

Fall 2013

**MISSION:** The Voice/Vision Archive promotes cultural, racial and religious understanding through unprecedented worldwide access to its collection of Holocaust survivor narratives. Our educational resources, programs and outreach provide quality Holocaust education to the metropolitan Detroit and global communities through engagement with teachers, civic groups and religious organizations.

**VISION:** The Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive seeks to strengthen the University of Michigan-Dearborn's position as a welcoming and nurturing institution, which supports diversity among its students, faculty, staff, and scholarship.

To accomplish this goal it is our vision to:

- Enable immediate connections to powerful, oral histories of survivors who experienced the Holocaust
- Reach out to Michigan's K-12 students and educators by offering guided discussions and focused dialogues
- Conduct content-specific workshops and colloquia aimed at metropolitan area educators
- Reach out to the metropolitan community's civic and religious organizations
- Provide an online Holocaust education curriculum
- Support Holocaust research
- Preserve the voices and memories of Holocaust survivors for future generations

# THE VOICE

“We die twice when men forget.”  
—*Simonides of Ceos (c.556 - 468 BC)*

**M** UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-DEARBORN



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## Archive Founder and Director, Dr. Sidney Bolkosky, Passes Away

Sidney M. Bolkosky, longtime professor of history and director of the Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, passed away June 14, 2013. Bolkosky retired from UM-Dearborn in April 2012 after 39 years of service.

He is survived by his wife, Lori, and children, Miriam and Gabriel.

“Sid Bolkosky was an inspiring and accomplished teacher and researcher. His work with the Honors Program and Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive will leave a lasting legacy with the university, the region, and our society,” said UM-Dearborn Chancellor Daniel Little.

Bolkosky joined the UM-Dearborn faculty as an assistant professor in 1972. He was promoted to associate professor in 1977 and professor in 1984. He served as director of the Honors Program from 1983 to 1986 and 1990 to 2012.



Sidney Bolkosky, 1944-2013

In 1981, Bolkosky began to focus his research on Holocaust survivors. It started with one interview, but grew to more than 300. “Word spread among the Jewish community about professor Bolkosky’s caring and attentive approach to interviewing Holocaust survivors, many of whom were breaking years of silence and talking about their experiences for the first time,” said Barbara Kriigel, associate director for circulation and technical services at the Mardigian Library.

The Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive was established in 1993. Since that time, more than 4 million people have visited [holocaust.umd.umich.edu](http://holocaust.umd.umich.edu) to listen to the interviews online. “Professor Bolkosky was a pioneer in both Holocaust research and education,” said Jamie Wraight, curator of the archive. “The Voice/Vision Archive stands as a permanent legacy to his commitment to documenting this dark period in human history.”

Hank Greenspan, author of *On Listening to Holocaust Survivors*, called Sid Bolkosky, “The most humanly generous guy I’ve ever known.” Greenspan added, “The foundation of Sid’s work with survivors was that he really got to know people. It wasn’t simply an interview and a thank you note—with many survivors, it was a relationship that continued throughout Sid’s life. The same quality shows in Sid’s writing. He doesn’t just cite a few excerpts in order to illustrate a theoretic or historical point. The reader gets to know people as particular people—just as Sid got to know them.”

Bolkosky’s research and teaching earned him accolades on campus and throughout the community. He was one of a very select group to have received all three of UM-Dearborn’s major faculty awards: the UM-Dearborn Distinguished Teaching Award (1975), the UM-Dearborn Distinguished Faculty Research Award (1995), and the UM-Dearborn Distinguished Service Award (2002). He was the university’s first William E. Stirton Professor in Social Sciences (1999) and the first recipient of the Distinguished Career Metropolitan Impact Award (2012).

May his memory be for a blessing.

## Archive Upgrades Website, Adds Video

Some users may have noticed that the Voice/Vision Archive's website has undergone some recent upgrades. In 2012, Allison Bailey, a student intern from the University of Michigan's School of Information worked with the Voice/Vision Archive. Bailey's role was to identify best practices for organizing and presenting information in the digital world. As a result, the Voice/Vision Archive now has an updated home page, better website Navigation, and a more robust discovery tool.

Allison also played a key role in posting the video portion of over 30 of our interviews, making the Voice/Vision Archive the first of its kind to offer such unprecedented access to its material around the clock to a global audience.



Dr. Robert Melson

## From the Curator

As the Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive celebrates over 30 years of existence, the collection's breadth and depth continues to grow. Full video versions of 31 interviews were added to the archive's website. We have also begun posting interviews conducted by the [Portraits of Honor: Our Michigan Holocaust Survivors Project](#), an interactive Holocaust educational exhibit of the Program for Holocaust Survivors and Families. By posting this filmed material online, we carry on **our tradition of offering unprecedented, global, and instant access to this vital resource.** We invite students, teachers, and scholars to utilize the video interviews in their learning, teaching, and research.

During the past year, the Voice/Vision Archive forged new partnerships while strengthening existing ones. In July 2012, Dr. Sidney Bolkosky and Dr. Jamie Wraight gave presentations at a teacher workshop held at the Holocaust Memorial Center (HMC) in Farmington Hills. In August 2012, we were honored to be part of the Raoul Wallenberg week celebration, partnering with the HMC, Mardigian Library, Henry Ford Centennial Library, and Farmington Community Library to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Wallenberg's birth. The archive also hosted the traveling exhibit "Architecture of Murder: The Auschwitz-Birkenau Blueprints" on loan from the American Society for Yad Vashem. The exhibit's closing featured a discussion led by the award-winning author and architectural historian Professor Robert Jan van Pelt. Working with the Cohn-Haddow Center for Judaic Studies, the Armenian Research Center at UM-Dearborn, and the HMC, the Voice/Vision Archive held its annual Holocaust and Armenian Genocide Commemoration in the spring. The event was attended by over 350 people and featured a talk by renowned genocide scholar Dr. Robert Melson. It was a busy year!

On June 14, 2013, the archive's founder and director, Sid Bolkosky, passed away. His death has prompted some to ask about the future of the Voice/Vision Archive. What will happen now that its founder is gone? The archive will remain. That is the benefit of being part of the University of Michigan and, no matter what happens, the interviews will always be available and the website will continue to exist. **But existing is not enough. Now more than ever, the Voice/Vision Archive needs your help to continue its growth, as both a digital repository of Holocaust survivor interviews and an active advocate for Holocaust education in Michigan and beyond.** As long as we are able, we will continue conducting and posting interviews. We will continue our collaborations with local groups, and we will continue striving to make the archive a world-class digital collection with a global reach.

As anyone who knew Sid will attest, he was deeply committed to Holocaust education. The Voice/Vision Archive was his vehicle for accomplishing that. With your help, we can continue to fulfill his commitment and work to secure his vision.

## Over 300 Turn Out for Annual Commemoration

On Wednesday, April 10, more than 350 people attended the annual Holocaust and Armenian Genocide Commemoration co-sponsored by the Voice/Vision Archive. This year's featured speaker was Dr. Robert Melson, whose presentation, "Two Survivors' Perspectives: The Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust," explored perpetrators' means and motives, as well as survivors' courage and survival during the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust. Melson framed his discussion by focusing on the stories of Armenian Bishop Grigoris Balakian and the Jewish Mendelsohn family.

Melson is professor emeritus at Purdue University and past president of the International Association of Genocide Scholars. His publications include "Revolution and Genocide: On the Origins of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust." He also lectured on ethnic conflict and genocide to audiences around the world.

This annual genocide commemoration is presented in cooperation with the Holocaust Memorial Center-Zekelman Family Campus, the Cohn-Haddow Center for Judaic Studies at Wayne State University, and the Armenian Research Center at the University of Michigan-Dearborn.

## Exhibit Exposes the “Architecture of Murder”

During January and February 2013, the Voice/Vision Archive hosted the traveling exhibit, the “Architecture of Murder: The Auschwitz-Birkenau Blueprints.” On loan from American Society for Yad Vashem, the exhibit included photographs, documents, and text panels, as well as blueprints of the camp that documented its development and expansion. It also contained poetry by Paul Celan and a short audio-visual presentation.

The “Architecture of Murder: The Auschwitz-Birkenau Blueprints” exhibit opened on Sunday, January 20, and was accompanied by a brief discussion by Dr. Jamie L. Wraight, curator and historian of the Voice/Vision Archive.

Following a 35-day run in the Mardigian Library, the exhibit closed with award-winning author Robert Jan van Pelt, Professor of Architecture at the University of Waterloo, presented “The Construction of Auschwitz.”

For Wraight, where the exhibit was held was as important as its message. “It’s fair to say that during its run at the library thousands of students were around it, and it’s taken some lumps and bumps along the way. Sometimes the students moved furniture next to it, bumping into the panels. Once they even unplugged and moved the television monitor so they could use the stand as a power source! Many of them, however, looked at it, read the text, and examined the pictures and blueprints. And that is what makes hosting the exhibit in a student centered space in the library so remarkable and important. It placed the subject—in this case the Holocaust—right in their midst. It provided a focal point for conversations, perhaps even difficult ones, as well as for reflection, and maybe even further study.”

## Join Our Online Mailing List and Make Your Voice/Vision Experience Digital and Green!

To sign up, please visit our homepage [holocaust.umd.umich.edu](http://holocaust.umd.umich.edu) and click on the blue subscription button located on the bottom left-hand side! It’s simple, it’s easy, it’s Green!

## Archive Helps Publish Second Survivor Memoir

The Voice/Vision Archive recently worked with Irene Miller on the completion of her Holocaust memoir “Into No Man’s Land: A Historical Memoir.” In it, Ms. Miller recounts her family’s efforts to survive during World War II. Robbed and stranded in a frozen field near the Polish-Soviet border—a no man’s land—by the man hired to help them escape from the Germans, the family was forced to separate in order to cross the border to safety. While waiting for her husband’s return, Irene’s mother was rounded up with other Jewish families abandoned in the field, and herded onto a train. She made a desperate and daring escape from the train being sent “who knows where.” The family was finally reunited, but was then shipped off to forced labor camps in Siberia where years of hard work and near starvation take a toll on them.

Despite these hardships, Ms. Miller refuses to let the destitution of her childhood destroy her dreams and desire to live a rich and full life. She was a featured local author during the 2012 Jewish Book Fair in West Bloomfield, and she has given numerous book talks at churches, book clubs, and other local groups. The Voice/Vision Archive partners with her to give presentations to school groups and, most recently, she was surprised to discover she was speaking at her grandson’s school! Ms. Miller’s memoir was published by the University of Michigan-Dearborn and can be purchased at Amazon as well as the Holocaust Memorial Center. To inquire about having her speak to your school or organization, contact us at [holocaust@umich.edu](mailto:holocaust@umich.edu) or 313-583-6300.



Robert Jan van Pelt

## Archive Continues To Conduct Interviews

Are you a Holocaust survivor who wants to be interviewed or do you know one who would like to be interviewed?

The Voice/Vision Archive is continuing to interview not only Holocaust survivors, but members of the Second Generation as well.

To schedule an interview please contact us at [holocaust@umich.edu](mailto:holocaust@umich.edu)



Irene Miller

### Sponsor an Interview!

It takes over 100 hours from the time an interview is conducted to the time it is cataloged and posted on our website. We work diligently to make sure each interview is properly transcribed, researched, and cataloged. This attention to detail takes the expertise and work of many dedicated individuals. Although painstaking, it is a labor of love.

A one-time gift of \$500 will allow us to continue our efforts collecting and preserving these important interviews.

By sponsoring an interview, you can help make it accessible to anyone, anytime, and virtually anywhere.

For more information, please contact Jamie Wraight at 313-583-6300 or [jwraight@umich.edu](mailto:jwraight@umich.edu)

### Help Secure the Archive's Future!

You can help to build the endowed fund of the Voice/Vision Archive. Your generous support of this important project is sincerely appreciated. Please detach and mail this form to:

The Voice/Vision Archive  
University of Michigan-Dearborn  
4901 Evergreen Road 1040AB  
Dearborn, Michigan 48128-1491

I have enclosed:

\_\_\_\_\_ My/our check payable to the University of Michigan-Dearborn for the first payment of a \$5,000 pledge to support the Voice/Vision Archive endowed fund. I/we will make gift payments: \_\_\_\_\_ monthly \_\_\_\_\_ quarterly \_\_\_\_\_ semi-annually \_\_\_\_\_ annually over a period of 5 years beginning in 2014-2015.

\_\_\_\_\_ My/our check payable to the University of Michigan-Dearborn for a gift of: \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ Other  
\_\_\_\_\_ My/my spouse's matching gift form

You may charge my gift to:

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Account No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ (Required)


Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

You are welcome to call the Office of Institutional Advancement at 313-593-5409 with any questions. EID 570502 AGG BSA07 DRBN



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