

# THE VOICE

VOICE  
Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive  
VISION

## UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-DEARBORN

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## Inner City School Students Use Voice/Vision Interviews



*Students from  
Victoria Monacelli's  
8th grade language  
arts class work on  
the podcast.*

Victoria Monacelli is an 8th grade reading/language arts teacher at the Warren G. Harding Middle School in Philadelphia. As part of her literacy program, Ms Monacelli has her inner city students research various topics and then create a 15 minute educational "podcast," i.e. an audio or video report available on the Internet. The students were assigned to study the Holocaust and during their research they discovered the interviews that can be heard and read on the internet at the Voice/Vision website: [www.holocaust.umd.umich.edu](http://www.holocaust.umd.umich.edu)

When Ms Monacelli emailed Archive curator Dr. Jamie Wraight asking permission for her students to use portions of the interviews in their podcast, he quickly gave approval. Thus began an interesting dialogue between Ms Monacelli, Dr. Wraight, and other members of the Voice/Vision team. Partway through the project, we received the following email:

"The past few days of this project have amazed even me and I get to experience a lot of incredible things in my work so if it amazes me, it has got to be good. I have stayed after school for an extra 2 hours each day for the past few days because I have had a difficult time interrupting their work . . . primarily because your survivors have been like real people to them. People that are alive and relevant to them. I really haven't ever seen anything like it before. . . I think they have spent so much time listening to and analyzing what your survivors have said that they feel as

though they know them. On a first name basis, that is. I am not sure when they crossed that line or why but they discuss them as if they were just right there. Like, "Remember when Ruth said...." or, "Didn't Henry talk about that" or, "I think Lily describes it better..." But maybe what Marton (since we are obviously on a first name basis now) said affected them the most, "If this tape will help a little bit, even one person, to see how not to be, how not to do, I will have accomplished something. If in this tape, I memorialized some of the people that were murdered for no reason at all, I think I did something. And I feel a little bit better by putting it for posterity, that's the least I could do, the least I could do, the fact that I survived for all these people that were murdered for no reason . . ." They picked this statement out of hundreds of statements and I hear one of them say, "He did." And another student asks, "He did what?" And the original student says, "He helped even one person- us." And I'm doing some work on the other side of the room thinking I can't believe it. I wish I could tell them how amazing that really was but they would not get why. So know that for right now your survivors, some of whom I am sure are deceased, are alive and well and affecting the lives of numerous young people in Philadelphia. Talk about posterity."

When the students began their research, Ms Monacelli said that many of them did not even know the Holocaust had occurred. To have survivors "come alive" and help educate the students is exactly the reason why the interviews, the Archive, and the work we do is so important.

The podcast can be heard on the Voice/Vision website at: <http://holocaust.umd.umich.edu/pod>

Ms Monacelli will be speaking about her students' experience at our 25th Anniversary Celebration of the Voice/Vision Project on the University of Michigan-Dearborn campus on Sunday September 9 at 2 p.m. Please mark your calendar so you can hear more about this amazing use of the interviews and our web site. If you would like to RSVP for the event, please call 313-593-5236. We look forward to seeing you!

**Dr. Sidney Bolkosky**  
Director,  
Voice/Vision Holocaust  
Survivor Oral History Archive



## From the DIRECTOR

# Help Voice/Vision Continue its Important Work

When we began the Voice/Vision Archive we had a single thought: survivor testimonies had to be taken and preserved as faithfully, professionally and sensitively as possible. The UM-Dearborn responded wholeheartedly, with support from Barbara Kriigel and Beth Taylor; Chancellor Little, Provost Martin and Library Director Tim Richards added their support. Jamie Wright joined us as curator/archivist and the sophistication of the archive grew dramatically. I don't think anyone anticipated the success we would achieve—the website, the number of hits from all over the world, the scholarly works, the student involvement. Nor did we foresee the difficulties.

We are the University of Michigan. We're not going anywhere, and Voice/Vision remains and will remain a part of our permanent collection. In my own work, I have always assumed that. I did not sign on to be a fund-raiser—I don't do it well. But given our current economic situation, we desperately need help to guarantee the quality and

professionalism of the Archive. Each interview needs to be maintained and managed and the specific costs are formidable, they include Dr. Wright's salary, our two student assistants (with help from the Claims Conference grant), and the daily website work.

There are "listening ears" now. The dialogues with survivors have grown louder, echoing the globe eloquently and articulately. We will continue to engender what have come to be known as the highest quality interviews and keep them available for all who want to access them, whenever they wish. It is increasingly clear, however, that this endeavor will need help from those of you who care about it. If you would like more information on what is required, please call Jamie or me. Talking is action; whether it prevents antisemitic and racial violence, only time will tell. Confronted with the evil prospect of neo-Nazism, one survivor quietly noted: "All we can do is speak out, tell our stories."

## The Voice/Vision Website is a Hit

The Voice/Vision Holocaust Oral History Archive's website receives approximately 160 hits per month. What makes Voice/Vision unique is the fact that not only does it make the audio of the interviews available freely online, but the written transcripts are available to people who want to read them. There are currently 72 interview transcripts online, with information and synopses of 21 additional interviews which have yet to be posted. All of the interviews listed on the site may also be requested through interlibrary loan by any library that offers that service. Many archives of Holocaust survivor interviews require users to come to them (or don't lend their materials), but Voice/Vision is dedicated to providing information, rather than keeping it in a place where few can have access.

The interviews can be found

- on the website (<http://holocaust.umd.umich.edu>) by selecting "interviews."
- in the Mardigian Library's online catalog (<http://wizard.umd.umich.edu>) by searching for "holocaust survivor oral histories."
- in WorldCat (<http://www.worldcat.org>) by searching for "holocaust survivor oral histories."

The website has undergone some exciting changes in the past year. The news page has rss feeds to which readers can subscribe to in order to be kept up to date on the Voice/Vision project. Many email programs offer rss feed-reading abilities, and there are a number of web-based rss readers available, such as Bloglines or Google Reader. The look of the site has been updated as well, and the technology used to post the interviews—although not apparent to website visitors—has made it increasingly easy to get the interviews from text to web form with a minimum of effort and time.

Other changes are coming soon. We are working on implementing a site search, which will make it possible to search across all of the interviews for terms like "hidden children" or the names of particular camps and other locations. Increasing the searchability of the site will also improve how well Internet search engines can find the Voice/Vision page itself. Since the project is dedicated to making its meticulously collected and presented information as available as possible, making the site as easy to find and use is a major goal.

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# Annual Commemoration Speakers Explore State Sponsored Commemoration in Israel and Armenia

On April 20, 2007, The Voice/Vision Holocaust Oral History Archive co-hosted the annual Holocaust and Armenian Genocide Commemoration at the University of Michigan-Dearborn's Fairlane Center. The theme of this year's event centered on state-sponsored commemoration of the Holocaust and the Armenian genocide in both Israel and Armenia.

In order to explore this theme in detail, the commemoration featured talks by Tamir Sorek and Gerard Libaridian. Sorek, an assistant professor of Sociology and Jewish Studies at the University of Florida, spoke about "The Holocaust and Public Culture in Israel." His talk focused on the lessons of the Holocaust prevalent in Israel political discourse. According to Sorek, these lessons take three forms: lessons for Jews, lessons for Zionists and universal lessons. Sorek spoke about how these lessons have manifested themselves in relation to the different political, social and international situations faced by the state of Israel since its establishment in 1948. Professor Sorek also addressed Israel's attitude concerning the Armenian genocide. Gerard Libaridian, the Alex Manoogian Chair in Modern Armenian History at the University of Michigan, presented his talk, "A Challenge for the Present: How to Think of the Past When Planning for the Future" which analyzed how remembrance of the Armenian genocide influences Armenia's official policy, both foreign and domestic. Libaridian, a former high-ranking member of Armenia's first post-Soviet government, focused primarily on the period of early Armenian independence, when two contrasting visions of how the newly independent country viewed the genocide existed.



*Tamir Sorek, Assistant Professor of  
Sociology at the University of Florida*

The event was attended by approximately 100 guests with a buffet lunch followed by a question and answer session with the speakers.

This is the third year that the Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive has co-sponsored the event, along with UM-Dearborn's Armenian Research Center, the Cohn-Haddow Center for Judaic Studies at Wayne State University, the Armenian Studies Program at UM Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan- Dearborn's Mardigian Library.

## Voice/Vision goes Deep

Testimonies from the Voice/Vision Archive are being deposited in "Deep Blue," the institutional repository of the University of Michigan. Deep Blue is a permanent, safe and accessible service for the breadth of intellectual resources represented by the University of Michigan.

Deep Blue offers us a different means to make the survivor testimonies available to the world. The premier scholarly search engine for digital resources is OAIster (<http://www.oaister.org>), which provides access to almost 12 million resources from 845 resources sites. Material deposited into Deep Blue is automatically made available for search by OAIster.

Another significant reason for placing the testimonies in Deep Blue is that the University of Michigan as a whole stands behind the permanence of these resources. Of course, just having the material at two separate sites increases the chances of enduring survival, but there is more to it than mere replication. As our testimonies are placed in Deep Blue, they are placed in an archival "best practices" format. This is to ensure as much as possible the long term accessibility of the material. As archival best practices change, the University is committed to migrating these resources to the new archival format, enabling both access and survival for generations.

Some might wonder why we should continue to place the testimonies in our own Voice/Vision site. While the material we place in Deep Blue is the same in content, the display is significantly different. The testimonies on the Voice/Vision site are broken up into smaller portions to make reading and listening easier. File sizes are much smaller, making it easier for worldwide users to access, no matter what the speed and capacity of their Internet service. Our site will exclusively focus on the testimonies of Holocaust survivors and will continue to offer enhancements not available through Deep Blue.

## *Save the Date*

September 9, 2007

The Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive is celebrating its 25 year anniversary and you're invited! The celebration will be held on September 9, 2007 at the Henry Ford Estate on the campus of the University of Michigan-Dearborn from 2 to 4 p.m. Victoria Monacelli will speak about her middle school students' extraordinary use of interviews from the Voice/Vision Archive. The celebration will also feature music from the Phoenix Quartet, as well as, talks by Hank Greenspan and Agi Rubin. Hors d'oeuvres will be served. Seating is limited, please RSVP by August 31

by calling (313) 593-5236 or via email at:

***library-event-rsvp@umd.umich.edu***

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# 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 2007-08.

\_\_\_\_\_ 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:

\_\_\_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_\_\_ Amex \_\_\_\_\_ Discover  
Account No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_ (Required)  
Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

You are welcome to call Cecile Aitchison in the Office of Institutional Advancement at (313) 593-5409 with any questions.

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## MISSION

*The Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive exists to maintain a collection of oral testimonies of those who survived the Holocaust and make these widely accessible for educational purposes. Through interlibrary loan and the Internet and community outreach, we make the oral testimonies and transcriptions available to researchers, students and the general public.*

## VISION

*The Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive strives to create personal links between listeners and survivors of the Holocaust for the purpose of providing an empathetic appreciation of the victims' experiences, thereby gaining greater insight into the historical event of the Holocaust. Through engagement of the listeners, the Archive seeks to reduce anti-Semitism and racism as it encourages tolerance.*

World Wide Web: [holocaust.umd.umich.edu](http://holocaust.umd.umich.edu)

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