

**Forum**

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Sherry Simon, Zoë Waxman

*Edited by Arielle Berger*

**Twenty Years of Publishing Survivor Narratives:  
Scholars Reflect on the Educational and Cultural  
Impact of the Azrieli Foundation's Holocaust  
Survivor Memoirs Program**

In the twenty years that the Azrieli Foundation's Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program (HSMP) has been publishing memoirs and diaries, there have been many changes in the academic and pedagogical landscape of Holocaust studies. Indeed, the HSMP has been at the forefront of these changes, producing not only written survivor accounts but also audiobooks, short films, and online exhibitions to educate on the complexities of survivor experiences in the Holocaust. Our work has and continues to be guided by a commitment to ensuring that survivors' voices continue to reach new generations, inspiring learning and reflection. We have always been cognizant of the fact that as we move further in time from the Holocaust, first-person accounts will diminish. Now, we are at the beginning of what those who work in the fields of Holocaust education and memorialization often describe as the "post-survivor era," a time when few living witnesses to the Holocaust remain alive.

As generations of learners are left without a direct living connection to the past, new methods of technology to transmit survivor narratives have emerged in the hope of replicating the personal connection that living witnesses create: Hologram-like video, virtual or augmented reality and, most recently, testimony projects that use artificial intelligence have been heralded as the newest means to engage learners in a study of the Holocaust. Yet through all the change, written memoirs, diaries, and letters of those who survived the Holocaust have continued to engage readers of diverse backgrounds and knowledge.

Having published more than 150 Canadian Holocaust survivor narratives since 2005, the HSMP has become a world leader in the publication of Holocaust memoirs in English and in French. In the memoirs program's inaugural year, the senior editorial board grappled with issues of fact-checking and editing survivors' accounts—twenty years on, our research process is rigorous, and our editors consult scholars, historical experts, and translators, balancing history, memory, and language to ensure the author's voice and story is preserved while producing an accurate account. The memoirs we publish are written by survivors with a wide range of prewar, wartime, and postwar experiences; they have been translated from Yiddish, Polish, Hungarian, and Russian; they have won awards and contributed to academic scholarship; and they explore how survivors rebuilt their lives in Canada and contributed to both small and large communities in Eastern, Central, and Western Canada.<sup>1</sup>

To mark the twentieth anniversary of our program, HSMP managing editor Arielle Berger sat down with six scholars working in a variety of academic disciplines to learn more about how they use memoir in their teaching and research, and how the HSMP has contributed to their fields of research. The forum participants—Doris Bergen (University of Toronto), Cheryl Fury (University of New Brunswick), Sara R. Horowitz (York University), Carson Phillips (Azrieli Foundation and Gratz College), Sherry Simon (Concordia University), and Zoë Waxman (University of

Oxford)—have each engaged with the memoirs program for different lengths of time.

**The Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program has published a wide variety of narratives over the past twenty years. Has there been a memoir, or several, that has made a particular impact in your field, and how so?**

**Doris Bergen:** I've used nine Azrieli memoirs in my classes—by Molly Applebaum, Sonia Caplan, Judy Cohen, Elly Gotz, Anna Molnár Hegedűs, Rabbi Pinchas Hirschprung, Helena Jockel, Nate Leipciger, and Fred Mann—and many others in my research—by Pinchas Gutter, Alex Levin, Zuzana Sermer, and more—plus I wrote the introduction for Anka Voticky, so I have a special fondness for her book.

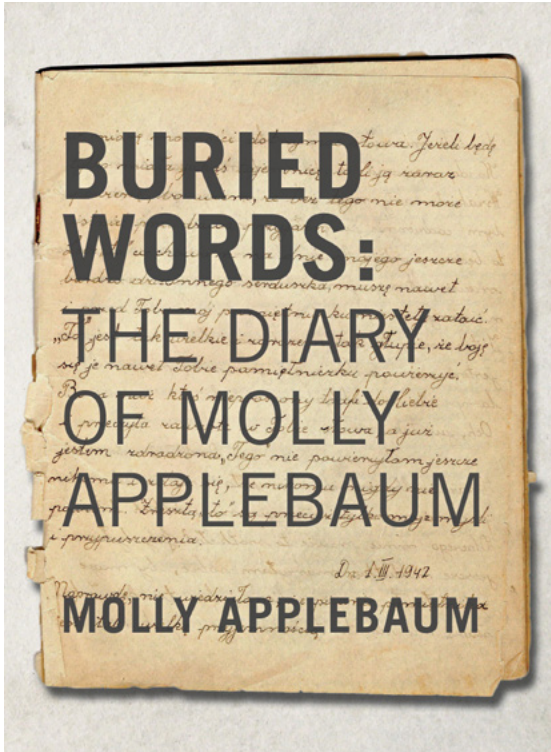
But when it comes to impact, Molly Applebaum's *Buried Words* is in a class of its own. This short book, which includes a diary Applebaum wrote as a teenager and a memoir written decades later, resonates all over the world. Teachers assign *Buried Words* in Canada, the United States, Australia, and, in its Polish version, in Dąbrowa, Poland, the town outside of which Applebaum and her cousin Helen were hidden for more than two years, in a box under the floor of a barn. Excerpts from the diary, including Molly's poetry and a letter from her beloved Sabina Goldman, set to music and performed by the Payadora Tango Ensemble, are part of an award-winning album.<sup>2</sup>

Many people assume that the subject of sex and the Holocaust is taboo, but Applebaum speaks openly about sexual relations that she and her cousin had with the Polish man who sheltered them.<sup>3</sup> She challenges simplistic notions of righteous rescuers but also refuses to present herself as a helpless victim. Anna Hájková's analysis of queer Jewish desire in the Holocaust devotes a chapter to Applebaum and her love for Sabina.<sup>4</sup> Another important theme is Applebaum's unhappy marriage to a man, also a survivor, who undermined her sense of her own worth.

For reasons unexplained, Applebaum's diary was in her cousin's possession for years and only returned to its author after her cousin died. Even then, it took many more years for Applebaum to publish the book, encouraged by her daughter and helped by her grandchild.<sup>5</sup> At so many points, Applebaum's writing could have been lost, destroyed, or thrown away. Its survival is a precious gift.

**Zoë Waxman:** I wholeheartedly agree with Doris that Molly Applebaum's *Buried Words* is an extraordinary memoir. It is indeed unusual to encounter such a frank discussion of sex and the Holocaust. I would absolutely concur with scholars such as Anna Hájková that works such as this remind us that it is important not to erase women's agency, even in extremity, and to take seriously the lived experience of women's sexuality.

As we move further and further away from the lived experience of the Holocaust, it becomes more important than ever to conceptualize Holocaust victims as real people capable of making choices—however difficult or painful they might seem to us. We must resist the tendency to view victims in a blandly heroic light if we are to even begin to comprehend the depth of their experiences.



Cover of Molly Applebaum, *Buried Words: The Diary of Molly Applebaum* (2017)

**Carson Phillips:** Like Doris, there are several memoirs that I regularly integrate into my courses—*In Dreams Together* by Leslie Fazekas, *Bits and Pieces* by Henia Reinhartz, *Memories in Focus* by Pinchas Gutter, *A Cry in Unison* by Judy Cohen, *Buried Words* by Molly Applebaum, and *Silent Refuge* by Margrit Stenge. Each offers readers an important opportunity to discover the range of human experiences in the Holocaust as well as illustrating the agency, limited though it may have been, that survivors exhibited. Whether it is Margrit Stenge's coming-of-age story, where she must take on adult responsibilities while fleeing across the Norwegian wilderness, or Henia Reinhartz's fragmented memories of the Lodz ghetto, deeply personal memoirs allow students to engage with history in new ways. History ceases to be abstract.

I've often found that memoirs, especially those that include diaries, letters, and archival photographs, lend themselves very well to interdisciplinary use. They encourage critical discussions on topics ranging from the ethics of testimony to the lim-

itations, or conversely how the depth of being able to express trauma is exhibited in literary works.

One new memoir that I am particularly keen to use in my upcoming classes is *Lament* by Moishe Kantorowitz. In particular, I will be using it in my Geographies of the Holocaust course to address themes of absence, loss—the loss of people, communities, and spaces—and how the Holocaust changed the geographical landscape of Europe. Kantorowitz laments the loss of towns, shtetls, and cultural geographies that either no longer exist because of the Holocaust or do not exist in quite the same way. For Kantorowitz, these vanished places become symbolic geographies of the cultural erasure and physical genocide of European Jewry, and I am eager for my students to unpack this vividly descriptive memoir.

**Doris Bergen:** I'm glad Carson brought up geography. All of the memoirs in the Azrieli series are by survivors who came to Canada after the war, so displacement is literally built into them. Some of the books deal at length with life after liberation, including accounts of returning to what had been home, “vanished places” that still existed, with new inhabitants living among, and often in, what scholars have called “dissonant heritage,” that is, the material reminders of people expelled or killed.<sup>6</sup>

For Anka Voticky, who survived with her family in Shanghai, returning to Czechoslovakia was distressing and dangerous. She recounts individual acts of aggression—an acquaintance greeting her on the street with a cold, incredulous “You’re alive!”—as well as mob violence against Jews. She could not get out of Europe fast enough. But every memoir, and every survivor, is different. Nate Leipziger has returned to Poland dozens of times, including on many trips with the March of the Living. He too encountered hostility when he first returned to his hometown in August 1945, but he also had a Polish friend welcome him with the words, “Thank God you survived.”

**Cheryl Fury:** Like Doris and Carson, I too have used Judy Cohen's *A Cry in Unison* and Pinchas Gutter's *Memories in Focus* in the classroom. I've also incorporated Elie Wiesel's *Night* and Vera Schiff's *Surviving Theresienstadt*. Gutter, Cohen, and Schiff graciously fielded questions from my students (remotely or in person), expanding on the details of their lives before, during, and after the Holocaust. Memoirs capture much but there's always more to be said from authors with such storied lives.

Part of what make Holocaust memoirs such compelling reading is the laborious work authors undertake to translate their turbulent lives into print. Elie Wiesel's *Night* is a well-documented example. Wiesel revised his memoir in different languages and editions: from a young survivor bent on revenge in the Yiddish version through the later, less vengeful versions in French and English. Even late in life, Wiesel and his wife, Marion, reworked the English translation of *Night*.

Memoir writing is often a lengthy process, and some authors require decades to adequately encapsulate their harrowing experiences. Many Holocaust survivors write about their lives in full, composites of their younger and older selves. In general, students identify with the authors' younger selves and respond empathetically to their older selves laying bare their trauma in their memoirs.

Some students have read a given memoir in high school (often Wiesel's *Night*) but comment that it resonates differently when they reread it in university. I find this is true for me as well, even with memoirs I've read and taught several times. This is one of many reasons I like to use memoirs as a teaching tool: Their depth and richness speak to us in different ways at different times in our lives.

**Each of you represent different fields of academic inquiry—e.g., history, literature, translation, gender studies. What are the advantages or perhaps disadvantages to using survivor memoirs in an interdisciplinary context?**

**Sherry Simon:** Questions of language and translation have for a long time been considered tangential to the core concerns of Holocaust studies, an area of “soft” investigation compared to archival and historical research. Yet our knowledge of the Holocaust, indeed the very existence of the Holocaust as an international, interdisciplinary term, has been shaped by the work of translators. While the Holocaust itself took place in many languages, English was not one of them. How paradoxical, then, that the memory of the Holocaust resides principally in this language today.

To understand how this process took place, to watch words, texts, testimonies as they move through time and across continents, is a necessary task of Holocaust studies. But in addition to questions of transmission of Holocaust memory, translation issues are important to understanding the experience of the camps and the events following the war. Some of the most important authors of Holocaust literary works have made language an issue of concern. Primo Levi's early works drew attention to the complex dynamics of translation in the camps and how knowledge of German, for example, could be a key to survival; Elie Wiesel's rewriting of his post-Holocaust memoir from Yiddish to French as *La Nuit* was a self-imposed attempt to translate his experience to a broader public; the foregrounding of on-screen interpreters in Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* gave recognition to the work of translating testimonies first-hand. David Boder's translations of the 1946 interviews he conducted with survivors—in nine languages—took into account the moods and emotions of the narrators, opting for “awkward” renditions that were attentive to signs of trauma. In a decision quite original for the period, he wanted the English read as if it was not originally English.

Translation is much more than the mechanical substitution of one language for another: It involves a process of reframing as texts move from their original contexts to new readerships. This applies to Holocaust scholarship itself. Most Holocaust researchers are themselves translators, dealing with first-hand documents in languages other than English. Their translations are themselves interpretive.

I am not an expert in Holocaust studies, although I have written about language and Jewish memory in the cities of Central Europe, for example, Lviv. I am inspired by the work of Peter Davies, Hannah Pollin-Galay, and Naomi Seidman who have begun the work of engaging a dialogue between Holocaust studies and translation studies and who were featured in one of the conferences on translation studies that I co-organized with staff members at the Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program. A recording of “Translating Holocaust Testimony: A Conversation Between Translation and Holocaust Studies” is available here: <https://memoirs.azrielifoundation.org/conferences/translating-holocaust-testimony/>.

**Doris Bergen:** Thank you for reminding me of that wonderful conference on translation studies, Sherry! For me as a historian, it was an incredible opportunity to get a glimpse of the profound intellectual, linguistic, and ethical challenges of translation. I was riveted by the presentation by Francine Kaufmann, who did the instantaneous translation of Hebrew into French for several of the eyewitnesses interviewed for Claude Lanzmann’s *Shoah*. Lanzmann did not give her any information to prepare in advance or even tell her whom they would be interviewing on any given day of filming, she said, so that her choices and reactions would be spontaneous. The outcome is brilliant, but it seems like a heavy, even cruel, burden to place on a translator. So much behind-the-scenes work, thought, and expertise goes into the production of a film, interview, or memoir.

**The Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program strives to maintain the authentic voice of the survivor author. These memoirs are distinct from testimony—and many published memoirs—in that they have been edited and fact-checked. Do you think it’s important that students are learning from fact-checked memoirs? How so? Does this impact how students learn about or understand the Holocaust?**

**Cheryl Fury:** The horrors of the Holocaust are difficult to capture and convey fully in any medium. However, as an educator, I believe that survivors’ accounts are the most effective means of teaching about the Shoah. While few of us can grasp the suffering of millions of people, the “way in” for students is often through the account of a single victim of Nazi persecution. Memoirs and testimonies have evocative powers far above the expert analyses in history textbooks.



When teaching about the Holocaust, I use scholarly works in conjunction with memoirs. This exposes students to macro and micro versions of events, blending professional analyses with personal accounts. Although I have experimented with a variety of methods to teach the Holocaust, as a historian, I prioritize texts that have been vetted for historical accuracy. It is important to model best practices when providing sources for students at the university level. Furthermore, fact-checking helps to ward off those seeking to distort or deny the Holocaust by highlighting historical inaccuracies in survivors' accounts.

Having worked on Holocaust memoirs myself, I know the challenges of fact-checking and editing the deeply personal works of another. One of the many reasons I use Azrieli memoirs in my classes is that I know they have been thoroughly researched and the editors have usually worked with the authors directly. Given the large number of memoirs published, their editors have considerable experience working through issues around translation, memory, and trauma. Good editors can provide helpful context and clarification for readers without intruding on the authentic voice of the author.

When the Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program provided my students with free memoirs and the opportunity to engage with two survivor authors, Pinchas Gutter and Judy Cohen, over Zoom, it was an experience that impacted all my students deeply. But the era of direct dialogue with survivors is coming to an end. In the years to come, memoirs will take on an even greater historical importance. They are invaluable resources for academic researchers, Holocaust educators, students, and anyone who is attempting to understand the Shoah and its lasting legacy. Accuracy is critical given that these deeply personal accounts will also serve as historical testaments for future generations.

**Doris Bergen:** Like Cheryl, I have found that a great advantage of using memoirs from the Azrieli series is the opportunity for students to develop personal connections with the authors, some of whom are available to speak to classes on Zoom or in person. Even after this possibility is gone, we still have recorded interviews of many survivor authors available, e.g., through the USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. My students have listened to multiple interviews of Molly Applebaum, which, together with her two-part book (diary and memoir), show how she has told her story at different stages of her life, to different audiences. Pinchas Gutter has been interviewed numerous times, most famously, for days on end, to produce one of the first 3D interactive projections of a Holocaust survivor for the USC Shoah Foundation's Dimensions in Testimony project. Of course there is nothing like the physical presence of a person, but having interviews, documentaries, animations, and graphic novels, as well as the memoirs, allows students to examine not only how the Holocaust was experienced but also how it is narrated and shaped by filmmakers, interviewers, editors, illustrators, educators, audiences, and survivors themselves.

**Carson Phillips:** Cheryl's observation that Holocaust memoirs will assume even greater historical importance as the survivor generation passes is crucial to understanding their role and impact. We are all perhaps too familiar with works such as *Misha: A Mémoire of the Holocaust Years* (1997) or *Angel at the Fence* (2009), which fabricated experiences of survival in the Holocaust. These works underscore the damage false testimonies can cause, while simultaneously highlighting the value of carefully fact-checked survivor memoirs.

The ability to engage in dialogue with a survivor author is, as Cheryl and Doris note, deeply moving for many university students. Having a survivor reflect on their Holocaust-era writing is another powerful learning experience. My students have often been surprised to read what Leslie Fazekas now thinks about his wartime letters, which are sensitive, thoughtful, and emotive. In the author's preface to *In Dreams Together*, he writes, "My diary of our Lager life now strikes me as unbelievably naive.... Aside from being ignorant and naive, I was also nineteen years old, with all the implications of this age: I was full of sentimentality, excitement and enthusiastic expectations concerning my future after the war." While I don't think these reflections in any way diminish the power of his diary and letters, they do provide us with valuable insights into how the author sees them in hindsight, after a lifetime of remembering and re-examining his wartime experiences. We, as readers, can also see how these experiences, as important as they were, are contextualized within a fuller understanding of the author's life.

**Some of the memoirs published by the HSMP were originally written in languages other than English and then translated into English and French. How does a translator's ethical stance, training, and cultural sensitivity play into the translation process?**

**Carson Phillips:** This is a topic that my students frequently raise, often from the perspective of wanting to know how cultural sensitivities and linguistic expressions are handled during the translation process. At the root of this question is if an implied meaning or context is possibly "lost in translation." One question I get from my students is how specific words that today we consider *Lagersprache* (language developed and used in the concentration camps) are translated. Similarly, students will ask how the poetic character of Yiddish is maintained in an English translation.

Interestingly, one of the most recent memoirs the program published—*Lament* by Moishe Kantorowitz—was originally written in Yiddish and translated into English by the author himself. The editor strove to preserve the Yiddish and Hebrew words and expressions used in the original manuscript, which was true to how the author spent his childhood—immersed in both languages. Towns with both small and large Jewish populations were documented with their lesser-known Yiddish names. This maintains the particular character of both the author's background and his voice.

Often a translator will seek clarification or additional information from a variety of sources—a historian, an editor, or even another translator might be consulted on a particularly challenging term or expression. The complexity of language and finding the right word to convey the author's intent was something that came up in preparing *Between the Lines* for publication, a diary-memoir originally written, and published, in Hungarian. The author, Margit Kassai, uses the word *hecc* frequently throughout the Hungarian text. *Hecc* is a slang word used as a verb that means to tease, to irritate, or to play jokes on someone; as a noun it can mean merriment, circus, commotion, or even upheaval or hoopla. When Kassai referred to the siege of Budapest as *Nagy Hecc*, the translators and editors thoughtfully debated whether to interpret this as Great Hoopla or Big Upheaval. Each has its own unique register and nuanced meaning. Maintaining the author's voice and her linguistic playfulness was an integral part of the decision-making process to go with the term Great Hoopla.

At other times, consulting with the survivor author can offer important contextual information about a term or expression. The supportive network can play an important role in maintaining the author's original voice and meaning and conveying it to the reader.

**Sherry Simon:** Testimony is defined by the immediacy of experience; in Holocaust studies in the last couple of decades, testimony has been a way of rescuing autobiographical texts from their previously secondary status and enhancing the significance of personal narrative. Because of its emphasis on subjective truth, testimony is especially vulnerable to the suspicion that the integrity of the words has been “tampered with”—through the intervention of a translator, for instance. Yet testimonies are spoken by a survivor whose lived language during the Holocaust is often different from the language they are speaking today or whose multilingualism obliges them to self-translate for a new audience. And indeed, as Hannah Pollin-Galay has shown, testimonies themselves are shaped by choices of style and tone considered adequate to certain contexts of reception: There will be subtle differences in the arc of testimony given in Hebrew, Lithuanian, or English.

The example Carson gives is eloquent. It shows how the translation of a written memoir can involve subtle distinctions that affect the tone of the narrative. Slang is especially difficult to translate because the translator will often have to choose between a word that is true to the time period or one that makes the meaning clear to a modern audience. And so the translator has to have in mind the overriding question: Who is the audience for this translation? Is the aim to create an emotional impact and enhance readability, rather than include the kind of information which might be relevant to a historian or an archivist? From the answers to these questions, many small choices will be made: whether to use the terms provided by the survivor (which might be German terms or Lager jargon or Yiddish expressions) or to convert these to contemporary usage; whether to use current expressions to convey imme-

diacy or use period language to indicate the time gap. Yet another layer of questions relates to sensitive information. When attitudes we consider distasteful might appear in a text, should they be erased? Take, for instance, racist attitudes to “gypsies,” whom we now call Roma, or gendered attitudes.

Many of these issues are discussed in the very detailed, fifty-seven-page-long Guide de rédaction (writing guide) prepared by the memoirs program’s French editorial team for the French-language translators who do work for the Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program. The aim of the program is to produce narratives that will be used as pedagogical tools in Holocaust education, and therefore the translations are prepared with this end in mind. Some of the issues they discuss have to do with current usage: *Holocauste* is preferred in North American French while “Shoah” is more current in France. “Kristallnacht” is always used rather than *Nuit de cristal*. The narrative tense of the *passé composé* is preferred to the more literary *passé simple*. The need for research is emphasized so as to avoid translating “sub-camps” as *sous-camps* rather than *camps annexes*, for example. And always, of course, the question of emotional tonality is foremost.

But while specific editorial parameters can be fixed, there will never be one definitive answer to the questions raised by translation, just as the meanings of the Holocaust continue to unfold over time.



Cover of Margit Kassai, *Between the Lines: The Diary of Margit Kassai* (2025)

**Sara R. Horowitz:** I know that you are asking us about translating from one language into another. Implicit in that, of course—as Carson’s and Sherry’s responses suggest—is translating not only words but cultures and contexts. Even the simplest of words are culture bearers: *house* and *maison* and *casa* and *dom* and *bayit* conjure up different mental images for native speakers and native readers. If this is true when translating stories from more ordinary times, then how much more so for narratives about the Holocaust, where author and reader lack a shared context. Even when reading a memoir of Shoah experiences in the original language, readers don’t have the experience to understand words as the author intends them. Writers such as Charlotte Delbo and Primo Levi often break off in their memoirs in frustration, wondering how postwar readers living normal lives can understand what the writers mean by “hunger,” or “thirst,” or “fear,” or “friendship.”

Translation always mediates between the writer and the reader. Making a memoir accessible to an anglophone or francophone readership without flattening out the complexity woven into the author’s narrative is a formidable challenge—and never perfectly successful. The magnificent Polish Israeli fiction writer Ida Fink once confided in me that the complexity of verb tenses in the original Polish of her autobiographical novel, *Podróż* (*The Journey*), was fundamental to understanding the complexity of the inner life of the novel’s protagonist—a young Jewish woman hiding in plain view during the war under a series of false identities. But much of that was lost in translation.

So many narratives about the Holocaust are polyglot—languages encountering other languages, words and phrases retooled for new purposes. Think of the encoded phrases in many wartime diaries, or—as Carson mentioned—the development of jargon in the concentration camps. And the very need to translate memoirs is in and of itself part of the effect of the Shoah, part of its aftermath. Survivor authors have almost always been displaced from their birthplace, wrested from their mother tongue. Some write in their native language, but not in their native land; their neighbours—their readers—can’t read what they’ve written without the mediation of a translator. Others write in an acquired language—writing in one language about what they’ve experienced in another, often feeling inarticulate and insecure in their mastery of their adopted tongue. Language carries memory.

**How do memoirs written by Holocaust survivors complicate or support theoretical frameworks of trauma and memory, history, literature, or gender studies?**

**Sara R. Horowitz:** When some researchers began asking questions, in the 1970s and 1980s, about sexual violence during the Holocaust, it was a taboo topic. Some established historians quickly asserted that because *Rassenschande* (racial defilement) was a criminal act in the Third Reich, rapes did not occur. And the suggestion of sexual

exploitation within victim groups was controversial. Despite testimonies by survivors soon after the war about rape and coerced sexual behaviour, only a few researchers dared to pursue the topic.

Since then, our understanding of the range of sexual behaviours has become complicated, thanks to ongoing work by people who study it in a variety of global contexts. This provides a theoretical framework to help think about the range of experiences of women and men during the Holocaust. At the same time, when we hear from survivors, when they recount their remembered experiences, when they convey their own understanding of those experiences and the impact they've had on who they have become—it sometimes confirms our understanding, sometimes refines it, and sometimes challenges it. The lives recollected and refracted in a memoir complicate our understanding of these important and delicate issues.

A couple of years ago, I participated in a small interdisciplinary workshop in Austria that focused on children as victims of sexual and sexualized violence during World War II. The workshop participants were from Europe, North America, and Israel, presenting work-in-progress that would eventually lead to a published collection of essays. The group consisted mostly of historians, with a few outliers like me who worked in literature. Most of the presentations involved archival work, or a combination of archival work and memoirs. On the second day of the workshop, a few people noticed that many of the memoirs that had been under discussion were published by the Azrieli Foundation. "Why is it," one of my colleagues at the workshop asked me, "that so many memoirs relevant to this topic come from the Azrieli's memoir program?"

I thought about that question. When my colleagues and I at the Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies at York were working closely with the Azrieli Foundation to launch the memoirs program, we gave a great deal of thought to the parameters of the project—how and how much to edit, how to treat historical errors, and so forth. I remember two particular memoirs that were published early on—*The Violin* by Rachel Shtibel and *A Drastic Turn of Destiny* by Fred Mann—occasioned strong debate among the editors involved in the project. The memoirs contained some sexually explicit material, and some people expressed initial discomfort in publishing them. Over time, especially working closely with living survivors who had their own views about how much they wished to make public and in what language and level of detail, the editors learned to take their cues from the authors. Equally important, the close bond that was established between the authors and their editors gave the survivors reassurance that all aspects of their story would be read with respect and compassion. During the workshop in Austria, we saw the value of allowing the story a survivor wanted to tell to, in fact, be told, just as the survivor wanted it told, without prejudice or censorship, and without letting what we think we know govern what we are willing to hear.

**Doris Bergen:** I really appreciate what Sara says here and elsewhere about reading and listening to survivors without letting our own assumptions and ideas of what is appropriate get in the way.<sup>7</sup> In Fred Mann's memoir, descriptions of his sexual exploits as a teenager are a key part of his self-presentation as an attractive and desirable person, an active agent—not only a victim—of his destiny. Sonia Caplan also writes proudly in her memoir, *Passport to Reprieve*, about sexual desire and pleasure, particularly as a teenager in the ghetto, where for her and her boyfriend, sex was, as she puts it, the ultimate act of *carpe diem*.

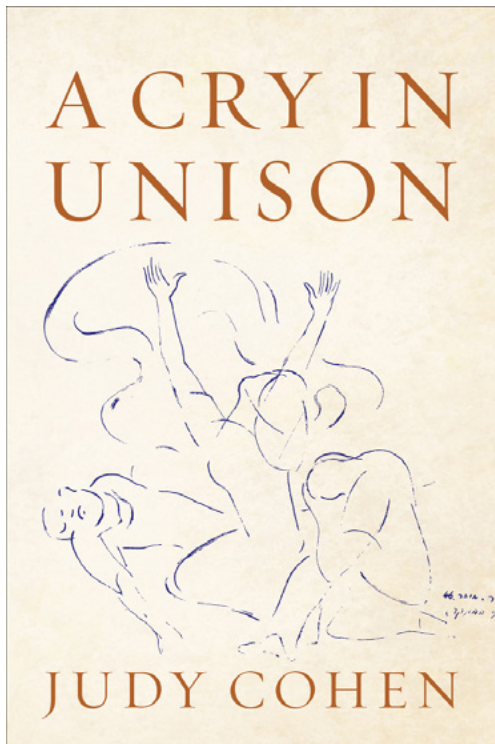
**Carson Phillips:** Whether it is a course on gender and genocide or studying the Holocaust through a geographical approach, I find that memoirs allow students to understand the Holocaust not just as a significant historical event, but to also see how complex issues such as trauma, gender, and memory are conceptualized and evident in their writing.

As literary works, memoirs will often complicate the boundaries between personal testimony and storytelling. They will blend poetic language, metaphor, and non-linear structures, resulting in a compelling read. Let me give a couple of examples to explain. Marie Doduck's memoir, *A Childhood Unspoken*, is written in a dual-voice structure that oscillates between her Canadian self, Marie, and her childhood self, Mariette. The result is a poignant and moving account. Yet, the duality of this structure also demonstrates the non-linear ways in which memory can function. It challenges learners of all ages to grapple with some of the theoretical frameworks of trauma and memory, as well as how these memories are narrated.

Other memoirs that I've had my classes work with are *Bits and Pieces* by Henia Reinhartz, to demonstrate the fragmentary nature of memory, and *The Weight of Freedom* by Nate Leipziger, to examine the belated nature of recalling traumatic events.

How life experiences are remembered, and how they are written about, can have a tremendous impact on learners. This often leads to discussions on not imposing current values and thinking onto events that happened over eighty years ago. I encourage my students to approach these topics with a historical perspective, which means making a concentrated effort to understand the social, cultural, intellectual, and emotional settings that shaped people's lives and actions in the past.<sup>8</sup>

Ultimately, I believe that Holocaust memoirs demand that educators and scholars approach theory not as a rigid framework, but as a flexible, evolving lens—one that must account for the ethical complexity and individuality of survivor testimony.

Cover of Judy Cohen, *A Cry in Unison* (2020)

**As academics trained in specific disciplines, how do you balance historical accuracy with the emotional and ethical impact that often characterizes Holocaust narratives?**

**Zoë Waxman:** More and more, I have come to realize that such questions are based on a dichotomy that is not only wrong, but pernicious. In the early days of my research, male scholars—and they were all men—repeatedly challenged my interest in testimony. Their (and I can now admit it) tiresome and narrow objections were twofold. In the first place, there were men who were fascinated by size. It was the sheer scale of the Holocaust that compelled their attention. Descending to the individual, much less attending to survivor testimonies, seemed to them a literal diminution: a trivializing of genocide.

Secondly, there were men who wanted facts. Often more interested in perpetrators and in processes than in the people subject to the persecution, their models were complicated—and sometimes jeopardized—by lived experience in all its messiness. They feared that; they also feared that accuracy and subjectivity were incommensurate.



A more sympathetic challenge, which I have engaged with elsewhere, was presented by those who believed that we should not study testimony, only honour it. Famously, George Steiner observed that:

As in some Borges fable, the only complete decent “review” of the *Warsaw Diary* or of Elie Wiesel’s *Night* would be to re-copy the book, line by line, pausing at the names of the dead and the names of the children as the orthodox scribe pauses, when re-copying the Bible, at the hallowed name of God.<sup>9</sup>

To approach testimony merely as a source—one that might be interrogated, questioned, doubted, even denied—seems in that context like sacrilege. What I have learned is the truth of the testimony lies precisely in its subjectivity. It cannot be reduced to a simple source, nor can we deny the ways in which these texts do indeed upend simplistic interpretations. More than that, the historian should not eschew or disavow their emotional engagement with them. That is not only an ethical imperative; it is a scholarly requirement.

**Doris Bergen:** I agree with Zoë completely here. It’s not an either/or between scholarship and memoir any more than it is between understanding and emotion. Emotional engagement can deepen intellectual understanding, and knowledge allows an emotional response that goes beyond sentimentality and cliché.

And anyway, memoir and scholarship are entangled at their roots. One point, often forgotten, is that many of the founders of the academic field of Holocaust studies, at least in its English-language form, were themselves survivors. Hannah Arendt, Raul Hilberg, Nechama Tec, Livia Rothkirchen, Ruth Klüger, Gerhard Weinberg, Saul Friedländer, Yaffa Eliach, Henry Friedlander, and Gertrude Schneider are examples. A few of them wrote memoirs as well as scholarship, but most did not, perhaps because in the 1950s, ’60s, ’70s, and into the ’80s, when they were labouring to get study of the Holocaust taken seriously as an academic subject, bringing in their own personal experience was more likely to be used against them as an accusation of bias than to be viewed as enhancing their credibility. Yet personal experience is present in their scholarship too, in direct ways, such as knowledge of multiple languages and familiarity with Holocaust places, and less directly, in the intensity and depth of their insights.

**Sara R. Horowitz:** What do we want from memoirs? From memoirs generally, but also, specifically, memoirs that engage profoundly traumatic events like the Holocaust? To put it differently, why do people read life-writing instead of simply reading accounts by historians? And as educators, why do we assign memoirs in our classes?

One answer—but not mine—is that while historical accounts tell us what happened, a personal remembrance makes us feel something. While this is often the case, I

think it trivializes life-writing to say we read it only because it engages our emotions. That formulation suggests that we get the important stuff, the hard knowledge, from the work of researchers in the field. But memoirs, too, give us hard knowledge—I would even say, harsh knowledge—often in ways we can't easily push away.

In teaching, I find that students connect to the human element, the actual person, the writing “I” (and the seeing eye) of the memoir. My students often connect to the sensibilities of someone their own age—the remembered younger self of the remembering older writer. They compare with their own lives—sometimes more privileged, sometimes traumatic. They begin to see the past not as distant, antiquated events, but as part of an evolving human story that has shaped our cultural, political, and social landscape today.

Do facts matter? I would be loath to say they don't. But how do they matter? Literary scholars who analyze life-writing sometimes refer to what is called the “auto-biographical pact”—an unspoken understanding between author and reader that when someone writes a book about their life, they tell the truth as best they recollect it. And Holocaust survivors tend to remember many things really well. But sometimes things get in the way of accurate memory: the deliberate chaos of wartime circumstances, the disappearance of certain markers of time and place, the psyche protecting itself from trauma. Memory sometimes falters. Sometimes an individual gets something wrong—a date, a place, a name, a motive, an interpretation.

And sometimes the places where memory falters tell us something important—as important as the facts. Many years ago, I sat with Larry Langer and Margot Stern Strom watching videotaped testimony of Holocaust survivors. Larry, an eminent literary scholar, was in the midst of writing *Holocaust Testimonies*—the first book to analyze videotaped testimony. Margot was the cofounder of Facing History & Ourselves and was selecting testimonies to use for an educational film. In one tape, we listened to a woman describe her distress at not menstruating when she was a slave labourer at Auschwitz-Birkenau. “They put chemicals in our soup,” the woman explained. Margot stopped the tape. “I can't use it,” I remember her saying, because the woman had latched onto a rumour and presented it as true. Whether or not the woman testifying was correct, what she conveyed powerfully was the utter loss of control over one's own body, and the search for an explanation for what she felt and observed. So, yes, accuracy matters. But errors, conjectures, missing pieces matter, too. Taken together, they reveal something of the inner life of those who remember.

**Cheryl Fury:** Zoë and Sara comment perceptively about the ethical and emotional impact of memoirs. My generation of historians was drilled throughout our undergraduate and graduate degrees to be unbiased and rigorously analytical in our historical analyses. This methodology deliberately leaves little room for emotional

engagement. As an honours student, I struggled to process the intense emotional impact of Holocaust history with that rigidly analytical approach. Unable to reconcile the two, I ran away from Holocaust studies for many years.

I believe it is important to guide my students through the mechanics of how the Holocaust was carried out. However, interspersed with the facts and figures, I include quotations and anecdotes from victims, rescuers, bystanders, and perpetrators, lest we lose sight of the human element. As many of the contributors have noted, our students connect readily with personal accounts.

Sara asks, “What do we want from memoirs?” I count on them to pack both an emotional and intellectual punch—university lectures might be forgotten, but a good memoir can make an indelible impression that stays with us long after a course is over.

Flying in the face of “old school” historical training, I hope we can now appreciate the vital role empathy plays in our historical understanding. When it comes to Holocaust education—as with so much else—both the head and the heart need to be informed. As Zoë says, “That is not only an ethical imperative; it is a scholarly requirement.”



Cover of Salomon Buch,  
*Un serment à la vie*

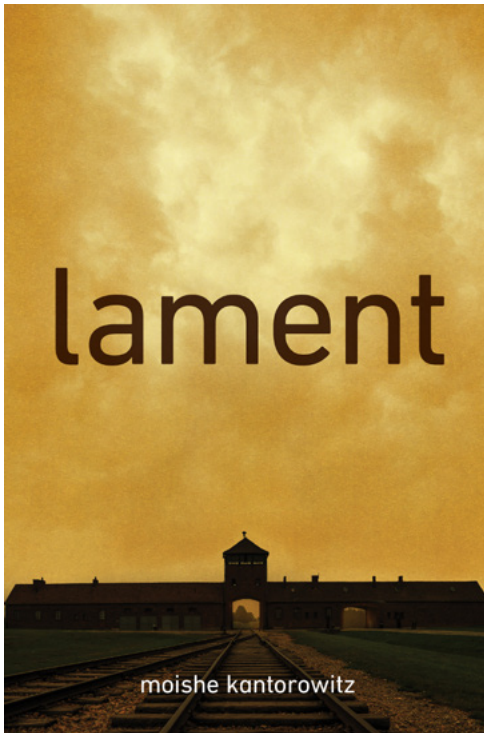
**What challenges have you faced when teaching Holocaust survivor narratives in increasingly diverse and globalized classrooms? What has changed in your own teaching experience in the twenty years since the Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program started publishing survivor memoirs?**

**Doris Bergen:** Students love personal accounts. In eighteen years at the University of Toronto, I've never had a student show disrespect to the texts or to the survivors who visit our classes. People outside the university often ask me about antisemitism and Holocaust denial. I know these views exist, but I haven't seen them in my classrooms, where most students are not Jewish. Presumably, students self-select for a class called The Holocaust, but in my other classes—Religion and Violence, 20th-Century Europe, World Wars, and so on—it's been the same.

Nate Leipziger's memoir is a special favourite. Students are deeply moved by his observation that it was Indigenous survivors of residential schools who emboldened him to speak out about the sexual abuse he endured as a boy. It's always appreciated when survivors make connections. For instance, in his preface, Pinchas Gutter describes the heartbreak of watching "refugees from Syria, Africa, Afghanistan and Iraq ... trudging along with their bundles." "I've gone through that," he writes, "and I know what it is all about."<sup>10</sup>

Holding on to such expressions of empathy helps me get past challenges that arise. Once, right before class, a survivor speaker told me they hoped there wouldn't be any Muslim students present. In fact, I had a student who wore a hijab, but she sat near the back that day and the guest speaker didn't notice her. Another survivor author "got political" in a presentation and defended Netanyahu by implying Palestinians were dupes of Iran. Students listened politely, even though most of them disagreed. They (Holocaust survivors) have earned the right to their views, a student told me later.

For years I taught in the Genocide and Human Rights summer seminar sponsored by the Zoryan Institute, and I always assigned a memoir from the Azrieli series—either *Buried Words* by Molly Applebaum, *We Sang in Hushed Voices* by Helena Jockel, or *The Weight of Freedom* by Nate Leipziger. The participants, most of them graduate students who focus on comparative genocide, are invariably keen to make connections and find commonalities. After the Hamas attacks on October 7, 2023, and Israel's assault on Gaza that followed, I was worried. Maybe participants would resent a survivor memoir and reject inclusion of a unit on the Holocaust. Not so: Last year, two participants gave an emotional reading from Applebaum's diary. They found the shared humanity.



Cover of Moishe Kantorowitz,  
*Lament* (2025)

**Cheryl Fury:** When I began teaching at the University of New Brunswick in the 1990s, most of my students came from the regional communities near campus and the vast majority had British and Western European roots. Over the last decade, the student population has become increasingly diverse. Most students are still from nearby communities, but our local population is much more ethnically and racially diverse due to recent, robust immigration. Our campus also has a sizable cohort of international students. Such changes have necessitated a reworking of my course materials in order to teach European history effectively to those with little or no background in it.

Some students have come to Canada to escape authoritarian regimes, while others openly or tacitly endorse such political systems. The upsurge of far-right views at home and abroad has normalized a number of policies historically associated with fascism. The cult of the strongman, racism, antisemitism, and anti-immigrant sentiment that led to the Holocaust are resurgent in our own times and present in our classrooms.

Events in the Middle East have caused deep divisions on many campuses, and passionate partisanship is much more evident among students. This threatens to politicize the study of the Holocaust. Some perceive Holocaust courses as a vehicle for

pro-Israel sentiment. Yet Holocaust studies are even more crucial to illustrate the parallels in the present with the dark trends of the 1930s and to demonstrate the perils of intolerance.

Holocaust memoirs and testimonies illustrate the human costs of “othering” and how exclusion can lead to annihilation. They are a powerful means to demonstrate our shared humanity. As we move farther from the Holocaust chronologically and the number of living survivors continues to diminish, it is first-hand testimonies that will endure. These accounts have always had a lasting relevance, but in this political moment, they have a new immediacy.

**Sara R. Horowitz:** When I first began teaching courses on Holocaust literature, most of my students were American born. In my first academic position after finishing my PhD, I taught at a state university in the mid-Atlantic region with a fairly homogeneous student body. The area had originally been settled by Scandinavian immigrants to the United States, and for the first few years, I remember looking out at my students and noticing that the majority of them were blond. The university’s curriculum, particularly in the humanities and liberal arts, built upon what we then called Western civilization: great books that were almost exclusively European or American (with a few Canadian authors slipping through).

Because of the Eurocentrism of the curriculum, and because I began developing and teaching courses on Holocaust literature less than half a century after World War II, my students came to my course with a basic understanding of the historical circumstances of the Holocaust and some familiarity with European culture and history. Even as geographically challenged American youth, they could identify most of the relevant countries on a map of Europe. Although, as early as 1987, Primo Levi despaired that the students he spoke to found his wartime recollections “distant, blurred, ‘historical,’” most of my students did not feel that way.” They expressed a strong sense that what had happened in Europe several decades earlier had a hand in shaping the politics, ethics, and dilemmas of their own time—even if they perceived the circumstances of their own lives as radically (and fortunately) different from that past. I assigned fiction, poems, and—especially because at that time, most historians were loath to integrate them into teaching—memoirs. Except in a most cursory way, I did not integrate the teaching of history into my literature courses.

Over time, the character of the students taking my courses changed. It’s not simply my move from the United States to Canada, nor even the passage of time between the “then” and the “now.” The students in my classes at York University mirror the demographics of Toronto and its environs. Many are immigrants or children of recent immigrants, carrying histories, cultures, and heritages of places other than Europe. Many bear the weight of oppression, violence, extreme poverty, even geno-

cide—as personal or as familial memory. While a few have studied the Holocaust before, most have no real knowledge about what occurred, or the scope and magnitude of it. For many, Europe represents an unknown and distant continent, neither the place they now live nor the place they (or their family) came from. More and more, I find I cannot plunge into literature without also teaching history and geography.

Increasingly, memoirs do important work in the course. Students connect to the authors in new and powerful ways. As always, the personal voice of the author engages and moves the students. Sometimes—and, as my colleagues here have also noted, the time for this will soon be past—they meet with the author of a memoir they have read. Most of my students read the memoirs not only as a fragment of history, but as a portal to the inner life of the author. And stories invite stories. The stories that Holocaust survivors tell in their memoirs and in person prompt a flow of stories from my students—familial memories, personal experiences, sometimes stories never before shared. As we move into a future where we will no longer be able to hear directly from a living survivor of the Holocaust, the voice captured in testimonies and memoirs will become the sole way to forge a personal connection between past and present.

**Carson Phillips:** Diversity on campuses and in classrooms is, as Cheryl and Sara note, an increasingly important issue. For me, the challenges are a little different. I teach in the online sphere—synchronous and asynchronous courses—and although my students are primarily in North America and Europe, I am more likely to see an urban–rural divide. Some have had the opportunity to interact with Holocaust survivors and visit Jewish community centres, museums, and exhibitions. Others have primarily encountered the Holocaust through memoirs and film. All, however, share an abiding interest in deeply engaging with survivors’ experiences during the Holocaust.

My students also note that the Azrieli memoirs reflect not only a diversity of survivors’ wartime experiences, but also a diversity of postwar life experiences in Canada. When I introduce students to Ben Carniol’s memoir, *Hide and Seek: In Pursuit of Justice*, many are surprised to discover how immersed he became in Indigenous issues. His engagement with Indigenous and marginalized communities in Montreal, Calgary, and Toronto reflects a commitment to social justice that transcends the urban–rural divide and deepens the understanding of how survivors who settled across Canada contributed to enhancing the social fabric of Canadian society.

Because my students interact over a platform like Zoom or in an online discussion forum and are not as likely to encounter one another in person, I’ve looked for ways to ensure that these online tools don’t somehow flatten the impact of memoirs. Initially, I was concerned that students would miss some of the nuances or that they would not engage with literary techniques in quite the same way as in-person learning. And yet, time and time again, just as Cheryl and Doris expe-

rienced, students find memoir to be a powerful means to demonstrate our shared humanity.

At times, exceptional memoirs even have the power to move students beyond fostering empathy to grappling with deep questions, such as how one maintains their humanity after surviving the cruelty of a Nazi camp. Anna Hegedűs's remarkable account, *As the Lilacs Bloomed*, is an example of this. I use it in my Gender and Genocide course because her perspective as a forty-eight-year-old Jewish woman, wife, and mother who survived Auschwitz-Birkenau, and later a forced death march, is unparalleled. Written in 1945, just a few months after liberation, we feel Hegedűs's loss and her fear, just as we experience her hopes for the future. She affirms values like dignity, compassion, empathy, and resilience—not in a naive way, but as a conscious insistence on the possibility of humanity after Auschwitz. She doesn't speak of survival as a personal triumph, but rather as a vantage point from which to speak about justice, equality, and the necessity of memory. With a memoir like Hegedűs's, the poignancy of the survivor author moves us a little beyond empathy to contend with the profundity of asking: What does it mean to remain human in the face of dehumanization?

**Zoë Waxman:** A quarter of a century ago, when I first began teaching Holocaust survivor narratives, the importance of the task seemed self-evident and the gap between the present and the past appeared eminently bridgeable. Holocaust denial was in the news, and the need to capture the voices of survivors before that generation died gave an urgency to our work.

Now, the Holocaust is no less omnipresent, but it has been both relativized and universalized: a weapon in culture wars. Holocaust denial still exists; but, in an era of deep fakes, survivor testimony is often dismissed. The generation of survivors has become history, but the Holocaust has escaped that category, unmoored from the lived reality of those subject to the genocidal impulses of the Nazi state.

Both the Hamas attack of October 7 and the subsequent Israeli response have added a new intensity to the ethical dilemmas I face in the classroom. Indeed, I know of colleagues who have given up teaching this subject and using these sources in their pedagogical practice. Others now write of the Holocaust in the present tense, whether describing Israeli suffering or accounting for the experience of Gazans.

Yet it is precisely because of this environment that I continue, with renewed determination, to insist on the importance of attending to the testimony of survivors. It is vital for students of all backgrounds to be confronted directly by the words of those who endured that cataclysm. This has a moral importance, to be sure, but it also introduces them to a complex and never-ending historical project. Survivors'



subjectivities shape their accounts in ways that can be troubling. Their testimony often disrupts preconceived notions of identity, historicity, and the Holocaust itself. We need, in other words, to reclaim the Holocaust as a singular historical event made up of millions of different events played out in a precise historical context. That is a process that starts with listening to and analyzing survivor testimony.

**Doris Bergen** is the Chancellor Rose and Ray Wolfe Professor of Holocaust Studies at the University of Toronto. She is the author of *Twisted Cross: The German Christian Movement in the Third Reich* (1996); *Between God and Hitler: Military Chaplains in Nazi Germany* (2023; winner of the Irving Abella Award in History and the Yad Vashem International Book Prize); and *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust* (4<sup>th</sup> edition, 2024). A Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, Bergen is a member of the Committee on Ethics, Religion, and the Holocaust of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

**Cheryl Fury** is a professor of British and European history at the University of New Brunswick. She has published three books and numerous articles and book chapters on Tudor–Stuart seafarers and is currently writing a monograph on the relationship between diet, disease, and disorder in the early English East India Company (Boydell & Brewer, forthcoming). She has also worked with Holocaust survivor Vera Schiff on several publications, including *Surviving Theresienstadt: A Teenager's Memoir of the Holocaust*. Fury is a fellow at the Gregg Centre for the Study of War and Society and was named a fellow of the Royal Historical Society for her contributions to scholarship.

**Sara R. Horowitz** is a professor of humanities and comparative literature at York University. She is the author of the award-winning *Voicing the Void: Muteness and Memory in Holocaust Fiction* and the co-editor of *Shadows in the City of Light: Paris in Post-War French Jewish Writing* and *Hans Günther Adler: Life, Literature, Legacy*, which earned a Canadian Jewish Literary Award. She served as the senior founding editor of the Azrieli Foundation's Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program. A long-time member of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Academic Committee, she received the 2022 Holocaust Educational Foundation's Distinguished Achievement Award and was recently elected to the Royal Society of Canada in recognition of her groundbreaking writing on Holocaust literature and gender.

**Carson Phillips** is the memoirs program's manager of academic initiatives and adjunct faculty at Yeshiva University and Gratz College. He earned a doctorate and a master's degree from York University and a diploma in Holocaust and genocide education from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (University of

Toronto). Phillips has held fellowships with the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute, the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous, and USHMM (Hess Faculty Seminar). His publications include a chapter in *The Holocaust and Masculinities: Critical Inquiries into the Presence and Absence of Men* (2020), and his forthcoming article “Mut-ed Memories: Reconciling Memories of Sexual Violence and Abuse in Holocaust Survivor Narratives” will be published in *Memory in Exile: 80 Years since the Liberation of the Nazi Camps*, a special issue of *Word and Text*, in November 2025.

**Sherry Simon** is Distinguished Professor Emerita in the French department at Concordia University. She has published widely on questions of language and memory, in particular relating to multilingual cities, in books such as *Translating Montreal. Episodes in the Life of a Divided City* (2006), *Cities in Translation: Intersections of Language and Memory* (2012), and *Translation Sites: A Field Guide* (2019). In 2020 and 2022, she co-organized conferences in partnership with the Azrieli Foundation’s Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program titled “Translating Holocaust Testimony: A Conversation Between Translation and Holocaust Studies” and “Translating Difficult Knowledge: Transmitting Genocide Testimony in Scholarship and Practice.”

**Zoë Waxman** is a professor of Holocaust history at the University of Oxford. She is the author of *Writing the Holocaust: Identity, Testimony, Representation* (2006), *Anne Frank* (2015), and *Women in the Holocaust: A Feminist History* (2017), as well as numerous articles relating to the Holocaust and genocide.

*This forum was prepared with the assistance of HSMP director Jody Spiegel and editorial staff Matt Carrington and Emily Standfield.*

## 1

Memoirs have been recognized with Canadian Jewish Literary Awards, the Western Canada Jewish Book Award, and the Literary Translators' Association of Canada Award, and have been shortlisted for the National Jewish Book Awards. Academic conferences have focused on memoir author Rabbi Pinchas Hirschprung and Montreal in 1944; sexuality and violence in Holocaust testimonies; translation studies; and the role of Auschwitz in Holocaust narratives. Alongside prominent Holocaust survivor authors who are known for their contributions to Holocaust education in Canada such as Stefan Carter, Judy Cohen, Marie Doduck, David Korn, Fishel Goldig, Marguerite Élias Quddus, Elly Gotz, Pinchas Gutter, and Nate Leipziger are lesser-known authors like Ben Carniol, who contributed to social justice work with Indigenous communities, and Martha Salcudean, who was honoured for her teaching and research work in engineering.

## 2

*Silent Tears: The Last Yiddish Tango*, performed by the Payadora Tango Ensemble, produced by Dan Rosenberg, January 19, 2023, compact disc.

## 3

See Stephanie Corazza, "Introduction to Buried Words: Sexuality, Violence and Holocaust testimonies," *Holocaust Studies* 27, no. 4 (2021): 441–6; the other contributions in that special issue; and publications by Doris Bergen, Pascale Bos, Sara Horowitz, and Zoë Waxman.

## 4

Anna Hájková, *People without History Are Dust*, trans. William Jones (University of Toronto Press, 2025).

## 5

Jason Chalmers, Molly's grandchild, approached their professor Jan Grabowski with a request to read the Polish manuscript of the diary. Grabowski subsequently wrote the introduction to *Buried Words*.

## 6

Andrea Corsale, "Issues and Changes Related to Dissonant Heritage: A Case from Jewish and Polish Heritage in the Small Towns of Western Ukraine," *Tourism Planning & Development* 18, no. 4 (2021): 479–87; see also Anna Wylegała, "The Void Communities: Towards a New Approach to the Early Post-War in Poland and Ukraine," *East European Politics and Societies* 35, no. 2 (2020): 407–36.

## 7

Sara R. Horowitz, "What We Learn, at Last: Recounting Sexuality in Women's Deferred Autobiographies and Testimonies," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Holocaust Literature and Culture*, ed. Victoria Aarons and Phyllis Lassner (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 45–63.

## 8

For more details, see the Historical Thinking Project, which defines six concepts of historical thinking and literacy that have been widely integrated into provincial curricula across Canada.

## 9

George Steiner, *Language and Silence: Essays on Language, Literature and the Inhuman* (Atheneum, 1986), 168.

## 10

Pinchas Gutter, *Memories in Focus* (Azrieli Foundation, 2017), 1.

## 11

Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved* (Simon & Schuster, 2017), 185.