

# **Beyond the Holocaust Period: Studying Global Jewish History through the USC Shoah Visual History Archive**

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July 2, 2020



Libraries  
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# Librarian's role

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- ❖ Promote to faculty, librarians & grad students
  - Training workshops, consultations
- ❖ Undergraduate courses
  - Freshman Honors Seminar to upper level
- ❖ Community members
- ❖ High schools (iWitness)

# USC Shoah Visual History Archive (VHA)

“Life History Testimonies”

1994 Spielberg

50,000+ interviews

2006 to USC

2013 Rwanda & other  
genocides added

2016 other Holocaust  
collections added;  
ProQuest partnership

## Collections:

- All
- Holocaust
  - USC Shoah Foundation (51,548)
  - Blavatnik Archive Foundation (25)
  - Community (3)
  - Florida Holocaust Museum (25)
  - Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus (25)
  - Holocaust Museum Houston (277)
  - JFCS Holocaust Center (923)
  - Museum of Jewish Heritage (10)
  - The Azrieli Foundation (47)
  - Canadian Collections (1,257) ▲
    - Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archives (64)
    - Calgary Jewish Federation (10)
    - Concordia University Centre for Oral History (30)
    - Freeman Family Foundation (52)
    - Jewish Archives of Edmonton & N Alberta (15)
    - Living Testimonies, McGill University (104)
    - Montreal Holocaust Museum (573)
    - Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre (406)
    - Ottawa Jewish Archives (3)

# How can researchers and students access the VHA?

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[Full Access sites](#) (libraries/archives)

affiliated users can access remotely; others can visit the library

[VHA Online](#) (3000 videos available)

**[vhaonline.usc.edu](http://vhaonline.usc.edu)**

Same access to indexing and interface as Full Access

# Global nature of the VHA

Interviews conducted

~ 40 Languages

~ 60 Countries



# Undergraduate student interests pre & post-war

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- DP camp experience
- Post-war loss of faith;  
change in religious belief or practice
- Trauma and its effects
- Post-war antisemitism
- Pre and post-war political activism

# Indexing

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- ❖ Human-Indexed for Minute-long segments
- ❖ Controlled vocabulary
  - Geographic locations and time periods
  - Movement of People
  - Experiences
  - Names of Individuals
  - Musical Recitals; Literary Recitals; Still and Moving Images; Documents and Artifacts
- ❖ New indexing terms added with additional collections, (e.g. JFCS psychological terms)

# Demo of VHA

Itzu-Rella Weiss





# Experience Groups Search

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- Jewish Survivors
  - ◆ Country of interview: Mexico
    - Language of Interview: English

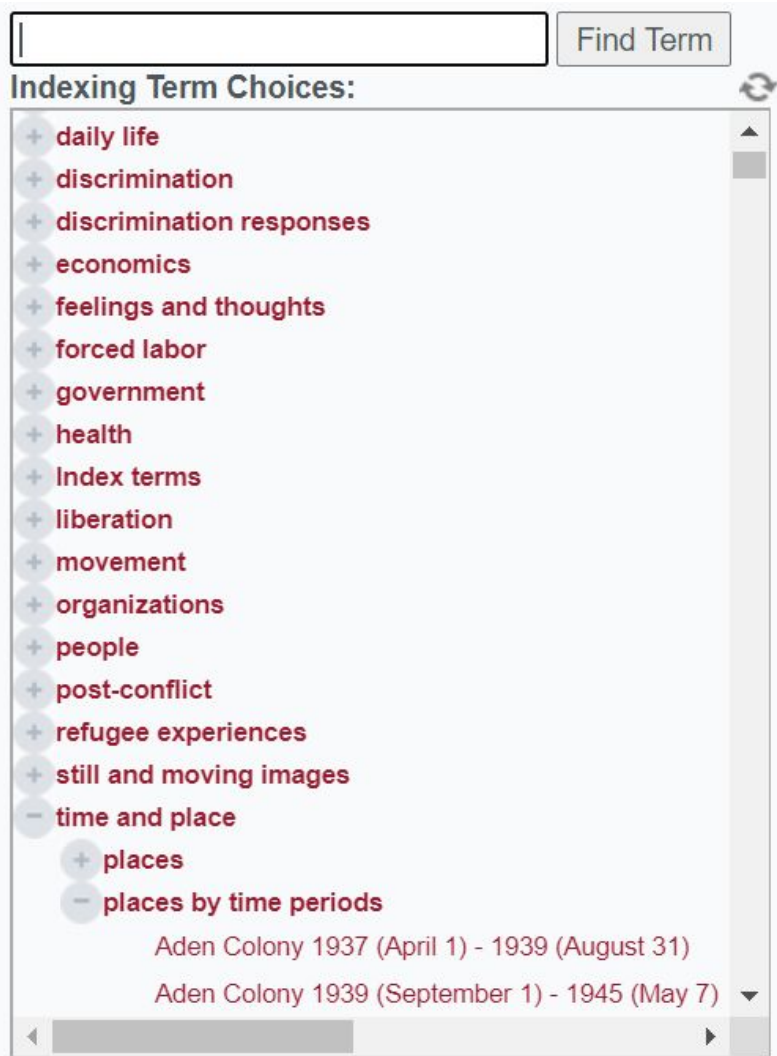
## Holocaust

- Jewish Survivor (51,545)
- Rescuer and Aid Provider (1,162)
- Liberator (432)
- Sinti and Roma Survivor (406)
- Political Prisoner (268)
- Miscellaneous (World War II) (175)
- Jehovah's Witness Survivor (84)
- War Crimes Trial Participant (62)
- Non-Jewish Forced Laborer (14)
- Eugenic Policies Survivor (13)
- Homosexual Survivor (6)
- Descendant (2)

# Index Search

## Places by Time Periods

Mexico 1945 (May 9) -  
2000 (December 1)



Find Term

Indexing Term Choices:

- + daily life
- + discrimination
- + discrimination responses
- + economics
- + feelings and thoughts
- + forced labor
- + government
- + health
- + Index terms
- + liberation
- + movement
- + organizations
- + people
- + post-conflict
- + refugee experiences
- + still and moving images
- time and place
  - + places
  - places by time periods
    - Aden Colony 1937 (April 1) - 1939 (August 31)
    - Aden Colony 1939 (September 1) - 1945 (May 7)

# Pre-war Index Terms

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- family members named (People Search)
- schools
- Jewish Religious observances
- Antisemitism

# Post-war Migration and Resettlement Index Terms

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- Migration to [Mexico]
- Acculturation
- Holocaust Faith Issues
- Future message

# Transcripts

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- ❖ ~1900 testimonies in English, ~900 German, more regularly released
- ❖ Search by keyword within transcript (Search in Testimony)
- ❖ Can browse/skim transcript
- ❖ Pauses, Laughs, Crying are noted

# Locating pre and postwar experiences within a testimony

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- ❖ Scroll through index terms (Segments) & transcript at **beginning** and **end**
- ❖ Photographs and documents at very end
- ❖ Often other family members join the interviewee at the end

# Photographs and stills

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- ❖ Family member photographs
  - prewar
  - post-liberation
  - postwar
- ❖ Documents
- ❖ Easily copied and pasted, unlike the videos



# Resources

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- ★ [Visual History Archive Curator's libguide \(USC Libraries\)](#)
- ★ [ProQuest's VHA libguide](#)
- ★ [Holocaust & Genocide Testimony \(MSU Libraries\)](#)
- ★ [VHA User Guide](#) (PDF download)
- ★ [iWitness](#): VHA for use by middle-high school teachers and students
- ★ [Center for Advanced Genocide Research](#) (USC Shoah)
- ★ USHMM [Holocaust Encyclopedia](#) and [Holocaust Bibliographies](#)



**Feel free to  
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