

Museum-Based Teacher Education:
Teacher Meaning-Making at a Jewish Heritage Museum

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ABSTRACT

MUSEUM-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION: TEACHER MEANING-MAKING AT A JEWISH HERITAGE MUSEUM

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This study answers the question of what meanings teacher-participants make in Holocaust professional development at a Jewish heritage museum in a mandate state. By understanding these meanings, the educational community can better understand how a particular context and approach influences teacher meaning-making and the ways in which museum teacher education programs shape the learning of participants. Meaning-making is a process of interpretation and understanding experiences in ways that make sense to each individual teacher. Meanings that are formed may impact teachers' pedagogic interpretation of the Holocaust, which may in turn shape their instructional practices.

This instrumental case study used multiple interviews, observations, surveys and documents to explore the meanings teachers make about the Holocaust from participation in Holocaust professional development at a Jewish heritage museum. Participants in the study included nine teachers from public schools and private Jewish schools and two professional developers from the Museum. Each participant was interviewed three times, and six different professional development programs were observed over a period of six

months. Programs typically lasted from one to six days and included a presentation by museum staff, Holocaust experts, and survivors.

At any museum, each representation of the Holocaust conveys particular messages and mediates Holocaust history through a particular lens. This study reveals insights about how intended aims are interpreted in Holocaust professional development. Three categories emerged of meanings teachers made, namely (1) the hopeful narrative, (2) identity, and (3) the emotional narrative of the Holocaust. This study contributes to the larger field of professional development by partially filling in an area of missing scholarship on Holocaust professional development. Findings from this study may be used to plan future professional development programs on the Holocaust, as well as on other topics, through a deeper understanding of the meanings teachers make of multiple programs at one site.

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I – INTRODUCTION

How do you teach events that defy knowledge, experiences that go beyond the imagination? How do you tell children, big and small, that society could lose its mind and start murdering its own soul and its own future? (Wiesel, 1978, p. 270).

Educators attempting to capture the complexity of the Holocaust, as Auschwitz survivor Elie Wiesel has, often face a seemingly overwhelming topic. The Holocaust is so significant that some refer to it as the “defining moment of modern history, perhaps of all time” (Gregory, 2000, p. 38) and others have suggested it is a critical component of every student’s education (Brown & Davies, 1998). Professional development has shown some potential to improve the quality of Holocaust instruction through educating teachers in complex content and helping them garner an understanding of and appreciation for the potential meanings that can be made of the Holocaust in secondary classrooms (Boulay et al., 2009; Donoho, 1999; Tollefson, 1999; Wolpow, Johnson & Wognild, 2002). School district programs, universities and teacher centers, as well as Holocaust and Jewish heritage museums, can all be avenues through which to deliver this training. Holocaust and Jewish museums in particular have been common sites for teacher professional development on the Holocaust due to their collections, their access to experts, and their attempt to fulfill the educational components of their mission statements.

At the core of any museum experience is meaning-making, especially for visitors like teachers who come to museums for educational programs (Roberts, 1997). Meaning-making is not simply a process of acquiring more information on a particular topic to add

to one's knowledge base; it involves bringing personal understanding and new, changed, solidified, or eliminated meanings to one's worldviews (Roberts, 1997). Teachers fundamentally come to understand the Holocaust through a process of meaning-making, which may shape their pedagogical decision-making in the classroom. This can be influenced not only through the exhibits and professional development activities from the museum itself but also by the meaning-making of others via the social learning of discussions (Czikszentmihalyi & Hermanson, 1999). By participating in professional development programs on the Holocaust at Jewish history museums, teachers may be challenged to reexamine existing understandings, form entirely new insights, and revamp existing knowledge, all of which may alter their pedagogical choice-making when they return to teaching.

Museum professional development research has not yet revealed the meanings teachers make of the Holocaust and how they come to understand Holocaust pedagogy at museum-based professional development programs operating within a particular context. Therefore, the research question this study considers is: *What meanings do teacher-participants make in Holocaust professional development at a Jewish heritage museum in a mandate state?* Subsidiary questions that this study considers are:

1. How do social studies teacher-participants' positionality affect the meanings they make of their professional development experience at a Jewish heritage museum?

2. How do a Jewish heritage museum's Holocaust exhibitions influence the meanings teachers make of their professional development experience?

This study adds to the scholarly literature on Holocaust education and professional development by exploring the impact on teacher meaning-making at museum-based teacher education programs. It further provides insights relevant to professional developers in general and museum-based professional developers in particular.

Despite the Holocaust's importance to the history of mankind, the complexity and traumatic nature of it, pedagogical difficulties abound in Holocaust education that for many makes teaching the subject challenging (Totten, 2000). Tough decisions need to be made about which instructional approaches to take and how to deliver content. The importance of the topic, and the potential it holds for educating students about the results of pathological indifference and racism, as well as tolerance and not being a bystander, demand that teachers make critical decisions about the meanings of the Holocaust that will emerge in their lessons and pedagogy. Professional development often helps teachers to make meanings about the Holocaust. The nature of those meanings can reveal how certain teachers respond to certain types of Holocaust professional development within certain contexts. Jewish history museums are a common site for Holocaust professional development, so it is important to understand how teachers make meaning of these museums' particular educational efforts.

As is true for all pedagogy, the quality of Holocaust instruction is closely linked to a particular teacher's Holocaust knowledge, awareness, and expertise (Davies, 2000;

Ellison, 2002; Shawn, 1995). Teachers often come to Jewish museums specifically for Holocaust professional development because of the difficulties of teaching the Holocaust, including the unprecedented depth of historical knowledge required to teach this intricate and challenging topic. Also, teachers come to such museums because many of the curricular materials available from textbook companies and other sources are inadequate to them since they often explain the event through the voice of the perpetrators and focus on the violence they committed; some teachers desire to also teach the event through the voice of the victims, resisters, rescuers, and survivors. In addition, choosing which methodologies are appropriate, sometimes without having enough background on the history of anti-Semitism or the social, political, and economic conditions of the time period which led to the rise of Nazism, can also be problematic for teachers. Furthermore, the gruesome nature of the topic may make it controversial in some communities and/or among some parents, and teachers must approach teaching the Holocaust in a way that does not capriciously traumatize students but also does not alter the grim reality of this horrific event. In addition, teachers often come to study the Holocaust with a number of inaccuracies or misconceptions about the event, often acquired from misrepresentations and trivializations of the Holocaust in popular culture. Some teaching materials are inaccurate as well, leading teachers to unknowingly disseminate incorrect, misleading, or incomplete historical information (Totten, 2002).

In light of these challenges, social studies teachers may get overwhelmed by the complexity, not know how to effectively teach the history of the event, or not know what

meanings to bring to a study of the Holocaust. The pedagogical challenges for professional developers, then, is to consider how individual teachers come to understand the Holocaust as a result of learning activities, since these interpretations would presumably change instructional practices. To what extent can professional development guide teacher meaning-making about this tragedy in a way that may improve instructional practice? That is the question that sits at the core of this study. The nature of the understandings that teachers make of the Holocaust and the pedagogical sense they bring to it after participating in Jewish museum-based Holocaust professional development is unknown. From the findings in this study, much can be learned about Holocaust professional development that can inform future professional development programs on this and similarly morally laden topics.

Statement of the Problem

The complexity of the Holocaust requires substantial professional development, which many times is not readily available. For some teachers, the topic is so challenging that they become overwhelmed by its complexity and lose the ability to engage students in important ways of thinking that encourage earnest and thorough historical understanding and analysis. When presenting such a horrifying event in human history, some teachers may feel depressed, and they may be unable to face the destruction or understand the meanings of the Holocaust, particularly when trying to convey the event

to younger generations who are even more removed than themselves from the time period. Due to the lack of adequate materials on the Holocaust as well as the challenges of teaching and learning about the topic, there have been efforts to engage teachers with the Holocaust through professional development opportunities at Jewish museums and in other places. How teachers understand their experience and the pedagogical meanings they make of the Holocaust from these programs have not been determined. This case study begins to address this gap in scholarly literature.

Today, most social studies teachers still rely heavily on textbooks to teach about the Holocaust, which at best usually provide only a brief overview or a superficial treatment of Hitler's Final Solution (Russell, 2005). Many textbooks fail to give teachers an adequate understanding of the scope of the Holocaust and often do not provide adequate historical background, understanding, or analysis (Lindquist, 2006, 2008; Totten, 1998; Totten & Riley, 2005). State education departments and other institutions focused on the Holocaust also create educational materials that contain historically inaccurate information, are not age-appropriate, or include questionable pedagogical approaches, such as simulations (Totten, 1998; Totten & Riley, 2005). Recent research has found positive outcomes from addressing issues related to difficulties in instruction as a result of participation in professional development devoted to the topic at places other than Jewish history museums, such as tolerance centers, foundations, and state-sponsored educational and academic conferences (Boulay et. al., 2009; Donoho, 1999, Mitchell, 2004 & Wolpow, Johnson & Wognild, 2002). Formal professional development in

Holocaust pedagogy in these studies is linked to the likelihood of more time spent on Holocaust topics in social studies classrooms and more effective instruction. What is unknown is what meanings teachers acquired as a result of their participation and how those may have affected instructional practice.

Participating in professional development is a process making meaning of what was said, taught, and experienced at a site. Falk and Dierking (2000) note that, in general, “The dominant motivation for humans is meaning-making” (2000, p. 113). Meaning-making involves constructing a personally meaningful understanding of what one experiences, which may have relevance in one’s professional and personal life afterwards. Meaning-making is linked to the context of learning since it is inevitably influenced by the place in which the learning occurs (Falk & Dierking, 2000). It is also linked to the influences of other people as “much of the way humans make sense of the world is through social interaction with others” (Falk & Dierking, 2000, p. 38). Despite the popularity of Jewish museums as sites for Holocaust professional development, the meanings and pedagogical sense that teachers make from these experiences is unknown since there has been no research on it.

Jewish history museums and memorial museums often provide extensive educational programs on how to teach the Holocaust, as well as Holocaust content information, but they may do so with particular religious or political aims that may or may not influence teachers’ meaning-making on the subject. The Museum of Jewish Heritage is one of 16 Holocaust museums and one of more than 150 Holocaust centers in

the U.S. (Beckerkman, 2009). American Holocaust museums account for the majority of the 282 Holocaust centers worldwide (Beckerkman, 2009). These museums and centers always necessarily engage in a process of translation in designing their narrative about the past, and museum-based professional development programs are no different.

A museum is an agent of memory formation that “makes a promise to the dead to tell the truth about the past” (Wyshogrod, 1998, xi). The function of memorial museums in particular goes beyond fulfilling the charge of conveying a “complete story” of what happened; they are also intended to act as traditional memorials typically do - to help restore, commemorate, and, to some extent, heal the people and nations that were the victims of the atrocity. At every Holocaust museum, only some lessons and meanings of the Holocaust get told and others are purposely or inadvertently not included. And those that are told, or at least attempted to be represented, may not be self-evident.

At Holocaust professional development, we do not know what lessons are being learned by teacher-participants, how different teachers’ identities and senses of self factor in, how the context of the professional development influences what lessons are learned, or even if teachers are learning any lessons at all. In researching the recently opened Museum of Memory in Argentina, devoted to studying and memorializing the brutal military dictatorships in that country, Friedrich (2011, p. 175) notes that,

The idea that history implies in and of itself a particular (progressive) morality is part of the pedagogical common sense usually embodied in the notion of historical consciousness. Yet it is pedagogy, or its intentions to mobilize history to particular goals, such as the production of responsible citizens, that introduces that extra ingredient that is “the lessons (to be) learned” (Friedrich, 2010).

Like the Museum of Memory in Argentina, Holocaust museums with increasing frequency have converged heritage and history. As a result, museological representations of the past are more frequently ethnically or culturally divided and space is less commonly made for multicultural histories (Conn, 2010). If the pedagogies of individualized memorial museums are filled with “lessons (to be) learned” (Friedrich, 2010, p. 658), then there is value for future professional development in revealing how teacher-participants make pedagogical meaning and personal sense of particular professional development programs within the context of a memorial museum about the Holocaust.

For museum educators at individualized ethnic museums such as the Museum of Jewish Heritage, representations of the past are always expected to be in line with the mission statement and the exhibitions. Professional development programs located at and paid for by a Holocaust memorial museum organized around a Judaic perspective, like the one at the center of this study, for example, may offer teacher-participants certain memories, historical interpretations, and meanings (and not others). Therefore, this in-depth instrumental case study of professional development at the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust will begin filling a void in the literature regarding the meanings teachers make about the Holocaust after participation in a Holocaust professional development program.

Significance of the Study

Professional development has been shown to hold some potential for improving Holocaust instructional practice. Despite the increasing availability of Holocaust professional development programs, particularly at museums, relatively few studies about Holocaust education systematically examine how professional development is conducted and how teachers respond to their participation (see Donoho, 1999). As a result of participating in professional development devoted to the topic, teachers may feel more capable of teaching the complex content due to their increased understanding, and this may result in more classroom time being spent on the Holocaust, greater attention to the meaning and significance of the Holocaust, and fewer inaccuracies entering classroom discourse. There has, therefore, been a growing need for an organization that will do the work of training teachers in Holocaust content and pedagogy that many others will not do, have not done, or do not know how to do well. Increasingly, Jewish history museums are filling this need. They have become an important resource for the social studies community and others involved with Holocaust education by providing professional development for teachers since they are staffed with or have access to content and educational experts on the Holocaust. The meanings teachers make of their professional development experience at a Jewish history museum will affect how they conceptualize their own rationale for teaching the Holocaust and their sense of the event, which will likely impact their planning and classroom presentation of the topic.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's recommendations for teaching the topic include, but are not limited to:

Do not teach or imply that the Holocaust was inevitable; Avoid simple answers to complex questions; Strive for Precision of Language; Strive for balance in establishing whose perspective informs your study of the Holocaust, Avoid comparisons of pain; Do not romanticize history; Contextualize the history; Translate statistics into people; Be wary of simplistic parallels to other genocides; Analyze American and world response; and Illustrate positive actions taken by individuals and nations in the face of genocide (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2011).

The Holocaust, when taught effectively with proper context, history, and meaning for students, “demonstrates that there is no safe level of racism...It teaches that any agenda that places economic and political concerns above rights has the potential to result in disaster” (Niewyk, 1997, p. 149). Other scholars have found potential meanings that can be made of the Holocaust that some Holocaust professional development programs attempt to teach. Again, it is not known whether these kinds of meanings are made, but this study will try to discover the extent to which they are. For example, Maitles, Cowan, and Butler (2006) studied middle and high school students learning about the Holocaust in Scotland and found that studying the topic can lead to a deeper understanding and awareness of human rights as well as the effects of prejudicial behavior such as scapegoating and stereotyping. The authors, however, pointed out that learning about the Holocaust cannot end all racial tendencies and behaviors.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has a far more complex list of what can be learned from studying the Holocaust. It states, in part, that by studying the Holocaust, students may understand that,

Democratic institutions and values are not automatically sustained, but need to be appreciated, nurtured, and protected; Silence and indifference to the suffering of others, or to the infringement of civil rights in any society can—however unintentionally—perpetuate the problems; The Holocaust was not an accident in history—it occurred because individuals, organizations, and governments made choices that not only legalized discrimination but also allowed prejudice, hatred, and ultimately mass murder to occur; Study of the Holocaust assists students in developing an understanding of the roots and ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping in any society; and A study of these topics helps students to think about the use and abuse of power, and the roles and responsibilities of individuals, organizations, and nations when confronted with civil rights violations and/or policies of genocide (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2011b).

In addition to concurring with what other scholars cited here have suggested about the potential for Holocaust education to teach about respect and tolerance, Seppinwall (1999) adds that Holocaust education can teach young people to cooperate with one another and appreciate the accomplishments of others around them. Other scholars have added that even though there will always be limits to Holocaust education, it has a powerful ability to inform students about possible results of hatred — that it may lead to genocide (Short, Supple & Klinger, 1998). Many scholars believe that Holocaust education has the ability to help reduce the spread of prejudice, increase tolerance between people, promote understanding, reduce the impact and spread of racism and anti-Semitism, increase students' understanding of and appreciation for a pluralistic society, and help learners see the consequences of being a bystander while human rights violations and other crimes are being committed (Cripps, 2008; United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2011b). Yet the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and educational scholars have not studied the meanings and pedagogical understandings teachers form from their

professional development programs, so the value and pedagogical sense of Holocaust education in the minds of those doing the teaching is unknown. This research is significant because it will reveal the meanings and understandings teacher-participants from several programs at one Jewish museum form, realize, and articulate during and after their participation.

My study at a Jewish heritage and Holocaust museum provides insight into a particular narrative of the Holocaust. The exhibits and story of the Holocaust at the Museum of Jewish Heritage speak exclusively about the main group that was under attack during the Holocaust, the Jewish people. The experiences of Communists, Sinti, Roma, disabled people, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, Poles and other targeted groups who comprise the approximately 5 million people besides the Jews who died in the Holocaust are left out. According to the museum's website,

The mission of the Museum is to educate people of all ages and backgrounds about the broad tapestry of Jewish life in the 20th and 21st centuries—before, during, and after the Holocaust. Multiple perspectives on modern Jewish history, life, and culture are presented in the Museum's unique Core Exhibition and award-winning special exhibitions (Museum of Jewish Heritage, 2011).

This exclusive Jewish focus may deprive visitors of the broad historiography of the Holocaust and create a master narrative that may influence their own sense of the topic. The Museum does teach in great detail about the Holocaust, but other emergent meanings may serve particular personal, sociological and historiographic purposes, which will be explored in this research.

Almost two decades ago, scholars suggested that “teachers need well-developed, in-depth in-service programs to learn how to teach about genocide accurately and effectively” (Totten & Parsons, 1992, p. 45). More recently some empirical studies have confirmed that such programs hold potential for educators to learn the skills required for Holocaust instruction (Donoho, 1999; Mitchell, 2004). Given the mandates for Holocaust education in the states that the Museum of Jewish Heritage serves, coupled with the complexity of the material, the legacy of inaccuracies, the importance of the Holocaust for understanding the current state of world affairs, and its significance for prejudice reduction and increasing tolerance, this study is significant because it provides insight into the meanings that both public school and private Jewish school teachers attach to the Holocaust after participation in a Jewish museum-based program of professional development. It reveals the extent to which the Jewish-focused aims of the Museum are reflected in the meanings teachers make in professional development. The Museum and professional development will help form collective memories of the Holocaust for teacher-participants, and my study begins to unearth those memories and historical meanings, paying particular attention to the ways teacher-participants receive material and approaches being presented.

In addition, this study informs various stakeholders in Holocaust education and teacher training about a museum-based approach intended to improve teachers’ pedagogical professionalism, instructional practice, and understandings of the lessons of the Holocaust. While the professional development program discussed in this study

cannot simply be copied elsewhere with the same results (because of the critical importance of context), the general results from this study will help professional developers and adult educators to gain insight into how teachers operationalize skills, content, and meanings that they have learned so they can more effectively plan future professional development opportunities.

In New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, the three states the Museum of Jewish Heritage's Holocaust professional development programs serve, teaching the Holocaust is mandatory. Jewish museums must play a special role in teacher training because almost no other institution is capable of providing teachers with the kind of intellectual and instructional support they need to meet the state mandates for Holocaust education. The professional development programs at the Museum of Jewish Heritage serve at least 500 teachers per year (and sometimes as many as 700 and up) from public, Jewish, and Hebrew schools. Since the Museum is the most significant provider of Holocaust professional development in the tri-state area, it is an important site for research on Holocaust teacher education.

To answer my research questions, I used an instrumental case study design that employed observations, semi-structured interviews, survey questionnaires and document analysis. Data was analyzed through categorical aggregation and through the development of issue-relevant themes that contain thick descriptions of the data. To improve internal validity, triangulation protocols were implemented, including method and source triangulations, theory/perspective triangulation, and member checking

(Creswell, 1998; Patton, 2002). This study has limited generalizability due to the relatively small number of observations and interviews gathered over a relatively short period of time. It is also limited by the subjective interpretation of the researcher, as well as by time constraints. Therefore, the conclusions reached in this study are true of the Museum of Jewish Heritage and may not be true of other sites. The next section provides the theoretical framework that situates this study and exposes a gap that exists in the literature on museum-based Holocaust professional development for teachers.

CHAPTER II – REVIEW OF SCHOLARLY LITERATURE

In this chapter, I offer three sections that frame this study. The first, on Holocaust education, explains why the Holocaust is an extremely complex and difficult topic to teach and therefore establishes why professional development on the Holocaust is needed, particularly for secondary educators. It also briefly traces the history of Holocaust education in the United States. The further intent of this section is to expose a gap in the literature in terms of the very few studies that characterize Holocaust professional development programs and seek to understand the meanings that teachers make from their Holocaust professional development experiences. This gap exists mainly because large-scale Holocaust museums have opened only relatively recently, and, therefore, these professional development programs have begun only relatively recently.

The second section defines professional development and outlines best practices in the field in order to provide a brief overview of how scholars and policymakers understand the nature of professional development, and it describes the various models that exist. The final section discusses learning at museums in general. Due to the focus of my research study, I especially emphasize relevant literature on the role of museums for teachers. Like many aspects of educational research, much remains to be discovered about the meaning, goals, and consequences of professional development at museums.

Holocaust Education

In 1979, the President's Commission on the Holocaust authored its *Report to the President*. Besides calling for a national museum devoted to the Holocaust, the report called for the creation of an educational organization that could help interested states and school systems create and implement curricula on the study of the Holocaust. The Commission stated that its explicit hope was that the Holocaust would be a part of the educational program in "every school" (President's Commission on the Holocaust, 1979). Holocaust education in the United States has thus far not fully realized this goal because of concerns over the quality of instruction, persistent inaccuracies in some materials, and variations in states' requirements for Holocaust teaching (some do not require it at all).

Brief History of Holocaust Education in the United States

Until the late 1980s, the Holocaust was largely ignored in American education (Ben-Bassat, 2000). After the release of the widely popular *Holocaust* mini-series on NBC in 1978, which was watched by 120 million Americans (Margolick, 1999), the "demand" for Holocaust educational materials and curricular space increased (Fallace, 2008). However, as Fallace (2008) notes, at the same time, there was a conservative backlash against what was seen as a crisis in the quality of American education, which was articulated in *A Nation at Risk*. This 1983 federal government report claimed that the quality of American schools and educational outcomes was so poor that the country was

on the verge of a crisis of such catastrophic proportions that education itself might never be able to restore high standards. While attention to Holocaust education did increase in the 1980s, it was occurring in a climate in which political controversy and conservatism often made history instruction in general and Holocaust education in particular especially vulnerable (Fallace, 2008). The paradox was that the Holocaust was increasing its presence in American public education while debates, often politically charged, raged on about the nature and shape of that education (Fallace, 2008). Such debates continued into the 1990s, when mandates and curricular suggestions for inclusion in the social studies became more popular (Fallace, 2008).

Today 22 states require Holocaust teaching, several others have advisory committees that recommend it be studied, and, in the 49 states that have social studies standards, “the Holocaust is either explicitly named or implicitly identified” (Totten & Riley, 2005, p. 123). This does not mean that complex Holocaust material is being taught adequately or accurately or not, or that students are learning the material or not. As is common for many curricular requirements, most educational mandates for Holocaust education were not accompanied by funding (Brabham, 1997). Holocaust commission mandates typically affected only those teachers who had already committed to bringing the topic into their classrooms, and most of these educators who supported Holocaust education in social studies curriculum opposed legal mandates because they feared that teachers would be ill-prepared to teach such a complex and sensitive topic (Fallace, 2008). Fallace (2008) notes that educators with this perspective advocated for a process of slow

integration to allow for teacher training and the creation of appropriate materials from state departments of education and/or other organizations. Such support was often either unavailable or filled with inappropriate pedagogical methodologies, glaring inaccuracies, or materials that were largely inaccessible to educators who had previously chosen not to teach the topic or were unfamiliar with it. Fallace (2008) argues that mandates typically affected only teachers already teaching the Holocaust prior to the regulation. Because of the lack of preparation to teach the subject on the part of many teachers, “In most cases, proponents of Holocaust education opposed these efforts [toward increasing mandates]” (p. 105).

Other scholars examined state materials and found them to be problematic as well. Riley & Totten (2002) examined four state curriculums on the Holocaust from Florida, California, Connecticut, and Virginia and determined that incorrect historical information was the largest error. This was largely due to the fact that many Holocaust educational products and curriculums “seek less to help the student of history acquire an understanding of the historical event, and more in terms of dictating to the social studies student what he or she should understand” (p. 541). Errors cited included: a lack of important background history and contextual information, enormously erroneous statistical information (for example, one curriculum stated that there were only 30 concentration and death camps, when in fact there were more than 9,000), a “historical distortion and marginalization of particular historical perspectives” (p. 551), and lessons on the Holocaust being used to teach about other social ills to which it is not connected.

With inaccuracies such as these coming from materials authored by state departments of education, teachers who are unaware of the inaccuracies may be continuing to teach incorrect Holocaust history.

Furthermore, it is important to note that what is written in curricular mandates on the Holocaust often does not translate into classroom practice, especially without proper teacher training and effective ways to enforce such laws. Since teachers are the curricular gatekeepers (Thornton, 1991), they have significant power over what is and is not included in enacted classroom material, regardless of what is written in formal state or district curricula (Thornton, 2001; 2005). As Fallace (2008) noted, “There is not a single example of a teacher who became interested in the topic as the result of a mandate” (p. 155). Ellison (2002) confirms this and found that in the state of Illinois a more detailed study in a particular classroom was associated with greater interest and greater knowledge on complex Holocaust content a particular teacher had on the topic. He called this a teacher’s “Holocaust profile.” The higher a teacher’s Holocaust profile, the more likely he or she would spend more time teaching the Holocaust. Although the average teacher spent 8 hours of classroom time on the Holocaust, it was typically couched in a study on intolerance and prejudice. Ellison (2002) contends that state mandates do little to increase accurate student knowledge and sensibility of the Holocaust. Rather, he suggests that teacher professional development to help educators learn complex content and to correct for inaccuracies is a better means to that end. This particular conclusion has not been entirely confirmed by other studies as Ellison’s is “one of the few surveys

done to broadly assess Holocaust education” (Schweber, 2006, p. 51). However, Fallace (2008) does argue that the supporters of the early push for Holocaust education in the 1980s and 1990s advocated for teacher workshops and high-quality curriculums to assist teachers in slowly integrating Holocaust studies into their courses.

Far more than mandates, throughout the history of Holocaust education in America the materials and professional development programs of the Facing History and Ourselves Foundation and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum have most substantially influenced the nature of Holocaust education in classrooms (Fallace, 2008). For teachers who already have a high Holocaust profile, some research has suggested that the approaches of both of these organizations to the history of the Holocaust has had an impact on teacher knowledge and instruction (Lindquist, 2002). These teachers are more likely to adapt or create lesson plans from the resources of these organizations, participate in Holocaust professional development workshops or scholarly lectures on or related to the Holocaust from these groups and elsewhere, and become part of the professional circles of Holocaust educators where ideas are shared on both content and pedagogy. These results occur largely because those teachers have often participated in each or both of these organizations’ professional development programs (Fallace, 2008).

For teachers who do not already have a high Holocaust profile, other factors seem to be important in influencing their curricular decision-making about the Holocaust. Fallace (2008) concludes that after the Holocaust was included as a recommendation in state curricular documents in Ohio, some teachers who were at first hesitant to teach the

topic (either because they saw it as one group's attempt to get their story included in the curriculum or because they felt incapable of teaching it effectively) often became more engaged with it once they "saw the Holocaust being taught successfully by teachers in their school, and...realized the pedagogical potentials of the topic and how it transcended cultural particularities" (p. 110). In other words, once teachers saw their own colleagues in their local context teaching the Holocaust in ways they felt were accessible to their students and ways that showed the global importance of the Holocaust to all people, then they often were more willing to try to teach the topic in their classrooms.

Clearly, mandates to teach the Holocaust are not the best way to assure student learning about the topic. Fallace (2008) contends: "Lobbying for state mandates may achieve a political victory, but this will not necessarily result in...a meaningful experience" (p. 186). He is so deeply concerned about the future of Holocaust education, particularly in an age when so much emphasis is placed on standardized teaching, as to call it "endangered" (p. 185). Since not all topics are given fair space in the school curriculum and there are many forces affecting social studies education in general and Holocaust education in particular, the future of high-quality Holocaust education may be in jeopardy. Fallace (2008) cites the pressures of standardized testing and No Child Left Behind legislation as problematic for studying the Holocaust or any part of the world in a complex way. He further argues that states that require the teaching of the Holocaust tend to focus on broad characterizations rather than complex historical analysis, and that

the Holocaust is often taught in elective courses, which are decreasing due to the combined pressures of testing and tightening school budgets.

In my own teaching experience, I have heard from many colleagues that they now teach about the Holocaust in “a day,” which means one 41-minute class. Fallace (2008) retells a time when he saw the Holocaust being taught in three minutes! Therefore, it would be a mistake to think that simply pushing political bodies to pass laws requiring the teaching of the Holocaust is necessarily a means by which to increase student knowledge of the various lessons inherent in a critical study of the genocide. In assessing the history of the growth of Holocaust profiles among teachers, Fallace (2008) affirms: “Teaching seminars seemed to be the most important factor in initiating change” (p. 111) and inspiring teachers to spend more time on the Holocaust and teaching it more effectively. He found that in New Jersey and Ohio, once teachers began to understand the universal implications of Holocaust education and believed that it “transcended cultural particularities” (p. 110), the desire among social studies teachers to teach the topic began to increase, especially after teaching seminars on the topic became more widely available. He cites one teacher-participant on the Ohio Holocaust Council as saying, “The success and quality of Holocaust education coincided with the availability of teaching seminars, not the number of Jewish students” (p. 110).

The hesitancy to teach a course on the Holocaust is not surprising given the challenges and complexities inherent in the topic. Professional development seems to be

the only consistent factor that leads teachers toward a more in-depth appreciation for and understanding of the Holocaust.

Holocaust Educational Concerns

The reality is that “more and more people show an interest in this particular tragedy” and there has been “a flood of fiction, theatre, films, TV series, art, music, and of course historical, sociological, philosophical, psychological, and other academic research, a flood that has rarely, if ever, been equaled in dealing with any other historical event” (Bauer, 2009, p. 5). Therefore, it can be legitimately suggested that, since we continue to see genocides around the world, in places like Rwanda and Darfur, the true lessons of the event have not been learned. This suggests that a topic’s prevalence in popular culture and in extensive academic knowledge may not necessarily extend to student understanding when it comes to the Holocaust because of its complexity. In fact, many teachers may find the Holocaust complex for precisely that reason: an enormous amount of data exists on the topic. Scholarship has noted that the massive amount of research on and study of the Holocaust has led to deep knowledge of almost every aspect of the tragedy (Whyman & Rosenzweig, 1996). Therefore, despite Nazi attempts at the end of World War II to destroy evidence of their crimes, teachers may encounter massive amounts of documents about the genocide as well as a tremendous amount of secondary sources on the topic, in addition to pervasive imagery, videos, and writings

from popular culture. The Holocaust is fairly unique in the sheer volume of information and sources available that may overwhelm teachers.

Textbooks are another source of concern in Holocaust instruction as they may lead teachers to form questionable meanings about the Shoah. Their coverage of the Holocaust is often very limited, unbalanced or inaccurate (Lindquist, 2006, 2008; Totten, 1998; Totten & Riley, 2005). How they describe a particular event, what significance they give it, and what is left out is critical to both student and teacher understandings of history since the textbook is likely the most ubiquitous teaching tool in secondary school social studies courses. For example, in the commonly used *World History: Connections to Today* high school global history textbook, published by Prentice Hall (Ellis & Esler, 1999), descriptions of the Holocaust are overly simplistic, unbalanced, and couched in a discussion of World War II. Three-fourths of a page is devoted to “Struggles of the Weimar Republic” (p. 778), which was the weak government in Germany after World War I that was plagued by a failing economy and unpopularity. However, only five sentences are devoted to the “Campaign against the Jews” (p. 781), and only half a page is spent on the “Nazi Genocide” (p. 799). In addition, this section is filled with overgeneralizations, and the entire textbook lacks any serious explanation of the history of anti-Semitism, the methodological means by which the genocide was carried out, the role of the bystander (neither individuals nor nations), and the reasons Nazism was able to succeed so resoundingly. Nothing in the textbook gives the student a sense of the extent of Nazi death camps or the more than 11 million Jews, political opponents, gypsies,

and others who died in the Holocaust. Students are told that “General Dwight Eisenhower was stunned to come ‘face to face’ with indisputable evidence of Nazi brutality and ruthless disregard of every sense of decency” (pp. 808-809). This text is likely to make a young reader feel like the Allies should be forgiven for their policy of nonintervention since they did not really have a complete grasp of what was going on in the camps.

The text goes on to say: “Only at war’s end did they [the Allies] learn the full extent of the Holocaust” (p. 808). However, the historical evidence suggests that the Allied powers and the American government had some knowledge about what was going on in the Nazi death camps, though it may have been incomplete (Breitmann, 1999; Feingold, 1995; Hamerow, 2008). Many complex factors figured into the lack of American involvement in stopping the Holocaust. Some scholars have suggested that among the reasons for the lack of response from the Allied powers were anti-Semitic sentiments and extremely restrictive immigration policies in the United States and in the United Kingdom, as well as in other places (Hamerow, 2008). Other historians, though, have contested the view that America and the other Allied powers did not live up to their global responsibilities, claiming that the vast majority of resources and attention was focused on winning World War II as quickly as possible, which in turn would end the Nazi Holocaust (Novick, 2000). Novick (2000) states that during the Holocaust,

Americans, including many American Jews, were largely unaware of what we now call the Holocaust while it was going on... But the available evidence doesn't suggest that, overall, American Jews (let alone American gentiles) were traumatized by the Holocaust, in any worthwhile sense of that term.

He further suggests that it was not until 20 years after the Holocaust that the event began to take a prominent place in Jewish and other Americans' social consciousness.

Overgeneralizations and mischaracterizations like the ones discussed here are commonplace in world history textbooks.

The only recent study conducted about the Holocaust in modern textbooks showed results very similar to mine from the Prentice Hall text above (Lindquist, 2009). The study looked at the six most popular world and American history secondary-level textbooks in the United States in 2009 and concluded: "Although textbooks provide substantial coverage of the Holocaust, the effectiveness of this coverage is limited in ways that can lead students to develop inaccurate perspectives about the event" (Lindquist, 2009, p. 303). Their coverage of the topic is often extremely brief, incomplete, overly generalized and/or superficial. Lindquist (2009) found problems relating to factual accuracy, a history of anti-Semitism, and even a dominate obsession with Adolf Hitler (p. 301).

In addition to limited, unbalanced, and often inaccurate coverage of the topic in textbooks, scholars have found six other reasons why teaching the Holocaust is complex. First, it must be taught within the context of the Nazi time period in Europe (Lindquist, 2009). The political and social conditions in Germany at the end of World War I, the weaknesses of Weimar Government between World War I and World War II, the economic deterioration of the country marked by rampant inflation, and the uses and abuses of propaganda must be clearly understood. Students also need to have some

awareness of the history of anti-Semitism before the Nazi era if they are to have a framework in which to contextualize a study of the Holocaust. Lindquist notes that “students’ understanding of this overarching history is sparse, at best” (Lindquist, 2009, p. 118).

Second, teachers may find the topic complex to teach because they must represent the Holocaust for the horror that it was but also be careful not to overwhelm or traumatize their students, especially given their young age (Lindquist, 2009; Totten, Feinberg & Fernekes, 2001). The Holocaust presents teachers with unique pedagogical decisions to be made, such as how much depth to go into and what topics to cover, how to select age-appropriate materials and teaching techniques, and how to choose an appropriate pedagogical framework through which to teach (Riley & Totten, 2005).

For example, is Holocaust denial an appropriate topic for classroom exploration? Some scholars have argued that if students are not exposed to the issue of denial within the structured and comfortable environment of a classroom, they may not know how to react when they encounter such arguments later in life (Huerta & Schiffman-Huerta, 1996). Other scholars strongly disagree, believing that any discussion of deniers within the classroom setting gives it a certain degree of legitimacy and therefore it is an entirely inappropriate topic for teachers to discuss (Totten, Feinberg & Fernekes, 2001). Furthermore, given the limited time in a typical world history class that most teachers feel they can spend on the Holocaust, tradeoffs inevitably must be made, and learning

about deniers may not help achieve the aims of Holocaust education as articulated by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and others previously cited.

Third, additional complexities arise over the question of how much space and attention should be given to various aspects of the topic, such as Jewish versus the non-Jewish experiences in the Holocaust (Lindquist, 2010; Tinberg 2005). Lindquist suggests that teachers must be sensitive to Jewish students as well as to the larger Jewish community, and give special care to focus on their experiences but not so much as to ignore the experiences of others who suffered during the genocide. Like balancing the issue of depth with the potential for traumatization, here too the issue of balancing perspectives complicates the teaching of the topic.

Fourth, Lindquist (2010) and Tinberg (2005) argue that the personal identity of the teacher adds a dimension of complexity to teaching the topic. If the teacher is Jewish, he or she must consider the context in which they are teaching. Different teaching styles and instructional choices may need to be made based on the student population. Lindquist (2010) also suggests that if the teacher is Jewish there may be an added benefit for his or her students. “Both Jewish and non-Jewish students can observe the direct link that ties the subject to the teacher’s interest in it. In doing so, students learn that studying history can be a personal journey as well as an academic endeavor” (p. 87). He suggests that non-Jewish teachers must recognize that students of Jewish background and those of other identities may view learning about the Holocaust differently. This line of work has

particular bearing on the current study as it illuminates the somewhat idiosyncratic understandings that necessarily result from an event such as the Holocaust.

Fifth, in addition to issues related to the identity of the educators, problems also potentially exist in trying to use the complex history of the Holocaust to teach moral lessons. In a study of the ways in which the Holocaust may be used to teach about human rights, Eckman (2010) raises concerns related to the notion that history “cannot be transposed to the present in a linear way” and students may be too quick to believe, albeit incorrectly, that all stereotyping has the power to end in genocide similar to that of the Holocaust (p. 10). Eckman (2010) notes: “In this example, students draw on their personal feelings, and then move too rapidly to parallels with the mechanisms of state-sanctioned murder” (p. 10). In the information age where supposed answers to complex questions can be found in seconds via an uncritical internet search, modern students will likely desire clear answers, but a study of the Holocaust does not lend itself to such answers. Students may become frustrated with the lack of clear-cut answers to questions that commonly arise, such as “Why didn’t the Jews fight back?” or “Why did the Nazis target the Jews?” or “Why didn’t America end the Holocaust?” These are extraordinarily complex questions that require a careful and thoughtful examination of the historical evidence, and will lead students and teachers to widely varying historical interpretations and analyses.

For some teachers, answering these questions is so overwhelming that they believe they cannot convey an understanding of reasons for the Holocaust. In one case

study of Holocaust instruction at a Lubavitch girls' Yeshiva, Schweber (2008) found that for the teacher of the unit, "the Holocaust transcends human understanding and, as such, defies explanation – regardless of whether human action or theological issues beg explanation" (p. 175). However, some scholars have argued the exact opposite, suggesting that the Holocaust is not unthinkable at all but rather provides us with the images that can very closely represent the terrifying events of this horrific past (Didi-Huberman & Lillis, 2008). These scholars claim that of the approximately 1.5 million pictures that remain of Nazi concentration and death camps, only four show the actual process of murder at the gas chambers (Didi-Huberman & Lillis, 2008). Without question, these images show a small group of naked women being crammed into the gas chambers at a concentration camp where they ultimately die. Other images, artifacts, and some limited video clearly demonstrate the actions of the Nazis as well. Yet time and again, students of this history, school-aged or older, invoke the claim that the Holocaust is somehow unimaginable. Didi-Huberman and Lillis (2008) challenge us not to hide behind this falsity, stating, "We must attempt to imagine the hell that Auschwitz was in the summer of 1944. Let us not invoke the unimaginable. Let us not shelter ourselves by saying that we cannot, that we could not by any means, imagine it to the very end. We *are obliged* [italics found in original text] to that oppressive imaginable" (p. 3). Yet teachers and others do hide behind those very claims. Perhaps the psychological weight of the Holocaust and the fact that a study of it might not lead to clear explanations that, in students' and perhaps even teachers' minds, adequately deconstruct the meaning of the

Holocaust or improve their own inability to make sense of it, further complicates Holocaust instruction and might account, at least in part, for this shielding. Didi-Huberman and Lillis (2008) suggest that in regards to the four images at the center of their work, and other horror-filled and painful imagery of the entire event, “we must contemplate them, take them on, and try to comprehend them. Images in spite of all: [italics found in original text] in spite of our own inability to look at them as they deserve, in spite of our own world, full, almost choked, of imaginary commodities” (p. 3).

Sixth, the issue of age-appropriate pedagogical and instructional choices further complicates the teaching of the topic. Typically, decisions on what to teach are based on the academic level and abilities of the students. However, when teaching morally-laden topics, issues of empathy and avoiding trauma must be recognized. Perhaps the most basic question educators must grapple with is at what age students should be taught about the Holocaust? In his teaching guide to Holocaust education, Totten (2002) says, “Holocaust education for K-4 students? The answer is no!” (p. 161). He argues that to begin to understand the history of the Holocaust, students need to have some understanding of Germany’s past, the history of anti-Semitism, the various people involved in the Holocaust (either by their own choosing or by force), the history of the various key events that lead up to and take place during and after the Holocaust, and so on. Totten (2002) argues that even attempting to teach just some of these topics “in a way that is understandable to a five-, six-, seven-, or eight-year-old would be folly. To do so by telling the ‘real story’ with all of its hatred, abuses, ugliness, and murderousness

would constitute miseducation” (p. 161). He contends the topic is too complex for students that young, particularly since they cannot understand the Holocaust because they cannot understand the background and context in which it occurred, and because it is just too traumatic for them.

Teachers’ own descriptions of the challenges bear out Totten’s arguments. In 2002 six teachers who had won awards for their Holocaust teaching in Tennessee were interviewed to gain insight into their practices and perspectives on Holocaust education (Lindquist, 2002). Interviews with them suggested that great care must be taken when presenting the Holocaust, given the gruesome nature of this horror-filled event. The teachers said that Holocaust educators must judge the maturity of their students in determining what materials to use, images and videos to show, and topics to discuss. For these teachers, such choices were not easy. Further, they suggested that the time and space given to “showing” the horror should be limited and therefore teachers should avoid showing particularly disturbing images. Lastly, the educators said the prevalence of violence in modern media culture, in everything from television to video games, makes it challenging for teachers to convince students that these events actually happened, that they are not fiction or simply “made for TV.” In addition, students must also realize that the conditions that lead to the rise of the Holocaust are not necessarily inconceivable in the 21st century. These pedagogical considerations complicate the teaching of the topic even further.

When the content-oriented, instructional, or pedagogical complexities are not considered by Holocaust educators, students are likely to shy away from wanting to understand the Holocaust further, and may even become disinterested altogether.

For example, Schweber (2006) has noted how problems can result from teaching the Holocaust without proper context, explanation, and analysis:

If we teach about the Holocaust without generating deep understandings of the subject matter – without teaching why different groups were persecuted, how perpetrators were enticed into violence, how this atrocity is similar and dissimilar to other genocides – repeating that kind of coverage is the surest way to get students not to take it seriously, not to care about it, and to become, “sick of the Holocaust” (p. 53).

Teachers who want to learn how to better address issues involved in teaching the Holocaust often seek professional development on the topic. This study seeks to understand teachers’ attempts to address challenges in their own understandings via professional development and the meanings they make from it.

Teaching the Holocaust is bound up with questions about which aspects to focus on and which, if any, moral or theological lessons to teach. Any teacher or curriculum can attempt to convey meanings of any historical event from a particular perspective and can use history to assist students in understanding certain perspectives and lessons while ignoring others. The pedagogical arrangement of Holocaust education can be used to reaffirm religious identity, explore personal identity, internalize a large body of historical knowledge, or understand the pain of the victims, among other aims. How teachers form their own Holocaust profiles, which affects the experiences they create for students and what they seek to address in Holocaust education in their classrooms, is only somewhat

known. Holocaust education for teachers has not been deeply researched, but a few studies have confirmed that professional development is an important component of how teachers may learn to engage students with Holocaust education.

Holocaust Professional Development

Professional development related to the Holocaust has tremendously increased over the past two decades following an increase in the 1990s and early 2000s in state mandates devoted to the study of the Holocaust, and particularly after 1993 with the opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and the release of Steven Spielberg's Academy Award-winning motion picture *Schindler's List*. There are sixteen Holocaust museums, approximately 150 Holocaust centers, and approximately fifty Jewish museums in the United States (Beckerkman, 2009). Scholars have conducted a very limited number of studies about Holocaust professional development programs in a variety of settings, but never at any of these museums. Facing History and Ourselves, a private organization devoted to providing students and teachers with materials and experiences to combat prejudice and intolerance and to learn about genocides and politicides (such as the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide, and the genocide in Darfur), has its own mechanisms for evaluating its teacher programs and materials. Boulay et al. (2009) conducted a randomized controlled experimental study for Facing History and Ourselves of 134 teachers in 76 schools. Facing History and Ourselves has long reported that its professional development programs lead to positive

changes in teacher practices and attitudes. However, in the past, their results had come from teachers and/or schools that had specifically sought out the organization for its assistance. In this study, the researchers used a randomized and controlled methodology and found 76 schools across the nation that had never used Facing History and Ourselves materials. These schools represented geographical diversity, and most were underperforming schools with a high percentage of students in poverty. The authors created a control and a treatment group (giving the former the professional development program in year one of the study and the latter in year two) to eliminate, to the extent possible, any differences already present in the study participants, such as teacher engagement and student abilities. The goal of the study was to evaluate the impact of Facing History and Ourselves' professional development programs on teacher behavior and student achievement. They concluded that as a result of participation there was a statistically significant increase in teachers' self-efficacy and improved feelings towards professional development in general. These results were not specific to the Holocaust, as Facing History and Ourselves materials and teacher training programs also include tolerance and diversity, among other topics. The study concluded that,

Facing History and Ourselves' professional development services engage teachers, and increase teacher efficacy in promoting students academic and civic learning. Those teachers who received Facing History and Ourselves services, relative to those who did not, demonstrated significantly greater efficacy in promoting community- and learner-centered classrooms, deliberative skills, historical understanding, and civic learning. The heightened efficacy for Facing History teachers corresponds with student outcomes: the study also captured statistically significant results for students in those same areas—improved classroom climate, skills for analyzing history, and civic skills and dispositions (Boulay, et al., 2009, p. 4).

The study specifically did not seek out teachers who had already been motivated to use Facing History programs, and it specifically did not exclude from its data set teachers who had not fully taught the program after professional development or had not taught it all. All the data from each teacher and every student in the 76 schools was included in the data set used for analysis. Doing this made the results of the study more reliable than previous studies on Facing History programs, which included only teachers who wanted assistance from the organization. Given this design, the impacts found by the researchers show that professional development on the Holocaust and other related topics can have influences beyond improved knowledge to include changes in classroom environment, school culture, and civics. One problem with the study is that the multiyear and nationwide design means a very heavy financial investment had to be made to complete it. Researchers came from the staff at Facing History and Ourselves, a few university faculty, Fine Associates, and mostly from Abt Associates. Each of these people and/or organizations were paid by Facing History and Ourselves; the study was entirely funded by them.

Other studies have been conducted on Facing History and Ourselves Holocaust and tolerance programs as well. One study of the impact of the Facing History and Ourselves tolerance and Holocaust curriculum found that teachers who participated in the professional development activities related to their curricular materials had increases in the use of student-centered learning and improvements in student deliberation (Barr & Mingo, 2010). Tollefson (1999) conducted case studies of four schools in the Cleveland

area for Facing History and Ourselves in order to measure the long-term impact of its professional development programs there. Results included increased teacher efficacy, decreased student apathy toward academics in the class where Facing History and Ourselves materials were used, as well as in other courses, and increased teacher participation in professional development experiences to improve teachers' own learning. Since these studies were not specifically about the Holocaust, their results may have limited applicability to the outcomes of Holocaust professional development. Facing History and Ourselves teacher and student programs cover Holocaust content, but they also heavily focus on tolerance training, diversity issues, and civics. Therefore, what these studies have found may or may not have relevance for Holocaust education itself but rather for a program of professional development or student learning in those broader topics. I limited the scope of my study specifically to Holocaust professional development to begin to understand the meanings teachers attach to teacher education on the Holocaust itself and not to broader themes that span historical place and time.

Beyond studies involving Facing History and Ourselves materials, another study was conducted on a series of in-service workshops totaling 72 hours on the Holocaust in seven different schools in two rural counties in Washington State funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, an independent grant-making agency of the United States government (Wolpow, Johnson & Wognild, 2002). Professional developers designed the program to familiarize teachers with general Holocaust content and teaching strategies as well as interdisciplinary approaches to genocide and Holocaust studies, and

provide them with an understanding of accurate, high-quality resources that can be used in classroom discourses. Researchers found that teachers' efficacy increased and they had a greater understanding of complex Holocaust content as a result of participation. They also found greater enthusiasm on the part of teachers for studying the role of human nature in historical events and for using additional accurate educational tools, such as primary sources from survivors, media analyses, and literature, in order to widen the scope of classroom experiences that students partake in during Holocaust education. This study provided insight into potential benefits for teachers in understanding complex Holocaust content and decreasing the likelihood of teachers allowing historical inaccuracies about the Holocaust to persist after they participate in long-term and sustained professional development lead by Holocaust scholars. This study did not involve a Holocaust museum (likely because the schools involved were rural schools), but it did show that a carefully planned program of professional development can lead to improving teachers' ability to understand the Holocaust. The results of this study showed that the inaccuracies and complexity that have plagued the field of Holocaust education can be lessened through professional development. However, this study did not assess the meanings teachers attach to the professional development they were taking part in, nor did it seek to reveal how teachers conceptualized the Holocaust, how its various aspects should be taught, and what or whose perspectives would be given priority. While the study did show teachers had greater knowledge on the Holocaust, which is no doubt important for social studies educators, questions it left unanswered about teacher

conceptualization about the Holocaust are partly addressed in my case study, albeit at a different site and in a different context.

A few other studies have examined Holocaust professional development in other contexts. Donoho (1999) found positive outcomes on Holocaust instruction as a result of participation in professional development on the topic. She conducted a study of 182 teachers who participated in the Arkansas Holocaust Education Committee's 1994-1997 professional development conferences. She found that the number of educators teaching the Holocaust increased from 75 to 103 after the professional development program and the implementation of Facing History and Ourselves curricular materials. She also found that the number of hours devoted to Holocaust instruction, the number of content areas covering the Holocaust, and the number of pedagogical strategies all increased as a result of teachers' participation in professional development conferences. No other study has confirmed whether such results could be replicated in other settings, such as at Jewish history or Holocaust museums. Mitchell (2004) conducted a study of 17 Holocaust teachers who had won the Belz-Lipman Holocaust Educator of the Year Award in Tennessee, all of whom had participated in formal professional development on the Holocaust from organizations such as United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Facing History and Ourselves, and the Tennessee Holocaust Commission. These teachers read widely on the topic on their own and were self-motivated about the Holocaust. They carefully selected appropriate, accurate, and student-friendly materials in order to teach the topic. Using qualitative interviews with each of the award winners

as her primary data source, Donoho concluded that on the whole in their Holocaust instruction the teachers focus more on complex concepts, such as reasons to learn about human nature, than on a chronology of specific dates or facts. The author focuses on the materials these teachers use and the instructional techniques they implement. Only tangential focus is given to what these teachers learned in their extensive professional development on the Holocaust, and almost no attention is given to the meanings they attached to it. The study does confirm that professional development was a part of changing the nature of Holocaust instruction, but it revealed very little about the ways in which these teachers identified with or did not identify with the material and what understandings they developed as a result of participation in Holocaust teacher education programs. The study lacks analysis on any influence that these teachers' extensive participation in professional development at museums and institutes had on the perspectives that they form of the Holocaust and Holocaust education. The results of my study begin to fill in this knowledge gap because greater insight is revealed about how teachers respond to professional development specifically at a Jewish history museum.

Compared with the number of institutions offering Holocaust professional development and the large number of teachers participating, the number of studies on the topic is minimal. Institutions that have largely been left out of the literature are Holocaust and Jewish history museums, which often provide extensive Holocaust professional development and are staffed with specialists. This omission may be because large-scale professional development at these museums, and the museums themselves, are relatively

new and therefore are not seen as traditional places for professional development, such as universities typically are. However, there may be a particular angle from which a Jewish museum presents the Holocaust in professional development since its exhibits typically address the topic only from the perspective of the main targeted group, the Jewish people. The Museum of Jewish Heritage, for example, is a secular institution built on state-owned real estate at the southern tip of Manhattan. Because of this, teachers participating in its programs might assume they will learn about the Holocaust in broad human terms. However, there may be a salient difference in the way a Jewish museum presents Holocaust content and pedagogy. The exhibits on all three floors of the Museum have a Jewish narrative in their presentation of history, including starting the visitor experience with scenes and artifacts from Jewish life before, during, and after the Holocaust. The grand narrative is that of the fate of the Jewish community. This may influence the meanings teachers make from professional development at the Museum.

Defining Professional Development

Professional development is a term that broadly refers to formal or informal learning that further trains a professional over varied periods of time. Speck and Knipe (2001) define professional development as “a lifelong collaborative learning process that nourishes the growth of educators both as individuals and as team members to their skills and abilities” (p. 9). While there has been some growth over the past fifteen years in

social studies and Holocaust educational research on the topic, the studies remain extremely limited. There is very limited research on social studies professional development generally, which is likely tied to a lack of funding as compared with curricular areas that have more mandates and accountability (van Hover, 2008).

However, the field of education in general has several organizations and researchers who have conceptualized professional development. The National Staff Development Council (2007), the largest non-profit organization devoted to professional development in the United States, defines professional development as a “comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach” to ensuring that efforts result in improved student achievement. The council has created a comprehensive definition of professional development and proposed it as an amendment to Section 901 (34) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as reauthorized by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (2007). The act demands that states have “high quality” professional development for every teacher (Hess & Petrilli, 2007) yet offers virtually no conceptualization about what will give teachers the skills, abilities, and desire to teach in new ways (Grant, 2003). The NSDC definition of professional development states,

Professional development fosters collective responsibility for improved student performance and must be comprised of professional learning that: (1) is aligned with rigorous state student academic achievement standards as well as related local educational agency and school improvement goals; (2) is conducted among educators at the school and facilitated by well-prepared school principals and/or school-based professional development coaches, mentors, master teachers, or other teacher leaders; (3) primarily occurs several times per week ... (2007)

The NSDC definition goes on to state that professional development should be job-embedded, address learning goals already established, and use a wide array of educational professionals from within school districts, universities, for-profit agencies, content specialists, or other educational institutions. This type of professional development suggests that museums will need to work closely with individual schools and school districts in order for their training programs to be integrally connected to the professional lives of teachers as a part of their professional responsibilities. For example, the educators at The Museum of Jewish Heritage have worked closely with the New York City Department of Education in order to offer professional development credits (“p-credits”) for participation in some of the museum’s programs. These “p-credits” are useable toward salary advancement and for helping to fulfill the requirement of 175 hours of professional development for all New York State and New York City teachers certified after February 1, 2004. The Museum of Jewish Heritage has also aligned its programs with New York City and New York State learning standards, and it schedules its programs around the New York City school calendar in order to accommodate the largest potential pool of participants.

On a federal level, the NSDC definition is in line with the professional development component of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which states that programs aimed at improving teacher knowledge and skills should not be one-day or short-term in nature, but rather they should be a part of long-term, ongoing, high-quality programs. Historically, professional development has commonly been restricted to the

short-term, often single-day workshop or in-service training session (Gaudelli, 2002; Fogerty & Pete, 2007, van Hover, 2008). Gaudelli (2002) suggests that this model has generally “failed to transform the professional lives of teachers” and has become more a part of the ritualistic tradition of schools than an effective technique to promote any kind of sustained professional improvement (p. 5).

Recently, as reflected in the NSDC definition, there has been a large shift in the literature on professional development for educators toward a more long-term, regularly scheduled, and meticulously planned program of professional growth. Walling and Lewis (2000) consider this potential shift so dramatic as to call it a new paradigm for professional development. The shift also includes movement toward what Cafarella (2002) refers to as the “transfer of learning model.” In this model there is a deliberate and systematic attempt to design professional development opportunities for currently practicing teachers that result in the transfer of new knowledge to students or the implementation of new pedagogical approaches in classrooms and other educational settings. There is little evidence to suggest that this shift is taking place on a widespread basis, as the single-day workshop still remains the typical form of professional development offered to teachers (van Hover, 2008). However, in places where this shift is occurring, there have been measurable outcomes.

Best Practices in Professional Development

Some scholars have expressed problems with the current state of professional development (Borko, 2004; Sykes, 1996). They believe that professional development as it is conceived and practiced is insufficient and it is not meeting the needs of today's educators. In social studies, "our knowledge of the professional development of social studies teachers is idiosyncratic and there exists no 'big picture' of social studies professional development across the country" (van Hover, 2008). Despite these shortcomings and the beliefs of some scholars, some research in social studies education has found that carefully planned programs that reflect best practices from the professional development literature lead to positive outcomes in social studies teacher learning, efficacy, and practice (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2000). Professional development often alters teacher behavior and pedagogy in a positive way (Baker & Smith, 1999; Franke et. al., 1998; Nelson, 1999). For example, the research about professional development supported by Teaching American History grants shows positive outcomes about teacher practices, instruction, and teacher enthusiasm for American history (Hudson & Santora, 2003; Humphrey et al., 2005; Stein, 2003). These studies are limited, though, as they largely rely on self-reported data and interviews with teacher-participants as opposed to observations.

While there are a number of studies that shed light on the effectiveness of professional development programs supported by Teaching American History grants, the research on other professional development opportunities for social studies teachers is

extremely limited. No single model of professional development in social studies or Holocaust studies could aptly identify the “right” way to train teachers, because context plays such a significant role. However, there are several guidelines for educators in general that experts use to define an effective model (Guskey, 1995). Lester (2003) conducted a study of 93 veteran and novice educators and 9 administrators from 8 different high schools to find out the components of effective professional development. At each high school, professional development was conducted on how to integrate literacy instruction into the curriculum. In order to determine the most effective parts of participants’ professional development experiences, data was collected from interviews, open-ended questionnaires, observations, and reflective writing samples with each teacher and administrator who participated. By analyzing the data from those sources, she concluded that the key contributors to growth from professional development are small study groups, mutually agreed-upon topics, regular meetings and times, ongoing opportunities for reflection and discussion of best practices, and ongoing review of the process. She also concluded that that the following practices are necessary for a highly successful professional development program: “(a) a genuine desire to improve practice, (b) a valued voice in the planning process, (c) recognition of accomplishments in the classroom, (d) the need for a structured professional development program, and (e) accountability standards that are fair and realistic” (p. 53). Speck and Knipe (2001) believe that in order for professional development to have a long-term impact and not simply be a forced activity that teachers unwillingly attend, it should assess needs,

establish clear aims and goals, center on the learner, improve student learning, sustain professional growth, and be evaluative (p. 9). These attributes stand out for these scholars because of what teachers themselves have said and what has been found through data analysis of various studies, although which studies are not entirely clear. Neither Lester's (2003) nor Speck and Knipe's (2001) conclusions can be proven to be the "best" or "right" approach to professional development, but they stand as potential components of an effective structural design for teacher education.

Perhaps the most oft-cited research on professional development is The Eisenhower Professional Development Program (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). The Eisenhower model was designed for the implementation of the largest professional development program in the history of the United States government. It serves as the most substantial representation of the shift toward a new paradigm in professional development. It included a national sample of teachers and was designed to be so broad that it would not only apply to the activities that were a part of the Eisenhower Professional Development Program but also significantly contribute to the knowledge of best practices in professional development for teachers and professional developers nationwide, including social studies (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). The study provided a framework by which to move beyond potentially misconceived notions of professional development as effective simply because it is an experience that teachers enjoy or because it may create even a minor change in classroom pedagogy (Wenglinsky, 2004; Salpeter, 2003). They used a national probability sample

of 1,027 math and science teachers who participated in Eisenhower-related professional development activities, as well as Eisenhower professional development coordinators in 363 school districts and grant directors at 92 colleges and universities, in order to study the effects of professional development on how teachers learned and gained new knowledge and skills. Mathematics and science education are not the same as social studies and Holocaust education, but the study's purpose was to reveal new understandings about the nature of professional development for teachers in general, so it can have relevance for social studies education professional development studies. The study also included in-depth observations and case studies of 30 schools and their teachers to investigate the effects of the Eisenhower professional development model. This comprehensive study likely stands as the largest, most in-depth one ever conducted on professional development for in-service teachers. Borko (2004) has suggested that the technique of examining professional development in other curricular areas and applying the findings to social studies may have currency in developing a grand picture of best practices for social studies professional development. Borko (2004) showed that focusing on the features of the professional development rather than the structure (university-based course, online offering, or traditional workshop) is more effective in measuring outcomes. The results indicate six loose categories for best practices in professional development, which will be discussed below: a focus on content, actively engaging teachers in their own growth, coherence, collective participation, school-based teacher training, and long-term engagement. Questions remain, however, about whether

showing some alteration of teaching practice or teacher knowledge is enough to constitute a particular element of professional development as effective (Desimone, 2009). This is especially true since little consensus or empirical data exist on which approaches and features of professional development lead to positive changes in student performance (Wayne, Yoon, Zhu, Cronen & Garet, 2008), or even how to judge the impact of professional development at all (Borko, Jacobs, Eiteljorg & Pittman, 2008).

As is found in most social studies professional development offerings (Humphrey, et. al., 2005; Shoob & Stour, 2007; Sykes, 1996; van Hover, 2008), the Eisenhower Professional Development Program states the first characteristic that they found of effective professional development is a focus on clear, content-oriented goals of the professional development session. Based in part on student outcomes and what teachers have said, scholars have found that professional development that places an emphasis on relevant content and pedagogy and is job-embedded is the most effective (American Research Association, 2005; Aness, 2000; Borko, 2004, Fogerty & Pete, 2007; Wood & McQuarrie, 1999). Effective professional development also actively engages teachers in their own growth. It is based on constructivist engagement with teaching, learning, observing, assessing, and reflecting (Dadds, 2001; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). In practice, this might mean teachers actually teaching new content learned or engaging in a lesson study with colleagues. The Eisenhower model also suggests that effective professional development has coherence, meaning that it connects all of the

professional development activities with one another and with larger goals in curriculum, standards and assessments (especially local or state-mandated assessments).

Effective professional development according to the Eisenhower Professional Development Program also involves collective participation of teachers from the same school. This likely fosters continuing dialogue about the skills and knowledge learned at the professional development program, and will likely lead to a more context-specific discussion about how to apply the lessons to a specific population and realities of a specific school or district. This may also lead to more long-term supportive discussions among teachers, who are then more likely to reflect on their practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2000). However, given that many districts continually experience budget difficulties, and given that teachers often serve as deans, coaches, club advisors, and mentors, this is not likely to become widespread without a dramatic shift in the structure of public education and teacher contracts.

The fifth characteristic of effective professional development according to the Eisenhower Professional Development Program is school-based teacher training where professional development is built into the normal daily life of the teacher (for example, during planning time or teacher professional meeting times) rather than occurring only during the typical one or two days of professional development per year.

Professional learning for teachers is typically most effective when it takes place in schools, thereby creating a culture of a professional learning community (King & Newmann, 2000). Professional development should function in such a way as to build

cultural norms rather than act as a one-shot training day (Loucks-Horsley, 1998). The last characteristic of effective professional development according to the Eisenhower Professional Development Program is that the duration of related sessions is long-term and recognizes that teachers, like students, need time to absorb and practice new knowledge and skills (Ganser, 2000; Dudzinski, Roszmann-Millican & Shank, 2000). The Teaching American History grant program's long-term professional development sessions, for example, are always connected to one another by content or pedagogy, such as oral history (see, for example, Hudson & Santora, 2003). One type of institution where professional development for teachers is sometimes offered is museums.

Certainly no comprehensive consensus exists on what constitutes effective professional development or how many of the elements above need to be present for effective teacher growth to take place, but other research has found similar features to be effective as well. Five components of effective professional development that are similar to those developed in the Eisenhower study have emerged repeatedly in a number of studies as important elements in teacher training: content focus, active learning, coherence, duration, and collective participation (Desimone, 2003, 2009; Firestone, Mangin, Martinez & Polovsky, 2005; Jeanpierre, Oberhauser, & Freeman, 2005; Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi & Gallagher, 2007; Phillips, Desimone & Smith, 2011). These studies have led to at least a partial agreement on the elements of effective professional development. To the degree that there is consensus, it "lacks sufficient specificity to guide practice" (Wayne, Yoon, Zhu, Cronen & Garet, 2008, p. 470). For example, while

much of the research notes some of the potential shortcomings with the single-day workshop (as compared with long-term programs), little guidance is offered on the costs associated with longer programs and the effects on students when teachers are at professional development and not in the classroom (Wayne, Yoon, Zhu, Cronen & Garet, 2008). The authors suggest more research on the opportunity costs of longer programs as opposed to the widely used workshop model. The workshop model in and of itself does not necessarily imply that content will be unconnected to the work of the teacher and will not include authentic educational engagement. Some scholars have questioned the practicality of in-school professional development as it usually necessitates a full-time employee serving as a professional development coach, “which is among one of the most expensive approaches to PD available” (Wayne, Yoon, Zhu, Cronen & Garet, 2008, p. 470). The authors raise questions about this approach, such as: Should schools reduce their off-site professional development opportunities, like at museums, to make budgetary room for on-site professional development, and, how often and in what way does on-site professional development need to occur to make a difference (Wayne, Yoon, Zhu, Cronen & Garet, 2008)? No answers exist yet to these questions, but they raise important inquiries into the practicality, applicability, and proven results of the five features of effective teacher training that appear frequently in professional development literature.

Some scholars have noted that our comprehension of professional learning is still “poorly understood,” and “despite decades of research and theorizing about learning *in situ* and knowledge as used in professional practice, our overall understanding of this

topic is still ambiguous” (Webster-Wright, 2009, p. 704). Webster-Wright (2009) suggests that we need to know much more about how professionals learn and move beyond a keen focus on the activities of professional development. One site for professional development that is particularly understudied but plays a significant role in public and teacher education is museums.

Museums and Education

Each year, millions of Americans visit public and private museums to learn more about a particular topic, group, or era of history. Museums have traditionally been seen by the public as storehouses for artifacts of bygone eras (Talboys, 2000; Weil, 2002). Museum exhibits and collections, and their accompanying narratives, “are held to embody essential forms of evidence of history, culture, nature, science, and art” (Trofanenko, 2006, p. 49). Informal learning institutions such as museums play an important role in educating the public in general and social studies teachers in particular. Virtually all museum-goers of every stripe experience at least some degree of learning as a result of their visit (Falk, 1999). Combined with print, digital, and television media; books, schools and universities; and community groups, museums are a critical part of a large public network of places that support learning for people of all ages (Falk, 1999). They are a “crucial foundation for power” and “an inescapable ground for struggle” (Trofanenko, 2006, p. 62) between competing forces and varying ideologies.

Museums and other nonformal learning environments often have great autonomy in how and what they potentially teach visitors. Therefore, the results of museum-based education for visitors are innumerable. Nonformal learning refers to education that takes place outside the traditional confines of university classrooms, is not typically linked to the awarding of a degree (though they can award professional learning credits, which may be needed to maintain state-issued certification), and is not imposed by an external force. This type of learning occurs only because the learner wants it to occur at a time and place of their choosing (Livingstone, 1999). The goal of nonformal learning is to improve the personal and professional lives of adult learners (Heimlich, 1993). Informal teacher education programs at museums are characterized by opportunities that typically are intended to be applied to their instructional responsibilities and can widen their knowledge and skills in relation to teaching a particular academic theme or topic. Unfortunately for museum educators and professional developers, little research exists on the adult learning at museums, and no research exists on Holocaust learning for teachers at museums of any kind. This is a surprising reality:

Given the extent of museum patronage in the U.S. and museums' self-defined role as educators, one would imagine that the literature should be awash with insightful research acting as theoretical and empirical foundation for the work of museums and their educators. Regrettably...[we] found this not to be the case. Museums looking to research for ways to understand and affect their adult visitor's and employees' learning have been largely left to illuminate their own path (Dudzinska-Przesmitzki & Grenier, 2008, p. 18).

However, one major and comprehensive national study was conducted on museum adult learning between 1996 and 1999. By interviewing 508 adult participants

in museum-based programs, 75 museum-based teachers, and 143 museum-based program planners at a wide variety of museums (including art museums, history museums, cultural museums, historical homes, and even botanical gardens), the authors researched three questions: (1) What makes an excellent program?; (2) What effective techniques are used with adult learners?; and (3) What, if anything, is the impact of the learning taking place at a museum? (Sachatello-Sawyer, et. al., 2009). Among other results, most of which are not relevant to my study, they found that adult learners at museum-based programs felt that learning content that challenged them in an engaging way was entirely necessary for a program to be successful. This study did not specifically limit the scope of its participants to teachers. The study, therefore, leaves open the possibility that a subset of data exists that could provide insight into museum adult informal learning if the study participants were studied individually according to their different capacities, contexts, and realities. One such subset is teachers who frequently use museums to educate themselves in both formal and informal ways.

Since museums enact “public pedagogy” (Giroux, 2001), they act as important agents of politics and power. By choosing to include certain stories in certain ways and excluding others, they help determine what will be seen by teacher professional development participants and the public as important and what will not. In that sense, they often present a singular, grand message. Inevitably, museums form “particular, and, therefore, partial identities” (Trofanenko, 2006, p. 49) which can serve a variety of purposes, such as promoting nationalism, forming a particular identity or view of the past,

and transferring knowledge (Trofanenko, 2010). Learning always occurs in relation to where the learning is taking place as “learning is always a complex phenomena situated within a series of contexts” (Falk & Storksdieck. 2005, p. 745). Questions arise over who gets to tell the story and who owns the story. Should a Holocaust museum’s exhibits be presented from the Jewish perspective? Should Irish Americans be the authors of museums devoted to their past? These kinds of questions are constantly challenging museum professionals, as is trying to connect their “educational purposes to the real lives of visitors” (Vallance, 2004).

Today, museums are no longer institutions that cater predominantly to the wealthy class of society. They now attract people of all age groups and socio-economic backgrounds. Over the past twenty years museums have begun to shift focus from being concerned largely with their collections to giving attention to the experience of different types of visitors. To do this, they are investing resources and effort into attracting a wide variety of visitors, and giving different visitors different educational experiences that will be meaningful to them (Kotler & Kotler, 1998). For those different audiences and different experiences, museums typically follow an educational theory that guides their educational approach, exhibition design, and learner and visitor involvement (Hein, 1998; Tran & King, 2007). These theories address the range of visitors, from the silent museum visitor to the active learner. The silent museum visitor is seen largely as a repository to be filled with new knowledge and information, the meaning and significance of which has already been determined, so the job of the visitor is to simply take it in. On the

opposite end of the spectrum is the active learner, for whom the goal is to purposely engage in the creation of his or her own knowledge, taking into account the identity, experiences, and background of the visitor (Hein, 2006). Between these two polar opposites lie varying degrees of visitor involvement.

Hein (1998) categorized learning in museums within this spectrum into four different categories: didactic expository education, stimulus response education, discovery education, and constructivism. Didactic expository education is the most traditional model of museum education, in which labels, exhibits, and objects are used to teach specific, predetermined lessons to visitors, and the museum curators are seen as the final authority on the meaning and significance of the museum's topic of focus (Witcomb, 2006). In this theory, no space is left for personal interpretation or discussion. Stimulus response education emphasizes repeating information to the visitor over and over again so as to ensure visitors provide the correct responses (Witcomb, 2006). This approach has received criticism for forcing students and visitors to simply memorize information rather than engage in any degree of critical inquiry, which may impact learning more substantially than short-term memorization activities do (Hein, 2006). Discovery education is a more active form of museum education in which the visitor is engaged in activities, often hands-on, that typically result in new understandings or changed perceptions (Hein, 1998). Due to the traumatic nature of Holocaust museum content, discovery education is extremely rare at the sixteen major Holocaust museums in the United States.

Lastly, constructivism involves visitors and students making meaning of their museum experiences by taking into account their own cultural background and prior knowledge (Mayer, 2005). Learning must be substantiated through learners' own ideas and thinking (Mayer 2005). Learning in this theory is a highly personalized process of meaning-making in which each museum visitor has a unique and personalized experience. That experience is inevitably influenced and shaped by the nature of the museum or museum program. Therefore, constructivist learning is seen as a negotiation between the learner/visitor and the context of the museum at a particular moment in time (Adams, et. al., 2003; Falk & Dierking, 2000). In the constructivist theory, learning outcomes are based not only on what is intended to be learned by museum experiences and exhibitions but also on the meanings that are constructed by the learner/visitor (Adams, et. al., 2003). Constructivism is a commonly applied learning theory in Holocaust museums in the United States.

In museum studies, social constructivism has emerged as a significant framework for research within informal learning environments (Schauble, Leinhardt & Martin, 1997). This theoretical framework has emerged as important for museum research since it recognizes the contextual nature of learning within museums and recognizes the important role that culture, background, and prior beliefs and knowledge, as well as interactions within an informal learning environment, play in museum education (Salmon & Perkins, 1998). When employing social constructivist theories, the meanings that visitors make of their museum experiences are a critical part of museum learning. What

museums want to teach is only a contributing factor to the varying and highly personalized meanings visitors take away from their museum visit or program (Adams, et al., 2003). Social constructivism has emerged as the dominant model for understanding museum learning because it recognizes that a wide range of factors influence the meanings that museum visitors and museum-based program participants make, including not only the messages of the exhibitions, objects, and even museum staff but also cultural factors, the identity of the visitor, and interactions with others.

Falk and Dierking (2000) recognize the value of social constructivism in models of museum learning. As such, they developed the Contextual Model of Learning, which I apply in the Discussion section of Chapter 5 because of its relevance in understanding teacher meaning-making in Holocaust museums. This model takes into account the differing and socially constructed learning experiences of visitors and the various factors influencing their personal meaning-making. Their theory does not diminish the multifaceted, complex, and entangled nature of learning at museums (Falk & Dierking, 2000). In this model, the role of the learner is paramount and learning occurs in the exchanges among three separate but interconnected contexts: the personal context, the physical context, and the sociocultural context (Falk & Dierking, 2000).

The personal context involves the motivations and expectations of the museum visitor. Reasons for the visit and what one expects to experience and get out of a museum visit or program impact learning within the personal context. One research study found that adult visitors come to museums with very particular notions of what they

want to learn and what they expect to acquire (Tan et. al., 2008). The personal context also involves a visitor or program participant's interests and prior knowledge. A visitor's interests may determine what exhibits to focus on and which to ignore, and they may influence the meanings that are made from museum programs. Prior knowledge will influence the way a visitor understands an experience, particularly if that prior knowledge is held as a core belief, such as a long-held religious belief. In short, personal context takes into account the varying identities of visitors.

The physical context involves the setting in which the museum learning takes place. It accounts for the orientation of the learning environment, since all learning is connected to the environment in which it occurs (Falk & Dierking, 2000). What one learns, remembers, and deems important about an experience is strongly connected to the physical environment. Therefore, meaning is inevitably made within the confines and structure of a particular setting. Falk & Dierking (2000) stress, "All learning is influenced by the awareness of place" (p. 65) and, "the bond between the personal context (self) and the physical context (nonself) is a constant, stable basis of all thought" (p. 65). In professional development for teachers, the museum environment in which a program is occurring will impact the nature and content of the meanings made by participants. This includes all aspects of the environment, such as the exhibits, the museum design, the space used for professional development, and the website.

The sociocultural context refers to the idea that learning and knowledge are linked to a particular culture that is larger than the museum learning environment. This context

also includes the notion that learning is mediated by a visitor's interaction with others. Many studies found that adults typically come to museums with other adults, such as family or friends (Bitgood, 2002; Falk & Dierking, 2000; Hein 1998; Leinhardt & Knutson, 2004). In professional development in particular, teachers come to a museum as part of a highly specialized group (e.g., teachers or, in the case of the Museum of Jewish Heritage, Jewish school teachers or public school teachers), and membership in and interaction with that group mediates the learning that takes place. Professional developers and other presenters, such as Holocaust survivors, mediate learning as well. The sociocultural context is critical to understanding a museum experience as it "shapes the meaning that is made of the perceptions formulated by the individual and the community" (Falk & Dierking, 2000, p. 48).

In museum research today, understanding of visitors' learning experiences at museums is often built on the overlapping categories of the three domains of the Contextual Model of Learning (personal, physical, and sociocultural) (Adams et. al, 2003, Leong, 2003). These three contexts help the educational community understand how learning and making sense of the world occurs through "social interaction with others, through distributed meaning-making" (Falk & Dierking, 2000). One of the most common types of museum visitors is teachers because of their desire and need for content-based continual professional development and the unique collections and capabilities of museums to fill that need. Museums are increasingly playing a role in student and teacher education in a variety of school subjects, including the Holocaust.

Since there are multiple ways of knowing about the world and interpreting the past, the “public curriculum” (Vallence, 1995) -- that is, the particular perspective a museum employs in its exhibits -- reveals much about its positionality toward content and the ways in which it may seek to shape visitors’, teachers’, and students’ identities and senses of self. By understanding the meanings various types of visitors make, the educational community can learn how education at museums can be improved (Hein, 1998). Therefore, this study focuses on teacher meaning-making on the Holocaust at a Jewish heritage museum.

Museum Teacher Education

Museums have the potential to educate teachers in complex, specialized content and pedagogy, such as the Holocaust, which can be brought into actual classrooms. This potential is often unrealized. When museums provide teachers with professional development, museum educators focus on helping them learn about the area of information that is central to that museum (Marcus, 2008). Historically, most studies of museum learning have been focused on measuring the transmission of “*specific, predetermined* [italics found in original text] information, much as someone would test learning in a traditional classroom” (Falk, 1999, p. 260). But visitors often do not spend time at the museum thinking about the meanings they bring to what they learn or to their prior knowledge; this may not happen until long after they leave (Falk, 1999). This means that any study about museum education should be at least somewhat long-term

and must take into account the prior knowledge and a priori assumptions of the visitor. Most teacher-visitors or teacher-participants in professional development offerings at museums are there of their own free will and, like most museum visitors today, they are engaging in “free-choice learning – learning that occurs in an individual’s free time and that is motivated by choice rather than necessity” (Falk, 1999, p. 273). Falk and Dierking (1998) define free-choice learning as learning that takes place at one’s own pace, in no particular order, with no mandate or assessment, and the choice to include or exclude certain knowledge offered is at one’s will. Free-choice learning for the general public is on the rise, as it is for teachers, so museums will likely continue to play a critical role in public pedagogy and teacher learning, albeit with the continuing authority to present a particular narrative to the public (Falk, 1999).

A museum holds the role of a “powerful and legitimizing institution” for conveying a narrative about the past or a particular part of society “[as well as conveying its] own affirmation to hold such authority” (Trofanenko, 2008). Museums attempt to control the outcomes of visits through their collections, artifacts, storylines, and programming for teachers, students, and the general public. Even though museums are seen by the public as institutions that can be trusted, still very little is known about how learning occurs in museums for the public, teachers and students (Trofanenko, 2010). Falk and Dierking (1992) declared at the end of the twentieth century that it is critical for museums to articulate their role as educational institutions within the larger community

and that they should focus on showing that important learning takes place as a result of their exhibits and programs.

Over the past decade, because of the changing desires and needs of museum visitors, there has been noticeable shift in museums, transforming from places about education to institutions for learning (Falk, 2004; Hooper-Greenhill, 2003; Rennie and Johnston, 2004; Weil, 2002). Scholars have articulated what adult education for teachers should look like. Hodgson (1986) declared that it must not only convey new knowledge to teachers but also help them learn how to transmit their new learning in their classrooms. Cafarella (2002) concurs that transfer of learning is a key component to effective professional development. Many museum-based professional development programs, however, seem not to consider this important element. Marcus states, “My discussions with dozens of museum educators and hundreds of secondary social studies teachers suggest that content, rather than pedagogy or museum theory, is the primary focus of professional development.” (p. 66). However, some scholars (Castle, 2006; Marcus, 2008) believe that these cannot be taken apart and that professional development at museums should focus on both pedagogy and content knowledge to provide the most meaningful experience for teacher-participants.

Despite the intense focus on content, museums are often looked to for professional development for teachers because of their long-standing relationships with schools and their involvement with the educational community (Tal, Bamberger, & Morag, 2005). Museums have long been encouraged to use their resources to improve

educational practice in classrooms and results for student achievement (Cox-Petersen et al., 2003; Gilbert & Priest, 1997). The few scholars who have researched museum-based professional development have typically found positive results. In one science education study, Melber and Cox-Peterson (2005) investigated the impact of museum-based science professional development on 54 elementary school teachers. Using a mixed-methods approach that incorporated both qualitative and quantitative inquiry, including Likert-scale questionnaires, open-ended questionnaires, and additional follow-up interviews and questionnaires at both four to six months after participation and two years after participation, they found an “increased understanding of scientific content and scientific processes” (p. 111), “enhanced science instruction (content, pedagogy, and curriculum knowledge)” (p.113) and “increased awareness of museum resources due to museum-associated workshops” (p. 115). The authors recognize that their study provides only a limited amount of information about the ways in which museums can affect the professional practices and thinking of teachers. The results of this study suggest that if science educators can be impacted by museum-based science professional development, then conducting studies on social studies professional development informal learning sites (such as museums) may be worthwhile.

Some studies have examined what museum educators from various types of museums, including history museums, want to teach student visitors (see, for example, Brooks, 2004), but these studies do not address professional development for teachers. Museum-based professional development studies are very limited. Marcus (2008) noted

that history education is a particularly understudied area of scholarship compared with other school subjects within museum education research in general. He notes that while research has revealed quite a bit about the teaching and learning of history in the traditional classroom setting, the educational community knows little about the teaching and learning of history in the museum setting (Marcus, 2008). Although Marcus does not comment on the reason for this, and the causes are unclear, history education at museums may be less studied because the subject has fewer curricular mandates than other disciplines do nationwide (van Hover, 2008).

In one of the rare studies on museum-based history education professional development, Moe, Coleman, Fink, and Krejs (2002) investigated a teacher education program at the Utah Museum of Natural History using archaeology to teach ethics, character, and citizenship. Through museum-based activities, they used a problem-solving approach to learn about how to protect archaeological resources, teach ethics to students, and integrate the study of ethics into various curricular disciplines through archaeology. The authors reported that teacher-participants planned to incorporate more ethics into their individual curriculums through techniques learned at the museum-based workshops. Unfortunately, the report fails to meet the most basic methodological standards of qualitative research, and the work stands more as a descriptive journalistic report on what took place than an analysis of the meaning or impact of the workshops.

Overall, while research in the field of museum-based teacher education has found that myriad resources and learning opportunities exist for teachers, the field falls short in

developing theory that could enhance research (Dudzinska-Przesmitzki & Grenier, 2008). Despite exhaustive database searches, as well as corroborating conversations with numerous Holocaust museum education directors and scholars in the field, Holocaust-education professional development research studies at museums have not been found. This gap is particularly alarming considering that Holocaust museums all over the world provide various types of in-person and online teacher training and professional development opportunities, (e.g., The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, The Simon Wisenthal Center, Yad Vashem: The Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Israel, and the focus of this study, The Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust). Rarely, if ever, do these institutions study the impact of their work on teacher knowledge in complex Holocaust content beyond an end-of-workshop evaluation. Equally rare are empirical studies that examine the ways in which Holocaust museum educators approach professional development at all. Since these museums typically operate from a particularistic perspective on the Holocaust, studies like mine may reveal that the meanings teachers make may be influenced by a particular narrative and perspective afforded in Holocaust professional development.

Holocaust museums across the United States are an important force in public pedagogy. Although many museums are still highly authoritative in their presentations, the recent reworking of some modern museums has led them to “play a more central social role” (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007, p. 2) in identity formation that helps form cultural meaning. Holocaust museums put together their exhibits and professional programs to

string together a particular narrative about the Final Solution “which produce(s) views of the past and thus the present” (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007, p. 2). There are those who have suggested that the Holocaust simply cannot be represented because it exceeds humans’ capacity for understanding. And yet, today, with sixteen major Holocaust museums across the country, museum curators have created what one scholar calls the “post museum,” which signifies a “more sophisticated understanding of the complex relationships between culture, communication, learning, and identity that will support a new approach to museum audiences” (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007, p. 1). Such post museums are characterized not by antiquated models of final authority and permanence but by a changing and fluid model that is marked by increasingly complex relationships and an increased awareness of the power inherent in museums to shape various identities and meanings (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007).

Discussions and debates about representation and collective memory formation cannot remain theoretical when putting together museums and their educational programs (Linenthal, 1995). Each museum’s exhibits and programs, including professional development for teachers, invite visitors and attendees to construct knowledge about the Holocaust from a particular political and historiographic point of view. In that sense, the public pedagogy of the Holocaust at museums is not simply an objective activity but one that invariably takes place in relation to politics, power, and identity.

Increasingly there is a growing acknowledgement of the role that culture plays in identity formation (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Interpretation at and by museums is part of

the process of identity formation based on the relationship between the visitor or museum-based workshop participant and the material. This relationship may influence the meanings and pedagogical sense of the Holocaust that some professional development participants form, or solidify or omit from prior knowledge. Museum exhibits, video testimonies, artifacts, photographs, charts, and materials collectively form the learning that will take place and help inform the meanings that will develop for visitors at Holocaust museums. Such exhibits and museum programs are at once a process of representation and interpretation, which cannot be seen as unbiased. Certain realities are made known and others are left out. Museums use their collections and programs to design a narrative of the past and the present in light of their own cultural identity and the identity (or forming identities) of the visitor and participant. This may be especially true for teacher professional development programs such as those at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, because insight into how those questions are answered may influence not only the identity of the teacher-visitor but also the identities of their students.

Learning involves growing and shaping identities, or, as others have suggested, preserving one's own identity (Brown & Starkey, 2000). Learning is a process of meaning-making from the cultural context in which one is living. A teacher's personal becoming may or may not be shaped by the meanings they make as a result of participating in museum-based professional development. Little is known about the personal meanings made by teachers and the pedagogical understandings they acquire on

the Shoah at professional development at Holocaust museums. Even less is known about such topics at Jewish heritage museums in particular. Dudzinska-Przesmitzki and Grenier (2008) suggest that this reality extends well beyond Holocaust studies. They say that much work remains to be done in the field of museum education studies:

Overall, there is still a great deal of research needed to explore the learning experiences of adults in museums. It is up to those in adult education and museum studies to further examine how museums contribute to adult learning in nonformal and informal environments in order to draw from a theoretically informed knowledge base for museum practices (p. 20).

My study helps to fill the gap in professional development focused on the Holocaust because it reveals insight into how the Holocaust is represented and made knowable to teachers at the Museum of Jewish Heritage; it unearths the meanings that teachers make from their experiences there; and it analyzes the identities that form, change, or are solidified by participation in the museum's professional development programs. The next section will describe the methodology of the study.

CHAPTER III – METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methodology that was used in order to achieve an answer to the main research question and the subsidiary questions. It also describes how the study is bounded, how data was collected and analyzed, and steps that were taken to provide corroborating evidence (Stake, 1998) that increases the credibility of the data.

Rationale for Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative methods allow a researcher to study problems and issues by gaining detailed descriptions and analyses of phenomena. The objective of this study is to understand the meanings that teachers make from professional development at a Jewish Holocaust museum. My goal is to describe and analyze the approach taken by museum professionals and educators as it is understood by the participants and the presenters. This research follows the framework of an instrumental case study as described by Stake (1995, 2000) and Creswell (1998). In general, the case study methodology allows the researcher to conduct an in-depth analysis of a “bounded system” (Creswell, 1998, p. 61) that is limited by a particular time and location. For this study, the case is bounded by an in-depth analysis of professional development at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, through in-depth interviews with teachers and museum professionals, and through document analysis. The case is also bound temporally as it occurred over six months including six

sessions ranging in length from a half-day to six days. Case studies provide a unique opportunity for the researcher to bring the reader into the specific time and location that is the focus of the study with a high level of detail and clarity in order to descriptively render the case.

The instrumental case study design was best for this study because it allowed the researcher to use the professional development sessions, interviews with teacher-participants, and documents “instrumentally to illustrate the issue” (Creswell, 1998, p. 62). This approach uses a particular case in order to understand a phenomenon.

The instrumental nature of the case lies in the fact that I focused on one particular aspect, teacher meaning-making, rather than a range of other potential dimensions (e.g., teacher knowledge acquisition, the museum’s arrangement of space, or the pedagogical changes that flowed from the activity). My assumption here is that the momentary learning of professional development and the immediacy of meanings made are significant in the long-term pedagogical choices of the teachers, though the study does not explicitly examine this issue.

The instrumental case study design is effective for this research also because it allowed the researcher to study the problem in its natural setting through an in-depth analysis of thick descriptions (Clifford & Marcus, 1986). Those descriptions were created by drawing on multiple sources of information and data, including direct observations, participant observations, extensive interviews, surveys, and document analysis. Thick descriptions are embedded in the context of the case, meaning that they

arose naturalistically from the settings observed (Merriam, 1998). They take the reader into the setting that is the focus of the study by constructing a case record that is detailed enough to understand the case as “a unique, holistic entity” (Patton, 2002, p. 450).

The qualitative methods used in this instrumental case study are not concerned with moving data into “standardized measures” (Patton, 2002, p. 14) of preconceived themes or categories in order to produce statistical aggregation, but rather they focus on issues of describing and understanding the meaning teachers make from a professional development program devoted to the Holocaust. In order to do this, multiple perspectives and realities are accounted for, since the data was drawn from a variety of people, including teachers from various types of schools and educational contexts who have varying backgrounds and experiences. This yielded a holistic description of the case (Merriam, 1997). I used multiple sources of data to achieve this, including observations, document analysis, interviews, and survey questionnaires. Given the specificity and context, however, generalizations are not warranted from case studies such as these. Rather, they aim to inform and round out the understandings of those who engage in similar work.

The instrumental case study design also allows for reflexivity, an attitude of systematically recognizing and being cognizant of the process of knowledge construction, with a particular focus on the role I played as researcher (Geertz, 1973). Reflexivity is also the process of attempting to be conscious of the limits that are inevitable in any research, such as location, context, analysis, and the limits of human capacities in

observations and interviews, and to address those limits. Malterud (2001) notes, “A researcher’s background and position will affect what they choose to investigate, the angle of investigation, the methods judged most adequate for this purpose, the findings considered most appropriate, and the framing and communication of conclusion” (pp. 483-484).

In order to be reflexive, I kept a reflexive journal, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985). I made regular entries throughout my observation, data collection, and analysis about the methods I chose to use, and I reflected upon my own biases and interests that may have influenced the choices made. The journal assisted me in providing a deeper understanding of the data entered into the data set. It helped me to be able to explain points of data analysis and to more accurately construe a narrative. The journal became part of the process of data analysis. At the end of each week during data collection, I added an entry into my journal that logged who I spoke with, what we talked about and/or what I observed, with careful attention to my thinking about the process as it emerged. I also began organizing the data in ways that ultimately would help feed my data collection and analysis. Each week’s reflections allowed me to come to the next week more capable of collecting data and more reflective as I began the preliminary process of organizing the data into deeper meanings. Another step I took to foster reflexivity is to briefly report here in my study on my own background and identity in order to expose my beliefs and values as they may have influenced my research and conclusions.

Researcher's Role

In a case study design, the researcher “is the instrument of qualitative inquiry” (Patton, 2002, p. 566). Because of this, researchers must provide key information about their own backgrounds, experience, training, interests, and perspectives -- what may be broadly called positionality -- that helps the reader situate the location of the researcher and how it may shape the narrative. Researchers should identify information that could influence any stage of the research process, including data gathering, coding and analysis, and conclusions (Patton, 2002).

My study may be influenced by the fact that I am a Jewish social studies teacher in my eighth year at a public school where I primarily teach world history and a course I designed devoted to the study of genocide and human rights in the twentieth century and beyond. Approximately one quarter of that course is devoted to the Holocaust. I have spent time listening to Holocaust survivors recount their experiences, and I see them as integral to my students' Holocaust education. My teaching experience, and being a member of the Jewish community, allowed me to be seen by both the museum educators and the teacher-participants as a part of their professional community. It should be noted that at the professional development workshops designed exclusively for Jewish-school teachers, I may have been seen as peripheral to that professional circle since I do not currently, nor have I ever, taught at such a school.

My content knowledge and my secondary school teaching experience on the Holocaust improved my ability to personally relate to the participants and the presenters,

as well as to understand and interpret the professional development experience. During data collection, there were numerous instances when my firsthand knowledge of Judaism became important, such as during my interview with one of the orthodox teachers, who told me she could not answer my question about her personal opinions on a happening at the professional development session because it would be “lashon hara,” a sin (it literally translates to “evil tongue”). It has its roots in the Book of Leviticus in the Torah, and in Jewish practice it means that one is not allowed to spread gossip or speak critically about another person. Presumably, she believes that if she had offered her true opinion about the professional development session, it would constitute using speech for a negative purpose, which violates this Jewish principle.

My background in Judaism greatly improved my ability to relate to this teacher and her perspective, as well as to effectively communicate with her in order to understand the nature of her experiences at the professional development sessions. It is important to note that because of my observance of Jewish custom, I will use a dash in the place of the “o” whenever I write the word G-d. Another time when my background in Judaism was beneficial to this study was during one of my observations of a Holocaust professional development program for Jewish school teachers. A scholar hired by the Museum to teach content about the ghettos in Europe before and during the Holocaust often said words and phrases in Yiddish or Hebrew, sometimes without translation, which most of the audience (although not all) seemingly understood with ease. In just the first few minutes of his session about the Vilna Ghetto of occupied Poland, he used all the

following phrases and terms, none of which he defined: *shalom aleikhem* (may you be well), *rebe* (a rabbi), *H-Shem* (G-d), *Talmud* (central Jewish text of learning), and *shtetl* (little town). The scholar continued to infuse his talk with other Yiddish words and phrases, some of which he defined but not others. The lecture and discussion that followed would have been somewhat difficult to truly understand without knowing the paramount importance given to certain concepts in Jewish intellectual, spiritual, and cultural traditions, as well as the definitions of certain Yiddish and Hebrew words.

Conversely, my background and knowledge may also have led me to bring certain biases to the study or to the categories in the data analysis. I may have unintentionally missed some important happening(s) during my observations or not fully interpreted a teacher-participant's response during an interview because of my deep exposure to Holocaust content, and my pedagogical experience. To attempt to address this and improve external validity, I conducted multiple observations of professional development sessions over a six-month period on different days and at different times, and even in different settings (for example, my study includes observations of and interviews with teachers who participated in large-group professional development programs in an auditorium as well as programs exclusively for Jewish-school teachers in small classrooms). I also conducted multiple randomized interviews with multiple teacher-participants from a variety of schools and backgrounds.

Bounding the Study

Case studies seek to understand a system that is bounded by location, setting, participants, and time (Creswell, 1998). Boundaries are necessary so that a case can be observed and used to answer particular research questions. The bounding of this study potentially limits the generalizability of the conclusions that may be drawn; setting the boundaries of the case (such as where data would be collected, which and how many participants would be included in interviews, and which and how many professional development programs would be observed) was up to me as the researcher, and some data may have been left out. To account for the limits of the bounding of this case study, I followed Creswell's suggestion of ensuring "extensive verification" (Creswell, 1998, p. 213) through multiple data sources and data-checking methods, discussed later in this chapter.

Setting and Participants

This instrumental case study took place in New York City at the Museum of Jewish Heritage. The selection of the best possible case is critical to understanding the issue at stake in a research study (Yin, 2008). Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that such a selection is the single most important aspect in a case study. Cases should be selected that have "some typicality" and "*offer an opportunity to learn*" [italics found in original text] about the phenomena being examined (Stake, 2000, p. 446). My objective

in this research is to understand the meanings that teacher-participants make of the Holocaust at professional development sessions at a Jewish history museum. Thus, the study necessitated a site that is not only centered around Jewish history but also has a significant focus on the Holocaust and professional development.

The Museum of Jewish Heritage meets those requirements, especially since it runs approximately 15 long- and short-term professional development programs on the Holocaust, each year serving at least 500 teachers from public, private, and Jewish schools. This includes New York City teachers who attend the museum's professional development programs for New York City Department of Education-approved continuing-education credits. The specific professional development programs that are the focus of this study are three one-day programs and one three-day summer institute from the Shoah Teaching Alternatives in Jewish Education series for Jewish school teachers, the Annual Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Conference for all educators, and the six-day *Meeting Hate with Humanity* summer seminar for public school teachers. All of the programs were given in the spring and summer of 2011. Programs were specifically selected for their variety and balance as a representative sample of the various types of teachers in attendance and professional development programs offered (Stake, 1995).

Teacher-participants in this study are all social studies educators from both public and private schools in New York, as well as Holocaust educators and professional developers from the Museum of Jewish Heritage. All of the private school teacher-participants come from Jewish day or congregational schools, and all of the public school

teachers come from urban or suburban New York or New Jersey public schools. A total of nine teachers from all sessions were selected for the interviews based on their willingness to participate, as well as their school setting and experience, in order to have a balanced and representative sample (Stake, 1995). I ensured that there was a wide variation of teachers interviewed in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, social class, teaching experience in general and experience teaching the Holocaust in particular, type of school (public schools, religious schools, middle schools, high schools, et cetera), and religious affiliation.

Access to Site

Access to the site was granted after I had several meetings and discussions with the director of education at the Museum of Jewish Heritage to discuss the nature of this study and specific goals of my research. I also laid out a time frame and articulated my experiences that make me qualified to do this research. A formal written request for permission to do research was emailed on December 14, 2009, (Appendix A) and verbal approval was given on December 23, 2009.

Data Collection Procedures

This section describes the ways in which data was collected. The case study design demands broad data collection from multiple sources (Creswell, 1998). The goal of data collection was to complete an in-depth investigation to acquire a holistic picture

of the case (Feagin, Orum, & Sjoberg, 1991). Marshall and Rossman (2006) identify four methods for gathering data in qualitative research: participating in the setting, observing in-person, interviewing, and document analysis. I used direct observations, questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis. This choice was made because the objective of my study, which is to understand how teachers make meaning of the Holocaust in the context of professional development, was best achieved by creating thick descriptions of the phenomenon from surveys, observations, and document analysis, and through conducting in-depth interviews of both participants and museum educators. The data collection for this study was conducted from February 2011 through July 2011.

Observations

Observation is the cornerstone of qualitative research. It entails the “systematic noting and recording of events, behaviors, and artifacts” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 98). Naturalistic observations of professional development programs at the Museum of Jewish Heritage were conducted for this purpose. The observations were naturalistic because professional development programs were observed where and when they were regularly occurring, and I did not create nor manipulate their occurrence. I only observed professional development programs in the place and time of their happening, and I did not manipulate or change the professional development environment in any way. Four naturalistic observations were of professional development programs designed exclusively for Jewish-school teachers, which are part of ongoing Holocaust professional

development at the museum called Shoah Teaching Alternatives in Jewish Education, funded by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany - The Rabbi Israel Miller Fund for Shoah Research, Documentation and Education. Another professional development program I observed was the Annual Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Conference for Educators designed for all public, Catholic, and Jewish school teachers. The remaining professional development observations were of the *Meeting Hate with Humanity* six-day public school teacher summer institute. In order to gain full insight into the complexities of how the professional development took place in the context of the Museum of Jewish Heritage, no predetermined categories for observation were used. Rather, direct observations focused on holistic descriptions, which were used for thematic analysis. This direct approach allowed me to more fully understand the context of the professional development at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, and it allowed me to see things that might otherwise go unnoticed by participants or informants, or would not have come up in an interview had they not been identified during the observation.

Qualitative researchers seeking to understand a case in its natural setting should not intervene with the proceedings in any way (Stake, 1995). I recognize that it was impossible for me to completely disappear from the observation site as my presence was inevitably noticeable, but I made every attempt not to be involved with the proceedings of the professional development and, to the extent possible, I did not participate in program activities. The categorical themes arose naturalistically; no predetermined

categories were developed prior to observation and data analysis. The descriptions were recorded in field note data sheets (for an example, see Appendix B).

Survey Questionnaire

Voluntary anonymous survey questionnaires were given to teacher-participants at the conclusion of the professional development workshops (see Appendices C and D for examples). The strengths of surveys include “accuracy, generalizability, and convenience” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 126). Questionnaires asked respondents to assess their own level of accurate knowledge about the Holocaust before and after the professional development session, explain the extent to which the session did or did not assist them in understanding the complex topic of the session, explain what they learned as a result of the professional development and what they would have liked to learn that they did not, and how, if at all, they planned to use the professional development experience in their professional lives. These questions were revised after the completion of a pilot study on Holocaust professional development at the Museum of Jewish Heritage (Goldberg, 2010). Questions that did not reveal anything new or were not useful in answering my research questions were changed or deleted. One question that I asked during the pilot study was, “What other topics would you like to see covered in professional development?” While this question yielded some interesting ideas for professional development staff, it did not tell me very much about the meanings teachers attached to their experiences or almost anything about the nature of their experiences.

Therefore, this question was discarded. Another question I asked during the pilot study was, “How, if at all, will you use what you have learned at this conference in your teaching of the Holocaust? Please be specific and feel free to list multiple ways you will use or apply what you have learned.” This question revealed teachers’ preliminary thinking about the ways in which they may, if at all, make meaning from their experiences in their classroom practice in teaching about the Holocaust, and it revealed some of the meanings teachers attached to their professional development. I kept this question from my pilot study and used the insights that it revealed in my analysis of the data.

The benefit of the anonymous survey questionnaire is that it allowed me to reach a much larger sample of teacher-participants than would be feasible using only interviews. In fact, anonymous surveys can sometimes yield more accurate information than interviews because respondents may be more open to divulging truthful opinions. However, because of the brevity of the survey and because surveys in and of themselves do not necessarily represent broader phenomena, these were used to further triangulate the data and substantiate themes and patterns drawn primarily from direct observations, interviews, and document analysis.

Interviews

Creswell (1998) recommends five to ten interviewees as a guideline for a qualitative study. The guideline is only that, however, and the key criteria according to

Creswell is that when participants have exhausted the range of related ideas, or when nothing new is being learned by the researcher, the interviews are considered sufficient. For this study, nine teacher-participants and two museum educators were interviewed. Teachers and professional developers were interviewed extensively, until I was no longer learning anything new that was significant to the research questions (Creswell, 1998). I conducted three interviews of each study participant. This is the ideal number of interviews since, to some degree, the first meeting is as much about establishing a trusting relationship as it is about yielding data from the respondent (Weiss, 1994). By the time of the second interview, a greater bond formed between me and the respondent, and the respondent now had time to reflect on the topics discussed or may have been more aware of something surrounding the topics talked about and had new information to report (Weiss, 1994). The third interview allowed me as the researcher to go into greater depth and cover more areas. Weiss (1994) notes that more interviews than three will likely prove fruitless: “Fourth and fifth interviews are likely to produce a sense of diminishing returns” (p. 57).

Each interview followed a semi-structured format: I came with a list of potential questions but asked them in a flexible order and often changed their wording according to context (Gibson & Brown, 2009). My interview protocol followed Creswell’s (1998) design in that I prepared a small number of open-ended questions as a basis for the interview (Appendices E through J). Because of the emergent nature of the study, questions were adapted, added, and/or changed based on interviewee responses. I

followed a naturalistic format in that I allowed the interviews to drift from the original list of questions if I felt it would yield further rich data (Spradley, 1979).

Document Analysis

Curricular materials from the Museum of Jewish Heritage and handouts given during the professional development conferences were analyzed using content analysis. Holocaust curricular materials produced by the Museum of Jewish Heritage are limited in scope and number, but they helped to inform the study by further contextualizing the setting and triangulating the data.

Data Analysis Procedures

Consistent with the case study design, data analysis began by assembling the raw case data and constructing a case record. Upon completion of data collection, the case record was built by assembling all of my data from observation field notes, interview field notes, surveys, and documents into a single “comprehensive, primary resource package” (Patton, 2002, p. 449). This data was then sorted, organized, and edited for analysis. Analysis and interpretation was completed in four forms, including categorical aggregation, pattern creation, data coding, and description of the case (Creswell, 1998; Stake, 1995).

For categorical aggregation, I began by organizing the data into issue-relevant meanings that developed through immersion (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Data immersion allowed relevant patterns to be established and categories to be developed through extensive engagement with the text. Issue-relevant meanings grew from the data obtained by the participants themselves in the context of the study. Categories were sought that had both internal convergence and external divergence, meaning they needed to fit in with one another but be different from one another (Guba, 1978). To do this, I looked for repeating or similar statements from the field notes that exposed patterns and could be developed into categories. Any category developed must have internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity (Patton, 2002). This means that they must fit together in a logical way within a category and there must be clear and distinct differences between categories. To test for completeness, I followed Guba's (1978) four-part strategy, including integrability (ensuring categories are internally consistent and create a whole picture), inclusiveness of relevant data (ensuring that the categories reasonably include the data that was collected, including outliers), reproducibility (ensuring the categories and themes make sense in light of the data), and credibility (ensuring participants themselves would understand the categories).

Throughout the data-analysis phase, I wrote notes in the margins of my field notes and regularly wrote analytic memos to conceptualize my thoughts and insights (Maxwell, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994). I also kept a reflexive journal to reveal my own personal biases and openly acknowledge them rather than act as if they are not there. To

analyze and reduce the data into relevant themes for categorical aggregation, I developed a coding scheme that organized each piece of data from all of the sources. I was vigilant for both recurring regularities and outlier cases that did not fit in with other categories. When coding the data, categories and phrases grew from the language and understandings of the research participants (Bernard & Ryan, 1998). Data was read and analyzed multiple times for coding and categorizing purposes.

In order to assist the reader in getting as close to the data as possible, I provide thick descriptions of the professional development activities and include quotes from the interviews with teacher-participants and key informants. These steps also allow unique multiple perspectives and realities to be understood in the context of this study (Stake, 1995). To increase validity and reliability, methods and data sources were triangulated.

Triangulation

In order to increase internal validity and the reliability of the study, triangulation protocols were implemented. Methods and sources triangulation, theory/perspective triangulation, and member checking were used to increase confidence in the data analysis and the conclusions reached (Creswell, 1998; Patton, 2002). Methods and source triangulation came from using a variety of sources for data, including observations, interviews, surveys, and document analysis. Steps in that phase included comparing observation notes with interviewee responses, checking to see if an interviewee

responded the same way about the same topic asked at different times, comparing and contrasting the opinions of various types of teachers with those of the professional developers, and checking teacher and professional developer responses against institutional documents (though these are limited in number) (Patton, 2002).

Theory/perspective triangulation was implemented by examining the data from the different perspectives of participants and professional developers. To some extent, these two groups differed over the conceptualizations of the objectives, methods, and results of professional development programs on the Holocaust. In that sense, they represented divergent opinions that informed conclusions in my study. I also conducted member checking that involved allowing those who were interviewed and observed to review and comment on the data analysis in order to establish credibility (Ely et al, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Some participants were asked to read and comment on rough drafts of the conclusions and provide feedback and comments on content, language, or analyses (Stake, 1995).

IRB and Human Subjects Compliance

All institutional research requirements set forth by the Institutional Review Board of Teachers College and Columbia University were met. All participants were provided with the Informed Consent Form (Appendix K), which provided a description of the research that was conducted, the ways in which data was stored, the steps that were taken

to ensure confidentiality, the time involvement, and the ways in which data was used. Participants were also provided with a detailed description of the risks and benefits of this research. They were informed on the Informed Consent Form (Appendix K) as well as by me that their participation has the same amount of risk associated with holding a normal conversation. The possible benefits of the research are an increased understanding of the relationship between museum professional development programs and teacher meaning-making and pedagogy of the Holocaust. Participants were told that this study could lead to more effective professional development in general and on the Holocaust in particular. Participants were also informed that the data was used to complete this Ph.D. dissertation at Teachers College, Columbia University. I informed all the teachers and museum staff participants that I intend to share this research with them following my dissertation defense. All participants were provided with the Participant's Rights Form (Appendix K), and they were asked to sign it as an indication of their agreement to the terms set forth. I signed the Investigators Verification of Explanation to attest to that fact that I have faithfully explained the nature of the research and provided answers to any questions or concerns that participants had.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of participants was maintained through anonymous questionnaires and the use of pseudonyms. All participants' names in this study are fictional and no one other than me will know their true identities. Member checking through allowing some study participants to check for unintended errors in transcriptions was completed because

the detailed descriptions from some of the study participants may put their anonymity in jeopardy.

Data Management

Participants were informed that all interview and observation transcripts and field notes will forever remain private and available to no one other than the researcher. They are kept in a locked cabinet and/or on a password-protected computer and no one other than the researcher has access. All identities are kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms.

Use of the Data

All teachers and professional developers at the Museum of Jewish Heritage were informed that data collected in this study would be used to complete a doctoral dissertation at Teachers College, Columbia University. Participants were also informed that the results of this study may be used by others in the educational field, broadly defined.

Limits of the Research

This research followed an instrumental case study conceptual design and therefore only a small number of observations and interviews were conducted. This limits the generalizability of the results. Six professional development programs were observed and

9 teacher-participants and 2 museum-based professional developers were interviewed. Only two professional developers from the Museum of Jewish Heritage were interviewed, as that is the size of the non-secretarial professional development staff at the Museum of Jewish Heritage. This limits the extent to which results can be generalized to a larger population. In order to increase the credibility of the data, a wide variety of professional development programs were observed, and a wide variety of types of teachers were interviewed on as close to a randomized basis as was possible. Despite these protocols, given the time constraints and structure of all qualitative studies, generalizability is limited.

Furthermore, this study is limited by subjective interpretation and analysis. To account for this limitation, data sources were triangulated among direct observations, naturalistic interviews, survey questionnaires, and document analysis. This helped to increase the reliability and validity of the findings. Data was drawn from multiple sources, which provided a system of checks. For example, the data gathered from the observations provided a check for the data obtained during the interviews (Patton, 2002).

Interviews and observations also have their own set of limitations that could have affected the outcomes of the data. Interviewees may have offered answers that do not reflect their true feelings, because I did not ask the right questions, or because the interviewee chose to provide the answer that he or she thought that I wanted to hear rather than what he or she truly felt, or because the interviewee may have been uncomfortable discussing a particular topic (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). During the observations, I

may have missed an important happening or misunderstood something that was taking place.

In addition, since this study was restricted by time constraints, and a long-term longitudinal design was not feasible, it may reveal only part of the reality in terms of the impact the professional development has had on teacher meaning-making. Teachers' conceptions and perceptions of pedagogical and content knowledge change over time due to the very human nature of educational practice. This study was not designed to track increasing or decreasing Holocaust consciousness of teachers over time, and therefore the applicability of the findings and analysis discussed in the next two chapters for designing future professional development on the Holocaust or other topics may be somewhat limited to certain contexts.

IV -- FINDINGS

In this section I provide an analysis of the research findings. I start by providing an overview of the elements of each of the professional development programs analyzed in this study. Next I describe the context of the Museum of Jewish Heritage, to provide an understanding of the location in which the professional development took place. I then provide an analysis of the triangulated data obtained over the six-month period in order to answer the main research question that this study considers: *What meanings do teacher-participants make in Holocaust professional development at a Jewish heritage museum in a mandate state?*

Overview of the Professional Development Programs

During the time of this study, the Museum of Jewish Heritage provided professional development programs intended for public school teachers, Jewish-school teachers, and mixed programs for both. All programs were for teachers who include the Holocaust in their program of study, and the overwhelming majority of teachers in attendance were social studies teachers. All programs were free of charge, except for fees mandated by the New York City Department of Education for programs that award continuing education credit for New York City public school teachers (p-credit). No prerequisites were required to attend any program.

The Museum of Jewish Heritage provides a comprehensive program on teaching the Holocaust to educators from various types of institutions. For the purposes of this study, six professional development sessions of varying lengths and focuses were observed from the overall Holocaust teacher education professional development program. Tables 1, 2, and 3 summarize the titles, number of participants, intended audience, and content of each program observed in professional development sessions for Jewish-school teachers, public school teachers, and both, respectively. Table 4 provides descriptions of the study participants.

Table 1 describes each of the Jewish-school programs in this study. These were the most frequent type of program at the Museum, and they were most in line with its Jewish identity. They were highly specific in their content, and none provided an introduction to Holocaust education generally.

Table 1

Observed Professional Development Programs for Jewish School Teachers at the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust.

Program Title	#	Audience	Topic Summary
The Holocaust in Literature	40	Jewish school teachers	This one-day professional development program discussed the use of literature in Holocaust education through presentations by Alexandra Zapruder, author of <i>Salvaged Pages: Young Writers' Diaries of the Holocaust</i> , and Jane Yolen, author <i>The Devil's Arithmetic</i> . This professional development program was led by the Director of Education of Jewish Schools at the Museum.

Germany Faces its Past	31	Jewish school teachers	This one-day professional development program addressed the significant steps Germany has taken to address its Nazi past. Teachers learned about the reconstruction of Germany since the War until the present day, about the complex relationship among Israel, Germany, and the United States, about how German students learn about the Holocaust, and about some of the documentation left by the Nazis currently held in Berlin. This professional development program was led by the Director of Education of Jewish Schools at the Museum and included presentations from scholars, the former Director of the Berlin Documentation Center, and the current Director of Education at the Wansee Villa (the mansion where Nazi leadership finalized plans for the Final Solution, outside Berlin).
The Holocaust in Slovakia	46	Jewish school teachers	This one-day professional development program discussed Jewish life in Slovakia before and during the Holocaust, as well as the activities of The Working Group (a group of resisters in Slovakia who tried to stop deportations to Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp). This professional development program was lead by the Director of Education of Jewish Schools at the Museum and included presentations from scholars on Slovakia and a survivor from the Slovak city of Kosice, as well as use of the Museum's special exhibit on Slovakia.
Four Ghettos	62	Jewish school teachers	This three-day professional development program provided an intensive study of the ghettos of Warsaw, Vilna, Lodz, and Terezin. The very different histories of each were examined, as was the role of the Jewish leadership and Nazi policies in each ghetto. Film, historical analysis, and testimony were used to train the teacher-participants. This professional development program was led by the Director of Education of Jewish Schools at the Museum, and presentations were given by scholars and survivors of ghettos.

Table 2 describes the public school program in this study. This program was attended by a limited number of participants, compared with the number attending Jewish school programs. It included the most extensive discussion of teaching strategies of any professional development offering at the museum. Teachers in this program came from a wide variety of backgrounds, and their different identities resulted in different meanings made of their experiences.

Table 2

Observed Professional Development Programs for Public School Teachers at the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust.

Program Title	#	Audience	Topic Summary
Meeting Hate with Humanity: Life During the Holocaust	11	Public school teachers	This six-day professional development program provided an extensive overview of the Holocaust and the Museum resources for teachers. Jewish life before, during, and after the Holocaust was addressed. Some limited pedagogy in terms of how to teach the Holocaust was included in these sessions. Six and one quarter hours of testimony from survivors, some who survived concentration camps and others who avoided them by hiding, were used as an instructional tool. A survivor from the Rwandan genocide also spoke. Teachers engaged with five Holocaust scholars, including the founding Director of Collections and Exhibitions at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, a scholar from Yad Vashem (the Holocaust museum in Israel), and a law professor who sits on the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, among others. Teachers also spent more than six hours learning in the Museum's galleries, practiced each of the Museum's online teacher tools, and created their own Museum gallery tours. This

			professional development program was lead by the Director and Assistant Director of Education at the Museum of Jewish Heritage.
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Table 3 describes the one program offered for all types of teachers in this study. This program is offered least frequently. Given the large size of the group that attended, there was little space for teacher interaction. The topic was highly specific in its content, and no pedagogical experts or teachers presented. This program is always funded and attended by a Holocaust survivor who, to some degree, always gives powerful emotional testimony related to her survival.

Table 3

Observed Professional Development Programs for All Types of School Teachers at the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust.

Program Title	#	Audience	Topic Summary
The 12 th Annual Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Conference for Educators	185	All teachers	This one-day professional development program discussed medical professions and the Holocaust, especially eugenics and the abuse of medicine by the Nazis for so-called “research” purposes. The ethical ramifications of Nazi medical experiments since World War II were also addressed. This professional development program was lead by the Director of Education at the Museum and included presentations from scholars and a Holocaust survivor.

Table 4 provides descriptions of the public and Jewish school teachers who were interviewed in this study, including their names, personal and professional backgrounds,

and what and where they teach. As stated previously in the Methodology chapter, all names of interviewed study participants have been changed to protect their identity.

Table 4

Study Participant Descriptions

Name	Background	School Type	Teaching Experience
Adina	Identifies herself as a reform Jew. She regularly attends programs on the Holocaust at the Museum and elsewhere. Has a master's degree in Elementary Education and extensive experience in Jewish education.	Jewish congregational Hebrew school	26 years as 7 th - and 8 th - grade Hebrew school teacher at a Jewish congregational school. Teaches the Holocaust as a part of her Hebrew school classes.
Ashley	Identifies herself as a non-practicing Catholic. Has international teaching experience in South and Central America. Has never attended a program on the Holocaust anywhere. Has a master's degree in Secondary Education.	New York City public high school	9 years as 9 th - and 10 th - grade World History teacher
Bob	Identifies himself as Catholic. Has never attended a program on the Holocaust anywhere. Has a master's degree in Secondary Education. Has attended many Advanced Placement institutes run by the College Board.	New York City public high school	10 years primarily as Advanced Placement American History and World History Teacher
Halle	Identifies herself as a practicing Modern	Jewish orthodox day	5 years as social studies and

	Orthodox Jew. Has attended more than a dozen programs on the Holocaust at the Museum of Jewish Heritage and at other museums and institutes. Has a master's degree in Secondary Education and has completed some post-graduate work on the Holocaust.	school	Holocaust teacher
Mrs. Gold, Director of Education	Identifies herself as non-regularly practicing Jew. Has no special degree or training in the Holocaust. Holds a master's degree in Elementary Education.	Taught at a New York City public school	10 years as an elementary school teacher
Dr. Greenberg, Director of Jewish Education	Identifies himself as a regularly practicing orthodox Jew. Follows all laws of being Kosher and strictly follows Jewish orthodox laws, traditions, and customs. Holds a Ph.D. in Jewish History. Has extensive expertise in Judaic thought, law, and history. No special training or coursework on the Holocaust.	Taught at a private Jewish day school	0.5 of a year as a secondary school Judaism teacher
John	Identifies himself as non-religious. Has never attended a program on the Holocaust. Has a master's degree in Secondary Education.	New York City juvenile detention center school	11 years as a World History and American History teacher to incarcerated students
Neil	Identifies himself as a conservative Jew. Has attended programs on the Holocaust regularly for over 30 years. Has a	Teacher and administrator at a public school in the suburbs of	31 years as a social studies teacher, Holocaust elective teacher, and partly as the Social

	master's degree in Secondary Education and School Building and District Leadership.	New York City	Studies Department Chair
Max	Identifies himself as Christian. Has never attended a program on the Holocaust. Has a master's degree in Secondary Education.	New York City public high school	8 years primarily as a regular-level and honors-level American and World History Teacher
Sharon	Identifies herself as an extremely orthodox Jew. Has attended programs on the Holocaust regularly for more than 21 years. Has a master's degree in Jewish Education and also authors materials for a private Holocaust curriculum project.	Ultra-orthodox male-only private Jewish day school	20 years experience as a social studies, religion, and Holocaust studies teacher
Steven	Identifies himself as a reform Jew. Has attended and led programs on the Holocaust regularly for 39 years. Has a master's degree in Secondary Education.	New York City public high school and Jewish reform Hebrew school	39 years as a social studies teacher covering all social studies courses and a Holocaust elective. Considers himself one of the first Holocaust elective teachers in the United States. Also has 46 years experience teaching Holocaust and Judaism at a congregational Hebrew school.

In the next section, I provide an overview of the key elements of each type of professional development offered.

Jewish School Programs

Professional development programs for Jewish school teachers are the type of teacher training programs offered most frequently by the Museum of Jewish Heritage. According to the Director of Jewish Education, since he took over that post five and a half years ago, there have been 27 programs of this nature, not including programs intended for all school teachers that many Jewish school teachers choose to attend. Each professional development training session is focused on a different topic, and there have been no repeated topics to date. Also according to the Director of Jewish Education, three-quarters or more of workshop attendees are repeat attendees, some attending a dozen times or more. Workshops are always held at the Museum of Jewish Heritage.

Jewish school teachers who participate in Holocaust teacher training programs come from different types of Jewish schools and typically teach social studies. The majority of teachers come from Jewish day schools, also known as Yeshivas, located throughout the five boroughs of New York City. All of these schools emphasize Talmudic studies but vary in their approaches and student populations. Teacher-participants largely come from girls' high schools that are affiliated with the Haredi (traditionalist orthodox) Beis Yaakov movement. Some teachers also come from modern orthodox Jewish day schools, which include a combination of non-religious curriculum, similar to that of public schools, and religious Talmudic education. A few teachers come from congregational schools, which are supplementary educational institutions that students attend after school and on weekends and typically either follow conservative or

reform Judaism. A few other people sometimes attend these workshops, such as Rabbis, Holocaust survivors, Museum gallery educators (docents) and friends and relatives of one of the teachers. Nearly all teacher-participants are not new teachers and are typically in their 40s or older. The reasons for this are unclear, but these programs are taught at a fairly advanced level and therefore may not attract beginning teachers. It may also be that Holocaust education is often offered as a high school elective, to which early-career teachers may not be assigned.

Teachers in these workshops approach Holocaust education from a different perspective than that of typical public school teachers in that the religious aspect and meaning of the genocide for the Jewish community during and after the Holocaust is stressed. The content of the workshops also differs to some extent in that these courses are not intended as general introductory courses to Holocaust education; they are taught at the highest academic level of all professional development at the Museum. In practice in the sessions I observed, this meant more time spent on academic lectures -- typically by professors from premier universities who tended to focus on one very narrow aspect of the Holocaust, such as one ghetto or one group of resisters -- than on teaching strategies.

These experts tended to assume that the teachers in the audience had substantial background on the Holocaust. That is not to say that new Holocaust educators at Jewish schools are not welcome, but rather that the programs are designed to fit in with each other over a long period of time on the assumption that after a particular teacher has attended many sessions, he or she will have a more complete understanding of the history

of the Holocaust and its religious meanings. In other words, professional development sessions (even multi-day) for Jewish school teachers were not designed to be an overview of the Holocaust but rather to cover one very specific topic during one session because attendees are presumed to know the overview.

Professional development programs were held in a classroom space that was not adorned with any pictures or design that enhanced its simple appearance, though the rooms were comfortable – bright and not typically cramped. The space used for teacher education was designed for learning in the 21st century as it was equipped with computer technology, projection screens, internet, and a podium with a microphone. Teachers sat around square tables with four to five seats each. This style of seating in many ways engenders mutual learning and dialogue between professional development participants. In every public or Jewish school professional development session observed in this study that was held in this type of room, teachers at the tables constantly engaged in discussion related to the topic of the sessions largely because they were forced by the table design to face each other. Had they been sitting in auditorium-style rows, it is unlikely so much discussion and professional collaboration would have taken place, other than perhaps with people sitting next to them.

In addition, classrooms were located adjacent to the Teacher Resource Center, which provided internet-connected computers for Holocaust research and an extensive resource library of several thousand Holocaust-related books and scholarly works, videos, and curricular materials (authored by the Museum as well as by outside individuals and

organizations). Teacher-participants teach social studies or history, though occasionally other teachers attend as well.

Jewish school programs always include lectures from three or four well-respected scholars from all over the world and, typically, some combination of a survivor presentation and/or an independent visit to the Museum's permanent or special exhibitions. The lecture-oriented design of this professional development session does not take into account the design of the seating nor use it to advantage by allowing space and time for structured interaction among the educators. Instead, the seating arrangement seems to come from nothing more than the furniture that happens to be in that room. To the extent possible, topics are chosen that fit in with certain exhibits the museum is displaying for a limited time. Some sessions include a brief discussion at their conclusion about teacher-participants' thoughts on how to include what they learned in their classroom instruction, though these are not guaranteed or led by a classroom teacher.

Public School Programs

The Museum of Jewish Heritage has been providing professional development programs for public school teachers since its opening in 1997. All programs are held in classrooms onsite at the Museum. Programs for public school teachers include a few single-day workshops held throughout the school year, typically on public holidays, when the New York City public schools are closed and teachers have a greater ability to attend. In addition, two multi-day programs are offered each year over a six-day period with 36

hours of instruction. These programs are approved by the New York City After-School Professional Development Program (ASPDP) for three p-credits, which are needed for salary advancement and, for some, to maintain one's teaching license. Not all teachers are New York City school teachers, and the professional development credits awarded vary depending on the requirements of different school systems and districts. New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) requirements for ASPDP-approved programs influence the structure and nature of the professional development. This includes, for example, requiring the length of the program to be 36 hours, requiring that no lecture last more than 20 minutes without a breakout session or an activity of some kind, requiring approximately two written assignments that are evaluated through the use of rubrics, requiring pedagogical discussions to take place throughout the program, and requiring observations of professional development programs by ASPDP evaluators. The implication of having these requirements only for the programs for public school teachers may be that the Museum presumes that the Jewish school teachers do not need pedagogical discussions, activities, or assessments since they are more likely to have a strong motivation and knowledge base. It may also be that the Museum staff does not agree with this professional development methodology for any teacher but is forced to implement these requirements for public school teachers due to government regulations.

Public school programs observed in this study were led by the Director and Assistant Director of Education at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, as well as a multitude

of Holocaust scholars from universities and from the exhibition staff at the Museum. In addition, these programs included testimonies from Holocaust survivors.

Programs for All Teachers

The most infrequently presented type of professional development training at the Museum of Jewish Heritage is a mixed program intended for all school teachers. Most programs at the Museum are designed exclusively for either Jewish school teachers or public school teachers. The occasional mixed programs, where all teachers are invited to attend, typically happen only once a year, and attendance is usually upwards of 175 teachers from New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut private and public schools. The majority of these teachers are social studies or history teachers, but other teachers, such as English teachers, attend as well. Also in the audience are members from the Museum's Board of Directors and a few other interested people from the public, such as teachers' spouses. Professional development programs of this nature are held after school for four to five hours in the Edmond J. Safra Hall, the main auditorium at the Museum. The impressive room is designed for various public programs. Raised cherry-colored wood panel walls, dark maroon seats and carpeting, as well as a high vaulted ceiling and a large stage create an atmosphere that immediately implies that happenings of importance take place in this space. For professional development, the design of the space also means that unless there are breakout sessions, there will be little to no

interaction with presenters as the space precludes easy face-to-face interaction among participants.

The focus of mixed programs is not on pedagogical training. Instead, the focus is on large-group instruction from scholars in the field. The main and usually only mixed program is the Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Annual Conference for Educators. Fanya Gottesfeld Heller survived the Holocaust with the help of two Christian rescuers and has spent much of her life devoted to Holocaust education. She personally funds this conference each year. Her financial backing influences the nature of the conference in that she must approve the topic and she specifically requests scholarly presentations from well-respected experts from around the world whom she must also approve. Her work on Holocaust education for both students and teachers was recognized in 1998 when the New York State Board of Regents awarded her the Louis E. Yavner Citizen Award, typically given to an educator who makes exceptional contributions to Holocaust or human rights education in the state.

The Annual Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Conference for Educators has been in existence for 12 consecutive years, and plans continue to be made for future conferences. The professional development conference typically includes an introduction by Dr. David Marwell, the Director of the Museum of Jewish Heritage, followed by Fanya Gottesfeld Heller herself speaking on the importance of high-quality Holocaust education for students and respected scholarly Holocaust instruction for teachers. This is followed by brief statements about upcoming scholarly presentations by the Director of Education at

the Museum. Then two or three scholars speak about their expertise. Little mention is made of applying the knowledge they provide to classroom practice, likely because none of them are or have been secondary school educators. Mostly they are professors at universities.

The entire structure of mixed programs is very similar to several graduate school lectures in a large class given one after the other. The session is followed by a fully catered kosher dinner in the Museum's ballroom, where voluntary unguided discussion sometimes takes place about the content of the professional development. Mixed programs are the rarest type of professional development at the Museum of Jewish Heritage. At all of the other Holocaust Museums in the United States, it is the most common. This is likely because the Museum of Jewish Heritage is the only Holocaust museum that is charged with exclusively representing the Jewish perspective of the Holocaust and therefore it has a unique ability to help Jewish school teachers answer more theological questions about the Shoah that are applicable to their private religious school curriculums.

The Museum of Jewish Heritage has programs specifically for public school teachers, Jewish school teachers, and, on occasion, all teachers. The nature of the programs varies based on the identity of the teachers and the schools in which they teach the Holocaust. In varying the content, the museum professional development staff recognizes, at least to some degree, how different types of teachers interpret the content and events of the professional development program may influence the ways in which

their learning will become a part of their professional practice. They demonstrate awareness that different teachers will translate the meanings of Holocaust programs differently. In order to understand the environment in which professional development on the Holocaust in my study was conducted, below I describe the context of the Museum of Jewish Heritage.

The Museum of Jewish Heritage - Background and Context

Since 1997, the public memory of the Holocaust in the New York metropolitan area has largely been entrusted to the curators and educators at The Museum of Jewish Heritage. The Museum operates with the dual purpose of educating the public about Jewish life in the 20th century and remembering the Holocaust. As one of only 16 Holocaust museums nationwide, and the only substantial one in the New York City area, it is entrusted with what Langer (2004) refers to as “the custody of the public memory of the Holocaust” (p. 39). Fifty years earlier, the cornerstone had been set for the building of a memorial to the Holocaust in New York City. Controversy, disagreements, lack of funding, delays, changing government officials, and political problems plagued the project nearly from its inception.

Not until 1981 when New York City Mayor Edward Koch, a leader in the New York Jewish community, established a Holocaust task force and then a memorial commission did more serious plans for a Holocaust memorial begin to take shape (Saidal,

1996). Even then the problems continued, but the project moved along and many wealthy New York Jewish community leaders and philanthropists joined the effort. After initial hesitation, Governor Mario Cuomo eventually gave his support in the early 1990s and helped move plans for a memorial through the complicated arena of New York City and New York State politics. Ultimately, an agreement was reached to build a Holocaust memorial in New York City at its current location in Battery Park City on the southern tip of Manhattan Island. A groundbreaking ceremony was held on October 16, 1994 (Remember the Women Institute, 2003). It should be noted that teachers do not have access to this background information on the Museum of Jewish Heritage as the Museum does not document its founding either in its exhibit or on its website. Unless a teacher individually decides to do extensive research on the founding of the Museum on his or her own, he or she would not be aware of the politics surrounding its beginning.

Even with construction under way, questions remained about how this museum would memorialize the Holocaust and 20th century Jewish history. Museum designers and curators for any project have to make decisions about what perspective they will present. For example, Yad Vashem, the Israeli Holocaust museum, presents the Holocaust from a Zionist perspective that supports the State of Israel as a Jewish state. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., takes a different approach; it “not only tells the story about America’s role in the Holocaust but provides a lesson in how to be a good citizen in the U.S. today” (Crysler & Kusno, 1997, p. 52). The viewpoint of the Museum of Jewish Heritage was, not surprisingly, influenced by the

large Jewish population and Holocaust survivor population in New York City; therefore the museum has a “Jewish slant” (Saidal, 2006. p. 225), meaning the narrative of the museum exhibits tends to shape the history of the Holocaust from the perspective of Jews rather than all victims of the Nazi genocide.

At the Museum of Jewish Heritage, remembrance of the event is at the center of the experience. Upon immediately entering the exhibit hall, visitors encounter two biblical quotes: “Remember Never to Forget, Deuteronomy” and “There is Hope for Your Future, Jeremiah.” These quotes demonstrate from the outset that one of the purposes of the Museum is to remind visitors to always remember what is possible when hate leads to the most extreme form of human behavior. These quotes also reference the idea that by remembering the past, even such a horrific one as the Holocaust, the future of the Jewish people can be maintained.

The notion of a living memorial is a fairly new concept in the museological world that largely emerged with the opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1993. The Museum of Jewish Heritage is intended to assure that the public not only never forgets the painful history of the past, but also that they take an active role towards building a more prosperous future that takes the lessons the museum is conveying and applies them to the modern world afterwards. Unlike a traditional museum, this Museum is intended to be a place that educates the public on the history of the past and also provides them with a moral education that enlivens them with a sense of moral purpose towards being part of the effort to eradicate the social conditions that contributed to the

Holocaust. In other words, the Museum also fulfills an educative function to learn the meaning and moral lessons of the history that they see as important. Whether this is actually possible is a question up for debate.

Over the last twenty-years there has been an international proliferation of memorial museums devoted to the Holocaust, both at the sites of trauma (like at concentration camps) and also in places geographically far removed from the event like in the United States. This represents a shift towards a trend for museums to not simply celebrate triumph or military victory, but rather to expose memory of trauma and destruction and memorialize the victims so as to be able to move forward and work towards a brighter future (Levy & Snaider, 2006).

At the Museum of Jewish Heritage, remembrance is at the core of the experience. For them it is what each visitor must do in order to memorialize those who suffered and those who perished. Many museums, “remember events according to the hue of national ideals, the cast of political dicta” (Young, 1993, vii). “Memory is never shaped in a vacuum; the motives of memory are never pure” (Young, 1993, 2). Teachers and students, neither of whom were there, “share instead the forms of memory” (Young, 1993, p. xi) that are interpreted and filtered to yield particular meanings and emotions. All museums to some extent are driven by political forces, but The Museum of Jewish Heritage in particular, like all Holocaust Museums, is especially so given the sensitive and traumatic nature of its content. Because of this, Zolberg (1998) coined the phrase

“contested sites of remembrance” to refer to power of politics in influencing Holocaust museums, which could include The Museum of Jewish Heritage.

The Museum is divided into three floors organized as Jewish Life a Century Ago, The War Against the Jews, and Jewish Renewal. Each floor presents Jewish history through the many lives and stories of the Jewish people who experienced it. The story of the Holocaust is understood as a Jewish experience. In his foreword to the official book about the Museum’s collection, Museum Director Dr. David Marwell confirms this and states that at the Museum,

Visitors encounter Nazism’s attempts to extinguish a culture and a people. The Museum focuses on illustrating the Jewish peoples humanity, dignity, and spiritual resistance when confronted with the threat of execution...It illustrates the spiritual resistance that allowed the Jewish people to live and go on to repair the community and the world at large” (Marwell, 2002, p. xi-xiii).

As part of their mission of learning, the Museum today offers many professional development opportunities to at least 500 public and private school teachers each year. These originally began at The Center for Holocaust Studies at Brooklyn College under the leadership of Dr. Yaffa Eilach, a Holocaust survivor who went into hiding to escape the Nazis, and these original professional development programs later merged with the Museum of Jewish Heritage (Eliach, 2008). The Museum’s teacher professional development program now includes the Shoah Teaching Alternatives in Jewish Education series, which are primarily designed for Jewish congregational and day school teachers, programs for public school teachers, programs for Catholic school teachers, and programs for all teachers which sometimes award continuing education credit from the

New York City Department of Education. In the next section I analyze the findings of the data that was collected in the context in order to answer the main research question.

Analysis of the Data

In this section, I analyze the data obtained from observations, interviews, survey questionnaires and documents to understand the meanings teachers made from professional development on the Holocaust. Ellsworth (2005) suggests that it may be useful to look at the pedagogy at places of learning, which could include such a place as The Museum of Jewish Heritage, “not in relation to knowledge as a thing made but to knowledge in the making” (p. 1). She suggests that, “By focusing on the means and conditions, the environments and events of knowledge in the making, it opens an exploration into the experience of learning itself” (p. 1-2). In the traditional view, learning at museums is restricted to the category of the knowledge visitors gain through reading and seeing the museum exhibits.

In a postmodern frame there is a shift to meaning-making that occurs individually and collectively within the museum and therefore a more active model is necessary for maximum pedagogical engagement. All learning is to some extent based on the environment as it takes place in relation to a particular space and place at a particular time. How learning occurs within the particular space of my study is captured through understanding how the meanings teachers made of the Holocaust and of Holocaust

pedagogy may have been influenced by the Jewish nature, memorial nature, and museum nature of the professional development space. Learning in this study took place within the overlapping domains of these three characteristics of the space, as well as through the influence of other personal, cultural, and social factors. Museum tours, the backgrounds of the Museum professional developers and hired experts, the approach of museum exhibits and the nature of professional development content are all included in the data to further understand teacher meaning-making within this specialized context. From this study, three categories of meanings emerged, namely (1) the hopeful narrative, (2) identity, and (3) the emotional narrative of the Holocaust.

(1) The Hopeful Narrative

“It is so interesting hearing of how instrumental the US was for Jewish immigrants. Just another reason why it’s a great country.”

- Bob, Museum of Jewish Heritage Professional Development Participant

Common throughout professional development programs at the Museum of Jewish Heritage was the attention paid to placing bravery and hope, rescue and righteousness, and surviving and altruism prominently within the story of Holocaust history and the manner in which teachers received this narrative. In teaching the barbaric behavior of the Nazis and the horror of the resulting genocide, the Museum also wishes

for teacher-participants to bring the heroic actions of individuals into their classroom practice. In other words, Holocaust education is not all about death and despair. At present, throughout the United States the story of the Holocaust is in a state of constant change in popular culture, and how the Museum of Jewish Heritage engages teachers with that story was found in this study to impact the meanings teachers make about the Holocaust, how they understand it, and the ways in which they design lessons for students.

The seemingly endless ubiquity of the Holocaust and Nazi imagery in popular culture through memorabilia, Hollywood films, books, and Museums shape Americans views of the Holocaust, which all-too-often grossly overemphasize the noble actions of an individual which can make the Holocaust less tragic and more palatable. While not an explicit aim of the Museum, and while Museum educators did not express a desire to explicitly implement a hopeful narrative of the Holocaust, data reveals an approach to teacher training at the Museum that focuses on the horrifying history while at the same time spotlighting daring behavior of individuals whose moral actions saved their lives or the lives of those around them. This approach often leads to teachers making meanings of the Holocaust that were hopeful in nature by lessening the burden of the tragedy through personalizing the Holocaust and by highlighting rescuers and resistance.

Personalizing the Holocaust

One common place where teacher-participants were able to encounter individual stories of triumph and courage during professional development programs at the Museum of Jewish Heritage was in visits to the Museum's galleries. For example, during the *Holocaust in Slovakia* teacher professional development program for Jewish school teachers, participants visited the *Last Folio* special exhibit which included modern photographs taken by Yuri Dojc of Jewish communities throughout Slovakia. The centerpieces of this exhibit were his photographs of Jewish schools and synagogues in Bardejov, where almost no one has entered since the residents were taken to concentration camps in 1942. On a visit to the buildings in Bardejov, Dojc's colleague picked up a prayer book stamped with the name Jakub Deutsch, Dojc's grandfather. After teacher-participants saw the book in the special exhibit, they then entered a narrow hallway lined with photographs of individuals, mostly in their 80s and 90s, who survived the Holocaust in Slovakia. In the exhibit teachers expressed that they found it inspiring that this rare book would be found by the victim's grandson. But in this exhibit, which was the only portion of the Museum visited by teacher-participants at the *Holocaust in Slovakia* professional development session, there were no corpses, no gas chambers, no *Einsatzgruppen* (mobile killing squads), and no death overtly visible.

The message of the exhibit is about how time has virtually stood still in these Jewish towns in Slovakia until this photographer "discovered" them. There is a 15-minute video that plays on continuous loop where survivors tell their memories of life in

Slovakia before, during, and after the Holocaust. Teachers expressed that they were moved by the video testimonies of survival. The moral lesson of paramount importance for most teachers in this study is that students should see that you can survive and there is a hope for the future. Teacher-participants who visited this exhibit focused on a representation of the town that emphasized the photographer's discovery and the photographs of the very few who lived. The stories of the innocent victims was largely left out.

In light of this, what are teachers to take away from this experience which will guide their practice? One congregational school teacher, Adina, brought her 7th and 8th grade students to the exhibit after the professional development program. She said, "I had brought my kids up there. The film on the floor was very helpful. They took the time to watch it. What caught their attention in this exhibit is that this guy found a book that belonged to his grandfather and he decided to trace back the book. They were shocked." She said that she gave students a "scavenger hunt with questions" and then "I turned them loose with the chaperones." She said that beyond taking her kids to the *Last Folio* exhibit, she may add in a little more information about the Holocaust in Slovakia, especially the testimony of those who survived for their ability to fascinate students and allow them to learn about the Holocaust without running the risk of being overly traumatic.

Halle, who also attended this session, stated that, "The movie of the survivors from Slovakia was powerful, and will be powerful for my students." When asked why it

would be powerful, she stated, “It’s powerful for them [my students] because it is a way for me to get them to learn about what it was like in the Holocaust without having to end the story with the typical ending that every student knows: ‘He died in a gas chamber.’ Basically, it shows that people did survive and they have stories to tell. The point I want to make is that not everyone died.” For Halle, ensuring that her students understand survival is an important meaning she makes of her Holocaust professional development experience.

Holocaust testimony can be startling for sure, but it is inevitably positive in its ending, for the person lived. This was not the ultimate fate of the vast majority of Jews and others during the Holocaust. Survivor testimony is most certainly valuable in demonstrating to students that virtually no survivor would have lived without the help of others who provided food, hiding places, or false documentation, but the intense focus on it during professional development at the Museum also laid the foundation for the hope-filled meanings teachers made of the Holocaust by encouraging them to reduce time and space spent on the brutality of Nazism in order to focus on individual triumph. Teachers, like Adina, came to understand the Holocaust as an event, at least in part, that can teach young people about the power of individual determination even under the most dire of circumstances. Adina made no mention of the brutality that took place in that Slovakian town that was nearly entirely obliterated during the Holocaust. For her, the meaning that an exhibit like the one described here has for her pedagogy is that an individual can survive even the harshest of circumstances, despite the fact the original owner of the

book (Dojc's grandfather) did not survive. The power of the individual was the meaning of paramount importance to her pedagogical sense-making of the Holocaust.

During the six-day *Meeting Hate with Humanity* professional development program, teachers had approximately 7 hours in the galleries at the Museum during both guided and unguided visits. One of the guided visits was to the *Voices of Liberty* special exhibition. In a large room with two walls of windows overlooking the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, teachers were given iPods and sit under different theme sensors which then allowed the teacher to listen to the appropriate testimony of Holocaust survivors, refugees and others who immigrated to the United States associated with that theme. Themes were upbeat, and included such topics as "liberty," "adapting," and "a new home." Under the theme "dreams" Magda Spiegel, who arrived in the United States in 1949 from Klucarky, Czechoslovakia, says to visitors, "When I got the papers to come to this country I was very, very happy and I felt that my dreams were finally realized. I am arriving in the land of dreams."

Each of the speakers tends to speak positively, and visitors are listening to their success stories while staring right at the place many of them arrived in New York Harbor. Visitors are also gazing at an unobstructed close view of the Statue of Liberty, the symbol of freedom for Americans. More than half of the teachers interviewed described pride in America or the American dream as the meanings they made after going through the interactive exhibit. For example, John, who has taught world history for 11 years at a public school, stated that,

For me, when I was in that room looking over at the Statue of the Liberty and hearing stories of the people who came and made it here, I felt particularly proud of my country. As an African American, knowing full well the past of this country, I felt in that moment that we have come a long way from the time of slavery and in many ways we have overcome.

Max, another public school teacher who has taught world history for eight years, similarly stated that, “This is what makes America, America - that we let everyone in and here, anyone can reach the American dream. Just look at all those people we heard on the iPod.” The Museum of Jewish Heritage clearly has a narrative of the greatness of a hopeful America, particularly for Jewish immigrants, and that narrative is understood and internalized by teachers.

The connection between the exhibit and Holocaust education was not made explicitly clear and teachers generally struggled to identify how they would use that exhibit in their Holocaust lessons. Teachers did make sense of the exhibit in terms of understanding its intent to show America’s powerful role in allowing for immigration to the United States, but they were unsure how to use it in their study of the Holocaust. In a few instances, some teachers said that they would look at the *Love thy Neighbor: Immigration and the US Experience* curriculum pamphlet produced by the Museum of Jewish Heritage, available only at the Museum and given out to teacher-participants for help with lesson planning on the topic. The extremely short curriculum, which does not contain lesson plans but rather readings with questions and ideas for student research, Americanizes the Holocaust by placing the story of restricted Jewish immigration to the United States during the Holocaust within the larger context of immigration to America

between the mid-1800s and mid-1900's (Museum of Jewish Heritage, 2001). In the section on US Immigration during the Holocaust, the role of wide-spread anti-Semitism within and outside of the State Department that fueled the restrictive immigration policies are largely pushed aside. No discussion takes place of how many Jewish people could have been saved had the United States Congress, President Roosevelt and/or the State Department advocated for more open immigration policies. The tone of the curriculum, much like the *Voices of Liberty* exhibit, is fairly positive and focuses on those who did come to and succeed in the United States, their reasons for coming, their experiences in the new land, as well as rescue and refuge over the last 50 years. It does not include the powerful anti-Semitism many Jewish immigrants faced and the extremely restrictive immigration policies which in the end meant many of those who would have come ultimately died at the hand of the Nazis. The dominant trope of the exhibit and curriculum fit in well with American desires for a hopeful story that ends well and one that does not focus on hardship but rather stresses triumph over challenges and overcoming pain.

Ignoring the anti-Semitism within our own country that led to remarkably restrictive immigration policies towards Jewish people to the United States, which resulted in many of those potential immigrants dying in the concentration camps, is to ignore our own national lack of response to the "banality of evil" (Arendt 1963/2006). One could see this exhibit as nothing more than an add on to the other exhibits at the Museum, included because of its proximity to and unobstructed view of the Statue of

Liberty and Ellis Island. That interpretation, however, would fail to recognize key elements of American society today that help inform such an exhibit. Americans are constantly indulged with stories, images, and advertisements relating to personal survival, personal overcoming, and personal success. In that sense the personal self has become a centerpiece of American cultural being. Add to that a popular culture that increasingly couches historical atrocities in narratives of hope and survival, making those themes the centerpieces of whatever story is being told while downplaying the grim realities. In very recent Holocaust related motion pictures, one can see this occurring, such as in the film *Sarah's Key* (2010) where the reality of the French assisting the Nazis is only tangential to the story of a little girl who saved a key for her whole life to the closet where she locked her little brother up to hide him from soldiers decades ago when she was a child. While her brother did ultimately die in that closet, the dominant storyline is about Sarah's escape from a concentration camp with the help of a French soldier, and her life and family in the United States after the Holocaust. It is in this culture of an extreme focus on personal triumph, if unrealistic and highly improbable, that such an exhibit as the *Voices of Liberty* emerges where a casual observer can, rather easily, mistakenly begin to believe that America was a place of massive refuge in the United States for victims of genocidal brutality. They may also begin to believe that the Jewish victims of Nazi crimes arrived in massive numbers with the assistance of the United States Government, which is equated with being the savior for the evil doings of others in distant, far away lands. In light of the actual level of anti-Semitism rampant throughout the United States

Federal Government during and after World War II and the Holocaust, coupled with this being one of the only parts of the Museum that even discusses America and the Holocaust (and certainly the most substantial exhibit on the topic by far) this representation of American immigration policy precludes attention given to America's role in the Holocaust. For teacher-participants in professional development who visited this exhibit, their understanding of the Holocaust and US policy during that time period may be sensationalized by the powerful stories of a few while disengaged or unaware of the stories of the many. In American society today, which seems to present personal success and overcoming in every strand of popular culture, this exhibit may be feeding Americans desire to implicate themselves as victims of one kind or another who themselves can overcome hardship as well. Therefore this exhibit was not seen by teacher-participants as anything even approaching a misrepresentation of history.

After experiencing this exhibit, teachers generally said that they felt positive and hopeful about the role of America in the Holocaust. Bob noted, "It is so interesting hearing of how instrumental the US was for Jewish immigrants. Just another reason why it's a great country." These are not the feelings one would expect to hear if he knew of the extremely late response of the Americans to intervene in the Holocaust and the obstructionist policies of the State Department towards helping to rescue Jews. The meaning Bob has made of American immigration policies during and immediately after the Holocaust from this exhibit and the accompanying curricular materials reveal a sense

of the Holocaust that is a fictionalization of reality. Bob has come to understand the Holocaust and the world's response to it in a more comforting way.

Dr. Greenberg, the Director of Jewish Education at the Museum, echoed the positive narrative that he stresses in Holocaust professional development but added a religious objective as well when he said,

All human beings are holy, created in the image of G-d. All people deserve to be treated with respect and cared for. The Holocaust is immoral – a descent into utter depravity brought on by Germans and executed by Germany. Yet free people rose to the occasion. What do I want teachers to select to teach? Select things to be positive. You cannot teach everything. Teach those things that create the kind of Jews and people we want to create.

The meanings that Dr. Greenberg wishes to create for teacher-participants at museum-based professional development programs are ones that almost exclusively reflect positively on Jewish identity. When he states that he wishes to “create the kind of Jews and people we want to create,” he is directly suggesting that it is the responsibility of museum professional developers and Holocaust educators to use the teaching of this event to ensure that the moral beliefs that he and the Museum see as valuable are imparted to students. The implication here is that he, and by extension the Museum itself, know what ethics are most important for all students to have and that those moral underpinnings can be taught through Holocaust education. One way he attempts to do this with Jewish school teacher-participants is by leaving out certain topics. For example, during the Holocaust Jewish prisoners at concentration camps were sometimes selected to be a part of the *Sonderkommandos*, which were units of Jews who, often threatened of their own death, had to assist the Nazis in the disposal of the remains of those who were

killed in the crematoria. By ignoring or downplaying topics like the *Sonderkommandos*, Dr. Greenberg is pursuing a pedagogical choice that fits within a more positive narrative of the Holocaust. Further, underlying this quote is the core belief that the Holocaust can be used to teach moral living, the right way to act. What is unclear is how a teacher-participant in professional development is supposed to take an event that he calls “immoral” and turn it into something “positive” and something that can create ethical beings. He sees Holocaust education as a chance for moral Jewish education. Interestingly though, some participants interpreted this as a chance for a pro-American education and not necessarily an exclusive focus on moral Jewish education.

This is not entirely surprising given that in the United States today, the Holocaust is widely situated within American popular culture, from literature to movies and public spaces. The most commonly used piece of literature in teaching the Holocaust cited by participants in this study and possibly even within the United States, is *The Diary of Anne Frank*. The most often cited line from this work, perhaps from anything ever written on the Holocaust, is, “In spite of everything I still believe that people are truly good at heart” (Frank & Pressler, 1997, p. 327). In the *Diary*, no one sees an extermination camp. In that sense, the *Diary* fits within the positive personalized narrative that often accompanies an understanding of the Holocaust within American popular culture. Langer (2010) suggests that the popularity of this memoir is more about avoidance – avoiding the pain, avoiding the suffering, avoiding what Hannah Arendt famously referred to as the “banality of evil” (Arendt 1963/2006). In that way the *Diary* lessens the burden of pain

that should necessarily be attached to a study of crimes of this magnitude and situates learning about the Holocaust within a happier and more personalized story than the actual experience of many. Here, the courageous spirit of a young girl leaves students with positive feelings for the future of mankind and sends the message to young and adult readers alike that despite even the worst of circumstances one can overcome.

The book, and the mythical figure that has emerged since its first publishing, does not take into account Anne's terrifying existence inside the hell that was the concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen where she ultimately died. Museum professional developers from both public school and Jewish school programs were seemingly aware of the American desire to lessen the burden of this history through the Museum staff's explicit focus on the heroism of individual actions. The data in this study reveals that teacher-participants often wish to understand the event in such a way that, somehow, like the *Diary*, makes them and their students feel upbeat and feel that, despite all of that bad, there was some good.

Max, who has taught public school world history for 8 years, stated that, "I cannot teach the Holocaust and only talk about the mass killings. My students will be entirely turned off. I must also focus on the heroes, [such as] those who rescued others." Similarly, Sharon, who teaches the Holocaust at an ultra-orthodox Jewish day school, stated that, "The story of the Holocaust is much more than 'the six million'; it is also the one who saved someone else's life, the one who provided food to a boy in hiding, the one who escaped...stories like that can make my students not leave my [class]room feeling

sad and depressed every day.” Museum professional developers, like the museum exhibition designers, recognize the desire of their audience to connect with the individual who overcame Nazi brutality and in turn teachers further internalized that narrative.

As anyone familiar with the American media would likely recognize, Americans tend to desire to understand the human condition as one of hope and progress, and one in which individual actions heroically make a positive difference. Very often American films have a happy ending despite the content or gravity of the topic of the film. This typical ending by American films emphasizes the desire of viewers to end movies with positive feelings of hopefulness, overcoming, and the desire to share that triumph with others. In a July 2011 presentation to the Second World Congress of the International Positive Psychology Association, acclaimed movie producer Lindsay Doran (of the Sherlock Homes films, among others), stated,

It’s no surprise to say that American movies specialize in stories of accomplishment...When Jennifer Grey finally dares to make the scary leap at the end of ‘Dirty Dancing,’ when the Karate Kid performs the impossible kick that wipes out his opponent, or when King George VI gets through his wartime speech without stammering - those accomplishments are among the great pleasures of cinema. (Doran, quoted in Rickey, 2012).

Even Holocaust films have happy endings and positivity in their storylines. The quintessential example of this is *Schindler’s List*, in which the story of the rare rescuer is moved to the front of Holocaust history. It places the narrative of those who were saved front and center and, because of its overwhelming popularity, it moves public consciousness about the Holocaust towards those who survived and lived to tell about it

and away from massive death. Therefore the importance of rescuers and resisters also emerged as part of the meaning teachers made of Holocaust professional development.

Rescuers and Resistance

Professional development at the Museum also focused on the individual heroic actions of rescuers and those who resisted in order to work on empowering Jewish identity and work against cynicism. The way in which the museum accomplished this was seen in one informal meeting of teacher-participants. Some artifacts of resistance within the ghettos and the camps are part of the permanent exhibit of the second floor (Jewish life During the Holocaust). On the second day of the multi day *Meeting Hate with Humanity* introductory course for public school educators, I accompanied teacher-participants to these artifacts during free time when they were allowed to explore the exhibits. For an unknown reason, the teachers began to congregate around a somewhat aged trumpet. This instrument had belonged to Louis Bannet, an extremely talented violinist and trumpet player from Rotterdam. Upon his arrival at Auschwitz-Birkenau, he was allowed to audition for the Men's Orchestra at Birkenau, which he played in for two years (Museum of Jewish Heritage, 2002). Most of his family died in Auschwitz, but he was able to save his younger brother by hiding him in the garbage that band members had to move every day. During his death march from Auschwitz to Ohrdruf, Germany he carried this trumpet around his waist and when he arrived at the camp, near dead, he was asked to play a violin for every SS officer at the camp which gave him more food

(Museum of Jewish Heritage, 2002). After several more camps and a train ride that killed most people aboard, Mr. Bannet survived and returned to his native Holland and eventually to Canada, trumpet in hand. For him, and others of the Birkenau Band, resistance came in the form of musical performance.

In viewing this trumpet, and reading the explanation below the artifact, one teacher shouted, “There was a band at Auschwitz! Why would anyone [there] want to play in a band!?” As I watched on as the silent observer, after a few moments, another teacher responded, “That’s what she [Mrs. Gold] was talking about, that Jews did resist, like with the Warsaw Ghetto and the uprising.” In other words, this teacher has recognized the importance of working against the cynical view in the lack of hope for the Jewish people. Even though the extremely limited scope and effectiveness of resistance was entirely left out or ignored in place of a more comforting part of Holocaust history, in this instance the survival of one talented musician, the teacher who talked about Mrs. Gold did so by empowering the Jewish identity by saying that Jews did in fact fight back such as in uprisings. These teacher-participants may have been attracted to this exhibit in the first place because of the keen focus on resistance and survival during the lectures and other teacher professional development activities. Focusing on the individual continued throughout the six-day *Meeting Hate with Humanity* introductory-level summer professional development workshop on the Holocaust

On the next day, day 3 of the workshop, the 10 teachers in attendance were told at 11:15 a.m. by the Museum’s Director of Education that they would be watching 20

minutes of *Daring to Resist: Three Women Face the Holocaust*. This is another example of the way in which the museum professional development programs explicitly sought to empower Jewish identity and work against cynicism. This 1999 film focuses on the lives of three Jewish females who lived in Nazi-controlled Holland, Hungary, and Poland. Each of them put up resistance to Nazi aggression: by secretly moving Jews to safety, by distributing resistance materials, and by fighting as a partisan. By this time, the small group of teachers had developed a strong sense of collegiality and everyone knew each other's names. This session took place after touring part of the Museum's permanent exhibition on resistance during the Holocaust. Mrs. Gold, the Director of Education, told the teachers that they would be watching a piece of an extraordinary film that documents how three brave individuals pushed back against the Nazis. During the 20-minute clip, teachers seemed to be fully intrigued by the film and the uncommon bravery of the women, as evidenced by their unwavering attention and their facial expressions and sighs during scenes of the women's daring actions.

After the film, no summary or further insight into the film or its pedagogical application was immediately given. In the few moments it took the Museum staff to turn off the DVD player and turn on the lights, the teachers shared their unanimous approval of the film with one another, and two teachers at my table said that they wanted to buy the film to use with their own students. At this point, Mrs. Gold simply asked, "Did anything stand out or surprise you?" One teacher, Max, answered, "They were just so vibrant and they felt so good about themselves, what they had done with their lives. And

they had so much to be proud of. Even in old age, they could hold onto that. They were really wonderful.” This echoed notions of Jewish empowerment that were evident throughout the Museum and its professional development programs. Mrs. Gold did not give her opinion or offer further insight here, but rather repeated the question she had asked before. Bob said it was gratifying to hear a less gruesome story about the Holocaust. “I enjoyed the last woman. The whole thing was beyond the scope of horrific events, but she was talking and she had humor, sarcasm. I really enjoyed it, a human side.” Others said they too appreciated hearing more than just the horrifying elements that Holocaust education typically details. Ashley then said, “It’s good to hear other stories. I’ve always heard stories about concentration camps, but it always surprises me to hear much more stories about the Holocaust, like when that lady that hid in the forest came out.”

Teachers then continued discussing how this film helped them to understand resistance during the Holocaust. Unlike the programs for Jewish school teachers, in the public school programs like this one left more (though still limited) space throughout the various sessions for discussions about teaching. Five minutes into the discussion on what the teachers were now able to clearly understand about resistance, Mrs. Gold tried to help them answer a seemingly simple question that students often pose: “Why didn’t they [the Jews] leave and why didn’t they [the Jews] fight back? The answers are, they did leave and they did fight back. Other responses?” That is a surprisingly simple answer for a question that deserves much more explanation. Certainly Ms. Gold was attempting to

empower the Jewish community, in no uncertain terms working to quell notions that Jews had lost faith or hope in their ability to survive Nazi brutality. No other teacher spoke up after that short statement. Mrs. Gold then offered two pedagogical insights for teachers. The first was that excerpts from this film are excellent for classroom use because students can easily relate to the main characters. The second was a caution against presenting only one response to Nazi policies over other responses. Her logic for this is that,

We are inspired by these heroes... We want examples of heroism but not at the expense of saying, well, [some people] didn't do anything, they went to the camps and were murdered. We need not pass judgment on people ... We want to empathize with the experience rather than pass judgment. So, that's a tricky thing to do [in your classroom and in the museum].

Since lunch had already arrived, and sticking to the precise schedule of activities was an absolute must during public school professional development programs, teachers did not have an opportunity to explore these points further. Mrs. Gold's statement exemplifies how professional development at the Museum creates a hopeful, Americanized narrative of the Holocaust in that she explicitly instructs teacher-participants to include examples of heroes.

In follow-up interviews, many admitted to not knowing much about rescuers and resistance before taking the course. Ashley said,

I never knew how Jews resisted. I always new the bad side, but not the heroic side until this course. I didn't know about Hannah Senesh [a Palestinian Jew who worked to save the Jews of Hungary and was ultimately killed] or the Russian partisan who presented to us. I didn't know about women who tried to pass as gentiles and help Jewish people. My stories were *Schindler's List* and *The Pianist*. That was my knowledge of the Holocaust. It's embarrassing to say that, but that's all I knew...Now I can bring my students Hannah, the partisans, and the survivors

we heard who resisted, like Brania [Brandman], who resisted against [Dr. Josef] Mengele.

Ashley's core belief, that she should now include more stories of resistance and rescuers during the Holocaust, was echoed in some way by every teacher interviewed after that program. The pedagogical sense that teachers made of this part of their professional development program was that rescue and resistance played a large role in the Holocaust by empowering some Jews to fight back and should therefore play a large role in their classroom pedagogy.

One Holocaust scholar who has called for increased attention to the role of rescuers who helped Jews and others survive during the Holocaust is Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis, the former director of several organizations devoted to documenting the acts of the righteous and the founder of the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous, a United States-based nonprofit organization devoted to providing financial and other social assistance to non-Jewish rescuers, and to honoring and documenting their stories. Schulweis believes that when teaching or representing the Holocaust, alongside the horrors should be a keen focus on acts of righteousness. In a 2002 speech on rescue efforts in Bulgaria, he said, "We need a new heart to overcome the anthrax of cynicism, the toxins of disillusionment and despair. We need to search the past for a glimmer of hope. Paradoxically, you find the spark in the ashes of crematoria" (Schulweis, 2002). For him, learning is an act of memory formation, and it informs as much as it liberates and inspires. He further argued,

We are here to publicly recognize goodness. Goodness must not be buried in anonymity. Goodness is evidence of Godliness. We owe it to our children. Our children must be taught Godliness. Our children must know the true celebrities, the true heroes of our times, the celebrity of conscience, the heroism of defiance against brute power, the nobility of the altruistic spirit. Why should children only know the names of evil, the name of Himmler, and Heydrich, and Hitler? Why should they not know of Demeter Peshev, the former deputy speaker of the Bulgaria Sobranie, who turned away from his early support of an anti-Semitic law and when he learned of the plan to deport Jews to their death, he gathered the support of forty-two other parliamentarians to resist the stain that would have fallen upon Bulgaria's dignity. For this he lost his political power, he lost his office, but he gained immortality. The altruism of Bulgaria is a piece of history that must not be forgotten. It has taught us and should teach our children that there was, is and always will be an alternative to complicity with evil (Schulweis, 2002)

Museum educators agree with Schulweis that focus and attention should be given to rescuers. Thus, the professional developers sought to make the Holocaust more tolerable, especially by spending more time on rescuers and survivors than any other aspect of the event during lecture portions of the six-day professional development program for public school teachers. Teachers made pedagogical sense of the event in the same way, as they too now want to focus much more intently on rescuers and resistance. In effect, they abided the narrative of hopefulness as presented by the Museum, and therefore they understood the Holocaust as an event that can be understood through the lens of empowerment.

Adina, who teaches religious Congregational school, felt that as a result of her participation in the *Holocaust in Slovakia* professional development program for Jewish school teachers, she too now sees an even more prominent place for rescue in her curriculum, an understanding that is very much in line with the sentiments expressed by

Rabbi Schulweis and implemented by Museum professional developers. She articulated that belief in the following way:

In the Holocaust I can't just teach that Jews were sent to camps, and this was life in Auschwitz. My students need to hear stories like that of the Working Group [a group of Jewish activists in Slovakia in 1942 who tried to stop deportations to concentration camps]. I must get my students to understand that there was resistance.

Dr. Greenberg, also like Rabbi Schulweis, explained that it was his intention in professional development to have teachers focus on the more upbeat parts as well as the horrors. He said,

I wanted to give teachers something productive in terms of building their students' Jewish identity. Not necessarily focus on Dr. Mengele's experience, but the resistance of the Bielski brothers [a group of partisan resisters in German-occupied Poland] or the spiritual resistance of Rabbi Ephraim Oshry [whose explanations of Jewish law during the Holocaust helped many Lithuanian Jews survive].

No clear disparities were found between public school teachers and Jewish school teachers over the topic of resistance. Without exception, every teacher interviewed felt that there was value to hearing the stories of resistance to counter the terror-filled stories of the Holocaust. All of the rescuers and resisters that the teachers met and learned about fought for what they believed in and did so at great risk to their own personal safety and the safety of loved ones. Their actions deserve to be honored and remembered. However, professional developers, like Rabbi Schulweis in his 2002 speech on Bulgarian rescuers, did not recognize that in educating teachers about resistance and rescue without addressing the question of how widespread and successful such efforts were or were not, they may unintentionally undermine the reality of the very limited scope of these

activities. The question of scope is also not addressed in the main Holocaust student text provided by the Museum to public school teacher-participants. Two of the 15 pages are devoted to “Resistance – Jewish Responses,” where students read and reflect on armed and spiritual resistance. Students are told that some Jews did fight back, and they read a story of a young artist at the Terezin ghetto who drew pictures of Hanukkah, but students are never informed of how few resistors survived compared with how many died.

Generally, teachers indicated that they were “moved” or “inspired” by hearing the stories of individual heroic action from those who were actually there and are still alive more than six decades later to share their wisdom. For example, after listening to testimony from Ms. Lyuba Abramovich, a partisan in Russia who fought against the Nazis, Ashley’s reflections, which exemplify the response of study participants, was, “She was fearless, and she fought for what she believed in. That is what I will teach my students when we talk about the partisans.” The teachers commonly made reference to how the testimony makes a positive emotional connection to the Holocaust possible for their students. Adina, a Jewish school teacher-participant at the three-day summer seminar entitled *Four Ghettos*, said she was particularly inclined to change her lessons on ghettos to include testimony for the first time after hearing from Joseph Friedenson on his experiences in the Warsaw Ghetto. She also said,

Now I can say to my students I met that person, like Joseph Friedenson, he was there in the [Warsaw] Ghetto. It connects the emotions between the presenter and the student, as opposed to reading it from a book. Students themselves are really a witness of the experiences by being exposed to those who were there. There is nothing like a live image and like a human voice to show students the power of perseverance.

For Adina, hearing from a survivor like Mr. Friedenson allows her to fight against cynicism in her classroom and empower her students to be inspired to work hard and never give up. The meaning she made of this part of her professional development experience is that her students' exposure to stories like his can empower their own Jewish identity; in this way they "witness" survival in the face of horrific circumstances in order to find hope in their own lives.

As in professional development sessions at the Museum, the topics of rescuers and resistance are pervasive in popular culture. As already mentioned, one of the most widespread works ever to impact Americans' knowledge of the Holocaust is *Schindler's List*, produced by Steven Spielberg. Like *The Diary of Anne Frank*, its focus is not on the millions who died but on the heroic actions of one man who saves more than 1,200 Jews. Spielberg's film helped place the stories of rescuers and resisters more prominently in Americans' consciousness about the Holocaust. In the traditional view, resistance during the Holocaust is defined as "any *group* [italics found in original text] actions consciously taken in opposition to known or surmised laws, actions, or intentions directed against the Jews by the Nazis and their supporters" (Bauer, 1982, p. 245). More recently, Bauer has revised this definition to include the actions of individuals and acts on a smaller scale that his previous definition ignored (Bauer, 202). In addition, he now believes that resistance must also include *Amidah*, a term scholars and Rabbis have a difficult time defining but which he translates as "standing up against" (p. 120). Resistance includes armed and unarmed acts, by both Jews and non-Jews. Bauer explains,

It includes smuggling food into the ghettos; mutual self-sacrifice within the family to avoid starvation or worse; cultural, educational, religious, or political activities taken to strengthen the morale; the work of doctors nurses and educators to consciously maintain health and moral fiber to enable individual and group survival; and, of course, armed rebellion or the use of force (with bare hands or with “cold” weapons) against the Germans and their collaborators (p. 120).

All resistance activities were severely limited in that almost no nations supported the Jews in any struggle against the Nazis, Jews rarely had access to arms or weapons, and resisters’ families might suffer consequences for the resister’s actions, which were unlikely to be successful. Still, some resistance efforts did succeed, such as the shutdown of the gas chambers at Sobibor concentration camp. In addition, Jews from the Jewish Fighting Organization revolted in the Warsaw Ghetto for more than a month and dramatically reduced deportations during that time. Also, multi-day revolts took place in Bialystok (Poland), Marcinkonis (Lithuania), and Vilna (Lithuania) Ghettos, among other places. Furthermore, Jewish partisans fought from the forests, actively blew up railroad tracks, and used arms against the Nazis (Kopel, 2011). One must also remember less-violent forms of resistance, particularly within the camps, including underground schools (or at least what could be considered study groups); continuing Jewish traditions and holidays; and creating poems, stories, drawings, and other artwork.

The hopeful narrative that permeated the professional development programs in this study was received by teacher-participants from both Jewish and public schools. Themes of hope and heroism, bravery and resistance, and triumph over evil were clearly evident in the meanings teachers made of their Holocaust professional development experiences. By creating such a narrative, professional development at this museum

empowered a Jewish identity that worked against the forces of cynicism and toward the very American notions of understanding the world in a positive light with attention toward a more hopeful future.

(2) Identity

“The Holocaust is a Jewish event. It happened because of the Jews. The fact that others were caught in it is tragic, sad, awful, but the Holocaust is a Jewish event.”

-- Halle, Museum of Jewish Heritage Professional Development Participant

Museums are inevitably sites of learning that are tied to identity. Identity includes how an individual views him or herself in relation to a particular context and the role he or she plays in it. One's background, interests, family, socio-economic and socio-cultural context constitute one's identity, which is a personal attribute that is always in flux and has the ability to change with changing circumstances such as experiences, age, income, and beliefs (Kidd, 2002). Identity is at the core of who one is and how the others around an individual come to understand him or her. At museums, identity determines how a museum visitor or a museum-based teacher professional development participant will interpret his or her experience and learning, and it will help to determine the meanings that one makes of his or her participation at the museum. Meanings that are made from museum-based learning experiences are influenced by aspects of one's identity, such as prior knowledge (Meyers & Allen, 1997), expectations (Falk, Moussouri & Coulson,

1998) and interests in the topic. Identity is not only how people see themselves in the present, but also helps to determine how people will be prepared for and adapt to new environments or situations in light of their past beliefs and knowledge (Meyers & Allen, 1997). Museums are places that can affect and help shape teachers' personal and professional identities, especially from their exhibits and professional development programs (Falk, 2006).

In this study, a teacher-participant's background, prior experiences, involvement in professional development activities, interactions with other teachers and professional developers, can result in alterations to or a solidification of their sense of self and the meanings that they make of their experiences. By using one's background and way of seeing the world to form understandings, museum professional development participants in this study make meaning of their experiences, which are inevitably influenced by the identity, values, and norms of the museum and the identity, attitudes, and behaviors of other professional development participants. As a result of interviews, observations, survey's and document analysis, it was found that learning about the Holocaust by teacher-participants was a negotiated process of relying on past knowledge and beliefs but also being heavily influenced by the religious identity and the social and cultural context of The Museum of Jewish Heritage. Through this process of meaning-making, teachers and other museum visitors are able to better understand where they have been, who they are and where their understandings are leading. Both teacher-participants and professional developers recognized and articulated the primacy of the Jewish identity of

the museum in influencing the meanings that they made from the professional development experience.

Both Jewish and public school teachers who were interviewed recognized that the Museum's identity and approach meant that they were learning the Holocaust from the perspective of the largest group of victims: the Jewish people. Jewish school teachers, all of whom in this study follow conservative or orthodox Judaism, overwhelmingly spoke positively about this approach. For example, Halle is a relatively new social studies teacher with experience only in Jewish schools and she identifies her self as "a practicing modern orthodox Jew." When she came to the Museum for Holocaust professional development programs she was, "looking to learn how to better teach the Holocaust to my Jewish students." She further stated that, "The Holocaust is a Jewish event. It happened because of the Jews. The fact that others were caught in it is tragic, sad, awful, but the Holocaust is a Jewish event." Halle discussed her views on the Holocaust in an energetic manner with complete confidence in what she was arguing. Some research has found that the connection between museum visitors' prior beliefs and their understandings of experiences can lead to small shifts in both how they come to make meanings from the content that is the focus of that museum or exhibit and in their identities (Leinhardt & Knutson, 2004). Professional development programs that Halle participated in, most of which were designed exclusively for Jewish school teachers, may have helped strengthen her belief that the Holocaust should be taught and understood as a

Jewish event. Rounds (2006) believes that museums can both help visitors maintain their identities or learn about alternatives.

Halle, and every other Jewish school teacher in this study, identified with the Holocaust as a Jewish event and expected to make meanings about the event that would conform to their Judaic perspective during their participation in professional development at the Museum. The programs that Halle and all of the other Jewish school teachers attended were intentionally designed to examine the Holocaust only from the Jewish experience. Falk (2006) argues that the motivations that entice people to learn are closely associated with their identity. All of the programs for Jewish school teachers were voluntary, not credit bearing, and took place on Sundays, and therefore teachers attend entirely because they wanted to and none had financial or other external motivations. Programs for public school teachers often were accompanied by professional development credits which can be used to maintain teaching certification or for salary advancement purposes.

The data revealed that what motivated the Jewish teachers to come was an opportunity to further understand the Holocaust from the Jewish perspective and their desire to teach their students about the event from that perspective. Each of these educators, like Halle, identified the Holocaust as Jewish event with unique implications for their Jewish students. Understanding the meaning of the Holocaust as a Jewish event with unique implications for Jewish people was solidified by participation in Holocaust professional development programs at the Museum.

Sharon, who has attended numerous professional development programs for Jewish school teachers at the Museum since it opened and who teaches at an ultra-orthodox school, exemplified the common sentiment among Jewish teacher-participants when she said, “I come to this Museum because I know that I will learn about the Jewish Holocaust. I know other groups were targeted, but for me the Holocaust has to be understood for what happened to the Jews and that’s what I have to teach my students.” This statement exemplifies a common understanding of Jewish school teachers about the role of the Museum in shaping their identity.

At Jewish school programs at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, professional developers specifically and intentionally designed programs that leave little space for “seeing things differently.” The Director of Jewish Education, Dr. Mordechai Greenberg, places a strong emphasis on the Jewish experience and Jewish responses to the Holocaust in professional development programs. When asked what he thinks teachers should focus on when teaching about the Holocaust, he gave a religiously oriented answer saying,

They should teach that all human beings are holy, created in the image of G-d. All people deserve to be treated with respect and cared for. The Holocaust is immoral – a descent into utter depravity brought on by Germans and executed by Germany. Yet free people rised to the occasion. What do we select to teach?....Teach those things that create the kind of Jews and people we want to create. You can’t understand the world unless you understand the Holocaust.

Dr. Greenberg admits to actively creating professional development programs that, as he sees it, can help ensure the very future of the Jewish people themselves. In the final interview he said, “If there will be a Jewish future part of that is Jewish education and Holocaust education. I will do everything that I can do to support teachers and make

what they do better and stronger. It is a holy kind of work [they do], creating an ethical Jewish context is part and parcel of the broader larger context of the future of the Jewish community.” The subtext of this quote demonstrates a core part of his identity in that he believes that Holocaust education is a key part of character education and is bound up with Jewish theological questions of morality and ethics. For him, Holocaust education from the Jewish perspective is integral to Jewish identity formation for students and to their understanding the world through the Jewish lens. Dr. Greenberg said, “To be Jewish, students have to know the Holocaust.” Sharon echoed a similar notion when she said, “Every Jewish student who graduates from a Jewish school should know full well what the Holocaust is and why it matters, a lot.” Every other Jewish school teacher interviewed in this study suggested, to varying degrees, that they too supported the idea that the Holocaust is a part of Jewish identity. Differing from this view point, some public school teachers made more universal claims about why it is important to know about the Holocaust. Neil said, “Students should learn about the Holocaust because it is important for the future of mankind and knowing what happens to the world when we don’t work together.” Neil is suggesting that Holocaust education has universal applicability larger than the Jewish school teachers suggested.

Generally, teacher-participants make different meanings about the same professional development programs based on their personal identities and experiences. For example, during the final hour of the three day summer institute on the Holocaust, this year titled *Four Ghettos: Warsaw, Vilna, Lodz, and Terezin*, a session was held

entitled, *Applying What We Have Learned*. After a few attempts to get started, Dr. Greenberg stated his intention to use the next, “20 minutes or so” to address two questions: “How can we apply what we have learned over the past few days in your classes? And how has our knowledge of the Holocaust changed?” What emerged from the discussion however were different meanings made by different teacher-participants based on their personal and professional identities. The discussion consisted of 62 individuals, 44 women and 18 men. The teachers were highly engaged in this discussion and more than willing to create positive intellectual tension through multiple viewpoints. At one point the lively discussion turned towards how teachers wish for their students to address issues of morality and immorality in learning about the Holocaust. This grew out of learning about how different leaders of the Jewish Councils (*Judenrat*) in different ghettos responded differently to requests from the Nazis to provide Jews for deportation to concentration and death camps, some giving in and some not, and some even going so far as to kill themselves. This notion raised tough questions for teachers. One Jewish school teacher, Adina, stated, “We must also think about making moral decisions. That is a very tough question. And it is something to be said for both sides [the Nazis and the head of the Jewish Councils], making moral decisions, because that’s what they did.” Many teachers in the room agreed, and, as would be expected in a room filled largely with orthodox private Jewish school teachers, the discussion quickly veered toward the religious implications of the decisions made by the Jewish elders in the ghettos.

The discussion was largely a regurgitation of what the Jewish Councils did. However, the calmness of the discussion quickly dwindled when Steven, a 46-year veteran teacher at a reform congregational school and former social studies department chairman at a New York City public school, expressed that he teaches about the decisions of the Jewish Councils and asks students to give opinions on the ethics of the decisions that different leaders made. “If a kid looks at it, and walks out and thinks, ‘No, he did the right thing,’ and kids walk out with a judgment, that’s part of what we wanted them to do... we want kids to walk out with a judgment.”

At that moment, less than 10 minutes into this session, the room erupted in heated but respectful disagreement with that statement. At this point it became impossible to follow all of the discussions and comments taking place in the room, though I did hear many people say “No” and “Absolutely not.” Dr. Greenberg tried to calm the room quickly, and then Sharon, a passionate orthodox Jewish woman, stood up and made a counterargument,

Of course we want our students to be able to make judgments, but I think we want them to be able to make judgments in their own lives and the dilemmas that they face. And I think that what we’re looking at, we don’t want to be in the situation that they were in when they had those choiceless choices. So what we have to say is, I can’t judge him. If I were to be in a situation where I had to do such and such, this is what I would do that would be right for me. But thank G-d I was never there. So, of course, we want to give them a moral compass. But I can’t judge him for making his choice. He did what he thought was right at that point. If I were there I don’t know what I would do.

As hands went flinging up in the air after Sharon made her point, and many teachers continued to speak over each other, an entirely unexpected person at the front of

the room garnered attention: the Museum's college intern. She stood forward, in front of 62 school teachers and a few survivors, and said,

As a student, I'm sure I've not received as much knowledge as a lot of the people up here, I didn't go to a Jewish school, but a lot of the education I did get was that teachers presented you straight with facts, numbers, they wanted you to get a sense of how horrible the Holocaust was....I think you're both right in a certain sense...Don't let your students leave the room thinking they know everything. I think that's what you guys are saying. Let them think maybe I need to still form an opinion, maybe I still have judgments to make, because just to give them straightforward facts without discussion, and you don't challenge them, they're going to leave without answering the question.

At this point, Dr. Greenberg spoke up and declared that inevitably Holocaust education is bound up with moral questions that face both students and teachers. In an attempt to shift the discussion, he reminded the audience of the inappropriateness of simulation as a teaching method for the Holocaust, as well as the main goal of the three-day seminar of the ghettos, saying,

You can try to recreate what it's like to be in that bunker, but to really live for 3 years underground. You can't do that. Because you can't simulate it, it's beyond the ability to comprehend totally, to experience completely, you don't want that it'd be traumatic. Thus, judgment is problematic. We tried to show you two things. There are elements in which there are similarities to ghettos and there are other elements in which they are not similar.

At this point the session time had run out, and teachers still had to fill out a substantial evaluation. No further group discussion took place. Teachers stayed about 10-20 minutes longer writing their thoughts and comments. Within 30 minutes, the room was empty.

The implication of Dr. Greenberg's remark, like Sharon's, is that he believes that because students were not there and could not possibly know the horror of life in the

ghettos or have a truly intimate understanding of the circumstances surrounding the complicated decision-making by the head of the Jewish Councils, they should never be asked to make such a judgment. This differing of opinion likely has its roots in the fact that Steven, who made the original comment, has nearly four decades of full-time public school teaching experience and identifies most strongly with his role as a social studies teacher in a public school, where questioning of authority, Jewish or otherwise, may be commonplace and where the identity of his students varies greatly.

In subsequent interviews, Steven explained: “I do not follow Judaism strictly, and the work I do teaching religious school is something I love and believe in, but I equally love the work I do in the public schools. I think I bring that into the Hebrew school.” By “that” he meant the style of teaching and ways of knowing that are found in the public school he taught at, such as debate, open forums, and alternate opinions without necessarily coming up with “right” answers. His Jewish identity and religious school teacher identity co-exist with his public school teacher and administrator identities. His identity allows him to consider a question such as, “Did the *Judenrat* make proper choices?” Steven acknowledged that such questions can be used to teach morality. Sharon and her students, whom she described as having a very strong Orthodox Jewish identity, explained that in an institution with such a conservative orientation, questioning of Jewish authority is not typically seen as appropriate. She further explained that moral questions are largely left to rabbinical interpretation and would undoubtedly be inappropriate for classroom debate. Her orthodox Jewish school teacher identity and her

personal religious identity made it difficult, if not impossible, for her to see evaluating the morality of the Jewish leaders' actions as appropriate.

The meanings Steven solidified for himself from participation in this session were that the Holocaust can be used to raise moral questions and allow students to make judgments about the ethics of others. For Sharon and the other Jewish school teacher-participants, their participation in this Holocaust professional development program meant learning how to present the facts of what happened, such as what the *Judenrat* did and the decisions they made, and informing students that their Jewish identity demands they not question the actions of Jewish leaders who lived under circumstances that no one except those who were there can ever know. The only teacher in the room who expressed any disagreement with Sharon was Steven. For Jewish school teachers, Holocaust professional development was meant to help them teach their students to affirm their Jewish identity without entering the murky territory of moral judgments. That murky space is exactly where Steven wants his public and Hebrew school students to be.

Programs for Jewish school teachers were always presented with the assumption that participants had a Jewish identity and an appreciation for and an understanding of Jewish traditions, Jewish lore, and Yiddish and Hebrew phrases and words. For example, during one of the sessions during the summer three-day workshop, called *Four Ghettos*, Professor Sam Kassow used dozens of Yiddish phrases and words and made several jokes that only those familiar with orthodox Judaism would understand. As Dr. Greenberg put it, you “had to be enculturated Jewishly” in order to understand the

content of the session. In that sense, you had to have a strong Jewish identity that included knowledge of Jewish culture and some language. In public school and mixed programs, teachers did not have to have any special knowledge of Judaism, as any topics or terms of that nature were either fully explained or left out.

Throughout the study, most Jewish school teachers expressed a preference for this approach and accepted it as a given at the Museum of Jewish Heritage. Jewish school Holocaust educators frequently referred to the Jewish approach to Holocaust education and the ways in which the event affected and continues to affect the Jewish community and their students as Jews. When asked what the impact of the Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Conference on Nazi experimentation for all educators has been, Halle, a Holocaust teacher who has attended many programs for Jewish school teachers, expressed pedagogical thinking that was very much in line with the nature of the Jewish school professional development programs at the Museum. She said, “My goal is not to tell it [Holocaust history] through the Nazi voice, but through the Jewish voice, Jewish resistance, and Jewish response. I am hesitant to say I would spend any more time on the voice of the Nazis or their experiments. My educational philosophy is that the Jewish voice needs to be the loudest.” In her opinion, devoting more instructional space to the crimes of the Nazis would take away from the time she can spend amplifying the actions and heroism of the Jewish people.

Halle has taken her Holocaust classes to the Museum exhibits almost since the Museum opened. In doing so, Halle used Museum programs and exhibitions in her own

pedagogical choices: Just as the Museum devotes two-thirds of its permanent exhibit to the culturally and socially rich aspects of Jewish life before and after the Holocaust, so Halle chooses to spend much of her Holocaust education on similar themes. While interviews with her revealed that she certainly does not ignore or downplay Jewish life and death during the Holocaust, she does couch it within a study of Jewish traditions, survival, resistance, and renewal, similar to the Museum exhibitions, since the meanings she makes of the Holocaust indicate that learning about it can and should be used to help students strengthen their Jewish identity.

This provides evidence that some meanings made of the Holocaust in professional development for Jewish school teachers (such as that it is an event that must be taught in the context of Jewish life before and Jewish renewal after the Holocaust) influences how teacher-participants make sense of the Holocaust. Non-Jewish public school teachers did not typically agree with this. John, who has taught world history and the Holocaust for 11 years, stated, “It is important to inform students on the long history of anti-Semitism and how that laid the foundation for the Holocaust, but I do not think they [the students] really need to know much about how Jewish people lived before the Holocaust. I honestly don’t have time for that.” In a later interview, he elaborated on this: “I also now think it’s important to teach about what happened after the Holocaust, especially the result of the Nuremberg trials.” No mention was made of teaching how the Jewish community revived itself worldwide after the devastation of the Holocaust. Jewish school teachers may have seen Jewish renewal after the Holocaust as important in a way

that public school teachers did not because their and their students' identities gives personal meaning to the topic. The Museum is intended to memorialize the Jewish Holocaust and therefore those with a Jewish identity found the memorialization space more impactful to the meanings they made of the Holocaust than those without a Jewish identity.

Even though there is an unquestionable Jewish identity at the Museum and at its professional development programs, public and Jewish school teachers generally believed that the content of the teacher training institutes was appropriate and balanced. Sharon, an orthodox Jewish woman who attends every program for Jewish school teachers and programs for all teachers and who teaches in an ultraorthodox Jewish school, expressed this by saying,

If the Museum program tries to say the Nazis hate everybody that is not entirely honest. The [professional development] program narrative is not too anything. It's accurate. Other institutions might pander too much. There is certainly very little on the orthodox experience, very little on references to Jewish life cycle events like Bar Mitzvah or kosher food. [It is a] pretty secular approach. There is a huge history of Hassidic Jews, and that is notably absent. I feel part of the museum. I stand by their narrative.

Her Jewish identity and her sense of the Holocaust as a Jewish event are solidified at the professional development programs she participates in. She clearly comes to the Museum to bolster her way of understanding the Holocaust, which is aligned with her Jewish identity and the identity of the school at which she teaches. By participating in professional development programs at the Museum, Sharon is reassured that her understanding and way of teaching the Holocaust is correct, or, as she puts it, "accurate."

By stating that she feels she is “part of the Museum”, she seems to take on the identity of the Museum itself.

Professional development programs at the Museum also aimed to attach a Jewish identity to the Holocaust for public school teachers as well. At teacher training programs, Museum staff sometimes gave out scholarly readings related to the topic of the workshop or authored by the academic presenter. At the *Meeting Hate with Humanity* six-day summer workshop for teachers, a 124-page spiral-bound course reader was distributed on day one. In it were readings related to each day’s course content. The overwhelming majority of readings related exclusively to the Jewish experience, including *The Onslaught of Modernity: Jewish History from 1880 to the Present*, from *Jewish People*, *Jewish Thought: The Jewish Experience in History*, by Robert Seltzer; *The November Pogrom and Its Aftermath*, from *Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany*, by Marion Kaplan; *Jewish Life Under German Occupation in Holocaust – A History*, by Deborah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt; and *Jewish Life in the Shadow of Destruction*, by Yitzchak Mais. A few other articles appear in the reader, but the main focus is on understanding the Holocaust from the Jewish perspective. Bob, who has taught the Holocaust for just under a decade, noted,

I am always looking for new documents to use on the Holocaust. The ones in the reader give a perspective have not focused on, the Jewish perspective. While these are way to hard to for my students, I can see myself taking pieces of them and using them in a DBQ [Document-Based Question] so the students can really see how the Holocaust impacted the Jewish people.

The Jewish identity of the Museum is impacting the pedagogic sense Bob makes of the Holocaust.

Further evidence of the paramount importance of the Jewish identity of the Museum in Holocaust education in professional development for public teachers was seen in the guide distributed to public school teachers, titled *Teachers Guide - Meeting Hate with Humanity: Life During the Holocaust* (Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust, 2005). In the introduction, Jewish life and the Jewish experience during the Holocaust are firmly established as the context. It states, “The overall objectives of the Museum program are to...foster understanding of the impact of World War II and the Holocaust on Jewish lives and communities in Europe” (p. 1). Contained within the background materials is information about what it means to be kosher, the ways in which Jewish people sanctify the Sabbath, and the meaning behind Jewish clothing.

In interviews, public school teachers rarely expressed any concern with the Jewish identity of the Museum but recognized that it was ever-present in their programs. When asked what she thought of the Jewish aspects of the program Ashley, who attended only the *Meeting Hate with Humanity* summer institute for public teachers stated during her first interview,

The program did have a Jewish focus because it was at a Jewish museum, but not too much...But it had to be Jewish—they taught us about the Torah, etc.—I think it was necessary, it calls for it to be that way. I didn't think anything bad that it was heavily Jewish, I appreciated it because I don't know much about the Jewish culture or religion besides what I see as an observer. And I think everyone was

very welcoming. No one looked at me like, ‘Oh, you’re a non-Jew. I didn’t feel anyone felt like I shouldn’t know these things since I am not Jewish.

Ashley believes that attention to Judaism in teaching about the Holocaust is necessary.

When asked if she believed that before participating in the program, she stated, “I knew that the Jewish people suffered the most in the Holocaust, but I did not know how I

should include Jewish culture and the religion in teaching the Holocaust.” However, by her third and final interview, Ashley’s devotion to recognizing the Jewish identity of the Museum as a part of her own identity as a teacher of the Holocaust began to dwindle.

When asked the same question again during her last interview, the meanings she made of the Jewish aspects of the program changed, as she stated, “I certainly know more now about Judaism and the Jewish experience in the Holocaust than I ever did; I just don’t think that I will talk too much more about it [Judaism and the Jewish experience in the Holocaust] when I teach the Holocaust. I am not an expert, and I can’t really answer the kids’ questions.” Ashley’s participation in her professional development program did not, or at least hasn’t yet, led her to take on a Jewish identification for Holocaust education as it will be practiced in her classroom.

In that same vein, Bob, a New York City public high school Advanced Placement American and World History social studies teacher for a decade, noted that when he signed up for a professional development course at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, located in a city with a large Jewish population, he didn’t expect to hear about the experiences of homosexuals, Romanians, gypsies, and the disabled, among others, during the Holocaust but rather the experience of the Jews. He said, “I got exactly what I

bargained for.” When asked to elaborate, he said, “I am not Jewish, and I tell my students about the 6 million Jews and the five and a half million others that were killed in the Holocaust, but I knew at this Museum I was going to get the Jewish history part the entire time. And that’s fine; it’s just not who I am.” Bob may have gone to this professional development program to see the Holocaust from a different identity-perspective than his own in a “low-risk environment” (Rounds, 2006, p, 142) that does not threaten the core of how he makes sense of the world and of the Holocaust. Bob never really expected to develop new meanings and understandings of the Holocaust or the way in which he identifies with the event, but, like most of the public school teachers in this study, by opening himself up to the Jewish perspective of the Holocaust, he sought to at least explore the possibility of an alternate way of knowing. Rounds (2006) concurs that for museum visitors like Bob and most of the other public school teachers in this study, “Otherness is tolerated rather than embraced, and even tolerated only within certain limits” (p. 142).

For one public school teacher, those limits were reached. This teacher expressed concern over the overwhelming Jewish identity of the Holocaust professional development at the Museum. During a tour for public school teachers participating in the six-day summer workshop of the first floor of the Museum, which is devoted to Jewish life before the Holocaust, the tour guide (a former New York City public school principal) stressed exhibits on the Torah, a *Yad* (a pointer used only on the Torah), Jewish family life, Jewish holidays, and Jewish holy objects. The tour guide even referred to the

Jewish people as “my people” and apologized for doing so. Max, who is in his eighth year of teaching social studies, felt that “it was a little too much focus on Judaism.” When asked how that impacts his overall impression of the Holocaust training he received, he said, “No effect at all. The amount that I learned is unbelievable.” However, when I asked Max why he mentioned it to me, his answer revealed more insight into the meaning his professional development experience has for his understanding of the Holocaust. He said, “I don’t want to insult anyone here because the program was great, but I think we spent too much time on Judaism and how the Jews fared in the Holocaust. I just also want my students to know that others suffered, that there are other stories. And honestly, do you really have to teach about Jewish traditions to understand the Holocaust?”

Rounds (2006) believes that “museum experiences allow us to flirt with alternative ways of being without undermining our ability to keep faith with our declared identity” (p. 142). This was Max’s experience at the Museum of Jewish Heritage – by participating in a Holocaust professional development program at a Jewish museum, he was able to experiment with learning and teaching about the event from the Jewish perspective without having to potentially alter his identity or the pedagogical sense he makes of the Holocaust. He felt uncomfortable with this new Holocaust identity and stated that he will “take some of the facts I learned back to my classroom.” It is very likely he will leave the Jewish identity of the Museum at the Museum. It should be noted that no other teacher mentioned any concerns in their interviews or survey, even when

directly asked, about how much space was given to exploring Judaism and the Jewish experience in the Holocaust but that two of the nine participants is noteworthy.

In trying to move teachers toward understanding the Holocaust from a Jewish perspective, the programs used the term Holocaust only when referring to the Jewish victims. Professional developers consistently used the number 6 million to describe the number of Jews killed. Not once in 85 hours of programs observed did they use the number 11 million. This distinction is of profound significance -- it reflects whose story is included and whose is not, and it demonstrates how the Holocaust is intended to be identified by teacher-participants. Since the programs leave out other groups targeted in the Holocaust, teachers may unknowingly be making meanings of the event based on an incomplete historical reality.

While the majority of interviewees did not see this as a cause for concern, Neil, a Holocaust educator at a suburban public school who has taught the Holocaust for more than three decades, feels teachers may get the wrong impression. After attending the 12th Annual Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Conference for Educators on Nazi medical experimentation, he said, "Teachers who attend are unaware that there are another 6 million people [who died in the Holocaust], especially if your professional development is coming from this Museum. Survivors certainly don't bring that up, and neither does the Museum staff."

Only public school teachers raised this as a concern, perhaps since they did not personally identify the Holocaust with the Jewish people as strongly as Jewish school

teachers seemingly did. In the course of this study, survivors only spoke of the 6 million Jews who were killed. Auschwitz survivor Bronia Brandman said, “How do you speak about 6 million murdered? 3,000 innocent murdered on 9/11. How would you feel if were 100,000? A million? 3 million? 6 million? Can you begin to fathom that? We see it as a statistic, and it’s not a statistic. It was my friends, neighbors.” Regardless of how the Museum used the term Holocaust, teacher-participants recognized that groups other than Jews were targeted and most recognized that at a Jewish museum he or she was likely to get only the history of the Jews as opposed to a comprehensive history of the Holocaust.

The data clearly reveals that Museum professional developers and the museum exhibitions themselves promote a Jewish identity for the Holocaust. The meanings teacher made reveal that their personal identity played a far greater role in the pedagogical sense they made of the Holocaust than their participation in a brief professional development program did.

(3) The Emotional Narrative

*“[Holocaust survivor] Mrs. Heller makes you truly **feel** the Holocaust, and I want my students to experience that kind of feeling in the same way I have.”*

-Adina, Museum of Jewish Heritage Professional Development Participant

The meanings and pedagogical sense of the Holocaust that teachers made of their professional development experiences at the Museum of Jewish Heritage were found in this study to recognize the importance of creating an emotional memory of the Holocaust within the context of the social studies curriculum, most especially through the use of survivor testimony as the mechanism for memorialization. This led to a range of responses from participants. Simon (1998) believes that listeners to Holocaust testimony respond in both “spectorial” and “summoned” ways (p. 147). Spectorial means that listeners attempt to place Holocaust testimony in categories that make sense to them. Summoned means that when one listens to testimony, he or she is summoned to feel the intensity of the experience and even the horror of the speaker’s past, especially that of Holocaust survivors. These two categories in this study were found not to be mutually exclusive: the data showed that they can occur at the same time. When listening to testimony, participants make meaning from their understanding of a survivor’s story even if they are not cognizant of this process. Understanding a survivor’s testimony was found in this study to be a process of individual meaning-making in summoned and/or spectorial ways because teachers typically demonstrated that they sought to understand the experience in ways that made sense to them within their own frame of reference and also because teachers of all kinds expressed strong desires to have their students feel the intensity of a personal Holocaust story.

Teacher meaning-making from survivor testimony revealed that teachers almost always responded in spectorial ways that allowed them, to the degree possible for each

individual teacher, to feel the power of the survivor's personal experience. This was typically followed by a desire to replicate that experience for their own students as a way to bring the "living memorial" model into their classrooms. Survivor testimony came to be seen by professional development teacher-participants as perhaps the most effective way to convey an emotional memory of the Holocaust in their social studies classrooms. The vision of the Museum educators was for teachers to feel this way. This was clear from the Museum staff's introduction to every survivor. For example, at the 12th annual Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Conference for Educators on Nazi medical experimentation, the largest public professional development program offered at the Museum, drawing 200 educators of all types, Dr. David Marwell, a European history expert and the Director of the Museum of Jewish Heritage, said, "[Holocaust survivor] Fanya hid from her would-be murderers with the help of Christian rescuers. Beset by hunger, sentenced for death by her neighbors, and faced with constant threat of discovery and execution, she miraculously survived to share her message of memory and hope."

These words resonate and spread the Museum's main stated missions of "Remember, Never Forget" and "There Is Hope for Your Future." Marwell continued, "Remember, by participating in this conference and passing those lessons on to your students, you can be hopeful, because people like Fanya Heller survived and therefore she serves as a source of hope for all of our futures." As Director of the Museum, Dr. Marwell conveys the "living" aspect of the living memorial to the attendees by suggesting they can use the Holocaust in their classrooms to help lay the foundation for

an emotional connection to the Holocaust that can impart the “lessons” of the life of a survivor like Fanya Gottesfeld Heller. In introducing her, Dr. Marwell expressed the Museum’s mission of not focusing on the crimes and the victims but rather on the survivors and the ways in which they and the entire Jewish community were revived after the Holocaust. In his final words to the group of Holocaust educators, Dr. Marwell said, “How survivors like Fanya who experienced the worst of humankind dedicate themselves to being the best examples is surely the most inspirational of our time. That Fanya survived the war and made such contributions ...is a testament to the exponential power of survival.” Dr. Marwell attempted to create an emotional connection to the Holocaust for the teachers in attendance through the live story of survivor Fanya Gottesfeld Heller, urging them to respond in “summoned” ways so they could experience the emotional intensity of her story. Furthermore, they could use that story in their classrooms to work towards a more prosperous future.

A minute later, 87-year-old Fanya, with the help of Dr. Marwell, struggled and climbed the six large steps to the stage. The room went completely silent as she took the podium. Her passion was immediately apparent as she spoke with passion and a sense of urgency. The teachers in the audience seemed to hang on her every word. They were responding in seemingly “summoned” ways. Less than 60 seconds into her remarks, she exhorted the teachers to use this special opportunity to learn everything they can could from the scholars. Acknowledging the inevitability of human mortality and the eventual loss of any firsthand witnesses to the Holocaust, she proclaimed, “You ask why I’m

doing this. I'm a Holocaust survivor. I am one of the last. I bear witness to what happened to us... Of the 1,500 Jews in [my town in] the Ukraine, only 45 lived, and only 2 are alive today... I go to schools and students ask me, 'Where was G-d?' I say, 'Where was man?' There is no answer."

The emotional connection to the Holocaust Fanya Gottesfeld Heller fostered in her talk was palpable. Adina stated, "Mrs. Heller makes you truly *feel* the Holocaust, and I want my students to experience that kind of feeling in the same way I have." Inherent in Ms. Gottesfeld's words is a fear that without survivors telling their stories, it is conceivable that the Holocaust could be reduced to just another event in the history of mankind, lacking the horror, enormous historical weight, and emotional significance that she feels that the Holocaust should have for all of us. She's concerned that students and teachers will be unable to give the Holocaust its proper place in history and social studies education unless they experience survivors' testimonies in ways they can relate to and understand. Her presentation laid the foundation for, and expressed the mission of, this professional development program: that an emotional connection to the Holocaust should be fostered and nurtured in students if they are truly to connect with its history.

Fanya Gottesfeld Heller spent the next several minutes speaking about why she believes the topic of the conference, specifically named *Nazi Medical Professions and the Holocaust*, should be taught to students, namely because it allows students to see what happens when the educated "intelligentsia" abuse their knowledge and power and virtually no one stands up in protest. To Fanya Gottesfeld Heller, a major donor and key

player at the Museum, the Holocaust and its memory should be used to teach future generations the lessons of what can happen from pathological intolerance and indifference.

Reappearing in her remarks three minutes later was her desire to ensure that the history of the Holocaust is not lightened, that the emotional connection always remains high, that deniers' voices are never taken seriously, and that the Holocaust's grave importance to the world afterward is not forgotten about when all of the survivors like herself have passed on. She said,

I speak on behalf of all survivors. Listen to us! We are now in our 80s and 90s. We leave a lot of diaries and memoirs but when I come here [to educate the teachers] I put a face to the suffering but I'm not going to be around forever but I can still tell people that I was there. I meet Holocaust deniers but I was there. So we have to teach our children [to] love our neighbors, [to] be tolerant [so as to] live in a world with more peace and less anger and less intolerance and less hatred. Thanks for everyone for coming I really want to hear what our professors have to say.

For Fanya Gottesfeld Heller and the Museum educational professional development staff alike, creating an emotional memory of the Holocaust in the context of the social studies curriculum by using survivors is a way of ensuring the "living" lessons of the horror are taught and felt by current and future generations. The intent of this is to do exactly what living memorials and living memorial museums of all kinds around the world seek to do by trying to use remembrance of the tragedy to prevent another one.

The approximately 175 teachers in the room then energetically clapped, some even giving a standing ovation. Teachers were clearly moved and inspired by Fanya Gottesfeld Heller's powerful words. They were, as Simon (1998) suggests, summoned to

confront the horrors of the Holocaust. One older male teacher was so moved by her words that he began to cry very loudly and could not stop. It was such dire screaming that he had to be helped out to calm himself down. When asked if he needed help or wanted to step outside, in a crying voice he said, “I don’t want to leave!” He eventually stepped out to regain his composure. In most educational space this occurrence may have been seen as an outlier event, perhaps even unrelated to the professional development. Here though, given the power of the moment, it was not seemingly seen as such given that others immediately went to console and support this teacher. Clearly he was moved by the power of Mrs. Gottesfeld’s words, and those around him could recognize this and immediately sought to comfort him since they too, on some level, understood how painful hearing her testimony was.

Further data revealed that the emotional impact of survivor testimony was no doubt felt by teachers in this professional development session. Neil, who follows conservative Judaism and has taught social studies, including electives on the Holocaust, in the New York City public schools for 31 years revealed that for him listening to Fanya Gottesfeld Heller tell part of her story reminded him of the importance of bringing survivor accounts into his Holocaust classes. He said,

I have been doing this [teaching the Holocaust] for a long time and I usually try to bring in a survivor or two at the end of the course so students can ask questions. I see that I am not doing enough to really have kids feel what a survivor can help them feel and learn. I guess I just did not realize the impact a survivor can have on how my students can learn and remember the Holocaust and use it to better their own way of thinking.

While Neil always considered survivor testimony as an effective pedagogical tool in teaching the Holocaust, as a result of participation in professional development at the Museum he came to see teaching the Holocaust as means to create an emotional attachment to it. For him it is no longer adequate pedagogy to have his students confront the traumatic history of the past through secondary sources, and the occasional primary source. Neil's comments imply that such a model is insufficient if he is to create the conditions whereby students can respond to the Holocaust in both spectral and summoned ways. By focusing more intently on survivor testimony to help students "remember" the Holocaust, Neil is implying a belief in the living memorial model of Holocaust education in that he is intently focusing on using the "lessons of the Holocaust" that he learned at the Museum (and that can presumably be taught by survivor testimony) to help his students improve their own lives and, potentially, contribute to larger society in ways that may help prevent future trauma.

Other social studies teacher professional development participants at other programs at the Museum echoed similar sentiments about the meanings they make of the Holocaust testimony they were exposed to during professional development at the Museum. At the six-day *Meeting Hate with Humanity* summer workshop for public school teachers, there were six Holocaust survivors and one Rwandan-genocide survivor who gave testimony totaling more than six hours of instructional time. There was agreement among teacher-participants from both public and Jewish schools that survivor testimony had a powerful impact on them personally and would have an effect on their

Holocaust instruction. Specifically, they will now include survivors as part of their Holocaust instruction one way or another, if they do not already. Bob, an Advanced Placement American and World History teacher, echoed this belief when he said,

The survivors' testimonies were to show us it happened -- give us ways, facts, stories to show us about the severity of what happened so we can tell our students that and so we can use the testimony of the survivors or even bring them in to make our Holocaust lessons more meaningful. I used to only spend a day or two day on the Holocaust. I used to show some pictures and give a few facts, but now I can definitely include more, and I choose survivors.

When asked how survivors will make his lessons more meaningful, he responded,

Listening to their [the survivors] testimony this week has made me feel connected to the Holocaust in a way that I never had before. I feel I can really understand sort of what they went through, what it was like. I want my students to feel that too, because that is what they will use to reduce their own prejudice. And that is what good teachers do. They get their kids to connect with the content they are teaching. The Holocaust is perfect for that.

Bob went on to say that listening to the testimony of survivors was very much like listening to the stories of utter hardship his grandmother would tell him about coming from Eastern Europe to the United States in the period between World War I and World War II. Bob responded to the Holocaust survivor testimony in both spectral and summoned ways in that he was understanding the stories of survivors in ways that made sense to him (through the lens of his grandmother) and in ways that emotionally connected him to the survivors. That connection is what he seeks to replicate in his own Holocaust pedagogy. Bob has created narrative space in his pedagogy of the Holocaust much like a living museum does in that their common goal of is to use the Holocaust to change learners emotionally, psychologically, and ethically. In other words, like the

Museum, Bob intends to use the horrors of the Holocaust to construct an alternate future, individually and, perhaps, collectively. He wants his students to see that history in general and the Holocaust in particular impact people's lives in personal ways that have tremendous emotional impact on those involved. His students can use learning about the Holocaust to create lives for themselves that are less prejudicial and more meaningful, because they will better understand the hardship and emotions of others. One way he will do that is to memorialize the Holocaust in his social studies lessons through extensive use of survivor testimony.

Similarly, Ashley, another participant at the *Meeting Hate with Humanity* professional development program, who has been teaching world history to 9th and 10th graders in a New York City public high school, agreed that survivors will allow her students connect more naturally with the history of the Holocaust. She stated, "I now want to have a survivor speak to my students. The survivors were a huge part of the [professional development] program, and there is no substitute for bringing survivors in. Survivors make it more real. I want them to connect." This implies that she wants to keep the memory of the Holocaust alive for her students and that she believes that a function of Holocaust curriculum is to have students not only learn the history of what happened but also learn from the mistakes of the past to improve their own lives. The goal of all living memorials like the one at the center of this study is to make a lasting impact on visitors and teacher professional-development participants, and Ashley's pedagogical understanding of the Holocaust is to do the same.

Nearly all the teacher-participants expressed admiration for the Holocaust survivors who told their stories. In the *Meeting Hate with Humanity* session, fewer than half of the teachers had ever seen or heard from a Holocaust survivor prior to the workshop. The first Holocaust survivor to speak was Ruth Wachner Pagirsky, a German Jewish girl who, after having a gun shoved in her face by an SS officer and witnessing her grandparents being shot in the face in the ghetto, pretended to be a Polish slave laborer under false papers and was sent to a German farm, where she acted as if she only spoke Polish. She stood silent for three years as a cover. Only she and her cousin survived the Holocaust, while 300 other family members died at the hands of the Nazis. Throughout her talk, Ruth spoke of acts of resistance and defiance, courage and hope. Her words were so powerful that after she spoke a circle of 7 of the 10 teacher-participants and the Director of Education formed around her to hear more stories and learn more of her experience.

John, a world history teacher at a juvenile prison, saw in her an ability to convey a message in a way no other instructional tool in professional development had. In front of the other teachers, he explained his unique teaching situation and asked, “Would you be willing to speak to my students?” To which she responded, “I would be happy to speak to them. We can meet here [at the Museum].” John laughingly said, “You would have to come to us. There is no way they are going to be able to get out.” And without missing a beat, she said, “That’s fine. I’m not afraid, I’m definitely not afraid.” All of us who had heard her testimony of witnessing the Nazis murder her family, getting beaten by the gun

of an SS officer, and being all alone when she arrived at the shores of America knew that being in a room talking to convicted criminals paled in comparison to the horrors she experienced in the Holocaust. During his interview, John stated forthrightly,

When I heard Ruth speak, that solidified it for me. I have to tell my kids survivor stories. My students are very interested in the Holocaust, especially those in gangs. They don't believe anything they read in books. I can't imagine someone telling their story live! That would be a completely different personal insight that they would just be blown away by.

Prominent in this reflection is that John wants his students to bear witness to the Holocaust through personal engagement with a survivor. As previously mentioned, one of the Museum's goals is make visitors remember the Holocaust. In John's pedagogy, remembering can now happen by engaging with a survivor. The difficulties and challenges inherent in listening to survivor testimony went unaddressed during all the professional development sessions, and John did express some ambivalence as to how his students would respond. He said, "I am not sure what to say to them [his students] when she leaves, how to make this meaningful for them, considering their difficult lives [being incarcerated]." Museum professional development staff seemed to imply that simply listening to testimony would somehow make students remember, and remembering is the ultimate goal.

But remembering the Holocaust, and listening to stories like this one can also be traumatic, especially for young people. Creating an emotional connection to the Holocaust at professional development is done through survivor testimony, and its value and meaning for teachers are supposedly self-evident. It is ultimately up to John to

interpret, reflect, and provide meaning of the Holocaust for his students based on his own identity and experiences. For professional developers at the Museum, allowing survivors' stories to speak for themselves is adequate. The meaning that John brings to that approach is that testimony is of enormous value to help students "remember and never forget," but he's not sure what messages he should impart through his pedagogy alongside this instructional activity.

Some survivor testimony was so emotionally powerful that teachers expressed shock, even at merely being in the presence of a survivor, such as Bronia Brandman. *Meeting Hate with Humanity* teacher-participants could see her tattoo as soon as she walked in: 52643. That was the number that identified her to the Nazis. Shortly after she and her family arrived at Auschwitz, they were told to file past Dr. Josef Mengele, often referred to as the Angel of Death for his horrific medical experimentation, "who stood there with white gloves on. All he did was move his finger and we had to move very quickly." When Bronia's turn came, Dr. Mengele told one of her sisters to go to the right and her and two other sisters to go to the left.

In a split-second decision, I decided to run to the right. No sooner did I get to [my sister] Mila's line that I realized what I had done. It meant my two baby sisters were going to the gas chamber alone. It meant I was jeopardizing Mila's life having me, a young looking 12-year-old next to her. What situation would she be in? Having me near would jeopardize her life. It was too late."

This would not be the only time she stood up to Dr. Mengele. She explained how from time to time prisoners were called back to their barracks and the doors were locked, which meant Dr. Mengele was coming with a list of the numbers of people to be taken to

the gas chamber. According the Bronia, “Once your number was written, you could never come off. It meant there was no way out of the gas chamber.” In the barrack, her friend prodded her to beg Dr. Mengele for her life as he was leaving. Despite believing that there was no way he would agree, she tried anyway:

I asked him to remove my name. Low and behold, Mengele said, ‘Don’t worry, little girl, you’ll be okay.’ But I knew I wouldn’t be okay unless he returned to remove my name himself. So I argued with him to return to remove my number. I call it luck, I call it a miracle. Just as I was talking to Mengele a siren went off. At that particular instance, the Allies were circling overhead. ...And Mengele was deathly afraid of bombs. Because he felt so vulnerable at that particular instant, he called his assistant to remove my number from the list, so that bombing [nearby] saved my life.

In interviews with teachers who heard this testimony, a range of other meanings emerged toward the attempt to memorialize and establish an emotional connection to the Holocaust through the use of survivor testimony. In a tone of deep appreciation and conviction, Ashley explained that hearing testimony made her feel that she was “in the presence of a celebrity.” She said that she had never before met someone who had so much courage and audacity. “She survived Auschwitz. She survived Dr. Mengele. She survived the Death March in 40 below zero. She survived six years of the Holocaust. She survived 50 years of silence. What she and her story can offer my students in terms of life lessons is unmatched.” It is precisely this aspect of testimony, that it is, in some sense, pedagogically unmatched for teachers in terms of emotional intensity, that makes its instructional use a critical thing to discuss in Holocaust professional development. Yet Ashley could not explain how she would use this or any other testimony in her teaching, because the Museum staff didn’t provide any pedagogical guidance, even

though the nature of their work – teacher training – is an inherently pedagogical act. Clearly it cannot be assumed that teachers will know what to do with new content, especially morally laden, emotionally charged content, in their classroom practice.

The overarching message of the Museum professional development staff seems to be that survivors will force students to remember the Holocaust and to memorialize it in personal, emotionally charged ways, which warrants including their stories prominently in curriculums, like they were in the Museum’s professional development programs. Mrs. Gold, the Director of Education, stated, “No teacher here has to figure out what to cover. Take our [Holocaust education] program for teachers and copy it.”

Museum professional developers only once acknowledged that with Holocaust survivors being a big part of professional development, they must caution teachers about historical accuracy and the nature of memory. Over time, memories inevitably begin to fade, and this may impact the historical accuracy of anyone’s personal history. The only such caution was given to public school teachers, whose participation in Holocaust professional development programs is generally far less than that of Jewish school teacher-participants. Mrs. Gold said, “Sometimes the Holocaust survivor will want to tell you about the history, but unless that survivor happens to be a historian, they are talking about their experiences,” adding that the teachers could check the facts later with the Museum historians. This assumes that all facts can be checked and that all historical “truth” can be discovered and agreed upon. This is not necessarily true, as history is more complex than Mrs. Gold made it appear. She also cautioned teachers about the

imperfections of memory when she said, “One of the ways that we learn history is from Holocaust survivors. They were there. And historians then check it against many, many testimonies to hear if things are repeated, then it becomes reliable and it gets documented against other sources.” She concluded her remarks about survivor testimony by telling teachers that she believed survivor testimony was a highly effective way to make Holocaust history personal for students. The implication here is that survivor testimony can be used as a prominent pedagogical tool that can turn the classroom into a quasi-living memorial of its own.

For Holocaust educators it is common to experience the shock of students, their faces of despair, and their outcries of anger upon hearing the stories of those who survived Nazi brutality. Hearing or reading the accounts and testimonies of survivors, of the living victims, who are attempting to describe the indescribable, to explain the “choiceless choices” (Langer, 1989, p. 222) thrust onto their shoulders by Nazi murderers, and to communicate the utter destruction of their souls and their lives moves students into the role of witnesses, albeit generations removed. At the core of the pedagogical difficulty for teachers is how to “psychologize” (Dewey, 1902/1980) the utterly painful and unimaginable experiences of the survivors and make them non-traumatizing and knowable for students. Museum professional developers didn’t seem to feel it was their primary responsibility to help teachers make some sense of the testimony for their students or provide guidance on how to engage students with that testimony. Survivor testimony, like the content that scholars conveyed, was understood to have

straightforward classroom application. Nearly every professional development program had at least one survivor speaker, but the Museum professional development staff simply presented it to teachers, offering nothing about how to teach with or about emotion-filled survivor testimony. In short, they were “giving” content to them to “give” to their students.

Like other teachers in this study, Bob took this lack of guidance on what to do with Holocaust testimony in the classroom setting as an indication that,

I guess I am just supposed to show it to students and not try to have them explain or do much with it. If I can hardly understand it there is no way my students will know what it means. But they will be moved by it and it will bring history alive for them. If they meet a survivor they will not forget the Holocaust.

Bob’s pedagogical understanding of testimony is that so long as his students remember the Holocaust and the testimony they heard, and therefore memorialize it, they will have achieved his curricular goal, even if they do not engage in critical discussions about meaning or the failures of memory.

There were outlier survey responses to survivor testimony based largely on the emotional toll Holocaust testimony can take. One survey respondent from the six-day *Meeting Hate With Humanity* professional development session explained how after hearing from several survivors over many days, he was so overwhelmed and stressed from “learning so many things I wish I didn’t have to learn” that during a break he went outside the Museum and bummed a cigarette, something he had not done in years. The implication here is that this teacher is seeking to deny himself information and experiences he feels he should know and remember. Through the Museum’s exhibits and

professional development program, filled with survivor testimonies (there were seven survivors who gave testimony in this professional development program), this teacher became more aware of the importance of emotionally connecting to the Holocaust and understanding the experiences of the victims.

Attempting to foster a powerful connection to the memory of the Holocaust relates directly to the Museum's mission. Mrs. Gold, the Director of Education, readily admits, "We have to tie our professional [development] programs to our mission." Since that mission includes only Jewish heritage in the broad scope of the Holocaust, in the Museum's professional development programs give little attention to other genocides and peoples involved the Holocaust. Except for a passing comment, at no point in this study was there any focus on any other group than the Nazis targeted. For all professional developers at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, the Holocaust is presented as a crime against the Jewish people. The memory that teachers formed was of a Jewish Holocaust, and it is the Jewish Holocaust that will be remembered and Jewish survivors whose testimonies students and teachers are supposed to connect with.

Summary

This chapter revealed the meanings teachers made of their professional development experience at the Museum of Jewish Heritage. In order to fulfill the mission of that museum, professional development programs there had to fit into the

story of the Jewish Holocaust in a way that not only conveyed an historical record but also aligned with the living museum mission, using the lessons of the Holocaust to work toward eliminating the social conditions and behaviors that allowed it to occur in the first place. This chapter sought to uncover the meanings teachers make of their professional development experiences. In learning about the Holocaust through the actions of individuals like survivors, resisters, and rescuers, teachers made meanings of the Holocaust that Americanized it by placing it within a hopeful narrative that was typically in line with their own identity. The degree of trauma and horror associated with the Holocaust may turn students off to the event, so teachers understood that it must be presented in ways that make it accessible to students, such as through individual stories of survival.

A meaning teachers made of the survivor testimony was that it could be used to memorialize the Holocaust and help students gain an emotional connection to an event they did not experience. Whether they responded in spectatorial and/or summoned ways, the teachers put themselves squarely into the history of the event, forming their own memories of it. In this way, teachers not only acquired knowledge of the Holocaust but also took on a memory of the Holocaust that has personal, individualized, and emotional meaning for them even though they did not experience the event personally (Landsberg, 2004). The pedagogical sense that they made of this newly formed memory was that they could help their students acquire some version of a memory of the Holocaust, largely through the same means they did, which was predominantly through hearing survivor

testimony. Ultimately, teacher-participants' understanding of the representations of the Holocaust as a result of participation in professional development programs were in line with the mission and nature of a Jewish museum located in an American metropolis. In the next and final chapter, I provide a cross-case analysis, discuss the implications of this study, and offer suggestions for future research.

V – DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this section I bring together the findings of the previous chapter by analyzing across the cases of the nine teachers, two professional developers, and six professional development programs in this study. I base this analysis in part on Falk and Dierking's Contextual Model of Learning (2000), introduced in Chapter 2. To do this, I examine the overlapping and interconnected areas of meaning-making, including the physical context of the Museum, the personal context of the teachers, and the affective desires of the teachers that influenced how participants came to understand their museum-based Holocaust professional development experiences. I begin by examining the physical context of the museum as it relates to the meanings teachers made of the Holocaust and their Holocaust pedagogy. I then compare and contrast the personal attributes of the various teachers in this study to show how meaning-making may have been influenced by their prior knowledge and expectations, professional background, identity, and interests. Next I examine the affective desires of the teachers as they relate to meaning-making. Then I discuss the implications of this study for literature and research, and for professional development. I also provide suggestions for further research related to this study. Finally, I offer some concluding thoughts.

Cross-Case Analysis: The Physical Context, the Personal Context, and the Affective Desires in Teacher Meaning-Making

In this section I provide a cross-case analysis across the interviews of the 11 participants and 6 professional development programs in this study. To do so I draw in part upon the Contextual Model of Learning in museums (Falk & Dierking, 2000), introduced in Chapter 2. The meanings of the Holocaust made by the 9 teachers in this study were impacted by: (1) the physical context of the Museum; (2) the personal context of the teacher; and (3) the affective desires of the teacher. This cross-case analysis expands the findings in Chapter 4 by accounting for the influences on teacher meaning-making and pedagogic sense-making.

The Physical Context

The physical context that influences museum learning includes both the actual museum space and the context for learning set up by the museum. This includes, but is not limited to, the broad categories of exhibition content and museum architectural design (Falk & Dierking, 2000). In designing a museum's pedagogical approach, exhibition designers at any museum must make difficult choices about the particular content they wish to convey and how they will represent it. For Holocaust museum designers, these questions are more complicated given the traumatic nature of Holocaust history and the complexity of the topic.

The design of the Museum was found to directly influence the meaning teachers made of the Holocaust. The characterization and pedagogical sense of the Holocaust during professional development from an exclusively Jewish perspective originates in the exhibition design as it focuses on articulating the Holocaust from the perspective of Jews. The first floor of the Museum is devoted to studying the vibrant Jewish community, largely in Europe, before the Holocaust; the second floor is devoted to studying the Jewish experience during the Holocaust; and the third and final floor is devoted to studying Jewish renewal and rebuilding the Jewish community around the world after the Holocaust. Mrs. Gold, the Director of Education, who has 10 years experience as an elementary level public school teacher, agreed that the identity of the Museum exhibits explicitly influences their professional development programs by saying, “Our programs have to be tied to our exhibitions. Being that we are located at a Jewish history museum does affect our professional development. It is our area of expertise. Not that I don’t talk about other things, but this what I can do and do well.” The Jewish perspective is at the core of the Museum’s identity, and therefore it was found at the core of the meanings teachers made of their professional development experiences.

At the Museum of Jewish Heritage, meaning-making is a personal process that flows from visitors’ interaction with the objects, pictures, memorabilia, texts, religious items, videos and narratives that shape the story of the Holocaust, all of which are presented within the context of Judaism and the Jewish people. The Jewish identity of the Museum was evident in the happenings and historical perspectives provided in its

professional development programs. The Museum was always intended to be a living memorialization space. Living memorial museums generally seek to expose humanity's constant use of violence, typically focusing on somewhat recent events, not only to protect a particular narrative but also to teach "lessons" from the events. At this museum, the Jewish Holocaust is memorialized, and that impacted teacher meaning-making.

The nine teachers made understandings of the Holocaust that have their origins in the way in which the Holocaust was represented at the Museum. For example, both public and Jewish school teachers desired to have their students hear from a Jewish Holocaust survivor (or watch testimony of one). In the exhibit and professional development alike, the story of the Holocaust is told from the perspective of the people who lived it, and since no single experience can encompass all of this history, visitors and teachers engage with many who survived and many who did not through the objects they left behind and the stories they tell.

On the second floor, devoted exclusively to the Jewish Holocaust, visitors can choose to hear the testimony of survivors in side rooms or move past them into the exhibit. Given the 4,000-odd audio and video testimonies of survivors, rescuers, and Jewish soldiers in the Allied Forces in the Museum's collection (Museum of Jewish Heritage 2011a), testimony is a key learning tool throughout the exhibition. Not surprisingly, teachers from both public and Jewish schools came to see testimony as a critical component of Holocaust education.

Content on any particular event or subject will not be the same at different museums since it is formed in response to the particular place being represented (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This “social construction of reality” (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 1) for the Museum of Jewish Heritage was no doubt influenced by the large Jewish and Holocaust survivor population in New York, as well as the Jewish people involved in New York City and New York State politics, whose funding and political power ultimately made this museum possible. This museum has a uniquely Jewish identity. Unlike the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, it does not take on the role of a center for tolerance training or prejudice reduction, nor does it, like the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., remind visitors of the grand importance of American ideals that are at the center of our democracy (Berenbaum, 2006).

To represent the Holocaust, the core exhibition of this Museum is divided into three floors: “Jewish Life a Century Ago,” “The War Against the Jews,” and “Jewish Renewal.” Visitors start on the first floor and spiral through each exhibition, ascending to subsequent floors via a predetermined path. By bracketing the horrors of the Holocaust between the first floor, which shows the vibrant Jewish community and traditions in Europe and the United States before the Holocaust, and the final floor, which denotes Jewish successes, largely in the United States, after the Holocaust, museum exhibition designers communicate a message of hope and pride for the future of the Jewish people, who endured pain but once returned to a place of social, cultural, and

economic influence. In short, Jewish life goes on, and the Jewish people continue to thrive after the Holocaust and presumably will do so in the future.

One would not have the same feeling after leaving Yad Vashem, the Holocaust museum in Israel, as that permanent exhibit ends with the visitor overlooking the quiet and empty Jerusalem Forest, which evokes feelings of nothingness and an uncertain future. The conclusion of Yad Vashem's permanent exhibition takes place within the social construction of the Israeli reality – a nation that is well aware of its formation after the Holocaust, a nation whose tense political reality in the Middle East creates uneasiness for its people. The Museum of Jewish Heritage's ending takes place within the social construction of the American reality and the American psyche, which tends to want to see the world from a positive perspective. Also unlike the Museum of Jewish Heritage, Yad Vashem is a national museum that optimizes the national ideal of the necessity for a Jewish state as a safe haven for the world's Jewry and the Israeli people.

The Holocaust helped lead to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, and given the high number of survivors within its borders, the Holocaust and its representation at Yad Vashem is a part of the Israeli identity. The triumph of the Jewish people in establishing a Jewish state is evident in Yad Vashem's exhibits, captions, and memorials. They send clear messages about the importance of learning about, remembering, and memorializing the Holocaust, as well as the absolute necessity of an the Israeli state in a world where mass murder of Jews actually happened. No easy explanations or meanings are offered by museum exhibition and memorial designers at Yad Vashem given the

complexity of the event. However, the message that it is important that a militarily and politically powerful State of Israel be in existence today is clear.

This is not to suggest that Yad Vashem's designers wanted to necessarily say that a powerful State of Israel necessarily assures the future of the Jewish people; rather, that a State of Israel might have prevented the Nazi destruction if it had existed before the Holocaust (in fact, plans for a Holocaust memorial were being written even before the end of the genocide) and that the State today can help insure the future survival of the Jewish people. Unlike the intentional design at the Museum of Jewish Heritage and in many of its professional development programs, visitors do not leave Yad Vashem and its surrounding memorials with a sense of triumph from the acts of heroism during the Holocaust. Visitors here are more likely to leave with a sense of the undeniable importance of Israel for the future survival of the Jewish people.

In contrast, the design of the Museum of Jewish Heritage and its professional development programs seek to represent the Holocaust differently from other such institutions, through the experience of the largest group targeted by the Nazis for complete obliteration: the Jewish people. The exhibits at the Museum of Jewish Heritage do not universalize their narrative of the Holocaust within the larger context of crimes against humanity, as the Simon Wiesenthal Center does. At the Museum of Jewish Heritage, the Holocaust is presented as a singular event, albeit a singular *Jewish* event, that is best understood separately because it is unmatched in terms of the extent of devastation and death brought on by the Nazis. On this point, the Jewish school teachers

and the public school teachers disagreed in their pedagogic sense-making. Only the Jewish teachers felt it was adequate for the physical context of the Museum to discuss, chronicle, and address the experiences of only the Jewish people, whereas public school teachers believed a more broad-based approach is generally more desirable. John (public school teacher) stated, “I have to teach about the other groups who suffered so that my students can see the full spectrum of who the Nazis targeted.” John revealed that, despite the Jewish orientation of his Holocaust professional development experience, he still plans to teach other aspects of the Holocaust. In that sense, the physical context of the professional development program and the content itself did not alter his pedagogic meaning-making of the Holocaust so much as to shift his prior beliefs about whose experience he would convey to students.

Exhibition designers at the Museum of Jewish Heritage had to grapple with questions of how to construct the reality of such a historically profound event within the confines of a museum. The pedagogy of museum exhibitions in general necessarily engages in a process of representing that inevitably “condense[s], dislocate[s,] reorder[s], (fictionalize[s]), and mythologize[s]” (Thistlewood, 1993, p. 8) the past. Choosing which artifacts to show, which videos to play, what descriptions to attach to displays, and what experiences to provide to visitors ultimately was found to help determine the pedagogical sophistication employed in the professional development programs. At the Museum of Jewish Heritage, the Museum’s identity is initially found in the architectural design of the core exhibition building itself. It is a hexagonal building designed to look like a Star of

David, perhaps the most recognizable symbol in all of Judaism. The six sides of the building represent the six million Jews who died in the Holocaust. The structure itself establishes the cultural identity of the Museum and telegraphs that Jewish history is the central and only focus of the exhibition.

In line with a postmodernist museum design, the exhibition offers visitors various experiences which even in totality do not create a perfectly strung narrative of Jewish or Holocaust history. Visitors stroll through the hexagonal floors in a predetermined path, but every visitor's experience is unique depending on which side rooms they choose to enter. No two visitors will ever have the same experience, and no experience is complete. Space is left for interpretation and personal meaning making. In professional development programs as well, the Holocaust was always presented as a Jewish event with unique salience for the Jewish community before, during, and after the Holocaust. Halle (Jewish school teacher) stated her firmly held belief when she said, "The Holocaust is a Jewish event."

The museum visitor and the teacher-participant in professional development must decide what meanings to attach to the parts and slivers of the Holocaust that are represented in the physical context of the Museum. The implication is that visitors can never truly know the Holocaust, that we can only see what is left behind by the Jewish victims, like photographs, and what is left behind by the perpetrators, like the death camps and documentation. The Museum's exhibition, like its professional development programs, provides content with particularistic perspective and pedagogic choices, and

visitors and teachers are left to determine the implications of the pedagogy for their own lives or classroom.

More than any other element of program design, such as the requirements of the New York City After School Professional Development Program (ASPDP), but the ways in which the physical context and the core exhibition pedagogically engaged visitors to identify the Holocaust as a Jewish event had the most profound influence on the particular structure of teacher training. The objective of this Museum in general is to preserve Jewish history as it relates to the Holocaust and not necessarily to chronicle the history of other groups (Gypsies, Roma, Sinti, homosexuals, physically disabled, etc.) during the era of Nazi rule. Since these other groups were never mentioned or taught in professional development, it is not surprising that none of the data revealed that teachers had any substantial knowledge of these groups or their history in the Holocaust.

The physical context of the Museum of Jewish Heritage seemed to impact many teachers understanding about Holocaust curriculum. Ashley (public school teacher) admitted to knowing very little about rescuers and resistance before participating in professional development, and now she sees the as important parts of Holocaust pedagogy. She exclaimed unequivocally, “I will absolutely include them now.” The Museum and its accompanying exhibitions and professional development programs emphasize the heroic actions of rescuers and resisters and Ashley has therefore responded in a similar fashion. She also admitted to having only limited knowledge of Jewish culture and religion and how they were impacted by the Holocaust. After learning about

those topics in professional development, she came to see addressing them as necessary in her teaching. Bob noted that he wants his students to connect to the Holocaust emotionally like he and other participants did in their professional development program at the Museum. Some teachers were so influenced by the context of the museum that they stated they felt a part of the museum itself. Sharon (Jewish school teacher) said with conviction that she stands by the narrative of the Museum.

In addition to curricular meanings being influenced by the physical context of the Museum, the nine teachers typically began to see certain classroom activities as paramount in Holocaust education that were common methodologies found in the Museum. This includes survivor testimony, the use of written first person accounts, the importance of visual teaching tools like videos and photographs, stories of courage and hope, and the personalization of the Holocaust. In all, the nine teachers were influenced to varying degrees by the physical context of the professional development program. The context influenced the pedagogic meaning-making of teachers in their conceptualizations of Holocaust education.

The Personal Context of the Teacher

The personal context that influences meaning-making refers to the prior knowledge, beliefs, expectations, desires, interests, and abilities (Falk & Dierking, 2000) of museum learners. The cumulative effects of these aspects of professional development teacher-participants helps influence the meanings and pedagogical sense that is made of

museum-based educational experiences. In Chapter 4, I presented the broad categories of teacher meaning-making a result of participation in professional development at a Jewish museum. Here I focus on the impact the Museum's identity combined with the personal context of the teacher had on teacher meaning-making.

For some teachers, participation solidified pre-existing beliefs about Holocaust education and pedagogy. This was true for Sharon (Jewish school teacher) who came to the Museum believing that the exclusive Jewish narrative in teaching the Holocaust was best and this approach was clearly endorsed by the Museum. For other teachers, new meanings about Holocaust education were formed, such as for Ashley (public school teacher) who, as a result of participation, began to believe that teaching about Judaism was an important component of teaching the Holocaust. This was also true for John (public school teacher) who was personally impacted by hearing testimony and now believes it is important to include in his lessons. Sharon, who follows orthodox Judaism and teaches the Holocaust at an ultra-orthodox school, took on the identity of the museum because her personal context is in line with the Museum's contexts.

Ashley's and John's personal contexts, both of whom teach at a public school and neither of whom are Jewish, were influenced by the approach of the Museum because they were convinced that the approach the Museum professional development staff was presenting and advocating for had pedagogical merit within their teaching contexts. Ashley teaches at a school with almost no Jewish population, and she said that her students, like her, know almost nothing about Judaism. Teaching the ways in which the

religion was impacted by the Holocaust is appropriate in her teaching context and she feels capable of implementing such an approach. John, who teaches at a publically funded school for incarcerated youth, expressed very strong feelings about the impact a survivor who persevered against horrific circumstances could potentially have on his student population. Both of them took on the pedagogical identity of the Museum professional development program and exhibitions when discussing how they now plan to teach the Holocaust.

However, Falk (2006) suggests that museum visitors may take on the identity of the museum when one is visiting and often lose that very identity when one leaves. The data in this study suggests that for repeat museum-based professional development participants to teacher programs (which is nearly all of Jewish school professional development program teacher-participants) these teachers, like Sharon, not only take on the identity of the museum or use the identity of the museum to strengthen their already existing identity, but they come back again and again to continue their “identity work” towards strengthening their understanding of a Jewish Holocaust. Rounds (2006) states that when the visitor adopts the identity of the museum he or she is taking “on a role—a set of stylized actions—that belongs to the setting rather than to the individual. The role is a part of the structure afforded by the museum as much as, or even more than, the content of the exhibition” (p. 139).

The results of this study suggest that the museum and the visitor can share an identity, especially since nearly all Jewish school participants come to Jewish school

teacher programs at this same museum over and over again over many years. Therefore, the identity of the Museum as representing the Holocaust as a Jewish event only is sometimes shared by its professional development participants in ways that suggest that while Rounds may be correct for the traditional museum visitor, he may not be entirely accurate for the teacher professional development participant. In other words, museum-based teacher professional development participants can (but not must) own the identity of the museum as much as the museum does, especially when their identities are both based in the same religious grounding.

Rounds (2006) further suggests that “By adopting the role while inside the museum, the visitor is enacting an identity, not the role itself” (p. 139). Jewish school teacher-participants describe their core beliefs about the Holocaust in terms that are in fact enacting the role and the identity of the museum at the same time. Sharon, for example, feels that she not only attends the museum but she is a part of it. Part of the identity of the Museum itself is Sharon’s identity and part of Sharon’s identity is the Museum. I agree that visitors likely do adapt to the identity of the museum when they are there, but I also believe that teacher professional development participants can (not must but as this study suggests often do), take that museum identity and make it part of their own. For example, Ashley admitted to knowing very little about Jewish rescue and resistance during the Holocaust. However, after participating in professional development at the Museum she stated, “I want to include stories about how Jews did fight back and how they did resist the actions of the Nazi’s, at least some of them did.”

This shows to some extent that participants like Ashley do in fact begin to take on the identity of the Museum and make it part of their own, in this case part of her professional teacher identity.

Bob, however, confirms what Rounds (2006) suggests since he stated that he came to the museum knowing he would get the Jewish perspective of the Holocaust but it did not become a part of his identity because it is not who he is. As Rounds (2006) suggests, sometimes a visitor only plays a role when he or she is at a museum and never really takes on the identity of that museum. Unlike any Jewish school teacher in this study, some public school teachers did not express much desire to teach the Holocaust from the Jewish perspective or to see the Holocaust as a Jewish event despite spending six-days at a Jewish heritage museum during their professional development program.

The personal contexts of each of the teachers in this study had an impact on the meanings they made of the professional development program they attended. Since I did not follow these teachers into their classrooms to see if or how their professional development experiences affected their teaching, I can only draw conclusions about the meanings they made based on what they said during observations and interviews. In all, these nine teachers combined their own personal contexts with the museum context in the process of meaning-making. The meanings of the Holocaust that were emphasized by participants (a hopeful narrative and an emotional narrative) either solidified pre-existing beliefs or formed new beliefs based within these two contexts.

The Affective Desires of the Teacher

Teachers who attended any professional development program at the Museum experienced firsthand the personal affective connection that testimony can offer to Holocaust education, though most expressed hesitation about how to address similar feelings in the context of their own classrooms. Survivor testimony was the second-most-common methodology used in Holocaust professional development, just after lecture. Dubois (2008) argues that making history more personal for students includes “teaching with an affective emphasis; it means attempting to have students understand and experience at least some of the full emotional power of an historical event.” (p. 4). Of all of the public school teachers interviewed here, none said that survivor testimony was a key component of their Holocaust instruction prior to participation in the professional development program. All teachers came to recognize survivors’ testimony as valuable. For example, Neil (public school teacher) said he had never truly felt the emotional impact of survivor testimony before, even though he has had students read testimony or see a survivor or two since he started teaching the Holocaust. Now he believes that it is a critical component of Holocaust education for its ability to connect students to the emotional dimension of Holocaust study.

While every teacher interviewed after their participation at professional development programs believed it is important to include a large number of survivor testimonies in their classroom pedagogies, they often did not know what meanings to bring to their students about how to understand such testimony, in what form to reflect

upon it, or how to address the matter of historical accuracy of personal accounts. John (public school teacher) stated, “I know I want to bring in a survivor because she will connect with my students in a way I or a movie can’t, but I will only be able to say these are feelings that those in the Holocaust felt.” His response seemed consistent with the approach of the Museum staff at Holocaust professional development in that he desired to include survivors’ stories but was highly tentative when discussing how he would use them in lessons. His answer mimics the way in which the Museum professional development staff did not typically contextualize or analyze testimony with teacher professional development participants, nor use such testimony to explore the validity or use of historical sources. This may be due to the memorialization identity of the Museum; that is, it functions first and foremost to memorialize the Jewish Holocaust and not necessarily to act as an all-encompassing provider of Holocaust history. It may also be due to the Jewish identity of the Museum and many of its staff in that they may not want to engage in any type of discussion that may be deemed “lashon hara” (evil tongue). Examining the validity of Holocaust survivor testimony may border on breaking that important Jewish principle since it may be construed as speaking poorly about another person.

If teachers use Holocaust testimony, as all said they now desire to, the accuracy of the testimony is not likely to be addressed. The accuracy of Holocaust testimony has long been examined by historians (Stone, 2000). Eaglestone (2003) suggests that historians who question the historical accuracy of survivor testimony presume that

accuracy must mean absolute, verifiable historical truth. He argues that the accuracy of testimony can be understood differently, “not as the agreement or correspondence of a judgment...but as an existential uncovering or revelation, a way of showing ‘who we are and how things are in the world’ ” (Eaglestone, 2003). The accuracy of testimonies then does not necessarily have to correspond to historians’ views of “what happened” but rather may offer a meaningful view for students into firsthand interpretations of life during the Holocaust as an attempt to memorialize and remember it. Unfortunately, however, when it comes to Holocaust history, this may begin to open the door to unscrupulous and reckless deniers, which can lead to devastating results. Still, Eaglestone (2003) suggests that the testimony of Holocaust survivors is not intended to do the work of historians, or the work of fictional novel writers, but rather is a category of writing unto itself that fulfills a different need. For Museum professional developers, that need was to bring teachers closer to the affective nature of Holocaust education by revealing different realities about the Holocaust that history alone cannot.

When asked how their professional development experience would impact their teaching, eight of the nine teachers interviewed mentioned including more testimony as a major change they would make (the one who did not, Sharon, had already been using a lot of testimony). Rozett (2005) suggests that there are limits to what Holocaust survivors can convey in testimony, and therefore we as listeners can never truly know their experience. Langer (2006) argues that there is a gross over-importance given to oral and written testimonies, such as *The Diary of Anne Frank*. In a teacher-training session

for both public and Jewish school teachers in 2010 at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, he claimed that personal accounts of the Holocaust “teach us little” about the history of the event (Langer, 2010). He posited that almost nothing can be learned from those horrible stories. In their widespread use at professional development programs in conjunction with lectures from historians and museum staff, survivor testimonies seemed to function more as attempts to memorialize the event and to inspire action rather than opportunities to convey Holocaust academic content knowledge.

Steven (public school teacher) connected testimony to improving students’ worldviews but not necessarily improving their knowledge of history: “I am now going to include much more survivor stories when I teach the Holocaust. My students used to be a little bored actually [when learning about the Holocaust] because they have learned about it in many of our courses, but hearing a survivor will really wake them up [to see] what the Holocaust really was.” For Steven, having affective outcomes for his students is now a pedagogical dimension that he will aim for in his Holocaust lessons in light of the meanings he made by participating in professional development.

Including the stories of the heroic actions of individuals in a Holocaust curriculum is important because it increases the range of experiences students are exposed to and because it raises questions about the nature of mankind without providing definitive answers (Dubois, 2008; Haydn, 2000). If students can truly hear and not tune out testimony because of its traumatic nature, they still cannot truly understand it. Nor can teachers. Almost none of us has ever experienced a world filled with such evil nor seen

the kind of hell they have. And yet, students typically do listen, at least partly. In my own experience teaching the Holocaust, more often than any other reflection, students relay to me that hearing testimony of heroism and/or of concentration camp survivors was the single most meaningful experience they had during their entire high school career. If none of us can truly understand Planet Auschwitz, why do my students so often cite survivor testimony as their most meaningful educational experience? Patterson (2007) suggests that it is because,

The stories [survivors] tell are part of our own stories; deciding something about this matter, we decide something about ourselves, about why we live and die, what we hold dear and where we go from here. When the survivors bear witness to what few eyes have seen, they entrust us with a message that we must attempt to bear (p. 135).

Patterson believes that oftentimes testimony is ultimately undeliverable and that the Holocaust itself is ultimately unteachable (Patterson, 2007). Yet he realizes that the Holocaust must be taught because it is a way to refuse the Nazis “a posthumous victory” and because “it has implications for every other aspect of an educational endeavor” (p. 145). Listening to individual stories of overcoming the most challenging odds or of bravery is ultimately an experience of listening to those who avoided being gassed or hid. Testimony cannot stand in for a confrontation with the “banality of evil” (Arendt 1963/2006) that is at the core of the Holocaust. In listening to testimony, students may, like the teachers in this study began to, empathize with the speaker, perhaps even to the point where they claim to know their experience. Listening to such testimony over and over again for hours allowed the teacher-participants to enter the hell that was the

Holocaust but then escape it, to feel and indeed experience a way out (Schulweis, 1995). By emphasizing survivor testimony as much as the evil committed by Hitler and the Nazis, museum professional developers suggest that the evil acts can be counterbalanced, that somehow both the history of evil and the history of survival deserve equal space and attention in teaching the Holocaust.

Many of the teachers came to believe that. For example, Max (public school teacher) said that he now plans to “spend a few classes on the history and a few classes listening to testimony.” In giving so much weight to the affective dimensions of the Holocaust, the meaning of the Holocaust may become distorted and imbalanced. The heroic actions of individuals and the stories of rescuers, resisters, and survivors do offer ways of learning about the Holocaust that shields students from the horror. Such space is needed in Holocaust classrooms to avoid traumatizing students. Nevertheless, the popularization in American culture and at professional development programs in this study of a less painful approach to the Holocaust, such as using *The Diary of Anne Frank* or listening to survivor testimony, may contribute to the less-than-desirable meanings that surround the Holocaust in American civil society.

Without question, the Holocaust was not a positive event. Themes such as the overwhelming darkness and terror, the gas chambers and ovens, and the loss of more than 11 million lives with little intervention from the outside world are the dominant aspects of this horrifying past, and it may more desirable to emphasize them over the more

hopeful stories. Putting too much focus on affective aims through individual survival stories runs the risk of trivializing the Holocaust.

Implications

This research study examined the meanings teachers make from professional development experiences on the Holocaust at a Jewish heritage museum. Here I examine the implications of the findings and conclusions of this study for literature and research, as well as for professional development in general and Holocaust professional development in particular. Since this study was conducted in a museum, these implications largely relate to how teachers make meaning of professional growth opportunities within museum-based teacher education, though they have some relevance in other professional development settings as well. To present these implications, I have drawn conclusions from the individual findings discussed in Chapter 4 and the cross-case analyses presented earlier in this chapter. Implications include: (1) understanding museum identity and teacher meaning-making; (2) pedagogical decision-making; and (3) imparting lessons.

Understanding Museum Identity and Teacher Meaning-Making

The historiography of the Holocaust over time was found to be less important to the meanings teachers made of their experience than the identity of the museum. The

complexity of the topic and the horrifying images that accompany it make the medium through which it is viewed -- in this case, museum professional development programs -- an agent of historical knowledge, which was found to sometimes impact the identity of the teacher-participants and therefore lead to new meanings and pedagogical understandings about the Holocaust, or a deeper solidification of already existing ones. The Museum's mission, which forms the basis of its shared identity, is "to educate people of all ages and backgrounds about the broad tapestry of Jewish life in the 20th and 21st centuries -- before, during, and after the Holocaust" (Museum of Jewish Heritage, 2001a). This mission was carried out, to varying degrees, in each professional development program observed and teachers made meanings of the Holocaust in light of this approach. Actions done by and to Jewish people during the Holocaust dominated the content and the meaning teachers made, including Jews as a vibrant community before the Holocaust, Jews as victims, Jews as forced laborers, Jews as survivors, Jews as escapers, Jews as leaders, Jews as partisans, Jews as resisters, and Jews as a renewed people.

At voluntary professional development programs at specialized museums, it is not surprising that the Holocaust or any other social studies topic would be presented from the core perspective of the museum running the teacher program. Rounds (2006) believes that the goal of museum program participation should not be to seek major changes in a visitor or participant's identity, but rather that his or her experience may lead to changes in how he/she makes sense of the world. In that way, Rounds (2006) suggests that museum visitors and museum program participants can be strengthening their

existing identity and, at the same time, building a capacity to alter that identity in the future, which is a process he refers to as “identity exploration.” He defines this as the desire of museum visitors to confirm their sense of the world and also be open to new interpretations and ways of knowing and understanding. Rounds (2006) suggests that in the process of trying to maintain one’s identity based on prior knowledge and experience, like the Jewish school teachers did, one may in fact may be acquiring a storehouse of information and ways of making sense of the world that may come to light in some way in the future. He states,

Many museum experiences offer opportunities to learn about alternative ways of living, and of making sense of the world, without the risks that might be involved in actual immersion in those alternatives. The visitor can maintain the present boundaries that define his or her personal identity, while becoming familiar with the fact that other people see things very differently (p. 142).

The data shows this did occur in professional development at this museum: Teacher-participants did not reveal major shifts in their identity, but they may be storing alternate perspectives for later use in their classrooms. Doering and Pekarik (1996) have argued that overwhelmingly transformational experiences from museum visits are rare. For example, the Jewish school teachers who attended professional development programs in this study, like Halle, who unequivocally declared that the Holocaust is a Jewish event, confirm this as they all sought to have their sense of the Holocaust as a Jewish happening strengthened rather than to broaden their understanding of the event by including other perspectives or victims. Jewish school teachers at the Museum of Jewish Heritage strongly suggested that they came to this Museum seeking Holocaust scholarship and

information that would confirm their existing identities. Because this study was bound by time and space, it is unknown to what extent the Jewish perspective of the museum and its professional development programs impacted classroom instruction or student learning. This and other recommendations for future research are addressed in the next section of this chapter.

Pedagogical Decision-Making

Overall, teacher training activities designed to help teachers deliver content to students represented only a very small fraction of the total time of each professional development program. Teaching the Holocaust adds pedagogical “burdens” to educators that other typical topics in a social studies curriculum do not (Rothberg, 2004, p. 467). In my own Holocaust courses, these burdens include not overly traumatizing students, encouraging personal reflection, adding an affective dimension to classroom discourse, and understanding the global implications of the event, which inevitably demands more than knowledge of facts. For example, recall that in regards to the pedagogic sense Bob made of the use of Holocaust testimony in the classroom, he said, “I guess I am just supposed to show it to students and not try to have them explain or do much with it. If I can hardly understand it, there is no way my students will know what it means. But they will be moved by it...” Pedagogical meanings like this one reveal how museum professional developers in this study approach pedagogical teacher training on the

Holocaust. This lack of pedagogical guidance will likely have an influence on the extent to which teachers are prepared to deal with the unique burdens of Holocaust education.

Scholars (Totten & Riley, 2005) argue that “teachers who want to teach a robust course on the Holocaust must select an appropriate framework, approach, or method as the guiding principle that will direct both the teaching and learning of the topic” (p. 123). They further argue that a Holocaust course or unit should follow “authentic pedagogy” and engage in “tasks that require use of the tools of the discipline (history) for teaching, learning and assessment” (p. 124). Professional development at the Museum of Jewish Heritage largely does not seek authentic pedagogy in their participants’ classrooms, as evidenced by their overwhelming objectivist approach to content transmission. In the Museum’s instruction on the Holocaust for social studies teachers, scholars were practically in lockstep with one another in that they constantly provided extensive content information. Guidance on how to make difficult and morally laden content accessible to students through tools of history was not typically part of the professional development programs.

More than a century ago, Dewey (1902/1980) argued that teachers, and not content experts, are the only ones capable of “psychologizing” content, by reinterpreting it in such a way as to make it powerful, valuable, and accessible for students. In practice, the Museum’s fact-packed, scholar-centered, “objectivist” (Castle, 2006) approach contrasted heavily with Dewey’s (1902/1980) notion that only classroom teachers have the ability to design meaningful, active learning models that promote student involvement.

As evidenced by the professional development programs in this study, the professional developers at the Museum consider knowledge to be fairly linear, both implicitly and explicitly, and it does not need to be reconfigured in light of a student audience. In the interviews, teachers rarely made pedagogic sense of the content they learned. While they did come to see the importance of implementing a hopeful narrative of the Holocaust and the importance of an emotional connection to it, the data also revealed that meanings teachers made did not reflect deep pedagogical understandings. Most teachers expressed only tentative understandings, at best, of the pedagogic sense they will make of content they learned, such as the heroic actions of rescuers and resisters, or the powerful stories of survivors. For example, after listening to three hours of non-interactive lectures at the Fanya Gottesfeld Heller conference at the Museum, Adina expressed her fears when she said, “I always come for the content. I worry that in just the limited time I have on WWII, what am I supposed to do? I worry [that] I attend this, and now what?...How do I make it accessible to my eighth graders?”

In practice, it is unlikely that any secondary educator could easily translate three hours of complex content into classroom practice unless Museum professional developers assisted them. Teachers recognized the tremendous opportunity they were experiencing, hearing from world-renowned scholars, but comments like Adina’s show that teachers also recognized their own limitations in knowing how to use such material.

By its very nature, new content is always learned and made pedagogical by the teacher-participants, even without the Museum’s help. Museum professional developers,

however, see this learning process as neutral and largely not worth examining. They operate mostly with the unproven underlying assumption that it will be possible or even easy for teachers to translate extremely complex and morally laden content, conveyed in a non-interactive lecturing style, into classroom instruction that will effectively reach students. Furthermore they do not recognize that the literature as explained in Chapter 2 suggests that best practices in professional development should include modeling of content and pedagogy, actively engaging teachers in professional growth activities, and guiding and mentoring teachers in the process of, in this case, Holocaust instruction (Dudzinski, Roszmann-Millican & Shank, 2000; Ganser, 2000; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Lester's, 2003).

Their disavowing pedagogically, when professional development itself is a pedagogical act, calls into question the impact of some of their professional development activities on student learning. Teaching the Holocaust cannot be approached from the traditional conventions of teacher-centered instruction, and students cannot be seen as buckets to fill with factual knowledge. The affective dimensions of the Holocaust defy the conventions of objectivist pedagogy. Since a key best practice of professional development is to emphasize both content and pedagogy (American Research Association, 2005; Ancess, 2000; Borko, 2004, Fogerty & Pete, 2007; Wood & McQuarrie, 1999), perhaps greater attention to teaching methods might help teachers utilize the meanings they make of their professional development experiences more effectively when teaching the Holocaust. In helping teachers enter the “antiworld”

(Patterson, 2007, p. 145) of the Holocaust in their classrooms with young people, professional development can hold tremendous potential to help teachers improve their educational practice when it is focused on both content knowledge and pedagogical skills that meet the heightened demands of Holocaust education. Greater attention to pedagogy may help assist teachers in making more explicit pedagogical meanings of their professional development experiences.

Imparting Lessons

Throughout all of the interviews in this study, the phrase “lessons of the Holocaust” was echoed repeatedly by teacher-participants and the professional developers. There was no discussion or recognition of the possibility that there might be no, or only limited, lessons to be learned. The focus on moral lessons in Holocaust education is by no means unique to this museum or these study participants. The meanings teachers made of the Holocaust usually centered around notions that a study of the Holocaust can teach students to be more tolerant of and emotionally connected to the plight of others, and that standing up to injustice (like the rescuers and resisters did) is the only means by which to stop man’s inhumanity to man. For the Museum of Jewish Heritage’s professional developers, the Holocaust has become synonymous with man’s ultimate evil. As such, they transmit their belief that many moral lessons from it can and should be conveyed to the world and to students. In addition, the Museum and its professional development programs suggest that the Holocaust must never be reduced to

yet another tragic event in human history due to its traumatic weight and implications for the modern world. The Museum's mission to promote remembrance of the Holocaust is paramount in its professional development programs.

Surely the Holocaust can demonstrate to students the potential consequences of racism, especially since it was taken to the most extreme form known to man. Holocaust education also has the potential to help students understand the major ideals that form the foundation of democratic nation-states, such as a respect for human rights and freedom of speech, assembly, and the importance of a just legal system. As the data in Chapters 4 and 5 have shown, teachers have made substantial meanings about the Holocaust as a result of participation in professional development. But in learning about the Holocaust at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, key moral understandings – like survivors of the Holocaust conveying hope for the future – were presented as unquestioned absolutes. The meanings made by teachers from their professional development experiences revealed that no room was made for them to deconstruct the moral implications of the Holocaust, if they saw any at all.

Teachers in this study revealed that the meanings they make of the Holocaust often pre-establish the moral lessons their students will learn from the past. For example, as was explained in Chapter 4, Adina (Jewish school teacher) revealed that she believed the heroic actions of the Working Group (a group of Jewish activists in Slovakia in 1942 who tried to stop deportations to concentration camps) can teach students the power of civic action and resistance, and that the actions of those responsible for ghetto uprisings

can teach students “the power of perseverance.” As revealed through the meanings teachers made, what they’re planning to do in their teaching is “provide students with both the content (the collective past to be taught) and the attitude that allows them to see themselves as part of that content (historical consciousness)” (Friedrich, 2010, p. 657). As Friedrich (2010) has pointed out, educators often try to overcome the challenges and difficulties inherent in assembling a story of the past by “arriving at a consensus of what should be taught and towards which goals it should be taught” (p. 657). This is precisely the process teacher-participants went through at teacher-training programs. The moral lessons that the Museum considered important to be taught were presented as unquestionable absolutes, and teachers, in turn, largely internalized those beliefs. Mrs. Gold (the Director of Education) stated clearly that she wants teacher-participants to see how she and the other professional developers have designed and organized their Holocaust coursework, look at what they emphasized (and what they left out), and “steal it.” Almost never during the entire span of this study was intellectual space made for alternative perspectives on any topic. As a result, the moral lessons stressed by the Museum professional developers and the hired experts were accepted as givens in the process of teacher meaning-making.

Thus, the professional developers at the Museum of Jewish Heritage use their representation of the Holocaust to make the authoritative decision on the moral meanings of the genocide in order to protect their version of this history stressing the themes that were revealed in Chapter 4. The Holocaust is, in fact, one of the most immoral events

ever to take place in human history. Beyond a few exceptions (like the acts of rescuers), there is nothing inherently moral about it (Friedrich, personal communication, 21 March 2011). The morals attached to the Nazi genocide have been added on afterward by pedagogues like the professional developers at this Museum and teacher-participants in their programs (Friedrich, personal communication, 21 March 2011). The singular way the Holocaust is presented to teacher-participants, and by extension the singular way their students are presumed to understand it, make the history and the moral lessons attached to the genocide fixed along lines acceptable to the Museum.

Friedrich (2010) notes that the function of a historian is “...dissensus, the continuous task of raising questions and avoiding the overwhelming consensus that shuts down discussions” (p. 661). The dominant lecture-oriented model employed at museum-based professional development programs observed in this study attempted to create consensus among teachers about meanings of the Holocaust, like the hopeful narrative and the emotional connection required in Holocaust education, and not dissensus, as they presented interpretations of the past in a singular format almost always from the perspective of the Jewish museum. Discussions that might have created positive tension – dissensus, alternative perspectives, or different understandings – were either non-existent or simply footnotes to the pedestals of unquestionable moral superiority on which the ethical perspectives of the museum rested. And yet, the dissensus was evident in teachers’ divergent views of the museum’s offerings, such as Jewish school teacher Emily’s understanding the Holocaust as an exclusively Jewish event and public school

teacher Bob understanding it as a more universal event with implications for Jews and non-Jews alike. This and other evidence of dissensus confound the linearity of the museum's intentions.

Ultimately, there are parts of the Holocaust that cannot be taught, and there are parts of the Holocaust that have no morals at all. Therefore, there are many parts of Holocaust history that have no moral lessons that can be extracted for classroom instruction. Museum-based professional development that assists teachers in designing instructional approaches that allow students to make moral judgments could enhance teacher training. If teachers can help their students recognize there are not necessarily any moral absolutes, then the students themselves can become the judges of this history, thereby not leaving the difficult task of determining moral consequence to someone else. Holocaust instruction should be a place where the consciousness of the Holocaust is developed *and* implications of its meaning are debated. Students must feel the weight of the moral dilemmas of the Holocaust if those dilemmas are to have a substantial impact. With genocide and other massive violations of human rights still pervasive in the modern world, teachers should make meanings of the Holocaust from professional development that help students learn to make their own moral judgments, so that they can respond to such fanaticism if they encounter it. Museum-based Holocaust professional development could play a critical role in helping teachers develop the skills in their students to determine the moral consequences of human action and inaction.

Future Research

Museum-based professional development in general, and Holocaust-focused museum-based professional development in particular, are under-studied areas of educational research and theory. Teacher training programs at museums are on the rise worldwide, largely because they provide an avenue through which museum professionals can assist traditional educational institutions and other community organizations in receiving pedagogical and content training in what are often highly specialized topics. This dissertation serves as an initial inquiry into the topic in order to shed light on the meanings teachers make of Holocaust professional development at a Jewish museum devoted largely, though not exclusively, to Holocaust studies.

This study was limited in that it did not follow teachers into their classrooms to analyze the ways in which their professional development experience at the Museum of Jewish Heritage translated into implemented pedagogy. A study of that nature would be instructive in further understanding the meanings teachers make of their professional development experiences in a variety of educational contexts. Researchers could also create a study to measure the effects, if any, on student knowledge and perceptions of the Holocaust (or, for that matter, any other professional development topic offered by a museum) based on their teachers' meanings and understandings of the Holocaust derived from a museum-based education program. How, if at all, do students' understandings differ based on the different meanings teachers make? How does a teacher's professional

development participation at a museum, which necessarily has a particular perspective, influence student outcomes? Through a potential pretest/posttest and/or interview research design, insight into the knowledge and attitudes of students in Holocaust-related topics may be able to be revealed. Assessing what students learn in terms of both facts and perceptions from a teacher who participated in a professional development program at a museum might be a way of measuring the extent to which the meanings teachers made in museum-based professional development are translated to student meaning-making. Furthermore, it is recommended that such research be conducted in classrooms with varying pedagogical approaches, such as discussion-dominant and lecture-dominant classrooms, so as to begin to understand the effect different instructional approaches on the Holocaust have on student learning.

It would also be valuable to replicate this study at hand or a study of a similar nature at different Holocaust museums in different contexts, including, for example, at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and at Yad Vashem: The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem. How Holocaust professional development takes place and what meanings teachers derive from their teacher-training programs can be compared to reveal the role of context in professional development. Since the results of this dissertation are limited in that they cannot necessarily be generalized beyond the location of and teacher-participants in this study, it is also recommended that other types of teachers, such as those from Catholic

schools or English teachers (who commonly cover the Holocaust) be included in future research.

Finally, a longitudinal study that measures and assesses the long-term impact of participation in museum-based professional development programs is needed. This could reveal how museum-based teacher training programs influence teachers' classroom practices and pedagogical sense-making over a substantial period of time. Questions to be researched might include: How, if at all, do teachers who participate in several museum-based teacher training programs alter the personal and pedagogical meanings they make of the Holocaust versus those who have only participated once? Are short-term museum professional development program participants less likely to approach the Holocaust from the perspective of the museum? What role do changing contextual factors, like the soon-to-be fully implemented Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) protocols in New York State or other increasingly common mechanisms to quantitatively measure teacher effectiveness, play in the long-term classroom impact of museum-based Holocaust professional development? Much remains to be revealed in educational theory for professional development, teacher meaning-making, the educational role of the museum, and in Holocaust education. Research suggested here would be substantial contributions to the burgeoning fields.

Conclusion

Research into professional development at history museums in general, and research into Holocaust professional development at history museums in particular, is rare. This study is one of the very first explorations into the nature and goals of Holocaust teacher education based at a Jewish heritage museum. By examining the meanings teachers make of their educational experiences at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, this study provides new insights that have begun to fill the dearth of theoretical research into the topic. Through interviews, observations, document analysis, and surveys, this instrumental case study has shown that museum professional developers have specific goals and approaches in their practice that influence teacher meaning-making. The results of this study can help Holocaust museum educators begin to understand how teachers respond to their professional development programs and can help them address instructional concerns that have plagued the teaching and learning about the topic almost since its inception in secondary schools.

This study revealed that teacher professional development participants make meanings of Holocaust content and pedagogy in light of their museum-based learning experiences as well as their own identities. All of the teacher-participants in this study were passionate about teaching the Holocaust and demonstrated a desire for increased attention in designing and implementing their Holocaust lessons based on the individual meanings they made of their experiences. Throughout the study, despite engaging in the

inevitable process of meaning-making, teachers expressed only tentative understandings of how to transform the substantial amount of new knowledge gained into classroom practice. This problem deserves the attention of Holocaust professional developers and educational researchers alike.

As has been explained, results from this study may not be generalizable beyond the context and participants of this research. However, this study does contribute to the nascent field of museum-based Holocaust professional development studies. Results should be taken seriously for they begin to unearth how teachers respond to particular arrangements of professional development at history museums, and they reveal one approach to addressing some of the problems that teachers have long encountered in teaching the Holocaust.

The limited attention or cursory treatment many social studies educators continue to give to the Holocaust is of grave concern to this researcher. The continuing assault on Holocaust memory from various sources, the widespread use of some version of its past for Hollywood profit or personal gain, and the ongoing loss of first-hand survivors, could in the near future mean that for our students and the world at large, the Holocaust might become less gruesome, less unimaginable, and, somehow, as unthinkable as it is for me, more comfortable. Primo Levi, one of the most eloquent writers on life inside the Nazi death camps, described his survival at Auschwitz by saying, "We are slaves, deprived of every right, exposed to every insult, condemned to certain death, but we still possess one power, and we must defend it with all our strength, for it is the last - the power to refuse

our consent” (Levi, 1996/1957, p. 41). We educators also must continue to harness our power to refuse anything that might be considered “consent,” by further improving our own practices in Holocaust education. This study has shown that Jewish museums have potential in this arena.

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APPENDIX A

FORMAL WRITTEN REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH

David R. Goldberg

December 14, 2009

Dear _____,

Thank you very much for meeting with me previously. The faculty at Columbia University has approved my topic for my Ph.D. dissertation. I will be focusing on seeking to understand how a museum devoted to Jewish history teaches the Holocaust through a program of professional development. I am asking to complete this important research at the Museum of Jewish Heritage.

Even though it is required by many state social studies curriculums, and there is an assumed moral value, very little is known about Holocaust education in terms of what instructional approaches professional developers and educators take. As more and more states are mandating the teaching of the Holocaust, and the interest in the topic from teachers themselves is on the rise, it is important for the educational community to understand the instructional approaches taken in Holocaust education professional development.

This study will measure the “transfer of learning” that takes place among participants. This study will be incredibly useful for your organization in terms of future planning of professional development on the Holocaust, as well as for other museums, organizations, and in-service workshops devoted to training teachers in Holocaust education.

This is one of the first significant studies to examine these important research questions. As the Holocaust continues to be an integral part of social education curriculums across the United States, much can be learned for teachers, administrators,

higher education faculty, and museum professionals from the approaches of the Museum of Jewish Heritage.

In order to complete the actual dissertation, I am required to complete a short pilot study to work through any problems that may arise. The pilot study research and writing need to be completed during the early Spring of 2010. The actual dissertation research and writing will take place in the in the Fall of 2010 and the Spring of 2011. I expect to defend the dissertation in the Fall of 2011.

I am very excited about the possibility of working with you and your organization in the future. Please let me know if I can be of any further help in fostering this potential relationship. I very much look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

David R. Goldberg, Ph.D. Student

APPENDIX B

FIELD NOTES EXAMPLE

Project:	Museum-Based Teacher Education: A Jewish Museum's Approach to Holocaust Professional Development
Date:	July 7, 2011
Time:	4:05PM-5:00PM
Professional Development (PD) Workshop Title	Shoah Teaching Alternatives in Jewish Education Three Day Seminar for Jewish Educators - Four Ghettos: Warsaw, Vilna, Lodz and Terezin. Concluding Discussion: Applying What we Have Learned. Sponsored by The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany - The Rabbi Israel Miller Fund for Shoah Research, Documentation and Education
Number in Attendance	61
PD Workshop Leader	Dr. Mordechai Greenberg, Museum Educator for Jewish Schools
PD Workshop Presenters	Dr. Mordechai Greenberg, Museum Educator for Jewish Schools and Yitzchak Mais, former Director of the Yad Vashem Historical Museum in Jerusalem and founding Curator of the Museum of Jewish Heritage— A Living Memorial to the Holocaust's Core Exhibition.

DESCRIPTIVE OBSERVATION KEY:

YM = Yitzchak Mais, Founding Curator of the Museum of Jewish Heritage— A Living Memorial to the Holocaust's Core Exhibition.

T1 = Teacher 1

T2 = Teacher 2

T3 = Teacher 3

.....

T10 = Teacher 10

I1 = Museum Intern

Descriptive Observation	Observers Comments
<p>T1 = I was looking at something from specific to general that we can teach our students. One is the diversity of the Jewish experience... The Jews in different countries had different experiences. Their perspective on what was happening was different. And it is important for our students to appreciate the diversity of the Jews and the Jewish experiences.</p> <p>T2 = We must also think about making moral decisions. That is a very tough question. And it is something to be said for both sides, making moral decisions, because that's what they did.</p> <p>T3 = It came across very strong during the 3 days that we need to act non-judgmentally. Part of our religion, part of our – everything that we learned – we're never done. And it was so strong during those three days that I can give to my kids. Not to judge another person in whatever case their found at. And we gained so much from that, just that alone. Secondly, being the child of Holocaust survivors, the experience was very different for everyone. I used to hear my parents talk about it. My father would say this really happened, most would say that never happened. My father would say, but I saw it happen, and they would get together with their friends and talk about friendships and they're so close with those people that were together with them in the barracks. So everyone's experience was really different.</p> <p>T4 - The more I learned the more I realized I knew absolutely nothing. What I really liked about the conference was how it was set up between survivor testimony and a lot of history because growing up I really only got survivor testimony. And I got from school, we had survivors come in but I really like the contextualization. You take the testimonies and put names and dates and put things on the map that I was really lacking from my Holocaust studies.</p>	<p>Teacher is very passionate about how this professional development may have helped her to better include the Jewish experience in ghettos into her lesson plans.</p> <p>Many teachers nod their head in support of the comment about acting non-judgmentally. Being a child of Holocaust survivors is crucial in informing this teacher's Holocaust instruction, and her belief is clear: as Jews the teachers in the room should not be judgmental and they should teach our kids that. Evidence of the goal to infuse Jewish thought was heard by some.</p> <p>Survivors play a key role in Holocaust PD at the museum, for both Museum PD staff and teachers.</p>

<p>T5 - You want kids to base opinions not on emotional facts. I teach specific lessons, some of you do, on Jacob Gens [head of the Jewish Council in the Vilna Ghetto]. I've learned a lot more than that...I want them to make a judgment. We don't want to impose on some kid, but that's what we're doing. We've looked at all the critical thinking things. If a kid looks at it, and walks out and thinks, no he did the right thing, and kids walk out with a judgment, that's part of what we wanted them to do...You're teaching some aspect of how the war started, we want kids to walk out with a judgment.</p> <p>T6 = Of course we want our students to be able to make judgments, but I think we want them to be able to make judgments in their own lives and the dilemmas that they face. And I think that what we're looking at, we don't want to be in the situation that they were in when they had those choiceless choices. So what we have to say is, I can't judge him. If I were to be in a situation where I had to do such and such this is what I would do that would be right for me. But thank G-d I was never there. So, of course, we want to give them a moral compass. But I can't judge him for making his choice. He did what he thought was right at that point. If I were there I don't know what I would do.</p> <p>T7 = Based on this discussion, there might be a slight difference between a judgment and an opinion. I think we want the kids to be able to walk out of the class after a discussion like this and have an opinion on what they think based on the facts that they just heard during the discussion. To be able to say, well I think he was on the right track, I think he was a fair person, I think he was doing this and that. But with the knowledge that there are differences of opinions at any table that we sit at. That's what we want our kids to have. It's not really a judgment, it's putting the facts together and saying well I guess in my opinion this is where he was standing, but knowing that there are</p>	<p>Several members of the audience express rumblings as this man is speaking, stating quite clearly they disagree with him. He is the only public school teacher here besides me.</p> <p>This is a highly orthodox woman who is making an impassioned argument.</p> <p>She is dealing with complexity of moral choices on the part of teachers – should the teacher ask kids to make judgments? No clear answer from PD staff/scholar.</p> <p>Discussion veering very philosophical, and evidence exists that teachers are beginning to think very deeply about the complex ethical and moral components inherent in teaching the Holocaust. No consensus exists in the room.</p>
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<p>other circumstances.</p> <p>Il = As a student I'm sure I've not received as much knowledge as a lot of the people up here, I didn't go to a Jewish school, but a lot of the education I did get was that teachers presented you straight with facts, numbers, they wanted you to get a sense of how horrible the Holocaust was. And I think the important thing that both of you are adding to this discussion, I think you're both right in a certain sense, but what you really want the student to walk away with it the same sense that all of you have gotten. You don't know everything, the more you know, the more you have to learn. Don't let your student leave the room thinking they know everything. I think that's what you guys are saying. Let them think maybe I need to still form an opinion, maybe I still have judgments to make, because just to give them straightforward facts without discussion, and you don't challenge them, they're going to leave without answering the question.</p> <p>YM: Holocaust studies deals with moral engagement and values. And we have to say to ourselves where is it applicable and where is it not applicable. You want your students to walk out thinking that hatred and other teachings the Nazis taught is despicable. In a Jewish school it's obvious, but in a non-Jewish school it's not. You have to think a little about that. So there are things you want them to reject. You want them to reject perhaps indifference on the part of world response. When you go into the level of response of the victims, it gets a lot more complex. And judging and blaming the victim is a very problematic situation. It's not the same thing to equate. I want my student to have an opinion on fascism vs. democracy, of humanitarian aid vs. closing of borders and indifference. But victimization is very problematic. We all know that it's good to get simulation in schools. So if you're teaching democracy, you're teaching the process, you want to have a mock course, congress, or UN. You're the UN, you want to discuss if there should be sanctions applied against Libya given what's going on. That's a valid subject which</p>	<p>This girl is the intern for the professional development staff at the Museum. No one expected her to speak, but she has the full attention of the room. Her perspective reminds teachers of their audience: students.</p> <p>This man speaks with authority, especially since the audience by now is well aware that he was the Director of the Holocaust Museum in Israel. Here his comments reveal some of the possible goals of the PD – reject simulation as a method to teach the Holocaust, understand that the horrors of the Holocaust to a large extent are unknowable, and asking students to make judgments or teacher's making judgments themselves about the decisions</p>
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you're entitled to have an opinion. What would be invalid is, ok, simulate a discussion on the crisis and you're going to decide whether to revolt or not revolt. And that's an impossibility. It's grotesque because you don't know what fear is, you don't know what hunger is, you haven't seen death in the street. I saw the movie I want to judge it is very problematic. You can't simulate that situation. That's why I made a point in the movie about simulation vs. recreation. You can try to recreate what it's like to be in that bunker, but to really live for 3 years underground. You can't do that. Because you can't simulate it, it's beyond the ability to comprehend totally, to experience completely, you don't want that it'd be traumatic. Thus, judgment is problematic. We tried to show you two things. There are elements in which there are similarities to ghettos and there are other elements in which they are not similar. It's not black and white, it's grey. If you're going to have 30 hours to teach all of the Holocaust, I don't think educationally it's sound to say, okay I'm going to teach 30 ghettos. What we're trying to say is, let's be aware that as much as there's commonalities, there's also significant differences. It's not something that contradicts each other, it's a dialectic.

made during the Holocaust is problematic. He also is trying to correct for the inaccuracy that some teach all ghettos are the same. They are not and teachers should use a few to show how they are different.

APPENDIX C

HOLOCAUST IN SLOVAKIA
Shoah Teaching Alternatives in Jewish Education (STAJE) Seminar

Your thoughts about today's conference are important. Please rate today's sessions on a scale of 1-5, where *1=strongly disagree, 3=neutral, and 5=strongly agree*. In addition, please include detailed written comments about the conference using the space provided or additional sheets.

Prof. Paul Hanebrink, Rutgers (discussed interwar Slovakia & its Jewish Community)

The speaker provided new and informative material.	1	2	3	4	5
I will use material from this session with my students.	1	2	3	4	5
My teaching abilities have been enhanced.	1	2	3	4	5
Overall, this session was worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments about this portion of the program:

Bonnie Gurewitsch, Museum Archivist (speaker about the Working Group)

The speaker provided new and informative material.	1	2	3	4	5
I will use material from this session with my students.	1	2	3	4	5
My teaching abilities have been enhanced.	1	2	3	4	5
Overall, this session was worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments about this portion of the program:

Survivor Eva Lux Braun

The speaker provided new and informative material. 1 2 3 4 5

I will use material from this session with my students. 1 2 3 4 5

My teaching abilities have been enhanced. 1 2 3 4 5

Overall, this session was worthwhile. 1 2 3 4 5

Comments about this portion of the program:

Overall Educators Conference:

1. Overall, describe your experience at this conference.

2. How did this conference affect your understanding of the Holocaust?

3. How will you use what you have learned at this conference from the **scholars** in your teaching of the Holocaust, if at all? Feel free to list multiple ways you will use what you have learned.

4. How will you use what you have learned at this conference from the **survivor** in your teaching of the Holocaust, if at all? Feel free to list multiple ways you will use what you have learned.

5. How will your visit to *The Last Folio* exhibit with your colleagues influence your teaching of the Holocaust, if at all?

6. Would you have preferred a guided tour of *The Last Folio* exhibit? Why or why not?

7. What could have been done better at this conference?

APPENDIX D

EXAMPLE 2 OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION FORM

GERMANY FACES ITS PAST
Shoah Teaching Alternatives in Jewish Education (STAJE) Seminar

Your thoughts about today's conference are important. Please rate today's sessions on a scale of 1-5, where *1=strongly disagree, 3=neutral, and 5=strongly agree*. In addition, please include detailed written comments about the sessions and speakers using the space provided or additional sheets.

Dr. David Marwell, Director of the Museum

The speaker provided new and informative material.	1	2	3	4	5
I will use material from this session with my students.	1	2	3	4	5
My teaching abilities have been enhanced.	1	2	3	4	5
Overall, this session was worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments about this portion of the program:

Professor Carole Fink, Ohio State University

The speaker provided new and informative material.	1	2	3	4	5
I will use material from this session with my students.	1	2	3	4	5
My teaching abilities have been enhanced.	1	2	3	4	5
Overall, this session was worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments about this portion of the program:

Professor Wulf Kansteiner, Binghamton University

The speaker provided new and informative material.	1	2	3	4	5
I will use material from this session with my students.	1	2	3	4	5
My teaching abilities have been enhanced.	1	2	3	4	5
Overall, this session was worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments about this portion of the program:

Dr. Wolf Kaiser, The House of the Wannsee Conference

The speaker provided new and informative material.	1	2	3	4	5
I will use material from this session with my students.	1	2	3	4	5
My teaching abilities have been enhanced.	1	2	3	4	5
Overall, this session was worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments about this portion of the program:

Overall Educators Conference:

1. Overall, please describe your experience at this conference.

2. What is the most useful content that you learned at the conference?

3. What are the most important teaching skills that you learned at the conference?

4. How, if at all, will you use what you have learned at this conference in your teaching of the Holocaust? Please be specific and feel free to list multiple ways you will use apply what you have learned.

5. What could have been done better at this conference?

APPENDIX E

PRE-SCREEING SURVEY FOR POTENTIAL PARTICPANTS

- 1a. Where do you teach? What kind of a school is it?

- 1b. What, if any, certifications do you hold?

- 1c. How long have you been teaching and in what contexts?

- 1d. How long have you been at your current school?

- 1e. Please describe your formal educational background.

- 1f. Please describe any formal or informal training you have had on the Holocaust (college courses, symposiums, in-service workshops, previous museum-based programs, personal reading or museum visits, interaction of any kind with survivors or liberators)?

- 1g. What is your religious affiliation?

1h. Please describe your level of observance to your religion.

1i. Please describe your ethnicity.

1j. How old are you?

1k. What do you currently teach?

APPENDIX F

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR TEACHERS

INTERVIEW 1

1. How is the Holocaust included in the curriculum in your school (including what grade(s) , what subject(s), and general comments about how it is taught)?

2. Prior to participation in this professional development session, how have you taught about the Holocaust (especially the activities you used, content you covered or chose to leave out, and the materials you have used)?
 - a. What, if anything, have been the challenges to student understanding and instructional practice?

3. What was it about the professional development program at the Museum of Jewish Heritage that attracted you to it?

4. Please describe the professional development activities you participated in?

6. Why do you think they did _____ in the professional development session? To what extent was that valuable for you?

7. If you could change anything about the professional development session what would it be and why (this can even be as broad as the topic or as narrow as one small aspect of the professional development session)?

APPENDIX H

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR TEACHERS

INTERVIEW 3

1. What do you feel that you got out of participation in the professional development session(s)?

2. After now having participated in the professional development session(s), can you please describe the extent to which your feelings have, or have not, changed about the Holocaust in general?
 - a. Please describe the extent to which your feelings have, or have not, changed about teaching the Holocaust?

 - b. In what ways do you find your self different from your usual self, if at all, in your role as teacher (on the Holocaust or even otherwise)?

3. To what extent has the professional development you participated in been helpful in your teaching (or planning to teach) about the Holocaust? Please give as much detail as you can here.

- a. What has been the greatest challenge in implementing instructional strategies or content learned at the professional development, if at all?

4. You stated that _____ was a challenge for you in the past in teaching the Holocaust. How, if at all, has this professional development session improved your ability to deal with that issue?

5. As you think about your participation in the professional development program, what particular feelings do you have about having been a part of a program that is based at a Jewish history museum?

6. What further professional development do you desire on the Holocaust?

7. Will you attend future workshops at the Museum of Jewish Heritage? Why or why not?

8. Have there been any ways the professional development program has affected you that we haven't discussed?

9. Suppose you were being asked by your principal whether or not she should award professional development credit for this course, what would you say?

a. Why?

b. Who should not participate in this professional development program?
Why not?

10. Thank you very much for all of your time over these last several interviews. Are there any other thoughts or feelings you would like to add about the professional development program, its aims, or its impact on you?

APPENDIX I

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR MUSEUM EDUCATORS

INTERVIEW 1

- 1a. What is your position at the Museum of Jewish Heritage?

- 1b. What, if any, certifications do you hold?

- 1c. How long have you worked at the Museum of Jewish Heritage and in what contexts?

- 1d. Please describe your formal educational background.

- 1d. Please describe any formal or informal training you have had on the Holocaust prior to your employment at the Museum of Jewish Heritage (college courses, symposiums, in-service workshops, previous museum-based programs, personal reading or museum visits, interaction of any kind with survivors or liberators)?

- 1g. What is your religious affiliation?

- 1h. Please describe your level of observance to your religion.

- 1i. Please describe your ethnicity.

- 1j. How old are you?

- 1k. Do you or did you ever teach? What grade, class, and type of school?

2. Describe the elements of excellent professional development on the Holocaust?

3. What were your overall reflections about the professional development session?

4. How did the topic(s) of this professional development program(s) come to be?
 - a. Why did you choose this topic?

 - b. Why did you think this topic would be valuable for that particular audience?

5. What was it about this professional development program at the Museum of Jewish Heritage that you want teachers to be attracted to?

a. How did you ensure that that happened?

b. Were you successful? Why or why not?

6. Please describe the professional development activities teachers participated in?

a. To what extent was it what you expected it to be? What came true?

b. To what extent was it different? What did not come true?

c. What were the aims of the session?

d. Were you successful?

6. What new knowledge and/or skills did you want teachers to take away from the professional development session?

7. Please describe for me what you see as the goals of the professional development? Were they met? If so, how and if not, why not?

8. Why do you do _____ in the professional development session?

9. If you could change anything about the professional development session what would it be and why (this can even be as broad as the topic or as narrow as one small aspect of the professional development session)?

4. Scholars have found that complexity of content is a challenge for teachers when covering the Holocaust. How, if at all, has this professional development session improved their ability to deal with that issue?
 - a. Inaccurate materials are another problem scholars cite. How, if at all, has this professional development session improved their ability to deal with that issue?

5. How does the fact that the programs are based at a Jewish history museum affect the design, content, and delivery of the programs, if at all?

6. Do you think schools should award professional development credit for this program? Why?
 - a. Who should not participate in this professional development program? Why not?

7. Thank you very much for all of your time over these last several interviews. Are there any other thoughts or feelings you would like to add about the professional development program, its aims, or its impact on participants?

APPENDIX L
Table 1
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FORMS

INFORMED CONSENT

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
Program in Social Studies

Dear Educator,

You are invited to participate in a research study on Holocaust professional development. You will be asked to reflect on your experiences at Holocaust professional development programs. The research will be conducted by David R. Goldberg, a Ph.D. Candidate at Teachers College, Columbia University. The research will be conducted at the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from participating at anytime and for any reason.

The purpose of this study is to better understand professional development on the Holocaust at the Museum of Jewish Heritage. The overarching question that guides this study is: How does a Jewish museum teach about the Holocaust in professional development in a mandate state? The study will also seek to understand how the aims of Holocaust professional development at a Jewish museum in a state in which the topic is mandated are articulated, understood, and, to some degree, enacted by both teachers and professional developers. It will also provide insight into how learning on the Holocaust at the Museum is provided to secondary social studies educators more generally.

Data from this study will be obtained from observation of professional development session and interviews that will be audio recorded for transcription purposes only. Audio tapes will be stored on the researchers password protected computer and will be destroyed two years following completion of the study. You will be asked to participate in three interviews of about one (1) and hour each. Your total time commitment to participate in this study will be no greater than four (4) hours.

Your name and the name of any school for which you are affiliated will be kept confidential throughout this study and in any publications afterwards. Pseudonyms will be used for both. You may refuse to answer any question and you may leave the study at

any time for any reason. All audio-recordings, interview and observation transcripts, and field notes will be kept confidential. They will be kept on a password protected computer and no one other than the researcher will have access. If printed they will be kept in a locked cabinet.

This research has the same amount of risk associated with holding a normal conversation. However, in the event that you feel traumatized by this experience, I will take you out of the study and assist you in receiving counseling by providing you with a list of places with mental health professionals.

The results of this study will be used to complete a Ph.D. dissertation at Teachers College, Columbia University. The possible benefits of the research are an increased understanding of the relationship between museum professional development programs and teacher knowledge and pedagogy of the Holocaust. This study could lead to more effective professional development in general, and on the Holocaust in particular.

You may contact me at drg2124@Columbia.edu with any questions you have regarding this research.

Sincerely,

David Goldberg

David R. Goldberg, Ph.D. Candidate
Program in Social Studies
Teachers College-Columbia University
Box 80
525 W. 120th Street
New York, NY 10027-6696
Drg2124@Columbia.edu

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
Program in Social Studies

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS

Principal Investigator: David R. Goldberg

Research Title: Museum-Based Teacher Education: A Jewish Museum's Approach to Holocaust Professional Development

I have read and discussed the Research Description with the researcher. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures regarding this study.

- My participation in research is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw from participation at any time without jeopardy to future medical care, employment, student status or other entitlements.
- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at his/her professional discretion.
- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue to participate, the investigator will provide this information to me.
- Any information derived from the research project that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.
- If at any time I have any questions regarding the research or my participation, I can contact the investigator, who will answer my questions. The investigator's phone number is 516-992-2714.
- If at any time I have comments, or concerns regarding the conduct of the research or questions about my rights as a research subject, I should contact the Teachers College, Columbia University Institutional Review Board /IRB. The phone number for the IRB is (212) 678-4105. Or, I can write to the IRB at Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY, 10027, Box 151.
- I should receive a copy of the Research Description and this Participant's Rights document.

- If video and/or audio taping is part of this research,
I () consent to be audio/video taped.

I () do NOT consent to being video/audio taped. The written, video and/or audio taped materials will be viewed only by the principal investigator and members of the research team.

- Written, video and/or audio taped materials
 - () may be viewed in an educational setting outside the research
 - () may NOT be viewed in an educational setting outside the research.
- My signature means that I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Name: _____

If necessary:

Guardian's Signature/consent: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Investigator's Verification of Explanation

I certify that I have carefully explained the purpose and nature of this research to _____ (participant's name) in age-appropriate language. He/She has had the opportunity to discuss it with me in detail. I have answered all his/her questions and he/she provided the affirmative agreement (e.g. assent) to participate in this research.

Investigator's Signature: _____

Date: _____