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# Memory, Politics, and Pedagogy: A Framework for Interpreting Genocides in U.S. Holocaust Museums

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# Abstract

This study examines how U.S. Holocaust museums interpret genocides and atrocities beyond the Holocaust, while preserving the specificity of the Holocaust implied in their organizational mission. Using interviews with museum professionals and document analysis from three case study institutions, the research identifies four main strategies used by Holocaust museums: mission-bounded expansion, abstraction, survivor-centered authority, and the strategic use of public statements. Drawing on the Southern Poverty Law Center's "Hard History" framework, this study proposes a "Hard Histories" approach for representing genocide and mass violence in museum spaces. The findings suggest that Holocaust museums navigate competing political, ethical, educational, and communal pressures as they balance contemporary relevance with commitments to Holocaust remembrance and historical specificity. Together, these strategies allow museums to address broader issues of genocide, human rights, and contemporary violence without displacing the Holocaust as their central interpretive focus.

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# Introduction

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## Problem

By definition, Holocaust museums are interpretive institutions. They are charged with communicating a traumatic, morally complex, and politically charged history to an increasingly diverse and global public – a public that is often uncompromisingly divided and volatile. Last year, the *Journal of Museum Education* published a special issue on the recent interpretive challenges faced by Holocaust museums (Schmutz, 2024). Authors debated how Holocaust museums can remain relevant today, arguing that Holocaust museums present opportunities for education about other genocides more broadly. Inspired by explorations into the ways museums are responding to broader political and social forces, including rising antisemitism, historical revisionism, and contentious debates over Holocaust memory, nationalism, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this research study asked *how* different Holocaust museums navigate interpreting genocide beyond the Holocaust to better understand how Holocaust museums balance the changing expectations of their audiences with the weight of their ethical and historical responsibilities.

## A History of Holocaust Museums

### Context and Rationale

The challenge of balancing Holocaust specificity with broader educational and moral lessons has accompanied Holocaust memory in the United States for decades, shaping both the development of Holocaust museums and contemporary debates about genocide representation. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum began as an idea in 1978. Today, it is an internationally recognized institution with nearly 2 million visitors annually. President Jimmy

Carter established the President's Commission on the Holocaust on November 1, 1978. The commission was chaired by renowned author and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel. On September 27, 1979, he recommended to President Carter the establishment of a Holocaust memorial (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC, History of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum). Prior to government involvement, movements to memorialize the Holocaust in the United States had already begun, often led by survivors and their new communities.

The first of such institutions was founded in 1961 in Los Angeles, California (Holocaust Museum LA, Mission & History). It was created to provide a permanent home for the photographs, documents, and personal items each survivor had from before the war. It was decided that these artifacts needed a home where they could be displayed safely and in perpetuity. Since then, nearly 16 major museums have opened across the US, and close to 45 memorials and centers have been founded. These museums' missions often focus on Holocaust education and the importance of learning Holocaust history. Some, such as the Florida Holocaust Museum, also frame their mission around contemporary civic responsibility and human rights, while emphasizing the importance of Holocaust education and remembrance. The museum states that it is "dedicated to teaching the members of all races and cultures the inherent worth and dignity of human life in order to prevent future genocides" (The Florida Holocaust Museum, *Mission, Vision & History*) through exhibits, educational programming, and public engagement initiatives. In practice, the museum fulfills this mission through educational programs, public statements, and initiatives that promote human rights awareness, tolerance, and civic responsibility.

The expectations of museums have always been many and unique. From providing awe-inspiring moments and historical revelations to serving as political protest sites and community support and outreach centers, local museums are expected to be a third space that can transform to meet the shifting needs of their communities while simultaneously taking a global stance. To be perceived as trustworthy and genuine, museums face pressure to address contemporary issues rather than just historical moments. Significant literature exists surrounding trust and museums. An American Alliance of Museums report from 2021, *Museums and Trust*, confirmed that the public continues to regard museums as highly trustworthy. An important aspect of the trust vested in museums is their nonpartisan support. However, as pressure increases on museums to take a political stance, they risk losing some of the hard-earned trust they have built.

At the same time, the distinction between remaining nonpartisan and engaging contemporary issues is not always clear. Holocaust museums operate within a field shaped by ongoing debates about memory, identity, human rights, nationalism, antisemitism, and genocide. Decisions about what histories to include, how to frame them, whose voices to prioritize, and when to respond to current events all carry political implications. In this context, the challenge facing Holocaust museums is not whether to engage politics, but how to navigate competing political, ethical, educational, and communal expectations while maintaining public trust and historical integrity.

The increasing politicization of cultural institutions in the United States affects all museums, regardless of size or content. In 2025 alone, the Trump administration reignited controversy by issuing the executive order, “Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History”, which instructed the Smithsonian Institution to remove or revise content deemed “divisive” or “anti-American”. Holocaust museums hold a unique position in the museum world. Tasked with

interpreting one of history's most politically and morally charged subjects, Holocaust museums face a distinct set of pressures surrounding memory, representation, identity, and contemporary relevance. However, the increasing public expectation for these museums to address other genocides and contemporary human rights issues grows. At their core, Holocaust museums must figure out how to expand their scope without diluting Holocaust specificity or mission integrity.

### **Scholarly Context and Ongoing Debates**

Jewish Studies is a broad interdisciplinary field that examines Jewish peoples, Jewish cultures, and Jewish civilizations across history and around the world. It began to gain traction in U.S. colleges and universities in the 1960s, but the study of Jewish experience dates back to the early nineteenth century. It includes Jewish history, literature, language, religion, politics, and arts. It often also incorporates unique subfields like bible and biblical interpretation, rabbinic literatures and culture, Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews, Israel Studies, and Holocaust Studies (Association for Jewish Studies, *What Is Jewish Studies?*).

Jewish Studies helps explain why and how Holocaust museums are so uniquely burdened with questions of identity, inheritance, and obligation. Some foundational Jewish studies texts like Yosef Yerushalmi's (1982) *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, explains how Jewish historical consciousness centers remembrance differently than secular traditions. This is crucial for explaining why Holocaust memory is particular in Jewish communities. Inherent evidence of this is in Yerushalmi's title. "zakhor" is Hebrew for "to remember" or "remembrance". Yerushalmi's main argument is that remembrance is a religious and communal imperative rather than a historiographical exercise. Similarly, Shaul Magid's (2012) "The Holocaust and Jewish Identity in America: Memory, the Unique, and the Universal" explores how the Holocaust became central to American Jewish identity. He continues to explore "the

institutionalization of the Holocaust as part of American history as part of American history and as a Jewish ‘event’ in the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.” (p.100).

Other literature linking Jewish identity, museums, and representation includes Jennifer Hansen-Glucklich’s (2014) book *Holocaust Memory Reframed: Museums and the Challenges of Representation*. Hansen-Glucklich examines the difficulties Holocaust memorials and museums face. Using three case studies (Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, the Jewish Museum in Berlin, and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.) she “describes a variety of visually striking media, including architecture, photography exhibits, artifact displays, and video installations in order to explain the aesthetic techniques that the museums employ” (p. 1). While interpreting the exhibits, she explains how museums communicate Holocaust narratives while taking into account the historical and cultural contexts specific to Germany, Israel, and the United States. Hansen-Glucklich explores how each museum uniquely choreographs the visitor's experiences.

### **Holocaust Education**

Another significant body of relevant literature is centered on holocaust education. New approaches for teaching the Holocaust to a wide variety of audiences are constantly being developed. There is also significant relevant debate within this field on whether certain approaches are “right” or “wrong”. The most prominent debate is whether using a comparative approach is useful or disrespectful. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) has its own webpage devoted to just this. They provide resources answering the questions surrounding “What comparison does and does not mean?, how the Holocaust and other genocides can be compared?, and how can the Holocaust and other atrocities be compared?”.

David Tollerton (2025) approaches this topic from a unique angle in his article “‘Never right to make comparisons’? Holocaust memory, climate crisis, and the debate over appropriate discourse.” This article explores the relationship between the Holocaust and the increased threat of mass violence due to climate change. It considers the history of similar controversies surrounding Holocaust comparisons and argues that there are select ways in which it is reasonable and useful to bring Holocaust memory into dialogue with the climate crisis. However, Katherine Bischooping and Andrea Kalmin (1999), in their article “Public Opinion About Comparisons to the Holocaust”, dissect this debate concerning the uniqueness of the Holocaust and the appropriateness of comparing this event to others. They conclude that comparisons made by activists are typically carelessly reasoned and self-interested. While both of these articles are directly related to the appropriateness of discussing the Holocaust in comparison to other events, they do not touch on whether the Holocaust can be compared to other genocides.

### **Holocaust Exceptionalism, Comparison, and Contemporary Debates**

Underlying many debates about Holocaust representation is the longstanding tension between Holocaust exceptionalism and comparative approaches to genocide. Some scholars argue that the Holocaust possesses unique historical characteristics that require special interpretive treatment, while others contend that meaningful lessons emerge through comparison with other genocides and forms of mass violence. These debates have become increasingly visible in contemporary public discourse, particularly in discussions surrounding genocide, antisemitism, nationalism, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As a result, decisions about how museums define genocide, frame comparison, and engage contemporary issues are often understood not only as educational choices but also as interventions within broader political and moral debates.

## **Gaps in the Literature**

While significant research exists on the surrounding elements of this research, a few questions remain unanswered. The majority of this research examines the overlap of Holocaust education, curatorial frameworks, and the ethics of Holocaust comparisons, all within the context of United States Holocaust museums. Much of the literature analyzes one or two elements, but none directly addresses this specific phenomenon. There is limited research on how museum staff make curatorial decisions internally in Holocaust museums. Similarly, there is little discussion on multiple genocides being presented in the same space or how visitors understand or appreciate non-Holocaust genocides/atrocities in the Holocaust museum setting. More broadly, there are gaps in the discussion about the trustworthiness and uniqueness of Holocaust museums in particular.

## **Study Purpose**

This study sought to better understand how Holocaust museums navigate competing ethical, political, educational, and communal expectations while maintaining commitments to Holocaust remembrance and historical specificity. The study was driven by 3 key research questions:

1. What curatorial and educational decisions do Holocaust museums in the US make about representing/teaching genocides other than the Holocaust? How do they balance these decisions with their missions?
2. How do Holocaust Museums strike a balance between addressing broader topics of genocide/ contemporary social issues while maintaining the integrity of the museum's specificity?

3. What interpretive frameworks emerge from these curatorial and educational decisions?

Can such frameworks assist other Holocaust museums with ethical representation of other genocides or instances of mass violence beyond the Holocaust?

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## Methods

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### Study Design

This study utilized a multi-site case study approach, which investigates a specific phenomenon. This approach facilitates in-depth understanding, comparison, and replication of findings across contexts, enhancing the robustness, generalizability, and theoretical development. The study collected qualitative data through semi structured interviews with individuals employed by Holocaust museums in the U.S. These data were supplemented with information through document analysis of publicly available information about the participating institutions. Transcripts of the interviews were analyzed to identify emergent themes that contributed to a framework creating exhibits about genocide in Holocaust Museums.

### Sampling

#### Site Selection

Three case study sites were chosen based on existing/previous exhibits related to genocides other than the Holocaust. The Holocaust Museum Houston features a permanent exhibit called Human Rights: A Call to Action in The Lester and Sue Smith Human Rights Gallery next to their main permanent exhibit: Bearing Witness: A Community Remembers. The Florida Holocaust museum highlights their teaching trunks and uses their digital resources to often comment on contemporary issues. Seattle's Holocaust Center for Humanity employs

several interactives that prompt audiences to think critically about atrocities beyond the Holocaust and offers lesson plans titled:

- Introduction to Genocide
- Teaching about Genocide
- Modern-Day Genocide, A Study of the Rohingya Minority in Burma
- Crimes Against Humanity and Civilization: The Genocide of the Armenians.

While they do not currently have any exhibits or plans for exhibits advertised about genocides beyond the Holocaust, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum offers significant documentation about past exhibits about other genocides and worldwide atrocities.

### **Recruitment**

Staff at these three case study sites were recruited for interviews. They were selected because their role overlapped with decisions surrounding the inclusion of genocides beyond the Holocaust in their museum. The majority were either in a higher, more mission-oriented role, education, outreach/communications or exhibitions development. Participants were recruited via email, obtained through public channels such as online staff directories or online contact information from institutional websites or through professional connections of committee members of this thesis.

### **Participants**

Five museum staff were interviewed across the three case study sites. Participants represented a range of professional roles across the three case study institutions, including executive leadership, collections management, museum management, curatorial work, and education. All participants had direct experience with curatorial, educational, or public-facing decision-making related to Holocaust representation and genocide education.

## Data Collection

### Procedures

Data for this study were collected between January and April 2026. The majority of supplemental data, gathered through document review and online resource analysis, was completed during this period. All interviews were recorded, with the exception of one participant who declined recording for privacy reasons; in that case, detailed field notes were taken instead.

Interviews at the Holocaust Museum Houston were conducted on March 26. Interviews at the Florida Holocaust Museum took place on March 13. Finally, interviews at the Holocaust Center for Humanity were carried out between April 1 and April 6.

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## Results

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### **RQ1: What curatorial and educational decisions do Holocaust museums in the US make about representing/teaching genocides other than the Holocaust?**

Case study results revealed two key strategies used by Holocaust museums when interpreting other genocides and contemporary issues: a) mission-bounded inclusion; and b) abstraction. Together, these themes illustrate how Holocaust museums balanced the desire to remain relevant to the present-day with the need to preserve the historical specificity and moral authority of the Holocaust. The first theme examines how institutional missions shape the scope and placement of comparative genocide content, often relegating it to secondary interpretive spaces. The second theme explores how museums employ abstraction, through universal frameworks, moral categories, and process-based models, to encourage engagement without making explicit or potentially controversial comparisons. The following sections examine each theme in turn.

### **a) Mission-Bounded Interpretation**

Across all three institutions, the interpretation of genocides other than the Holocaust is structured and limited by their institutional mission, resulting in a consistent pattern: while these Holocaust museums do address broader histories of violence and human rights, the narratives are typically positioned outside the core Holocaust framework. This is done cautiously and strategically, often relegating other genocides or instances of mass violence to secondary spaces like educational programming or temporary exhibits rather than core narratives.

At the Florida Holocaust Museum, institutional mission functions as a constraint on how other genocides are interpreted. Currently, the museum's mission is to honor the memory of those who suffered or died in the Holocaust. It is dedicated to teaching all people about the inherent worth and dignity of human life to prevent future genocides. When asked about how interpreting other genocides or contemporary social issues fit into their museum's interpretation of its mission, Interviewee A described their institution's mission as one that both "honor[s] the lives lost and the legacy of those who survived" and seeks "to help prevent future genocides and atrocities," illustrating how remembrance and prevention are often intertwined within Holocaust museum interpretation. This framing highlights a dual obligation that makes expansion beyond the Holocaust possible, but also risky, as it must not undermine the museum's primary commemorative focus. Interviewee A clarified that any expansion beyond the specificity of the Holocaust must be deliberate and thoughtful because expansions can too easily drift away from its mission. This suggests that institutional mission operates as a boundary-setting mechanism, limiting how far comparative genocide content can be integrated. They address genocides other than the Holocaust not within their exhibit spaces, but rather within their educational materials.

Holocaust Museum Houston's mission aims to "challenge antisemitism, hatred, and indifference while promoting individual responsibility, moral courage, and respect for human

rights”, ultimately enabling broader engagement with human rights while still structuring how other atrocities are incorporated. Their educational and curatorial programming directly answers this mission by extending Holocaust memory into a broader human rights framework. Their inclusion of other atrocities is mainly explored through exhibits outside their core exhibit (e.g., human rights and diaries), indicating that while comparative content is supported, it remains structurally peripheral rather than fully integrated. The Lester and Sue Smith Human Rights Gallery is the museum's central platform for education and outreach. It allows the museum to address broader human rights issues without altering the central narrative of its core exhibit.

When asked the same question about their mission as Interviewee A from the Florida Holocaust Museum (referenced above), Interviewee C from Holocaust Museum Houston emphasized the importance of explaining to the community why remembering the Holocaust is essential reinforcing that all expanded content must ultimately anchor back to Holocaust memory rather than replace it. They further explained that it goes beyond preserving history, “but also helping people think about actions they can take today to create positive changes in the community”, demonstrating how contemporary relevance is framed through individual responsibility rather than direct comparison to specific events. Another central exhibit in the museum's educational programs is “And Still I Write: Young Diarists on War and Genocide”. This exhibit features several diaries written by young people during the Holocaust, but also diaries from the Japanese and Japanese American internment and the Bosnian genocide, illustrating how comparative histories are included through curated, thematic connections rather than integrated reinterpretations of the Holocaust itself.

The Holocaust Center for Humanity in Seattle’s mission is grounded in the stories of local survivors. This mission shapes and limits how other genocides can be incorporated, which

can inspire hesitation to include other genocides in core programming due to a lack of direct institutional authority or lived experience. Interviewee D explained they are “constantly working and growing and thinking about [their] mission”, suggesting that these boundaries are not fixed but actively negotiated within the institution. Because the Center was begun by Holocaust survivors in the area, its authority is rooted specifically in Holocaust testimony, reinforcing a narrower interpretive scope. Interviewee D emphasized that “first and foremost is teaching and learning about the Holocaust” and “sharing [the survivors] stories”. This positions Holocaust testimony as the institution’s primary responsibility and limits the integration of other genocides into its central narrative. The Center does address other genocides and atrocities fully in their online educational resources, providing educators with the materials to construct meaningful lessons about genocide and genocides in the world. This indicates that comparative content is not excluded but strategically relocated to spaces that do not challenge the institution’s core focus on Holocaust survivor testimony.

#### **b) Abstraction as Strategy**

Abstraction as a strategy refers to the practice of translating events such as the Holocaust or other genocides into generalized concepts, frameworks, and processes. Rather than addressing contemporary issues or drawing direct comparisons explicitly, case study museums use abstraction to highlight recurring patterns such as roles, structural dynamics, and warning signs. This approach allows institutions to engage with sensitive and politically charged material while maintaining a stance of educational neutrality. Across institutions, this approach takes distinct forms: at the Florida Holocaust Museum, abstraction operates through shared terminology; at the Holocaust Museum Houston, it emerges through generalized thematic frameworks; and at the

Holocaust Center for Humanity, it is expressed through process-oriented tools that emphasize how genocide develops over time.

At the Florida Holocaust Museum, their core exhibits and educational initiatives are centered on teaching the universal terminology used to discuss crimes against humanity and civilization: bystander, upstander, victim, and perpetrator.<sup>1</sup> When asked about how teaching about other genocides and other contemporary social issues fits into their mission, Interviewee B's response affirmed how their education and curatorial initiatives look “to inspire guests and visitors who come to be an upstander instead of a bystander”. Their educational materials prioritize transferable concepts, such as the roles of bystander, upstander, victim, and perpetrator, as well as broader patterns like the escalation of prejudice, rather than drawing direct parallels to specific contemporary events. By focusing on these generalizable frameworks, the museum equips visitors with interpretive tools they can apply to other historical and present-day situations independently. When asked about the criteria for inclusion, Interviewee B responded that they “want to be a strictly educational institution” and that they want to be able to discuss “genocides in general”. They further expressed how the institution doesn’t “want to misinform anybody, [...] offend, or weigh [their] opinion in any particular way.”

The Holocaust Museum Houston uses abstraction as a strategy. By translating contemporary issues into generalized frameworks, they enable engagement while maintaining institutional neutrality. The Lester and Sue Smith Human Rights Gallery is a prime example of how the institution teaches genocide through a broader lens. Rather than focusing exclusively on the Holocaust, this gallery presents a range of global human rights issues, such as mass violence, discrimination, and displacement, however, these examples are organized through the following

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<sup>1</sup> See glossary.

thematic sections: “What are human rights”, “How do atrocities happen”, “Who stood up for human rights”, and “What can we do”. Each section includes interactive displays, testimonies, and case studies. These case studies are framed as illustrations of recurring patterns and structures, including abuses of power, the erosion of civil rights, and the role of individuals and institutions. By focusing on broad themes instead of direct comparisons, this gallery helps visitors see genocide and human rights as ongoing global issues, while letting them make their own connections to the present. When asked about challenges in presenting comparative histories, interviewee C emphasized the importance of discussing historical truth and contemporary events, “but not necessarily singling out certain individuals or groups and just having a more thematic conversation.”

The Holocaust Center for Humanity recently installed a new exhibit on genocide. While in the design phase of this element, the curatorial and educational departments went back and forth on how to best design it. Earlier models included direct references to specific instances of genocide, whereas the final edition is based on the pyramid of hate<sup>2</sup> and other universal teaching tools. The pyramid of hate was originally developed by the Anti-Defamation League to be a visual tool to illustrate escalating levels of hate. The base of the pyramid of level 1 is “biased attitudes”, which includes stereotyping, insensitive remarks, non-inclusive language, and microaggressions. Level two: “acts of bias” comprises name-calling, belittling jokes, social avoidance/exclusion, and slurs. The third level, “discrimination”, contains housing/employment discrimination, school resource inequity, and social exclusion. Level 4 is “bias-motivated violence”, which refers to murder, rape, assault, arson, threats, and vandalism. And finally, level 5, the peak of the pyramid, is “genocide”. This level is defined as the act or intent to deliberately

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<sup>2</sup> See appendix B

and systematically annihilate an entire group. This process-based genocide interpretation was emphasized by interviewee D and interviewee E. Interviewee D discussed the update, saying, “We have most recently updated our exhibit and added a genocide feature to get visitors and students thinking about the process. Genocide is a process, not an event.” Interviewee E explained they “really wanted to emphasize it as kind of a process, something that’s intentional and something that is preventable.” Interviewee E continued that, by taking an “abstract idea standpoint,” they are able to “spell out the warning signs.” They are not drawing direct parallels: “However, if people look at these warning signs, and they look out in the world and see those warning signs are happening, it allows them to connect those dots where we might not be able to explicitly say one way or another.”

## **RQ2: How do Holocaust Museums strike a balance between addressing broader topics of genocide/ contemporary social issues while maintaining the integrity of the museum’s specificity?**

Two clear responses emerged from the analysis of these institutions’ curatorial and education decisions: a) survivor-centered authority; and b) the strategic use of public statements. Together, these themes illustrate how Holocaust museums navigate the challenge of engaging broader contemporary issues and other instances of mass violence while maintaining a clear focus on the Holocaust. The first of these, survivor-centered authority, reflects museums’ employment of first-person testimony and lived experience as a primary basis for interpretation. The second theme, the strategic use of public statements, highlights how museums use press releases, digital platforms, and other forms of institutional messaging as a channel to address controversial or contemporary topics without needing to alter their core exhibition or change long-term interpretive frameworks.

### **a) Survivor-Centered Authority**

In order to balance the growing pressure to address broader topics of genocide/contemporary social issues while maintaining the Holocaust museum's historical integrity, case study institutions described designing exhibits that intentionally center human stories, emotion, and lived experience, rather than comparative histories. This approach focuses on individual survivors, and uses testimony, personal artifacts, and narrative to create emotional engagement. It prioritizes empathy and identification over analytical comparison, whereas comparative approaches place the Holocaust alongside other genocides to highlight shared patterns and themes.

At The Florida Holocaust Museum, Interviewee B emphasized wanting “to make sure there's a story being told” and that “the humanity and emotion is felt”. The museum uses survivor testimony as a core interpretive tool, such as the “‘Dimensions in Testimony’ program [which] focuses on interactive survivor testimony as a central exhibit feature”. Florida maintains specificity by grounding interpretation in personal, survivor-based narratives, ensuring that the Holocaust remains the central focus of the museum's narrative, even as broader connections are introduced.

In Houston, Holocaust Museum Houston uses survivor testimony (first-person accounts from individuals who experienced the Holocaust) as its primary interpretive lens, shaping how visitors understand the Holocaust through personal narrative and lived experience rather than through abstract or purely analytical frameworks or comparisons. Interviewee C explicitly addressed concerns about this balance, asking, “How do we preserve and keep these stories alive while also making connections to modern-day issues, to be relevant?” They explained that this framework is key as their “local survivors were so instrumental in helping [them] build the museum.” When further questioned about this framework, Interviewee C expanded that “It was

really important for [them] to focus on [their] local survivors and to have their testimonies and artifacts highlighted throughout the exhibition [...] there are bearing witness stations where you can listen to their testimony [...and] their artifacts on display.” These video panels allow you to listen to their interviews and see how different their stories are. Similarly, they expressed the urgency around preserving survivor voices: “We’re going to live in a time where there are no more Holocaust survivors [...] how do we keep these stories alive?” To maintain balance, the Holocaust Museum Houston structures their exhibits around survivor testimony and artifacts, using first-person accounts to shape how visitors understand the Holocaust through lived experience and emotional engagement. When the museum incorporates contemporary antisemitism, human rights issues, or other genocides, it uses historical and moral framework established through Holocaust testimony to contextualize these broader topics. In this way, contemporary issues are interpreted through the lens of the holocaust, ensuring that any expansion reinforces, rather than displaces, the museum’s core focus.

Both Holocaust Museum Houston and the Holocaust Center for Humanity converge on a common interpretive strategy for balancing Holocaust specificity with broader engagement. Both ground their interpretation in survivor testimony and personal narratives, using lived experience to shape visitors’ emotional and historical understanding of the Holocaust. At the Holocaust Center for Humanity, museum interpretation is rooted in local Holocaust survivor stories, using them as the primary lens for understanding history. Not only is this in alignment with their mission, but curatorial practice is “root[ed] it in the stories of those local survivors”. Interviewee E also further explained that they “don’t want to mischaracterize history [...] that aren’t our histories to tell.” The center maintains its specificity not by avoiding broader discussions, but by structuring them around survivor-centered authority. Ensuring that any expansion into global and

contemporary issues enhances rather than competes with the Holocaust's historical and moral centrality.

## **b) Strategic Use of Public Statements**

Across all three case study institutions, a clear strategy emerged: the strategic use of public statements and digital materials to address contemporary social and political issues outside of exhibitions and core educational programming. While these materials exist outside formal curatorial spaces, they provide critical insight into institutional priorities, values, and decision-making, making them an important site of analysis for understanding how museums navigate present-day issues. These formats function as strategic workarounds, allowing museums to engage with controversial present-day issues and other historical moments while maintaining the longevity and scholarly framing expected of exhibitions. Rather than eliminating controversy, this approach repositions it. Museums remain responsible for the positions they take, but by shifting engagement into statements and digital platforms, they change where and how that responsibility operates.

The Florida Holocaust Museum's digital Press Room is a treasure trove of content and opinion. While the museum may be hesitant to address pressing contemporary social issues through education and curatorial outputs, it is comfortable issuing press statements that clearly frame its stance on several topics. Releases range from a "Statement of Solidarity: Seattle's Holocaust Center for Humanity" to statements condemning the murder of George Floyd, the Pulse Nightclub mass shooting, and the Buffalo, NY Shooting.

One of their more recent statements from May 10, 2024, is titled "No, Protesters, Israel is Not Committing Genocide", which was issued in response to public demonstrations and widespread claims labeling Israel's actions in Gaza as genocide. The purpose of the statement is

not only to refute this claim, but to position the museum as an authoritative voice on the definition and historical meaning of genocide. Rather than engaging directly with the geopolitical conflict itself, the statement centers on clarifying what constitutes genocide under established definitions. This strategy reflects a broader institutional pattern: even when museums engage with contemporary issues, they often do so by translating them into definitional or educational terms.

Even though a press statement is separate from exhibitions, the Florida Holocaust Museum still has to stand by it fully. It represents an official institutional position, so the museum remains accountable for defending its claims, responding to criticism, and managing any reputational consequences. What the statement *does* allow is a separation between taking a stance and changing the museum itself. The museum can clearly articulate its chosen position and engage in contemporary debate without redesigning exhibitions, rewriting educational programs, or altering its long-term interpretive framework. The statement doesn't remove responsibility. It simply lets the museum take a position without committing to permanent curatorial or educational change.

Holocaust Museum Houston similarly advertises their press room, directly inviting viewers to "read the Museum's public statements" on the front page of its website. They use this space to address instances of violence like the Uvalde, Texas mass shooting and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. A key difference that sets the Holocaust Museum Houston apart is their transparency through the inclusion of their Guidelines for Social Media Contributions.

Seattle's Holocaust Center for Humanity employs a unique strategy: it uses digital public materials, leveraging them to address broader topics of genocide/ contemporary social issues while maintaining the museum's specificity. Unlike Florida and Houston, which address

contemporary issues through formal press statements that assert an institutional stance, Seattle uses digital educational materials as a more flexible, community-informed space. This approach allows the Center to engage broader topics while decentralizing authority and avoiding speaking definitively on histories it does not claim as its own.

By focusing their efforts on digital educational materials, they can more easily create accessible resources for teachers and other institutions that respect the cultures and historical specificity of the genocides they discuss. Interviewee D explained that this method allows them to consult with individual communities and ask the important question, “How do you want to be represented?” The Center’s goal is to centralize this information. They can reach out to communities and ask, “Where do you want us to send viewers?” The Center’s goal is to centralize this information and direct users of its digital resources, such as educators, students, and online visitors, to materials created or endorsed by those communities. Beyond their public lesson plans and community resources, the Center also sends internal memos to members of the museum at the executive board's discretion in order to express the museum's stance on contemporary issues. Interviewee E expressed how there are moments where staff felt the center didn’t “quite meet the moment in ways [they] could have.” They continued that these memos are “a really good opportunity for [them] to lean into [the moment].” However, contention among staff, hesitancy to talk about other histories, and a strong desire not to “misrepresent or mischaracterize other histories that aren’t [theirs] histories to tell” make timely statements challenging.

### **RQ3: What interpretive frameworks emerge from these curatorial and educational decisions? Can such frameworks assist other Holocaust museums with ethical representation of other genocides or instances of mass violence beyond the Holocaust?**

Drawing on the findings from RQ1 and RQ2, this section synthesizes the key patterns identified across case study institutions (mission-bound expansion, abstraction as strategy, survivor-centered authority, and the strategic use of public statements) into a broader “hard histories” pedagogical framework.

#### **“Hard Histories” Pedagogical Framework**

The official “Hard History” Framework, developed by the Southern Poverty Law Center, provides a structured approach to teaching the history of American slavery in K-12 education. Designed primarily for educators, curriculum developers, and school districts, the framework responds to widespread gaps and inaccuracies in how slavery has traditionally been taught in U.S. classrooms. It consists of a set of pedagogical guidelines intended to support historically accurate and ethically responsible teaching. This framework remains successful by emphasizing accuracy, critical inquiry, and confronting difficult truths. It promotes critical inquiry by encouraging students to ask questions about power, agency, resistance, and historical narrative. Widely used by teachers, school systems, and educational organizations across the United States, the framework functions both as a content guide and as a pedagogical model, shaping how difficult histories can be taught in ways that are honest, rigorous, and socially meaningful.

While this framework was not designed for Holocaust education, it is used here as an analytical lens to examine how Holocaust museums similarly construct ethical and pedagogical approaches to representing difficult histories. In this context, the comparison highlights how both

frameworks emphasize fostering empathy and critical reflection. The Florida Holocaust Museum, Holocaust Museum Houston, and the Holocaust Center for Humanity similarly engage with emotionally charged histories through curated narratives, immersive exhibits, and the use of survivor-centered storytelling, which together shape how visitors emotionally and intellectually engage with the history.

An analysis of the curatorial and educational approaches identified across the case studies alongside the “Hard History” Framework developed by the Southern Poverty Law Center reveals both significant overlap and key divergences. From this comparison, a distinct “Hard Histories” framework specific to genocide and mass atrocity representation begins to emerge, shaped by the unique challenges of portraying collective violence, survivor testimony, and the moral imperatives of remembrance.

The guiding principles of the Southern Poverty Law Center’s “Hard History” Framework are “be ready to talk about race, center the stories of enslaved people, embed civics education, teach about commonalities, and teach about conflict and change”. These guiding principles are reflected throughout the framework and should be kept in mind when teaching about slavery. Key similarities in approach exemplified by the Florida Holocaust Museum, Holocaust Museum Houston, and the Holocaust Center for Humanity are themes similar to “center the stories of enslaved people”, “embed civics education”, “teach about commonalities”, and “teach about conflict and change”.

### **“Center the Stories of Enslaved People” → “Center the Stories of Survivors and Victims”**

Across the case study institutions, a consistent pattern emerged: survivor testimony functions as the primary interpretive anchor, not as means of interpreting contemporary genocide directly, but as a way of anchoring Holocaust-specific authority while engaging broader themes.

In Florida, this looks like a significant investment in Dimensions in Testimony programming, which enables guests to ask questions that prompt real-time responses from pre-recorded video interviews with Holocaust survivors and other witnesses to genocide. Holocaust Museum Houston's central exhibition, *Bearing Witness: A Community Remembers*, is personalized with testimony of Holocaust Survivors who later settled in the Houston area. Whereas Seattle's Holocaust Center for Humanity's collection of nearly 10,000 artifacts that populate its central exhibition, "Finding Light in the Darkness", is primarily from local Holocaust survivors.

By grounding interpretation in survivor testimony, these institutions ensure that the Holocaust remains the interpretive core. Broader lessons about genocide, human rights, and contemporary issues emerge from this foundation, rather than through direct comparison with or representation of other genocides.

### **"Embed Civics Education"**

As discussed in RQ1, institutional missions often frame Holocaust education in terms of genocide prevention and human rights. This framing extends in RQ2 through educational programming that encourages visitors to reflect on their role in confronting injustice. Holocaust education consistently emerges as a form of civics education, where historical understanding is explicitly linked to present-day responsibility and action. The Florida Holocaust Museum frames Holocaust education as a civic responsibility. The museum's mission is to teach the lessons of the Holocaust and to help prevent future genocides and atrocities. Holocaust Museum Houston emphasized the many ways in which their institution strives to include civics education in its overall framework. All of their initiatives are centered around teaching the history and lessons of the Holocaust to empower individuals today so they can work on creating a more inclusive world. The institution also highlights the importance of helping people think about actions they

can take today to create positive changes in the community, whereas, the Holocaust Center for Humanities new exhibit aims to show that genocide is constructed and preventable and that students should feel empowered to recognize the steps and say something.

### **“Teach About Commonalities”**

As seen in the use of abstraction strategies in RQ1, case study institutions prioritized transferable concepts such as identity, belonging, and moral choice over detailed comparative histories. In reference to this guiding theme: “teach about commonalities”, the Florida Holocaust Museum talks about the importance of individual stories and individual people's mindset in order to make history more relatable. They reinforced the idea that victims were regular people. Holocaust Museum Houston’s highlighted how the museum is continually building bridges between the museum and Houston’s communities to emphasize how Jewish and other identity-based communities are connected together through shared histories. Similarly, their exhibit “And Still I Write: Young Diarists on War and Genocide” fosters a connection between youth who visit and those who experienced war and genocide by highlighting shared emotions, perspectives, and coming-of-age experiences across different historical and geographic contexts. At the Holocaust Center for Humanity, the focus is not on comparing one atrocity to another, but what the common patterns and structures that connect them are and how does this apply to today’s thinking?

### **“Teach About Conflict and Change”**

The findings from RQ1 and RQ2 also demonstrate that the Holocaust museums studied here framed genocide not as a static historical event, but as an ongoing process shaped by conflict, change, and human decision-making. This is evident at the Florida Holocaust Museum through their emphasis that Holocaust education is ongoing and never

finished, as people either never learned the lessons or forgot them as well as their dedication and plans to update traveling exhibits to ensure “current” language and framing were being used. At Holocaust Museum Houston, programming explicitly addresses contemporary conflicts through their expansive press room site. They also have developed a toolkit to help teachers understand contemporary anti-Semitism and tangible actions they can take. The Holocaust Center for Humanity emphasized that genocide is a process not an event and so it is paramount to be aware of the genocide structures and processes and how they can be interrupted. The center leads by example by acknowledging that history is always getting recontextualized based on what’s happening here and now.” The center continues to create lesson plans for teachers that go beyond just the Holocaust and to promote change by empowering students and visitors and planting the seeds to prevent and dismantle the structural conditions that enable genocide and other forms of collective violence.

### **Overall Framework**

This “Hard Histories” framework, which emerges from these museums’ efforts to ethically and responsibly represent and teach the Holocaust, offers a transferable interpretive model for institutions seeking to address histories beyond the Holocaust. Centering the stories of survivors and victims and embedding civics education enables ethical representation without collapsing distinct histories into false equivalence. Teaching about commonalities and about conflict provides a scalable approach for representing other genocides and mass violence. This approach, however, requires careful navigation of a central tension: ensuring that any comparisons are pattern-based rather than hierarchy-based. It is crucial to avoid ranking or conflating suffering while still fostering understanding of recurring structures of violence.

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# Discussion

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This research study asked how Holocaust museums balance Holocaust specificity with broader genocide representation. Its goal was to better understand how Holocaust museums balance the changing expectations of their audiences with the weight of their ethical and historical responsibilities. Using a case study design, the study explored how Holocaust museums make decisions about teaching genocides other than the Holocaust, and how they strike a balance between addressing broader topics of genocide while maintaining the integrity of the museum's specificity. Four key themes emerged.

First, museums engage in mission-bounded expansion, meaning that they incorporate other genocides into their exhibits and programming while preserving Holocaust centrality. Across cases, mission statements functioned as boundary-setting mechanisms, allowing museums to engage broader histories of violence while maintaining a primary commitment to Holocaust remembrance. This pattern supports concerns raised by Bischoff and Kalman (1999), who argue that Holocaust comparisons are often viewed as inappropriate or are contested in public discourse. At the same time, it extends Hansen-Glucklich's (2014) work on museum representation and visitor experience, showing how institutional priorities determine where and to what extent comparative histories are included. This finding similarly reinforces Magid's (2012) claim that the Holocaust occupies a distinct and protected position within Jewish identity in the American context, which continues to shape how institutions define their scope. Rather than avoiding comparison altogether, museums are strategically controlling where and how it occurs within the institution through mission-driven constraints. Differences across institutions may also reflect organizational history. The three case study museums were founded under

different circumstances, possess distinct missions, and derive authority from different constituencies, including local survivor communities, educational initiatives, and human rights advocacy. These institutional histories likely shape how each museum understands its responsibilities and the degree of flexibility it possesses when engaging contemporary issues.

Second, institutions rely on abstraction as strategy, using generalized frameworks such as human rights or patterns of violence rather than direct comparisons between the Holocaust and other genocides or contemporary conflicts. This finding demonstrates how museums interpret broader histories of violence through generalized frameworks instead of explicit comparison. Holocaust Museums are beginning to use general frameworks (human rights, roles, processes) instead of direct comparison. This finding extends David Tollerton's (2025) argument that Holocaust memory can be applied to broader contemporary issues, showing that museums engage this connection indirectly through abstraction rather than explicit comparison. It does, however, complicate existing debates about Holocaust comparison, particularly those outlined by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, which frame comparison as either appropriate or inappropriate. Rather than operating within this binary, the museums in this study demonstrate a more nuanced approach, avoiding direct comparison altogether while still engaging broader themes through abstraction. This suggests that institutions are not resolving the tension around comparison, but instead working around it by shifting the terms of engagement. Importantly, this finding helps address a gap in the literature by demonstrating how museums operationalize comparison in practice without relying on direct parallels.

Beyond its educational function, abstraction may also serve an important interpretive role. Across the case studies, generalized frameworks such as human rights, bystander behavior, warning signs, and patterns of violence allowed museums to connect the Holocaust to broader

questions of genocide and contemporary injustice without requiring direct equivalence between historical events. In this sense, abstraction functions as a mechanism for managing a longstanding tension within Holocaust education: the desire to draw universal lessons from the Holocaust while preserving its historical specificity and moral distinctiveness. Rather than choosing between universalization and exceptionalism, museums employ abstraction as a middle path that allows broader engagement while avoiding direct comparative claims.

Viewed this way, abstraction is not simply a pedagogical strategy but also an interpretive and institutional one. By emphasizing patterns, processes, and human behavior rather than explicit historical comparison, museums can encourage visitors to make connections independently while maintaining control over how those connections are framed. This approach enables institutions to remain relevant to contemporary concerns while reducing the risks associated with direct comparison, false equivalence, or challenges to Holocaust specificity.

Third, survivor-centered authority anchors interpretation, with survivor testimony shaping both the narrative and the limits of representation. This finding highlights how museums rely on survivor testimony as the core interpretive anchor for representing the Holocaust. This finding strongly supports Yosef Yerushalmi's (1982) assertion that Jewish historical consciousness and remembrance is rooted in memory as a moral and communal obligation rather than a purely historiographical exercise. Centering survivor voices prioritizes lived experience and remembrance over detached historical analysis, reinforcing the idea that the Holocaust is not only something to be studied, but something to be remembered and carried forward. This finding similarly aligns with Hansen-Glucklich's (2014) work on Holocaust museum design, which emphasizes the role of narrative and experiential storytelling in shaping visitor understanding.

Finally, museums employ the strategic use of public statements, addressing contemporary issues through digital and institutional platforms rather than within permanent exhibitions. These findings help address tensions already identified in relevant literature. This allows institutions to respond quickly and directly without changing exhibits. This reflects the points highlighted by the American Alliance of Museums (2021), about how museums are expected to be trustworthy and nonpartisan. Public statements show tension between remaining neutral and responding to current events. Museums appear to be separating. Permanent exhibitions are stable, carefully curated, and slow to change. Whereas, public statements are flexible, immediate, and responsive. This strategy reveals that museums are not avoiding contemporary engagement, but are instead relocating it to more flexible and responsive institutional spaces.

An important tension underlying these findings is the assumption that Holocaust museums can separate historical memory from contemporary relevance and political engagement. The case studies suggest that this distinction may be difficult to sustain in practice. Decisions about which genocides to include, which contemporary events to address, when to issue public statements, and when to remain silent all carry political implications. Rather than maintaining an apolitical position, the museums in this study appear to navigate competing political, ethical, educational, and communal pressures. Their strategies of mission-bounded expansion, abstraction, survivor-centered authority, and strategic communication do not remove politics from interpretation. Instead, they provide mechanisms for managing the risks associated with political engagement while preserving institutional legitimacy and public trust. Viewed in this way, Holocaust museums are not avoiding politics but negotiating how political responsibilities intersect with their commitments to remembrance, education, and historical specificity.

This study helps address several key gaps identified in the existing literature on Holocaust museums, interpretation, education, and representation. While prior research has explored debates surrounding Holocaust comparison, memory, and pedagogy, it has largely focused on theoretical or ethical discussions rather than institutional practice. This study contributes by providing insight into internal curatorial and educational decision-making, demonstrating how museums actively navigate the inclusion of other genocides within mission-driven constraints. It also expands understanding of how multiple genocides are represented in practice, showing that museums rely on strategies such as abstraction and spatial separation rather than direct comparison. In doing so, this research adds to broader discussions of museum authority and trust, illustrating how institutions maintain credibility while responding to contemporary expectations. Overall, this study shifts the focus from what museums should do to how they actually operate in practice.

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## Implications/ Conclusions

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The findings of this study have significant implications both for museum practice and for future research. Holocaust museums do not avoid broader conversations about genocide and contemporary violence. Rather, they are carefully navigating how best to address these topics without forsaking Holocaust specificity. This study shows how museums strategically balance ethical responsibility, survivor memory, institutional mission, and public expectations. Findings demonstrate that decisions related to representation are inseparable from questions of politics, authority, trust, and historical responsibility. Rather than avoiding political implications, museums continually negotiate how these forces shape institutional practice. More broadly, this

study demonstrates how museums are active interpreters of difficult histories rather than neutral spaces and repositories of historical information.

## **Implications for Practice**

For Holocaust museums specifically, these findings can help museums engage in broader conversations about genocide without having to fully integrate comparative genocides into central Holocaust narratives. This guarded engagement with alternative content is achieved by means of the following strategies: survivor-centered storytelling, abstraction, mission-based framing, and digital/public statements. These strategies permit institutions to be current and relevant while still maintaining historical specificity. In addition, this research suggests that Holocaust museums could benefit from distinguishing exhibitions and digital/public, treating each as separate interpretive spaces. Permitting exhibitions to remain stable and historically grounded, while digital platforms can respond meaningfully to current events.

Other museums and cultural institutions could also find this framework helpful, in particular when interpreting colonial violence, slavery, racial violence, displacement, and other traumatic histories. The findings suggest that museums can discuss difficult contemporary issues ethically, without recourse to false equivalencies between historical events. The findings assist educators in the teaching of genocides, sidestepping a reliance on direct historical comparisons and focusing instead on warning signs, processes, human behavior, and civic responsibility. Finally, from the students' perspective, abstract frameworks can also help to connect historical events to present-day issues independently.

## **Implications for Research**

This study focused on institutional decision-making, not on visitor response. Future research could examine how visitors interpret abstraction-based approaches, whether audiences

recognize distinctions between comparison and contextualization, and how these strategies shape emotional or political responses. Another avenue for future research concerns how Holocaust museums define genocide itself. While this study examined how institutions represent genocides beyond the Holocaust, it did not directly investigate the definitions that guide those interpretive decisions. Future research could explore whether museums privilege legal, historical, educational, or moral understandings of genocide and how those definitions shape decisions about comparison, contemporary relevance, and public engagement. Such work may be particularly valuable given ongoing debates surrounding genocide claims, antisemitism, and the relationship between Holocaust memory and contemporary conflicts.

Future studies might also compare Holocaust museums in other global contexts. Different national histories and political climates can shape how museums approach genocide representation.

## **Concluding Thoughts**

Overall, this study demonstrates that Holocaust museums are not static institutions focused only on preserving the past. They actively negotiate how memory, ethics, education, and contemporary responsibility intersect in the present. Their approaches reveal both the possibilities and limitations of representing difficult histories in increasingly polarized public environments.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A. Data Collection Instrument

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Background Could you describe your role at the museum?

### Balancing Topics With Institutional Mission

1. How does teaching about other genocides or contemporary social issues fit into your museum interpretation of its mission?

### Curatorial & Educational Decisions

2. How does your museum decide whether, when, and how to represent genocides beyond the Holocaust and what criteria guides these decisions?
  - a. Can you tell me about a specific instance when your institution has done this?
    - i. How did you make that decision?
    - ii. Who was involved?
    - iii. What kinds of discussions were had about it?
    - iv. What kind of feedback have they gotten from visitors or community members?
  - b. Do you have any documents from this example that I could review?
3. How do educational goals differ from curatorial goals in regard to the inclusion of other genocides?

### Interpretive Frameworks & Ethical Representation

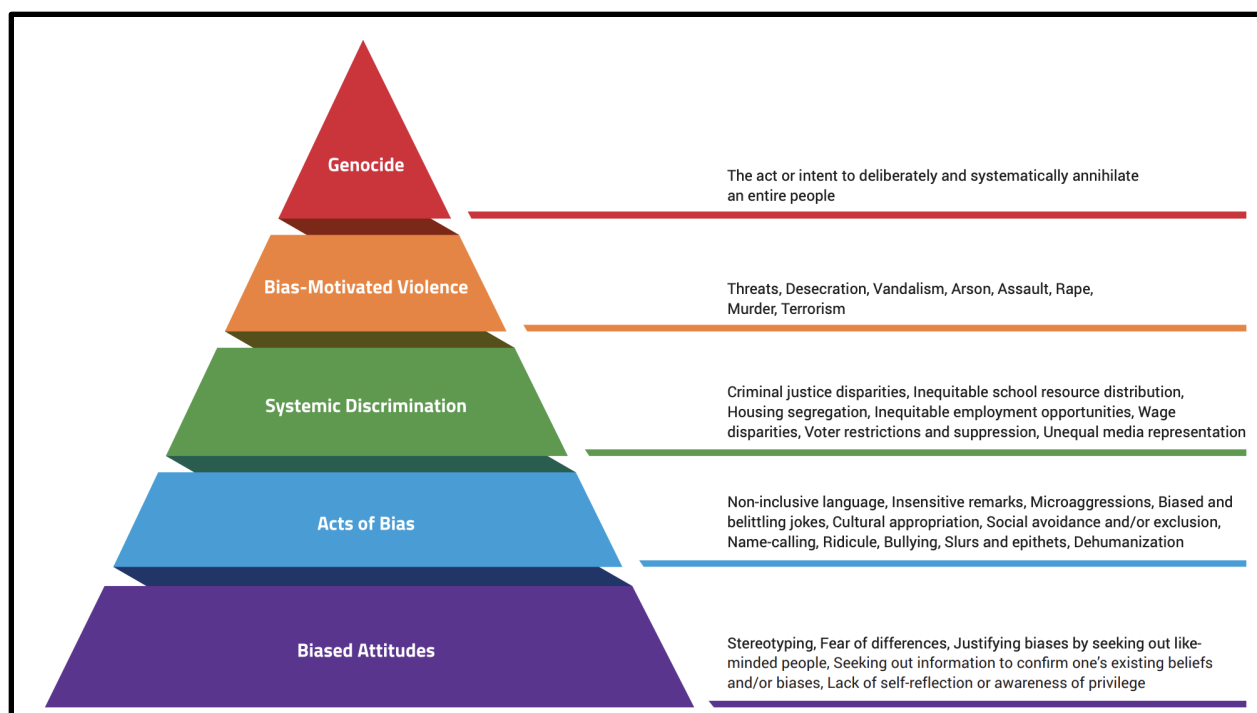
4. What interpretive frameworks guide your representation of other genocides?
5. What challenges do you encounter when presenting comparative histories?
  - a. How do you navigate them?

### Visitor Outcomes & Evaluation

6. How do you assess visitor understanding or engagement when your museum addresses other genocides or broader social issues?
  - a. And what kind of feedback have you gotten from museum stakeholders outside of evaluations?

### Conclusion

7. Is there anything else you think is important for me to understand about how Holocaust museums navigate representing other genocides?



Appendix B. ADL Pyramid of Hate

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# Glossary

| Term                   | Definition                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Antisemitism           | Prejudice against or hatred of Jews.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Bigotry                | Obstinate or intolerant devotion to one's own opinions and prejudices.                                                                                                                                   |
| Bystander              | A person who is present but not actively taking part in a situation or event.                                                                                                                            |
| Collective Memory      | Collective memory refers to the process through which groups consolidate individual memories into a shared narrative, shaping their identity and collective experience.                                  |
| Comparative History    | Comparative history is a method of historical analysis that contrasts two or more societies, cultures, or events from different contexts or time periods.                                                |
| Historical Revisionism | Historical revisionism refers to the practice of reinterpreting or challenging established historical narratives, often to deny or downplay significant historical crimes.                               |
| Institutional Mission  | An institutional mission is a foundational declaration that outlines an organization's core purpose, reason for existing, and primary values.                                                            |
| Memory Politics        | As a field of study, memory politics seeks to examine how memory is shaped by power dynamics, national identity, trauma, and commemoration, and how it influences current politics and social relations. |
| Museum Interpretation  | The process of communicating the meaning, context, and stories behind museum collections to the public.                                                                                                  |
| Perpetrator            | A person carrying out a harmful, illegal, or immoral act.                                                                                                                                                |
| Prejudice              | A preconceived, usually unfavorable opinion towards others that is not based on reason or actual experience.                                                                                             |
| Pyramid of Hate        | The Pyramid of Hate is a framework developed by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) that illustrates how escalating levels of societal oppression work together.                                            |
| Racism                 | Prejudice, discrimination or hatred directed against someone of a different race based on the groundless belief that one's own race is superior.                                                         |

|                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Scapegoat          | A person or group of people blamed for the wrongdoings, mistakes or faults of others.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Stereotype         | An over-generalized, often unfair and untrue belief or expectation about a group of people, such as about the group's personality, preferences, appearances or ability.                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Survivor Testimony | A first-person account from someone who experienced genocide, war crimes, or other atrocities, serving as vital, personal evidence to humanize historical events, educate on consequences, and counter denial.                                                                                                                                 |
| Upstander          | A person speaking or acting in support of an individual or cause, particularly someone who intervenes on behalf of a person being attacked or bullied. Additionally, a Rescuer is a type of upstander. A rescuer, in the context of the Holocaust, saved one or more people, typically at great risk to him/her and, often, to his/her family. |
| Victim             | A person being targeted by the harmful, illegal, or immoral acts of a perpetrator.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

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