

USC Shoah Foundation

Center for Advanced Genocide Research

Founded in 2014, USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research is dedicated to advancing new areas of interdisciplinary research on the Holocaust and other genocides, specifically discussing the origins of genocide and how to intervene in the cycle that leads to mass violence.

Establishing the Center as the research and scholarship unit of the USC Shoah Foundation signifies an important milestone for international scholarly research on genocide. Building on the substantial academic work the Institute has accomplished since joining the University of Southern California in 2006, as part of USC Dornsife, the Center will also integrate the Resisting the Path to Genocide research cluster that has been part of the successful interdisciplinary Dornsife 2020 initiative for the past four years, which opened a new avenue of research on mass violence.

The Center aligns with the university's strategic vision of creating scholarship with consequences by bringing together experts from different fields to tackle grand challenges facing the world today.

USC Professor of History Wolf Gruner directs the Center and set its research agenda. Gruner also holds the Shapell-Guerin Chair in Jewish Studies at the university. He is an internationally recognized expert on genocide, who has published 10 books and numerous articles on the Holocaust in Europe as well as on mass violence against indigenous people in Latin America.

During its first five years, the Center will further research and scholarship primarily around the following three themes:

- **Resistance to Genocide and Mass Violence:** Explore conditions and factors – historically and contemporarily – that enable people, groups and societies to slow down or stop the course of mass violence. Focus on acts of resistance that inhibit the impact of genocidal ideology and/or defy its policies.
- **Violence, Emotion and Behavioral Change:** Explore the nature of genocide/mass violence and its emotional, social, psychological, historical and physical impacts on individual behavior. Seek to deepen the understanding of the individual experience as reflected in personal testimonies of survivors, witnesses and perpetrators. Advance the application of such knowledge in fostering behavior and/or behavioral change in resisting mass violence.
- **Digital Genocide Studies:** Examine how large digital data sets, such as the fully indexed 52,000 video testimonies of the USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive, can be used for a sophisticated quantitative analysis of complex human phenomena. Seek to establish patterns of behavior in the field of mass violence and its resistance.

The Center uniquely positions USC as being the only world-renowned private research institution with substantial original material from the Holocaust and other genocides:

- **USC Shoah Foundation** currently has a collection of over 53,000 testimonies with survivors and witnesses of the Holocaust and other genocides, including the Rwandan Tutsi Genocide and the Nanjing Massacre. Testimonies from survivors of the Armenian Genocide will be integrated into the Institute's Visual History Archive in 2015.
- **Feuchtwanger Memorial Library** part of the Special Collections of USC Doheny Library houses private papers of German and Austrian emigrants who fled the Nazis, among them the famous German-Jewish writer Lion Feuchtwanger.
- **The Holocaust and Genocide Studies Collection** at the USC Doheny Library contains books on almost every facet of the Holocaust and on various genocides, with a total collection of relevant books reaching 14,000 volumes. Within the collection there are more than 1,000 original Nazi books and pamphlets, Jewish publications, and microfilms with original documents such as Nazi newspapers. The collection also features 300 boxes of original transcripts from the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials, and the 12 trials of the Nuremberg Military Tribunals that were held between 1945 and 1949.

The Center will organize annual workshops or conferences, building on the practice of the USC Shoah Foundation to host yearly symposia with leading international scholars and the program of interdisciplinary annual workshops for mostly young researchers on "Resistance to Genocide" established by the Dornsife 2020 cluster.

In November 2014, the Center will co-sponsor a first conference with the USC Shoah Foundation. Called "Media, Memory, and Technology: Exploring the Trajectories of *Schindler's List*," the conference will be tied to the 20th anniversary of the release of *Schindler's List* and the establishment of the USC Shoah Foundation. It will bring together up to 75 participants from around the world from a variety of disciplines to explore the transformative legacy of the film and Institute. Oral history, testimonies and genocide will be the main themes of discussion.

In 2015 the Center will co-organize an international workshop together with the USC Thornton School of Music on "Music as Resistance to Genocide." In 2016 the Center will host an international conference on "Genocide and Resistance in Guatemala." Both events will take place at USC.

The Center for Advanced Genocide Research will convene an international community of students, young academics and senior scholars via a substantial research fellowship program, built on the successful visiting fellow and scholars-in-residence programs established by both the USC Shoah Foundation and the Dornsife 2020 cluster. This will help to shape and foster future research at and beyond the campus, as well as create new global networks of scholars and students of Holocaust and Genocide research.

The Center currently offers fellowships that vary in scope and length. They are awarded to researchers, doctoral candidates, post-doctoral students, undergraduate students or senior scholars who use the

Visual History Archive or other genocide related resources at USC for innovative research projects across academic disciplines. Selected projects will advance understanding of the cultural and societal dynamics that precipitate or deter genocide, offering knowledge that has practical application and benefit.

The Margee and Douglas Greenberg Research Fellowship, the first endowed fellowship for the Center, enables a junior scholar -- from Phd candidate to early Postdoc -- to spend up to a month in residence at the Center every year. The result of a generous gift from Margee and Douglas Greenberg, the fellowship is bestowed by a panel of USC researchers and professors who vet proposals for their originality and potential to make advancements in the field through the use of testimonies in the Visual History Archive.

The Center Research Fellowship enables the recipient to spend one semester in residence at the Center. It goes to an outstanding senior international scholar from any discipline who will advance genocide research through use of the Visual History Archive and other USC resources. The recipient will be expected to bring the Center fresh research perspectives, play a role in Center activities and deliver a public talk during his or her stay.

The Undergraduate Research Fellowship allows USC students to spend at least 60 hours conducting research at the Center. Recipients are selected based on several criteria, including the originality of the proposal, the centrality of video testimonies or other USC materials to the project, the importance of the project to the student's thesis and the degree to which the project embraces an interdisciplinary approach.

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