

USC Shoah Foundation

Center for Advanced Genocide Research

The 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 the international scholarly research on genocide. Building off the substantial academic work the Institute has accomplished since joining the University of Southern California in 2006, 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 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's Visual History Archive** contains nearly 52,000 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 and Cambodian genocides will be integrated 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 12,000 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 1945-1949.

The Center will organize annual workshops or conferences, building on upon 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. The first conference the Center will co-sponsor with the USC Shoah Foundation will be in November 2014 tied to the 20th anniversary of the release of *Schindler's List* and the establishment of the USC Shoah Foundation. The conference, "Media, Memory, and Technology: Exploring the Trajectories of *Schindler's List*," 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.

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 fellowships will range in scope and length. Researchers, i.e., Ph.D. candidates, post-doctoral students and senior scholars, can apply for short-term visiting fellowships (one to two months) and long-term fellowships (one semester or one year). They will work on the most innovative and interesting research projects across academic disciplines that enhance our understanding of the manmade processes that lead to and/or slow down genocide, thus offer knowledge that has real-world application and benefit.

Initial funding for the Center for Advanced Genocide Research will come from USC Shoah Foundation and USC Dornsife, with additional funding being sought through the USC Shoah Foundation Initiative. As part of the funding, the Center is looking not only to establish a series of prestigious endowed fellowships for young and senior researchers, but also several endowed chairs, with an emphasis on regions (such as

Chair for the Study of Mass Violence and Resistance in Africa), as well as topics (Chair for the Study of Audio-Visual History of Mass Violence).

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