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 the conditions that enable people to resist mass violence.

The establishment of the Center as the academic unit of USC Shoah Foundation in 2014 signified an important milestone for furthering international scholarly research on genocide. The Center’s mission aligns with USC’s strategic vision of creating scholarship with consequences by bringing together experts from different fields to tackle grand challenges facing the world today.

The Center grapples with the most pressing and important questions on the topic of genocide: Why do some people choose to resist mass violence targeting entire populations when others stand by or collaborate? How do violence and its emotional impact change individual behavior? How can digital humanities facilitate and enhance scholarly work and thus improve our understanding of mass violence and its resistance? These questions have been largely neglected by international genocide scholars, but answering them is vitally important to broadening our understanding of the origins and developments of genocide and identifying possible interventions.

Wolf Gruner, USC Professor of History and the Shapell-Guerin Chair in Jewish Studies, is the founding director of the Center and sets its research agenda. An internationally recognized expert on genocide, Gruner has published 10 books and over 60 academic articles and book chapters on the Holocaust in Europe as well as on mass violence against indigenous people in Latin America.

“The Center, with its innovative research program and its affiliated faculty of excellency, aims to establish an intellectual hub in Los Angeles for scholars from all over the world and across disciplines to advance research on genocide and mass violence.” Wolf Gruner

Research Agenda
The Center for Advanced Genocide Research distinguishes itself by focusing interdisciplinary study and attention on three primary research themes to advance the analysis of genocide and systematic mass violence on an international scale. The aim is to transcend the differentiated disciplines to produce innovative approaches and a new global network of scholars.

• 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 and mass violence and its emotional, social, psychological, historical, and physical impacts on individual behavior. Deepen the understanding of the individual experience as reflected in personal testimonies of survivors, witnesses and perpetrators.

• Digital Genocide Research. Examine how large digital data sets, such as the fully indexed 53,000 video testimonies of 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.

Workshops and Conferences
The Center for Advanced Genocide Research organizes annual international workshops and conferences on various topics that fall under the central theme of “Resistance to Genocide.”

The Center hosted its first international conference in October 2015 entitled “Singing in the Lion’s Mouth: Music as Resistance to Genocide.” Scholars from diverse disciplines gathered to explore the relationship between resistance and music during the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide, the Indonesian mass killings, the apartheid in South Africa, and in contemporary film. The symposium was part of a two-day program with films and a concert featuring performances by students from the USC Thornton School of Music.

In 2016 the Center will host an international conference on the genocide of the Mayan people during the early 1980s in Guatemala. Called “A ‘Conflict’? Genocide and Resistance in Guatemala,” the conference will delve into a set of atrocities that has been mostly overlooked in the academic literature on genocide and mass violence. The conference will bring together experts from Guatemala, Mexico, Europe and the US who conduct research in disciplines such as Political Science, Anthropology, Sociology, Law,
Human Rights, and International Relations. In 2017 the Center will host another conference on Digital Genocide studies.

**Fellowship Programs**

The Center for Advanced Genocide Research has established a research fellowship program, which convenes an international interdisciplinary community of promising young academics and prominent senior scholars. The Center’s fellowships, varying in scope and length, are awarded to international doctoral candidates, post-doctoral students, senior scholars as well as USC undergraduate and graduate students who use the Visual History Archive or other genocide-related resources at USC for innovative research projects across academic disciplines. In addition to shaping and fostering future research at and beyond the USC campus, the Center is creating new local and global networks of scholars and students of Holocaust and genocide research through its fellowship program.

The first two cohorts of fellows selected by the Center have explored a diverse range of under-studied topics, including the little-known inter-ethnic violence that unfolded in the Western Ukraine during the Holocaust; the deliberate destruction of tradition and rituals during the Cambodian genocide, which profoundly affected people’s sense of ritual; and the role that religion played in the lives of Jewish victims and non-Jewish aid providers during the Holocaust in the occupied parts of the Soviet Union; and the use of photography in ghettos in Nazi-occupied Poland during World War II.

The Margie and Douglas Greenberg Research Fellowship and the Robert Katz fellowship are the first two endowed fellowships for the Center. They enable two junior scholars — from PhD candidates to early Postdoc — to spend up to a month in residence at the Center every year. The result of generous gifts from Margie and Douglas Greenberg and Robert Katz, the fellowships are 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 allows a senior scholar to spend one semester in residence at the Center. It goes to an outstanding international scholar from any discipline who will advance genocide research through use of the Visual History Archive and other USC resources. Recipients bring the Center fresh research perspectives, play a role in Center activities, and deliver a public talk during their stay.

The DEFY Undergraduate and Graduate Student Research Fellowship are named after the USC Shoah Foundation’s student organization. The DEFY Fellowships allow USC students to conduct research at the Center during the summer break. 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.

**Interdisciplinary Research Week**

Each year, the Center hosts an interdisciplinary team of scholars from different universities for a week. The invited team of scholars works on a particular challenge within the field of genocide studies. The opportunity yields intensive creative discussions across disciplines. The first group hosted by the Center consisted of geographers, historians and art historians from the United Kingdom and the United States who use geographical methods to examine spaces and places of the Holocaust. In their research, the team creates maps and other visualizations (geographic information science, or GIS) to illustrate where events of the Holocaust occurred, where and how people moved from place to place, topographical changes, locations of camps, and other data. Spending a week at the Center, they explored how survivor testimonies from the Visual History Archive could contribute to, complicate, and sharpen their research.

**Holocaust and Genocide Resources**

The Center for Advanced Genocide Research uniquely positions USC as being the only world-renowned private research institution with substantial original material from the Holocaust and other genocides. The resources include:

- **USC Shoah Foundation’s Visual History Archive**, a collection of over 53,000 video testimonies of survivors and witnesses of the Holocaust and other genocides, including the Rwandan Tutsi Genocide, the Armenian Genocide and Nanjing Massacre.
- **Feuchtwanger Memorial Library’s private papers of German and Austrian emigrants who fled the Nazis**. Part of the Special Collections of USC Doheny Library, Feuchtwanger Memorial is named after the famous German-Jewish writer Lion Feuchtwanger, a fierce critic of the Nazis in the run-up to World War II, who fled to Los Angeles in 1941.
- **The Holocaust and Genocide Studies Collection at USC Doheny Library**, which contains books on almost every facet of the Holocaust and on various genocides, with a total collection of 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 houses 300 boxes of original transcripts from the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials, and the 12 trials of the Nuremberg Military Tribunals held between 1945 and 1949.
- **The New York Life Collection donated by Vartkes Yeghiayan** of documents pertaining to the historic Martin Marrotian et al. v. New York Life Insurance Company, that not only brought settlement, but a measure of justice and public recognition for the 1.5 million victims of the Armenian Genocide.

For more information on the Center go to: sfi.usc.edu/cagr.