



*Mural in Comalapa, Guatemala*

**USC Shoah  
Foundation**

*Center for Advanced Genocide Research*

*April 2017*

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April, Genocide Awareness Month, is always busy at the Center, and this year was no exception. The month was full of events and lectures, and we continued our work providing Visual History Archive (VHA) introductions to classes at USC and to visiting scholars. The Center's 2016 USC summer research fellows presented on various topics related to research projects they conducted using the VHA while in residence at the Center last summer. We also hosted a lecture by our 2016-2017 Center Research Fellow Alexander Korb (University of Leicester). Professor Korb discussed the research he is conducting using the Visual History Archive for his upcoming book project, *A Multitude of Lethal Attacks: Collaboration and Mass Violence in Southeastern Europe, 1940-1946*.

The Center co-sponsored a conference organized by STAND, a national organization devoted to creating a student network that fights genocide and mass atrocities. The conference, "Preventing Mass Atrocities: From Rhetoric to Reality," which took place at USC, focused on conflict regions and the nuances of conflict prevention in the 21st century. It also contained a teaching component of instructional workshops, panels, and speakers aimed at teaching conference attendees how to advocate for change.

We concluded the month with a co-sponsored event led by DEFY, a USC student organization that advocates for genocide awareness. DEFY's event featured two speakers: Holocaust survivor Zenon Neumark and Guatemalan genocide survivor Aracely Garrido. These survivors shared their stories with those in attendance and answered questions from the audience.

For next month, we are very much looking forward to the residency of internationally renowned Holocaust scholar Omer Bartov (Brown University), who is the 2016-2017 Sara and Asa Shapiro Scholar in Residence. On May 8th, he will give a public lecture entitled "Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz".

Sincerely,

Wolf Gruner

Founding Director of the USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research  
Professor of History and Shapell-Guerin Chair in Jewish Studies

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## Events

### USC Research with Testimonies: Featuring the Center's Summer 2016 Research Fellows

On April 4th, four of the Center's five Summer 2016 research fellows gathered to publicly present and discuss their research with the USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive.

Watch their lectures and read a more detailed summary of their talks [here](#).

#### **Nisha Kale, USC undergraduate student double majoring in Neuroscience and Law, History, and Culture**

The DEFY Undergraduate Summer Research Fellowship allowed Nisha Kale to apply her interests in both neuroscience and history to the field of genocide studies. She did so by examining survivors' reactions to stress - not after the genocide, as most similar research has - but while the genocide was occurring, focusing on interviewees' descriptions of stressful events such as killings, beatings, forced marches, and mass executions. She tried to identify patterns of behavior, including investigating whether responses differed by gender.

#### **Erin Mizrahi, PhD candidate in Comparative Studies in Literature and Culture at USC**

During her residence at the Center, Erin Mizrahi used the Visual History Archive not so much to learn what survivors had to say but rather to discover the meaning in their silences. She explored moments in testimonies where words fail survivors and in so doing, she identified and analyzed different types of silences in testimonies.

#### **Piotr Florczyk, PhD student in Literature and Creative Writing at USC**

As a poet, literary translator and university instructor, Piotr Florczyk has long focused his work on history, World War II and the Holocaust. Florczyk watched Visual History Archive testimonies by Polish Jews who talked about places in and around Krakow that Florczyk himself knows from personal experience growing up in the region. He then wrote poetry inspired by the testimonies of these Holocaust survivors.

#### **Beatrice Mousli, Professor (teaching), USC Department of French & Italian**



Professor Mousli explored testimonies from the Visual History Archive in which survivors discussed the act of writing under threat, focusing on French Jewish authors who continued to write in France even while they faced occupation, deportations and oppression in the throes of World War II.

## Collaborators: Exploring Participation in the Holocaust by Non-Germans in Eastern Europe

On April 20th, Professor Alexander Korb, the 2016-2017 Center Research Fellow and director of the Stanley Burton Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at the University of Leicester, gave a public lecture focusing on his research on collaboration in the Holocaust in eastern and southeastern Europe, which is the topic of his current book project *A Multitude of Lethal Attacks: Collaboration and Mass Violence in Southeastern Europe, 1940-1946*.



Collaborators, or non-German perpetrators, have largely been viewed as German puppets or as madman accomplices. Researching international, national, regional, and local dimensions of collaboration and exploring the regional and local dynamics of violence complicate the conventional depictions of collaborators. Professor Korb emphasized that Jewish perspectives, like those found in the USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive, are essential to understanding collaboration since Jews knew their collaborating neighbors much better than the Germans did.

Watch his lecture and read a more detailed summary of his talk [here](#).



## DEFY Survivor Panel

Holocaust survivor Zenon Neumark (second from left) and Guatemalan genocide survivor Aracely Garrido (third from left) spoke about their experiences and answered questions at the April 27th event for Genocide Awareness Month, organized by the DEFY student organization and co-sponsored by the Center.

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## Research



## Facebook Live Interview with Alexander Korb, 2016-2017 Center Research Fellow

This month Professor Korb participated in a Facebook Live interview about the research he plans to do in the Visual History Archive during his residency as and the importance of continuing to study the Holocaust. Now more than ever, he said, it is important to remember the consequences of the past to avoid making similar mistakes.

Watch the Facebook Live interview with Professor Korb [here](#).



## Toni Nickel Investigates the Kindertransport Using Testimonies

Toni Nickel, a Texas A&M undergraduate student, first became familiar with the Visual History Archive when she served as the inaugural USC Shoah Foundation Holocaust Education intern at Texas A&M University. She visited the USC Shoah Foundation during the summer of 2015 after her sophomore year. Now she is about to graduate, and she has written a senior thesis about the Kindertransport, using the Visual History Archive's testimonies as a principal source. In her analysis, she highlights the significant role that women played in rescuing thousands of refugee Jewish children from Nazi Germany between 1938 and 1940.

Read more about Toni Nickel's senior thesis research [here](#).

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## Upcoming Events

**May 8, 2017 – 11:30am**

**Scriptorium, University Club of USC**

### **Omer Bartov gives the Sara and Asa Shapiro Scholar Annual Lecture: Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz**

In this lecture, esteemed Holocaust scholar and 2016-2017 Sara and Asa Shapiro Scholar in Residence Professor Omer Bartov (Brown University) will discuss how the East Galician town of Buczacz was transformed from a site of coexistence, where Poles, Ukrainians, and Jews had lived side-by-side for centuries, into a place of genocide. What were the reasons for this instance of communal violence, what were its dynamics, and why has it been erased from local memory?

For more information about this event click [here](#).

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## Spotlight on USC Resources

### Rolf Ransenberg Papers

As part of our series on USC Holocaust and genocide studies resources, we would like to bring the spotlight to the papers of Rolf Ransenberg, which are housed at the USC Doheny Memorial Library Special Collections.

In 1938, Rolf was one of relatively few German children who took part in a Kindertransport to the United States. Rolf's family members, who remained in Germany, wrote letters to Rolf and other members of his family. The [Rolf Ransenberg papers](#) contain correspondence from the Ransenberg family to Rolf, as well as personal documents from 1937-1947. Eventually, six out of the eight members of the Ransenberg family were killed by the Nazis.

Click [here](#) to read a USC student worker's reflection on the papers.

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## Donate to Special Collections

Please consider donating private papers, documents, photographs or films regarding the Holocaust and other genocides. The Center works with USC Libraries Special Collections to preserve private collections and make them accessible for academic research worldwide and student investigation at USC.

To find out more about donating materials, email us at [cagr@usc.edu](mailto:cagr@usc.edu) or call 213-740-6001.

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For more information about the USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research and its work, please visit our website at: [cagr.usc.edu](http://cagr.usc.edu)

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University of Southern California

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650 West 35th Street, Suite 114

Los Angeles, CA 90089

213-740-6001

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