PastForward
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE USC SHOAH FOUNDATION INSTITUTE

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On the Cover: University of Southern California student Darian Lopez views Segments for the Classroom on the Institute’s new website. Photograph by Mark Berndt
Safeguarding the Past for the Future

The USC Shoah Foundation Institute has collected, digitized, and indexed 52,000 testimonies of survivors and other witnesses of the Holocaust. We are now embarked on a world-wide effort to provide access to them so they may be used for educational purposes.

The testimony we began collecting in 1994 is at the heart of our every endeavor. Our mission thus depends upon the preservation of the archive; the life stories it holds are the links through which generations of people, ever more distant in time and space from the Holocaust, will come to understand its historical significance and human consequences.

The archive now has a permanent home at the University of Southern California. This was an essential step in safeguarding the testimonies, but videotape degrades over time, and the tapes on which the testimonies were originally recorded will ultimately become unusable.

In light of this inevitable outcome, the Office of the Provost is supporting a preservation effort that will permit the Institute to replace the aging videotaped testimonies with exact digital replicas. Two pristine copies of each digitized testimony will be managed by separate robotic systems at the University’s new data center; this massive project will ensure that the faces and voices of survivors and witnesses will still be seen and heard in the decades ahead.

This multi-year preservation project is consistent with our pledge to secure the testimonies for all time. Simultaneously, our educational mission is expanding, and a second major project—the redesign of our website—signals our desire to deliver testimony-based resources to the widest possible audiences. In response to the near-ubiquitous transition toward online learning, the new website provides straightforward access to products, services, and other educational resources.

“... our mission... depends upon the preservation of the archive; the life stories it holds are the links through which generations of people, ever more distant in time and space from the Holocaust, will come to understand its historical significance and human consequences.”

— Douglas Greenberg

The Institute not only relies on charitable contributions to support major projects like these, but it also relies upon donors to help make the archive accessible throughout the world. We are especially proud to say that our longstanding partner, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, has become the twelfth institution to have complete electronic access to the archive.

These new initiatives create new opportunities to learn from the memories of survivors and other witnesses, and bring us closer to a world that is free from intolerance and bigotry. Thank you for the loyalty and ongoing support that have enabled us to come this far and will carry us into the future.

Douglas Greenberg
Executive Director
Professor of History
The Archive at Work Around the World

At universities throughout the world, electronic access to the Institute’s archive is helping graduate students conduct research and allowing professors to enhance the courses they teach through the use of visual history testimony. Twelve institutions on three continents now offer access to the complete archive via Internet2 or other high-capacity networks, and the testimonies of survivors and other witnesses have been used in almost 50 higher education courses since 2003.

In years past, many university students who studied the Holocaust relied on textbooks, scholarly journals, archival footage, and other primary and secondary resources; few had the opportunity to learn from individuals who remember the events firsthand. But at institutions like Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, visual history testimony is adding a new dimension to Holocaust education. In one course taught by Professor Mark Baker of the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation, “The use of testimony has transformed the study of the Holocaust, and genocide in general, from an abstraction to a reality that impacted people just like ourselves.”

Holocaust education is only one of many subject areas in which the archive is being used; the variety of disciplines and courses that has utilized testimony demonstrates the archive’s versatility as an educational resource. At the University of Southern California, for example, students have viewed testimony in disciplines ranging from business writing to terrorism and genocide studies. At Freie Universität Berlin, the archive has been used by the departments of art history, English literature, film studies and cinematography, history, Jewish studies, and political science; courses that have incorporated testimony include Cultural Studies, Cultures of Commemoration and European

“The use of testimony has transformed the study of the Holocaust, and genocide in general, from an abstraction to a reality that impacted people just like ourselves.” – Mark Baker
Identity, and Qualitative Research Methodologies. Faculty members at Rice University have drawn on testimony from the archive to teach Anthropology, Documentary Production, German History, Gender and Symbolism, and Rhetoric, to name only a few courses.

Access to the Institute’s archive at universities has done more than provide an innovative and flexible educational tool. For some professors, the breadth and scope of information contained in the archive has even changed the perspective with which they regard traditional disciplines, such as the humanities. “The archive offers a unique and exciting opportunity for humanities research and teaching,” Gregory Kaplan, Anna Smith Fine Assistant Professor of Judaic Studies at Rice University, said. “Such an expansive and extensive perspective on the witness of the Holocaust gives us a reason to hope that the humanities can enter a new stage of relevance to the general public and especially the young leaders whom we are charged with educating.”

To learn more about institutions that offer electronic access to the archive, visit www.college.usc.edu/vhi/testimoniesaroundtheworld.

Archival Access in Washington, D.C.

The USC Shoah Foundation Institute and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum’s (USHMM) relationship began 14 years ago, shortly after the USHMM site in Washington, D.C., had been dedicated and just as the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation was being established.

Since that time, USHMM has welcomed 25 million visitors and become a leading research destination for scholars, researchers, and students from dozens of countries. As an institution to which so many turn for information about the Holocaust, USHMM is an optimal location from which to provide access to the world’s largest collection of survivor and witness testimony; this summer, it became the twelfth institution to gain electronic access to the entire Visual History Archive.

“Scholars visit USHMM from all over the world to conduct research on the Holocaust,” Douglas Greenberg, Institute Executive Director, said. “We are thrilled that the archive will be accessible at the Museum and to have helped to create a research opportunity of great significance.”

In June, the Institute’s Director of Archival Access and Special Projects, Karen Jungblut, trained USHMM staff on the use of the archive.

(L to R) Karen Jungblut, Institute Director of Archival Access and Special Projects; Erwin Schiff; Charlene Schiff; Michael Goldman Haley, USHMM Survivor Registry; Ellen Zyroff, Principal Librarian, Public Relations, San Diego County Library.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, which has welcomed 25 million visitors since 1993, now offers electronic access to the Institute’s Visual History Archive.

“The instruction they received will enable the Museum to provide vital support for those who wish to explore the nearly 52,000 testimonies contained in the archive,” Jungblut said. In addition to providing training, Jungblut also gave a presentation on the archive to members of the American Library Association (ALA) and other conference attendees at “Resources and Remembrance: ALA Visits the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.”

“Our visitors tell us that the Museum’s unique power is the way it personalizes history, bringing a human dimension to the enormity of the Holocaust,” Sara J. Bloomfield, Director of USHMM, said. “The Visual History Archive is an important contribution to this effort, and we are grateful to be able to make this unparalleled resource available to our millions of visitors from the U.S. and abroad.”
During World War II, Corrie ten Boom and her family hid Jews and members of the underground Dutch Resistance at their home in Holland. Their willingness to risk their own lives led to their eventual capture and imprisonment but not before they had saved hundreds from Nazi persecution.

In honor of her courage, the USC Shoah Foundation Institute has established the Corrie ten Boom Research Awards, made possible through generous funding by the Ahmanson Charitable Community Trust. “Corrie ten Boom risked her life so that others might live,” Roberta Ahmanson said. “We need to ponder her example and that of others like her, not only today but for generations to come.”

The awards enable postdoctoral scholars and dissertation candidates to conduct research at the Institute for periods of one to six months. While at the Institute, recipients receive training in the use of digital library software, as well as workspace and access to the Visual History Archive. “The volume, diversity, and nature of the testimonies contained in the archive make it a unique resource for scholarship of many kinds,” Douglas Greenberg, Institute Executive Director, said.

The ten Boom family home (above) became a hiding place for Jews and other fugitives during the war. (right) Liora Gubkin and Jeff Koerber, recipients of the Corrie ten Boom Research Awards.

Liora Gubkin, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and Women and Gender Studies Chair at California State University, Bakersfield, came to the Institute for six weeks this summer to study the relationship between spiritual resistance and Jewish survival. Her research in this area follows the recent publication of her book, You Shall Tell Your Children: Holocaust Memory in American Passover Ritual, and was inspired by a 2005 visit to the Institute, where she found testimony from Holocaust survivors who shared memories of commemorating Passover in concentration camps. “That experience changed the trajectory of my research,” Gubkin said. “I was left both with a sense of how inspiring those testimonies are and also with a lot of questions.”

Doctoral student Jeff Koerber, of the Strassler Family Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University, in Massachusetts, also conducted research at the Institute this summer. Koerber had previously identified the archive as an important resource when he discovered that approximately 90 people who...and access to the Visual History Archive.
Institute Presence at International Conferences

At conferences across the world, people are working together to increase knowledge and understanding about genocides so that such events can be prevented in the future. Last month the USC Shoah Foundation Institute participated in three such conferences.

Paris Conference Re-examines Holocaust in Ukraine
Crispin Brooks, Curator of the Institute’s Visual History Archive, traveled to Paris to present “The Visual History Archive Interviews on Ukraine” at a conference that addressed the history of the Holocaust in Ukraine. Organized by France’s Mémorial de la Shoah, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Centre d’Histoire de l’Europe Centrale, Université de Paris Sorbonne - Paris IV, and Yahad-In Unum, “The Holocaust in Ukraine: New Resources and Perspectives” brought together leading Holocaust historians, researchers, and others to expand understanding of the Holocaust in Ukraine by examining new evidence, which includes Ukrainian testimony from the Institute’s archive.

Columbia University Holds Human Rights Conference

Global Conference Focuses on Preventing Genocide
Policymakers, diplomats, human rights activists, and survivors and other witnesses of genocide from around the world convened at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec for the “Global Conference on the Prevention of Genocide.” According to the McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, the conference “represents the first major non-governmental conference on genocide” since the United Nations first defined the concept in 1948. Institute Executive Director Douglas Greenberg chaired a panel discussion titled “Genocide in History: The Onward Progress of Civilization?” Panelists included experts on the Holocaust and the Armenian, Cambodian, and Rwandan genocides.

“Genocide is a pervasive international problem,” Greenberg said, “and preventing it is a responsibility that we all share.”

Institute Films Find New Audience
Founded in 2005, the Open Student Television Network (OSTN) is the country’s first student-produced TV network, providing via Internet2 and other high-capacity equivalents educational, entertainment, and news content to 41 million subscribers at 4,500 university campuses in 36 countries.

This fall, OSTN aired two of the Institute’s films: Giving Voice and The Last Children of Berlin.

Giving Voice is an educational product comprising a film and study guide. The film follows seven students who used mini-DV cameras to document interactions with friends and family after viewing survivor and witness testimony.

The Last Children of Berlin begins 54 years after the Gestapo closed the Grosse Hamburger Strasse Schule—the last Jewish school in Berlin—when former students, many of whom were unaware of which of their classmates survived, come from around the world to reconvene at the newly reopened school.

“By distributing the Institute’s programming on OSTN, millions of students worldwide will be encouraged to think critically about intolerance and how to overcome it,” Prashant Chopra, CEO of OSTN, said.
Reaching Out Through the World Wide Web

In spring 2007, the USC Shoah Foundation Institute enlisted Evenson Design Group (www.evensondesign.com) to design and build a new website to help the Institute carry out its mission more effectively. “The project was guided by the belief that the website should be more than an access point to information about the Institute and the archive. It should be a destination where educators can find resources for their classrooms; where researchers and scholars can further their academic pursuits; where donors can discover new opportunities to make a difference; and where the general public can hear the stories of survivors and other witnesses.” — Douglas Greenberg
the general public can hear the stories of survivors and other witnesses.”

Rather than simply being renovated, the Institute’s new website has gained many improvements over its predecessor, and visitors will find that it has been designed to meet the needs of users from around the world. While some familiar, core elements remain—the Online Testimony Viewer, for example—new elements have been added as well. These include an easy-to-use search function; a section devoted to educational resources in languages other than English; and an interactive world map to help users locate institutions that offer access to the entire archive or access to a smaller collection of testimonies.

Additionally, new educational resources have been made available for the first time online, such as a lesson for educators of Polish students and Segments for the Classroom, a set of downloadable testimony clips that teachers can use to build their own classroom lessons (see sidebar on this page).

“Regardless of where they are located, visitors to the website will now be able to benefit more directly from the Institute’s online resources and services,” Kim Simon, Institute Director of International Programs and Communications, said. “We are optimistic about the potential impact the new website will have on our mission to overcome intolerance through the educational use of the visual history testimonies.”

To explore everything the new website has to offer, log on to www.college.usc.edu/vhi.

Online Resource for Educators

To coincide with the launch of its new website, the Institute has developed Segments for the Classroom, an online resource for educators of students ages 14 and older who wish to integrate testimony from the archive into their classroom lessons.

“Video delivers information succinctly and persuasively, and students respond to it in a way that they do not respond to other media,” explained William D. Robbins, President of the Leo Rosner Foundation, whose generous funding made Segments for the Classroom possible. “Teachers are aware of the unique power of video, and this resource will help them harness it.”

Segments for the Classroom consists of seven downloadable clip reels—six in English, one in Spanish—that contain testimony covering a variety of topics: The Holocaust through the Eyes of Child Survivors; Facing Persecution as a Jehovah’s Witness; The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising; Surviving Auschwitz II-Birkenau; The Auschwitz II-Birkenau Sonderkommando; The Sobibór Uprising; and The Immigration Experience (in Spanish). The clips range from 17 to 33 minutes in length, and may be viewed as downloaded videos or streamed directly from the Institute’s website. To learn more, log on to www.college.usc.edu/vhi/segmentsfortheclassroom.
Summer Workshop Bridges the Distance

The USC Shoah Foundation Institute works cooperatively with regional consultants and educational partners worldwide. In the past, the thousands of miles that separate these consultants and partners from the Institute have also separated them from valuable, personal training, as well as the opportunity to collaborate face to face with Institute staff. This August, a number of regional consultants and education specialists visited the Institute in Los Angeles for a full week of comprehensive training and discussion.

“It was essential for me to meet the team with whom I will work,” said Kata L. Győrfla, Regional Consultant in Hungary, “and not only Institute staff but also my colleagues in other countries.”

The participants were instructed on how to use the Visual History Archive, how institutions in their regions may gain electronic access to it, and the future of the archive’s preservation and accessibility. The participants were also trained on the opportunities and challenges involved in using visual history in the classroom. “In coming to the workshop, I hoped to find new ways to touch on sensitive issues and talk with students about a past that shouldn’t be forgotten,” Oleksandr Voytenko of the Ukrainian Association of History Teachers said, “but to do so in a way that is ethical and correct.”

“In the future, students won’t have the opportunity to meet living witnesses of the Holocaust,” Alicja Bielecka, of Poland’s International Center for Education About Auschwitz and the Holocaust, said. “But we will have their testimonies—and not only their words but their emotions and their body language.”

In addition to addressing how testimony can be used in the classroom to educate secondary school students, the workshop also included a discussion with Institute Executive Director Douglas Greenberg about issues associated with the use of testimony at the university level.

Each of the regional consultants and educators was given time to share their own experiences related to tolerance education, which helped to provide understanding about local conditions that influence how the Institute works in other countries.

“The workshop was more than an opportunity to offer training. It was a forum for the exchange of knowledge, which will help the Institute and its consultants work together more efficiently and effectively.” – Kim Simon

The Regional Consultant and Educator Workshop was made possible by the Ruth Ziegler International Training Fund.

For more information about the Institute’s training programs, visit www.uscshoah.org/edu/educationalresources.
Helping Polish Students Understand the Holocaust

In Polish education, incorporating testimony from Holocaust survivors and witnesses into classroom activities is a new opportunity. Doing so will enable students ‘to meet’ such individuals, to learn about their experiences during the war, and to learn how those experiences influenced their later lives,” said Piotr Trojanki, who along with fellow Holocaust expert Robert Szuchta has written an online lesson for educators of Polish students ages 15 to 19.

The lesson, which can be used to meet requirements in history, Polish literature, civic education, and art curricula, is designed to encourage students to ask fundamental questions about the Holocaust as it relates to history and contemporary life in Poland.

Facing the Holocaust is divided into three parts. The first part of the lesson focuses on rescuers and addresses topics such as the motivations behind their efforts and the risks involved in their actions. By focusing on bystanders, the second part of the lesson motivates students to think about such issues as the consequences of passivity and the meaning of empathy. The third part of the lesson focuses on perpetrators and collaborators by considering the roles of German occupiers and local civilians.

In addition to utilizing excerpts from primary historical and literary texts, as well as photographs and statistical data, each part of Facing the Holocaust is driven by testimony of Jewish survivors, and rescuers and aid providers from the Institute’s Visual History Archive. “This living history conveys messages from which students and even educators can learn,” Trojanki said.

Facing the Holocaust is available in Polish on the Institute’s website, www.college.usc.edu/ ysh/wolbuczaggaldy, and is made possible by generous funding from Edward Phillips.

Developed in partnership by the USC Shoah Foundation Institute and Poland’s International Center for Education About Auschwitz and the Holocaust, ‘W obliczu Zagłady, Ratujmy, biecznie i z wdzięcznością (Facing the Holocaust: Rescuers, Bystanders, Perpetrators, and Collaborators)’ is a study of individual and group behavior in Poland during the Holocaust.

Facing the Holocaust authors Piotr Trojanki (L) and Robert Sauchta.

Using Testimony to Teach Media Literacy

As part of the USC College of Letters, Arts & Sciences, the USC Shoah Foundation Institute is beginning to make active contributions to programs at the University. This summer, the Institute participated in a joint training program between USC and France’s Centre International d’études pédagogiques (International Center of Teaching Studies).

The program, hosted by the USC Rossier School of Education, and faculty members Andrea Clemons, Assistant Professor of Clinical Education, and Kate O’Connor, Director of the USC Language Academy, enabled 20 French high school English-language teachers to visit USC for intensive instruction in English language and American culture, with emphasis on media literacy. “The archive’s value is not limited to the study of the Holocaust,” Sherry Bard, Director of Education for the Institute, said, “or even to the study of history. Its value as a tool for teaching media literacy illustrates this point.”

Barnd Institute Training Specialist Chaim Singer-Franckes demonstrated how to make use of the Institute’s archive and modeled a lesson from Creating Character, an online educational resource.

www.college.usc.edu/ ysh/
Phil and Monica Rosenthal have been longtime friends and supporters of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute; recently, they established the Phil and Monica Rosenthal Education and Program Fund.

"Our support of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute stems from our desire to help educate today's youth about the horrors of genocide and racism,” Phil Rosenthal explained. “The nearly 52,000 testimonies contained in the Institute’s archive are a wonderful tool to reach people in a meaningful and significant way.”

The Phil and Monica Rosenthal Education and Program Fund enables the Institute to engage in a wide range of educational activities, which includes teacher training, outreach, and curriculum development in the United States and around the world.

Education Fund Established

Through its work with educators across the world, the USC Shoah Foundation Institute has learned of the need for tools and training to help teachers educate their students on the consequences of intolerance; donors like Suzanne and Ric Kayne are helping the Institute meet those needs.

“Education has always been a priority of our family and a focus of the Kayne Foundation,” Suzanne Kayne said, who along with her husband recently established the Suzanne and Ric Kayne Education and Program Fund. The fund will aid in the ongoing development and distribution of anti-bias educational resources based on the testimonies of Holocaust survivors and other witnesses contained in the Institute’s Visual History Archive; products and programs are being developed for middle school, high school, and college-age students in the United States and abroad, and many will be made available to educators at no cost on the Institute’s website.

“Our support of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute is based on our belief that children can learn valuable lessons about understanding and respect from viewing the testimonies,” Ric Kayne said.

Donor Highlight: Bobbie and Jim Beller

Since hearing about the USC Shoah Foundation Institute in 1996, Bobbie and Jim Beller have been making regular contributions. "It’s our responsibility not to sit quietly while there continues to be suffering around us. The lessons that the survivors teach us are very relevant to issues that we are confronting today.” — Monica Rosenthal

Monica Rosenthal shares her husband’s commitment to making a better world through the educational use of the Institute’s testimonies. “It’s our responsibility not to sit quietly while there continues to be suffering around us,” she said. “The lessons that the survivors teach us are very relevant to issues that we are confronting today.”

In addition to supporting the Institute’s work, the Rosenthals are involved in other philanthropic endeavors that benefit Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, Inner-City Arts, New Visions Foundation, and American Friends of Shaare Zedek Medical Center.

Monica and Phil Rosenthal

Suzanne and Ric Kayne
Extraordinary Leadership: Bob Katz

Bob Katz has been instrumental in the evolution of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute,” said Institute Executive Director Douglas Greenberg of Board of Councilors Member Robert J. Katz. “His guidance and foresight have been essential to everything we have accomplished in recent years. If his leadership proves anything, it is that one individual can make a huge difference, even in a large and complex organization.”

Katz first became involved with the Shoah Foundation when he received a copy of PastForward in 1998; his interest in the Foundation was immediate, and it was not long before he began contributing to its work with ideas and financial support. He eventually became Chair of the Development Committee of the Foundation’s Board, and he played a key role in thinking through the many issues that had to be resolved in order for the move to USC to become a reality. As a current member of the Board of Councilors, “Bob is always a leader in conversation,” Greenberg said. “He is a great problem solver, and everyone on the Board respects his wisdom and judgment.”

Katz has also introduced many donors to the Institute—especially in New York City, where he lives and serves as a Senior Director of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of Cornell University; the Executive Committee of the Dean’s Advisory Board of Harvard Law School; and the Council on Foreign Relations. He is also Chair Emeritus and a past Chair of the Board of Trustees of Horace Mann School, and a trustee of Achilles International, a worldwide organization devoted to mainstream athletics for people with physical disabilities.

“Through the use of visual history testimonies, we can help young people learn about the sources and nature of hatred…and thereby enable and encourage them to resist it.” — Bob Katz

Of his unflagging support for the Institute, Katz remarked, “The issues being addressed by the Institute will have a very profound impact on future generations of leaders. Through the use of visual history testimonies, we can help young people learn about the sources and nature of hatred and identify with its victims, and thereby enable and encourage them to resist it and become more tolerant individuals themselves.”

How You Can Make a Difference

One person really can make a difference. The USC Shoah Foundation Institute counts on your support to continue its important work to overcome prejudice, intolerance, and bigotry.

Cash Donations: Gifts may be made by cash, check, or credit card.

Pledges: You may wish to make a gift to the Institute that is paid over several years, following a payment schedule that is most convenient for you.

Planned Gifts: Planned gifts might help you reduce or avoid income, gift, and inheritance taxes. Planned gifts include wills, charitable remainder trusts, charitable lead trusts, and annuities. You may wish to consider funding a planned gift with such assets as cash, life insurance policies, real property, retirement plans, or marketable securities.

Memorial or Tribute Gifts: Contributions can be made to honor special occasions, such as birthdays, weddings, or births, as well as to memorialize a friend or family member. The Institute will mail a tribute card announcing the gift.

In-Kind Gifts: The Institute accepts gifts of goods or services that fulfill programmatic needs.

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