

Type: Call for Papers

Deadline for Abstract Submission: November 1, 2018

Location: Charlotte, North Carolina, United States

Subject Fields: Holocaust, Genocide Studies, Memory Studies, Human Rights, History, Colonial and Post-Colonial Studies, Law and Legal History, Feminist Studies, Gender Studies, Transitional Justice, Reconciliation, Peace & Conflict Studies, Indigenous Studies, Religious Studies, Memoirs

Denial: The Final Stage of Genocide

First International Conference of the Center for Holocaust, Genocide & Human Rights Studies

Call for Papers

University of North Carolina Charlotte, April 13-14, 2019

Conference themes and topics

Denial is often the “final stage of genocide,” Gregory H. Stanton asserted twenty years ago. The perpetrators “deny that they committed any crimes, and often blame what happened on the victims.... The black hole of forgetting is the negative force that results in future genocides.” (Stanton, 1996, 1998) The “assassins of memory,” in Pierre Vidal-Naquet’s memorable turn of phrase, seek to bury their crimes or, more often, legitimize or prettify governments or political movements with which they sympathize. The ways in which portrayals of genocide are constructed may contribute to creating “zones of denial” (Shavit 2005) that allow space for minimizing the harsh realities of genocide in our collective understanding. For victims and their descendants, denial brings additional injustice and trauma.

Holocaust denial gained notoriety in the United States and Europe by the 1980s and has spread to other parts of the world, while Turkey’s denial of the Armenian Genocide has brought further scholarly and public attention to the problem of genocide denial. Yet genocide denial extends far beyond these two well-known cases. Crimes that can be classified as “genocide” – and others that may not fit standard genocide definitions but that represent ghastly crimes against humanity – have routinely been followed by attempts at subterfuge or outright denial. Given the contemporary rhetoric of “fake news” and the increasing avenues for almost anyone to share or promote stories without factual underpinning, the need to confront genocide denial is more urgent than ever.

This conference will examine multiple cases of denial and place them in comparative context. We seek to explore strategies of denial and to confront denial and its effects on survivors and upon collective memory. The conference organizers prefer the more inclusive, less legalistic definitions of “genocide” that have been advanced in recent years by Martin Shaw, Barbara Harff, Adam Jones, and many others. Logic and compassion dictate that the conference should include crimes against humanity that fall short of common definitions of genocide but share many of its features.

We welcome proposals on, *but not limited to*, these topics/themes:

- Use of denialist strategies by contemporary political movements
- Effects of denial upon survivor groups and/or upon perpetrator societies
- Reconciliation and transitional justice in post-genocidal societies in relation to education and denial
- Feminist perspectives and gendered analyses in relation to denial
- Denial or other forms of falsification in relation to indigenous peoples’ experiences
- Confronting and resisting denial in effective ways
- Post-colonial theories and practices in relation to issues of denial or confronting denial
- Minimization or erasure of racist and colonial histories in Europe, the United States, or elsewhere
- Appropriation and/or exploitation of the Holocaust and or other genocides
- Art, literature, and film confronting (or promoting) denial
- Pedagogical issues and approaches to addressing denial in educational settings
- How the era of “fake news” erodes genocide education or promotes denial

“Denial: The Final Stage of Genocide” welcomes proposals from undergraduate & graduate students, university professors and lecturers of all ranks, and independent scholars, as well as others who are involved in research or activism around these issues. We plan to include at least one panel of undergraduate students and to publish selected papers in an edited collection of essays.

The conference’s keynote speaker will be Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, historian of the Modern Middle East at MIT and author of [*Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*](#) (Stanford University Press, 2016).

Abstracts for papers should be a maximum of 500 words and abstracts for panels (up to four participants) should be a maximum of 1500 words. Additionally, please include a short biographical statement (max 150 words) or your CV with your submission.

Submit abstracts by November 1, 2019 to genocideconference2019@hghrconference.com. Please include your last name in the subject line.

Notifications will be sent by January 15, 2019.

Contact Email:

hghr.uncc@gmail.com

URL:

<https://globalstudies.uncc.edu/center-holocaust-genocide-human-rights-studies/2019-conference-genocide-denial>