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## **Finding Aid of the Joseph Roos papers 0313**

Finding aid prepared by Rebecca Hirsch

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USC Libraries Special Collections

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**Title:** Joseph Roos papers

**Collection number:** 0313

**Contributing Institution:** USC Libraries Special Collections

**Language of Material:** English

**Physical Description:** 13.0 Linear feet 13 boxes, 1 map case folder

**Date (inclusive):** 1921-1999

**Language of Materials:** Most of the materials found in the Joseph Roos Papers are in English; however, some of Roos's correspondence and research was conducted in German.

**Abstract:** This collection contains papers documenting the activities of Joseph Roos (1905-1999) from his retirement from the Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation Council in 1969 until his death in 1999. These papers include correspondence, research files, memoranda and publications. Some documentation of Roos's earlier activities investigating the activities of the German Bund in Los Angeles in the 1930s is also present.

**creator:** Roos, Joseph, 1908-1999

#### **Biographical Note**

Joseph Roos (1908-1999) was a pioneering community relations adviser and activist who helped to infiltrate the prewar Nazi movement in Los Angeles. Roos was born in Vienna, Austria, and came to the United States in 1928. He became a Chicago newspaperman during the height of the Depression and in 1933 worked with George C. Marshall to launch the first government investigation of Nazi activities in America.

Roos came to California in 1934 to work in book publishing and wound up working as a publicist for Universal Pictures. He later became a story editor at United Artists and RKO Studios. In 1938, Roos began working with the Jewish Community Committee, which became the Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation Council. The pro-Nazi German American Bund, a national organization, arose in Los Angeles in the 1930s around the same time Adolf Hitler gained power. Roos took a leading role in investigations that would expose white supremacy groups and help to arouse the local Jewish community to the seriousness of the Third Reich's threat. Under the leadership of the Hitler-appointed American Fuhrer, Fritz Kuhn, the Bund tried to organize boycotts of Jewish-run businesses, especially those in the movie industry. Ultimately, the Bund hoped to purge the United States of Jews, minorities, Communists, and anyone who did not share its notion of Aryan supremacy.

Roos went on to serve as executive director of the Committee from 1945 to 1969, when he retired. In his work with the Committee, Roos gained a national reputation as a pioneer in the fields of race and community relations. In 1969 he started his own firm, Community Relations Consultants, and in 1984, Roos helped form USC's Office of Civic and Community Relations, the university's community outreach arm. He continued to advise USC on community relations matters until 1993. Roos was honored in 1979 by USC's School of Journalism with its Distinguished Achievement in Journalism Award. In 1997 at USC's second annual Jewish Community Luncheon, President Steven B. Sample awarded Roos a Lifetime Achievement Award for his service to the Southern California Jewish community. Roos was also a founder and board member of the Pacific Coast Council in Inter-Cultural Relations and of the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations.

#### **Related Archival Materials**

The Urban Archives Center at California State University, Northridge, has material from Joseph Roos in its Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles Community Relations Committee collection.

#### **Scope and Content**

This collection primarily documents the career and activities of Joseph Roos from his retirement from the Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation Council in 1969 until his death in 1999, although Roos's earlier activities are also documented. Papers present in this collection include correspondence, manuscripts of radio scripts, articles and books, research files, and publications. These papers document the business activities of Roos's firm, Community Relations Consultants, his work with the University of Southern California, and Roos's research on Nazis and other white supremacist groups in Southern California. Also included in this collection are transcripts of Roos's oral histories and a copy of the 1938 report *Summary Report on Activities of Nazi Groups and Their Allies in Southern California*. Please see the Scope and Content notes of individual series for more information.

#### **Conditions Governing Access**

COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE. Advance notice required for access.

#### **Conditions Governing Use**

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The collection contains published materials; researchers are reminded of the copyright restrictions imposed by publishers on reusing their articles and parts of books. It is the responsibility of researchers to acquire permission from publishers when reusing such materials. The copyright to unpublished materials belongs to the heirs of the writers. Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

**Acquisition**

The Joseph Roos Papers were donated to USC by Leonard Roos in 2002 as an agent of the Joseph and Alvina Roos Trust.

**Preferred Citation**

[Box/folder# or item name], Joseph Roos papers, Collection no. 0313, Special Collections, USC Libraries, University of Southern California

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Ferenz, F.K.

German American Bund. -- Archives

Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles . -- Archives

Pitt, Leonard -- Correspondence

Roos, Joseph, 1908-1999 -- Archives

University of Southern California. -- Archives

Clippings

Correspondence

Ephemera

Exiles--Austria--20th century--Archival resources

Exiles--United States--20th century--Archival resources

Jews--California--Los Angeles--20th century--Archival resources

Los Angeles (Calif.)--History--Archival resources

Manuscripts

Memorandums

National socialism--California--Los Angeles--Archival resources

Nazis--California--Los Angeles--Archival resources

Notes

Oral histories (document genres)

Pamphlets

Photographs

Printed ephemera

Public relations consultants--California--Los Angeles--Archival resources

Publications

Typescripts

White supremacy movements--United States----20th century--Archival resources

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**Correspondence and Clippings**

**Scope and Content**

Series contains Roos's correspondence and clippings files and typescripts of articles Roos wrote for various periodicals. Roos's correspondents include municipal, state, and federal government officials, his sisters, Claire and Frances Roos, and Jewish organizations in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. Most of the correspondence present in these files is incoming to Roos; however, copies or carbons of Roos's outgoing correspondence are also occasionally present. Roos's files on USC document his tenure as USC's advisor on community relations and include clippings, correspondence, and memoranda to and from USC staff and faculty. Also included in this series are Roos's address book, address card files, and folders of rosters of members of various organizations.

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Box 1

**Chronological Files**

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Box 1-2

**USC**

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Box 2

**General**

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Box 2-5

**Addresses**

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Box 6

**Awards and Recognitions**

**Scope and Content**

Series contains correspondence, ephemera, and other papers pertaining to awards and recognitions received by Joseph Roos. Awards given to Roos include the 1981 Paul Lund Award from the Public Relations Society of America, the 1979 USC Journalism Alumni Award, and the 1988 Human Relations Award from the Mayor of Los Angeles. Also included in this series is Roos's files from when he served on the Awards Committee for the 1986 JFC Awards.

Map-case 5,  
Drawer 4, Box 6

**Personal Papers**

**Scope and Content**

Series contains photographs and biographies of Roos. Also included in this series are transcripts of oral histories given by Roos and his appointment books for the years 1987-1989.

Box 6-7

**Exhibits**

**Scope and Content**

Series contains clippings, correspondence and ephemera pertaining to exhibits of Nazi and anti-Semitic materials in Southern California.

Box 7

**Plays, Radio Scripts and Screenplays**

**Scope and Content**

Series contains manuscript and typescript drafts of plays, radio scripts and screenplays written by Roos.

**Book-length Manuscripts**

**Scope and Content**

Series contains research files, manuscripts, and typescripts for Roos's book on F.K. Ferenz, a member of the German Bund in Los Angeles who distributed Nazi propaganda from his bookshop in Los Angeles. Also included in this series are manuscripts of two other (also unpublished) works on similar topics and Roos's correspondence with Dr. Leonard Pitt, with whom Roos was writing a work tentatively titled *Under the Crooked Cross*.

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Box 7-8

**Manuscripts**

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Box 8

**Research**

Box 8-9

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**Research Files****Scope and Content**

Series contains Roos's research files on various topics related to the Nazi party, white supremacy groups in the United States, or anti-Semitism in the United States. Files include correspondence, copies of source material, and Roos's notes on the materials.

**Publications****Scope and Content**

Series contains publications and copies of publications by Roos, including the News Research Service (NRS) newsletters, the *Summary Report on Activities of Nazi Groups and Their Allies in Southern California*, published by the Americanism Committee in 1938, and typescripts of a few journal-length articles. Also present are various periodical publications collected by Roos, including *Common Ground*, *The American Vindicator*, *The Free Press* and *Propaganda Analysis*, and printed ephemera and pamphlets on human rights and freedoms, white supremacy and anti-Semitism.

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Box 9**News Research Service (NRS)**

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Box 10***Summary Report on Activities of Nazi Groups and Their Allies in Southern California & Copied Publications***

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Box 10-12**Periodicals and Printed Ephemera**

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Box 13**Newspapers**