Loyola hosts conference to discuss topics of genocide and hate speech
By Sarah Zavala
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SPRINGFIELD — Experts from all over the United States and in Canada will gather in April to discuss such heavy topics as hate speech.

The Loyola University Chicago Law Journal will host a conference called "Hate Speech, Incitement and Genocide" on April 8. The conference will be in the Power Rogers & Smith Ceremonial Courtroom at the Philip H. Corboy Law Center.

"This is going to be a fascinating opportunity to explore genocide," said Kenneth Marcus, co-sponsor of the conference and executive vice president and director of the Anti-Semitism Initiative at the Institute for Jewish & Community Research in San Francisco.

Marcus said the conference will explore the relationship between hateful and insightful speech.

He said he hopes to explore mass atrocity and learn what leads people to murder.

Marcus, who will be one of the panelists on hate speech and genocide in Africa and the Middle East, said he wants to discuss real-world situations that people are concerned about.

The conference is scheduled to start at 8 a.m. with registration and refreshments outside the Ceremonial Courtroom. At 9:30 a.m. the first panel will begin.

Panelists will talk about developing the structure of genocide law. At 11:15 a.m. the second panel will discuss hate speech and genocide in Africa and the Middle East.

Lunch is at 12:30 and Irwin Cotler, former attorney general of Canada and a member of the Canadian Parliament, will be the guest speaker.

The third panel will resume at 2 p.m. with a discussion of free speech and equality in the Internet Age. The conference will end at about 4 p.m.

Alexander V. Tsesis, assistant law professor at Loyola University Chicago School of Law, said the conference will look at the potential of contemporary technology and how it relates to the amount of violence and death that exists in the world.

Tsesis said it is critical to look for ways to legally address the spread of hatred, especially through the Internet.

Tsesis said each panelist will get 15 to 20 minutes to present their speeches, which will be published in the Loyola University Chicago Law Journal.

After each panelist speaks, the moderator will allow them to respond to each other, Tsesis said. After about an hour, the panel will be open for audience participation, he added.
Tsesis said he wanted the panels to consist of a diverse group of people who have recently published books and articles in this field.

One of the panelists will be Steven Baum, editor of the Journal for the Study of Antisemitism.

Baum wrote a recent book on the psychology of genocide and has lectured at the University of New Mexico on psychology.

Baum said his speech will be titled "Fiction excels nonfiction."

Fiction books outsell nonfiction by three-to-one, he said, adding that his speech will focus on how most people spend about 80 percent of their day in fantasy.

It is not terrible to think about fantasy, except when thinking about genocide, Baum said.

"What happens when you really believe fantasy?" Baum said. "You get a dictator."

Baum said the first thing to do is understand genocide. The next step is to figure out how to stop it and then put laws into place to block people from acting on it, he said.

Registration fees are $175 or $145 for alumni. A 50 percent fee reduction is offered for attorneys working in the areas of government or public interest.

For registration and information, contact Conference Editor Craig Beaker at cbeaker@luc.edu or call (312) 915-7183.