

**SERLING INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH STUDIES  
AND MODERN ISRAEL  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

**FALL 2019  
NEWSLETTER**



Photo by Yore Kedem

# NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR



We begin this year in the Serling Institute with hope for the year ahead, but with the recognition that these are difficult times. In the past year, we have seen with stark visibility a dark tendency that is certainly not new, but has achieved an alarming acuteness and visibility in the last twelve months. The threat of white nationalism has grown, impacting the safety of minority communities across the US and abroad, including Jewish communities. There have been two terrorist attacks on synagogues in the past year, and at least one planned attack averted; more broadly, hate crimes have risen to record levels, according to FBI statistics and the Anti-Defamation League. Public figures speak openly in language that evoke timeworn antisemitic tropes. This of course is part of a larger pattern of attacks on minority groups: mosques in New Zealand have been attacked, African American churches have been targeted, and now most recently members of the Hispanic and Latinx communities have been murdered. This, all in the context of a demonization and dehumanization of refugees seeking asylum in the US, as well as migrants – a phenomena of particular concern for Jews, given the long Jewish experience of being refugees and migrants. While there are legitimate debates to be had across the political spectrum about how precisely to fix what is clearly a broken immigration system, we can likely all agree that separating children from families, and housing them in inhumane conditions and inadequate care while under custody of government agencies – under which a number of asylum seekers, at least 6 of them children, have died – is against Jewish values, and that the Jewish experience teaches us that it is crucial to make sure that those seeking asylum are given a fair hearing and are treated humanely.

This context makes the work we do this year in the Serling Institute especially important, as we continue to study, debate, celebrate and critique all aspects of Jewish culture and history, and think about its relevance to contemporary events. Building on our previous panel, held in anticipation of Richard Spencer’s impending campus visit, we continue our efforts to “build community and resist hate” with a second panel organized by Muslim Studies and the Serling Institute. Featuring representatives from academic units across campus the panel will highlight the dangers of white nationalism, the threats that these hate groups pose to our communities, and the importance of building community to resist these threats. And throughout the year – as is amply evident in the following pages – we will continue to build on our research and teaching strengths in Israel Studies, American and European Jewish History, Judaism, Hebrew and Holocaust Studies. We have an exciting array of guest speakers coming to talk about a wide range of issues, as well as a number of distinguished visiting scholars; our award-winning faculty are engaged in ground-breaking research and innovative teaching, and our current students and alumni are making a real difference in their communities. I look forward to doing this important work, at this crucial time, with you all throughout what will be an exciting and challenging year.

Professor Yael Aronoff

Director of The Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel

# THE SERLING INSTITUTE SUMMER PROGRAM AT HEBREW UNIVERSITY

In July 2019, twelve MSU students took part in the MSU Serling Institute Summer Program at Hebrew University. Students took two courses: "The Emergence of the Modern State of Israel," taught by David Mendelsson (Lecturer, Rothberg International School, Hebrew University), and "Immigration and Cultural Diversity in Israel," taught by Yore Kedem (Assistant Professor of Hebrew, Department of Linguistics and Languages, MSU). They attended lectures, heard guest speakers and went on several field trips.



On the Beach in Ashdod

For Professor Mendelsson's class, students went to Tel Aviv to see where many of the events of early Zionism occurred. With Professor Kedem they went to Wadi Ara, observed the physical and human geography of the area and met Dr. Ibrahim Yehia - Director of the Triangle Research and Development Center in Kafar Qara. From Dr. Yehia students heard about the research conducted by Arab-Israeli scientists to benefit their community, and about his life as a Palestinian citizen of Israel. Students also went on a field trip to Ashdod and Rehovot, where they learned about the history of Ashdod and met a neuroscientist who immigrated to Israel from the US. Students commented about the way the two courses coalesced to help them have a more robust understanding of Israel and their experiences. As Jewish Studies Minor Max Efros (Senior, James Madison College) reflected: "Adjusting my worldview to a non-American point of view was difficult, but I can honestly say that my trip to Israel has given me invaluable experiences and has altered my perceptions of the world around me. I feel that my opinions are more informed and I'm glad I was able to interact with people from another society." Another Jewish Studies Minor, Jake Rubin (Junior, Residential College in the Arts and Humanities) commented: "In my brief experience in Israel I experienced a previously unseen connection to my

Triangle R&D Center, Kafar Qara



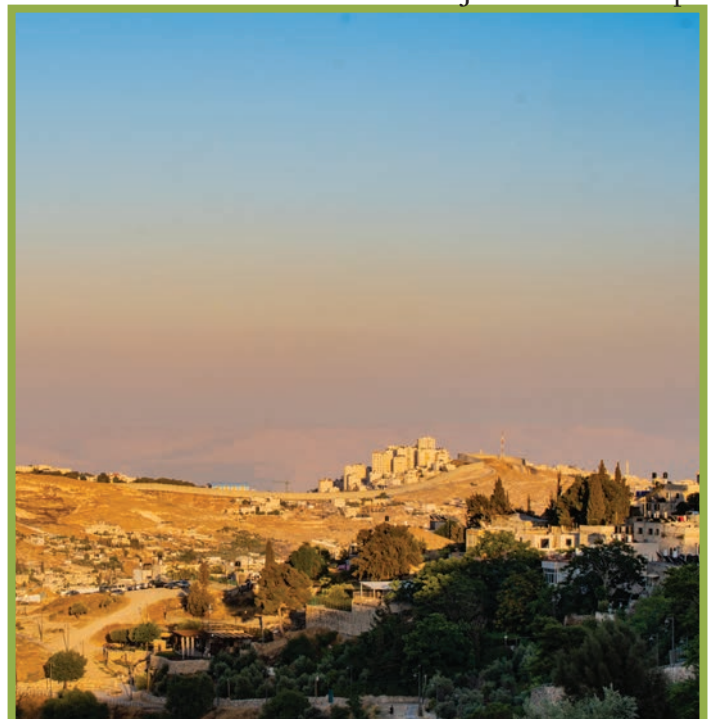
Jewish roots. Some of my personal highlights include visiting the Western Wall, going to the Dead Sea, going to Yad Vashem, and diving in headfirst with the food and culture. Overall, from the experience I am taking a deeper appreciation of what it means to be Jewish as well as a greater understanding of Israel as a whole. I truly had an amazing time in and outside the classroom.

I am so thankful that Michigan State and the Serling Institute offered this wonderful study abroad experience."

Jerusalem pedestrian street



Jerusalem Landscape



☆☆☆ Save the dates for the Annual Israeli Film Festival on March 15th-16th! ☆☆☆

# FALLEV



## "Building Community: Resisting Hate"

Building on our previous panel, held in anticipation of Richard Spencer's impending campus visit, we continue our efforts to "build community and resist hate" with a second panel on September 16 at 7pm in Club Spartan in Case Hall, organized by Muslim Studies and the Serling Institute. Featuring representatives from academic units and communities across campus, the panel will highlight the dangers of white nationalism, the threats that these hate groups pose to our communities, and the importance of building community to resist these threats.

**MONDAY**  
**SEPTEMBER 16th**  
 7:00-8:30 PM  
 Club Spartan, Case Hall  
 (3rd Floor)

## "The Pathology of Political Polarization - The Story of Israel's 2019 Elections," Alon Tal and Yael Aronoff

For the first time in its history, Israel's April 2019 elections ended in stalemate, and Likud Party Chair Benjamin Netanyahu was unable to cobble together a coalition with over 50% of the Knesset members. Israel's parliament subsequently disbanded and new elections will be held on September 17th. Two days after the elections, a post-election wrap-up will take place, beginning with a presentation by Alon Tal, MSU's 2019 Serling Visiting Israeli Scholar- and a founding member of the Blue & White Party's list of Knesset candidates, who actively participated in both 2019 campaigns. He will answer questions like: What were the issues? How were they framed? How does social media transform the country's political campaigns? What were the tactics used by different parties? And what do the results mean for Israel's future? After Dr. Tal's opening presentation, Professor Yael Aronoff, Serling Chair in Israel Studies and Director of the Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel will respond with her analysis - and the two will then conduct an open discussion with the audience about this unique year in Israeli political history.



**THURSDAY**  
**SEPTEMBER 19th**  
 7:00-8:30 PM  
 James Madison College  
 Library (332 Case Hall)

## "How Frontier Jews Made American Judaism," Shari Rabin



The first mass migration in American Jewish history took place in the nineteenth century, during the era of westward expansion and manifest destiny. Shari Rabin, author of *Jews on the Frontier: Religion and Mobility in the Nineteenth Century* (New York University Press, 2017), will discuss the experience of these Jewish migrants, focusing on the eclectic forms of religious life that they developed and what they can tell us about American Judaism in the twenty-first century.

**MONDAY**  
**SEPTEMBER 23th**  
 7:00-9:00 PM  
 Wells Hall  
 B-342

Dr. Rabin is currently Assistant Professor of Jewish Studies and Religion at Oberlin College. *Jews on the Frontier* won the National Jewish Book Award in American Jewish Studies and was a finalist for the Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature. Shari received a Ph.D. in Religious Studies from Yale University in 2015.

## "A Jewish Journey in the White House and Beyond," Sarah Hurwitz

In this wide-ranging discussion with Professor Laura Yares, Sarah Hurwitz will discuss her recently-published book, *Here All Along: Finding Meaning, Spirituality, and a Deeper Connection to Life - in Judaism (After Finally Choosing to Look There)*. She'll talk about what led her to engage in deep Jewish learning and what she discovered during her journey. Sarah will also share stories and lessons learned from her career as a political speechwriter and provide tips for effective speechwriting and communication.



**THURSDAY**  
**OCTOBER 24th**  
 7:00-9:00 PM  
 The Kellogg Center  
 Auditorium

From 2009 to 2017, Sarah Hurwitz served as a White House speechwriter, first as a senior speechwriter for President Barack Obama and then as head speechwriter for First Lady Michelle Obama. Prior to working in the White House, she was the Chief Speechwriter for Hillary Clinton on her 2008 presidential campaign, as well as Deputy Chief Speechwriter for Senator John Kerry and General Wesley Clark during the 2004 Presidential campaign cycle. Ms. Hurwitz is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School.

There will be complimentary copies of Hurwitz's book available.

# EVENTS 2019



## "The Predicament of Aftermath: Oral History and the Ghosts of the Past," Edward T. Linenthal

This presentation will offer video testimonies from Holocaust survivors, an officer from the famed Tuskegee Airmen, and first responders from the Oklahoma City bombing as "case studies" in the struggle to engage the open wounds of violent pasts. Edward T. Linenthal is Professor of History at Indiana University, Bloomington, and served as editor of the *Journal of American History* from 2005-2016. He has been a Sloan Research Fellow in the Arms Control and Defense Policy Program at MIT, where he did the research for his first book, *Symbolic Defense: The Cultural Significance of the Strategic Defense Initiative*. He is also the author of *Sacred Ground: Americans and Their Battlefields*; *Preserving Memory: The Struggle to Create America's Holocaust Museum*; and *The Unfinished Bombing: Oklahoma City in American Memory*.

**MONDAY**  
**OCTOBER 28th**  
7:00-9:00 PM  
James Madison College  
Library (332 Case Hall)

## "Israeli Leaders Who Made Historic Decisions-What Inspired Them?" David Makovsky

In 2019, Dennis Ross and David Makovsky published a book entitled *Be Strong and of Good Courage: How Israel's Most Important Leaders Shaped Its Destiny*. The book examines key moments in Israeli history in which leaders had to make crucial decisions, and examines the issues of leadership and judgment surrounding those decisions.



**WEDNESDAY**  
**NOVEMBER 6th**  
7:00-8:30 PM  
The Kellogg Center  
Auditorium

David Makovsky is one of America's leading experts on Israel and is the Ziegler Distinguished Fellow and director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy's Project on the Middle East Peace Process. He is also an adjunct professor in Middle East Studies at Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS).



## "Time and Policy: Time Uses, Time Preferences and Policy Perceptions in Israel," Lihi Lahat

Time is one of our most essential resources. While researchers from various disciplines have studied time, less attention has been paid to the connection between time and public policy. Dr. Lahat will discuss four questions: 1) How does the Israeli public spend their time, vis-à-vis four kinds of time: sleep, work, care time and personal time? 2) What are their preferences regarding the use of time in these four categories? 3) What is the public support for different policy alternatives that affect different uses of time? 4) Is there a connection between the preferences regarding the uses of time and policy alternatives?

Dr. Lihi Lahat is a senior lecturer in the Department of Administration & Public Policy at Sapir Academic College in Israel. Her articles have been published in journals such as *Policy Sciences*, *Social Policy & Administration*, *International Review of Administrative Sciences* and *Poverty & Public Policy*.

**TUESDAY**  
**NOVEMBER 12th**  
7:00-8:30 PM  
Political Science  
South Kedzie Hall  
S-104

## Annual Kessler Film: "Who Will Write Our History?" Introduction and post-film discussion led by Amy Simon

"In November 1940, days after the Nazis sealed 450,000 Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, a secret band of journalists, scholars and community leaders decided to fight back. Led by historian Emanuel Ringelblum and known by the code name Oyneg Shabes, this clandestine group vowed to defeat Nazi lies and propaganda not with guns or fists but with pen and paper. Now, for the first time, their story is told as a feature documentary. Written, produced and directed by Roberta Grossman and executive produced by Nancy Spielberg, *Who Will Write Our History* mixes the writings of the Oyneg Shabes archive with new interviews, rarely



seen footage and stunning dramatizations to transport us inside the Ghetto and the lives of these courageous resistance fighters. They defied their murderous enemy with the ultimate weapon - the truth - and risked everything so that their archive would survive the war, even if they did not."

**MONDAY**  
**NOVEMBER 18th**  
7:00-9:00 PM  
MSU Main Library's  
Green Room  
(4th Floor West)

## MSU Symphony Orchestra and Choral Ensembles:

### SHOSTAKOVICH BABI YAR

*Remembering the Holocaust*

**Featured baritone Professor Mark Rucker and concert preview lecture**

Dmitri Shostakovich's Symphony No. 13, titled *Babi Yar*, memorializes the massacre of Ukrainian Jews by Nazi forces.

The work remains one of the most enduring musical protests against antisemitism. An engaging and informative preview lecture by three scholars and the conductor explored the historical context of the Holocaust and the artistic reaction and remembrance generated by Shostakovich's symphony. The work was paired with selections from "I Never Saw Another Butterfly" by Charles Davidson, settings of poems by Jewish children who perished in the Holocaust.



Professor Amy Simon



Professor Matthew Pauly



Professor Kirsten Fermaglich, Professor Matthew Pauly and Professor Yael Aronoff



Professor Mark Rucker



Michael and Elaine Serling

The Concert was held on Saturday, April 27, 2019 at the **Cobb Great Hall, Wharton Center**, East Lansing and on Sunday, April 28, 2019 at the **Orchestra Hall** in Detroit.



Amy Simon, Elaine Serling, Michael Serling and Yael Aronoff

The preview lectures by Serling Institute faculty were by **Professor Amy Simon**, William and Audrey Farber Family Chair in Holocaust Studies and European Jewish History; Assistant Professor, James Madison College, Department of History; and core faculty in the Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel. **Professor Matthew Pauly**, Associate Professor of History, College of Social Science, and affiliate of the Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel.

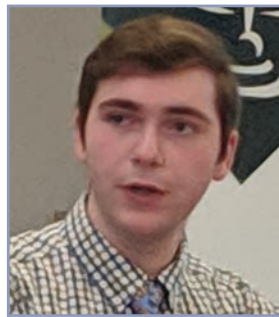


Dean of College of Music Jim Forger, Provost June Youatt, Amy Simon, Elaine Serling, Michael Serling, Yael Aronoff, Matthew Pauly and Kevin Bartig

# SERLING INSTITUTE UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2019

*On Friday, April 12th, 2019, the Serling Institute hosted its annual Undergraduate Research Conference. Twelve students from several different colleges and academic units at Michigan State University presented the research projects they had completed in their Jewish Studies courses to faculty, fellow students, and their families.*

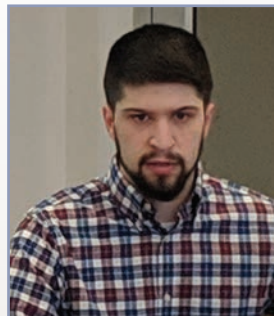
The conference consisted of a morning panel moderated by Professor **Yael Aronoff** entitled “**Israeli Politics, Society, and Foreign Policy.**”



**David Warshay**, presented his research on “the Disputed Outcome of

Operation Protective Edge: How Both Sides Succeeded in the Short-Term but Failed in the Long-Term.”

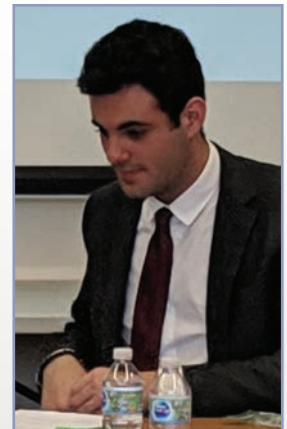
**Pejman Masrouri**, presented “Eretz Israel: The Jewish Insurgency in the Palestine Mandate.”



**Kaila Waineo** discussed “Slavery in the Front Yard: How Israel Successfully Fought Women’s Trafficking for Prostitution.”

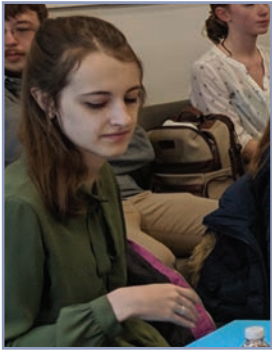


**Ben Francis** presented “Minorities Within the Education System of Israel.”



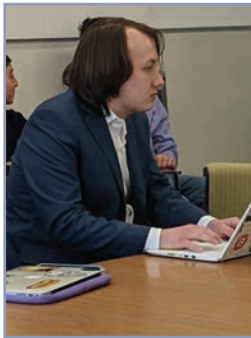


The second panel, entitled “Memories and Depictions of Jews and the Holocaust,” was moderated by **Dr. Amy Simon.**



**Megan Freibe** presented “Psychological Trauma from the Holocaust and its Role in Survivor Identity in America.”

**Mateusz Leszczynski** discussed “Polish Nation-Building and the Role of Polish Jews.”

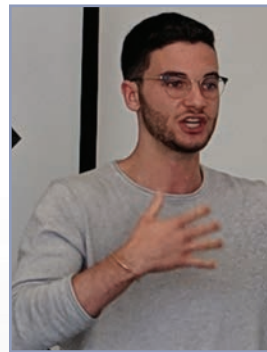


The third panel, “Judaism and Jewish Culture in America,” was moderated by **Dr. Kirsten Fermaglich.**



**Alexis Sargent** presented “The Shoah on Stage: Broadway Musical Representations of the Holocaust and Jewish Persecution.”

**Daniel Baum** presented “Constitution Street: My Grandfather’s Story.”

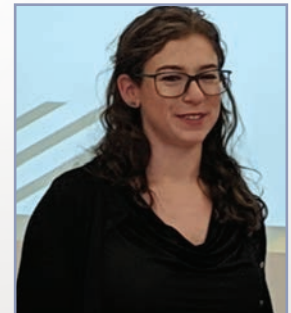


**Jordan Robinson** analyzed “BBYO: Jewish Youth Groups and the Effects on Jewish Teens.”



The final panel, “Israeli Society and Identity,” was moderated by **Dr. Yore Kedem.**

**Jordyn Weinberg** discussed “The #MeToo Movement in Israel: Sexual Harassment in the Media and Politics?”

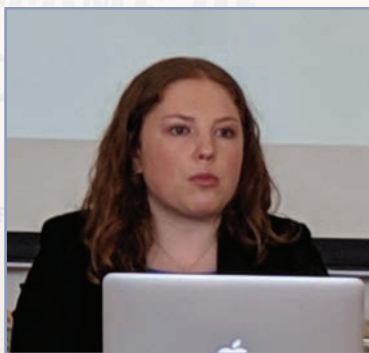


Following this panel, students and attendees were joined for lunch by alumna



**Sarah Kirsch**, who discussed “What it Takes To Be a Powerful Woman In Israeli High-Tech.”

**Rachel Morof** discussed “Looking at Changing Shabbat Observance in Michigan over the Past 50 Years.”



**Nadav Pais-Greenapple** presented “Manifesting Jewish Identity in Space: America & Israel.”



# SERLING INSTITUTE WELCOMES THREE ISRAELI VISITING SCHOLARS

An academic and practitioner, Dr. Harry Yuklea has been directly involved for the last 40 years in the remarkable build-up process of the Israeli high-tech sector. His career ranges from technology development and engineering to marketing, management, consulting and investment. He has also held executive positions at a series of technology start-ups, and he serves on the Board of Directors of several high-tech firms. Dr. Yuklea served as advisor to the Israeli National Economic Council, the Israel Innovation Authority and various international agencies such as EUREKA, IADB, and iCreate. He recently co-founded Quantum China-Israel Investment Ltd., a Chinese firm specializing in creating Israel-China technology joint ventures. He holds a MSEE from Technical University Iasi (Romania), a M.S.M. from Boston University and a Ph.D. in Business Management from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He will teach in the Eli Broad College of Business for the second time teaching **ESHP 190-005: The Art of Starting** and **FI 491-005: Economy and Finance of Innovation**.

**DR. HARRY YUKLEA**  
Serling Visiting Israeli Scholar



**DR. ALON TAL**  
Serling Visiting Israeli Scholar



Dr. Alon Tal is teaching at James Madison College for the fifth time. Professor Tal is the Chair of the Department of Public Policy at Tel Aviv University and founded the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies, a graduate studies center in which students join Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian environmentalists to study common environmental challenges and solutions. He served as the co-chair of Israel's Green Party. He received a Ph.D. in Environmental Health Policy from Harvard University, a Law Degree from Hebrew University, and is the author of five books. This fall semester, Professor Tal will teach **MC 335: Israeli Politics, Cultures and Society** and **MC 459/LB 459: Determining Carrying Capacity and Sustainable Population Policies** which will have a case study on Israel. The public has an opportunity to hear Dr. Tal speak on September 19, at our analysis of the Israeli election: "The Pathology of Political Polarization - The Story of Israel's 2019 Elections,"

Dr. Lihi Lahat is a senior lecturer in the Department of Administration & Public Policy at Sapir Academic College. Her articles have been published in journals such as *Policy Sciences*, *Social Policy & Administration*, *International Review of Administrative Sciences* and *Poverty & Public Policy*. Her areas of research are policymakers' perceptions of poverty, the regulation of personal social services, the trust and well-being of public officials, uses of time and policy, and collaborative governance.

Dr. Lahat will teach **PLS 392: Public Administration, Public Policy and Policy Analysis: The Israeli Case**. Dr. Lahat lecture's "Time and Policy: Time Uses, Time Preferences and Policy Perceptions in Israel," will be given on November 12.

**DR. LIHI LAHAT**  
Supported by the Israel Institute



# FACULTY NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

## PROFESSOR YAEL ARONOFF

Yael Aronoff was elected President of the Association of Israel Studies for a two-year term at the end of June 2019. The Association for Israel Studies is an international scholarly society devoted to the academic and professional study of Israel. She was re-appointed this past July for another five-year term as the Director of the Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel. Dr. Aronoff is co-editing a book with Dr. Ilan Peleg and Dr. Saliba Sarsar entitled, *Continuity and Change in Political Culture: Israel and Beyond* as well as completing a book manuscript on the *The Dilemmas of Asymmetric Conflicts: Navigating Deterrence and Democratic Constraints*. Her chapter "The Zionist Center-Left Opposition to the Netanyahu Governments," in *Israel Under Netanyahu: Domestic Politics and Foreign Affairs*, ed. Robert Freedman, is forthcoming in Routledge, 2019. This past June Professor Aronoff participated on a roundtable "Israel at the Polls, 2019: Perspectives on the 21st Knesset Election," participated on a book roundtable on the Israel-Egypt Peace Process, and chaired a panel on Israel's foreign relations in Europe and South America at the 35th Annual Conference of the Association of Israel Studies at the Kinneret Academic College in Israel. Dr. Aronoff is presenting her paper, "Pathways to Peace: The Legitimation of a Two State Solution" at the 41st Conference of the Association of Interdisciplinary Studies, hosted by the University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands, from October 24-26 2019. She will also be reflecting on the upcoming September 17 Israeli elections with Dr. Alon Tal on September 19 at MSU.



## PROFESSOR KIRSTEN FERMAGLICH

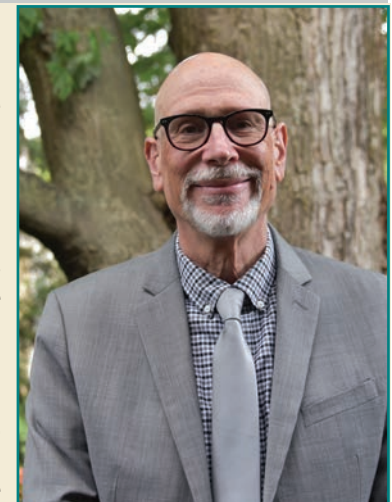
*A Rosenberg By Any Other Name: A History Of Jewish Name Changing in America* received the American Jewish Historical Society's Saul Wiener Book Prize. The prize is awarded biannually and is given to original works in English that focus on American Jewish History. The book is Kirsten Fermaglich's original and compelling study of Jewish name changes in New York in the twentieth century. It effectively illuminates some of the key cultural and structural dynamics that enabled the flourishing of antisemitism in employment, education, and social life from the 1910s to the 1960s, and how Jews responded. In Dr. Fermaglich's hands, New York City Civil Court records, which she reviewed in the thousands, proved to be a remarkable source for the study of Jews, who were the majority of people who filed for name changes. The petitions offered rationales for why people sought new names, and from them she builds a powerful case for what motivated first and last name changes and what did not. This first historical study of Jewish name changes is a work of

intellectual depth and originality that draws on untapped sources to tell a story about real men and women who negotiated identity, the state, and antisemitism, and the consequences of their strategies.

## PROFESSOR STEVEN GOLD

Dr. Gold received the American Sociological Association, International Migration Section Distinguished Career Award in 2019. He was awarded the Fund for the Advancement of the Humanities and Social Sciences in Israel Grant for Distinguished Scholars and will be speaking at Bar Ilan, Haifa and Tel Aviv Universities in 2020. Dr. Gold is a sociologist engaged in research, teaching and publication involving immigration, refugees, ethnic economies and ethnic communities, cross-national networks, conflict between ethnic entrepreneurs and native minority customers and methodology. A commitment to both Jewish Studies and comparative research is evident in his research.

**Cross-National Networks-** Israelis are a group with numerous networks and skills that allow them easy access to many nation states. Dr. Gold worked with research assistants to collect interview data from Israelis living in California, Florida, the Midwestern U.S., England, and France, as well as returned Israeli migrants (from the U.S., South Africa and Argentina) in Israel. These materials are included in several publications including *The Israeli Diaspora* (2002) which won the Thomas and Znaniecki Best Book Award from American Sociological Association International Migration Section in 2003. More recent work on this topic includes "Adaptation and Return among Israeli Enclave and Infotech Entrepreneurs," (2015); and "Israeli Infotech Migrants in Silicon Valley," (2018).



## Faculty Highlights



### DEBORAH J. MARGOLIS

Deborah J. Margolis was promoted to Middle East Studies Librarian and Area Studies Coordinator. Margolis was awarded the 2019 Charles A. Giozzo Award for Public Diplomacy from MSU's International Studies and Programs. She was a panelist in June at the American Library Association annual conference on "History Unfolded: U.S. Newspapers and the Holocaust. Leveraging Libraries to Transform Holocaust Learning," a project from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum run locally by Dr. Margaret Lincoln of Lakeview High School (Battle Creek), Scott Durham (Lakeview High/MSU) and Dr. Kirsten Fermaglich (MSU).

## Academic News

**Yore Kedem** received a Designation B Appointment, which offers long-term continuous appointment at MSU for non-tenure stream faculty. He led the Serling Institute Summer Program at Hebrew University for the third time in July. Over the 2019-2020 school year, he will be teaching and leading a new Honors Research Seminar Abroad: "Immigration and Cultural Diversity in Israel," for the Honors College at MSU and the Serling Institute. He is using an innovative format for these seminars, which includes instruction on campus in the Fall and Spring and traveling to Israel over winter break.

**Michael Koppisch** published an essay last Spring: "Au début, nous voulions chanter": Turning to Molière in Auschwitz," in *Molière Re-Envisioned: Twenty-First Century Retakes (Renouveau et renouvellement moliéresques: Reprises contemporaines.)* Ed. M. J. Muratore. Paris: Hermann, 2018. Pp. 567-86.

**Ken Waltzer** has retired from his position as founding Executive Director of the Academic Engagement Network (AEN). AEN is a national faculty organization that counters the academic Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement on American campuses, helps defend academic freedom and freedom of expression, and responds to antisemitism where it appears. Ken has several essays on contemporary antisemitism on American campuses slated to appear this year and will be participating in a four-part course in Fall 2019 on rescue during the Holocaust, with participants from several Michigan universities sponsored by the Holocaust Memorial Center.

**Amy Simon** will present the paper, "Imperfect Humans and Perfect Beasts: Changing Perceptions of German and Jewish Persecutors in Holocaust Ghetto Diaries" in October, at the Forty-Third Annual Conference

of the German Studies Association. Dr. Simon will also moderate the panel, "Genres of Holocaust Representation (2): Media, Genre, and Generations in Holocaust Memory." Also in October, Dr. Simon will present an invited paper, "'I Shall Record it all!' Yiddish Diarists Document the Holocaust" at the 2019 Powell-Heller Conference for Holocaust Education at Pacific Lutheran University.

**Lynn Wolff** published an edited volume on H.G. Adler, an author, scholar, and Holocaust survivor which appeared in May 2019: *A Modernist in Exile: The International Reception of H.G. Adler*. Ed. Lynn L. Wolff. Oxford: Legenda, 2019. [Studies in Comparative Literature 42] <http://www.mhra.org.uk/publications/Modernist-in-Exile>. Dr. Wolff will give two presentations this fall: 1) Invited Conference Presentation: "Continuity in Spite of the Catastrophe: H.G. Adler's Relationship to and Reflections on the

German Language," Sprachhandeln – Jüdische Reflexionen über Sprache in der Kriegs- und Nachkriegszeit, International Workshop of the Project "Early Forms of Writing about the Shoah: Knowledge and Textual Practices by Jewish Survivors in Europe (1942 – 1965)." October 21-22, 2019, Leibniz Institut für jüdische Geschichte und Kultur =Simon Dubnow Institute, Leipzig, Germany  
2) Invited Keynote Lecture: "H.G. Adler and Writing 'After Theresienstadt'", International Holocaust Conference: *Silence, Speech, Memory, Message, Understanding – After 75 Years*, organized by the Universities of Szeged, Halle (Germany) and Sheffield (UK), with the contribution of the European Association of Holocaust Studies (EAHS). November 14-16, 2019, Martin-Luther-University, Halle-Wittenberg, Germany.

# NEW AFFILIATED FACULTY OF SERLING INSTITUTE



## DR. AYALLA RUVIO

Department of Marketing | Broad College of Business  
Michigan State University  
632 Bogue Street, Room N304  
East Lansing, MI 48824  
W: 517-432-6467 | [ruvio@broad.msu.edu](mailto:ruvio@broad.msu.edu)

Ayalla Ruvio (Ph.D. in Entrepreneurship, University of Haifa, Israel) is an Associate Professor of Marketing in the Eli Broad College of Business at Michigan State University. She is an applied consumer behavior researcher who specializes in issues such as identity and consumption, and cross-cultural consumer behavior. Her doctoral dissertation compared for-profit and non-profit entrepreneurs in Israel and was one of the first studies that explored non-profit and social entrepreneurship. Several of her papers investigated the consumption phenomenon in Israel, including materialism in the face of terrorist attacks, the effect of the Intifada on consumers' behavior, the role of consumption in the acculturation of Russian immigrants, holiday consumption rituals and the association between consumption attitudes and aggressive driving. Her research has been featured in numerous media outlets all over the world, including *CNN*, *the TODAY Show*, *Good Morning America*, *TIME Magazine*, *The New York Times*, *Forbes*, *Consumer Reports*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Atlantic*, *The Telegraph*, and the *Toronto STAR*. Dr. Ruvio is currently working on creating a study abroad course in Israel with a focus on the Start-Up Nation (potentially during spring break).



## DR. LYNN WOLFF

Department of Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, Asian  
and African Languages | College of Arts and Letters  
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Lynn Wolff's research and teaching deal broadly with twentieth- and twenty-first-century German literature and culture and interdisciplinary questions of translation, visibility, and world literature. The core concern of her work is with the fundamental and sustained tension between literature and historiography, and a major focus of her research is in the area of Holocaust Studies. She explored the specific ethical and aesthetic questions inherent to the problem of representing the Holocaust in several publications and in a graduate seminar that she taught at the Universität Stuttgart (2012-2013). The interdisciplinary nature of Holocaust studies has made it possible for her to build important networks at MSU and in the profession. She participated in multiple workshops offered by the MSU Libraries to become familiar with the USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive, a resource that is integral to her current book project. In summer 2017, she participated in the Silberman Seminar on "Visualizing the Holocaust and Digital Humanities in the Classroom" at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and was awarded a follow-up grant for this summer to continue developing a graduate seminar on "The Representability of the Holocaust," which she is offering in the Fall 2019 semester.

## STUDENT AND ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

### *Josh Kanter '09*

Josh Kanter graduated in 2009 with a JS Minor in addition to his BA in Political Theory and Constitutional Democracy from James Madison College and a specialization in Peace and Justice Studies. Josh spent a summer at the Rothberg International School at Hebrew University with a group from Michigan State led by Yael Aronoff, which inspired a year-long internship at the Israel Democracy Institute with Career Israel (through MASA) after he graduated. His coursework in the Jewish Studies Program at MSU served as the cornerstone of his professional path in the Jewish non-profit world. He went on to earn an MSW from the University of Michigan School of Social Work Jewish Communal Leadership Program and has worked for the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, American Jewish World Service, and UJA-Federation of New York. Josh currently works for Reboot, an arts and culture non-profit that reimagines and reinforces Jewish thought and traditions for the 21st century. He lives on the Upper West Side in Manhattan with his wife, Allie, and their adorable daughter, Zoe.



difficult, interconnected issues regarding climate change, economic justice and the fear of change and transition when covering energy and environment policy for POLITICO."

### *Marissa Cloutier '10*

Since graduating from MSU's Eli Broad College of Business and James Madison College with a specialization in Jewish Studies, Marissa has pursued a career in international trade by working at the U.S. State Department, NASA, and a small defense company. Currently, Marissa works at the U.S. State Department in an office responsible for ensuring exports of defense articles (e.g., military aircraft, ordnance, weapon systems) to foreign governments and companies to advance U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives. She works with U.S. defense manufacturers, foreign militaries, and embassies on a daily basis and travels to support her mission. While at MSU, Marissa strove to blend her interest in international relations and business. The Jewish Studies specialization provided curriculum and mentors to guide her passion. Marissa studied the Hebrew language and participated in the MSU Jewish Studies Summer Program at Hebrew University. With the Slade and Ed Levy scholarships from the Jewish Studies Program, Marissa also interned at the U.S. Embassy in Israel with the U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Commercial Service, which promoted U.S. exports by linking U.S. companies with Israeli companies for business partnerships. Marissa had the opportunity to apply her classroom studies by using her Hebrew language skills and business knowledge during her internship.



### *Zack Colman '10*

"Not many people choose a study abroad based on the courses being offered, but that's exactly what I did in the summer of 2008. My five weeks at Hebrew University's Mt. Scopus campus gave a tremendous introduction to a land I'd only read and heard about through synagogue and the news. I'd always felt a connection to the land; growing up in a secular Jewish household -- emphasis on secular -- it was the way I identified with my heritage. But witnessing its complicated past and present up close demonstrated things are not as black and white as presented in U.S. media. I really valued Marc Bernstein's curriculum that summer, as he tried to stretch our imaginations of what Israel is and could be by taking us to Silwan, a majority Palestinian neighborhood in Jerusalem, and bringing cross-cultural speakers to our classrooms. It was truly an enriching experience and helped to guide my future studies and the journalism I practice today by ensuring I enter a situation with no bias and truly seek to understand the motivating factors and historical grounding that animate actions today. That epistemic charity has been crucial as I navigate



### *Geoffrey Levin '11*

Dr. Geoffrey Levin is the incoming Alan M. Stroock Fellow at Harvard University's Center for Jewish Studies, continuing on a path that began with his Jewish Studies minor at Michigan State University. As an International Relations sophomore at MSU's James Madison College, Geoffrey took Professor Yael Aronoff's "Israeli Politics and Society" course and Professor Ken Waltzer's "Jews and Antisemitism." Encouraged by their mentorship, Geoffrey enrolled in more Jewish Studies courses with both professors, studied abroad at the University of Haifa with the aid of Jewish Studies Program scholarships, and won the Jewish Studies Student Achievement Award in 2010.



Geoffrey teaches undergraduates about the same pressing issues that he studied at MSU, offering a course on Antisemitism and Islamophobia at New York University this summer and having previously taught an Israeli Politics course at Rutgers University. Drawing from Professor Aronoff's innovative teaching style, Geoffrey's Israeli Politics course involved simulations and debate and was awarded a syllabus prize from the Israel Institute in 2017. Geoffrey received his Ph.D. in Hebrew and Judaic Studies/History at New York University in May and also studied at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). At Harvard, Geoffrey will participate in the Modern Jewish History seminar series and prepare a book on the emergence of Palestinian rights as a contentious issue in the relationship between American Jews and Israel.

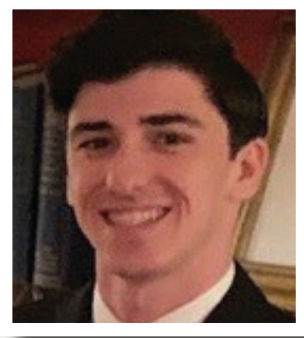
### *Sarah Strasberger '15*

Since graduating from James Madison College with a specialization in Jewish Studies, Sarah has been working as a Jewish communal professional in metro Detroit. She worked as a special events coordinator for the Jewish Community Center and the Jewish Federation of Metro Detroit, planning and implementing community events, fundraisers, and speaking engagements for visiting dignitaries. Last spring, Sarah began working for Jewish Family Service of Metro Detroit as the Program Manager for the Cancer Thrivers Network for Jewish Women. Sarah credits her Jewish Studies education for her success as a Jewish professional. "The critical thinking and problem solving skills I learned in my Jewish Studies courses has helped me approach my work in an extremely thoughtful and perceptive way, which is a special skill for a young professional looking to make a big impact."



### *Maverick Levy '21*

"My journey through the Jewish Studies program has been nothing but amazing and luckily I am far from being done. Thus far, I have taken two years of Hebrew completing over four separate courses. My biggest take away from these classes would be the strong relationship I have built with Professor Yore Kedem. As we all know, MSU is a very large campus; having a professor that you can talk to about school, life, hobbies, etc., is very important. This makes me feel as though I have someone that supports me in such a



large environment and has my back no matter what. Without the Jewish Studies program I would not have been able to create that relationship, therefore I want to thank everyone who made and supports this program at MSU."

### *Benjamin Francis '21*

Ben Francis is a Junior Political Theory and Constitutional Democracy major from James Madison College, a Religious Studies major, and a Jewish Studies minor. Ben was awarded the James and Anna Hersh Scholarship for Internships in Israel last summer and had the opportunity to intern as a research assistant at Bar Ilan University's Faculty of Law Clinics. He conducted comparative legal research on the rights of Parents with Disabilities through the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) between the countries of Israel, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and Australia with the Disability Rights Clinic's Director, Dr. Roni Rothler. Ben also received the Ed Levy Scholarship to further strengthen his Hebrew abilities and take a month long Ulpan Class at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem at Mt. Scopus. In the past, Ben has taken two years of Hebrew with Dr. Yore Kedem and participated in his Study Abroad in Israel through the Ed Levy Scholarship in 2018, where he researched Education Policy in Israel and presented his research at the Serling Undergraduate Research Conference in April.



Ben will continue his interest in Jewish Studies and Modern Israel through taking classes focusing on Judaism in his Religious Studies major as well as being active in both MSU Hillel and Chabad. In the future, Ben is interested in Jewish non-profit work or finance before pursuing graduate school.



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