

**The Michael and Elaine
Serling Institute
for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel
Michigan State University**



Spring Newsletter

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel is wrapping up another exciting semester, and looks forward to the next! We continue to thrive as an intellectual community fostering exploration of Jewish culture, history and life at Michigan State University. This past fall, we hosted speakers relating to a wide variety of themes. Building on our strengths in American Jewish History and Judaism, we heard from experts like Dr. Shari Rabin on “How Frontier Jews Made American Judaism,” and Sarah Hurwitz on a career in political speechwriting and finding meaning in Judaism. The Serling Institute also co-sponsored a faculty workshop on *Situating American Jewish Studies* which included both **Kirsten Fermaglich** and **Laura Yares**.



One of the goals of our Institute is to expand our relationships with Israeli scholars, universities, and institutions, and this fall we were able to build on our strength in Israel Studies by hosting three visiting Israeli scholars. Serling Visiting Israeli Scholar Professor **Alon Tal** was back at James Madison teaching two courses and providing post-Israeli election insights. Serling Visiting Israeli Scholar Professor **Harry Yuklea** returned to the College of Business to teach three courses related to Israeli entrepreneurship and startups. He and Dr. Ayala Ruvio helped organize a successful forum on “Accelerating Michigan Israel Business Innovations” with MSU as a facilitator and catalyst, which was co-sponsored by the Serling Institute, the Eli Broad College of Business, Michigan Israel Business Accelerator, and Lansing Area Economic Partnership. Our third visiting Israeli scholar, **Lihl Lahat**, sponsored by the Israel Institute, taught a course in the Political Science department. She presented her fascinating research on the Israeli public’s perceptions of time and how that influences policy choices. In addition, David Makovsky discussed insights from his new book, co-authored with Dennis Ross, on Israeli leaders, and Israeli director and screenwriter Tamar Kay screened and discussed her film *Senior Moments*, a wonderful portrait of 10 vibrant Israeli senior citizens from different subcultures.

This spring will be equally exciting. We are sponsoring our 15th annual Israeli Film Festival, a highlight of which will be a presentation by Yael Katzir, an award-winning Israeli documentary film maker and professor. Katzir will introduce and lead a discussion of her new documentary *The Albanian Code*, an inspiring film about how and why Albania so successfully protected Jews during the Holocaust. For the first time there will be a new spring break study abroad to Israel centering on entrepreneurship, led by **Ayalla Rubio**; the Serling Institute is supporting the 20 student participants with scholarships. **Benjamin Lorch** will also be leading our summer study abroad program to Israel this year.

We continue to collaborate with others to build a more inclusive campus and combat prejudice. Jewish Studies and Muslim Studies were awarded a grant from the MSU Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives to establish an MSU Dialogue on religion and ethnicity that will focus on antisemitism and Islamophobia. (MSU Dialogues are semester-long non-credit discussion groups for students, faculty and staff.) **Kirsten Fermaglich**, **Amy Simon**, and **Ken Waltzer** will be among those collaborating on establishing this curriculum. We are collaborating with MSU Hillel and the Office of Inclusion for our annual student forum on antisemitism. I have also been asked to serve on the University Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Steering Committee.

We of course enrich campus life and contribute to diversity through all of our 30-plus courses every year, and all of our co-curricular events, which speak to the depth and breadth of the Jewish experience. This semester we will cover many aspects of the Jewish experience, including: Yiddish writing and culture in diverse contexts with a panel of renowned scholars of Yiddish literature and culture chaired by **Margot Valles**; the history of Jews in Salonika, Greece by award-winning scholar Dr. Devin Naar; Israeli musicians performing the work of Salomone Rossi, accompanied by a screening of a documentary about them; several lectures on aspects of the Holocaust, including the annual Rabin/Brill lecture on the Holocaust by Father Patrick Desbois speaking about the “Holocaust by Bullets: Model for the Modern Genocide”; an analysis of Israel’s upcoming elections; and an examination of and rebuttal to anti-Zionist critiques by Dr. Susie Linfield based on her award winning new book. We will also hold our fourth annual Serling Institute Undergraduate Research Conference. I invite you to read about these events and others in more detail in this newsletter. We look forward to seeing you in the spring!

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

Class Highlights

SERLING INSTITUTE SUPPORTS CLASS TRIPS TO THE HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL CENTER

By Amy Simon



This semester, and every year since 2016, I have taken my MC 498 “The Holocaust in American Memory” senior seminar students to the Holocaust Memorial Center, Zekelman Family Campus, in Farmington Hills, MI. This was inspired by Dr. Kirsten Fermaglich, as she has led a similar trip in her HST 201 “The United States and the Holocaust” class, and my first trip came at her invitation to join her class on their visit in fall 2016. On a Sunday morning mid-semester, students arrive at Case Hall to board an MSU bus to the museum. Upon arrival, I point the students to look out the window at the striking architecture of the outside of the building, and the day has begun. Students bring into the museum



a half-semester’s worth of reading and examination of questions relating to how Americans have talked about and represented the Holocaust since it occurred during World War II. The course moves chronologically from the 1940s to the present day, and the students visit the museum while reading about the creation of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC in 1993. They therefore enter the space of the museum thinking about major questions about how and why Holocaust museums get designed and built in the United States. They understand the complicated issues regarding which voices get emphasized and which silenced, which educational goals highlighted and which left to the margins, and which narratives underscored and which ignored.

This semester’s visit was a particularly special experience for the students as they had recently participated in guest and public lectures with Edward T. Linenthal, the author of *Preserving Memory*, the only monograph on the creation of the DC museum. Furthermore, they were slated to meet an amazing Holocaust survivor, Mania Salinger, after their visit through the Museum’s exhibits. They had watched interviews with her earlier in the semester when they viewed portions of *Night Will Fall*, a 2014 documentary about the liberation of the concentration camps. Thus, their learning experience coalesced in this visit to the museum in which they brought the background knowledge and analytical skills they had honed over the course of the semester to the memorial in Farmington Hills, and got the opportunity to hear and meet a Holocaust survivor whose powerful story moved them all. After they explored the museum and listened to Mania speak, they also had the chance to meet with Michael and Elaine Serling who had helped set up the viewing of *Night Will Fall* and Mania’s talk.



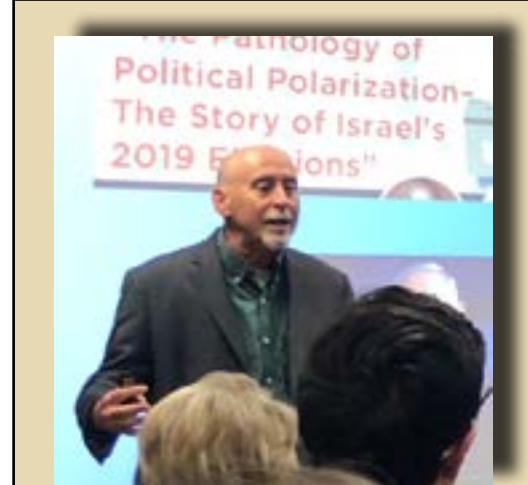
Later, over lunch at a local Jewish deli (most were non-Jewish students who had never been to a Jewish deli before!), I learned from the students how impactful they had found the day. They had been able to bring an analytical eye to the museum while also appreciating its importance as a local institution educating students on the history of the Jewish people, the long history of antisemitism, and the Holocaust. The conversations in the museum, at the restaurant, on the bus ride home, and in class the following day, demonstrated to me again the value of off-campus educational experiences for our undergraduates. Having the Holocaust Memorial Center just an hour’s drive away makes it possible for my students to bring the readings we do in class to life, and having the support of the Michael and Elaine Serling Institute and the Michael D. Brill Endowment to support Teaching and Research about the Holocaust, makes these meaningful experiences accessible to all.

Professor Amy Simon
William and Audrey Farber Family Endowed Chair in
Holocaust Studies and European Jewish History

Recent Events



"Building Community: Resisting Hate" 9-16-19.
Following the success of last year's efforts to "build community and resist hate" a second panel was organized by the Muslim Studies Program and the Serling Institute. Featuring representatives from academic units and campus communities, the panel highlighted the dangers of white nationalism, the threats that these hate groups pose, and the importance of building community to resist these threats.



"The Pathology of Political Polarization – The Story of Israel's 2019 Elections," Alon Tal and Yael Aronoff 9-19-19



"The Predicament of Aftermath: Oral History and the Ghosts of the Past," Edward T. Linenthal 10-28-19



"Time and Policy: Time Uses, Time Preferences and Policy Perceptions in Israel," Lihi Lahat 11-12-19



"How Frontier Jews Made American Judaism," Shari Rabin 9-23-19



"A Jewish Journey in the White House and Beyond," Sarah Hurwitz 10-24-19



"Israeli Leaders Who Made Historic Decisions-What Inspired Them?" David Makovsky 11-06-19

Annual Kessler Film: "Who Will Write Our History?" Introduction and post-film discussion led by Amy Simon 11-18-19



"Accelerating Michigan-Israel Business Innovation," featuring Andy Schor, Mayor of Lansing, and innovation experts 11-13-19



"Senior Moments," Documentary with introduction by director Tamar Kay 11-25-19

SPRING EVENTS

2020 TIMELINE

Book discussion of *The Lions' Den* by Susie Linfield
Led by Dr. Ken Waltzer

The Lions' Den: Zionism and the Left from Hannah Arendt to Noam Chomsky
Jonathan Netanyahu
Lecture by Dr. Susie Linfield

The Search for Salomone Rossi
Documentary and musical performance by Vocal Ensemble Profeti della Quinta

Yiddish Between Worlds
Panel discussion chaired by Dr. Margot Valles
Participants: Dr. Dov-Ber Kerler, Dr. Jack Kugelmass, and Dr. Eli Rosenblatt

Holocaust by Bullets: Model for the Modern Genocide
Annual Rabin/Brill Lecture by Father Patrick Desbois

Between the Ottoman Empire and Modern Greece: The Fate of Salonica 'Jerusalem of the Balkans'
Lecture by Dr. Devin E. Naar

01/13

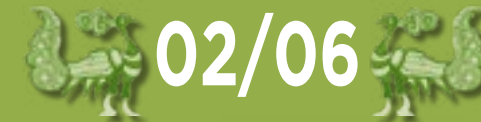


Complimentary copies of *The Lion's Den* are available in the Serling institute

01/17



01/27



יידיש צווישן וועלטן

02/10



02/17



03/15-16



04/03



04/14



04/20

The Moon Is Down... Unsung Tales of Rescue and Resistance under Norway's Nazi Occupation
Lecture by Dr. Sten H. Vermund and Dr. Madeleine Lenski

15th Annual Israeli Film Festival
Featuring Yael Katzir, award-winning Israeli documentary filmmaker and professor

Serling Institute Undergraduate Research Conference
Keynote address by alumna Marissa Cloutier, U.S. Department of State

Student Forum on Antisemitism

The Phantom of the Guillotine: Dealing with the Legacies of Mass Violence after the French Revolution
Lecture by Dr. Ronen Steinberg

Parking information: For events in Wells Hall, community members without faculty parking passes can park in the "Pay by Plate" parking areas in Lot 39 (south of the International Center) and Lot 79 (south of the football stadium). Signage has been installed in these areas. Immediately after parking, enter license plate number and payment into the lot's pay station or via the MSU SPOTON app. Pay stations accept cash or credit cards.

SPRING EVENTS 2020

1

Book discussion of *The Lion's Den: Zionism and the Left from Hannah Arendt to Noam Chomsky*
Dr. Ken Waltzer will lead a discussion of Dr. Susie Linfield's book in anticipation of the author's visit on January 17. Complimentary copies of the book are available in the Serling Institute for faculty, students and community members to read before the discussion.
Monday, January 13, 4:30-6:00 PM | Wells Hall B-342

2

Jonathan Netanyahu lecture, "The Lion's Den: Zionism and the Left from Hannah Arendt to Noam Chomsky"
Dr. Susie Linfield will lecture on her new book, *The Lion's Den: Zionism and the Left from Hannah Arendt to Noam Chomsky* (Yale University Press, 2019). The book is the winner of the Jewish Book Council distinction, formerly known as the Natan Book Award. Susie Linfield has been a professor in the journalism department of New York University since 1995. A former editor at the *Washington Post* and the *Village Voice*, she has written for a wide variety of publications, including the *New York Times*, the *Nation*, *Dissent*, and the *New Republic*.
Friday, January 17, 10:00-11:30 AM followed by catered lunch for participants | Wells Hall B-342

3

Hebreo: The Search for Salomone Rossi
 An evening in collaboration with the College of Music, devoted to the music of Salomone Rossi (ca. 1570-1630). Rossi is the leading Jewish composer of the late Italian Renaissance, who is most famous for his *Songs of Solomon*, a beautiful collection of originally composed music for Hebrew psalms and prayers. The evening will include the 45-minute documentary *Hebreo* by Joseph Rochlitz, followed by a musical performance and Q&A with singers from the Israeli vocal ensemble **Profeti della Quinta** who are featured in the film: Doron Shleifer, Roman Melish, Lior Leibovici, Jacob Lawrence, Loic Paulin, Elam Rotem, and Ori Harmelin.
Monday, January 27, 7:00-8:30 PM | Residential College of Arts and Humanities Theater
 (Basement of C-20 Snyder Phillips, 362 Bogue St, East Lansing, MI 48825)

4

Yiddish Between Worlds
Dr. Margot B. Valles (MSU) will chair a panel bringing together three scholars of Yiddish who are 2019-2020 Frankel Institute Fellows exploring the theme of "Yiddish Matters" at the University of Michigan. **Dr. Dov-Ber Kerler** (Dr. Alice Field Cohn Chair in Yiddish Studies at Indiana University) is a contemporary Yiddish poet and ethnographer who is currently exploring the relationship between Yiddish poetry and the status of Yiddish today. **Dr. Jack Kugelmass** (Professor of Anthropology and the Melton Legislative Professor at the University of Florida) is a cultural anthropologist who studies Jewish identity and ethnography, particularly through travel narratives. **Dr. Eli Rosenblatt** (Northwestern University) works on racial politics and Ashkenazi identity through Yiddish literature. Together the panelists will explore Yiddish writing and culture in diverse contexts.
Thursday, February 6, 7:00- 8:30 PM | Wells Hall B-342

5

Annual Rabin/Brill Lecture, "Holocaust by Bullets: Model for the Modern Genocide"
Father Patrick Desbois, Yahad-In Unum and Georgetown University
 Meticulous Nazi records of Jews killed in the death camps identify fewer than half of the Holocaust's victims. When, where and how were the other victims killed? Father Patrick Desbois has sought and found the answers to these questions. Father Desbois' books will be available for purchase and signing. Father Patrick Desbois is founder and president of Yahad - In Unum, an organization dedicated to locating the sites of mass graves of Jewish victims of the Nazi mobile-killing units in the former Soviet Union. He is Braman Endowed Professor of the Forensic Study of the Holocaust at the Center for Jewish Civilization at Georgetown University.
Monday, February 10, 7:00-8:30 PM followed by reception | The Kellogg Center Auditorium

6

Between the Ottoman Empire and Modern Greece: The Fate of Salonica 'Jerusalem of the Balkans'
Dr. Devin E. Naar, University of Washington
 From 1492 until the twentieth century, the city of Salonica--once part of the Ottoman Empire and today the second biggest city in Greece--was home to the largest community of Ladino-speaking Sephardic Jews in the world. This talk focuses on how this once-thriving Jewish community grappled with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of modern Greece prior to the devastation of the Holocaust. Dr. Devin E. Naar is Isaac Alhadeff Professor of Sephardic Studies and Associate Professor of History and Jewish Studies at the University of Washington. His book, *Jewish Salonica: Between the Ottoman Empire and Modern Greece*, won a National Jewish Book Award and the grand prize from the Modern Greek Studies Association. Complimentary copies of Dr. Naar's book will be available at the Serling Institute for those who would like to read it before the lecture.
Monday, February 17, 8:00-9:30 PM followed by reception | The Kellogg Center Auditorium

7

Third Time's the Charm? Analyzing the Israeli Election
Dr. Yael Aronoff, Serling Institute and James Madison College, MSU
Wednesday, March 11, 7:30-9:00 PM | James Madison College Library, 332 Case Hall

8

The Moon Is Down... Unsung Tales of Rescue and Resistance under Norway's Nazi Occupation
Dr. Sten H. Vermund, Dean, Yale School of Public Health
Dr. Madeleine Lenski, Specialist, MSU Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics
 Professors Vermund and Lenski will discuss the experience of Norway under Nazi occupation by examining the life and legacy of Odd Nansen. Dr. Vermund will discuss Nansen's diary from the Grini concentration camp outside of Oslo, which is one of the only surviving diaries from a Norwegian concentration camp. Dr. Lenski will discuss the rescue organization "Nansenhjelpen," which Nansen established in 1936 to provide assistance to Jewish and political refugees from Nazi tyranny, and its extraordinary rescue of hundreds of Jews from Prague.
Thursday, March 12, 7:00-8:30 PM | Wells Hall B-342

9

15th Annual Israeli Film Festival
 Featuring **Yael Katzir**, award-winning Israeli documentary filmmaker and professor
Sunday-Monday, March 15, 1:00-9:00 PM, March 16 7:00-8:45 PM | Wells Hall B-122

10

Annual Serling Institute Undergraduate Research Conference
 Featuring student research presentations and a keynote address by **Marissa Cloutier**, Senior Compliance Specialist, U.S. Department of State. Marissa, an alumna of the Serling Institute, will discuss her experiences working on national security and foreign policy in the U.S. State Department over lunch. The conference and lunch are free and open to the public.
Friday, April 3, 9AM-5PM | James Madison College Library, 332 Case Hall

11

Student Forum on Antisemitism
 Forum for students to share and/or hear from fellow students about experiences of antisemitism at MSU. Hillel Staff and Serling faculty will be at the forum. Complimentary dinner provided to participants.
Tuesday, April 14, 6:30-8:00PM | MSU Hillel Jewish Studies Center (360 Charles St. East Lansing, MI 48823)

12

The Phantom of the Guillotine: Dealing with the Legacies of Mass Violence after the French Revolution
Dr. Ronen Steinberg, Department of History, MSU
 Dr. Steinberg will discuss his new book, *The Afterlives of the Terror: Facing the Legacies of Mass Violence in Post-Revolutionary France* (Cornell University Press, 2019). Complimentary copies of his book will be available in the Serling Institute starting on January 6.
Monday, April 20, 7:00-8:30 PM | Wells Hall B-342

Co-sponsored event:
Lynne Avadenka at MSU Libraries
 Please join us for a talk and pop-up exhibition with Michigan artist/printmaker Lynne Avadenka. Avadenka's artist books and prints engage a wide range of ideas from Jewish and Israeli culture. It will be a rare treat to meet the artist and view her works held in MSU Libraries Special Collections.
Friday, March 20, 10:00 AM (talk) and 12:00-2:00 PM (pop-up exhibit) | MSU Main Library

Co-sponsored event:
William Kentridge: Universal Archive
 An exhibit of recent work by the renowned Jewish South African artist William Kentridge. In an expanding series of linocuts printed on dictionary pages, William Kentridge explores the arbitrariness of the definitions and borders imposed by reason and colonial oppression.
Thursday, January 16, 4:00 to 7:00 PM (opening reception), January 16 to March 20 (exhibit) | RCAH Lookout Gallery

The Serling Institute Presents:

15th ISRAELI

ANNUAL MSU FILM FESTIVAL

SUNDAY MARCH 15th | Wells Hall B-122 | 6:30-9:00

Award-winning documentary filmmaker and professor Yael Katzir will introduce and lead a discussion of each film.

* Subtitles in English

Film festival committee: Yael Aronoff, Michal Eidin, Galit Pelled and Ellen Rothfeld.

SUNDAY MARCH 15th | Wells Hall B-122 | 1:00-3:15



Ma'abarot (2019)
Documentary.
Director: Dina Zvi Riklis

Israel. Language: Hebrew
Ma'abarot is the first documentary project to tell the story of the Israeli transit camps. The transit camps were a controversial enterprise, housing hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees from different parts of the world and transitioning them into becoming part of Israeli society - a process with mixed, and sometimes traumatic, results that continue to shape Israeli culture and politics today. The film features rare archival materials and testimonies of former residents.

SUNDAY MARCH 15th | Wells Hall B-122 | 3:30-5:45



5:45 pm: Complimentary dinner for festival attendees, catered by Woody's Oasis Mediterranean Deli, after Tel Aviv On Fire

Tel Aviv On Fire (2019)
Comedy/Drama/Romance
Director: Sameh Zoabi

Israel. Languages: Arabic, Hebrew
Salam, a young Palestinian man, becomes a writer for a popular soap opera after a chance meeting with an Israeli check point commander. His creative career is on the rise - until the soldier and the show's financial backers disagree about how the show should end. Salam is caught in the middle. A sharp, insightful story about the power of storytelling itself, in the context of competing narratives of conflict and peace. Venice Film Festival, Best Actor: Kais Nashif; Ophir Award (Israeli Academy Awards) Best Original Screenplay.

The Spy (2019)- 2 Episodes
Drama/History

Directors: Gideon Raff and Max Perry
Language: English

The Spy is a miniseries based on the life of Eli Cohen, Israel's top Mossad spy, who is portrayed by Sacha Baron Cohen (no relation). Eli Cohen became part of an Israeli spy network in Egypt, which was subsequently uncovered. He fled to Israel in 1956. In 1960, facing an increasingly tense border situation with Syria, Israeli intelligence recruited him to make connections and gather information in Syria. The Spy depicts Cohen's transformation into a Mossad operative in this daring tale of espionage.



MONDAY MARCH 16th | Wells Hall B-119 | 7:00-8:45



The Albanian Code (2019)
Documentary by Yael Katzir

Albania. Languages: Albanian, Hebrew, English
The Albanian Code is a documentary feature about the little-known saga of the thousands of Jewish refugees saved in Albania during WWII, due to the courage and humanity of the Albanian people--mostly Muslims. Most of the rescuers are no longer living, therefore it is urgent to document for posterity both saviors and saved and to leave a legacy for future generations. Premiered in Albania in the presence of the President. Screened in Paris at the Memorial de la Shoah and in Manhattan at the JCC.

Ken Waltzer will have two articles on antisemitism published in 2020. "Contending with Antisemitism in its Many Forms on American Campuses" will appear in *Contending with Antisemitism in a Changing Political Climate, ed.*, Alvin Rosenfeld, Indiana University Press. "The University of California Principles Against Intolerance: Efforts to Integrate Them into Campus Policy and Practice" will appear in another collection titled *Poisoning the Well: Antisemitism in Contemporary American Culture, eds.*, Andrew Pessin and Corinne E. Blackmer, Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP) Press.

Ayalla Ruvio, is leading an exciting new program: "Students Explore Israel – The Startup Nation!" The Serling Institute is sponsoring the first Study Abroad program to Israel that will center on entrepreneurship and innovation. During the Spring break of 2020 20 students will travel to Israel to explore how one of the smallest countries in the world has become a global center of innovation. The students will travel across the country and meet with entrepreneurs and innovative companies such as Google and General Electric. They'll learn firsthand how Israel invented everything from Intel's chips to drip irrigation. This interdisciplinary

program has attracted students from a wide range of majors, including engineering, business, communication, natural sciences, and agriculture. Prof. Ruvio is a dual citizen, her PhD was on entrepreneurship, and she has a strong publication record in the area of new ventures and innovation. Her background and relationships will open many doors, so students will get a behind-the-scenes look at what makes the Startup Nation tick.

Dr. Yael Aronoff was invited to serve on the University Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Steering Committee starting January 2020. Dr. Aronoff will present three different papers at three conferences. She will present "(Un)Intended Consequences: The Policies of Israeli Prime Ministers Towards Hamas and Their Influence on the Peace Process with the Palestinian Authority," at the International Studies Association Conference, Honolulu, March 25-28, 2020. She will present, "Peering Over the Protective Edge: The Dilemmas of Israel's Asymmetric Wars," at the Midwest Political Science Association Conference, Chicago, April 16-19, 2020. Dr. Aronoff will present "Pathways to Peace: The Legitimation of a Two-State Solution," for the Association of Israel Studies Annual Conference, Tulane University, June 28 – July 1, 2020. She will also be giving a lecture at the University of New

Mexico, sponsored by the Association of Jewish Studies Distinguished Lectureship Program, on March 3, 2020.

In November, **Kirsten Fermaglich** presented her award-winning book, *A Rosenberg by Any Other Name: A History of Jewish Name Changing in America*, at the Jewish Book Festivals of Detroit, Ann Arbor, and St. Louis, and at the Jewish Genealogical Society of Cleveland, Ohio. In December, she will speak in Memphis Tennessee, Springfield and East Falmouth, Massachusetts. In September, she attended the faculty workshop, *Situating American Jewish Studies* (generously co-sponsored by the Serling Institute), in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Lynn Wolff gave an invited presentation on "Continuity in spite of the Catastrophe: H.G. Adler's Relationship to and Relations on the German Language," at the international workshop *Sprachhandeln – Jüdische Reflexionen über Sprache in der Kriegs- und Nachkriegszeit [Jewish Reflections on Language during World War Two and in the Postwar Period]*. This workshop was part of a Franco-German Research project on "Early Forms of Writing of the Shoah. Knowledge and Textual Practices of Jewish Survivors in Europe (1942-1965)." The workshop took place on October 21-22, 2019 at the Leibniz

Institute for Jewish History and Culture Simon Dubnow Institute, in Leipzig, Germany. The program can be found here: http://www.dubnow.de/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Flyer_Sprachhandeln_final_web.pdf

Amy Simon's article "Imperfect Humans and Perfect Beasts: Changing Perceptions of German and Jewish Persecutors in Holocaust Ghetto Diaries" is forthcoming in *Journal of Jewish Identities*, January 2020. Dr. Simon will give a talk in California State, Fresno, on March 19, 2019: "Holocaust Diaries: Voices from the Abyss."

Benjamin Lorch was approved this semester for a UNTF Designation B appointment, which offers long-term continuous appointment at MSU for non-tenure stream faculty. He is acting as Associate Director of the Serling Institute, assisting with student advising and focus groups and the newsletters, and he will lead the Israel study abroad program in Summer 2020 where he will teach a course on "The Jewish Political Tradition: from King David to David Ben-Gurion."

FACULTY NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

DR. RONEN STEINBERG

Assistant Professor, Department of History

Serling Institute Affiliated faculty Ronen Steinberg published his book *The Afterlives of the Terror: Facing the Legacies of Mass Violence in Post-Revolutionary France* (Cornell University Press, 2019). The book explores how those who experienced the mass violence of the French Revolution struggled to come to terms with it. Focusing on the Reign of Terror, Steinberg draws on the massive traumas of the twentieth century, including the Holocaust, in order to examine how French men and women struggled to come to terms with the violence of the French Revolution in the late eighteenth century. Steinberg challenges the presumption that its aftermath was characterized by silence and enforced collective amnesia. Instead, he shows that there were painful, complex, and sometimes surprisingly honest debates about how to deal with its legacies.

Dr. Steinberg will be giving four talks in December and January about this book at Tel Aviv University, the Hebrew University, and the University of Haifa.



DR. GAIL RICHMOND

Professor, Dept. of Teacher Education, College of Education

Serling Institute Affiliated faculty Gail Richmond and collaborators received more than \$2 million from the National Science Foundation in July with her co-PI Tali Tal from the Technion Israel Institute of Technology, to study ways in which the outdoors can be utilized for learning science, particularly in urban elementary schools. "We want to expand the notion of what the classroom is," said Richmond, of the Department of Teacher Education at MSU. "There is a misconception that urban environments don't have many or any outdoor learning spaces—and that's just not true. There are playgrounds and parks and so much more, and these are spaces which either are or could be meaningful to children and their families to understand the natural world better." The project will also bridge the existing gap between formal and informal education, providing more insights about the benefits and constraints of outdoor spaces, building a broader community of educators and studying how this work might be applied in other contexts. Collaborators on the project include co-PI Tali Tal along with Renee Bayer of MSU's CREATE for STEM Institute and Kara Haas from the MSU W. K. Kellogg Biological Station. In 2018, Richmond took her expertise and research to Israel as part of her designation as a Fulbright Specialist. She has been invited by the Weizmann Institute to give some workshops and talks.

NEW AFFILIATED FACULTY

DR. BRYAN SMITH

Associate Professor of Biomedical Engineering, College of Engineering

Serling Institute Affiliated faculty Bryan R. Smith is a member of the Institute for Quantitative Health Science and Engineering. His lab blends engineering, chemistry, biology, physics, and medicine to develop new imaging and therapeutic approaches. He is developing novel nanotechnology-based strategies to harness the power of the immune system, creating novel diagnostic imaging and therapeutic agents for diseases including cancer, atherosclerosis, and neurodegeneration.

Dr. Smith is very interested in fostering scientific research between MSU and Israeli universities and already has experience doing so. He writes, "Past collaborations and discussions have included faculty members at Hebrew University, involving nanoparticle development and applications, as well as projects involving detailed, rapid cellular microscopy. I have recently initiated collaborations with faculty at the Weizmann Institute with respect to a new project on developing high-dimensional, multi-parametric bio-characterization techniques with relevance to disease diagnostics and new drug target identification."

Dr. Smith is interested in developing greater collaborative research with faculty at the Hebrew University, and in being more actively involved with the Serling Institute as a whole.



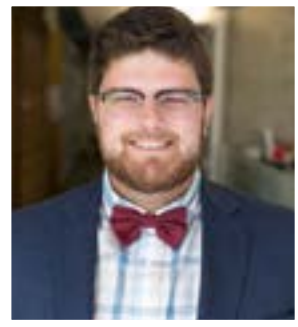
STUDENT AND ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

Marissa Perry '12 (JMC, International Relations)



"The highlight of my minor in Jewish Studies was working with Professor Waltzer to conduct an independent research study of a women's concentration camp, Leipzig-Hasag. The project involved attending a seminar at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum to learn how to use concentration camp records for research, travelling to Buchenwald and Auschwitz, and spending a week in Bad Arolsen, Germany to study the original camp records at the International Tracing Service Archives. After graduating from Michigan State, I continued researching the Holocaust in Germany on a Fulbright scholarship—this time focused on post-World War II trials. After returning from Germany, I began law school at the University of Michigan, graduating in 2017. I clerked for the Honorable Diana E. Murphy on the Eighth Circuit before joining Davis Polk & Wardwell, a corporate law firm in New York, in the fall of 2018. Although my work no longer involves studying the Holocaust, I continue to use the research and writing skills I gained through my independent research project every day."

Ben Lemanski '14 (JMC, International Relations / Comparative Cultures and Politics)



"The highlights of my minor in Jewish Studies were plenty, but I would have to say that a significant highlight was taking Professor Ken Waltzer's class on the Holocaust. In the class I was able to explore more of the experience that other targeted minorities had, including LGBTQ+ individuals, that really resonated with me due to my own identity. A lot of the classes I took for my Jewish Studies minor dealt with Peace and Justice - so I really believe that my minor helped develop my ability to empathize with others and their stories. I've been in DC for the past few years working in the private sector for a consulting firm where I've been on teams that work with others from all over the world (another way that my minor has helped me - cultural intelligence!). In the future, I'm hoping to make the transition to something in the non-profit sector whether

that has to do with Jewish studies, LGBTQ issues, or something else we will see!"

Micaela Procopio '17 (History)



"I was interested in studying the Holocaust and encouraged that the Jewish Studies minor would help me in future career choices. At that time I had no idea how much the Jewish Studies minor was going to play a role in my life. Following my graduation from Michigan State I earned a Master's in Public History in Washington DC and wrote my thesis on the Holocaust in Italy. My Jewish Studies minor has significantly helped me understand my area of focus and my career path because as a core of my teaching is to make the beauty and history of Jewish culture and heritage the forefront. I believe that teaching and educating about the Holocaust is crucial, not as part of Jewish history but as a part of human history and the concept of democracy. I equally believe that you cannot teach the Holocaust and not also teach the life and richness of Jewish history before the 20th century. My background and advocacy in Jewish life has helped me to become one of the leaders and facilitators at my full time job-The Lab School of Washington-where I am spearheading the charge for a Jewish Affinity Group, as part of our school's mission for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. I recently have begun a part-time job, in addition to my full-time teaching, as a teacher at Washington DC's Machar for Humanistic Judaism as one of the Jewish Cultural School teachers. Every other Sunday I spend a couple of hours with a small group of fourth graders and we study Jewish beliefs, core values and the beginning of Jewish history. I learn something new every day with these kids and I feel the richness and beauty of Judaism every time I'm with Machar. The Jewish Studies minor truly helped me gain a wide understanding of Judaism and its importance in our everyday society and I'm really excited to see where it takes me next."

Alan Shulman '20 (JMC, International Relations)



"My name is Alan Shulman, and I am a junior majoring in International Relations with minors in Russian and Jewish Studies. I have taken several classes for my Jewish Studies

minor, including MC 112 with Professor Amy Simon on Holocaust literature. It is critical to not forget what happened during World War II and how horrific tragedies can happen again if there is not a group of people willing to fight back. After I graduate in December 2020, I am planning on moving to Washington D.C. I wish to work on Capitol Hill or the White House on national security issues with a focus on either the Middle East, or Eastern Europe/Russia!"

Lexie Kay '20 (Psychology)



"My name is Lexie Kay and I am a graduating senior this Fall. I am majoring in Psychology and minoring in Leadership of Organizations and Jewish Studies. I studied abroad in Tel Aviv last semester at Tel Aviv University. I absolutely loved living in the heart of Tel Aviv while I was there. Tel Aviv is such a fun and unique city to Israel, so I quickly become comfortable once I got the hang of things! Some of my favorite things that I did while I was there were connecting further to my Jewish roots while studying along side some of the greatest professors and students I have ever met! I also enjoyed hanging out at the beach and meeting other students who shared similar interests with me from around the world, including New York, Nebraska, California, Germany, and Israel. After graduation, I am looking forward to returning back to Israel for a month stay to spend time with family and friends. Afterward I will be applying to University of Michigan's Social Work program, with the track in Jewish Communal Leadership. I am so excited to see where my next steps take me!"

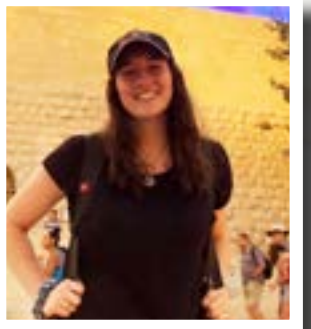
Jules Levy '21 (Sustainable Parks, Recreation and Tourism)



"My name is Jules Levy and I am a junior here at MSU. My major is Sustainable Parks, Recreation and Tourism, and I am minoring in Jewish Studies. I have taken Hebrew since I started at MSU and recently went on a Birthright trip to Israel as well as Onward, an Israel summer program where each student receives an internship as well as housing and day trips in a city of their choosing. I am also currently the V.P. of Community Programming for the Jewish Student Union of MSU. All these experiences and opportunities have led me to pursue a Jewish

Studies minor. I hope to take this degree with me in my future career and overall knowledge of Judaism as well as other cultures/religions. I hope to intern for a Jewish organization this summer and use my knowledge/experiences through this minor to help me get to where I wish to be."

Grace Hunt '22 (Social Work)



"Having a minor in Jewish Studies has been an unexpected gift in my college experience. My favorite part of the program so far has been my participation in the study abroad to Israel. I loved exploring the old city of Jerusalem (pictured here) and visiting various exciting and historic cities such as Nazareth and Tel Aviv. I also loved being immersed in the culture and Hebrew language. The professors who taught our classes were both wonderful teachers and helped me learn an incredible amount about Israel's history and culture in such a short amount of time."



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