

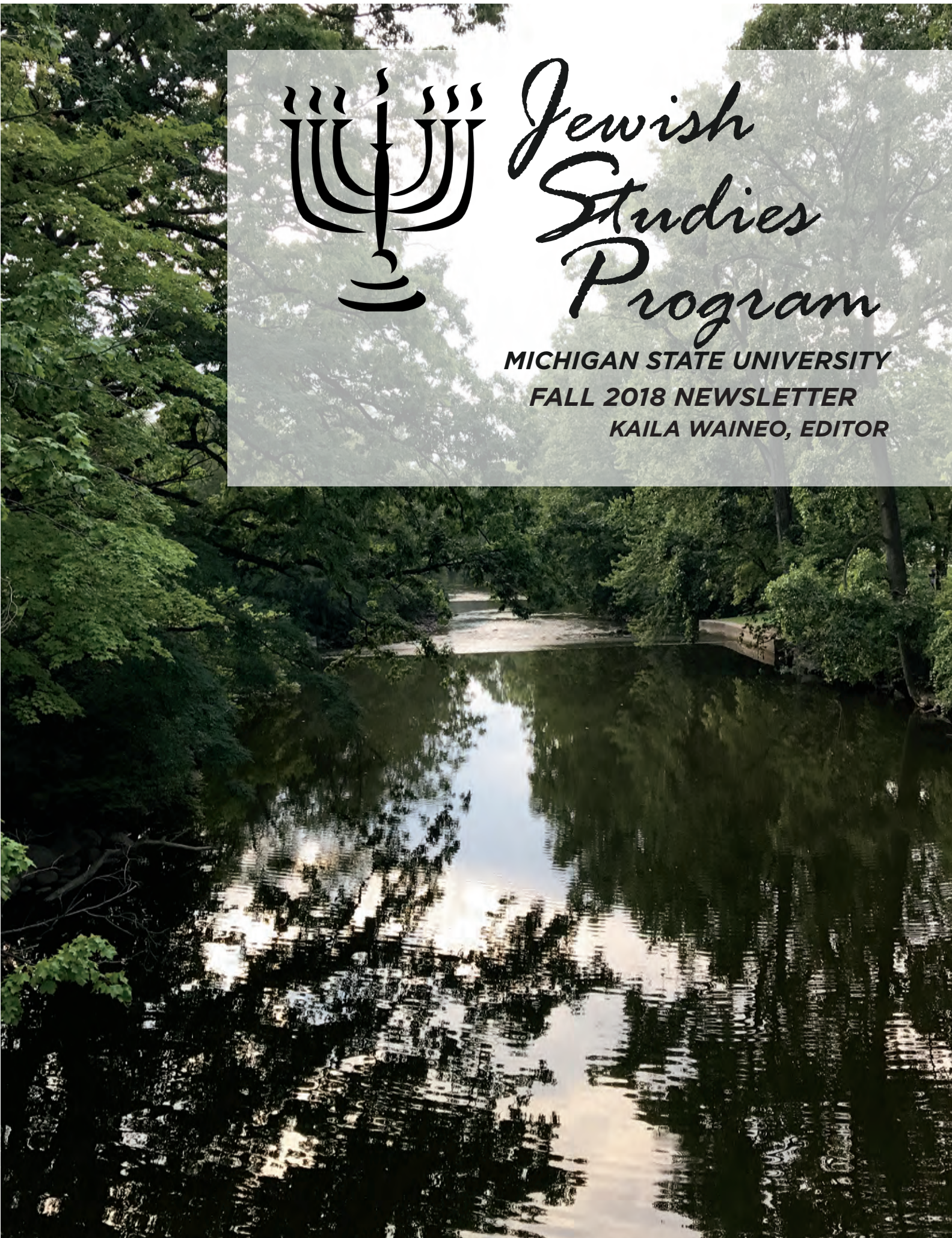


Jewish Studies Program

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

FALL 2018 NEWSLETTER

KAILA WAINEO, EDITOR



NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

The coming year promises to be an exciting one for Jewish Studies at MSU. To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel and reflect on that history, we are proud to sponsor MSU Jewish Studies' largest academic conference ever: "Israel at 70: Complexity, Challenge, and Creativity" on September 16-17, 2018 at the Kellogg Center. The conference brings together 40 internationally recognized scholars from more than 7 universities and academic institutions in Israel and over 10 U.S. universities under one roof to discuss Israeli society, culture, politics, and foreign policy, as well as agricultural, biomedical, water, environmental, and business innovation. The conference includes entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, and members of non-governmental organizations and think tanks, including the Brookings Institution and the Institute for National Security Studies affiliated with Tel Aviv University.

After 70 years, Israel has many accomplishments to celebrate as well as many challenges to overcome. This conference highlights some of these challenges and accomplishments. It also inaugurates a forthcoming multi-million-dollar naming gift from Michael and Elaine Serling that will provide a new endowment in "Modern Israel" in Jewish Studies. It will serve as a catalyst stimulating activities that join MSU faculty and Israeli colleagues in several fields, including the humanities, social sciences, business entrepreneurship, medical science, and engineering, as they initiate new collaborative projects. It will also contribute to research, study abroad, and internship opportunities in Israel for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as to Israeli visiting scholars teaching at MSU. The Program will soon be known as the Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel.

A featured keynote speaker at the conference is **Gilead Sher**, who heads the Center for Applied Negotiations and is a senior researcher at the Tel Aviv Institute for National Security Studies (INSS). Sher was PM Chief of Staff and Policy Coordinator to former Prime Minister Ehud Barak, and in 1999-2001 he served as the Israeli Chief and co-Chief negotiator at the Camp David peace summit and the Taba peace talks. Another keynote speaker is **Oded Shoseyov**, an expert in nanobiotechnology who has authored or co-authored more than 160 scientific publications and is the inventor or co-inventor of 45 patents. Others include: **Naomi Chazan**, Professor Emerita of Political Science at the Hebrew University, who has served three terms as a Member of the Knesset on behalf of the Meretz Party, has authored eight books on comparative politics, served as President of the New Israel Fund between 2009-2012 and is among the founders of the International Women's Commission for an Israel-Palestinian Peace; **Sayed Kashua**, a leading Palestinian Israeli novelist, screen writer, journalist, and public commentator; political scientist and poet **Saliba Sarsar**, who is Associate Vice President of Monmouth College, on the Board of Directors of the American Task Force on Palestine and edited *Palestine and the Quest for Peace* and co-edited *Principles and Pragmatism: Key Documents from the American Task Force on Palestine* among other publications. Another prominent speaker is **Donna Robinson Divine**, the Morningstar Family Professor of Jewish Studies and Professor of Government Emerita at Smith College, who has written several books and is currently President of the Association for Israel Studies.

This semester we also continue to build on our program's strengths in Holocaust Studies and in American Jewish History. We will have two prominent speakers related to Holocaust Studies. Dr. **Michael Berenbaum** — American scholar, professor, rabbi, writer, and filmmaker, who served as Deputy Director of the President's Commission on the Holocaust, Project Director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and Director of the USHMM's Holocaust Research Institute — will speak on October 15th and argue that the current challenge regarding the Holocaust is not denial, but rather vulgarization, trivialization, minimization and falsification by friend and foe alike. Dr. **Steven Bowman**, Professor Emeritus from the University of Cincinnati, will speak on November 14th on "Ashkenazim, Sephardim, Romaniots? Book of Yosippon as a Model for the Shoah." Our Kessler Film this year is "GI Jews: Jewish Americans in World War II," which tells the story of the 550,000 Jewish men and women who fought in World War II through their own eyes. The film's producer and director **Lisa Ades**, who has made documentary films for PBS and cable television for 25 years, will introduce the film and lead a discussion after the screening. This theme will be further discussed in a panel the next day on "Jews, Gender, and Difference in the US Armed Forces: A Historical Discussion" by Professors **Ronit Stahl** (University of California, Berkeley), **Jessica Cooperman** (Muhlenberg College), and **Kirsten Fermaglich** (MSU).

Lastly, we would like to welcome our newest core Jewish Studies faculty member, Assistant Professor in Judaism in the Religious Studies Department, **Laura Yares**. Her research and teaching centers on the Jewish experience in modernity, and on Jewish education in particular. Please see more highlighting her in the newsletter.

Yael Aronoff – Professor and Director

Save the dates for the Annual Israeli Film Festival on March 24th-25th, 2018, the Annual Rabin/Brill Holocaust Lecture on April 18, 2018, and the Annual Jewish Studies Undergraduate Research Conference on April 12, 2018!



Photo credit: Mary C. Madigan
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/29136804@N00/493958972>

ISRAEL AT 70: COMPLEXITY, CHALLENGE, AND CREATIVITY

The Jewish Studies Program will host a major academic conference on September 16-17, 2018 at the Kellogg Center at Michigan State University.

To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel and reflect on that history, the Michigan State University Jewish Studies Program is very proud to sponsor its largest academic conference ever: "Israel at 70: Complexity, Challenge, and Creativity" on September 16-17, 2018 at MSU's Kellogg Center. The conference brings together 40 internationally recognized scholars from Israel and the United States under one roof to discuss Israeli society, culture, politics, foreign policy, and agricultural, biomedical, water, environmental, and business innovation.

If you are interested in attending please register at <https://msuisraelat70.eventbrite.com>. If you have any further questions please contact Amy Shapiro at 517-432-3493.

Co-sponsors include the College of Arts and Letters, James Madison College, the Eli Broad College of Business, the Institute for Quantitative Health Science & Engineering, the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities, the College of Social Science, the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Department of Linguistics & Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages, the Asian Studies Center, the English Department, the Science, Technology, Environment, and Public Policy Program, the Israel Institute, the Academic Engagement Network, the Ravitz Foundation, the Greater Lansing Jewish Federation, and the Lester & Jewell Morris Hillel Jewish Student Center.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE (TENTATIVE)

**Sunday, September 16, 2018—Lincoln Room, Kellogg,
8:15-8:40am registration**

**8:45-10:15 a.m. ORIGIN STORIES: A ROUNDTABLE ON
LITERATURE, CINEMA, AND PEDAGOGY**

Moderator: Eric Aronoff, Michigan State University

- **Sayed Kashua**, Washington University - Reflections on His Work
- **Rachel Harris**, University of Illinois - Warriors, Witches, Whores: Women in Israeli Cinema
- **Ilana Blumberg**, Bar Ilan University - Literary Pedagogy for Teaching Diverse Students
- **Marc Bernstein**, Michigan State University - The Denial of Despair: Kletzkers in Israel

**10:25-11:55 a.m. ROUNDTABLE: REFLECTIONS ON ISRAELI
SOCIETY, NATIONALISM, DEMOCRACY, AND SECURITY**

Moderator: Myron Aronoff, Emeritus, Rutgers University

- **Donna Robinson Divine**, Smith College - #Hashtag Israel at 70: Blessing or Curse?
- **Naomi Chazan**, Hebrew University - Israel at 70: Gender, Society, and Democracy
- **Nadav Shelef**, University of Wisconsin - Israel at 70: Transformations in Israeli Nationalism
- **Yael Aronoff**, Michigan State University - Israel's Changing Security Environment

**12:10-1:30 p.m. LUNCH IN BIG TEN C FOR THOSE WHO PRE-
REGISTERED FOR MEALS IN AUGUST**

➔ **Keynote by Oded Shoseyov**, Nature's Gift: Materials for the Future

1:40-2:55 p.m. PANEL: U.S.-ISRAEL RELATIONS

Chair: Yael Aronoff, Michigan State University

- **Robert Freedman**, Johns Hopkins University - US-Israel Relations 1948-2018
- **Scott Lasensky**, INSS Tel Aviv University - The Peace Puzzle: Can America Still Be Effective at Arab-Israeli Peacemaking?
- **Tamara Cofman Wittes**, Brookings - Shared Values: Democratic Challenges and the US-Israel Relationship

3:05-4:20 p.m. PANEL: BOUNDARIES OF ISRAEL CRITICISM

Chair: Benjamin Lorch, Michigan State University

- **Amy Elman**, Kalamazoo College - Pinkwashing Antisemitism
- **Ken Waltzer**, Michigan State University - When Anti-Zionism Becomes Antisemitism: Insights from American Campuses
- **Yore Kedem**, Michigan State University - Boundaries of Israel Criticism: Understanding Yeshayahu Leibovich

**4:30-6:10 p.m. ROUNDTABLE: LESSONS AND PROSPECTS
FOR ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE**

Moderator: Gilead Sher, INSS Tel Aviv University

- **Saliba Sarsar**, Monmouth University - Uncommon Pairs: The Making of Unique Peacebuilding Leaders in Israel/Palestine
- **Alan Dowty**, Notre Dame University - Israelis and Palestinians: Has the Gap Narrowed?
- **Miriam Elman**, Syracuse University - Negotiating Jerusalem: Visions for Dividing & Sharing a Contested City
- **Ilan Peleg**, Lafayette College - Narratives of Victimization & Victimhood Among Israelis & Palestinians: A 70-Year Saga
- **Yuval Benziman**, Hebrew University - Normalization with Arab States and Israeli-Palestinian Peace

**6:25-7:25 p.m. DINNER IN BIG TEN C FOR PARTICIPANTS
AND ATTENDEES WHO PRE-REGISTERED FOR MEALS IN
AUGUST**

7:30 p.m. KEYNOTE LECTURE

➔ **Gilead Sher** - The Israeli-Palestinians Negotiations: Prospects for a Two-State Reality

**Monday, September 17, 2018—Red Cedar Room, Kellogg,
8:15-8:50am registration**

**9:00-10:30 a.m. PANEL: ISRAELI ENVIRONMENTAL
INNOVATION AND ITS USE AS A FOREIGN POLICY TOOL**

Chair: Michael Kaplowtitz, Michigan State University

- **Giora Rytwo**, Tel Hai College and MIGAL Research Institute - Coping with Water Crises: New Cleantech Water Technologies
- **Micah Guy**, Ben Gurion University - Agriculture at the Ramat Negev Country: Survival and the Introduction of New Crops
- **Itay Fishhendler**, Hebrew University - Natural Resources as Foreign Policy Tool: A Legitimate Israeli Policy?

**10:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. ROUNDTABLE: ISRAELI
BIOTECHNOLOGY AND MEDICAL INNOVATION**

Moderator: Erik Shapiro, Michigan State University

- **Assaf Gilad**, Michigan State University - Science in Israel: Evolution and Evaluation of Dynamic Patterns
- **Amnon Bar Shir**, Weizmann Institute - "Multicolor" Sensors: Beyond "Black & White" MRI
- **Galit Pelled**, Michigan State University - From Fish Navigation to Neuromodulation
- **Benny Hochner**, Hebrew University - Why Can Octopuses Help Us Build New Types of Robots?
- **Drorith Celnikier-Hochner**, Hadassah Mount Scopus Medical Center - Hadassah for Everyone, Everywhere

**1:00-2:00 p.m. LUNCH IN BIG TEN C ROOM FOR
PARTICIPANTS AND ATTENDEES WHO PRE-REGISTERED
IN AUGUST**

**2:05-3:30 p.m. PANEL: ISRAEL'S REMARKABLE
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCE: YESTERDAY, TODAY AND
TOMORROW**

- **Chair: Ronald Hendrick**, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Michigan State University
- **Alon Tal**, Serling Visiting Israeli Scholar, MSU and Tel Aviv University - Israeli Agricultural Policy and Yields: What a Long Strange Trip It's Been
- **Bill Slott**, Columnist, *Times of Israel* - Israel's Grand Socialist Agrarian Experiment: The Evolution of Israel's Kibbutzim
- **Dr. Shoshan Haran**, Founder, Fair Planet Seeds - How Israel's AgriTech Innovations Are Affecting Africa

**3:45-5:45 p.m. ROUNDTABLE: THE 70-YEAR-OLD STARTUP
THAT SETS THE GLOBAL DIRECTION IN
ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

Moderator: Neil Kane, Michigan State University

- **Tsahy Shapsa**, Israeli entrepreneur, Co-Founder of Cloudlock, Inc.
- **Parag Amin**, Founder of Indian I-create
- **Gal Wainer**, Israeli entrepreneur, She-Codes
- **Doron York**, Chairman of City Side Ventures
- **Harry Yuklea**, Serling Visiting Israeli Scholar at MSU, Israel Innovation Authority

**6:00-7:30 p.m. Closing Dinner for Conference Participants
Only**

FEATURED SPEAKERS: ISRAEL AT 70 CONFERENCE

GILEAD SHER (KEYNOTE)

Gilead Sher heads the Center for Applied Negotiations and is a senior researcher at the Tel Aviv Institute for National Security Studies (INSS). Sher was PM Chief of Staff and Policy Coordinator to former Prime Minister Ehud Barak, and in 1999-2001 he served as the Israeli Chief and co-Chief negotiator at the Camp David peace summit and the Taba peace talks. He has written several books, and co-chairs the NGO Blue White Future.



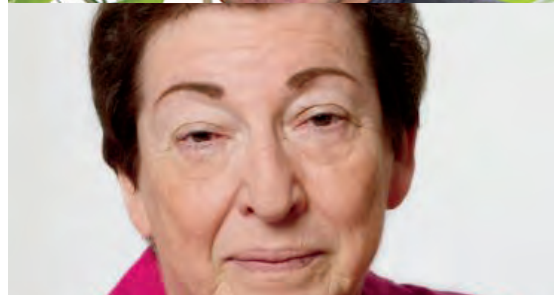
ODED SHOSEYOV (KEYNOTE)

Oded Shoseyov is an expert in nanobiotechnology who has authored or co-authored more than 160 scientific publications and is the inventor or co-inventor of 45 patents. Professor Shoseyov is Professor of Protein Engineering and Nano-Biotechnology and is the Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment, the Hebrew University.



NAOMI CHAZAN

Naomi Chazan is Professor Emerita of Political Science at the Hebrew University. She served three terms as a Member of the Knesset on behalf of the Meretz Party, has authored eight books on comparative politics, served as President of the New Israel Fund between 2009-2012 and is among the founders of the International Women's Commission for an Israel-Palestinian Peace.



SAYED KASHUA

Sayed Kashua is a leading Palestinian Israeli novelist, screen writer, journalist, and public commentator. Kashua is well known for his books, written in Hebrew, *Second Person Singular*, *Native: Dispatches From an Israel-Palestinian Life*, *Dancing Arabs*, *Let it Be Morning*, and *Exposure*. In 2004 he was awarded the Prime Minister's Prize in Literature. Kashua is the creator of the popular Israeli sitcom *Arab Labor*, which uses comedy to explore serious issues of Palestinian Israelis navigating life in Israel.



DONNA ROBINSON DIVINE

Donna Robinson Divine is the Morningstar Family Professor of Jewish Studies and Professor of Government, Emerita at Smith College, who has written several books and is currently serving as President of the Association for Israel Studies. She has authored *Politics and Society in Ottoman Palestine: The Arab Struggle for Survival and Power* and co-edited *Postcolonial Theory and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*.



SALIBA SARSAR

Professor Saliba Sarsar is a political scientist and poet who is Associate Vice President of Monmouth College, on the Board of Directors of the American Task Force on Palestine, and edited *Palestine and the Quest for Peace* and co-edited *Principles and Pragmatism: Key Documents from the American Task Force on Palestine* among other publications.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FALL 2018

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 16th and MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17th

ACADEMIC CONFERENCE

ISRAEL AT 70: COMPLEXITY, CHALLENGE, AND CREATIVITY

The Kellogg Center (Lincoln Room on the 16th and Red Cedar Room on the 17th)

To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel and reflect on that history, the Michigan State University Jewish Studies Program is very proud to sponsor its largest academic conference ever. For more information, see pages 3 to 5 of this newsletter.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10th, 7:00-8:30pm

STANLEY AND SELMA HOLLANDER JEWISH MUSIC AND ART EVENT

PERFORMANCE BY TEIKU - THE SEDER PROJECT

Location TBA

Jonathan Taylor and **Josh Harlow** were both raised Jewish, claiming ancestors from Ukrainian-Jewish communities in two villages that have disappeared, victims of pogroms and the Holocaust. Strikingly, both grew up with a set of songs, intended to be sung on Passover, that are traced back to their respective ancestral villages and are, so far as they know, completely unique to their families. Upon discovering this amazing coincidence, they started a new project, Teiku (which means "unanswered question"), to document, perform, and breathe new life into these beautiful old melodies. They aim to situate traditional cultural melodies and traditional spirituality in a forward-looking context.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 15th, 7:00-8:30pm

JONATHAN NETANYAHU LECTURE

THE CHALLENGE IS NOT HOLOCAUST DENIAL, BUT VULGARIZATION, TRIVIALIZATION, MINIMIZATION

AND FALSIFICATION BY FRIEND AND FOE ALIKE

Club Spartan, Case Hall (3rd Floor)

When Holocaust denial first began in the early 1980's, people were fearful of its consequences. Increased and improved scholarship, the self-destruction of David Irving in 2000, and the departure of Iranian President Ahmadinejad have diminished the challenge of denial. Dr. **Michael Berenbaum** will discuss how important new challenges to our understanding of the Holocaust and its role in public discourse are now more pressing and potentially more dangerous.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7th, 7:00-9:00pm

ANNUAL KESSLER FILM

GI JEWS: JEWISH AMERICANS IN WORLD WAR II

MSU Main Library's Green Room (4th Floor West)

For the annual Kessler film, the Jewish Studies Program will show *GI Jews: Jewish Americans in World War II*. This film tells the story, in their own words, of the hundreds of thousands of Jewish Americans who fought in World War II. They describe how they fought for their country and their people, struggled with anti-Semitism, and emerged from the war transformed as both Americans and Jews. The film's director, **Lisa Ades**, will introduce and discuss the film afterwards.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8th, 3:00-5:00pm

GUEST PANEL

JEWS, GENDER, AND DIFFERENCE IN THE US ARMED FORCES: A HISTORICAL DISCUSSION

B-342 Wells Hall

The Jewish Studies Program will sponsor a panel exploring what Jewish soldiers' historical experiences have to tell us about religious outsiders and the military today. Panelists include **Ronit Stahl**, an Assistant Professor of History at the University of California, Berkeley; **Jessica Cooperman**, an Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Muhlenberg College; and **Kirsten Fermaglich**, an Associate Professor of History and Jewish Studies at MSU.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14th, 7:00-8:30pm

GUEST LECTURE

ASHKENAZIM, SEPHARDIM, ROMANIOTS? BOOK OF YOSIPPON AS A MODEL FOR THE SHOAH

James Madison College Library (332 Case Hall)

Dr. **Steven Bowman** of the University of Cincinnati recently translated *Sepher Yosippon* and will tie this important work to the origins of Sepharad, Ashkenaz, and the Romaniots and also its ramifications for the Shoah. *Sepher Yosippon* has been the most popular read for Jews, Christians, and many Muslims in multiple languages for the past 1000 years. It is the first history of the Second Temple period from Cyrus to Titus since Josephus Flavius' Jewish War with the Romans that led to the destruction of Jerusalem, its Temple, and the power of the priestly class. It is traditionally read on Tisha be Av, the Ninth of Av.

ISRAEL STUDY ABROAD REPORT: JEWISH STUDIES SUMMER PROGRAM AT HEBREW UNIVERSITY

During the month of July 2018, 14 students participated in the MSU Jewish Studies Program at Hebrew University. Students from James Madison College, the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities, Political Science, the College of Education and other departments took two classes at the Rothberg International School on the Mount Scopus campus. Students were eligible for and received generous funding from the Ed Levy, Jr. and Linda Dresner Levy Endowed Fund for Scholarships for Student Leaders Studying in Israel, which covered their program fees. A few students also received support from the Ed and Dot Slade Israel Study Scholarship and the Albert and Sharie Gladner Study in Israel Scholarship.

This program included two classes: 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). Students stayed at the Student Village at Hebrew University, and in addition to taking classes on campus, went on several field trips.

Professor Mendelsson's class included a trip to Tel Aviv, where students walked the streets where the Modern State of Israel came into being. They visited the area where the Declaration of Independence was made, and discussed the people who contributed to Israel's creation. Another field trip took the students to Mount Herzl, where students and professor discussed Israel's secular religion.

On the first day of Professor Kedem's class, students went for their first observation assignment in Central Jerusalem. They sat on Ben Yehuda Street, observed passers by, and talked to local people. During this exercise, the students began to think about their research project for this class. Subsequent observation exercises took place in the Old City of Jerusalem and on the Nahalat Binyamin Market in Tel Aviv. As students' engagement with locals increased, so did the depth of their observation and understanding on how cultural diversity and immigration play in Israeli society. In addition to these exercises, students went on a field trip to Yad Vashem, where they reflected on the Holocaust and its relationship to Modern Israel. Another trip was to the Wadi Ara area. On this trip, they observed the human geography of the area, thinking about the way Arabs and Jews lived and interacted there. At the Triangle Research and Development Center, they met a computer scientist from the Arab community who conducts research on machine learning and issues related to his community. Another field trip took them to Ashdod and the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot, where they learned about a unique project designed to improve the lives of high school dropouts through science education. They were also privileged to host Siba Awad, the assistant to the Director of Summer Programs at Rothberg International School, who shared her experiences growing up as an Arab in East Jerusalem.

As this is an inquiry-based class, students designed projects to study the issues in its center by integrating their experiences and the readings into small scale qualitative research studies. These projects included topics such as immigration and education in Israel, the relationship between the secular Jews and the religious orthodox / ultra-orthodox Jews of Israel, religious identity expression and construction centered on linguistic manifestations in Modern Day Israel, diversity and education, and comparing Jewish identity in Israel and the

US. Through these projects students challenged their preconceptions of Israel and its society, grew in their understanding of their experiences in Israel, and were challenged to reflect and understand their personal religious and national identity. Students also reflected on how their understanding of cultural diversity and immigration changed both in Israel and in the United States.

For many students this experience changed their self understanding, and they felt encouraged to be involved in social issues in their future at MSU and beyond. As David Warshay wrote: "While I have been here before, I've never experienced Israel like this. It was definitely an eye opening experience and one that I will not soon forget."

- Dr. Yore Kedem, program leader





JEWISH STUDIES STUDENT RESEARCH conference 2018



On Friday, April 21st, 2018, the Jewish Studies Program hosted its annual student research conference. Ten 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 Dr. **Yore Kedem** entitled "Israel Studies: Causes for Mizrahis Arriving in Israel, Domestic Politics, and Foreign Policy." All three of these students had completed research projects supervised by Professor **Yael Aronoff**. **David Warshay**, a rising junior in James Madison College, presented his research on the push factors that led to the expulsion and migration of Jews from Syria, Iraq, and Iran. **Mackenzie Cater**, now graduated from James Madison College, analyzed the role of Twitter in asymmetric warfare. **Graham Wise**, a senior in the College of Social Science, and **Abby Laporte**, now graduated from James Madison College, presented research that they completed while studying in Israel in 2017. Graham discussed the evolution of the Labor Party in Israel, and Abby gave a poster presentation on the transformation of Israeli kibbutzim.

The second panel, entitled "Israel Studies: Research based on sources in Hebrew" was moderated by Dr. **Yael Aronoff**. All of the research projects presented in this panel were advised by Dr. **Yore Kedem** and

written in Hebrew using only Hebrew sources. **Alexis Spector**, a junior in James Madison College, discussed the relationship between American Jewry and Israel, focusing on the case of the pluralistic prayer pavilion at the Western Wall. Next, **Kaila Waideo**, a senior in James Madison College, identified contradictions in the Jewish Home Party's efforts to advance the status of women in Israel. Finally, **Ari Chesternman**, a senior in the College of Social Science, analyzed the influence of the Azaria case on Israeli public conscience. Following this panel, students and attendees were joined for lunch by alumna **Laura Williams**, who discussed how her JS Minor influenced her desire to become a Curator at Temple Beth El in Bloomfield Hills.

The final panel was moderated by Dr. **Kirsten Fermaglich** and Dr. **Amy Simon**, and students presented research that they had completed in their classes. **Olivia Rutherford** and **Anna Cumming**, students in the College of Social Science, presented work relating to the Holocaust as remembered, experienced and denied in the United States. Olivia presented a project in which she assessed Holocaust denial in the United States, and Anna presented her senior honor's thesis entitled "Jewish Liberators and Masculinity: How the Liberation of the Nazi Concentration Camps Shaped the Jewish Male Experience."

STUDENT AND ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

RAFFI APPEL '12

Since graduating in 2012, Raffi has been living in DC and working in the progressive digital marketing space. He interned on Obama's digital team in Chicago in the final months of the 2012 campaign, and that is where he got his start. Raffi is currently Director of Strategic Services at Trilogy Interactive, a full-service, left-leaning digital agency. They often have to break new ground when building campaigns for clients. Raffi says that Eric Aronoff's summer study abroad in Israel was an eye-opening experience and allowed him to see how Israelis broke new ground and innovated in agriculture, water preservation, and alternative energy to make the desert bloom. He says that his experiences in Israel inspire him to look back at Israel's experience when faced with a challenge, and wonder: is there a better, simpler way to do this?

SAMUEL "SAM" APPEL '14

After completing his Jewish Studies Minor, Sam worked with the Michigan State University Hillel House, as well as several other university Hillels around the state of Michigan. Hillel is the center of Jewish student life on campuses and provides religious, cultural and Israel-related activities. Sam says, "My professional goal was always focused on supporting an open dialogue about religion and Israel on campus. This was a skill significantly supported by my experience with Jewish Studies." Sam is currently completing his MBA from Wayne State University with a focus on Marketing.

DANIEL BAUM '19

To complete the Jewish Studies minor, Daniel has taken History of the Holocaust, American Jewish History, and Jewish Mysticism at Michigan State University so far. This past summer he participated in the Jewish Studies Summer Program at Hebrew University. Finally, during his last semester at MSU this fall, Daniel will be doing an independent study under the supervision of Dr. Amy Simon investigating American Holocaust education. Part of what helped

propel Daniel toward Jewish Studies has been his involvement with the Official State of Michigan Holocaust Commemoration (and this past year helping to plan it with MSU Hillel). Daniel is considering attending law school after graduation.

MACKENZIE CATER '18

Mackenzie was awarded the 2018 Jewish Studies Student Achievement Award. She says that during her time at MSU, the Jewish Studies minor allowed her to explore many aspects of Jewish life and the State of Israel. She spent a semester learning about the roots of antisemitism as well as contemporary versions of antisemitism on both the right and left. After this experience, Mackenzie researched the major facets of US foreign policy towards Israel in relation to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Her minor also allowed her the opportunity to study abroad in Israel and investigate her interests in Bedouin women's struggle towards higher education. In her senior seminar with Professor Aronoff, Mackenzie devoted her research to exploring the role of Twitter in asymmetric warfare in relation to Operation Protective Edge. Today, she currently lives in DC and works for the U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform. As an International Legislative Coordinator, Mackenzie focuses her research on legal reform that is important to EU Member States, Canada, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, and Mexico—to name a few. Mackenzie says, "I continue to follow and engage in US/Israeli relations and hope to pursue further education in the study of conflict resolution."

ANNA CUMMING '18

Anna was awarded the 2018 Jewish Studies Student Achievement Award and earned a double bachelor's degree in History and Political Science Pre-law with minors in Anthropology, Women and Gender Studies, and Jewish Studies. She took several Jewish Studies courses, including a graduate course with Dr. Kirsten Fermaglich in addition to a Senior Honor's thesis in



Raffi



Sam



Daniel



Mackenzie

Jewish Studies. In her graduate-level course, she completed a research project on antisemitism in the United States military. Her senior honors thesis examined the role of Jewish liberators of Nazi concentration camps, with a specific focus on Jewish masculinity. She looked at instances of antisemitism in their youth, then focused on the actual experience of walking into the camps upon liberation. Anna also looked at the role of female liberators in comparison to the formation of Jewish masculinity and examined the postwar experiences of Jewish liberators, including an examination of post-war faith. Next month, Anna will be moving to England to attend the University of Cambridge, where she will pursue a Masters of Philosophy in Multidisciplinary Gender Studies. She plans to study sexual violence in conflict zones. Following this, Anna is attending Georgetown Law where she will study human rights law and continue to advocate for sexual assault survivors. Anna was a finalist for the Rhodes Scholarship, Mitchell Scholarship, and Gates-Cambridge Scholarship, and was a university nominee for the Truman Scholarship.

BEN FRANCIS '21

Ben is a Political Theory and Constitutional Democracy Major in James Madison College. Within the Jewish Studies minor, he has taken both Hebrew 101 and 102, a course on Trauma and Memory of the Holocaust, and studied abroad in Israel this past summer. Ben also completed an honors option for Trauma and Memory of the Holocaust, writing a project entitled "The Need For A Jewish State After The Holocaust." He plans on finishing his Jewish Studies minor by taking Hebrew 201 and 202 this coming year. On campus, Ben is a David Project intern and sophomore engagement intern for Hillel. In the future, Ben plans to attend a graduate school and make a positive impact on the world.

ABBY LAPORTE '17

Abby graduated from James Madison College in the fall of 2017 with a major in Comparative Cultures and Politics and a minor in Jewish Studies. As part of her minor, she was fortunate enough to study abroad in Israel with Professors Yael and Eric Aronoff for two

months in the summer of 2017. "There, we spent our time further delving into the Israel-Palestinian conflict and ways that it might be resolved by studying at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, learning about community by spending time at kibbutzim, traveling to surrounding borders to learn about security challenges, and ultimately, we were exposed to firsthand knowledge and experiences that I could have never gotten from the inside of a classroom. I felt so inspired when I returned back to the U.S. that I decided I wanted to pursue graduate school in Israel, and this fall, I will be returning to Hebrew University to do my Masters in Human Rights and Transitional Justice." Abby hopes to forge a career with an NGO after graduation that focuses on conflict resolution and the promotion of equality. She says, "I am incredibly thankful that I had the opportunity to study in Israel last summer because I would have never found my post-graduate path without the firsthand, invaluable experiences I had as an undergraduate."

KAILA WAINEO '19

Kaila is a fourth-year International Relations student in James Madison College. She is a recipient of the 2018 Jewish Studies Student Achievement Award. The primary interest of her coursework is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Upon graduation, her goal is to pursue graduate degrees in Law and Public Policy and then use her research, legal and intercultural skills to resolve disagreements, preferably by helping the United States advance peace in Israel and Palestine. By the time of graduation, Kaila will have four years of Hebrew, Minors in Jewish Studies and Muslim Studies, and completed five academic study abroad programs in West and South Asia. Kaila completed both the Jewish Studies Summer Program at Hebrew University and the Green Israel Program, as well as interned in Israel at the Knesset. She is currently writing a senior honor's thesis on Israeli anti-trafficking policies with Professor Yael Aronoff. Kaila was selected this year to receive a Foreign Languages and Area Studies Fellowship, an award given by the Asian Studies Center and the U.S. Department of Education for students excelling in foreign languages and area studies.



Anna

Ben

Abby

Kaila

JSP WELCOMES NEW CORE FACULTY MEMBER

Dr. **LAURA YARES**

PH.D, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Laura Yares is thrilled to be joining the Jewish Studies Program as one of five core faculty positions. She is Assistant Professor in the Department of Religious Studies. Her research and teaching centers on the Jewish experience in modernity, and on Jewish education in particular. Dr. Yares is originally from the U.K, but has spent the last 10 years living and working in Washington, D.C. She completed her undergraduate degree at Oxford University, and holds M.A. degrees in Jewish Studies and Religious Studies from Oxford as well as from McMaster University in Ontario, Canada. She completed her doctoral work in the Religious Studies department at Georgetown University, writing on the development of Sunday schools in the Reform movement in 19th century America. She is currently at work on a book length manuscript based on her dissertation.

Following the completion of her Ph.D., Dr. Yares spent four years as Director of Educational Research at Hillel International, where she developed research and training in experiential education for Hillel campus staff. She has also served as a consultant for a variety of Jewish educational settings, focusing on professional development for Jewish educators.

Dr. Yares' latest research project focuses on the intersection between Jewish education and cultural arts, in collaboration with the George Washington University and the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis University. She currently serves on the Book Review committee of the Journal of Jewish Education, and on the Executive Committee of the Network for Research in Jewish Education.



MSU JEWISH STUDIES WELCOMES TWO NEW AFFILIATED FACULTY AND SERLING ISRAELI VISITING SCHOLARS



Dr. **GERARD BREITZER** NEW AFFILIATE FACULTY

Dr. Gerard Breitzer is a graduate of the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine. He is a tenured Professor of Pediatrics, in the Department of Pediatrics, MSUCOM. He practices primary care pediatrics with the MSU HealthTeam. Dr. Breitzer is directly involved with clinical teaching of medical students and pediatric residents and has served on various MSU and college committees. He is currently completing a project that reviews Maimonides' medical aphorisms and highlights what 21st century physicians can learn from them.



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 and a Law Degree from Hebrew University, and is the author of five books. This fall semester, Professor Tal will teach MC335: Israeli Politics, Cultures and Society and MC459/LB459: Determining Carrying Capacity and Sustainable Population Policies, a STEPPS Capstone in James Madison College and Lyman Briggs College that will have a case study on Israel.



DR. **KENNETH LEVINE** NEW AFFILIATE FACULTY

Kenneth Levine (Ph.D., Communication, Michigan State University, J.D., Case Western Reserve University School of Law) is a faculty member in the Department of Communication at Michigan State University. Dr. Levine's research concentrates on organizational communication, small group communication, leadership, and political communication. He also studies the impact of technology on organizations and the socialization of at-risk students. He is currently studying how the Yiddish language daily, *Die Yiddishe Velt*, contributed to the vital role of the immigrant press in the socialization and assimilation of newcomers to the United States.



DR. **HARRY YUKLEA** SERLING VISITING ISRAELI SCHOLAR

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 MSM from Boston University and a PhD in Business Management from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He will teach BUS190: Israel: Start-Up Nation in the Business College.

FACULTY NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Dr. **KIRSTEN FERMAGLICH** NEW BOOK

Congratulations to Dr. Kirsten Fermaglich for the publication of her book entitled *Rosenberg by Any Other Name: A History of Jewish Name-Changing in America*. Her book will be published by New York University Press in fall 2018. It demonstrates how historical debates about immigration, antisemitism and race, class mobility, gender and family, the boundaries of the Jewish community, and the power of government are reshaped when name changing becomes part of the conversation. Mining court documents, oral histories, archival records, and contemporary literature, Fermaglich argues that name changing had a lasting impact on American Jewish culture. Ordinary Jews were forced to consider changing their names as they saw their friends, family, classmates, co-workers and neighbors do so.



Dr. **STEVEN FRAIBERG** AWARDED TENURE

Congratulations to Dr. Steven Fraiberg, for being awarded tenure in the summer of 2018. Steven Fraiberg [Ph.D., English/Concentration in Writing Studies, U. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign] is an Associate Professor in Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures where he teaches courses in composition, professional writing, and language and culture. In his research, he examines language and cultural shifts in Israeli society as it transitions from the socialist ideals of the kibbutz to a capitalist system based on global high-tech industries. In his work, Dr. Fraiberg studies language practices in classrooms, communities, and start-up companies in Israeli society. He previously lived and worked in Israel for four years as a technical writer in the high-tech industry.



ACADEMIC NEWS

Yael Aronoff's chapter, "Israeli Prime Ministers: Transforming the Victimhood Discourse" is forthcoming this fall in a volume *Victimhood*, Ed. Ilan Peleg, Roman & Littlefield. She is giving an invited talk on "The Zionist Union and Yesh Atid Opposition Parties," for a conference on "Israel under Netanyahu," October 7, 2018, Johns Hopkins University. She is giving a public lecture on "Israel's Wars with Hamas: Lessons Learned from Asymmetric Wars" on November 19, 2018 at Case Western Reserve University. Dr. Aronoff is presenting on Israel's changing security environment at the "Israel at 70: Complexity, Challenge, and Creativity" conference on September 16 at MSU. She gave three presentations relating to U.S.-Israeli Relations, an evaluation of the Oslo process, and on her current work on the dilemmas of asymmetric wars at the Association of Israel Studies conference, June 24-27, at the Berkeley Institute of Israel Law and Israel Studies. Dr. Aronoff also presented "New Right Wing Narratives" on a panel on "the New Politics of Israel" in a Conference entitled "Israel at 70" sponsored by the Israel Institute and the Center for Jewish History, June 10, 2018, New York City.

Kirsten Fermaglich participated in a roundtable on the relationship between religious studies and American Jewish history at the American Jewish Historical Society's Biennial Scholars Conference in June. Her book, *A Rosenberg By Any Other Name*, will be published by New York University Press in Fall 2018.

Steven Fraiberg was awarded tenure.

Steve Gold has been invited to a conference on "Israel at 70." It will take place at the Koschitzky Centre in Toronto on October 7-8, 2018. He is to present a paper in a session tentatively entitled "Emigration from Israel and Transnational Identities."

Yore Kedem was chosen to be a fellow of the Adams Academy for Instructional Excellence and Innovation 2017-2018 at MSU.

Amy Simon has organized and will be leading the workshop, "Teaching the Holocaust Through Life Stories" at the "Lessons and Legacies XV" conference held at Washington University in St. Louis, Nov. 1-4. She also will be presenting, "History and Testimony in the Digital Age: Studying the Holocaust" regarding our honors seminar class using the Shoah Foundation Archive at the Midwest Jewish Studies Association Conference, held at the Spertus Institute of Jewish Learning and Leadership, Chicago, October 21-22.

Alon Tal (Serling Visiting Israeli Scholar, MSU and Tel Aviv University) along with **Ken Waltzer** (MSU professor emeritus) have joined together to oversee research that evaluates the effectiveness of strategies and policies in response to BDS campaigns at American universities. Tal and Waltzer are thesis advisors to Tel Aviv University masters student Moriah Dana, whose study analyzes 24 cases in American universities: 8 on the West Coast, 8 in the east and 8 in the mid-west. Her study promises to be the first empirical assessment of specific cases where BDS campaigns were successful and where they were not, characterizing the conditions and the dynamics behind the contrasting results. Working through social media, over a hundred "pro-Israel activists" have participated in surveys to supplement the objective data base with the subjective perceptions of students in the field. At present, the study seeks to receive similar feedback from pro-BDS students involved in these campaigns. They hope the results will cast light on some of the complex dynamics of BDS campaigning on campuses.

Ken Waltzer's essay "The University of California's Principles Against Intolerance: Efforts to Integrate Them Into Campus Policy and Practice," will appear in *Poisoning the Wells: Antisemitism in Contemporary American Culture, Politics, and Education*, eds., Corrine Blackwell and Andrew Pessin, University of Wisconsin Press.

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