

# Jewish Studies Program

Spring Semester 2016



Michigan State University

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*Yael Aronoff, Director*  
*Michael Serling, Chair, Advisory Board*  
*Bill Bilstad & Yael Aronoff, Editors*

## Notes from the Director

As events at universities across the country have drawn renewed attention to the importance of dialogue about issues of diversity and inclusion, our Jewish Studies Program continues to stand in support of making all students feel welcome on college campuses, both inside and outside the classroom. We support the special attention needed for issues of race as well as sexual assault on college campuses, and ally ourselves with all seeking to foster a more inclusive and welcoming environment, including our Muslim students who face a national environment of renewed Islamophobia. In this context, the many classes, lectures, and films sponsored by the Jewish Studies Program contribute to an environment that fosters education about diversity, the dangers of prejudice, and the contributions of and the challenges faced by Jewish communities across history and geography.

Jewish Studies is also co-sponsoring three events this spring that focus attention on the relationships between African Americans and Jews. Our own **Kirsten Fermaglich** will co-lead an event titled "Civil Rights Reconsidered," in which she will share some of her own research on Jewish contributions to the Civil Rights Movement. **Edwin Black** will speak about African American and Jewish intersections surrounding the Holocaust. Finally, we will sponsor a sculpture exhibit by **Tanya Walker** that explores areas of historical cooperation between Jews and African Americans.

Part of this renewed attention to inclusion and diversity must also include the fact that anti-Semitism on college campuses is also rising, as in many parts of the globe. Statistics show the majority

of hate crimes targeted against religious groups in the US, for example, are directed against Jews. Our Jewish Studies Program will address this issue through a variety of curricular and co-curricular initiatives. Our new Farber Chair in Holocaust Studies and European Jewish History, whose first occupant we are hoping to welcome at the beginning of the next academic year, will help address this issue by educating students on the history of the Jewish experience and offering a class on anti-Semitism. In addition, **Deborah Lipstadt**, Professor at Emory University, will lecture on "Anti-Semitism in the 21st Century." Last spring we inaugurated, in conjunction with Hillel and the MSU Office of Inclusion, our first forum in which students shared their experiences of anti-Semitism on the MSU campus. The vast majority of the students who attended the forum had themselves experienced anti-Semitism in that academic year, mostly from fellow students. As a result we will organize a follow-up forum, in which we will discuss existing University reporting mechanisms as well as offer a space for self-empowerment. **Brad Isakson**, a senior double majoring in James Madison College and History and minoring in Jewish Studies, will be presenting his research on rising anti-Semitism on university campuses at a Jewish Studies Faculty/Student Research Seminar. MSU faculty member and author **Lev Raphael** will discuss his book *Making Peace with Germany* and his own experiences as a child of Holocaust survivors of working through that historical trauma. Finally, Jewish Studies is meeting with the MSU Office of Inclusion to have issues of anti-Semitism included in

tentative future plans for cultural awareness videos or programs for incoming students.

This spring we continue to feature Israel Studies as a strong component of our Jewish Studies Program. Some highlights include a visit by one of Israel's most accomplished novelists, **David Grossman**, during which he will speak about his many internationally acclaimed novels. In preparation for his visit, interested Jewish Studies faculty and students as well as community members will meet to discuss his latest book, *Falling Out of Time*. During his visit, we will have an afternoon panel to discuss Grossman's works with the author himself, and then hear Grossman's evening lecture focusing on his latest book. In another event, our Israel Institute and Serling Israeli Visiting Scholar, **Yuval Benziman**, will discuss Israel's security challenges. We are thrilled both of our Serling Visiting Scholars this year, Professors **Alon Tal** and **Yuval Benziman** will return to MSU to teach at James Madison College in Fall 2016. Our new faculty member teaching Hebrew, **Yore Kedem**, will lead our summer study abroad program to Israel.

Finally, we would like to congratulate **Lynne Goldstein** for receiving the Distinguished Career Award given by the Midwest Archaeological Conference. We also congratulate **Margot Valles** on her new home in the Department of English, and welcome **Karrin Hanshew** as a new affiliated faculty from the Department of History.

~Yael Aronoff, Professor and Director

## JSP Student Highlights



### Jamie Denenberg

I am currently a junior double majoring in James Madison College (International Relations) and Economics, and minoring in Jewish Studies and Peace and Justice Studies. I have taken MC 220, an international relations class that focused on Israeli–Palestinian peace negotiations, with Professor Aronoff, MC 335 “Israeli Politics and Culture,” and MC 450 “Environmental Policy and Law” with a focus on Israel with Serling Israeli Visiting Scholar Alon Tal. This semester I am taking MC 492 “Senior Seminar: Israel’s Foreign Policy” and I plan on taking HST 392 “History of the Holocaust” prior to graduation. After completing my undergraduate degree, I plan on attending law school.

Through pursuing a Jewish Studies minor, my eyes have been opened up to not only the Jewish community but also how the Jewish community and identity influences broader society. This past year I interned at the Jewish Studies office, where I attended a variety of lectures that have opened my eyes to different topics that relate to my own Jewish identity.



### Brad Isakson

I am a double major in James Madison College and in History, and have completed my minor in Jewish Studies. I studied abroad in Israel with Professor Aronoff after my freshman year. In Spring 2015, I interned in the Jewish Studies Program to complete my JMC Field Experience. The final requirement for this internship was a twenty-five page research paper under the guidance of Professor Aronoff, in which I chose to focus on contemporary anti–Semitism after my brother and I experienced anti–Semitism on campus. Last April I helped organize an anti–Semitism forum that was co-sponsored by Jewish Studies, MSU Hillel Jewish Student Center, and the Office of Inclusion to offer Jewish students a safe place to open up about any experiences they had.

I received the Jewish Studies Student Achievement Award in Spring 2015. This spring, I will be interning with former Director and Professor of Jewish Studies, Ken Waltzer, at the newly formed Academic Engagement Network, which aims to actively fight against the academic boycott of Israel movement. I will be graduating this May.



### Michelle Peraino

I am majoring in International Relations at James Madison College. I became interested in completing the Jewish Studies minor after I studied abroad in Israel during the summer of 2013 with Professor Aronoff. The following spring, I took Professor Aronoff’s class, MC 324A “Regional Politics, Cooperation & Conflict in the Middle East,” and completed an Independent Study this past summer with her that focused on the challenges posed by the BDS movement. These classes were excellent preparation for my internship this past semester in Washington, DC, at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, and it went better than I’d imagined! I was doing research for David Makovsky, (*cont.*)

the Ziegler Distinguished Fellow and director of the Project on the Middle East Peace Process, on the terror attacks in Israel, the ways to mend the US–Israel relationship, and the spread of the BDS movement on college campuses.

This spring I will be taking IAH 211C with a focus on Jewish–American cultures with Professor Weiland and my senior seminar, MC 492, on Israel’s Foreign Policy with Visiting Israel Institute and Serling Visiting Israeli Scholar Professor Yuval Ben-Zimman.



### Carly Sternberg

I am a Social Relations and Policy major in James Madison College and a Jewish Studies minor. Continuing my Hebrew education in college was critical for me, and I took Ellen Rothfeld’s and Professor Marc Bernstein’s Hebrew courses. I expanded my knowledge regarding the history, culture, and politics of Israel through pursuing a Jewish Studies minor. In my free time on campus, I act as president of Spartans for Israel. Through my Jewish Studies courses such as Area Studies with Professor Bernstein and a collaborative study of the “New Jew” with Visiting Professor David Mendelson, I was able to solidify and enhance my passions, knowledge, and overall support for Israel. The courses were particularly engaging and always inclusive to students of different opinions and disparate backgrounds.

This year I decided to intern with Professor Aronoff to assist the Jewish Studies Program. This upcoming semester I will be studying a semester abroad in Budapest, Hungary, at Corvinus University. After graduation, I plan to attend law school.



### Nate Strauss

I am double majoring in James Madison College (in Comparative Cultures and Politics) and Journalism. I earned my Jewish Studies minor by taking second-year Hebrew courses, MC335 “Israeli Politics, Cultures, and Society” with Serling Israeli Visiting Scholar Professor Alon Tal, and participating in the Jewish Studies Study Abroad program at Hebrew University during the summer of 2014, which was led by Professor Marc Bernstein.

I am currently serving in my second term as president of the Jewish Student Union (JSU). The JSU is working on many interesting programs, and I am particularly excited for the “Civil Rights Reconsidered” program, which will examine the role that Jews played in the Civil Rights Movement. I am also excited to get to continue my involvement in the Jewish community after I graduate, as I have accepted a full-time offer to work at MSU Hillel Jewish Student Center. The Jewish Studies Program has become an important and helpful component of my undergraduate education, and I am so glad I decided to pursue the Jewish Studies minor.

**Sarah Kovan**  
2016 Rhodes Scholar Recipient  
Her Israel Study Abroad Experience

The summer after my freshmen year at MSU, I had the incredible opportunity to both work and study in Israel for ten weeks as part of the MSU Jewish Studies Program at Hebrew University. As an individual pursuing a dual degree in Human Biology and Comparative Cultures and Politics, I was interested in placing health in the context of social sciences, adding an introspective analysis to healthcare. When the Israel study abroad opportunity presented itself, I enthusiastically jumped on board. The Jewish Studies Program through MSU, in conjunction with an independent program with Magen David Adom (Israel's national ambulance service), allowed me to continue my studies and explore the relationship between global health and international affairs.

For the first five weeks, I spent my days working as a first-aid responder on Israel's national ambulances. I then partnered my experience in the Israeli healthcare system with intensive studying of Israeli politics and society at Hebrew University, led by Professor Aronoff. By joining my work on the ambulances with the study abroad experience, I was able to gain valuable insight into that country's cultures and society, as well as the provision of health care.



Sarah Kovan (left)

I returned to Michigan State eager to continue understanding these complex relationships. My time in Israel had fueled my interest in international health and global affairs, enhanced my educational and professional goals, and shaped both my studies at Michigan State and the work I will continue to pursue in the future. Following my acceptance as a 2016 Rhodes Scholar, I am thrilled to now continue these studies at Oxford by pursuing a Masters in Development Studies, with a focus on international health and development.

As I begin to reflect on my undergraduate education, I am truly able to appreciate and understand the importance of studying abroad. My international experiences have not only developed my interest in global health and international affairs, but have also enriched my understanding of our global community. ~ Sarah Kovan



**MSU Jewish Studies Summer Program  
at Hebrew University**  
Dates abroad: July 8 to August 5, 2016  
Scholarships available at <http://jsp.msu.edu/israel/>  
For more information, contact Yael Aronoff at:  
(517) 884-7054 or [aronoffy@msu.edu](mailto:aronoffy@msu.edu).

**New Affiliated Jewish Studies Faculty  
Karrin Hanshew**

**Karrin Hanshew** (Ph.D. History, University of Chicago) enjoys teaching in the broader field of modern European history with an emphasis on modern Germany and post-1945 memory and reconstruction. Dr. Hanshew's research interests in social movements, the politics of resistance and transnational alliances reflect her particular commitment to the field of contemporary history. Since coming to MSU, Dr. Hanshew has taught HST 392 "History of the Holocaust" every spring as well as a number of 400-level seminars on Nazi Germany and post-war memory. Karrin's first book, *Terror and Democracy in West Germany* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), investigated West German efforts to contain terrorism in the 1970s. Her current project brings together a number of different research strands—tourism, food, migration, international diplomacy, and politics of the right, left, and center—to reveal Italy's particular importance for Germany's moral and psychological re-founding as well as its political and economic reconstruction after World War Two and Nazism.



**Lynne Goldstein  
Distinguished Career Award**

Hearty congratulations go out to **Lynne Goldstein**, who was the recipient of the Distinguished Career Award given by the Midwest Archaeological Conference. What a well-deserved, great honor! Dr. Goldstein is Professor and former Chair of the Department of Anthropology, and an accomplished archaeologist.



Dr. Goldstein has been an affiliate of our Jewish Studies Program since 1996 when she came to MSU. In teaching ISS 315 "Global Diversity & Interdependence: The Jewish Experience," Dr. Goldstein likes demonstrating to students, through archeology, the time depth and geographic spread of Judaism. Her research in archaeology and the analysis of mortuary practices—how treatment of the dead through time and across cultures reflects some of the core beliefs of societies—intersects with Jewish Studies. Dr. Goldstein has been an active member of our Jewish Studies Program for many years, including serving on the annual Israeli Film Festival committee for over seven years.

Dr. Goldstein is currently Publications Director of the Archaeology Division of the American Anthropological Association, and she has also been editor of *American Antiquity* as well as Anthropology and Archaeology consultant for the *Encarta World English Dictionary*. Most of her books and articles are on the archaeology of the eastern US or mortuary analysis and the ethics of archaeology.



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## Academic News

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**Yael Aronoff** has a HARP fellowship this year to work on her book project “**The Dilemmas of Asymmetric Conflicts.**” She presented on “Straddling Deterrence and Restraint: Israel’s Dilemmas in Asymmetric Wars” at a conference at the University of Arizona on Israel in a Changing Middle East, December 6–7, 2015. Dr. Aronoff is presenting a paper, “The United States and Israel,” at the Association for Israel Studies Conference in Jerusalem, June 20–22, 2016, and is participating in the meetings of the Board of the Association. She is also serving this spring on the Ben Halpern Prize committee for the best doctoral dissertation in Israel studies, which will be awarded by the Association of Israel Studies. Dr. Aronoff will participate in the Israel Institute’s second Leadership Summit, which will take place in the Ma’ale Ha-chamisha near Jerusalem, from June 26–29, 2016. This invitation-only event brings together Israel experts from universities and research centers around the world to foster dialogue across disciplines and build networks and partnerships to enhance the field of Israel Studies.

**Kirsten Fermaglich** is on sabbatical during the 2015–2016 academic year. She is completing her book, *A Rosenberg by Any Other Name: Jews and Name Changing in New York City in the Twentieth Century*. In the fall, Dr. Fermaglich was a visiting fellow at the Frankel Institute for Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan. She gave a presentation, “Layers of Bureaucracy: Jewish Name Changing and the Struggle for Civil Rights after World War II,” at the Association for Jewish Studies conference in Boston in December. She will present her work at a Newberry Library seminar in Chicago on February 19; at Limmud in Ann Arbor, MI, on March 13; at the Organization of American Historians conference in Providence, RI, on April 7; and at Temple Israel in West Bloomfield, MI, on June 6.

**Steve Gold’s** article “Patterns of Adaptation among Contemporary Jewish Immigrants to the US” appeared in *American Jewish Yearbook*, Volume 115, in December 2015.

**Anna Norris** published an article on French Holocaust survivor and filmmaker Marceline Loridan-Ivens titled “Auschwitz-Birkenau 1944–1945: Marceline Loridan-Ivens tourne et retourne son passé,” in a special issue of *Women in French Studies, Women and memory/Femmes et mémoires* this fall. She presented a paper on Irène Némirovsky’s Jewish and Russian *émigré* novels at the international conference Russian *Émigré Culture: Transcending the Borders of Countries, Languages and Disciplines* at the University of Saarland, Saarbrücken, Germany, in November. Dr. Norris will present a paper, “Marceline Loridan-Ivens: A French Birkenau Survivor Interprets the Present Through the Past,” at the Future of Holocaust Testimonies Conference at Western Galilee College in Akko, Israel, in March 2016.

**Ken Waltzer’s** essay “Moving Together, Moving Alone: The Story of Boys on a Transport Auschwitz to Buchenwald” will appear in Claire Zalc and Tal Bruttman (eds.), *Microhistories of the Holocaust* (Berghahn Books, 2016). Dr. Waltzer will present in March on “The Legacy of Testimonies: The Role of Memory in Reconstructing the Story of the Rescue of Children and Youths at Buchenwald” at the Future of Holocaust Testimonies Conference in Akko, Israel. He is also publishing an essay on families in the camps in Joanna Michlic (ed.), *Jewish Families in Europe, 1939–Present: History, Representation, and Memory* (University of New England Press, 2016).

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