

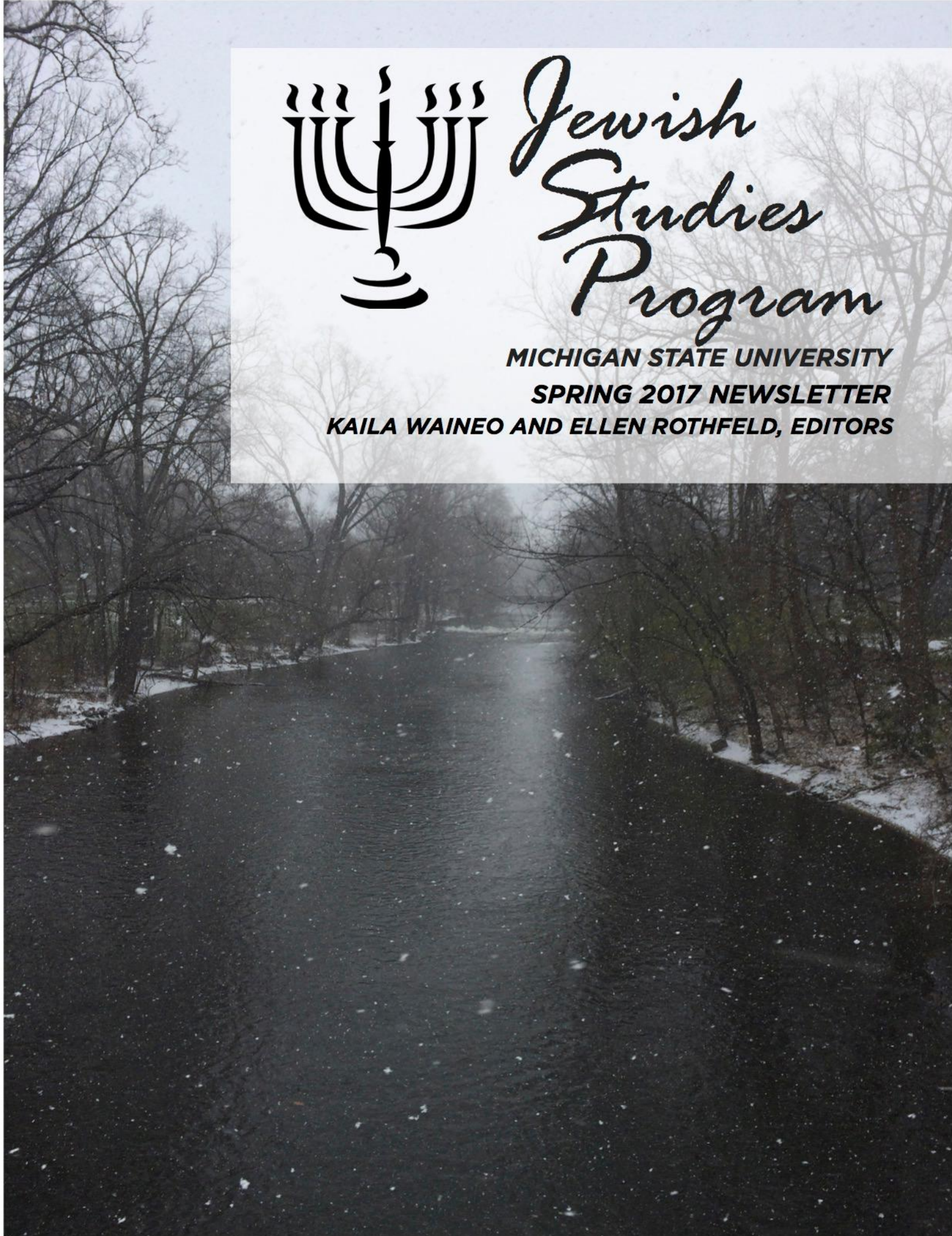


Jewish Studies Program

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2017 NEWSLETTER

KAILA WAINEO AND ELLEN ROTHFELD, EDITORS





Director Yael Aronoff with students at the Jewish Studies student/faculty lunch



Group photo from the annual Jewish Studies student/faculty lunch



Chen Shapira with his artwork during his exhibition of *Lines of Flight*, sponsored by Jewish Studies

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

As we come to the end of 2016, one thing we can all agree on is that this was a year of unpredictability. For some, uncertainty poses risks and dangers; for others, potential for change; many are suspended between the two, hoping for the best, worried for the worst. As we move into spring semester 2017, one thing is certain: our Jewish Studies Program will continue to help our students, community and faculty work to make sense of these complex times. And we will do so, together, by drawing on, remembering, questioning and analyzing the myriad aspects of the Jewish experience(s), to see what lessons, ancient and new, might be found in those experiences to help navigate the future.

As it is across the country, diversity is a key concern for MSU. Within Jewish Studies, our students are exposed to issues of diversity through the very nature of our curriculum, with its emphasis on the richness of Jewish history, as well as the Jewish experience of discrimination in varied historical and geographic contexts. Antisemitism is on the rise in many parts of the world; here at home, and especially since the election, there has been a spike in bias incidents. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, of the Midwestern states, Michigan witnessed the largest number of reported hate crime incidents in the ten days following the election. (Of the 867 incidents tracked nationally in that period, 32% were directed against immigrants, 23% against African Americans, 12% against Jews, 11% against LGBT people, and 6% against Muslims.) This trend has found its way to college campuses as well. Our Jewish Studies Program allies itself with all groups that face discrimination and, in our courses, our programming, and in our collaboration with other groups and units across campus, promote mutual respect for all people. Jewish Studies will help address antisemitism experienced on campus by students in the following ways: providing annual lectures and courses that address both historical and contemporary antisemitism; co-sponsoring in February, along with Hillel and with the Office of Institutional Equity, our third annual forum where students can share their experiences of antisemitism, feel empowered, and learn about university reporting mechanisms; ensuring that antisemitism continues to be included in the video addressing diversity for incoming students; and conducting a workshop for residential advisors on January 6, 2017 that addresses definitions of antisemitism, and ways that residential advisors can help educate students. We will have members of the Anti-Defamation League engage in an interactive exercise with the Residential Advisors, along with several of our students and alumni and four Jewish Studies faculty (**Yael Aronoff, Kirsten Fermaglich, Amy Simon, and Kenneth Waltzer**), as well as a representative of the Office of Equity).

We have applied to the Honors College for a team taught Jewish Studies course: "History and Testimony in the Digital Age: Studying the Holocaust." The course will be taught collaboratively by Jewish Studies faculty from across many units. Students will be mentored in the research uses of the USC digital database, as well as in the ethical use of the Holocaust testimonies, and will be expected to participate in the creation and presentation of new knowledge.

Jewish Studies will continue to emphasize undergraduate research. Many of our classes, both on campus and abroad, involve students writing extensive research papers. We offer opportunities for students to present their research in monthly faculty/student research seminars, and encouraged them to publish their research; we reward outstanding research with our annual Jewish Studies Student Achievement Award. We are thrilled to organize our first annual Jewish Studies Student Research Conference on April 21st.

We continue to develop our programming related to the study of Israel in all its dimensions. This spring will see the launch of a new study abroad opportunity: in May 2017, **Tom Bielik**, an Israeli visiting post-doc in the STEM program at MSU, will take 15 MSU graduate students in STEM fields to the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel, where they will join Israeli counter-parts for a class collaboratively taught by researchers from MSU, from the Weizmann Institute, and from the Technion. Students will carry out research and present their results in both the Weizmann Institute and MSU. In June, Professor **Eric Aronoff** will lead another group of MSU undergraduates to Israel for a 3 week, hands-on exploration of environmental challenges in Israel. In July, I will be leading the MSU Jewish Studies Program at Hebrew University, and immersing my students in the study of Israeli politics, cultures, and society.

We hope that you are able to come and engage our many lectures, panels, and films this semester.

—Yael Aronoff, Professor and Director

HIGHLIGHTS FROM SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF ICONIC LAKES: LESSONS LEARNED FROM LAKE MICHIGAN AND LAKE KINNERET

On September 14th the Jewish Studies Program hosted an international conference entitled *Sustainable Management of Iconic Lakes: Lessons Learned from Lake Michigan and Lake Kinneret*, co-sponsored by several other academic units. The Great Lakes and Lake Kinneret (Sea of Galilee) are two



internationally iconic transboundary surface water resources. While completely different in their dimensions, climatic conditions and geopolitical circumstances, the lakes face challenges that are surprisingly comparable. Policymakers and academics from both Michigan and Israel learned from each other's experiences to better address the ecological, institutional and economic problems associated with sustainable management of these unique and invaluable water resources. On the following day, participants traveled to Muskegon to the Robert B. Annis Water Resources Institute to discuss university/government interaction and local initiatives and their implementation. Speakers included: Mr. **Jon Allan**, Director of the Michigan Office of the Great Lakes; Professor **Yael Aronoff**, Director of the Jewish Studies Program, MSU; Professor **Mark Axelrod**, Associate



Professor in the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and James Madison College, MSU; Dr. **John Dettmers**, Director of Fisheries Management, Great Lakes Fishery Commission; Mr. **Frank Ettawageshik**, Executive Director of United Tribes of Michigan; Professor **Avital Gasith**, Head of the Master's Program of Tel Aviv University Porter School of Environmental Studies; Mr. **Mark Loomis**, Acting Chief of the Remediation and Restoration Section, U.S. E.P.A., Great Lakes National Program Office; Mr.

David Lorenz, Vice President of Travel Michigan; Dr. **Doron Markel**, Director of Lake Kinneret Watershed Management, Israel Water Authority; Mr. **Arfan Nagar**, Archaeologist, Israel Antiquities Authority; Mr. **Matt Pressier**, Lake Michigan Coordinator, Michigan Office of the Great Lakes; Professor **Brian Roth**, Associate Professor in the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife; Dr. **Orit Skutelsky**, Director of Water Resource Initiatives, the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel; Professor **Alon Tal**, Associate Professor in the Department of Desert Ecology, Ben Gurion University, and Visiting Serling Israeli Scholar, MSU; and Dr. **Tamar Zohary**, Former Director of Lake Kinneret Laboratory.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GENOCIDE TESTIMONIES FACULTY/STUDENT WORKSHOP

Michigan State University recently subscribed to the USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive, a streaming video database of interviews with survivors and witnesses of genocide. The archive currently contains testimonies from the Holocaust (Shoah), the Armenian Genocide, the Nanjing Massacre, and the Rwandan Genocide. The database includes minute-by-minute subject, name, and geographic indexing, allowing for fairly sophisticated searching. The projects are searchable and storable for return viewing.

Twenty-three faculty and graduate students from across the University, including ten Jewish Studies faculty, participated in the workshop. Day One of the workshop focused on research methods using the testimonies. Day Two focused on teaching with the testimonies, mentoring student research, and setting up faculty research projects. We addressed questions including: How are the testimonies constructed? Where do testimonies permit us to go compared with other primary sources? What are the challenges that accompany working with testimonies? How can we successfully design classroom experiences and student research projects using them? Professor Emeritus of History and former Director of Jewish Studies Ken Waltzer and Jewish Studies librarian Deborah Margolis led the workshop. Professor Henry Greenspan of the University of Michigan also contributed to the workshop.

Access to these testimonials is made possible by a generous gift from Edward Brill and Leslie VanBrandt in honor of their brother, Michael Brill.



SPRING 2017 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, JANUARY 20th, 12:00-1:30pm

JEWISH STUDIES FACULTY/STUDENT RESEARCH SEMINAR

STARTUP NATION: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT, THE CULTURAL GEOGRAPHIC LANDSCAPE, AND THE ISRAELI INFOTECH MIGRANTS IN SILICON VALLEY AND BEYOND

Wells Hall B-342

Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the first President of Israel, had over 120 patents and numerous research projects in his name, and went on to establish Hebrew University, the chemical, military and computer industries in Israel, and the Weizmann Institute. Dr. **Tom Bielik** (Weizmann Institute; post-doc at MSU) will focus on the history of Dr. Chaim Weizmann and the Weizmann Institute in fostering research. Dr. **Steven Fraiberg** (MSU, WRAC) will focus on the cultural geographic landscape of the Israeli high-tech industry. Finally, Dr. **Steven Gold** (MSU, Sociology) will discuss the Israeli infotech migrants living in Silicon Valley. Co-sponsored by the College of Arts and Letters, the Asian Studies Center, and James Madison College.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3rd, 10:00-12:00pm

JEWISH STUDIES FACULTY/STUDENT RESEARCH SEMINAR

YIDDISH MEMORY BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE HOLOCAUST

Wells Hall B-342

In this seminar, three historians who utilize Yiddish language in their teaching and research will discuss the intersection of language and memory. Dr. **Jeffrey Veidlinger** (University of Michigan, Director of the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies) will present a multimedia exploration of how Ukrainian Yiddish-speaking Jews remember Jewish life in the prewar Soviet Union. Dr. **Amy Simon** (MSU, History and JMC) will examine how Yiddish diary writers during the Holocaust made sense of their experiences through the collective memory of the history of Jewish suffering. Dr. **Anya Quillitsch** (University of Michigan) will explore how Yiddish language helps us understand Ashkenazi culture after the Holocaust. Dr. **Margot Valles** (MSU, English) will moderate the panel. Lunch will be provided afterwards from 12-1. Co-sponsored by the College of Arts and Letters and James Madison College and the Center for Russian, European and Eurasian Studies.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9th, 7:00-8:30pm

GUEST PANEL

THE LASTING SIGNIFICANCE OF EVIAN AND THE SOSUA SETTLEMENT

Wells Hall B-342

Distinguished MSU alumni **Hugh Bayer** and Dr. **Dennis Laffer** will present on the 1938 Evian Conference and subsequent 1940 Sosua settlement on the North Coast of the Dominican Republic. This conference, convened by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, decided the fate of the fleeing and displaced European Jews. Included in the discussion will be the historical background on why the conference was convened, its content, participants, outcomes; they will also examine the motivations behind then dictator Rafael Trujillo's decision to admit Jewish refugees. Finally, they will discuss the Jewish refugees' experience in building a new life. Co-sponsored by the College of Arts and Letters and James Madison College.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15th, 6:30-8:00pm

DISCUSSION FORUM

STUDENT FORUM ON ANTI-SEMITISM

MSU Hillel Jewish Student Center

MSU Hillel and the Jewish Studies Program come together to hear from students about their experiences with antisemitism and to educate them in how combat discrimination of all kinds. Co-sponsored by MSU Hillel Jewish Student Center and the Office of Institutional Equity.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24th, 10:00-11:30am

JEWISH STUDIES FACULTY/STUDENT RESEARCH SEMINAR

ISRAEL'S WARS WITH HAMAS: THE DILEMMAS OF ASYMMETRIC CONFLICTS

Wells Hall B-243

Yael Aronoff analyzes democracies fighting asymmetric wars, as they attempt to balance traditional military strategies of deterrence with pressures for restraint. Restraining factors include: mitigation of further resentment by affected populations; maintaining a political culture's self-identity as a democracy upholding democratic norms and international laws; and the importance of winning media battles. Dr. Aronoff will examine how international lawyers, military commanders, and non-governmental organizations have come together to reach consensus on what the restraints binding states in these wars should be. Co-sponsored by the College of Arts and Letters, James Madison College, and the Asian Studies Center.

TUESDAY, MARCH 14th, 7:00-8:30pm

GUEST LECTURE

TWO WORLDS COLLIDE: THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT**Club Spartan, third floor of Case Hall**

Alan Dowty, Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Notre Dame University has published seven books and over 130 articles on the Middle East, U.S. foreign policy. He will speak about his forthcoming book on the origins of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which analyzes of the historic forces that brought the conflict into existence and an attempts to answer the question of its inevitability, given the positions and circumstances of the two sides. Co-sponsored by the College of Arts and Letters and James Madison College.

SATURDAY, MARCH 25th, 7:30-10:00pm

STANLEY AND SELMA HOLLANDER JEWISH MUSIC AND ART EVENT

THE YELLOW TICKET**RCAH Theater, lower level of Snyder-Phillips Hall**

The Yellow Ticket is a multimedia event featuring a rare 1918 silent film and an original score by renowned klezmer violinist/vocalist/composer Alicia Svigals, performed live along with virtuoso new-music pianist Marilyn Lerner. Joel Rubin, clarinetist, ethnomusicologist, and Associate Professor of Music and Director of Music Performance at the University of Virginia, will also perform. "The Yellow Ticket" tells the story of an innocent young Jewish woman from a Polish shtetl who is constrained by anti-Semitic restrictions to lead a double life in a brothel while attempting to study medicine in Tsarist Russia. Co-sponsored by the College of Arts and Letters, James Madison College and Residential College in the Arts and Humanities.

SUNDAY, APRIL 2nd, 1:45PM-8:45pm and TUESDAY, APRIL 4TH, 7:00-9:15pm

FILM FESTIVAL

THE ANNUAL ISRAELI FILM FESTIVAL**April 2: Wells Hall B-122; April 4: Wells Hall B-119**

The Jewish Studies Program will show four full-length Israeli films: *Apples from the Desert*, *Arabic Movie*, *Baba Joon* and *Sand Storm*. See pages 7 and 8 for more information on the festival. Co-sponsored by the Union Activities Board, the College of Arts and Letters, the Asian Studies Center, and James Madison College.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5th, 7:00-8:30pm

GUEST LECTURE

MYSTERIES OF THE AFTERLIFE: TRANSCENDING DEATH AND FINDING HEAVEN IN JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM**The Kellogg Center Auditorium**

How did the hope for a blessed afterlife arise and evolve in Judaism, Christianity and Islam? Based on his ongoing research. **Professor J. Edward Wright** (University of Arizona) will address this and other questions related to the power of afterlife beliefs and images of heaven. Co-sponsored by the Muslim Studies Program, the Department of Religious Studies, the College of Arts and Letters and James Madison College.

THURSDAY, APRIL 20th, 7:00-8:30pm25th ANNUAL RABIN HOLOCAUST/3rd MICHAEL BRILL MEMORIAL LECTURE**HISTORY AND CATASTROPHE: THE SECRET WARSAW GHETTO ARCHIVE OF EMANUEL RINGELBLUM****The Lincoln Room of the Kellogg Center**

During World War II Jews resisted not only with guns but also with pen and paper. Even in the face of death they left "time capsules" full of documents, which they buried under the rubble of ghettos and death camps. The Ringelblum Archive in the Warsaw Ghetto buried thousands of documents. But of the 60 people who worked on this mission, only three survived. **Professor Samuel Kassow** (Trinity College) will discuss their story. Co-sponsored by the College of Arts and Letters and James Madison College.

FRIDAY, APRIL 21st, 9:00-5:00pm

STUDENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

ANNUAL JEWISH STUDIES STUDENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE**Wells Hall B-342**

Students will present projects from their Jewish Studies courses, followed by a lunch with Jewish Studies alumni.



Apples from the Desert תפוחים מן המדבר



Arabic Movie סרט ערבי



Baba Joon באבא ג'ון



Sand Storm סופת חול

12th ANNUAL ISRAELI FILM FESTIVAL

On Sunday, April 2nd, and Tuesday, April 4th, the MSU Jewish Studies Program will host the 12th Annual Israeli Film Festival in the B-wing of Wells Hall. Admission is free and a complimentary dinner will be served on Sunday evening. Selection committee: Yael Aronoff, Yuval Benziman, Tom Bielik, Yore Kedem, Ellen Rothfeld, Ronen Steinberg, Kaila Waineo and Jerrold Weiss.

SUNDAY, APRIL 2ND

Apples from the Desert (1:45-3:50pm)

2014. Hebrew. A film by Matti Harari & Arik Lubetzky.

Rebecca Abarbanel lives in Jerusalem, the only daughter of an Orthodox Jewish family. Unhappy with her life, Rebecca becomes attracted to the secular world. Then one day she runs away with a young man to a kibbutz in the desert. This movie won the Chicago Festival of Israeli Cinema 2015 BEVIE Award for Best Feature Film. Discussion afterwards led by Professor **Yael Aronoff**.

Arabic Movie (4:00-5:45pm)

2015. Documentary. Arabic, Hebrew. Directed by Eyal Sagui Bizawe and Sara Tsifroni. Many Israelis are still nostalgic about the old Friday afternoon ritual, back when television had only one channel. Everyone would watch the Arabic movie of the week. But how was Israel's official TV station able to transcend hostile boundaries to obtain these films, and why did it show them? The Arabic-language movie from Egypt allowed some Israelis to "return" to their original homeland, and let others catch a glimpse of their neighbors across the border. They briefly shared the same cultural heroes as everyone else in the Middle East. But this film about the richness and intensity of Egyptian cinema also raises many questions. Winner of the Art and Culture Award, Docaviv International Film Festival, 2015. This film will be followed by a dinner. Introduction by **Dany and Ellen Rothfeld**.

Baba Joon (6:30-8:45pm) Discussion and Q & A led by the Director, Yuval Delshad.

2015. Farsi, Hebrew.

Yitzhak runs the turkey farm his father built after they emigrated from Iran to Israel. When his son Moti turns thirteen, Yitzhak teaches him the trade, hoping that he will continue the proud family tradition. But Moti's passion is fixing up old cars. Soon enough Yitzhak will learn that his son is just as stubborn as he is. Ophir (Israeli Academy Award) for Best Film 2015. Israel's submission for the U.S. Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

TUESDAY, APRIL 4TH

Sand Storm (7:00-9:15pm)

2016. Arabic. Directed by Elite Zexer.

As wedding festivities begin in a Bedouin village in Southern Israel, Jalila finds herself in the awkward position of hosting her husband Suliman's marriage to a second, younger wife. Meanwhile, Jalila discovers her eldest daughter Layla's involvement with a young man from her university. Jalila tries to bury the indignity of her husband and his bride living next door, while attempting to contain Layla's situation, but Layla sees a different life for herself. Winner of six Ophirs (Israeli Academy Awards) including Best Film, Best Director and Best Supporting Actress 2016. Israel's submission for the U.S. Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. First time that Israel's submission is entirely in Arabic. Discussion leader to be announced.

STUDENT AND ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

Ariel Bergman is a Junior studying Interior Design and she is a Jewish Studies Minor. She first began her Minor in Jewish Studies freshman year, taking Hebrew with Professor Marc Bernstein. Last summer, with an Albert and Sharie Gladner Scholarship from Jewish Studies, she participated in the Jewish Studies Study Abroad at Hebrew University. She says that her favorite memory about studying abroad was being able to learn about Israel and Judaism first-hand—going on field trips and learning about the sites, instead of just classroom work. After graduation, Ariel plans to work in the design field and hopes to incorporate Jewish Studies into her career.

Bradley Berry is a senior International Relations student in James Madison College and a Jewish Studies Minor. He says that “my college experience as a whole would be completely different and, might I say, void without the experiences and community provided by the Jewish Studies Minor. As an International Relations Major, the classes I took on Israel and Jewish Studies expanded my knowledge of a complex culture, history and politics. In particular, my Jewish Studies study abroad to Israel (made possible by a generous Ed Levy scholarship) took what I learned in classes and unbound the books into real life experiences. I will never forget the lessons we learned on our trips, including the visit to the ruins of a Palestinian village named Lifta. As an IR major, I believed that conflicts like the Palestinian- Israel conflict can be resolved by simply redrawing borders. However, while negotiations for a two state solution that include this are necessary, it is also important on the grassroots level to foster mutual understanding. My time in Israel has given me experiences to draw on and knowledge that I have applied back at MSU and I will continue to do so into the future.”

Alexandra Burkow graduated from Michigan State University in 2011 with BA in Political Theory and Constitutional Democracy from James Madison College with a Specialization in Jewish Studies. The summer before her senior year, Alex attended the Study Aboard Program in Israel at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, led by Professor Yael Aronoff. She took Professor Aronoff’s Senior Seminar on Israeli Foreign Policy. It was a combination of her experiences abroad, her courses at MSU, and some helpful guidance from professors, that led to Alex’s decision to complete her Master’s degree in Counter-Terrorism Studies at the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya (IDC). After living aboard for a year, she began her career at the Washtenaw County Sheriff’s Office as a Court Service Liaison. Alex now is a Community Response Survivor Advocate for FirstStep, a non-profit agency that helps victims and survivors of domestic and sexual assault in Wayne County. She cites her unique background and experience for her success in this field.

Rebecca Farnum graduated from Michigan State University in May 2008 with degrees in Anthropology, International Relations, Interdisciplinary Humanities, and International Development and a Minor in Jewish Studies. A summer spent studying abroad with MSU Jewish Studies, enabled by the Ed Levy Scholarship, informed the blending of her environmental, political, and interfaith interests. After graduating, Becca was awarded a Marshall Scholarship to study for an MSc in Water Security and International Development at the University of East Anglia. Her thesis on “Virtual Water, Equivocal Law” included Israel as a case study. Becca is now a doctoral researcher at King’s College London, where she studies Environmental Peacebuilding in the Middle East and North Africa - a topic she first heard of from EcoPeace Middle East while on study abroad with Professor Eric Aronoff.

Sarah Klein is a senior, with a Major in Honors Psychology and a Minor in Jewish Studies. She has already completed her Jewish Studies minor. She also participated in the Jewish Studies Summer Study Abroad Program at Hebrew University in Israel in 2015. Sarah has completed two Hebrew-language research projects with Professor Kedem, one about the Reform Movement in Israel, and one about how women are portrayed in the ultra-Orthodox community and media in Israel. Her favorite courses were Jewish Mysticism and her Independent Study projects. She will present one of these projects at our first annual Jewish Studies Undergraduate Research Conference this spring. Sarah intends to become a Reform Rabbi and has just interviewed at Hebrew Union College. Sarah also plans to work in the metro-Detroit Jewish community.

Geoffrey Levin graduated from James Madison College in 2011 with a degree in International Relations and a Minor in Jewish Studies. He is a PhD candidate in Hebrew & Judaic Studies/History at New York University. His focus on Israel Studies and Jewish History began at MSU, where he took courses taught by Professors Yael Aronoff and Ken Waltzer for his Jewish Studies Specialization. Geoff’s paper for Professor Aronoff’s Senior Seminar in Israeli Foreign Policy was later published in the scholarly journal *Israel Affairs*. In 2010, Geoff received MSU’s Jewish Studies Student Achievement Award. With an Ed Levy Scholarship from the Jewish Studies Program, Geoff spent his final semester at the University of Haifa. Geoff started a Master’s degree in Middle East Studies at Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Bologna and studied Arabic in Morocco. Geoff began his PhD at NYU in 2013. He will soon teach his own “Israeli Politics” course at Rutgers University. His current research explores how American Jewish organizations dealt with Palestinian/Arab rights issues in the 1950s and 1960s.



Rebecca Farnum



Bradley Berry, center



Alexandra Burkow



Ariel Bergman, center



Sarah Klein, baking challah at MSU Hillel



Geoffrey Levin

FACULTY NEWS

NEW AFFILIATED FACULTY: BENJAMIN LORCH

Benjamin Lorch teaches public affairs and political philosophy at James Madison College. He received his BA from St. John's College and his PhD in political theory from Boston College. His research focuses on classical and medieval political thought, particularly on the relation between philosophy and religion, and he has published articles on Plato and Xenophon in peer-reviewed political science journals. Professor Lorch also conducts research in Jewish thought. He has delivered public lectures at MSU on Jewish political thinkers including Gershom Scholem and Maimonides, and most recently he published an article on Maimonides' Guide of the Perplexed, "Maimonides on Prophecy and the Moral Law" in *Interpretation: a Journal of Political Philosophy*.



FACULTY HIGHLIGHT: KIRSTEN FERMAGLICH

This summer, **Kirsten Fermaglich** was selected as an incoming co-editor of the journal *American Jewish History*, the flagship journal of her subfield. Along with Adam Mendelsohn, Associate Professor of History and Director of the Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies and Research at the University of Cape Town, and Daniel Soyer, Professor of History at Fordham University, Dr. Fermaglich will be responsible for recruiting, editing, sending out for review, and helping to publish articles for the nearly 125-year old journal. The position is a prestigious one, and all three co-editors are excited to be able to continue with the excellence of the journal forged by their predecessors.

Yael Aronoff will give a public lecture on the political psychology of Israeli Prime Ministers at the Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada, on behalf of the AJS Distinguished Lectureship Program on January 26, 2017. She will also present on the same topic at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor on February 7, 2017. Professor Aronoff is co-Chair of the International Relations section for the Israel Studies Association's Annual Conference, June 12-14, 2017, at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts. In that conference, she will participate in a panel, "Israel and the World After the Trump Election" and present a paper entitled "Israel's Wars with Hamas: Lessons Learned?" She is working on her book manuscript, *The Dilemmas of Asymmetric Conflicts: Navigating Deterrence and Democratic Constraints*.

Kirsten Fermaglich's manuscript, *A Rosenberg by Any Other Name: New York City Jews and Name-Changing in the Twentieth Century* is now under contract by New York University Press. Anticipated release date is the fall of 2017.

Steven Gold's chapter entitled "Ethnic Economies" was published in *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity and Nationalism*, edited by John Stone, Rutledge Dennis, Polly Rizova, Anthony D. Smith, and Xiaoshuo Hou. At the American Sociological Association Meeting in Seattle on August 24, 2016, he presented "Latino Jews" during the International Migration roundtable discussion. He completed a photo essay, *International Students in the United States*, published in *Society* in August 2016. He recently reviewed *Summoned: Identification and Religious Life in a Jewish Neighborhood* by Iddo Tavory in *Choice*, October 2016. Dr. Gold was a discussant on the panel "Migrating Intellectuals: Who gets to be an 'Elite Migrant'?" in Migration without Boundaries: An Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Conference on Migration at Michigan State University, October 22, 2016.

Benjamin Lorch's "Maimonides on Prophecy and the Moral Law" was published in *Interpretation: a Journal of Political Philosophy*, volume 43, number 1, fall 2016 issue.

Anna Norris will present a paper on Marcel Ophüls' film *The Troubles We've Seen*, examining the role of media in representing contemporary conflicts and genocides, at the conference on Conflicts and Memory to be held at the Université du Maine, Le Mans, France in April 2017.

Lev Raphael is currently learning Dutch to do research for his 26th book, a historical novel which concerns the Jewish expulsion from England in 1290 and their subsequent migration to the Netherlands. Parallel to his research, he received a College of Arts and Letters/Office of Study Abroad travel grant to explore establishing a summer abroad program at the University of Ghent, possibly as early as 2018.

Amy Simon is chairing the panel "Postwar Reconstruction: the Meanings and Limits of Rebuilding Jewish Life in Europe," at the 48th meeting of the Association for Jewish Studies Conference on December 20th where she will also present "We Have Struck the Enemy with a Hard Blow: Ghetto Diarists' Perceptions of Allied Rescue." Professor Simon will give a community talk, "Holocaust Diaries: Primary Sources of Private Lives," at Fox Run senior residence on March 16, 2017. She will give a class, "The 'Model' Concentration Camp Theresienstadt," at Southfield's Congregation Shaarey Zedek under the aegis of Adult Jewish Learning for the Jewish Federation of Metro Detroit. This is part of a series of lectures surrounding the Detroit Symphony Orchestra's performance of "The Defiant Requiem: Verdi at Terezin."

Margot Valles had a book chapter co-authored with Thelma Fenster, entitled "Elia Lvita's Yiddish Bovo d'Antona: Pulp Fiction for Women?" which appeared in *The Epic Imagination in Medieval Literature: Essays in Honor of Alice M. Colby-Hall* as part of the Romance Monographs series at the University of Mississippi. She is also presenting "Translating Yiddish: Intra-Communal Exegesis / Extra-Communal Conversion" at the American Comparative Literature Association Annual Meeting on July 6 to 9 in Utrecht, the Netherlands, and presenting "Food and Religious Identity in Early Yiddish Epic" at the 2017 International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University from May 11 to 14 in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Kenneth Waltzer will present "The University of California Principles against Intolerance: a Standard for Other Universities?" at the Association for Jewish Studies, December 20, 2016, in San Diego, CA; and "Buchenwald Boys in the Palmach After World War II," at the Western Jewish Studies meeting, March 26-27, 2017, at Claremont, CA. His essay, "Moving Together and Alone: Boys on a Transport from Aschwitz to Buchenwald," will appear in Joanna Beata Michlic, ed., *Jewish Families in Europe, 1930-Present: History, Representation, and Memory* (Brandeis, 2017). A different version will be in Clare Zalc and Tal Bruttman, eds., *Microhistories of the Holocaust* (Berghann, 2017).

MSU RECOGNIZES OUR ENDOWED CHAIRS

We are appreciative that the University has recently recognized our two Endowed Chairs. As President Lou Anna K. Simon was quoted in MSU Today, the University's weekly bulletin circulated to faculty and staff, "being able to offer endowed chairs helps us compete for top talent and support the culture of excellence that today's challenges demand." The article explains that part of MSU's recently-launched 1.5 billion dollar capital campaign, Empower Extraordinary, goes towards furthering academic innovation and increasing its number of endowed chairs.

Professor **Yael Aronoff**, the Michael and Elaine Serling and Friends Chair of Israel Studies, was recently interviewed by MSU Today on the impact of her position as an Endowed Chair on her teaching and research. Professor Aronoff is quoted in the article as saying, "MSU was the sixth university in the country to establish such an endowed chair. It's important because it allows me to contribute in my teaching and research to a growing, dynamic and interdisciplinary field of study for which there is much student demand and allows me to bring MSU students to Israel on our faculty-led study abroad programs. I am able to conduct research in Israel practically every summer, to bring top scholars in the field to MSU and to promote collaborative research in the field."

Professor **Amy Simon** was officially welcomed by Michigan State University at the Holocaust Memorial Center in West Bloomfield by James Madison College Dean Sherman Garnett and College of Arts and Letters Dean Christopher Long. At this ceremony, Dr. Simon discussed the challenges and the importance of teaching about the Holocaust. Her Chair, the William and Audrey Farber Chair in Holocaust Studies and European Jewish History, is sited within James Madison College and the Department of History, and is a core position within the Jewish Studies Program. She was introduced by Dean Garnett, who said that the Chair signifies "a perpetual change of our university life." The College of Arts and Letters recently featured her on their website, where she is quoted: "I am thrilled and honored to be joining the MSU faculty. The areas of Holocaust and Jewish Studies continue to be important and relevant not just historically, but also in the context of current events. I am therefore pleased to have the opportunity to take a leading role in the continuation and development of these studies at a university so clearly dedicated to their future." In addition, Professor Simon was recognized by the University at Investiture, a ceremony and reception honoring newly endowed chairs. President Lou Anna K. Simon and Provost June Pierce Youatt spoke at this ceremony and presented her a medallion.

Top photo: Professor Aronoff in MSU Today's article recognizing Endowed Chairs.

Bottom photo (from left to right): David Farber and Nanci Farber, family of William and Audrey Farber; David Groves, Vice President of Michigan State University Development; Professor Amy Simon; Michael Serling and Elaine Serling, President of the Jewish Studies Advisory Board, and donors to Professor Aronoff and Professor Simon's Endowed Chairs; and Gary Karp, President of the Holocaust Memorial Center.



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