

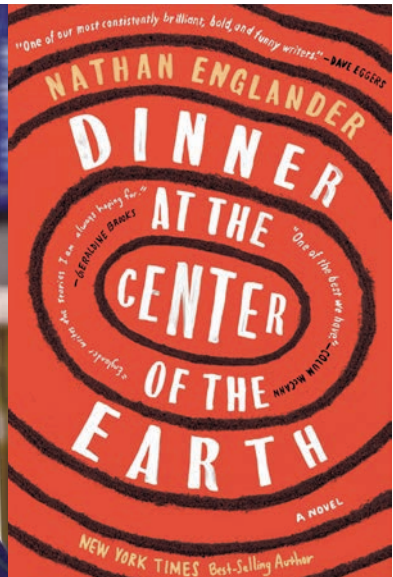
The
MICHAEL AND ELAINE
SERLING
INSTITUTE

*for Jewish Studies
and Modern Israel*

spring 2019 newsletter



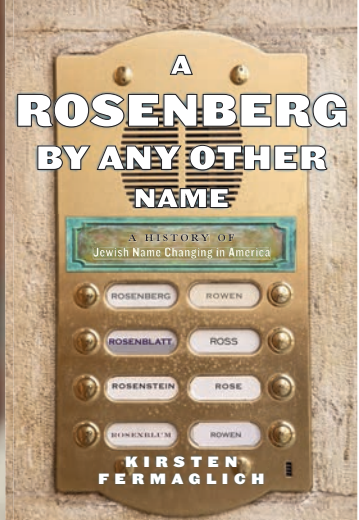
Nathan Englander



Doris Bergen Photo credit: Michael Rajzman



Kirsten Fermaglich



The Brothers Yares

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

We are proud to present to you the inaugural issue of our newsletter as the Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel. We are honored to have our Jewish Studies Program now bear the Serling name. Michael Serling has been President of our Advisory Board for two decades, and both Michael and Elaine have been engaged with our program throughout those many years. Our Institute would be unrecognizable without their commitment and generosity. They established the Michael and Elaine Serling and Friends Chair in Israel Studies, are major contributors to the William and Audrey Farber Family Chair in Holocaust Studies and European Jewish History, to the Serling Israeli Visiting Scholar Endowment, to the Jewish Studies Endowment, and to the Serling Israeli Culture Endowment. Their most recent donation was for a new endowment in “Modern Israel” in our Institute. This fund 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 students.

This last semester has been one of high highs, and low lows. The news of our renaming is among the highs. And the lows included the shock of the deadliest attack against Jews in American history at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. In our grief, the Jewish Studies and broader MSU community came together. We honored the victims at a student initiated vigil at Hillel, and came together in the service held by our local synagogues, Kehillat Israel and Shaarey Zedek, with interfaith clergy and members of the broader community. We also sponsored our own teach-in by six of our faculty and one of our advisory board members (**Yael Aronoff, Kirsten Fermaglich, David Mittleman, Amy Simon, Margot Valles, Laura Yares, and Ken Waltzer**). At the teach-in we honored the victims, celebrated the Pittsburgh Jewish community, and reflected on the meaning of the tragedy. We also examined the multiple contexts of the event, including the history of antisemitism and its current permutations, and the important work of HIAS (an organization based on Jewish values and history that helps refugees). We received wide support at MSU with 18 colleges, departments, and programs co-sponsoring the teach-in and with many students, faculty, and community members in attendance.

We take this opportunity to appreciate the importance of our role as educators and how we can contribute to education concerning diversity and inclusion on campus. This includes our 25 courses and co-curricular activities each year, as well as our workshops for residential advisors on identifying and reporting antisemitism on campus, and our upcoming 4th annual forum in collaboration with Hillel where students share their experiences with antisemitism and learn about reporting mechanisms.

Fortunately, we still had much to celebrate this semester, and have much to look forward to in the coming semester. We sponsored our largest conference, “Israel at 70: Complexity, Challenge, and Creativity.” Our own **Kirsten Fermaglich** has been receiving much acclaim for her recently released book, *A Rosenberg by Any Other Name: A History of Jewish Name Changing in America*. This spring she will be giving a talk on campus about the wider implications of her book, and facilitating discussion. **Doris Bergen**, Chancellor Rose and Ray Wolfe Professor of Holocaust Studies in the Department of History and Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto will give the annual Rabin/Brill Holocaust lecture entitled “No Secret: Sexual Violence in the Holocaust,” and discuss how analyzing this painful topic adds to our understanding of the Holocaust.

Other highlights this spring include our partnership with the MSU libraries to host acclaimed short story writer and novelist **Nathan Englander**, who will discuss his most recent book, *Dinner at the Center of the Earth*. We will sponsor a book discussion of his novel, along with discussions of 4 other works, and are offering complementary books to students, faculty, and community members wishing to take part. Another highlight is our 14th annual Israeli Film Festival which will showcase four recent award-winning Israeli films. We look forward to sponsoring our third annual Serling Institute Undergraduate Research Conference, a musical performance by the **Brother Yares**, actors performing selections from the play *Indecent*, and a number of other world-class scholars. It will be another great semester contributing to diversity and inclusion, building an intellectual community, and supporting our students.

Yael Aronoff – Professor and Director

**With the naming gift, the MSU Jewish Studies Program
officially changed its name to the Michael and Elaine
Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel**



Michael and Elaine Serling announcing their naming gift at the Israel at 70 Conference



The Serlings with many of the conference participants



The Serlings at the Conference with Deans Chris Long, Sherman Garnett, Steve Esquith, Director of the Institute Yael Aronoff, former Director Ken Waltzer, and Oded Shoseyov



Dean Sherman Garnett, Israel at 70 Conference



Mike Aronoff, Nadav Shelef, and Yael Aronoff



Provost June Youatt



Alon Tal, Elaine Serling, and Bill Slott performing a song composed by Elaine Serling



Naomi Chazan



Gilead Sher, Saliba Sarsar, and Yuval Benzinim



Dean Christopher Long



Oded Shoyseyov



Professors Benjamin Lorch, Kenneth Waltzer, and Yore Kedem



ISRAEL AT 70: COMPLEXITY, CHALLENGE, AND CREATIVITY

fall 2018 conference

Michigan State University hosted the largest academic conference on Israel in its history on September 16 and 17. Over 260 faculty, students and community members from East Lansing, the Detroit metropolitan area, Ann Arbor and Grand Rapids attended the recent two-day conference.

The conference brought together 40 prominent scholars from Israel and throughout the United States, including MSU's own experts, to discuss transformations in Israeli culture, society, politics and innovation. The symposium received extensive support from MSU with 14 different colleges, departments and programs co-sponsoring. MSU's institutional support was dramatic. The Provost, June Youatt, and six deans attended the opening lunch, dinner, and/or various sessions.

Fortuitous timing added another layer to the excitement. Just three days before the start of the conference Michael and Elaine Serling signed documents for their substantial and impactful naming gift for the MSU Jewish Studies Program. With the naming gift, the MSU Jewish Studies Program officially changed its name to The Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel at MSU. Both Michael and Elaine addressed the conference and expressed their excitement at the launch of the Institute.

One panel presented on American efforts to mediate peace between Israelis and Palestinians. The panel was moderated by Gilead Sher, the renowned Chief of Staff and policy coordinator to former Prime Minister Ehud Barak. He served as chief

negotiator at the Camp David summit in 2000 and co-chief at the Taba talks in 2001 and has written several books covering his experiences. He currently heads the Center for Applied Negotiations and is a senior researcher at the Tel Aviv Institute for National Security Studies.

Other topics discussed ranged from the controversies over how Jerusalem might be divided and/or shared in future peace agreements, to the many 'lessons to be learned' from cooperating grass-roots Israeli and Palestinian non-governmental organizations. Also, the constructive role that Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and UAE might play in the peace process were debated.

In the evening keynote speaker, Sher, gave a thought-provoking and inspiring vision for moving things forward to an eventual peace agreement. The hope for peace that infused the panels and keynote was captured with a sing-a-long by Elaine Serling, accompanied by Visiting Serling Israeli scholar, Dr. Alon Tal and kibbutznik, Cantor Bill Slott. The high-spirited music session ended with Elaine's original song, "Sing a Song for Peace" as over 100 people joined in!

Interesting dialogues developed during the portion of the conference on shifts in Israeli society, culture and politics over the past 70 years. Topics ranged from an examination of the portrayal of women in Israeli film, to teaching pedagogies for Israeli and Palestinian students studying creative writing in the same classroom, to shifts in Israeli nationalisms.

A highlight of the day was a talk by Naomi Chazan, Professor Emerita of Political Science at the Hebrew University, warning of illiberal trends in Israeli society and forces challenging those trends. Chazan served 3 terms as a member of the Knesset on behalf of the Meretz Party and has authored 8 books on comparative politics. She is among the founders of the International Women's Commission for an Israel-Palestinian peace.

Another thought-provoking panel discussed the boundaries of legitimate criticism of Israel and where such criticism crosses into antisemitism.

The second day of the conference focused on the many strands of Israeli innovation in agriculture, water technology, the environment, entrepreneurship, business start-ups and bio-medical engineering. For example,

Professor Oded Shoseyov of the Hebrew University gave a talk about how Israeli genetic engineers discovered the methods to cultivate previously unknown substances existing in nature that can now be used in food, water and bio-medicine. Dr. Shoseyov has authored more than 160 scientific publications and is the inventor/co-inventor of 45 patents.

MSU professors Dr. Galit Pelled and Dr. Assaf Gilad, originally from Israel, gave exhilarating presentations about their research in bio-medical engineering at the Institute of Quantitative Health and Sciences at Michigan State. This conference is the outgrowth of MSU's existing strengths in Israel Studies, and the new endowment in Modern Israel signifies continued growth in this area.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Complementary copies of all books for designated book discussions are available in the Serling Institute office (Wells Hall C-712) for those faculty, students, and community members reading the book before each discussion.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24th, 6:30-8:00pm

GUEST LECTURE

L'HEAVEK: WRESTLING WITH THE DIVINE IN SYRIAN JEWISH MEXICO CITY

JMC Library, 332 Case Hall

Dr. **Evelyn María Dean-Olmsted** (Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras) will analyze how in the late 2000s, young Shami (Damascene) and Halebi (Aleppan) Jewish Mexicans were coming of age amidst a boom in ultra-Orthodox or Haredi outreach activity, and how they struggled to craft a religiosity that was both personally meaningful and intelligible to those in their social networks.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31st, 12:00-2:00pm

BOOK DISCUSSION

PASSING ILLUSIONS

Wells Hall B-342

Dr. **Kerry Wallach** (Associate Professor and Chair of German Studies at Gettysburg College) will lead a book discussion on her book, *Passing Illusions*, which examines constructions of German-Jewish visibility and instances in the 1920s and early 1930s when it was concealed, revealed, or contested.

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

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

STUDENT FORUM ON ANTISEMITISM

MSU Hillel Jewish Student Center, 360 Charles St, East Lansing, MI 48823

Forum for students to share and/or hear from fellow students about experiences of antisemitism at MSU. Hillel Staff and Serling faculty will be at the forum. A kosher dinner from Woody's Oasis will be provided.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10th, 7:00-8:30pm

MUSIC PERFORMANCE

THE BROTHER YARES: FROM THE MID-ATLANTIC TO THE MIDDLE EAST, A ONE OF A KIND PAIRING OF JEWISH TROUBADOURS

The Kellogg Center Auditorium

Join the Brothers Yares (Gavri-Tov and Ami) for a music-filled journey stretching from their pastoral upbringing in the sprawling New Jersey suburbs to the hills of Jerusalem, the shores of Jaffa and back again. Their musical experience covers a vast swath of Jewish, Israeli, American, and Middle Eastern music captured by the great harmonic depths of contrabass, 12-string acoustic guitar, and the beautiful pairing of Gavri-Tov and Ami's voices.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13th, 7:00-8:30pm

BOOK DISCUSSION

DINNER AT THE CENTER OF THE EARTH

Wells Hall B-342

Faculty, students, and community members are welcome to join a discussion of **Nathan Englander's** new book, *Dinner at the Center of the Earth* in anticipation of his lecture on this book on February 25th.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22nd, 2:00-3:30pm

FACULTY RESEARCH SEMINAR

"NOT EVERYONE IS PREPARED TO REMAKE THEMSELVES": WHAT NAME CHANGING MEANS IN THE 21st CENTURY

256 Old Horticulture

In New York City in the 20th Century, Jews officially changed their names at a much higher rate than other groups. Antisemitism and Jewish desires for upward mobility combined to help propel this phenomenon. But by the 21st Century, name changing had become a very different phenomenon, one that affected poor people of color disproportionately and -- while racism was still a factor -- for very different reasons as well. Research will be presented by Dr. **Kirsten Fermaglich** (Associate Professor, History and Jewish Studies).

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22nd, 3:30-5:00pm

BOOK DISCUSSION

A ROSENBERG BY ANY OTHER NAME

256 Old Horticulture

Faculty, students, and the community are welcome to discuss with Dr. **Kirsten Fermaglich** (Associate Professor, History and Jewish Studies) her recently published book, *A Rosenberg by Any Other Name: a History of Jewish Name Changing in America* with NYU Press.

SPRING 2019

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25th, 7:00-8:30pm

GUEST LECTURE — SPONSORED BY THE SERLING INSTITUTE AND MSU LIBRARIES

AN EVENING WITH NATHAN ENGLANDER: DINNER AT THE CENTER OF THE EARTH

MSU Library's Green Room

Nathan Englander (Distinguished Writer-in-Residence, New York University) will discuss his recently published book, *Dinner at the Center of the Earth*. He is also the author of the novel *The Ministry of Special Cases* and the story collections *For the Relief of Unbearable Urges* and *What We Talk About When We Talk About Anne Frank*—winner of the Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award and finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. The event will be followed by Nathan Englander signing books.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13th, 7:00-8:30pm

BOOK DISCUSSION

THE MESSIANIC IDEA IN JUDAISM BY GERSHOM SCHOLEM

Wells Hall B-342

Faculty, students, and community members are welcome to discuss selections of *The Messianic Idea in Judaism*.

SUNDAY, MARCH 24th, 1:00-8:45, and MONDAY, MARCH 25th, 7:00-9:00

FILM FESTIVAL

14th ANNUAL ISRAELI FILM FESTIVAL

Wells Hall B-122 and B-115

The Serling Institute will show four full-length Israeli films: *Muhi: Generally Temporary; And then She Arrived; Shoelaces;* and *The Unorthodox*. See pages 9 and 10 for more information on the festival.

FRIDAY, APRIL 12th, 9:00am-5:00pm

CONFERENCE

THIRD ANNUAL SERLING INSTITUTE UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Wells Hall B-243

Students will present projects from their Jewish Studies courses. Lunch with Jewish Studies alumna Sara Kirsch ('11) will be provided during the conference. Sara is currently resides in Israel working as a Digital Copywriter at Quality Score, one of the leading digital marketing agencies in the Middle East, and a blogger for 'Olim In Tech' in Israel.

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

PLAY DISCUSSION

INDECENT

Wells Hall B-243

Faculty, students, and community members will come together to discuss *Indecent* by **Paula Vogel**.

THURSDAY, APRIL 18th, 7:00-8:30pm

RABIN/BRILL HOLOCAUST LECTURE

NO SECRET: SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE HOLOCAUST

Lincoln Room of the Kellogg Center, MSU

Doris Bergen will discuss sexual violence during the Holocaust against Jews and non-Jews, against women and girls, and also boys and men. Professor Bergen is the Chancellor Rose and Ray Wolfe Professor of Holocaust Studies in the Department of History and Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto. She is the author or editor of five books, including *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust* (3rd edition 2016).

MONDAY, APRIL 22nd, 7:00-8:30pm

PLAY PERFORMANCE

INDECENT

RCAH Theater (Basement of 362 Bogue St, East Lansing, MI 48825)

Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright **Paula Vogel's** *Indecent* is a deeply moving play inspired by the true events surrounding the controversial 1923 Broadway debut of Sholem Asch's *God of Vengeance*. Members of the cast and crew will present selections from the play *Indecent*, which they are performing in June.

SATURDAY, APRIL 27th, 8:00pm

CO-SPONSORED EVENT

SHOSTAKOVICH SYMPHONY 13 PROJECT

The Wharton Center's Great Hall (MSU)

This concert features the very powerful Shostakovich Symphony No. 13 "Babi Yar," and "I Never Saw Another Butterfly" by Charles Davidson. A setting of poems by the renowned Soviet writer Evgeny Yevtushenko, Shostakovich's work significantly memorialized the 1941 massacre of Ukrainian Jews by Nazi forces at Baba Yar.



Photo from *And Then She Arrived*



Photo from *Muhi: Generally Temporary*



Photo from *Shoelaces*



Photo from *The Unorthodox*

Film festival committee: Yael Aronoff, Yore Kedem, Galit Pelled, Ellen Rothfeld, Ronen Steinberg, and Jerry Weiss.

Fourteenth Annual ISRAELI FILM FESTIVAL

Sunday, March 24th,
1:00-8:45pm
Wells Hall B-122

*Muhi: Generally Temporary • And
Then She Arrived • Shoelaces*

Monday, March 25th,
7:00-9:00pm
Wells Hall B-115
The Unorthodox

Subtitles in English.
Complimentary dinner
catered by Woody's
provided at 5:30,
after *And Then
She Arrived*.

FILM SELECTION

SUNDAY, MARCH 24th — Wells Hall B-122

Muhi: Generally Temporary • מוּחִי

1:00-3:00pm. Hebrew, Arabic. A film by Rina Castelnuovo and Tamir Elterman, 2017.

For seven years Muhi, a brave and spirited boy from Gaza, has been living in Tel Hashomer, an Israeli hospital, the only home he has ever known. Caught between two homes and two peoples, he is raised by Israeli volunteers in the hospital and his grandfather. His time at the hospital is running out and Muhi now faces the most critical choices of his life. DocAviv Film Festival, Best Documentary of 2017. Golden Kapok Award, Best Documentary Director 2017, Guangzhou Documentary Film Festival, China.

And Then She Arrived • ואז היא הגיעה

3:15-5:30pm. Hebrew. A film by Roei Florentin, 2017.

Charming romantic comedy about Dan Freilich, a handsome, easy-going nerd who is quite sure his future is organized for the next 50 years. The plan is that soon he will marry Tamar, his high school sweetheart. That's all he needs...until he meets Meirav, a waitress from Jerusalem. Chicago Festival of Israeli Cinema, Israeli Film Festival New York, Miami Jewish Film Festival.

Followed by a complimentary dinner catered by Woody's Oasis Mediterranean Deli.

Shoelaces • שרוכים

6:30-8:45pm. Hebrew. A film by Jacob Goldwasser, 2018.

Moving, crowd-pleasing drama about the complicated relationship between an aging father and his special-needs son. Reuben's kidneys are failing and his son Gadi wants to donate one of his own kidneys to help save his father's life. However, the transplant committee objects, claiming that Reuben, Gadi's sole legal guardian, has a conflict of interest. Winner, Audience Choice Award for Best Feature Film, Israel Film Festival in Los Angeles 2018. Nominated for 8 Ophir Awards (Israel's Academy Awards) including Best Picture of the Year.

MONDAY, MARCH 25th — Wells Hall B-115

The Unorthodox • הבלתי רשמיים

7:00-9:00pm. Hebrew, Yiddish. A film by Eliran Malka, 2018.

When Yakov Cohen's daughter is expelled from school for ethnic reasons, he decides to fight back. It's 1983 and Yakov is just a regular guy. But he has the will and the passion to take action, and a belief that he and other Sephardic Jews should be able to hold their heads up proudly. This close-to-reality comedy drama shows how he and his friends helped found the Shas party. Opening film at the 2018 Jerusalem Film Festival.

STUDENT AND ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

MEGAN HOLLAND '11

Megan graduated from James Madison College with an International Relations major and a Jewish Studies specialization. She studied abroad in Israel during the summer of 2010, and subsequently completed her senior seminar with Dr. Aronoff. She also took "Jews and Antisemitism" with Dr. Waltzer. After graduating Megan moved to Washington, DC to work for the Humane Society Legislative Fund. She spent her time there focusing on federal animal welfare policy and lobbying efforts. She recently moved back to the Lansing area, and plans to complete a second degree in the veterinary field through Michigan State University.

SARA KIRSCH '11

Sara graduated from James Madison College with a major in International Relations and a Minor in Jewish Studies. She is currently working as a Digital Copywriter at Quality Score, one of the leading digital marketing agencies in the Middle East. She is also the blogger for 'Olim In Tech,' a volunteer-led community geared towards empowering and connecting newcomers to Israel who work or want to be working in hi-tech. At MSU, her most memorable and significant courses were under Professor Kenneth Waltzer and Professor Yael Aronoff. Professor Waltzer's course was on "Jews and Antisemitism," and Professor Aronoff's class focused on regional politics in the Middle East. "I became highly engaged and intrigued in Middle East peace and conflict resolution as well as in Israeli Foreign policy."

SIDRAH KOVAN '21

Sidrah is a sophomore majoring in Arts and Humanities with a Minor in Jewish Studies and Modern Israel. She has taken two semesters of Hebrew with Dr. Yore Kedem and has taken a business course with Serling Visiting Scholar Dr. Harry Yuklea. While taking elementary Hebrew with Dr. Kedem, she learned about the Jewish Studies Study Abroad program. After being awarded the Levy scholarship, the study abroad was made

possible for her to attend. "I had a class with both Dr. Kedem and with Dr. Mendelsson. We learned about Israel from a multitude of perspectives by speaking with people living there, taking field trips to different areas in Israel, and learning the history of the country. From this trip, I learned about the complexity of Israel's history. As a result of this trip, I plan to continue my work within the Jewish community on campus and elsewhere." Sidrah currently plans on pursuing an internship in Israel over the summer with one of the startups she learned about during Dr. Yuklea's course. She plans on working for Jewish non-profits in the future.

DANIEL KUHN '09

Since graduating from James Madison College with specializations in Jewish Studies and Muslim Studies, Daniel has lived in Washington D.C. He currently works at the Government Accountability Office (GAO), a legislative branch federal agency that works for Congress to audit the executive branch and ensure that taxpayer dollars are used effectively, efficiently, and as intended. Daniel focuses on homeland security and justice issues, including a wide range of areas including: drug enforcement, border security, immigration, firearm enforcement, the Coast Guard, and recovery from natural disasters, among others. Daniel has published reports in areas as diverse as the James Webb Space Telescope and other NASA projects, drinking water quality near military bases, innovative international aid models, and most recently, prosecution of people denied firearms purchases. Prior to joining GAO, Daniel completed a masters in public administration from American University. "My Jewish studies courses helped me develop as a learner: how to read analytically, how to conduct quality research, and continue to develop as a writer in topics that allowed me to develop the skills I need, and use in my career, and as a leader in my community. Without a doubt, my studies at James Madison College and my Jewish Studies minor put me on that path that led me to where I am today."



Megan



Sara



Sidrah



Daniel

PEJIMAN MASROURI '19

Peji is an International Relations Major with Minors in Jewish Studies, Muslim Studies and Russian and Eurasian Studies. He says, "I have no Jewish heritage in the slightest but have found the Jewish Studies program at MSU to be an absolute pleasure. The faculty were most helpful and I was highly impressed by the organization of the program. I have learned and experienced some amazing things in Jewish Studies, including getting the lifetime opportunity to travel to Israel thanks in no small part to the generous scholarships offered by the Jewish Studies program. Visiting Israel and learning about the security situation there gave me a deeper understanding of concepts of national security and foreign policy, in which I am actively searching for a career. After the Israel trip, I became wholeheartedly convinced of pursuing the Jewish Studies Minor and have studied fascinating subjects including the Politics, Culture, and Society of Israel, Holocaust History, and the Dilemmas of Asymmetric Conflicts. These courses have easily been my favorite as an undergrad and have lined up perfectly with my interests."

ARIELLA STERNFELD '19

Ariella is a senior majoring in Political Science with a double Minor in Religious Studies and Jewish Studies and Modern Israel. She is also a member of the Honors College. In her four years at Michigan State, Ariella has taken many courses offered by the Serling Institute such as "Elementary Hebrew," "History of the Holocaust" and "American Jewish History." Over the past summer, she had the opportunity to travel to Israel twice—once through MSU Hillel Birthright and a second time as a participant of the Serling Institute Summer Program at Hebrew University. She is also a recipient of the Julie and Ed Levy Jr. Scholarship for her studies in Jerusalem. Ariella plans to graduate in May 2019 and hopes to find a job in the metro Detroit area.

DAVID WARSHAY '19

David says participating in the Jewish Studies and Modern Israel Minor has had many highlights, from working on an honors thesis on comparative

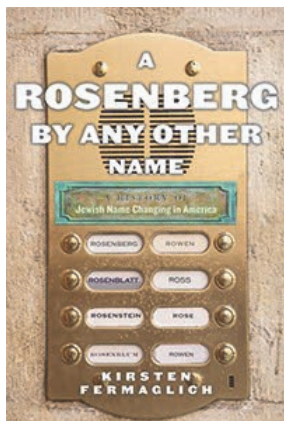
genocide under Professor Aronoff's guidance and taking her senior seminar on The Dilemmas of Asymmetric Conflicts, to taking a class on Jewish Mysticism. He says one experience that stands out as a major highlight is the Jewish Studies Summer Program at Hebrew University. "While on the program I visited many sites holy to both the religious and secular Israelis, these sites included Mount Herzl, the Temple Mount, and Yad Vashem. Going to these sites is an experience that one can only have in person; pictures and videos do not do them justice." David also says that the Jewish Studies Minor has aided his plans for the future by influencing him to continue exploring his interests in the Middle East and Israel through a PhD degree. "The Jewish Studies Minor, and the classes and faculty associated with it, have definitely assisted in my future career aspirations and interested research areas."

GRAHAM WISE '19

Graham is a senior double majoring in Economics and Political Science with a Minor in Jewish Studies and Modern Israel. He went on the Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel study abroad to Israel in the summer of 2017. He says his study abroad, was an "incredible experience. It was amazing being able to live in Jerusalem, while having the opportunity to learn from two incredible professors, Professor Aronoff and Professor Mendelsson." Graham currently serves as the President of Spartans for Israel, a bipartisan pro-Israel organization, and works as an assistant for the Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel. He is also currently in the midst of writing a research paper examining United States policy towards Israel. After graduation, he plans to pursue a career working on Capitol Hill as a foreign policy aide.

**Peji****Ariella****David****Graham**

FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS



DR. KIRSTEN FERAGLICH BOOK PUBLICATION

Over Thanksgiving, I had one of the more surreal experiences of my career. I was staying at my in-laws' home in Bergen County, New Jersey, and my husband and I decided to do some Hanukkah shopping at the local Palisades Mall. We walked into the Barnes and Noble, and there in the doorway, on the "Happy Hanukkah" promotional table was my new book, *A Rosenberg by Any Other Name!*

Since New York University Press released *A Rosenberg By Any Other Name* in October, I've been having a lot of weird experiences like that. I've been working on this research for 12 years, so just the fact that it has become an actual book is amazing in itself. It is truly bizarre to imagine that someone at the Palisades Mall might decide on a whim to buy my research as a gift for their baby boomer father.

After huddling for years in a corner of the New York City Civil Court, anxiously photocopying as many name change petitions as I could, it's been so exciting and gratifying to see the stories of those petitions come to life in my book, and to find that reviewers and readers have been enjoying the book and finding their stories resonating on its pages.

Tablet excerpted the book on October 23 and interviewed me for their "Unorthodox" podcast. *Lilith* featured *A Rosenberg By Any Other Name* in its list of 12 new books on American Jewish life written by women; *Lilith* will also excerpt the book in its next issue.

In June, I published an article on the myth of Ellis Island name changing which was republished in the *Chicago Tribune*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and many more. In November, I published an article on name changing in the 21st century, which was republished by the *Boston Globe* and featured on the *John Munson Show* on Wisconsin Public Radio.

Since the book has been out, I've given public events in Rockville, Maryland; at Temple B'nai Moshe in Detroit; and I've spoken with U of M faculty and graduate students in Ann Arbor. I'm scheduled to speak at the 92nd Street Y and the American Jewish Historical Society in April, and at Temple Beth El in Detroit in May. I've had such a wonderful time writing about my research for a public audience, talking with people about my research, and hearing their responses and their stories.

Even with this flurry of attention, perhaps the most exciting accolade I've received has been an email from a reader who wrote to tell me about all the name changes in her family, the antisemitism that had caused those changes, and the regrets and divisions that those changes caused in her family. Her email began: "I read *A Rosenberg By Any Other Name* today. When I saw the review, I knew I just had to read it. As I expected, I found myself in the pages of your text. I loved the book." She did not say whether she bought it as a Hanukkah present from Barnes and Noble—but it doesn't matter.



DR. NOAH KAYE NEW AFFILIATE FACULTY

Dr. Noah Kaye is an ancient historian and archaeologist focused on the eastern Mediterranean in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. He is especially interested in the relationship between economic and cultural change, particularly as witnessed in the multi-ethnic Hellenistic kingdoms that emerged in the Near East after Alexander the Great. Dr. Kaye also studies the interactions of the contemporary Seleukid dynasty with Judeans and the Jerusalem priesthood -- looking for the real story, the true causes and effects of Hanukkah. He published an article on Flavius Josephus, and works with Jewish coins of the Graeco-Roman Period. In Spring 2020, he will be teaching HST481: The Holy Land in the Graeco-Roman Period.

ACADEMIC NEWS

Yael Aronoff has written two book chapters which are forthcoming in 2019. "The Zionist Center-Left Opposition to the Netanyahu Governments," in *Israel Under Netanyahu*, ed. Robert Freedman, (forthcoming, 2019); "Israeli Prime Ministers: Transforming the Victimhood Discourse," forthcoming in *The Victimhood Discourse in Contemporary Israel*, Ed. Ilan Peleg, Roman & Littlefield, 2019. She will be presenting in two panels at the Association of Israel Studies Conference June 24-26, 2019 at Kinneret College, Israel. One presentation will discuss the recent dynamics of U.S.-Israeli relations, and the other will focus on Israel's wars with Hamas. Dr. Aronoff will present "Populist Leaders and Liberal Democratic Constraints on Asymmetric Wars" at the International Society for Political Psychology Conference in Lisbon, Portugal, July 12-15, 2019.

Marc Bernstein was invited to present "The Tales of the Prophets: Interdependence between Jewish and Muslim Traditions in the Islamic World," at the University of Oslo (Norway). He moderated for a panel "The Politics of Passing Fiction and Film" at a MSU Global Perspectives Symposium, *The Poetics of Passing: Interrogating Self-Fashioning as the Other in Zainichi Cultural Production*. He has also conducted research in Israel on Kletsk emigres and their descendants in Palestine and Israel as part of a multi-year project on the history of the Belorussian emigration. He presented a talk based on his research titled "The Denial of Despair: Kletzkers in Israel" at the Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel conference: *Israel at 70: Complexity, Challenge, and Creativity*.

Kirsten Fermaglich's book, *A Rosenberg By Any Other Name: A History of Jewish Name Changing in America*, was released on October 23, by NYU Press. Kirsten has spoken at Temple B'nai Moshe in Detroit and on Wisconsin Public Radio about her research this semester, and her article on name changing for the *Conversation* (an academic website for general audiences) was published by the *Boston Globe* on November 25. In the spring, she will be speaking at the 92nd Street Y and at the American Jewish Historical Society in New York City.

Steve Gold presented, "Adaptation and Identity Formation in the Israeli Diaspora," at the *Israel at 70: Critical Perspectives on Diaspora Relations, Identity and Antisemitism* Conference at York University, October 7-8, 2018. He also presented, "Work, Identity and Communal Life Among Israeli Emigrants: A Comparison of Enclave and Infotech Entrepreneurs," at the *Israeli, Palestinian, and Other Diasporas in Comparative Perspectives* International Research Workshop, at Boston University, December 13-14th, 2018. In addition, Dr. Gold completed a book chapter, "Liabilities and Benefits Associated with the Involvement of Undocumented Immigrants in Informal Entrepreneurship in the US," in *Informal Ethnic Entrepreneurship: Future Research Paradigms for Creating Innovative Business Activity*.

Benjamin Lorch completed a book chapter, "Emil Fackenheim on Moses Maimonides and the 'One Great Difference between the Medievals and the Moderns.'" The chapter will appear in an edited volume titled *Emil Fackenheim's Jewish Thought: Tracing its Philosophical Genealogy*. The book chapter is forthcoming in 2019.

Deborah Margolis in Fall 2018 worked with Feiga Weiss, Head Librarian of the Holocaust Memorial Center (HMC), to bring a diverse donation of materials held by HMC to the MSU Libraries and will be processing those donations in Spring 2019. She also worked with Dr. Marc Bernstein to acquire a new series of biographical films about Hebrew authors from filmmaker Yair Qedar. This academic year, she is enjoying participating in the teaching of a Holocaust research seminar for first year students in MSU's Honors College, which has a focus on the USC Shoah Visual History Archive. In October, Deborah along with Kirsten Fermaglich guided Lakeview High School students to participate in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) History Unfolded newspaper research project.

Amy Simon will present "Reading and Understanding Emotions in Holocaust Diaries," at The Usage of Ego-Documents in Jewish Historical Research -- An International Researcher's Workshop at Western Galilee College, Akko, Israel May 27-28. She also presented on historical and contemporary antisemitism in our Teach-In following the mass shooting at the Pittsburgh synagogue, is providing two workshops in January to residential advisors at Michigan State University, on identifying and reporting on antisemitism, and is helping to facilitate a workshop at Hillel in February where students share their experiences with antisemitism.

Ken Waltzer will present "Contending with Antisemitism in its Varied Forms on American Campuses" at the *Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism* conference on Contending with Antisemitism in a Rapidly Changing Political Climate at Indiana University, March 23-27, 2019. His essay, "The University of California Principles Against Intolerance: Efforts to Integrate them into Campus Policy and Practice" will appear in Corinne Blackmer and Andrew Pessin, eds., *Poisoning the Wells: Antisemitism in Contemporary American Politics, Culture, and Education* (2019).

Laura Yares' research focuses on the historical and contemporary enterprises of Jewish education. She began the year with a review of two new books on Bar/Bat Mitzvah, published in the 2018 edition of the *Journal of Jewish Education*. In December 2018, she presented a paper at the Association for Jewish Studies Annual Meeting, analyzing the 19th century Jewish Chautauqua movement and its approach to teaching the Bible in religious schools. This year, she also has been named as an affiliate scholar of the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis University. The Mandel Center is supporting her latest project, examining Jewish learning in cultural arts venues. The pilot study for this research will be conducted in summer 2019 at the National Museum for American Jewish History in Philadelphia.

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