

JEWISH STUDIES STUDENT RESEARCH conference 2018



On Friday, April 21st, 2018, the Jewish Studies Program hosted its annual student research conference. Ten students from several different colleges and academic units at Michigan State University presented the research projects they had completed in their Jewish Studies courses to faculty, fellow students, and their families.

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

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

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

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