



The Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel

FALL 2024 NEWSLETTER

DIRECTOR NOTES



The Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel looks forward to another fulfilling year, educating and mentoring students in enriching classes, supporting our faculty in their teaching and scholarship, and providing a vibrant intellectual community for the campus, for Michigan and for scholars across the world.

We faced a challenging year last year, and these challenges continue. Members of our community continue to worry about the physical safety of friends and family in Israel and for the hostages, and also feel anguish over the continued suffering of Palestinian civilians. The rise of antisemitism in the U.S., including on our campus also continues to be a challenge, as well as the more subtle – but nonetheless real – challenge to an atmosphere of inclusion, in which students, faculty, and staff of all backgrounds can feel they are welcome and belong. In these challenges, of course, we are not alone: we join Jewish Studies programs across the country in these challenges. We are grateful to President Guskiewicz, Senior Vice President Vennie Gore, Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer Dr. Jabbar Bennett, and Vice President Laura Rugless, for their strong and supportive statement in response to recent antisemitic, racist, and homophobic incidents on campus.

Especially in these challenging times, our courses and programming, which covers the diversity of Jewish lived experiences and histories, and the range of intellectual and artistic contributions, are urgently needed. To directly face the current moment, and in the hopes of educating even more students at MSU, Kirsten Fermaglich, Amy Simon, Laura Yares, Morgan Shipley and I developed a 1-credit online course on antisemitism, to be offered every semester starting this semester. Thank you to Associate Director Fermaglich for leading this team, to Morgan Shipley for teaching its inaugural semester, and to Michael and Elaine Serling and our Advisory Board for supporting this effort. I also want to thank Deborah Margolis, Amy Simon, Lynn Wolff, and Steve Weiland, who were awarded the Honors College Award for Distinguished Contributions for Honor Students for their innovative Honors Research Seminar *History and Testimony in the Digital Age: Studying the Holocaust*. I also thank Laura Yares and Mary Juzwik for organizing and facilitating a year long professional

development program for Michigan 8-10th grade teachers on the state mandated curriculum on the Holocaust and Genocide. Amy Simon and Deborah Margolis also contributed to one of these workshops.

We continue to be thankful for our collaboration with the Director of Muslim Studies, Mohammad Khalil, as Professor Khalil joins Kirsten Fermaglich, Amy Simon, Morgan Shipley and me as we continue to offer as many workshops as we can on antisemitism and Islamophobia. We already led an August workshop to all incoming students at James Madison College, and are offering 4-session workshops open to MSU faculty, students, staff, and administrators in both the Fall and Spring semesters. We also thank Ralph Johnson in the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion for his support and help with this program. In September we will run workshops for MSU's Office for Civil Rights staff and for student athletes; workshops for residential advisors are in the works for upcoming months.

We are thrilled to offer enriching co-curricular programming and exhibits this Fall, organized by our faculty in collaboration with 23 units across campus, in addition to three organizations outside MSU. Our partners in collaboration include: American Indian and Indigenous Studies; Asian Studies; the Broad Art Museum; the Center for European, Eurasian, and Russian Studies; the Colleges of Arts and Letters, Law, Music, and Social Science; the Departments of Community Sustainability, English, History, Religious Studies, Languages, Linguistics, and Cultures; German Studies, the Eli Broad College of Business; International Studies and Programs; Film Studies; James Madison College; Jewish Historical Society of Michigan; MSU Libraries; the Native American Institute; the Residential College of Arts and Humanities; the Science, Technology, Environment, and Public Policy program; the United States Holocaust Museum; and the Zekelman Holocaust Center.

We hope to see you at our many stimulating events! Please see more about these programs, faculty, student, and alumni highlights and accomplishments in the newsletter.

Professor Yael Aronoff
Director of the Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel. If you have any questions about our Institute please email me at aronoffy@msu.edu or call me at 517-303-6019.

ACADEMIC NEWS

Yael Aronoff, after serving as Director of the Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel for the past ten years, was reappointed this summer for another five years. In July she participated in four roundtables at the Association of Israel Studies Annual Conference at Charles University in the Czech Republic, including “Teaching about Israel During the War,” “The History, Past, and Present of the Association of Israel Studies,” and two panels on newly published books *Americanization of the Israeli Right*, eds. Ilan Peleg and Yoav Former, and *Netanyahu vs the Generals*, by Guy Ziv. She also co-chaired the International Relations section for the conference, and continues to serve on the AIS's Advisory Board. This Fall, she will be giving a lecture on “The Israeli Government's Opposition Parties,” at the conference, “The Impact of the Israeli-Hamas War on Israel's Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy,” Johns Hopkins University, October 27, 2024. The paper presented will be the basis for a contributing chapter to a forthcoming edited book with the same title as the conference. Dr. Aronoff will also participate on the panel “October 7, One Year Later: Currents in Israeli Society” sponsored by the Northwestern University's Crown Family Center for Jewish and Israel Studies on October 9, 2024. On November 2-4, she will participate in a roundtable on Ilan Troen's book, *Israel/Palestine: Whose Promised Land?* at the Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa annual conference, Washington, D.C. She will be giving a lecture on the “Prospects for New Israeli Elections?” as part of Limmud Michigan, Shaarey Zedek, Southfield, Michigan, on September 22, 2024. She gave a workshop on antisemitism and Islamophobia (with Mohammad Khalil and Amy Simon) to all incoming James Madison College students on August 23, 2024. She will be joining Mohammad Khalil, Morgan Shipley, Kirsten Fermaglich, and Amy Simon in providing an eight-hour workshop over 4 sessions on “Conversations on Antisemitism and Islamophobia” this fall to MSU students, faculty, staff, and administrators. She also worked this summer with Kirsten Fermaglich, Amy Simon, Laura Yares, and Morgan Shipley to create a 1-credit online class on antisemitism, which will pilot this fall. Dr. Aronoff will be honored, along others, with the ADL Path to Courage Award at their annual March Against Hate on September 29th in Southfield.

Kirsten Fermaglich presented her recent research on academic Jewish migration in East Lansing at the Biennial Scholars Conference on American Jewish History in New York City in May; she will present on the same subject at the Midwest Jewish Studies Association Conference in Ann Arbor in September. In June, the podcast, *Antisemitism, U.S.A.* was released, featuring interviews with Fermaglich on American antisemitism and her research on Jewish name changing. Fermaglich was part of a panel on antisemitism this summer at the Weitzman Museum of American Jewish History marking the podcast's release. Fermaglich also presented her

work on name-changing to the Morristown Jewish Center Beit Yisrael in Morristown, New Jersey. She worked this summer with Yael Aronoff, Amy Simon, Laura Yares, and Morgan Shipley to create a 1-credit online class on antisemitism, which will pilot this fall.

Steve Gold and Nir Cohen submitted the chapter “I Can Relocate Whenever I Feel Like: Narratives of Privileged Mobility among Israeli IT Migrants” to the edited volume *Privilege in Migration: Mobilities, Inequalities, and the Urban Context* by Hila Zaban and Franz Buhr. Additionally, Steve Gold has two forthcoming chapters: “The Changing Demographics of American Jewry: Continuing Patterns of Jewish Migration to the US” in Frederick Greenspahn's *The State of American Jewry* (NYU Press, 2024) and “Work, Identity, and Communal Life among Israeli Emigrants: A Comparison of Enclave and Infotech Entrepreneurs” in Nahum Karlinsky's *The Modern Israeli, Palestinian, and Other Diasporas in Comparative Perspective* (University of Texas Press, 2024.)

Noah Kaye; Deborah Margolis; Amy Simon; Lynn Wolff see Faculty Highlights p.16-17.

Aliza Lambert see New Affiliated Faculty p.4.

Laura Yares has been invited to give a number of talks about her recent book, *Jewish Sunday Schools: Teaching Religion in Nineteenth-Century America* during summer and fall 2024. She gave two presentations at the American Jewish Historical Society Conference in New York in May. She was invited to give talks at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York in June; at the Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina's annual conference in September; and at the University of Cincinnati in October. She was also interviewed by Schneur Zalman Newfield for the New Books Network podcast in July. In November, she will give two talks about her forthcoming book, *Artful Education* at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion Conference in San Diego. *Artful Education* is under contract with NYU Press, scheduled to be published in late 2025.

Unrelated to her research, Laura also gave a talk to MSU Culinary services on Jewish food in July. Culinary staff enjoyed learning about the religious and cultural dimensions of Jewish food, and sampling a few Jewish holiday themed treats! During 2024-2025 Laura Yares and Serling Institute affiliate faculty Mary Juzwik are organizing and facilitating a yearlong professional development program for Michigan 8-10th grade teachers who teach the state mandated requirements for curriculum on Holocaust and Genocide. The program began with a 3-day workshop on MSU's campus in August, and continues throughout the year with teachers returning to MSU for half-day workshops once per month.

Workshop on Personal Documents and Ephemera in Holocaust Scholarship held May 15-16, 2024 By Amy Simon



This workshop, organized by Dr. Amy Simon and taking place on the MSU campus and over Zoom, featured presentations and commentary from scholars whose articles have been selected for publication in a special issue of the journal, *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History* (co-edited by Dr. Hannah Holtschneider and Dr. Amy Simon). A primary purpose of the workshop was to convene a venue for discussions that crossed multiple disciplines and approaches—the major innovation of the special issue. It also provided a forum for comment and critique to help the authors as they revise their articles for publication. Contributing scholars represented all career levels, from graduate student to full professor, as well as international perspectives, with participants from the United States, Great Britain, Israel, Poland, and Hungary. Lastly, several from this group of teacher-scholars also presented a workshop for the MSU and East Lansing-area communities on teaching the Holocaust through personal documents.

Participants: Dr. Hannah Holtschneider, University of Edinburgh; Dr. Natalia Aleksion, University of Florida; Dr. Atina Grossmann, The Cooper Union; Dr. Barry Trachtenberg, Wake Forest University; Dr. Kathryn Sederberg, Kalamazoo College; Barnabas Balint, Oxford University; Claudia Reese, National Holocaust Centre and Museum, United Kingdom; Dr. Heléna Huhák, Institute of History, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences Centre of Excellence; Dr. Borbála Klacsmann, University College Dublin; Dr. Abigail Lewis, Temple University, Executive Director of the Council for European Studies; Sandra Lipner, Royal Holloway, University of London; Dr. Lukas Meissel, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Ayana Sasoon, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Dr. Sara Sewell, Virginia Wesleyan University; Dr. András Szécsényi, Historical Archives of the Hungarian State Security, Research Division, Faculty Member; Dr. Agnieszka Witkowska-Krych, University of Warsaw; Dr. Talia Farkash, The Open University of Israel.

NEW AFFILIATED FACULTY



Aliza Lambert

Aliza Lambert is the STRIDE Services Manager at Michigan State University. STRIDE (Services, Training and Research for Independence and Desired Employment) is a center that supports transition-age youth with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities as they transition into employment and adult life after high school. As the STRIDE Center Services Manager, Dr. Lambert develops pre-employment transition services and implements services throughout the state of Michigan. Aliza received her BA in Special Education-Learning Disabilities from Michigan State University, her MA in Rehabilitation Counseling from Kent State University, and her Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision from Virginia Commonwealth University. Some of Aliza's work includes research about lived experiences of Jewish youth with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, American Jewish identity development, and antisemitism and Islamophobia. Her co-authored article (with Cheryl L. Fulton and Lauren Melamed,) "Ethno-Religious Engagement, Minority Experiences, and Strengthening American Jewish Identity" was published in the *Journal of Mental Health Counseling* last July.

EXPLORING JEWISH HISTORIES, CULTURES, LANGUAGES AND JUDAISM AT MSU

(First Published by *the Detroit Jewish News*)

By Ben Goldstein

MSU Class of 2024 (Social Relations & Policy, James Madison College and a Jewish Studies minor).

Students have found the Serling Institute to be a place where their curiosity is nurtured and their academic pursuits are encouraged.

At a large institution like Michigan State University, the Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel creates an academic home base for students. From the time I registered as a Jewish Studies minor, I found a welcoming and supportive environment. The Serling Institute's faculty and staff are dedicated to helping their students succeed academically and professionally, providing guidance, mentorship and resources tailored to their individual needs and goals.

Students have found the Serling Institute to be a place where their curiosity is nurtured and their academic pursuits are encouraged.

One of my peers, also a Jewish Studies minor, Sydnie Burnstein (Social Relations & Policy, James Madison College), reflects, "Throughout my undergraduate career, the Serling Institute faculty leaned into my curiosity. They challenged my thinking as I was exposed to the interdisciplinary contexts of Jewish history, literature, language and culture, all while allowing me to veer into distinct avenues of research and discovery."

Another recently graduated student, Jewish Studies minor and friend, Andrew Schulman (Social Relations & Policy, James Madison College), notes, "The Serling Institute was an essential component of my college career, offering unique educational programs, several scholarship opportunities and a supportive community to last far beyond my time at MSU."

The Serling Institute is committed to advising Jewish Studies minors each step of the way through graduation. To support academic pursuits, the Serling Institute provides a dozen student scholarships. The Levy Scholarship, for example, supports academic study or internships in Israel as well as Hebrew courses while at MSU. This ensures a preparation for a well-rounded and immersive experience.

The Abramson Scholarship offers funds for research or internships focused on antisemitism and Holocaust studies in Europe, Israel or the U.S. These are just two of the dozen scholarships available, reflecting the Jewish Studies program's dedication to student success and growth. There are also scholarships that cover tuition for Jewish Studies courses.

Study Abroad Programs

A highlight of the Jewish Studies program is its emphasis on study-abroad opportunities. Students can choose from four faculty-led education abroad programs in Israel, ranging from a summer study abroad at the Hebrew University focused on the diversity of Israeli cultures, history and society to the Chamber Music Education Abroad Program in Israel, performing music in various locations in Israel in May.

There's also a spring break opportunity focused on entrepreneurship in Israel and an exchange program for graduate students with the College of Education. All programs focus on the academic pursuit of enhancing one's knowledge of the complexity of Israeli society and culture and provide invaluable experience and supplemental learning to their MSU curricula.

The Serling Institute provides the necessary support from the moment students register, helping them make the most of their time abroad. This includes the already mentioned study abroad programs in Israel and an inaugural study abroad program focused on the Holocaust and European Jewish history in Poland. These opportunities allow students to deeply connect with their studies, offering a unique and transformative educational experience.

The Serling Institute placed me in the position to gain skills and perspective while studying around the world that will carry me throughout the rest of my life. For students interested in earning a Jewish Studies minor, there are two tracks available to fit any student at MSU: a general track and a social science track for social science majors.

Students have the chance to present their research, connect with Jewish Studies minor alumni, and engage with scholars and experts in the field from around the world. The Serling Institute hosts a broad range of programming for co-curricular events and lectures that complement the Jewish Studies courses.

The Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel is dedicated to supporting students every step of the way, ensuring a fulfilling and successful academic journey while at MSU and beyond. Students are welcome to become part of the vibrant Jewish Studies community and take advantage of these and more unique opportunities available at Michigan State University.



Ben Goldstein



Sydnie Burnstein



Andrew Schulman

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Members of the MSU community are encouraged to join in person. Refreshments will be provided at most events.

* For parking information please visit: <https://maps.msu.edu/interactive/>

All our events are held in-person. Recorded events will be available on our YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/@serlinginstituteforjewishs8606



Making Climate Tech Work: Policies that Drive Innovation

By Alon Tal

Tuesday, September 10, 5:30-7:00 pm

JMC Library, 332 Case Hall (3rd floor), 842 Chestnut Rd.

Climate tech is critical for averting planetary chaos. Half the greenhouse gas reductions required to reach “net-zero” climate targets in 2050 will need to come from technologies that have not yet been invented. *Making Climate Tech Work* describes how smart government policies can make those technologies a reality. Which approaches can lead us to a sustainable economy, and which are likely to fall short? The result is an essential policy roadmap for anyone interested in accelerating climate tech solutions.



Dr. Alon Tal is a professor at Tel Aviv University, where he previously served as chair of the Department of Public Policy. Dr. Tal was also a professor at Ben Gurion and at the Hebrew University, and has been a visiting Professor at Harvard, Michigan State, Otago, and Stanford Universities. He has founded several environmental organizations, including the Israel Union for Environmental Defense, the Arava Institute which is being considered for the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize, Zafuf, and the Israel Forum for Population, Environment, and Society. Between 2010 and 2013, Tal served as chair of Israel’s Green Party, “the Green Movement.”

Alon Tal’s lecture has been specially scheduled to allow everyone ample time for dinner before the presidential debate!

Leonard Gilman Lecture on Jewish Culture - Two Tribes: The Real-Life Story Of A Jewish-Native American

By Emily Bowen Cohen

Monday, September 23, 5:30-7:00 pm

MSU Main Library Green Room (4th floor, West wing) 366 W. Circle Dr.

In a Q&A with Professors Blaire Morseau and Laura Yares, Emily Bowen Cohen, author of *Two Tribes*, will discuss the childhood memories that inspired her debut graphic novel. The talk will be accompanied by slides of original drawings and illustrations from her book. Emily traces the history of her Jewish and her Muscogee (Creek) ancestors, exploring the similarities and differences. She will also reflect on the roots of current representations of Native Americans in popular culture. Join us for an empowering and uplifting conversation celebrating the cultural diversity in the U.S. today.



Los Angeles based artist, **Emily Bowen Cohen**, creates comics that explore intersectional identity. She is Jewish and a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Emily uses personal experience to tell stories that examine contemporary American and Jewish culture. Her debut graphic novel, *Two Tribes*, is published by HarperCollins’ Native-focused imprint, Heartdrum.

Home (2023) screening and discussion with Nechumi Yaffe

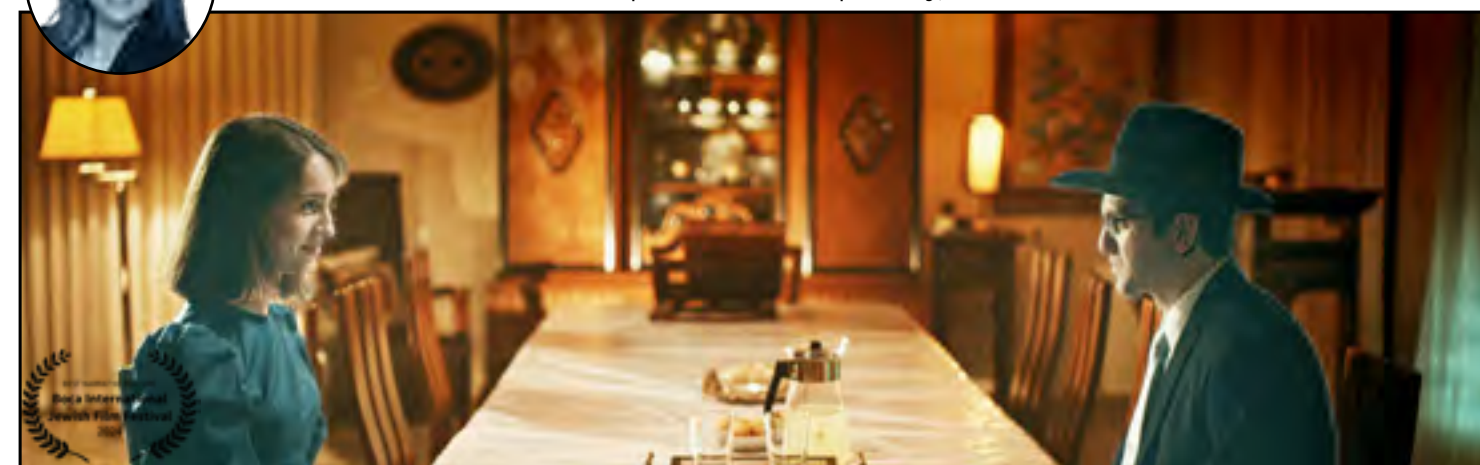
Tuesday, September 24, 5:30-8:00 pm, Natural Science Building 116, 288 Farm Lane.

1h 51m, Drama, directed by Benny Fredman

Israel, Hebrew with English subtitles. A young and recently married Orthodox man’s dream to open a computer store in an ultra-Orthodox neighborhood in Jerusalem turns into a violent nightmare when the entire neighborhood sees him as an existential threat. Turning his whole world upside down, the threat enters his home and puts his marriage to the test, as he faces the reality of his own free will within a predetermined world.



Dr. Nechumi Yaffe is a faculty member in the Department of Public Policy at Tel Aviv University. Her research examines, from a social psychology perspective, how social norms, and authority contribute to the creation and preservation of poverty,



Norms and Breaking Norms in Ultra-Orthodox Society in Israel and the USA

By Nechumi Yaffe

Wednesday, September 25, 5:30-7:00 pm

JMC Library, 332 Case Hall (3rd floor), 842 Chestnut Rd.

This lecture presents findings from two groundbreaking studies: one examining the impact of dress code changes on social perceptions in the Satmar community, and the other focusing on the challenges faced by young ultra-Orthodox Jews who enlist. The lecture will explore the complexities of deviating from community norms, discuss its implications on sense of belonging and personal and communal identity, and offer insights into strategies for supporting individuals who diverge from norms while maintaining their connection to their community and ensuring their psychological well-being.



Dr. Nechumi Yaffe is a faculty member in the Department of Public Policy at Tel Aviv University. Her research examines, from a social psychology perspective, how social norms and authority contribute to the creation and preservation of poverty, with a focus on the ultra-Orthodox communities in Israel and the U.S. Previously, she served as a consultant to the ultra-Orthodox education system, where she authored the curriculum and new history textbook currently used in all ultra-Orthodox high schools in Israel. Her work has been published in several journals, including *Evolution and Human Behavior*, *Frontiers in Psychology*, *Cities*, *European Journal of Social Psychology*, and *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. Nechumi advised the Israeli government on ultra-Orthodox matters during the COVID-19 crisis and later founded the Hamel Ahdot frontline movement, which mobilized over 100,000 ultra-Orthodox volunteers. She is also the first ultra-Orthodox woman to integrate into Israeli academia.

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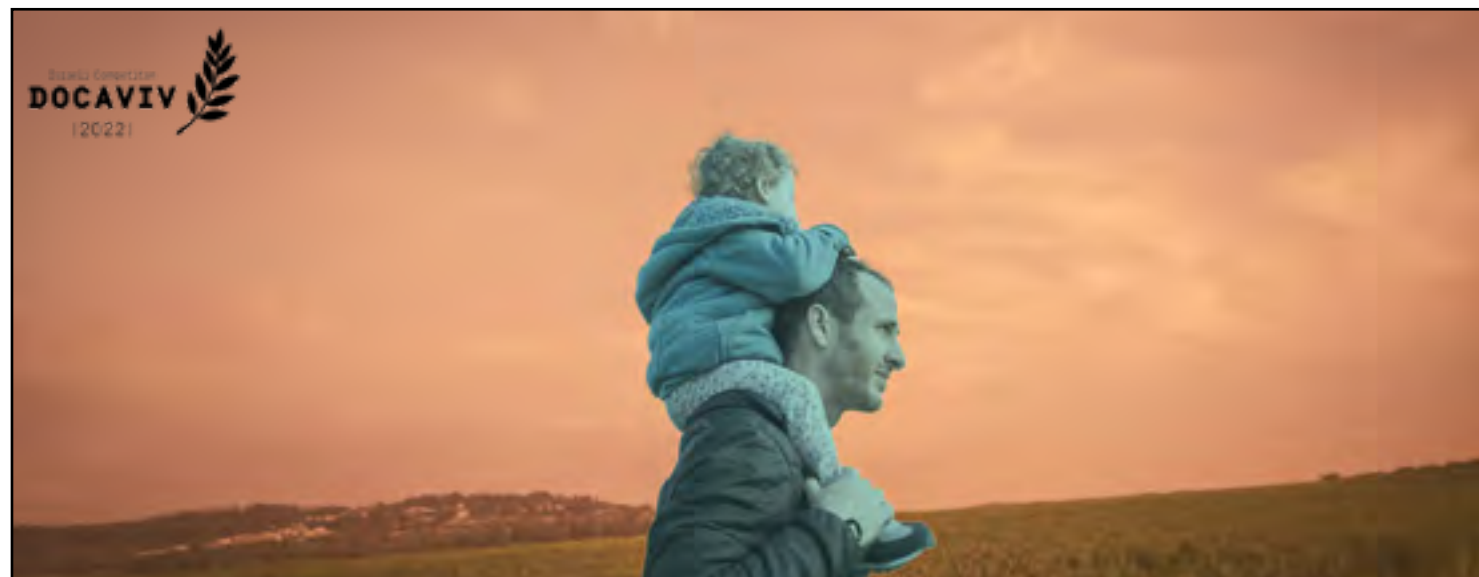
Members of the MSU community are encouraged to join in person. Refreshments will be provided at most events.

* For parking information please visit: <https://maps.msu.edu/interactive/>

Children of Peace (2022) screening and discussion with Mohammad Darawshe

Tuesday, October 1, 12:40-2:30 pm

Natural Resources Building, room 221, 480 Wilson Rd.



59m, Documentary, directed by Maayan Schwartz
Israel, Arabic, English and Hebrew with English subtitles.

Arabs and Jews have lived in ongoing conflict for over a century. A group of dreamers decided to challenge everything they know about their nationalities and histories and founded a village in 1970s Israel as a social experiment. The film follows the many children who were brought up in this unique environment. In this bold attempt to raise a new generation, their internal struggles and the outside conflict challenged their revolutionary ecosystem. The children of peace are now grown men and women dealing with the harsh reality of political turmoil, war and societal segregation.



Mohammad Darawshe is the Director of Center for Equality and Shared Society at Givat Haviva Institute in Israel. He is also a Faculty Member at the Shalom Hartman Institute, and serves as an expert on national minorities at the European Council in Strasbourg.

Arab Citizens of Israel Between Palestinian National Identity and Israeli Civic Identity with Mohammad Darawshe

Tuesday, October 1, 5:30-7:00 pm, Club Spartan, Room 338 (third floor), Case Hall, 842 Chestnut Rd.

A presentation describing the political, social, economic aspects affecting 21% of Israel's population, who are indigenous Palestinians with Israeli citizenship since 1948.



Mohammad Darawshe is the Director of Center for Equality and Shared Society at Givat Haviva Institute in Israel. He is also a faculty member at the Shalom Hartman Institute, and serves as an expert on national minorities at the European Council in Strasbourg. Currently he is a visiting scholar at the Illinois Global Institute at the State University of Illinois and was also a visiting scholar at the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich. He holds a B.A from Hebrew University in Jerusalem, an M.A. in Peace and Conflict Studies from Haifa University, and is currently working on his PhD in Teaching and Learning Strategies at An-Najah National University. He is considered a leading expert on Jewish-Arab relations and has presented lectures and papers at the European parliament, NATO Defense College, the World Economic Forum, Club de Madrid, US Congress, Herzlia conference and Israel's Presidential Conference.



The Boy (2023) screening and discussion with editor Shaylee Atary

Tuesday, October 15, 12:40-2:30 pm

Natural Resources Building, room 221, 480 Wilson Rd.

25m, Drama, directed by Yahav Winner. Israel, Hebrew with English subtitles. Avinoam and Barak, father and son from a Kibbutz near Gaza, are each facing another round of violence in their own way. While Avinoam insists on continuing his routine and his work in the field, Barak finds it difficult to close his eyes and continue as usual. One night, Barak reaches a boiling point and Avinoam is forced to absorb the flames.

Shaylee Atary is a graduate of Nissan Nativ Acting Studio and Rimon Music School. In 2015 she released a debut album "Be'emet Sheratziti." Shaylee acted in Israeli television series like "Zaguri Empire" and "Johnny and the Knights of Galilee." In 2016 Shaylee survived a car accident followed by a long rehabilitation as a wheelchair user, where she fell in love with the world of cinema that combines both of her loves: acting and music. "Neurim," her second year film as a student at the Steve Tisch School of Film & Television, Tel Aviv University, was selected for "Ciné fondation" Festival de Cannes 2020. The film had its first TV premiere on ARTE TV. In June 2023 Shaylee finished shooting "Kibbutz Legend" as the lead actress, a full-length film she cowrote with her husband Yahav Winner, who is the director of the film. "Single Light" is her second short film.

Running on Sand (2023) screening and discussion with actor Chansela Mongoza

Tuesday, November 12, 5:30-8:00 pm

The location is Being Confirmed. Please get in Club Spartan, Room 338 (third floor), Case Hall, 842 Chestnut Road.

1h 44m, comedy, directed by Adar Shafran
Israel, Hebrew, English, and Tigrinya with English subtitles.

Aumari (Chansela Mongoza), a young Eritrean refugee living in Israel, is about to be deported back to his home country. After a spontaneous escape attempt at the airport, he is mistaken for a Nigerian soccer player, who is supposed to arrive at the same time. Aumari seizes the opportunity and benefits for his change of identity as the new key acquisitions for the team of 'Maccabi Netanya.' Despite the absence of any soccer talent, Aumari is able to cover-up and heal the divisions of his struggling team, while a tender romantic bond with charmingly unconventional daughter of the team owner is growing.



Chansela Mongoza is a television, film, and theater actor. The star of the film *Running on Sand*, who also played in the television series *Virgins*, *Queens* (HOT), *Asylum City*, *Kadabra* (YES) and more. In theater, he landed a leading role in the stage adaptation of the French film *The Intouchables* at the Cameri Theater. In early 2020, the documentary film *Chansela - The New Black* (Kan 11), directed by Boaz Rosenberg, was released, telling the story of Mongoza's life. Boaz followed him for about seven years, during which he went a long way from an anonymous young man to a rising star.

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Coming of Age as a Queer Teenager in the Holocaust: Bringing Margot to the Stage
Anna Hájková will introduce and lead a discussion following the screening of the play
Monday, October 28, 7:00-8:30 pm, RCAH Theater, C20 Snyder-Phillips Hall (downstairs), 362 Bogue St.

The Amazing Life of Margot Heuman is a play about the first lesbian Holocaust survivor to bear testimony. Margot Heuman (1928-2022) was a survivor of Theresienstadt ghetto, Auschwitz, Neuengamme, and Bergen-Belsen. After the war, Heuman emigrated to the US, and spent the last years of her life in Green Valley, AZ. The play, which takes its text from interviews conducted by Warwick University historian Anna Hájková, offers a poignant look at coming of age as a Jewish queer woman in the concentration camps. In the play, Margot Heuman reflects on love, choices, sexual violence and sexual barter, homophobia, and survival. Moving, funny, pragmatic, and original, she reminds us of humanity within the society of Holocaust victims, but also of the stories that have been erased by homophobia. Heuman will probably remain the only lesbian voice to speak about her experience in the Holocaust. "I am amazing," she tells her interviewer, and the audience.

Directed by Erika Hughes (Portsmouth University), this work of documentary theatre layers Heuman's testimony with archival imagery and projection. Actor Ayse Evans, who reads the testimony of Margot, notes that "this is the queer story I never had growing up, but that I am so glad my daughter will have." This play offers a rare and important glimpse into queer life during the Holocaust, one of the most silenced and marginalized topics of this genocide.



Dr. Anna Hájková is Reader for Modern European Continental History at the University of Warwick. Her book, *The Last Ghetto: An Everyday History of Theresienstadt*, came out in 2020 with Oxford University Press. She has also published three short books: in addition to a coauthored book on the Veit Simon family, she edited family wartime diaries from the Communist resistance in the Holocaust. In 2021, she published *Menschen ohne Geschichte sind Staub* with Wallstein, on queer teenagers in the Holocaust. The book is coming out as *People Without History are Dust* in an expanded English translation with the University of Toronto Press. She is currently a fellow at the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies where she is working on a book on the Neuengamme guard Anneliese Kohlmann and queer Holocaust history.

The Ancient Law (1923/2017) screening and concert by Alicia Svigals and Donald Sosin
Thursday, November 7, 7:30-9:00 pm
Cook Recital Hall, 333 W Circle Dr.

2h 15 m, Drama/Silent, directed by Ewald Andre Dupont. German, English and Yiddish subtitles
The Ancient Law (Das alte Gesetz) cine-concert is a screening of a newly restored classic 1923 silent film by the great Weimar-era director, Ewald André Dupont. It was digitally restored in 2017 by the Deutsche Kinemathek with generous support from the Sunrise Foundation for Education and the Arts. The film is an important piece of German-Jewish cinematic history, contrasting the closed world of an Eastern European shtetl with the liberal mores of 1860s Vienna. With its historically authentic set design and ensemble of prominent actors – all captured magnificently by cinematographer Theodor Sparkuhl – *The Ancient Law* is an outstanding example of the creativity of Jewish filmmakers in 1920s Germany. Synopsis: Baruch (Ernst Deutsch), the son of a rabbi, becomes fascinated by the theater. Against his father's wishes, Baruch leaves home and finds his way to Vienna, where an archduchess at the imperial court (Henny Porten) falls in love with him. She becomes his patroness, facilitating his successful career as a classical actor. But Baruch continues to long for home, and must find a way to reconcile his religious heritage with his love of secular literature. The movie paints a complex portrait of the tension between tradition and modernity.

Alicia Svigals and **Donald Sosin** have been bringing audiences to their feet throughout the US and Europe with their unique and stirring violin and piano scores for Jewish-themed silent films.

Violinist/composer **Alicia Svigals** is the world's leading klezmer fiddler and a founder of the Grammy-winning Klezmatics. She has performed with and written for violinist Itzhak Perlman, and has worked with the Kronos Quartet, playwrights Tony Kushner and Eve Ensler, poet Allen Ginsberg, Robert Plant and Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin, Debbie Friedman and Chava Albershteyn. Svigals was awarded a Foundation for Jewish Culture commission for her original score to the 1918 film *The Yellow Ticket*, and is a MacDowell fellow. Her CD *Fidl* (1996) reawakened klezmer fiddle tradition. Her newest CD is *Beregovski Suite: Klezmer Reimagined*, with jazz pianist Uli Geissendoerfer—an original take on long-lost Jewish music from Ukraine. Svigals was awarded the 2024 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship in Folk/Traditional arts.

Pianist/composer **Donald Sosin** grew up in Rye, New York and Munich. Sosin received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Denver Silent Film Festival, and the Best Original Film Score award by the 2022 Mystic Film Festival. He has performed his scores for silent films, often with his wife, singer/percussionist Joanna Seaton, at Lincoln Center, MoMA, BAM, the National Gallery, at major film festivals in New York, San Francisco, Telluride, Hollywood, Yorkshire, Pordenone, Bologna, Shanghai, Bangkok, Berlin, Vienna, Moscow, and Jecheon, South Korea and many college campuses. He has worked with Alexander Payne, Isabella Rossellini, Dick Hyman, Jonathan Tunick, Comden and Green, Martin Charnin, Mitch Leigh, and Cy Coleman, and has played for Mikhail Baryshnikov, Mary Travers, Marni Nixon, Howie Mandel, Geula Gill, and many others. He records for Criterion, Kino, Milestone, Flicker Alley and European labels, and his scores are heard frequently on TCM. He has had commissions from MoMA, EYE Amsterdam, Deutsche Kinemathek, L'Immagine Ritrovata, the Chicago Symphony Chorus, the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra and the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. He lives in rural Connecticut with his family.



SAVE THE DATES FOR SPRING EVENTS

Americans and the Holocaust: Exhibition and Special Events January 11 to February 22, 2025 Library of Michigan

The Serling Institute is partnering this spring with the Library of Michigan to bring an important exhibition on the United States and the Holocaust to mid-Michigan.

The Library of Michigan is one of 50 U.S. libraries newly selected to host *Americans and the Holocaust*, a traveling exhibition from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and the American Library Association (ALA) that examines the motives, pressures and fears that shaped Americans' responses to Nazism, war and genocide in Europe during the 1930s and 1940s.

Working together with the Library of Michigan, the Serling Institute will co-sponsor 4 different programs this spring in conjunction with the *Americans and the Holocaust* exhibit.



Thursday, January 16
9:30am-2:30pm
Teachers' Workshop
co-sponsored by the Zekelman Holocaust Center, Farmington Hills, MI
(pre-registration is required)



Monday, January 27
6:00-8:00 pm
Lecture and exhibit walk-through by Daniel Greene, curator, *Americans and the Holocaust*

Thursday, February 6
6:00-8:00 pm
Panel: "Red Tape, not Red Carpet: Contemporary Refugees and Bureaucracy in the United States"

Monday, February 10
6:00-8:00 pm
Panel: "Rethinking the History of Antisemitism in Michigan," co-sponsored by the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan

In conjunction with the *Americans and the Holocaust* exhibit, the Serling Institute and the Zekelman Holocaust Center will also co-sponsor two exhibits at the Broad Museum in Fall 2024-Spring 2025.

PAST EVENTS SPRING 2024



The Myth of the Twelve Tribes of Israel with Andrew Tobolowsky 01-16-2024



Leonard Gilman Lecture on American Culture-Feeling Jewish: Nostalgia and American Jewish Religion with Rachel B. Gross 01-24-2024



Exploring Jewish History and the Holocaust in Ukraine through Research and Documentary Filmmaking with Yurii Kaparulin 02-01-2024



Spring reception for Jewish Studies minors and prospective minors 02-19-2024



Emotions in Yiddish Ghetto Diaries: Encountering Persecutors and Questioning Humanity (Routledge, 2023) with Amy Simon 02-21-2024



Israeli Culture and Emergency Routine: Personal and Academic Perspectives Book discussion with Avner Dinur, Irit Ronen and Vered Weiss 03-18-2023

PAST EVENTS SPRING 2024



Israeli Culture and Emergency Routine: Personal and Academic Perspectives Book discussion with Avner Dinur, Irit Ronen and Vered Weiss 03-18-2023



A screening of the TV show *Stockholm*, adapted from the Israeli novel and a discussion with author Noa Yedlin-03-04-2024



Serling Institute Undergraduate Research Conference 04-11-2024



Serling Institute Undergraduate Research Conference 04-11-2024



Because Where There is Struggle, There is Hope: Standing Together with Itamar Avneri and Rula Daood 04-03-2024



Israel, American Jews, and Palestinian Rights: A History 1948-1978



Serling Institute Student Achievement Award 05-16-2024



Serling Institute Undergraduate Research Conference- With student Ethan Biederman 04-11-2024



Serling Institute Undergraduate Research Conference- With JS student Aaron Parker 04-11-2024



Jewish Studies Minor Andrew Schulman-Granting of Serling Institute Student Achievement Award 05-16-2024



Teaching the Holocaust Through Personal Documents with Alexandra Garbarini, Barry Trachtenberg, Kathryn Sederberg, and Abigail Lewis 05-16-2024

FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS



Noah Kaye

Noah Kaye, a historian of Classical Antiquity specializing in the interactions between Greeks and non-Greeks in ancient empires, will present his paper titled “What does Mysia have to do with Jerusalem? Military Recruitment and the Apameian Legal Space of Cis-Tauric Asia” at the annual conference of the American Society of Overseas Research in Boston from November 20th-23rd. This presentation, which connects the 2nd Book of Maccabees and the Hanukkah story to Greek inscriptions and Anatolian archaeology in Turkey, is part of the panel “(Post-) Imperial Spaces in the Late Hellenistic Levant and Beyond,” organized by Rotem Avneri Meir from the University of Helsinki and Roi Sabar from Boston University.

Dr. Kaye’s research has consistently explored how Jews navigated the Graeco-Roman world and their use of the Greek language. As a postdoctoral researcher, he worked on a project that re-edited Israel’s ancient inscriptions, many of which inform the social and economic history of Greek-speaking Jews. His 2021 article in the *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, “Purity and Property at Gezer: The Commons in a Second Temple Town,” reflects his interest in these topics.

In addition to his conference work, Dr. Kaye authored *The Attalids of Pergamon and Anatolia: Money, Culture, and State Power* (Cambridge, 2022), which also ties his research in Turkey to broader historical narratives, including the Hanukkah story. He has received funding from the Serling Institute’s Finifter Fund to analyze over 4,000 Jewish inscriptions in Greek, providing valuable insights into the identities, gender relations, and existence of pre-modern Jewish communities.

Dr. Kaye is also involved in cultural heritage projects in Greece and Turkey, collaborating with Israeli archaeologists and participating in efforts to document Jewish life, including the Holocaust, in modern Greece. He recently consulted on a project led by MSU’s Isthmia Excavation in Greece, focusing on Jewish life on the Isthmus of Corinth and commemorating Jewish prisoners-of-war captured during the 1941 Battle of Corinth.

In June 2024, Dr. Kaye was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure.



Amy Simon

In spring 2024, Amy Simon won the MSU Honors College Award for Distinguished Contributions to Honors Students (with collaborators Deborah Margolis, Lynn Wolff, Steven Weiland) for her years’-long work co-teaching the freshman honors seminar, “History and Testimony in the Digital Age: Studying the Holocaust.” Dr. Simon was also awarded the MSU History Department award for DEI contributions in teaching and service for her work on antisemitism education across the university.

In June 2024, Dr. Simon was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. In July, her essay, “Rudashevski and the Quiet Period,” appeared in the YIVO Bruce and Francesca Cernia Slovin Online Museum’s exhibit, “Yitskhok Rudashevski: A Teenager’s Account of Life and Death in the Vilna Ghetto.”



Deborah Margolis

In spring 2024, Deborah Margolis won the MSU Honors College Award for Distinguished Contributions to Honors Students (with collaborators Lynn Wolff, Amy Simon, Steven Weiland) for her years’-long work co-teaching the freshman honors seminar,

Deborah Margolis presented a paper written with Dr. Valentina Denzel, “Educating for a New Humanity: Partnering to Incorporate the Holocaust in an Italian Course,” at the New Directions in the Humanities Conference in Rome in June. Deborah received the Frank and Adelaide Kussy Scholarship for Study of the Holocaust and Its Legacy and for Study of Genocide, for travel to Ferrara and Rome, for study of Jewish culture, history, and the Holocaust in Italy.

Steve Weiland

In spring 2024, Steve Weiland won the MSU Honors College Award for Distinguished Contributions to Honors Students (with collaborators Deborah Margolis, Amy Simon, Lynn Wolff) for his years’-long work co-teaching the honors seminar. This recognition honors his role in initiating, participating in, and administering the honors seminar during its early years. He is Professor Emeritus in the College of Education. From 1995-2002, he served as Director of Jewish Studies and taught courses in American Jewish literature and culture.



Lynn Wolff

In spring 2024, Lynn Wolff won the MSU Honors College Award for Distinguished Contributions to Honors Students (with collaborators Deborah Margolis, Amy Simon, Steven Weiland) for her years’-long work co-teaching the freshman honors seminar,

Lynn Wolff’s “The Power of Language: The ‘Wörterverzeichnis’ of H.G. Adler’s *Theresienstadt 1941-1945*.” *Zeithistorische Forschungen/Studies in Contemporary History* 20 (2023): 313-330. Special Issue: Jüdische Sprachkritik nach dem Holocaust/Jewish Critique of Language after the Holocaust. Eds. Nicolas Berg, Elisabeth Gallas, and Aurélie Kalisky will be published this Fall. Support from the Serling Institute and the Kussy scholarship made it possible for Dr. Wolff to do the research for the article and to include a reproduction of an archival document in the essay. The article can be read here <https://zeithistorische-forschungen.de/2-2023/6140>

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

*Alexander (Sasha) Wade
(Social Relations and Policy, James Madison College)*

Hello all! My name is Sasha Wade, and I will be your 2024-2025 Serling Student Representative at JS faculty meetings. I am committed to the responsibility of this position, and excited for the opportunity to represent my peers. I am entering my second year at Michigan State University this fall, and have taken great joy in the Jewish studies coursework I have completed. I feel connected to my peers, professors, and all other relationships I have built in this program. The Serling Institute facilitates an exciting and dynamic space for academic growth, reflection, and belonging. During the school year, I study within James Madison College, anticipating on-time graduation in the Spring of 2027. I will leave Michigan State University with a degree in Social Relations and Policy, and a minor in Jewish Studies. I am currently employed by Professor Amy Simon, and plan on assisting with her work this upcoming Fall semester. Professor Simon seeks to access victim/perpetrator responses to the Holocaust experience through emotional understanding. Her work has had a profound impact on my life, interests me to no end, and I continue to be grateful for all the opportunity she has given me. My own academic interests gravitate towards Jewish social movements that mobilize intentional community building tactics as a pattern of activism - regardless of geographical, linguistic, or political boundaries. Put differently, I am interested in understanding how Jews construct intentional community building as a method of liberation within itself. I am also interested in understanding how Jewish collectives, and their relationship to Gd interact, in a similar light. During the academic year, I study Hebrew with Professor Yore Kedem - but I spent this last summer in Western Massachusetts at the Yiddish Book Center's Steiner Summer Program. It was a life changing experience, and I encourage any who are interested to reach out. It is a good time to be a Yiddishist in Middle America! I look



forward to representing my peers, and building academic community together.

Lela Weintraub

RECIPIENTS OF THE 2024 SERLING INSTITUTE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

(Residential College of Arts and Humanities,)

During my time as a Jewish Studies minor, I had the incredible opportunity to study abroad in Israel, where I was able to gain a deeper understanding of the modern and ancient history of the area. During my study abroad, I conducted a mini research study regarding a law that passed in 2018 related to the various languages spoken in Israel. As part of my research, I was able to interview people to give voice to their opinions of the languages spoken in Israel, both currently and in the future, and how these languages interact with the country as a whole. As part of my Jewish Studies minor at MSU, I took Hebrew language classes which provided me a deeper understanding of the language and Israeli culture. I was lucky to return to Israel two additional times while at MSU, and my studies of the language were invaluable during my travels. During my final semester I was also one of the recipients of the Serling Institute's Student Achievement Award, for which I am extremely grateful. Currently I am working at the University of Illinois Hillel, and in the future I hope to attend law school.



*Reuven Margrett
(College of Education)*

Having had several years of experience in the Jewish educational world, I am excited to be at MSU, entering my fourth year of doctoral studies at the College of Education. I



focus on how educators think about and teach Jewish religious texts and their influence on the types of textual encounters and practices they want students to engage in. I've learned from Dr. Laura Yares some of the breadth of Jewish education scholarship and presented at AERA, 2023, addressing the question: *How do Jewish congregational school educational directors view the role of their Jewish teachers?* as part of a round table titled: Exploring (Ethno) Religious Truths in Curriculum Studies: A Dialogue Across Global Perspectives, chaired by my mentor in the Teacher Education Department Prof. Mary Juzwik. I presented at the National Research in Jewish Education Conference 2023 in a session titled *Wrestling with the Past, Transforming the Future. How do Jewish congregational school educational directors view the role of their Judaic teachers?* I am also the proud recipient of the 2024 MSU Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel's Student Achievement Award.

*Andrew Schulman
(Social Relations and Policy, James Madison College)*

The Serling Institute and the Jewish Studies Minor supported and created some of the most valuable experiences throughout college at MSU. As a minor, I enjoyed specialized Hebrew classes with Professor Weiss and Professor Kedem, covering topics of interest at my level of proficiency. Additionally, I was fortunate to receive the Levy and Abramson scholarships which supported my learning at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Summer 2021, internship in Tel Aviv, Summer 2022, and my research position with the Holocaust Museum of Budapest, Hungary, Summer 2023. Back home, I enjoyed interning for the institute under Professor Aronoff, and attending engaging events such as fascinating speakers, the annual Israeli Film Festival, and, of course, the faculty bake-off. I was proud to see how supportive the Jewish Studies community was during times of uncertainty on campus: providing resources, hosting informative events, and frequently checking in on students. Since graduating this past May 2024, my focus has mainly been on taking the LSAT, applying to law schools, and planning my gap year. However, I will soon be on the job search



while simultaneously preparing to travel around Alaska in an RV for the month of August.



Please consider the Serling Institute in your charitable giving this year, to support our mission to educate students and future leaders about Jewish Studies and Modern Israel.

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