

STROUM CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES

HENRY M. JACKSON SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

IMPACT REPORT

Critically Acclaimed Novelist Gary Shteyngart Delivers 2018 Stroum Lectures

Announcing the Jack and Rebecca
Benaroya Endowed Fund for
Excellence in Israel Studies

Sephardic Studies Digital Library
Reaches New Milestone



Graduate Fellowship
Welcomes Largest Class Ever





LETTER FROM THE **DIRECTOR**

Over the summer, the Nazi symbols I teach about in my Jewish history courses entered mainstream American politics in a way I never thought would occur. White supremacists marched through the grounds of our peer institution, the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia, holding Nazi flags, carrying torches, and shouting racist and anti-Semitic slogans. Even more disturbing, the public response to the rally at the highest level of our government seemed intent on normalizing the white supremacists as legitimate American voices. The backdrop of this appalling rally at the University of Virginia does not seem to be a coincidence. Supporters of the alt-right have targeted college campuses to directly challenge our core values of critical thinking, research-based debates, and tolerance for different viewpoints. Our own campus has not been spared. Violence broke out earlier this year on Red Square responding to an alt-right journalist speaking on campus.

The Charlottesville “Unite the Right” rally unfortunately indicates that the theoretical

question of why Jews are historically viewed as problematic outsiders has leapt off the pages of scholarly journals and into our Facebook feeds. The increasingly vocal voices for the alt-right on campuses around the country make our fundamental task as professors of Jewish Studies more imperative than ever. As teachers of the Jewish experience, our faculty explore the universal significance of a minority community grappling with questions of tolerance, integration, and ethical living with hundreds of students each year. The Jewish experience offers a rich lens for comparing how societies and nations across time and space understand the value of diversity, pluralism, and human equality. In the following pages, you will read about our amazing students, programs, and faculty initiatives. Behind each of these inspiring stories are individual students honing the moral compass they will need to heal our polarized communities.

We are incredibly fortunate at this moment when our courses are more important than ever to have two new full-time faculty members join the

“Beyond each of these inspiring stories are individual students honing the moral compass they will need to heal our polarized communities.”

Stroum Center. Thanks to a visionary gift from Rebecca Benaroya, we welcome our new Benaroya Professor of Israel Studies, Prof. Liora Halperin. Prof. Halperin is a leading Jewish cultural and social historian, whose first book was awarded the Shapiro Prize from the Association of Israel Studies for the best book in the field. Prof. Halperin brings a scholarly perspective to an increasingly politicized area of knowledge. Prof. Halperin is already at work building relationships with faculty from across the university, and developing public fora for understanding events in Israel in a global context. I am grateful to Becky Benaroya, and all the members of our community that worked over the last two years to translate the vision of a new faculty position in Israel Studies into a reality. Thanks to bridge funding from the Samuel and

Althea Stroum critical needs endowment, we will also welcome a second new faculty member, Prof. Sasha Senderovich. Prof. Senderovich will be joining the Stroum Center faculty to teach courses in Russian-Jewish and Yiddish literature as well as Jewish culture more broadly at the UW. With this exciting hire, the Stroum Center and the UW has become a leader in the United States in the field of Russian and Eastern European Studies. Joining an impressive faculty in the Jackson School and in Slavic Languages and Literatures, Prof. Senderovich brings a passion for community programming, undergraduate teaching, and public scholarship. He is already making his mark by facilitating the 2018 Stroum Lectures with award-winning author Gary Shteyngart.

The addition of these two outstanding new hires secures the Stroum Center's position as one of the premier Jewish Studies centers in the country. We have an internationally recognized Sephardic Studies program lead by Prof. Devin Naar. We have critical faculty mass to offer in-depth courses on rabbinic literature, Jewish culture, American Jewish history, the Holocaust, Hebrew language, Yiddish and Russian literature, and Jewish philosophy. Our course offerings taught by dedicated Stroum Center faculty will almost double, as will our capacity to mentor graduate students. We are now at an ideal moment to think far more expansively and strategically about how the Stroum Center will play a central role in the future of the field of Jewish Studies, engage more students on campus, and contribute to the wider Puget Sound community.

At the heart of our success and future plans are our amazing staff, advisory board, and community supporters. Sarah Zaides Rosen, a newly-minted UW History Ph.D. and former Stroum Center graduate fellow, has joined our staff as our new associate

director. Sarah joins Lauren Kurland, director of student engagement, Emily Thompson, community outreach and events manager, Kara Schoonmaker, digital media coordinator, Ty Alhadeff, Sephardic Studies program coordinator, and Doria Nelson, our student intern. Our staff works tirelessly and enthusiastically to support the Center and I am so grateful that we have such an experienced, talented, and fun team! Our advisory board, under the dedicated leadership of Jamie Merriman-Cohen, helps us bridge campus and community in our work. I am indebted to the members of the advisory board for sharing their feedback, offering hands-on help at our programs, and promoting the Stroum Center in the broader community.

Finally, to all of you, our community supporters: The impact of the Stroum Center is possible only because of the tremendous support we receive through endowments and annual fund gifts. While we are deeply integrated into the university, we are completely self-sustaining and rely on outside funding for all of our work with students, faculty, and the public. Teaching about the Jewish experience to diverse students on today's college campuses makes an important contribution to protecting the values of diversity, tolerance, and critical thinking. As we all adjust to a challenging new political reality, I thank you for allowing the Stroum Center to share the Jewish experience as a source of inspiration, resilience, and optimism.

Warmly,

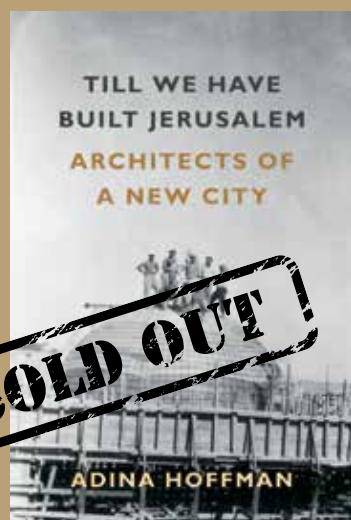


Noam Pianko

Samuel N. Stroum Chair of Jewish Studies; Lucia S. and Herbert L. Pruzan Professor of Jewish Studies; Professor, Jackson School of International Studies



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS 2017-2018



Presenting the Jack and Rebecca Benaroya Endowed Lecture: "Till We Have Built Jerusalem: Architects of a New City" Lecture with Adina Hoffman

We were pleased to have welcomed essayist and biographer Adina Hoffman. She writes often of the Middle East, approaching it from unusual angles and shedding light on overlooked dimensions of the place, its people, and their cultures.

Hoffman offered a sold-out public lecture based on her critically acclaimed new book, *Till We Have Built Jerusalem*, Hoffman's talk uncovered layers of one great city's buried history asking what it means to be foreign and to belong.

October 17, 2017 at 7:00pm in Kane Hall

For more information, see our Israel Studies Highlight on page 14.

Graduate Fellow Presentations

The Stroum Center is proud to announce its sixth cohort of graduate fellowships. Each of this year's eight fellows will give a lunchtime presentation about their fellowship research. Topics will range from Sephardic choral music to curriculum development around the Arab-Israeli conflict. Light lunch will be served.

For more information on this year's Fellows and their research, see page 11.

Contact the Stroum Center for details of the various dates:

Monday, February 26, 2018

Wednesday, April 25, 2018

Monday, May 14, 2018

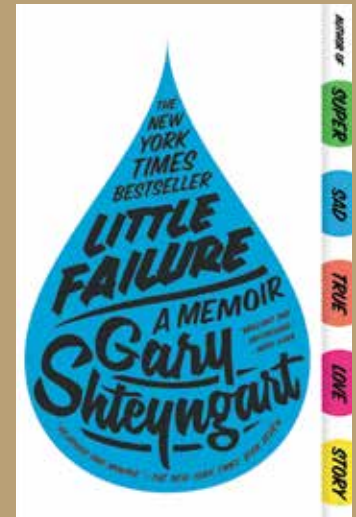
Dates and times are subject to change. For the most up-to-date event information or to RSVP for an event, please visit us at jewishstudies.washington.edu/events or call the Stroum Center at 206-543-0138.

Annual Stroum Lecture Series with author Gary Shteyngart

Award-winning author Gary Shteyngart will visit Seattle in May 2018 for the annual Stroum Lectures. Shteyngart will read from his memoir *Little Failure* as well as give a sneak preview of his soon to be released new novel. He will also participate in an onstage conversation with Prof. Sasha Senderovich, who joins the Stroum Center's faculty in the 2017-18 academic year.

For more information on Gary Shteyngart and his work, see our Stroum Lectures Highlight on page 13.

May 7 and 9, 2018 at 7:00pm in Kane Hall



Yasmin Levy: A Ladino Day Event with Prof. Devin Naar

Yasmin Levy, a charismatic and renowned interpreter of Ladino music, returns to Seattle for the first time in many years for a concert and Q&A session with Prof. Devin Naar. Levy is on tour in support of her fifth studio album, *Libertad* ("Freedom"). The Q&A will also feature an appearance from the ethnomusicologist Jon Kertzer.

Saturday, November 11, 2017, doors at 7:00pm at the Stroum Jewish Community Center

Ticket price: \$30 General Admission. More ticket options available – visit www.sjcc.org for more information.

Referendum on the Deli Menu: American Jewish Nostalgia and the Deli Revival with Rachel Gross

Thursday, December 7, 2017 at 6:00pm in HUB 145

Salud y Shalom: American Jews in the Spanish Civil War with Joe Butwin

Tuesday, January 30, 2018 at 3:30pm in Thomson Hall 317

Looking at the Irish with Envy: American Zionism and the Uses of Irish Nationalism with Judah Bernstein

Wednesday, February 7, 2018 at 11:00am in Thomson Hall 317

Cole Fellow Colloquium with Constanze Kolbe

Tuesday, February 13, 2018 at 3:30pm in Thomson Hall 317

The Other Iraq with Orit Bashkin

Monday, April 9, 2018 at 3:30pm in Thomson Hall 317

Ancient Jewish Magic with Mika Ahuvia

Tuesday, April 17, 2018 at 3:30pm in Thomson Hall 317



EVENTS RECAP 2016-2017

Spinoza & Modern Jewish Philosophy International Conference

In May 2017, twelve of the world's foremost Spinoza scholars met in Seattle for the Spinoza & Modern Jewish Philosophy conference, hosted by Prof. Michael Rosenthal, who holds the Samuel & Althea Stroum Chair in Jewish Studies.

The conference was an interdisciplinary two-day event held at Hillel UW and the Husky Union Building (HUB). Cosponsors included the Departments of Philosophy and Germanics as well as the Simpson Center for the Humanities.

Speakers traveled from across the US, Canada, and Israel to present on a range of topics related to Spinoza, including "The Study of Scripture and the Study of Nature," "The Zionist Critique of Spinoza's Politics," and "Spinoza

on the Election of the Hebrews." All sessions were free and open to the public. Over 100 audience members came to learn from and interact with the presenters over the course of the conference.

Spinoza & Modern Jewish Philosophy was held in conjunction with the Stroum Lectures, which featured Prof. Jonathan Israel of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey. Audio recordings from several conference presentations are available at <https://soundcloud.com/stroum-jewish-studies> and video of both Stroum Lectures can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/user/StroumJewishStudies>.



Jewish Salonica Book Launch

Published by Stanford University Press, Prof. Naar's new book, *Jewish Salonica: Between the Ottoman Empire and Modern Greece*, won the 2016 National Jewish Book Award for best archival research. More than 200 guests attended the book's launch at the UW Tower Auditorium. With introductions by Jackson School Director Reşat Kasaba and Stroum Center Director Noam Pianko, the event also featured a sold-out book signing by Naar and a reception with Sephardic delicacies.



Access Student Lunch Film Series

Once per quarter during the 2016-17 academic year, 20-30 Access students and community members joined Prof. Naomi Sokoloff in the HUB for a film screening and discussion. The films were from the Israeli series *Halvrim* ("The Writers"), and each featured a different Jewish author. Attendees enjoyed the opportunity to view these films, which are not widely available, and to participate in group discussions with Prof. Sokoloff, an expert in Hebrew literature.



ANNOUNCING NEW **ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR**

Meet Sarah Zaides Rosen

Dr. Sarah Zaides Rosen joined the Stroum Center staff as associate director last June. However, Rosen is no stranger to UW or the Stroum Center. Rosen has been involved with Jewish Studies for some time, having been twice a Stroum Center Graduate Fellow. She was the Philip Bernstein Memorial Scholar in 2012-13, as well as the Samuel and Althea Stroum Graduate Fellow in the inaugural cohort of 2013-14. Rosen received a Ph.D. from the Department of History at the University of Washington in Seattle in 2017. Her scholarship explores the history of Russian Jews in Constantinople and Western Anatolia on the eve of Turkish and Soviet statehood.

Rosen is looking forward to steering the growth of the Stroum Center and its two flagship programs in Sephardic Studies and Israel Studies. "This is such a unique Center," Rosen told Stroum Center Staff in May – "it's not just the center for the study of the Jewish experience for UW students, but it's the intellectual heartbeat of the Jewish Puget Sound. We are home to such a world-class faculty, and

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— Sarah Zaides Rosen, Stroum Center
Jewish Studies Associate Director

if students are looking for experts in Holocaust history, Sephardic history, Jewish philosophy – the experts are right here at the University of Washington. [Stroum Center Director] Noam Pianko has done such a great job with the digital reach of our Center, and as we've become one of the top Jewish Studies programs in the country, we need to continue to lay down more infrastructure to allow us to expand and ultimately meet our goal of reaching as many students and community members as possible." Rosen is also passionate about the possibilities for expanding and enriching the Jewish Studies undergraduate program. As a recent graduate student herself, Rosen appreciates that Jewish Studies provides UW majors and minors with a unique set of skills. "We are a multidisciplinary program by definition, our students take courses in business, history, science, literature, languages, and the list goes on. Our majors receive the kind of education that employers are looking for – we teach critical thinking, reading and writing, and our student-faculty ratios are some of the highest on this campus. Our students go on to be leaders in their fields."

STROUM CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES

SEPHARDIC STUDIES PROGRAM

THE STROUM CENTER CELEBRATES THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS
OF THE SEPHARDIC STUDIES PROGRAM

► INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR THREE YEAR OLD PROGRAM

As the Ladino *refran*, or proverb, tells us: *Un anyo mas, un sehel mas*. Another year, another piece of knowledge. This is certainly true for the Sephardic Studies Program, which has completed its third year of sharing knowledge with, and gaining knowledge from, students, scholars, and community members in Seattle and across the world. The increased enthusiasm and interest is reflected in the numerous media outlets that have profiled our endeavors, from *The UW Daily* and *The Seattle Times* to *The Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, *The Jewish Daily Forward*, *Mosaic Magazine*, and myjewishlearning.com.

RESEARCH

Our Sephardic Studies digital library and archive continues to grow. Not only do we have more Ladino books than the Library of Congress or Harvard University, but we have succeeded in digitizing 1,445 Sephardic “treasures” contributed by local community members: nearly 600 books, magazines, and newspapers; more than 400 archival documents including family correspondence, postcards, photographs, immigration documents, institutional records, theater scripts, amulets, and marriage certificates; and more than 200 audio and video recordings. All told, to date we have scanned 132,236 pages of Sephardic material. We are now a “big data” operation. A sampling of more than 40 of these sources are available online for free to anyone with an internet connection and have already been visited by thousands of users.

Working with Ty Alhadeff – who serves as our archivist, librarian, accession officer, blogger, social media strategist, and student research resource – we have published a series of more than twenty online essays on the Stroum Center website. These essays, by staff, faculty, and students, highlight Sephardic themes, artifacts, or personalities and situate them within the relevant cultural and historical context accompanied by images and translations from original Ladino sources. Focused on Sephardic customs and cuisine, songs and oral traditions, military service and war, migration and refugees, publishing and education, rabbis and teachers, and the roles of men and women, the posts open new vistas on the Sephardic experience; they have attracted 77,345 visitors.

TEACHING

Last year, thanks to a course on medieval Sephardic culture taught by Professor Ana Gómez-Bravo and another by me, on Sephardic history after 1492,

undergraduate and Access students delved into a millennium of the Sephardic experience from Spain to the Middle East, America, and beyond. Recent undergraduate projects have included a study of Sephardic identity in Seattle; the history of the Rhodes Holocaust monument; the relationship between Sephardic and Arab-Jewish identity; and the debates over whether Sephardic Jews should apply for Spanish or Portuguese citizenship today.

Graduate students in History, Linguistics, Near and Middle East Studies, and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations continue their innovative, multidisciplinary work in Sephardic Studies. Sarah Zaides Rosen completed her dissertation on the encounter between Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews in Istanbul; Molly FitzMorris continues her study of the Rhodes dialect of Ladino; Canan Boel is on fellowship in Turkey for her research on the Jews of Izmir; and, having already completed his dissertation, Oscar Aguirre Mandujano is preparing an exhibition of Sephardic artifacts in Seattle to be displayed in Istanbul.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our Fourth Annual Ladino Day celebration involved a screening of the 1978 film, *Song of the Sephardi*, which profiled Sephardic life in Seattle forty years ago, followed by a multigenerational panel of community leaders (Hazan Isaac Azose, Judith Amiel, David Behar, and Makena Owens) who

discussed the past, present, and future of Ladino. Are there more verses to the “song of the Sephardi” yet to be written or has the language been condemned to extinction? With 300 attendees, the event concluded with Sephardic treats. Other events such as a celebration of my new book, *Jewish Salonica*, and our annual Sephardic Spotlight at the Seattle Jewish Film Festival, drew together hundreds more.

We have also cultivated a worldwide virtual Sephardic Studies community. Our Facebook page has become a key international go-to resource for all things Sephardic. Our 3,500 “friends” hail from 45 countries in addition to the US, including Israel, Turkey, Greece, England, France, Brazil, Spain, Canada, Italy, Germany, Argentina, Hungary, South Africa, Columbia, Mexico, Belgium, Peru, and Japan. We remain grateful for the support of the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies and its staff, as well as the Jackson School of International Studies and our many partners on and off campus. Finally, our endeavors are made possible with the generous contributions of our supporters, and especially the Sephardic Studies Founders Circle. *Mersi muncho!* May 2017-2018 be another year with more knowledge shared and more knowledge gained. *Adelantre!*

Devin Naar, Isaac Alhadeff Professor in Sephardic Studies; Sephardic Studies Program Chair; Associate Professor, Jackson School of International Studies; Associate Professor, History



STROUM CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES

ISRAEL STUDIES PROGRAM

STROUM CENTER GRADUATE FELLOW DESIGNING ISRAEL STUDIES CURRICULUM



Growing up in an evangelical Christian home in Houston, Texas, Robert "Rob" Keener first learned about Israel as a child. Israel played a central role in the family's eschatology and beliefs, and Keener had some additional exposure to Jewish customs and rituals through his Jewish

godfather, a close business associate of Keener's father. However, Keener's interest in exploring Israel became more central to his academic pursuits when he entered Ole Miss for a Master of Arts in History. A survey course of the Middle East from the Middle Ages to World War II with renowned historian Nicolas Trepanier piqued his interest in learning more about this complex region.

Now a graduate student in the UW College of Education and a Stroum Center graduate fellow, Keener has decided to apply his expertise in curriculum design to helping high school students learn more about Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict. With the help of Professor Noam Pianko, Keener

is developing a syllabus and hopes to soon build digital resources on the Arab-Israeli conflict that will be widely available to educators. He is creating these materials because "teachers are faced with time constraints, and don't always have the hours in the day to stay up to date on all of the literature," explains Keener. "That's where we come in. Professional development is essential for teachers, especially on a topic that is constantly evolving and changing." Keener's goal is to promote the study of the Arab-Israeli conflict to enable students to gain a deeper understanding of this complex global issue.

"This is a classic social justice issue," Keener asserts. "We can use this specific narrative to find common ground among students that can be applied in other educational contexts, including human and civil rights. We need contexts that are difficult to talk about and controversial, and we can't be afraid of it. Many teachers are afraid to teach the Arab-Israeli conflict, and that's a missed opportunity."

This project complements Keener's other work as a student at the UW College of Education. His dissertation examines the ways in which race is

“We can use this specific narrative to find common ground among students that can be applied in other educational contexts, including human and civil rights.”

— Robert Keener,
Stroum Center Jewish Studies
Graduate Fellowship

constructed in rural, white classrooms. He looks at the way in which curriculum is introduced in these classrooms, what questions it raises, and how students engage with it, an approach that Keener developed based on his own positionality as a white Texan working on multicultural education. Keener understands how deeply his dissertation is integrated with his project for this year’s Stroum Center Jewish Studies Graduate Fellowship. He hopes to continue his work in the Puget Sound region upon the completion of this fellowship and his Ph.D. In fact, his family recently put down roots in Snoqualmie, and he and his wife Emily, welcomed their first daughter in August.

Dr. Sarah Zaides Rosen, Associate Director



KEENER SPEAKING WITH BOB CENTER, A PAST ADVISORY BOARD PRESIDENT AND GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP SUPPORTER



HAZEL D. COLE FELLOW **WELCOME**

Welcome Constanze Kolbe, the Stroum Center’s 2017-2018 Hazel D. Cole Fellow

Constanze Kolbe received her Ph.D. in 2017 from the Department of History at Indiana University in Bloomington. Her dissertation examines how 19th-century Jewish merchants, publishers, and rabbis who lived in Corfu (a Greek island) created a transnational commercial, cultural, and philanthropic network with Jews, Muslims, Catholics, and Christian Orthodox peoples in the Adriatic region.

This spring, Kolbe will teach “Jews and Money: Myths and Reality,” which will cover the early modern Court Jews of the Hapsburg Empire to the Sephardic Diaspora networks in the New World to World War II Germany and contemporary America. The course will explore both the historical circumstances for Jewish involvement in commercial professions and how this commercial involvement has been used in anti-Semitic propaganda.

The Hazel D. Cole Fellowship is a prestigious fellowship award made possible by a gift of Samuel and Althea Stroum in honor of Althea’s sister, Hazel D. Cole.

UNDERGRADUATE ENGAGEMENT



THE FOLLOWING PIECES ARE
ADAPTED FROM PRESENTATIONS
AT THE STROUM CENTER 2017
YEAR END CELEBRATION

FROM OUR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT DIRECTOR

Our Jewish Studies courses attract remarkably diverse students: students pursuing humanities, engineering, and sciences; students raised Jewish, Christian, Muslim, or without religious education; students who feel connected to the Jewish experience and others who had not encountered Judaism until arriving at the UW. Despite – or perhaps because of – these different backgrounds,

students consistently describe Jewish Studies classes as being among the best they have taken at the UW. They tout our professors as being as passionate about student learning as they are about the subject matter they teach. They experience the Jewish Studies community as welcoming and sincerely invested in their growth and development. These qualities distinguish Jewish Studies at the UW and beyond.

Lauren Kurland, Student Engagement Director

Special thanks to the Rita and Herbert Rosen Family Foundation and Michele and Stan Rosen for funding the Stroum Center's Student Engagement Director. This unique position allows the Stroum Center to offer personal, tailored outreach to current and prospective Jewish Studies students at the UW and to create events and programs that reflect student interests.

FROM A RECENT UW JEWISH STUDIES GRADUATE

I am a daughter of the Jewish Studies program here at the University of Washington. Every single one of my “parents” has watched me grow over the past several years. You should have all seen me as an 18-year-old toddler in Professor Naar’s class, struggling and knowing absolutely nothing. I bet it must have been difficult to teach someone like me, starting with the basics and from the very beginning. But my Jewish Studies professors and teachers did it with love, patience and full commitment. They believed in me, took me in, raised me up, and treasured every step I took. Without them, who would I be? I really don’t know.

While graduating may seem like I’m departing from this big family, no matter where I go, I will forever keep the memory of those days close to my heart, so that whenever I get tired on my journey, my heart can remind me of the warmth, the strength and the trust Jewish Studies has provided me.

Hui (Dawn) Yang, born and raised in China, enrolled in Jewish Cultural History during her first year at the UW and never looked back. She double-majored in Jewish Studies and Philosophy, was a stalwart member of the Jewish Studies Student Advisory Council, and received a Stroum Center Opportunity Grant for advanced Hebrew studies.



STROUM CENTER SUPPORTER CAROL GOLDBERG CONGRATULATES NEW ALUMNA HUI YANG AT THE YEAR END CELEBRATION



JEWISH STUDIES ALUM SPOTLIGHT

Jewish Studies alum **Ondina “L.B.” Lipney-Burger**, ’17, is in Jerusalem at the Hebrew University pursuing a master’s in human rights and transitional justice. Transitional justice refers to the ways countries emerging from times of conflict and repression address human rights violations that might otherwise overwhelm the standard justice system. L.B. reports that the classes she takes with world-renowned faculty and a dazzling mix of international students are challenging but rewarding. Her Hebrew, honed at the UW, is serving her well. She reflects that UW prepared her properly for the critical thinking and school-life balance that she needs to succeed in graduate school.

STROUM CENTER BRINGS LEADING AUTHORS TO SEATTLE

NEW PROFESSOR SASHA SENDEROVICH WELCOMES GARY SHTEYNGART AS 2018 STROUM LECTURER



A decade and a half ago, with the publication of his 2002 novel *The Russian Debutante's Handbook*, the writer Gary Shteyngart launched a new wave of literary production by Jewish writers who immigrated to North America from the Soviet Union

at a young age, and who took up the pen in English, their adopted tongue. By now, works by award-winning and bestselling writers Anya Ulinich, David Bezmozgis, Boris Fishman, Lara Vapnyar, Irina Reyn, Nadia Kalman, Sana Krasikov, and others easily fill an impressive – and growing – bookshelf. Coinciding with the flourishing of English-language literature by authors of diverse national, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds such as Jhumpa Lahiri, Junot Díaz, and Chang-rae Lee, this cohort of writers placed the experience of Russian Jewish immigrants on the map of contemporary American fiction.

Shteyngart followed his debut with two more satirical novels. *Absurdistan* (2006) was a whimsical yet darkly comic take on both Vladimir Putin's oligarchy and George W. Bush's America. *Super Sad True Love Story* (2010) presented a dystopian vision of America's

decline that was filled with prophecies on issues ranging from surveillance technology to economic disparity that have gradually – and stunningly – been coming true in the years since. Vastly different in their breadth and set in a range of real and imagined locations the world over, Shteyngart's first three novels explored different versions of a series of nebbishes who, in parodic ways, resembled the author himself.

With the publication of his memoir *Little Failure* in 2014, Shteyngart appears to have closed a chapter of his career that built rich fictional worlds on his satirized autobiography. *Little Failure* – a humorous, touching, and deeply honest exploration of his family's and his own history delved deeply into the 20th century experience of Jews in the Soviet Union and during immigration that sat at the core

of Shteyngart's earlier fiction. In his anticipated (and as yet untitled) new novel, expected to be published in 2018, Shteyngart is poised to pivot in a new direction and to train his

perceptive gaze on unfolding American realities. Set during a time that Shteyngart's narrator defines as "the first summer of Trump," the novel launches its American Jewish protagonist – a hedge fund broker of dubious accomplishments and a failed father and

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If you are interested in learning more about Gary Shteyngart and joining a reading group led by Prof. Senderovich, please contact Dr. Sarah Zaides Rosen at Szaides@uw.edu
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The 2018 Stroum Lectures with Gary Shteyngart will offer an opportunity to look back on the first fifteen years of the writer's career and to look ahead to his future literary pursuits.

husband – on a life-changing trip across the United States aboard a Greyhound bus. Semi-cognizant of other literary protagonists who had previously undertaken similar journeys of self-discovery and failed, and not entirely unaware that such pursuits of lost time tend to yield disappointing results, Shteyngart's new hero offers profound observations of a native country he hadn't known before, its fabric of fragile human relationships rapidly and starkly fraying all around him.

The 2018 Stroum Lectures with Gary Shteyngart will offer an opportunity to look back on the first fifteen years of the writer's career and to look ahead to his future literary pursuits. In a series of conversations and readings, Shteyngart will explore the questions of the role of humor and comedy in today's world, immigration and the Jewish experience, prescient issues in Russian-American political and cultural relations, and the satirist's role in authoritarian societies.

Prof. Sasha Senderovich

STROUM CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES

ISRAEL STUDIES PROGRAM

GETTING TO KNOW

ADINA HOFFMAN



We were pleased to welcome Adina Hoffman to UW in October to kick off our Benaroya Chair programming. Hoffman offered a public lecture about her recent book, *Till We have Built Jerusalem: Architects of a New City*, a sensitive and probing work of popular non-fiction about the construction of city so often at the symbolic and political heart of our study of and conversations about Israel. Jerusalem's multiethnic past and present, and the numerous forces and visions that have shaped it over the course of modern history, offer a fitting entry point into the diverse activities that the Benaroya Chair will enable at UW. Courses, campus and community programming, and research within the framework of the Jackson School and Stroum Center for Jewish Studies will explore how the contemporary state of Israel and the historic territory of Israel/Palestine have been shaped through past and ongoing ties to Europe, the Middle East, North America, and beyond, and by the long, global sweep of Jewish history. Hoffman connects stories of the personal and the local with larger political and social realities, revealing unknown stories about a place we hear so much about. A Guggenheim-award-winning author, she is also known for her work, with Peter Cole, on the gripping and multi-continent story of the modern discovery of the Cairo Geniza, a medieval Jewish collection of community texts and an unparalleled source for learning about Jews in the medieval Sephardi, Middle Eastern, and Mediterranean worlds.

Liora Halperin, Associate Professor, Jackson School and History

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**Announcing the Jack and Rebecca Benaroya Fund
for Excellence in Israel Studies.**

GRADUATE FELLOWS: PAST AND PRESENT

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

It's been five years since our inaugural class of Graduate Fellows. Our Fellows have spanned over ten disciplines, speak over a dozen languages, and have won numerous awards and prizes for their innovative research. The Stroum Center caught up with a few of them – read below to learn about their accomplishments.

Yoav Duman 2012-13 earned his Ph.D. in Political Science and is a tenure-tracked faculty member in political science at Green River College. He continues to teach his popular Arab-Israeli Conflict class at the University of Washington.

Emily Gade 2016-17 completed her Ph.D. in Political Science and was awarded the Moore/Sloan Data Science and Washington Foundation Innovation in Data Science Postdoctoral Fellowship from the eScience Institute at the University of Washington.

Sasha Mariel 2015-16 was recently awarded a fellowship through TENT: Creative Writing at the Yiddish Book Center and has also been chosen as a Jewish Studies Interdisciplinary Graduate Fellow at the University of Virginia for 2017-2018, where she is pursuing an M.F.A.

Veronica Mushkeli 2012-13 was awarded the Presidential Dissertation Fellowship at UW and was awarded the Hanauer Fellowship in Western Civilization from the Simpson Center.

Oded Oron 2015-16, 2016-17 is currently in Israel completing his field work for his dissertation in the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. program at the Jackson School and has a forthcoming chapter, "Let My People Stay: Seeking Asylum in the Jewish State" slotted for publication in an edited volume through Warwick University Press.

Zachary Tavlin 2016-17 is a Ph.D. student in English and has recently published articles in *The Comparist*, *Theatre Journal*, and *The Wallace Stevens Journal*.



PROF. MICHAEL ROSENTHAL WITH ZACHARY TAVLIN



GRADUATE FELLOW SARA MOLAIE AND OZGUR OZKAN

THE CLASS OF 2017-2018

The Stroum Center is pleased to announce the 2017-2018 class of the Graduate Fellowship. The Stroum Center's Graduate Fellowship creates a community of graduate students across disciplines and departments at the University of Washington, convening them for a series of meetings during the school year and culminating with presentations of their research during the spring quarter of the academic year.

Mickey Sreebny Memorial Scholar Pablo Jairo Tutillo is an M.A. student at the Henry M. Jackson School of Middle East Studies and has an interest in joining the Foreign Service. His research project is about Mizrahi Jewish communities in the Middle East and their points of intracommunal contact.

Isaac Alhadeff Fellow Molly FitzMorris is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Linguistics, and her research explores Seattle Ladino dialects. Molly is at work on creating an online grammar resource that will uniquely contribute to linguistics and serve as a resource for Ladino speakers and their families.

I. Mervin and Georgiana Gorascht Fellow Ozgur Ozkan is a third year Ph.D. student in the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, working on a dissertation that focuses on Jewish military conscription in the Ottoman Empire.

Robert Arthur A. Jacobovitz Fellow Sam Gordon is researching Israeli foreign and economic policy toward Asia. Sam's aim is to understand Israel in what he calls a "post-western" context. He is an M.A. student in the Henry M. Jackson's Middle East Studies Program.

Israel Studies Fellow Robert Keener is a Ph.D. student in Education and is creating material to help teach the Arab-Israel conflict in secondary schools teaching the Israeli/Palestinian conflict in secondary education. *See article on page 9.*

Richard M. Willner Memorial Fellow Vivian Mills is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. Her research interests are in the literary works by Jewish, Converso and Morisco writers of medieval Iberia. She is at work on a project that examines *Proverbios Morales* by Shem Tov of Carrion, a thirteenth-century Jewish poet. Shem Tov draws on the literary wisdom traditions of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism to address his "heterogenous and often antagonistic audience."

Robert and Pamela Center Fellow Sara Molaie is researching the comparative linguistic revivals of Hebrew and Persian in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She is an M.A. student in International Studies: Comparative Religion, Islam and Judaism.

Robinovitch Family Fellow Sarah Riskind is a Ph.D. student in the School of Music, and her research project, "Sephardic Music for Choirs: Traditions and Adaptations," focuses on how Jewish choral arrangements reflect the style and historical context of the original melodies, with a specific emphasis on Ladino music. In addition to conducting, singing, and teaching, she has composed choral and instrumental works that have been performed all over the United States, many of which use Jewish liturgical texts in Hebrew and in English.

The Jewish Studies Graduate Fellowship is now entering its 6th year of supporting masters- and doctoral-level research projects related to Jewish Studies. Graduate Fellows have come from many UW departments:



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Prof. Liora Halperin, Israel
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**TY ALHADEFF WITH
LADINO SINGER-
SONGWRITER
FLORY JAGODA**

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COMMUNITY LEARNING FELLOWSHIP 2016-2017



ADVISORY BOARD CHAIR JAMIE MERRIMAN-COHEN'S REFLECTIONS

This past February, the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies hosted its second Community Learning Fellowship (CLF). Continuing the Center's 2016-2017 theme of Otherness and Tolerance, the CLF provided an opportunity for community members to come together to study, discuss, and debate "The 2016 Election and America's Jewish Communities." With a guiding question of "what can we learn from Jewish history, politics, sociology, and religious sources about the potential impact of the Trump election on American Jewish communities?", a diverse, multi-generational cohort of CLF participants engaged in rich learning and passionate conversation during three lively seminar style sessions. Professor Noam Pianko kicked off the series by introducing Louis Brandeis' article promoting the idea that one can be a Zionist and an American at the same time, which led to a heated (and tolerant!) discussion about American Jewish attitudes about Israel. Professor Devin Naar challenged the Community Learning Fellows to look to Sephardic Jews and their experiences as minorities in

a dominant culture, holding intersectional identities, models possibilities for contemporary American Jewry. Professor Michael Rosenthal concluded the series by guiding us through a philosophical approach to consider if America in the Trump era might follow the trajectory of Germany's Weimar Republic. Over 50 people participated in the CLF, and many commented that they left the discussions with minds buzzing from the energetic exchange of ideas.

The Community Learning Fellowship is a shining example of new and innovative ways that the Stroum Center delivers on its mission to extend academic learning opportunities to the Greater Seattle community. On behalf of the SCJS Advisory Board, we thank Folio: The Seattle Athenaeum for hosting the CLF, our generous supporters for helping bring Jewish Studies into the community, and our outstanding faculty for sharing their expertise in this unique forum.

Jamie Merriman-Cohen, Advisory Board Chair

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The number of **OPPORTUNITY GRANTS** awarded to undergraduate and graduate students for Spring/Summer 2017! Funding is offered in two cycles: Winter/Spring and Summer/Autumn. Opportunity grants support UW-approved research and study opportunities related to Jewish Studies. The 2017 winners used their grants for fantastic experiences both domestically and abroad, including:

**ISRAEL
TECH
CHALLENGE**

**STUDY
ABROAD
TAU**

**STUDY
ABROAD
Prague**

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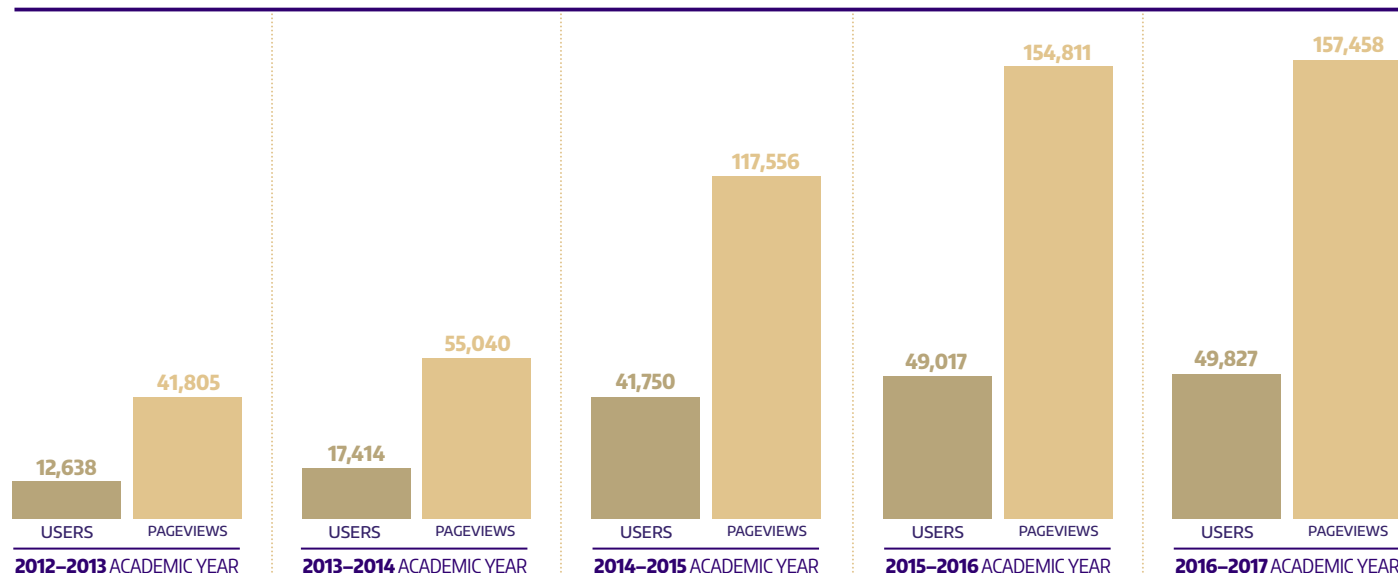
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RESEARCH
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"Thank you for your support, your interest, and your commitment to the idea that the university can be a unique place of asking questions, making comparisons, and grappling with the past and present of a place so much at the center of our local and global attentions"

– Prof. Liora Halperin

STROUM CENTER WEBSITE ENGAGEMENT OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS



OUR FACULTY

Noam Pianko: Samuel N. Stroum Chair of Jewish Studies; Lucia S. and Herbert L. Pruzan Professor of Jewish Studies; Professor, Jackson School of International Studies; Director, Samuel and Althea Stroum Center for Jewish Studies

Mika Ahuvia: Althea Stroum Endowed Chair in Jewish Studies; Marsha and Jay Glazer Endowed Chair in Jewish Studies; Assistant Professor, Jackson School of International Studies

Daniel Bessner: Assistant Professor, Jackson School of International Studies

Richard Block: Associate Professor, Germanics

Joseph Butwin: Associate Professor, English

Daniel Chiot: Herbert J. Ellison Professor of Russian and Eurasian Studies; Professor, Jackson School of International Studies; Job and Gertrud Tamaki Professor of International Studies and Sociology

Galya Diment: Thomas L. & Margo G. Wyckoff Endowed Faculty Fellow; Joff Hanauer Distinguished Professor in Western Civilization; Professor, Slavic Languages and Literatures

Kathie Friedman: Associate Professor, Jackson School of International Studies; Adjunct Associate Professor, Sociology

Susan Glenn: Professor, History

Ana M. Gómez-Bravo (Raftery): Professor, Spanish

Liora Halperin: Associate Professor, Jewish Studies & History; Benaroya Chair in Israel Studies, Jackson School of International Studies

Barbara Henry: Associate Professor, Slavic Languages and Literatures

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LECTURERS

Hadar Khazzam-Horovitz: Near Eastern Languages and Civilization

Gary Martin: Near Eastern Languages and Civilization

Tovi Romano: Near Eastern Languages and Literature

Ruggero Taradel: French & Italian Studies

RETIRED & EMERITUS

For a list of our Retired and Emeritus faculty, please visit jewishstudies.washington.edu/emeritus-retired-faculty

CLASSES: 2016-17 ACADEMIC YEAR



EVENTS

2016-17 ACADEMIC YEAR



21 Events

ALL FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

1,280 Attendees

5 Graduate Fellow Presentations

3 Access Student Teas

5 Major Lectures



Annual Impact Report photography by Michael Young, Meryl Schenker, and Mitch Olsen; design by YaM Brand.



GET JEW ST

WITH JEWISH STUDIES

Beginning in Autumn 2017, the Jewish Studies course prefix changed to JEW ST to make courses more visible and easily searchable.

Autumn 2017 Course Highlights

Intro. to the Hebrew Bible: Prof. Gary Martin

History of Modern Israel/Palestine: Prof. Liora Halperin

Jewish American Literature and Culture: Prof. Joe Butwin

Literature and the Holocaust: Prof. Naomi Sokoloff

Nazi Germany and the Holocaust: Prof. Laurie Marhoefer

Winter 2018 Course Highlights

Adapting Arthur: Retelling the Story of the Once and Future King: Prof. Annegret Oehme

Biblical Prophets: Dr. Gary Martin

Bioethics: Secular and Jewish Perspectives: Dr. Hadar Khazzam-Horovitz

Jewish Cultural History: Prof. Liora Halperin

Jewish Experience in Literature & Film: Prof. Sasha Senderovich

Jewish Philosophy: Prof. Michael Rosenthal

Spring 2018 Course Highlights

First Six Centuries BCE: Dr. Gary Martin

Funny Jews: Prof. Noam Pianko

German Jewish Autobiography: Prof. Richard Block

History of Biblical Interpretation: Dr. Gary Martin

Holocaust and American Life: Prof. Susan Glenn

Jews & Money: Myths & Reality: Dr. Constanze Kolbe



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