

IMPACT REPORT

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STROUM CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES

HENRY M. JACKSON SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES



UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON



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FROM THE DIRECTOR

THE FUTURE OF THE STROUM CENTER



Dear Friends,

I am excited to share our 2018 Impact Report with you. These pages capture the impact your generous support has had on our dedicated faculty, passionate students, and engaged community. Thanks to you, at a time of many challenges for the humanities, Jewish Studies has been able to dramatically increase our course offerings, grow our world-renowned faculty, and create new public programs. In the past year, over 1,000 students took Jewish Studies courses, and we hosted twenty public programs that reached over 2,700 people, including a sold-out crowd of 710 for this year's Stroum Lectures. I want to thank my faculty colleagues, who give so much to the Stroum Center and to our students, and our amazing staff – Sarah Zaides Rosen, Emily Thompson, Lauren Kurland, Kara Schoonmaker, Ty Alhadeff and Doria Nelson – for making these successes possible.

To maximize the Stroum Center's opportunities to contribute to campus and community life, our faculty began a strategic planning process in this past year to guide our growth in an intentional and collaborative way. I am proud to say that our faculty felt the Center was distinctive in its strong commitment to integrating insights from Jewish Studies into broader classroom, public, and scholarly conversations. Our faculty also emphasized their commitment to teaching students to be thoughtful, engaged, critical citizens who gain exposure to multiple perspectives and participate in open, evidence-based dialogue. **At this point in American politics and global affairs, I can't think of a more meaningful mission than using our understanding of Jewish experiences to advocate for diverse viewpoints, respectful conversations, and bridge-building.** We are fortunate that our home in the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies provides a unique foundation for building an intellectual community across geographic, disciplinary, and intellectual interests and perspectives.

Based on our vision, we have identified several strategic priorities for the next five years: to increase undergraduate engagement and enrollment; expand the intellectual and financial support we provide to our graduate students; strengthen our faculty community; develop our unique areas of expertise, especially our Sephardic Studies and Israel Studies programs; and create opportunities to engage further with Seattle community members and institutions. We have organized this Impact Report to highlight our work in each of these areas. As you will see, thanks to the generous supporters who make our work possible at a challenging time for the humanities, we already have a strong baseline in student and community engagement. As we move ahead into the next decade, we feel compelled to do more for the students and faculty who will contribute their energy, knowledge, and broad perspectives to our world. We hope that you will continue to help us meet our strategic goals by choosing to support the Stroum Center in 2018-19.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Noam Pianko". The signature is fluid and cursive.

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*

UNDERGRADUATE IMPACT

INCREASING ENGAGEMENT AND ENROLLMENT

DEAN'S MEDALIST REFLECTS ON MINOR IN JEWISH STUDIES

FROM COURSES IN HOLOCAUST HISTORY TO SEPHARDIC HISTORY, ANNIE LEWIS FOUND AN INTELLECTUAL HOME IN JEWISH STUDIES

Before beginning my time in the Stroum Center, I viewed Jewish Studies through a narrow lens, one predominantly shaped by popular culture. My childhood years were spent in an overwhelmingly white, Christian farm town that afforded me little exposure to Jewish history and culture, or to diversity in general. As Professor Devin Naar shared his family story in his course Holocaust: History and Memory, the first of many classes I took in the Stroum Center, I developed an interest in Jewish Studies as a means of engaging with new perspectives and learning how to prevent the erasure of non-dominant histories.

I regard the Stroum Center as one of the premier learning communities at the University of Washington for the way faculty and staff supported my peers and me in developing our voices, especially in regard to questions of representation and equity. The availability of faculty mentorship, small class sizes, and guest lectures ensured that we had context for and could appreciate the complexity of Jewish identity. From investigating the Spanish Inquisition in León, to studying the creation of Congregation Ezra Bessaroth's Holocaust monument, to comparing the Jewish refugee crisis of World War II with the Syrian refugee crisis of the modern day, my experiences as a

student of the Stroum Center makes clear the value of a Jewish Studies education.

The highlight of my time in the Stroum Center revolved around my honors thesis "Precarious Whiteness: Reimagining the Seattle Sephardic Origin Story," supervised by Professor Naar. Collaboration with Professor Naar and Research Coordinator Ty Alhadeff allowed me to study racism and xenophobia in the twentieth century and the resonances of those discriminatory belief systems in today's world.



Annie Lewis and Professor Mika Ahuvia

"I regard the Stroum Center as one of the premier communities at the University of Washington for the way faculty and staff supported my peers and me in developing our voices, especially in regard to questions of representation and equity."

For its ability to help students think critically about the relationship between identity and modernity, the Sephardic Studies Program remains one of the strongest elements of the Stroum Center.

While the academic strengths of Jewish Studies are surely commendable, the culture and individual talent within the Stroum Center is the most distinguished feature of the program. While Associate Director Sarah Zaides Rosen works tirelessly to network with the Seattle Jewish community and organize important events, Undergraduate Program Coordinator Mika Ahuvia constantly strives to make sure students have access to courses that provoke intrigue and offer a challenge. Any Jewish Studies student will tell you that Lauren Kurland, Director of Student Engagement, lights up with a smile at the chance to grab coffee to discuss course planning, post-graduation plans, or life in general. These three individuals are just a few of the many people who ensure Jewish Studies is a safe and inclusive place for people of all identities and backgrounds.

Without doubt, the Stroum Center encourages its students to become socially conscious question-askers who think critically about diversity and privilege, reflect on how the past informs the present, and bear in mind their own impact as an active participant in the world.

Annie Lewis, '18, graduated magna cum laude from the University of Washington with B.A.s in History and English and minors in Spanish and Jewish Studies. She received the Dean's Medal for the Social Sciences, and the Library Research Award for Undergraduates in the senior thesis category for her paper "Precarious Whiteness: Reimagining the Seattle Sephardic Origin Story." Annie also received the prestigious Bonderman Travel Fellowship through the UW and will spend 2018-19 travelling in Asia and Africa.

Meet Margaret Slack

I came to college knowing that I wanted to pursue a career in medicine. A course in Jewish Studies taught by Professor Naar quickly convinced me that a Jewish Studies minor would perfectly complement my science education: Jewish Studies stretched my thinking, widened my worldview, and engaged and developed different skills than those I used in my STEM classes.

I am excited to say that I will begin medical school at the University of Washington this autumn. I am grateful to the Jewish Studies professors and staff who have supported me and know that my Jewish Studies education will make me a better clinician in the future, as it gave me a more developed understanding of other cultures and religions.

Margaret Slack graduated magna cum laude from the UW in 2018 with a major in Biology and minor in Jewish Studies. She will be attending the UW School of Medicine in autumn.

JEWISH STUDIES ALUM SPOTLIGHT



Director of Student Engagement Lauren Kurland and Margaret Slack, '18

MODHEB 100, Introduction to Hebrew Language and Culture, is a two-credit course taught in English by **Hadar Khazzam-Horovitz**. This year the course's enrollment was raised to 35, and it filled immediately. The class teaches students some of the history of the language and some of Hebrew's fundamental structures, as well as connections between contemporary usage and Jewish traditions. Topics include: the modern revival of Hebrew, the alphabet, the verb system, the Hebrew calendar, Jewish and Israeli holidays, names, songs, slang, and prayer.

This was the inaugural year of the Near Eastern Languages and Cultures Department Hebrew Contest. Students were invited to submit entries responding to the prompt: "Learning Hebrew is like... Speaking Hebrew is like... Writing Hebrew is like..." Prizes (\$100 for first place, \$50 for second, and passes to the Seattle International Film Festival for honorable mention) were awarded at an end-of-year party, where students joined in the hokey pokey in Hebrew, led by lecturer **Tovi Romano**, and in a competitive game of *HaMelekh Omer* ("Simon Says"), led by lecturer Hadar Khazzam-Horovitz.

NEW THIS YEAR: Professor **Naomi Sokoloff** is working together with Northwest Yeshiva High School and

the UW in the High Schools program to develop dual curriculum. NYHS students will be able to enroll next year on their own campus in a course from the UW curriculum, Popular Music in Israel. Those who complete the course can earn five UW credits while also meeting high school requirements.

Students are invited to join the newly formed, student-initiated UW Hebrew Club, meeting monthly next autumn.

In a new course on the Nobel Prize and World Literature offered through the Department of Comparative Literature, Media and Cinema, Professor Naomi Sokoloff presented a lecture on S.Y. Agnon, Hebrew author and 1966 Nobel Laureate. The course drew over 100 students and provided an opportunity for them to learn about modern Hebrew literature in comparative contexts, along with writing by a range of other globally acclaimed authors such as T.S. Eliot, Gabriel García Márquez, and Svetlana Alexievich.

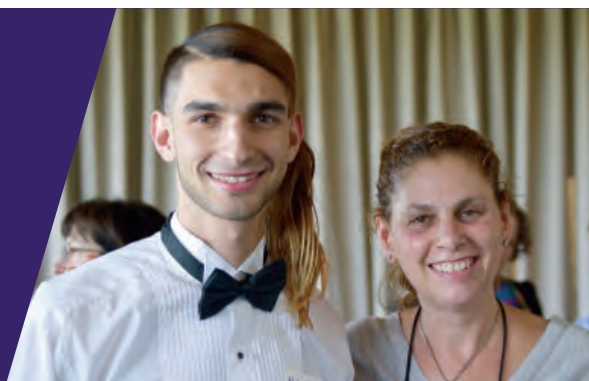
Professor Naomi Sokoloff co-directed a conference with Professor Nancy Berg (Washington University, St. Louis) on "Israeli Literature at 70." They are gathering essays from the conference participants and co-editing a volume to be published in the coming year.

Congratulations to our 2018 Jewish Studies graduates!

Michael Balderas	Yarrow Linden*
Michaela Covner	Adam Rozen-Wheeler
Mohamed-Moshe Elias*	Margaret Slack*
Narmin Kerimova*	Katie Snyder*
Annie Lewis*	Peri Zangwill*

* = Jewish Studies minor

Mohamed-Moshe Elias, '18, and Hebrew lecturer Tovi Romano at the Stroum Center end-of-year celebration



CLASSES: 2017-18 ACADEMIC YEAR

1,044
STUDENTS
TAUGHT



37
COURSES
OFFERED



25
MEDIAN
CLASS SIZE



SCHOLARSHIP PRIZE

STROUM CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES
AND HOLOCAUST CENTER FOR HUMANITY
EXCELLENCE IN SCHOLARSHIP PRIZE

Ellen Perleberg, a first-year linguistics student at the University of Washington, received the inaugural Stroum Center for Jewish Studies and Holocaust Center for Humanity Excellence in Scholarship Prize.

The annual prize is given for an outstanding undergraduate student paper that engages critically with the central themes, lessons and ideas of the Holocaust in the time period leading up to, during, or after the Second World War. Ellen's paper, "Nature and Nazism," reminds us that complicity with atrocities doesn't require citizens to embrace a hateful ideology, or any ideology at all; indeed, sitting by and focusing on "normal life" while atrocities occur "quietly" somewhere else is all too easy, and all too human.

The faculty committee that reviewed the 25 entries was chaired by Professor Richard Block (Germanics) and included Professors Susan Glenn (History) and James Felak (History).

Special thanks to Dee Simon, Baral Family Executive Director of the Holocaust Center for Humanity, for her work helping to make the prize possible.



**Ellen Perleberg (Linguistics, '22),
bested a field of 25 to receive the inaugural award**



GET JEW ST WITH JEWISH STUDIES

Considering a Jewish Studies course this year? Our courses investigate the full diversity of Jewish experiences and expressions – past and present – using local, global, and comparative perspectives as well as disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches.

Autumn 2018 Course Highlights

Holocaust and American Life: Professor Susan Glenn

Near East in Song: Popular Music in Israel:
Professor Naomi Sokoloff

Popular Film and the Holocaust: Professor Richard Block

Russian Jewish Experience: Professor Sasha Senderovich

Sephardic Diaspora: 1492-Present: Professor Devin Naar

Winter 2019 Course Highlights

Bioethics: Secular and Jewish Perspectives:
Hadar Khazzam-Horovitz

Dancing with Hebrew: Tovi Romano

Introduction to World Religions: Professor Mika Ahuvia

Jewish Cultural History: Professor Noam Pianko

Jewish Experience in Literature & Film:
Professor Sasha Senderovich

Spring 2019 Course Highlights

Gender, Sex and Religion: Professor Mika Ahuvia

Global Diasporas: Professor Kathie Friedman

History of Israel/Palestine: Professor Liora Halperin

Holocaust: History and Memory: Professor Devin Naar

The Sages: Introduction to Rabbinics:
Professor Mika Ahuvia

GRADUATE STUDENT IMPACT

SUPPORTING STUDENTS

FROM THE US NAVY TO JEWISH STUDIES

WILLNER FELLOW VIVIAN MILLS FINDS HER ROOTS, AND RESEARCH, IN MEDIEVAL JEWISH HISTORY



In 2008, Vivian Mills was completing her bachelor's degree in the evenings while serving in the United States Navy as a third-class petty officer. In the Navy, she was a gas turbine systems electrician, and she decided to pursue a degree in business economics to prepare for a career in the private sector upon graduation. However, Mills soon found herself pursuing an M.A. degree at the University of South Florida and writing her thesis on Abner of Burgos (1270-1347), a medieval Spanish philosopher and Jewish convert to Christianity. Mills was researching Burgos's exegetical, or critical, writing, which sought to prove the "truth" of Christianity just as she was undergoing her own conversion to Judaism.

Mills was born and raised in Ecuador, and immigrated to the United States when she was 16. Although her family was not religious, Mills attended Catholic school in her new home in Florida and felt a fundamental disconnect with the Catholicism she encountered there. She began researching her family's history and learned she might have Jewish roots. Her research revealed small but significant "tells" of a Jewish heritage leading back to the Inquisition in Spain. One of these tells was a family tradition of naming daughters after living relatives, a strategy originally adopted by Jews in medieval Spain to confuse inquisitors.

Mills is invested in the Jewish community and in her Jewish identity, and is an active member of Congregation Kol Ami in Woodinville. She feels that



Vivian Mills presented her research to an audience of faculty, graduate students, and community members in February 2018



"Jewish history has largely been told from the vantage point of Eastern European Jews."

Jewish history has largely been told from the vantage point of Eastern European Jews, and her work in medieval Sephardic history helps to re-orient our understanding of the Jewish experience. In Vivian's words, "What is Jewish history other than a 2,000-plus-year struggle to define and practice your identity?"

Now a Ph.D. student in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese Studies, working primarily with Professor Ana Gómez-Bravo (Spanish/Portuguese, Jewish Studies), Mills credits her time as the Richard Willner Memorial Graduate Fellow in 2017-18 as an important turning point in her academic career. "Being awarded the Willner was a much needed boost of confidence. I don't have the 'traditional' educational background. It was an affirmation that my voice, that my research, matters, and that the quality of my work is high."

Mills looks forward to defending her Ph.D. prospectus and completing exams during autumn 2018.

Vivian Mills is a second-year Ph.D. student in Spanish and Portuguese Studies at the University of Washington. She received a B.A. in Business Economics and an M.A. in Spanish from the University of South Florida. Her research focuses on identity and the building of textual authority in the literary works of Jewish, Converso and Morisco writers of late medieval and early-modern Iberia. Her latest research focuses on the works of Shem Tov of Carrión, a medieval poet and rabbi.



STROUM CENTER ALUMNI CONGRATULATIONS

Oscar Aguirre-Mandujano accepts tenure-track professorship at the University of Pennsylvania

The Stroum Center congratulates former Mickey Sreebny Memorial Fellow Oscar Aguirre-Mandujano, who will begin his position as Assistant Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania in autumn of 2018.

Aguirre-Mandujano writes, "During my years at the UW I was lucky to be part of the intellectual community fostered by the Stroum Center. I learned from its faculty, joined fellow graduate students, and discovered the strong connection between community and university that makes possible the thriving intellectual life of the Stroum Center. And as a result, together with Devin Naar, I developed new and interesting projects that expanded my research and teaching interests."

We look forward to following Professor Aguirre-Mandujano's career in the coming years.

ANNOUNCING 2018-19 GRADUATE FELLOWS

The Stroum Center for Jewish Studies is excited to introduce the 2018-19 cohort of Graduate Fellows in Jewish Studies. Fellows receive mentorship from Jewish Studies faculty, attend workshops on public scholarship and Jewish Studies, and share their research with the community through public presentations and articles published on the Stroum Center website. Funding for the annual fellowship program is generously provided by community supporters. For upcoming presentations and more information, please visit jewishstudies.washington.edu/events

Vincent Calvetti-Wolf
Mickey Sreebny Memorial
Scholar



Vincent is a first-year student in the Near and Middle Eastern Studies Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program. He holds a B.A. in Liberal Arts from The Evergreen State College and obtained a Master of Arts in International Studies, with a focus in Comparative Religion, from the University of Washington in 2017. His research explores the histories and politics of social movements led by Mizrahi Jews in Israel. His current project focuses on the strategies used by grassroots movements in Israel to raise awareness about the Yemenite, Mizrahi and Balkan Children Affair that took place in the early 1950s. Vincent is graduate student co-coordinator of the Israel/Palestine Research Colloquium.

Kerice Doten-Snitker
Rabbi Arthur A. Jacobovitz
Fellow



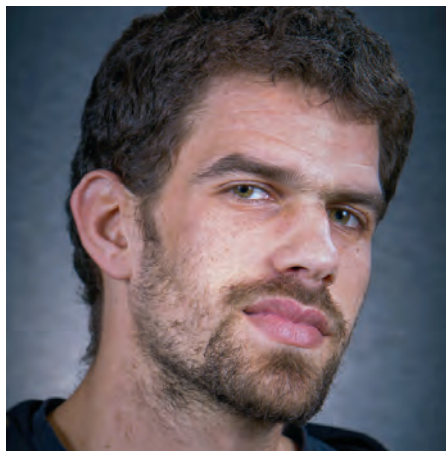
Kerice is a doctoral candidate in Sociology at the University of Washington. She double-majored in Sociocultural Studies and International Relations at Bethel University (Minnesota) before completing an M.A. in Sociology at the University of Washington. Her scholarly interests include processes of inclusion and exclusion in society. Her current work examines the roles of political institutions, economics, and religion in the exclusion of Jews in medieval times, focusing on the Rhineland (western Germany). In autumn 2017 she was a visiting student at the Arye Maimon Institute for Jewish History at Universität Trier in Trier, Germany, funded by the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD).

Berkay Gulen
Robinovitch Family
Fellow



Berkay is a Ph.D. candidate in the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies. She received her M.Sc. degrees in International Relations from the Middle East Technical University, Turkey, and in International Politics from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Berkay's academic interests led her to conduct research at the Moshe Dayan Center of Tel Aviv University in 2013 and the Institute of National Security Studies in Tel Aviv in 2018. Her doctoral research is on foreign policy decision-making and Turkey-Israel relations after 1991.

Hayim Katsman
I. Mervin & Georgiana
Gorasht Fellow



As a Ph.D. student in International Studies, Hayim researches the interrelations between religion and politics in Israel/Palestine. Focusing on the religious-Zionist movement and the settlement enterprise in the West Bank and Gaza, Hayim's research shows how developments in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have affected religious Zionists' theological interpretations of the Israeli state. Before coming to the University of Washington, Hayim lived in a kibbutz on the Israel/Gaza/Egypt border. Hayim received his B.A. in Philosophy from the Open University of Israel and completed his M.A. thesis on the theology of Rabbi Yitzchak Ginzburg at the Department of Politics and Government at Ben-Gurion University.

Lawrence Koster
Robert & Pamela Center
Fellow



Larry is a fourth-year doctoral student in Political Science and is a Graduate Fellow at the Washington Institute for the Study of Inequality and Race (WISIR), as well as a member of the Graduate & Professional Student Senate. He recently conducted research in Rwanda and Tanzania on agriculturalists' perceptions of state agricultural policy and foreign investment. He hopes to build on this current research to explore the determinants of pro- and anti-Israeli attitudes in Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and Mozambique. He received a B.A. in Communication from the University of California, San Diego, and worked in local and national politics, as well as in Hollywood as a screenwriter, script consultant and film development producer.

Pablo Jairo Tuttilo Maldonado
Richard M. Willner Memorial
Scholar



Pablo, who hails from Connecticut, is a second-year M.A. student in Middle East Studies at the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies. Pablo obtained his B.A. in International Relations and a minor in Arabic Studies from Connecticut College. Pablo has studied at Alexandria University in Egypt and at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Israel. At the University of Washington, Pablo has been researching the intersection of history and politics in countries in the Middle East, particularly the political and historical narratives of Jewish refugees, Syrian refugees and other forced migrants from the Arab world. He speaks conversational Arabic, Hebrew and Turkish.



2017-18 cohort of Graduate Fellows in Jewish Studies

FACULTY COMMUNITY

EXPANDING AND STRENGTHENING

GROUNDBREAKING HOLOCAUST RESEARCH

WELCOMING NEW JEWISH STUDIES FACULTY MEMBER LAURIE MARHOEFER



Over the last several decades, public awareness of the Holocaust has continued to grow, thanks to the ongoing work of scholars and institutions such as the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, and the Holocaust Center for Humanity in Seattle. But many people still don't realize that – along with its persecution of Jews and other minorities – Nazi Germany was the site of the modern world's most deadly campaign against male homosexuality.

Starting in Germany and continuing in occupied Europe, the Nazi regime murdered an estimated 10,000 men for the “crime” of having had consensual homosexual sex. Laurie Marhoefer, an assistant professor in the Department of History and affiliated faculty at the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies, is beginning a new study of homosexuality and transgenderism in Nazi Germany. Marhoefer's research will be drawn from the massive collection of documents housed at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), which includes police files from Berlin and Vienna.

Marhoefer is interested in how and why Jewish Germans were targeted in the Nazi campaign against

homosexuality. Her preliminary research shows that a surprisingly large number of Jewish men in Berlin were charged with homosexuality, even before deportations began in 1941.

“I was really shocked to see that when I was at work at the USHMM,” Marhoefer says. “They have material there from the Berlin city archive. When I began to look through the police files in that collection, I saw that Jewish men were accused of homosexuality far more often than I'd expect, given that Jews were only about 1% of the German population.”

Over the next year, Marhoefer will work on discovering why the prosecution of Jewish men for homosexuality was so high, as well as how the campaign against



FACULTY NEWS

At the core of the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies are our committed faculty members from across the university. We want to celebrate some highlights of our faculty's impressive accomplishments, honors and awards.

- Mika Ahuvia and Annegret Oehme were each awarded the prestigious UW Royalty Research Fund fellowship for the 2018-19 academic year to support their research projects.
- Daniel Bessner published "Democracy in Exile: Hans Speier and the Rise of the Defense Intellectual."
- Naomi Sokoloff co-edited a volume called "What We Talk about When We Talk about Hebrew (and What it means to Americans)," a collection of papers from a 2016 conference at the UW.
- Michael Rosenthal's article "Prophetic Style and Ethical Experience in Hermann Cohen and Spinoza" appeared in the leading Jewish Studies journal, *Jewish Studies Quarterly*.
- Sasha Senderovich taught a literature class at the Steiner Summer Yiddish Program at the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, MA.
- Ana Gómez-Bravo continues to have one of the most popular features on the Stroum Center website, her amazing *Converso Cookbook*. In addition, she published "Judaism as Illness in Fifteenth-Century Medical and Literary Discourse" in a recent issue of the *Journal of Iberian Studies*.
- Barbara Henry serves as an editor of the Digital Yiddish Theatre Project blog (yiddishstage.org) and portions of her translation of the work of Yiddish actor Avrom Fishzon recently appeared on the site.

Marhoefer is interested in how and why Jewish Germans were targeted in the Nazi campaign against homosexuality.

male homosexuality overlapped with the Nazi State's genocide of European Jews.

Though historians have studied the persecution of gay men in Nazi Germany before, these studies mostly ignore the plight of Jews who had same-sex affairs, in spite of the fact that their situation was more dire than that of homosexual "Aryan" Germans.

Marhoefer hopes that her study will shed light on these issues, as well as on broader questions of how German fascism functioned in everyday life.

Laurie Marhoefer is Assistant Professor of History and author of the 2015 book "Sex and the Weimar Republic: German Homosexual Emancipation and the Rise of the Nazis."



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

From the desk of the Undergraduate Studies Coordinator, Professor Mika Ahuvia

It was a wonderful year to be the Stroum Center's Undergraduate Studies Coordinator. We added two new faculty members who prioritize undergraduate education, including Liora Halperin and Sasha Senderovich, and ran programs that inspired profound conversations on topics such as anti-Semitism in America.

I taught a course called Introduction to Judaism this year to about 30 students of diverse backgrounds and interests. Students came from a variety of backgrounds, some with no exposure to Judaism. Others offered valuable experiences that contributed to our class discussions, including Mohamad Elias, the first student that I had encountered who had visited Ur in Iraq, the birthplace of Abraham. I also sent students "into the field" of our local Seattle Jewish community, encouraging them to experience various synagogues and various programs that our communities have to offer. Teaching students to explore their local communities with an open mind is one of the most important things I can do as a teacher at UW.

In my position at the Stroum Center, I interact with undergraduate students on a daily basis. Many students have told me they are deeply appreciative of how the Jewish Studies program reaches out to them and takes note of their accomplishments. I am proud of our reach and what we have accomplished so far, and look forward to the next academic year.

UNIQUE AREAS OF EXPERTISE

THE STROUM CENTER

SEPHARDIC STUDIES AND THE BOUNDARIES OF JEWISH STUDIES

A YEAR IN REVIEW BY DEVIN E. NAAR



When the Stroum Center, via its e-newsletter, announced an award my book received by invoking the expression *mashallah!*, a concerned reader replied: “Isn’t it ‘odd’ that ‘Jewish Studies’ chose to applaud one of its professors by resorting to

Arabic and invoking the name of ‘Allah?’”

A teachable moment: The use of *mashallah* is not odd at all. Far from it, it is in keeping with more than a thousand years of Jewish cultural expression. The only problem is that although dynamic Jewish cultures developed in Muslim contexts, their experiences have been largely erased from American Jewish consciousness, from the field of Jewish Studies, and from our conceptualization of the Middle East today.

The Sephardic Studies Program aims to recuperate the experiences of those Jews left out of the discussion. Fortunately, the Stroum Center, bolstered by the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies and the new Benaroya Israel Studies Program, now houses one of the country’s most active Sephardic Studies initiatives which seeks to expand the parameters of the field while also honoring Seattle’s local Sephardic Jewish communities.

The Sephardic Studies Program aims to recuperate the experiences of those Jews left out of the discussion.

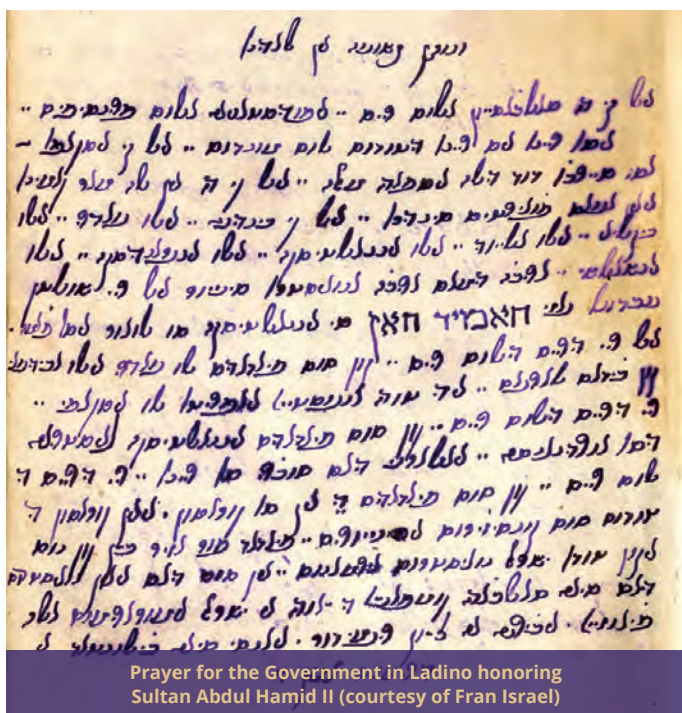
We need go no further than Seattle to see how integral the expression *mashallah* remains to Sephardic Jews. In Arabic, *Masha Allah* literally means “God has willed.” In the Ladino language, formed through the fusion of Spanish, Hebrew, Turkish, Greek, Italian, French, and Arabic, the expression signifies praise and appreciation, and also protects against the “evil eye” – a phrase to be said when you see a baby or achieve a milestone (in the case of a book award). So ubiquitous is the term that the Mercer Island Stroum JCC chose Mashallah! as the slogan for the 2017 Sephardic Day at the J. Seattle’s Ladineros, a group of community aficionados who have starred in International Ladino Day, composed a remarkable Ladino adaptation of “Little Red Riding Hood.” In their version, upon seeing the wolf dressed like her grandmother, the protagonist exclaims: “*Mashallah, nona, ke dientes grandes tienes!*” (*Mashallah, grandma, what big teeth you have!*).

Now boasting over 1,200 items, including 400 Ladino titles, all maintained by our research coordinator Ty

Alhadeff, our Sephardic Studies Digital Collection is overflowing with artifacts that make us think: the incorporation of the Islamic star and crescent on 19th century Ottoman Jewish wedding contracts, on a *fasha* (Torah binder), and on the finials of a Scroll of Esther; patriotic poems written in Ottoman Turkish in Arabic script by a Jewish soldier; a Ladino prayer for the government praising the sultan, who is referred to as *gazi* – a warrior engaged in *jihad*; a recording of a rabbi's son chanting the opening verses of the Koran which he learned as a student in a Muslim school in Turkey; a Judeo-Arabic Passover Haggadah; and Ladino correspondence sprinkled with expressions like *mashallah*, including Claire Barkey's dramatic letters from Rhodes that describe her family's escape from the Nazis.



Fasha (Torah binder) with crescent and star, Monastir (courtesy of Elayna Youchah)



Prayer for the Government in Ladino honoring Sultan Abdul Hamid II (courtesy of Fran Israel)

Our public programs also highlighted Jewish-Ottoman/Muslim/Arabic connections. Professor Bryan Kirschen (CUNY-Binghamton) delivered a lively talk about Ladino as an endangered language and current efforts at revitalization in which he demonstrated that Ladino experienced its apogee in the Ottoman Empire. Professor Eyal Ginio (Hebrew University) delivered a packed lunchtime talk, "The Last Ottoman Decade: The 'Other' Ottomans," in which he described how Sephardic Jews, including his own family in Jerusalem, were deeply embedded in their Ottoman context. This year's Seattle Jewish Film Festival's Sephardic Spotlight featured "Trezoros: The Last Jews of Kastoria," a documentary that reminds us that even Jews born in the Ottoman Empire perished in Auschwitz.

Our students continue to push us to expand the boundaries of Jewish Studies. Among the 2017-18 Jewish Studies Graduate Fellows, several projects address Jewish-Muslim connections. They involve the study of Ladino in Seattle; the fate of Jews in 20th century Egypt; and the influence of Arabic musical modes (*makam*) on Sephardic Jewish music. Jewish Studies minor Annie Lewis won this year's UW Libraries Research Award Grand Prize for her thesis, "Precarious Whiteness: Reimagining the Seattle Sephardic Origin Story." She demonstrated how Sephardic Jews' origins in the Muslim world led them to be subjected to discrimination by fellow (Ashkenazi) Jews.

We still have a long way to go to fully acknowledge and embrace the variations of the Jewish experience, but we are making serious strides here at the University of Washington. We will continue to insist that modern Jewish history, politics, literature, and philosophy is not only about Europe, America, and Israel; that the Holocaust impacted the Jews of the former Ottoman Empire; that "Jewish" cuisine includes both gefilte fish and borekas; that Jewish humor existed beyond the shtetl. Thanks to the continued generosity and commitment of community supporters, future Sephardic Studies public programs, courses, and research projects will continue to enrich and expand our understanding of the multiplicities of the Jewish experience – until *mashallah* is recognized as just as Jewish as *mazel tov*.

Devin Naar is the Isaac Alhadeff Professor in Sephardic Studies, Sephardic Studies Program Chair, Associate Professor in the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, and Associate Professor in History.

THE RETURN OF SEATTLE'S SEPHARDIC TREASURES TO THE FORMER OTTOMAN EMPIRE

BY TY ALHADEFF



Over a century ago, Sephardic Jews packed their steamer trunks with clothes, provisions, photographs, and books to make the long voyage from the Ottoman Empire to Seattle. Leaving behind their parents and friends, they never could have dreamed that one day these same books and other family heirlooms would return to the former Ottoman Empire on display in a new exhibition, "Trajectories of Sefarad: An Object-History of Seattle's Ottoman Sephardic Community."

The Sephardic Studies Program in partnership with Professor Oscar Aguirre-Mandujano, a former Stroum Center fellow and graduate of the University of Washington who is now an assistant professor of Ottoman history at the University of Pennsylvania, and his colleague Kerem Tinaz, a PhD candidate at Oxford University, are curating the exhibition, an initiative of Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED) in Istanbul, Turkey. The exhibit is scheduled for February 2019. The exhibition will be accompanied by an academic conference organized by ANAMED and the publication of a volume containing scholarly overviews of the Ottoman Sephardic Community as well as a catalog highlighting hundreds of Ottoman "treasures" from the UW Sephardic Studies Collection – texts in Ladino, Hebrew, and Turkish, as well as photographs, documents, and artifacts from the Ottoman Empire.

Artifacts from the lives of Ester and David DeFunes encapsulate the trajectories of Sephardic Jews over the generations and the connections they developed across multiple cultures and geographies. A beautifully ornamented Jewish wedding contract (*ketuba*), signed in 1887 in Rodoschik, the Ottoman city of Rodosto (present-day Tekirdağ, Turkey) and surrounded

Artifacts from the lives of Ester and David DeFunes encapsulate the trajectories of Sephardic Jews over the generations.

by verses from the Torah, is uniquely adorned with the star and crescent moon, symbols of the Ottoman Empire and of Islam. This *ketuba* is significant not just because of its aesthetic qualities which merge Jewish and Ottoman imagery, but also because the Aramaic text specifies the monogamous nature of the marriage – a noteworthy addendum given the Ottoman Turkish context in which polygamy remained legal until 1926.

As significantly, the *ketuba* served as the principal piece of identification for Ester DeFunes and her daughters Estrea and Samhula (Allegra) when they applied for a passport to travel to the United States in 1920, after World War I. Despite the family having viewed themselves as part of the Ottoman environment at the time of the wedding, the changed circumstances decades later provoked them to acquire travel papers from the Spanish Consulate in Istanbul. By that time, the Spanish government had begun its effort to recruit Sephardic Jews (recently renewed with the Spanish citizenship law of 2015), and the DeFunes clan took advantage of the opportunity. Due to restrictive immigration laws in the United States that targeted Asians and Middle Easterners



Jewish marriage contract, Esther Benezra & David DeFunes, Tekirdağ, Ottoman Empire, 1897 (courtesy Albert Maimon/Henry Benezra collection)



Spanish passport for Defunes family, Istanbul, 1920 (courtesy Albert Maimon/Henry Benezra collection)

– and barred those in polygamous relationships – it was easier for the DeFunes family to enter the United States as Spaniards than as Ottomans.

The trajectory of the Sephardic Jews is often envisioned as a five-century saga, from the expulsion from Spain in 1492, to the resettlement in the Ottoman Empire, to the out-migrations to the United States and elsewhere in the twentieth century. These two DeFunes artifacts illustrate an even more complex

and winding path, with the biblically inspired text of the Ottoman ketuba enabling their acquisition of Spanish papers that linked them to the ancestral land of Spain and permitted their entry into yet another land – the United States. The anticipated “homecoming” of the artifacts from Seattle to Istanbul in the summer of 2019 signifies the latest destination among the trajectories of the Sephardic Jews.

Special thanks to Al Maimon for providing the Henry and Samhula Benezra collection, courtesy of their daughter Sarah Benezra.

JEWISH LITERATURES

BY SASHA SENDEROVICH

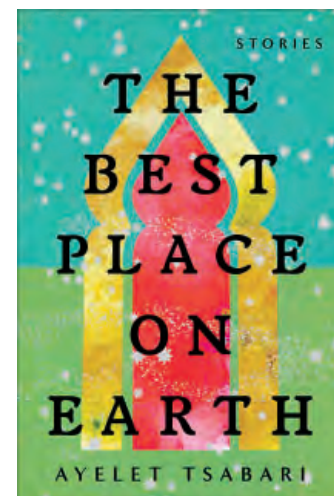
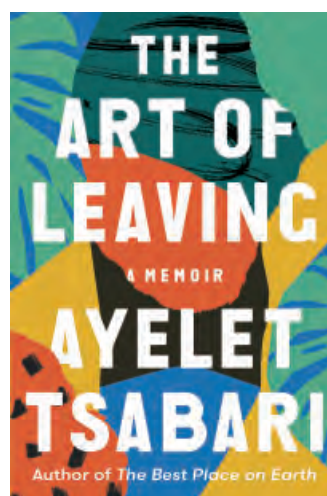
Ayelet Tsabari begins her forthcoming memoir “The Art of Leaving” (2019) with the story of her father’s promise to publish her childhood writings as her first book for her tenth birthday. A lawyer who had published one poem as a young man and spent a lifetime assiduously writing verse and prose on sheets of paper kept in his bedside drawer, Tsabari’s father bequeathed to his daughter the insatiable desire for wordsmithing and storytelling. He fell ill within days of making this promise and died shortly thereafter. It would take Ayelet Tsabari another two and a half decades to see her first book published – not in her home country of Israel or in her native Hebrew, but in Canada, her adopted homeland, and in English, her adopted tongue.

In that first book, “The Best Place on Earth” (2013), Tsabari made her debut as an intricate teller of stories about the kinds of protagonists she did not see in the Israeli literature she avidly read in childhood: Mizrahi Jews. Jews who trace their families’ lineage to Arab lands of North Africa and the Middle East – Tsabari’s family had come from Yemen – had been largely invisible in the Ashkenazi-centric literary culture of Israel. Mizrahi voices had also been absent in English-language Jewish literatures in Canada and the United States. Tsabari’s first book – a collection of astutely observed stories about women, lovers, children, soldiers, poets – opened up this theretofore underexamined experience; it won the prestigious Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature in 2015.

In “The Art of Leaving,” which will be published a week before her visit to Seattle in late February, Tsabari

weaves together stories of her own migration from the outskirts of Tel Aviv to Vancouver and Toronto, by way of much global peregrination, with the stories of her grandparents’ travel, on foot, to the land of Israel through the deserts of the Arabian peninsula. In essays on heartbreak and loss of beloved people and native language, drug-fueled wanderlust and the discovery of dark family secrets, betrayal and abandonment, motherhood and the ever-unquenched thirst for writing, Tsabari explores how the past haunts and shapes the stories we tell ourselves and how we viscerally embody our lives.

Ayelet Tsabari’s visit, scheduled for February 28-March 1, 2019, is made possible by the Benaroya Endowment in Israel Studies and is cosponsored by the departments of English, Comparative Literature, Cinema & Media, and Near Eastern Languages & Cultures, the programs in Sephardic Studies and Canadian Studies, and the Simpson Center for the Humanities. For more event details, see our events preview on page 23.



REFLECTIONS ON A SUCCESSFUL YEAR OF ISRAEL STUDIES

BY LIORA HALPERIN, JACK AND REBECCA BENAROYA ENDOWED PROFESSOR OF ISRAEL STUDIES



The State of Israel sits at the geographic intersection of Asia, Europe, and Africa, on land symbolic and significant to Jews as well as to Muslims and Christians, and at the heart of many of our most pressing conversations and debates.

When we talk about Israel – in our classrooms, families, and communities – we might be in fact engaging in broader conversations about the past and future of the Jewish people, the purpose and limits of nationalism, the interplay between the relatively powerful and the relatively powerless both within and between societies, the right way of interpreting and responding to historical trauma, and the obligations facing the leadership and citizens of Israel, as well as those who take great interest in that country from a distance.

The Israel Studies Program at the University of Washington, founded thanks to the Jack and Rebecca Benaroya Endowment for Excellence in Israel Studies, completed its inaugural year in 2017-18 under the direction of Professor Liora R. Halperin. Through university and public programming, student funding and support, and outreach, it has promoted learning about local and regional affairs that lends insight into unfolding conversations about nationalism, liberalism, citizenship, globalization, technology, religion, ethnicity, and migration. It has built partnerships with other programs on campus, particularly those in the Middle East Studies field: the Middle East Center, the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, and the Interdisciplinary Near and Middle Eastern Studies Ph.D. Program. It continues to partner with multiple academic units on campus as it engages with members of diverse audiences made up of people from a range of backgrounds and perspectives who may not normally learn with one another.

During its inaugural year the Israel Studies Program hosted or cosponsored several lectures by distinguished speakers from both North America and Israel including the Jerusalem-based writer Adina Hoffman, who presented her insights into three architects – one Jewish, one British, and one Arab – who built modern Jerusalem; University of Chicago

The Israel Studies Program completed its inaugural year.

Professor Orit Bashkin, who spoke on the Jews of Iraq and their diverse experiences upon arrival in the new State of Israel in the early 1950s; and Portland State University Professor Laura Robson, who spoke about how the British considered various plans for Mandate Palestine (including partition) in the context of other ethnic conflicts of the early 20th century. Israel Studies also hosted filmmaker Noam Osband, who screened and mediated a discussion about his short film on the Hebron-based settler leader Baruch Marzel.

Several exciting public events planned for 2018 will push the Israel Studies Program in new programmatic and thematic directions. Alon Tal (Tel Aviv University) will deliver the Jack and Rebecca Benaroya Endowed Lecture in Israel Studies and will speak about contemporary issues surrounding water and environmental challenges in Israel and the larger Middle East. Harvard professor Derek Penslar will join us to lend insight into the roots of the Zionist movement in Europe and the ways in which Zionism has been expressed not only as an ideology but often first and foremost as a set of deeply felt emotions. The novelist and writer Ayelet Tsabari will be continuing the Stroum Center's emphasis on contemporary literature with her insights on the Mizrahi Jewish experience. The Israel Studies Program is also excited to be a cosponsor of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations Afrasiabi Lectures in Iranian and Persian Studies, as it brings historian and Jewish Studies professor Lior Sternfeld from Penn State University to discuss his new book on the Jews of Iran entitled "Between Iran and Zion" (Stanford University Press). For more event details, see page 23.

The Israel Studies Program is particularly proud to support the work of students engaging in significant research related to Israel, both through grants for research, conference travel, and language study by creating intellectual community among graduate students doing Israel-related research across the university.

Liora Halperin is the Jack and Rebecca Benaroya Professor of Israel Studies and Chair of the Israel Studies Program at the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies.



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Richard Block: Associate Professor, Germanics

Joseph Butwin: Associate Professor, English

Daniel Chirof: Herbert J. Ellison Professor of Russian and Eurasian Studies; Professor, Jackson School of International Studies

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Gary Martin: Near Eastern Languages and Civilization

Tovi Romano: Near Eastern Languages and Civilization

Ruggero Taradel: French & Italian Studies

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NEW MEDIA

DEVELOPING INITIATIVES

SALUD Y SHALOM : AMERICAN JEWS IN THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

NEW ONLINE EXHIBIT BRINGS AMERICAN JEWISH VETERANS' VOICES TO LIFE



This winter, the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies published an online oral history project, "Salud y Shalom: American Jews in the Spanish Civil War," presenting interviews with five American Jews who volunteered to serve in the Spanish Civil War.

Nearly 3,000 Americans traveled to Europe from 1936-1939 to join the democratically elected Spanish Republic in its effort to repel the military coup led by Francisco Franco. Nearly one-third of them were Jews.

In the early 1990s, Joe Butwin, Associate Professor of English at the University of Washington, traveled around the United States to interview dozens of these veterans. The audio interviews he recorded collect volunteers' reflections on their wartime experiences and their identities as Jews.

Professor Butwin is working on a book collecting these interviews in collaboration with Tony Geist (Spanish & Portuguese Studies, University of Washington) and Professor Edward Baker (Emeritus in Spanish, University of Florida). Five of these interviews are online now at <https://jewishstudies.washington.edu/salud-y-shalom>




Cover of the American Yiddish magazine "Der Hammer,"
SEPT. 1937 Art by leftist artist William Gropper.

GEORGE WATT, SOLDIER (1913-1994)



George Watt in 1938

George Watt: *"What's a good Jewish boy from the Bronx doing in this combat? What am I doing here? I don't belong here."* 

At first, George Watt (1913-1994) hesitated to put his life on the line. Soon he knew he had to go: "I was afraid our history was going to pass me by." For Watt, originally Israel Kwatt, "our history" began as family history. [Hear more of George Watt's story >](#)



[Cookie policy](#)



Stroum Center for Jewish Studies
George Watt: Our tradition of activism

 SOUND CLOUD



▶ 18

A TRADITION OF ACTIVISM

"As long as I can remember there was a legend in our family around my grandfather, my father's father. My father's father was a textile worker, a weaver, in Lodz (Poland) and he worked in a factory which was owned by a Jewish boss. His factory was the place where they had the first strike of Jewish workers in 1903, at the Shlitsky factory in Lodz. And ever since I was a kid my father told a story which was part of our family tradition.

He was not a rabbi, but he was considered very learned and was called *Avremele der lamden*, Abraham the learned one, and he was one of the elder workers in the plant who became active in this strike, and he was one of the leaders of the strike...

And so that was part of our tradition. In other words, my grandfather, the pride that we had, my grandfather had led the first strike of Jewish workers in Lodz. 1903. That was around the time leading up to the 1905 revolution. So that's part of our tradition."



"Abraham the learned" among striking workers in Lodz, 1903.
Photo from *Image Before My Eyes: A Photographic History of Jewish Life in Poland, 1864-1939*, 1977.

"I WAS VERY JEWISH AT THE TIME"

"I went on from there to *mittl-shule* [middle school]. In other words, I actually went beyond that to a Jewish Yiddish high-school [in addition to public school]. This is extra-school activity. In other words, a couple times a week and on weekends. The *mittl-shule* was really on weekends.

We used to go into the city from Brooklyn to go to this school. And there I developed a circle of friends. There were Communists there, there were Socialists there and there were some of the people who went there later went on to become leaders in the student movement and became Communists, and some became Trotskyists, and some became Socialists. But we studied Jewish history, we were steeped in Jewish history, we studied all the works. I read at that time all of the works of Sholom Aleichem and Mendle Mokher-Sforim, Peretz, the American writers – Raboy and others – in Yiddish. For a short time we were Yiddishists. We tried to speak only Yiddish. So, I was very Jewish at the time."



George Watt marches on the right of American Battalion commander Milt Wolff—22 years old at the time. Spain 1938. Photo by Robert Capa

Hear the stories at <https://jewishstudies.washington.edu/salud-y-shalom/>

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

EDUCATIONAL PUBLIC EVENTS

EVENTS RECAP

2017-18

ISRAEL STUDIES PROGRAM LAUNCH WITH ADINA HOFFMAN

Over 300 people gathered in Kane Hall this October for the launch of the Stroum Center's Israel Studies Program. Professor Liora R. Halperin, the program's chair, introduced author Adina Hoffman, who spoke about her book *Till We Have Built Jerusalem*. Hoffman also gave a lunchtime talk for students and faculty about her research methods for archival materials.



ANCIENT JEWISH MAGIC TALK WITH MIKA AHUVIA

The Stroum Center's own Professor Mika Ahuvia, who holds the Althea Stroum Endowed Chair and the Marsha and Jay Glazer Endowed Chair in Jewish Studies, gave a sold-out talk on ancient Jewish ritual practice. Audience members included current and prospective students, alumni, and faculty from other UW departments.



2017-18 EVENTS

30 PUBLIC
AND STUDENT
EVENTS

2,727
ATTENDEES

13 VISITING
SPEAKERS
FROM YALE, HEBREW UNIVERSITY,
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO & MORE

8 GRADUATE
FELLOW RESEARCH
PRESENTATIONS

SEPHARDIC FOCUS: LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT WITH BRYAN KIRSCHEN

Professor Bryan Kirschen, assistant professor of Hispanic Linguistics at SUNY-Binghamton, visited Seattle for a month-long residency this spring. He met with Seattle's Ladineros and gave a well-attended public talk on language endangerment with a special focus on Judeo-Spanish (Ladino).



STROUM LECTURES

STROUM LECTURES 2018: TWO NIGHTS WITH GARY SHTEYNGART

Ph.D. candidate Denise Grollmus (English) reflected on this year's Stroum Lectures in Jewish Studies, which took the form of two conversations between author Gary Shteyngart and Professor Sasha Senderovich. The following is an excerpt:

On Monday, May 7, over 400 people poured into the main auditorium of UW's Kane Hall for the first night of this year's Stroum Lectures, which featured author Gary Shteyngart. Had you unknowingly stumbled into the room, you'd be forgiven for thinking you had walked into a sold-out comedy show, rather than an academic lecture or literary reading. As Shteyngart sat on stage, conversing with UW Assistant Professor of Russian and Jewish Studies Sasha Senderovich about everything from the horrors of growing up as an asthmatic Jew in the Soviet Union to how his first three novels eerily predicted, among other things, Tinder and Michael Cohen, the audience howled. And it didn't let up. From his opening jab at Seattle's abundance of (unaffordable) condos to his 80s Brezhnev jokes (so resonant and funny because they work just as well for Trump), Shteyngart's singular brand of Soviet-inflected Jewish American humor had the audience cramping up from their cheeks to their bellies.

To read Denise's full reflection on Gary Shteyngart's visit to Seattle, visit <https://jewishstudies.washington.edu>



WEBSITE: TOP ONLINE CONTENT



47,000+
UNIQUE USERS
VISITED THE STROUM
CENTER'S WEBSITE
DURING THE
2017-18 YEAR

THIS YEAR'S TOP NEW ARTICLES WERE:

- ❶ "Paradox of Hanukkah in Greece & Auschwitz" by Professor Devin E. Naar
- ❷ "The Greatest Thing: Spinoza, Loving God, and Being Loved in Return" by Professor Benjamin Pollock
- ❸ "Reimagining Sephardic Çanakkale and its Ties to Seattle" by Ozgur Ozkan
- ❹ "Spinoza & Industrialization" by Professor Tracie Matysik
- ❺ "Discovering the Unexpected Connections Between Persian and Hebrew" by Sara Molaie
- ❻ "Wonder Woman and the Superpower of Hebrew" by Professor Naomi Sokoloff

Read these articles and more from our e-journal at jewishstudies.washington.edu.

SAVE THE DATE

EVENT PREVIEW 2018-19

JACK AND REBECCA BENAROYA ENDOWED LECTURE IN ISRAEL STUDIES FEATURING ISRAEL AND THE ENVIRONMENT WITH ALON TAL

Professor Alon Tal, chair of the Department of Public Policy at Tel Aviv University, will give a lecture on water and the environment in the Middle East. This event is supported by the Stroum Center's Israel Studies Program, which was launched during the 2017-18 academic year.

Tuesday, November 27 at 7:00 PM, Kane Hall 110



LADINO DAY

2018 Ladino Day will showcase a creative initiative that brings Ladino traditions to future generations. Paris-based author François Azar will discuss his two new collections of illustrated Ladino children's folktales and the significance of storytelling and art in Sephardic culture. Members of Seattle's Ladineros will participate in the performance of Azar's stories.

Wednesday, December 5 at 7:00 PM, Kane Hall 220



HISTORY OF ZIONISM

The Stroum Center's Israel Studies Program will host Professor Derek Penslar (Harvard University) for a talk on Theodor Herzl and the history of Zionism as it relates to his forthcoming book, "Zionism: An Emotional State."

Tuesday, January 15 at 7:00 PM, Kane Hall 110



AYELET TSABARI SPEAKS ABOUT NEW MEMOIR

Author Ayelet Tsabari will visit the Stroum Center just days after the publication of her new memoir. She will give a lecture entitled "The Art of Leaving: Language, Longing, and Belonging." She will discuss her experiences as a Yemenite-Israeli writer in Canada with the Stroum Center's Professor Sasha Senderovich.

Thursday, February 28 at 6:30 PM, Ethnic Cultural Center Theatre



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT SERIES

Keep an eye out as Stroum Center faculty including Professors Laurie Marhoefer (History) and Kathie Friedman (International Studies) give talks on their latest research and upcoming publications.

Dates and times of the Faculty Spotlight series will be announced in autumn.

2019 STROUM LECTURES

MACARTHUR FELLOW AND STROUM CENTER COLE POST-DOCTORAL ALUMNA TO DELIVER 2019 STROUM LECTURES

Professor Marina Rustow, an American historian and the Khedouri A. Zilkha Professor of Jewish Civilization in the Near East at Princeton University, will give the 2019 Samuel and Althea Stroum Lectures. A former Hazel D. Cole Fellow at the Stroum Center and 2015 MacArthur Fellow, Rustow will return to the UW to give the Center's flagship lectures. **Tuesday, May 14 and Thursday, May 16, Kane Hall 220**



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.

The Stroum Center is proud to present these and several other events in the coming year. For a full event calendar or to RSVP, visit jewishstudies.washington.edu/event

Why I support Sephardic Studies as part of Jewish Studies



I was born into a proud Sephardic family in Seattle just before the end of World War II. My mother's father, who died before I was born, was the rabbi of the Sephardic Bikur Holim congregation, emigrating here from Turkey in 1924. My uncle, Rabbi Solomon Maimon, succeeded his

father and was the rabbi of our congregation while I was growing up. My father's family had been founders of the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue in his hometown of Manchester, England. I was imbued with the traditions, language, and customs unique to Sephardic Jews throughout my childhood. However, a discordant note in my childhood surrounds my Jewish education. As a student at Seattle Hebrew Academy through the 8th grade, I had to leave my Sephardic identity at home. All of my teachers were Ashkenazic, and the pronunciation, language and customs we were taught were exclusively Ashkenazic. As I prepared for my Bar Mitzvah, I learned the Sephardic Hebrew pronunciation, now much better known because of Israeli Hebrew, and our unique *taamim* (musical notation) for reading from the Torah. In effect, I had to become two different Jewish people, one at school

and one at home and at synagogue. This was not a painful experience because we just accepted that we were a minority, and the majority established the rules. But, my childhood experiences did shape my outlook on the need to enhance and preserve Sephardic culture as unique and important. This also explains my excitement when the UW hired Devin Naar to be a Professor of Jewish Studies.

It was a thrilling opportunity to bring together resources in an area very near and dear to my wife Maureen and me. Maureen's grandparents, Rebecca and Morris Alhadeff, were a part of the pioneering group of Sephardic Jews that came from Rhodes to Seattle, and over the past seven years, it has been our pleasure to support the program and to watch with pride as it has become an important part of our University and a shining light to the world. The impact of the teaching and programs Devin has brought to the UW have made us the envy of other universities around the globe. I hope we can continue to grow and advance this wonderful program in the years to come.

Joel Benoliel is the first Sephardic member of the UW Board of Regents and a member of the Sephardic Studies Founder's Circle.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



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