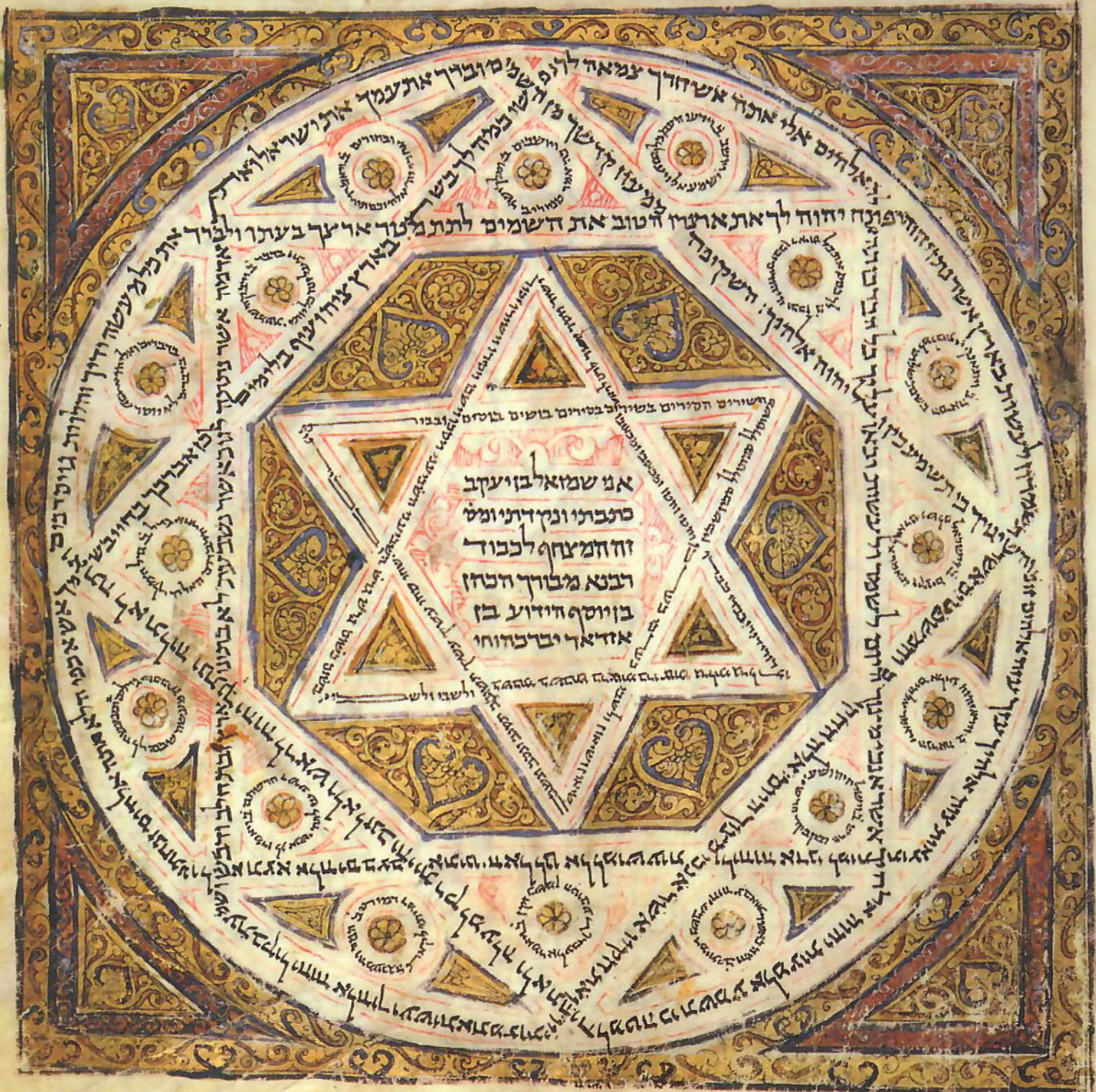


PROGRAM IN  
**Jewish Culture  
& Society**

AND THE INITIATIVE IN  
HOLOCAUST, GENOCIDE,  
AND MEMORY STUDIES

2019-2020 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER







## The Program in Jewish Culture & Society

College of Liberal Arts  
and Sciences

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Urbana-Champaign

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**On the cover:** Image from the Leningrad Codex. The Program in Jewish Culture & Society recently acquired a facsimile of the Leningrad Codex to be housed in the Program office, thanks to the generosity of Allen and Elaine Avner.

# Greetings from the Program in Jewish Culture and Society

Now that things have quieted down a bit, after a whirlwind first year as Director, I am delighted to have this opportunity to reflect on the past year and share my perspective on the program's past, present, and future. First of all, I want to express what an honor it has been to take over the leadership of the program, which has been a cherished intellectual home for me since I arrived at UIUC almost 20 years ago. I am also immensely grateful to my predecessor, Brett Kaplan, and all of the Jewish Studies faculty, affiliates, and friends who support the program and offer the research, teaching, and engagement on which our program rests. I have also had the privilege of working closely with Eugene Avrutin—who serves as Associate Director—and members of the PJCS Executive Committee; not only has their support allowed me to act as director, but they have made those efforts productive and highly rewarding.

We had a robust year of programming, with a wide range of events in Champaign-Urbana and Chicago. This year's events centered on the theme of "21C. Jewish Writing and the World" and included visits by four preeminent contemporary authors—Ruby Namdar, David Bezmozgis, Ayelet Tsabari, and Nicole Krauss—along with a related symposium, through which we probed questions of what it means to be a Jewish writer today, Jewishness in literature (historically and in the 21st Century), and how we understand the relationship between Jewish writing and "the world." We also held a diverse lineup of workshops, lectures, film screening, and exhibits—some on our own and many in conjunction with campus and community partners—and offered an exciting array of courses. Through our courses, events, and online presence, the program was able to engage several thousand students, faculty, and community members in the exploration of Jewish cultures and societies. For more information about our activities, I invite you to peruse the pages of this newsletter, visit our departmental homepage, and/or visit the Program's Facebook page.

This newsletter and other program publications also highlight many of our extraordinary graduates and award winners. You can find information about their achievements, projects, and plans along with information about opportunities for the 2019-2020 academic year.

I would also like to take this opportunity to call your attention to some of our plans for the 2019-2020 academic year. We will be hosting several very exciting visitors—some for a few days and others for up to a year. Omri Drumlevich (dancer/choreographer) will be teaching courses and staging a piece by Ohad Naharin in the Fall. In November, Leora Batnitzky (Princeton) will present on the Apostle Paul, Jewish law, and Jewish-Christian relations and Mark Roseman (Indiana) will participate in a panel with Peter Fritzsche (History, UIUC) on Anti-Semitism in Europe and the U.S. In the Spring, we will be hosting Rena Potok (Villanova), English professor and daughter of the renowned author, Chaim Potok. She will discuss the volume of her father's plays that she recently edited, and selected scenes will be performed by U of I students. You can find a preliminary calendar of all planned events in this newsletter. Updates will be

## *from the Associate Director*



**Dara E. Goldman and Itai Seggev at Templo Libertad, Buenos Aires**

posted on our website and distributed through our weekly email; you can find the most current information through those communications or check with the program office for additional information on any/all of our programming.

Over the past couple of years, we have been moving away from producing a comprehensive annual booklet that is mailed out to our extended network of faculty, alumni, colleagues, and friend. In an effort to be more ecologically and fiscally responsible, we are increasingly relying on electronic communications (including the annual newsletter along with weekly emails and news items featured on the program's webpage and Facebook page). At the same time, as a scholar of literature, I am unwilling to completely abandon the physical object that one can hold and flip through (and that can be accessed while "unplugged"). Consequently, we will continue to make an abbreviated newsletter available on a more limited basis. If you would like to receive a hard copy, just contact the Program office, and we will be happy to get one to you. If you are reading the hard copy, you may want to visit our website where you will find additional content, both in the electronic version of the newsletter itself and in the news section of the site ([jewishculture.illinois.edu/news](http://jewishculture.illinois.edu/news)).

—Dara Goldman

Having served eleven years on the Executive Committee, I am delighted to take on the responsibilities of Associate Director and help our new Director, Dara Goldman, steer the Program in Jewish Culture and Society in exciting directions. The work that my predecessor, Dana Rabin, did the past three years has made my job easier. I have been honored to support and interact with so many amazing students who come from different backgrounds with varied intellectual interests. Students have a wide assortment of undergraduate offerings to choose from, including "Jewish Storytelling," "World Religions," "Israeli Cinema and Television," "Modern Hebrew," "Soviet Jewish History," "Antisemitism," and the "Holocaust," among many others, all taught by world-class faculty. Despite a dip in undergraduate Humanities enrollment, I am pleased to report that most of the Program's courses are now operating at near full capacity, due to the hard work of Brett Kaplan and Dana Rabin and some of the exciting new initiatives we have launched this past year.

Over the past year, my energies have focused on broadening undergraduate student enrollment. In partnership with LAS Online—an initiative to create a diverse set of online courses that meet or exceed the expectations of traditional courses—the Program is in the process of developing a set of challenging and exciting Jewish Studies courses in an on-line format. In Fall 2019, I will offer Jewish History Since 1700 as an on-line course for the fifth time to students from a wide range of backgrounds and academic disciplines, including the Gies College of Business and the Grainger College of Engineering. In the near future, the Program has plans to roll out two new on-line courses: "Zionism: A Global History" taught by me and "Holocaust on Screen" taught by Rachel Harris. We are now currently working with LAS Online to develop an entire certificate program curriculum delivered completely online, which would be the first of its kind in the nation. Look for details of this amazing new program, which has the potential of broadening the reach of our courses to students around the world, as they become available.

—Eugene M. Avrutin

# Faculty News

## Eugene M. Avrutin



Eugene M. Avrutin is Professor of Modern Jewish history and the Tobor Family Scholar in the Program of Jewish Culture and Society at the University of Illinois. He is the author and co-editor of seven books, including *Jews and the Imperial State: Identification*

*Politics in Tsarist Russia* (Cornell University Press, 2010) and *Ritual Murder in Russia, Eastern Europe, and Beyond: New Histories of an Old Accusation* (Indiana University Press, 2017). Avrutin has published articles on documentation practices, the concept of race, and religious toleration and neighborly coexistence in the East European borderlands. His newest book, *The Velizh Affair: Blood Libel in a Russian Town*, was published by Oxford University Press in 2018. He is at work on several projects: a short exploration of racial politics in modern Russia, and a longer book on crime, criminality, and neighborly relations in the borderlands. His scholarship has been supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture.

## Dale Bauer



Dale M. Bauer is Professor of English. Professor Bauer previously taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the University of Kentucky, and Miami University of Ohio. Professor Bauer is the author of *Sex Expression and American Women Writers, 1860-1940*

(University of North Carolina Press, 2009), and is the editor of the *Cambridge History of American Women's Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

## Eric Calderwood



Eric Calderwood is Associate Professor of Comparative and World Literature (CWL) and a current Conrad Humanities Scholar. His specializations are in North African Literature and Film, Modern Spanish Literature and

Film, al-Andalusian cultural memory (Medieval Muslim Iberia), Modern Arabic Literature, Mediterranean Studies, Postcolonial Studies, and Travel Writing. Professor Calderwood has recently published. *Colonial al-Andalus: Spain and the Making of Modern Moroccan Culture* (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2018), which was translated into Spanish as *Al Ándalus en Marruecos* and published by Almuzara Press, 2019. He is currently working on a book entitled *The Invention of al-Andalus: Uses of the Past in Contemporary Mediterranean Culture*.

## Virginia Rosa Dominguez



Virginia Rosa Dominguez is the Edward William & Jane Marr Gutzsell Professor of Anthropology, past President of the American Anthropological Association, and co-founder and Consulting Director of the International forum for US Studies.

Professor Dominguez is a political and legal anthropologist whose most recent books are, *America Observed: On an International Anthropology of the United States*, co-edited with Jasmin Habib (Berghahn Books, 2017) and *Global Perspectives on the US*, co-edited with Jane Desmond (University of Illinois Press, 2017).

## Dara E. Goldman



Dara E. Goldman, Director of the Program in Jewish Culture & Society, is Associate Professor of Spanish, specializing in contemporary Caribbean and Latin American literatures and cultures, gender and sexualities studies and cultural studies. She is the author of

*Out of Bounds: Islands and the Demarcation of Identity in the Hispanic Caribbean* (Bucknell University Press, 2008) and is currently completing a project on how recent Cuban cultural production challenges dominant depictions of the island as a land frozen in time, available for touristic consumption, or as a model of anti-imperial resilience. Professor Goldman delivered a paper at the Cuban Research Institute comparing scholarship on Jewish male identity and analyses of the “New Man” in Cuba, has given several presentations about Cuban-Jewish literatures and cultures, and is writing about Jewish themes in 21st



century Cuban writing. She is also scheduled to deliver a paper on Caribbean Jewish literature at the Association for Jewish Studies conference in San Diego (December 2019) and is co-organizing a symposium on Jews of the Caribbean.

### Rachel S. Harris



Professor Harris is Associate Professor in Comparative and World Literature, focusing on Israeli literature and culture. She is author of *Warriors, Witches, Whores: Women in Israeli Cinema* (Wayne State Press 2014), *An Ideological Death: Suicide in Israeli Literature* (Northwestern University Press 2014), and co-editor of *Narratives of Dissent: War in Israeli Arts and Culture* (Wayne State Press 2013).

On April 29, Professor Harris spoke and signed copies of her new work, *Teaching the Arab-Israeli Conflict* at the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago/Jewish United Fund Offices. Professor Harris' latest research focuses on terrorism in literature and cinema.

### Brett Ashley Kaplan



Brett Ashley Kaplan is Professor of Comparative and World Literature and Director of the Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies. Her first books, *Unwanted Beauty: Aesthetic Pleasure in Holocaust Representation* (2007) and *Landscapes of Holocaust*

*Postmemory* (2011), examine the Shoah's intersections with art and space. Turning to Jewish American literature and race, she published *Jewish Anxiety in the Novels of Philip Roth* (2015), and is now working on a project about Jewish and black art and literature in France and the U.S. (among other projects). She teaches classes in Jewish American Literature in Dialogue with US Minority Cultures, Literary Responses to the Holocaust, Introduction to Theory, Introduction to Holocaust, Genocide, Memory Studies, and single author/auteur classes on J.M. Coetzee, Philip Roth, Woody Allen, Marguerite Duras and Alain Resnais.

### Harriet Murav



Harriet Murav is the Catherine and Bruce Bastian Professor of Global and Transnational Studies and Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures and Professor in the Program in Comparative and World Literatures. She is editor of *Slavic Review*. In Spring

2019, she was a Joyce Z. Greenberg Visiting Professor at the University of Chicago. In Spring 2020, she will be a Fellow at the Frankel Institute at the University of Michigan.

In 2019, her book *David Bergelson's Strange New World: Untimeliness and Futurity* was published by Indiana University Press. Professor Murav's new research project, *Archive of Violence: The Russian Civil Wars and the Literature of Abandonment* uses the Kiev District Commission for Relief to Victims of Pogroms (1920–1923) and selected literary works in Yiddish, Russian, and Ukrainian to analyze the extraordinary outpouring of literary creativity in tandem with the extraordinary proliferation of violence in Ukraine and Russia in the revolutionary period.

### Dana Rabin



Dana Rabin specializes in the history of eighteenth-century Britain with an emphasis on crime, law, gender, and race. Her first book, *Identity, Crime and Legal Responsibility in Eighteenth-Century England* (Palgrave, 2004), examined the language of mental states

in the English courtroom. Her recent book *Britain and its Internal Outsiders 1750–1800: Under Rule of Law* (Manchester University Press, 2017)—which she presented at the Illini Union Bookstore on October 15th—analyzes the intersection of metropole and colony through a study of legal events involving criminal trials, law suits, legislation, and riot that unfolded in London in the second half of the eighteenth century. Featuring six case studies—the Jewish Naturalization Act, the Elizabeth Canning kidnapping case (1753–1754); the Somerset Case (1771–72); the Gordon Riots (1780); the Spithead and Nore mutinies of 1797; and the Act of Union with Ireland in 1800—the book uses legal events as a prism through which

# Faculty News

to examine the complexities wrought by empire and how the law created, delineated, maintained, and managed categories of difference.

Rabin's current project, "Jews, Suffrage, and the Color Line in the British Empire, 1740–1858," examines Jewish civil rights throughout the British Empire between passage of the Naturalization Act (or Plantation Act) in 1740 and "Jewish Emancipation" 1858 when Jews received the right to vote in Britain. This multi-sited project takes note of the Empire's metropole and its colonial spaces, plantation societies and settler colonies, to study how definitions of race and religion shaped the lives of Jews and definitions of Jewishness and whiteness.

## Bruce Rosenstock



Bruce Rosenstock is Professor in the Department of Religion. His most recent book is *Transfinite Life: Oskar Goldberg and the Vitalist Imagination* (Indiana University Press, 2017). He has created and currently maintains the University of Illinois digital library, *Folk Literature of the Sephardic Jews Multimedia Archive*, at <http://sephardifolklit.illinois.edu>. His current project is a study of the intersection of vitalism and politics among the students and followers of the German philosopher Alexius Meinong.

## Dov Weiss



Dov Weiss is Associate Professor of Jewish Studies in the Department of Religion. Specializing in the history of Jewish biblical interpretation and rabbinic theology, Dov's first book, *Pious Irreverence: Confronting God in Rabbinic Judaism* (University of Pennsylvania Press), won the 2017 National Jewish Book Award in the category of Scholarship. His recent articles include "Sins of the Parents in Rabbinic and Early Christian Literature" [*Journal of Religion* 97:1], "Divine Concessions in the Tanhuma Midrashim" [*Harvard Theological Review* (108:1)] and "The Sin of Protesting God in Rabbinic and Patristic Literature" [*AJS Review* 39:2]. Professor Weiss' research interests include Ancient Judaism, Rabbinic Thought and Literature, Medieval Judaism, History of Jewish Theology, Jewish Biblical Interpretation, and Modern Jewish Thought.



Faculty publications

# Why Write, and Read (Jewishly)?

## Reflections on the 21st Century Jewish Writing and World Series

BY DARA E. GOLDMAN AND  
BRETT ASHLEY KAPLAN

During the 2018-2019 academic year, Gordon Hutner, Dara Goldman, and Brett Kaplan organized the 21st Century Jewish Writing and the World initiative, which furnished a vibrant and exciting series of discussions with contemporary writers.

The idea was to examine the state of Jewish literature, its history, and how it has evolved over the years. Many of us grew up with copies of iconic volumes on our bookshelves: Saul Bellow's *Herzog*, Chaim Potok's *The Chosen*, Phillip Roth's *Portnoy's Complaint*—to name just a few prominent examples. How have those and other works shaped our understanding of Jewish literature? How has Jewish writing evolved in recent decades? Twenty-first century literature often delves into questions of ethnic and/or multicultural identity, of time and place, and of international migration. What perspective and insights might 21st century Jewish writing offer when grappling with these questions, and how are they elucidated by literary texts?

The series consisted of visits by four preeminent contemporary authors: Ruby Namdar, David Bezmozgis, Ayelet Tsabari, and Nicole Krauss. Each of these novelists connects classic Jewish themes, including alienation and the endless quest for identity, with a sense of the global character of literary confines; the places in the novels range from Israel to New York to the USSR and beyond. At the same time, the questions discussed in these works touch and reach audiences well beyond Jewish literature. With Ruby Namdar, we discussed *The Ruined House* and considered what constitutes Jewishness, what it meant in ancient times, and what it means to us today. We reflected on how to tell stories of both the sacred and the quotidian and how certain characters, settings, and narrative styles might lend themselves to the telling of such stories. In his lectures, David Bezmozgis shared thoughts about his novel, *The Betrayers*, and the process of developing it into a screenplay for a feature film. Our conversations



Ruby Namdar



David Bezmozgis



Ayelet Tsabari



Nicole Krauss

probed what it means to be a moral person and to grapple with the consequence of choices people (both real and fictitious) make. The lectures and exchanges with David also highlighted the question of nationalisms and how the attachment to a particular homeland informs our sense of community and our relationships with one another more broadly. Ayelet Tsabari shared excerpts from her recently published memoir, *The Art of Leaving* as well as her short-story writing and her explorations of her family history and of other Yemeni Jews in both Israel and Yemen. She shared her experiences growing up in Israel as a Yemeni Jewish woman, traveling the world, and eventually returning to live in Israel again. Her visit offered tremendous insight into the complexity of Israeli society and raised compelling questions about how we think about Judaism, Jewish culture, and Israeli identity. Audience members were surprised by some of the statistics and anecdotes she shared and mesmerized by the glimpse of less familiar vignettes of Jewish communities and world views that she offered. During Nicole Krauss's visit we discussed her latest novel, *Forest Dark*, and how it evolved from her previous writing, reading, and experiences. Nicole's visit also included a discussion of her work in dialogue with a chapter from Abraham Joshua Heschel's *Man is Not Alone*. Students, faculty, and community members had a chance to discuss her treatment of time and space, family relations, the connections she draws across different Jewish sites (particularly Israel and New York), and what it means to be a Jewish writer.

The penultimate event in the series was a stimulating symposium with four scholars, each matched with a brief response from a UIUC faculty member. The symposium



## Why Write, and Read (Jewishly)? *continued*

crystallized critical opinion and scholarly interest in these subjects and tested the vitality and resources of the literary development—both formal and historical—that these writers' oeuvres, taken together, offered. The scholars, Sarah Phillips Casteel, Dean Franco, Dalia Kandiyoti, and Benjamin Schreier were chosen because of their expertise and their ability to discuss contemporary Jewish literature and the world as well as their knowledge of/interest in the writers who made the series so spectacular. The symposium offered an intense day-long discussion of Jewish literature with excellent responses from UIUC faculty and many engaged and thoughtful questions from students and community members. We hope that these essays will be published in a special issue of *American Literary History* devoted to the symposium.

The title of this piece evokes Jean Paul Sartre's famous essay, "Why Write?" (as David Bezmozgis did in his lectures). Certainly, all of the more deeply existential questions that Sartre raises in that essay are entirely relevant to the series and its impact. At the same time, Sartre's question is evoked here to draw attention to some more concrete aspects or corollaries of those philosophical meditations. What drives us to put pen to paper, as it were, to represent our perspectives and experiences—both our own, more individual ones, or those that claim to represent our communities in some way? What compels us to read literature that has been specifically identified as Jewish? How do we understand the term "Jewish literature," and what characteristics do we associate with that designation? When we say "Jewish Writing and World," what are we implying about the relationship between the two? Is the world something we understand as being within the "Jewish," outside of it, or perhaps both? How does Jewish-American (US) literature intersect with other national/regional subcategories of Jewish literature? Throughout the series, we grappled with all of these questions while also pondering the weight of Jewish history, notions of wandering and permanence, and of displacement and the search for the elusive space from which to speak to and about all of these issues. We noted how all of the authors in the series weave together voices and story lines, spanning multiple continents and generations, as they present their particular narrative worlds—worlds in which a multitude of truths converge and intersect yet persistently refuse to neatly fit together.



**21st Century Jewish Writing and the World Roundtable Symposium**

These conversations continue to echo throughout the program's classes, events, and critical conversations. The links below offer the opportunity to learn more about the series, and we are preparing the aforementioned special issue that will further explore the import of the material and the questions raised during the year-long initiative. We also invite you to join us for more exciting events that examine Jewish cultures and societies during the 2019–2020 academic year—including a screening of *Liberation Heroes: the Last Eyewitnesses* and presentation by Advisory Council member Scott Gendell on January 27, 2020 and a visit by Villanova professor Rena Potok (who recently edited a collection of plays by her father, Chaim Potok) on April 6th, 2020. Of course, you can always visit the program website and Facebook page and/or contact the Program office about upcoming events.

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For our write-up on Ruby Namdar and David Bezmozgis' visits, click here: [jewishculture.illinois.edu/news/2018-10-26/recap-ruby-namdar-and-david-bezmozgis-visits](https://jewishculture.illinois.edu/news/2018-10-26/recap-ruby-namdar-and-david-bezmozgis-visits)

For information about Ayelet Tsabari's reading in the Lucy Ellis Lounge, click here: [jewishculture.illinois.edu/ayelet-tsabari](https://jewishculture.illinois.edu/ayelet-tsabari)

For a transcript of Ayelet Tsabari's Q&A with Professor Brett Kaplan published in *The Ninth Letter*, click here: [www.ninthletter.com/tsabari](http://www.ninthletter.com/tsabari)

For a video/transcript of Nicole Krauss' book reading and Q&A with Professor Brett Kaplan, click here: [cas.illinois.edu/node/172](https://cas.illinois.edu/node/172)



# The Program Celebrates the Continuing Legacy of the Tobor Family

Our endowments are one of the key resources that the Program in Jewish Culture and Society has relied on over the years. These funds have allowed us to realize our core mission of promoting greater knowledge and understanding of Jewish communities in a wide array of places, historical periods, and contexts. Chief among these endowments is the Tobor Family fund, a resource created by Jeff and Debbie Margolis that has both promoted the growth of the program and grown with us. It has allowed us to create a faculty position in European Jewish History, currently held by Eugene Avrutin, and has thus solidified the program's excellence in Eastern European and Russian Jewry. Indeed, since his initial appointment, Dr. Avrutin has been promoted to the rank of Full Professor, published several single-authored books and edited volumes along with numerous journal articles on Russian and Eastern European Jewish history, developed several new courses (including two new online courses on Jewish History and the History of Zionism), organized countless lectures and conferences on campus, and taken on an administrative role as Associate Director of the Program.

The Tobor Family fund was created over 20 years ago to honor the family's historical connections with the University of Illinois and their commitment to Jewish education and scholarship. Members of several generations of the extended family attended the University of Illinois, including Barbara Tobor Margolis (Science and Letters, 1960), Donald Margolis (Chemistry, 1959; Law, 1962), Gary Margolis (Journalism, 1990), and Jeffrey Margolis (Business Administration, 1984). The family has maintained ties with Jewish education, both in Illinois and elsewhere. From the 1930s through the 1980s, the Tobor descendants and extended family studied architecture, arts and sciences, business, chemistry, information technology, journalism and law. In the spirit of that legacy, we would like to take this opportunity to share some of the family's history and the principle aims of the Tobor Family endowment.

Like so many other Jewish families, the Tobor family immigrated to the United States from Eastern Europe (Smorgon near Vilna, then Russia) in the late 19th century (1895) to New York City. In approximately 1914, the



Tobor Family club reunion, 2004



## The Program Celebrates the Continuing Legacy of the Tobor Family, *continued*

family re-established its center in Chicago, Illinois. Jacob (1865–1940) and Hannah (1869–1945) Tobor had a total of nine children. These were:

- **Rose Tobor Lazerson** (1891–1964)
- **Esther Tobor Kaplan** (1894–1979)
- **Ben Tobor** (1898–1947)
- **Abraham Tobor** (1900–1916)
- **Sam Tobor** (1901–2001)
- **Mayer (Mike) Tobor** (1903–1968)
- **Harry Tobor** (1908–1968)
- **Sara Tobor Slutsky** (1909–1996)
- **Saul Tobor** (1911–1992)

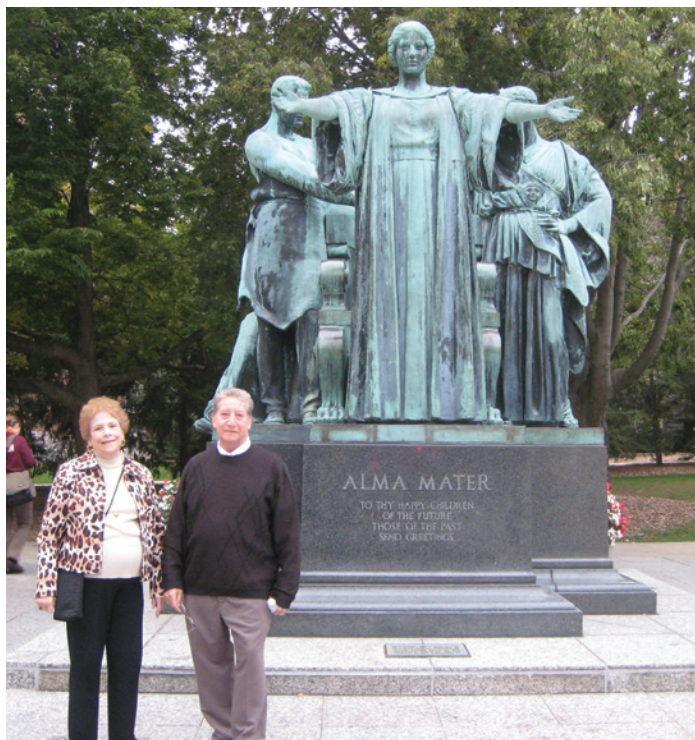
These nine children in turn had a total of twenty children, and they, in turn, created successive generations of U.S. citizens pursuing multi-disciplinary interests. The descendants of the Tobor family value their common heritage, intertwine religious background with secular existence in the United States, and support education and tolerance.

The Tobor Family Endowment Fund was established within the framework of the University of Illinois Program in Jewish Culture & Society to encourage scholarship and programming that supports the ideals of multi-disciplinary

study with a Jewish perspective. As generations continue to build, the Tobor family name will be a reminder that learned individuals should not only possess a keen grasp of the modern world,



The original Tobor Family club



Barbara Tobor Margolis and Donald Margolis, both graduates of U of I



Jeff Margolis as commencement speaker, Winter Convocation, College of Business, December 2007

but also understand their heritage. Building a productive future requires knowledge of the past. The Program in Jewish Culture & Society is proud to be a spoke in the wheel that advances Jewish learning and—in doing so—to continue the tradition embodied by the multiple generations of the Tobor family.



# Primo Levi, on the Centenary of his Birth: An Evening Commemorating the Author on Holocaust Remembrance Day

BY JONATHAN DRUKER, EMANUEL ROTA,  
AND ELEONORA STOPPINO

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You who live safe

In your warm houses

You who find, returning in the evening,

Hot food and friendly faces:

Consider if this is a man

Who works in the mud

Who does not know peace

Who fights for a scrap of bread

Who dies because of a yes or a no.

Consider if this is a woman,

Without hair and without name

With no more strength to remember,

Her eyes empty and her womb cold

Like a frog in winter.

Meditate that this came about:

I commend these words to you.

Carve them in your hearts

At home, in the street,

Going to bed, rising:

Repeat them to your children,

Or may your house fall apart,

May illness impede you,

May your children turn their faces from you.

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*On Wednesday, May 1st (Yom Ha'Shoah), the Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies, the Program in Jewish Culture & Society, and the Department of French and Italian co-hosted an evening of readings, reflections, and music commemorating the life and work of Primo Levi. It proved to be a meaningful and moving event, and we wanted to take this opportunity to share a small portion of the content from that evening. The presenters and co-organizers have been kind enough to share the following excerpt.*

No one has written about the Nazi concentration camps with more understated eloquence and moral clarity than Auschwitz survivor Primo Levi. After a period of relative obscurity, Levi is now recognized as an indispensable guide to our post-Holocaust world—a writer we truly cannot do without. His books, especially his Auschwitz memoir *If This Is a Man*, deserve our sustained attention because they testify powerfully to the victim's experience and the complex legacies of the Holocaust with respect to ethics, the limits of language and representation, and the double-edged sword of technology.

Levi was born into a secular Jewish family in Turin, Italy on July 31, 1919, making this year his centenary. He grew up in the 1920s and 1930s among Jews and gentiles who, at first, ignored Italian Fascism, then accommodated themselves to it, and finally reviled it. As he tells it in *The Periodic Table*, his own life demonstrated that Turinese Jews felt no less Italian than their Catholic neighbors. With his university degree in chemistry and a thorough education in the canonical Western texts, Levi deeply imbibed the scientific and humanistic values that were strongly embraced in Turin.

*If This Is a Man*, first published in 1947, is a record of what the author personally endured in the death camp and a searing testimony to the sufferings of others. Levi reports his own physical, intellectual, and moral degradation with notable restraint. He frankly admits to having internalized the corrosive ethics of Auschwitz, what he later called the Gray Zone, in which, “a man is bound to pursue his

## Primo Levi's Centenary, continued

own ends by all possible means.” Levi counterbalances this coerced egocentrism with continual references to the other prisoners’ faces and eyes, and to the dehumanizing stares of the SS guards and Kapos which negated their victims’ humanity. These face-to-face encounters provoke our reflection on the ethical relation between self and other. The memoir’s focus on ethics is signaled by its epigraphic poem, reprinted above, which commands us, the “safe” reader, surrounded by “friendly faces,” to reflect on whether the dehumanized victim, unable to assert his or her own subjectivity, remains a human being for whom we are responsible. Our failure to recover the humanity that resides within the dehumanized victims, and to remember them, will bring on the curse articulated in the poem’s last lines. Our children will turn away their faces, will, in effect, deny the human recognition that we ourselves certainly need.



Primo Levi audience.



Primo Levi panel, featuring Jonathan Druker (at podium) and Kirsten Wynne, Philip Phillips, and Jason Finkelman (seated, right to left). Special thanks to Kirsten and Philip for their moving recitations of Levi’s work and to Jason, who created amazing musical/sonic accompaniments throughout the evening.

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Comment on “The Journey”

Comment on “Ka-Be”

Comment on “The Canto of Ulysses”

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Over the course of four decades, Levi wrote powerfully about shame, one of the Holocaust’s saddest and most significant legacies. He stated multiple times that the Holocaust shamed not only the victims, perpetrators, and bystanders, but also debased the whole world, depositing a toxic residue that still shames everyone, even those born after the events. The feeling of shame experienced by the just person does not depend on actual culpability, but on a moral sensitivity to crimes against humanity. It does not arise from a rational decision, but from an affective response to unnecessary suffering. It follows that people of conscience who have done no wrong, or were even born too late, would judge their own inability to stop this monstrous crime as a kind of complicity: they feel implicated in the shame of the Holocaust.

Levi’s second memoir, *The Truce*, also known as *The Rearwakening*, opens with a powerful passage describing the liberation of Auschwitz, a day, Levi wrote, that “filled our hearts with both joy and a painful sense of shame [because]



B. Kaplan



the marks of the outrage would remain in us forever.” With an unforgettable image of four Russian soldiers, previously uninitiated to the horrors of an extermination camp, Levi describes the precise moment when our world collided with Auschwitz.

Four young soldiers on horseback ... turned their gazes, checked by a strange embarrassment, to the jumbled piles of corpses, to the ruined barracks, and to us few living beings. [...] They appeared oppressed, not only by pity but by a confused restraint, which sealed their mouths, and riveted their eyes to the mournful scene. It was a shame ... that inundated us after the selections and every time we had to witness or submit to an outrage: the shame that the Germans didn't know, and which the just man feels before a sin committed by another. It troubles him that it exists, that it has been irrevocably introduced into the world of things that exist, and that his goodwill availed nothing, or little, and was powerless to defend against it.

Note Levi's careful attention to the visual, the sense of perception most typical in the production of shame. The soldiers, on first exposure to the terrors of Auschwitz, look and then, with greater engagement, gaze in “embarrassment” at the defiled corpses. In the face of

such inhumanity, the soldiers do not spare themselves by looking away. Rather than treat their fixed stare as a voyeuristic lack of respect for the dead, Levi links it with a righteous sense of shame, that is, with a human affect that is an essential condition for responsibility and solidarity.

The soldiers, outsiders encountering the strange, terrible world of Auschwitz for the first time, are also stand-ins for us, Levi's readers. He counts on the same “restraint” mentioned in the passage to keep our gazes fixed on the page, focused on the unjust and intolerable suffering of the victims. It is this moral restraint, the “shame of the just,” that prevents us from looking away, as much as we would like to. Shame is the subject of Levi's writing but also, potentially, the impediment to its reception. Testimonies bearing witness to deeply shameful events, like Levi's, risk meeting with our willful amnesia, which lets the troubling past slip quietly away. The “shame of the just” can point us toward ethical choices, but any testimony, any political resistance to crimes against humanity must also overcome the shame of speaking of shameful things.

During this year, Levi's 100th, we appreciate anew his remarkable writings and unique moral voice. We are lucky to have him.



**Bagel brunch at Illini Hillel, an event co-sponsored by Illini Hillel and members of the PJCS Advisory Council. Students, faculty, visiting scholars, alumni, community members, and friends had the opportunity to mingle and learn more about Jewish Studies courses, programs, and events—all while enjoying a nice bagel and a schmear, of course.**



**Brett Kaplan**  
Director, HGMS

The Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, Memory Studies enjoyed another vibrant year full of workshops, guest speakers, a reading group, new initiatives, and our second graduate student conference in memory studies. The keynote speaker for that conference, Nafissa Thompson-Spires, riveted the room with a reading from her much lauded and truly remarkable collection of short stories, *Heads of the Colored People*. Graduate students from disciplines as diverse as Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology as well as from Comparative and World Literature, Spanish, English, Education, and Anthropology offered exceptional papers on a wide array of topics. HGMS faculty generously offered feedback on the papers, and the atmosphere was congenial and supportive. The graduate college generously sponsored lunch so that all participants could continue the conversation. Please mark your calendars for the 3rd annual graduate student conference on Friday March 27, 2020.

We have a stimulating year planned. Our first major event will be the second performance by HGMS and Comparative Literature graduate student, Ethan Madarieta, at 7 pm on September 23rd in Levis room 210. Entitled, *grandma's medicine, iraganeko zuloa*, Ethan describes this multi-media piece as a, "performance of diasporic memory that draws together the story of my great grandmother's salve (amumaren medikunza, or grandma's medicine), Basque mythology, and futures made from irretrievable pasts. This performance traces an indigenous memory from Bizkaia to Idaho and Buenos Aires through diasporic memorial pathways." Ethan's first on campus performance was stunning, and you can read about it here: [hgmsblog.weebly.com/blog/archives/12-2016](http://hgmsblog.weebly.com/blog/archives/12-2016)

**Ethan Madarieta, Ph.D. candidate in Comparative & World Literature and HGMS, who will perform *grandma's medicine, iraganeko zuloa* on Monday, September 23rd.**

Then, on January 27th we are delighted that Scott Gendell, an active member of the Chicago-based Advisory Board, will be here to discuss *Liberation Heroes: the Last Eyewitnesses*, which we will screen that evening at 7:00 pm in 210 Levis Faculty Center.

We anticipate a rich and fascinating discussion that will continue our long-standing tradition of hosting an event each April in commemoration of the Armenian Genocide. This year we are delighted that Kevork Mourad has agreed to talk first in Chicago on April 22 and then on campus on April 23. His work will also be exhibited at UIUC's Spurlock Museum. Mourad's art explores memory and the hold of the past on the present. He often weaves music into his visual projects and has collaborated with Yo-Yo Ma and other august musicians. For some videos of his fascinating pieces please go here: [www.kevorkmourad.com/](http://www.kevorkmourad.com/).





# 2019 Graduate Symposium

BY JUAN ANDRÉS SUÁREZ ONTANEDA

Going to the archive is not always a conscious choice. As I write about the 2019 Graduate Symposium in Memory Studies (Friday 03/01/2019), I feel like a mediator between the notes in my notebook and my personal memory of the event. At times, both forms of inscription work in tandem, but at other times they seem to be at odds with each other. Much beyond my own mediation, this year's Symposium illustrated the potent research being conducted by Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies (HGMS) members and scholars who are dealing with memory studies from a plurality of angles.

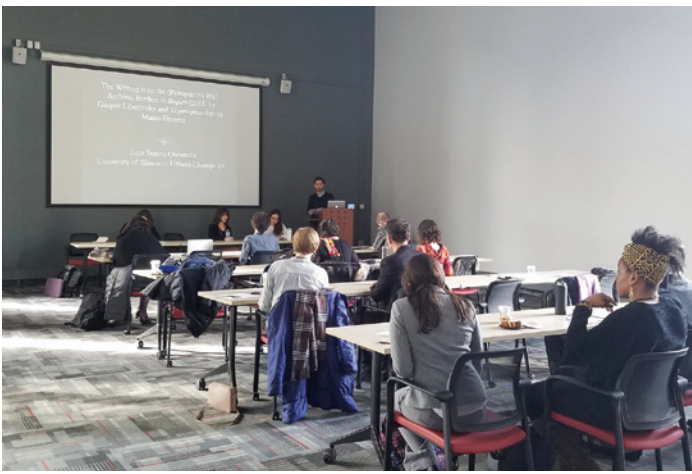
In her assessment of Agata Tuszynska, Lizy Mostowski made a compelling analysis about how the Holocaust blurred the frontiers between the sacred and the profane, as evidenced by the destruction of cemeteries. Her Derridian reading of Tuszynska allowed Mostowski to thread the importance of dream in the novel as contingent to the architecture of the Death Drive. Sarah Chitwood examined Patrick Modiano's novel *Dora Bruder*, and her careful analysis pushed us to consider how archives might be public institutions, but their contents are mediated by private entities. I attempted to show how the walls of two prisons, one in Argentina (Caseros) and the other

in Ecuador (Ex-Penal García Moreno), narrate archival practices that have been destroyed by the State.

After *archive fever*, the following panel brought some fascinating engagement with the body and memory. Helen Makhdomian focused on the spatial demarcations created through the movement of the body in Susan Power's *The Grass Dancer* (1994). Naomi Taub examined, through multiple articles by James Baldwin and Tony Eprile, the intersection between whiteness and Jewishness. Dilara Caliskan brought an ethnographic lens to discuss how a trans woman was memorialized through her funeral. Connecting the weight of guilt, the destruction of the body, and brutal state violence, Estibalitz Ezkerra discussed *Twist* (2018), the novel by Harkaitz Cano that narrates the assassination of two ETA militants in the Basque Country.

In between panels, keynote speaker Nafissa Thompson-Spires read some excerpts from her award-winning book, *Heads of the Colored People* (2018). Her wonderful short story "Belles Lettres" shows how memory can be mobilized in the context of epistolary exchanges between two African-American mothers who have sent their daughters to PWI (Primary White Institutions). Thompson-Spires pointed out that writing about memory can be ludic and painful at the same time, but accurate engagement with time allows the mixture of registers.





**HGMS Grad Student Symposium**

The members of the panel about the state and memory sought to place into dialogue strategies to memorialize through and beyond institutions. Jorge Rojas assessed the role of Colombian “Acción de Cultura Popular” during the armed conflict that has affected Colombia since the second half of the Twentieth century. ArCasia D. James-Galloway focused on the connection between race and gender in different school desegregation processes between 1968 and 1980. Daria Semenova focused on children’s literature produced by *émigré* Ukrainian writers, and the function of those texts in creating alternative narratives about national identity. Piercing into the pistons of commemoration and erasure at work in post-dictatorship Chile, Ethan



Madarieta theorized how different performers have embodied memory as an aesthetic and political tool.

The Symposium concluded with a deep engagement between memory and borders. Megan Smith inquired into speculative fiction, and the role of fiction in the production of utopian and dystopian politics. Ragini Chakraborty analyzed Saadan Hasan Manto’s well-known short story “Toba Tek Singh” (1954), examining how mental health institutions are connected with the formation of political borders. Sana Saboowala presented her fascinating research about the intersection between memory and genetics. This year’s Symposium was a wonderful occasion for intellectual solidarity and collaboration. Can’t wait for next year’s presentations!



**Materials for the HGMS Mad Creative Breaking the Silence mosaics project.**



# Reflections on Mad Creative

The series that has become “Mad Creative” is the first in what I hope will become an HGMS annual tradition. It generated through a perhaps atypical origin story. I saw on Facebook a posting from one of the wonderful Comparative and World Literature and now HGMS graduate students, Meagan Smith. I’ve been a fan of Meagan’s writing ever since her exams some years ago and I read her post during a time when I felt bombarded, teary, and triggered by the enormity of sexual violence in the news. Here is part of what Meagan posted: “I’ve listened to people assume...that women who do speak up are likely to be lying, and arguing that women should remove themselves from work places and social spaces that ‘make them uncomfortable’ while the men creating the atmosphere of discomfort should be given all the space they want for their toxic behavior. I’ve responded with logic, with questions, with outrage, with personal narratives, with frustrated pleas to simply acknowledge that the systemic roots of the problem should be addressed. So, before totally missing the point and frantically deploying the ‘not all men’ argument, please take a deep breath and listen to the women you care about. Be brave and try deferring to us on these issues. Leave your fear and your guilt and your own discomfort behind long enough to allow us a chance to catch our breath and change the damn world. We will do the rest of the work it takes to gain our share of the freedom you take for granted.”

As soon as I read this I emailed Meagan to suggest that we construct an HGMS event around these issues. A few days after her post, Meagan and I met to discuss how to do something about this sense of bombardment and the feeling of being silenced. Meagan suggested we reach out to various groups across campus, and we did. Through a series of planning meetings with a range of people from

The Women’s Resources Center, YWCA, APO, Women & Gender in Global Perspectives, as well independent artists and thinkers, we decided to orchestrate a three part series: A Breathing Room, a rally to celebrate the almost 100 years since women gained the right to vote (Friday November 2 at the Alma Mater), and Breaking the Silence: A Mosaic Project led by the artist Susan Parenti.

We felt that this range of events would speak to the range of feelings we had—we wanted to talk, to listen, to shout, to break something and also to make something. “We are delighted that the mosaics were exhibited at the Spurlock Museum in the Spring of 2019.”

HGMS has focused until now on trauma and memory studies and has done incredible work to educate students, the community, and faculty about the Holocaust, the Armenian Genocide, and other genocides, about the interconnections between traumas across temporal and geographical divides. Some of our speakers have been experts in gender studies. But we had not organized an event expressly around gender and trauma. We held our Breathing Room in the Lucy Ellis

lounge, and not only was every seat full, but people were standing at the back of the room, and huge numbers of people thanked us for putting this together. It felt very needed and very, very appreciated.

The first event in the series was the Breathing Room for people of all genders. We gathered to talk and to listen and to find ways to end rape culture and begin consent culture, or whatever else we can call a world without rampant sexual harassment of women, transpeople, men, boys, girls; everyone should be able to breathe!

The first speaker was co-organizer Sarah Colomé, Director of the Women’s Resources Center. Sarah spoke about our



I’ve listened to people assume...that women who do speak up are likely to be lying, and arguing that women should remove themselves from work places and social spaces that ‘make them uncomfortable’ while the men creating the atmosphere of discomfort should be given all the space they want.”

collective responsibility to call rape culture when we see it. She made an apt analogy to what we might say if we hear someone making a racist joke... we would call them on it, right? In the same way sexist or troubling comments can and should be pointed out. Sarah also shared resources on campus for sexual assault survivors and demonstrated how much support is available. You can find out more here: [oii.illinois.edu/womens-center](http://oii.illinois.edu/womens-center).

The second speaker was supposed to be co-organizer Lesley Wexler, Professor of Law at UIUC who was called to a meeting at the Law School about a Law Professor's alleged repeated sexual misconduct. As you might imagine, the irony was lost on no one that she was unable to be at our event in person for this very reason. Lesley sent me an essay co-written with Colleen Murphy, Professor of Law and Philosophy and Political Science and Director of the Women & Gender in Global perspectives program that has organized the related MeToo in Academia series, and I relayed to our full to bursting audience part of this great article in their absence. The full text is here and definitely worth reading: [verdict.justia.com/2018/10/06/a-beginning-not-an-ending-metoo-and-the-kavanaugh-confirmation](http://verdict.justia.com/2018/10/06/a-beginning-not-an-ending-metoo-and-the-kavanaugh-confirmation).

The third speaker, co-organizer Nidhi Singh, is a current undergraduate student studying Industrial and Organizational Psychology with a minor in Social Work and Leadership Studies; she is the Vice President of Leadership within Alpha Phi Omega. I would like to thank Nidhi especially for organizing ten APO volunteers who led the discussion groups. Nidhi spoke about MeToo from her cultural perspective as the child of immigrants from India. She described with both gravitas and humor a four-hour conversation with her father during which she educated him about sexual harassment and what it is like to be a woman in college in the US. At first, she said, he was reluctant to learn. But then he seemed to have gotten it and understood more deeply from her perspective. Nidhi spoke about reaching out to her uncles next and stressed that reaching out to someone who has a different perspective can be transformative. You can find out more about APO here: [apo-aa.org/](http://apo-aa.org/).

The next speaker was Kadin Henningsen, a graduate student in the Department of English who is minoring in Queer Studies and has an MA in Gender and Women's Studies from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Kadin spoke very movingly about the ways in which transpeople's experience of violence and sexual violence

is both pervasive and often and unfortunately invisible. He discussed how sometimes the insistence on gender binaries in academe is a form of violence and he challenged those of us who organize panels and construct syllabi to include more trans scholars and more scholarship on trans experience and history. He encouraged us to read this: [koritha.blogspot.com/](http://koritha.blogspot.com/).

The final speaker was Suda Rao, Vice President of Students Against Sexual Assault (SASA) and the Chair of the Illinois Student Government Sexual Assault Prevention Department. Suda spoke about how SASA is designed to be led and run by survivors and how this group orchestrates a variety of events, including an open mic series where people can share anonymously, self-care events, creative events, and other ways of both supporting survivors and letting people know that sexual assault happens here. You can find out more about SASA here: [www.facebook.com/SASAUIC/](http://www.facebook.com/SASAUIC/).

After everyone on the panel had spoken, we all broke into discussion groups and talked for about twenty minutes and then re-convened for a final conversation. In my group, we first talked about transitional justice and then branched out to tell stories and share ideas and feelings. The evening concluded with everyone screaming. That unexpected group expression was just right.

The organizing group turned out to be an intensely smart and creative crowd, and I offer an enormous thanks to Meagan Smith, Naomi Taub, Sarah Colomé, Nidhi Singh, Alaina Pincus, Michelle Awad, Lesley Wexler, Anita Kaiser, Susan Parenti, Dilara Caliskan, Claire Baytas, and Ronnie Hemrich. An enormous thank you to the office manager for HGMS, Sarah Elder who made (and revised many times) the poster, booked the rooms, ordered the pizza, and dealt with all budgetary issues. I am indebted to her for all she has done to keep HGMS and Jewish Studies running so smoothly!

Enormous thanks to our sponsors: School of Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics; The Department of English; Gender and Women's Studies, Center for Advanced Study, and College of Fine and Applied Arts. The feedback from the sponsors was so positive and makes all the difference to our ability to conduct events that really matter.

—Brett Ashley Kaplan  
*Director, Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, Memory Studies*  
*Professor, Comparative and World Literatures*  
[bakaplan@illinois.edu](mailto:bakaplan@illinois.edu)



# Melissa Bilal Presents Research on Armenian Lullabies, Print Culture, and Remembrance Practices to the UIUC Campus Community

BY HELEN MAKHDOUMIAN

As part of its commitment to hosting an annual Armenian Studies event, the Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies (HGMS) welcomed Melissa Bilal this April. Professor Bilal received her PhD in Ethnomusicology from the University of Chicago and is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at the American University of Armenia.

Professor Bilal visited with graduate students, undergraduates, and faculty from across campus. Each time that I assumed that we had exhausted her archive of information, I watched as Professor Bilal pointed us towards fascinating sources, raised thoughtful questions because she genuinely loves to learn from others, and taught with a vision that the exchange of knowledge and stories has repercussions beyond the classroom, the library, or the dinner table.

Indeed, Professor Bilal's presentations generated thought-provoking discussions that will undoubtedly influence the research in comparative trauma and memory studies undertaken by HGMS students and faculty. Moreover, for us graduate students who hope to become professors, Professor Bilal provided a wonderful example of mentoring in academia. I trust that at whatever institutions we call home after we graduate, we will put into practice what we witnessed. That is, I cannot wait to see how we champion our own students' intellectual curiosity and model community-building between novice and more-experienced scholars from different disciplines.

For the HGMS faculty lecture series, Professor Bilal gave a talk entitled, "Injuries of Reconciliation: Being an Armenian in Post-Genocide Turkey." Professor Bilal articulated city-level microhistories of Armenian exile, the intertwined histories of dislocated peoples in this early

20th century period of population transfer in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, and connections between Armenians' experiences and those of Kurds and Alevi who also continue to face political violence in Turkey. She further called our attention to the affective and embodied elements of memory work and asserted that in narrating silenced histories, storytelling and music are powerful decolonizing modes of knowing constituted by feeling.

[For] graduate students who hope to become professors, Professor Bilal provided a wonderful example of mentoring in academia. I trust that at whatever institutions we call home after we graduate, we will put into practice what we witnessed.

Graduate student members of the Future of Trauma and Memory Studies reading group and Professor Bilal then visited the Rare Book and Manuscript Library on campus. Curator Cate Coker pulled out a fantastic selection of Armenian language and Armenian history texts from the library's collections, spanning the 16th through the 20th centuries. We looked at bilingual dictionaries, books on comparative linguistic studies, travel narratives, a translation of Lord Byron's poems into Armenian, a book of sonnets penned by the English

poet William Watson about England's response to the Hamidian Massacres of Armenians from 1894 to 1896, a book of letters written by English humanitarian relief workers who witnessed those massacres, and issues of the *Hairenik Weekly* periodical from 1934.

The next day, Professor Bilal visited the Introduction to Poetry undergraduate-level course I taught this semester, which I had themed "Memories, Witnesses, Diasporas." The course culminated in a class discussion on witnessing and bearing witness in our contemporary moment. In preparation, students read Professor Bilal's recent journal article entitled, "Lullabies and the Memory of Pain: Armenian Women's Remembrance of the Past in Turkey." Students pursuing majors within and beyond the Liberal Arts and Sciences asked Professor Bilal questions regarding communal storytelling practices and history writing, the intergenerational transmission of traumatic

cultural memory, and how remembrance practices, including telling narratives about painful pasts through lullabies, can inform the pursuit of justice for victims of mass violence.

In the evening, Professor Bilal gave a Center for Advanced Study/MillerComm lecture entitled, *Historians in Action: How and Why We Reclaim an Armenian Feminist Past*. Professor Bilal provided an overview of *Feminism in Armenian: An Interpretive Anthology and Digital Archive*, a book and digital humanities project that she is working on with Professor Lerna Ekmekçioğlu (MIT). The project recovers work by twelve Ottoman-born Armenian feminist activist writers. It aims to end the ever-present invisibility of activist women in Armenian historiography and collective memory.

These women's writings offer a rich archive of intellectual discourse on social justice concerns. They also register the transatlantic migration of print culture in that these Armenian women writers referenced conversations on abolition and women's rights movements. In her lecture, Professor Bilal focused on Yelbis Gesaratsian (1830–1913).

Gesaratsian published seven issues of *Կիթաւն/Guitar* (1862–1863), the first Armenian women's journal which fought for women's rights and the second women's journal ever published in the Ottoman Empire. Unfortunately, the journal was silenced and Gesaratsian's overall intellectual contributions were overlooked during her lifetime. However, Professors Bilal and Ekmekçioğlu's critical return to these twelve women authors' works is paving the way for research on Armenian feminist movements past and present as well as for comparative historiographies.

We are grateful for all the programs which made Professor Bilal's visit possible: Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies; Program in Jewish Culture & Society; CAS/MillerComm, Center for Global Studies; Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies; Department of Gender and Women's Studies; Department of Political Science; Department of Sociology; European Union Center; Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities; Program in Women and Gender in Global Perspectives; Russian, East European, Eurasian Center, School of Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics; Spurlock Museum.



**Nicole and Claire Sufrin at Northwestern University. The Program in Jewish Culture & Society partnered with the Crown Family Center for Jewish and Israeli Studies to organize a presentation by Nicole Krauss in Chicago along with her visit to Champaign-Urbana.**

**Many thanks to the Greenfield-Lynch Lecture Series, CAS/MillerComm, the Trowbridge Initiative in American Cultures, and the Creative Writing Program as well as the Crown Family Center (Northwestern) and all of their sponsors.**



# The Future of Trauma and Memory Studies Reading Group: Fall 2018–Spring 2019 Reflections

DILARA CALISKAN AND CLAIRE BAYTAS

As part of the Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies, for Fall 2018 and Spring 2019, we, the Future of Trauma and Memory Studies Reading Group, chose “margins of memory” as the central theme of the meetings. Our aim was to think critically about the intersections between memory, power and violence. Rather than a geographic border, we focused on the term “margin” to detach ourselves from the centrality of state borders in the study of memory and its circulation. Exploring memory at the “margins” thus allowed us to discuss memory marginalized by dominant narratives, to uncover the at times hidden importance of memory to numerous social and political issues, and to transcend disciplinary borders in our study of memory.

In order to explore how practices at the margins shape the ways in which we understand, conceptualize and make sense of memory, we conducted meetings on several topics such as “Materiality in the Margins of Memory,” “Memory and Visual Media,” and “‘Truth’ and Memory.” Our materials for discussion included not only theoretical, critical, and creative texts, but also images, short films, and podcasts by anthropologists, political scientists, creative artists, and activists, to name only a few. We went beyond the humanities and social sciences too, especially to explore biological research on memory in a session dedicated to “Epigenetics and Memory.” When discussing texts on violence by Hannah Arendt and Frantz Fanon, we undertook the intellectual and rewarding challenge of bringing a memory studies-informed perspective to texts that did not explicitly proclaim themselves to be focused on memory, but in which memory was nonetheless lurking in the margins in significant ways. We delved as well into local memory debates, particularly those surrounding the

Chief mascot at our own university and the work of our English Department’s Professor Jodi Byrd on the subject. In addition, we continued our collaboration with other reading groups and co-organized a session with Trans/Gender Studies Reading Group on “Trans Archives.” During this meeting, we specifically focused on the term “trans” and explored the space that it opens for scholars who work on Trans/Gender Studies and Memory Studies.

Organizing events to experience the inter-disciplinary atmosphere of the Program in Jewish Culture & Society and HGMS is very important for us. This year, we were honored to have a reading group meeting with Professor Esra Ozyurek (LSE) in September and discuss her lecture given on campus the previous evening, “Generation Allah: Democratizing Allah and Holocaust Memory in Germany,” organized by the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities. To end the year, our reading group held a meeting with guest scholar Melissa Bilal (American University of Armenia) in the Rare Book and Manuscripts Library, following her HGMS Workshop and MillerComm lecture, *Historians in Action: How and Why We Reclaim an Armenian Feminist Past*. Our visit to the Rare Book and Manuscripts Library allowed us to examine and discuss a remarkable selection of documents related to the society, history, and memory of Armenians. These collaborations with various institutions on campus and with scholars from both the University of Illinois and elsewhere in the world greatly enriched our past year’s program. We look forward to continuing to lead the Future of Trauma and Memory Studies Reading Group for the upcoming 2019-2020 academic year, to researching and discussing a variety of new topics, and to collaborating with institutions and scholars across and beyond our campus.

# Award Winners

## Karasik Scholarship Award Winner



**Claire Baytas** is a student in the PhD program in Comparative Literature. She works on collective memory in literatures in French, Turkish, and English, particularly from the perspectives of migrants and ethnic and religious minority groups. She has

recently finished her preliminary examinations and is beginning research on a dissertation project that explores ethnic and religious minorities' relationships to Republican citizenship and secularism in France and Turkey between the Second World War and the turn of the twenty-first century. This project will rely on theoretical frameworks from the field of Memory Studies—particularly in order to examine the relationship between state-sponsored narratives of history and minority group collective memories and identities—and will focus primarily on texts and films that “remember” the past. Claire will use the Karasik Scholarship she received in the spring of 2019 to help fund three months of research she will perform in Paris this fall semester.

## Gendell Family and Shiner Family Fellowship Award Winner



**Diana Sacilowski's** project involves close analysis of key cultural texts—literature, film, monuments, heritage sites, etc.—from 1980s and 1990s Poland. She employs a comparative approach that examines how these texts work with and against earlier, as well as

more recent, representations of Poland's Jewish past, written by both Jewish and non-Jewish Poles. By tracing thematic and aesthetic connections to works by people from different backgrounds who were/are living in and responding to different socio-historical moments, she aims to create a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of these works as a whole and to situate the texts of the eighties and nineties within existing cultural paradigms, showing what discourses they are responding to, which they are attempting to challenge, and which they have influenced.

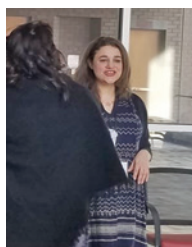
## Karasik Scholarship Award Winner



**Lizy Mostowski** studied Yiddish in the Uriel Weinreich Summer Program in Yiddish Language, Literature, and Culture at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York City for six weeks this summer to deepen her knowledge of Yiddish language and

literature. This is to prepare her for the research she will undertake in the future while writing her dissertation, tentatively titled “The Reconstruction of Polish-Jewish Collective Memory in Literature.” Lizy's dissertation will consider the role of the reconstruction of memory in a period when Poland's right-wing government is also reimagining itself in relation to the Holocaust in tracing Poland's reconstruction of collective memory alongside authors' reconstructions of Polish-Jewish collective memory. Understanding the work of Yiddish writers who partook in Warsaw and New York's literary circles, who wrote in both Polish and Yiddish, and who wrote in Yiddish from a Polish literary tradition, is essential to understanding the foundations of pre-war, Polish-Jewish collective memory. While in New York, Lizy has also been doing archival research at YIVO on writers who wrote about their ties to Poland, such as Joseph Opatoshu and Avrom Sutzkever.

## Gendell Family and Shiner Family Fellowship Award Winner



**Naomi Taub's** project, “Distant Proximities: Whiteness and Worldedness in Contemporary Jewish Literature,” brings together post-1961 Jewish texts from the United States, South Africa, Israel, and the United Kingdom in order to demonstrate how

contemporary Jewish literature de- and re-constructs whiteness through a constellation of multi-layered encounters that transcend national boundaries. It aims to shift the conversation in Jewish literary studies in two ways: first, by replacing the omnipresent question, “Are Jews white?” with the ultimately more productive inquiry, “Under what conditions do Jews understand and/or write



themselves as white?,” and, second, by re-framing the concept of Jewish whiteness as inherently worlded, shaped by an international network of colonial histories, political commitments, and affective entanglements.

### Fall 2018 Ronald Filler H. Scholarship Winner



**Candace Grossman** earned a Bachelor’s in Economics and a minor in Jewish studies. She completed coursework in the history of anti-Semitism, Soviet Jewish history, the Holocaust in context, and medieval Jewish philosophy. Her studies have

focused on European Jewry. She hopes to find a job that gives her the best of both worlds, combining an educational background in economics, critical thinking skills, and social understanding of being an outsider. Her goal is to work helping charities to help communities, especially children, who have faced hardship and struggles in their lives.

### Spring 2019 Ronald H. Filler Scholarship Winner



**Yoav Margalit** looks to both philosophy and Jewish studies as a way to understand things. Yoav believes that learning about Judaism is, like philosophy, so much more than just learning about one thing. Yoav has learned about other perspectives that he

never would have considered otherwise. Humanity gives its members names and titles. Who does it obligate one to be, if he is called a son? What does it mean for me to be a man when society names me male? And when I live as a Jew, what does it mean to be Jewish?

For Yoav, taking classes in the Jewish Studies program at the University of Illinois teaches something of both what Judaism has meant over the years and what it means today. He appreciates the rich insight that the program has given him.



**Ronald Filler (BA, '70, Political Science), sponsor of the Ronald H. Filler Scholarship in Jewish Studies—one of several scholarships he has endowed across the UIUC campus—at the Ronald H. Filler Scholarship awards dinner.**

# AIS Women's Task Force Meeting, March 2019

BY RACHEL S. HARRIS

The first meeting of the Association of Israel Studies (AIS) Taskforce on the situation of women in the profession took place at the University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign March 10-12, 2019. The meeting was attended by 23 women engaged in work relating to Israel Studies. Participants came from the United States, Canada, Germany, and Israel; they included associate professors, assistant professors, post-doctoral fellows, graduate students, administrators in academic non-profits, and unsalaried independent scholars. The meeting was sponsored by the Israel Institute, the Academic Engagement Network, and The Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago through the Israel Studies Project at the University of Illinois. The event had three purposes: to create networking opportunities for women; to provide training in areas that would enhance women's professional skills in order to have them better placed for employment and advancement; and to begin the research process into gender inequity in Israel Studies.

There are only four tenured women in Israel Studies in North America<sup>1</sup>, and no female Full Professors of Israel Studies in the United States or Canada. Of the 36 Israel



Women in Israel Studies Taskforce Dinner

Studies centers in North America listed on the AIS website<sup>2</sup> only one is run by a woman. In Israel, there are forty programs or centers that work in Israel Studies, and only three are directed by women.

Over the past two decades there have been significant numbers of women working in Israel Studies; excelling in research, publication, and teaching<sup>3</sup>. Yet the relative gender equity at the graduate level slowly disappears during the transition from degree to employment, and particularly as one progresses through the ranks of tenure-stream faculty. Anecdotal evidence shows that few women completing

a PhD in Israel Studies progress beyond post-doctoral fellowships or contingent academic positions, despite the relatively large percentage of new faculty positions in Israel Studies (compared to other fields, including Jewish Studies). Women are more likely to find employment in lower status non-tenure track administrative appointments, contingent labor positions, or in alternative-academic careers.

There has, until now, been no systematic study of these gender disparities within the Association of Israel Studies. I proposed the Taskforce on Women in Israel





Studies in order to engage in a preliminary examination of the gender imbalance in the field; the idea was endorsed by the board of AIS at the annual meeting in June 2018.

By the end of the March meeting, we had created a new Facebook group “Women in Israel Studies” (WIS) had devised plans to create an AIS Women’s Caucus which held its first meeting at the annual conference at Kinneret College in June, with over 50 people in attendance, and sponsored by the Association, and had plans for a new post-doc in Israel Studies at the University of Illinois, supported by the Israel Institute which will be held by Liat Maggid-Alon for the academic year 2019–2020. One of the most important achievements of the meeting was that we began collecting data about the situation of women which with Gila Silverman (University of Arizona) we plan to publish in the coming year.

We are hoping that raising awareness about the gender inequity in the profession, and sharing these findings publicly, will encourage awareness and lead to change in gender equity in Israel Studies, it may have been one small

step at the University of Illinois, but we hope it will prove to be one large step for womankind.

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<sup>1</sup> Liora Halpern (History), Miriam Elman (Government), Yael Aronoff (International Relations) and Rachel S. Harris (Literature and Culture).

<sup>2</sup> [reg.co.il/ais/ais/centers.ehtml](http://reg.co.il/ais/ais/centers.ehtml). In September, 2018 the Michigan State center for Jewish Studies chaired by Yael Aronoff (Associate Professor) was renamed the “Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel” thereby making Aronoff the only tenured female faculty member to head an Israel Studies center or program.

<sup>3</sup> Women have received 13 out of 22 annual Ben Halpern Award for Best Dissertation in Israel Studies; and authored, or co-authored, 8 out of the 23 books awarded the annual Shapiro Prize for the Best Book in Israel Studies. Only one female scholar has been awarded the AIS-Israel Institute Lifetime Award, and two female scholars have been awarded the AIS-Israel Institute Young Scholar Award (all of these women are at Israeli institutions).



**Reception preceding David Bezmozgis’s talk, North Shore Congregation Israel, where PJCS affiliates and NSCI members had a chance to mingle with one another as well as with our featured speaker. Included in the picture are Advisory Council Chair, Doug Hoffman chatting with David Bezmozgis (right), Michael Shapiro, Elizabeth Klein, and Illini Hillel Director Erez Cohen (middle).**

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Many thanks to all who have donated to the program. We would not be able to have such robust offerings without your support. Thanks to Megan Wolf, who has moved on in Advancement at the university, and welcome to Paul Winterbotham, our new Advancement Officer, who has done a superb job of stepping into the role.

We heartily welcome contributions of all sizes from both past and new donors. If you are interested in giving to the program, you can call our office at 217-333-7978, or you can give by clicking on “Give Now” on the top right of our webpage or by copying [giving.illinois.edu](http://giving.illinois.edu) into your browser. You may also contact Paul Winterbotham to discuss a gift or request a visit. Paul can be reached at 217-300-5027 or [paulww@illinois.edu](mailto:paulww@illinois.edu).

—Paul Winterbotham



# In Memoriam

During the past year, the Program in Jewish Culture & Society lost two members of our extended community: Paul C. Krouse, devoted member of the Advisory Council and sponsor of the Krouse Family Visiting Scholars in Judaism and Western Culture Fund, and Ralph J. Kaplan, father of Professor Brett A. Kaplan. We would like to take this opportunity to remember the lives of those we lost and honor their commitment to Jewish cultures, communities, and causes. זיכרונו לברכה; may each of their memories be a blessing.



## Paul C. Krouse

Paul C. Krouse earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1959 and was a life member of the University of Illinois

Alumni Alliance. He and his wife, Ann Wolk Krouse, have generously supported the Department of Anthropology as well as the Program in Jewish Culture & Society.

Paul served as a Member of the University of Illinois Foundation since 1997. Expressing his loyalty to the affairs of the University in 1983, he became a member of the President's Council, the University's highest donor recognition organization. Paul would

often tell his children about his days at the University of Illinois. He was a Sammy (i.e. a member of Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity) and worked as a waiter for a sorority to earn money. He never had quite enough money to buy pizza with his friends, and that regret helped fuel his desire to work hard and help others when he could. Paul's strong belief in education was the foundation for Educational Communications, Inc.—the business he and his wife Ann started and ran for 35 years. The business honored high-achieving high school students. As the business grew, they started a scholarship fund, which awarded over \$2 million in scholarships and grants so students could continue their education.

As a proud U of I Class of '59 graduate, he strongly believed in giving back to the University where he received his education. Paul was part of a core group that supplied funds for Illini Hillel to serve more students and employ more staff. He served for many years as a dedicated member of the Program in Jewish Culture & Society's Advisory Council, actively participating in program events, offering thoughtful guidance to the program about its mission and direction, and securing vital resources that

helped the program to grow and flourish. Paul and his wife also endowed through the Ann and Paul Krouse Family Visiting Scholars in Judaism and Western Culture Fund. This fund has allowed the Program in Jewish Culture & Society to bring numerous distinguished scholars, public intellectuals, and artists to campus—including David Bezmozgis, Dagmar Herzog, Masha Gessen, Nancy K. Miller, Paul Mendes-Flohr, Shimon Attie, and James Young. These visitors have delivered lectures, presented artistic and cultural works, visited Jewish Studies classes, and engaged with community members about some of the most pressing issues in Jewish Studies. In short, the Krouse Family Visiting Scholars program has greatly enriched the curriculum, scholarship, and public engagement of the program, and it will undoubtedly continue to serve as one of our most cherished resources.

Paul's alma mater was not the only beneficiary of his generosity and sense of community. Paul always felt connected and committed to his Jewish heritage. As soon as his income grew, he generously gave to Jewish charities including JUF (Board Member), the Holocaust Education Foundation (Board Member), and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Founder).

Paul was survived by his wife of over 54 years, Ann, and his children (and in-laws) Amy (Jason Rosenthal), Beth (Mark Kaufmann), Joe (Megan Dunne) and Katie Froelich (Brian Saltzman) and grandchildren Justin, Miles, and Paris Rosenthal; Matt and Andy Kaufmann; Sadie and Charlie Krouse; and Tyler, Tucker and Jackson Froelich.

The Program in Jewish Culture & Society is honored to continue Paul's legacy of support for Jewish education and—to whatever extent possible—help ensure that his memory continues to be a blessing for generations to come. For more information about the Krouse Family Visiting Scholars in Judaism and Western Culture Fund and past events sponsored by the fund (including videos of selected lectures), please visit the Krouse Family Fund page on our Program website.

## Ralph J. Kaplan

It is with intense sadness that the program received word of the passing of Brett's father, Ralph J. Kaplan, who was born on December 4, 1941 and passed away on November 2, 2018. His father, Saul Kaplan, was Research Director at the Jewish United Fund of greater Metropolitan Chicago, and his grandfather, Rabbi Joseph Leib Kaplan, was the Rabbi at Beit Hamedrash Hagadol in Squirrel Hill, Pittsburgh. Ralph was a marketing manager at the University of Massachusetts Press for many years and enjoyed living in Northampton, Florence, and Amherst. Ralph was an avid reader and a prolific writer, and he cared very deeply about the world. He will be missed by his daughter and grandchildren. Z"l.



# Preview of Events

Our calendar of events will continue to evolve and develop long after this newsletter goes to print. Please refer to our program website, our weekly email, and our Facebook page for the latest information about upcoming events. You are also welcome to contact the PJCS/HGMS office for additional information about our activities.

**2019**

## Monday, September 9

### ***Reflections of a Former Jerusalem Correspondent* lecture**

Etgar Lefkovits, former Jerusalem correspondent and former Foreign Affairs Director to Israel's Minister for Social Equality, 5:00 pm, Illini Hillel, The Margie K. and Louis N. Cohen Center for Jewish Life, 503 East John

## Monday, September 23

### ***grandma's medicine, iraganeko zuloa***

Ethan Madarieta, performer, CWL and HGMS Ph.D. Candidate, 7:00 pm, 210 Levis Faculty Center

## Thursday, October 10

### ***First View: Dance Performance Workshop***

Omri Drumlevich, Visiting Lecturer/Choreographer, 5:00 pm–6:20 pm, Dance Studios, 905 West Nevada

## Monday, November 4

### ***Between Religion and Politics: Recent Conversion Controversies in Israel and India* workshop**

12:00, 109A English

### ***Race and Grace: Rethinking Paul and its Implications for Modern Jewish Thought and Christian Theology* lecture**

Goldberg Lecture to be given by Professor Leora Batnitzky (Princeton University), 5:30 pm, Lucy Ellis Lounge, 1080 Foreign Language Building

## Thursday–Saturday, November 7–9

### ***Reconstruction of an Ohad Naharin Masterwork Performance***

Omri Drumlevich, Visiting Lecturer/Choreographer, 7:30 pm, Colwell Playhouse, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts

## Wednesday, November 13

### ***The Secret of solidarity: Helping Jews in the Holocaust* lecture**

Rosenthal Lecture to be given by Professor Mark Roseman (Indiana University), 7:00 pm, Lucy Ellis Lounge, 1080 Foreign Language Building

## Thursday, November 14

***Anti-Semitism panel discussion***, with Mark Roseman (Indiana University) and Peter Fritzsche (History), moderated by Harriet Murav (Comparative and World Literature), 4:00 pm, 4th Floor, Levis Faculty Center

## Tuesday, December 3

### ***Israel on the Screen: Between Fauda and Shtisel***

Liat Maggid Alon, Israel Institute Visiting Scholar (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev), 7:00 pm, Anshe Emet Synagogue, 3751 North Broadway, Chicago

## Monday, December 9

### ***Exodus or Expulsion: Reconstructing the past of the Jews of Egypt in the 20th Century* workshop**

Liat Maggid Alon Israel Institute Visiting Scholar (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev), 12:00 pm, Jewish Studies Seminar Room, 109A English

## December 12

### ***"A Nice Jewish Boy who Believes in Jesus:" Fear, Fury, and the Campaign against Messianic Judaism in Britain* workshop**

Bridge Grant Visiting Scholar Gavin Schaffer (University of Birmingham, UK), 12:00 pm, 109A English

**2020**

## Monday, January 27

### ***Liberation Heroes: the Last Eyewitnesses* documentary**

Screening and discussion by Scott Gendell, member of the PJCS Advisory Council, 7:00 pm, Illini Hillel, 503 East John Street, Champaign

# Advisory Council

## February/March (Date TBD)

Lecture to be given by Professor Jennifer Grayson (Hebrew Union College/Xavier University), Time and location TBD

## Friday, March 27

### 3rd Annual HGMS Graduate Student Symposium

9:00 am–4:00 pm, 210 Levis Faculty Center

## Sunday, April 5

### Words of the Living God: Truth, Memory, and Cultural Conflict in *The Collected Plays of Chaim Potok*

Presentation by Rena Potok (Villanova University), 7:00 pm, Anshe Emet, 3751 North Broadway, Chicago

## Monday, April 6

### Greenfield/Lynch Lecture: “Cultural Migration and Fusion in *The Collected Plays of Chaim Potok*”

lecture by Rena Potok (Villanova University) with performance of selected scenes, 5:00 pm, 210 Levis Faculty Center

## Wednesday, April 22

### Talk by Kevork Mourad, artist

5 pm, Illini Center, 200 South Wacker, Chicago  
Thursday, April 23

### HGMS Armenian Genocide Commemoration

Kevork Mourad, artist. Time and location TBD

## Monday, Tuesday, May 4–5

### Jewish Caribbean Symposium

Participants to include Aviva Ben-Ur of University of Massachusetts Amherst, Sarah Phillips Casteel of Carleton University, Laura Liebman of Reed College, and Stan Mervis of Arizona State University, 210 Levis Faculty Center

## Program in Jewish Culture & Society Advisory Council Members 2019–2020

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# Last Year's Events

## 2018

### Sunday, September 2

#### **Welcome Bagels/Sandy's Bagel Brunch**

Gathering for those interested in Jewish Studies  
with Illini Hillel

### Monday, September 17

#### ***Pulp Memory? The Holocaust in Hungarian Mass-Market Socialist Literature, 1956-1970***

Rick Esbenshade, Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center  
HGMS faculty seminar

### Monday, October 1

#### ***Where is the Nuclear Sovereign?***

Ned O'Gorman, Communication  
HGMS faculty seminar

### Monday, October 8

#### **Ruby Namdar, author of *The Ruined House***

21st Century Jewish Writing and the World  
Israel Studies Project (Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago)

### Wednesday, October 10

#### ***Rivals, a Love Story: Israel and American Jewry***

Ruby Namdar, author  
Talk at the University of Illinois at Chicago Institute for Humanities

### Wednesday, October 10

#### ***How we Give to the Needy: Facing and Losing Face***

Steven G. Sager, Beth el Synagogue, Durham, NC

### Sunday, October 14

#### **Paula Vogel's *Indecent***

Theatrical performance at Victory Gardens Theater and post-theater discussion

### Monday, October 15

#### **Dana Rabin (History) book presentation, *Britain and its Internal Others, 1750-1800***

### Monday, October 22 and Tuesday, October 23 (North Shore Congregation Israel)

#### ***The Betrayers and Other Stories: Writing for the Page and the Screen***

David Bezmozgis, author and screenwriter  
21st Century Jewish Writing and the World  
Krouse Family Visiting Scholars in Judaism and Western Culture Fund

### Thursday, October 25

#### ***Contemporary German-Jewish Relations, Anti-Semitism and Populism in Europe, and Other Issues Affecting Europe and the Transatlantic Relationship***

Stefan Schlüter, diplomat

### Monday, October 29

#### ***Ghost Writer* new book reading and discussion**

Beth Benedix, DePauw University

### Monday, November 5

#### ***Anti-Semitism and Jewish Body Politics: An Analysis of Leon Pinsker's Auto-Emancipation workshop***

#### ***Jewish Materialism: Matter and Spirit in Modern Jewish History* lecture**

Elli Stern, Yale University  
Vivian Marcus Memorial Lecture Fund

### Thursday, November 8

#### **One Hundred Years of the Kiev Kulter-Lige: Ukranian and Jewish Cultural Formation**

Symposium organized by Harriet Murav and Gennady Estraiikh, Skirball (NYU)

The Dmytro Shtohryn Endowment in Ukrainian Studies, REEEC, and Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures

### Thursday, November 8

#### **Reflections on Kristallnacht**

with Illini Hillel and HGMS

### Monday, November 12

#### **Mad Creative Community Art Project**

Susan Parenti, Artist  
HGMS event

### Tuesday, December 3

#### ***Historical Diversity Predicts Contemporary Tolerance: The Cultural Legacy of the Ottoman Empire in Turkey***

Avital Livny, Political Science  
HGMS faculty seminar

### Monday, December 10

#### **Pnina Motzafi-Haller (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev) book presentation, *Concrete Boxes: Mizrahi Women on Israel's Periphery***

## 2019

### Monday, January 28

#### ***Israelite Technology and Trade in the Iron Age* workshop**

Brett Kaufman, Classics  
PJCS and HGMS

## Monday, February 4

### ***New Italy and the Jews: From Massimo D’Azeglio to Primo Levi* book workshop**

Emanuel Rota (Department of French and Italian) and Jonathan Druker (Illinois State University), editors and contributors  
PJCS and HGMS

## Monday, February 18

### ***Seeing is Disbelieving: The Contested Visibility of 9/11 in France***

Jean-Philippe Mathy, Department of French and Italian  
HGMS Faculty Seminar

## Monday, February 25

### ***The Art of Leaving* reading, discussion, and Q&A**

Ayelet Tsabari, author of *The Art of Leaving*  
21st Century Jewish Writing and the World

## Monday, February 27

### **Talk at The Standard Club (Chicago)**

Ayelet Tsabari, author  
Israel Studies Project (Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago)

## Friday, March 1

### **2nd Annual HGMS University of Illinois Graduate Student Conference**

## Monday, March 4

### ***Life in the Shtetl* workshop *The Importance of Jewish History: an Impassioned Plea* lecture**

David Myers, University of California, Los Angeles

## Sunday, March 10–Tuesday, March 12

### **Women in Israel Studies Taskforce conference**

Israel Studies Project (Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago)

## Friday, March 29

### **21st Century Jewish Writing and the World Roundtable symposium**

featuring Sarah Phillips Casteel, Carleton University, Dean Franco, Wake Forest University, Dalia Kandiyoti, College of Staten Island, City University of New York, and Ben Schreier, Pennsylvania State University

## Sunday, March 31

### **Sandy’s Bagel Brunch**

Gathering for those interested in Jewish Studies  
with Illini Hillel

## Monday, April 1

### ***Thinking About the Politics of Jewish Purpose* workshop**

### ***What are Jews For? The History of the Idea of Jewish Chosenness* lecture**

Adam Sutcliffe, King’s College, London  
Oscar and Rose A. Einhorn Fund

## Monday, April 8

### ***Nicole Krauss, A Literary Conversation* talk at Northwestern University**

Nicole Krauss, author of *Forest Dark*  
Greenfield/Lynch Lecture Series, MillerComm, Crown Center for Jewish and Israel Studies

## Tuesday, April 9

### **A Literary Conversation workshop and lecture**

### **Workshop/Discussion of Heshcel’s *Man is Not Alone* and Krauss’s *Forest Dark***

### **An Evening with Nicole Krauss**

Nicole Krauss, author of *Forest Dark*  
21st Century Jewish Writing and the World  
MillerComm and Greenfield Lynch Lecture Series Funds

## Tuesday, April 16

### ***The Practice of Citizenship***

Derrick R. Spires, English  
HGMS faculty seminar

## Monday, April 29

### **Rachel S. Harris (Comparative and World Literature), editor, book presentation: *Teaching the Arab-Israeli Conflict***

with Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago

## Tuesday, April 30

### ***Historians in Action: How and Why We Reclaim an Armenian Feminist Past* lecture**

Melissa Bilal, American University of Armenia  
MillerComm Lecture Series Fund  
HGMS

## Wednesday, May 1

### **An Evening Commemorating Primo Levi**

Yom Ha’Shoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day)  
PJCS and HGMS