April 4, 2021

Prof. Yariv Tsfati

Department of Communication

University of Haifa

Dear Prof. Tsfati and Search Committee Members,

I am delighted to submit my candidacy for the position of Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication at The University of Haifa. I am currently a MINDSS post-doctoral fellow at the department, where I work with Dr. Roei Davidson and Dr. Eran Tamir (of Tel Aviv University), on a research project examining the issue of educational interventions by the high-tech sector. Within this project I am leading the examination of public discourse produced by high-tech companies regarding their educational activities, aiming at identifying the underlying norms and values this discourse draws from, and the boundary work conducted through this discursive activity.

My PhD research, conducted under the supervision of Prof. Limor Shifman and Prof. Zohar Kampf at the Department of Communication and Journalism at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and approved December 2020, explores the ways in which ironic humor operates on social media, and the roles it fulfills social boundary work. I examine the design of irony on social media, its marking, and the discursive sanctioning that follows failed interpretations of irony, all in the context of collective identity construction. Two of its chapters were published in *Information, Communication & Society* (co-authored with Zohar Kampf and Limor Shifman) and in *New Media & Society*, and were awarded top paper and top student paper awards by the Israel Communication Association and top student paper award by the International Communication Association’s popular communication division.

My research project, “Performative Membership Categorization Through Limited Access to Contextual Knowledge”, was recently awarded a highly competitive ISF social sciences post-doctoral grant. This project will expand my engagement with the role of polysemy and misinterpretation in social boundary work, and to re-engage with the issue of minority group communication, which was a central issue in my early work. This research aims at developing both the theorization of the constructive role of discursive misinterpretation, and a methodological approach to the analysis of the “un-said” within communication research.

Teaching constitutes a central part of my scholarship. I have been deeply invested in the teaching positions I held in the las decade, as I see great importance both in making higher education more accessible to a variety of populations, and in nurturing independent and critical thought among students. I served as a teaching assistant in a variety of courses at the Department of Communication in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, as well as at the School of Communication in Netanya Academic College. I repeatedly received and very high teaching evaluation scores, as well as positive feedback from my students, mostly on the inclusive environment in class, my high accessibility, and the relevance of class discussions to students’ lived experiences and critical media consumption.

Lastly, I feel deeply committed to my academic community. In addition to reviewing for leading journals and taking active part in conference organizing committees, I also initiated several peer group activities, such as interdisciplinary study groups and a departmental peer-review platform for research students to consult and support each other’s work. I found these initiatives productive, not only at the immediate professional level, but also in their contribution to the general collegial environment in the department.

Thank you for considering my application for this position, I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Noam Gal

NOAM GAL

CURRICULUM VITAE .

**CONTACT INFO**

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**ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS**

2020-2021 Haifa University

The Department of Communication

MINDSS post-doctoral fellow

Hosts: Dr. Roei Davidson & Dr. Eran Tamir

**EDUCATION**

2020 The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

PhD in Communication and Journalism

*Ironic humor and collective identity in digital participatory spheres*

Supervisors: Prof. Limor Shifman & Prof. Zohar Kampf

2013 The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

MA in Communication and Journalism - magna cum laude

*Internet memes and the construction of collective identity: The case of ‘It Gets Better’*

2010 The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

BA (hons) in Hebrew Literature and Communication and Journalism

**PUBLICATIONS**

**Gal, N.**, Kampf, Z., & Shifman, L. (Forthcoming) [SRSLY?? A typology of online ironic markers](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1369118X.2020.1814380). *Information, Communication & Society*.

[IF 2019 = 4.559; R 2019 = Communication: 7/92 (Q1); Citations: 1]

**Gal, N.** (2019). [Ironic humor on social media as participatory boundary work](https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444818805719). *New Media & Society, 21*(3), 729-749.

[IF 2019 = 4.577; R 2019 = Communication: 6/92 (Q1); Citations: 22]

John, N. A. & **Gal, N.** (2018). [‘He’s got his own sea’: Political Facebook unfriending in the personal public sphere](http://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/8673/2410). *International Journal of Communication, 12*, 2971-2988.

[IF 2019 = 1.069; R 2018 = Communication: 61/88 (Q1); Citations: 18]

**Gal, N.** (2018). [Internet memes](http://sk.sagepub.com/reference/the-sage-encyclopedia-of-the-internet-3v/i5817.xml). In: B. Warf (Ed.), *SAGE Encyclopedia of the Internet*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications. pp. 528-530.

[Invited contribution; Citations: 3]

**Gal, N.**, Shifman, L. & Kampf, Z. (2016). ['It Gets Better': Internet memes and the construction of collective identity](http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1461444814568784). *New Media & Society, 18*(8), 1698-1714.

[IF 2016 = 4.180; R 2019 = Communication: 1/79 (Q1); Citations: 234]

**Gal, N.** (2011). [The use of interpersonal and internal discussion tools in narratives of lesbian sexual identity formation](http://havana.mb-tc.info/academic-contest/2011/Noam-Gal-Mifgash.pdf). *Mifgash*, 33, 167-192. (Hebrew)

**UNDER REVIEW**

**Gal, N.** “You are the irony, not your tweet”: Sanctioning of ironic failures on social media.

**Gal, N.** Identity in Crisis: The dialectics of conflict and identity work in social-change activity.

**DISTINCTIONS & AWARDS**

2021 Finalist for top student paper award

Popular Communication division, The International Communication Association (ICA)

2019 Top student paper award

Israel Communication Association Conference

2019 Top paper award

Israel Communication Association Conference

2017 Top student paper award

Popular Communication division, The International Communication Association (ICA)

2015 Top student paper award

LGBTQ division, The International Communication Association (ICA)

2015 Teaching distinction

2013 The Faculty of Social Sciences, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2014 Top three paper award

(with Limor Shifman & Zohar Kampf)

Popular Communication division, The International Communication Association (ICA)

**GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS**

2021-2022 Social Sciences Post-Doctoral Fellowship

Israel Science Foundation

2020-2021 MINDSS Post-Doctoral Fellowship

The Department of Communication, The Faculty of Social Sciences, Haifa University

2016-2018, Research grant

2019-2020 The Smart Family Institute for Communications, The Department of Communication and Journalism, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2018-2019 The Brenda Danet Scholarship

The Smart Family Institute for Communications, The Department of Communication and Journalism, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2017 Travel grant

The Department of Communication and Journalism, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2017 Travel grant

Popular Communication Division, International Communication Association (ICA)

2016-2020 The President’s Scholarship for Outstanding PhD Students

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2016 Language editing grant

The Faculty of Social Sciences, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2016 Travel grant

The Authority for Research Students, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2014, 2016 Scholarship for outstanding doctoral students

The Department of Communication and Journalism, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2015-2017 The Hoffman Leadership and Responsibility Fellowship

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2014, 2015 Travel grant

The Department of Communication and Journalism and The Faculty of Social Sciences, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2012, 2015 Travel grant

The Lafer Centre for Women and Gender Studies, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2012 The Lafer Centre for Women and Gender Studies Fellowship

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

**CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

“The irony is you, not your tweet”: Sanctioning of ironic failures on social media. Paper scheduled to be presented at the *International Communication Association Conference*. Virtual conference, May 2021.

Are you serious?? A medium adapted typology of ironic markers online. Paper presented at the *Israeli Communication Association Conference*. Hadassah Academic College, Israel, April2019. [Top Paper; Top Student Paper]

Ironic humor in the context-collapsed web as a social segregation tool. Paper presented at the *International Pragmatics Research Association Conference*. Belfast, July 2017.

‘I make the decisions here’: Political Facebook unfriending in the personal public sphere (with Nicholas John). Paper presented at the *International Communication Association Conference*. San Diego, May 2017.

The intellect-physicality divide: Ironic humor as a social segregation tool. Paper presented at the *International Communication Association Conference*. San Diego, May 2017.[Top Student Paper]

Facebook unfriending and the personal public sphere (with Nicholas John). Paper presented at the *Israeli Communication Association Conference*. Sapir Academic College, Israel, April2017.

“One people”? Ironic humor and collective identity in Israeli social network sites. Paper presented at the *Israeli Communication Association Conference*. Sapir Academic College, Israel, April2017.

’I can’t see you any more’: A phenomenology of political Facebook unfriending (with Nicholas John). Paper presented at the *Association of Internet Research*. Berlin, October 2016.

'THIS IS NOT REAL, NO WAY!': The (failed?) ironic utterance as a social segregation tool. Paper presented at the *International Communication Association Conference*. Japan, June2016.

Identity in crisis: The dialectics of social identity and conflict in LGBT social-change activity. Paper presented at the *International Communication Association Conference*. Puerto Rico, May2015. [Top Student Paper]

The positioning of LGBT/queer research in Israeli sociology. Round-table held at the *Israeli Sociology Society Conference*. Kinneret Academic College, Israel, February 2015.

'It Gets Better': Internet memes and the construction of collective identity *(*with Limor Shifman and Zohar Kampf). Paper presented at the *International Communication Association Conference*. Seattle, May2014. [Top Three Paper]

Memetic practices in the participatory cyber space and collective identity construction: The case of 'It Gets Better'. Paper presented at the *Israeli Communication Association Conference*. Netanya Academic College, Israel, April2014.

Internet memes and the construction of collective identity: The case of 'It Gets Better'. Paper presented at *Metaksherim: Conference for communication graduate students.* Haifa University, Israel, December 2012.

(Un)queering the alternative public sphere. Paper presented at *Queering Paradigms*, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, July 2012.

Subversion vs. compliance in LGBT social change activity. Paper presented at *Queering Paradigms*, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, July 2012.

'How could I have not known about myself... Nobody told me!': Interpersonal and internal discussion in processes of lesbian identity formation. Paper presented at *Between Sexual Orientation and Professional Bias,* The Bob Shapell School of Social Work, Tel-Aviv University, Israel, October 2011.

'Let's not call it perverse': Power relations and negotiation over social order in LGBT social change activity. Paper presented at *Mind the Gap,* Lafer Center for Women and Gender studies, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, May 2011.

**INVITED TALKS**

Crime & Punishment: Interpretive failures of irony on social media and the sanctions they endure. The departmental seminar of the Department of Communication, Haifa University, November 2020.

Ironic humor on social network sites: The case of ‘The Lions of the Shadow’. The departmental seminar of the *School of Communication at the College of Management*. Israel, December 2016.

‘Devoid of humor but dedicated to mockery’: Gender, ethnicity, and the intellect-physicality divide in Israeli political irony. The jubilee conference of the Department of Communication and Journalism, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Israel, May 2016.

The use of an interpersonal and internal discussion tool on narratives of lesbian sexual identity formation. *'Mifgash' conference for the launch of issue 33,* Netanya Academic College, Israel, December 2011.

**TEACHING & RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

**Teaching assistant**

Frontal teaching (classes of 10-60 students), personal academic guidance, essay and exam grading

2011-2018 Department of Communication and Journalism, The Hebrew University

Courses: Language and communication (BA); Reading and writing supervision (BA, independent course); Research methods in communication (BA); Televised humor in Israel (BA – not frontal); Gender and communication (BA & MA); New media and the information age (MA); Advanced methods in cultural, textual and visual research (MA)

2014 School of Communication, Netanya Academic College

Courses: Digital culture (BA); Qualitative research methods (BA)

**Research assistant**

Material collection, coding procedure, in-depth interviews

2011-2016 Department of Communication and Journalism, The Hebrew University

**ACADEMIC ACTIVITY & SERVICE**

**Journal review**

* *New Media* & *Society*
* *Journal of Pragmatics*
* *Journal of Homosexuality*
* *Women & Language*
* *Feminist Media Studies*
* *European Journal of Humour Research*
* *Constructive Pragmatics*

**Conference review**

* *International Communication Association (ICA)*, divisions of popular communication, LGBT studies, feminist scholarship, and annual theme (“intervention”).
* *Metaksherim: The annual conference for communication graduate students,* Haifa University.
* *Mind the Gap: Academy and activism within the queer community*. Lafer Center for Women and Gender studies, The Hebrew University, Israel.

**Conference organizing committee**

2015-2016 *Metaksherim: The annual conference for communication graduate students.* Haifa University, Israel.

2012 *Mind the Gap: Academy and activism within the queer community*. Lafer Center for Women and Gender studies, The Hebrew University, Israel.

2008-2010 *Between Sexual Orientation and Professional Bias*. The Bob Shapell School of Social Work, Tel-Aviv University, Israel. [Founding organizing committee]

**Other**

2013 Workshop instructor, *Academic empowerment workshop for underprivileged graduate-school candidates.* Dean of Students’ Office, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel.

2011-2013 Founding member, *Scholar peer group for research students of queer studies*. Lafer Center for Women and Gender studies, The Hebrew University, Israel.

2006-2010 Member of founding editorial team, *Beintaim; Journal of literature*. School of Literatures, The Hebrew University, Israel.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

*The Jerusalem Open House for Pride and Tolerance*

Youth counselor, clinic manager, board member and chairperson

*Hoshen: Education and social change*

Lecturer, volunteers' trainer, volunteer manager, research coordinator

*B’Tselem: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories*

Member of checkpoint documentation team

Updated April 2021

NOAM GAL

SCIENTIFIC BIOGRAPHY .

My research explores the interrelations between discourse and identity. I am especially interested in the ways personal, collective and public identities shape discourse, and how discourse shapes these identities. Spanning coming-out narratives, social change activism, social media irony and educational interventions, my work examines the dialectics between discourse and identity.

My early work focused on gender and queer studies. In a paper based on one of my BA seminars (Gal, 2011), I analyze in-depth interviews I conducted with 13 lesbian women, and explore the role of discourse - and the perceived implications of its absence - in processes of personal identity construction. In this paper I describe the recurrent discussion between two inner voices: that of the young, frightened, closeted woman, and that of the experienced, accepting “out” woman, conducting together an intra-personal mentoring process, which serves as the alternative to the absent inter-personal discourse. In another study (under review), I analyze 10 observations conducted in social change activities of an LGBT education organization, and examine the role of identity categories both as the source of legitimation and as the product of these activities. In my analysis I show how the repeated downplay of marginalized aspects of gender and sexual identities, and the foregrounding of other more hegemonic ones, serve in the attempt to gain acceptance into mainstream society.

In my MA thesis research, I explored the use of Internet memes in the construction of collective identity and the design of social boundaries. I conducted a mixed-methods analysis of 200 YouTube videos of an LGBT campaign, including a coding procedure and qualitative critical discourse analysis of selected texts. My analysis illustrates how practices of imitation and variation of memetic patterns act as performative tools in the collective design of the social order. The article based on this research, co-authored with my supervisors (Gal, Shifman & Kampf, 2016), was awarded Top Paper by the International Communication Association’s Popular Communication Division, and was cited over 230 times.

My doctoral research, further exploring the dialectics between online discourse and identity, focused on ironic humor and collective identity on social media. The first chapter, published as a soul-authored article (Gal, 2019), explores the intersection between content, keying and medium through the case study of left-wing Facebook humor targeting a hawkish group. In my analysis I shed light on the use of existing identity categories (gender and ethnicity) as the basis of online ironic humor, and the use of ironic humor as a tool in the consolidation of a new social divide I define as the intellect-physicality divide. In this paper I also introduce the concepts of divisive vs. cohesive polysemy as central discursive devices in processes of social collectivization and segregation online. The second chapter, published as a co-authored article with my supervisors (Gal, Kampf & Shifman, 2020), examines ironic humor on five social media platforms and offers a typology of five ironic markers characteristic to social-media irony. We also point at the broad social function of ironic markers - and their absence - as semi-permeable barriers distinguishing the (imagined) audience of the ironic utterance from those excluded from the discourse through their inability to decode it. The third paper based on my dissertation (Gal, under review) addresses the phenomenon of discursive sanctioning of interpretive failures of irony on social media. It examines the mechanisms through which sanctioning responses to interpretive failures facilitate boundary work. I show how these responses execute acts of social inclusion or exclusion, and introduce the concept of the *un-addressee*, the failed interpreter who takes part both in the construction of the message and in the delineation of group boundaries.

In my current post-doctoral research project, as part of a larger project lead by Dr. Roei Davidson and Dr. Eran Tamir, we examine the phenomenon of interventions of high-tech companies in education. Within this project, I am leading the section dealing with the discourse produced by these companies in order to communicate their social interventions to the general public. Based on qualitative discourse analysis on corporate websites, CSR reports and social media platforms, we aim at identifying the underlying norms and values this discourse draws from, and the boundary work conducted (or rather - being undone) through this discursive activity. At this stage we are focusing our analysis on six global high-tech companies. In the future we will consider two additional veins of inquiry: a cooperative analysis, including locally-centered companies, examining the involvement of national-related boundary work and values, and an exploration of the educational interventions discourse revolving the COVID-19 crisis.

In my second post-doctoral project, recently awarded the highly competitive ISF social sciences’ post-doctoral grant, I aim at deepening my exploration of linguistically driven boundary work, by examining the use of limited access to contextual knowledge as semi-permeable barriers in social segregation and collectivization processes. In this project I seek to examine how social media users harness gaps in contextual knowledge to engage in performative social boundary work, and achieve social segregation and/or collectivization in digital spheres. Guided by critical discourse analysis approach, and combining the principles of Membership Categorization Analysis with performativity literature, I aim at exploring the use of the “un-said” in social boundary work. As my starting point, I intend to return to two discursive fields I have previously engaged with: online irony and internal LGBT discourse. While my previous work on these discourses mostly focused on the said, I would now like to attend to the un-said, and develop a novel approach to its analysis. I would also like to investigate the role of lexical choices in collectivization of marginalized communities. Building on the concepts of *cohesive/divisive polysemy*, as well as the *un-addressee*, I aim at deepening our understanding of the role of mis-interpretation in social boundary and identity work. I aim at offering in this study a three-fold contribution: empirically, it will shed light on online social categorization practices based on gaps in access to contextual knowledge; methodologically, the study will develop an innovative systematic analytical procedure to facilitate textual analyses of the un-said, rather than the said, in communication research; and theoretically, it will contribute to Membership Categorization Analysis theory, by incorporating categorization processes based on implicit cues, and developing the novel notion of *performative membership categorization analysis*.

NOAM GAL

PROPOSED COURSES .

In addition to introductory course dealing with mass communication, new media, culture, language, research methods and academic writing, I would be happy to offer courses revolving around my realms of expertise, in particular social media, humor, and various aspects of critical discourse analysis. Three examples for such courses are detailed below.

Online humor as identity work (BA seminar)

Social media constitute a central arena for identity work in contemporary society. Various genres of humor take part in these processes. This course examines the role of online humor in processes of collective identity construction. It examines the dialectics between social identity and humorous communication, and the significance of the participatory nature of social-media communication within this dialectics. Students will get acquainted with literature dealing with social media, with various humorous genres (nonsense, satire, parody, irony, memes), and with identity work. Students will present examples of relevant humorous texts throughout the course, and identify aspects of identity work emerging from them, and right a case-study paper referring to these issues, focusing a specific identity category of their choice and the online humor revolving it.

Minority discourse on social media: Gender, ethnicity & nationality (BA seminar)

Social media facilitate constant segregation and collectivization of social groups. It enables the assemblage of these groups in distinct spaces, and at the same time create multiple opportunities for inter-group interaction. This context collapsed arena leads to a complex social dynamics within minority groups, between such groups, and between them and the general hegemonic society. This course will explore this dynamics based on literature regarding social media and minority-groups’ media usage. The course will focus 3 central divides with emphasis on the Israeli context: gender, ethnicity and nationality. Students will write a paper analysing a case of inter- or intra-group social media discourse related to one social gap of their choice.

Misunderstandings, meaning-multiplicity & the un-said in discourse (MA seminar)

Misunderstandings are predominantly perceived as undesired lapses in communication, but they also incorporate significant productive potential to promote social collectivization and segregation, and to expose transparent social norms. Based on literature dealing with social media, meaning multiplicity and misunderstandings, the course will explore the conditions in which this discursive dynamics comes into being, and its social implications. Along the course students will be expected to present one instance of such interaction and provide a brief analysis based on the literature included in the syllabus. Students will write a paper analyzing an instance of an interpretive failure, and discuss potential productive and counter-productive social implications of the chosen misinterpretation.