A Note from the Director

In the aftermath of the Charlottesville, Virginia “Unite the Right” rally, where a gathering of White Supremacists (primarily neo-Nazis and Ku Klux Klanners) shouted anti-Semitic and racist slogans and slurs—receiving little condemnation from the President of the United States—I have done a good deal of thinking about the importance of the Center for Jewish Studies at Eastern Michigan University. As I pondered the anger and ignorance of the marchers, as I considered the conspiracy myths about Jews fueling their fear and hatred, I wondered if a different sort of education, a better education than the one they received, might have made a difference. In our Mission Statement we claim, "EMU’s Center for Jewish Studies provides a gathering place for EMU’s numerous ethnic communities to learn more about Jews and Judaism, a space to build bridges, to open and engage in discourse, to create new understandings between Jews and the many other groups that comprise the diverse culture of southeast Michigan." Right now, I can think of no more important work. EMU students are white, black, Latino/a, Native American, Middle Eastern, Asian. They include—but are no means limited to—Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, Mormons, and Jews. They come from across a very wide economic spectrum. These students take Jewish Studies classes, go to Jewish Studies lectures, participate in Jewish Studies events. They are the recipients of the community-based funding that provides for Jewish Studies scholarships and programming. For our students, the Center for Jewish Studies can be—and often is—life-changing, life-affirming. I am very proud of what we have accomplished—making our entire campus, even the entirety of Southeast Michigan, more open to, more accepting of, Jewish life and culture—and determined that we continue on the path we have set for ourselves. I am also deeply grateful for the support of our community friends who contribute to EMU Jewish Studies in so many ways.

Highlights

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Jewish Studies Endowments

Two years ago, to help insure the success of EMU’s Center for Jewish Studies, Art and Mary Schuman established the Martin Shichtman Endowment, named for the founding director of the program. Our hope is to grow this endowment so it can provide the sort of significant assistance that will allow for the program’s permanent vitality.

Endowed by Lisa and Jeffrey Bernstein, the Lerner Family Scholarship in Jewish Studies is named in memory of Dr. Bernstein’s grandparents, Yetta and Sol Lerner, and his mother, Eileen Lerner Zirin. The 2016-2017 award was presented to Sara Shearer, for her Undergraduate Symposium project, “Examining the Schlemiel: Gimpel and More.” The EMU Center for Jewish Studies congratulates Ms. Shearer for her outstanding work.

Please consider supporting these endowments. As they increase through additional contributions, they offer the foundation on which the EMU Center for Jewish Studies will build its future.

Jewish Life and Language in Southeast Michigan

Initiated in the Fall semester of 2015, Jewish Life and Language in Southeast Michigan (JLLSM) is a cooperative research project between the Center for Jewish Studies and the Linguistics program at Eastern Michigan University. Interested in documenting life and language in the Jewish community of Southeast Michigan, capturing people’s experience in their own words, JLLSM has been gathering information about what it’s like to be a Jewish person in Southeast Michigan. This is a study that brings together faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, and members of the community. This year, JLLSM faculty directors Eric Acton and Veronica Grondona, along with graduate students Kelsey DeGuise, Beau-Kevin Morgan, Alla Shvetsova, and Daniele Benson, have been invited to present their groundbreaking research at the 46th Annual “New Ways of Analyzing Variation” (or “NWAV,” as its commonly known) Conference in Madison, Wisconsin. This is the flagship conference for sociolinguistics in North America.
Becoming American: The Jewish Experience

Professors Bernstein and Shichtman (the “Frick and Frack” of EMU Jewish Studies) will once again accompany a group of community members on a journey similar to their much-beloved EMU travel-class, “Becoming Jewish in America.” Those who partake in this version of the experience, however, will stay in quality hotels, eat at nice restaurants, and move about New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC, in a motor coach. The trip commences May 3-9, 2018, but reservations must be made by December 31, 2017.
For more information, please contact either Jeff Bernstein (734-487-6970, jbernstei@emich.edu) or Marty Shichtman (734-487-0978, jewish.studies@emich.edu). This should be a blast. Please join us!!!

Jewish Studies at EMU's Undergraduate Symposium

Eastern Michigan University’s Undergraduate Symposium displays the best undergraduate work for the academic year. This year, eight students from four different classes presented papers on Jewish Studies topics, yet another powerful example of how far the Center for Jewish Studies has come in such a very short time. Here are the students and their projects:

Matthew Benkarski, “Intersectionality of Jewish Women in Ruth Kluger’s Still Alive and Anzia Yezierska’s Bread Givers”

Emily “Rory” Franchy, “American Stereotypes of Jewish Women: Modern Antisemisogyny and its Effect on Jewish Culture”

Krystin Frane, “The Natural World in Gertrud Kolmar’s A Jewish Mother from Berlin”

Arica Frisbey, “Dante’s Inferno in Liana Millu’s Smoke Over Birkenau”

Ashley Horn, “Silence as a Means of Survival in Fascist Italy: Elsa Morante’s History: A Novel”

Andrea Nicholson, Gendered Memory in Liana Millu’s Smoke Over Birkenau and Primo Levi’s Survival in Auschwitz”

Sara Shearer, “Examining the Schlemiel: Gimpel and More”

Katelyn Webster, “Musicology During the Third Reich”
During the 2016-2017 academic year, we offered two new study-abroad classes, “World War II and the Holocaust in Poland” and “The Question of Convivencia: Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain” as well as the domestic-travel class, “Becoming Jewish in America.” Professors Elisabeth Daumer and Carla Damiano team-taught a new, on-campus class, “International Jewish Women’s Writing,” and our World Languages department initiated a slate of dual-enrollment classes in Modern Hebrew at Temple Adat Shalom in Farmington Hills.

For the coming school year we have scheduled the study-abroad class, “History of Nazi Germany: Munich-Nuremberg-Berlin,” to be taught by award-winning history professor, Jesse Kauffman. “Jewish Identity and American Theater,” which travels to New York City, will be taught by professors Pirooz Aghssa and Marty Shichtman. Students taking these travel classes will be supported, in part, by funding from community member Michael Levine. We expect to continue with our Modern Hebrew classes at Adat Shalom and are investigating other venues throughout the state.

EMU Jewish Studies Classes

Emily “Rory” Franchy Graduates With a Minor in Jewish Studies

The EMU minor in Jewish Studies came into being during the Winter semester of 2012. From the beginning, we knew this minor would attract a small, very select group of students. This year, Emily “Rory” Franchy graduated cum laude, with a major in Communication and Theater Arts and a minor in Jewish Studies. While at EMU, Ms. Franchy worked as undergraduate assistant for the Center for Jewish Studies. In 2017-2018, she will be attending graduate school at Indiana University, where she is a recipient of the Robert A. and Sandra S. Borns Fellowship in Jewish Studies. She will be teaching “Introduction to Religion.”

World War II and the Holocaust in Poland, Summer 2017

World War II and the Holocaust in Poland, Summer 2017
Community Involvement

During the past year, EMU Jewish Studies has partnered with the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, the Ann Arbor Jewish Community Center, the Ann Arbor Jewish Book Festival, the Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus, the Academic Engagement Network, the Natan Foundation, and the Schusterman Institute for Israel Studies on numerous events.

Center for Jewish Studies
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Make a Difference!

Donate to EMU Jewish Studies

Your support is essential to the vitality of EMU’s Jewish Studies Program and to the support of Jewish life on our campus. As we offer more new and innovative classes for our students, as our faculty engages in important research, as we continue to provide the entire Southeast Michigan community with an exciting resource for Jewish culture, we are increasingly dependent on you help.

Donations can be made using the following link: www.emich.edu/foundation/give

1. Click “I would like to apply my gift to a specific fund”
2. Under the category, “Search” please type Jewish Studies
3. Select either:
   01793 - Jewish Studies Expendable Development Fund
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   02249 - Martin Shichtman Endowment for Jewish Studies

Your contributions have built this program. Your contributions guide it forward!
Monday, September 18, 2017—7:30 PM—EMU Student Center Auditorium

Dr. David Hirsh, **Contemporary Left Antisemitism**

British sociologist Dr. David Hirsh (Senior Lecturer, Goldsmiths, University of London), author of *Law Against Genocide: Cosmopolitan Trials*, winner of the Philip Abrams Prize for the best first book in sociology from the British Sociological Association, will talk about and sign copies of his new book, *Contemporary Left Antisemitism*. Hirsh notes that today’s anti-Semitism is often difficult to recognize because it does not necessarily come dressed in a Nazi uniform. He looks at the kind of anti-Semitism which is tolerated or goes unacknowledged in apparently democratic spaces: trade unions, churches, left-wing and liberal politics, social gatherings, university classes, and intellectual journals. This lecture is supported in part by grants from the Academic Engagement Network and the Natan Foundation.

Monday, October 23, 2017—7:30 PM—EMU Student Center Auditorium

Dr. Lawrence Baron, “Hollywood's First Wave of ‘Holocaust’ Films: From Frank Sinatra to Anne Frank”

Dr. Lawrence Baron, Nasatir Chair in Modern Jewish History and Emeritus Professor, San Diego State University, notes that although most people assume Hollywood avoided the subject of the Holocaust until the release of *The Diary of Anne Frank* in 1959, feature films dealing with the subject started to appear immediately after the end of World War Two. This lecture traces how Hollywood depicted the Shoah in films produced between 1945 and 1959. Lawrence Baron is author of: *Projecting the Holocaust into the Present: The Changing Focus of Contemporary Holocaust Cinema* and *The Modern Jewish Experiences in World Cinema*.

Wednesday, November 15, 2017—7:30 PM—EMU Student Center Auditorium

Rabbi, Capers C. Funnye, Jr., “The History of Black Jews in America”

America’s most influential Black rabbi, Capers C. Funkye, Jr., is spiritual leader of Beth Shalom B’nai Zaken Ethiopian Hebrew Congregation, Chicago. He also serves as Chief Rabbi of the International Israelite Board of Rabbis, which works with congregations in the United States, the Caribbean, South Africa, Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana, and Uganda.

In his capacity as Chief Rabbi, Funkye endeavors to bring diverse communities into the Jewish fold, through Halakah, the Jewish code of law. This work is most apparent with the Lemba community of South Africa, and the Ibo communities in the south and southeastern regions of Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, and Uganda. Rabbi Funkye’s presentation is part of the EMU Center for Jewish Studies “Jewish Diversity” initiative, and is supported in part with a Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor Impact Grant. It is co-sponsored by EMU Campus Life, Hillel at EMU, and The Ann Arbor Jewish and Arts Festival.

All lectures are free and open to the public. For more info, please contact: jewish.studies@emich.edu