

2014

Summer Study Group Guide

Chairs: Pat Knapp, Marcia London, Penny Elias

STUDY GROUP CALENDAR

JUNE

9 Monday	Joyce Reider	The Minaret (Sudan) Leila Aboulela
11 Wednesday	Bilha Ron	Isaac Bashevis Singer
13 Friday	Terryl Lawrence	Japanese Art
16 Monday	Joyce Reider	The Yacoubian Building (Egypt) Alaa Al Aswany
16 Monday (7PM)	Robert Watson	1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
17 Tuesday	Carole Steinberg	Let's Talk About It
18 Wednesday	Freya Homer	Gender Roles in Japan
19 Thursday	Rabbi Eli Kavon	The Jewish Confrontation with Modernity
23 Monday	Joyce Reider	Our Lady of Alice Bhatti (Pakistan) Mohammed Hanif
24 Tuesday	Myrna Goldberger	Swindler's List
25 Wednesday	Dr. Robert Rabil	Arab World in Crisis
26 Thursday	Helen Kurzban	Bintel Briefs
30 Monday	Joyce Reider	Second Person Singular (Pakistan/Israel) Sayed Kashura

JULY

8 Tuesday	Barbara Klein	Hedy Lamarr
10 Thursday	Helen Kurzban	Bintel Briefs
16 Wednesday	Freya Homer	Madam Butterfly
17 Thursday	Rabbi Eli Kavon	The Jewish Confrontation with Modernity
18 Friday	Terryl Lawrence	American Impressionism
21 Monday	Giuseppe Albanese	Joy of Opera
22 Tuesday	Barbara Klein	Audrey Hepburn
29 Tuesday	Myrna Goldberger	Swindler's List
30 Wednesday	Dr. Robert Rabil	Arab World in Crisis
31 Thursday	Rabbi Eli Kavon	Book Talk

AUGUST

5 Tuesday	Barbara Klein	Ali McGraw
8 Friday	Terryl Lawrence	Russian Impressionism
9 Saturday	Al Guastafeste	Evolution of Jazz
11 Monday	Giuseppe Albanese	Joy of Opera
13 Wednesday	Freya Homer	Reflection and Renewal Through Literature's Lens
14 Thursday	Rabbi Eli Kavon	The Jewish Confrontation with Modernity
26 Tuesday	Myrna Goldberger	Swindler's List

Summer Study Group Guide

1. THE JEWISH CONFRONTATION WITH MODERNITY

Leader: Rabbi Eli Kavon
Venue: South County Civic Center

Dates: Thursdays, June 19, July 17, Aug. 14* 1:30 PM
Fee: \$10 per session, \$ 15 at door

June 19: “Schindler’s List, Anne Frank and The Americanization of the Holocaust“- It has been 20 years since Steven Spielberg’s classic “Schindler’s List” was released and won the Oscar for Best Picture. But how has the world remembered the Holocaust through Spielberg’s masterpiece-and the Diary of Anne Frank? Rabbi Eli Kavon explores the controversy surrounding these cultural milestones in the Shoah remembrance and asks whether popular cultural understanding of the Nazi genocide of the Jews has been altered by the vision of filmmakers such as Spielberg and the writers of the Broadway play based on Anne Frank’s writings. The real question: Are we remembering the Holocaust as it really was- or as we would have liked it to have been?

July 17: Spinoza, Heine and Kafka: How Jewish was Their Genius? - Benedict Spinoza, Heinrich Heine and Franz Kafka were all born as Jews. Their philosophy, poetry and novels have been celebrated as the epitome of modern Jewish genius. In this provocative lecture, Rabbi Eli Kavon asks “What is inherently Jewish about these geniuses?” Should we call Spinoza a “Jewish philosopher”? Should we describe Heine as a “Jewish poet”? Was Kafka expressing something uniquely Jewish or something inherently universal-or perhaps both- in “The Metamorphosis” and “In the Penal Colony”? These three icons are celebrated for their contribution to the world. But what of their contribution to Jewish identity, Jewish culture and Judaism?

August 14: Jews, Christians, Pastors, Sermons and the American Revolution- Was the American Revolution a political war, a holy war-or both? Rabbi Eli Kavon uncovers the unknown heritage of the Christian sermons that inspired Americans to go to war against their British overlords-and risk life and limb for the cause. While Jews were important participants in the events of 1776, the war defying George III was understood by the Protestant majority in America a Christian war. How do the sermons of the fight for freedom alter our understanding of modernity, our understanding of religion in America, and our failure to contemplate early America as an inherently “Christian Nation”? A controversial topic-this issue deserves investigation and re-appraisal.

Bio: Rabbi Eli Kavon is spiritual leader of Beth Ami Congregation in Boca Raton. He is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Columbia University, where he studied Comparative Religion and History. Eli received his Master’s degree in Jewish Studies from the Spertus Institute in Chicago in 2009. He is on the faculty of The Lifelong Learning Institute of Nova Southeastern University and is an instructor for the Central Agency for Jewish Education of Broward County. His essays have been published in The Jerusalem Report, The Jerusalem Post, and the Zionist journal Midstream.

2. ARAB WORLD IN CRISIS

Leader: Dr. Robert Rabil
Venue: South County Civic Center

Dates: Wednesday: June 25, July 30* 1:30 PM
Fee: \$10 per session, \$15 at door

The two lecture series Arab World in Crisis will examine the socio-political conditions of the Arab world against which the revolutions and/or demonstrations in Egypt, Tunisia, Bahrain, Jordan and Libya have emerged and spread. The talks also analyze the impact of the changes brought about by the popular revolutions on the regional order and in particular on the triangular Arab-Israeli-American relations. This format gives Dr. Rabil the opportunity to structure his lectures around the most current happenings in the area.

Bio: Dr. Rabil has a Master’s Degree in Govt. from Harvard and PHD in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies from Brandeis. He is Associate Professor and Director-of Graduate Studies in the Political Science Dept. of FAU

3. JAPANESE WOMEN: THEIR HISTORY AND THEIR MYSTERY

Leader: Freya Homer
Venue: Delray Grande

Dates: Wednesdays: June 18, July 16, Aug. 13* 1:30 PM
Fee: \$10 per session. \$15 at door

June 18: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: Gender Roles in Japan: Each of us is a member of a society and many of us ask the question “How did things get this way?” Understanding yesterday is a critical to comprehending today. Comprehending today enables us to envision tomorrow. The evolution of gender roles affects all aspects of a society. Japan has and still is undergoing dramatic societal changes which we will explore.

July 16: Madam Butterfly: The Magic and the Myth: The image of the Japanese woman as the self-sacrificing, passive Madame Butterfly dates back to 1904 when Giacomo Puccini’s famous opera Madame Butterfly premiered. To the thinking of many Westerners, Japanese women are compliant objects of fantasy epitomized by the “geisha” image. Seldom challenged and corrected, this stereotype has helped create the prevailing Western image of Japanese women. This tendency underestimates the power and influence Japanese women actually do possess. We will study it through the lens of this opera.

Aug. 13: The Laws of Evening: Reflections and Renewal through Literature’s Lens: “Circling the Hondo”, a multifaceted, wistful, optimistic, short story provides a glimpse into Japanese family life, seen through the eyes of a grandmother. The story unfolds in modern times when Japan is undergoing rapid Westernization. At this time the older generation found comfort in the everyday traditions they cannot bear to leave behind. The theme is universal illuminating the shared human condition of different generations as they confront an altered world.

Bio: Freya Homer is a lecturer at Nova Southeastern University Lifelong Learning Institute and its satellites. At the Morikami Museum and Gardens, she instituted, implemented, and teaches the Volunteer Training Program. She conducts the opening night exhibition tours as well as familiarizing special visiting groups with the unique culture of Japan using all the features of the museum and gardens. As a lecturer throughout southeast Florida, she has received many rewards for her work as an educator

4. FRAMEWORKS

Leader: : Dr. Terryl Lawrence
Venue: Delray Grande

Dates: Fridays: June 13, July 18, Aug. 8* 1:30 PM
Fee: \$10. Per session, \$15 at door

June 13: Japanese Art: The Art is very much like impressionism. The images identified as Ukiyo-e capture the light and activity of a single moment in urban life: cherry blossoms in Springtime, combing luxurious hair, or the blanket of a winter snowfall. Japanese art succeeds in capturing the beauty of each fleeting hour. It is meant to enrich our sensations and provide beauty to our lives.

July 18: American Impressionism: Impressionism, although normally identified with France, was an international movement which produced artists of stature throughout Europe and America. These painters often worked out-of-doors to capture the brilliant effects of light, color, and atmosphere. This style of painting has enjoyed immense popularity among artists, viewers, and collectors since the late nineteenth century. Luminous landscapes, domestic scenes, and figure studies reveal experimentation with the vibrant light and color that infused American art with a new vitality. Painting out-of-doors to capture those changes, or working in their studios from sketches made on site, the Impressionists laid the groundwork for much of the avant-garde painting that followed.

Aug. 8: Russian Impressionism: Many Russian artists had come to Paris to familiarize themselves with this “New” art. Upon returning to Russia they spread the word by teaching the response to nature that they had encountered in France. They began to portray modern life at home in a manner that spoke of their lives and personal concerns - in a manner that differed dramatically from the frivolity experienced in Paris.

Bio: Dr. Terryl Lawrence has a doctorate from Columbia University. A painter and photographer, she continually exhibits her work and has won many awards, including a National Grant in the Humanities for research in art history. Currently she is on the staff of Lifelong Learning Society of FAU

5. BINTEL BRIEFS

Leader: Helen Kurzban
Venue: Home of Penny Elias

Dates : Thursday, June 26, July 10* 1:30 PM
Fee: \$10 per session, \$15 at door

“Bintel Briefs” were letters seeking advice from the editor of the Jewish newspaper, “The Forwards”. We will read some of these letters. Class participants will give their advice to each letter, after which we will hear the editor’s advice-then compare the two.

Bio: Helen Kurzban, long time Brandeis member and board member, was a teacher and principal in the NYC school system.

6. STORIES FROM THE MUSLIM WORLD

Leader: Joyce Reider
Venue: South County Civic Center

Dates: : Mondays, June 9, 16, 23, 30* 1:30 PM
Fee: \$10 per session, \$15 at door

June 9: The Minaret (Sudan) Leila Aboulela

June 16: The Yacoubian Building (Egypt) Alaa Al Aswany

June 23: Our Lady of Alice Bhatti (Pakistan) Mohammed Hanif

June 30: Second Person Singular (Palestine/Israel) Sayed Kashura

These are all recent novels that depict some part of the religious or cultural lives of the countries they represent. Telling the stories of their people, their authors have become major voices in the West who are often called upon to make political or historical commentary in the press and on line. This is your opportunity to make their acquaintance.

Bio: Joyce Reider was trained at Northwestern. University: She is renowned for “Taking a Look at Society” in her Brandeis Short Story Study Group. She did the same thing for 10 years at the U.N. in her classes for “Spouses of Diplomats”.

7. SWINDLER'S LIST

Leader: Myrna Goldberger
Venue: Delray Grande

Date: Tuesdays, June 24, July 29, August 26* 1:30 PM
Fee: \$10 per session, \$15 at door

Charles Ponzi and Bernie Madoff top the list. Yet, there are other ne'er-do-wells, both, male and female, who have made "swindling" their occupation and have remorselessly cheated large numbers of people. How did Gerald Barnes add "doctor" to his name and advance in a medical career without a degree? How did twins manage to bilk the US Government of over three million dollars in "shipping costs"? How did George Hull create and exploit the "Cardiff Monster" and then have P.T. Barnum outdo him? How did George P. Parker find buyers for the Statue of Liberty and Grant's Tomb? These bizarre but true stories will highlight America's swindlers, cheats and scammers.

June 24: Charles Ponzi, Bernie Madoff

July 29: Gerald Barnes, the Shuler Twins

Aug. 26: Cassie Chadwick, George Hull, Scott Rothstein

Bio: Myrna Goldberger has been a presenter for the Lifelong Learning Society for 21plus years. Educated at the University of Maryland, Loyola College and Johns Hopkins University, Myrna has had more than 50 years of experience in educational programming, including Elderhostel and scholar-in-residence weekends. She currently presents lectures to community and religious groups, as well as to special-interest groups. She performs in self-written, one act plays focusing on famous American women and men.

8. ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER AND THE NOBEL PRIZE FOR LITERATURE

Leader: Bilha Ron
Venue: South County Civic Center

Date: Wednesday, June 11* 1:30 PM
Fee: \$10 in advance. \$15 at door

Why was Isaac Bashevis Singer awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature?

We shall examine the life and writing of I.B. Singer. We shall discuss his amazing stories full of Humor and wisdom, particularly the short story "Gimple the Fool".

Recommended reading: "The Collected Stories" by I.B. Singer, published in 1996 by Farrar, Straus, Giroux.

Bio: Bilha Ron was born in Israel and graduated from Levinski Teachers College in Tel-Aviv. A former member of the Hagganah, she served in the Israeli Army during the War of Independence. She taught in the public schools and in Israel's language academy (Ulpan). In 1974 she graduated from Walsh University in N. Canton, Ohio with a bachelor's degree in English literature. Bilha was the Education Director of the Temple Israel Religious School in Canton, Ohio and a Jewish Education Specialist for Canton Jewish Community Federation. She has lectured extensively on Hebrew literature, biblical studies, politics of the Middle East and the Holocaust.

9. 1600 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

Leader: Dr. Robert Watson
Venue: Delray Grande

Date: Monday, June 16* 7:00 PM
Fee: \$10 in advance, \$15 at door

DANCING WITH THE (AMERICAN FEMALE POLITICAL) STARS

Hillary in 2016? Come hear Dr. Watson's take on women in politics - past, present, and future. First Ladies, Senators, Secretaries of State, - President(???)

Bio: Dr. Robert Watson is Professor and Coordinator - American Studies Program at Lynn University.

He is a frequent media commentator and political analyst for WPTV 5 (NBC), wrote a column for the Sun Sentinel and has appeared on TV with Jon Stewart and Chris Matthews. He has been named Distinguished Professor of the Year at both FAU and Lynn University.

10. A TALE OF 3 UNCONVENTIONAL, AMAZING HOLLYWOOD STARS

Leader: Barbara Klein
Venue: Delray Grande

Date: Tuesday July 8, 22, Aug. 5* 1:30 PM
Fee: \$10 per session. \$15 at door

These 3 actresses were individuals who had their own styles, set their own career paths, and had lives outside Hollywood even more interesting than their acting careers. Join us as we uncover all the perhaps unknown sides to them (and their men).

July 8: Hedy Lamarr

July 22: Audrey Hepburn

August 5: Ali McGraw

Bio: Barbara Klein, a retired psychotherapist, was a Fulbright Scholar in India and a National Endowment for Humanities Fellow. She taught for 20 years at the University of Miami with overlapping years at FIU. She has lectured at Nova Southeastern University and Florida Atlantic University. Also, Barbara has lectured in the public and private sector for 20 years.

11. LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

Leader: Carole Steinberg
Venue: Home of Carole Steinberg

Date: Tuesday June 17* 1:30 PM
Fee: \$10 in advance

Let's Talk Travel:

What's new in Thailand?

Have you been to Antarctica?

What is the best way to see the world?

This is not a lecture! Come enjoy the comraderie of a small group getting together to talk about a favorite pastime. Share your escapades and enthusiasm.

Bio: Carole is an active board member of our BNC chapter.

12. BOOK TALK

Leader: Rabbi Eli Kavon
Venue: Delray Grande

Date: : Thursday July 31 * 1:30 PM
Fee: \$10 in advance, \$15 at door

How the Vatican Betrayed Democracy”—Rabbi Eli Kavon explores the issues, ideas, and personalities that comprise historian David I. Kertzer's recent study of “The Pope and Mussolini: The Secret History of Pius XI and the Rise of Fascism in Europe.” While Kertzer has focused on these events in previous works, this latest book is solely devoted to the Faustian bargain that the Pope made with the Italian dictator and that the religious leader would later regret. Kertzer's insights into this betrayal of democracy and the Rome of Garibaldi enable us to understand with greater clarity why the Vatican leadership endorsed Nazi Germany as a legitimate state and why the Popes did little to aid in the rescue of the persecuted Jews of Europe. Rabbi Kavon brings to the discussion of Kertzer's latest work an in-depth knowledge of Jewish and general history, the story of the Vatican's relationship with Jews following the French Revolution, and a talent for cogent and concise analysis of the events of our time in historical perspective.

Bio: Rabbi Eli Kavon is spiritual leader of Beth Ami Congregation in Boca Raton. He is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Columbia University, where he studied Comparative Religion and History. Eli received his Master's degree in Jewish Studies from the Spertus Institute in Chicago in 2009. He is on the faculty of The Lifelong Learning Institute of Nova Southeastern University and is an instructor for the Central Agency for Jewish Education of Broward County. His essays have been published in The Jerusalem Report, The Jerusalem Post, and the Zionist journal Midstream.

13. JOY OF OPERA

Leader: Giuseppe Albanese
Venue: Delray Grande

Date: Mondays, July 21, August 11* 1:30 PM
Fee: 10 per session, \$15 at door

July 21: Passing the Torch: New Faces in Opera for the 21ST Century: Giuseppe Albanese has collected performance footage of the latest vocal phenomenons to have “come of age” in this 21st century era of opera production. Featuring tenors, sopranos, baritones, mezzos, and bassos, these new faces (and voices) are carrying on the timeless vocal legacy of the last 400 years. Combining exceptional physical beauty with flawless technique, this new generation of vocal artists is setting opera stages around the world ablaze with passion and professionalism. Come and experience these vibrant performances which continue to uphold the highest standards of operatic tradition. Mr. Albanese will moderate the program and provide interesting commentary and facts about each artist and selection.

August 11: Remembering Pavorotti: Tenor Luciano Pavorotti had arguably the most recognizable voice in the world. His career spanned over 40 years, from an American debut at the Greater Miami Opera to a farewell tour which included a stop at the very same city. During his reign as “King of the High C,” he did more to introduce people to the World of Opera than any other single opera star since Enrico Caruso. Like Caruso, his was a flawed, thus ultimately human personality, but it will be the exquisite artistry that will be remembered as his legacy. Luciano Pavorotti died on September 6, 2007. He was 71 years old.

Bio: Giuseppe Albanese attended the University of Vermont and graduated with a degree in history in 1966. In 1989, after five years of intensive study, he developed a dynamic educational program entitled, The Joy of Opera.

For the past 25 years he has lectured extensively on many operatic subjects and produced a series of video documentaries. He was recently named the Brandeis National Women's Committee Man of Achievement. Maestro Albanese continues to gain recognition as one of the most stimulating instructors in opera education today.

14. MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC

Leader: Al Guastafeste
Venue: Steinway Piano Gallery

Date: Saturday, August 9* 4 PM
Fee: \$20 in advance, \$25 at door

This program will include selections representing Ragtime, New Orleans Jazz, Boogie Woogie, Blues, Swing, Latin American Influence and Contemporary Jazz. Wynton Marsalis and Billy Joel will also be presented.

Bio: Al Carmen Guastafeste is a pianist, teacher, recording artist, lecturer and author. He received his BS and MS Degrees from Juilliard. Al also received his Professional Diploma as a Specialist in Music Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. Al has performed before audiences throughout the United States and the Far East. He has been a pianist/conductor for Marilyn Monroe, Florence Henderson, Kaye Starr, Johnny Johnston, Frank Fontaine, Allen and Rossi.