

Echoes of the Holocaust: Antisemitism Then and Now

Akron-Summit County Public Library, 60 S High Street, Akron OH

Tuesday, October 15th, 2024

5:30 – 7:30 PM

Introduction: Martin Belsky & Pam Hickson Stevenson

Educational Address *Echoes of the Holocaust: Antisemitism Then and Now*: Barb White

Panel Discussion moderated by Leon Bibb

Panelists: Rabbi Josh Brown, Rachel Felber, Kelly Fishman, David Moritz, Timothy Murnen, Ph.D. moderated by Leon Bibb

Introduction to the Akron-Summit Holocaust Arts and Writing Contest: Elaine Fippin (2024-25 Theme: *Lessons of the Holocaust: Countering Discrimination, Apathy & Denial*)

Closing Remarks: Martin Belsky and Leon Bibb

[Barb White](#) is a retired youth and adult services librarian and Deputy Director with the Akron-Summit County Public Library, has been exploring Holocaust themes with students and educators for more than three decades. A graduate of New York and Kent State Universities, Barb has served in varying capacities with the Akron-Summit Council on Holocaust and Genocide Education and is a former member of the Holocaust and Genocide Education Network. In retirement, Barb's study of the Holocaust is ongoing, as are her efforts to learn and serve in early childhood and dementia education sectors locally, statewide, and nationally.



[Leon Bibb](#) is a Senior Reporter and Commentator at wkyc studios in Cleveland, Ohio.

Mr. Bibb has more than 40 years experience as a television journalist in Cleveland. He is currently working as a senior reporter, commentator, and essayist for WKYC-TV3. He began his career at that NBC television station in 1979 and worked there for 16 years before moving to WEWS-TV5, the ABC station in Cleveland, where he worked for 22 years. At both television stations, Leon Bibb served as a news anchor and a reporter for all the major newscasts. In 2018, he joined WKYC-TV where, although in semi-retirement, he serves as a senior reporter, commentator, and broadcast stylist where he offers his viewpoints and opinions on the passing scene. He is also co-host of the popular public affairs program "We The People."

Before his career in Cleveland television, Leon worked as a news anchor and reporter in Columbus and Toledo and as a reporter for the Plain Dealer newspaper in Cleveland. He is a graduate of the School of Journalism at Bowling Green State University where he also studied Radio-TV-Film in the graduate school.

Leon has covered stories throughout Ohio on a regular basis. He has also covered many national stories including the Persian Gulf War when he was imbedded with an Ohio-based U.S. Coast Guard unit. In 2011, Leon interviewed President Barack Obama in a one-on-one interview at the White House. He has also interviewed President George H.W. Bush in the White House and interviewed Neil Armstrong ten years after Armstrong's historic walk on the moon.

In 1978, Leon Bibb interviewed James Earl Ray, convicted assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the Tennessee prison where Ray was held. It is believed to be Ray's only interview with a local television news reporter. Nominated many times for local Emmy awards, Leon Bibb has received the Emmy ten times for his news reports.

Among his many reports has been a series of more than 300 stories entitled "My Ohio with Leon Bibb" which was about interesting people, places, and things in the state. Leon has had a passion for journalism since he was in elementary school. He is in the halls of fame of the following organizations:

- Cleveland Press Club
- Cleveland Association of Broadcasters
- Sigma Delta Chi Journalism Honorary
- Ohio Association of Broadcasters
- National Association of Black Journalists, Local Region
- Bowling Green State University School of Journalism
- Bowling Green State University Distinguished Alumnus Award
- Glenville High School (Cleveland)
- Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

From 1996 to 2005, Leon served on the board of trustees of Bowling Green State University, having been appointed to the position by Ohio Governor George Voinovich. In his last year on the University's board of trustees, Leon Bibb served as chairman. For more than two decades, Leon has served on the advisory board of the Greater Cleveland Salvation Army, often lending his voice to the cause of the organization. For his entire time

working in Cleveland television, Leon has visited schools throughout Northeast Ohio where he has been a motivational speaker for students from elementary grades through college.

As well, he has been a popular guest in the pulpit of many churches which have asked him to deliver a Sunday address.

Always interested in working in behalf of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution with emphasis on the importance of freedom of speech and of the press, Leon Bibb is currently one of the vice presidents of the Greater Cleveland Association of Black Journalists.

Leon is a veteran of the U.S. Army. He served a full tour of duty in the war in Vietnam where he was awarded the military's Bronze Star Medal for his service. Over the years, Leon has been a popular speaker at U.S. military and Memorial Day events.

When he is not working in journalism, Leon is often in the world of theater. He has starred in several location productions of "Same Time Next Year," "Love Letters," "War of the Worlds," "God's Trombone," "Modern Warrior," and "A Soldier's Play." In 2012, Leon starred in the feature films "Made in Cleveland" released in 2013 and "Lost and Found in Cleveland" released in 2024.

Leon is also author and performer in his own one-man live production, "Burning Leaves," which is filled with Leon's original poetry and storytelling ability. He has been awarded the Zora Neal Hurston award presented by the National Association of Black Storytellers. Among other awards, Leon Bibb is the 2014 recipient of black professional of the year presented by the Black Professionals Association Charitable Foundation in Cleveland.

He is a singer with both the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center Chorus and the Greater Cleveland Pan-Hellenic Choir, both of which raise funds for their charitable causes.

Leon Bibb has also served as a popular narrator with the Cleveland Orchestra and the Akron Symphony Orchestra where he performed "A Lincoln Portrait," "Peter and the Wolf," and "The Life of John Brown."

He has also worked onstage with many local jazz groups where he offered his words and voice chronicling the history of jazz and the impact the music has had on the world. Leon Bibb is currently working on his memoirs which will detail many aspects of his years growing up in Cleveland and his work as a journalist. As well, he is authoring a book based on a true thriller story involving high crimes, imprisonment, and an escape from prison. Leon is also working on a novel involving themes of interlaced television, romance and jazz music. In 2021, he was the voice of the audio recording of Designing Victory the biography of nationally-known architect Robert P. Madison.

In 2010, Leon was the subject of an Ohio University graduate student's thesis. "Leon Bibb: Pioneer in Broadcasting History" highlighted his life. He was also interviewed by the national group "HistoryMakers" which produces oral histories on the lives of black Americans who have made significant contributions to society and to their chosen professions. The on-camera interview was four hours long and chronicled Leon's life from birth to the present day. The HistoryMakers maintains the largest collection of African-American oral histories of its type.

Leon Bibb is a popular speaker on a variety of issues involving the local community.

He also serves as an usher in the church to which he and his wife, Marguerite, are members.

He and Marguerite are the parents of two grown daughters and are grandparents. Leon Bibb is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha and Sigma Pi Phi fraternities. Contact Leon Bibb at leonbibb@wkyc.com and follow him on [Facebook](#).

[Martin H. Belsky](#) is presently Professor and Dean Emeritus the University of Akron School of Law. Professor Belsky has served as chief prosecutor in Philadelphia., as counsel to two congressional committees, as an administrator of the Federal National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Belsky began his academic career in 1982 as associate professor of law and director of the multi-disciplinary Center for Governmental Responsibility at the University of Florida. He is a “serial Dean.” He has served as Dean and Professor at Albany and Tulsa Law Schools. Belsky was named Dean of the University of Akron School of Law in July of 2007 and in January of 2008 was named Randolph Baxter Professor of Law. He continued as a faculty member until he retired in 2022. He now teaches part-time at the law school.

Professor Belsky has written numerous articles and books on criminal justice and procedure, Constitutional Law, Supreme Court jurisprudence, and administrative law. Active in the community, Belsky has served as Chair, President, and Board member of many diversity, interfaith, and Jewish organizations at both the local and national level. He also has been active with many bar associations, At the local, state and national level In Akron, he has served on the Akron Bar and Akron Bar Foundation Boards and now Chairs the Bar Investigatory Committee.

Belsky is a graduate of Temple University, College of Liberal Arts with a B.A., cum laude (1965); Columbia University School of Law with a J.D., cum laude (1968). He also has graduate diplomas from the Hague Academy of International Law and Cambridge University.



[Rabbi Joshua Brown](#) has served as our congregation's senior rabbi since July 1, 2016. Rabbi Brown dedicates his time to our congregation as a rabbi passionate about lifelong Jewish learning, social justice, and pastoral care. His belief that Judaism is intended to punctuate our lives helping us celebrate our greatest joys and survive our greatest fears informs his spiritual leadership every day.

Rabbi Brown currently serves on the board of the Cleveland American Jewish Committee as well as the board of Miami University Hillel. Previously, Rabbi Brown proudly served on the URJ Commission for Social Action as well as the core team for the Ohio Religious Action Center. He was ordained in May 2008 at the Los Angeles campus of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Prior to ordination, he completed a Master's in Jewish Education from the Rhea Hirsch School of Education, also on the HUC-JIR campus in Los Angeles, and a B.A. degree in Family Studies and Social Work from Miami University (OH).

A native of Atlanta, Rabbi Brown, has also served Temple Emanuel in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and Temple Israel in Omaha, Nebraska. Rabbi Brown enjoys living in Akron with his wife Carrie, a native of Cleveland, and their three children—Hannah, Noah, and Ezra.

[Rachel Felber](#), joined the Kent Hillel team as the executive director in 2023. She began her Jewish communal career at Kent Hillel in 2004, when she served as the Jewish Campus Service Corps (JCSC) fellow after college. Prior to returning to Kent Hillel, Rachel spent more than 15 years working in Jewish Community Centers: most notably serving as the Mandel JCC's Camp Wise Assistant Director and Director from 2012-2022.

Rachel has a B.A in Sociology with a minor in Jewish Studies from Clark University and a master's degree from the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University. Rachel lives in Cleveland and loves getting to know students at both Kent State and the University of Akron, especially during Shabbat. When she isn't working, you'll find Rachel playing with her puppy Golda Meir, reading a book, or discussing all things travel-associated (especially Israel travel).

[Elaine Fippin](#) has taught English, speech, theater, and film at Our Lady of the Elms HS for thirty-six years. She coaches speech and debate and is a member of the Ohio High School Speech and Debate Hall of Fame. She is a new member of Holocaust and Genocide Education Network of Ohio. For more than thirty years, Elaine and her students have participated in the Akron-Summit Council on Holocaust and Genocide Education Writing and Art Contest.

[Kelly Fishman](#) is the Regional Director for the Anti-Defamation League's Cleveland office covering Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, & Western Pennsylvania. Kelly began her career in higher education administration at the University of Miami (Florida), the University of Michigan, and Case Western Reserve University. After completing her master's degree in education, Kelly worked for over a decade as a high school English teacher, club advisor, and diversity, equity and inclusion lead at Solon High School in Northeast Ohio. Kelly joined the ADL in June of 2022 as the Education Director. In March of 2023 she moved into the Regional Director role. In addition to her work at ADL, she is also currently completing her Doctor of Education degree in diversity and equity in education through the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and has co-written a freshman diversity, equity and inclusion textbook for West Virginia University.

[Pam Hickson-Stevenson](#) has served as the Executive Director of the Akron-Summit County Public Library since April 2018. Previously, she was the Deputy Director of the Akron system for twelve years. She also served as an adjunct member of the Kent State University iSchool faculty from 2000 to 2015. Pam is a past president of the Ohio Library Council and served as the Ohio Chapter Councilor to the American Library Association. Here in Summit County, she is a board member of Child Guidance & Family Solutions, Downtown Akron Partnership, Summit Education Initiative and a past president of the board at the International Institute of Akron. Pam also is a graduate of Leadership Akron and of three other community leadership programs and one library leadership program. She resides in Summit County with her husband.



[David Moritz](#) Activist, Son of a Holocaust Survivor, Antisemitism/hate victim
<https://www.carolinajournal.com/palestine-resistance-activists-attack-jewish-asheville->

[library-mail-threats-to-son-of-holocaust-survivor/](#) David has been outspoken at the Asheville City Council where he has made over 10 speeches against antisemitism. David is a real estate developer in Asheville, North Carolina. Previously, he was an investment banker in Singapore and New York. He has an MBA from Columbia and a BS in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Maryland. (instagram: @jewish_history_daily)

[Tim Murnen Ph.D.](#) is a Professor of Education at Bowling Green State University, with particular focus in Literacy, Language Arts, and curriculum design. In his role at BGSU he prepares teachers in secondary and middle childhood education—primarily in English or Language Arts, but also in Social Studies. In 2014 he was the Co-Principal Investigator on a Fulbright-Hays Group study abroad project to take 10 teachers to Poland, Hungary, and Greece to follow in the footsteps of 6 Toledo-area Holocaust survivors. He continues to present on strategies for teaching about the Holocaust and genocide—particularly in connecting Holocaust study to local communities and current events issues. As president of the Holocaust & Genocide Education Network, he helps lead work in Holocaust education across the state, and in encouraging more teachers to teach about the Holocaust and genocide, and to deepen their knowledge of the historical contexts, current global and local issues, and the pedagogical strategies to connect these pieces in the minds and lives of students. He is also well aware of the need for stronger Holocaust and genocide education in teacher education programs within Ohio.

Please Note

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