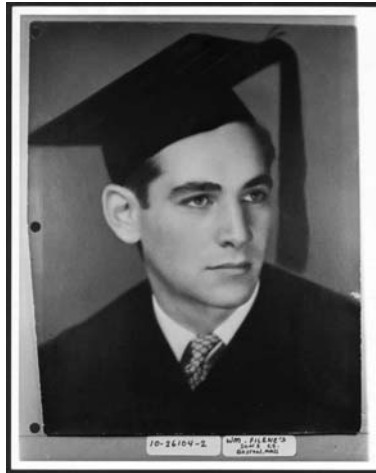


**Before *West Side Story*: Leonard Bernstein's Boston  
(Music 194)**

**Professors: Carol J. Oja and Kay Kaufman Shelemay  
Teaching Fellow: Emily Abrams**

**Requirements**



**Emails:** [coja@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:coja@fas.harvard.edu), [shelemay@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:shelemay@fas.harvard.edu), [abrams@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:abrams@fas.harvard.edu)

**Office hours:** Professor Oja and Professor Shelemay: 3-4pm on Wednesdays. Emily Abrams: 10-11am on Wednesdays.

**Course description:** This seminar will explore the childhood and early career of one of the 20th century's most renowned musicians and composers. Working in teams, students will fuse ethnography and archival research to explore the interlinking communities and institutions that shaped Bernstein's formative years. These include, but are by no means limited to, Congregation Mishkan Tefila in Newton, Boston Latin High School, Harvard (class of '39), and the BSO.

Together, we will be launching a major collaborative research project. As a result, the expectations and work flow will differ greatly from the usual seminar. Instead of focusing on exams or individual research papers, “Leonard Bernstein’s Boston” involves lots of strategizing and working in groups. In other words, it requires a consistent time commitment and regular maintenance over the course of the semester, and it can only be successful if everyone pitches in at a steady pace. Regular attendance is essential. We will be functioning as a team, which means that it is crucial for everyone to be cooperative and collegial. All students will work on two levels: (1) preparation of and participation in class interviews and discussions, and (2) out-of-class research projects, pursued individually or in teams. There will be no midterm, final exam or traditional research paper. Graduate students will have additional requirements, which will be more clearly defined as the project unfolds.

Our seminar has been devised to dovetail with “Celebrating Leonard Bernstein,” an international festival and conference, scheduled for Harvard, October 12-14, 2006. Individual students will be identified from the seminar to help prepare an exhibit for the conference over the summer and to give presentations at that event. Beyond that, we expect to uncover exciting original materials, both in the oral tradition and in archival sources, which may pave the way for future research. Depending upon what we find, there may be possibilities for team publications or projects yet-to-be-imagined.

In other words, this is a course in which you can spread your wings and take chances. You will leave with a solid set of research skills, and, depending on your ingenuity and industry, you might find yourself with an enticing project that will carry into the future.

### **Required readings**

[\*Available at the Coop for purchase.]

\*Burton Bernstein. *Family Matters: Sam, Jennie, and the Kids*. Lincoln, NE: iUniverse.com Inc, 2000.

Humphrey Burton. *Leonard Bernstein*. New York: Doubleday, 1994. (out of print – used copies available for purchase from Karen Rynne, Music Department)

\*Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

\*Janet Topp Fargion, ed. "Ethical and Legal Considerations" in *A Manual for Documentation, Fieldwork & Preservation for Ethnomusicologists*. 2nd ed. Bloomington, Indiana: The Society for Ethnomusicology, Inc., 2001, pp. 11-23.

\*Jonathan Sarna. *The Jews of Boston*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.

### **Grading**

- 20% class and activity participation, including one written response to the readings and listening
- 20% conducting class interviews and completing interview transcripts (\*the latter prepared promptly and posted on our website\*), also leading/participating in class discussion, when assigned to do so
- 20% journal entries, which should be turned in at midterm and the end of term
- 20% research project in one of the six areas defined in the introductory course materials; this can be done individually or in teams; it will include archiving all original data on the class website, whether interview transcripts, notes from primary sources, or xeroxes of sources (which need to be scanned and loaded on the website).
- 20% final oral presentation about the research project (likely with team), which will share findings and analyze method

### **Journals/Field Notes**

All students must keep a digitized journal of their experiences in the class, to be handed in twice during the semester. This material should include personal responses to all in-class interviews and class excursions. Critiques should be shaped on multiple levels, including interactions among class members and interview subjects, responses to what was said and what was avoided, interview subject's body language and other cues to content, and evaluation of how the interviewing went (that is, in terms of technique, exploring such questions as whether the interviewees were allowed to speak freely). Guidelines to participant observation and interview technique will be discussed and distributed during the first class session.

### **Preparation for In-Class Interviews**

In order to make the in-class interviews a truly collaborative process, all students will post ideas and questions for that week's interview by the Saturday before class, at 5 pm. The cluster of students conducting that interview will then work those ideas into their questions. It is essential to have done the week's reading and listening before posting these suggestions.

### **Transcripts of Class Interviews**

Complete transcripts need to be completed by the team conducting the interview and posted on the class site by the next Monday. The work should be divided fairly among team members. At the end of the transcript, team members should add comments about what went well, what didn't, and why, as well as areas that should be followed up.

### **Websites**

Our course website (accessible through my.harvard.edu) will house streaming audio of listening examples, blogs for teams and for the class as a whole, facilities to upload (and playback) video and audio files of interview and their transcriptions, tips on interviewing and permissions, plus a large number of research materials, including images of items in the Library of Congress, lists of possible research projects, and other online, local, and national resources for Bernstein research.

### **Acknowledgements**

This course has been generously funded from the following Harvard sources: Innovation Fund of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Center for Jewish Studies, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Bok Center Pilot Project in Community-Based Learning.

We are grateful to many people for helping with ideas and information about Bernstein's Boston years, especially the Bernstein family, Craig Urquhart and Marie Carter of the Leonard Bernstein Office, and Mark Eden Horowitz of the Music Division, Library of Congress.

## Syllabus

*February 7*

### **1-4pm: Introduction**

**Ethnographic and Archival Methods: Strategies, Practices, Pitfalls**

**Class visitors: Marty Schreiner, Head of Morse Music & Media, Lamont Library and Sarah Adams, Keeper of the Isham Library**

#### Reading:

David Schiff, "Bernstein, Leonard [Louis]" in *Grove Music Online*. Ed. L. Macy  
[http://www.grovemusic.com.ezp1.harvard.edu/shared/views/article.html?from=search&session\\_search\\_id=461970741&hitnum=5&section=music.02883](http://www.grovemusic.com.ezp1.harvard.edu/shared/views/article.html?from=search&session_search_id=461970741&hitnum=5&section=music.02883)

Donal Henahan, "Leonard Bernstein, 72, Music's Monarch Dies," *New York Times*, October 15, 1990. (see course website)

William E. Mitchell, "A Goy in the Ghetto: Gentile-Jewish Communication in Fieldwork Research." In Jack Kugelmass, ed., *Between Two Worlds: Ethnographic Essays on American Jewry*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988, pp. 229-235.

#### Listening:

Leonard Bernstein, *West Side Story* (1957)

*February 14*

### **1-4pm: Bernstein and Judaism**

**Class guest: Jonathan Sarna, Joseph H. and Belle R. Braun Professor in American Jewish History, Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, Brandeis University**

[During class, sign up for class interview clusters and discuss research teams.]

#### Reading:

Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Jews of Boston in Historical Perspective," pp. 3-18; Leon A. Jick, "From Margin to Mainstream 1917-1967," pp. 87-104. Both in Jonathan D. Sarna, Ellen Smith, and Scott-Martin Kosofsky (eds.), *The Jews of Boston*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.

David Schiller, "Leonard Bernstein's *Kaddish*" In *Bloch, Schoenberg, Bernstein: Assimilating Jewish Music*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003, 127-66.

Listening:

Leonard Bernstein, *Kaddish Symphony* (1963).

\_\_\_\_\_, *Hashkiveinu* (for cantorial solo, SATB choir, and organ) (1945)

*Feb 17*

**2-4pm: Interview of Sylvia Shuman, Bernstein's 2<sup>nd</sup> cousin (attendance is optional)**

*February 21*

**1-2pm: Project planning and team forming**

**2-4pm: Class Guests--Two of Bernstein's Close Musical Associates and Friends from the 1930s and 1940s:**

**Harold Shapero, composer and Professor Emeritus of Music, Brandeis University**

**Sid Ramin, Broadway orchestrator (including of *West Side Story*)**

[During class, confirm research teams]

Reading:

Howard Pollack, "Harold Shapero." In *Grove Music Online*. L. Macy ed.,

[http://www.grovemusic.com.ezpl.harvard.edu/shared/views/article.html?from=search&session\\_search\\_id=783833739&hitnum=1&section=music.25586](http://www.grovemusic.com.ezpl.harvard.edu/shared/views/article.html?from=search&session_search_id=783833739&hitnum=1&section=music.25586)

Aaron Copland, "The New 'School' of American Composers," *New York Times* (March 14, 1948). (see course website)

Harold Shapero, "Lenny at Harvard (Reminiscence)." In Claudia Swan, ed., *Leonard Bernstein: The Harvard Years, 1935-1939*. New York: Eos Orchestra, 1999, 47-70.

"Sid Ramin," in *Composers and Lyricists Database Plus*: <http://nfo.net/cal/tr1.html>

Search through the index in Humphrey Burton's *Leonard Bernstein* for sections about Ramin and Shapero.

Listening:

Bernstein, *Symphonic Dances from 'West Side Story'* (1960) (orchestrated with the assistance of Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal)

Bernstein, *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* (1941-42)

Harold Shapero, *Symphony for Classical Orchestra* (1947)

Optional Reading and Listening:

Harold Shapero, *Four-Hand Sonata for Piano* (1941)

Howard Pollack, *Harvard Composers: Walter Piston and his Students, from Elliott Carter to Frederic Rzewski*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1992, 104-30, 166-88.

***February 28***

**1-2pm: More Team Talk**

**2-4pm: More about Bernstein and Judaism**

**Class guests: Harvey Tattelbaum (graduate of Temple Mishkan Tefila, Harvard '55), and Judith Clurman (Director of Choral Activities, The Juilliard School)**

Reading:

Paula E. Hyman, "From City to Suburb: Temple Mishkan Tefila of Boston." In *The American Synagogue. A Sanctuary Transformed*. Jack Wertheimer, Ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, pp. 185-205.

Jeffrey A. Summit, *The Lord's Song in a Strange Land: Music and Identity in Contemporary Jewish Worship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. Introduction (especially pp. 3-5 and 8-22) and Chapter 1 (pp. 23-31).

Listening:

Accompanying CD for Jeffrey A. Summit, *The Lord's Song in a Strange Land: Music and Identity in Contemporary Jewish Worship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Bernstein, "Jeremiah," *Symphony No. 1* (1942).  
\_\_\_\_\_, *Yigdal* (1950)

***March 5 (Sunday)***

**Afternoon bus tour of Bernstein's Boston sites: Boston Latin, Bernstein home in Newton, Congregation Mishkan Tefila (new location in Chestnut Hill and old one in West Roxbury), Sharon Colony, Blue Hill Ave., Samuel Bernstein Hair Company.**  
(Exact time TBA)

Reading:

Bernstein letter to Helen Coates, July 13, 1935, Library of Congress (American Memory Project) [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?lbcoll:1:/temp/~ammem\\_02jh::](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?lbcoll:1:/temp/~ammem_02jh::)

Optional Reading:

Ron Gwiazda, "Leonard Bernstein at Boston Latin School." In *Leonard Bernstein: The Harvard Years 1935-1939*, 38-46.

Stephen J. Whitfield, "The Smart Set. An Assessment of Jewish Culture." In Jonathan D. Sarna, Ellen Smith, and Scott-Martin Kosofsky (eds.), *The Jews of Boston*, pp. 309-331.

***March 7***

**1-4pm: The Bernstein Family**

**Class guests – Burton Bernstein, Jamie Bernstein Thomas, and Nina Bernstein Simmons**

Reading:

Burton Bernstein, *Family Matters: Sam, Jennie, and the Kids*. Lincoln, NE: iUniverse.com Inc, 2000.

Shirley Bernstein. *Making Music: Leonard Bernstein*. Britannica Bookshelf Great Lives. Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1963.

Leonard Bernstein. "Father's Books" and "The Whole Megillah." In *Findings*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982, 13-14, 164-67.

Humphrey Burton, *Leonard Bernstein*. New York: Doubleday, 1994, 3-31.

Listening:

Bernstein, "Quiet Girl," from *Wonderful Town*.

Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*

***March 14***

**1-3pm: Consolidation and Stock Taking**

**3-4: Interview with Jonathan Sheffer**, who reconstructed and conducted Bernstein's *The Birds* with The Eos Orchestra.

Reading:

Claudia Swan, ed., *Leonard Bernstein: The Harvard Years, 1935-1939*. New York: Eos Orchestra, 1999. (Read all.)

Listening:

Leonard Bernstein, *The Birds* (1938) (score on reserve)

***March 21***

***No Class—Instead, Meetings of Individual Research Teams***

***The cluster conducting the interviews at Mishkan Tefila and Eliot House will need to confer with the teaching staff.***

***March 28***

***No class – Spring Recess.***

***April 4***

**Class visit to Congregation Mishkan Tefila**

***April 11***

**1-4pm: Bernstein at School and College (Class 2) – Harvard**

**7-9pm: Group interview of Harvard alumni at Eliot House (tentatively scheduled)**

Reading:

Humphrey Burton, *Leonard Bernstein*. New York: Doubleday, 1994, 40-55.

Leonard Bernstein, “Juvenilia 1935-39.” In *Findings*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982, 14-99.

Claudia Swan (ed.) *Leonard Bernstein: The Harvard Years, 1935-1939*. Review all, which we have already read.

Listening:

Bernstein, Piano Sonata (1938)

***April 18***

**Open Session**



*April 25*

**1-4pm: Student Presentations**

*May 2*

**1-4pm: Student Presentations  
Wrap-up and conclusions**

## Bernstein Web Resources

“Leonard Bernstein Collection.” American Memory Project, Library of Congress.  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/lbhtml/lbhome.html>

Leonard Bernstein Office. Homepage. [www.leonardbernstein.com](http://www.leonardbernstein.com)

## Other useful items on reserve

Leonard Bernstein. *Leonard Bernstein Collection Scrapbooks [microform]*.  
Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress Preservation Microfilming Program, 1999. Isham  
Lib. 3205.748.82.4 (1-62)

Humphrey Burton. “Professor Lenny.” *New York Review of Books* 40 (13), 15 July 1993.

Jack Gottlieb. *Funny, It Doesn't Sound Jewish: How Yiddish Songs and Synagogue  
Melodies Influenced Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, and Hollywood*. New York: SUNY Press,  
2004.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Leonard Bernstein, August 25, 1918 – October 14, 1990: A Complete  
Catalog of his Works, Celebrating his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday year, 1998-99*. New York: Leonard  
Bernstein Music Publishing Company, 1998.

Nat Hentoff. *Boston Boy: Growing up with Jazz and other Rebellious Passions*.  
Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2001.

Joseph Horowitz. “Professor Lenny.” *The New York Review of Books* 40 (11), 10 June  
1993.

Pauline Holmes. *A Tercentenary History of the Boston Latin School, 1635-1935*.  
Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935.

Paul Laird. *Leonard Bernstein: A Guide to Research*. New York: Routledge, 2002.

Philip Marson. *Breeder of Democracy*. Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publishing  
Company, 1963. [subject – Boston Latin School]

Vivian Perlis. “Dear Aaron, Dear Lenny: A Friendship in Letters.” In *Aaron Copland  
and his World*, ed. Carol J. Oja and Judith Tick. Princeton: Princeton University Press,  
2005, 151-78.

Jonathan D. Sarna. *American Judaism: A History*. New Haven: Yale University Press,  
2004.

\_\_\_\_\_. “‘My Own Kaddish’: Leonard Bernstein's Symphony No. 3,” in *Key Texts in American Jewish Culture*, ed. Jack Kugelmass. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2003.

Kay Kaufman Shelemay. “Together in the Field: Team Research Among Syrian Jews in Brooklyn, New York,” in *Ethnomusicology*, vol. 32, no. 3 (1988), pp. 369-84.

### **Other useful recordings on reserve**

Recordings from archives of Congregation Mishkan Tefila:

*Israel: The Golden Calf*, 1955 transcribed 2001

*Sources of Strength: Rash Hashanah*, 1954 transcribed 2001

*Dedication of Temple*, 1958 transcribed 2001

*Rabbi Kazis*, 1953 (topics: Israel, Arabs, the UN – also includes music of service)

*Rabbi Kazis* 1952 (topic: What Does Chunukah Mean to Us – also includes music)

*Excerpts of speeches and music*, June 1957

### **Xeroxed materials on reserve**

Various sheet music from Congregation Mishkan Tefila

Various correspondence and notes from Congregation Mishkan Tefila

Various items from the archives of Congregation Mishkan Tefila

Notes on panel discussion with Jonathan Sheffer, Bernstein: The Harvard Years 1935-39. Harvard, Office for the Arts, February 1, 1999.

Humphrey Burton, “Interview with Leonard Bernstein”, “My Musical Childhood,” 15 September 1986. Bernstein Collection, Library of Congress.

Various authors, *Congregation Mishkan Tefila 1858-1983* (private publication).

## Bernstein in Boston: Timeline

[Non Boston/Massachusetts events are in a smaller font. Most of the information below comes from: Jack Gottlieb, *Leonard Bernstein: A Complete Catalogue of his Works* (1998) and Humphrey Burton, *Leonard Bernstein* (1994). We are grateful to these authors for providing a foundation for our seminar's work.]

<b>Year</b>	<b>Age</b>	
1918		Born August 25, Lawrence, MA. Soon returned with parents to home in Mattapan, MA. Named Louis, but known by family as Leonard.
1920	2	Bernstein family moved to Allston, MA.
1923	5	Family moved to Roxbury: over next 6 years lived on Abbotsford St, Crawford St, Brookledge St, Schuyler St, and Pleasanton St.. Samuel Bernstein Hair Company founded.
1928	10	First piano lessons with Frieda Karp.
1930	12	graduated William Lloyd Garrison Grammar School, Roxbury.
1931	13	Bar Mitzvah, Congregation of Mishkan Tefila, Roxbury. Piano lessons with Susan Williams, NEC.
1932	14	Family moved to newly built house 85 Park Ave., Newton; also purchased house in a summer colony, 17 Lake Ave., Sharon; family joined Temple Adath Sharon. Piano lessons begin with Heinrich Gebhard and his assistant, Helen Coates. May: attended first orchestra concert - Arthur Fielder and Boston Pops (benefit for Palestine trade union movement).
1933	15	Fall: bought BSO subscription and began attending regularly.
1934	16	May 14: appeared as pianist in Grieg piano concerto with Boston Public School Orchestra, Roxbury High School.
1935	16	Graduated Boston Latin.
	17	Officially changed his name to Leonard. Fall: Began at Harvard, Wigglesworth House.
1936	18	Moved to Eliot House, Harvard.
1937	19	Summer job as music counselor at Camp Onata, outside Pittsfield, MA: met Adolph Green there; produced <i>The Pirates of Penzance</i> and Gershwin's <i>Of Thee I Sing</i> .

		October: professional debut in Ravel's piano concerto with the State Symphony Orchestra at Sanders Theatre, Harvard. Fall: Met Aaron Copland, for whom he played Copland's <i>Piano Variations</i> .
1938	20	Music Editor for <i>Harvard Advocate</i> ; wrote criticism for <i>Modern Music</i> .
1939	20	April 21, first appearance as a conductor, leading his own incidental score to <i>The Birds</i> , at Sanders Theatre. May 27, directed and performed, from the piano, Blitzstein's <i>The Cradle Will Rock</i> with Harvard Dramatic Club. Blitzstein attended performance. Submitted senior thesis, "The Absorption of Race Elements into American Music." June 22, graduated Harvard, <i>cum laude</i> .
1940	22	Spent first summer, as a student of Serge Koussevitzky, at Berkshire Music Center, Lenox, MA. Began studies with Fritz Reiner at the Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia.
1941	22	Bernstein family moved year-round to Sharon house. Received diploma from Curtis Institute.
1942	23	April 21, premiere of <i>Sonata for Clarinet and Piano</i> , Institute of Modern Art, Boston (David Glazer and LB performing)
1943	24 25	August 24, premiere of <i>I Hate Music</i> , Public Library, Lenox, MA. (Jennie Tourel and LB) August 25, named Asst. Conductor of Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York (later NY Philharmonic).
1944	26	December 28, premiere of <i>On the Town</i> , Adelphi Theater, New York City
1945	27	Began 3-year directorship of New York City Symphony.
1949	30 31	April 8, premiere of <i>The Age of Anxiety</i> , Symphony no. 2, Boston. December 2, led premiere of Messiaen's <i>Turaganlila Symphony</i> , BSO.
1951	32 33	Became head of orchestra and conducting departments of Berkshire Music Center (through 1955). Became Professor of Music at Brandeis University, MA (through 1954).
1952	33	June, Conducted premiere of his <i>Trouble in Tahiti</i> at Brandeis University; also conducted the premiere of Marc Blitzstein's translation of Weill's <i>The Threepenny Opera</i> .
1953	33 34	February 26, premiere of <i>Wonderful Town</i> , Winter Garden, New York City June 13, led American premiere of Poulenc's <i>Les Mamelles e Tiresias</i> , Brandeis University.
1954	35	<i>On the Waterfront</i> released by Columbia Pictures, score by LB. First <i>Omnibus</i> television broadcast, on the sketches for Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, 1 <sup>st</sup> movement.

1956	39	Premiere of <i>Candide</i> , New York City.
1957	39	Premiere of <i>West Side Story</i> , New York City.
1958	39 40	Commenced 11-year period as Music Director of New York Philharmonic. Began televised Young People's Concerts with New York Philharmonic.
1959	41	First book published, <i>The Joy of Music</i> .
1963	45	Premiere of <i>Kaddish</i> , Symphony no. 3, in Tel Aviv, Israel.
1973	55	November 9, delivered first of 6 lectures titled <i>The Unanswered Question</i> as the Charles Eliot Norton Professor of Poetry at Harvard. Published as a book in February 1976.
1990		Died October 14, New York.