



2013 - 2014

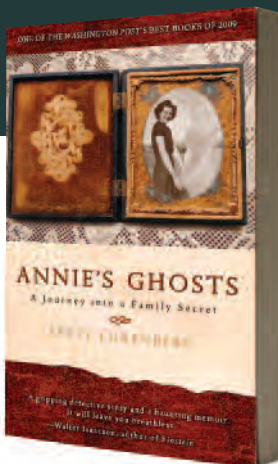
MICHIGAN  
HUMANITIES  
COUNCIL

GREAT  
MICHIGAN  
READ



**Annie's Ghosts:  
A Journey into a  
Family Secret**

*Steve Luxenberg*



## WHAT IS THE GREAT MICHIGAN READ?

This reading initiative aims to connect us as Michiganians by exploring our history, our present, and our future as discussed in a single literary title. The program is intended for young adults to senior citizens with broad goals of making literature more accessible and appealing while also encouraging residents to learn more about our state and individual identities.

### WHAT IS THE GREAT MICHIGAN READ?

The Michigan Humanities Council's Great Michigan Read is a book club for the entire state. With a statewide focus on a single book – *Annie's Ghosts: A Journey into a Family Secret* by Steve Luxenberg – it aims to connect us as Michiganians by deepening our understanding of our state, our society, and our history.

### WHY ANNIE'S GHOSTS?

*Annie's Ghosts* is part memoir, part detective story, and part history. Employing his skills as a journalist while struggling to maintain his empathy as a son, author Steve Luxenberg pieces together the story of his mother's motivations, his aunt's unknown life, and the times in which they lived. His search takes him to imperial Russia and Depression-era Detroit, through the Holocaust in Ukraine and the Philippine war zone, and back to the hospitals where Annie and many others languished in anonymity.

*Annie's Ghosts* is a story about family secrets, personal journeys, genealogy, mental disability and illness, poverty, and immigration. It is a story of reframing one's self-understanding once a family secret is revealed, providing insight into how our identities are shaped by learning something shockingly new about our family history.

### HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE?

Pick up a copy of *Annie's Ghosts* and supporting materials at Meijer, your local library, or your favorite book-seller – or download the e-book. Read the book, share and discuss it with your friends, and participate in Great Michigan Read activities in your community and online.

Register your library, school, company, or book club and receive copies of reader's guides, teacher's guides, bookmarks, and other informational materials at no cost. Nonprofit organizations – including schools and libraries – may apply for discussion kits, which include free copies of *Annie's Ghosts*.

For more details, including a calendar of events, additional resources, and to register your organization, visit [www.michiganhumanities.org](http://www.michiganhumanities.org).

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### GET CONNECTED & FOLLOW US!

Join the Michigan Humanities Council Facebook group, or follow @mihumanities (#greatMIread) on Twitter.



**A SPECIAL THANKS:** The Michigan Humanities Council is grateful to the following individuals for their assistance with the reader's guide: C. Patrick Babcock, Public Policy Associates // Bill Castanier, literary historian // Jim Dwyer, collector of old photos // Carol Holden, Michigan Department of Community Health // Jo Johnson, Westland Historical Commission and Friends of Eloise // Cynthia Kelly, Michigan Department of Community Health // Steve Luxenberg // Anna Pegler-Gordon, Michigan State University // Mark Reinstein, Mental Health Association in Michigan // Kris Rzepczynski, Archives of Michigan // Charles Silow, Program for Holocaust Survivors and Families

# ANNIE'S GHOSTS

## AND AUTHOR STEVE LUXENBERG



Steve Luxenberg. ©The Washington Post

# Q&A

## WITH STEVE LUXENBERG

### STEVE LUXENBERG

Steve Luxenberg, a Washington Post associate editor, has worked for 38 years as a newspaper editor and reporter. Post reporters working with Steve have won two Pulitzer Prizes for explanatory journalism.

Steve grew up in Detroit, where *Annie's Ghosts* primarily takes place. He attended Detroit public schools, including Henry Ford High School. He and his wife, Mary Jo Kirschman, a former school librarian, live in Baltimore. They have two adult children.

*Annie's Ghosts* was a Washington Post Best Book of 2009 and a Michigan Notable Book in 2010. Following the publication of *Annie's Ghosts*, Steve was invited to give the 10th annual Horace W. Davenport Lecture in the Medical Humanities, sponsored by the University of Michigan's Center for the History of Medicine.



### ANNIE'S GHOSTS

*Two sisters, born two years apart to immigrant parents, grow up in Depression-era Detroit. One—Beth, my mother—escapes eight years of low-paying jobs and her family's walk-up apartment by marrying and moving away from the neighborhood that she equates with broken promises and broken lives.*

*The other sister? She was my mother's secret.*

*Annie's Ghosts is their story, as best as I could unearth it.*

—Steve Luxenberg

### How did you approach writing *Annie's Ghosts*?

I saw *Annie's Ghosts* as a story about a search, about putting myself in someone else's place, about whether the truth can be found, and how to navigate the distortions that memory imposes on the truth. It seemed natural to write the story in the first person, as part memoir and part history, while separating my memories from those of the people I found and interviewed.

### As you got deeper in your research, what was the biggest surprise you encountered?

I never thought I'd find so many secrets, with so many levels and implications—and not just in my own family. In retrospect, I'm not sure why I wasn't prepared for that. I suppose it seems obvious that one secret begets other secrets.

The difficulty of getting Annie's records also was a surprise. I had no idea that a family member would have such trouble seeking information about someone long dead. I think we need to revisit our privacy laws, and make sure that they don't prevent us from telling our own history or, most important, learning about past medical issues that could affect future generations in the family.

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### What is the story's most compelling lesson for today?

The power of secrecy cannot be underestimated. For many families, secrets can be a destructive force. They can affect generations long after the secret is created. I don't want anyone to believe that we need to live our lives like open books, but if a secret is harming the secret keeper, if carrying that secret is causing the secret keeper pain, then my rule of thumb is to release the secret. My mother would have been a much happier person if she had released her secret.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**  
[www.steveluxenberg.com](http://www.steveluxenberg.com)

# FAMILY SECRETS AND PERSONAL IDENTITIES

Family secrets take many forms and are discovered in various ways – through a slip in conversation, by a family member doing genealogical research, through a treasure trove of old letters, or even through social media.

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Family secrets take many forms and are discovered in various ways – through a slip in conversation, by a family member doing genealogical research, through a treasure trove of old letters, or even through social media.

Family secrets are kept for various reasons and often have unintended consequences, especially for later generations. *Annie's Ghosts'* author Steve Luxenberg notes, "Shame is often the reason why many people create and keep a secret. Shame is a terribly destructive emotion. If we could avoid shame, we would all be better off."

**"Shame is often the reason why many people create and keep a secret. Shame is a terribly destructive emotion. If we could avoid shame, we would all be better off."** STEVE LUXENBERG

Secrets and their discovery can powerfully shape our identities. Steve Luxenberg states, "Identity along with secrecy is one of the overarching themes of the book. My mom took on a new identity, reinvented herself as the girl who grew up as an only child after her sister Annie went into the institution. Annie lost her identity when she went to Eloise, essentially becoming anonymous. In trying to reconstruct their stories, and the times in which they lived, I had to reinterpret my own identity – and confront how my mom's secret-keeping defined me and my understanding of my family."

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### HAVE? HOW?

*Have you discovered something unexpected about your family?*

*If so, how did it shape your self-understanding?*



### LETTER TO STEVE'S MOM

"Darling precious angel,

*I'm ashamed to say this darling. I'm not making a very good soldier. It's getting me down dear and I'm going to pieces. I just can't take it...it's impossible to take all that's dished out. They just don't seem to have any heart. I'm being worked 18-20 hours a day, and every nite lying in bed I shed a tear. I just can't help it. Perhaps I'm not a man—at least in the army way... I doubt whether I'll ever be the same where and if I return to you."*

*"Precious, if it's all at possible in any way regardless of price—get me out of this—if I stay much longer I'll be in the insane asylums. I know I shouldn't be saying this—I can't help it. I know once and for all I won't be able to take 17 weeks of this hell. Please, darling, do whatever you can—I really don't know what you'll be able to do—do something—please—please. Don't get upset as I know you probably will be—control yourself as much as you can and try and see if there is anyway for me to get out of this mess. Even if you have to write the president—I mean it..."*

February 2, 1944, Steve's Dad at Camp Wolters, writing to Steve's Mom in Detroit

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Broyard, Bliss. *One Drop: My Father's Hidden Life: A Story of Race and Family Secrets*. New York: Little Brown, 2007.

Cohen, Deborah. *Family Secrets: Shame and Privacy in Modern Britain*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

# LOST FAMILY MEMBERS

Once we find out about a lost family member, we often feel compelled to find them or find out about them. *Annie's Ghosts* recounts Steve Luxenberg's journey to learn about his Aunt Annie.



Men at Eloise. Courtesy of Westland Historical Commission

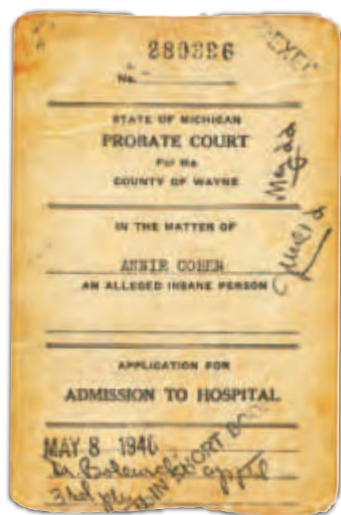
## LOST FAMILY MEMBERS

After her parents died, Annie Cohen was left alone in Eloise Hospital. She was essentially lost to future generations of her family.

Her nephew, author Steve Luxenberg, learns that this is not uncommon. A state employee speculated that there were thousands of people who were institutionalized and forgotten.

There are many ways in which family members were lost in the past: in psychiatric institutions; in Indian boarding schools; via immigration to another country.

**There are many ways in which family members were lost in the past: in psychiatric institutions; in Indian boarding schools; via immigration to another country.**



### ADMISSION RECORD

**Annie Cohen, an alleged insane person 5/8/40**

### DISCUSSION POINTS

#### DO? HOW? IF?

Do you have family members that were lost but are now found?

How did you find out about them?

If they are still living, have you been able to connect with them?

If they are deceased, what do you wish you could ask them?

There are many ways in which family members are lost today: to the streets; to prisons; to addiction; to societal and family shunning.

Once we find out about a lost family member, we often feel compelled to find them or find out about them. *Annie's Ghosts* recounts Steve Luxenberg's journey to learn about his Aunt Annie.



### PIECES FROM THE PAST

*"To understand my mother's reasons for hiding her sister's existence, to learn as much as I could about my secret aunt, I was trying to reconstruct the world as Mom and Annie knew it in 1940, the year of Annie's institutionalization for mental illness at Eloise Hospital outside Detroit. To see what Mom saw, I had to find the people who lived in her apartment building, or went to her school, or listened to her account of what had happened."*  
-Steve Luxenberg

Only two of the  
**7,441**  
graves at Eloise have markers with names on them. The rest only have numbers.

**"As I try to understand my mom's reasons for hiding her sister's existence, readers have a front-row seat to the reality of growing up poor in America during the 1920s and 1930s, at a time when the nation's asylums had a population of 400,000 and growing."** STEVE LUXENBERG

# PORTRAITS OF HONOR: OUR MICHIGAN HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

Portraits of Honor cherishes and honors each and every Michigan survivor. For so long, Holocaust survivors have not been appreciated for what they endured and for what they have gone on to accomplish in their lives after the war.

## OUR MICHIGAN HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

New research is teaching us more about the scope of the Holocaust. On March 1, 2013, *The New York Times* reported that researchers at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., have now cataloged 42,500 Nazi ghettos and camps that existed throughout Europe from 1933 to 1945. An estimated 15-20 million people died or were imprisoned in the documented sites.

After the Holocaust, some survivors immigrated to the U.S.; many of those came to Michigan. The Program for Holocaust Survivors and Families, a service of Jewish Senior Life of Metropolitan Detroit, has created an interactive educational exhibit, Portraits of Honor: Our Michigan Holocaust Survivors, to document the lives of our Michigan Holocaust Survivors for education and posterity. The exhibit is housed at the Holocaust Memorial Center in Farmington Hills and available online at [www.portraitsofhonor.org](http://www.portraitsofhonor.org).



# 42,500

## NAZI CAMPS & GHETTOS

Researchers at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., have now cataloged 42,500 Nazi ghettos and camps that existed throughout Europe from 1933 to 1945.

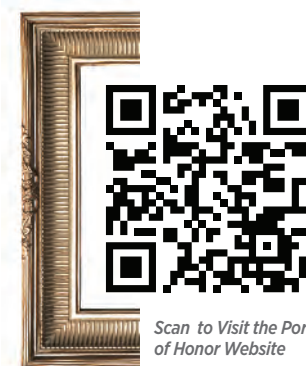
After the Holocaust, some survivors immigrated to the U.S.; many of those came to Michigan.



## ANNA OLIWEK

One of our Michigan Survivors, Anna Oliwek, was instrumental in helping Steve Luxenberg learn more about his family history. You can learn more about Anna by reading *Annie's Ghosts* and from her portrait in Portraits of Honor.

To be included in the permanent exhibit, survivors can contact Dr. Charles Silow at 248.661.2999 or at [csilow@jslmi.org](mailto:csilow@jslmi.org). Families of Michigan Survivors who have passed away are also encouraged to contact Dr. Silow to have their loved ones included in the exhibit.



Scan to Visit the Portraits of Honor Website

# 15-20 Million

An estimated 15-20 million people died or were imprisoned in the documented sites.



Anna Oliwek's postwar identification card. Courtesy of Anna Oliwek.

## SURVIVOR: ANNA OLIWEK

NAME AT BIRTH  
Chayka Shlain  
PLACE AND YEAR OF BIRTH  
Radziwillow, Ukraine, 1923  
NAME OF GHETTO  
Radziwillow  
ESCAPE OR HIDING PLACE  
Novomoskovsk, Russia using a false German identity  
YEAR OF DEATH  
2013

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### DO? DID? HOW?

Do you have family members who left their home country because of persecution?

Did they find solace and protection in their adopted countries?

How can future generations keep their stories alive?

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Lichtblau, Eric. "The Holocaust Just Got More Shocking." *The New York Times*. March 1, 2013.  
[www.portraitsofhonor.org](http://www.portraitsofhonor.org)  
[www.holocaustcenter.org](http://www.holocaustcenter.org)

# GENEALOGY/ FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH



Mom and Marsha, at age 2. Courtesy Luxenberg family.

Before writing *Annie's Ghosts*, author Steve Luxenberg knew little about his family's history. He calls himself a storyteller, not a genealogist, but he taught himself as much as he could about the techniques that genealogists use.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### HAVE? WHAT?

Have you tried to research your family's history?

What was the most interesting thing you learned?

What was the most difficult road-block you encountered?

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Smolenyak, Megan. *Who Do You Think You Are?: The Essential Guide to Tracing Your Family History*. New York: Viking, 2009.

Szucs, Loretto Dennis and Sandra Hargreaves Luebking, eds. *The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy*. 3rd rev. ed. Provo, UT: Ancestry, 2006.

## GENEALOGY/FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH

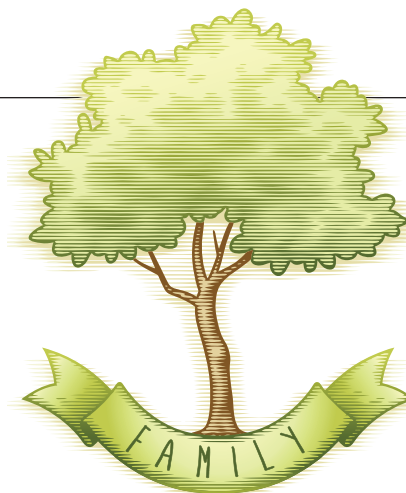
Before writing *Annie's Ghosts*, author Steve Luxenberg knew little about his family's history. He calls himself a storyteller, not a genealogist, but he taught himself as much as he could about the techniques that genealogists use. He began by talking with family members. Then he traced the paper trail that most of our ancestors leave behind: census records, birth and death certificates, old city directories, court and immigration records, photo albums, and much more.

Archives of Michigan Senior Archivist Kris Rzepczynski says that the first step to researching family history is to ask "any and all family members key questions such as who, where, and when?" Before delving into census and other records, he says, it is very helpful to be able to narrow your research by name, location, and time period.

## BEGIN YOUR SEARCH

You can begin your search for census and other records by using online databases such as [familysearch.org](http://familysearch.org) and [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com). These and other resources are available to the public at the Archives of Michigan in Lansing. Online databases are also available through many public libraries, and for a fee, you can subscribe to them yourself and have access from your home computer.

Available for free at Seeking Michigan ([seekingmichigan.org](http://seekingmichigan.org)), the Archives of Michigan has developed a step-by-step guide to help researchers get started. With the combination of onsite research at archives and libraries, online research at subscription databases, and the network of local genealogical societies across the state, exploring your family history has never been easier.



Discover your family history – start your family tree – who knows what hidden family secrets you might uncover.

Before delving into census and other records, it is very helpful to be able to narrow your research by name, location, and time period.



### ANNIE'S BIRTH RECORD

Born: April 27, 1919  
Died: August 7, 1972

## WHERE TO BEGIN YOUR SEARCH



### CYNDI'S LIST

[www.cyndislist.com](http://www.cyndislist.com)

An excellent starting point for online research.



### FAMILY SEARCH

[www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

This free website has an impressive array of records from across the world.



### SEEKING MICHIGAN

[www.seekingmichigan.org](http://www.seekingmichigan.org)

The free, digital platform for the Archives of Michigan.



### ANCESTRY.COM

[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

Access billions of genealogy records including Census, SSDI & Military records.

## GET STARTED

Online databases are also available through many public libraries, and for a fee, you can subscribe to them yourself and have access from your home computer.

# MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN MICHIGAN: 1841-2013

As Michigan's general population grew, so did its population of citizens experiencing mental illness. The state recognized its responsibility to care for those experiencing mental illness, opening the Michigan Asylum for the Insane in Kalamazoo in 1859. As the need for mental health care grew, additional facilities opened.



**BRIDGET "BIDDY" HUGHES**

Eloise's first patient, admitted in 1841. She remained there until her death 54 years later in 1895.

## MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN MICHIGAN: 1841-2013

The history of mental health care in Michigan begins in 1841 when Bridget "Biddy" Hughes was judged legally insane and admitted to the Wayne County Poor House. As Michigan's general population grew, so did its population of citizens experiencing mental illness. The state recognized its responsibility to care for those experiencing mental illness, opening the Michigan Asylum for the Insane in Kalamazoo in 1859. As the need for mental health care grew, additional facilities opened.

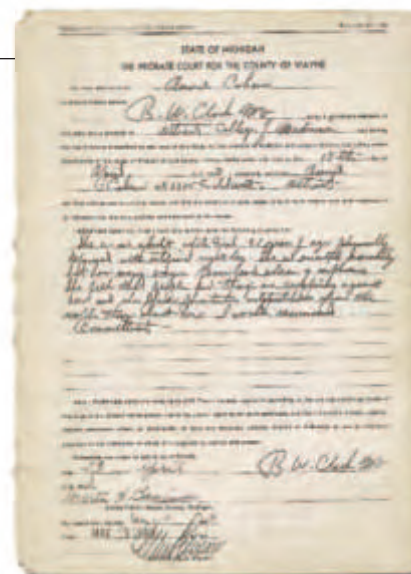
By the mid-1950s, more than "20,000 Michiganians with mental illness were residing in state- or county-operated psychiatric facilities" (Michigan Mental Health Commission Final Report, Appendix B, 13).

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Author Unknown. *An Historical Outline of the Beginnings and Development of Michigan Institutions for the Insane and Similar Dependents*. Archived at the Library of Michigan. 1939.

Michigan Department of Community Health. *Combating Stigma Within the Michigan Mental Health System: A Toolkit for Change*. 2011.

Michigan Mental Health Commission. *Final Report*. 2004.



### PHYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATE -ALLEGED INSANE PERSON

"She is an adult white girl 21 years of age physically deformed with artificial right leg. She is oriented normally but has many vague fears and ideas of influences. She felt that people and things are conspiring against her and she places phantastic interpretations upon the simple things about her. I would recommend commitment."

From B.W. Clark's affidavit for Annie Cohen, 1940

In 1963, the passage of the Michigan Community Mental Health Services Act (Public Act 54) empowered each of the state's counties to establish and administer community mental health services. In 1974, the passage of the Michigan Mental Health Code (Public Act 258) established the principle of "least restrictive setting," which solidified the trend of deinstitutionalization. As a result of deinstitutionalization, the inpatient census in public psychiatric hospitals fell to 5,000 by 1975 (Michigan Mental Health Commission Final Report, Appendix B, 15). Since 1996, person-centered planning has been required by the Michigan Mental Health Code.

Currently, the Michigan Department of Community Health maintains four state psychiatric hospitals (in Westland, Caro, Kalamazoo, and Saline) and one state psychiatric facility for children and adolescents (in Northville). In 2013, Michigan's state psychiatric bed capacity totaled 1,017. At the same time, 46 Community Mental Health Service Programs serve all 83 counties in Michigan.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### HAVE? HOW?

How have understandings of mental disability, mental illness, and mental health changed over time?

How have these understandings shaped the provision of mental health services?



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# ELOISE HOSPITAL

1832-1984



**The Wayne County Poor House – Eloise’s progenitor – was founded in 1832, five years before Michigan became a state.**

*From cabinets at Eloise. Credit Elizabeth G. Conley, 2008.*

## ELOISE HOSPITAL: 1832-1984

The Wayne County Poor House – Eloise’s progenitor – was founded in 1832, five years before Michigan became a state. Its original property, located at Gratiot and Mt. Elliott avenues in Hamtramck Township, deteriorated quickly. In 1834, 280 acres were purchased in Nankin Township, now the City of Westland, for a new poorhouse. In 1839, 35 people were transferred to the new location.

The name Eloise is derived from the name of the post office established at the Poor House in 1894. The U.S. Postal Service required that post offices have original names—Eloise was named after the postmaster’s four-year-old daughter.

Eloise, like many of its peer institutions, developed into a “self-supporting community with its own police and fire department, railroad and trolley stations, bakery, amusement hall, laundries, and a powerhouse” (Ibbotson 7). Eloise also had its own farm, including “barns, a piggery, root cellars, a tobacco curing building, and greenhouses” (Ibbotson 7).

At its peak during the Great Depression, Eloise occupied 902 acres and housed 10,000 patients (Ibbotson 8).

Farm operations ceased in 1958. Some of the larger buildings were vacated in 1973. The general hospital closed in 1984.

Today, four buildings remain (two of which are habitable) on a small parcel of land.



*Namesake of Eloise Hospital. Courtesy Westland Historical Commission*

**Eloise, like many of its peer institutions, developed into a “self-supporting community with its own police and fire department, railroad and trolley stations, bakery, amusement hall, laundries, and a powerhouse.”**



*From Top: Cannery Employees; Music Therapy; Sleeping Quarters at Eloise. Courtesy Westland Historical Commission. Bottom: Eloise today.*

# 902

**Eloise occupied 902 acres, and also had its own farm, including “barns, a piggery, root cellars, a tobacco curing building, and greenhouses.”**

# 10,000

**At its peak during the Great Depression, Eloise housed 10,000 patients.**

# 1984

**Farm operations ceased in 1958. Some of the larger buildings were vacated in 1973. The general hospital closed in 1984.**

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Clark, Alvin C. *A History of the Wayne County Infirmary, Psychiatric, and General Hospital Complex at Eloise, Michigan: 1832-1982.*

Ibbotson, Patricia. *Eloise: Poorhouse, Farm, Asylum, and Hospital 1839-1984.* Chicago: Arcadia, 2002.

[www.cityofwestland.com/historicalcommission](http://www.cityofwestland.com/historicalcommission)

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### WHAT?

*What do you think it was like to live at Eloise?*

*What would it be like to visit Eloise?*

### LITTLE ELOISE

*The name Eloise is derived from the name of the post office established at the Poor House in 1894. The U.S. Postal Service required that post offices have original names—Eloise was named after the postmaster’s four-year-old daughter.*

# PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS

## PUBLICLY OWNED IN MICHIGAN -SERVING ADULTS

### DISCUSSION POINTS

**HOW?**

Historically, how were Michigan's mentally ill children served?

How are they served now?

How were and are persons with developmental disabilities served?

### MICHIGAN PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS

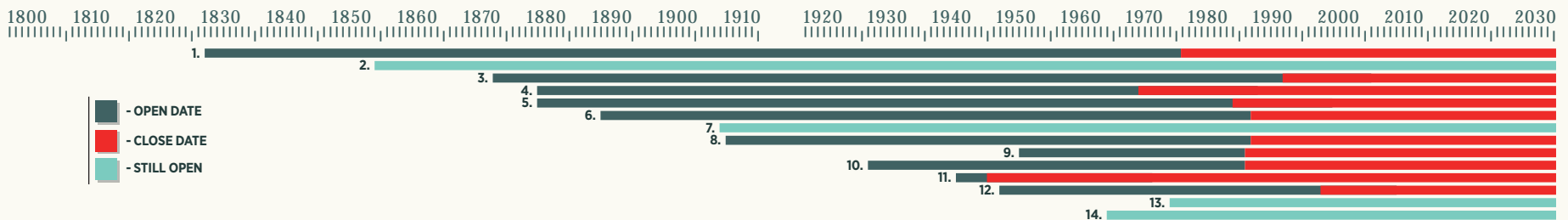
1. Eloise Hospital	1832-1984
2. *Kalamazoo State Hospital	1859-
3. Pontiac State Hospital/Clinton Valley Center	1878-1997
4. Ionia State Hospital for the Criminally Insane	1885-1974
5. Traverse City State Hospital	1885-1989
6. Newberry State Hospital	1895-1992
7. *Michigan State Hospital for Epileptics/Caro Regional Mental Health Center	1914-
8. Detroit Psychiatric Institute (served both adults and children)	1915-1997
9. Lafayette Clinic	1955-1992
10. Ypsilanti State Hospital	1931-1991
11. Sault Ste. Marie Hospital	1945-1950
12. Northville Psychiatric Hospital	1952-2003
13. *Walter Reuther Psychiatric Hospital	1979-
14. *Center for Forensic Psychiatry	1969-

Currently, 46 Community Mental Health Service Programs serve all 83 counties in Michigan.

\*still open; all other publicly owned and operated psychiatric hospitals listed here have been closed



### FACILITY OPEN & CLOSE TIMELINE



# IMMIGRATION & MIGRATION TO MICHIGAN

The growth of the auto industry in the 20th century brought a new wave of immigrants to Michigan, including Arabs, Poles, Russians, Hungarians, Romanians, and Greeks. Joining them were African Americans from the south and whites from southern Appalachia.



## DISCUSSION POINTS

### HOW? WHAT?

How do you connect to your ethnic heritage?

What does it mean to you?

ROUGHLY  
**14,000**  
YEARS AGO

“The original settlers of Michigan were the Paleo-Indians,” descendants of people who crossed the Bering Strait from Asia roughly 14,000 years ago.

## IMMIGRATION & MIGRATION TO MICHIGAN

“The original settlers of Michigan were the Paleo-Indians,” descendants of people who crossed the Bering Strait from Asia roughly 14,000 years ago (Glazier and Helweg 19). Between 1000 BCE and 1650 CE, the Ojibwa (Chippewa), Ottawa, and Potawatomi migrated to Michigan from the eastern seaboard, settling in the upper and lower peninsulas (Clifton, Cornell, and McClurken v).

In the 17th century, “the French were the first Europeans to come to Michigan” as explorers and traders (Glazier and Helweg 22; Dunbar and May 17).



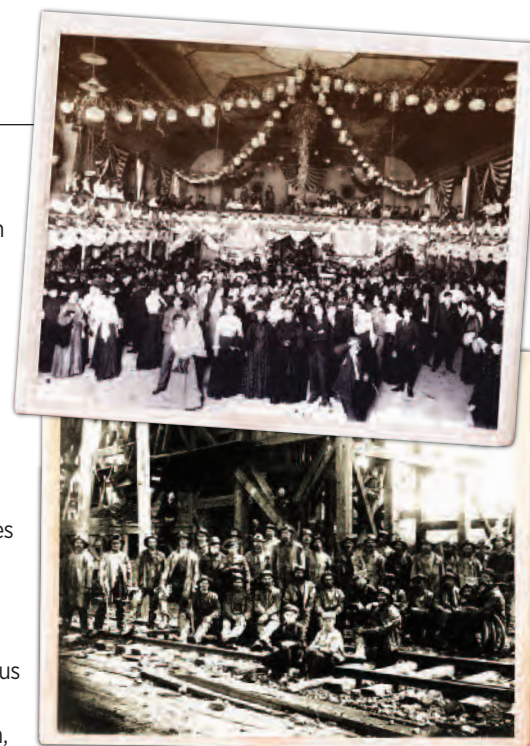
The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 brought migrants from within the United States to Michigan. “Thousands of people from New England, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Canada arrived by steamship in Detroit to take up residence in the Michigan Territory” (Glazier and Helweg 24).

In the 1830s and 1840s, freed slaves migrated north to Michigan, often settling in rural Cass County (Dunbar and May 243).

The 19th century also saw numerous ethnic groups – Swedes, Finns, Dutch, Norwegians, Irish, Cornish, Italians, Chinese, and Canadians flow into Michigan to work in its lumber, mining, and agricultural industries.

The growth of the auto industry in the 20th century brought a new wave of immigrants to Michigan, including Arabs, Poles, Russians, Hungarians, Romanians, and Greeks. Joining them were African Americans from the south and whites from southern Appalachia (Frazer 712; Hassoun 33; Glazier and Helweg 70).

After the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act ended racial discrimination in immigration policy, immigrants increasingly came from Latin America, Asia, and Africa.



In 2011, 11.4 percent of Michigan’s immigrants were born in Mexico, 8 percent in India, and 6.4 percent in Canada (“Michigan Fact Sheet”).

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

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Dunbar, Willis F. and George S. May. *Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995.

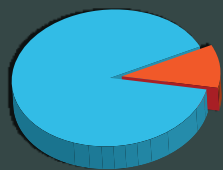
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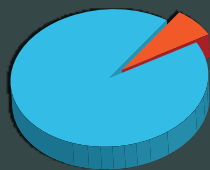
Hassoun, Rosina J. *Arab Americans in Michigan*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2005.

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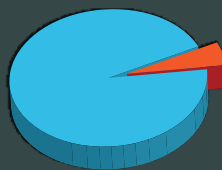
## TODAY'S MICHIGAN IMMIGRANTS



**11.4%**  
BORN IN MEXICO



**8%**  
BORN IN INDIA



**6.4%**  
BORN IN CANADA

After the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act ended racial discrimination in immigration policy, immigrants increasingly came from Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

# JEWISH IMMIGRATION & MIGRATION TO MICHIGAN 1761-1924

The Michigan Central Railway facilitated Jewish settlement in southern Michigan. Jews also traveled by foot, horse and wagon, river steamer, and train to the lumbering areas of mid-Michigan.



Jewish entrepreneurs ventured far and wide in Michigan. The Michigan Central Railway facilitated Jewish settlement in Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Adrian, Jackson, Marshall, and Kalamazoo (Graff in Cantor 23). Jews also traveled by foot, horse and wagon, river steamer, and train to the lumbering areas of Muskegon, Saginaw, Bay City, East Tawas, and Alpena as well as to the mining camps of Houghton-Hancock (Cantor 18-38).



## JEWISH IMMIGRATION & MIGRATION TO MICHIGAN: 1761 - 1924

The first known Jewish settler, a German-born fur trader and supplier, made his way to what is now Mackinaw City in 1761 (Cantor 3). By the 1850s, about a hundred Jewish traders and pioneers, mostly from Prussia and Bavaria, had settled in Michigan (Cantor 6-7). Jews came because of discriminatory laws in Europe, and because of the promise of religious freedom.

Similarly, in the 1880s as conditions in eastern Europe became increasingly oppressive for Polish, Russian, Czech, and Hungarian Jews, immigration to the United States and Michigan increased dramatically. Between 1880 and 1920, the Jewish population in Detroit grew from 1,000 to 35,000 (Bolkosky in Cantor 16).

The first priority for Jewish immigrants was to earn a living. According to Cantor, many Jews chose peddling – fruits, vegetables, clothing, and sundries – because sales presented an immediate opportunity (16-17).

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Bolkosky, Sidney. *Harmony and Dissonance, Voices of Jewish Identity in Detroit, 1914-1967*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991.

Cantor, Judith Levin. *Jews in Michigan*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001.

Graff, George P. "Michigan's Jewish Settlers, Frontiersman in Every Sense of the Word." *Michigan Jewish History*. 10.1 (January 1970): 10-14.

The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan: [michjewishhistory.org](http://michjewishhistory.org).

Migration of Jews to Detroit continued in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century; Detroit's industry was booming, and in 1914 Henry Ford's \$5/day was a significant incentive. By 1924, new restrictive laws caused Jewish immigration to Detroit to cease (Bolkosky 19).

# \$5 PER DAY

Henry Ford's \$5/day in wages was a big incentive to move to Michigan.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### HOW? WHY?

How did your family arrive in Michigan?

Why did they come – was it to flee oppression or to seek an opportunity?



### FRUITS OF LABOR

Many Jewish immigrants earned a living peddling – fruits, vegetables, clothing, and sundries – because sales presented an immediate opportunity.



Immigrant family to Detroit. State Archives of Michigan.

In the 1880s as conditions in eastern Europe became increasingly oppressive for Polish, Russian, Czech, and Hungarian Jews, immigration to the United States and Michigan increased dramatically. Between 1880 and 1920, the Jewish population in Detroit grew from 1,000 to 35,000.



From Left: S.S. Patricia. Credit Edwin Levick; Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, E2LC-USZ62. Dad and Bubba Ide, 1917. Courtesy Luxenberg family. Tillie Cohen. Courtesy Luxenberg family.



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