10/20/2014

On the Jewish Media

Time: 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM
Location: Raytheon Amphitheater, Egan Research Center, 120 Forsyth St
Sponsored By: Presented by the Jewish Studies Program and the Northeastern Humanities Center. Sponsored by the Ruderman Family Foundation.
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The 2014 Morton E. Ruderman Memorial Event

Brooke Gladstone, Host, NPR's *On the Media*

Jane Eisner, Editor-in-Chief, *Forward*

Mark Oppenheimer, Columnist, *New York Times* "Beliefs"

Dina Kraft, School of Journalism, Northeastern University

From "News@Northeastern": "On the Jewish media,"October 22, 2014 by Joe O'Connell

Dina Kraft, associate program coordinator for the Northeastern's School of Journalism, right, speaks during the "On the Jewish Media" panel discussion Monday night while Jane Eisner, editor-in-chief of *Jewish Daily Forward* looks on. The discussion was sponsored by the 2014 Morton E. Ruderman Memorial Lecture. *Photo by Matthew Modoono*

"What makes a story Jewish?" This simple and compelling question kicked off a panel discussion Monday night at the 2014 Morton E. Ruderman Memorial Lecture event titled "On the Jewish Media."

The question was posed by Brooke Gladstone, host of NPR's *On the Media*, who moderated a discussion between Dina Kraft, an associate program coordinator in Northeastern's School of Journalism who worked in *The Associated Press*' Jerusalem bureau; Mark Oppenheimer, a columnist for *The New York Times* and contributing editor of *Tablet*; and Jane Eisner, editor-in-chief of *Jewish Daily Forward*.

"If (a story) illuminates our world, if it touches our soul, if it tells us something that we didn't know, even if that something is discomforting, and it broadens our sense of who we are as Jews, then it's a *Forward* story," Eisner said.

More than 150 people attended the event, which was held in the Raytheon Ampitheater and presented by the **Jewish Studies Program** and the **Northeastern Humanities Center**.

The annual Ruderman Memorial Lecture is supported by the Ruderman Family Foundation, which was created in honor of alumnus Mort Ruderman, **E**'59. The foundation aims to produce and promote innovation that fosters inclusion of people with disabilities in the Jewish community and Israel, and to strengthen relationships between Israel and the U.S. Jewish community.

Lori Lefkovitz, the inaugural Ruderman Professor of Jewish Studies, director of the Jewish Studies Program, and director of the Northeastern Humanities Center, said in her welcoming remarks that when planning this year's memorial lecture, the organizers were mindful of the turmoil going on in the world and the importance of journalism during trying times.

"Because people have passionate views on all sides of every issue, and passionate views about press coverage, we hoped that both the Jewish community and the university would want to engage in a serious discussion about media," Lefkovitz explained.

The panelists agreed that the Israel-Gaza conflict that erupted this summer makes this a unique time to be a journalist in the Jewish media. Kraft said the Jewish media story evolved into the social media story, as many people took to the Internet to express opinions about the conflict and its coverage in the media.

"You couldn't open your Facebook page without wanting to immediately close it because there were thousands of screaming voices going back and forth," Kraft said. "I've been planning to contact the Facebook data people and see if there was a spike in de-friending over the summer related to Israel and Palestine."

Having written for both Jewish publications and other religious-affiliated publications, Oppenheimer said not only can you find every point of view in Jewish media, but Jewish media is also the only religious media that really investigates itself.

"The larger Evangelical Christian publications and Roman Catholic publications are not interested in that type of coverage," Oppenheimer said. "The Jewish media is entirely on its own and unique in taking hard coverage of its own community seriously."