

# Florida Humanities Speakers Directory



Engaging Speakers



Compelling Topics



Thought-provoking  
Discussions



## Marcia Jo Zerivitz

*Scholar, Oral Historian*

Marcia Jo Zerivitz, Founding Executive Director, Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU, is a native West Virginian who has lived in Florida for more than half a century. She has been a trailblazer in the American and Floridian Jewish communities serving national, state, and local organizations and has broken the “glass ceiling” as the first woman in many positions. Her focus for the past forty years has been organizing Florida Jewish communities to collect, document, and preserve their history, researching and collating the hidden 250+ years of Florida Jewish history, and creating a state-wide history museum with collections, exhibits, publications, and educational programs. She initiated the legislation for both Florida Jewish History Month (FJHM) each January and Jewish American Heritage Month (JAHM) each May to increase awareness of the contributions of Jews to the quality of life for all. In 2020, her seminal book, *Jews of Florida: Centuries of Stories* was released.

**Contact Information:**  
305-761-5193  
mzerivitz@me.com

### Program Format:

- In-person
- Virtual

## Programs Available

### Jews of Florida: Centuries of Stories

This 60-minute PowerPoint presentation is based on the author’s seminal book, the first comprehensive history of the Jews of Florida from colonial times to the present—a sweeping tapestry of voices spanning centuries. Despite not being officially allowed to live in Florida until 1763, Jewish immigrants escaping expulsions and exclusions were among the earliest settlers. They have been integral to every area of Florida’s growth, from tilling the land and developing early communities to boosting tourism and ultimately pushing mankind into space. You will meet contemporary Floridian Jews—names that are recognized globally—and pioneers who impacted history beginning 257 years ago and possibly in 16th century Florida.

### Antisemitism: Why the Longest Hatred? Images of Hatred in Florida Culture

Why have antisemitism and resulting hate crimes increased during this pandemic? This 60-minute PowerPoint presentation will explain its genesis and tropes. Historically, antisemitism has been the early warning signal of a society in danger. Why? Using degenerate artworks, Marcia Jo Zerivitz will demonstrate the historical background of antisemitism – the virus that mutates with every generation, and the insidious power of imagery in communicating the agenda of hatred, including Christian roots, the modern world and contemporary racist images from Florida culture since the Civil War covering the Klan, Nazism and restrictive covenants.

**Need to reach Florida Humanities?** For Grants, contact Lindsey Morrison at [lmorrison@flahum.org](mailto:lmorrison@flahum.org), for Florida Talks, contact Lisa Lennox at [lennox@flahum.org](mailto:lennox@flahum.org). For more information about the Florida Humanities Speakers Directory, visit <https://floridahumanities.org/speakers>.

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