

# New Jewish FEMINISM



Probing the Past,  
Forging the Future

Edited by Rabbi Elyse Goldstein

Foreword by Anita Diamant

*For People of All Faiths, All Backgrounds*

**JEWISH LIGHTS Publishing**

Woodstock, Vermont

# CONTENTS

Foreword by Anita Diamant . . . . .	xi
Acknowledgments . . . . .	xv
Introduction . . . . .	xix

## **PART I Women and Theology** 1

---

Calling All Theologians JUDITH PLASKOW, PhD . . . . .	3
Major Trends in Jewish Feminist Theology <i>The Work of Rachel Adler, Judith Plaskow, and Rebecca Alpert</i> RABBI DONNA BERMAN, PhD . . . . .	12
To Her We Shall Return <i>Jews Turning to the Goddess, the Goddess Turning to Jews</i> RABBI JILL HAMMER, PhD . . . . .	22
Metaphors of God RABBI KARYN D. KEDAR . . . . .	35
Creation Theology <i>Theology for the Rest of Us</i> ELLEN BERNSTEIN . . . . .	42

## **PART II Women, Ritual, and Torah** 55

---

The Hermeneutics of Curiosity <i>On Reclamation</i> RABBI DANYA RUTTENBERG . . . . .	59
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

## Contents

The Politics and Aesthetics of Jewish Women's Spirituality	
LORI HOPE LEFKOVITZ, PhD, AND RABBI RONA SHAPIRO . . . . .	66
The Pink Tallit	
<i>Women's Rituals as Imitative or Inventive?</i>	
RABBI ELYSE GOLDSTEIN . . . . .	81
From Ancient Times to Modern Meaning	
<i>Jewish Women Claim Their Ritual Power</i>	
RABBI GEELA RAYZEL RAPHAEL . . . . .	90
Torah Study "For Women"	
WENDY ZIERLER, PhD . . . . .	102
Transforming Our Stories through Midrash	
RABBI TIRZAH FIRESTONE . . . . .	113
<b>PART III Women and the Synagogue</b>	<b>121</b>
<hr/>	
From the Personal to the Communal	
<i>How Women Have Changed the Rabbinate</i>	
RABBI JACQUELINE KOCH ELLENSON . . . . .	125
The Ascent of the Woman Cantor	
<i>Shira Hamaalot</i>	
CANTOR BARBARA OSTFELD . . . . .	133
Orthodox Women in Rabbinic Roles	
SARA HURWITZ, <i>MADRICHA RUCHANIT</i> (RELIGIOUS MENTOR) . . . . .	144
Feminism and the Transformation of the Synagogue	
RABBI SUE LEVI ELWELL, PhD . . . . .	155
Where Are the Jewish Men?	
<i>The Absence of Men from Liberal Synagogue Life</i>	
RABBI JOSEPH B. MESZLER . . . . .	165
Pacing Change	
<i>The Impact of Feminism on Conservative Synagogues</i>	
ANNE LAPIDUS LERNER, PhD . . . . .	175

Women in the Conservative Synagogue  
 RABBI IRIT PRINTZ . . . . . 186

**PART IV Women in Israel** 195

---

A Thirty-Year Perspective on Women and Israeli Feminism  
 RABBI NAAMAH KELMAN . . . . . 197

Gender in Israeli Liberal Liturgy  
 RABBI DALIA MARX, PhD . . . . . 206

Masorti (Conservative Israeli) Women  
 RABBI EINAT RAMON, PhD . . . . . 218

The First Decade of the Orthodox Women's  
 Revolution in Israel  
*The Case of Kolech*  
 MARGALIT SHILO, PhD . . . . . 227

**PART V Gender, Sexuality, and Age** 239

---

Jewish Feminism, Sexuality, and a Sexual Justice Agenda  
 MARLA BRETTSCHEIDER, PhD . . . . . 241

If the Shoe Doesn't Fit, Examine the Soul  
*Jewish Feminism and Gender Expression*  
 RABBI JANE RACHEL LITMAN . . . . . 250

*Koach Banot (Girl Power)*  
*Talking Feminism with Jewish Teen Girls*  
 BETH COOPER BENJAMIN, EdD, AND JODIE GORDON . . . . . 258

Portrait of the Writer as a Young Feminist  
 RAHEL LERNER . . . . . 273

The Pink Ghetto  
 RUTH ANDREW ELLENSON . . . . . 277

## PART VI Women and the Denominations 283

---

### Orthodoxy and Feminism

IDANA GOLDBERG, PhD. . . . . 287

### The Changing Status of Women in Liberal Judaism

*A Reflective Critique*

RABBI RACHEL SABATH BEIT-HALACHMI . . . . . 297

### Feminism and Halakhah

*The Jew Who (Still) Isn't There*

RABBI HAVIVA NER-DAVID, PhD. . . . . 312

### Feminism and Jewish Law in Conservative Judaism

RABBI GAIL LABOVITZ, PhD . . . . . 323

### Women and the Reconstructionist Movement

RABBI BARBARA PENZNER . . . . . 334

## PART VII Leadership and Social Justice 345

---

### Jewish Women's Leadership for the Twenty-first Century

SHIFRA BRONZNICK. . . . . 347

### Bread, Roses, and Chutzpah

*Jewish Women in American Social Movements*

RABBI JILL JACOBS . . . . . 356

### Women's Right to a World Free of Violence

RABBI LYNN GOTTLIEB. . . . . 369

### Servants before the King

*Raising Up the Healer to Leadership*

RABBI VALERIE JOSEPH AND RABBI ALANA SUSKIN. . . . . 382

### Post-Triumphalism and the New *Haskalah*

ROSIE ROSENZWEIG. . . . . 397

Notes . . . . . 404

Glossary . . . . . 427

Suggestions for Further Reading. . . . . 432