

Not Your Bubbe's Feminism: Making Jewish Feminism Relevant for Today's Teens

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RHSOE Curriculum Guide
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Note: Appendices and additional resources are included directly after the corresponding lesson plan.

Letter to the Educator

Dear Educator,

Thank you for considering using this curriculum! Like me, you believe in the power of teaching our young women to engage with and question the texts, history and practices of Judaism through a feminist lens. This curriculum encourages female Jewish teenagers to think about how their Jewish and female identities intersect and challenge and enhance one another. Regardless of your relationship with the term feminism, a belief in women's self-actualization and the continual project to raise and honor women's voices is key to be successful in implementing this curriculum. Below are some answers to questions you may have about this curriculum:

What do I need to know to be able to teach this curriculum?

I would encourage you to do some pre-reading about Jewish feminism before teaching this curriculum. Rabbi Dr. Rachel Adler's book *Engendering Judaism* offers a thorough rationale for the project of Jewish feminism. *The Torah: A Women's Commentary* is a great basis for gender-based text study. Excerpts from both of these works are found throughout this curriculum. Additionally, a familiarity with sex, gender and sexuality studies and American and Jewish feminism will help you feel more grounded in the content and terminology. To supplement these background readings, this curriculum includes definitions and background information along with suggested readings, websites, and videos. The ideal educator will also have an openness to discussion and self-reflection and appreciation for this challenging and exciting age group of juniors and seniors in high school. There are many places to personalize this curriculum with your interests and passions – I encourage you to make it yours!

How is this curriculum organized?

This guide is organized in five curricular units. Handouts for each lesson are found directly after the lesson itself. Most of the lessons can be completed in 60 minutes, though certain lessons may take longer. Some lessons require students to do preparation work beforehand, but most of the projects that require outside research could take place in class. While unit 1 and unit 5 should open and close the curriculum, the three middle units are relatively interchangeable. The units were written in the order they are organized, but the material can be taught in any order. The lessons within each of these units are intentionally sequenced. I encourage you to create a sequence that works best with your education calendar and students' needs.

How is learning assessed?

Each of the three middle units concludes with an assessment/cumulative activity. These projects can be contracted or expanded based on timing and the interests of the students. These projects are meant to reach beyond the classroom, so I encourage you to work with your supervisors and fellow educators to find moments to share these projects with other classes and groups at your institution.

What if the students or I are uncomfortable with the concept of feminism?

For this curriculum, feminism is defined as the advocacy of women's rights, elevation of female voices, and the belief that female gender/gender identity should not be a limiting factor for opportunities. It does not promote male-bashing or diminish male involvement, but instead this ideology believes that encouraging all experiences and voices to be valued benefits all people. Feminism is both supported and misunderstood in popular culture, so it is important to open this curriculum by creating definitions and a common understanding of the terminology central to this curriculum.

Why is this learning meant for a female-only environment? Shouldn't boys learn about Jewish feminism too?

Absolutely! However, this curriculum is meant to provide a slightly different experience for students by making the class exclusively female. For students who identify as transgender, you should work with the student to decide if this curriculum and educational environment is appropriate and growth-producing for this student. A diversity of gender identity could add another layer of depth and power to this curricular experience. This single-gender environment allows the students to feel safe to share personal experiences that often are missing in co-educational environments. While the students will likely be incredibly diverse otherwise (and are encouraged to bring in these experiences throughout the curriculum), the commonality of gender allows the students to focus in on a characteristic they may not discuss or focus on in other environments. It may be uncomfortable or a tough sell to some students, but I encourage you to push them to try! They may be surprised to learn how much they enjoy engaging with education in this setting. Hopefully, the female students will share their learning with their male classmates and they will push for a similar learning experience for them! The *Shevet Achim* curriculum from Moving Traditions includes great resources to discuss masculinity and growing up male in the Jewish community.

B'hatzlacha! I wish you luck, joy, and curiosity as you embark on the journey of this curriculum. I hope this curriculum offers support in the sacred task of helping students engage in their journeys as women, Jews and emerging leaders.

Julie Bressler
April 2017

Educational Rationale

Despite the great strides towards equality by women in the public and private spheres, the rhetoric surrounding the 2016 presidential election and the backlash against strong female public figures such as Secretary Hillary Clinton indicates that the fight for women's issues and representation is far from over. Even though women and girls have more access than ever before, understanding of the self still varies greatly between the sexes. If you ask a group of seven-year-olds what they want to be when they grow up, an equal number of boys and girls will answer, "President of the United States." By the time this same group reaches age 15, a major gender discrepancy arises and many more teenage boys answer this question affirmatively than teenage girls. Something happens in those eight years. Somehow, the milieu minimizes and questions girls' dreams and self-images. In contemporary American culture, the bombardment of media, social and cultural pressure and public discourse has created an unhealthy environment for teenagers, especially female teenagers. We must do something to fight this reality. This curriculum aims to be one step in the ongoing battle for female self-actualization and empowerment of young Jewish women.

The Jewish community itself experiences unbalanced gender dynamics and has its own history of feminist involvement and action to elevate women's roles and voices. Since the 1970s, various streams of Jewish feminism have worked to move the dial towards a more inclusive and accommodating Jewish community. Rabbi Rachel Adler and Judith Plaskow pushed for change in the Jewish community as much as fellow Jews Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem influenced the secular American conversation. Jewish law inherently includes gender separation, so feminist halakha aims to find space for inclusion and expansion of the definition of obligation to allow women to accept the yolk of the commandment. Political and social Jewish feminisms have pushed and continue to push for increased representation in Jewish leadership, increased awareness of gender-based violence in the Jewish community, and gender inclusivity in prayer language. Jewish feminists worked within and outside of Jewish tradition to broaden the definition of Jewish involvement and dedication. These efforts have expanded the tent of Judaism not only for women but also for other minorities within the Jewish community. The conversations started and pushed by this movement have led to

opportunities for other minority voices also to question traditional Jewish practice that could feel exclusionary. Jewish feminism paved the way for conversations around race, sexuality, accessibility and access within the Jewish world. Despite all of these efforts, Jewish feminism, like most streams of contemporary feminism, remains an unfinished project. The goal of this curriculum is for the students to take their place as the next generation of women who will to make their mark on this endeavor.

To both honor these past efforts and dream of a future Judaism of inclusion and advocacy, I believe Jewish teenage women would benefit from learning about this history, question how their Jewish tradition both influences and challenges their contemporary experiences as women and dream about a future that honors and welcomes diverse female experiences and practices. Even when the Jewish community provides a comfortable growing environment for teenagers, these students eventually move on, most often to college. The ability to feel self-actualized and confident in oneself before entering this new environment that is both pan-denominational and secular is critical to a student's growth and ability to appreciate all a college experience has to offer. To achieve these outcomes, this curriculum guide is designed for students in late high school (ideally juniors and seniors in high school) at a congregational or community-based supplementary education program. This program is designed for a female-only learning environment. While co-ed learning has many benefits, liberal Jewish women benefit from experiencing Jewish life in female-only spaces as well. The opportunity for sharing of experiences and focused intention around honoring female voices and experiences is expressed more easily in these spaces. Strong social and emotional connections between students will enhance their experience of this curriculum and an educator should spend time building community while sharing this content. In weekly hour-long sessions, this curriculum will expose students to experiences of women past and present and the influence of Jewish tradition on various aspects of our lives. Students will compare experiences of women from different periods and locations and use these stories as groundwork to develop their own sense of self as emerging Jewish women. Through traditional text and contemporary literature, the lessons will expose students to the efforts of Jewish feminists to change women's roles and provide opportunities for leadership, self-identification and opportunity expansion.

Ultimately, the Jewish feminism of tomorrow will be defined by the young people of today. At the end of each unit, students will create their own feminist texts that push their own communities or larger Jewish systems to expand the tent of inclusion and honor the diverse perspectives of the class. This curriculum guide will provide a context for the rich and central narratives of Jewish women throughout history and encourage these students to claim the identity of feminists and advocates for social change.

Enduring Understandings

- The role of Jewish women evolves continuously from biblical times until tomorrow.
- Judaism is a feminist religion because women's voices or experiences are often the catalyst for change.
- Jewish values promote self-esteem and self-actualization of young Jewish women.
- By questioning the status quo, Jewish feminism benefits all Jews and enhances Jewish life.
- Jewish feminism expands the tent of inclusion and allows Judaism to be relevant for a larger community of individuals.

Scope and Sequence

Units Outline:

- 1) *Ayshet Chayil - Why do we need Jewish feminism anyway? Through a close text analysis of Ayshet Chayil from Proverbs, students will reflect on the definition of woman of valor past, present and future. This text highlights that women's roles have been discussed and valued since biblical times in the Jewish community.*
 - a. Authentic Assessment (AA): Develop a personal definition of a Woman of Valor based on the Tanakh text and contemporary examples.
- 2) *Models of Inspiration: This unit focuses on examples of biblical and contemporary women who used challenges presented to them as means to change the system or go against the status quo. Women such as Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Shifra & Puah, Zelophehad's Daughters, Miriam, and others will be analyzed for their transformation and inspiration for Jewish women today.*
 - a. AA: Write a children's book about a Jewish woman who makes a change in her community using the values and texts discussed in this unit.
- 3) *Feminism's Influence on Jewish Law/Ritual/Prayer: In this unit, students will learn about the discrepancies between male and female obligation in traditional Jewish law and observance. They will look at feminist halakha and responsa that aim to expand the scope of obligation and inclusion in practice. This unit will also include an exploration of prayer language and look at different blessing formulae that aim to be more gender inclusive.*
 - a. AA: Create a ritual for a liminal moment in a Jewish woman's life that is not traditionally acknowledged. Write your own Nisim Bchol Yom "identity blessings" by incorporating different aspects of identity in prayer and obligation.
- 4) *Sexual Politics in the Jewish Community: From the rape of Dinah to contemporary discussions of rape culture in America, this unit will educate students about the language surrounding sexuality (male, female, and non-binary) and include opportunities for the students to envision a more sex-positive and agency-focused culture around sexuality and relationships.*
 - a. AA: Make a video about rape culture, sex, and sexuality in their community to educate about the need for healthy conversations and agency-building activities.
- 5) *Our Jewish Feminist Platforms: Students will reflect on the learning throughout the curriculum to develop personal Jewish feminist platforms. They will practice reflective feedback as they edit their platforms. The curriculum concludes with both class-based and community-based celebrations to honor the learning and encourage students to pursue future Jewish and feminist activities in their next life stage.*
 - a. AA (Curriculum-wide): Write, edit, and present personal Jewish feminist platforms. These statements will reflect a personal understanding of Jewish feminism and a commitment to continue to pursue these principles after the conclusion of this year of study.

Unit 1: Why Jewish Feminism?

Unit Overview: Through a close text analysis of Ayshet Chayil from Proverbs, students will reflect on the definition of woman of valor past, present and future. This text highlights that women's roles have been discussed and valued since biblical times in the Jewish community.

Unit EUs:

- Feminism influences my life today.
- While organized feminism emerged in the 20th century, Jewish tradition and Jewish individuals have expressed feminist ideas for centuries.
- Jewish feminism engages with feminist principles and applies them to specifically Jewish scenarios and challenges.
- The female ideal continues to evolve from biblical times until today.

Unit EQs:

- What is a woman of valor? How am I a woman of valor?
- How does my definition of valor compare to and differ from the text of Proverbs 31?
- What does Jewish feminism mean to me?
- What world were Jewish feminists responding to?

Unit Goals:

- Provide students with the rationale for why Jewish feminism impacts their lives as liberal Jews.
- Expose students to lesser known Jewish female exemplars.
- Engage students in conversation and reflection about their own definitions of valor, womanhood, femininity and feminism.
- Define and complicate the Jewish definition of a "woman of valor."

Unit Objectives:

- Develop personal definitions of feminism and female valor.
- Comprehend the text of *Ayshet Chayil* and interpret it for different moments of history.
- Teach their classmates about lesser-known influential Jewish women.

Key Terms:

- Ayshet Chayil
- Feminism
- Valor

Lessons:

1. Our Women of Valor
2. How Did We Get Here? American and Jewish Feminism Part One
3. American and Jewish Feminism Part Two
4. Ayshet Chayil – What Was and What is Now

Lesson 1:1: Our Women of Valor

Goals:

- To expose students to the key terms of the unit (feminism, valor, sex, gender, Jewish feminism).
- To teach students how to notice sex and gender as a means to examine the world, our interactions and surrounding culture.

Objectives:

- To develop working definitions of the key terms of the unit.
- To begin to develop personal definitions of “women of valor.”
- To share connections to and separation from their idealized senses of womanhood.

Materials:

- Posterboard, Glue, Markers, Pens
- Magazines
- Post-it Paper
- Post-its
- Computer for Videos
- Question Box/Receptacle to Collect Questions

Set Induction/Opening Activity: Defining Valor

Explain to the students that this entire unit/curriculum is about understanding, complicating and unpacking our understandings of Judaism, womanhood and their intersections. We will dive deep into personal, communal, Jewish and global of womanhood, feminism and more. To begin to reflect on our own comprehensions of these definitions and identities, students will use materials provided to create a version of a vision board about their definition of the concept “woman of valor.” Explain that there is a set of biblical verses traditionally offered by the husband to his wife on Shabbat called “a woman of valor – Ayshet Chayil” that discusses one definition of this term. Before the students dig into that text, they will first identify this concept for themselves.

First, define VALOR for the students (from Merriam-Webster Dictionary): Strength of mind or spirit that enables a person to encounter danger with firmness; personal bravery.

Students will make vision boards that represent their understanding of women of valor. Provide students with magazines and other visual images to use for this project. Encourage students to reflect first on some of the adjectives they would connect to valor. Allow 20-30 minutes in this first lesson and allow students to return to these projects throughout the unit. I suggest allowing for 5-10 minutes at the end of each subsequent lesson for editing/adding/fine-tuning. Let students know they will have more time on this project so they do not feel pressure to finish.

during this first lesson. Explain that they will have time to add on as they complicate and adapt their definition of womanhood and valor as the unit progresses.

Activity: Introduction to Curriculum

Compare these two videos (SNL Herstory Month Video - <http://www.nbc.com/saturday-night-live/video/update-will-fortes-womens-history-month-song/n12741?snl=1>

& United State of Women Video -

<https://www.facebook.com/TheUnitedStateofWomen/videos/929638413837359/> and discuss.

The first video comes from a SNL sketch in 2010 and offers a comical perspective on female heroes and discussions in schools. The second video was released in advance of the International Women's March on January 21, 2017 after the inauguration of President Donald Trump. It features prominent women leaders of that era and discusses a few of the key issues of the day – women's leadership, wage gap, and representation in the public sphere to name a few. The discussion should focus on the messages of the videos, how each represents the cause of women's activism and activity and what each video represents in the public sphere.

Possible Questions:

- What do we see in each video? How are women represented?
- How does the video make you feel?
- Who is the target audience of each video?
- Who speaks in each video? What message(s) does this send?
- What do you think each video aims to express?
- Using these videos, how would you suggest popular culture defines feminism?

Activity: Addressing Feminism Stereotypes

Allow students to write stereotypes or concerns with feminism anonymously (if the class is comfortable speaking these out loud, this can also be led through discussion). Share with students that many individuals, including many women, do not want to be identified as feminists. This may include individuals in the class – that is ok! The goal of this curriculum is to help unpack these terms and personally decide how we would like to identify. While this curriculum believes feminist is a worthwhile and positive identity to own and claim, there is no obligation to claim this term for yourself. Students may engage with this term more as the curriculum goes on and it is important to reflect on the power and challenge of this term throughout the curriculum.

Lead a discussion about breaking down stereotypes. Create a list and, if the class seems apprehensive about the terminology and/or topic, find videos/magazine clips etc that dispel some of these stereotypes in the next class. *See rationale for working definition of feminism for this curriculum.*

Activity: Creating Definitions

Hang large post-its around the room with the words SEX, GENDER, WOMANHOOD, FEMININITY, VALOR (add more of your choice if desired. Define valor as a class even though the individual students have already defined it for themselves). Ask students to write/draw descriptions of these terms on each post-it. After a few minutes, assign students to different post-its and ask them to find the most common 3-5 terms to create a working definition of that term. Share the definitions with the class and work on them until the class agrees with these beginning definitions. Write these definitions on a poster and return to them as the unit progresses.

As a class, define FEMINISM together. Ask each student to write/share their own definition of feminism and then combine these definitions into one. Write these definitions on the board, compare and contrast the definitions. The dictionary defines feminism as “the advocacy of women’s rights on the basis of equality between the sexes.” Make sure the class has a working definition of feminism before moving on to the next activity.

Optional: Use this article or an equivalent - <https://www.bustle.com/articles/121120-11-celebrities-define-feminism-in-their-own-unique-way> as a jumping off point for different popular definitions of feminism. There are many videos and articles that share individuals’ definitions of feminism. Select media and subjects that will interest your students.

For this curriculum, these are the four overarching elements of feminism: Honoring women’s voices, questioning the status quo, honoring the diversity that emerges from questioning, and agency.

Closing Activity: Lingerin Questions/Topics of Interest

Spend a few minutes collecting questions or interest areas from the class related to the intersections of/connections between sex, gender, feminism, womanhood and Judaism. Read through these questions and try to come back to them at various points in the curriculum. Encourage students to keep asking questions throughout to ensure the curriculum meets their needs and interests.

Lessons 1:2 & 1:3: How did we get here? American and Jewish Feminism

Note for Educator: These activities connect to the goals and objectives listed below, and the amount of time for each activity will vary depending on your students. Students with more background in women's history and/or Jewish history will be able to move through these activities more quickly. For those students, I encourage you to have them find their own examples and build their own timelines. For students without much prior knowledge, encourage them to do additional research about the waves of feminism and key leaders in both the American and Jewish Feminist landscapes. Possible figures to investigate include Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, Audre Lorde, Rabbi Rachel Adler, Judith Plaskow, Marcia Falk and more. See bibliography for more figures and suggested reading.

Goals:

- To provide historical context and perspective on the feminist movements.
- To connect feminism and Judaism for students.
- To expose students to pre-organized feminist examples of valuing women's voices in Judaism.

Objectives:

- To explain why learning about Jewish feminism is relevant today.
- To research early examples of counter-cultural Jewish women.
- To differentiate between different moments and waves of feminism.

Materials:

- Appendix 1:2A – American Feminist History Article
- Appendix 1:2B – Examples of Early Jewish Feminism (pass out specific examples to each student)
- Appendix 1:2C – Feminist Quotations (cut into strips and pass out one to each student)
- Appendix 1:2D – Feminism Waves Comparison Graphic Organizer (filled-out table within lesson itself)
- Vision Boards and Supplies

Before teaching this lesson, read Appendix 1:2A and the articles cited below for an overview of the four waves of feminism to help lead the discussions surrounding what is feminism and where is our place in the discussion today.

Activity: Cultural Context

This activity helps students gauge a basic understanding of the different movements in American and Jewish feminism. This activity aims to show students that the definition of feminism and its goals has shifted over time. Use Appendix 1:2A for more information about American Feminism and these articles (<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/american-jewish-feminism-beginnings/#> and <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/jewish-feminism-in-united-states>) for more information about Jewish American Feminism. See Bibliography for

other texts that include historical information about these movements. *Note – these waves are primarily calibrated for American Feminism. Jewish American Feminism has a slightly different timeline, but the main points of each era are shared within this table.*

If helpful, the empty version of this chart is available as Appendix 1:2D and can serve as a graphic organizer as the students uncover this information.

Wave/Era	American Feminism	Jewish American Feminism
1st Wave (late 19th C – 1950s)	Challenges to cult of domesticity, Sojourner Truth, Suffragists	Women leading organizations and have power in private sphere
2nd wave (1960s-1980s)	Women’s roles in other social-consciousness groups, Equal Rights Amendment, women working together, equality to men, public expressions	Access to leadership, opening ordination to women, primarily occurring within Jewish organizations/institutions
3rd wave (1990s – 2010s)	Academic study of sex and gender, intellectualism, reclaiming sexuality as power, feminism as exclusionary term, breaks boundaries	Marriage rights, prayer book adaptations, Orthodox feminism, expanding Jewish feminism to entire community
4th wave (present day)	Intersectionality, elevating female voices as unique, limiting power of patriarchy, minimizing gender binary, reclaiming feminism, back to in your face actions of 2 nd wave	Feminism enlarges tent to include other marginalized Jews, racial diversity, changing language to be more inclusive

Provide students with the table above and discuss. In the discussion, determine that the major difference between early waves of feminism and later waves is about the place of equality versus individuality. Early waves of feminism emphasize getting women in the door and achieving equal access to men. Later waves focus on celebrating women’s differences and the unique qualities of being a woman.

Activity: Debate – Equality or Uniqueness?

Use this major difference (push for equality or valuing uniqueness) between early and later feminism and hold a debate. Split the class in half and ask each group to create an argument for why their version of feminism has a greater impact on their life today. Allow students to use books, personal stories, the articles cited above and other resources at their disposal.

Encourage groups to come up with at least three points to justify their version of feminism. Have the students get creative! Encourage them to present their arguments as poems, raps, interpretive dance or another creative modality. Make sure students are using examples from both American and Jewish Feminism in their arguments.

Ideas:

- Early waves/equality:
 - o People should be judged on ability not sex/gender
 - o Open doors to access, then let people differentiate
 - o Women have as much ability as men
- Later waves/uniqueness:
 - o Women bring a different perspective than men
 - o Women have different experiences that should be highlighted
 - o Valuing women's voices leads to the valuation of other marginalized groups

Activity: What is Jewish about Feminism?

Explain: Jewish feminism emerged officially in the 1960s, but related ideas and unofficial movements have existed since Judaism emerged thousands of years ago.

Ask:

- Why do you think Judaism needs/needed feminism?
- How does our class definition of feminism naturally relate to and/or differ from a Jewish understanding of feminism?

Share examples (Appendix 1:2B) of early versions of Jewish feminism. Divide students into groups and pass out one example to each group. Ask each group to review their example, explore more using internet/library sources and determine the following to present back to the class:

- What was this woman/group reacting to?
- How were her/their actions feminist?
- What is a contemporary equivalent of this scenario/person/story?

Activity: Return to Vision Boards

Give students 10-20 minutes to work on their vision boards, complicating and expanding their definition of women of valor based on their studies about Jewish and American feminism. How does this continued education enhance their understanding of valor? Does it expand or narrow the category for the students?

Closing: Pass out a quotation (Appendix 1:2C) to each student. Ask each to read the quotation and then add a one sentence definition of feminism in Judaism to check comprehension from these lessons. This closing also will help you see which aspects of feminism and women's history connect with your students.

Appendix 1:2A: Helpful Article about the History of Western Feminism¹**Four Waves of Feminism**

By Martha Rampton

This piece was originally published in the Fall 2008 issue of Pacific magazine. Martha Rampton is a professor of history and director of the Center for Gender Equity at Pacific University. Her specialty is the early medieval period with an emphasis on social history and the activities and roles of women. She holds an MA in medieval history from the University of Utah and a doctorate in medieval history from the University of Virginia.

It is common to speak of three phases of modern feminism; however, there is little consensus as to how to characterize these three waves or what to do with women's movements before the late nineteenth century. Making the landscape even harder to navigate, a new silhouette is emerging on the horizon and taking the shape of a fourth wave of feminism.

Some thinkers have sought to locate the roots of feminism in ancient Greece with Sappho (d. c. 570 BCE), or the medieval world with Hildegard of Bingen (d. 1179) or Christine de Pisan (d. 1434). Certainly, Olympe de Gouge (d. 1791), Mary Wollstonecraft (d. 1797) and Jane Austen (d. 1817) are foremothers of the modern women's movement. All of these people advocated for the dignity, intelligence, and basic human potential of the female sex. However, it was not until the late nineteenth century that the efforts for women's equal rights coalesced into a clearly identifiable and self-conscious movement, or rather a series of movements.

The first wave of feminism took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, emerging out of an environment of urban industrialism and liberal, socialist politics. The goal of this wave was to open up opportunities for women, with a focus on suffrage. The wave formally began at the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 when three hundred men and women rallied to the cause of equality for women. Elizabeth Cady Stanton (d.1902) drafted the Seneca Falls Declaration outlining the new movement's ideology and political strategies.

In its early stages, feminism was interrelated with the temperance and abolitionist movements and gave voice to now-famous activists like the African-American Sojourner Truth (d. 1883), who demanded: "Ain't I a woman?" Victorian America saw women acting in very "un-ladylike" ways (public speaking, demonstrating, stints in jail), which challenged the "cult of domesticity." Discussions about the vote and women's participation in politics led to an examination of the differences between men and women as they were then viewed. Some claimed that women were morally superior to men, and so their presence in the civic sphere would improve public behavior and the political process.

¹ Rampton, Martha. "Four Waves of Feminism." *Pacific Magazine (Fall 2008)*.
<https://www.pacificu.edu/about-us/news-events/four-waves-feminism>.

The second wave began in the 1960s and continued into the 90s. This wave unfolded in the context of the anti-war and civil rights movements and the growing self-consciousness of a variety of minority groups around the world. The New Left was on the rise, and the voice of the second wave was increasingly radical. In this phase, sexuality and reproductive rights were dominant issues, and much of the movement's energy was focused on passing the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution guaranteeing social equality regardless of sex.

This phase began with protests against the Miss America pageant in Atlantic City in 1968 and 1969. Feminists parodied what they held to be a degrading "cattle parade" that reduced women to objects of beauty dominated by a patriarchy that sought to keep them in the home or in dull, low-paying jobs. The radical New York group called the Redstockings staged a counter pageant in which they crowned a sheep as Miss America and threw "oppressive" feminine artifacts such as bras, girdles, high-heels, makeup and false eyelashes into the trashcan.

Because the second wave of feminism found voice amid so many other social movements, it was easily marginalized and viewed as less pressing than, for example, Black Power or efforts to end the war in Vietnam. Feminists reacted by forming women-only organizations (such as NOW) and "consciousness raising" groups. In publications like "The BITCH Manifesto" and "Sisterhood is Powerful," feminists advocated for their place in the sun. The second wave was increasingly theoretical, based on a fusion of neo-Marxism and psycho-analytical theory, and began to associate the subjugation of women with broader critiques of patriarchy, capitalism, normative heterosexuality, and the woman's role as wife and mother. Sex and gender were differentiated—the former being biological, and the later a social construct that varies culture-to-culture and over time.

Whereas the first wave of feminism was generally propelled by middle class, Western, cisgender, white women, the second phase drew in women of color and developing nations, seeking sisterhood and solidarity, claiming "Women's struggle is class struggle." Feminists spoke of women as a social class and coined phrases such as "the personal is political" and "identity politics" in an effort to demonstrate that race, class, and gender oppression are all related. They initiated a concentrated effort to rid society top-to-bottom of sexism, from children's cartoons to the highest levels of government.

One of the strains of this complex and diverse "wave" was the development of women-only spaces and the notion that women working together create a special dynamic that is not possible in mixed-groups, which would ultimately work for the betterment of the entire planet. Women, due whether to their long "subjugation" or to their biology, were thought by some to be more humane, collaborative, inclusive, peaceful, nurturing, democratic, and holistic in their approach to problem solving than men. The term eco-feminism was coined to capture the sense that because of their biological connection to earth and lunar cycles, women were natural advocates of environmentalism.

The third wave of feminism began in the mid-90's and was informed by post-colonial and post-modern thinking. In this phase many constructs were destabilized, including the notions of

"universal womanhood," body, gender, sexuality and heteronormativity. An aspect of third wave feminism that mystified the mothers of the earlier feminist movement was the re-adoption by young feminists of the very lip-stick, high-heels, and cleavage proudly exposed by low cut necklines that the first two phases of the movement identified with male oppression. Pinkfloor expressed this new position when she said that it's possible to have a push-up bra and a brain at the same time.

The "grrls" of the third wave stepped onto the stage as strong and empowered, eschewing victimization and defining feminine beauty for themselves as subjects, not as objects of a sexist patriarchy. They developed a rhetoric of mimicry, which appropriated derogatory terms like "slut" and "bitch" in order to subvert sexist culture and deprive it of verbal weapons. The web is an important tool of "girlie feminism." E-zines have provided "cybergrrls" and "netgrrls" another kind of women-only space. At the same time — rife with the irony of third-wave feminism because cyberspace is disembodied — it permits all users the opportunity to cross gender boundaries, and so the very notion of gender has been unbalanced in a way that encourages experimentation and creative thought.

This is in keeping with the third wave's celebration of ambiguity and refusal to think in terms of "us-them." Most third-wavers refuse to identify as "feminists" and reject the word that they find limiting and exclusionary. Grrl-feminism tends to be global, multi-cultural, and it shuns simple answers or artificial categories of identity, gender, and sexuality. Its transversal politics means that differences such as those of ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, etc. are celebrated and recognized as dynamic, situational, and provisional. Reality is conceived not so much in terms of fixed structures and power relations, but in terms of performance within contingencies. Third wave feminism breaks boundaries.

The fourth wave of feminism is still a captivating silhouette. A writer for *Elle Magazine* recently interviewed me about the waves of feminism and asked if the second and third waves may have "failed or dialed down" because the social and economic gains had been mostly sparkle, little substance, and whether at some point women substituted equal rights for career and the atomic self. I replied that the second wave of feminism ought not be characterized as having failed, nor was glitter all that it generated. Quite the contrary; many goals of the second wave were met: more women in positions of leadership in higher education, business and politics; abortion rights; access to the pill that increased women's control over their bodies; more expression and acceptance of female sexuality; general public awareness of the concept of and need for the "rights of women" (though never fully achieved); a solid academic field in feminism, gender and sexuality studies; greater access to education; organizations and legislation for the protection of battered women; women's support groups and organizations (like NOW and AAUW); an industry in the publication of books by and about women/feminism; public forums for the discussion of women's rights; and a societal discourse at the popular level about women's suppression, efforts for reform, and a critique of patriarchy. So, in a sense, if the second wave seemed to have "dialed down," the lull was in many ways due more to the success of the movement than to any ineffectiveness. In addition to the sense that many women's needs had been met, feminism's perceived silence in the 1990s was a response to the

successful backlash campaign by the conservative press and media, especially against the word feminism and its purported association with male-bashing and extremism.

However, the second wave only quieted down in the public forum; it did not disappear but retreated into the academic world where it is alive and well—incubating in the academy. Women’s centers and women’s/gender studies have become a staple of virtually all universities and most colleges in the US and Canada (and in many other nations around the world). Scholarship on women’s studies, feminist studies, masculinity studies, and queer studies is prolific, institutionalized, and thriving in virtually all scholarly fields, including the sciences. Academic majors and minors in women’s, feminist, masculinity and queer studies have produced thousands of students with degrees in the subjects. However, generally those programs have generated theorists rather than activists.

Returning to the question the *Elle Magazine* columnist asked about the third wave and the success or failure of its goals. It is hard to talk about the aims of the third wave because a characteristic of that wave is the rejection of communal, standardized objectives. The third wave does not acknowledge a collective “movement” and does not define itself as a group with common grievances. Third wave women and men are concerned about equal rights, but tend to think the genders have achieved parity or that society is well on its way to delivering it to them. The third wave pushed back against their “mothers” (with grudging gratitude) the way children push away from their parents in order to achieve much needed independence. This wave supports equal rights, but does not have a term like feminism to articulate that notion. For third wavers, struggles are more individual: “We don’t need feminism anymore.”

But the times are changing, and a fourth wave is in the air. A few months ago, a high school student approached one of the staff of the Center for Gender Equity at Pacific University and revealed in a somewhat confessional tone, “I think I’m a feminist!” It was like she was coming out of the closet. Well, perhaps that is the way to view the fourth wave of feminism.

The aims of the second feminist movement were never cemented to the extent that they could survive the complacency of third wavers. The fourth wave of feminism is emerging because (mostly) young women and men realize that the third wave is either overly optimistic or hampered by blinders. Feminism is now moving from the academy and back into the realm of public discourse. Issues that were central to the earliest phases of the women’s movement are receiving national and international attention by mainstream press and politicians: problems like sexual abuse, rape, violence against women, unequal pay, slut-shaming, the pressure on women to conform to a single and unrealistic body-type and the realization that gains in female representation in politics and business, for example, are very slight. It is no longer considered “extreme,” nor is it considered the purview of rarified intellectuals to talk about societal abuse of women, rape on college campus, Title IX, homo and transphobia, unfair pay and work conditions, and the fact that the US has one of the worst records for legally-mandated parental leave and maternity benefits in the world.

Some people who wish to ride this new fourth wave have trouble with the word “feminism,” not just because of its older connotations of radicalism, but because the word feels like it is underpinned by assumptions of a gender binary and an exclusionary subtext: “for women only.” Many fourth wavers who are completely on-board with the movement’s tenants find the term “feminism” sticking in their craws and worry that it is hard to get their message out with a label that raises hackles for a broader audience. Yet the word is winning the day. The generation now coming of age sees that we face serious problems because of the way society genders and is gendered, and we need a strong “in-your-face” word to combat those problems. Feminism no longer just refers to the struggles of women; it is a clarion call for gender equity.

The emerging fourth wavers are not just reincarnations of their second wave grandmothers; they bring to the discussion important perspectives taught by third wave feminism. They speak in terms of intersectionality whereby women’s suppression can only fully be understood in a context of the marginalization of other groups and genders—feminism is part of a larger consciousness of oppression along with racism, ageism, classism, ableism, and sexual orientation (no “ism” to go with that). Among the third wave’s bequests is the importance of inclusion, an acceptance of the sexualized human body as non-threatening, and the role the internet can play in gender-bending and leveling hierarchies. Part of the reason a fourth wave can emerge is because these millennials’ articulation of themselves as “feminists” is their own: not a hand-me-down from grandma. The beauty of the fourth wave is that there is a place in it for all—together. The academic and theoretical apparatus is extensive and well honed in the academy, ready to support a new broad-based activism in the home, in the workplace, and in the streets.

At this point we are still not sure how feminism will mutate. Will the fourth wave fully materialize and in what direction? There have always been many feminisms in the movement, not just one ideology, and there have always been tensions, points and counter-points. The political, social and intellectual feminist movements have always been chaotic, multivalenced, and disconcerting; and let's hope they continue to be so; it's a sign that they are thriving.

Appendix 1:2B – Early Examples of Jewish Feminism to Explore

Tkhines: Women’s Prayer

Many of the early Tkhines centered on the positive-time bound Mitzvot that women are obligated to obey. Since most Jewish women were not learned in Hebrew, this methodology allowed women to add prayer to their actions. While the acts themselves fulfill the Mitzvah, these words provide the extra Kavanah of sanctifying the moment. While Hebrew prayers may still have had meaning based on their feeling in the moment, the use of Yiddish allowed women to truly know what they were saying and feel connected to the Mitzvot and obligation embedded in the acts of Challot, Hadlakat Nerot and Niddah.

For more information - <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/tehines-womens-prayers/#>

Glukel of Hamlin

Glückel, author of an untitled memoir in Yiddish that is the source of most of the information about her life (with the exception of the date of her death and several minor details), was born in Hamburg. When she was twelve years old, her parents betrothed her to Hayyim Hamel, whom she married at the age of fourteen, moving into his parents’ home in Hamel. She appears to have been an active and equal partner in all decisions concerning both family affairs and business matters. As a result, when her husband was asked on his deathbed whether he wished to leave any final advice, he replied: “I have no instructions. My wife, she knows everything. Let her do as she has done until now.” Glückel continued single-handedly to manage the family’s business affairs in Hamburg (where she also opened a sock factory) and at the trade fairs she attended in other cities. Glückel began writing her memoirs in 1691 at the age of forty-six, about two years after the death of her first husband, in order to “stifle and banish the melancholic thoughts which came to [her] during many sleepless nights,” and convey to her children and their descendants the life stories of their parents and family.

For more information - <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/glueckel-of-hameln>

Rashi’s Female Descendants

Shlomo ben Yitzhak (c.1040 –1105), better known as [Rashi](#), had three daughters and no sons. It would be reasonable to assume that his daughters, Yokheved, Miriam and Rachel (also known as Belle Assez), were learned, but there is no definitive evidence for this. Both Yokheved and Miriam married their father’s students and were the mothers of scholarly sons. They also had daughters who, whether formally educated or not, were knowledgeable and astute. Hannah, the daughter of Yokheved and R. Meir ben Shmuel, was quoted by her brother, the famed Rabbenu Tam (Jacob ben Meir Tam, c. 1100–1171), concerning laws about candle-lighting. Elvina (Alvina), the daughter of Miriam and R. Yehudah ben Natan, taught some of Rashi’s customs, learned from her mother, to her cousin R. Yitzhak of Dampierre.

Rashi's youngest daughter, Rachel, was divorced early and spent a good part of her life in her parents' home. It was long believed that she wrote at least one legal ruling for her father when he was sick. This assumption was based on a single source, a thirteenth-century work, *Shibbolei Ha-Leket*. In 2001, the reference to Rashi's daughter was discovered to be a misprint; the word should have been "grandson" and not "daughter." This recent correction eliminated the only evidence available for Rachel's possible erudition.

Women conversant with Jewish law appear among Rashi's descendants and their spouses, continuing into twelfth- and thirteenth-century France, up until the time of the French expulsion in 1306. One of Rashi's granddaughters (unnamed) is credited with having taught the women of her community how to perform the commandments to which they were obligated. Rabbenu Tam's second wife, Miriam, was asked to explain her husband's customs after his death, and the wife (b. 1305) of R. Yosef ben Yohanan Treibish, another of Rashi's descendants, clarified obscure passages in the [Talmud](#) and explained difficulties in the writings of the Tosafists (school of commentators on the Talmud in France and Germany; twelfth to fourteenth centuries).

For more information - <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/learned-women-in-traditional-jewish-society>

Regina Jonas – First Female Rabbi

Regina Jonas, the first woman to be ordained as a rabbi, was killed in Auschwitz in October 1944. From 1942–1944 she performed rabbinical functions in Theresienstadt. She would probably have been completely forgotten, had she not left traces both in Theresienstadt and in her native city, Berlin. None of her male colleagues, among them Rabbi Leo Baeck (1873–1956) and the psychoanalyst Viktor Frankl (1905–1997), ever mentioned her after the Shoah. In 1972, when Sally Priesand was ordained at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, she was referred to as the "first female rabbi ever"—misinformation which was never corrected by those who knew better. Only when the Berlin Wall came down and the archives in East Germany became accessible was Regina Jonas's legacy found in the *Gesamtarchiv der deutschen Juden*.

"If I confess what motivated me, a woman, to become a rabbi, two things come to mind. My belief in God's calling and my love of humans. God planted in our heart skills and a vocation without asking about gender. Therefore, it is the duty of men and women alike to work and create according to the skills given by God." Regina Jonas, C.-V.-Zeitung, June 23, 1938.

For more information- <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/jonas-regina>

Appendix 1:2C – Famous Feminist Quotations

I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is. I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat.

- Rebecca West

Though we have the courage to raise our daughters more like our sons, we've rarely had the courage to raise our sons like our daughters.

- Gloria Steinem

We cannot all succeed when half of us are held back.

- Malala Yousafzai

I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own.

- Audre Lorde

I'm not ashamed to dress 'like a woman' because I don't think it's shameful to be a woman.

- Iggy Pop

Here's to strong women. May we know them. May we be them. May we raise them.

- Unknown

I just love bossy women. I could be around them all day. To me, bossy is not a pejorative term at all. It means somebody's passionate and engaged and ambitious and doesn't mind leading.

- Amy Poehler

Feminism has fought no wars. It has killed no opponents. It has set up no concentration camps, starved no enemies, practiced no cruelties. Its battles have been for education, for the vote, for better working conditions, for safety in the streets, for child care, for social welfare, for rape crisis centers, women's refuges, reforms in the law. If someone says, "Oh, I'm not a feminist," I ask, "Why? What is your problem?"

- Dale Spender

Feminism isn't about making women stronger. Women are already strong. It's about changing the way the world perceives that strength.

- G.D. Anderson

Feminism is the radical notion that women are people.

- Marie Shear

My idea of feminism is self-determination, and it's very open ended. Every woman has a right to be herself and do whatever she needs to do.

- Ani DiFranco

Appendix 1:2D – Graphic Organizer for History of Feminism Learning

Wave/Era	American Feminism	Jewish American Feminism
1st Wave (late 19th C – 1950s		
2nd wave (1960s- 1980s)		
3rd wave (1990s – 2010s)		
4th wave (present day)		

Lesson 1:4: Ayshet Chayil – Past and Future

Goals:

- Expose students to the text of Ayshet Chayil
- Help students delineate the ideal female characteristics from the text and the archetype of a woman of valor today.

Objectives:

- List the values of womanhood in Ayshet Chayil
- Compare the values of the poem to their own definitions of valor
- Explain the similarities and differences between ideal womanhood in the time of the text and today

Materials:

- Vision Boards and Supplies
- Paper, Post-its, and Pens
- Tanakhim for Ayshet Chayil Text (Proverbs 31:10-31)
- Jewish Women’s Archive Ayshet Chayil Text Sheet and Facilitator Guide (Download at <https://jwa.org/discover/throughtheyear/march/talmud>)
- Appendix 1:4A – Ayshet Chayil Qualities Graphic Organizer

Activity: Our Definitions of Valor

Return to the Vision Board projects begun in session 1. Give students some more time to work on the projects. Display the projects in a gallery-esque setting and have the students look at one another’s projects. Give each student a stack of post-it notes to leave comments and questions on one another’s projects. One of the post-it comments by each student on each board should be a *definition of valor based on their reflection of the vision board*. After a few minutes, have students return to their projects, review the comments and then offer a general summary of their project to the group orally. ***Save these projects for later units. It can be re-referenced later on as the understanding of feminism, Jewish womanhood and valor adapt throughout the curriculum.***

After reflecting on their individual projects and seeing one another’s, have the class create a top ten lists of qualities of women of valor according to the class. This list will be helpful later in the lesson as it will be compared to the list of values seen in the text from Proverbs.

Activity: Valor in Judaism – What is a Woman of Valor?²

Explain: Now that we have begun to articulate a definition of women of valor for ourselves, we will look at the text of Ayshet Chayil itself. We created our own definitions of valor and now will look at this Tanakh-based definition.

Before reading the text, ask each student to list out 3-5 activities or qualities of a “Woman of Valor” they guess will be present in the text.

Text Study: Here are suggestions as to how to read the text of Ayshet Chayil (Proverbs 31:10-31. Use Tanakhim to view the text in Hebrew and English).

- 1) Divide students into pairs or groups. Ask each group to read through the text as a whole or assign shorter sections to each group. Have students create a list of qualities and activities used to describe the Ayshet Chayil. Use Appendix 1:4A as a graphic organizer.
- 2) Use the *Jewish Women’s Archive Ayshet Chayil text sheet and facilitator guide*.³ This text study focuses on a few key phrases of a selection of Ayshet Chayil. The facilitator guide offers guiding questions for the five phrases it focuses on in the text.

Wrap-up Questions (from JWA):⁴

- What causes mattered to the women of Chayil featured in this text study? What passions did they pursue?
- Just as Chayil can range widely in meaning depending on context, so too can each reader of Proverbs 31:10-31 bring different interpretations to the language and concepts. Think back to your initial reaction to Ayshet Chayil. How have the ancient and modern voices included changed your initial understanding of this text?
- When the feminist movement was in its infancy, would these verses from Proverbs have been received in a certain way? How do you think this reception is different today?
- Why do you think that contemporary Jewish communities could still connect to or value this text?
- As a class, what would you define as the top 10 characteristics/attributes of the woman described in this text? Create this list and set aside for a later activity.

Activity: Writing a Modern Ayshet Chayil

² To acquaint yourself to the tradition of Ayshet Chayil and its place in Jewish tradition today, read this article <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/how-to-read-eshet-hayil/> by an Orthodox Jewish Feminist. This article provides background information on when the tradition began, different interpretations of the text and how to read it in a positive and challenging light. If need be, spend a few minutes defining Tanakh, its three sections (Torah, Nevi'im, and Ketuvim) and where Ayshet Chayil (Ketuvim, Proverbs 31:10-31) lies in the text.

³ Jewish Women's Archive. "A Feminist Talmud Page." (Viewed on March 10, 2017) <https://jwa.org/discover/throughtheyear/march/talmud>.

⁴ *ibid*

Using the format of Ayshet Chayil, task students with creating their own versions of Ayshet Chayil. Proverbs is written in a poetic style and this poem has two main aspects of every line – a factual statement/characteristic and a poetic rationalization/explanation for the statement.

Example: She gives generously to the poor. Her hands are stretched out to the needy.

Divide the students into groups and ask each group to come up with 4-6 lines. Encourage the students to be creative and utilize different poetic styles (rhyming, haiku, limerick etc) to convey their message. They can use the characteristics the class came up with in the first activity or utilize different ideas unique to the group. Have students present their poems to the class. If the different poems fit together, they can be combined into a class poem.

Additional Activity: Have students write Ayshet Chayil as told by different voices – popular culture, different sub-cultures they identify with, certain television show/movie/musical artist, their city/ school/club, athlete etc. Note the different ideals set by these various communities. Do they fit within one of these ideals? Are they a mix? Does one version of an Ayshet Chayil even exist today?

Activity: Venn Diagram of Then and Now

Students draw a Venn Diagram and label one circle “Ayshet Chayil Then” and the other “Ayshet Chayil Today.” Beginning with the top ten lists of characteristics from both the opening activity and the Ayshet Chayil text activity and adding their own ideas, students fill out the Venn Diagram individually. Have a class discussion about what they find.

Possible Questions:

- 1) What are major differences and similarities between the two lists?
- 2) Does anything surprise you about the overlap? Why or why not?
- 3) How does the list of characteristics in the Then list compare to our list of guesses about what would be in the text before we began studying the text itself?
- 4) What does this comparison teach you about women’s roles and expectations?
- 5) Which time period would you rather live in? Why?
- 6) How do we fit within and outside of these ideals?
- 7) Do you believe one version of Ayshet Chayil existed then? Now? Why or why not?

Closing: Whip around the circle and ask each student to list one quality of an Ayshet Chayil that lasts between generations and one they are thankful has emerged in contemporary times. Then, ask each student to complete the phrase, “I am an Ayshet Chayil because...” After students have a minute to think, ask them to write down their answers, fold up the paper and place them in a hat/basket. Redistribute the papers anonymously to all the student. Each student pulls one piece of paper from the hat and reads the answer to the class. Offer signs of agreement/support (snaps, claps etc) after each statement to show solidarity and connection between the students.

Appendix 1:4A – Graphic Organizer

Qualities of an Ayshet Chayil	Actions of an Ayshet Chayil

Draw a Picture of an Ayshet Chayil as Described in the Proverbs Text



Unit 2: Jewish Superheroines – Models of Transformation

This unit focuses on examples of biblical and contemporary women who used challenges presented to them as means to change the system or go against the status quo. Women such as Miriam, Shifra & Puah, Zelophechad's Daughters, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and others will be analyzed for their transformation and inspiration for Jewish women today.

The authentic assessment for this unit involves the creation of a children's book about a Jewish woman who makes a change in her community using the values and texts discussed in this unit. The subject can be one of the figures discussed in the unit, another Jewish woman or a fictional character. Before teaching this unit, read Ruth Bader Ginsburg Leaves Her Mark by Debbie Levy as an example.

Unit EUs:

- Jewish notions of authentic leadership align with feminist ideals.
- Biblical text elevates voices of women.
- Jewish women use feminist tactics to push against societal expectations and make change.

Unit EQs:

- In what ways does Jewish tradition respond to and acknowledge female agency?
- What makes the subjects of these lessons women of valor?
- In what ways do these stories of transformation inspire me in my life?

Unit Goals:

- To expose students to modern and biblical stories of female agency.
- To teach students about women who use their Jewishness and Jewish values to make change.
- To inspire students to notice opportunities for agency within their own lives.

Unit Objectives:

- To interpret biblical narratives through a feminist lens.
- To draw connections between biblical stories and contemporary examples of female agency.
- To express a connection to Jewish feminist icons.

Key Terms:

- Biblical Narrative
- Female Agency
- Resilience
- Power Pose

Lessons:

- 1) The Women of Shemot – Faith over Fear
- 2) Zelophechad's Daughters – Named and Counted
- 3) Devorah, Yael & Judith – Warriors in Context
- 4) Our Jewish Female Heroines – Nevertheless, She Persisted
- 5) Ruth Bader Ginsburg & Framework for the Authentic Assessment

Lesson 2:1: The Women of Parshat Shemot – Faith Over Fear

Goals:

- To expose students to the women who enabled Moses' narrative to occur.
- To encourage students to move beyond fear when confronted with difficulties.
- To highlight the values each of the women in Parshat Shemot embodied in their resistance.

Objectives:

- Identify the values each of these women represented in their resistance.
- Explain how the women of Parshat Shemot utilized faith and strength over fear.
- Illustrate how the women of Parshat Shemot played significant roles in Moses' origin story.

Materials:

- Appendix 2:1A – Scripted Prompts
- Appendix 2:1B – Graphic Organizer
- Envelopes with Printed Prompts for Scavenger Hunt
- Paper and Envelopes for Thank You Cards

Set Up Before the Lesson: *Around the classroom (could be a scavenger hunt around the whole building if you add additional location clues), set up four envelopes with the four explanations and prompts about the characters. Print the graphic organizer (Appendix 2:1B) for each student. Instead of envelopes, you could utilize four madrichim or other staff members to act as these characters at the various locations (See Appendix 2:1A for scripted prompts).*

Set Induction: After check-in, ask students to collectively create a list of ten facts about Moses. Assuming this task is relatively simple/fast, ask the students to name his sister (Miriam), then his mother (Yocheved) and the midwives who saved him and other Israelite babies (Shifra/Puah). While some classes may be able to name these individuals, assume many will not know their names. Students are likely to know they existed, but may not know much about their stories and importance. Share with the class that this lesson will give us more insight into these women who enabled Moses to ascend to his position of leadership. Without these women, Moses' story would have ended much earlier. In this lesson, students will think about the values inherent in the stories of each of these women and reflect on how they can act on faith and a sense of what is right and wrong over fear.

Activity: Getting to Know the Women of Parshat Shemot

Explain to the students that they are going to learn about several women who were influential to Moses' narrative. At each station, students will open an envelope/meet the character and perform a task that illustrates a central value of that woman. Students should write the name, a

one sentence synopsis of the character and the value they learned about on their graphic organizer at the end of each station.

Station 1: Shifra/Puah (The Midwives)

Shifra and Puah were two midwives for the Israelite people in Egypt. Pharaoh commanded them to kill all the Israelite boys as they were born, but because the women feared God and had a strong sense this request was inhumane, they let the boys live. They stood up for what they believed in and cared for their neighbors.

Activity: These women saw Pharaoh's request of them to be a breach of trust. Women in labor trusted them to safely guide them through delivering their babies. Killing the babies after such a vulnerable and personal experience seemed wrong. Instead, Shifra and Puah helped the Israelite mothers hide their male babies, including Moses. Instead of breaking this trust, they solidified it. One way to experience the importance of trust is through **trust falls**. Divide your group into pairs. Have each partner experience being the fall-er and the catch-er. Take a few steps back each time to increase the risk AND need for trust.

Questions for Discussion:

- How did it feel to be the fall-er? The catch-er? How did this experience change as the gap between partners increased?
- How would you feel if there was no one there to catch you as you fell? Or if that person standing there stepped to the side?
- How do you establish trust in these situations? How can you increase the trust even among strangers?

Station 2: Yocheved (Moses' Mother)

When Moses was born, instead of throwing him into the river as Pharaoh commanded, Yocheved hid Moses for three months and then placed him in a basket in the Nile, hoping to save his life. Yocheved thought quickly and made a plan to help save her son. She protected him in every way she could.

Activity: Judaism teaches "to save a life, it is as if you saved a world," showing the high value placed on life. Even though Pharaoh could have killed Yocheved if he found out she saved her son, she was willing to take this risk. She expressed extreme selflessness. **Share a time when you allowed someone else's needs to overtake your own and you acted upon them.** This experience may have happened with a sibling, cousin, close friend or another relative. Ask yourself why you were able to act selflessly for another and what about that relationship made your decision possible?

Station 3: Miriam (Moses' Sister)

After her mother Yocheved placed Moses in the Nile, Miriam watched over him to see what would happen, made sure that Moses was taken care of, and arranged it so that his mother would become his nursemaid once she saw Pharaoh's daughter take Moses out of the Nile.

Activity: Placing Moses in a basket on the Nile did not guarantee his survival, so Miriam watched in the hopes that someone would find him and save him from the water. Once Miriam saw that Pharaoh’s daughter took him from the river, she made the connection that kept Moses connected to his family and allowed him to grow in safety as an Egyptian prince. Think about one of the people in your life who has looked out for you and kept you safe. Write a **thank you card** to that individual who watched over you during a moment or many moments of potential danger. What would you like to share with this person in your gratitude? How did he or she support you?

Station 4: Batya (Pharaoh’s Daughter)

Named Batya by the rabbis, she discovered Moses as she was bathing in the Nile, and decided to raise Moses as her son. Pharaoh’s daughter was Egyptian, not an Israelite. Yet she risked her life for what she believed in, and allowed Miriam (Moses’ sister) and Yocheved (Moses’ mother) to help her raise Moses. Batya served as the final piece of many connections and situations coming together to allow Moses to succeed. It took a lot of teamwork from Moses’ family to keep and hide this baby alive for three months before they placed Moses in a basket and hoped God would ensure his safety. In seeing such faith from these women, Batya could not let this baby die after their devotion to him. Ultimately, a whole group of women worked together to ensure Moses’ survival.

Activity: Like these women, it often takes many people to come together to solve a puzzle. As a group, create and then detangle a **human knot**. Stand in a circle, shoulder-to-shoulder. Extend your arms across the circle and grab hands with two different people, ideally neither of whom should be standing right next to you. Work as a group to untangle the knot without letting go of either hand.

Questions for Discussion:

- How did we work together to untangle our knot? What were effective strategies and what were less effective strategies?
- What were some of the different roles we took on during this challenge?
- How did it feel during the process? Were there moments you wanted to give up?
- How do you think Batya felt when she saw Moses floating down the river? How do you think she accepted the challenge knowing what the risks could be?

Conclusion:

Bring the students back together and lead a discussion about the values of these women. Utilize the graphic organizers to remind students about the different figures. The discussion should focus on how each of these women took risks, worked for a higher purpose than their own success and worked together to achieve their goals.

Possible Questions for Discussion:

- What values did you discern for each woman?
- What were the choices they had and how did they make their ultimate choice?
- What can we learn from these women? What do they teach us about making our own choices in the face of challenge?

Appendix 2:1A – Script**Shifra & Puah:**

Let us tell you our story about how we were asked to break the trust of people who trusted us. We are Shifra and Puah. We worked as midwives in Egypt – we helped women deliver babies and given the high mortality rates of both mothers and babies, our work was incredibly important. The women trusted us just like you trusted each other with your trust falls. They trusted us with their lives and the lives of their children. Then Pharaoh told us to kill all the baby boys that were born to Israelites.

We couldn't do it. It was wrong. We believed in God's teaching that every human life is valuable. We cared about our Israelite neighbors. Even though we put our lives in danger by disobeying Pharaoh, we protected the babies. We told Pharaoh that we were unable to kill the baby boys because the Israelite women gave birth without our help. It was scary telling Pharaoh this, because he was the king of Egypt and could have us thrown in jail or worse. He was in charge of everything and was our boss. But we knew it was the right thing to do.

Yocheved:

I am Yocheved, Moses' mom. I knew my son was going to be special and that God would protect him. I loved him before he was even born. I heard of Pharaoh's evil law that each Israelite baby boy was to be killed. I knew I had to protect my son the best I could. After I gave birth to him, I hid him for 3 months to keep him safe. It wasn't easy. My son grew and grew, and after 3 months, like many babies, he was too big and noisy to hide. I knew I had to do something. I decided to build a basket for him and placed him in the Nile River. I hoped that someone would find him, love him and take care of him. I prayed that God would protect him. One of the hardest parts was letting him go. I sent Moses' sister, my daughter Miriam, to follow the basket down the Nile River and report back to me what happened to my baby. Once Pharaoh's daughters found him, Miriam made sure that Batya – one of Pharaoh's daughter - let her help take care of the baby and raise him.

Miriam:

It's easy to miss things if you aren't looking for them or if you don't realize how important it is to be a witness. Hi everyone. My name is Miriam. I am Moses' older sister and I was given the very important task of being a witness. When my mom Yocheved was pregnant, Pharaoh commanded the midwives – women who helped deliver the babies - that they had to kill all baby boys. I could tell my mom was scared. I watched my mom hide Moses for three months until he was too big (and noisy) to hide. I watched my mom build a basket for him and placed the basket on the Nile river. She told me to follow the basket to watch what happened. I followed the basket as it floated all the way down the river. I witnessed Pharaoh's daughter take my brother's basket out of the river. I watched what Batya did and I knew what I had to do. I told Pharaoh's daughter that I knew a nursemaid who would help raise the baby. This

helped our family stay connected to Moses as he grew up in the Egyptian palace. One of my primary roles was to witness what happened to Moses so I could tell others about it.

Batya:

Hi, I am Pharaoh's daughter. The rabbis later named me "Batya," which means "Daughter of God." Although you may not know me by name, I played a very important role in Moses' life. I am not blood related to Moses, but I helped to raise him. Some people call me Batya, because I was more like a daughter to God than to Pharaoh. I discovered a baby boy floating in a basket on the Nile River. I guessed that this boy floating on the river was an Israelite. I knew that my father commanded that all baby Israelite boys had to be killed, but I wanted to save him. Life is too important. I wanted to be active and to something to help this person in need. I did not want to simply sit idly by. When I took the baby out of the river, a young girl came up to me and said that she knew of a nursemaid who could help raise him. I sent the boy with her so he could learn and grow.

Appendix 2:1B: Graphic Organizer

Name	Who is She?	What does she teach us?

Lesson 2:2: Zelophechad's Daughters – Named and Counted

Goals:

- To expose students to the story of daughters using their situation to cause a law change.
- To encourage students to think about what power they have in their family and communities despite “lower” status.
- To empower the students to speak up when they sense injustice.

Objectives:

- Analyze the text of B'not Zelophechad through a feminist lens.
- Connect the example of the daughters to scenarios where they spoke up for an injustice.
- Explain how the daughters worked together to achieve change.

Materials:

- Computer for Video
- Printed Text Examples (See “Activity: Learning the Story”)

Note to Educator: Before teaching this lesson, familiarize yourself with the story of Zelophechad's daughters, which can be found in Bamidbar (Numbers) 27:1-11. The commentary in The Torah: A Women's Commentary offers context, summary and analysis of the section.

Set Induction:

Go around the circle and ask each student to share a time when she lacked access to something because of her age/sex/ethnicity/situation in life. Encourage each student to share for approximately a minute and focus on share the scenario and her emotions or reactions to the situation. Who imposed the restriction? Did you accept what was happening or ask why? Why or why not? What answers were you given?

Activity: Learning the Story

To learn the text of Zelophechad's Daughters, students will watch the BimBam video for Parshat Pinchas <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UhZoihnMII0>.

Before the video, share with the students more information about the story itself. Daughters are often seen as those with one of the lowest level of power and rights. They move from their father's house to their husband's house and rarely speak for themselves in the text except in courtship situations.

As you watch, ask students to note the following (create a graphic organizer or write questions on the board):

- What are the names of the five daughters?
- What were the daughters asking for?

- How do Moses and God react?
- How does the ruling get complicated at the end?

After the video, share the text itself and lead a discussion about the implications of this ruling. Questions to guide the discussion and additional commentary are below:

- 1) It is relatively uncommon for minor characters in the Torah to be named, much less five daughters. Why do you think the five daughters are named?⁵
 - a. *They are named several times as individuals, yet work together and express admiration and respect for one another. This early example of community organizing shows the sisters' awareness of the power of coming together to make change. Together their voices are more powerful than if they had approached individually or took on this battle without one another's support.*
 - b. (Note on 27:1) *Rashi: MAHLAH, NOAH, etc. — But further on (Numbers 36:11) states, "And Mahlah, Tirzah were" (changing the position of the names within the verse): this is to tell you that they all were of equal worth one with another, and on this account, it is that it changed their order (i.e. the order of their names) (Sifrei Bamidbar 133:2).*
 - c. (Note on 27:2) *Yalkut, Pinchas 773. "And they stood before Moses," (Num 27:2) Each of the five daughters presented one of the five pleas. The first said, "Our father dies in the wilderness," the second said, "He was not one of the faction of Korach.," The third said, "but he died in his own sin." The fourth: "He had no sons." The fifth: "Why should our father's name be lost to his family."*
 - d. (Note on 27:4) *Rashi: [WHY SHOULD OUR FATHER'S NAME BE DONE AWAY WITH] BECAUSE HE HATH NO SON — Thus it follows that if he had had a son they would have made no claim of any kind: this tells us that they were women of intelligence (Sifrei Bamidbar 133:4; cf. Bava Batra 119b).*
- 2) What is the daughters' rationale for their claim? Why do you think God agreed and asked Moses to make it the law?
 - a. (Note on 11:5) *Rashi: This chapter ought to have been written by Moses (i.e., like most laws in the Torah it should have been spoken to the people by Moses without his having waited until some incident made its promulgation necessary), but for the fact that the daughters of Zelophehad had so much merit, it was therefore written through them (it was their complaint which gave occasion for stating it) (Bava Batra 119a; Sanhedrin 8a).*
- 3) How might the daughters have felt when they approached Moses? How do you think they helped one another in this moment (this is creating midrash!)? How has strength in numbers help us in our own lives?

Activity: Pump-Up Speeches

⁵ The following notes are some of the traditional rabbinic interpretations/answers to these questions. The various texts were found using www.sefaria.org.

Have the students write a one paragraph “pump-up” speech they could envision one sister offering to the others before approaching Moses.

Activity: Our Stories

The daughters of Zelophechad teach us about the value of noticing problems, raising our voices, and making change. Ask students to return to the story they shared in the set induction. Have them think about the person, institution or situation who did hold the power. Each student will create a poster/write a rap/prepare speech or another form or visual or oral expression directed at that individual or situation with the goal of 1) expressing the injustice and 2) convincing the person to reconsider the present reality. If the scenario from the set induction does not fit, students can pick a new scenario. Students should be encouraged to use the example of the daughters of Zelophechad in their presentation. After students have time to prepare, share these presentations with the whole class. Encourage the students to pursue these changes if possible or feel more prepared to speak up if the situation repeats itself (within reason!)

Closing Discussion with the goals of determining the characteristics we need to speak up, acknowledging and owning our own power, thinking about how we can support one another when we sense injustices and reflecting on the story of the daughters.

- 1) Do you believe society values teens’ voices? Women’s voices? Why or why not? How could you work to change this narrative?
- 2) How do you harness the power of your own voice and self?
- 3) How can we support one another? What does it mean to show up in support?
- 4) Who are your support sisters (real or figurative)?
- 5) How can we use this biblical story as inspiration?
- 6) What is feminist about this story using our created definition from unit 1?
- 7) What does it teach us about Jewish tradition that these women are named and elevated in the Torah text itself?

Lesson 2:3: Judith, Devorah & Yael – Female Warriors

Goals:

- To expose students to lesser-known texts about female warriors.
- To provide students with practical behaviors to increase self-confidence and sense of personal power.
- To highlight a few of the female-driven and feminist narratives in ancient texts.

Objectives:

- To compare female warrior narratives within and outside of the Jewish canon.
- To explain why female warriors are included in ancient text traditions.
- To utilize contemporary methods of confidence-building to find their own inner warriors and leaders.

Materials:

- Appendix 2:3A – Judith Text Sheet
- Appendix 2:3B – Devorah & Yael Text Sheet
- Appendix 2:3C – Contemporary Inclusion of Jewish Female Warriors
- Computer for Video
- Appendix 2:3D – Power Pose Infographic (for reference)

Set Induction: During check-in, add the question, “What is a time when your belief or confidence in something helped others around you feel confident and you achieved a goal/ completed an assignment/ surprised yourself with your achievements? Essentially, when did you serve as a leader who brought others along with you?” Ask students to draw a picture or write a short poem about the situation and reflect on the following questions – what were the circumstances? Why was this situation different than others? Was there someone who encouraged you in this moment?

Note to the Educator: As a reminder, previous lessons asked about times when they needed the support of others to be successful and placed other’s needs above their own – this exercise asks for a time when they took the lead and benefitted from their and other’s actions.

Activity: Learning the Texts

Explain that women in our ancient texts take on many roles. In this unit already, the students have looked at sisters, potential wives, mothers, daughters and midwives. In this lesson, the students are going to learn about a slightly surprising category for women in the ancient world – warriors. This lesson will look at three women who showed prowess and strength in times of war. Given the still-existing controversy about women in combat, it will be important to remember these texts are thousands of years old!

As the students read these texts, encourage them to think about the different aspects of these women’s stories that seem to be highlighted in the text. How do they use their womanhood similarly and differently?

Activity: See appendix for a summary and text samples from the stories of Judith & Yael and Devorah. These texts can be studied and presented in many different ways. I encourage you to split the class in half and have each group learn one of the stories (Devorah & Yael’s stories are connected). Each text page (Appendices 2:3A & 2:3B) includes guiding questions. To teach the story back to the rest of the class, students can perform a bibliodrama (even if it is a bloody story to teach!), pair up with someone who learned the other text and summarize for their partner, or create poetry about these women’s value and importance in feminist literature (examples in Appendix 2:3C).

Possible Discussion Questions:

- How do you think you would have reacted in these situations?
- How does womanhood play a role in Devorah and Yael’s story? Judith’s story?
- Why do you think these texts exist? Why is Devorah’s story in the canon? Why is Judith’s story not in the canon?⁶
- How are the actions of these women feminist?
- What do we learn from Judith, Yael and Devorah?

Activity: Power Pose

Explain that in 2012, social psychologist Amy Cuddy’s TEDTalk went viral. In her talk about body language, she claimed that body language shapes who we are and how others view you. She talks about utilizing a “power pose” and the impact of this position on one’s self confidence. According to Cuddy, just two minutes in the “power pose” increases cortisol and testosterone levels enough to cause a significant rise in self-confidence and projection. These warrior women from the ancient texts may appear confident on paper, but one can only wonder how she willed herself to make these huge decisions. We see in the texts prayers to God and pleas for strength and confidence, and this posing can be another way to achieve strength as well.

Watch a few minutes of the TEDTalk (Begin at 10:10 and watch until the end)

(https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are) and reflect on her message. *What is her thesis? What is her evidence? Have you experienced this difference before?*

Have students **sit slouched and then sit up straight in their chairs** – do they feel different? Do they see others differently? Why or why not? Pass out Appendix 2:3D and read its contents. *Do you agree with the conclusions of the infographic? What is this infographic trying to express?*

⁶ *Note: Judith is a book of Apocrypha, meaning it is not officially in either the Jewish or Christian canon. However, it is a well-known book and is dated to around the 2nd or 1st century BCE).*

Ask students to **hold the power pose for 2 minutes**. Cuddy suggests this amount of time is what is needed to raise your cortisol levels enough to make a change. According to her research, our bodies can change our minds. Use the “warrior woman” pose shown in the video. If students are giggling from watching one another do the pose, face each student towards the wall so she is in her own personal warrior woman space. Actually time the activity!

Questions for Discussion:

- How did it feel to hold the pose?
- How did it feel to know you were in a room of others holding the pose?
- How would you describe the change of your mood and sense of self before and after the two minutes?
- When might you find this pose helpful? How do you think it would impact you if you posed for two minutes before a college/job interview or difficult test?

Conclusion: Create Power Pose Mantras

Many people recite mantras, short phrases of inspiration and self-motivation, before challenging or high-pressure moments too. A mantra is like an internal power pose. It could be done in tandem with the power pose and recited over and over in one’s head or done by itself if power posing is not possible or it does not work for you. Give each student a few minutes to craft a personal mantra connected to one of the women they have learned about in this lesson/unit or curriculum thus far (I am like Judith because... I will speak up in the board meeting when I sense injustice like Zelophechad’s Daughters... etc). It can be associated with a specific moment (I will remember the quadratic equation on the math test tomorrow!) or a more general personality situation (I am worthy of looking everyone in the eye as I walk down the street!). Ask the students to share their mantras if they feel comfortable to close the class.

Appendix 2:3A – Judith Text Sheet

The Book of Judith's truly remarkable heroine, Judith, introduced as a devout, shapely, beautiful and wealthy widow (Judith 8:4, 7), exhibits characteristics showing her the equal of Israel's finest warriors. Indeed, her beheading of Holofernes, the invading Assyrian general—in his own tent, with his own sword, and surrounded by his own heretofore victorious army, no less! — marks her as a political savior in Israel on a par with David.⁷

Chapter 1: *Judith as an atypical widow.*

[2] Her husband Manasseh, who belonged to her tribe and family, had died during the barley harvest.

[4] Judith had lived at home as a widow for three years and four months.

[5] She set up a tent for herself on the roof of her house, and girded sackcloth about her loins and wore the garments of her widowhood.

[6] She fasted all the days of her widowhood, except the day before the sabbath and the sabbath itself, the day before the new moon and the day of the new moon, and the feasts and days of rejoicing of the house of Israel.

[7] She was beautiful in appearance, and had a very lovely face; and her husband Manasseh had left her gold and silver, and men and women slaves, and cattle, and fields; and **she maintained this estate.**

[8] No one spoke ill of her, for she **feared God with great devotion...**

Judith as prophetess.

[13] You are putting the Lord Almighty to the test -- but you will never know anything!... Then Uzziah said to her, "All that you have said has been spoken out of a true heart, and there is no one who can deny your words. [29] Today is not the first time your wisdom has been shown, but from the beginning of your life all the people have recognized your understanding, for your heart's disposition is right..."

[32] Judith said to them, "Listen to me. I am about to do a thing which will go down through all generations of our descendants. [33] Stand at the city gate tonight, and I will go out with my maid; and within the days after which you have promised to surrender the city to our enemies, the Lord will deliver Israel by my hand.

[34] Only, do not try to find out what I plan; for I will not tell you until I have finished what I am about to do."

[35] Uzziah and the rulers said to her, "Go in peace, and may the Lord God go before you, to take revenge upon our enemies."

Chapter 13: *Judith as warrior*

⁷ Branch, Robin G. "Judith: A Remarkable Heroine, Part 2." *Biblical Archaeology Society*. N.p., 19 Sept. 2016. Web. 15 Apr. 2017.

<http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/people-cultures-in-the-bible/people-in-the-bible/judith-a-remarkable-heroine-part-2/>.

[2] So Judith was left alone in the tent with Holofernes sprawled upon his bed, dead drunk...So all had left them, and no one, either important or insignificant, was left in the bedroom. Then Judith, standing beside the bed, prayed silently, **“Adonai, God of all power, look in this hour upon the work of my hands for the greater glory of Jerusalem, [5] for now is the opportunity to come to the aid of your inheritance, and to carry out my plan for the destruction of the enemies who have risen up against us.”** [6] She went up to the bedpost by Holofernes’ head, and took down from it his sword; [7] and approaching the bed, she grabbed the hair of his head and said, ‘Lord God of Israel, give me the strength, now!’ [8] Then she struck at his neck twice with all her might, and chopped off his head.

The story concludes: many men desired to marry her, but Judith gave herself to no man all the remaining days of her life. She lived more than 100 years and was buried and mourned by all of Israel. No one ever again spread terror among Israel during the lifetime of Judith, or for a long time after her death.

Questions for Discussion:

- **What is surprising about this story?**
- **What role does Judith play in the takedown of Israel’s enemies?**
- **How does her womanhood play a role? Is her womanhood highlighted? Why or why not?**
- **How do the other characters benefit from Judith’s actions?**
- **Why do you think this story may not be in the Jewish canon?**

Appendix 2:3B – Devorah Text Sheet

For generations, Devorah has been an inspiration to women as a courageous leader and powerful woman. Her story is described in the Book of Judges (4:1 - 5:31). She was a Judge of Israel who bound her community through struggles and resolved the disputes of her community a reputation for fairness and justice. She predicted her tribe's defeat of Sisera, the general of an imposing enemy army, and worked with Barak and Yael to ensure the victory.

Legends of the Jews 4:2:35-48⁸ http://www.sefaria.org/Legends_of_the_Jews.4.1?lang=bi
(35) DEBORAH

(36) Not long after Ruth, another ideal woman arose in Israel, the prophetess Deborah.

(37) When Ehud died, there was none to take his place as judge, and the people fell off from God and His law. God, therefore, sent an angel to them with the following message: "Out of all the nations on earth, I chose a people for Myself, and I thought, so long as the world stands, My glory will rest upon them. I sent Moses unto them, My servant, to teach them goodness and righteousness. But they strayed from My ways. And now I will arouse their enemies against them, to rule over them, and they will cry out: 'Because we forsook the ways of our fathers, hath this come over us.' Then I will **send a woman unto them, and she will shine for them as a light for forty years.**"

Judges 4:1-11

4 The Israelites cried out to Adonai; for Sisera had nine hundred iron chariots, and he had oppressed Israel ruthlessly for twenty years.

5 Deborah, wife of Lappidoth, was a prophetess; she led Israel at that time.

6 She used to sit under the Palm of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites would come to her for decisions.

7 She summoned Barak son of Abinoam, of Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, "Adonai, the God of Israel, has commanded: Go, march up to Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun.

8 And I will draw Sisera, Jabin's army commander, with his chariots and his troops, toward you up to the Wadi Kishon; and I will deliver him into your hands."

9 But Barak said to her, "If you will go with me, I will go; if not, I will not go."

10 "Very well, I will go with you," she answered. "However, there will be no glory for you in the course you are taking, for then Adonai will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman." So Deborah went with Barak to Kedesh.

11 Barak then mustered Zebulun and Naphtali at Kedesh; ten thousand men marched up after him; and Deborah also went up with him.

According to Deborah's prophecy, the plan succeeded. The Israelites conquered the Canaanites, but Sisera (the general) managed to escape on foot. Fleeing to a tent he suspected would give him safe haven, Sisera found himself greeted by Yael, who welcomed him into her tent. Yael gave Sisera a drink of milk and covered him with a blanket. Yael, seeing her chance, waited for

⁸ *Legends of the Jews* is a collection of Aggadic stories and texts about biblical literature.

Sisera to fall asleep and then drove a tent peg through his head. When Barak came searching for Sisera, he found his enemy in Yael's tent, already dead. This fulfilled the second part of Deborah's prophecy, that the honor of dispatching Sisera would go to a woman.

Questions for Discussion:

- **What is surprising about this story?**
- **What role does Devorah play in the takedown of Sisera? What role does Yael play?**
- **How does their womanhood play a role? Is their womanhood highlighted? Why or why not?**
- **How do the other characters benefit from Devorah and Yael's actions?**

Appendix 2:3C – Women Warrior Poetry Examples

***Devorah the Prophet* by Debbie Friedman**

Chorus

Arise, arise Devorah
Arise, arise and sing a song
Arise arise, Devorah
Uri, uri dabri shir

Devorah the prophet was a judge in Israel
She sat beneath her palm tree on a hill
And people came from everywhere
Just to hear her judgements honest and fair
Devorah the prophet, Devorah a mother in Israel.

Devorah the prophet was courageous strong
and wise

Her people lived in peace for forty years
The twelve tribes lived together as one
For the first time since the world had begun
Devorah the prophet, Devorah a mother in Israel

Chorus, then bridge:

Arise, Devorah, arise and sing a song
Arise, Devorah, uri uri dabri shir
Devorah the prophet, a woman of fire, her
torch in hand
She led the Israelites to victory
Barak said, "Devorah, I cannot fight
Unless you are standing right by my side!"⁹

Haim Gouri—Imo¹⁰

Years ago, at the end of the Song of Devorah,
I heard the quiet of Sisera's chariots, which
were late in coming.
As I looked at Sisera's mother watching at the
window,
A woman whose hair had a silver streak

A spoil of diverse colors of needlework
Diverse colors of needlework on both sides
meet for the necks of them that take the
spoil (Judges 5:30), the maidens saw;
At that very moment, he lay like a sleeper in
the tent;
His hands [were] very empty.
On his chin, traces of milk, butter, and blood.

The quiet was not shattered by the horses
and the chariots;
The maidens also fell silent, one after the
other.
My silence touched their silence.
After a while, the sun set. After a while, the
twilight went out.

Forty years – the land was calm. Forty years.
Horses did not gallop and dead horsemen did
not stare with glassy eyes. But she died a
short time after her son's death.

⁹ Lyrics: <http://www.jewishlearningmatters.com/AC-Devorah-s-Song-by-Debbie-Friedman-992.aspx#sthash.utqo37Ws.dpuf>

¹⁰ Translation by Dan Pagis. For the original Hebrew text and more information about this poem, see p164-165 in *The Modern Hebrew Poem Itself*.

Appendix 2:3D – Power Pose Infographic

A COLLABORATION
TED + **SUPER INTERESSANTE**

FAKE IT 'TIL YOU BECOME IT

We all know that our body language affects how people see us. But does it also shape how we see ourselves? In her TED Talk, “Your body language shapes who you are,” social psychologist Amy Cuddy discusses how our posture can affect testosterone and cortisol levels in the brain and change our feelings about ourselves. That means that standing tall and proud – even when we don’t feel confident – can have a positive impact on how we’re perceived. So take a look in the mirror; your next success could depend on how you pose. — Karin Hueck and Rafael Quick

HOW PEOPLE SEE YOU

WEAK ← → **STRONG**

HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF

“...Change your posture for two minutes... It could significantly change the way your life unfolds.”
 – Amy Cuddy

 <p>PROTECTIVE Placing your hand on your face or neck is a low-power pose that communicates a need for protection from other people.</p>	 <p>HAND-HIDING Hiding your hands in your pockets is another example of a low-power pose; it hints that you may lack self-confidence.</p>	 <p>WONDER WOMAN Shift your pose to make yourself appear bigger. That can take you from looking meek to seeming assertive.</p>	 <p>TALL AND PROUD Take a private moment to hold your arms up in a V-shape and lift your chin. That can make you feel (and seem) powerful.</p>
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<http://blog.ted.com/fake-it-til-you-become-it-amy-cuddys-power-poses-visualized/>

Lesson 2:4: Our Jewish Female Heroines – Nevertheless, She Persisted

Goals:

- To expose students to lesser-known Jewish women.
- To enable students to practice teaching others and researching a historic figure.

Objectives:

- To teach one another about important Jewish women,
- To craft a narrative through research and presentation.
- To connect feminist ideals to different stories and perspectives of Jewish women past and present.

Materials:

- Vision Boards
- List of Influential Jewish Women Cut into Strips
- Materials for Presentation Preparation/Presentations as Needed
- Computers for Research

Set Induction: Based on the woman they will present on during this session, have students bring in one additional image for their Women of Valor posters.

Activity: Preparation for Presentations

Note: This activity can be done at home if you pass out names and the assignment the week beforehand. This preparation can also take place during regular class time, though there will be less time for presentations and comparison.

Have students pick a name from the following list (feel free to add additional transformational/influential Jewish women of your choosing). Students spend time in class researching the woman and craft a presentation to share the individual and her accomplishments with the class. **Remind students of the four overarching elements of feminism from unit 1: Honoring women’s voices, questioning the status quo, honoring the diversity that emerges from questioning, and agency.** Information shared in the presentations should reflect these four major categories.

List of Influential Jewish Women:

- Golda Meir (first female Prime Minister of Israel)
- Ayelet Waldman (author)
- Leah Goldberg (poet)
- Hannah Senesh (poet)
- Dr. Ruth Westheimer (media personality, sex therapist)
- Gloria Steinem (one of the first leaders of the American feminist movement)

- Rabbi Naamah Kelman (first female rabbi ordained in Israel)
- Rabbi Sally Priesand (first female rabbi ordained in America)
- Amy Winehouse (singer)
- Sarah Silverman (comedian)
- Anat Hoffman (Founder, Women of the Wall)

Activity: Presentations

Students can choose to present their female heroine in the media of their choosing. Presentations should be 2-3 minutes long and focus on the four overarching themes of feminism mentioned above and discussed in unit 1. Encourage students to focus on one or two major milestones in the woman's life and to explain why this woman is a feminist, utilizes feminist ideals in her actions and is considered a woman of valor in their minds.

Activity: Feminism in Many Forms

Note to the Educator: You will have more time for this comparison activity if the preparation for the presentations is done before class.

Through this unit and these presentations, students have seen a variety of expressions of feminism and met many different women who fit this category of transformational women/women of valor. Pair up students and have them create a dialogue between the women they presented about earlier in the session and one of the biblical women from previous lessons (or another female biblical character they know about... Eve, Rachel, Leah, Bathsheba etc). In this dialogue, the different women should share their appreciations for one another and discuss at least one ideal or quality that connects the (minimum) three women. Share the dialogues with the whole class.

Conclusion: Ask students to share one feminist action they learned about through these presentations from a figure they did not present about themselves.

Lesson 2:5: Ruth Bader Ginsburg & Unit Authentic Assessment

Goals:

- To expose students to Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's history and determined path to leadership.
- To help students connect actions to values.
- To guide students through the process of creating a children's book to teach about female Jewish heroines.

Objectives:

- To explain the key Jewish values inherent in the life and actions of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.
- To identify the values and feminist messages of the Jewish heroines within this unit,
- To use these values to create a shareable method of teaching Jewish female heroines to others.

Materials:

- Appendix 2:4A – Ruth Bader Ginsburg Quotations
- Computer for Video
- List of Jewish Values (See "Activity: RBG's Values")
- Appendix 2:4B – Jewish Heroines Values Worksheet
- *I Dissent: Ruth Bader Ginsburg Makes Her Mark* Book
- Paper and Art Supplies for Children's Book Creation

Set Up Before the Lesson: Before class, tape the quotations in Appendix 2:4A around the room. If you particularly like one of the quotations or think multiple students may be drawn to that quotation, tape up two copies (students will be choosing their favorites in the Set Induction).

Set Induction: As students enter the room (or after check-in), ask the students to walk around the room and select one of the Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg quotations hanging around the room. Students should pick a quotation they feel connected to, are inspired by or struck them for one reason or another. When the students have selected their quotation, they can return to the circle and be prepared to share their quotation and their connection to it with the group.

Introduction: Watch Makers video (<http://www.makers.com/ruth-bader-ginsburg>).

Additional background information is below.

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg became the first Jewish female Supreme Court Justice in 1993. As a young law student and lawyer, she spoke out for women's rights and access in feminism's early years. She grew up in a Jewish family who taught her to love learning, help others, ask questions, and argue. She felt that Judaism lagged behind the rest of the feminist movement in America and felt viscerally excluded from key Jewish experiences her male friends and family

members had growing up. She felt excluded from experiences as a lawyer because of her sex, even though she excelled in every class and job she was offered. She directed the Women's Rights Project at the ACLU and later became the first tenured law professor at Columbia Law School. After arguing several landmark cases in front of the Supreme Court, President Clinton nominated her to the bench in 1993. She continues to speak out for women and minority rights and holds a strong liberal mindset on the court.¹¹

Activity: RBG's Values

Ask the students to come up with a list of ten Jewish values (*examples include Ahava/Love, Areyvut/Mutual Responsibility, Chesed/Kindness, Daat/Knowledge, Rachamim/Compassion, Tikkun Olam/Repairing the World, Tzedek/Justice, Tzelem Elohim/All people created in God's image, Shivyon/Equality*). Then, task students with finding examples of these values within the quotations of RBG's they read earlier. If the students cannot find a connection, encourage the students to search on the internet for more information and quotations from RBG.

After students search and share, discuss how Jewish values play a part in our decision-making. Even if we do not explicitly name that our action is Jewish, these values underscore our actions in the world and how we treat others.

Activity: What do we learn from our Jewish heroines?

Pair up students to complete the Appendix 2:4B worksheet. They can use the values they came up with in the previous activity or in other lessons to create a list of values embodied by the women they have learned about in this unit.

Activity: Authentic Assessment

Read all or sections of *I Dissent: Ruth Bader Ginsburg Makes her Mark* to the class. Before beginning, explain that the students will be creating their own children's books about Jewish female heroes. After reading the book, talk about the various techniques employed by the author to teach young children how RBG made change.

Each student will now create her own children's book (from a few pages to an entire narrative – choose length based on time available) to teach the next generation about powerful Jewish women. They can use women taught in this unit, another famous woman or someone they know personally who embodies Jewish values in her actions. If possible, combine the stories into one book, read to younger classes and/or share with the rest of the school.

¹¹ Halberstam, Malvina. "Ruth Bader Ginsburg." *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*. 1 March 2009. Jewish Women's Archive. (Viewed on April 10, 2017) <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/ginsburg-ruth-bader>.

Appendix 2:4A – Justice Ginsburg Quotations

The decision whether or not to bear a child is central to a woman's life, to her wellbeing and dignity. It is a decision she must make for herself. When government controls that decision for her, she is being treated as less than a fully adult human responsible for her own choices. (1993)

Feminism ... I think the simplest explanation, and one that captures the idea, is a song that Marlo Thomas sang, 'Free to be You and Me.' Free to be, if you were a girl—doctor, lawyer, Indian chief. Anything you want to be. If you're a boy, and you like teaching, you like nursing, you would like to have a doll, that's ok... we should each be free to develop our own talents, whatever they may be, and not be held back by artificial barriers. (makers.org)

We should not be held back from pursuing our full talents, from contributing what we could contribute to the society, because we fit into a certain mold – because we belong to a group that historically has been the object of discrimination. (2001)

Women will have achieved true equality when men share with them the responsibility of bringing up the next generation. (2001)

People ask me sometimes, "When will there be enough women on the court?" And my answer is, "When there are nine." (2015)

Every now and then it helps to be a little deaf... That advice has stood me in good stead. Not simply in dealing with my marriage, but in dealing with my colleagues. (makers.org)

I try to teach through my opinions, through my speeches, how wrong it is to judge people on the basis of what they look like, color of their skin, whether they're men or women. (2015)

[I'd like to be remembered as] Someone who used whatever talent she had to do her work to the very best of her ability. And to help repair tears in her society, to make things a little better through the use of whatever ability she has. To do something, as my colleague David Souter would say, outside myself. 'Cause I've gotten much more satisfaction for the things that I've done for which I was not paid. (2015)

Women belong in all places where decisions are being made... It shouldn't be that women are the exception. (2015)

We're still striving for that more perfect union. And one of the perfections is for the 'we the people' to include an ever enlarged group. (2016)

I've learned... to seek ever more the joys of being alive, because who knows how much longer I will be living? (2016)

Appendix 2:4B – Graphic Organizer to Summarize Heroines

Name	Feminist Actions	Values
Zelophechad's Daughters		
Miriam & Yocheved		
Shifra & Puah		
Batya (Pharaoh's Daughter)		
Judith		
Devorah & Yael		
Ruth Bader Ginsburg		
Your Feminist Heroine (from lesson 4)		

Unit 3 (Scripted): Feminist Influence on Prayer, Halakha and Ritual

Unit EUs:

- Jewish feminists aimed to expand the tent of obligation and inclusion by re-interpreting traditional understandings of obligation and expectation.
- The language of Jewish tradition is inherently gendered and can be interpreted to honor the female perspective.
- Jewish feminists enhanced and added to Jewish tradition and ritual by identifying uniquely female sacred moments and experiences.

Unit EQs:

- What is feminist halakha? Where do I find connection to obligation?
- How do the gendered aspects of prayer influence my practice?
- What is the value of female-centered prayer and ritual experiences?

Goals:

- Acquaint students with halakhic expectations of men and women.
- Expose students to different interpretations of prayer and God language.
- Encourage students to reflect on prayer practice and the gendered nature of prayer.
- Integrate students into the value of female perspectives and feminist ideology in Jewish law and practice.

Objectives:

- Identify differences in halakhic obligation between men and women.
- Explain key halakhic innovations by Jewish feminists.
- Formulate and express their own sense of obligation and connection to Jewish law and practice.
- Contrast prayer formulae and write their own.
- Identify and create uniquely female and contemporary prayer and ritual.

Assessments:

- Ritual Creation
- My Names for God Reflection
- Individual Nisim Bchol Yom Prayers

Key Terms:

- Halakha
- Feminist Halakha
- Prayer
- Ritual
- God Language

Lessons:

- 1) Jewish Law & Feminist Halakha Part 1
- 2) Jewish Law & Feminist Halakha Part 2
- 3) Gendered Prayer & God Language
- 4) Female Prayer Innovation
- 5) Change the Prayer Book
- 6) Feminist Ritual Innovation (Authentic Assessment)

Note for Educator: Prior to leading this unit, I encourage you to read "Toward Inclusive Worship" in Engendering Judaism by Rachel Adler. Many of the quotations utilized in this unit are pulled from this chapter. While aspects of the entire book would be helpful to be familiar with, this chapter focuses on how Jewish feminists, including Rabbi Adler, worked to expand the scope of practice, access and depth of meaning for Jewish women in prayer, ritual and law.

Lessons 3:1 & 3:2 – Jewish Law & Feminist Halakha

Goals:

- To develop knowledge about Jewish law and obligation.
- To understand the differences between male and female obligation according to halakha.
- To unpack female halakhic observance and obligation.

Essential Questions:

- What is halakha?
- Why are men and women obligated differently in Jewish tradition?
- What role do women play based on this obligation?

Objectives:

- Identify key terms related to halakha.
- Reflect on the experiences of halakhically-observant women
- Analyze the explanations for different levels of obligation.

Materials:

- 5 Large Post Its
- Markers
- Appendix 3:1A - Definitions Sheet
- Appendix 3:1B - Mitzvot Sheet Cut into Slips and Placed In Envelopes
- Appendix 3:1C – Halakha Study Sheet
- Appendix 3:1D – Ketubah & Brit Ahuvim Texts
- Random Object in Paper Bag for Innovation v Adaptation Set Induction (Orange, Pencil, Magazine, Water Bottle etc)

Timeline (1.5 Sessions):

00-15: What is Halakha?

15-25: Different Obligation for Men and Women – Categorizing Halakha

25-40: Rationalization for Difference

40-55: Why Rock the Boat

55-60: Wrap-up with Stories

60-65: Review from Last Session

65-75: Innovation v Adaptation

75-100: Comparison of Brit Ahuvim & Ketubah

Set Up:

- 1) *Create large post-its/posters with the following terms in the center (one term on each poster): Mitzvah, Negative Commandment, Positive Commandment, Halakha (Jewish Law), Obligation. Hang these posters around the room.*

- 2) *(See footnote) If the trust walk will take place within the classroom, create a specific path with barriers and opportunities for challenge throughout the path.*

00-05: Set Induction: Trust Walk¹²

Guide students through a trust walk experience. Either have students pair off and lead one another in a trust walk through the classroom or have the teacher guide the class together. Those being led will close their eyes and be led through the specific path created by the teacher. Emphasize offering specific, focused and clear instructions (Example: Take your left foot, raise it one foot off the ground and move it about one foot forward over the sweatshirt on the floor). After the activity, lead a discussion about how it felt to be guided with such specificity.

Discussion Questions:

- What was simple about that exercise? What was challenging?
- (If applicable) Did you prefer to be the guider or the one being guided? Why?
- What did you notice about the instructions? *Specific, many details, told me what to do*
- In your own experiences, what are some examples of times when you feel similarly guided? *Class assignments, dance practice, sports clinics, SAT/ACT*
- Do you find this guidance helpful or limiting or somewhere in the middle?

Explain: Nearly all Orthodox Jews and many Jews of other denominations follow Jewish law called Halakha. This word itself comes from the Hebrew verb “to walk” or “to go,” and it is translated often as “the path” or “the way.” It implies that Jewish law is THE path and THE way to live Jewishly. For many Jews, these laws give their life meaning and fullness. For others, these laws are antiquated and limiting. This unit will expose you to various aspects of these laws and how they influence men and women differently. You will have many opportunities to question and reflect on these laws and think about how you may or may not want to incorporate some of these aspects into your lives today and in the future.

Pass out Appendix 3:1C (Halakha Explanation Sheet) and have students read through the sheet in *chevruta* (pairs).¹³

05-15: Defining Terms

¹² Note to Educator: If there is some type of labyrinth/set path available, complete this activity at that location. The goal of this trust walk is to have students walk through a specific path with clear instructions and can take place within or outside of the classroom.

¹³ Note to Educator: This sheet highlights the concept of halakha as a path towards better living. Students reflect on how the rationale behind halakha can lead us to work towards a world as it should be instead of how it is today. Essentially, this sheet helps students feel connected to this concept that they may never plan to engage with personally but its rationale can have larger implications for how they view the world.

Give the students markers and ask them to walk around the room and add words to the posters hanging around the room. Ask students to write comments or thoughts that relate to each of the terms. For example, on the Negative Commandment sheet, they may write “do not murder” or “something you are not supposed to do.”

After 7 minutes, pass out the Definitions sheet (Appendix 3:1A) and read through the sheet as a class. As you read through the sheet, ask comprehension questions and seek differentiation between the terms.

Explain: In liberal Judaism, we may not engage with halakha in its traditional sense, but we engage with it as the push to live an upstanding life. *See Appendix 3:1C for a study sheet about Halakha in liberal Judaism.*

15-25: Different Obligation for Men and Women

Pass out Appendix 3:1B (List of Twenty Mitzvot). Give students five minutes to place Mitzvot into categories (encourage creativity – whatever categories they see!). Share categories aloud.

Explain: Mitzvot (commandments) are generally placed into three different categories – those everyone observes, those based on biological difference/gender, and those based on gender but not related to biological differences. The major difference between obligation between men and women relates to the observance of positive commandments. Both women and men are largely obligated to negative commandments (do not murder, do not steal, do not want your neighbor’s stuff). Positive commandments divide between those based in time and those not based in time. For example, men and women are obligated to observe Shabbat, but women are not obligated to pray three times a day. Therefore, women are largely not obligated to observe time-bound commandments while men are.

Have students attempt to place the twenty Mitzvot into these three categories (universal, biological sex difference, gender (not sex) difference) using the definitions of differential obligation described above.

Specific Mitzvot are designated for women, including a few time-based Mitzvot: Bearing children, lighting holiday and Shabbat candles. While it may be natural to feel that women are excluded, the rabbis genuinely believed they were creating special spaces for women and honoring their space in the family and home.

25-40: Explaining the Difference

Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think men and women have different expectations placed upon them for law observance? *Women and men hold different roles in the family, men spend more*

time studying, women focused on domestic duties, women are busier, men need more guidance, women are less important religiously etc

- How does it feel as a Jewish woman to know the expectations for observance are different for you than for a Jewish man?

Offer a few explanations as to why the differential exists (print as quotes and pass to each student):

- "Women are so in tune with nature's rhythms because of their own biological clock that they have no need to pray at regular intervals, as men do."¹⁴
- "Women's superior spirituality best suits them for child care, whereas men's grosser natures need to be tempered by prayer and lots of ritual."¹⁵
- "As for the positive commandments (*Mitzvot asay*) women must perform virtually all the commandments not structured by time, and are exempted from those *Mitzvot* that are restricted by time (*Mitzvot asay she'hazeman gerama*). This is because of women's traditional domestic roles of bearing children, raising a family, and fulfilling household responsibilities. The law was designed to liberate women of obligations of *Mitzvot* that they would find difficult. For instance, a woman is not required to pray in the morning, because it would be demanding for her to also pay attention to the children."¹⁶
- "Most traditional communities have maintained that a woman may not release men's obligations by voluntarily opting to perform a *Mitzvah* required of men. This judgment is emphasized by the idea of *k'vod ha-tzibbur* or "honor of the community," that a woman discharging men of their obligations brings embarrassment to the community."¹⁷

Ask: What seems to be the theme between these explanations? *Women more naturally attune to self and rhythms, women occupied with familial life, obligation distraction from family obligations*

The Mishnah (Oral Torah) uses the word exemption to describe female lack of obligation. However, many rabbis in the Orthodox community have determined that women were not allowed (actually prohibited) to observe many of these *Mitzvot*, including reading from the Torah and wearing Tallit and T'fillin. Maimonides (Rambam) believed a commandment performed by a woman, who is not obligated, is less equal than a man performing the same *Mitzvah*. Other sages believe a woman can take on the obligation of commandment but that she must accept all aspects of the obligation. Clearly, there is not one opinion on this issue!

¹⁴ Schneider, Susan Weidman. *Jewish and Female: Choices and Changes in Our Lives Today*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985. Print. 39.

¹⁵ *Ibid* 40.

¹⁶ "Jewish Concepts: Obligation of Women to Perform the Commandments." *Obligation of Women to Perform Jewish Commandments*. Jewish Virtual Library, n.d. Web. 10 Jan. 2017. http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/woman_commandments.html

¹⁷ *Ibid*.

40-55: Why Rock the Boat

This section reflects on these questions: Why would women want to change the status quo? What is threatening to the traditional Jewish community about expanding the tent of obligation? Wouldn't it be great to have more observant Jews?

Ask: It seems like women actually have it "easier" according to Jewish law. Why would women want to change this system? *Equal opportunity, inclusion in the community, limits women's responsibility, limit's women's inclusion and role availability*

Explain: Even though many of us may never live in a world bound by halakha or even know many people who live by halakha, many Jews around the world find it adds great meaning to their life. This group includes millions of women as well. Given its prevalence in Jewish life, it is important for us to understand why it is personally meaningful for so many Jews.

Activity: Interview a halakhically observant woman with your class. Questions to ask could include:

- Did you choose to observe halakha or were you born into a family/community who was observant?
- What role does halakha play in your life?
- How is halakha inspiring? Challenging? Simple? Time-consuming etc?
- Have you ever considered becoming more or less observant? Why?
- How does your observance of Jewish law differ from the men in your household/family? How do you feel about these differences?

55-60: Wrap-Up

Ask: What is the value of halakha? *Makes Judaism unique, creates specific roles, in and out groups, alignment for life, way of life.*

Given the many potential benefits for this way of life, women across the denominational spectrums began to express interest in participation in Jewish obligation. Next session, we will look at some of those innovators and how they used Jewish tradition and innovation to engage with understandings of halakha and expand the tent to attempt to include women.

*Session 2***60-65 Review from Previous Session**

Ask: What did we discuss last time? *Halakha and the differences between male and female obligation under Jewish law. Why do you think differences exist between the sexes in terms of obligation? Different roles for men and women, antiquated ideas, respect for women's roles and time, tradition*

65-75: Innovation v Adaptation

Activity: Students are divided into two groups. Each group is handed the same object. Task one group with coming up with as many brand-new meanings or uses for the object while the other comes up with related but connected uses for the object.

Example: Orange →

- *Group 1: Juggling ball, door stop, massage ball, planet in a diorama*
- *Group 2: Orange juice, orange zest, orange soda, air freshener, dry the rinds for decoration, put the rind in your mouth and smile, stick a straw in it and drink the juice, toast the seeds*

Complete activity twice to allow each group to try both options.

After both rounds, ask:

- Which list was easier to create?
- What was the difference between the two tasks? *One was innovative, one was adaptive, one required you to ignore the actual use of the object while the other made you think about its many purposes and qualities*

To close the discussion, share this quotations from Rabbi Dr. Rachel Adler. Explain that Rabbi Adler largely combines these ideas of innovation and adaptation because she believes in finding the essence of the practice and creating a model that fits within a feminist lens. As one of the premier and first prominent Jewish feminists, she played a major role in expanding the scope of Jewish ritual and law for Jewish women.

“If you play by their ground rules, there is no way for women to win. So then you change the ground rules.” – Rachel Adler (3/15/16)¹⁸

70-100 Comparison of Brit Ahuvim & Ketubah

Explain: The distinction between these tasks largely mirrors the dichotomy between different schools of thought for Jewish ritual. Some feminist halakhists want to use existing Jewish law to value Jewish women in contemporary times while others want to create a completely new system. We will learn about these different schools of thought through studying different approaches to the Jewish marriage document.

Explaining Ketubah and Brit Ahuvim

Explain: Before the marriage ceremony, Jewish couples sign a document called a Ketubah, a traditional text makes the wife the possession of her husband. Today, we might be upset by this idea of possession. Even though the idea is problematic, we also should understand its historical context. For much of history, women needed to be protected. They moved from their father’s house to their husband’s house without many opportunities to make a living on her

¹⁸ Quotations from personal conversations with the speaker.

own. Therefore, this Ketubah protected a woman in this transition period so she would not be left alone without a means of support. However, as society offers more opportunities for women and we no longer believe in such a hierarchical system, Jewish feminists believed it was time to adapt the document. Many couples innovate this text and make it personal and less gendered. These translations often focus on making both couples “owners” of the other and inheriting one another. This language is more egalitarian though still sometimes based in inheritance.

Dr. Rabbi Rachel Adler created an alternative model that aimed to change the conception of marriage in Jewish tradition. This Brit Ahuvim (lovers’ covenant) “exemplifies the methodology of transforming a foundational religious element based on new readings of traditional texts.”¹⁹

The goal of the Brit Ahuvim is to eliminate the subjugation of women to men in traditional marriage language and reframe marriage in terms of partnership law.²⁰

Read Appendix 3:1D (Ketubah & Brit Ahuvim). After reading, ask:

- How would you categorize the language of each text? *K – transactional, formal, items exchanged, distant from partners; BA – personal, couple-centric, values-based*
- How are women characterized in each text? *K- item to be traded, monetary value, commodity; BA – equal partnership, given a voice*
- Do either of these texts work for non-heterosexual marriage? How could they be adapted for non-heterosexual partnership? *Remove husband/wife language, depending on the couple one language may be preferable, eliminate the directionality of the gendered language*
- Which language would you prefer?
- How does the language of Brit Ahuvim honor the feminist perspective? *Not about possession, woman has agency*

Closing:

Explain: While we may connect more with the partnership-based text of Brit Ahuvim, many Jewish women across the world feel this text is too far outside of Jewish tradition to accept. This does not mean they are not feminists (though some may not identify this way or believe in this ideology), but they live in a different environment than we do. As we will learn in later units, feminism impacts all denominations of Judaism at different levels. While Reform Jews may have more English than Hebrew on a Ketubah and change the language to partnership instead of inheritance, Orthodox Jews are blending the concept of Get with American divorce law. All successful innovation relates back to the original source because it allows the participants to still feel connected and engaged. Later in this unit, we will create innovative

¹⁹ Goldstein 308.

²⁰ Adler, Rachel. *Engendering Judaism: An Inclusive Theology and Ethics*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1998. Print.207.

blessings and rituals. It will be critical to remember the source material for the innovations to feel authentic and grounded in Jewish experience, tradition and text.

Optional Activity: As a fun way to close, students can use phones/computers to visit howmanygoats.com. This online quiz allows users to determine how many goats their dowry would be worth in the ancient/traditional world.

Appendix 3:1A

Mitzvah: Commandment, obligated under Jewish law, often mistranslated as “good deed”

Positive Commandment: Something you are required to do. Observe Shabbat, Believe in One God etc.

Negative Commandment: Something you are obligated not to do. Do not steal, do not make false idols.

Halakha: Comes from a Hebrew word meaning to walk or to go. Thus, the term means the act of making one’s way or path. Halakha translates the stories and values of Judaism into ongoing action. Halakha takes laws from the Torah, Talmud and other commentaries and makes them into a way of life with set guidelines and actions.

Mishnah: Earliest commentary on the Torah. Codified around 200 CE.

Talmud: Two versions – Babylonian and Jerusalem. Collection of rabbinic commentary on Mishnah.

Appendix 3:1B: List of Mitzvot

1. Lighting Chanukah candles
2. Shabbat Kiddish (blessing over wine)
3. Bearing Children
4. Saying Shema
5. Sitting in the Sukkah
6. Listening to the Shofar
7. Wearing Tzitzit (Tallit)
8. Wrapping Tfillin
9. Praying Three Times per Day
10. Studying Torah
11. Leading Services
12. Circumcision
13. Do not Practice Magic
14. Caring for the Land
15. Saying Birkat Hamazon (Prayer after Meals)
16. Do not Work on Shabbat
17. Putting a Mezuzah on your Doorpost
18. Do not take God's name in vain
19. Believe in one God
20. Do not make Idols

Appendix 3:1C Halakha Study Sheet

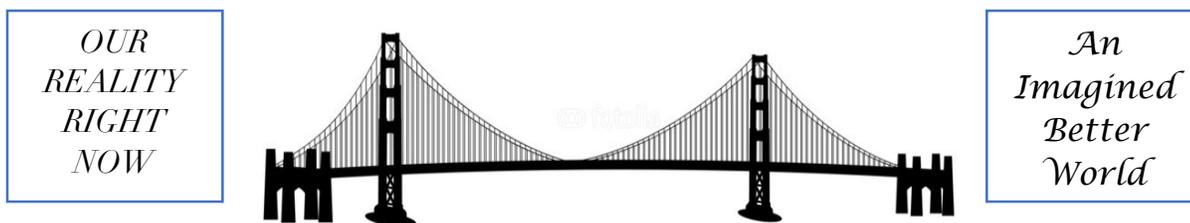
HALAKHA: Walking the Walk

הלכ
halach – that’s the verb “to go”
הלכה
halakha- the word for Jewish law

>

The connection is hardwired in! Halakha isn’t just about laws and rules that we make up and enforce. When you do it right, halakha is really a path or a way of living. It means that you COMMIT to acting ethically, to living out your values, and to applying the ancient teachings and laws of Torah to your everyday life today. You walk in the ways of Torah. This “path” helps us make meaning in the world

Robert Cover offers the image of the bridge to express the dynamism of the meaning-making component that both constitutes and propels law. Law-as-bridge is a tension system strung between “reality,” our present world..., and “alternately,” the other normative worlds we may choose to imagine (Dr. Rachel Adler, *Engendering Judaism*)



Imagine if the halakha for our community allowed each of us to approach the highest ideal of the community. We would actively walk through life looking for ways to improve ourselves and make our lives holy. This is embedded in Judaism itself. When laws are passed and judgments are justly enacted, we gain glimpse after glimpse of this ideal world. The **law** represents a “bridge to a better world.” When Jews are commanded to help the poor, be fair in business dealing, and protect the orphan, these laws make the world more just.

START IMAGINING RIGHT NOW....
What does that world in the future look like to you? What needs fixing?

What are we committing to today?

What virtues, basic universal character traits, should be the basis for our imagined world?

Think of one law that could bridge us towards a better world.

Appendix 3:1D Ketubah & Brit Ahuvim Texts

The Ketubah Text²¹

The traditional Aramaic text of the *ketubah* (marriage contract) reflects the history of Jewish marriage.

By Rabbi Maurice Lamm

This article explains the first half of the traditional ketubah, including the proposal and funds committed to the marriage from the bride's family and the groom. "Explaining the Ketubah Text (Part 2)" describes the additional gift from the groom, contractual protections for his wife, and how the ketubah is sealed.

In liberal communities the bride and groom often write more egalitarian ketubot that reflect their goals for the marriage—either in place of or in addition to the traditional ketubah. Both liberal and some traditional Jews may include a prenuptial agreement in their ketubah that would require the groom to give the bride a get, or Jewish bill of divorce, should the marriage end. Reprinted from The Jewish Way in Love and Marriage by permission of Jonathan David Publishers.²²

The Date and Place of the Wedding

"On the _____ day of the week, the _____ day of the month _____ in the year _____ since the creation of the world according to the reckoning which we are accustomed to use here in the city of _____ in _____"

The Date. The law prescribes that the date appear at the beginning in private agreements, but at the end in court agreements. Though the ketubah has the status of a court decree, it is in the nature of a private agreement and so the date is placed first.

The Place. The same rationale is used for the place. A divorce document contains more geographical information (e.g., mention of a neighboring river). The *Sephardim* [Jews of Spain who, after the Expulsion, emigrated to North Africa and the Middle East] retained this custom, and Rema, in the 16th century, urged that the technicalities of the ketubah follow those of the divorce. But the Talmud simplified the ketubah and the Jews of Europe have followed that tradition.

The Groom, the Bride, & the Proposal

"... _____ son of _____ of the family _____ said to this maiden _____ daughter of _____ of the family _____ "Be thou my wife according to the law of Moses and Israel."

The Names. Their Hebrew names, their fathers' names, and usually, though not always, their family names. The mother's name is given when praying for recovery from illness, as a symbol of mother's compassion. A father's name is used in legal matters, just as a father's family name has always been used in legal affairs. [Today, though, many liberal Jews include the mother's name on a ketubah as well.] Added to their names is also the appellation for a rabbinic scholar, *Rav*, or priestly or Levitic descent, *kohen* or *Levi*.

²¹ Lamm, Rabbi Maurice. "The Ketubah Text." *My Jewish Learning*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Feb. 2017. <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-ketubah-text/#>

²² *Alternative Ketubot Texts are linked from this article: Lockshin, Shoshanna. "Alternative Ketubah Texts." My Jewish Learning. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Feb. 2017. <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/alternative-ketubah-texts/>*

The Proposal. "Be thou my wife according to the law of Moses and of Israel" is the marriage proposal. The ketubah, following in time as it does the betrothal and its oral proposal formula, "You are hereby betrothed unto me according to the law of Moses and Israel," is written by witnesses testifying that the groom in fact proposed to the bride. The formula has remained intact for some 2,000 years. The Talmud considered variants, but this language of proposal endured.

The Groom Promised the Basic Support

"... and I will work for thee, honor, provide for, and support thee, in accordance with the practice of Jewish husbands, who work for their wives, honor, provide for and support them in truth."

Support. This is referred to as the alimentionation clause. Providing support is elemental in marriage, and is considered so obvious that the Talmud makes no reference to it. But the phrase is so beautiful and appropriate that it appears in the ketubah not only once but twice, "honor, provide for, and support... honor, provide for, and support.... " Indeed, one authority described it as *le'shufra di'she'tara* (for the beauty of the contract).

Funds for the Wife, If and When the Marriage Terminates

"... and I will set aside for thee 200 silver *zuz mohar* due thee for thy maidenhood, which belong to thee according to the law of the Torah, and thy food, clothing, and other necessary benefits which a husband is obligated to provide; and I will live with thee in accordance with the requirements prescribed for each husband."

The Mohar. The funds, called *mohar*, are so important that this clause is called *ikkar ketubah*—the basic part of the ketubah, or simply the ketubah. Mohar is the cash gift the groom gives the bride, as Eliezer, Abraham's servant, gave "precious things" to Laban, Rebekah's father, and as Jacob gave seven years of service for the hand of Rachel. The great sage and the ketubah's most important author, Rabbi Simeon ben Shetach, decreed that this serve as protection for the bride rather than only a gift, and ordained that the funds were not given but set aside for the bride. During marriage, therefore, it was considered a debt which was paid only in case of death or divorce, and the mohar thus became a divorce or life insurance settlement rather than a mere marriage gift. This arrangement also enabled poor grooms to marry without any immediate monetary expenditure. The Talmud provides another reason, *mishum china*, to give the woman a secure financial position at the time of divorce so that she may remarry, and make the trials of marriage less poignant.

The Law of the Torah. There is a running dispute between the Jerusalem Talmud and the Babylonian Talmud as to whether this settlement, which all agree is historically of biblical times, is biblically or rabbinically mandated. Today we generally take mohar to be rabbinically commanded, yet because of the gravity of the marriage bond we persist in using, "which belong to thee according to the law of the Torah." We also include "200 silver *zuz*," the Tyrean coin used in biblical assessments, rather than the "current" coin used in rabbinically ordained payments.

Mohar for brides previously married is one-half the total and is recorded as rabbinically mandated.

Food, Clothing, and Conjugal Relations. The obligations are basic to marriage and are obligatory even without specific contractual condition. They are the rights (including conjugal relations) of the wife, and are accounted duties of the husband.

The Bride Accepted the Proposal

"... and this _____ maiden, consented and became his wife."

Willing Acceptance. The proposal having been made in the traditional formula, the witnesses now assert that the bride accepted with willing consent, and therefore "she became his wife." *Ve'havat lih le'into* is an Aramaic translation of [Ruth 4:13](#), *va-tehi lo le'ishah*.

And She Brings a Dowry

"The dowry (*nedunya*) that she brought from her _____ house, in silver, gold, valuables, clothing, and household furnishings, all this _____ the said groom accepted in the sum of 100 silver pieces."

The Dowry. *Nedunya* (dowry), popularly referred to as *naddan*, is given the bride by her father for her use in the home she is about to build. This dowry includes the items listed plus any other valuables she may bring with her. In the Bible, Rachel and Leah are given servants Bilhah and Zilpah as dowry. It is the daughter's share of her parents' inheritance. The sons succeed their father, but the daughters leave him and therefore receive an equivalent in the form of dowry. The sages make it compulsory for a father to give his' daughter, as a start in married life, sufficient funds to buy a woman's wardrobe for one year.

The dowry is distinct from property or possessions that the bride owns and continues to own privately throughout marriage. Thus it serves as an inducement for suitors. The dowry is included in the ketubah, and is the property of the bride, technically "leased" to the groom for the duration of marriage. The bride's private property, called *nikhsei melog*, is given outright to the bride, the husband enjoying only the "fruit" (usufruct) during marriage. It is not part of the dowry and is not included in the ketubah.

The Groom Accepted. The ketubah originally listed all items in the dowry and tabulated the cost. In time, this was standardized under the general categories listed and estimated at a standard sum of 100 silver pieces, one half of the mohar that the groom provided the bride for use of the dowry, but which, in reality, comes today to very much more than the half mohar. *Rabbi Maurice Lamm holds the Chair in Professional Rabbinics at Yeshiva University, is the former senior Rabbi of Beth Jacob Congregation--Beverly Hills, and is President of National Institute for Jewish Hospice. He has written five books and sold 450,000.*

B'rit Ahuvim: Lovers' Covenant

By Rachel Adler

Transliteration:

Brit Ahuvim

*B'_____ b'shabbat (yom) _____ (khodesh) _____ (shanah) _____ livriat olam l'minyan
 she'anu ba' (ir) _____ (m'dinah) _____ hashutafim _____ ben/bat _____
 l'mishpakhat _____ v' _____ ben/ bat _____ l'mishpakhat _____ m'kay'mim
 b'yeyneyhem lifney eydim brit ahuvim u'makhrizim al kavanatam lhitkasher b'shutafut l'hakim
 bayit b'yisrael.*

*Haskem zeh sheyavo'u vo _____ ben/ bat _____ v' _____ ben/ bat _____ brit k'dushah he
 kivritot hak'domot shel ameynu ha'asu'ot b'emunah u'vshalom la'amod lanetzakh.*

*Brit sh'mirah v'tikvah he ka'brit shenishava Adonay el nuakh v'tze'etza'av shenemar: v'haytah
 hakeshet bey'anah u'ritha lizkor brit olam beyn Elohim u'veyn kol nefesh khayah b'khol basar
 asher al ha'arets. Va'yomer Elohim el noakh zot ot ha'brit asher hak'm'ti beyni u'veyn kol basar
 asher al ha'arets.*

Brit s'gulah he kivrit kab'rit she'asah Adonay im yisrael shenemar:

Va'hayitem li l'am v'anokhi ey'yeh lakhem la'elohim.

Brit y'didut he hamkasheret l'avot k'shekartu David v'Y'honatan shenemar:

V'nefesh Y'honatan v'David brit b'a'havato oto k'nafsho.

Brit shel khesed hadadi habrit hazot kabrit n'sueyhem shel Adonay v'tzion shenemar:

V'ey'rashtikh li l'olam. V'ey'rashtikh li b'tzedek uv'mishpat uv'khesed uv'rakhamim.

V'ey'rashtikh li bey'emunah v'yada'at et Adonay.

On _____ (day of week) the _____ day of _____ (month), 57__, according to Jewish
 reckoning (_____ month _____ day _____ year, according to secular reckoning), in the city
 of _____ (state or region), _____ (country), _____ (Hebrew name)
 daughter/son of _____ and _____ whose surname is _____
 and _____ (Hebrew name) daughter/son of _____ and
 _____ whose surname is _____ confirm in the presence of witnesses a
 lovers' covenant between them and declare a partnership to establish a household among the
 people of Israel.

The agreement into which _____ and _____ are entering is a holy
 covenant like the ancient covenants of our people, made in faithfulness and peace to stand
 forever. It is a covenant of protection and hope like the covenant God swore to Noah and his
 descendants, saying

When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between
 God and all living creatures, all flesh that is on earth. That," God said to Noah, "shall be the sign
 of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh" (Gen. 9:16–17).

It is a covenant of distinction, like the covenant God made with Israel, saying

You shall be My people, and I shall be your God (Jer. 30:22).

It is a covenant of devotion, joining hearts like the covenant David and Jonathan made, as it is
 said,

And Jonathan's soul was bound up with the soul of David. Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself (1 Sam. 18:1-3).

It is a covenant of mutual lovingkindness like the wedding covenant between God and Zion, as it is said,

I will espouse you forever. I will espouse you with righteousness and justice and lovingkindness and compassion. I will espouse you in faithfulness and you shall know God (Hos. 2:21-22).

Provisions of the Covenant

The following are the provisions of the lovers' covenant into which _____ (Hebrew name) daughter/son of _____ and _____ and _____ (Hebrew name) daughter/son of _____ and _____ now enter:

1. _____ and _____ declare that they have chosen each other as companions, as our rabbis teach:

Get yourself a companion. This teaches that a person should get a companion, to eat with, to drink with, to study Bible with, to study *Mishnah* with, to sleep with, to confide all one's secrets, secrets of *Torah* and secrets of worldly things. (Avot D'Rabbi Nat an 8)

2. _____ and _____ declare that they are setting themselves apart for each other and will take no other lover.

3. _____ and _____ hereby assume all the rights and obligations that apply to family members: to attend, care, and provide for one another [and for any children with which they may be blessed] [and for _____ child/children of _____]

4. _____ and _____ commit themselves to a life of kindness and righteousness as a Jewish family and to work together toward the communal task of mending the world.

5. _____ and _____ pledge that one will help the other at the time of dying, by carrying out the last rational requests of the dying partner, protecting him/her from indignity or abandonment and by tender, faithful presence with the beloved until the end, fulfilling what has been written:

Set me as a seal upon your arm, for love is stronger than death. (Song of Songs 8:6)

To this covenant we affix our signatures.

The partners:

Witnessed this day the _____ day of Parashat _____ (Hebrew date).

The witnesses:

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Lesson 3:3 - Gendered Prayer & God Language

Goals:

- To unpack God language to identify its gendered aspects.
- To reflect upon the influence of gender in God language and practice.
- To connect students to their sense of God.

Essential Questions:

- What is the value of prayer?
- How does language influence prayer?
- How do I engage with God in prayer?
- Why is God language gendered?

Objectives:

- Identify different terminology for God
- Identify and explain gender-based components of God language
- Express personal connection to God and prayer

Materials:

- Paper & Pens
- Hashkiveinu Prayer Sheets
- White Board & Markers

Timeline:

00-10: Why We Pray

10-25: An Example of Prayer Innovation

25-50: Talking about God

50-60: Closing Activity: My Name for God

00-10 Set Induction: Why We Pray

Ask students to reflect on a time when they had a meaningful prayer experience. This experience can take place in any setting and could involve formal liturgy or not, be led by a Rabbi or not, be inside a synagogue or not. If a participant cannot think of an experience, ask them to think about a time they felt spiritually moved (hopefully you can connect this to prayer or a prayer-ful experience).

Ask guiding questions for the students to reflect upon privately: Where did the prayer take place? What did it look like? Smell like? What was the temperature? What was said? What sounds, if any, did you hear? How did you feel as the experience unfolded? Why do you still remember this experience?

After a few minutes of personal reflection, ask the students to each share her experience. Once everyone has shared, ask students to create a list of commonalities that resonated between the experiences. Acknowledge the unique nature of each experience and how we all connect with prayer differently.

10-25 An Example of God-Language Innovation in the Siddur

Explain: We just shared examples of meaningful prayer experiences and mostly focused on the experience itself – the scenery, environment, those around us, how we connected emotionally and spiritually. Much of the prayer experience also comes from the words we offer and pray individually and communally. One major theme of prayer is connection to God. The prayer book has many names and ideas about God and often moves between these ideas so seamlessly we barely notice. We are going to zoom in on some of these names for God and reflect on how we engage with these ideas in our prayers and these concepts more generally as Jewish women in this course.

We going to focus first on a prayer called Hashkiveinu. Hashkiveinu is traditionally prayed each evening. If you have gone to Jewish camp, you may have prayed these words right before you went to sleep during closing circle or at the closing of a weekend or program. The prayer itself comes from a time when our ancestors slept in tents in the wilderness – going to sleep was an adventure! They literally were asking for God’s protection from the many beasts and dangers found in the desert. Even today, while our homes may be more protected than the tents in the desert, we still ask God for shelter and protection in this prayer. What may be modern equivalents of wild beasts that we can ask for protection from? *Earthquakes, tornadoes, burglars, natural disasters etc.*

Pass out Appendix 3:3A (Hashkiveinu in two different forms). Note the difference in God language. In the first prayer, God is referred to as Malkeinu (Our King). In the second version, God is referred to as Shomreinu (Our Guardian/Protector).

Read the prayers and discuss the difference between the two prayers. Ask:

- What do you notice as the difference between the two prayers? *When the students name “one says Malkeinu and one says Shomreinu”, stop the discussion and do the activity below:*
 - o Write “Melech - King” and “Shomer - Guardian/Protector” on the board. Ask students to call/write out as many adjectives as they can that describe each term.
- Do you connect more to one meaning or the other?
- Using our list of descriptive words, how would you describe the role of God in each prayer?
- How does changing the word for God’s name change the prayer’s meaning?
- How does changing the word for God’s name change your experience of/connection to the prayer?

Jewish feminists are one of the groups we can thank for our diverse prayer experiences and connections. For centuries, Jews prayed one way. Liturgy was fixed, men and women prayed separately and prayer was rapid and an obligation to get through. This style can be deeply meaningful and connected millions to Jewish tradition for centuries; however, prayer innovation has emerged as a key aspect of Jewish feminism that aims to find new and different methods of meaning. Rabbi Michele Lenke argues, “the women’s movement of the 70s, 80s, and 90s gave birth to the renaissance of the Jewish spirituality movement that is so vibrant today.”²³

This change to the traditional text of the Hashkiveinu prayer came in the early 2000s with the release of *Mishkan Tfillah*. Rabbi Elyse Frishman, who served as one of the co-editors, proposed this change in an effort to de-gender the name of God in the siddur.

25-50 Talking about God

Students will explore more names of God and the male-female/masculine-feminine spectrum.

There are many names for God in the Torah, liturgy and other rabbinic sources. As we saw above, the different names we use for God influence the meaning of the text we are using.

Write out the following names for God on the board: Tetragramaton (Yod-Hay-Vav-Hay), HaRachaman (Compassionate One), HaMakom (The Place), Melech HaOlam (King of the Universe), Shechina, Elohim, Adonai, Shomreinu (Our Guardian/Protector), Divine Mother, Avinu (Our Father). Pass out paper and a writing utensil to each participant.

Each learner will place these names of God on a spectrum from male to female. Explain that while we do not ascribe gender to God officially, Hebrew is a gendered language (like Spanish, French or Italian). Much of our text uses gendered pronouns when referring to God and Godself in text. Given that the opening unit defines gender on a spectrum, students can place these names anywhere along the spectrum between male and female. *Note: Some terms do not have a simple English translation and will need to be explained.*

After students create and compare their spectrums, ask:

- What was simple about this activity?
- What was challenging about this activity?
- Would you have plotted the names differently if the ends of the spectrum were masculine and feminine as opposed to male and female? Do these terms have different connotations to you? *About qualities rather than identities, male and female more expansive than masculine and feminine*
- Do you believe God has gender? Why or why not?
- How do you prefer to address God?

²³ Schorr, Rabbi Rebecca Einstein & Rabbi Alysa Mendelson Graf, eds. *The Sacred Calling: Four Decades of Women in the Rabbinate*. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis Press, 2016. Print. 483.

- What is the value of incorporating gender-based qualities into our connection with God? What harm could it do?
- Do we generally value male or female qualities more highly? How does this influence our understanding of this exercise? How do you wish we viewed different qualities?

*Note for facilitator: Ideally, this conversation will move students towards a place of valuing qualities on an equal level regardless of whether the characteristics are seen as traditionally male or female. While some students likely will argue that female-typical characteristics are more valuable, society tends to prefer male-typical characteristics in leadership and those we admire. However, by discussing these qualities without judgement and seeing the value in having different names of God for different situations, this activity aims to elevate traditionally valued and traditionally subjugated characteristics. Instead of honoring dominion or kingship, traditionally masculine characteristics, over care, a quality associated with femininity, the goal of this lesson is to flatten the spectrum and see all of these characteristics imbued in God. No metaphor is total or all-encompassing and the language is not static. Addressing God in the feminine does not negate God's masculine qualities and vice versa. **Both traditional male and female characteristics can and should be seen as valuable when discussing God. God's presence in these characteristics elevates their identity. This is a power and goal of the Jewish feminist project – to elevate qualities instead of having a hierarchy of characteristics.***

50-60 Closing Activity

Ask the students to pick one name of God they most resonate with. Students will use the name of God to create an acrostic poem describing how they connect to this image of God. If time, this poem can be turned into a drawing, traditional poem or other physical representation of the learner's experiences with that attribution of God.

Appendix 3:3A**Traditional Hashkiveinu Opening:**

<p>Hash·ki·vei·nu</p> <p>Hash·ki·vei·nu A·do·nai E·lo·hei·nu l'sha·lom, v'ha·a·mi·dei·nu mal·kei·nu l'cha·yim, u·fros a·lei·nu suk·kat sh'lo·me·cha,</p>	<p>הַשְּׁכִיבֵנוּ ^{en}</p> <p>הַשְּׁכִיבֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְשָׁלוֹם, וְהַעֲמִידֵנוּ מַלְכֵנוּ לְחַיִּים וּפְרוֹשׂ עָלֵינוּ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ,</p>
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*Lay us down, Adonai our God in peace
And raise us up, our King, to life renewed.
Spread over us the shelter of your wings.*

Mishkan T'filah Haskiveinu Opening:

<p>HASHKIVEINU, Adonai Eloheinu, l'shalom, v'haamideinu shomreinu l'chayim, ufros aleinu sukat sh'lomecha,</p>	<p>הַשְּׁכִיבֵנוּ, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, לְשָׁלוֹם, וְהַעֲמִידֵנוּ שׁוֹמְרֵנוּ לְחַיִּים, וּפְרוֹשׂ עָלֵינוּ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ,</p>
<p>GRANT, O GOD, that we lie down in peace, and raise us up, our Guardian, to life renewed. Spread over us the shelter of Your peace.</p>	

Lesson 3:4 – Female Prayer Innovation & Female-Centered Prayer Experiences (Memorable Moment)

(Ideally should take place around Rosh Chodesh)

Goals:

- To unpack blessing formulae to identify its gendered language.
- To reflect upon the influence of gender in prayer language and practice.
- To expose students to new prayer practices

Essential Questions:

- How does language influence prayer?
- How do I connect as a woman to prayer?
- How does prayer language connect with me as a woman?

Objectives:

- Identify the gendered aspects of the blessing formula.
- Recognize gender-based components of prayer language.
- Express personal connection to God and prayer.

Materials:

- Paper & Pens
- Copies of *Mishkan Tefillah* for whole class
- Computer to Play Video (Women of the Wall video)
- Copies of Rachel Adler Quotation (See “Elevating Women’s Voices in Prayer”)

Timeline:

00-15 Prayer Service

15-30 Reflection on Prayer Service & WOW Video

30-40 Blessing Formula

40-55 Elevating Women’s Voices in Prayer

55-60 Marcia Falk’s Blessing Formula

00-15: Prayer Service (Memorable Moment)

Invite a female clergy member/songleader to lead a service with the women in the class. Try to highlight female composers when choosing melodies and additional readings. While our Reform ancestors fought for egalitarian prayer, there is also a special quality to praying with only other women. Midrash teaches that the women of the slave generation did not give up their gold to Aaron to build the Golden Calf at Sinai. For this faith and dedication, God “gifted” Rosh Chodesh to Jewish women. This ritual is discussed in lesson two. If this lesson takes place near Rosh Chodesh, psalms from that liturgy should be included as well.

15-30: Reflection on Prayer Service

Have students take three minutes to free write about the experience of praying with only women. What did they notice? How did this prayer experience feel? Did it feel different than their usual prayer experience? If so, how?

Ask the students to share at least one thought aloud from the free write. Discuss the experience and the questions above. Add additional questions:

- What do you value about egalitarian (men and women together) prayer? *Equality, everyone's voice is equal, more diverse voices present, only one way to divide is by gender (could be many other ways to create separate prayer spaces), limits gender hierarchy, key aspect of Reform Jewish tradition*
- Why might someone want to pray in a female-only prayer space? *Solidarity among women, traditional practice, female-specific ritual time*
- In what situations if any would you choose a female-only prayer space?
- What might differ between a female-only and male-only prayer space?
 - o *Note: Encourage students to not just revert to gender stereotypes and reach an understanding that many types of prayer experiences could occur in a single sex prayer space regardless if the students identify as male or female.*
 - o *Times for sex-segregated prayer: Rosh Chodesh, ritual moments for specifically male/female experiences (bris, bar/bat Mitzvah, menstruation, childbirth etc), family traditions, trauma, personal experiences)*

Resources: Other Powerful Female Prayer Spaces→

- Women of the Wall (show video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UiCW62Y9hek>)
- Rosh Chodesh circles
- Mikvah experiences (expanded upon in Ritual lesson)

Use personal experiences or examples as well to expand upon the stories in this lesson. When did you have an experience praying with women? Why was the space only for women? What did you enjoy? What did you miss from egalitarian spaces?

30-45 Contemporary Examples of Absent Women's Voices

Explain: We just experienced the power of women praying with women and the elevation of our voices. However, women's voices were traditionally absent from prayer leadership and prayer itself. We are going to look at another situation in which women's voices were surprisingly absent.

Share this photo (https://www.thenation.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/trump_globalgag_ap_img.jpg) of President Donald Trump signing the Executive Order to reinstate the Global Gag Rule (2017), a law that dramatically narrows access and aid for women's healthcare in foreign nations. What do you notice? *All white men. Where are the women?!* (More information - <https://www.thenation.com/article/trumps-anti-abortion-order-is-actually-likely-to-increase-abortions/>)

Decisions about women and their bodies are sometimes made without women being present. Another example occurred in 2012 when the House Judiciary Committee on the Constitution considered a bill that would outlaw abortion after 20 weeks of pregnancy across the United States. Again, no women served on this committee and thus no women participated in the debate of this bill. (More information here -

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/05/23/abortion-bill-house-men_n_3325864.html)

Discussion Questions:

- How do you react to these stories?
- Why do these situations occur? *Fewer women in positions of authority, desire to not tokenize women or require women to serve on too many committees (problem related to the first answer), leaders do not think to diversify in this manner, ignorance*
- Do women need to be in the room to enact change? Why or why not?
- Do you believe an all-male group should have the right to make women's health decisions? Why or why not?
- How could we change or influence this narrative? *Speak up, require female voices on all committees, ensure issues that disproportionately impact women have female representatives in influential positions*
- What are other examples when women's voices are surprisingly absent? *Major professional sports scenes (besides the token sideline reporter in a tight dress), executive positions at many major companies, President of USA etc*
- How does this connect to this larger idea about women's voices in Judaism? *Women's voices also absent sometimes, the male perspective does not encompass the female perspective (and neither of these are all-inclusive either), surprising places where only one group is present*

Explain the connection to Jewish Prayer: Jewish female prayer innovators were doubly concerned – women's voices traditionally had been kept silent AND liberal streams of Judaism wanted to minimize differences between the sexes by including women in the traditional prayers that were not only written in masculine form but also did not acknowledge uniquely female experiences or expressions. Prayer innovators sought to explore and challenge both of these problems.

45-50 Traditional Blessing Formula

Explain: As a central aspect of Jewish expression, we want prayer to reflect our values. One of these values may be inclusive language and the ability to pray with pronouns, verbs and nouns that reflect one's own identity and relationship to text and God. However, we also have to acknowledge that Hebrew is a gendered language. If the students have learned Spanish, French or another romance language, they will recognize this practice from those languages as well. As we talked about with God language, this aspect of Hebrew influences our prayer language.

Ask: What is the traditional beginning of most blessings (write on board in Hebrew and English)? *Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech Haolam...*

Explain the gendered aspect of this formula:

- 1) *Baruch* – masculine for “bless”
- 2) *Atah* – masculine “you”
- 3) *Melech Haolam* – masculine name for God, King of the Universe

Use Mishkan Tfilah to show how verbs in prayer are also masculine and singular.

Ask: Why do you think the blessing formula is in masculine and singular? *Default, generic, includes everyone, used to making masculine the default*

How does this make you feel? *Bothered, don't care, so used to it, didn't even know it was gendered*

50-70 Elevating Women's Voices in Prayer

In traditional Judaism, women's voices are not to be heard during prayer. While liberal Judaism abolished this distinction and made it possible for women to not only pray out loud but also be prayer leaders, feminist prayer innovators believe this is only part of the battle.

Print or project this quotation for all students

Rachel Adler offers:

Egalitarian Judaisms may integrate women as participants by ignoring their distinctive experiences and concerns as women... Obedient to the tenets of Enlightenment universalism, it abolished the rules that excluded women and instead subsumed women within the congregation as “honorary men.” Deprived both of the Orthodox practices that has distinguished them as women and of the education and leadership opportunities still reserved for men, women in liberal Judaisms became even more invisible than they had been before.²⁴

This statement can be pretty hard to read, especially for those of us who really identify with and enjoy the egalitarian prayer of Reform Judaism we experience.

Discussion Questions:

- How does this statement make you feel?
- What do you think the author means by referring to women as “honorary men”? *Limited distinctions as a positive, blending identity, making gender a non-important distinction, inclusion, focus on everyone participating together, ignores the aspects that make men and women unique from one another, could minimize identity, male still default*
- Do you agree or disagree with this idea? Why?
- Are there other spaces in your life where you feel like you are expected to be or talked to as “honorary men”?

²⁴ Adler 62-63.

It is ironic that women are not traditionally included in communal prayer because one of our earliest examples of praying with kavanah (intention, focus, importance) comes from a woman, Hannah:

Hannah was barren. She had no children with her husband. Her sister-wife, Peninah, did have children—and although Hannah was the favorite wife, Peninah did not hesitate to torment Hannah over the social and financial disadvantage of barrenness. Distraught and frustrated, Hannah made her way to the Temple in Shiloh, where Eli was the High Priest. In the middle of the night, Hannah made her plea to God for a son—in her passion she was weeping, she was swaying back and forth, her lips uttering a silent prayer. Eli the Priest, watching Hannah from a distance, saw that her lips were moving without making a sound. From afar, he concluded that she was drunk and confronted her for what he thought was defiling the sanctuary. He couldn't see Hannah's prayer. Hannah explained herself saying she had drunk no wine, but that she was pouring her heart out to God. Reproved, Eli blessed her. God answers Hannah's prayer and she becomes the mother of the prophet Samuel.

The rabbis use this story to illustrate the laws of the Amidah, one of our most central prayer texts. They use this story because she illustrates the authenticity and value of personal prayer.

“Yet after deriving so many norms about the spirit and decorum of communal prayer from the private prayer of Hannah, no rabbinic scholar attempts to draw the logical conclusion that women ought to be included in communal prayer. Although the interpreters can all imagine themselves as Hannah, they cannot see the Hannahs all around them.”²⁵

Discussion Questions:

- Describe Hannah's story in your own words. *Hannah was desperate for children and felt jealous of her sister-wife. She prayed for a son but was confused for a drunk person by the high priest. Thankfully, the high priest trusted Hannah's account of her reason for praying so passionately and receives a blessing. She ends up becoming a mother to a future prophet.*
- How else could this story have ended? *Priest does not believe her, she is shunned/killed, loses status*
- What do we learn from Hannah's story? *Power of prayer, personal connection to God is key, faith helps one get through tough moments*
- What do we learn from the rabbinic use of Hannah's story? *Same as above, value of authentic prayer, prayer may be rote but it is also highly personal, intention matters*
- Why do you think rabbinic scholars still did not include women in communal prayer even after using this story in their texts about prayer? *Cannot overtake biology, power of prayer more important than who said it, tradition*

70-80: Change the Blessing Formula

²⁵ Adler 65.

Explain: Marcia Falk, a feminist liturgist, has innovated two blessing formulae. One that translates the traditional formula into the feminine and another that attempts to eliminate the gendered aspect of the formula altogether.

- 1) *Bricha At Ya* – Blessed are you God (using female language)
- 2) *Nvarech et ein hachayim* – Let us bless God, source/spring of life (non-gendered language)

Falk explains, “I create and use new images... to serve as fresh metaphors for Divinity (God). With these images and still others composed of all the basic elements of creation – earth, water, wind and fire – I hope to help construct a theology of immanence that will both affirm the sanctity of the world and shatter the idolatrous reign of the lord/God/king.”²⁶

Discussion Questions:

- Does this formula work for you? Why or why not?
- Do you think men would be willing to pray with this formula as well as women? Why or why not?
- Could this work in a mixed prayer space? Why or why not?
- What might be a challenge of this formula? *Does not address God directly, could feel less personal as a prayer/pray-er*

²⁶ Adler 90.

Lesson 3:5 – Change the Prayer Book

Goals (similar to 3:4):

- To encourage students to reflect upon the influence of gender in prayer language and practice.
- To expose students to new prayer practices.

Essential Questions:

- How can I express my Jewish and female identity within the concept of daily miracles and blessings?
- What are the daily miracles of being a Jewish woman?
- What do I value about being Jewish and female in prayer?

Objectives:

- Explain the purpose of Nsim Bchol Yom and its multiple iterations
- Write their own blessings using intentional God and formula language

Materials:

- Nisim Bchol Yom Blessing Sheets
- Paper & Pens
- Copies of *Mishkan Tefillah* for Reference

Timeline:

00-20 Innovative Prayer in the Prayer Book

20-40 Nisim Bchol Yom Explanation

40-55 Our Own Identity Blessings

55-60 Sharing Our Blessings

00-10 Blessings in Our Lives and Bodies

Show videos of contrasting morning experiences from popular culture.

- Happy morning routines (Tangled (0:50-2:20)-
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Loo41xVlb_I; (Legally Blonde
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UUKVPC4Fq4>); Lego Movie (until 1:20
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMs3CfyW1Qw>)
- Messy morning routines (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1lO3l_J3gPE)

Discussion Questions:

- What are the differences between these routines? *Speed, time to breathe, pacing of the activities, sense of ownership and order*
- How does our morning routine influence our day? *Sets the tone, day feels rushed if I rush, gives us time to approach the day or we may not be present in our first classes*
- What is your morning routine?

Explain: Traditionally, Jews pray a set of blessings before they even leave their house in the morning. Some of these blessings mirror our movements just getting out of bed! Ideally, these blessings remind us to pause and be thankful for our bodies and notice how miraculous it is that they move and allow us to do so many other things.

Activity:

- 1) Think about your ideal morning routine – what you do first, second, how many times you hit snooze and what gets you ready for the day. Use an ideal day when you wake up on time and give yourself enough time to get ready.
- 2) Translate these actions into five movements and put them together into a yoga/dance/pose set of movements. This set of movements will become your individual sun salutation (a set of yoga poses designed to work all the major muscle groups and energize your body through dynamic stretches).
- 3) Give each student a few minutes to think about the movements and create their sun salutation. *Alternative – have each student come up with one move and work in groups or as a class to create a sun salutation for the class.*
- 4) Encourage students to practice this set of movements in the morning between this class and the next. At the next class, ask the students if they were able to perform the routine each morning. If so, how did it influence their morning? Day? Mood?

Explain: Later in the lesson, we will look at the prayer book's morning blessings, called Nisim Bchol Yom (Blessings for Daily Miracles) and reflect on how they connect to and differ from our own blessings.

10-25 Another Innovative Prayer Solutions: Change the Prayer Book

Explain: Last session, we discussed women's prayer – how women's voices were traditionally excluded from prayer, the inherent gendered nature of prayer language, and we experienced a female-only prayer space. Today, we are going to discuss engaging with prayer through a feminist lens.

Change the Prayer Book

Background Material (Use ideas from this text to introduce the idea of language of the prayer book and how English plays a role in our understanding of prayer): Prerequisite to the project of remaking liturgy is recognition that the language of prayer books is indeed masculine. This point is often opaque to the compilers and users of prayer books. Some argue that masculine language is generic, that "mankind" includes women by extension. "God of our fathers," can be broadly construed as "God of our ancestors." Others argue that masculine gender in prayer is conventional... it is the addition of feminine language that would sexualize God and thus be blasphemous. Masculine imagery... is not really masculine, because it is not to be taken literally. Yet the God who is depicted as wronged husband, pastoral lover, judge, father, and king certainly has both gender and sexuality."²⁷

²⁷ Adler 65.

Some prayer books change the translation but not the Hebrew prayer itself. This dichotomy creates an additional challenge that “words of lesser sacredness and power can be altered, while the most powerful words remain unchanged. The assumption seems to be that only the most ignorant worshippers would desire inclusive language; those learned enough to understand Hebrew would embrace androcentrism as a religious norm.”²⁸

Discussion Questions:

- Do you view terms like “mankind” and “fathers” as inclusive? Why or why not?
- How might these terms be expanded to feel more inclusionary to non-male pray-ers?
- How do you feel about translations using gender-neutral language while the Hebrew prayer text remains the same?

25-40: Nisim Bchol Yom – Feminist Influence on the Siddur

What are Nisim Bchol Yom?

We are commanded to say these 15 blessings (few liberal siddurim include the entire list) when we wake up and prepare for the day as reminders of the blessing of life provided to us each day. Traditionally, these blessings are said as one wakes up and thus are said personally at home, but the blessings made their way into the siddur. Some of the blessings relate to specific actions of the physical body, while others relate to the identity of the individual. *Ask students to identify which blessings relate to which category.*

Activity: Review the entirety of the Nisim Bchol Yom in *Mishkan Tefilah*. Connect the blessings to actions you participate in each morning. Create hand motions/dance moves to explain each blessing. Have the students put together an entire set of movements for the group of blessings.

Identity Blessings

Share background information on the identity blessings: There are the three “identity” blessings that derive from the Talmud.²⁹ Since none of these blessings is gender inclusive, they have all been modified in contemporary liturgies. *B’rachot* 6:18 reads as follows:

R. Judah says: A man must recite three benedictions each day:

1. Blessed . . .Who has not made me a gentile;
2. Blessed . . .Who has not made me a boor [that is, an ignoramus];
3. Blessed . . .Who has not made me a woman.

A gentile—as it is written, *All the nations are nothing before him* (Isaiah 40:17).

A boor (often translated as slave)—because a boor does not fear sin (Avot 2:5).

²⁸ Adler 71.

²⁹ Text Citations: The identity blessings are discussed in Tosefta *B’rachot* 6:18, also Menahot 43b-44a in the BT, and *B’rachot* 9:2, 13b in the Yerushalmi. The Tosefta (3rd c. CE) is a collection of early rabbinic traditions, some of the same vintage as those in the Mishnah, some elaborating on those in the Mishnah, but all earlier than the Talmuds. The Talmuds use many of these traditions to discuss the Mishnah.]

A woman—because women are not obligated to perform all the commandments.³⁰

Discussion Questions:

- What is the power of these blessings? *Proud of who one is, reminder to be appreciative towards God, thankful for what one has*
- What might be some of liberal Judaism's challenges with these texts? *Exclusionary, particularistic, value a specific type of person (Jewish, male, privileged), could make those outside of Judaism feel inferior*
- How would a Jewish feminist engage with these blessings? *Excluded, angry, want to make them inclusive, may want to throw them out altogether because they do not engage with their reality*

Explain: Liberal Jews felt your reactions too and decided to make a change. While many siddurim cut out some of the 15 blessings, liberal Jewish siddurim chose to also change the wording of these identity blessings (See Appendix 2:5A).

Discussion Questions:

- What does it mean to be “created in the image of God”? *Aspect of God within each person, live up to values taught by God, high standard, holiness part of each person, unique yet all connected*
- How do these blessings re-interpret the original version/iteration of the blessings? *Same idea (identity-based), still separate Jews, positive claims*
- Which version do you prefer? Why? Which version do you think your male friends would prefer? Why?

40-55 Activity: Creating Own Identity Blessings

Explain: Review the dance of Nisim B'chol Yom created earlier in the lesson. Thinking about what these blessings encompass, think of three aspects of your identity to create personal identity blessings. However, instead of thanking God for making you a great basketball player, think about the aspects of liberal Jewish identity, obligation and prayer experiences you learned about throughout these lessons.

Example: Blessed are you Shechina (name of God discussed in 3:3), source of all life (honoring Marcia Falk's expressions for God learned in 3:4) for empowering me to wear a tallit when I read from the Torah (experiences fought for by Women of the Wall, discussed in 3:4).

Activity: Make two lists on the board/Post two large post-its labeled “Names of God” and “Proud Identity Moments”. Give students three minutes to add as many ideas they can think of to each list. After students add their answers, review each list and discuss appropriate answers.

³⁰ Sarason, Rabbi Richard. "Nisim B'chol Yom, Part 2." *Mishkan T'fillah Resources*. CCAR, 2015. Web. 20 Dec. 2016. <https://www.ccarnet.org/ccar-press/mishkan-tfillah-resources/adult-ed/delving-liturgy/nisim-bchol-yom/nisim-bchol-yom-part-2/>.

Ensure all names for God are appropriate (though not necessarily traditional names for God) and all proud identity moments are at an appropriate level of depth for your students and goals of this activity (aka not “great basketball player” but “energetic and supportive leader of a team I have worked hard to participate on”).

55-60 Sharing Our Blessings

Students will each share one of their blessings with the class. After each is shared, the rest of the class will chant “Amen.” The educator will collect the blessings, compile them into one document and create an “Our Identity Blessings” handout for the class and/or the class will decorate a collective poster to be hung in the classroom.

Appendix 3:5A Nisim Bchol Yom Text from Mishkan Tefilah

<p>BARUCH atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, she-asani b'tzelem Elohim.</p>	<p>בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָׂנִי בְצַלְמֵ אֱלֹהִים.</p>
<p>PRAISE TO YOU, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who made me in the image of God.</p>	
<p>Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, she-asani ben / bat chorin.</p>	<p>בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָׂנִי בֶן / בַּת חוֹרִין.</p>
<p>PRAISE TO YOU, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has made me free.</p>	
<p>Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, she-asani Yisrael.</p>	<p>בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָׂנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל.</p>
<p>PRAISE TO YOU, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has made me a Jew.</p>	
<p>Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, ozeir Yisrael big'vurah.</p>	<p>בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֹזֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּגִבּוּרָה.</p>
<p>PRAISE TO YOU, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who girds Israel with strength.</p>	
<p>Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, oteir Yisrael b'tifarah.</p>	<p>בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, עוֹטֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתִפְאָרָה.</p>
<p>PRAISE TO YOU, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who crowns Israel with splendor.</p>	

Instead of “who has made me not a woman.”

Instead of “who has made me not a slave.”

Instead of “who has not made me a gentile (non-Jew).”

Lesson 3:6 – Feminist Ritual Innovation & Authentic Assessment

Goals:

- To teach students about feminist ritual innovation.
- To encourage students to reflect upon moments in their lives where ritual could have been impactful.
- To create a meaningful ritual experience.
- To connect pieces from the entire unit to internalize the impact of Jewish feminist thought on prayer, God and ritual.

Essential Questions:

- What is the importance of ritual?
- What do I value about being Jewish and female in my Jewish practice?
- What moments of life not previously honored by ritual can be enhanced by Jewish ritual?

Objectives:

- Develop innovative ritual for a distinctively female experience
- Describe simple feminist ritual theory

Materials:

- Computers for Word Clouds
- Materials for Ritual Creation
- Copies of *Mishkan T'fillah*

Timeline:

00-10 Personal Reflection

10-30 Feminist Ritual Innovation

30-60 Ritual Creation & Closing

00-10 Set Induction: Personal Reflection

Ask students to reflect on a moment of transition (middle school to high school, Bat Mitzvah, moving to a new city, joining a new sports team, losing a pet, etc.). Create a word cloud³¹ (<http://www.wordclouds.com/>) of the emotions/feelings they experienced during that time.

After two minutes, ask students to select one of these emotions or feelings. Have the students attempt to think about something they themselves or someone else could have done (or did) to honor that emotion. *Example: When I joined a new dance studio, I was nervous. When I arrived*

³¹ A word cloud aggregates all responses to a given question and highlights the words/phrases most frequently used. They are simplest to make using a Word Cloud website such as the one cited above.

at my new studio, one of the students in my class greeted me at the door and stood next to me at barre. She even shared one of the teacher's pet peeves with me before class, which helped me feel more comfortable.

Have the students share their examples. After everyone has shared, explain that these are the exact moments when people may turn to religion for guidance. They seek our rituals or ideas in their faith tradition to honor and explain the emotions of these moments. These moments of transition and new experiences can feel more comfortable when acknowledged and honored. However, when they are ignored or we feel alone in the process, we may feel even more anxiety and discomfort.

10-20 Jewish Feminist Influences on Ritual

Explain: Jewish feminists realized there were many moments of transition/renewal/excitement that were not honored by traditional Jewish practice. Early Jewish feminists also did not necessarily push for new ritual practices because of a desire to minimize difference instead of elevating difference between the sexes.³² However, once Jewish feminism transitioned towards a new phase that honored difference (and as more women became rabbis and Jewish professional leaders), liberal Judaism saw a “dramatic increase in the creation of alternative blessings... a plethora of new prayers and new ways of turning to God, and dozens of new life cycle ceremonies designed specifically for liminal or transitional moments in Jewish women’s lives.”³³

“Substituting words is not enough. [In order to actually innovate worship] we have to make room for new genres, new gestures, new styles of prayer. Feminist Jews have invented religious ceremonies and religious language to fill the gaps... Many commemorate previously unacknowledged life cycle events... The innovations are valuable because they articulate the possibility for holiness on women’s experiences and concerns and because they provide opportunities for Jewish women to mirror for one another what Jewish women could be. Their settings are forums not only for new rituals and rites, but also for new language and imagery about God and about the praying community.”³⁴

Discussion Questions:

- What is the value of female-specific rituals? *Honor specific experiences, hold space with other women, often different than men in how we emotionally engage, different women engage differently – different moments may be more influential to some than others, remind us that we are part of a gigantic community of shared experience*
- What are times in our lives when ritual could be intentionally female-focused? *First period, menstruation, childbirth, birth of a daughter, transitioning back to work after*

³² A brief history of waves of feminism (that mirror Jewish feminism) is discussed in the opening mini-unit.

³³ Goldstein 304.

³⁴ Adler 68-69.

maternity leave, sorority life, Rosh Chodesh, physical body changes, menopause, physical or emotional violence, etc.

- Have any of you – or someone you know - experienced one of these types of rituals – what was it like for you? Tell us about it?
- When would have a ceremony or prayer enhanced a personal experience? How could you envision this experience differently if a ceremony had been part of the moment?
See above

20-50 Ritual Creation (Unit Authentic Assessment)³⁵

Explain: We are now going to create rituals for some of these moments we discussed above.³⁶

Preparation Questions:

- What elements make a ritual?
 - *Special space*
 - *Time*
 - *Transitions*
 - *Transformation*
 - *Reflection and connection are key elements of ritual*
- How do we create a sacred moment?
- How do we enter the space?
- What do we need to do before we leave to exit appropriately?
 - *Express our gratitude*
 - *Hold each other in a circle*
 - *What words need to be spoken?*
 - *What a ritual could contain*
- What makes a ritual meaningful or powerful?³⁷
 - *Marks a significant moment*
 - *Honors the liminality (temporary/fleeting/duality) of the moment*
 - *Can be individualized*
 - *Incorporates related liturgy*
 - *Spiritual dimension (spirituality, presence of God, engages heart and soul)*
 - *Led successfully by ritualizer*
 - *Choreography*
 - *Tangible aspect (mikveh, change clothes, physical marker, obtain object etc)*
 - *Right people participating (friends, family, teacher etc)*

³⁵ Helpful resources include ritualwell.org, myjewishlearning.org, Marcia Falk's *The Book of Blessings*, and Rachel Adler's *Engendering Judaism*

³⁶ *Note for Educator: An example of an innovative ritual is attached. Use this example for ideas about ritual order, community engagement and style.*

³⁷ Suggested reading: "Becoming a Ritual Innovator" by Vanessa Ochs in *Inventing Jewish Ritual*

Ritual Creation Activity:

- 1) Create a list of possible liminal/transitional moments for ritual (see above)
- 2) Narrow down the list to the top three items
- 3) Divide class into groups based on interest
- 4) Each group will create a ritual that has the following components:
 - Ritual Itself
 - How do the participants enter and exit the ritual?
 - Opening prayer/statement
 - Moment of transition marked by physical change
 - Statement by person engaging in the ritual
 - Closing prayer/statement
 - Logistical Aspects
 - Who will participate? Who will lead?
 - When will it take place?
 - Where will it take place?
 - Reflection
 - What determines ritual success/meaning?
 - How do you hope the participant will feel the next day? Next week? Next year?

50-60 Unit Closing

If students are ready to share an aspect of their ritual, use this time to share. Otherwise, have groups continue to work on their rituals and extend this lesson as necessary. Schedule times for these rituals to be enacted during the course of the year.

Appendix 3:6A - Example of a Female-Specific Innovative Ritual

Onset of Menstruation Havdalah Ritual³⁸

Envisioned Time and Setting:

Given the historical, and spiritual connection between the cycles of the moon and women's menstruation cycles, this ceremony is meant to take place outdoors on the Havdallah evening closest to a new moon-representing eternal renewal, creative potential, and divine feminine presence. According to both the Talmud and mystical tradition, the new moon is a time to celebrate the reappearance of the Shekhinah, and has historically been a time to gather in exclusively female groups to celebrate the beginning of a cycle. (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 42a).³⁹

The ritual gathering is meant to be held annually in community on a special, privately designated Rosh Hodesh. Rather than gather for each individual woman's actual first menstruation, this ritual invites young women who are new within the year to menstrual bleeding to participate in a communal rite, without embarrassing individual attention. The ritual is meant to foster solidarity with others who have recently experienced this transition, and to provide an intimate Jewish context for conscious physical maturity.

Why Havdallah? The Havdallah ceremony resonates as an appropriate ritual container for a menstruation ritual for several reasons. First, it marks transition from what was, to a "new normal", as well as to what has the potential to be. Without implying that these adolescents have somehow "lost their childhoods", or become fully mature adults by age 12 or 13, the ritual acknowledges the physical transformation inherent in menstruating and the new creative capability the body now possesses that it didn't before. Second, Havdallah engages the entirety of the sensual being, and calls attention to the body in a way that many Jewish rituals do not. The symbols contained within the traditional Havdalah are employed in the ritual script below, to provoke reflection on the purpose of the gathering.

Participants: I envision this annual havdalah ritual occurring in a group of 10-20 women, between the ages of 11 and 22. Half the group will be adolescents who have all experienced their first menstruation sometime in the last year, and an equal number of females (ideally in their late teens or early twenties) will have been designated 'partners' for these newly menstruating women, who will act as 'experienced participants', and moral support for their younger community mates. Ideally, they will have at least one conversation with their younger partner prior to the ritual, in which they share voluntarily, and candidly about their experience of physical transition to regular menstruation. Importantly, these will not be parents, siblings or otherwise blood-related relatives, and preferably, will be women outside of the participants' normal social circles.

³⁸ *Thank you to Laura Rumpf for this ritual. This ritual was created as an assignment for Rabbi Dr. Rachel Adler's Ritual Theory class at HUC-JIR in Fall 2016.*

³⁹ Rabbi Jill Hammer, "Jewish Cycles of the Moon", http://telshemesh.org/water/jewish_cycles_of_the_moon_jill_hammer.html

One woman will act as the ritual convener for the ceremony, either a trusted rabbi, doulah, or knowledgeable adult Jewish female presence. This ritual convener will be responsible for inviting young women in the community who self-disclose to this individual that they have had their periods recently, and are open to participating in a ritual marking this special transition. No parents or older relatives will be present at this ritual.

Pre-Ceremony Preparation:

Before the havdallah gathering, each of the adolescent participants will be contacted by an older 18-22 year old female participant who will reach out before the ceremony and offer safe, non-judgmental space to debrief the symbolism of Havdallah, ask questions about the ritual, and anything they may be concerned with. The goal of this initial encounter is to make it as inviting as possible for participants to embrace an all-female gathering celebrating the body, and feel welcomed into a communal rite with women they do not previously know, without the fear of being caught off guard, or made to look ignorant in exploring the unfamiliar.

Each adolescent participant will also be gifted a small notebook, and invited to write a short, private letter from the perspectives of their own bodies, expressing any and all concerns, hopes, fear and dreams they have as maturing female beings. This letter need not be shared with anyone, it is simply for the young women to begin to do the work of listening intuitively, and lovingly to their physical beings, as they mature into adult females.

Ritual Ceremony

Participants will gather outside in a circle, in private, safe designated ritual area, as night falls. As participants gather, ritual convener will offer a soulful niggun to bring participants into quiet contemplation. As the niggun carries, each participant will be given a red tea candle, and a small sipping cup of grape juice at their place in the circle, and instructed to let both be, until ready to be used.

Welcome and Opening Poem: (read by ritual convener or a participant):

Ritual convener will welcome everyone into the circle, give brief context for Rosh Hodesh and Havdallah (as detailed above), and explain how both symbols add resonance to a group of women gathering to celebrate their embodied creative potential and beginning of menstrual flow. She will then read a brief poem to set the intention of attuning inward:

Meditation for the New Moon

By Ruth Lerner

there are as many ways to view the new moon
as there are days in our lives.

to view a moon
a poet's moon
you need only three things:
a silent spot inside you
a willingness to wait in the dark

and a wily nature that refuses to accept the "Man-in-the-Moon" as the ultimate authority.

here is one way to observe the new moon:
settle upon a path from which to grasp
the handle of white gold waiting above
find a quiet spot inside your sight.

in the darkness, close your eyes
and cover them, as if blessing the shabbos candles
"Praised are You, O Shechinah
who parts the days of the month
calls attention to our covenant and helps us to be
a light upon the earth."

then, slowly open your eyes
and behold the beginning
of time.

Convener will give the framing that, just as there are as many ways to approach the new moon as there are humans, there are as many ways to experience beginning menstruation as there are women, and the goal of this ceremony is to witness and affirm the uniqueness of everyone entering this rite of passage for the first time, exactly as they are.

Opening Candle Ceremony: Witnessing and Inviting Body Curiosity

Ritual convener will welcome everyone into the circle by lighting a small tea candle and modeling sharing a quality she wishes to be witnessed for in the maturing womanhood she is embracing. The prompt will be "My name is _____, and I am coming to know _____ about my body.

Examples: I am Hannah, and I am coming to know that I love running. I am Deborah, and I am learning that my body needs rest.

Around the circle, each woman will take turns lighting her tea candle from the flame of the woman who lit before her and expressing "what she knows" of her body, until each woman is sitting before her own personal spark of bodily wisdom.

Hitbodedut:

Transitioning from what we know to what we may wish to know, or find mysterious about our physical selves, the convener will invite the group into a short experience of hitbodedut, or private conversation with the divine, to express that which feels mysterious or beyond understanding, about the bodies each is inhabiting. (Suggestions for flowing private dialogue could be "transition makes me feel _____", "I wonder why my body _____." , "I hope my body is able to _____.")

Held within the darkness of evening, the young women will be invited to take their small candle, and separate from the circle for 3-5 minutes for a private, personal moment of Hitbodedut, or spontaneous, private prayer to God, particularly focused on their bodies, and the transition they have come here to mark.⁴⁰ The ritual convener will explain that we learn from the story of Hannah in Jewish tradition the significance of establishing deep kavanah, or intention, with God, through spontaneous prayer as an individual, particularly in moments of unknown and change. Before witnessing each other's transformation as a collective through Havdalah song, hitbodedut offers an opportunity for individuals to establish their own connections to God, and find some clarity of purpose for their being in the circle.

**Gentle niggun will play to welcome participants back after 3-5 minutes*

Havdalah Ritual Explained:

**Ritual Convener will light a central Havdalah candle when everyone is back together, to mark the beginning of the ceremony.*

The ritual convener will explain that on Havdallah particularly, flame represents a renewal of creative energy, after 24 hours of quiet, rest, and abstaining from creation. Just as the week's life force ebbs and flows, so too do our bodies. Each woman's flame is unique, and the lighting of one flame enhances, rather than diminishing the potential of another. So too, when we express fully who we are becoming, we only enhance the energy and lifeforce of the women in communities around us.

She will continue:

We may not always cycle together, but we do mark time ritually together each week, and in doing so, honor that women all over the world are transitioning from different moments in their cycle at all times.

*In addition to blessing the flames we light with our creative potential, we bless **wine**-whose red color symbolizes our life-giving blood, and the sweetness of growing into womanhood, and **spice**, connecting us to the Earth, fertility, and natural creative powers, as we choose to engage them. The intertwined wick of the Havdallah candle honors and represents the many intertwined identities we carry with us into this circle-child, woman, daughter, sister, learner, athlete, friend, etc. As the community move through the ritual blessings, the participants will be asked to consider, for themselves, the relationship to life-giving joy, earth, and self-identity they are cultivating.*

Ritual Script:

The Havdallah will include the traditional Hebrew blessings over the fruit of the vine, as well as a final blessing for marking the rhythms of the body, and a Shehechyanu blessing for gathering for the first time as a group of newly menstruating women.

⁴⁰ <http://www.breslov.org/hitbodedut-jewish-meditation-how-to>

The Blessing over Wine or Grape Juice:

Before the wine blessing begins, the women will be asked to contribute from their own small cup of wine to a central, large cup, and add a word of blessing to the community for this time of change and growth. (Ex: I bless us with dignity, I bless us with courage to listen to our needs....)

*Havdallah will follow Debbie Friedman melody, with pauses between blessings for ritual cues.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן

Baruch atah, Adonai, Elohaynu melech ha'olam, boray pri hagafen.

Blessed are You, God, Ruler of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

The Blessing over Spices: (*Ritual convener will encourage participants to tune into their physical beings as they smell the circulating herbs, and remember that the earth depends on our commitment to perpetual renewal.*)

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מִיְנֵי בְשָׂמִים

Baruch atah, Adonai, Elohaynu melech ha'olam, boray minay vesamim.

Blessed are You, God, our Lord, King of the universe, Creator of the different spices.

The Blessing over the Candle: Blessing our own unique creative potential and ebbs and flows, physical, spiritual and emotional.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מְאוֹרֵי הָאֵשׁ

Baruch atah, Adonai, Elohaynu melech ha'olam, boray me'oray ha'aysh.

Blessed are You, God of the universe, Creator of the fire's lights.

The Blessing over Havdalah: In marking this final separation, and entering into the “new normal” of our weeks, participants are invited to imagine, for one moment, the kind of transformation they hope to embody as they continue to flow and grow as women.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל, בֵּין אוֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ, בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַמִּים, בֵּין יוֹם הַשְּׂבִיעִי לְשִׁשֶׁת יָמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל

Baruch atah, Adonai, Elohaynu melech ha'olam, hamavdil bayn kodesh lechol bayn or lechoshech bayn Yisrael la'amim bayn yom hashevi'i leshayshet yemay hama'aseh. Baruch atah, Adonai, hamavdil bayn kodesh lechol.

*Candles will be extinguished at the conclusion of this blessing.

Closing Blessing for Monthly Bleeding:

A final blessing will be distributed on small cards for the women to take home with them, decorate, and hang somewhere visible as reminders of their worth, uniqueness and strength, when they are menstruating, or at any point they need a sense of renewal in their monthly

cycle. The blessing card can also be distributed to women who are not able or willing to attend a ceremony in person, that would like a blessing to say for their monthly cycle.

Blessing for the Rhythms of a Menstruating Woman:

Blessed are You, Source of Blessings, who formed human beings with wisdom and created within us the ability to mark time.

Blessed are those who observe the new moon and the holidays as they move through the cycle of the year.

Blessed are those who bleed without violence each month, our bodies marking potential and creativity, generation after generation.

Without rhythm in our bodies it would be impossible to praise you with stories, music, dance, and song.

Without our sacred monthly rhythms, it would be impossible to bring forth new generations of children.

Blessed are You, Holy One, who acts wondrously and forms us as beings who make rhythm and mark time. We praise Your sacred cycles as we celebrate our creativity, families, communities, and lives.

Blessed are the wondrous ways you have created us in blood and sacred rhythm⁴¹

The ritual will close with the recitation of the Shehechyanu in Hebrew and in English.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהֵחֵינּוּ וְקִיְמַנּוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה.

Blessed are you, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, who has given us life, sustained us, and helped us to reach this moment

Participants will be invited to stay and get to know each other better over delicious dessert

Post-ritual follow up:

The same designated mentor-role young women will reach out sometime in the month after the ceremony, and invite sharing any post-ritual reflections, encouraging open channels of communication in the months to come. First time participants will be invited back to future Rosh Hodesh circles to offer support to newer women coming in in future gatherings.

⁴¹ Adapted from Kohenet Ellie Barabash, “Embodied Rhythm, Celebration, Blood”
<http://ritualwell.org/ritual/embodied-rhythm-celebration-and-blood>

Alternatives Models of Ritual Enactment: Given the relatively minimal existence of viable rituals for menstruating teens, there is great creative license to design new rituals, either for the individual, or for communities, that resonate with the specific women in question. Ritual suggestions that I encountered in my research included monthly personal mikvehs, where one adds rain water to a bath, and reflects on the experience of the body, in the month gone by, and journal prompts for keeping track of monthly cycles and growth.⁴² Alternative blessings also abound, for blessing the “healer of all flesh” for making a body who adheres to healthy life-giving cycles. Taking to heart the needs and interests of the women who are in fact participating in the ritual remains of utmost importance, no matter the form such a ritual takes.

Of course, one can still opt not to observe any kind of ritual for this occasion, for any of the reasons named above. However, it is my hope that at least some safe container can be offered within circles of young women to initiate them into a life of celebrating and attuning to the rhythm and potential of their bodies.

Resources for Further Menstruation Ritual Exploration

Adelman, Penina V., Ali Feldman, and Shulamit Reinharz. *The Jgirl's guide: the young Jewish woman's handbook for coming of age*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Pub., 2005.

Adelman, Penina. *Miriam's Well: Rituals for Jewish Women Around the Year*. Fresh Meadows: Biblio Press., 1986

"Embodied Rhythm, Celebration, and Blood." Ritualwell. Accessed December 13, 2016. <http://ritualwell.org/ritual/embodied-rhythm-celebration-and-blood>

"First Menstruation." Ritualwell. Accessed December 13, 2016. <http://ritualwell.org/first-menstruation>.

Tippett, Krista. *Becoming Wise: An Inquiry into the Mystery and Art of Living*. New York: Penguin Press, 2016.

Weideger, Paula. *Menstruation and Menopause: The Physiology and Psychology, the Myth and the Reality*. New York: Knopf, 1976.

⁴² Penina V. Adelman, Ali Feldman, and Shulamit Reinharz, *The Jgirl's Guide: the young Jewish woman's handbook for coming of age* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Pub., 2005) p.107

Unit 4: Sexual Politics & Rape Culture

Unit Overview: This unit focuses on the prevalence of rape culture and unhealthy relationships in the lives of teens. Students have the opportunity to learn about these topics and reflect on how to be change makers in their own lives and communities. Through education surrounding the rape of Dinah and discussions of contemporary rape culture in America, this unit will focus on opportunities for the students to envision a more choice and agency-focused culture around sexuality and healthy relationships.

Unit EQs:

- How does Judaism understand and express female sexuality?
- What is rape culture and how can I work to mitigate its impact?
- What is a healthy relationship?
- How do my community feel about female sexuality?
- How do I feel about my sexuality? How have my opinions evolved over time?
- How does power and privilege influence safety and danger in my world?

Unit EUs:

- Healthy relationships involve communication, honesty and consent.
- Education and dialogue, as opposed to silence, will positively impact the rhetoric around sex, sexuality and gender-based violence within the Jewish community.
- While power and privilege influence rape culture in America, female and male empowerment and self-actualization mitigate its personal impact.
- While once cemented in a diametrically oppositional context (virgin/whore), accepted female sexuality is moving towards a wider spectrum of experiences and expectations.

Unit Objectives:

- To differentiate between a healthy and unhealthy relationship
- To illustrate a sense of physical and emotional empowerment in their bodies
- To define and express an understanding of rape culture in America and in biblical texts
- To identify ways to be a supportive friend and partner, especially to those in potentially dangerous relational situations

Key Terms:

- Rape culture
- Healthy relationships
- Mutuality
- Song of Songs
- Sexual agency

Lessons:

- 1) Permission and Power
- 2) Silence and Shame

- 3) Detecting Danger (Memorable Moment)
- 4) Healthy Relationships
- 5) Being a Support & Creating the Video

Lesson 4:1: Permission and Power

Goals:

- To teach about rape culture.
- To complicate students' perceptions of common gender-based occurrences (catcalls, safety precautions, dress choices etc) while maintaining their sense of safety and security out in the world.
- To expose students to examples of rape culture that surround them.

Objectives:

- Summarize rape culture and its presence in American popular culture.
- Identify examples of rape culture.
- Increase awareness over the presence of sexuality in terminology, media and interactions.

Helpful Websites/Resources:

- https://www.buzzfeed.com/ryanhatesthis/what-is-rape-culture?utm_term=.uoR7KGMAv#.inel3JN1Y (videos/gifs/explanations of aspects of rape culture)
- <http://everydayfeminism.com/2014/03/examples-of-rape-culture/>
- http://www.dayofthegirl.org/rape_culture
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=86ST_suv9I (How to Not Get Raped satire video)
- <http://www.shakesville.com/2009/10/rape-culture-101.html>

Materials:

- Music Stations around the Classroom (phones/ipods etc with song lyrics and play instructions with the device)
- Boxes for Boy/Girl Boxes Activity
- Slips of Paper
- Pens
- Computer for Videos
- Appendix 4:1C - Male/Female Advertisements (Add additional contemporary images and advertisements)

Set Up Before the Lesson: *Around the room, set up different music stations with individual songs cued up. Intentionally select different genres from different eras with both Jewish and non-Jewish songs (Debbie Friedman, Lady Gaga, Justin Bieber, Eminem, Hadag Nahash, Britney Spears etc). Have song lyrics for each song on the table next to the music player. Try to have ear buds for each station so multiple students can listen to the song at once.*

Set Induction:

As students enter, pass out the Music and Emotions Worksheet (Appendix 4:1A). Encourage students to move around the room, listening to each song and filling out the worksheet. Students do not need to listen to the entire song, but should hear at least a verse and a chorus (longer if they are unfamiliar with the song).

After a few minutes, bring the students back together to discuss their experiences and processing of the music. The conversation should focus around the different emotions the songs elicited in us and what messages we heard in the songs.

Discussion Questions:

- What was your favorite song? Why?
- What emotions did you feel while listening to your favorite song of the group? Your least favorite song?
- What messages did you hear in the songs (go through each song)?
- Does music influence culture? Do you pay attention to the message of songs or just the experience of listening to the music?

Transition: Music is only one aspect of the culture we live in. Music, advertisements, social media, TV etc all come together to create the culture we experience on a daily basis. Our goal for this lesson is to reflect on this culture and think about the messages we have received – both positive and negative.

Activity: Boy/Girl Boxes

This activity will lay the groundwork for a discussion about the messaging of rape culture. Place two boxes at the front of the room. Have students think about the messages either boys or girls receive (from personal experience and what they have noticed) and write each of these messages on a post-it/piece of paper and place it on/in the box.⁴³ After a few minutes, read the responses. List these responses on the board. Ask about when, from whom and where they heard these responses. Guide the discussion towards a realization that our society, friends and families are, often accidentally, reinforcing gender stereotypes in language, imagery and conversation.

Activity: Zooming in on Female Physical Expectations

Positive v. Negative Permission: To educate about the difference between negative and positive permission, students will engage with different advertisements that share some of the messages discovered above. Post advertisements that focus on male and female bodies around the room. As the students wander, ask them to reflect on what qualities are being promoted, what ideal is represented etc. Include body-positive images as well. Reflect on the positivity and negativity represented in these advertisements.

Discussion Questions:

⁴³ Examples: Boys – be strong, don't cry, play sports, like violence, play video games, talk/think about sex a lot... Girls – express emotions, like pink, care about appearance,

- How realistic are these images? Could you live up to these expectations?
- What is effective about a positive image campaign?
- What is damaging about an unrealistic image in a magazine/TV etc?
- How do you feel when you see these images?

Throw Like a Girl: Similar to activity above, but focus on the various portrayals of “Throw Like a Girl” in the media [Visual ad (google images search for “throw like a girl” or use the images in Appendix 4:1C), Mythbusters video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LD5Xm5u7UDM>), Always #likeagirl campaign (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjJQBjWYDTs>)]

Possible Questions:

- Did you hear this message growing up? In what contexts? How did it make you feel?
- What is the power of reclaiming this idea in a positive sense?
- Do you think this phrase means something different today than it did when you were younger?

Activity: How Stereotypes Lead to Rape Culture

Rape Culture in Music: Pass out lyrics to Robin Thicke’s *Blurred Lines* and/or Rihanna & Eminem’s *Love the Way You Lie*. Listen to the songs at least twice and discuss. Then, watch the music video and discuss how the music video influences students’ interpretation of the song. Ask students to think about what messages are being shared in the song. Use similar questions to the previous conversation about music and add in additional questions based on the messaging of the song.

Discussion Questions:

- What are your reactions to the song and video?
- What messages are present in this song?
- How does the video influence your perspective of this song?
- Why do you think this song was popular?
- What type of culture is the song promoting?

Activity: Defining Rape Culture⁴⁴

Definitions: This activity aims to bring the class to a common definition of rape culture and an understanding of its presence in the milieu. Share this definition (or another one you find)⁴⁵ with the class:

⁴⁴ Note: This term and concept can be triggering or frustrating for students, so educators will need to move slowly through the definitions and leave plenty of space for personal reflection and questions.

⁴⁵ Another definition option (from BuzzFeed): Rape culture is telling girls and women to be careful about what you wear, how you wear it, how you carry yourself, where you walk, when you walk there, with whom you walk, whom you trust, what you do, where you do it, with whom you do it, what you drink, how much you drink, whether you make eye contact, if you’re alone, if you’re with a stranger, if you’re in a group, if you’re in a group of strangers, if it’s dark,

Rape culture can be defined as “a culture in which dominant cultural ideologies, media images, social practices, and societal institutions support and condone sexual abuse by normalizing, trivializing and eroticizing male violence against women and blaming victims for their own abuse. Some examples of rape culture include lyrics to songs, TV shows, and jokes that either promote raping someone or make it seem like rape is an everyday occurrence that cannot be avoided. (From http://www.dayofthegirl.org/rape_culture)

Discuss the definition thoroughly, stopping at terms for examples and to deconstruct the language. After the group has a strong understanding of the definition, divide students into groups and give each of the groups one of the categories above that contributes to rape culture (cultural ideologies, media images, social practices, societal institutions). Ask each group to come up with 5-10 examples of rape culture that emerge from this category. Allow students to use their phones or internet-accessible devices to find examples. After sharing 1-2 examples per group, ask the groups to pick one example from their lists. Ask students to think about how this group/idea/image could be transformed to represent a healthier culture that does not condone or normalize violence.

Examples:

- *Cultural Ideologies: “what was she wearing” as a question asked when a woman is raped, parents being fearful when a daughter dates but not a son, assault only occurs from strangers, emphasis on female bodies and male intellect, men are stronger than women*
- *Media Images: Many rap/hip hop music videos, Victoria’s Secret catalogues, sexualized female athlete images, focus on women’s bodies, images of violence on film/TV/magazines*
- *Social Practices: celebration of violent video games, blaming the victim, teach women to be safe instead of men to respect women, rape/beat as common speech*
- *Societal Institutions: Major sports organizations allowing accused assaulters and rapists to keep playing, calling rape a “career-killer” for the perpetrator, lack of support for psychological care/time off work after crisis, lack of jail time for rapists*

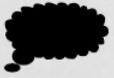
if the area is unfamiliar, if you’re carrying something, how you carry it, what kind of shoes you’re wearing in case you have to run, what kind of purse you carry, what jewelry you wear, what time it is, what street it is, what environment it is, how many people you sleep with, what kind of people you sleep with, who your friends are, to whom you give your number, who’s around when the delivery guy comes, to get an apartment where you can see who’s at the door before they can see you, to check before you open the door to the delivery guy, to own a dog or a dog-sound-making machine, to get a roommate, to take self-defense, to always be alert always pay attention always watch your back always be aware of your surroundings and never let your guard down for a moment lest you be sexually assaulted and if you are and didn’t follow all the rules it’s your fault. https://www.buzzfeed.com/ryanhatesthis/what-is-rape-culture?utm_term=.uoR7KGMav#.ineL3JN1Y

Closing Activity: Provide space for discussion and processing both as individuals and as a group. Allow students to journal/draw/create something tangible to express their reactions to the day's lessons. While today's lesson focused on the existence of rape culture and the problematic messages in popular culture and our world, awareness is the first step towards making change. Encourage the students to be aware of these messages in media and speak out against them with their friends and families. The students will continue to discuss ways to be advocates and allies as the unit progresses.

Appendix 4:1B – Rape Culture Infographic

WHAT "RAPE CULTURE" MEANS

RAPE IS ALL TOO COMMON.
1 OUT OF 5 AMERICAN WOMEN HAS BEEN THE VICTIM OF ATTEMPTED OR COMPLETED RAPE.

 <p style="text-align: center;">Rape cases are not being reported...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LESS THAN HALF OF ALL RAPES ARE ACTUALLY REPORTED.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">...So rapists aren't being sent to jail.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ONLY 3% OF RAPISTS SPEND EVEN A DAY IN JAIL.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Colleges can be openly hostile to victims.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CAMPUS RAPE RATES HAVEN'T CHANGED IN THE LAST 20 YEARS.</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">People think rape victims are making it all up.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2-8% OF CHARGES MAY BE FALSE, BUT STUDENTS THINK UP TO 50% OF RAPE REPORTS ARE FABRICATED.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Rapists can seek custody in a majority of US states.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IN 31 STATES, CONVICTED RAPISTS CAN SUE FOR CUSTODY AND VISITATION RIGHTS.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Politicians think women can't get pregnant from rape.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;">32,000 WOMEN GET PREGNANT FROM RAPE IN THE UNITED STATES EACH YEAR.</p>

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/15/health/nearly-1-in-5-women-in-us-survey-report-sexual-assault.html?_r=0
<http://journals.cluteonline.com/index.php/CIER/article/viewFile/1201/1185>
<http://www.theatlanticwire.com/national/2012/08/31-states-grant-rapists-custody-and-visitation-rights/56118/>
<http://www.nsvrc.org/publications/articles/false-reports-moving-beyond-issue-successfully-investigate-and-prosecute-non-s>

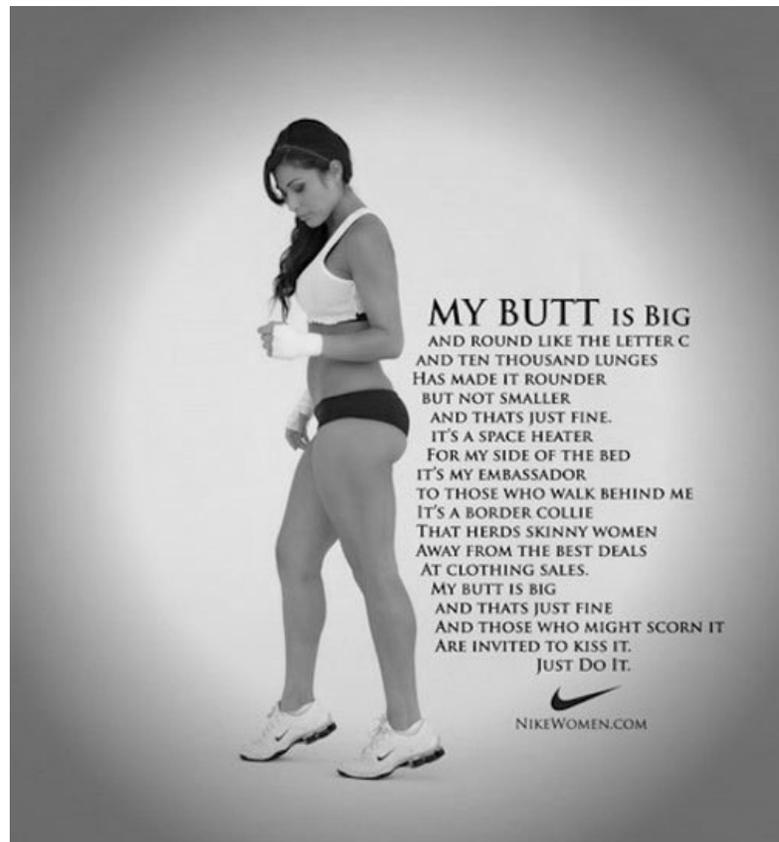
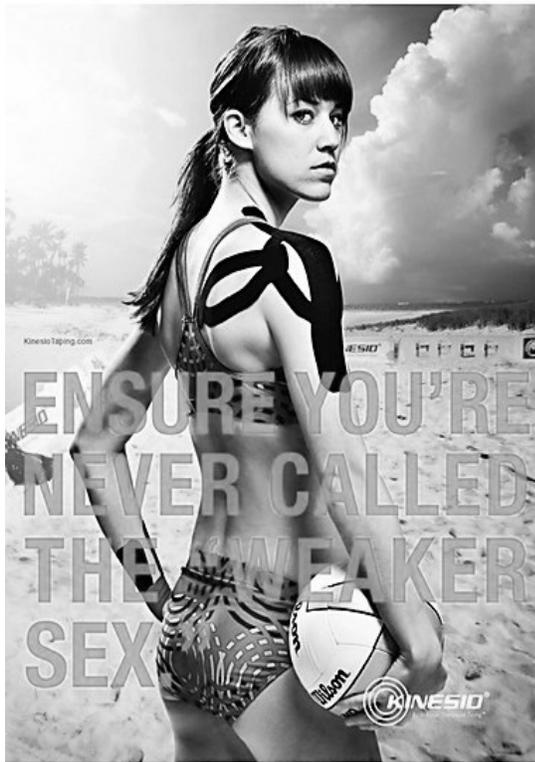
<http://nij.gov/topics/crime/rape-sexual-violence/welcome.htm>
<http://rainn.org/get-information/statistics/reporting-rates>
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/8765248>

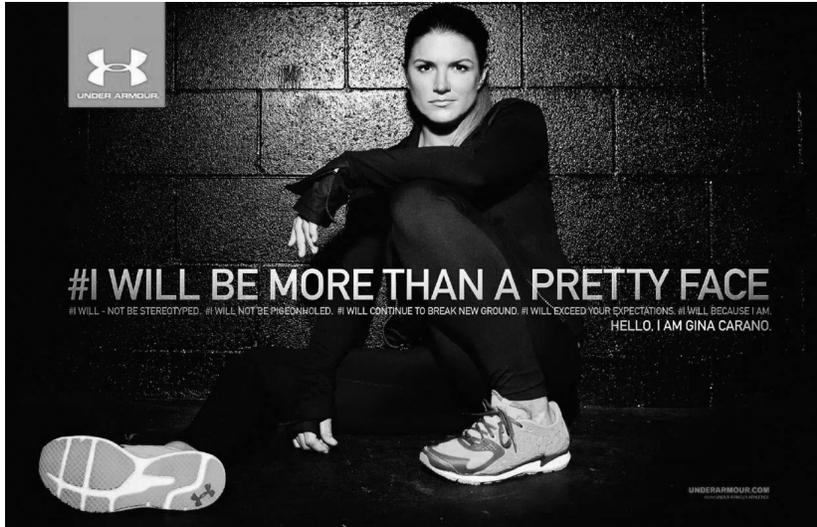
 **SHARE THIS NOW.**

https://act.weareultraviolet.org/act/rape_culture_infograph

Infographic to be used as alternate definition of and implication for the impact of rape culture.

Appendix 4:1C - Suggested advertisements for female athletes in the media





Lesson 4:2: Silence and Shame

Goals:

- To expose students to a Torah story, specifically the Dinah narrative in Genesis, through different textual lenses.
- To identify the lack of female agency and sexual violence in the story of Dinah.
- To wrestle with the concepts of agency and action.

Objectives:

- Recognize the differences and similarities between versions of the Dinah narrative.
- Apply the voices (or silent voices) in the text to modern comparisons.
- Contrast the biblical, rabbinic and contemporary versions of the Dinah narrative.

Materials:

- Tanakhim/Torahs for Biblical Text
- Appendix 4:2A (Different Versions of Dinah Narrative) Divided for Three Groups
- Printouts of Longer Quotations and/or Articles Embedded within the Lesson Plan (as necessary)

Set Induction/Check-In: Share a time when someone else decided how you should feel about a situation and did not ask for your opinion, but his or her actions impacted you. (*Examples: A parent called a teacher about a grade when I did not ask, a coach thought we should be ok with the loss when I felt frustrated with team effort, a friend talked to another friend about how he or she treated me without asking if I was hurt by the comment.*)

Activity: Determining the Story of Dinah⁴⁶

Explain: Dinah shows up in Genesis 34 and is only spoken about in a few lines. She would probably be forgotten about if the episode were not so shocking. Look at a few versions of this text, compare the narratives, and discuss the larger cultural expectations and issues illustrated by this story.

Activity: Split students into groups. Each group receives one version of the Dinah narrative (Appendix 4:2A includes biblical, rabbinic, and contemporary examples). After reading and reflecting on their text, the groups will jigsaw and each teach their story to other classmates.

⁴⁶ "Dinah: Bible." *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*. 20 March 2009. Jewish Women's Archive. (Viewed on February 20, 2017)

<https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/dinah-bible>.

Kadari, Tamar. "Dinah: Midrash and Aggadah." *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*. 20 March 2009. Jewish Women's Archive. (Viewed on February 20, 2017)

<https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/dinah-midrash-and-aggadah>

These second groups will come up with a combined narrative that attempts to combine the stories. Each group will present their narrative to the class.

Whole Class Discussion Questions:

- What are the major differences between the three stories?
- What do you believe happened to Dinah? Why did it happen?
- Why do you think this story is reinterpreted so differently in a modern context?

Discussion: Dinah's Voice

Explanation: The contemporary story involves Dinah gaining a voice. Her voice is mysteriously absent from the biblical text and explanations are offered about her largely as a pawn in a story in the rabbinic literature. In *The Red Tent*, Diamant aims to give Dinah a voice to give her agency and power. She falls in love with Shechem in that story and leaves out the aspect that there may have been violence in the physical relationship as seen in the text. Critics of this work have said that it downplays the problematic aspects of the text that imply violation and lowering of status. The text says, Shechem *vayikach otah, vayishkav otah va-y'a'ne'ha*. There are three verbs here: *vayikach* - took her, *vayishkav* - laid with her and *vayaneha* - this last verb is the most troubling one. It has many meanings, but wherever we find this word in the Bible, the essence of this word symbolizes one person lowering another person's place. Whether it means rape, torture, debasement, abuse – Shechem lowers Dinah's self-worth in this moment. And this *vayaneha*, this debasement makes the next piece of the story all the more confusing. Because right after we learn that he lowered her status, Shechem expresses his love for Dinah and his wish to marry her. Through all of this, Dinah remains silent. Hearing about Shechem's proposal, Dinah's brothers, Levi and Shimon, are enraged and rally support for an incredibly bloody massacre of Shechem and his people. Their decision is made without ever speaking to their sister. Did they do this because their sister was raped or because they were angry that their bloodline might be tampered with? Dinah's father Jacob, never speaks about the actions against his daughter. His only words are in reaction to his sons' violent decision.

Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think Dinah does not speak in the biblical story? *Women's voices are often left out, this action lowered her status that her voice does not matter, her brothers immediately take up her fight, and their reaction speaks for the anger of the family.*
- Why do you think this story is in the Torah? *Need to listen to stories, see our ancestors as real people, disappointment in our ancestors, learn from our mistakes, learn about gender roles*
- What does it teach us? *Overreaction is never the answer, rape is a serious crime, women are often spoken about but do not speak, should stand up for those we love (the brothers honor this, Jacob less so)*

- Where is God in this story?⁴⁷ *By not responding to either the rape or the actions of her brothers, God is condemning rape culture; unclear where the crime was committed, allowing human's free will, acting from a place of emotion is problematic, but can be justified*

Modern Silencing Example: Brock Turner & "Jane Doe" @ Stanford University (2016)

Background: During Summer 2016, the country became engrossed in a rape case that took place at Stanford University. The case first received national attention when the testimony of the survivor went viral on the internet. Her powerful testimony riveted and shocked readers. Unfortunately, the case continued to draw national attention when the rapist, Brock Turner, received an incredibly short sentence and seemingly light punishment after being convicted of the crime of rape and sexual assault.

Read excerpts of the woman's testimony and discuss. This letter is challenging to read and graphic, so the teacher should select passages that match the maturity level of his or her students. Read enough of the testimony so students understand the gravity of the assault, the fact that alcohol was involved and the impact on the survivor.

<http://www.paloaltoonline.com/news/2016/06/03/stanford-sex-assault-victim-you-took-away-my-worth>

Read excerpts from Brock Turner's father's testimony in which he claims the impact on his son is as large as the impact on the victim. The judge used this testimony to justify his short sentence for Brock. <http://paloaltoonline.com/media/reports/1465505335.pdf>

Discussion Questions for Comparison of the Two Documents:

- What images stand out from the testimonies?
- How did this event impact the parties involved?
- How do you understand Jane Doe's testimony and sense of self-understanding?
- What is the impact of hearing a character testimony for an individual who has been found guilty of a wrongdoing?
- What do you believe would have been fair punishment?

Activity: Comparison of Dinah and Jane Doe

Lead a discussion with the goal of finding comparisons and differences between the stories. Think about how awareness of the Dinah narrative informs our reading of the Stanford case and vice versa. What about each of these narratives seems very time-specific and how are they both somewhat universal and timeless?

Divide the class into two groups. Have one group write a letter to Jane Doe from Dinah's perspective and the other group write a letter to Dinah from Jane Doe's perspective. These

⁴⁷ Shanker, Deena. "Lessons of The Rape of Dinah." *The Forward*. N.p., 14 Nov. 2013. Web. 04 Feb. 2017. <http://forward.com/sisterhood/187603/lessons-of-the-rape-of-dinah/>

letters should be from a supportive perspective and reflect the situations of each case. Share the letters with the class.

Conclusion and Questions

Explain: The silencing of Dinah by her brothers and her father is not a foreign concept to us. Voices are silenced everyday. People endure and suffer pain alone. Even when they speak out, their words are sometimes silenced anyway. They are shut out and ignored when they bravely try to speak. Their family may not speak up, as Jacob remains silent. His silence may stem from shame, and a family may stay silent today from a culture that blames the victim instead of working to change society into one that both supports survivors and works to prevent these acts from occurring at all. Next week, we will dig deeper into this idea of rape culture and learn about the societal realities that deepen this problematic narrative.

Go around the circle and ask each participant to answer, "If you could speak to Dinah, what would you say to her?"

Conclude by reading this statement from Jane Doe of the Stanford case that she shared after the sentencing:

- *In the very beginning of it all in 2015, one comment managed to lodge harmfully inside me: Sad. I hope my daughter never ends up like her. I absorbed that statement. Ends up. As if we end somewhere, as if what was done to me marked the completion of my story. Instead of being a role model to be looked up to, I was a sad example to learn from, a story that caused you to shield your daughter's eyes and shake your heads with pity. But when my letter was published, no one turned away. No one said I'd rather not look, it's too much, or too sad. Everyone pushed through the hard parts, saw me fully to the end, and embraced every feeling. If you think the answer is that women need to be more sober, more civil, more upright, that girls must be better at exercising fear, must wear more layers with eyes open wider, we will go nowhere. When Judge Aaron Persky mutes the word justice, when Brock Turner serves one month for every felony, we go nowhere. When we all make it a priority to avoid harming or violating another human being, and when we hold accountable those who do, when the campaign to recall this judge declares that survivors deserve better, then we are going somewhere. So now to the one who said, I hope my daughter never ends up like her, I am learning to say, I hope you end up like me, meaning, I hope you end up like me strong. I hope you end up like me proud of who I'm becoming. I hope you don't "end up," I hope you keep going. And I hope you grow up knowing that the world will no longer stand for this. Victims are not victims, not some fragile, sorrowful aftermath. Victims are survivors, and survivors are going to be doing a hell of a lot more than surviving. http://www.glamour.com/story/women-of-the-year-emily-doe?mbid=partner_facebook_huffpowomen*

Appendix 4:2A: Texts for Dinah Story Comparison

Biblical: Genesis 34:1-2

1 And Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.

2 And Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her; and he took her, and lay with her, and debased her.

Rabbinic:

Comprehension Notes:

- *Bolded sections are biblical quotations embedded within the (non-bolded) commentary*
- *GenR = Genesis Rabbah (a commentary on the book of Genesis)*

Genesis Rabbah 80:5

And Dinah the daughter of Leah went out (Gen 34:1). R. Berekiah said in R. Levi's name: This may be compared to one who was holding a pound of meat in his hand, and as soon as he exposed it a bird swooped down and snatched it away. Similarly, **And Dinah the daughter of Leah went out**, and after, **and Shechem the son of Hamor saw her** (Gen 34:2). R. Samuel b Nahman said: Her arm became exposed (and thus he saw her beauty. And thus she exposed herself to be violated). **And he took her and lay with her** (unnaturally) **and humbled** (violated) **her** (Gen 34:2) (unnaturally).⁴⁸

Commentary on GenR 80:5:⁴⁹

Another example of the "she deserved it" myth can be seen in *GenR 80:5*, but with somewhat softer connotations. In this case, Dinah is portrayed as gullible, and lacking common sense, because she should have known the dangers inherent in "going out." This midrash suggests that the rape of Dinah can be compared "to one who was holding a pound of meat in his hand, and as soon as he exposed it a bird swooped down and snatched it away."⁵⁰

The logic of this midrash suggests that Dinah must certainly have known – or should have known – the dangers associated with "going out." Just as one would expect a bird of prey to swoop in and attack when someone walks around with exposed meat, so too women should expect to be preyed upon if they exposed themselves. Common sense, the rabbis suggest, would dictate that a woman not "go out" just as it dictates not providing vultures with an easy meal. This "she deserved to be raped because she should have anticipated the dangers" myth is, I believe, one of the ones seen most often today.

Reflections of the third category of rape myths – "rape is normative sex" – can be seen in the comments by "anonymous" in *GenR 80:5*. In this midrash the rabbis discuss the meaning of Gen 34:2, when Shechem saw, took, laid, and violated Dinah. Anonymous suggests that the verb *sh.c.v.* (to sleep with) means that Shechem laid Dinah "in a natural way" (i.e. – vaginally),

⁴⁸ *GenR 80:5*; p. 738-9

⁴⁹ Rabbi Gavi Ruit. Society of Jewish Ethics Paper Presentation, 1/7/17.

⁵⁰ *ibid*

and the verb *(a).n.h.* (to violate) means he laid her “unnaturally” (i.e. – anally).⁵¹ Here, Anonymous dismisses the violating elements of Dinah’s experience, and instead suggests that it was merely normal – albeit risqué – sex.

Contemporary: *The Red Tent, Prologue*⁵²

We have been lost to each other for so long.

My name means nothing to you. My memory is dust.

This is not your fault, or mine. The chain connecting mother to daughter was broken and the word passed to the keeping of men, who had no way of knowing. That is why I became a footnote, my story a brief detour between the well-known history of my father, Jacob, and the celebrated chronicle of Joseph, my brother. On those rare occasions when I was remembered, it was as a victim. Near the beginning of your holy book, there is a passage that seems to say I was raped and continues with the bloody tale of how my honor was avenged...

Maybe you guessed that there was more to me than a voiceless cipher in the text... Nothing remained except a few mangled details about those weeks in Shechem. There was far more to tell...

⁵¹ *GenR 80:5*; p. 739

⁵² Diamant, Anita. *The Red Tent*. New York: Picador USA, 1997. Print. 1.

Lesson 4:3: Detecting Danger (Memorable Moment)

Goals:

- To expose students to the concept of power dynamics in relationships
- To increase students' awareness of their sense of safety and security
- To empower students to feel physically and emotionally connected to their bodies

Objectives:

- Reflect upon their sense of self in relationships
- Feel empowered in their own bodies

Materials:

- Computer for Video
- Anne Frank and Viktor Frankl Quotations
- Appendix 4:3A – Power Mapping Worksheet
- Necessary Supplies for Krav Maga/Karate/Self-Defense Workshop (and an open area space)
- Post-its

Set Induction:

Part 1: Play scenes from scary movies with and without sound (Use own favorites or pick from ideas found here - <https://mic.com/articles/102582/7-iconic-horror-film-moments-that-are-totally-normal-without-the-sound#.QAxa93IUn>). Reflect on the differences between the scene with the music and without the music. What changes? What stays the same? How does your body/mind react to the presence or lack of music?

Part 2: Connect the idea of music to the idea of how we detect danger. Ask: What is the metaphorical music of our lives that tips us off to danger?

Check-in Question: During regular check-in, include the questions, “What is one thing you do each day out in public to protect yourself? What is one thing someone else asks you to do to protect yourself?” *Hold my keys as I walk to my car, don't walk alone at night, park close to my house, look both ways before crossing the street, wear modest clothing etc*

Activity: Personal Power Examples

- Ask: Where do you have power? What do you have power over? How do you harness that?
- Share examples of Anne Frank and Viktor Frankl. Both of these individuals lived during the Holocaust and ultimately had very little power over their lives. Anne and her family lived in hiding and she passed the time by writing of their lives. Viktor spent years in a concentration camp.

- Share these quotations and ask the class to discuss how each individual kept mentally strong in times of physical suffering.
 - o Anne Frank: *“In spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart. I simply can’t build up my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery, and death. I see the world gradually being turned into a wilderness, I hear the ever approaching thunder, which will destroy us too, I can feel the sufferings of millions and yet, if I look up into the heavens, I think that it will all come right, that this cruelty too will end, and that peace and tranquility will return again.”* (*The Diary of a Young Girl*)
 - o Viktor Frankl: *“When we are no longer able to change the situation, we are challenged to change ourselves... Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”* (*Man’s Search for Meaning*)
- Conclude with the message that both used the power of words to find power even in the most powerless situations.

Activity: Power Mapping

This activity uses principles of power mapping⁵³ to ask students to reflect on key relationships in their lives and think about the power dynamic. It helps students think about how we notice power and how power can be both a good thing and a problem. Some relationships require hierarchy (parents & children) while others (between friends or romantic partners) can become problematic when hierarchy is involved.

Pass out the Power Mapping Worksheet (Appendix 4:3A) to each student. Ask the students to individually fill out the worksheet by thinking of an example for each of the major categories (relationship when the parties are equal, when I am the subordinate and when I am the power player). Have students share examples with one another and then bring the discussion to the whole group.

Possible Questions for Discussion:

- How did it feel to differentiate between relationships based on power?
- In what situations is power important?
- What does power mean to you in a relationship?

⁵³ Power Mapping Definition (From Wikipedia): Power mapping is a visual tool used by social advocates to identify the best individuals to target to promote social change. The role of relationships and networks is very important when advocates seek change in a social justice issue.^[1] The power mapping process entails use of a visual tool to conceptualize the sphere of a person or group's influence. The power map tool helps to visualize whom you need to influence, who can influence your target and what can be done to influence the identified person with power. Power Mapping is often politically focused and is frequently used to persuade decision makers to alter how they may vote on an issue. It can also be used to convince an organization to take a stand, persuade a foundation to give your organization a grant, or compel a newspaper to write a favorable editorial.^[2]

- How do you define yourself in a powerful space? How does it feel to acknowledge you have power?
- How can those in both places of the hierarchical relationships influence the other party? How do we support one another in these roles?

Activity Two (Memorable Moment): Krav Maga/Karate/Self-Defense Workshop⁵⁴

Bring in a professional to lead a workshop or learn some moves/concepts on your own. The goal of this activity is to teach the students to feel empowered and strong in their own bodies. The message SHOULD NOT be about women needing to defend themselves to prevent violence but rather focus on the empowerment that emerges from feeling strong and confident in one's body. Ideally, a program will follow the model of "empowerment self-defense."⁵⁵

After the workshop (or encourage the workshop leader to include this activity in the workshop), lead a discussion about how we embody strength in our daily lives (an intentional flip of the class' opening discussion). Ask, "What is one thing I do (or can do) each day to feel strong and powerful? Mentally? Emotionally? Physically?"

To visualize these answers, pass out post-its to the students with different colors for each of the categories. Students could create some type of infographic or visual representation of the ideas to share with one another.

Conclusion: Ask each student to share one way they will mentally empower themselves in addition to a physical method of empowerment. If possible, students can demonstrate the physical and/or mental empowerment move for the class.

⁵⁴ Choose the right modality and leader who will effectively teach the psychology of mental and physical awareness and strength. This workshop could be its own day or within the context of the other lessons. Good questions to ask a potential facilitator: How do you teach female self-defense? How do you address the group? What are your goals for the workshop? How do you emphasize strength without excessive fear?

⁵⁵ To learn what Empowerment Self-Defense entails, see this website:

<http://www.lmwsafe.com/32-what-is-empowerment-self-defense>

Appendix 4:3A

POWER MAPPING WORKSHEET

Type of Relationship	Equal	Subordinate	One in Power
Who are the parties?			
How does this relationship make me feel?			
What do I gain in the relationship?			
What do I fear in the relationship?			

Lesson 4:4: Healthy Relationships

Goals:

- To expose students to an example of a female agency in Judaism (Song of Songs)
- To develop a shared understanding of healthy relationships
- To provide tools for creating the relationships the students' desire

Objectives:

- To develop personal tools for healthy relationship creation
- To explain what agency is and how to develop agency
- To paraphrase the relationship described in Song of Songs
- To apply the positive messages of Song of Songs to contemporary experiences

Materials:

- Phones for Playlist Creation
- Posterboard, Markers, Art Supplies (Infographic Creation)
- Appendix 4:4B & 4:4C – Song of Songs Text Study Sheets
- Appendix 4:4A – Extra Information about Song of Songs (Primarily for Educator)
- Construction Paper, Tape, Glue (Torn Paper Midrash)

Set Induction: Create a playlist of empowering relationship songs. Remind students of the music learned about in the first lesson of this unit that focused on unhealthy expressions of love and violence in the lyrics. Now, ask students to think of songs that reflect a healthy relationship or mutuality in love/friendship.

*Playlist Example:*⁵⁶

Ed Sheeran – Thinking Out Loud
 Janelle Monae – Primetime
 Fifth Harmony – Miss Movin' On
 Delta Spirit – California
 Frank Ocean – Thinkin Bout You
 Taylor Swift – You Are In Love
 Kacey Musgraves – My House
 Ne-Yo – Congratulations
 Paramore – Still Into You
 Coldplay – O
 Mickey Guyton – Better Than You Left Me
 Kelis – Breakfast
 Vance Joy – Riptide

⁵⁶ Steven. "Healthy Relationship Playlist 3.0 – Wwww.loveisrespect.org." *Wwww.loveisrespect.org*. N.p., 12 Mar. 2015. Web. 4 Feb. 2017. <http://www.loveisrespect.org/content/healthy-relationship-playlist-3-0/>.

Ariana Grande – Break Free

Mary Lambert – She Keeps Me Warm

Activity: Healthy Relationship Discussion⁵⁷

Lead a discussion about the components of a healthy relationship using the information below. Encourage students to think about examples of each of these categories or suggestions.

Component 1: Communication

Communication is a key part to building a healthy relationship. The first step is making sure you both want and expect the same things—being on the same page is very important. The following tips can help you and your partner create and maintain a healthy relationship:

- **Speak Up.** *In a healthy relationship, if something is bothering you, it's best to talk about it instead of holding it in.*
- **Respect Each Other.** *Your partner's wishes and feelings have value, and so do yours. Let your significant other know you are making an effort to keep their ideas in mind. Mutual respect is essential in maintaining healthy relationships.*
- **Compromise.** *Disagreements are a natural part of healthy relationships, but it's important that you find a way to compromise if you disagree on something. Try to solve conflicts in a fair and rational way.*
- **Be Supportive.** *Offer reassurance and encouragement to each other. Also, let your partner know when you need their support. Healthy relationships are about building each other up, not putting each other down.*
- **Respect Each Other's Privacy.** *Just because you're in a relationship, doesn't mean you have to share everything and constantly be together. Healthy relationships require space.*

Component 2: Healthy Boundaries

Creating boundaries is a good way to keep your relationship healthy and secure. By setting boundaries together, you can both have a deeper understanding of the type of relationship that you and your partner want. Boundaries are not meant to make you feel trapped or like you're "walking on eggshells." Creating boundaries is not a sign of secrecy or distrust — it's an expression of what makes you feel comfortable and what you would like or not like to happen within the relationship.

Remember, healthy boundaries shouldn't restrict your ability to:

- *Go out with your friends without your partner.*
- *Participate in activities and hobbies you like.*
- *Not have to share passwords to your email, social media accounts or phone.*
- *Respect each other's individual likes and needs.*

⁵⁷ "Healthy Relationships." *Www.loveisrespect.org*. National Domestic Violence Hotline, n.d. Web. 04 Feb. 2017. <http://www.loveisrespect.org/healthy-relationships/>. (Look around the website for additional helpful information)

Activity: Healthy Behavior Infographics

Determine a top 5 characteristics of a healthy relationship as a class (could be the five listed above under healthy communication). Have students divide into groups to create posters/infographics/other forms of publicity to encourage these types of behaviors for their peers.

Activity: Song of Songs as a Model for Healthy Relationships in Text

Use Chapter 8 of Song of Songs as an example of a healthy (sometimes female-dominant) relationship in the Tanakh. Appendices 4:4B & 4:4C provide in-depth analysis of two sections of this chapter as well as discussion questions. Song of Songs is located within the Ketuvim section of the Tanakh.

Part 1: Chavruta Study

Discuss the idea of *chavruta* (partner study)⁵⁸ with the students. Divide students into pairs or groups of three and pass out the guided text study sheets (Appendix 4:4B & 4:4C). Each group will focus in on a slightly different section of the chapter. After reviewing their section, have the students come together to discuss the whole section or create jigsaw groups so the students teach one another.

Questions for Whole Group Discussion:

- What metaphors speak to you?
- This text describes both emotional and physical connection. Does there seem to be a preference for one over the other? Where do you see this hierarchy?
- How is the female lover presented in this chapter?
- What can this text teach us about Judaism's attitude toward female sexual agency?
- How could you envision using this text in conversation with a romantic partner?

Part 2: Torn Paper Midrash

Thinking about the messages of love present in Chapter 8 of Song of Songs, have students create torn paper midrash to describe one (or multiple) expressions of love (seen in the poem or discussed in the first part of the lesson). Torn paper midrash allows students to express themselves creatively without pressure to create something precise or intricate. Give students

⁵⁸ Guidelines for Chevruta Study (applicable for all partner study throughout curriculum):

- 1) Read the biblical verses first. Summarize them in your own words.
- 2) Read the notes and seek clarification for confusing words/verses.
- 3) Answer each question personally before engaging in conversation with your partner.
- 4) Seek to understand using open-ended questions and language (I wonder if you have thought about... I notice you are focusing on this verse, why do you think you are focusing on that verse... etc).
- 5) Resist the urge to agree always with your partner or convince her of your correctness.
- 6) Listen while your partner speaks before thinking about what you will say next.

construction paper and glue or tape. Students tear pieces of construction paper to create their visual representation of the text and the relationship described.

Closing: Display the art as a gallery or hang it in the classroom or hallway for other students to view. Encourage students to ask one another about their artistic choices. Close the class with each student answering, “What is one characteristic of a healthy relationship you always want to remember?”

Appendix 4:4A: Additional Information about Song of Songs Chapter 8

Although *Song of Songs* is often divided into multiple sections and sometimes seen as separate poems altogether, the opening and closing sections are logical bookends that unify the entire book. The questions and unknowns about the relationship and potential for love seen in chapter 1 are solidified and understood in a more complex manner by chapter 8. The progression from the focus on physical connection (kisses, physical beauty, scent) in chapter 1 develops into a deep emotional connection that is more ethereal and spiritual by chapter 8. She does not need to call for her beloved to come to her and physically be close because the love is already established and strong.

Chapter 8 highlights the female lover and her voice. She, not an external speaker (most likely a man), describes her beauty, physical attributes and passion for her lover. The female takes pride in herself and the love relationship she has developed. Instead of others speaking about her beauty, she describes herself. The love did not just occur by chance – the relationship requires work and effort by both the male and female. To describe this love, the speaker utilizes an image of a vineyard. The sections include the phrase *karmi sheli* (my vineyard), indicating ownership and development of a relationship. A vineyard requires work, diligence and patience, which are all qualities of a successful relationship. Failing to tend to one's vineyard or having others tend to its sections do not cultivate the relationship envisioned throughout *Song of Songs*. The individual (whether male or female) wants to initiate and cultivate the process of love, and now the “quest is coming to fruition” (Fishbane 220) by the ending of the book. While both voices use love language, the female voice ultimately pushes for the creation and deepening of the love relationship, along with its expansive and unfinished ending.

Both sections also utilize external forces to underscore the relationship between the two Beloveds. The contrasting images between chapter one and eight highlight this change from separate entities to two forces focused on one another. Friends/companions appear to signify the other and the forces that note the relationship. They may want to hear the Beloved's voice, but ultimately the Beloveds only focus on one another. Since the female Beloved's voice is privileged throughout this book, she ultimately has the last word. She does not allow her brothers' comments to define her by her personal assertion and self-definition. She finds her own voice and tells her brothers that she will define her sense of self. The female Beloved cares for her own vineyard, which ultimately allows her to send her male lover away, knowing there is a relationship base and structure to return to.

The progression of the love story is also highlighted by a key verb difference between the sections. The female Beloved calls out to her Beloved *narutza* (1:4) – let us run together. By chapter 8, she exclaims *brach* (8:14) – flee. They run to a chamber to be together, which again highlights the need for physical closeness and immediate connection. When she calls for him to flee, their love expands. The feeling is felt without close proximity. The relationship needed grounding in chapter 1, and throughout the book even the smallest separation is heartbreaking. However, by chapter 8, the female can allow her partner to flee. Their love has progressed and lives in reality. Complete, perpetual and total connectedness is not possible, and they also must experience separation in their love. The love story ends for now, but does not come to a clean conclusion; they must separate indefinitely in this final verse as their story continues into the unknown.

Why this ending?

These first seven verses (8:1-7) could have closed Song of Songs and left the reader with a specific image. They would have provided a more traditional and optimistic ending to the love poetry. Song of Songs 8:6-7, speak to the climax of the poem and its central message - the affirmation "love is strong as death" (8:6). The first seven verses of chapter 8 pull the lovers closer. She seeks kisses, desires to him into her mother's house, and wants his hands to be near her (8:1-3). After chapters of seeking, finding and seeking again, the lovers appear to be locked together and experiencing love as "astonishing, overwhelming, confident, undeterred, deep and strong as death" (Exum 245). The metaphors of this penultimate unit further emphasize the power of love and its great example found in this poem.

However, the book does not end here. These final seven verses illustrate Song of Song's "resistance to closure, the way it circles back upon itself" (Exum 245). In an effort to not "slip into sentimentality" (Exum 254), the author ends the book with these complicated metaphors. While these verses also speak about desire, they do not use such expressive metaphors and instead speak to the fleeting nature of love and desire. This final section expands the definition of love to beyond the physical. After expressing her confidence and assurance of her love in the final verses, the female lover no longer needs such closeness. Love lingers on even without immediate connection. While the poem speaks specifically about a pair of lovers, the final chapters offer not only an open ending to their story but also a grand vision about the power of love and its timelessness. Her call for him to flee leaves the Song without a final conclusion. After an entire epic poem about lovers coming together, separation has the last word. The time of their reunion is undetermined, but leaves the reader with excitement and anticipation for that moment as we have come to believe in and dream for this type of powerful love and partnership.

Appendix 4:4B - Song of Songs 8:1-7

א מי יתנך כאח לי, יונק שדי אמי; אמצאך בחוץ אשקך, גם ל'א-יבזו לי.	1If only it could be as with a brother, as if you had nursed at my mother's breast. Then I could kiss you when I met you in the street, and no one would despise me.
ב אנהגך, אביאך אל-בית אמי--תלמדני; אשקך מיין הרקח, מעסיס רמ'ני.	2 I would lead you, I would bring you to the house of my mother. Of her who taught me - I would let you drink of the spiced wine, of my pomegranate juice.
ג שמ'אלו תחת ר'אשי, וימינו תחבקני.	3His left hand was under my head, his right hand caressed me.
ד השבעתי אתכם, בנות ירושלם: מה-תעירו ומה-תע'רו את-האהבה, עד שתחפץ. {ס}	4I urge you, maidens of Jerusalem: Do not wake or rouse love until it pleases!
ה מי ז'את, ע'לה מן-המדבר, מתרפקת, על-דודה; תחת התפוח, עוררתני--שמה חבלתך אמך, שמה חבלה ילדתך.	5Who is she that comes up from the desert, leaning upon her beloved? Under the apple tree I woke you, it was there your mother conceived you. There she who bore you conceived you.
ו שימיני כחותם על-לבך, כחותם על-זרועך--כי-עזה כמות אהבה, קשה כשאל קנאה: רשפיה--רשפי, אש שלהבתייה.	6 Let me be a seal upon your heart. Like the seal upon your hand. For love is fierce as death. Passion is mighty as Sheol. Its darts are darts of fire, a blazing flame.
ז מים רבים, ל'א יוכלו לכבות את-האהבה, ונהרות, ל'א ישטפוה; אם-יתן איש את-כל-הון ביתו, באהבה-בוז, יבזו לו. {ס}	7 Vast waters cannot quench love, nor can rivers drown it. If a man offered all his wealth for love, he would be laughed at.

Notes:

- Though the connection of the lovers to siblings may be off-putting in its romantic nature, the author desires to make the closeness of the lovers' relationship so intimate it is as if they are family. Additionally, sibling relationships may be some of the most equal male-female relationships. This idea highlights the equanimity between them, even in public when men almost always appeared dominant in relationships.
- In this passage, the female lover desires to bring the male lover back to her home, which goes against practice of the time that involved the female partner becoming part of the male's family and leaving her family behind.
- The image of the seal on the heart and the hand solidifies the relationship through emotion and physical connection. It is as if the lovers have engraved their love on one another's hearts.

Questions:

- What image of love do we see here? What emotions is the lover presenting?
- How does physical connection play a role? What parts of the body are discussed and why?
- What metaphors are powerful to you? Why?
- If the book ended here, how would you connect to this ending?

Appendix 4:4C - Song of Songs 8:8-14

ח אחות לנו קטנה, ושדים אין לה; מה-נעשה לאח־תנו, ביום שידבר-בה.	8 We have a little sister and she has not yet developed breasts. What will we do for our sister on the day that she will be spoken for?
ט אם-חומה היא, נבנה עליה טירת כסף; ואם- דלת היא, נצור עליה לוח ארז.	9 If she is a wall, we will build on her a silver turret. If she is a door, we will bind a cedar board on her.
י אני חומה, ושדי כמגדלות; אז הייתי בעיניו, כמוצאת שלום. {פ}	I 10 am a wall and my breasts are like towers. Thus I became, in his eyes, a finder of peace.
יא כרם היה לשל־מ'ה בבעל המון, נתן את- הכרם לנ־טרים: איש יבא בפריו, אלף כסף.	11 Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he leased [sections of] the vineyard to watchmen. A man would give a thousand pieces of silver for its fruit.
יב כרמי שלי, לפני; האלף לך של־מ'ה, ומאתים לנ־טרים את-פריו.	12 My vineyard of my own is before me; Solomon [you may keep] the thousand for you, and two hundred for the watchmen of the fruit.
יג היושבת בגנים, חברים מקשיבים לקולך-- השמיעני.	13 You who dwell in the gardens - companions are listening to your voice; let me hear it!
יד ברח דודי, ודמה-לך לצבי או לע־פר האילים-- על, הרי בשמים. {ש}	14 Flee my love, be like the gazelle or like the young stag, to the hill of spices.

NOTES:

- Commentators believe the female lover's brothers are speaking in verse 8 & 9 and the female lover responds in 10 and takes over as the speaker through the end of the chapter.
- The vineyard described in 8:11-12 is utilized for two reasons: first, a vineyard is a romantic and intimate place for the lovers to be together and the conversation about cost highlights that love as beyond any price.
- After an entire epic poem about lovers coming together, separation has the last word. While some translators want this term to mean *flee with me* or *return to me*, the term can only imply *flee away from* someone or something. This translation gives the female lover agency because she realizes that even such true love is fleeting and the lovers must part. She has the last word and leave the love story without a clear resolution.

QUESTIONS:

- What image of love do we see here? What emotions is the lover presenting?
- How does physical connection play a role? What parts of the body are discussed and why?
- What metaphors are powerful to you? Why?
- What is the ending image? How does it work/not work as an ending to the book?

Lessons 4:5 & 4:6: Being a Support & Creating the Video

Goals:

- To provide students with examples of healthy and unhealthy relationships
- To ensure students know how to help a friend in an unhealthy relationship
- To guide students through how to share their learnings with the community

Objectives:

- To support a friend (or themselves) in an unhealthy relationship
- To educate the community about the prevalence of rape culture
- To educate the community about resources available to those in an unhealthy relationship or unsafe situation
- To develop personal definitions for what it means to be an ally

Materials:

- Paper and Pens
- Computer for Videos and Power and Control Wheel Infographic
- Appendix 4:5A – Healthy/Unhealthy Relationship Scenarios
- Materials Needed for Authentic Assessment Project
- Printed Copies of Suggested Jewish Texts for Authentic Assessment

Activity: Share Stories

Utilize a few scenarios from Jewish Women International's *"Yes and Know"* curriculum (Appendix 4:5A) and have the students determine warning signs for an unhealthy relationship. Read the scenario in groups or as the whole class and circle/underline the "red flags" or warning signs of a potentially unhealthy relationship. Pick which scenarios will be most relevant and interesting for your class. The names in the examples are intentionally gender neutral.

- Have you ever been in a similar situation? What did you do?
- How could you help your friend in these situations?
- What are some of the risks associated with speaking up? How do you move past this fear?
- How can we be supportive friends without becoming too involved in the relationship that we get hurt?

Share video clips of Coach Beaste's storyline from *Glee*: <https://vimeo.com/81575881>. Select clips that highlight how/how not to be supportive; the strength of leaving a relationship and/or parse out the judgment that comes from those who know about the abuse but "don't get" why the individual does not leave the relationship.

Activity: Differentiation between Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships

Use the *Power and Control Wheel* (<http://www.loveisrespect.org/is-this-abuse/power-and-control-wheel/>), an interactive infographic, to show how power dynamics can exist in an unhealthy relationship. If you click on different aspects of the wheel, you will be directed to videos and questions that relate to the specific components of the wheel. Each aspect of the wheel can lead to a conversation about how to help a friend and what are “Red Flags” in relationships.

Create a two-columned list titled “Characteristics of a Healthy Relationship” and “Characteristics of an Unhealthy Relationship.” Divide students into groups to create different lists and compare or have the class create a collective list.

Authentic Assessment: Sharing Our Learnings – Be an Upstander

To close the unit, students work together to develop a public forum to share their learnings from this unit, especially about how to notice signs of rape culture and/or an unhealthy relationship and why Judaism does not condone violence.

Ideas:

- Create a PSA for their community/networks. An example of a video can be found here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5ZnY8nHkRk>.
- Develop a list of hotlines and organizations people can reach out to in case they are in a dangerous situation. Post signs (with permission of organization) on bathroom stalls.
- Lead a forum for teens about healthy relationships, rape culture or another related topic.
- Teach Torah study during Parshat Vaychi (the weekly portion where the story of Dinah appears) to share the message with a different audience

Jewish text ideas to include:

- Btzelem Elohim (everyone is created in the image of God and thus deserves to be treated with respect)
- One who publicly shames one’s neighbor, it is as if one sheds blood (Babylonian Talmud, Baba Metzia 58a).
- Whoever destroys a soul, it is considered as if one destroyed an entire world. And whoever saves a life, it is considered as if one saved an entire world (Mishnah Sanhedrein 4:5).
 - o High value placed on life, these situations can dramatically harm a person’s life and sense of self-worth

Appendix 4:5A: Scenarios for Discussion⁵⁹

Scenario 1: Ash and Sam have been dating for a few months. Ash is home sick, and Sam comes over to check on Ash. Sam posts an unflattering video Ash sleeping and snoring. Ash feels embarrassed and angry at Sam for posting it.

- What boundary was compromised?
- What could Ash say to Sam to communicate the issue and set the boundary for the future?

Scenario 2: Jo and Morgan have been dating for a few months, and Jo leaves for summer break to be a camp counselor at a sleepaway camp. Jo is busy with work, helping campers and making friends with other counselors, and feels irritated with Morgan, who calls every morning and every night and texts throughout the day. One day, Jo leaves the phone behind for a field trip and has over thirty texts from Morgan that night. Jo feels that Morgan is well-intentioned, but finds the communication excessive.

- What boundary/boundaries were comprised?
- What could Jo say to Morgan?
- Morgan really wants to talk to Jo more than they are currently talking. What could Morgan say to communicate that need assertively?

Scenario 3: Taylor and Jordan have been best friends for years and start dating in tenth grade. As soon as they decided to be a couple, Taylor started being very physical – Taylor is always initiating public displays of affection, touching and kissing Jordan. Whenever they're alone together, Taylor starts putting the moves on.

Jordan feels surprised and uncomfortable with all the physical attention.

- What boundary is being violated?
- How can Jordan communicate assertively about what s/he is feeling?
- Taylor does want the relationship to be more physical. What could Taylor say that's assertive, but not aggressive?

⁵⁹ "Yes and Know Teen Programs." *Jewish Women's International*. Web. 20 Mar. 2017.
<https://www.jwi.org/teens/>.

Unit 5: Bringing it all Together - My Feminist Platform

Unit EUs:

- Jewish feminist thought and action influences decisions of current Jewish female leaders.
- One's personal Jewish feminist stance continues to evolve throughout a lifetime.
- For Jewish feminism to remain relevant, it needs to embrace and recognize intersectionality.

Unit Goals:

- To expose students to a diversity of Jewish female leaders.
- To enable students to write their own Jewish feminist platforms
- To create a safe and empowering space for students to reflect and offer feedback on one another's work.
- To prepare students for their cumulative authentic assessment.

Unit Objectives:

- To select which aspects of the learning are most applicable to their own Jewish feminist beliefs.
- To engage with Jewish female leaders and apply their lessons to the students' own lives.
- To create a vision for their Jewish feminist beliefs and actions for the future.

Authentic Assessment:

- Students will write, edit and present their feminist platforms to their class and community and create a siyum/closing experience for their learning.

Key Terms:

- Siyum
- Feminist Platform
- Intersectionality

Lessons:

- 1) Women in Leadership Panel
- 2) What is My Jewish Feminism Workshop
- 3) Preparing My Platform
- 4) Platform Workshop and Siyum Preparation
- 5) Siyum

Lesson 5:1: Women in Leadership Panel

Goals:

- To provide students with Jewish female role models.
- To help students internalize how to incorporate feminist ideals into professional environments.

Objectives:

- To reflect upon the feminist narratives of Jewish female leaders.
- To engage with diverse Jewish journeys.
- To express how they may incorporate Jewish and feminist values in their professional lives.

Materials:

- Biographies of Presenters
- Thank You Cards for Presenters
- Set Up for Panel
- Paper and Pens for Reflection

Note to Educator: Before this lesson, reach out to a variety of female Jewish professionals in your community. Aim to create a panel that represents many different types of diversity – age, position, tenure in position, level of leadership etc. If possible, try to have at least one panelist who works in a predominantly female environment and one who is the only or one of a few women in her workplace. Let the speakers know they will be asked about their successes and struggles with womanhood in leadership today and how they understand themselves as Jewish feminists (or not). Share the general principles of Jewish feminism with the panelists from your class definitions and ask panelists to think about how their sex and gender influence their Jewish identity.

Activity: Preparing the Questions

Prepare a list of questions for the presenters either the week before the panel or at the beginning of the class session. Share short biographies of the presenters with the class and ask students to prepare both general and specific questions.

Suggested General Questions:

- How did you get your current position?
- Who are the women you look up to and why?
- Do you consider yourself a feminist? Why or why not?
- Do you consider Judaism a religion open to feminism? Why or why not?
- What are your touchstone Jewish female texts?
- Who are your Jewish female heroes?
- How do you believe your sex and gender expression influence your daily work? Interactions with coworkers? Interactions with lay leaders?

- What is your advice for young Jewish women?

Activity: Panel Discussion

Have students offer short biographies of the panelists before it begins and take notes of questions throughout the panel. Encourage students to think about their questions from throughout the curriculum and ask the panelists how they engage or do not engage with these issues. For example, students may want to ask about the panelists connection to prayer language or how they teach Torah.

Activity: Reflection on Panel Discussion

After the panel, lead the students in a reflective discussion either out loud or written. If there is not enough time to reflect in this session, give the students a few minutes to write out their reflections and continue the conversation in the next session.

Discussion Questions:

- What is one thing you learned from the panelists?
- What is one aspect of their stories that surprised you?
- How did these women define feminism? Jewish feminism? How does Jewish feminism influence their career and personal choices?
- What values did you hear in their stories? Do you align with these values? Why or why not?

Lesson 5:2: What is My Jewish Feminism?

Goals:

- To remind students of the lessons of the previous units.
- To scaffold the process of creating personal feminist platforms.

Objectives:

- To review the main concepts of the previous units.
- To determine which feminist lessons are most personally relevant.
- To begin to express their personal feminist beliefs.

Materials:

- Class Definition of Feminism from Unit 1
- Paper and Pens
- Appendix 5:2A – Graphic Organizer for Review
- Women of Valor Vision Boards
- Children’s Books from Transformational Women Unit
- Student-Created Rituals/Blessings
- Computer for Video

Set Induction: Reflecting on last week’s panel, ask students to share one lingering takeaway about how to incorporate feminism into their lives today and future experiences as students and/or professionals. Write thank you notes to the panelists with these learnings incorporated into the messages.

Activity: Revisiting Definitions

Take out the class-created definition of FEMINISM from the opening unit. Has their definition changed after this year? How has it stayed the same? What has surprised you over the course of the year that challenged your understanding of feminism?

Before creating a formal new definition, let students know they will move through a reflective practice to remind themselves of what they learned in this curriculum.

Give students a few minutes to answer this prompt: “I believe the world needs Jewish feminism because...” Have students share with the class.

Activity: What is My Feminism?

Before the students work on their own platforms, this experience will remind them what they learned throughout the curriculum and help them to determine which aspects of their learning (within and outside of the curriculum) they want to include in their feminist platform. Set up

these four prompts around the room and give students enough time to visit each station at her own pace. Students can visit these stations alone or with a partner to reflect together about the concepts presented at each station. Pass out the My Feminism graphic organizer (Appendix 5:2A) for the students to complete as they visit each station.

Ayshet Chayil/Women of Valor: At this station, display the students' Women of Valor creations from unit one as well as their definition of VALOR. Also display the drawings of a Woman of Valor the students created at the end of the unit and the text of Ayshet Chayil. Ask the students to adapt and/or add to their previous definition of valor based on what they have learned in the interceding units. Below this drawing, have students choose one value present in the Ayshet Chayil text and interpret it to fit within their contemporary definition of a Woman of Valor.

Inspirational Jewish Women: At this station, display the children's book and values sheet filled out by each student. Using these examples and reflecting back on the mantras the students created, ask students to list two ways they already embody these heroines or wish to in the future. Do the students want to make change within a system like Zelophechad's daughters, lead the charge for change like Devorah, speak up against injustice like Ruth Bader Ginsburg etc?

Feminism in Jewish Law, Ritual and Prayer: In this unit, students engaged with feminist innovations in obligation, ritual, contracts, prayer and God language. Display student work of their created blessings and rituals. What is one part of their Jewish practice they now look at through a feminist lens? Do they remember the difference between Shomreinu and Malkeinu in Hashkiveinu? Do/will they use She for God instead of He or other male terms? Do they want to create a Rosh Chodesh group in college?

Healthy Relationships and Self-Efficacy: Have a computer play the students' video. As students watch the video again, think about what is Jewish about a healthy relationship? Share that Chesed, Compassion, is seen as an action in Judaism. In thinking about this topic, reflect on the following questions: How can you be an advocate in your community? How will you take the messages of this video to your friends, family and Jewish community?

Collect the Graphic Organizers at the end of the lesson to use in Lesson 3: Preparing My Platform.

Lessons 5:3 & 5:4: Preparing My Platform and Siyum

Goals:

- To guide students through the process of consolidating their year of learning into a personal statement of purpose.
- To provide students with skills to offer and receive feedback.
- To help students determine how to celebrate the year of learning in a meaningful manner.

Objectives:

- To offer and receive meaningful feedback.
- To express their personal Jewish feminist platforms.
- To create a ceremony of celebration of one another and themselves.
- To recognize individuals they want to include in the celebration.

Materials:

- Materials for Writing Platforms
- Invitations for Siyum
- Computer for Thisibelieve.org Essays (Essays are in both written and audio formats)
- Feedback Guidelines (if necessary)

Note to Educator: These two tasks – creating their Jewish feminist platforms and planning the culminating ceremony/ritual (siyum) will take at least one or two class periods. There is no time frame or limit for these processes. I encourage you to work backwards from a logical siyum date (either the last session of the class or a Shabbat service honoring graduating students etc) and determine how much time your class will need to both complete their platforms and adequately plan the siyum.

Lesson Introduction: Explain to the students that the curriculum has two main pieces left – the creation of the students’ final reflections in the form of personal feminist platforms and the planning and execution of a final siyum, or closing program. All students will be involved in both pieces and create the final experience they wish to have as a class.

Activity: Thisibelieve.org

Before the lesson, select 2-3 essays from this website that will connect with your students. I encourage you to pick at least one person the class will recognize (the website includes essays from many celebrities/public figures) and a few others that you find most inspiring. There are essays by individuals the students’ ages, essays about feminism and womanhood, and essays about Judaism.

Explain: This website, thisibelieve.org, emerged from a story-telling blog on NPR. While these stories center around belief and spirituality, they can certainly serve as inspirations for the students' answers to the prompt, "Jewish feminism matters to me because..."

As students listen to the essays, prompt them to note how values are presented and how the stories are told. Their final projects will involve both a written and oral component (at least a piece of them will be presented at the siyum), so the students should think about the narrative arc and how to make this written piece personal and reflective.

Activity: First Draft of Jewish Feminist Platforms

The students will now write their own Jewish feminist platforms modeled after the *This I Believe* narratives. The platforms should be at least one page double-spaced and no more than three pages double-spaced. The platforms should reflect the students' learning from the curriculum as well as share personal experiences with the necessity for feminism, Judaism and Jewish feminism in their lives moving forward. It should incorporate the values, beliefs and actions they wish to incorporate to live out their goals. Since this experience will take place near the end of their high school experiences, these pieces can reflect how the students will incorporate the values of feminism and Judaism in their lives moving forward. Even though these pieces will be shared publicly, encourage the students to be personal, honest and aspirational.

Pass out all of the various worksheets and written/visual creations from the curriculum to the students. Give the students at least 20-30 minutes to write out a first draft. If students are struggling, encourage them to think about personal stories when they spoke up for something from a gendered perspective, a moment in the learning this year that was particularly meaningful, an example of how they hope to be Jewishly involved or involved in feminist/women's rights activism after high school.

Activity: Giving and Receiving Feedback

Teach the students about the value of giving and receiving useful feedback. Knowing these pieces of writing are deeply personal, receiving feedback can be challenging and make the writer feel defensive. By giving the students a common language, this feedback focuses on the style and content as opposed to the individual offering the words. On the other hand, offering too much praise does not help the author grow and improve her piece. Model the process of giving feedback using the three-statement protocol: *I notice, I wonder, I appreciate*.

Encourage students to begin a statement with "I appreciate" to offer praise and affirmation. "I notice" allows the feedback giver to share how the student's work appeared to another reader. "I wonder" offers guidance or a suggestion for the author to consider.

Introduce this language to the students, model while offering feedback about an unrelated piece of work and then have the students engage with the language themselves. The students

can practice using a piece of writing from an author outside of the classroom, looking at a piece of art or analyzing a recent episode of a TV show popular amongst the students. Once they feel comfortable with the language, they can begin to offer feedback on one another's platforms.

Activity: Workshopping and Editing Platforms

There are many ways to workshop the platforms. I encourage you to choose the method that makes most sense for your students and their ability to receive and offer feedback from one another. Feedback can be offered in chavruta (pairs), small groups or with the entire class. Pairs or small groups are most time-efficient, but students may appreciate hearing several other platforms as they continue to work on their own. The students should offer feedback using the language from the previous activity. The feedback-givers should provide feedback about the following aspects of the platform (you can also use these as a basis for a rubric for the final statements):

- Clarity: Is the message and writing clear to the listener?
- Content: Does the platform connect to material learned in the course? What feminist ideas or leaders are mentioned in the piece?
- Goals: Does the platform articulate goals, values and a vision for the future? Could you summarize in one sentence what the author plans to do to further a Jewish feminist agenda in her life moving forward? What would that sentence be?
- Experience: How did it feel to listen to the platform? What are your lingering questions? Do you feel inspired by the words?

If you would like, students could also conference with an adult and you about their platforms. Possible additional adults to involve could include other staff in the organization and/or the women who spoke on the panel at the beginning of this unit. These adults can also be helpful as practice audiences once the platforms are ready to be presented.

Make sure to give the students ample time to reflect on and edit their platforms. Writing workshops should take place during at least two distinct sessions so the students can think about their ideas in a less time-pressured environment.

Activity: Planning the Siyum

Lead the students through a brainstorming session to plan the siyum, or culminating celebration for this year of learning. Since the students are nearing the end of high school, this ceremony can be separate from or in conjunction with other graduation celebrations for the students at this institution. Some or all of the ceremony should be just for the class and invited guests to honor the close community created within the class.

It may be easier to divide the class into groups based on which aspects of the event they would like to plan. Students can work on logistics, invitations, ritual, presentation, gifts for one another and the other aspects of the event they want to include. Empower the students to create the ceremony they wish to experience, incorporating the skills learned in the ritual

lessons and the skills practiced throughout the curriculum to create a personal, feminist and meaningful event.

This siyum represents a rite of passage ceremony. The students are in transition – from juniors to seniors or from seniors into their post-high school plans. This liminal moment is full of transitions large and small. The students are about to embark on journeys they will forge themselves. While they may not be entering spaces of total freedom, they are about to take more control over their lives and choices than ever before. This ceremony should honor that space and celebrate the important learning and growing that took place in this classroom setting. The details of the ritual and ceremony are up to you and the students. Some suggestions are below:

- Students should share all or part of their Jewish feminist platforms. Students could create a script that involves a few sentences from each of theirs or each read a section/all of their platforms for the group. After students read their platforms, family members, fellow classmates or the educator could present the student with a Torah to celebrate continued learning or another type of personalized gift.
- Students can invite important female-identified individuals in their lives to the ceremony - family members, friends, mentors etc. Include the female leadership of your organization to show the value of this program to the institution as a whole.
- Ideally the siyum will incorporate some type of ritual planned by the students. Encourage those students involved in the planning to reach back to the lessons learned while they created their own ritual in a previous unit. What makes a ritual meaningful? How do we hear different voices throughout the ritual? What external voices do we want to incorporate? How do we represent this liminal moment through ritual?
- Given this siyum represents not only the end of this curriculum but also the end of their experience at this institution, personalize the experience as much as possible. Highlight the growth of these students and provide examples of their impact on this institution.
- Display/bind together/share the Jewish Feminist Platforms either publicly in the space or for the students to take home. Encourage them to keep themselves and one another accountable to the goals and values discussed in their words.

Lesson 5:5: Culmination

Goals:

- To celebrate the learning, growth and questioning that occurred throughout this year.
- To provide students with a space to share their platforms and learning with their family and friends.

Objectives:

- To share their platforms with their community.
- To commit to continuing learning and growth in Jewish and feminist learning and action in the next step of their lives.
- To celebrate their learning, community and personal growth in a public forum and privately with the class.

Introduction: If the entire siyum is created as a public celebration with invited guests and/or the entire community, be sure to have some type of closing experience with the class alone. Have the students reflect about their learning over the year, share a favorite moment, a particularly powerful takeaway, or an appreciation for the class.

Activity: Celebration!

Hold the ceremony and celebration created by the students in the previous lessons. Celebrate their learning by having the students share their platforms, present their ritual and lead the invited guests through their crafted experience.

As the educator, I encourage you to publicly honor each student personally. This acknowledgment can be shared by offering each student a quotation that reminds you of the student, a Jewish feminist she embodies and/or you believe could be inspirational for her, or another expression of your choosing.

If the ceremony does not already incorporate Havdalah, this ceremony could be a nice way to close the event and mark the closing of this chapter and the opening of another.

Annotated Bibliography

Adler, Rachel. *Engendering Judaism: An Inclusive Theology and Ethics*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1998. Print.

This book is a formative text for Jewish feminists. Dr. Adler's work highlights many of the enduring tensions in Jewish text and communal life that either ignore or subjugate women. This book's density may make it challenging for high school students to access, but there are key passages and ideas that can be adapted to fit any audience. Dr. Adler is a theologian, scholar and has experience in both the Reform and Orthodox Jewish worlds, which provides her with a unique perspective to the challenges and opportunities for Jewish women in various denominations. This book focuses primarily on prayer and theology through ritual examples, personal stories and Jewish text.

Eskenazi, Tamara Cohn, and Andrea Weiss, eds. *The Torah: A Women's Commentary*. New York: URJ, 2008. Print.

This fantastic Torah commentary provides deep textual analysis of the Torah through a feminist lens. It includes detailed analysis of the text and additional essays, poetry, and commentary from leading Jewish female scholars.

Goldstein, Elyse, ed. *New Jewish Feminism: Probing the Past, Forging the Future*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 2009. Print.

Schorr, Rabbi Rebecca Einstein & Rabbi Alysa Mendelson Graf, eds. *The Sacred Calling: Four Decades of Women in the Rabbinate*. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis Press, 2016. Print.

Both of these books divide women's representation in Judaism into various categories. They are comprised of individual essays by public Jewish figures about a variety of topics from women in prayer to women's ordination. *New Jewish Feminism* discusses women's roles in Judaism in the public and private spheres. It talks about the various Jewish feminist movements and influences, somewhat as an update and simplification of *Engendering Judaism*. *The Sacred Calling* celebrates forty years of women's ordination through essays about the influence of women's ordination on the rabbinate and Judaism as well as the long struggle to achieve this recognition.

Harding, Kate. *Asking for It the Alarming Rise of Rape Culture - and What We Can Do about It*. Boston, MA: Da Capo Lifelong, A Member of the Perseus Group, 2015. Print.

This book is aimed at young adult women to discuss the rise of rape culture in America. Given that one in four women on college campuses experience some version of sexual assault during their four years of school, this topic is incredibly important to discuss before women enter college. The author breaks down the various reasons for the rise into major aspects of society: media, justice system and power dynamics. This book provides a history of the rise of rape culture and more examples of its prevalence in culture, which could be useful background information for the unit about healthy relationships and rape culture.

Heschel, Susannah, ed. *On Being a Jewish Feminist*. New York: Schocken, 1995. Print.

This compilation provides historical background of the rise of Jewish feminism in the mid 20th century. While many of its claims are outdated, the articles, written by prominent Jewish thought leaders, represent several moments in time that are key to understanding the development of Jewish feminism. This book is organized chronologically as it builds the story from old myths to modern challenges. It could be helpful to provide the educator with more information about Jewish feminism and its various movements.

***Miss Representation*. Dir. Jennifer Siebel Newsom. The Representation Project, 2011. DVD.**

This documentary utilizes interviews, statistics, media and more to express the dramatic challenges facing girls (and boys) in contemporary American culture. It highlights the over-sexualization and body-focused nature of women's representation in the media and encourages viewers to critically analyze the content we absorb daily. This organization creates curricula for schools and institutions to continue the questions raised and conversations started by the movie in more intimate settings. This film highlights the challenges facing young women today and could be useful to view as a supplement to this curriculum.

"Rosh Hodesh: It's a Girl Thing!" Moving Traditions. Web. 27 Jan. 2017.

<http://movingtraditions.org/programs/rosh-hodesh-its-a-girl-thing/>.

This curriculum is an important resource for this guide because it responds to a similar need and demographic. This guide aims to utilize Judaism to promote self-discovery, challenge traditional gender roles, and celebrate a diversity of voices. This five-year curriculum is most commonly utilized between 6th-10th grades and uses holidays and Jewish stories/characters to engage teens in conversation about adolescence, successes, challenges and more. The scaffolded curriculum builds on similar themes each year with greater depth and more participant-led activities as the years' progress. The authors of this curriculum utilize Jewish knowledge, sociology and interactive activities to create a safe space for true conversation and community-building.

"Yes and Know Teen Programs." Jewish Women's International. <https://www.jwi.org/teens/>

& "Love Shouldn't Hurt." Shalom Bayit. [http://www.shalom-](http://www.shalom-bayit.org/prevention/about-loveshouldnt-hurt/)

[bayit.org/prevention/about-loveshouldnt-hurt/](http://www.shalom-bayit.org/prevention/about-loveshouldnt-hurt/).

These curricula offer information about healthy relationships for Jewish teens. I used it a lot in the unit about healthy relationships and rape culture. The curricula incorporate narratives, role play scenarios, Jewish text, questioning sequences, and other techniques to teach about self-advocacy and the importance of communication in relationship.