

**Home****About AJR**

History

FAQ

Our Students

Our Alumni

Visiting AJR

What Our Students Are Saying

Donate Online

Contact Us

Admissions**Ordination Programs****Faculty & Staff****Placement****For Current Students****Teachings****Support AJR****Site Map****Search**

[Home](#) > [About AJR](#) > [Our Alumni](#) > Rabbi Judith Hauptman

Rabbi Judith Hauptman

As a member of the faculty at the Jewish Theological Seminary, and since 2001 the E. Billi Ivry Professor of Talmud and Rabbinic Culture, **Judith Hauptman** has trained rabbis for the last 25 years. It is only now that she is following in her students' footsteps and becoming a rabbi herself. With formal training and ordination, Judith speaks out with a rabbinic voice on issues of contemporary importance. Her writings on the Talmud, in particular her attempt to unravel the mystery of how this text came into being, have made a significant contribution to the field of rabbinics. She is currently writing a book on the Mishnah and Tosefta, two contemporaneous collections of rabbinic teachings.

Another passion is Jewish feminism, an area where her voice, her writings, and, in particular, her book *Rereading the Rabbis: A Woman's Voice*, have influenced many. Her central thesis is that the talmudic rabbis succeeded, within the confines of a patriarchal society, in transforming women from chattel to second-class citizens. This change was a major accomplishment for its day. Today, following the principles of the rabbis of the Talmud, Judith calls for full equality for Jewish women in all areas of religious life.

Growing up with parents who loved all things Jewish, Judith first felt stirrings to be a rabbi as a child but was unable to articulate such a wish, even to herself, in a society that saw only men as rabbis. She therefore expressed her attachment to Judaism in other ways ' love of Jewish studies, love of the Hebrew language, love of Israel (where she lived for three years), and finally, love of Talmud.

A firm believer that the Jews out there need a spectrum with many points on it so that each can attach himself or herself where most comfortable, she teaches for the Reform movement in the summer, at its Kallah, and often speaks at the conferences of Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance. For the last two years she has served as volunteer chaplain for the dozen or so Jewish residents at the Cabrini Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation in Lower Manhattan. She loves walking into a room and being greeted, 'Hello Rabbi.'

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