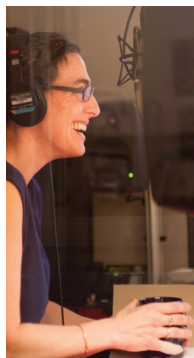


# Amplifying Jewish Women's Voices

## 2016-2017 Annual Report



"We need [JWA's] work because it appears we need those stories a little more today than we needed them yesterday. Archive rhymes with alive. We cannot live without these stories."

—Journalist, educator, and JWA supporter



## **Amplifying Jewish Women's Voices 2016-2017 Annual Report**

*The mission of the Jewish Women's Archive is to document the stories of Jewish women, elevate their voices, and inspire them to be agents of change.*

Founded in 1996, JWA shares these stories on [jwa.org](http://jwa.org), the world's largest source of information about Jewish women. JWA also hosts public programs, trains the thought leaders of tomorrow, creates original curricula, sparks conversation across multimedia platforms, and is a leading voice in feminist, Jewish, and historical spheres.



Dear Friends,

It is a pleasure to share with you the Jewish Women’s Archive’s achievements in fiscal year 2017. Across all our work, on multiple platforms, we were dedicated to amplifying Jewish women’s voices, experiences, and accomplishments to provide insight and context for our world today. In a year of uncertainty—about the state of the world and how we can individually and communally respond to the needs of the moment—JWA offered nuanced reflections and models of moral commitment as guides for our own actions and responses.

With history unfolding every day, JWA created vehicles for collecting stories about the impact of this moment and those that came before. At the same time, we shared historical stories that shed light on current events and trained young women to step up and shape conversations in their own communities, on our website, and beyond. As always, JWA provided in-depth, well-researched, and reliable information. In fiscal year 2017, 1.6 million people from 232 countries visited [jwa.org](http://jwa.org) to access this vital information.

The Jewish Women’s Archive has been a hub of activity, creativity, and timely conversation over the past year, and we couldn’t be more excited to continue this work. None of it would be possible without the vision and generosity of our individual donors and institutional funders—we are deeply grateful to you for your support of our work. On behalf of the entire organization, thank you for your vital partnership, as JWA goes from strength to strength!

Warm regards,

Rachel Bendit  
Co-Chair,  
Board of Directors

Karla Goldman  
Co-Chair,  
Board of Directors

Judith Rosenbaum  
Executive Director



Pictured above, left to right: JWA staff member Larisa Klebe and a group from “Jews in ALL Hues” at a JWA story-collecting training (courtesy of Rachel Kurland, The Jewish Exponent); father and daughter wearing JWA t-shirts; photo from #JWAmegaphone collection (courtesy of Debra Schultz).



## Story Aperture

JWA was honored to receive a grant from the Covenant Foundation in December 2016 to support **Story Aperture**, a new story-collecting initiative that enables people of all ages to collect and share the untold and underrepresented stories of Jewish women through mobile technology. This initiative builds on JWA's longstanding expertise in oral history and is intended to engage the public as our partner in collecting stories. We began the pilot phase of the initiative in early 2017, developing materials and training diverse cohorts of story collectors. We also partnered with organizations across the country to collect stories from members of their communities.

{ *Learn how to collect the stories of Jewish women:* [jwa.org/stories](http://jwa.org/stories)

## #JWAmegaphone

In January 2017, JWA created #JWAmegaphone: **Voices of Power and Protest**, a project documenting contemporary activism, and launched it in conjunction with the women's marches across the country. As Jewish women today speak up and take action, just as they have throughout history, JWA is committed to collecting their stories and reflections through this new project. We have received submissions from women ages 16 to 93, sharing their images and words of hope, concern, memory, and action. JWA plans to expand and promote the collection as new waves of activism take place on the national stage.

{ *Add your own story:* [jwa.org/megaphone](http://jwa.org/megaphone)



Photo submitted to #JWAmegaphone (courtesy of Karen Smul).



"I see [my daughter's] head held high with confidence and pride ... RVF has played a role in this transformation and has helped her find and focus her own voice. I love the fact that the JWA is growing a network for these like-minded women. "

—Father of RVF Fellow, Spring 2017

## Rising Voices Fellowship

In 2016-2017, JWA trained its fourth Rising Voices Fellowship (RVF) cohort, a pluralistic group of fourteen young women from across the country. We added new components to the program this year to enhance the program's core work with teens interested in feminism, Judaism, and social justice to strengthen their leadership and to influence the important conversations of the Jewish community. These included training the Fellows to conduct oral history interviews with important women in their lives and to write op-eds or letters to their elected representatives to advocate for change. This year we also launched an RVF alumnae network: as the number of RVF graduates grows, JWA is continuing to nurture these future leaders as they carry what they learned in their fellowship year into college and adulthood. Our RVF graduates represent an important conduit to expanded engagement and conversation with young Jewish women across the country.

{ *Treat yourself to reading what these smart, thoughtful young Jewish women have to say:* [jwa.org/risingvoices](http://jwa.org/risingvoices)





JWA hosted “Breaking Boundaries: Women Rabbis and the Transformation of Jewish Life” in New York in December 2016. Pictured, left to right: Rabbi Angela Warnick Buchdahl, Rabbi Lila Kagedan, Rabbi Dianne Cohler-Esses, JWA Executive Director Judith Rosenbaum, and Rabbi Sally Priesand.

“I am struck by how much the material in this collection speaks to the broader issues of women’s leadership that remain so relevant to us today.”

—Attendee of “Women Rabbis” program in New York, December 2016

## Education

JWA added lively new programs and resources for educators in 2016-2017, including new lessons about biblical women in the “Girls in Trouble” curriculum, created by educator-musician Alicia Jo Rabins. JWA convened educators for two “Educator Happy Hours,” an online meet-up for them to discover community, share ideas, and discuss timely educational issues together. We were also pleased to award the **Natalia Twersky Educator Award**, which recognizes educators for their creative use of Jewish women’s stories and primary sources in their teaching. This year, Yedida Kanfer, Coordinator of Education Services at the JFCS Holocaust Center in San Francisco, and Audrey Abade, Jewish History Department Chair at Magen David Yeshivah High School in Brooklyn, were the winner and finalist, respectively. Their winning lesson plans are shared on [jwa.org/twersky](http://jwa.org/twersky).

{ *Discover creative resources for a variety of educational settings:* [jwa.org/teach](http://jwa.org/teach)

## Women Rabbis

In Spring 2016, JWA launched **Women Rabbis** in partnership with the Story Archive of Women Rabbis. This extraordinary collection of video interviews with early trailblazers and more recently ordained rabbis tells the story of women breaking the “stained-glass ceiling” and the challenges and blessings they’ve experienced over the past 40 years. In 2016-2017, JWA developed creative programming around the new collection to highlight its themes of women’s leadership and innovation in a traditionally male profession. JWA hosted two public events, in Boston and New York, which drew hundreds of people and sparked conversations about women’s leadership in the rabbinate and beyond. In Spring 2017, we also expanded the narrative with a blog series, “Reimagining ‘Rabbi,’” in which rabbis and rabbinical students reflect on stories from the exhibit. JWA is excited to add the next group of 25 rabbis to the collection in September 2017.

{ *Read and listen to the stories of modern trailblazers:* [jwa.org/rabbis](http://jwa.org/rabbis)



JWA Director of Programs and Education, Mikki Pugh, with 2016 Twersky Award winner Yedida Kanfer (and dog Bella), at the JFCS Holocaust Center’s Day of Learning. Photo Credit: Trish Tunney.

“It is so rare to come across a podcast that is at once feminist, multigenerational, and unapologetic about exploring the nuances of women’s history, then and now. Bravo!”

—Reviewer on iTunes

## Podcast

JWA’s podcast, **Can We Talk?**, is a unique collection of audio stories and conversation about Jewish women and the issues that shape their public and private lives. Downloaded tens of thousands of times in its first year by people around the world, **Can We Talk?** presents timely stories of culture, family, identity, and current events. Over the past year, the podcast has delved into books (banned and beloved), debates over segregation at the Kotel, forgotten chapters of the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment and the women’s liberation movement, and more. In keeping with JWA’s commitment to capturing history as it is unfolding, the podcast also served as a powerful platform for nuanced exploration of post-election America and Jewish identity, with episodes about the Women’s March and Jewish women’s multi-generational commitment to activism.

{ *Listen and share with friends:* [jwa.org/canwetalk](http://jwa.org/canwetalk)

## Book Club

With input from members, JWA redesigned its **Book Club** this year to offer an even broader range of features for book lovers. We created new book reviews and interviews with authors, and enhanced our annual recommended reading list (“The Bookshelf”) with discussion questions to spark conversation among readers. These offerings, along with a new monthly newsletter, provide context, engagement, and conversation around JWA’s featured books. We also held events with authors, including Elissa Altman, Jennifer Brown, Tova Mirvis, Anna Solomon, Marjorie Ingall, Rebecca Traister, and Bonnie Anderson.

{ *Read with JWA:* [jwa.org/bookclub](http://jwa.org/bookclub)

## Blog

In Spring 2017, JWA’s blog celebrated its second decade with a new design and format. Renamed **Jewish Women, Amplified**, the blog features opinion, commentary, and humor about a wide range of issues and serves as an important platform to reflect on current events through a Jewish feminist lens. Over the past year, JWA also added new, younger voices to the roster of bloggers, revitalized the blog’s food section, and created special ongoing series such as “Reimagining ‘Rabbi,’” “Reading Our Rights,” and “From the Archives.”

{ *Follow the conversation:* [jwa.org/blog](http://jwa.org/blog)

## Quizzes

Always open to infusing history with humor and playfulness, JWA created several fun new quizzes in 2016-2017. The popular “Which ‘Nasty’ Jewish Woman Are You?” quiz riffed on a meme of the 2016 election and has been taken thousands of times.

{ *Find out which historic Jewish woman you are:* [jwa.org/quizzes](http://jwa.org/quizzes)



JWA podcast producer/host Nahanni Rous interviews Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum at the Democratic National Convention in July 2016.



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## Molly's JWA Story

Molly, a 2016-2017 Rising Voices Fellow, found not only connection and community with other young Jewish women in the Rising Voices Fellowship, she also found her own, unique voice. "I've learned how powerful words (and specifically my words) can be," she says. "I've gained so much confidence in being able to use that power in a productive way."



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## Beri's JWA Story

Beri, a nationally-recognized educator working in a Texas congregation, was delighted to discover the rich, fully accessible resources and curricula on [jwa.org](http://jwa.org)—and now draws on them extensively. “I am continuously inspired by JWA’s engaging material, whether it be blog posts or Book Club recommendations and discussions,” she says. “JWA helps me as an educator to support, enrich, and inspire my congregation with fresh perspectives and a strong feminine voice. Our adult education program is thriving because of JWA!”



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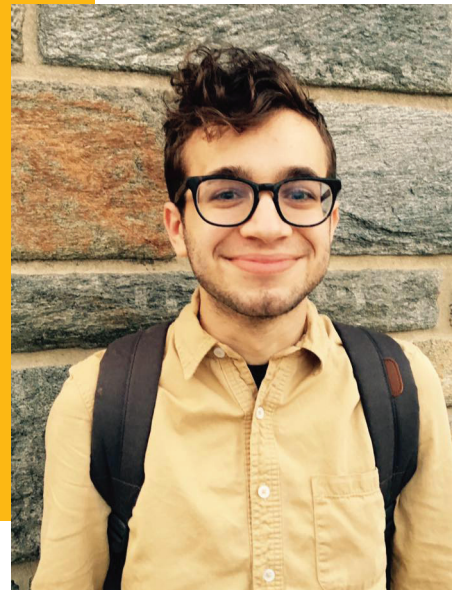
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## Rafi's JWA Story

After graduating from a Jewish day school, Rafi traveled to India for a yearlong cultural immersion program. Hungry for Jewish content, he went online and discovered the thousands of stories of Jewish women, curricula, and timely articles on jwa.org. With its global accessibility and rich content, JWA quickly became his primary connection to Judaism while abroad. "I felt intimately connected to Jewish conversations and history each time I ventured into the online archive," he says. "Toward the end of the year, I even led a workshop for non-Jews using JWA resources. I am grateful to JWA for supporting me when I needed it most and for continuing to educate me about the powerful voices guiding our Jewish future."



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 Suzanne Rutland  
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 Jaymie Saks and  
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 Esther Salem

## Isa's JWA Story

While preparing to become a bat mitzvah, Isa was deeply inspired by JWA's *Women of Valor* exhibit, and created a presentation for her ceremony using JWA materials. She also composed a song reflecting on the gulf between traditional views of women that still persist and the strong women she found at JWA. "The Jewish Women's Archive exhibit re-thought what being a Jewish 'woman of valor' could mean, and that inspired me to want to fight for women's equality and justice," she says.





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 Brian Kelly  
 Joella Werlin  
 Barrie Wheeler and  
 Amit Segal  
 Phyllis Whitesides  
 Stephen Whitfield

## Isabel's JWA Story

In December 2016, Isabel, an undergraduate student at New York University, chose JWA as the recipient of her family's Hanukkah philanthropy. "Every year, we each bring a new organization to the table, one that we believe has a direct impact on something we are very passionate about," she explains. "The Jewish Women's Archive spoke to me because it combines Judaism, feminism, and social justice perfectly—three of my passions. That combination is what excites me about JWA."



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# **Amplifying Jewish Women's Voices**

## **2016-2017 Annual Report**

