

Interesting Psak from Adina Bar Shalom on Kol Isha

By [Gldmeier @gldmeier](#)

Adina Bar Shalom, the famous daughter of Rav Ovadia Yosef, yesterday went on air talking about Haredi women, the now defunct female council of Shas, and most interestingly, I think, of men going to performances with women singing.

Bar Shalom said that regarding the issue of "kol b'isha erva" people have gotten very extreme over the years. She explained that a woman cannot get on stage and sing and dance in front of men who are there to see her. But, if she is there singing as part of a choir, as part of an orchestra, then a man can sit and listen to her sing, as long as he is not focusing on her and not watching her in a longing way.

Her statement has caused quite a ruckus. While the opinions are numerous as to what is and is not a problem of "kol isha", she is right that the ultra-Orthodox community has gotten very extreme about it.

It has been pointed out that Bar Shalom's psak is in opposition to her father's psak that was written in his sefer prohibiting kol isha if one even just knows what the woman looks like from having seen a picture. His psak is despite the fact that he himself was famously a fan of the Egyptian female singer [Umm Kulthum](#) and would listen regularly to her songs. There is some debate as to whether or not he later retracted this psak, and there is also [some debate](#) whether the original psak was more limited than how it is being made to sound and he was prohibiting it specifically during tefilla (shma and shomeh esrei) or by limiting it specifically for those who would be aroused by the specific singer.

As well, it has been pointed out how a slew of other gedolim throughout the years have prohibited kol isha in even the most minute way.

sources: [Srugim](#) and [Kikar](#)

There are two points in all of this that I find particularly interesting:

1. Adina Bar Shalom issued a psak, in some way, and was not afraid to take a position against well known rabbis. If she issued the psak it was surely because she assumed people would take her seriously and listen or at least debate the issue.

and even more interesting is:

2. people took her seriously.

I don't mean she should not be taken seriously, but I am intrigued by the fact that some people did not just brush her off, call her modern or anything like that, say she is just a woman and doesn't know or cannot have a say, but they took her statement as significant enough to be worth responding to at a halachic level.

Is that itself progress?

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