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Ruach Hiddush - רוח חידוש

רבנים וחזנים למען חופש דת ושוויון

Rabbis and Cantors for Religious Freedom and Equality in Israel

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Introduction

January 25, 2018 - 9 תשרי 5778

In the introductory piece by Tova Hartman to this week's newsletter, we see some of the complexity of creating a culture in which all streams of Judaism experience genuine equality in the essential sectors of Israeli society. Just as we oppose discrimination against and exclusion of liberal Jews and Judaism, so, Prof. Hartman claims, we need to open ourselves to and accommodate ideas of gender relations that do not fit our ideologies but are effective in including Haredi women as equals in Israel and providing for their success. Gender discrimination may further the goals of workplace inclusion and access to financial success.

Why Gender-Segregated Education Is Essential For The Ultra-Orthodox

By Tova Hartman

Prof. Hartman writes, *"Thousands of ultra-Orthodox women have been able to earn a degree and integrate into the Israeli workforce because the educational system met them where they are. This would not have been possible had they been told that academia was only accessible via mixed gender education. They simply would not have gone to university, as is the case for several generations of women from the ultra-Orthodox community."*

[FULL ARTICLE >>>](#)

Women journalists shunted to rear for Pence's visit to Western Wall

By Noga Tarnopolsky

I find myself reluctantly agreeing with her logic, but with one caveat: that the same equality and courtesy be demonstrated to all streams of Israeli religious life. No one may hypocritically claim the rights of self-determination for themselves and deny them to others. Prof. Hartman herself subscribes to these pluralistic values, and they should be respected by the State, even if they are not respected by the Haredi establishment that demands acceptance of their own demands but not those with whom they differ.

Fulfilling the Zionist dream of a homeland for all Jews, physically for some and culturally for others, perhaps demands areas in society in which women and men are voluntarily allowed to self-segregate. But as the other articles in this week's newsletter make clear, a כפייה דתית (religious coercion) to segregate the military, against the wishes of broad segments of Israeli society, Israeli history and the goals of the IDF, is simply unacceptable and contrary to Israel's Declaration of Independence. If women choose to self-segregate in religious military combat units (see articles to the

Women journalists were forced 4 rows back in coverage of VP Pence at the Kotel, inflicting inferior status and thus interfering with their jobs, given the preference for men at the Wall. Rabbi Rabinowitz insists this is standard procedure, but no one else remembers it occurring previously.

[FULL ARTICLE >>>](#)

Women warriors: a look at the all-female IDF combat battalions

By Yossi Yehoshua

After male religious soldiers protested serving side by side with women, female religious combat soldiers decided to lay down the law, and so a unit composed entirely of female soldiers was opened in the Lavi Battalion; 'We did not plan this,' says a senior officer. 'The demand came from the women.'

[FULL ARTICLE >>>](#)

You're in the army now, girl: more religious women enlist

By Yossi Yehoshua

Despite rabbis warning against women's enlistment into IDF, rising numbers of religious women into army reflect different stance within religious Zionism; New study even shows military service appears to strengthen religious convictions among religious women.

[FULL ARTICLE >>>](#)

Rabbi Levinstein disparages women in the IDF

By Kobi Nachshoni

right) and in education, Israeli society may choose to accommodate their needs. But forcing women to an inferior position religiously or in work life violates the Zionist ideal and the ethics of modern, democratic societies.

We'd love to receive your comments at:
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Kol tuv,

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The leading National Religious cleric makes comments against women serving in combat positions in the IDF while speaking before a pre-army yeshiva. Defense minister says Levinstein's position will be re-examined.

[FULL ARTICLE >>>](#)

Religious women, IDF defend female integration into the army

By Yoav Zitun, Elisha Ben Kimon and Isaac Dabush

In wake of derisory remarks by Rabbi Yigal Levinstein against women serving in the IDF, spokesperson dismisses comments as 'inappropriate,' while female orthodox soldiers say they only reinforce their determination to serve.

[FULL ARTICLE >>>](#)

Drop in national service volunteers amid increase in girls in the IDF

By Amihai Attali

Hundreds of volunteer positions remain vacant across the country, but head of Administration for National-Civic Service says IDF enlistment of religious women is not the sole factor, noting Shin Bet, Mossad and government ministries add new, more appealing volunteer posts.

[FULL ARTICLE >>>](#)

Safed rabbi calls on IDF chief to resign over women in combat roles

By Elisha Ben Kimon

Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu rationalizes comments by Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, who barred IDF service for

religious-Zionist men if they're placed in a unit with women: 'It means the situation is quite dire... Eisenkot must wake up, and the prime minister should tell him to resign.'

[FULL ARTICLE >>>](#)

Lieberman bans Sephardic chief rabbi from IDF events

By Matan Tzuri, Goel Beno

Defense minister instructed army not to invite Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef to events over his support of Safed Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu, who called on the army chief to resign, and Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, who spoke against enlisting in IDF over women's service; Safed mayor comes out against Rabbi Eliyahu, who threatens to sue Lieberman if order not recanted.

[FULL ARTICLE >>>](#)

רו"ם ה'דו"ש היא ארגון של רבנים וחזנים הפועל למימוש מלא של הבטחת מגילת הצעמאות לחופש דת ושוויון. מימוש הבטחה זו חיוני לחיזוק זהותה של מדינת ישראל כמדינה יהודית ודמוקרטית ולהמשך השותפות עם העם היהודי לתפוצותיו.

Ruach Hiddush is a network of Rabbis and Cantors working to fully realize the promise of Israel's Declaration of Independence, which guarantees religious freedom and equality. The fulfillment of this promise is vital for strengthening Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, and for maintaining the solidarity of world Jewry.

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