

**Gender and Leadership Among Reform Rabbis in the United States and Canada**

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Honors Thesis  
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March 13, 2015

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my appreciation to Professor Michael Heaney for his support and guidance in developing this honors thesis and especially thank him for his contribution to the data analysis portion of this project. Additionally, I would like to acknowledge Katie Steinberg for her help in developing the extensive list of e-mail addresses to whom this survey was sent and Lauren Roth for her help in creating the survey used to collect the data. Finally, I would like to thank the Qualtrics support team for their guidance in using the Qualtrics Mailer and survey systems as well as the the IRB for approving this research. And to all the Rabbis that generously gave of their time to complete the survey, I am truly indebted to you.

## **Introduction**

Women and men differ in many ways as the leaders of organizations. These differences stem from innate, bio-chemical distinctions between men and women but are also a result of gender stereotypes and historical circumstances that have excluded women from obtaining leadership roles. Previous analysis of sex differences in leadership styles have shown mixed results for how gender impacts leadership (Engen, 2004, 1). Some leadership styles, including transformational versus transactional leadership, display evidence for gender differences, while others indicate little to no gender differences (Engen, 2004, 3).

After an analysis of 100,000 interviews with male and female executives, John Gray and Barbra Annis found that there are differences in the ways that men and women communicate (Evans, 2014). The authors attribute many of these differences to the unique bio-chemical make up of men and women. Men have higher levels of testosterone, making them more attention seeking and prone to speaking up, whereas women have higher levels of oxytocin, increasing their desire for connectedness (Evans, 2014). While these differences are not shocking, our society's lack of "gender intelligence" and lack of appreciation for these expected and potentially beneficial differences, often hinders the ability of men and women to work together successfully within organizations.

Although there is validity to the differences stemming from bio-chemical make-up, individuals also carry with them implicit stereotypes of men and women (Banaji). These stereotypes, whether consciously or not, impact the associations that individuals make with male and female leaders. A multitude of studies display evidence that individuals associate men and women with different characteristics, and are more likely to associate male characteristics with leadership (Eagly, 2007, 65). While this association is often rooted in a long history of male

dominated leadership roles, it continues to place female leaders in a double bind (Eagly, 2007, 65).

Gender inequality and gender differences within the workplace are in part the result of historical circumstances and gendered expectations. Many researchers argue that “sex differences in leadership style are not due to fundamental differences between men and women but stem from sex differences in status, power, or other factors usually associated with sex” (Engen, 2004, 3). According to Mary Brinton, the Reischauer Institute Professor of Sociology at Harvard University, the issue is not with a lack of female achievements, as women now actually surpass men in educational achievements; rather, the root of the issue is that “when young adults try to balance work and family, [and] women end up carrying nearly all of the caregiving responsibilities” (staff, Harvard Summer School). Despite the increased contribution of men to household work over the past 25 years, women are still expected to contribute more to family demands (staff, Harvard Summer School).

The obstacle posed by women’s societal obligation to child rearing and housework, is one of the many potential obstacles that Alice H. Eagly and Linda L. Carli describe in their article “Women and the Labyrinth of Leadership.” They use the metaphor of a labyrinth in place of the more common metaphor for women in the workplace, the glass ceiling. The glass ceiling presents an absolute barrier to explain why women are unable to advance past a certain level in their careers, “a better metaphor for what confronts women in their professional endeavors is the labyrinth...a complex journey toward a goal worth striving for” (Eagly, 2007, 64).

Although Eagly and Carli’s article focuses on women in the C-Suite<sup>1</sup>, this notion of a labyrinth and differences between men and women in leadership roles persists in all

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<sup>1</sup> Officers who have the title chief (i.e. CEO, CFO, COO)

organizations, including religious institutions. In Engen and Willemsen's meta-analysis of sex differences in leadership styles, they suggest that "sex differences in leadership styles are contingent upon the context in which male and female leaders work" (Engen, 2004, 3). The inclusion of women in the leadership of religious institutions is particularly interesting because religious gender roles have often been prescribed by traditional doctrines. Women have played an active, albeit often marginalized, role within religious institutions throughout history. Today, many denominations within the United States now officially ordain female clergy. Some denominations began to ordain women as early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including the United Church of Christ and the Universalists; however, the ordination of women did not become widespread until after World War II, in conjunction with the rise of the second wave feminist movement and women's entry into the workforce (Masci, 2014). For instance, women have been ordained in the United Methodist Church since its creation in 1968, in Reform Judaism since 1972, and in Conservative Judaism since 1985. Even still, some of the most prominent denominations in the United States will not ordain women as clergy including the Roman Catholic Church, Southern Baptists, the Church of Latter Day Saints, and Orthodox Judaism (Masci, 2014).

Just as within all other organizations, women's entry into religious leadership and their success within these roles is an ongoing process. Because women's entry into clergy positions is fairly recent, there are varying views on how gender impacts their practice. For example, some researchers believe that men and women have two distinct approaches to religious leadership, which is referred to as the maximalist approach (Wessinger, 1996, 14). On the contrary, minimalists believe that "differences between women and men are relatively slight and that those that exist are produced by social arrangements and social concepts of gender" (Wessinger, 1996,

15). As a result of this recent development and these differing perspectives, it is important to study the differences, or lack thereof, between male and female clergy in religious institutions.

This study analyzes the differences between male and female Reform rabbis in the United States and Canada. The first female rabbi, Sally Priesand, was officially ordained in 1972 at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), the Reform movement's seminary. Her ordination was soon followed by women in the Reconstructionist (1976) and Conservative (1985) denominations. Today, there are over 600 Reform female rabbis and several hundred more throughout other denominations. Rabbi Peter Rubenstein wrote, in an essay published 25 years ago, about the future of the Reform rabbinate "that the increasing numbers of women will have a profound influence on the profession, causing male rabbis to reexamine the traditional definition of success and to consider alternative job structures that will allow them more time with family" (Marder, 1996, 287). Other literature written in the early 1990s also suggests that women rabbis bring different values and goals to the rabbinate; particularly, a shared commitment to balance, intimacy, and empowerment (Marder, 1996, 273). Because these articles were written only 18 years after the first woman rabbi was officially ordained in the United States, it is likely that today, with a longer history of women clergy and greater perspective, it may be easier to observe these differences and whether or not women have truly reshaped and transformed the rabbinate.

In this study, I surveyed over 200 Reform rabbis who work as congregational rabbis at Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) congregations in the United States and Canada. I asked them about their motivation to become a rabbi, their current practices, their career aspirations, and their career satisfaction. I controlled for factors such as age, region, previous experience, current position, and family life. The goal was to examine the ways in which gender impacts the practice

of rabbis. Would gender display minimal variation because of a lack of innate differences or because women have reshaped the rabbinate over the past 40 years? Or would there be a great disparity between the ways that women and men lead their congregations?

I will start by outlining a brief history of women in organizations, women as leaders in organizations, and gender differences among leaders. I will then explore these same topics in regards to women in religious leadership positions. Next I will look at women's role in Judaism, focusing in particular on their role as rabbis. Lastly, I will discuss my hypotheses and the results I obtained after a thorough analysis of my survey data.

## **I. Women in Organizations**

### **A. Brief History**

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century women's work shifted from primarily unpaid labor, to paid labor. This trend began during World War II, when women were needed to run the factories while American men were away at war (PBS). Although women were forced out of their wartime jobs upon the men's return home, their disenfranchisement with the rigid gender roles that followed helped to spark the feminist movement of the 1960's and 1970's. This movement led to greater inclusion of women in the workforce and laws that would theoretically enforce gender equality. Betty Friedan's 1963 book, *The Feminine Mystique*, criticized the post-war culture which took the ideal femininity to the extreme, and encouraged women to focus on their domestic roles (Klenke, 2011, 39). In 1920, fewer than 20% of women age 25-64 engaged in any form of paid labor; however, by 1980 almost 60% did (Brown, 1987, 1).

Many societal changes took place in order to allow women to enter into the workforce permanently. The rise of the service sector and the decline of manufacturing allowed women to

compete equally with men, something that jobs requiring physical strength often inhibited (Dunlop, 2009). Additionally, increased access to and creation of technology made cooking and cleaning less time consuming and therefore encouraged women to seek work outside of the home (Dunlop, 2009). One of the most important innovations in women's entry into the workforce was contraceptives. Contraceptives gave women the ability to plan for motherhood and family life, according to their professional aspirations. In turn women could develop skills that could be used in more prestigious and better paying industries (Dunlop, 2009). The most important societal change was the start of the second wave of feminism, ignited by Friedan's book. The main tenants of the feminist movement's ideology was that "women lack power simply because we are not, as women, allowed equal opportunity to compete in the male-dominated economic and political arenas" (Taylor, 2009, 559). They believed that the best strategies were to gain legal and economic equality.

As a result of these changes, today women compose almost half of American workforce (Dunlop, 2009). Women's entry into paid labor markets has significantly impacted both the economic and social development of the United States. Having two-income families increased American consumerism and has improved women's social status in society (Brown, 1987, 1). The past 50 years have also seen an increase in women's access to higher education, a result of Title IX of the Education Amendment to the US Constitution, providing them the same skill sets as their male counterparts.

## **B. Issues for Women in Organizations**

Because of women's fairly recent entry into the professional world, there are still remnants of outdated social norms, including gender discrimination present within organizations.



Although it is illegal to discriminate based on gender, subtle and implicit discriminatory acts still occur. One major issue is the deeply rooted gender stereotypes, which regard certain categories of work as male and others as female (DeLatt, 2007, xii). Even though "occupational segregation of men and women declined somewhat during the 1970's, largely as a result of the entry of more women into the so-called male occupations [including the first female rabbi]. Nevertheless, the traditionally male occupations remain bastions of male employment and the degree of occupational segregation is still very high" (Brown, 1987, 7). The sex segregation index for jobs was at 52 in 2000 but should be at zero if we were a perfectly integrated society (DeLatt, 2007, xi). This gender discrimination is motivated by "widely shared conscious or unconscious mental associations about women, men, and leaders...people associate women and men with different traits and link men with more traits that connote leadership" (Eagly, 2007, 65).

The jobs that men hold are often valued higher by society and compensated better. The stereotypes of what is male-oriented work and female-oriented work are so deeply engrained in society that people may not even realize that they are acting in accordance with these stereotypes in their personal career motivations and the ways in which they view potential candidates. This reality results in more "...women modify[ing] their career objectives and choices because of a combination of socialization, role-conflict, and organizational and professional realities than from true free choice" (DeLatt, 2007, xv).

Women also face discrimination in terms of compensation and advancement. Although women now work in many of the fields formerly dominated by men, they are still paid less money for doing the same work. The Equal Pay Act of 1963, states that men and women should be compensated equally for equal work; however, as of 2005, women earned 81 cents to every

dollar a man earned (Eagly, 2007, 64). Additionally, a study done by the US Government Accountability Office showed that, based on survey data from 1983 to 2000, women earned, on average, 44% less than men (Eagly, 2007, 64-65). Even in culturally feminine professions, “men ascend to supervisory and administrative positions more quickly than women” (Eagly, 2007, 65). No conclusive evidence demonstrates the exact reasons for the gender pay gap and lack of promotional opportunities for women but some speculations are that there are organizational barriers, women are more likely to have career interruptions, and women have a stronger desire to have work-life balance (DeLatt, 2007, xvii).

Regardless of whether women have a strong desire to balance their professional and personal lives, women are still seen as the primary caregivers and housekeepers. Despite the increased contribution of men to household work over the past 25 years, women are still expected to contribute more to family demands (Brinton). Although men now contribute more to household work, this “gain has been offset by escalating pressures for intensive parenting” and increased demands at many high-level professions (Eagly, 2007, 68). As a result of the high familial demands placed on women, “they have fewer years of job experience and fewer hours of employment per year”, which naturally hinders their career trajectory and promotional opportunities (Eagly, 2007, 68). This stereotype is also reflected in men and women’s wages, as “marriage and parenthood are associated with higher wages for men but not for women” (Eagly, 2007, 65).

Many people refer to these barriers to women’s success as the glass ceiling, an invisible barrier that makes it difficult for a woman to advance higher within an organization simply because of her gender. Evidence of this ceiling comes from the fact that “even though women hold 44 percent of the executive managerial jobs, they only account for 5 percent of the top

executive positions” (Merchant, 2012, 15). Eagly and Carli provide an alternative metaphor to the glass ceiling, the labyrinth. Goals in a labyrinth are attainable; therefore, this new way of looking at women in a professional context acknowledges the obstacles women face without claiming that ultimately there is an invisible barrier that will prevent them from reaching a certain level (Eagly, 2007, 64). Instead this metaphor shows that the lack of female officials in the highest rank is “the sum of discrimination that has operated at all ranks, not evidence of a particular obstacle to advancement as women approach the top” (Eagly, 2007, 64).

### **C. Gender Differences in Organizations**

An ever-present debate persists over whether or not women and men have different leadership styles and whether one of these styles is preferable to the other. In John Gray and Barbra Annis’ book *Work with Me*, they analyzed 100,000 interviews with male and female executives and found that there are indeed differences in the ways that men and women communicate, which the authors attribute to biochemical and hormonal differences (Evans, 2014). Men have higher levels of testosterone, making them more prone to speak up quickly within a meeting and yearn for personal acknowledgement and attention. On the other hand, women have higher levels of oxytocin, also referred to as the “we hormone,” which creates a desire for connectedness (Evans, 2014). As a result, women ask more questions than men; men often prefer to be acknowledged individually while women want to be seen as part of a team; and men also tend to retreat into themselves when attempting to solve a problem whereas women seek companionship (Evans, 2014).

On the contrary many social scientists argue that women and men lead similarly and that differences between their leadership styles are rooted in contextual factors not fundamental

differences (Engen, 2004, 4; Grant, 1998; Powell, 1990, 74). Many researchers believe that “behavioural differences have been largely overstated” (Hanson, 2011, 430). In Engen and Willemsen’s meta-analysis of empirical research surrounding sex differences in leadership, they found slight differences for the stereotypically feminine style of democratic (in contrast to autocratic) and transformational leadership (in contrast to transactional). Women tended to exhibit more of the qualities associated with democratic and transformational leadership (Engen, 2004, 8). Democratic leaders, which the study shows are slightly more often female, “behave democratically and invite subordinates to participate in decision-making,” while men tend to display more autocratic qualities, including not allowing subordinates to contribute to decision-making processes (Engen, 2004, 4; Eagly and Johnson, 1990, 249). Female leaders were slightly more transformational, often seen as role models and mentors because they gain followers’ trust and confidence and empower others to be successful within their organization, while male leaders took more corrective and disciplinary actions, characteristics associated with transactional leadership (Eagly, 2007, 67). Most transactional leaders “establish give-and-take relationships that appeal to subordinates’ self-interest” and manage in a conventional way, overseeing subordinates (Eagly, 2007, 67). The researchers found no evidence that there were differences based on sex in relation to interpersonal leadership or for the stereotypically masculine styles: task-oriented and transactional leadership (Engen, 2004, 8; Eagly and Johnson, 1990; Hanson, 2011).

The organizational context impacts the level of sex differences apparent in these results. One factor they considered was status within an organization; however, there was no evidence that a leader’s standings within a hierarchy impacted the overall comparisons (Engen, 2004, 11). However, they found statistical significance for cases when leaders are in “out-of-role”

professions (Engen, 2004, 15). When men and women are in jobs that are considered gender incongruent with them, they compensate by showing leadership behavior that is stereotypically congruent with their own gender (Engen, 2004, 15; Eagly and Johnson, 1990, 248). Hanson found that there were no significant differences in leadership behavior between women and men in organizations where more women work as managers than men and found few significant leadership differences in organizations where more men are managers (Hanson, 2011, 436).

Women are frequently “associated with communal qualities, which convey a concern for the compassionate treatment of others...in contrast, men are associated with agentic qualities, which convey assertion and control” (Eagly, 2007, 66; Hanson, 2011, 430). A multitude of studies have shown that many people associate agentic qualities with leadership, which places women in a double bind. If they are too agentic, they are seen as not being communal or “feminine” *enough*, but if they are too communal, they do not appear to have the “right” leadership traits for a high-ranking position (Eagly, 2007, 65; Hanson, 2011, 430). On the other hand, men are not victims of a reverse double bind; instead, research shows that “men can communicate in a warm or dominant manner, with no penalty either way” (Eagly, 2007, 66). In order to successfully navigate through this double bind, women “seek ways to project authority without relying on the autocratic behaviors that people find so jarring in women” (Eagly, 2007, 68). Therefore, although there seems to only be slight disparities between male and female leaders, there is reason to believe that a distinct female style of leadership does exist, even if it is merely the result of long held stereotypes and misperceptions.

## **II. Women as Leaders in Religious Organizations in the United States**

### **A. Brief History**

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a time of religious fervor in the United States. The increase in

industrialization, urbanization, immigration, and equal access to education, inspired many women to take on more vocal leadership roles within their religious organizations or to start movements of their own (Wessinger, 1996, 3). They began to preach, provide social services, and some were even ordained as official leaders. Although many women began to take on unofficial religious roles, it was not until 1853, when Antoinette Brown (Blackwell) was ordained by the Congregationalist Church, that the first woman was officially ordained (Wessinger, 1996, 351). Inspired by women's ordination, Catherine Booth published a pamphlet entitled *Female Ministry: Woman's Right to Preach the Gospel* and Phoebe Palmer's *Promise of the Father* (Wessinger, 1996, 351). These women argued for women's right to preach on the grounds that women were not morally or naturally inferior and that scripture actually encouraged them to study and share its teachings (Booth).

Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, feminism influenced religious life in America and encouraged a rethinking of history, polity, and theology by "incorporating the idea that power discrepancies between men and women have distorted human relationships and institutions" (Braude, 2006, 11). Although some religious denominations have rejected feminism because they feel it goes against scripture, the feminist movements have nonetheless impacted them. As early as 1848, when Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, two leaders of the suffragist movement, called for the first women's rights convention they included religious rights for women and the right to ordination in their Declaration of Sentiments (Braude, 2006, 13). Stanton believed that the fight for equality could never be won as long as the men they were fighting against believed in a theology that women were the creators of sin and were cursed by God (Braude, 2006, 14).

When the second wave of feminism emerged in the 1960s, religious women immediately

identified with its goals and used the rise of feminism to reexamine women's role in religion. Because religion has been studied for so long from an androcentric perspective, women were only discussed as objects (Gross, 2006, 4). Because of a long history of male-dominated religious study, the oral and written histories of many religions are based on what men have deemed important, leaving out both influential and average women and sacrificing an accurate portrayal of what life was like for women throughout the history of religion (Gross, 2006, 6). The second wave of feminism helped women find their place as subjects in the religious sphere.

Even though many of the major religious movements, including Judaism, encouraged traditional gender roles they also had within them a tradition of social justice that inspired involvement in the feminist movement (Braude, 2006, 14). Religious feminists had long since established women's networks, which allowed them to quickly bring the concepts of women's liberation to average American women. The interconnectivity between feminism and religion strongly impacted women's role in religious organization, giving many women greater leadership opportunities both officially, as ordained clergy, and unofficially, as active lay leaders.

Today, many major religious denominations in the United States allow women to serve as clergy. However, based on the National Congregation survey, as of 2012, only 11% of American congregations were led by women, a figure that has remained constant since 1998 (Masci, 2014). Many of the largest denominations, including The Church of Latter Day Saints and The Roman Catholic Church, still do not ordain or allow women to lead congregations. It is clear that "women's full inclusion in religious leadership is a process and not a one-time event" (Wessinger, 1996, 31).

## **B. Theories on Gender Differences in Religious Leadership**

There are both maximalist and minimalist theories as to how sex and gender differences impact religious leadership and on how female religious leaders behave in their roles. The maximalist view states that men and women have distinct religious leadership styles. The masculine style of ministry involves “the exercise of power over people, a concern for status and personal authority, excessive rationalism, approaching ethical dilemmas in a legalistic manner, and creating a protective distance between the minister and the congregation” (Wessinger, 1996, 14). The feminine style involves “empowerment of the laity, downplaying clerical authority in favor of egalitarianism, a warm and approachable personal style, social activism, reliance on intuition, and the resolution of ethical dilemmas with concern for the well-being of all persons involved” (Wessinger, 1996, 14-15). In contrast, “minimalists assert that differences between women and men are relatively slight and that those that exist are produced by social arrangements and social concepts of gender” (Wessinger, 1996, 15). These two distinct views represent the paradox that arises when thinking about gender described by Hare-Mustin and Marecek: “every representation conceals at the same time as it reveals...the issue of gender differences has been a divisive one for feminist scholars. Some believe that differences affirm women’s value and special nature; others are concerned that focusing on differences reinforces the status quo” (Lehman, 1993, 12).

Cultural feminists support the maximalist argument that there are indeed differences between how men and women approach their ministry work (Lehman, 1993, 16). Martha Ice summarized the differences between masculine and feminine clergy leadership, acknowledging that no clergy person will possess all of these traits (Lehman, 1993, 16). I have created a condensed version of her 1987 chart in Table 1 (see Table 1).



**Table 1.** Gender Differences in the Ministry

	<b>Masculine</b>	<b>Feminine</b>
<i>Interpersonal Style</i>	Impersonal Agency Authoritarian Closed	Personal, intimate Communion Egalitarian Open
<i>Theology</i>	Power over people God atop a hierarchy	Power within people God a partner
<i>Career Goals</i>	Extrinsic success Social status Goal attainment	Intrinsic rewards Social inclusion Nurturance
<i>Thought Forms</i>	Rationality Analytical thinking Rigidity	Intuition Integrative thinking Flexibility
<i>Power &amp; Authority</i>	Seek power Hierarchy Chain of command Formal authority	Eschew power Egalitarianism Free discussion Charismatic authority
<i>Ethics</i>	Legalistic Rigid Personal morality Rules of living	Existential Flexible Social ethics Responsible freedom

*Adapted from Martha Ice (1987), found in Edward C. Lehman, Gender and Work: The Case of the Clergy (1993)*

In Edward C. Lehman, Jr.'s sociological analysis of over 500 male and female clergy in four different mainline Protestant denominations, he found evidence to support the minimalist view. He found that there are "very few conditions under which sex differences predict variations in [the minister]...wanting positions of formal authority, interpersonal style, approach to preaching, and criteria of clergy status" (Wessinger, 1996, 16). Lehman found that sex differences predicted variation in these four aspects of ministry leadership: more men tended to use social power when working with their congregations; more women than men sought to

empower their congregations to define their own religious objections; more men used rational and formal decision-making process; more men dealt with ethical problems in a legalistic way (Lehman, 1993, 79). He also noticed that there is “a complex web of interrelated forces shaping a minister’s approach to pastoral work” (Wessinger, 1996, 15) including the position they held, when they were ordained, and their level of education. He saw the most evidence of sex-typing among senior pastors because they tend to feel secure in their position (Wessinger, 1996, 15). Similar studies done on a specific denomination’s clergy have reflected comparable results. In a study on the personality characteristics of Anglican Stipendiary Parochial Clergy, Robbins, et. al used Eysenck’s personality questionnaire to explore difference between male and female clergy members. They found that contrary to the general population, male and female clergy members showed little to no significant differences on the four scales for which the study measured (extraversion, neuroticism, lying, psychoticism) (Robbins, 1996, 202-203). Likewise, a study on gender differences in the professional orientations of Protestant clergy showed that male and female clergy hold similar career and professional work values, just as with the general population (McDuff, 2002, 479).

### **C. Issues for Women in Religious Leadership**

Similar to women in other professions, women who serve as religious leaders are also faced with organizational issues and barriers to their success. One of the major issues is the structure of religious institutions, which is often a result of the way in which religious leaders derive their authority. Religious authority can be derived from charisma, scripture, God, education or, the type that most often excludes women, authority of office (Wessinger, 1996, 9). The Roman Catholic Church is an example of authority of office derived from hierarchy, as

ordination is limited to a subset of men but is required to be part of the hierarchy that determines the policies and practices of the entire church. On the other hand, Protestant and Jewish denominations in the United States operate more democratically, by giving individual congregations or smaller representative bodies the authority to make decisions, such as those regarding women's leadership (Wessinger, 1996, 9).

Just like women in an organizational context who face the glass ceiling or "labyrinth of leadership," female religious leaders come into contact with the "Stained Glass Ceiling," a term coined by Susie C. Stanley to describe the resistance to women in religious leadership roles (Wessinger, 1996, 12). Research has shown that "whenever ordained leadership is involved, clergywomen are found to be paid less than their male counterparts, and [that] they more often serve in entry-level positions, either as assistants or associates, or as solo pastors or rabbis of congregations with limited funds" (Wessinger, 1996, 12). In a study on career attainment for clergywomen, Paul Sullins found that in denominations that allow women's ordination, "the more responsible, prestigious, and superordinate church positions...fall disproportionately to men" (Sullins, 2000, 244). Although the organizational hierarchy has formally permitted women to enter the ministry, the resistance comes from embedded cultural values within local congregations not the institutions (Sullins, 2000, 261). Female religious leaders are more likely to be marginalized into alternative career tracks to keep them from the higher-ranking positions (Wessinger, 1996, 17).

Women clergy, like most women in organizations, struggle to balance their careers with their families. Because of the all-consuming nature of working in the ministry, women find it extremely difficult to balance their work with raising children and other family demands. In 1922, Rabbi Jacob Lauterbach described serving as a clergy member as a life-time commitment,

not just a career, when he said: “If there is any calling which requires a whole-hearted devotion to the exclusion of all other things and the determination to make it one’s whole life work, it is the rabbinate” (Marder, 1996, 273).

### **III. Women in Judaism**

#### **A. Gender and Jewish Law**

Jewish law, *Halakhah*, is central to Jewish tradition and guides all aspects of traditional Jewish life. It is within Halakhah that we see “conspicuous gender distinctions” that are contrary to the roles and relationships between women and men in the modern world (Joseph, 1998, 576). As Judith Romney Wegner wrote: “[T]he sages chose to perceive woman sometimes as *person* and sometimes as *chattel*” (Joseph, 1998, 577). Many interpretations of Halakhah are seen as androcentric and, in more traditional settings, women often have little access to studying and interpreting these laws from a different perspective. Today, Orthodox women are beginning to study and interpret Jewish law for themselves. In doing so, they are “challenging long-held notions of women’s credibility” and the traditional community, encouraging them to equalize the gender discrimination in Jewish law (Elwell, 1996, 336).

Liberal Jews, including Reform Jews, consider the law to be part of a vast textual history; however, they reject many of the rules and regulations that do not fit into or go against their modern beliefs and practices. Reform Judaism emphasizes the concept of “choice through knowledge,” meaning that one is expected to be familiar with Halakhah, yet is only required to perform those rituals and commandments that enrich his or her connection to Judaism and Jewish tradition. As stated in the Pittsburgh Platform adopted in 1999, a statement of principles for Reform Judaism, “some of these (*mitzvot*), sacred obligations, have long been observed by

Reform Jews; others, both ancient and modern, demand renewed attention as the result of the unique context of our own times” (CCAR, 2004).

## **B. History of Women in Judaism**

Although Halakhah prohibited Jewish women from becoming Rabbis until 1972, women have played an active role in leading the Jewish people since ancient times. Miriam, Moses’ sister, was the first woman to be referred to as a prophetess and was thought of as the leader of the Israelites (Reiss, 2010, 184). While there are many other strong female characters mentioned in the Bible, Miriam is the first woman in the Bible to appear “not in the role of someone’s wife or mother but as an active figure in the affairs of the emerging nation of Israel” (Reiss, 2010, 189). Toveh Cohen suggests that the differences in the way Miriam and her brother Moses address the people of Israel, indicate differences in their leadership styles (Reiss, 2010, 185). Moses was an elitist leader who was closer to God than to the people; whereas Miriam was extremely close to the people and spoke to them in way they could understand (Reiss, 2010, 185). Although she does not explicitly relate these differences to gender, “Cohen seems to argue that Miriam was speaking from a form of feminine leadership; participatory, experiential, internal, non-elitist and oral” (Reiss, 2010, 185).

Other Jewish women leaders followed Miriam’s example. Devorah, who was the only woman to serve as a judge and the only judge to be a prophet, was said to have been chosen to lead the people of Israel because of her ability to empower and her ability to motivate the Israelites to take responsibility for their own Judaism (Kohn, 2002, torah.org). Beruriah, one of the few women whose biblical commentaries are written in the Talmud<sup>2</sup>, was known for her

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<sup>2</sup> The Talmud is a collection of Jewish laws, traditions, and commentaries written by the rabbis during the first through seventh centuries.

intellect and “womanly tenderness” (staff, 1906, Jewishencyclopedia.com). While both men and women have played a role in Jewish history, their roles have been different as a result of the social construction of gender which was relevant at that time.

While there have been many official and unofficial female leaders throughout Jewish history, it was the rise of Reform Judaism that allowed for a reassessment of women’s place in religious life. Reform Judaism began in Germany in the early 1800’s in “an attempt to adapt Jewish worship to the perceived demands for rational religious practice brought about by the Enlightenment” (Goldman, 2006, 533). When Reform Judaism arrived in America with the immigration of German Jews, it developed a distinct and more radical approach to Judaism (Goldman, 2006, 533). Congregations strived “to develop a style and a ritual that would be in tune with conditions in the United States, reflecting the position of Jews not as outsiders but as full members of society, even at the cost of breaking with traditional views and practices” (Scheindlin, 1998, 189). By the 1880’s, Reform Judaism was the dominant form of Judaism in America, so much so that it “was synonymous with American Judaism” (Scheindlin, 1998, 190).

The large Reform population in America, allowed Rabbi Isaac Meyer Wise to found the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC), now known as the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), in 1873 to serve as an umbrella organization for Reform Judaism (Scheindlin, 1998, 190). He also founded Hebrew Union College, a theological seminary, in 1875. These organizations helped to unify Reform Jews and led to a declaration of values that were defined in the 1885 Pittsburgh Platform, rejecting “virtually all traditional rituals and any national aspirations on the part of Jews and sought to redefine Judaism as a force of social justice” (Scheindlin, 1998, 190). This statement of principles was reevaluated in 1937 as “The Columbus Platform,” which reincorporated many of the previously rejected, more traditional practices and

shifted the Reform stance on Zionism<sup>3</sup> by expressing a need for the State of Israel (The Jewish Virtual Library).

Unique to American Reform Judaism, were the “practical innovations adopted by the Reform movement [that] actively redefined the nature of women’s participation in public worship” (Goldman, 2006, 533), including the abolition of separate seating for women and the introduction of the confirmation service<sup>4</sup> (Goldman, 2006, 533). Throughout the formation and growth of Reform Judaism in America, women played an active role in synagogue life. They “offered services in whatever ways congregations would allow them to participate, often in areas such as schools and temple decoration” (Goldman, 2009). In 1913, the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods (NFTS) was created and prompted the formation of local synagogue sisterhood chapters who could devote their energies to enhancing and sustaining congregational life (Goldman, 2009). Even within congregational life, however, “women were often explicitly excluded from leadership roles” (Goldman, 2009). It was not until 1920, when American women were granted the right to vote, that most congregations offered official membership to women (Goldman, 2009).

Shortly after the suffragists achieved the right to vote, the question of whether a woman could be ordained as a rabbi was brought into Reform Judaism. When it became apparent that a female student, Martha Neumark, might seek ordination, the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR)<sup>5</sup> and HUC-JIR faculty and board members began to debate this question (Goldman, 2009). Both the faculty and the CCAR voted in favor of female ordination, as one

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<sup>3</sup> Zionism is the Jewish nationalist movement, established in the late 1800’s in Europe to create a Jewish state recognized by the community of nations (Scheidlin, 1998, 220).

<sup>4</sup> A confirmation service signifies and celebrates the Jewish identity and education of boys and girls (Goldman, 2006, 533), in contrast to the Bar Mitzvah, which at this time was a right of passage into the Jewish community reserved exclusively for boys.

<sup>5</sup> CCAR is a network of Reform rabbis. It is not exclusive to congregational rabbis.

rabbi, Ephraim Frisch, stated: “I have been wondering whether we are not denying ourselves a new source of strength, a new source of inspiration, by our reluctance to admit women to the rabbinate. I recognize the handicaps, but I believe that the women who surmount the obstacles will be greater spirits than the men who are in the rabbinate today” (Marder, 1996, 271).

However, “although it was determined that there was no reason not to ordain qualified women as rabbis, the board of the Hebrew Union College decided that the time was not yet right” (Wessinger, 1996, 4).

The question of female ordination was also being discussed in Europe. In 1935, Regina Jonas, after attempting to receive ordination from a more Conservative seminary, was ordained by the more Liberal Rabbi Dienemann (Sarah, 1994, 4). She served as a rabbi in Berlin, Germany and later in the Terezin ghetto before her death at Auschwitz in 1944. Perhaps had the German Jewish community not been essentially destroyed by external events, there would have been other women rabbis sooner, but because of the Holocaust her memory was essentially erased until the 1990’s when the Berlin Wall fell and records of her existence were discovered (Sarah, 1994, 5).

Other women in the US did serve as rabbis despite being unable to receive official ordination. In the years following Neumark’s failed ordination, Paula Ackerman and Tehilla Lichtenstein succeeded their rabbi-husbands in the pulpit after their husbands passed away (Alpert, 1998, xiv). However, it was not until 1972, in the wake of second wave feminism, that the first female rabbi was ordained. Before his death in 1971, Nelson Glueck, who served as the president of HUC beginning in 1947, claimed “that he would ordain a female candidate when the opportunity arose” (Goldman, 2009) and “as Sally Priesand advanced through the course of study at the HUC in Cincinnati, the question was no longer one of abstract commitments but of



practical realities” (Goldman, 2009). In 1972, Glueck’s successor, Alfred Gottschalk, had the honor of ordaining the first official female American rabbi. This action was soon followed by the Reconstructionist movement in 1974 and by the Conservative movement in 1985. The climate for female rabbis changed when Amy Eilberg was ordained as a Conservative rabbi because for more traditionally-leaning Jews, this legitimated the existence of women in the rabbinate (Alpert, 1998, xiii).

Since then more than 829 women have been ordained across the denominations (Falk, 2007). As of 1994, women comprised half of every class at the three major institutions that ordain non-Orthodox rabbis (Alpert, 1998, xiv). In 2005, “at least fifteen women had been appointed to senior rabbinic positions in Reform congregations with a membership of five hundred or more households” (Goldman, 2009). In 2012, “Nearly 600 of the CCAR’s 2,000 members are women” (staff, Jewish Week). Even though many people take the existence of female rabbis for granted, this is still a recent development in the long history of the Jewish people (Alpert, 1998, xiv). While these changes are essential to the growth and continuity of American Judaism, women rabbis still face many of the same issues that women in other organizations do.

### **C. Women in the Reform Rabbinate**

In 1991, slightly under 20 years after Priesand was ordained, a qualitative study of 65 Reform rabbis, 50 women and 15 men, indicated that women were bringing a new perspective to the rabbinate and that many women rabbis saw “themselves as agents of change, consciously struggling to reshape the role of the rabbi in our society” (Marder, 1996, 273). The three major

values that this study focused on were balance, intimacy, and empowerment, claiming that women rabbis in the Reform movement see these values as fundamental to their leadership.

Women rabbis do not find the concept of “an all-consuming lifetime calling” appealing. Instead, they strive to find a balance between their professional lives and their families. As one female rabbi states, “I want to have a life apart from my work...the idea of having my entire life given over to the temple is not appealing” (Marder, 1996, 274). Male rabbis, on the other hand, take pride in how many hours a week they work as “being overworked appears to be a point of honor” (Marder, 1996, 274). Many female rabbis want to play an active role in their children’s lives in exchange for a more prestigious, or even a full-time, rabbinic career. One rabbi-mother states “they can always find someone to replace me on the job-but my children can never find another mommy” (Marder, 1996, 275). Today, there has been an increase in male participation in parenting; however, as one female rabbi points out, society does not give men the same opportunity to express their desire to parent and have a personal life as it affords women (Marder, 1996, 278). Rabbi Dvora Weisberg, director of the school of rabbinic studies at the Los Angeles campus of HUC, believes that “women’s ascension to senior rabbinical positions has allowed male rabbis to dare speak up in job interviews about their need to find a healthy balance between the pulpit and family life” (Ghert-Zand, 2014). Many rabbis, particularly female, argue that being a workaholic is a disservice to the congregation because it minimizes a rabbi’s effectiveness and strength on the job and inhibits a rabbi’s ability “to be a healthy role model for the congregation” (Marder, 1996, 278).

This qualitative study of Reform rabbis also indicated that women do not have the same desire as men to move to larger congregations. One factor that is cited to explain this variation is women rabbi’s desire to “form intimate relationships” (Marder, 1996, 281). Rabbi Elyse

Goldstein explained “for women, it’s quality of relationships that counts not quantity. I’d rather have quality, substantial relationships with 200 families than fleeting superficial relationships with 1000” (Marder, 1996, 281). The interviews also showed that many women who do aspire to move to larger congregations, still stress their desire to form strong, intimate relationships with their congregants and do not wish to move for the added prestige (Marder, 1996, 282).

The last major finding of this study, was that Reform women rabbis strive to empower their congregants to be Jewish in their own lives (Marder, 1996, 286). As was mentioned previously, women leaders tend to be more transformational in their leadership and empower others to be successful within their organization (Eagly, 2007, 67). Similarly, women rabbis’ “center of focus is on people rather than principles...women’s version of reality is not a hierarchal model where one’s goal is to move up...but rather a network model where the goal is to connect with others, to be together at the center” (Marder, 1996, 285). While not all women agree that women bring a distinct leadership style to the rabbinate, many express a need for making “synagogue life less hierarchical” (Marder, 1996, 285). Some even express interest in a co-rabbinate or sharing a congregation with a colleague because they believe that “both of us would benefit from the interaction and the congregation would benefit from the combination of our strengths” (Marder, 1996, 285).

#### **IV. Plan for Study and Methods**

The goal for this study was to explore the validity of the maximalist beliefs about gender’s impact on rabbis by investigating empirical data. To analyze the impact of gender on the motivations, preferences, and leadership practices of Reform rabbis, I sent out an anonymous survey to every congregation that was listed in the URJ’s directory. These congregations were located across the United States and in Canada. The e-mails were sent to the e-mail listed in the

directory which was often that of an administrator or the senior rabbi. The cover letter asked whoever received the e-mail to forward the survey to their rabbi or rabbis (Appendix A). I did not explicitly say in the cover letter that I was going to code this data for gender differences because we did not want to skew the participants' responses. Instead, I stated that "the purpose of this study is to understand the religious, personal, and career motivations of members of the rabbinate." The survey was originally sent out to 787 congregations. I sent two follow up e-mails requesting survey participation. Ultimately, I received 234 responses from 229 unique congregations.

The survey consisted of 29 multiple choice questions (Appendix B). I began by asking rabbis about their congregation including questions about age, location, and size of congregation. I then proceeded to ask them about their current position and status within their congregation, the time commitment that their role required, and any previous job experience they had. I asked questions about their motivations to become a rabbi, their leadership style, their work-life balance, their career satisfaction, and their feelings about a hierarchy within the rabbinate. I concluded by asking about their personal lives including their age, gender, year of ordination, marital status, and children.

My goal was to obtain enough data to empirically analyze how gender impacts Reform rabbis' motivations within their work, leadership styles, organizational preferences, work-life balance, and career satisfaction. I used regression models to analyze if the results provided any statistical significance for how gender impacted Reform rabbis or if the control variables, age and position, had a greater influence on rabbis' work. I imputed the data to forecast for the missing values in the data.

## V. Theories and Hypotheses

Janet R. Marder's article "Are Women Changing the Rabbinate? A Reform Perspective" indicates that, based on qualitative data, it seems that women rabbis do indeed bring a unique perspective to the rabbinate. According to Marder, women value balance, intimacy, and empowerment more than men. These findings align with Eagly and Carli's research on women in secular organizations which found that women possess more communal oriented qualities while men display more agentic qualities. On the other hand, a study by Edward C. Lehmen indicated that there are "very few conditions under which sex differences predict variations in [the minister]" (Wessinger, 1996, 16). This minimalist view is echoed in studies like that of Engen et. al, which claimed that differences in leadership behavior are not the result of fundamental differences between women and men, but rather social constructs of gender. This study also found little variation between male and female leadership styles except between transformational and transactional leadership.

When Marder's study was published 20 years ago, it was still unclear how women's entry into the rabbinate had impacted and would ultimately impact the leadership of Reform Judaism. The question remained: "Will women reshape the rabbinate, or will the rabbinate mold them, instead, in the traditional male image?" (Marder, 1996, 287). Rabbi Peter Rubenstein believed that "the increasing numbers of women will have a profound influence on the profession, causing male rabbis to reexamine the traditional definition of success and to consider alternative job structures that will allow them more time with family" (Marder, 1996, 287). This study aims to examine six different theories on how gender impacts a rabbi's approach to his or her work to see if the differences reflect the maximalist or minimalist view. The six dependent variables I examine are: motivating factors; leadership approach; organizational structure preferences;

organizational role; work-life balance; and career satisfaction.

## **Motivating Factors**

I divided motivating factors into two categories. The first category is motivations for entering the rabbinate and the second is the extent to which certain factors motivate one's service in the rabbinate.

### *Motivations for Entering the Rabbinate*

*I hypothesize that women and men are motivated by different factors when deciding to join the rabbinate. More specifically, men are motivated by leadership and status whereas women are motivated by their desire to form connections with others.* In my survey I asked: "which of the following best describes why you decided to become a rabbi?" and provided them with five options to which they could select all that applied. The options were: I felt that as a rabbi I could help others; I was passionate about Judaism; I wanted to be a leader in my community; I wanted to be a teacher; and other (see question 6). I expect that more men will choose the option "I wanted to be a leader in my community" because men tend to possess and value agentic behaviors which are often associated with society's perception of leadership (Eagly, 2007, 66). Women, on the other hand, are more focused on empowering and mentoring others and serving as role models (Eagly, 2007, 67). Therefore, I expect them to more readily choose the options "I wanted to be a teacher" and "I felt that as a rabbi I could help others."

I expect that gender, and all other independent variables, will not impact the choice "I was passionate about Judaism." According to Rabbi Lauterbach the rabbinate "is not to be considered merely as a profession by which one earns a livelihood. Nor is it to be entered upon as a temporary occupation. One must choose it for his lifework and be prepared to give it all his

energies and to devote to it all the years of his life” (Marder, 1996, 273). Therefore, it would be almost irrational to choose to become a leader of the Jewish people and to devote one’s life to sustaining the Jewish community if one is not passionate about Judaism.

### *Factors that Motivate Service in the Rabbinate*

*I hypothesize that men and women are motivated by different factors in their daily rabbinic practice. I hypothesize that men give higher value to the options about advancement, autonomy, and pay whereas women place more emphasis on service to others.* I asked the respondents “to what extent is your service in the rabbinate motivated by...service to others; acting in accordance with Jewish tradition; having opportunities for advancement in the rabbinate; having autonomy in the workplace/congregation; being paid fairly/receiving good benefits” (see question 16). I asked them to rate each option on a scale of extremely unimportant to extremely important. I expect that men will rate the advancement and autonomy options as more important because men feel more entitled to senior positions and have far more role models in higher positions leading them to believe that they should and can advance (Patel, 2013, 19-20). Additionally, men strive for independence in an organizational setting (autonomy), whereas women avoid isolation and therefore often are more comfortable working with others (Merchant, 2012, 21). Women’s more communal attributes emphasize selflessness and acting compassionately towards others and therefore I expect they will be more likely to place a higher value on service to others. I also hypothesize that older rabbis place a higher value on acting in accordance with Jewish law and having autonomy in the workplace but that they are less concerned with advancing in their careers. Older individuals tend to be more traditional and less comfortable with change and therefore I hypothesize that they are less comfortable with straying

from tradition. Additionally, older rabbis have usually achieved a higher ranking position and have established their families in a community, therefore, they are less likely to seek advancement and promotional opportunities.

### **Leadership Approach**

I also wanted to examine how the participants perceived their own leadership styles. *I hypothesize that the male leadership style is more centered around officiating and takes a more laissez faire approach and the women's leadership style is more centered around empowerment and counseling.* To analyze this hypothesis, I asked my participants to rate how well each of the following words described their approach to leadership on a scale of “not at all like me” to “exactly like me.” The list of words was as followed: “empower,” “laissez faire,” “teach,” “pastoral counsel,” “officiate,” and “divine decree” (see question 23). I hypothesize that the women will score the words “empower,” “teach,” and “pastoral counsel” as more like them and that men will score the words “laissez faire” and “officiate” this way. Additionally, I expect that older rabbis score “officiate” higher because this has been the traditional model.

I expect these results because many studies indicate that clergywomen, and more specifically female Reform rabbis, value interpersonal relationships and empowerment of the laity more than men. In Marder's article on Reform rabbis, she quotes a female rabbi who speaks of her desire to form a partnership with her congregants, not a boss-client relationship (Marder, 1996, 286). She says “women rabbis want to empower, not officiate. The rabbis we grew up with did everything for their congregants; that was one way of exerting control...my job is to empower you to be Jewish in your own life” (Marder, 1996, 286). This quote not only shows women's desire for an empowering leadership approach but also indicates that the



younger generation of rabbis are beginning to think about new ways to Jewishly empower their congregants, instead of officiating or doing everything for them.

Similarly, I infer that women are more likely to place a higher value on teaching in their leadership style. Lehmen found in his study of Protestant clergy that women, motivated by “their own frustrating experience of powerlessness,” strive to empower their members to define their own religious connections (Lehmen, 1993, 58). They feel that the “relationship of the church to the lay member should be that of ‘teacher’ and ‘facilitator’ rather than ‘parent’ and ‘keeper’” (Lehmen, 1993, 58). I also expect that men would be more prone to a *lassiez faire* leadership style, a sort of non-leadership that does not concern itself with the attributes of transactional or transformational leadership despite rank authority (Eagly, 2007, 67). Eagly and Carli’s meta-analysis of male and female managers found that men were more likely than women to be *lassiez faire* (Eagly, 2007, 67).

### **Organizational Structure Preferences**

I analyzed the respondents’ organizational structure preferences specifically in regards to hierarchy and co-rabbinate. *I hypothesize that men are more in favor of a hierarchy than women and that women rabbis are more comfortable with a co-rabbinate situation. I also hypothesize that senior rabbis place a higher value on hierarchy and feel less comfortable with a co-rabbinate situation than someone who is not a senior rabbi.*

To examine these hypotheses, I asked the rabbis “how important do you think a hierarchy is within the leadership structure of a congregation” with the options ranging from “not at all important” to “extremely important” (see question 22). I hypothesize that women rabbis place less value on the importance of hierarchy within the congregation than men do, and that senior

rabbis place a greater value on its importance. I expect these outcomes after reading the findings from Marder's interviews. A female rabbi's goal is to connect with others in a network model as opposed to rising to the top of a hierarchical model (Marder, 1996, 284). Women clergy also tend to downplay their authority role in favor of a more egalitarian approach (Wessinger, 1996, 14). Lehmen noted that men "enjoy wielding power over others," while women "seek only sufficient power to plan and control their own lives" (Lehmen, 1993, 55). His empirical data also indicated that "men tend to be involved with the use of power slightly more than the women are" (Lehmen, 1993, 57). As Deborah Tannen found, "men seek control, prefer inequality and asymmetry, and value differences between individuals, while women seek understanding, prefer equality and symmetry and value similarities as they see them as ways to connect with other individuals" (Merchant, 21, 2012).

I also asked the respondents "how comfortable would you feel with a co-rabbinate situation" with options ranging from "not at all comfortable" to "extremely comfortable" (see question 24). I hypothesize that women feel more comfortable with the concept of a co-rabbinate than men and that rabbis who did not serve as senior rabbis also feel more comfortable than those who are senior rabbis. As Rabbi Judy Shanks described in her interview "I'd love to share a congregation of 300-600 families with a colleague. Both of us would benefit from the interaction and the congregation would benefit from the strengths" (Marder, 1996, 285). Some of her male and female colleagues are skeptical of the feasibility of a co-rabbinate because "there is too much ego involved" and ultimately there has to be one person who's in charge" (Marder, 1996, 286). Despite skepticism, I expect that women feel more comfortable with this situation because they emphasize transformational leadership, focused on empowerment and mentorship, more so than transactional leadership, which involves a more authoritative, overseeing of

subordinates (Eagly, 2007, 67).

### **Role in Organization**

I also expect to see gender differences in male and female rabbis' organizational roles, including their role in the hierarchy of the congregation and their role in decision-making. *I hypothesize that male rabbis perceive their own role in decision making as greater than women rabbis perceive theirs to be. I also hypothesize that senior rabbis perceive their role in decision-making as greater than rabbis who serve in other congregational roles. I also hypothesize that more men are senior rabbis than women.*

I asked my participants “which of the following best describes your role in decision making within your congregation” and listed the following options: I usually participate in decisions made within the congregation such as hiring new staff, fundraisers, new congregational policies; my opinion is often asked for regarding major decisions but ultimately the board decides; I usually do not participate in decision-making processes that do not directly pertain to my work (see question 17). I expect that male rabbis are more likely to choose the first option than female rabbis. The reasoning behind this hypothesis is that men tend to be more confident than women, especially regarding financial decisions (Patel, 2013, 14). Because the synagogue is a nonprofit organization that is constantly trying to fundraise and balance a budget, financial decisions are imperative. Additionally, “one interesting study found that women do indeed apologize more but only because women judge themselves more harshly” (Patel, 2013, 14). Women’s harsher self-judgment may make them less likely to jump right into a conversation regarding an important congregational decision. Women are also more likely to be aware of others’ feelings and may take others’ emotions into consideration when making a decision; whereas men tend to react to immediate decisions with action (Patel, 2013, 15). These

tendencies may cause women to feel less included in the decision-making processes of a congregation. I also expect that senior rabbis are more likely to feel involved in decision-making processes because individuals with higher positions and subsequently more authority tend to have a greater say in the organization.

I also asked the participants what position they hold at their current congregation. I listed the options senior rabbi, associate rabbi, rabbi-educator, rabbi-cantor, rabbi emeritus, or other (see question 8). I expect that more of the men who participated in my survey serve as senior rabbis. I was unable to locate specific statistics for the gender breakdown among male and female senior rabbis in the Reform movement. I did, however, learn that women now comprise half of every rabbinic class at HUC (Alpert, 1998, xiv) and that nearly a third of the CCAR's members are women (staff, Jewish Week). Rabbi Julie Schonfeld, the executive vice president of the Conservative movement's Rabbinical Assembly, said that "in general, we are seeing a steady increase in the normalization of women serving as lead [senior] rabbis of congregations of substantial size and influence" (Ghert-Zand, 2014). However, without knowing specific numbers, I still presume that women aspiring to the most senior roles in congregations, just as in secular organizations, face a labyrinth of obstacles that make it difficult to attain these roles. In the labyrinth, although the route is full of obstacles, the ultimate goal, in this case attaining top leadership, is viable (Eagly, 2007, 64). An alternative metaphor to describe why I expect to see a higher percentage of men serving as senior rabbis, is because of the aforementioned "stained-glass ceiling," which indicates that "the initial prestige of women priests compares more favorably with men than their ending prestige" (Sullins, 2000, 259). Sullins found in his research on Episcopal clergy that "women, we might conclude, are only slightly less likely to head a congregation, but three times as likely to assist" (Sullins, 2000, 253). In some ways,

women are better leaders than men but “suffer the disadvantage of leadership roles having a masculine image, especially in some settings and at higher levels” (Brooks, 2012).

### **Work-life Balance**

I expect to see differences in the importance male and female rabbis placed on work-life balance. *I hypothesize that women value balance more than men and therefore work fewer hours than men.*

To test this hypothesis I asked two different questions. The first, “approximately how many hours a week do you devote to your work,” providing a drop down menu of options 1 hour to 60+ hours a week (see question 12). I later asked “how important do you perceive having balance between your professional and personal life” and provided the options “extremely unimportant” to “extremely important” (see question 19). I expect that women rate work-life balance closer to the extremely important side of the scale, while men rate it as less important. Therefore, I think that this will also be reflected in the number of hours they work per week, meaning that men work more hours than women.

As was evident in Marder’s interviews, women rabbis do not find the notion of an all-consuming, lifetime calling as appealing as men do. They strive to balance their professional and personal lives, whereas male rabbis often view working more hours as a point of prestige (Marder, 1996, 274). Although there has been an increase in male participation within households and an increase in men expressing a desire for balance, women are still expected to contribute more to familial demands, which may be a result of lingering stereotypes from a time when there were rigid gender roles. As a result, I expect that women value work-life balance more than men and act on this desire in a tangible way by working fewer hours.

## **Career Satisfaction**

In order to analyze my survey respondents' career satisfaction, I looked at how they perceive their promotional opportunities. *I hypothesize that men have a greater confidence about and desire to be promoted. I also expect that age impacts people's promotional desires.* In my survey I asked, "which of the following best describes how you view your potential promotional opportunities." The options were as follows: I have the opportunity for advancement in my current synagogue; I aspire to leave my synagogue so that I can take on a larger role at a different congregation; I am content with my current position. I hypothesize that men are more likely than women to choose the second option and that women are more likely to claim that they were content. Additionally, I hypothesize that senior rabbis and older rabbis are more likely to be content in their current role.

The reason I hypothesize that women are less likely to seek a promotion is because of gender differences that have been studied in regards to negotiating tactics. Women often have lower expectations when entering a negotiation regarding their own career or an organizational decision because of "the standard used to determine how much pay you deserve, where women are more likely to compare themselves to women"(Patel, 2013, 19-20). Women feel as though they are entitled to less which therefore means that women who are comparing themselves to one another end up asking for less money or stature in negotiations regarding promotions (Patel, 2013, 20). I suspect that older rabbis are not as concerned with advancement because it is likely that they have already established themselves as leaders and have established a life for their family in their community.

## VI. Results

### Background Data

In total, I received 234 responses to the survey. These responses came from 229 unique congregations. All statistical analyses were clustered by unique congregation. Approximately one-third of the respondents were female and two thirds were male. The participants ranged in age from 23 years old to 71 years old, with an average age of 49 years old. 62% of the respondents were senior rabbis and 43% of the respondents currently live and work on the East Coast (see table 2).

**Table 2.** Background Information

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
<i>Gender is Female=1</i>	0.329	0.471	0	1
<i>Age in years</i>	49.064	11.795	23	71
<i>Senior Rabbi=1</i>	0.623	0.486	0	1
<i>Region is East=1</i>	0.425	0.495	0	1

### Motivating Factors

#### *Motivations for Entering the Rabbinate*

I began by conducting an analysis of the factors that influence what motivates individuals to become rabbis. I looked at concepts that summarized motivations for why people wish to enter the rabbinate. I conducted a probit regression to estimate the factors that explain motivations for entering the rabbinate.

The results demonstrate that gender is not a statistically significant determinant of

Reform rabbis' motivations for entering the rabbinate, as a respondents' gender did not impact choosing any of the options listed. In addition to gender, none of the other independent variables, age, position, and region, impacted the respondents' choices of the options "I felt that as a rabbi I could help others," "I wanted to be a leader in my community," and "I wanted to be a teacher." Although the data for "I was passionate about Judaism" is not statistically significant by conventional standards, the results are very close to being statistically significant in regards to the effect of female gender ( $p=0.059$ ) and age ( $p=0.060$ ) on choosing this option. Had I collected more data, I may have been able to support the finding that women and younger rabbis are more motivated to enter the rabbinate because they are passionate about Judaism. Overall, these results indicate that both male and female Reform rabbis are motivated by similar factors when choosing to pursue a career in the rabbinate. I found no statistically significant differences between men and women's motivation to become Reform rabbis; therefore, my hypothesis that male and female rabbis are motivated to join the rabbinate by different factors is not supported (see Table 3).

#### *Factors that Motivate Service in the Rabbinate*

To analyze what factors motivated rabbis' service in the rabbinate, I looked at concepts that summarized motivations for why people serve as rabbis. I conducted an ordered probit regression to estimate the factors that explain motivations for working in the rabbinate. I found that there is no gender difference in the way male and female rabbis rated the factors I listed to describe their service in the rabbinate. Male and female Reform rabbis seem to be motivated similarly within their work which indicates that my hypothesis, that men and women are motivated by different factors, is not supported. I did find variance among age and region for



whether or not rabbis' careers are motivated by advancement. My hypothesis that younger people have a stronger desire to advance because they have not yet established their careers is supported by my data. In fact this finding is incredibly statistically significant ( $p=0.00$ ).

**Table 3.** Probit Analysis of Motivations for Entering the Rabbinate

	<b>Help Others</b>	<b>Passionate about Judaism</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Other</b>
<i>Gender is Female=1</i>	0.163 (0.197)	0.418 (0.222)	-0.024 (0.191)	-0.064 (0.193)	0.006 (0.210)
<i>Age in years</i>	-0.014 (0.008)	-0.015 (0.008)	-0.011 (0.007)	-0.010 (0.007)	0.002 (0.008)
<i>Senior Rabbi=1</i>	0.168 (0.190)	0.266 (0.202)	0.053 (0.182)	-0.008 (0.185)	-0.154 (0.198)
<i>Region is East=1</i>	0.343 (0.190)	0.310 (0.193)	0.261 (0.170)	0.186 (0.172)	-0.059 (0.191)
<i>Constant</i>	1.035* (0.433)	1.052* (0.450)	0.262 (0.409)	0.779 (0.412)	-0.747 (0.436)
<i>Mean of Dependent</i>	0.731	0.762	0.436	0.634	0.229
<i>St. Deviation of Dependent</i>	0.444	0.427	0.497	0.483	0.421
<i>Number of Observations</i>	227	227	227	227	227
$X^2_4$	7.35	10.43	4.93	2.99	0.84

Note: \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.010$ , \*  $p \leq 0.05$

I also found statistical significance that being located on the East Coast means rabbis are more motivated by Jewish tradition and advancement. These results show that my hypothesis about gender differences in regards to motivations is not supported, but that my hypothesis about age is

heavily supported by the data (see Table 4).

**Table 4.** Ordered Probit Analysis of Factors that Motivate Service in the Rabbinate

	<b>Service to Others</b>	<b>Jewish Tradition</b>	<b>Advancement</b>	<b>Autonomy</b>	<b>Pay</b>
<i>Gender is Female=1</i>	0.126 (0.169)	0.063 (0.150)	0.221 (0.156)	0.116 (0.155)	-0.017 (0.151)
<i>Age in years</i>	0.009 (0.007)	0.003 (0.006)	-0.033*** (0.007)	0.007 (0.006)	-0.004 (0.007)
<i>Senior Rabbi=1</i>	-0.039 (0.171)	-0.140 (0.146)	-0.062 (0.153)	-0.098 (0.149)	0.138 (0.155)
<i>Region is East=1</i>	0.243 (0.159)	0.399** (0.149)	0.282* (0.141)	0.004 (0.139)	0.042 (0.145)
<i>Cut Point 1</i>	-1.690 (0.401)	-1.923 (0.338)	-2.571 (0.378)	-2.282 (0.493)	-2.222 (0.414)
<i>Cut Point 2</i>	-1.162 (0.372)	-1.465 (0.347)	-1.905 (0.367)	-1.311 (0.341)	-1.721 (0.389)
<i>Cut Point 3</i>	-1.116 (0.370)	-1.421 (0.351)	-1.581 (0.362)	-1.000 (0.349)	-1.423 (0.386)
<i>Cut Point 4</i>	-0.801 (0.383)	-1.269 (0.351)	-0.836 (0.344)	-0.535 (0.346)	-1.095 (0.374)
<i>Cut Point 5</i>	0.516 (0.375)	-0.131 (0.347)	-0.039 (0.315)	0.334 (0.349)	0.188 (0.359)
<i>Cut Point 6</i>		0.940 (0.352)	0.890 (0.320)	1.399 (0.357)	1.416 (0.364)
<i>Number of Observations</i>	220	220	220	219	220
$X^2_4$	4.38	8.13	34.02	1.91	1.24

Note: \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.010$ , \*  $p \leq 0.05$

## **Leadership Approach**

I analyzed the way rabbis describe their own approach to leadership. I looked at words that described different types of leadership and then conducted an ordered probit regression to estimate the leadership approach of rabbis. In my analysis of male and female rabbis' leadership approach, I found very little data to support my hypotheses. I expected that women place a higher value on empowerment in their leadership style than men do. My results are not statistically significant by traditional standards for empowerment ( $p=0.053$ ); however, they are very close to being statistically significant and therefore indicate that there may be a correlation between these two variables. I did find statistical significance when comparing position to empowerment, indicating that senior rabbis value empowering others more than those who are not senior rabbis.

I found that gender impacts a rabbi's choice of a *lassiez faire* leadership style and that men are more likely than women to rate "lassiez faire" as "more like me." I discovered that age has the biggest impact on whether or not someone rated "officiate" as more like their leadership style, with older rabbis rating this approach as "more like me". Lastly, while I did not find conventional statistical significance for the option "divine decree," it is likely that had I gathered more data I would have seen that senior rabbis rated this higher ( $p=0.067$ ). I did not find any statistically significant data for any of the independent variables in regards to the options "teach" or "pastoral counsel." Contrary to my hypothesis, there is very little gender related variation among rabbis' self-described leadership styles. Although my hypothesis that women value empowerment more than men in their approach to leadership is not supported, my hypothesis that men identify as "lassiez faire" more than women is supported by the data I collected (see

table 5).

**Table 5.** Ordered Probit Analysis of Leadership Approach

	<b>Empower</b>	<b>Laissez Faire</b>	<b>Teach</b>	<b>Pastoral Counsel</b>	<b>Officiate</b>	<b>Divine Decree</b>
<i>Gender is Female=1</i>	0.343 (0.177)	-0.537*** (0.167)	0.103 (0.171)	0.034 (0.162)	0.033 (0.149)	-0.057 (0.192)
<i>Age in years</i>	-0.005 (0.007)	-0.006 (0.006)	0.009 (0.007)	0.005 (0.006)	0.024*** (0.006)	-0.004 (0.008)
<i>Senior Rabbi=1</i>	0.472** (0.177)	-0.167 (0.157)	-0.197 (0.172)	-0.019 (0.162)	0.081 (0.140)	-0.343 (0.187)
<i>Region is East=1</i>	-0.061 (0.162)	0.005 (0.151)	-0.056 (0.151)	-0.092 (0.148)	-0.049 (0.143)	-0.067 (0.182)
<i>Cut Point 1</i>	-1.268 (0.396)	-1.361 (0.374)	-2.306 (0.459)	-1.728 (0.354)	-0.939 (0.323)	0.130 (0.427)
<i>Cut Point 2</i>	0.800 (0.386)	-0.233 (0.358)	-1.169 (0.366)	-0.632 0.332	-0.006 (0.315)	1.156 (0.440)
<i>Cut Point 3</i>		0.608 (0.346)	0.569 (0.352)	0.581 (0.333)	0.748 (0.320)	1.573 (0.447)
<i>Cut Point 4</i>		1.484 (0.359)			1.907 (0.332)	2.201 (0.448)
<i>Number of Observations</i>	220	217	220	218	219	217
$\chi^2_4$	10.03	11.39	2.79	0.96	16.88	4.26

Note: \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.010$ , \*  $p \leq 0.05$

### Organizational Structure Preferences

To analyze rabbis' organizational structure preferences in regards to hierarchy and a co-

rabbinate situation, I asked my respondents about the importance of a hierarchy and their comfort level with a co-rabbinate. I conducted an ordered probit regression to estimate their feelings on these two topics. I did not find any statistical significance for how gender or any of the other independent variables impact how important Reform rabbis feel a hierarchy is. However, had I gathered more evidence it is likely that I would have seen that women rabbis view hierarchy as slightly less important than male rabbis do ( $p=0.055$ ). I also did not find any evidence to indicate that women feel more comfortable with a co-rabbinate situation. I did, however, find that senior rabbis feel significantly less comfortable with having a co-rabbi ( $p=0.002$ ). My hypotheses that gender impacts rabbis' perceptions of the importance of a hierarchy and that gender impacts a rabbi's comfort level with a co-rabbinate are not supported. However, my hypothesis that senior rabbis are less comfortable with a co-rabbinate is supported (see table 6).

### **Role in Organization**

I analyzed how rabbis perceived their role in decision-making within the congregation by presenting concepts that summarized varying levels of involvement within decision-making processes. I conducted an ordered probit regression to estimate the level of involvement rabbis perceive. Simultaneously, I analyzed what position a rabbi holds within the congregation by conducting a probit regression. My hypothesis about gender differences in decision-making is supported. I found that women are significantly less likely to feel involved in decision-making processes, meaning that they chose either the option: my opinion is often asked for regarding major decisions but ultimately the board decides, or I usually do not participate in decision-making processes. Men feel significantly more involved in decision-making than women. Senior

rabbis also felt significantly more involved in decision-making at their congregations. I found that, as I expected, men are more likely to be senior rabbis than women. My hypothesis that women feel less involved in decision-making than men is supported, as is my hypothesis that more men serve as senior rabbis (see table 7).

**Table 6.** Ordinal Probit Analysis of Organizational Structure Preferences

	Hierarchy	Co-rabbinat
<i>Gender is Female=1</i>	-0.290 (0.151)	0.106 (0.144)
<i>Age in years</i>	0.003 (0.006)	-0.008 (0.006)
<i>Senior Rabbi is 1</i>	0.100 (0.154)	-0.463** (0.151)
<i>Region=East Coast is 1</i>	0.193 (0.148)	-0.039 (0.154)
<i>Cut Point 1</i>	-1.353 (0.310)	-1.782 (0.346)
<i>Cut Point 2</i>	-0.605 (0.310)	-1.214 (0.339)
<i>Cut Point 3</i>	0.426 (0.315)	-0.416 (0.339)
<i>Cut Point 4</i>	1.750 (0.342)	0.465 (0.341)
<i>Number of Observations</i>	219	219
$X^2_4$	7.73	14.41

Note: \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.010$ , \*  $p \leq 0.05$

**Table 7.** Ordinal Probit and Probit Analysis Role in Organization

	<b>Decision-Making (A)</b>	<b>Position (B)</b>
<i>Gender is Female=1</i>	-0.624*** (0.196)	-0.582** (0.189)
<i>Age in years</i>	-0.001 (0.008)	0.006 (0.008)
<i>Senior Rabbi is 1</i>	1.028*** (0.189)	
<i>Region=East Coast is 1</i>	-0.337 (0.181)	0.116 (0.172)
<i>Constant</i>		0.193 (0.415)
<i>Cut Point 1</i>	-1.516 (0.462)	
<i>Cut Point 2</i>	-0.126 (0.439)	
<i>Number of Observations</i>	212	231
$X^2_4$	51.76	11.95

Note: \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.010$ , \*  $p \leq 0.05$

### **Work-life Balance**

I conducted an analysis of how much rabbis value work-life balance. I used an ordered probit regression to estimate the extent to which rabbis value this balance. I also used a standard regression analysis to analyze how many hours a rabbi claimed to work each week. Contrary to my hypothesis, men and women claim to value work-life balance equally. There is no statistically significant data regarding gender differences in the importance of work-life balance. However, I found that although both parties rated it as equally important, men also claim to work

more hours per week than women do. Additionally, I found that older rabbis rate work-life balance as less important than younger rabbis. My hypothesis that women value work-life balance more than men is not supported; even so, my hypothesis that women work fewer hours than men is supported (see table 7).

### **Career Satisfaction**

I analyzed rabbis' career satisfaction by presenting concepts that reflect different promotional opportunities. I conducted a multinomial probit regression to estimate career satisfaction within the rabbinate. The results demonstrate that gender is not a statistically significant determinant for Reform rabbis' career satisfaction. In comparison to being content with their current role, there are no statistically significant gender differences for a rabbi's desire to advance within his or her congregation or to move to a larger role outside of his or her current congregation. I found that senior rabbis are less likely to seek advancement within their current congregations ( $p=0.038$ ) in comparison to being content, but are just as likely as other rabbis to leave for a larger role. This is probably because they have advanced to the highest possible position at their current congregation. I also found age to be a statistically significant determinant for rabbis' desires for advancement within and outside of their current congregation. Younger rabbis are more likely to seek out both of these opportunities than older rabbis ( $p=0.000$ ). My hypothesis that gender impacts a rabbi's perception of his or her advancement opportunities is not supported; however, age is a statistically significant variable that impacts a rabbi's perception of advancement opportunities (see Table 8).



**Table 7.** Ordered Probit and Regression Analysis of Work-life Balance

	<b>Balance</b>	<b>Hours Worked/Week</b>
<i>Gender is Female=1</i>	0.070 (0.172)	-5.067* (2.303)
<i>Age in years</i>	-0.022*** (0.006)	-0.105 (0.099)
<i>Senior Rabbi is 1</i>	0.043 (0.173)	4.612* (2.279)
<i>Region=East Coast is 1</i>	-0.387* (0.158)	0.985 (1.910)
<i>Constant</i>		51.52*** (5.646)
<i>Cut Point 1</i>	-3.914 (0.528)	
<i>Cut Point 2</i>	-3.199 (0.394)	
<i>Cut Point 3</i>	-3.127 (0.381)	
<i>Cut Point 4</i>	-2.320 (0.368)	
<i>Cut Point 5</i>	-1.225 (0.359)	
<i>Number of Observations</i>	219	220
$X^2_4$	17.31	

Note: \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.010$ , \*  $p \leq 0.05$

**Table 8.** Multinomial Probit Analysis of Advancement<sup>6</sup>

	<b>Advance within Current</b>	<b>Leave for Larger Role</b>
<i>Gender is Female=1</i>	-0.155 (0.446)	0.162 (0.403)
<i>Age in years</i>	-0.076*** (0.021)	-0.069*** (0.020)
<i>Senior Rabbi=1</i>	-0.804 (0.388)	-0.325 (0.415)
<i>Region is East Coast=1</i>	-0.293 (0.424)	-0.378 (0.385)
<i>Constant</i>	2.206* (1.028)	1.773 (0.877)
<i>Number of Observations</i>	182	182
$X^2_4$	28.64	28.64

Note: \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.010$ , \*  $p \leq 0.05$

## Discussion

Overall, I found very few differences between male and female Reform rabbis. Contrary to my hypotheses, I found that men and women are not motivated by different factors to join the rabbinate or in their work as rabbis. One of the reasons I found very little variation among my survey respondents may be because the people who choose to become rabbis are very similar to one another. It is plausible that because they have similar personality traits, they are drawn to the same profession, leading to little variation among their motivations to become a rabbi, and subsequently their motivations within their work.

<sup>6</sup> Base category is content with current position.

I also found evidence that rabbis who work on the East Coast were more likely to seek advancement and to be motivated by Jewish tradition. Research about religion in America has indicated that the West Coast tends to be religiously weaker and has been referred to as an “Unchurched Belt” (Phillip, 1989, 105). While most Jewish immigrants of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century arrived to the East Coast and congregated in immigrant neighborhoods in already vibrant cities, Jews who migrated west played a prominent role in developing the emerging cities and communities of the West and therefore did not place as much emphasis on creating strong Jewish communities (Phillips, 1989, 105). A study conducted in 1989 which compared Midwestern cities with those on the West Coast, found that the West had a higher rate of intermarriage and a lower rate of synagogue affiliation than the Midwest. Although the impact of these results have yet to be studied in society, it is possible that they may be related to the reason why rabbis outside of the East Coast place a lower emphasis on Jewish tradition in their day-to-day work. The larger Jewish population on the East Coast (53% of Jews as of 1989) and stronger Jewish communal infrastructure (Phillips, 1989, 104), may also be the reason why rabbis on the East Coast are more likely to be motivated by advancement. The East Coast provides Reform rabbis with greater opportunities to move to a different congregation without making a distant geographic move.

Based on my research it appears that women and men who serve as rabbis define their leadership styles similarly. Both women and men describe their leadership approach with no variation for “empowerment,” “teaching,” “officiating,” “pastoral counsel,” or “divine decree.” This empirical data contradicts both my own hypotheses and the results of Marder’s qualitative study. My data indicates a minimalist explanation of gender differences among clergy, which may again be because people with similar personality traits choose similar professions and

subsequently behave similarly within these professions. The only gender difference I noted is for the term *lassiez faire*. I found that men were more likely to select this option. According to Eagly and Carli, men tend to take on a more *lassiez faire* approach when managing organizations of any type.

I noticed the greatest discrepancies based on age or generation. Younger rabbis feel less comfortable identifying their leadership style as officiating. It is possible, that although Marder's hypothesis that women valued empowerment and men valued officiating did not hold true, the generational variation still may be a result of this theory. When Marder's article was published over 20 years ago, the impact of women in the rabbinate could not fully be studied and the question remained whether women would reshape the rabbinate or be shaped by it. It is plausible that women's entry into the rabbinate has encouraged a desire for empowerment in place of officiating and therefore has reshaped the rabbinate to create this leadership style, regardless of gender. This is one possible explanation for the difference among younger and older rabbis.

I also did not find, as Marder suggested, that women are less comfortable with hierarchy than men. This may be an indication of one way in which women have conformed to the traditional model of synagogue life and been shaped by previous rabbinic practices. I did, however, notice that senior rabbis are less comfortable with having a co-rabbinate. This could be because having an additional rabbi, while lowering their workload, also encroaches upon their current status and prestige. Most rabbis have had to earn their role as senior rabbi and have worked hard to achieve this title; therefore, they are less willing to let go of this symbol of their hard work.

One area where I noticed a serious discrepancy between male and female rabbis is in their perception of their role in the organization and their position. Women feel less involved in decision-making. This may be because men feel more comfortable speaking up at meetings or because of preconceived gender stereotypes which cause lay leadership to seek out their male rabbi's advice and not their female rabbi's. There is also a correlation between position and decision-making, in that senior rabbis feel more involved in the decision-making process. This seems logical, as people with greater authority tend to play a larger role in any organization's decisions. It is also possible that because more men hold higher-ranking positions within congregations, male rabbis as a whole feel more comfortable being involved in decision-making.

I found that of my respondents more men than women serve as senior rabbis. This could potentially indicate that the "stained glass ceiling" or "labyrinth" still exist for Reform women clergy. It could also be a result of women's choosing to work in less all-consuming positions at congregations or being encouraged to take on alternative career tracks within the rabbinate to keep them out of the highest ranking positions.

One reason that women may not serve as senior rabbis is because of their familial demands. Although, both women and men claim to value work-life balance equally, women work fewer hours than men. This could be simply a perception issue in that men feel it is a point of pride to work more hours and therefore choose a higher number of hours. However, it may also be the result of socially constructed stereotypes that place higher expectations on women's role in the family. Although men have begun to contribute more to family demands and now place a higher value on finding a balance, women still end up doing more of the household work. Not only is this a result of stereotypes but it is also the result of institutional practices that exist

in many organizations throughout the US, such as maternity leave and greater leniency for women to attend to familial needs.

I did not find any statistically significant evidence for gender differences in desire for promotional opportunities. Both women and men have the same extent of desire to move up in their congregations or in other congregations. However, younger rabbis have a stronger desire to and perceive their promotional opportunities within their current congregation as greater than older rabbis. Younger rabbis are just starting out in their careers and therefore are looking for opportunities to advance. On the other hand, older rabbis have most likely already established themselves in their careers, in the Jewish community, and in their local community and therefore are not as concerned with being promoted. Senior rabbis have a lower perception of their opportunity to be promoted within their current congregation because they have achieved the highest position. They are, however, just as likely to want to leave their congregation if it means being promoted to a larger role, because, just as in many other careers, individuals aim to achieve the highest possible level.

### **Future Research**

In the future, it would be interesting to analyze how a rabbi's gender impacts the perceptions of lay leadership and congregants. It would be worthwhile to see if these individuals perceive greater differences from the self-assessed similarities my study analyzed. I hypothesize that congregants view their rabbis differently because of the social constructions of gender that they are accustomed to. It is important to examine the way in which a rabbi's level of education impacts his or her motivations within the rabbinate and perceptions of promotional opportunities, I hypothesize that rabbi's who have obtained a PhD, in addition to a master's and rabbinic

ordination, place a higher emphasis on teaching and have a stronger desire to be promoted. It would also be intriguing to see if a rabbi's sexuality impacted any of my dependent variables. Because of our society's heteronormative standards, I hypothesize that individuals who identify with marginalized sexual identities exhibit different practices and prioritize different values within their rabbinic leadership. I would be curious to analyze differences between male and female rabbis across denominations of Judaism to see if the results of my study remain constant. Additionally, it would be beneficial to look at the salaries of male and female rabbis in the Reform movement to assess the gendered pay gap to assess why discrepancies still exist and how to shrink this wide gap.

## **Conclusion**

The results of this study have implications for women in organizations, clergywomen, Reform Judaism, and Reform rabbis. These results indicate that there are minimal differences between men and women who serve in leadership roles. Men and women who choose the same career enter that career for similar reasons and value similar approaches to leadership. This means that throughout the hiring process the boards of organizations, including the boards of religious institutions, should be focused on each individual person and his or her personality traits and qualifications, as opposed to falling victim to gender stereotyping. This in turn can help shatter the "stained glass ceiling" and allow more women to take on senior level leadership roles at their congregations.

Based on my evidence, it is important for lay leadership and fellow clergy to acknowledge and address some of the obstacles comprising the labyrinth that make it difficult for women to achieve these roles. I saw that women Reform rabbis do not feel as included in

decision-making processes. This may be a result of a woman's tendency to wait until someone asks them for their opinion, as indicated by Gray's research. Consequently, this may result in women being perceived as weaker and less likely to be capable of taking on a more senior role, still yet another obstacle in the labyrinth. Lay leaders should use this knowledge to reconsider how they engage their clergy in decision-making processes and should make a more concerted effort to ask for their female rabbi's opinion if she has not shared it yet.

My data also indicate that the lay leadership should institute practices that allow male rabbis to contribute more to their familial and personal needs. Although both male and female rabbis indicate that they value work-life balance equally, men continue to work more hours. They should be given equal opportunities to nurture their relationships with their families through practices such as parental leave and an overall higher tolerance for professional men who strive to maintain a work-life balance. Rabbis should be role models for their communities and part of that job is reflected in their connection to their families and their own personal development. Congregations should recognize that their rabbis need space to exist outside of their work and give them the chance to enhance their personal lives. It would be beneficial to create a culture where rabbis ask for the opportunity to find a healthy work-life balance and where they empower their congregations so that the members do not rely solely on their rabbis to officiate.

Providing the leaders of organizations with a healthy work-life balance is an issue that men and women in secular organizations face as well. The evidence here that men and women value this balance equally implies that the higher expectations that are placed on women in the household and on men in the workplace (because men are still seen as the primary breadwinners) are rooted in historical and outdated stereotypes. Although there is the belief that many women



choose to work part-time or in alternative career tracks because of a stronger desire for work-life balance, this study indicates that women and men who choose to become congregational rabbis value this balance equally and therefore should be treated as such. These stereotypes in turn create obstacles along the labyrinth of leadership that prevent women from reaching the highest-ranking positions and create the “stained glass ceiling.”

This research shows that, contrary to popular opinion but similar to the results of many social scientists, the differences between men and women within the Reform rabbinate, and potentially within other religious and secular organizations, are minimal. Men and women enter the rabbinate for similar reasons, are motivated by similar factors, approach their leadership similarly, value work-life balance similarly, and view their promotional opportunities similarly. Although there is little variation in the way that male and female Reform rabbis describe themselves, their values, and their approach to their work, discrepancies still exist. These discrepancies are predominantly related to interactions involving outside individuals. I found that men are more likely to be senior rabbis, which is a result of men being more likely to be hired by lay leaders. Men are more likely to feel involved in congregational decision-making processes, which naturally involve other individuals in the congregation. Finally, men work more hours per week than women despite the fact that they claim to value work-life balance equally. This means that they are able to spend less time with their families and spend more time officiating for their congregations, potentially sacrificing the opportunity to empower congregants to take ownership of their Judaism.

Similarly, there seem to be structural inequalities in place within Reform Judaism, and potentially Conservative and Reconstructionist Judaism, that prevent female rabbis from attaining the same positions and being fully included in the leadership of their congregations.

These differences are not the result of gender distinct desires such as women wanting to spend more time with family or being less concerned with promotions. The responses I collected indicate that Reform rabbis' experiences within congregations are impacted by gender stereotypes, even though the rabbis themselves do not differ any more than any other random individuals. In order for female Reform rabbis to shatter the "stained glass ceiling" and overcome the obstacles that create the "labyrinth of leadership" for women, outsiders must intervene. Women rabbis do not act differently within their role, perhaps because they have conformed to the traditional rabbinic model or because the rabbinic model has shifted as a result of women's entry into the rabbinate 40 years ago, and therefore should be treated as such.

This study clearly shows minimal differences between male and female rabbis who serve at congregations in the Reform movement. The question remains: have women reshaped and redefined what the modern rabbi does and values or do women who choose to enter the rabbinate simply have similar traits to men who become rabbis? Regardless, the results of this study provide tangible evidence that male and female rabbis behave similarly in their professional lives which means that they should be able to pursue the same positions and career paths without being hindered by socially constructed barriers to success. While there may be stereotypically masculine and feminine traits, what is most likely the case is that each individual possesses some of each trait and, therefore, exhibit an androgynous leadership.

Despite these similarities, it is clear that there is still work to be done in providing female rabbis with equal opportunities to top leadership positions. It is no longer enough for the Reform movement as an institution to advocate for equal opportunities for female rabbis. The URJ has made its stance clear. It is now the responsibility of each Reform congregation to act on the notion of equal rights for women in the rabbinate and to make the movement's beliefs a reality.

Perhaps the results of this study in regard to motivation, leadership approach, and organizational preference will begin to shatter gender stereotypes about the type of leaders female rabbis are and can be and therefore will encourage individual congregations within the Reform movement to address the structural barriers that perpetuate inequality.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Survey Cover Letter

Hello,

You are receiving this e-mail because you are listed as the primary contact for your congregation's profile on the URJ website. This letter is being sent to every congregation that has a profile set up on the URJ website. This message is intended for the rabbi(s) of your congregation. If you are not one of the rabbi(s), I would greatly appreciate it if you could forward this e-mail to your congregation's current rabbi(s) to help me with my thesis research.

I am writing to invite you to participate in a study that will serve as the basis of my senior honors thesis at The University of Michigan. The purpose of this study is to understand the religious, personal, and career motivations of members of the rabbinate. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete an online survey which consists of approximately 40 multiple choice questions that inquire about your religious attitudes, career, and personal background. The link to this survey is attached in this e-mail. All answers will be treated as anonymous so that no part of your responses will be individually identifiable. You are free to skip any questions or to discontinue participation in the survey at any time if you feel uncomfortable. This survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes.

My name is Shira Moskowitz and I am a senior majoring in Organizational Studies with a minor in Judaic Studies at The University of Michigan. I have been an active and passionate Reform Jew for as long as I can remember. My parents, Rabbis Susie and Steve Moskowitz, graduated from HUC-JIR in 1991 and have worked hard to instill a love for both Jewish religion and culture in my brother and me. I attended Eisner Camp for 13 years, where I served as the Chalutzim (6<sup>th</sup> grade) unit head this past summer, and served as the NFTY NAR Religious and Cultural Vice President during my senior year of high school. I currently serve as the External Relations Coordinator for U of M Hillel's Governing Board.

My experience in the Reform community thus far has inspired me to pursue a career in the Jewish world when I graduate this May but it has also inspired me to write my thesis on our very own Reform rabbis. I am curious to see the different values that Reform rabbis bring to the pulpit and how their individual backgrounds impact their current rabbinic role.

I really appreciate your willingness to participate in my survey and hope that together we can learn more about the values that lead people to join the rabbinate! The first question of the survey will ask for your congregation's unique survey identifier. This number will not be attached to your responses but will prevent me from sending you follow up e-mails once you have completed the survey. Your congregation's survey ID is:

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at [shiraymo@umich.edu](mailto:shiraymo@umich.edu) or 516-574-3147. You may also reach out to my thesis advisor Professor Michael Heaney at [mheaney@umich.edu](mailto:mheaney@umich.edu) with any questions you may have. Additionally, for any inquiries regarding my research you may contact the Health Sciences and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board who approved this research at [irbhsbs@umich.edu](mailto:irbhsbs@umich.edu).

B'Shalom,  
Shira

## **Appendix B-Survey**

### **Rabbis in the US and Canada Survey**

#### **Q1 Approximately how old is your congregation?**

(drop down menu options: 1-200+ years)

#### **Q2 Where is your congregation located?**

US (1)

US outlying areas (2)

Canada (3)

#### **Q2a Answer If Where is your congregation located? US Is Selected**

##### **If you selected US, which area?**

East Coast (1)

Midwest (2)

West Coast (3)

South (4)

#### **Q2b Answer If Where is your congregation located? Canada Is Selected**

##### **If you selected Canada, which area?**

East (1)

Midwest (2)

West (3)

#### **Q3 Which of these terms best describes your congregation's setting?**

Major metropolitan area (1)

Urban area (2)

Suburban area (3)

Suburban area near a large urban area (4)

Rural area (5)

Other (6) \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Q4 Approximately how many families belong to your congregation?**

(drop down menu options: 0-1000+ families)

#### **Q5 Which of these terms best describes your congregation's views on social issues?**

Very Conservative (1)

Conservative (2)

Neutral (3)

Liberal (4)

Very Liberal (5)

**Q6 Which of the following best describes why you decided to become a rabbi? Select all that apply.**

- I felt that as a rabbi I could help others (1)
- I was passionate about Judaism (2)
- I wanted to be a leader in my community (3)
- I wanted to be a teacher (4)
- Other, please specify (5) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q7 Which of the following best describes how religion affects your daily life? Select all that apply.**

- It is the driving force behind all of my actions (1)
- I separate my secular life from my religious life (2)
- I view Judaism as a way to build a community (3)
- I feel connected to God (4)
- I view Judaism as a way of life (5)
- Other, please specify (6) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q8 What position do you hold at your current congregation?**

- Senior Rabbi (1)
- Associate Rabbi (2)
- Rabbi-Educator (3)
- Rabbi-Cantor (4)
- Rabbi Emeritus (5)
- Others, please specify (6) \_\_\_\_\_

**Answer If What position do you hold at your current congregation? Senior Rabbi Is Not Selected**

**Q8b If you answered something other than senior rabbi, how comfortable would you feel serving as the senior rabbi at your present congregation?**

- Very Uncomfortable (1)
- Uncomfortable (2)
- Somewhat Uncomfortable (3)
- Neither Comfortable nor Uncomfortable (4)
- Somewhat Comfortable (5)
- Comfortable (6)
- Very Comfortable (7)

**Q9 Regardless of the position you currently hold, how comfortable would you feel serving as the senior rabbi at a different congregation?**

- Very Uncomfortable (1)
- Uncomfortable (2)
- Somewhat Uncomfortable (3)
- Neither Comfortable nor Uncomfortable (4)
- Somewhat Comfortable (5)
- Comfortable (6)
- Very Comfortable (7)

**Q10 How satisfied are you with serving a congregation of approximately the size of your current one?**

- Very Dissatisfied (1)
- Dissatisfied (2)
- Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)
- Neither Dissatisfied nor Satisfied (4)
- Somewhat Satisfied (5)
- Satisfied (6)
- Very Satisfied (7)

**Q11 What is the time commitment for your current position?**

- Full-time (1)
- Part-time (2)
- Other, please specify (3) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q12 Approximately how many hours a week do you devote to your work?**

(drop down menu options: 1-61+)

**Q13 Have you served in any other rabbinic roles at this same congregation?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

**Answer If Have you served in any other rabbinic roles at this same congregation? Yes Is Selected**

**Q13a If you answered yes, what position did you hold at this same congregation prior to serving in your current role?**

- Senior Rabbi (1)
- Associate Rabbi (2)
- Rabbi-Educator (3)
- Rabbi-Cantor (4)
- Rabbi Emeritus (5)
- Other (6) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q14 Have you served at any other congregations in a rabbinic role before this one?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

**Answer If Have you served at any other congregations in a rabbinic role before this one? Yes Is Selected**

**Q14a If you answered yes, what was the most recent position you held at that congregation?**

- Senior Rabbi (1)
- Associate Rabbi (2)
- Rabbi-Educator (3)
- Rabbi-Cantor (4)
- Rabbi Emeritus (5)
- Other, please specify (6) \_\_\_\_\_

**Answer If Have you served at any other congregations in a rabbinic role before this one? Yes Is Selected**

**Q15 Which of the following best describes your principal reasons for leaving your last congregation? Select all that apply.**

- I was asked to take on a larger or more senior role at another congregation (1)
- I wanted or needed to move geographically (2)
- I was unhappy in my role (3)
- I received a better financial offer (4)
- Other, please specify (5) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q16 To what extent is your service in the rabbinate motivated by:**

	Extremely Unimportant (1)	Very Unimportant (2)	Somewhat Unimportant (3)	Neither Important nor Unimportant (4)	Somewhat Important (5)	Very Important (6)	Extremely Important (7)
Service to others (1)							
Acting in accordance with Jewish tradition (2)							
Having opportunities for advancement in the rabbinate (3)							
Having autonomy in the workplace/congregation (4)							
Being paid fairly/Receiving good benefits (5)							

**Q17 Which of the following best describes your role in decision making within your congregation?**

- I usually participate in decisions made within the congregation such as hiring new staff, fundraisers, new congregational policies (1)
- My opinion is often asked for regarding major decisions but ultimately the board decides (2)
- I usually do not participate in decision-making processes that do not directly pertain to my work (3)
- Other, please specify (4) \_\_\_\_\_



**Q18 Which of the following best describes how you view your potential promotional opportunities?**

- I have the opportunity for advancement in my current synagogue (1)
- I aspire to leave my synagogue so that I can take on a larger role at a different congregation (2)
- I am content with my current position (3)
- Other, please specify (4) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q19 How important do you perceive having balance between your professional and personal life?**

- Extremely Unimportant (1)
- Unimportant (2)
- Somewhat Unimportant (3)
- Neither Important nor Unimportant (4)
- Somewhat Important (5)
- Important (6)
- Extremely Important (7)

**Q20 How well do each of the following quotes reflect how you view your current work-life balance?**

	Not at all like me (1)	Not much like me (2)	Somewhat like me (3)	Quite a lot like me (4)	Exactly like me (5)
“If there is any calling which requires a whole-hearted devotion to the exclusion of all other things and the determination to make it one’s whole life work, it is the rabbinate”-Rabbi Jacob Lauterbach, 1922 (1)					
“I want to have a life apart from my work...the idea of having my entire life given over to the temple is not appealing.” (Marder, 274) (2)					

**Q21 How many other clergy work at your congregation?**

(drop down menu options: 1-11+)

**Q22 How important do you think a hierarchy is within the leadership structure of a congregation?**

- Not at all important (1)
- Slightly Important (2)
- Somewhat Important (3)
- Very Important (4)
- Extremely Important (5)

**Q23 How well do each of the following words describe your approach to leadership?**

	Not at all like me (1)	Not much like me (2)	Somewhat like me (3)	Very much like me (4)	Exactly like me (5)
Empower (1)					
Laissez Faire (2)					
Teach (3)					
Pastoral Counsel (4)					
Officiate (5)					
Divine Decree (6)					

**Q24 How comfortable would you feel with a co-rabbinat situation?**

- Not at all Comfortable (1)
- Slightly Comfortable (2)
- Somewhat Comfortable (3)
- Very Comfortable (4)
- Extremely Comfortable (5)

**Q25 What is your gender?**

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Other (3)
- Prefer not to identify (4)

**Q26 What year were you born?**

(drop down menu options: 1900-1995)

**Q27 When were you ordained?**

(drop down menu options: 1900-2014)

**Q28 What is your current marital status?**

- I am currently married (1)
- I am separated (2)
- I am divorced (3)
- I am widowed (4)
- I have never been married (5)
- Other, please specify (6) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q29 Do you have children?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

**If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Click to write the question text If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey**

**Q29a If yes, do your children still live with you?**

Yes (1)

No (2)

Other (3) \_\_\_\_\_

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