



Safety Respect Equity

We Need to Talk:

A Review of Public Discourse and Survivor
Experiences of Safety, Respect, and Equity in
Jewish Workplaces and Communal Spaces

About the Safety Respect Equity (SRE) Coalition

This research was conducted by Dr. Guila Benchimol and Marie Huber on behalf of the Safety Respect Equity (SRE) Coalition. The SRE Coalition was founded in February 2018 after informal conversations about #MeToo in Jewish spaces evolved into a gathering of movement builders, experts, and field practitioners.

The goal was to set a vision for how the Jewish community could address safety, respect, and equity within its workplaces and communal spaces and lend voice and action to the international #MeToo movement. Today, more than 100 organizations and individuals make up the SRE Coalition as an organized Jewish alliance committed to creating lasting change within Jewish institutions. The Coalition is focused on three main objectives:

Leadership Commitment

A broad cross-section of organizational and communal influencers widely embrace and prioritize efforts to change organizational norms and behaviors and ensure safe, respectful, and equitable workplaces.

Organizational Change

Jewish organizations implement comprehensive policies, procedures, and training for all staff and volunteers; demonstrate a recognition of and intolerance for boundary violations; and provide systems that enable victims and bystanders to report incidents and have them fairly addressed.

Cultural Shift

The Jewish community addresses the underlying systemic issues of sexism and prejudice that give rise to environments where abuse and bias persist. Eliminating sexual harassment and gender discrimination is a top-of-agenda issue for the communal workforce and the community at large.

Acknowledgments

There are a number of people without whom this report would not have been possible. Firstly, the SRE Coalition would like to acknowledge and thank the individuals, victims, and survivors who took the time to share their stories and experiences with us so that we could learn from them. Thank you to Rabbi Danya Rutenberg, Guila Benchimol, and Carly Straus for conducting a focus group, survey, and interviews with these individuals. SRE also acknowledges and thanks Leading Edge, Dr. Judith Rosenbaum and Jewish Women's Archive (JWA), The Good People Fund, Jewish Women's Foundation of New York (JWFNY) and B'kavod, and Dr. Elana Sztokman for sharing their research and reports with us. The Coalition also thanks Guila Benchimol and Marie Huber for conducting the research and authoring this report as well as Somoh Supharukchinda for her keen editing eye. Finally, we would like to thank all of the victims and survivors who have come forward to share their experiences of victimization and harassment in the Jewish world.

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Introduction

The #MeToo movement, originated by Tarana Burke in 2006 and gone viral in 2017 following the allegations against film producer Harvey Weinstein, drew wide attention to the pervasiveness of sexual harassment and assault. The movement provoked revelations of sexual victimization across the globe, as well as across industries and faith communities.¹ As the #MeToo movement has grown, it has laid bare an inescapable truth: the Jewish community is subject to the same kinds of issues, inequities, and power dynamics that exist in other communities.

To deeply understand this truth and the current state of safety, respect, and equity within the Jewish community, it is imperative to listen to the experiences of victims and survivors. Not only can the experiences of victim-survivors² allow us to honestly reflect on our communities and how we acknowledge, speak about, and address these issues, but it is crucial that their voices and experiences inform the work around creating safety, respect, and equity in Jewish workplaces and communal spaces. This is important because research has found that speaking out about one's victimization is often not enough since it does not guarantee that survivors will be heard.³ Applying what survivors have told us about safety, respect, and equity to Jewish workplaces and communal spaces and involving them in the process is one way to ensure that they know we have seen and heard them.

Other commentary on the broader #MeToo movement has affirmed that increased conversations about safety, respect, and equity are essential but, on their own, inadequate.⁴ #MeToo has amplified victim-survivors' voices, acknowledged experiences of gender-based violence and inequity, and opened spaces for victim-survivors of all genders to come forward. However, increased attention in public discourse that is not matched by actions and meaningful change

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- 1 Nicole Smartt, "Sexual Harassment in the Workplace in a #MeToo World," *Forbes*, January 16 2017, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbeshumanresourcescouncil/2017/12/20/sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace-in-a-metoo-world/#6b52e5745a42>.
 - 2 "Faith and the #MeToo Movement," University of Southern California Center for Religion and Civic Culture, June 12, 2018, <https://crcc.usc.edu/faith-and-the-metoo-movement/>.
 - 3 Tanya Serisier, "Speaking Out, and Beginning to be Heard: Feminism, Survivor Narratives and Representations of Rape in the 1980s," *Continuum* 32, no. 1 (2018): 52-61.
 - 4 Carly Lewi, "The Empathy Paradox: What #MeToo Misses," *Literary Review of Canada*, 2017, <https://reviewcanada.ca/magazine/2017/11/the-empathy-paradox-what-metoo-misses/>.

can create a dangerous illusion of improvement. As Judith Rosenbaum describes in the Jewish Women's Archive collection of #MeToo revelations,

“Stories are compelling until they're not, and we move on to the next issue or return to business as usual. We make small changes, symbolic sacrifices, and then we congratulate ourselves on a job well-done.”⁵

While there can be important benefits in calling out transgressions, doing so can fall flat if done in the absence of broader conversations and actions on the dynamics that have contributed to, or have not prevented, their occurrence. The ‘call out culture’ of public naming of harassers and abusers to hold them accountable for their

behavior that the #MeToo movement has facilitated must be matched with a call to action that ignites a transformative communal response.

Responses to sexual misconduct are often thought about in terms of the actions carried out internally by the organizations and spaces in which abuses occur and by the individual perpetrators and victim-survivors. In addition, there are intragroup discussions and external public discourse around these issues that instigate a complex public narrative that can include current and past accounts, beliefs, knowledge and prior experience, structural barriers, and values.⁶ What's more, once revelations enter public discourse, how they are framed and discussed can have immense impact on all victim-survivors, regardless of the credibility of the allegation or the accused's guilt or innocence. The way the allegations and issues are publicly discussed, or not discussed, has the potential to provide opportunities for healing or to trigger and retraumatize. It also has the potential to demonstrate support and accountability to those who come forward or to frighten and discourage others from coming forward.

Research has shown that the information that people are given in public accounts has wide-ranging potential; it can facilitate change at the collective level, but it also has the potential to legitimize the actions of the powerful or limit and shape the behaviors of individuals that are central to broader social change.⁷ Public discourse, therefore, is a contested space in which the most powerful groups can overtly or covertly establish the dominance of specific messages. At the same time, the complexity of how discourse is received makes room for the possibility of the transformation of attitudinal and behavioral responses.⁸

It is against this backdrop—the realm of diverse victim-survivor experiences and the complex content of public discourse—that this research investigated and understood the nuances of issues of safety, respect, and equity in order to create meaningful change in Jewish workplaces and communal spaces.

5 Judith Rosenbaum, “Archiving #MeToo,” *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, January 21, 2018, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/archiving-metoo/>.

6 Catherine Happer and Greg Philo, “The Role of the Media in the Construction of Public Belief and Social Change,” *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* 1, no. 1 (2013), <https://jspp.psychopen.eu/article/view/96/37>.

7 Catherine Happer and Greg Philo, “The Role of the Media in the Construction of Public Belief and Social Change,” 2013.

8 Ibid.

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this research was to collect and analyze the experiences and perspectives of victim-survivors of safety, respect, and equity offenses within the Jewish community and to discern what the public discourse is around safety, respect, and equity issues, both within and beyond the Jewish community. Therefore, the key questions this research sought to answer were:

- 01 What have been the experiences of victim-survivors of sexual harassment and assault within Jewish workplaces and communal spaces?

- 02 Where have Jewish organizations succeeded and failed in meeting their obligations regarding safety, respect, and equity and in responding to victim-survivors' needs?

- 03 How is the broader Jewish community discussing these issues and what are the possible implications of the discourse?

- 04 To what extent is discourse that has happened publicly, both within and beyond Jewish-focused media and from major Jewish organizations, aligned or misaligned with victim-survivor experiences and perspectives?

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The next section of the report provides a brief description of the research methodology (see Appendix A for the full methodology, scope, and limitations), followed by the research findings. The findings of this research are generally discussed in two components: **(1)** personal lived experiences and “internal” responses within the environments in which they occur; and **(2)** public discourse and the broader “external” discursive engagement on issues of safety, respect, and equity within these spaces, both in the mainstream and within Jewish contexts. The findings begin by addressing the first two research questions regarding victim-survivor experiences and successes and failures in organizational prevention and response. This context is then utilized to address the remaining two research questions regarding public discourse.

The section on personal experiences starts with a review of victim-survivor experiences regarding safety and respect, then moves to a review of victim-survivor experiences of equity and inequity. This is followed by the findings on victim-survivor perspectives on harmful and helpful responses to disclosures and a discussion of the factors that contribute to a lack of safety, respect, and equity.

The section on public discourse looks broadly at the content of safety, respect, and equity discussions occurring in the Jewish and mainstream public sphere, as well as public responses to specific disclosures and allegations. This is followed by an analysis of the features of public discourse.

Finally, the report concludes with a general discussion of these findings. The aim of this section is to contextualize this project's findings with previous external research and offer considerations and questions for organizations, funders, individuals, and experts as they work to create lasting, systemic change and ensure safe, respectful and equitable Jewish workplaces and communal spaces.

Methodology

This research utilized three key methods: **(1)** a qualitative review of available primary and secondary data on survivor experiences; **(2)** analysis of the SRE Coalition Standards Diagnostic primary dataset; and **(3)** a content analysis of public discourse within and beyond the Jewish community.

- (1)** This research reviewed the findings of several surveys and projects conducted in the Jewish world in the wake of #MeToo between 2018 and 2019. These include Leading Edge's 2018 Employee Experience Survey; Dr. Judith Rosenbaum's 2018 report based on the collection of #MeToo stories by Jewish Women's Archives; B'Kavod's 2017 survey on sexual harassment in the Jewish communal world; and the SRE Coalition's 2018 and 2019 focus group, interviews, and surveys with survivors of sexual harassment and victimization in the Jewish communal and professional world. It also considers some of the findings of Dr. Elana Sztokman's 2019 research on clergy sexual misconduct as well as relevant external research on sexual victimization and survivors.⁹
- (2)** This research utilized data drawn from the SRE Coalition Diagnostic Tool. The Diagnostic consists of 25 questions and was structured to help Jewish organizations and their leadership self-assess whether and how their organization promotes safety, respect, and equity through their leadership, policies, procedures, and internal training and education. As of May 7, 2019, 41 organizations had completed the Diagnostic.
- (3)** This research employed the approach of a qualitative content analysis, which is used to collect and analyze data to understand the meanings ascribed to an issue within a given context. This process involves discerning meanings about attitudes, symbols, cultures, and institutions from which inferences are ultimately drawn.

⁹ Where broader research or resources related to the content within the report, other sources were also consulted. Where sources were utilized outside of those discussed above that were formally included in the qualitative secondary data review, they are footnoted throughout the report and listed under References. Much of the external research is drawn from Benchimol's (2019) study on sexual violence and survivor led anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism. "Faith and the #MeToo Movement," University of Southern California Center for Religion and Civic Culture, June 12, 2018, <https://crcc.usc.edu/faith-and-the-metoo-movement/>.

LIMITATIONS

There are a few key limitations to this research that are critical to interpreting the research findings. Most importantly, this is not a quantitative research study. It is based largely on secondary data and information, and utilized robust qualitative social science research methods to address the research questions. The strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. It provides information about the “human” side of an issue – that is, the behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals and groups. Qualitative methods are also effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion. Findings from qualitative research can often be extended to people with characteristics similar to those in the study population, but in this approach gaining a rich and complex understanding of a specific social context or phenomenon takes precedence over eliciting data that can be generalized to other or larger populations.¹⁰

The first component of the research involving a review of surveys and research projects was based on secondary available reports, and as such while the findings and conclusions of this review are credibly indicative of broader trends in the Jewish community, the sample is not representative. The various research projects this secondary review reviewed included primary data from over 250 victim-survivors of sexual harassment, assault, and discrimination (see Appendix A for research project descriptions). In consideration of the consistent themes that emerged across the various projects reviewed, it is likely that this sample size was, at the very least, approaching saturation within the scope of the research questions for this project.

Additionally, the secondary review was based on summative reports, not a review of the primary data itself. As such, it was not possible to accurately quantitatively analyze the accounts from survivors from the

secondary research review, and there was limited demographic data beyond what was qualitatively disclosed and referenced in this report (e.g., information on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and denomination).¹¹ There is also a small possibility of overlap in some of the data included in the various reports reviewed.

Similarly, the SRE Diagnostic data represents those in the Coalition that had self-selected to complete the tool at the time of the research, and as such this data should also not be interpreted as representative due to self-selection and possible participation bias. In the content analysis, the key limitation to note is that the content reviewed was limited to the specific search terms, timeframes, and sources defined by the research team (see Appendix A for details). Inherently, this means that it is not fully exhaustive and the content reviewed represents a defined cross-section of public discourse.

For a full description of the research methodology, scope, and limitations, see Appendix A on page 53.

10 “Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector’s Field Guide,” Family Health International, <https://course.ccs.neu.edu/is4800sp12/resources/qualmethods.pdf>.

11 Regarding clergy sexual misconduct in the Jewish community, Sztokman (2019:38) has found that “there are internal mechanisms and hierarchies that work sometimes feverishly to hide abuse. This is done in similar ways – moving abusers to different congregations, enforcing silence, alienating victims, providing high-profile supporters of abusers. In fact, this is true across all major Jewish denominations.” Additionally, 2015 research by Paul Berger found that the investigative process into “rabbis who cross the line” in Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform communities is problematic. Furthermore, Dreyfus (2019) found that, regarding rabbinic ethics committees, “providing proper support to complainants continues to be lacking across denominations.”

Findings

A Lack of Safety and Respect

KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ Survivors believe that there is a lack of safety and respect across Jewish workplaces and communal spaces. They report an absence of both physical and psychological safety and respect, which manifests in a range of harassing and abusive behaviors, from sexist name-calling and jokes with innuendo to sexual assault and rape.
- ▶ Among victim-survivors whose stories are known, most are women, and most perpetrators are men. Victimization happens across power levels and is perpetrated by individuals of varying roles within the Jewish community.
- ▶ Numerous risk factors to victimization and discrimination are at play including power imbalances, the structure of Jewish institutions, and Jewish views and treatments of gender.
- ▶ Victimization itself has negatively impacted survivors and the Jewish professional world. This includes disempowering and destabilizing survivors, driving survivors to leave the Jewish professional world, creating ongoing trauma to survivors, and causing a loss of faith among survivors.
- ▶ There is a strong fear of reporting among victims, driven by personal factors (e.g., feelings of fear, shock, shame, and self-blame) as well as external issues (e.g., lack of knowledge about or access to legal, financial, or organizational resources).

VICTIM-SURVIVOR EXPERIENCES

Based on the victim-survivor experiences reviewed in this research, there is a lack of safety and respect across Jewish workplaces and communal spaces. The excerpts collected by the Jewish Women's Archive (JWA) about the #MeToo experiences of Jews¹² highlighted that "harassment and assault happen in the Jewish community."¹³ In fact, very few B'Kavod survey respondents said that they have never heard about sexual harassment in the Jewish workplace or that they have never experienced it.

Additionally, in their 2018 survey on employee experiences, Leading Edge found that "overall, women feel less psychologically safe—less comfortable expressing themselves and being themselves—than men" in Jewish workplaces.¹⁴

Leading Edge defined psychological safety as the "belief that one will not be punished or

humiliated for raising issues in the workplace or for making mistakes."¹⁵

Repeatedly, those who shared their stories declared that the absence of safety in the Jewish community is not simply around psychological safety but around "abuse and harassment."¹⁶ For example, respondents to B'Kavod's survey asserted that "we are not protecting our young women." Several respondents shared multiple experiences of harassment and some shared experiences of both harassment and discrimination. In some cases, the stories of harassment also contained elements of discrimination and sexism, reflecting the often-intertwined nature of these behaviors.

According to victim-survivors, the lack of physical and psychological safety and respect in Jewish spaces manifested in a range of harassing and abusive behaviors. They described experiencing "sexist name-calling," "vulgar comments," "jokes with innuendo,"¹⁷ "locker room talk," sexual comments about women's physical appearance (including their pregnancies and age), asking about one's sex life, and microaggressions. They also shared stories of sexual assault and rape, unwanted touching, leering, "aggressive unwanted sexual advances," direct sexual propositions, unwanted passes and flirting, "quid pro

quo" donations," "inappropriate expression of feelings, sexual advances, pressure," "unwanted kissing and back-rubbing," and "overly intimate touching." Generally, the victim-survivors were well aware of the differences in the range of these behaviors. This was evident in the way in which they minimized what they experienced by saying that it was not as bad as "more egregious" forms of victimization.

WHO IS VICTIMIZED AND WHO IS VICTIMIZING?

The majority of respondents to the reviewed surveys and reports were women who reported that their perpetrators were men. Similarly, the content analysis found that 44% of the articles on specific cases in Jewish audience media specified female victims, whereas 12% were male (of which the majority were minors).¹⁸ In 88% of the specific cases named in the articles reviewed from Jewish audience media, the alleged perpetrator was identified as male, with two cases of alleged female perpetrators.¹⁹ Though men make up a considerably smaller portion of the known and reported cases in this research, it is critical to remember that men can be victims of sexual abuse and harassment too. There are likely men who do not report or seek help for their abuse, for a variety of reasons related to

12 The #MeToo stories collected by JWA were about the experiences of Jewish people. Some of these experiences occurred in the Jewish community while others occurred outside it. There are many important insights from these stories including the way in which "misogyny and other forms of bigotry such as anti-Semitism and homophobia" dovetail and are reinforced (Rosenbaum, 2018). This report by SRE, however, focuses on the experiences of Jews in Jewish work and communal spaces.

13 Judith Rosenbaum, "#MeToo: The Shaping of Gender and Jewish Identity," 2018, Paper delivered at the Association for Jewish Studies conference, December 2018.

14 "Are Jewish Organizations Great Places to Work? Results from the Third Annual Employee Experience Survey," Leading Edge, 2018, <https://leadingedge.org/lptw/>.

15 Ibid.

16 Excerpt from "Archiving #MeToo" collection at the Jewish Women's Archive, SID 1137.

17 Respondents to B'Kavod's 2017 survey on sexual harassment in Jewish communal world.

18 The remainder were unspecified.

19 The remainder were unspecified.

20 "Men Can Be Victims of Abuse, Too," The National Domestic Violence Hotline, June 22, 2014, <https://www.thehotline.org/2014/07/22/men-can-be-victims-of-abuse-too/>.

social norms and beliefs around masculinity and abuse and a lack of recovery options for male survivors.²⁰

Additionally, this research found that victimization within the Jewish community happens across power levels and to individuals of varying roles. People without power, such as those who attend synagogues but hold no positions, as well as people with powerful positions, such as rabbis and executive directors, reported experiencing sexual harassment and victimization. Survey and report respondents discussed the harassment they experienced as members of Jewish communal spaces (such as synagogues), as well as in their roles as leaders, professionals, staff, and volunteers for Jewish organizations. They also identified Jewish donors, rabbis, other leaders, lay leaders, board members, mentors, professionals, professors, colleagues, supervisors, and congregants among those who engaged in sexual harassment and gender discrimination against them.

Similarly, the media review suggested that sexual harassment and victimization occurred in a variety of Jewish settings and among a variety of individuals. Of the 94 articles that discussed specific cases in Jewish audience media, 23% related to Jewish workplaces, nonprofits, or foundations, 19% to Jewish primary or secondary educational institutions, 16% to donors or philanthropy, 16% to

clergy, and 12% to camps. Additionally, of these 94 articles, perpetrators were primarily educators (18 articles), donors (15), rabbis (18), camp staff (11), staff members or senior managers (12), echoing that victimization impacts individuals with varying power levels serving varying roles.

Harassment and abuse by donors and rabbis featured prominently in several of the reviewed survivor reports. For example, respondents expressed that donors seem to feel at liberty to make advances on female Jewish professionals who seek their funding. They described being propositioned by donors, having donors force themselves on them, or being on the receiving end of overly flirtatious donor behavior. They further noted that this impeded their ability to discuss the donation they were seeking.

Additionally, numerous victim-survivors relayed experiences of clergy abuse. Rosenbaum notes that “12% of the stories submitted to JWA’s collection describe abuse by rabbis.”²¹ Meanwhile, the participants interviewed by Sztokman on clergy sexual misconduct provided insight into “the synagogue setting, the profile of the rabbinic abuser, the grooming process, the impact on the victim, and the reporting process.”²²

VICTIMIZATION’S IMPACT ON SURVIVORS AND ON REPORTING

The research of victim-survivor experiences provided strong evidence of the negative ways in which victimization has impacted survivors and the Jewish professional world.

Victim-survivors reported that being harassed and discriminated against can “disempower, dishearten and destabilize otherwise excellent professionals”²³ and some explained that it is why they left the Jewish professional world altogether.

Often, victim-survivors changed how they behaved in Jewish spaces, because perpetrators were rarely confronted by those they had disclosed or reported to. For example, a number of victim-survivors described maintaining their distance from the harasser or ignoring what was happening. The result was that perpetrators did not need to change *their* behavior because they were never asked to. Moreover, victim-survivors reported experiencing

21 Judith. Rosenbaum, #MeToo: The Shaping of Gender and Jewish Identity, 2018. Paper delivered at the Association for Jewish Studies conference, December 2018.

22 Elana Maryles Sztokman, Sexual abuse in the Jewish community: The role of the rabbi. June 2019, Unpublished (under review)

23 Respondent to B’Kavod’s 2017 survey on sexual harassment in Jewish communal world.

ongoing trauma. Respondents spoke about how they have retained the memories of their harassment and the ways in which their lives have been impacted. This was described in contrast to the impact on perpetrators, with sentiments echoing themes similar to this statement: “I’m sure both men have completely forgotten about what happened now.”²⁴ Additionally, survivors of clergy sexual misconduct “reported a loss of faith and religious connection.”²⁵

Victim-survivors also explained the reasons they had not reported or disclosed their experiences. In some cases, this was because they did not recognize or label their experiences as sexual harassment or sexual victimization. This was especially true for those sexually victimized as adults who were unable to recognize the sexual coercion that was involved or who deferred to rabbis because of their rabbinic titles and were taken advantage of.²⁶ Many also expressed difficulty in recognizing and naming non-contact sexual victimization.²⁷

Another notable finding of this research is a strong fear of reporting among victim-survivors. This is driven both by personal factors as well as external issues. Some explained that they did not report or disclose their victimization because they felt fear, shock, shame, and self-blame. Part of the fear was around the risk to their future personal, professional, and communal prospects should they speak out. Some simply wanted to ignore what happened to them and did not want to make a fuss in the organization. At times, this stemmed from the belief that victimization simply does not happen in the Jewish community. In other cases, they felt that the personal and professional costs of making a fuss was not worth it. Victim-survivors linked their silence to the power of perpetrators and the financial, professional, communal, and personal risks that may come in speaking against them. For instance, several noted a desire to protect the Jewish community or organization and their reputations. This demonstrates the sway that threats from powerful perpetrators can have over victim-survivors’ speech.

Victim-survivors also indicated that a lack of knowledge about legal and other resources has led to non-reporting. This includes limited awareness and understanding of how to report incidents or what will happen after one reports. Their silence also stems from a lack of financial resources needed to cover prohibitive legal costs that one may incur in attempting to speak out about their abuser or other things

such as mental health services.

Furthermore, the review of surveys and reports underscored the effects of disclosures on survivors. Survivors indicated that the secondary victimization they experienced by organizational leaders and members of their Jewish community as a result of their disclosures was equal to or worse than the victimization itself. Some noted that they continue to remain silent about historical cases because they do not know where to report them or what actions will be taken, if any. Some spoke about the anger they felt at self-silencing or being silenced by others.

Respondents who said that they currently feel safe in their Jewish organization wondered if they actually would be should an incident ever happen.

24 Respondent to B’Kavod’s 2017 survey on sexual harassment in Jewish communal world.

25 Elana Maryles Sztokman, *Sexual abuse in the Jewish community: The role of the rabbi*. June 2019, Unpublished (under review) SRE focus groups, surveys, and interviews.

26 Elana Maryles Sztokman, *Sexual abuse in the Jewish community: The role of the rabbi*. June 2019, Unpublished (under review)

27 Ibid.

Inequity and Discrimination

KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ Victims report that inequity on the basis of gender exists within Jewish communities. Those who did not disclose experiences of harassment did disclose experiences of gender bias, discrimination, and sexism.
- ▶ Despite their desire to advance, women report that they have fewer opportunities to do so than their male colleagues.
- ▶ Men understand how compensation, salary, and raises are set at their organization at higher rates than women.
- ▶ Efforts towards preventing discrimination and harassment have sometimes negatively impacted women's ability to succeed in their positions and careers.
- ▶ Inequity on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, and culture are notably missing from the discussion, potentially signaling that voices of marginalized groups are not being invited to speak or are not being heard.

VICTIM EXPERIENCES

On the Basis of Gender Identity

In the secondary review of surveys and reports, those that said they were not harassed reported that they experienced gender bias, discrimination, or sexism. Likewise, 15 of the 63 articles from Jewish audience media that discussed equity issues were about specific cases or allegations, several of which pertained to equity violations on the basis of gender identity. These included coverage of ordainment, marriage, and transgender and female leadership in Jewish institutions.

Based on the sources reviewed in this research, inequity on the basis of gender identity exists within the Jewish community. An article in *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, written by the President and CEO of Leading Edge as a part of a series presented by the SRE Coalition, described issues regarding equity in the Jewish nonprofit sector. This article noted that although 70% of the Jewish nonprofit sector identifies as women, women represent only 30% of CEOs. Data referenced in the article furthermore showed that male-led organizations have an average budget size that is almost three times that of female-led organizations.

Leading Edge's 2018 Employee Experience Survey with over 80,000 professionals working in the Jewish nonprofit sector served as a particularly rich source of information signaling systemic gender bias in Jewish organizations.²⁸ The survey found that despite their desire to advance, women believe they have fewer opportunities to do so than their male colleagues and that women function in a culture that demands more sacrifice from them than from men. It furthermore found that 12%

28 Gali Cooks, "Beyond the Glass Ceiling: Understanding Gender Inequities in the Jewish Communal Workforce," *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, December 3, 2018, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/beyond-the-glass-ceiling-understanding-gender-inequities-in-the-jewish-communal-workforce/>.

more men than women in their survey sample understood how compensation, salary, and raises are set at their organization. Male executives were found to more often have the title “President & CEO” while female executives were more often called “Executive Director,” even when they led organizations of similar sizes.²⁹

Notably, in the reports and surveys reviewed, female survivors explained that efforts towards preventing discrimination and harassment have sometimes negatively impacted their ability to succeed in their positions and careers. For example, women have been shut out from private conversations that men in their workplace can have with leadership because an “open door” policy, whereby colleagues will not be alone with other colleagues to eliminate any risk of perceptions or accusations of harassment or impropriety is only applied when meeting with female staff. Additionally, female fundraisers cannot do their jobs when they are told to avoid meeting with male donors or are afraid to meet with them as a result of the donor’s reputation and/or previous harassment or victimization experiences.

On the Basis of Sexual Orientation

In the secondary review of surveys and reports, there were no cases recounting personal experiences of discrimination or equity on the basis of sexual orientation, though one victim-survivor of sexual

harassment did identify as queer. This is consistent with the finding that content from major Jewish organizations also contained relatively fewer references to equity concepts related to sexual orientation and nonbinary gender identity. Terms that appeared in the content included “gender identity” (7% of content), “gay and lesbian” (8%), “gay” (13%), “lesbian” (13%), and “transgender” (14%).

However, rather than suggesting the absence of a problem, other findings from the content analysis may suggest that this notable gap indicates that there are voices within the Jewish community that are not being heard or that important questions, such as those about sexual orientation, are not being asked. Among the 15 articles from Jewish audience media that discussed specific equity-related cases or allegations, four were on the basis of sexual orientation. These involved discriminatory views and practices against LGBTQ+ individuals regarding general rights, ordainment, and marriage. There were also a handful of articles related to inclusion that were primarily focused on nonbinary gender identities and LGBTQ+ individuals.

On the Basis of Race, Ethnicity, and Culture

The silence in both the review of survivor experiences and the public discourse related to discrimination and inequity within the Jewish community related to race, ethnicity, and culture was even more

striking. None of the survivor experiences reviewed mentioned race, ethnicity, or culture even though Jews of color are approximated to comprise at least 12-15% of American Jews.³⁰ The lack of racial and ethnic diversity is noticeable among respondents to the SRE survey, focus groups, and interviews and it is representative of a broader lack of diversity. This suggests that important voices are likely missing or have been excluded from the collection of survivor narratives and, again, that questions about race and other components of intersectional identity are likely not being asked.

Within the review of Jewish audience media, a couple of articles discussed specific efforts by rabbis or Jews of color to create inclusive Jewish spaces. These included a broader call for increased diversity and equity in Jewish life and leadership, which could be a mediating factor in the current experiences of victim-survivors, and particularly regarding voices that were notably missing in the secondary data review for this research. **The compounding identities of Jews of color who may also experience discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of their gender identity or sexual orientation within Jewish workplaces and communal spaces are critical to note in terms of their possible implications as victim-survivors as well as for reporting and remediation when abuses occur.** These voices would appear crucial to understanding victimization and discrimination in the Jewish world more broadly as well as how to prevent and intervene.

²⁹ “Are Jewish Organizations Great Places to Work? Results from the Third Annual Employee Experience Survey,” Leading Edge, 2018.

³⁰ Dr. Ari Y Kelman, Dr. Aaron Hahn Tapper, Ms. Izabel Fonseca, and Dr. Aliya Saperstein, “Counting Inconsistencies: An Analysis of American Jewish Population Studies, with a Focus on Jews of Color,” The Jews of Color Field Building Initiative, 2019, <https://jewsofcolorfieldbuilding.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Counting-Inconsistencies-052119.pdf>.

Responses to Allegations and Disclosures within Organizations and Communal Spaces

KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ While there have been both helpful and harmful responses to disclosures, victims report that the majority have been harmful – often causing secondary victimization or trauma.
- ▶ Harmful responses to disclosures were especially common when the perpetrator was a donor or lay leader.
- ▶ The “bystander phenomenon,” the lack of action by bystanders even when others around them are suffering,³¹ was reported as being a quality of Jewish organizational life.
- ▶ Victim-survivors also asserted that another response used to silence them was to invoke Judaism.
- ▶ Victim-survivors have found some responses to their disclosures by organizations and individuals helpful.
- ▶ Proactively checking in with survivors about potential problems rather than waiting for them to grow was also helpful, as was the existence of mechanisms for independent external review or investigation.
- ▶ The presence of a female leader or colleague was at times harmful in reporting or disclosing, while in other instances the presence of a female was helpful and supportive.

HARMFUL RESPONSES

Survivors reported that the secondary victimization, or re-traumatization, they experienced by organizational leaders and members of their Jewish community was equal to or worse than the victimization itself. Those that responded poorly to their disclosures included lay leaders, board members, senior staff, rabbis, and community members. The leaders they reported to were often passive to complaints about harassment or did nothing in response. Those who contributed their stories to JWA spoke about the negative responses by Jewish professionals or rabbis to their disclosures of abuse or harassment. These responses include “telling women they won’t be believed, or failing to report or follow up on accusations.”³²

More often than not, respondents reported that their complaints were ignored, minimized, or laughed at. Survivors were blamed while empathy was expressed for their perpetrators. Some were retaliated against for speaking up or were told to change their behavior. In a *New York Times* op-ed regarding alleged assault by Ari Shavit, the author describes that people close to her warned her that

31 “Perkins and the Bystander Phenomenon,” Hoboart and William Smith Colleges, July 16, 2008, <https://www2.hws.edu/article-id-10868/>.

32 Judith Rosenbaum, “#MeToo: The Shaping of Gender and Jewish Identity,” 2018. Paper delivered at the Association for Jewish Studies conference, December 2018.

“if I wrote about Mr. Shavit, it might damage him but it would definitely damage me.”³³ Even when managers or superiors supported survivors by believing or validating them, they did not confront the perpetrator. This was disappointing to survivors, especially those who were told by managers or superiors to confront their perpetrators on their own. Others were told to stay away from their harassers.

Multiple victim-survivors’ narratives spoke to the existence of open secrets within Jewish workplaces and communal spaces, wherein it is known that some men engaged in sexual victimization and yet were not held accountable. The men retain their positions that enable them to continue their abuse. Survivors explained that when they reported their harassment experiences, there was often no follow up; the organizations or individuals to whom they disclosed or reported the harassment already knew of the perpetrator’s behavior by reputation. At times, women had even been warned to be careful around these men.

Personal narratives found in public media echoed this as well, with one victim-survivor describing her shock that colleagues’ responses to her disclosure that she was sexually assaulted at a conference included saying things like “Oh, he’s been acting like that since graduate school, he hasn’t changed,” and “Everyone knows you should never be alone in a room with him.”³⁴

Respondents felt that harassment by donors or lay leaders and board members was defended, excused, shrugged off, or minimized. For example, some respondents were told or intimidated to that a donation was contingent on their response to a donor’s harassing overtures. Respondents interpreted the lack of or harmful response to their disclosures as a signal that these men are perceived to be too valuable to an organization to speak out against them. Those that felt that harassment by donors and lay elders is tolerated in Jewish spaces also felt unprotected within those spaces.

Victim-survivor narratives have noted that the “bystander phenomenon”—the lack of action by bystanders even when others around them are suffering³⁵—is a quality of Jewish organizational life. Respondents to

the surveys connected this to the issue of donor supremacy, but several people also mentioned that it is the culture of enabling that has been more hurtful than the abuse itself.

Survivors also asserted that another response used to silence them was to invoke Judaism. Some survivors were asked to stay silent or deny their experiences so as not to give Judaism a bad name. JWA’s collection of stories showcased that the Jewishness of some victims of abuse and harassment has likewise been used as a weapon, wielded in an attempt to silence and deny the fact that abuse and harassment occur in Jewish communities and resulting in attracting “further harassment and negative attention” because of one’s Jewishness.³⁶ As an extension of this, some survivors were told that the financial and reputational needs of the organization—theirs or their perpetrator’s—supersede their experiences with victimization.

Within cases of clergy sexual misconduct, an especially harmful response was to have other rabbis investigating survivors’ claims. Survivors in Sztokman’s report as well as those interviewed by SRE reported being skeptical that rabbis who investigate their colleagues have the expertise to do so and believe that they are too biased to fill this role.

33 Danielle Berrin, “Should We Forgive the Men Who Assaulted Us?,” *The New York Times*, December 22, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/22/opinion/metoo-sexual-assault-forgiveness.html>.

34 Keren R. McGinty, “American Jewry’s #MeToo Problem: A First-Person Encounter,” *The New York Jewish Week*, June 21, 2018, <https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/american-jewrys-metoo-problem-a-first-person-encounter/>.

35 “Perkins and the Bystander Phenomenon,” Hobart and William Smith Colleges, 2008.

36 Judith Rosenbaum, “#MeToo: The Shaping of Gender and Jewish Identity,” 2018. Paper delivered at the Association for Jewish Studies conference, December 2018.

HELPFUL RESPONSES

Helpful responses included Jewish leaders reaching out to survivors, supporting and advocating on their behalf, and blowing the whistle about unsafe men. Survivors found it especially helpful when they were asked about what they would like to do when they disclosed. It also helped when organizations took responsibility to address complaints and helped advocate on victims' behalf. It is important to note that the presence of a female leader or colleague was at times harmful in reporting or disclosing because they can uphold problematic practices, while in other instances the presence of a female was helpful and supportive because they have a better understanding of the issues and ways to address them.

Survivors expressed a desire to see organizational and communal leaders balance the centering of survivors' voices and desires with their organizational or individual responsibilities in addressing complaints. Proactively checking in with survivors about potential problems rather than waiting for them to grow was also helpful, as was the existence of mechanisms for independent external review or investigation.

In fact, survivors were more likely to report harassment and victimization when policies and procedures were in place to address their complaints and the behaviors that led to them. They were also more likely to report when their past experiences with the organization's leadership had been positive and when there were allies in the organization.

Notably, the media review revealed some discourse around what organizations should do to be safer and more respectful workplaces, but did not surface actual helpful responses to disclosures and reports.

Factors Contributing to a Lack of Safety, Respect, and Equity in Jewish Spaces

KEY FINDINGS

- Key factors contributing to a lack of safety, respect, and equity in Jewish spaces include: the lack of adequate organizational structures to address harassment and discrimination; a familial sense of community and a lack of professionalism; gender and power dynamics; a culture of open secrets and a lack of bystander intervention; and pressures related to Jewish continuity and Jewish values.
- Survivors report that the lack of organizational structures to address harassment and discrimination means that there are no mechanisms to address these issues when they arise.
- Organizational policies seem to commonly exist addressing safety and respect, but much less commonly addressing equity.
- Even when organizational policies may exist, they are often not known, understood, or clearly and adequately operationalized.
- The informal, familial, and sometimes unprofessional environment within Jewish spaces can make it difficult to differentiate between what is and is not appropriate and to address sexual harassment when it occurs.
- The gender, generational, and power gaps between typically older men who run Jewish spaces and young women who work in these spaces contribute to the victimization that occurs in Jewish spaces and survivors' ability to speak up about it. Power differentials are at play when it comes to salary differentials, economic security, and organizational seniority or respect.
- The acceptance of "open secrets," where it is known that some individuals engaged in sexual victimization and yet suffer no consequences, puts everyone at risk. This culture means that little is done to protect or prevent people from becoming these perpetrators' next victims.
- Pressures related to Jewish continuity can limit women to roles as wives, mothers, and procreators. Pressures also manifest for Jewish youth through acts of matchmaking, dating pressures at Jewish camps, and other forms of teen sexuality.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

A number of factors related to organizational structures were reported as contributing to the lack of safety, respect, and equity in Jewish workplaces and communal spaces. Survivors reported that some Jewish organizations do not have a human resources department, often because they are small in size. The result is that there is no one to turn to if someone is harassed or discriminated against. Such an environment also makes it difficult to address sexual harassment when it occurs, especially in organizations that lack clear policies about what to do when it does. This may explain why some respondents point to the lack of relevant organizational and behavioral policies and training as a key driver in why sexual harassment occurs “more often than most people know”³⁷ in the Jewish professional world.

Available results from the SRE Diagnostic shed more light on organizational structures related to sexual harassment and gender discrimination policies and training within SRE Coalition member organizations. While not statistically representative of all SRE Commitment adopters or Jewish organizational life, these results can be viewed as a snapshot into likely broader trends and conditions within Jewish organizations. In theory, by choosing to opt into a platform for promoting SRE, it is possible that this cross-section of Jewish organizational life is actually reflective of organizations that are on the more advanced end of the spectrum as they have already begun to think about and address these issues in their organization.

Generally, SRE Commitment Adopters³⁸ seem to have developed policies regarding anti-harassment and non-discrimination, but echoing findings on equity, they are further behind in developing policies related to hiring and advancement. The majority of the 41 SRE Commitment Adopters that have completed the Diagnostic have an anti-harassment policy that is written and perceived to be easy to understand (83%), and four “somewhat” have this in place. Additionally, 85% of the organizations have a written non-discrimination policy, but only 46% of the organizations reported that their organization has written policies in place to help ensure fair and equitable hiring and advancement practices.

The presence of organizational policies, however, does not mean they are well-known and understood by staff, nor that they are operationalized with clear procedures and processes. Only 62% of the organizations that have an anti-harassment policy reported that they regularly communicate their policy to staff. Only 42% of organizations that have non-discrimination policies regularly communicate them to staff and only

47% with hiring and advancement policies do the same. Further, 29 and 27 organizations, respectively, reported that their anti-harassment and non-discrimination policies are easily accessible (e.g., published on a website); less than half (18) reported the same regarding their equitable hiring and advancement policies.

Additionally, responses from many organizations indicate the need for stronger procedural infrastructure. 83% of the organizations have a process in place whereby individuals can report discrimination or harassment, and four “somewhat” have this in place. 85% of those with reporting processes have multiple points of access for reporting (e.g., through a CEO, direct supervisor, other manager, and/or HR department). 85% of these organizations also have a process that requires the organization to respond to complaints of discrimination or harassment. Only 70% of organizations with processes in place for reporting have a process for investigating complaints of discrimination and harassment. Only 53% of organizations with processes in place reported that the individuals who conduct their organizations’ investigations are trained to do so.

³⁷ Respondent to B’Kavod’s 2017 survey on sexual harassment in Jewish communal world.

³⁸ The Safety, Respect, Equity Commitment is part of the Coalition’s mission to make all Jewish workplaces and communal spaces safe, respectful and equitable, and individuals and organizations are invited to adopt this Commitment. The Commitment is not a legally binding document. Adopting the Commitment is a sign that the institution has committed to working toward the implementation of the standards. The work may be beginning or in progress and is not necessarily complete for most or all organizations who adopt the Commitment. The SRE Coalition takes no formal responsibility for the actions of organizations or individuals who adopt the Commitment.

Similar to findings regarding communication to and understanding of policies by staff, there is less currently in place to ensure that reporting and investigative practices are known to staff, both in terms of their existence and structure as well as how to utilize them. Only 38% of the organizations with reporting procedures reported that they are communicated to staff on a regular basis, and only 53% of those actually provide training and education to employees regarding their policies and reporting systems.

There are also notable gaps in how organizations are currently putting resources behind their efforts to create safe, respectful, and equitable workplaces and communal spaces. 56% of organizations who have completed the SRE Diagnostic reported having time, money, and resources allocated annually to prioritize diversity, inclusion, and harassment prevention. Only 36% of the organizations reported conducting other trainings around prevention and addressing discrimination and harassment (e.g., trainings on implicit or unconscious bias, bystander intervention, and workplace civility).

There is an even bigger gap in terms of how organizations are ensuring that they are aware of their blind spots and addressing areas that need improvement. Only seven organizations reported that they conduct an internal audit, climate survey, cultural assessment, or engagement survey of

employees to assess and address workplace risk factors regarding discrimination and harassment. Eight organizations reported that they conduct an internal audit or climate survey of employees to assess and address whether individuals feel safe and respected as well as whether they have observed harassment.

In contrast to the findings from the Diagnostic review, across the websites of 52 major Jewish organizations reviewed in the content analysis, 9 had internal policies addressing issues of safety publicly available on their websites, 9 addressing issues of respect, and 7 addressing issues of equity. It is important to note that while this is not to say that the remaining organizations do not have these policies, it does mean that they are not publicly available online and therefore lack the public accountability component in their quality, thoroughness, and implementation.

FAMILIAL SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND A LACK OF PROFESSIONALISM

A common theme among victim-survivors was that the familial and intimate atmosphere that exists in Jewish workplaces and communal spaces leads to a blurring of boundaries, an unhealthy and informal work culture, and/or a non-professional office environment.

While a “laid back, informal atmosphere”³⁹ may appeal to some and be a draw of the workplace, respondents remarked that unclear boundaries make it difficult to differentiate between what is and is not appropriate.

Research has identified that the communal dynamic so valued in Jewish life can mean that there are multiple layers of overlapping community relationships that can make it difficult to report discrimination and harassment.⁴⁰

This concept was echoed in the content analysis as well, most notably in an article in which Maxyne Finkelstein forwarded the term “Living Room Syndrome” to describe the “informal nature” of interactions in many Jewish community organizations.⁴¹ According to the author, a basic cultural familiarity with colleagues can lead to interacting in the workplace as if people were in their living room rather than in workplaces with professional norms. The content reviewed from major Jewish organizations appeared to surface a similar familial relational aspect in discussions of safety, respect, and equity.

39 Respondent to B’Kavod’s 2017 survey on sexual harassment in Jewish communal world.

40 Dr. Elana Maryles Sztokman, “#metoo in the Jewish Community,” *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, 2018.

41 Maxyne Finkelstein, “We Must Own our Responsibility as Women,” *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, August 8, 2018, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/we-must-own-our-responsibility-as-women/>.

GENDER AND POWER DYNAMICS

Another important finding was how respondents discussed gender in relation to the various risk factors of sexual harassment and gender discrimination in Jewish spaces. Across the secondary data review, survivors attributed their workplace experiences of gender bias, discrimination, or sexism to power dynamics. They also pointed to the gender of those who typically victimize and those who are victimized. Their experiences highlighted that it women suffer disproportionately because of the informal environment of Jewish organizations noted above whereas “it is easier for men to take more liberties with inappropriate touching and comments.”⁴²

For example, victim-survivors noted that the young, and often single, women who constitute a large component of the Jewish workforce may be particularly exposed to the victimization that occurs by older men in these spaces. They may also be less likely to speak up about it. In addition, female professionals in the Jewish community often make a fraction of the money that their abusers make.

Despite women making up the overwhelming majority of professional staff in the Jewish world, their economic insecurity can be a significant factor in their ability to come forward.⁴³

These dynamics affect survivors’ ability to speak up depending on their relative position of power. Men who hold most of the senior and board member positions in Jewish spaces may find it easy to accept or ignore harassment of lower-level female employees. Female respondents spoke about the futility in speaking out about victimization because older men in Jewish organizations are more likely to protect one another—yet another indication of the ways in which gender discrimination and sexual victimization are linked. The power differential between the men who have harassed or assaulted and the woman who have been the recipients of these behaviors has made it easy for the former to deny their actions and harder for the latter to speak out about them.⁴⁴

Furthermore, it was often leaders and board members who were the ones respondents said harassed them. Survivors and outside research note that a distinguishing factor of Jewish communal life is the role of donors, given that a considerable share of the Jewish organized community relies on their philanthropy.

Another risk factor within the Jewish community is its heavy reliance on volunteers. Interactions with volunteer community members can be hard to define and oversee, so volunteers are left particularly vulnerable because of their frequent exclusion from organizational staff policies and protocols.⁴⁵

Relatedly, another example of how power has manifested in victimization in Jewish spaces is when those who have been victimized are not Jewish professionals but simply members of the Jewish world with no official position or role in it. One survivor explained that her lack of power made her and her victimization “invisible.” This invisibility meant that her complaints were not taken seriously by the board members to whom she reported. Such experiences underscore the issue of whose stories matter and whose voice is heard, which is an important issue when discussing sexual violence.

The issue of gender and power dynamics was also raised in the media. By way of example, an opinion article published by *e-Jewish Philanthropy* detailed multiple personal accounts of being expected to work for free or for less than male counterparts within the Jewish community. The author related this to Jewish values of service and giving back, but felt that this expectation at times manifested in ways that disadvantage women in the Jewish community.⁴⁶

42 Dr. Elana Maryles Sztokman, “#metoo in the Jewish Community,” *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, 2018.

43 Ibid.

44 Finding from SRE victim-survivor focus groups, surveys, and interviews.

45 Dr. Elana Maryles Sztokman, “#metoo in the Jewish Community,” *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, 2018.

46 Dr. Keren R. McGinty, True Equity Requires Rejecting the Status Quo,” *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, April 1, 2019, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/true-equity-requires-rejecting-the-status-quo/>.

A CULTURE OF OPEN SECRETS

As noted above, respondents felt that there is a culture of “open secrets” as well as a lack of bystander intervention that allows harassment to occur and persist. An article in *Alma* also acknowledges this dynamic, describing the “not-so-secret secret that Michael Steinhardt...has an alleged pattern of sexual harassment towards women went from whispers to a piece in a local Jewish paper to breaking news at the *New York Times*.”⁴⁷ This trend is echoed in the institutional responses to a number of cases of abusers of minors reviewed in the content analysis. In these cases, rumored abusers were often not addressed and, in some cases, allowed to continue in their posts (and continue their abuses) for many years. Similarly, an opinion article discussing the allegations against Steven M. Cohen, a prominent sociologist and demographer, assessed:

It is within this already deeply gender-imbalanced context that Cohen allegedly continued a pattern of abuse and inappropriate behavior, for decades, even as many knew and whispered about it. And yet, during all that time, he racked up an eye popping list of teaching positions, academic society honors, paid consultancies and directorships...Instead of slowing him down as concerns and whispers about his inappropriate behavior accumulated, Jewish institutions

enabled Cohen to reach ever-higher positions. He had power over the careers of innumerable men and women, as well as the authority to enact a communal agenda with control of private romantic choices, and women’s bodies and fertility, at its heart.⁴⁸

PRESSURES RELATED TO JEWISH CONTINUITY

An article by Dr. Sztokman notes that the Jewish collective discourse often revolves around issues related to the Holocaust, Israel, and demographics in terms of threats to the Jewish people. One component of this conversation is the notion that Jewish women should dedicate their bodies to the service of the collective.⁴⁹ In this frame, “language of the demographic threat is not only sexist in that it uses women’s bodies as vehicles in service of the collective. It is also often exploited by men who have their own personal, hidden agendas regarding women’s bodies, functions, and sexuality.”⁵⁰

This focus on Jewish continuity appeared in numerous articles reviewed. It was raised in relation to the allegations against Steven M. Cohen, noted above, whose work shaped the basis for the focus on Jewish natalism. It was also discussed in an opinion piece published in *The Forward*, which suggested the need for the Jewish community to reckon with

the darker, more problematic, gendered aspects that resulted from what some see as a continuity-driven agenda.⁵¹ According to the Rokhi Karfissen’s analysis, Cohen’s perspective portrayed continuity as a biological exercise, where “making marriage and fertility a subject of greatest communal interest, and giving it the quasi-scientific cover of academic inquiry, legitimizes the erosion of Jewish women’s control of their own fertility, and thus independence, in the service of the greater cause of ‘continuity’.”⁵²

In the *JTA*, Idit Klein, SRE Coalition leadership member and president and CEO of Keshet, a Jewish LGBTQ group, observed that:

An emphasis on heterosexual marriage and reproduction is problematic in the way that it, for many women, creates the sense that their most important contribution to the Jewish people is as functioning wombs, and that there is no higher mission for them than to be wives and mothers... That is necessarily demeaning and does not communicate to girls and women the potential that they have to make other contributions to Jewish life and society.⁵³

What’s more, the focus on heterosexual procreation could be a contributing factor to non-inclusive and inequitable spaces on the basis of sexual orientation.

47 Sara Beth Berman, “You Can’t Defend Sexual Harassment by Saying it was All a Joke,” *Alma*, <https://www.heyalma.com/you-cant-defend-sexual-harassment-by-saying-it-was-all-a-joke/>.

48 Rokhi Karfissen, “How A #MeToo Scandal Proved What We Already Know: ‘Jewish Continuity’ Is Sexist,” *The Forward*, July 20, 2018, <https://forward.com/opinion/406271/how-a-metoo-scandal-proved-what-we-already-know-jewish-continuity-is-sexist/>.

49 Dr. Elana Maryles Sztokman, “#metoo in the Jewish Community,” *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, 2018.

50 Ibid.

51 Rokhi Karfissen, “How A #MeToo Scandal Proved What We Already Know: ‘Jewish Continuity’ Is Sexist,” 2018.

52 Ibid.

53 Ben Sales, “Jewish organizations used to worry about matchmaking. Here’s why that’s becoming passe,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, April 4, 2019, <https://www.jta.org/2019/04/04/united-states/jewish-organizations-used-to-worry-about-matchmaking-heres-why-thats-becoming-passe>.

Another opinion article from Jane Eisner published in *The Forward* takes a different perspective. It affirmed that discussions of continuity should discourage crude comments from the likes of Steinhardt and Cohen focused on fertility and procreation. It further suggests that the concept of continuity would better service the Jewish community with a focus on supporting marriage (in all forms), having children, and expanding definitions of who is a Jew.⁵⁴

Themes related to Jewish continuity also emerged in relation to Jewish communal spaces and youth. Following the media coverage of the Steinhardt allegations, JTA published an article discussing his matchmaking “schtick” that was apparently widely known and tolerated, narrating an incident where he paid a young man and woman \$100 to talk alone in a corner for 15 minutes and offered to pay for their honeymoon if they ended up getting married.⁵⁵ The article further noted that critics and defenders of Steinhardt in this and the cases of sexual harassment discussed in the next section of this report ascribe his comments to an obsession with Jewish continuity.⁵⁶ In the wake of the Steinhardt revelations, some have suggested that the communal reckoning over his misdeeds should also include questioning whether American Jewish institutions place too much of a focus on Jewish natalism, focusing on Birthright Israel, the organization Steinhardt co-founded to build connections between Diaspora Jews and Israel, but which Steinhardt described as a trip to match Jewish singles. This reputation of Birthright was so widely known that the TV sitcom *Broad City* dedicated an entire episode to parodying it.⁵⁷

The issue was also discussed in relation to Jewish camps promoting the ideal that campers will meet their intended life partner at summer camp.⁵⁸ However, some Jewish adults recall that, in years past, the pressure to date at camp occasionally took an inappropriate turn when poorly trained counselors encouraged young teens to become close to each other, both romantically and physically. The issue was problematic enough that Moving Traditions initiated research on romance and sexuality at 25 Jewish camps, noting the tensions of being positive towards romance and sexuality while also creating a situation where boundaries are clear.⁵⁹ Foundation for Jewish Camp similarly started the “Shmira Initiative,” a staff training initiative on consent and reporting, the promotion of healthy relationships among teenage campers, and strategies for dismantling pressures on youth to “date Jewishly.”⁶⁰

54 Jane Eisner, “Family Is A Jewish Value. Don’t Let The Mistakes Of A Few Rob Us Of That Gift,” *The Forward*, September 16, 2018, <https://forward.com/opinion/410346/family-values-are-jewish-values-dont-let-the-mistakes-of-the-few-rob-us-of/>.

55 Ben Sales, “Jewish organizations used to worry about matchmaking. Here’s why that’s becoming passé,” 2019.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

58 Julie Zauzmer, “#MeToo goes to Jewish summer camp, a traditional place for teenage romance,” *The Washington Post*, July 14, 2018 https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/metoo-goes-to-jewish-summer-camp-a-traditional-place-for-teenage-romance/2018/07/14/05c1fb28-86b8-11e8-8f6c-46cb43e3f306_story.html?utm_term=.38d36b15ea49

Broader Public Discourse

KEY FINDINGS

- The Jewish community is talking about safety, respect and equity but it is not often in the context of these issues *within* the Jewish community.
- If there are broad discussions about issues of safety, respect, and equity within the Jewish community, they appear to be largely happening in private. The majority of content comes from a small subset of organizations that primarily includes women's organizations and Commitment adopters.
- Much of the conversation around safety and respect is presented as opinion, and public discourse around gender-based inequity is largely silent.
- The discourse regarding safety among adults is missing the discussion around coercion and consent.
- A notable amount of public discourse coverage on sexual harassment and abuse seemingly does not describe the allegations using those terms.
- The media tends to focus on the alleged perpetrator rather than the victim and there is a hesitance to name alleged perpetrators, especially beloved men.
- There are few media references to broader systemic issues related to safety, respect, and equity, as incidents tend to be treated in isolation. There is some discussion of how these issues relate to Judaism and Jewish values, as well as anti-Semitism.
- A focus on SRE issues in Judaism and Jewish values was notable in public discourse, including Bible and Torah stories and broader analysis of what Jewish traditions have to say about general SRE issues. There was a strong focus on *teshuva*, or repentance.

The content analysis of the websites and Twitter accounts of major Jewish organizations suggest that if there are broad discussions about SRE issues taking place within the Jewish community, they are largely happening in private. While it is clear that caring about these issues is perceived to some extent to align with Jewish values, the content analysis found a greater tendency to focus outwardly than inwardly. In total, of the websites and Twitter accounts of 52 organizations comprising the membership of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, 26 had public content related to broad issues of safety, respect, and/or equity. However, the content analysis found that only 18 organizations had public content on issues related to safety, respect, and/or equity within the Jewish community.

The 18 organizations collectively had 183 posts, statements, events, or resources related to issues of SRE within the Jewish community or related to SRE issues and Judaism. Notably, 43% of this content derived from only four organizations for women or that are specifically focused on women's issues. Furthermore, the review of the 52 organizations found that 79% of the content was from 13 organizations that are SRE Commitment Adopters. This suggests that these topics are likely being discussed and acknowledged even less in the broader communal and public discourse, limiting the potential for community-wide systemic change.

When issues of safety, respect, and equity were referenced on organizational websites or on organizational Twitter accounts, topics were broad and generally featured issues related to both gender and sexuality. A common focus of these materials was on what Judaism has to say about these issues, and materials and resources for supporting community development around them in a supportive and inclusive manner. There was notably less acknowledgement and attention to allegations surfacing within the Jewish community and broader systemic issues within Jewish communal and organizational culture and spaces.

Broadening this analysis to media coverage corroborated these findings. A search of major Jewish audience media sources covering issues in Jewish American life from October 1, 2017 to April 18, 2019, yielded only 251 articles and posts specifically addressing issues of safety, respect, and equity within the Jewish community or Jewish-specific commentary on safety, respect, and equity issues. There was a strong focus on safety and respect (85% of content), while only a fourth of the articles discussed topics related to equity.

Looking to influential Twitter users within the Jewish community, of the 50 accounts reviewed, 42 had tweeted posts on issues related to safety, respect, and/or equity since October 2017. However, many of these were in response to #MeToo or in relation to controversies involving political figures or celebrities. Only 12 of these accounts discussed issues related to safety, respect, and equity within Jewish workplaces and

communal spaces. That said, there were a small number of influential Twitter users on the JTA list focused specifically on SRE issues in the Jewish community. **Nonetheless, looking more broadly to the entire list reiterated a wider trend across the content reviewed; the Jewish community is talking about safety, respect and equity but it is not often in the context of these issues within the Jewish community.**

Where communal and intragroup discourse was found to be relatively quiet, public discourse beyond the Jewish community was even quieter. Mainstream media was found to be relatively silent regarding SRE issues within the Jewish community, even in relation to specific allegations and instances of abuse. A search of five mainstream news sources from October 17, 2017, to April 18, 2019, yielded only 17 articles from three sources related to safety, respect, and equity in the Jewish community using the research search term parameters. This relative public silence outside of intragroup Jewish communal discourse can be interpreted as logically consistent and likely not unique to the Jewish community. It also signals that the drive to push these discussions and transformative change will not come from media sources or coverage outside of the Jewish community.

SAFETY AND RESPECT DISCOURSE

Of the 213 Jewish audience media articles that the content analysis search yielded pertaining to safety, 77% explicitly framed issues in terms of sexual abuse or assault and 69% harassment. However, only 18% framed issues in terms of abuse of power, 9% consent, 2% intimidation, and 2% bystander intervention. Similarly, common terms across the content from major Jewish organizations included “harassment” (appearing in 41% of content), “sexual harassment” (33%), “safety” (26%), “sexual assault” (23%), “rape” (21%), and “sexual violence” (18%).

Only 97 of the articles from Jewish audience media related to safety referenced a specific case or allegation. The majority of the specific cases were identified as instances of sexual abuse or assault (75%) and/or harassment (58%), 13% were identified as abuses of power, and 5% as intimidation. **This finding mirrored those regarding victim-survivor experiences and contributing factors, showing a strong focus on the more “egregious” respect and safety transgressions that are safely and largely indisputably outside of the “grey area” of abuses.**

It is important to note that much of the conversation that is happening around safety and respect in public discourses is still happening in the realm of opinion. The content analysis surfaced articles that

were largely opinion pieces (51%), with the remainder news stories (38%), descriptions of specific projects or programs (8%), and one or two each editorials, event descriptions, sermons, and letters to the editor.

Perhaps most notably missing from the discourse regarding safety is a discussion around coercion and consent. A version of the word “coercion” only appeared in 8% of content from major Jewish organizations and 3% of content in Jewish audience media. This was particularly remarkable in discussions around specific instances of clergy “misconduct” regarding intimate relationships between clergy and adult congregants of consenting age. These were largely discussed as consensual but “inappropriate” without unpacking or assessing unequal power dynamics and coercive elements of “consent.” This is important to note because coercion holds a prominent place in the research around clergy sexual misconduct and adult victims as well as in survivor narratives.⁶¹

The content analysis also yielded interesting results regarding the framing of sexual abuse and harassment in relation to identity and power dynamics. While this analysis did not explore the basis of the abuses, only 19% of the content framed explicitly as being on the basis of gender and only 4%

on the basis of sexual orientation. This is particularly telling in terms of the previously noted missing voices and a lack of acknowledgement of systemic issues when taken in context of the findings of the secondary qualitative data review regarding victim-survivor experiences. This is also revealing considering that, of the 63 articles that discussed specific cases of safety-related abuse where the victim’s gender was specified, 79% were women, demonstrating that though women are victimized it is often not framed explicitly as a factor of gender.

Finally, it is important to note that of the articles in Jewish audience media that did address safety issues, 14% were specifically about children or minors. It appears that it was largely following the rise of the #MeToo movement that adult victimization entered the public discourse within the Jewish community. Some survivors expressed a similar sentiment while others worried that the sudden attention given to adult survivors would take away from the focus on and prevention of child victims.

61 Elana Maryles Sztokman, Sexual abuse in the Jewish community: The role of the rabbi. June 2019, Unpublished (under review)

EQUITY DISCOURSE

The public discourse around equity issues in the Jewish community was notably more silent, with the content analysis of Jewish audience media yielding only 63 articles that addressed issues related to equity. Of these, 57% addressed discrimination (36 articles), 30% career and role-based opportunities (19), 19% advancement (12), 16% terms and conditions of employment including pay equity (10), and 16% implicit or unconscious biases (10). The focus of equity-related content was primarily in discussions of Jewish workplaces, non-profits, and foundations (19 articles) and clergy (14). There was a notable minimal focus on donors (9) and boards (2). The topic of pay was somewhat more prevalent in the content from major Jewish organizations, appearing in 30% of equity-related content, although the term “pay equity” only appeared in 6% of the content.

44% of the articles discussed equity issues framed as specifically related to the basis of gender identity (28 articles) and 22% on the basis of sexual orientation (14). This focus was also evident in content from major Jewish organizations, where the word “gender” was found in 57% of content, with other common terms including “woman” or “women” (80%), “male” (26%), and “female” (24%). Notably, only 13% (7 out of 55) of the articles related to equity in Jewish audience media contain the term “sexual orientation,” and the same is true for only 16% of content from major Jewish organizations.

Especially in the context of the Leading Edge publication of their second and third Annual Employee Engagement Surveys, both of which addressed inequity in Jewish workplaces with a specific focus on gender and inequity in opportunities, advancement, and pay, public discourse is remarkably silent. The articles addressing equity issues were largely general analyses or commentary on issues within Jewish institutions and communal life (29 articles). The lack of attention to issues of equity related to sexual orientation is similarly notable.

PUBLIC RESPONSES TO SPECIFIC CASES AND HIGH-PROFILE ALLEGATIONS

From the early weeks of October 2017, after the Weinstein story inspired other women to come forward with their stories and when the #MeToo movement went viral, the conversation about sexual victimization entered the Jewish realm. This section addresses the public discourse around specific cases and high-profile allegations that were covered in public sources (both Jewish and mainstream media) in the timeframe covered by this research. A critical caveat to this section is that it is not focused on the credibility of accusations or guilt/innocence of the accused.

It is focused on *how* allegations have been discussed once they entered public discourse, and understanding how the trends and content of these discussions may affect victim-survivors and shape norms within the community that condone or communicate intolerance of certain kinds of abuses.

An additional critical qualification to this section is the choices around not using the names of victim-survivors in these cases. As this section was based on a content analysis of public discourse, none are based on firsthand information shared with the researchers from the victim-survivors of the cases addressed. As such, the authors have intentionally chosen to not utilize the names of the victim-survivors except where they are footnote referenced as the authors of the articles being reviewed. This section does not use any quotes or direct victim-survivor personal narratives previously shared in public discourse. This decision was made for two reasons; firstly, the discourse analysis highlights what the media has focused on and the analysis has found that the focus of these stories is generally on the perpetrators. Secondly, we believe that a victim-survivor centered approach respects the right of

victim-survivors to maintain control of their own personal stories and narratives and how they are used and shared, even if they have told their stories publicly. Therefore, the analysis here focuses on the ways in which we can learn to better support survivors in public discourse and Jewish spaces based on what they have shared in the stories about their experiences and based on what is written about their stories.

In October 2017, a *Medium* piece was published with a claim that Elie Wiesel had grabbed the author's behind as they posed for a group photo with her then-boyfriend's family at a Jewish charity event in New York in 1989. The author explained that she had stayed quiet for nearly three decades because it "might hurt many people who would lose their idol" and because she feared that it would reverberate negatively across the Jewish community. However, in the wake of the "#MeToo" campaign, she decided to publish the experience.⁶² These allegations were mentioned in three of the articles yielded in the content analysis, one of which was an opinion piece titled "Here's why I believed Elie Wiesel's accuser," and two articles discounting the allegations, calling them 'spurious' and debating whether what Wiesel was alleged to have done was "severe" enough to warrant coverage.⁶³

Similarly, on October 24, 2017, *The Forward* published an opinion article authored from their

staff, "Why *The Forward* Took Down a Story About Elie Wiesel," detailing that the story did not meet journalistic standards because it was from a single source with no corroborating evidence or response from the alleged attacker. This last justification is particularly curious in that Elie Wiesel had been deceased for over a year when the allegations came to light, essentially introducing a criteria that the publication will not acknowledge allegations against those who are no longer living. What's more, the *JTA* article notes that after the allegations were made in *Medium*, *Newsweek* reporters followed up on the story and interviewed the accuser's then-boyfriend who recalled her reaction and her telling him about the incident after it occurred, establishing multiple sources and corroborating evidence. Despite this, *The Forward* did not issue any follow-up coverage after redacting their original article.

In December 2017, the Conservative movement's United Synagogue Youth (USY) cut ties from its former director Jules Gutin after former male youth group members accused him of inappropriate sexual behavior.⁶⁴ Three articles specifically addressed Jules Gutin, though others referenced the case without naming him. The allegations first emerged in November, and USY suspended Gutin the week of Thanksgiving as it investigated the matter. USY severed ties with Gutin in December and set up a hotline for victims of sexual harassment and assault in the organization. It is of note that all

of the articles that specifically talked about this case were prompted by USY cutting ties, and not by the allegations or investigation. Two articles in December also covered the dismissal of Jens Hoffman, curator at The Jewish Museum, following an investigation into accusations of sexual harassment. **Again, the articles on these incidents were prompted by the alleged perpetrator's dismissal rather than by the allegations themselves.**

In late 2017, Manhattan's 92nd Street Y invited writer Ari Shavit as the keynote speaker at an Israeli Independence Day program scheduled for 2018. This would have been his first major public event in the United States after he had admitted that he was the unnamed Israeli journalist that a reporter had accused of sexual harassment and assault in October 2016. In December 2017, two additional women came forward with new allegations of sexual misconduct in *Jewish Currents*, and Shavit was removed from the event posting.⁶⁵ Four articles yielded from the search of Jewish American media specifically discussed accusations related to Ari Shavit. One covered the new accusations made against him and the cancellation of the event; another was an opinion piece in *The Forward* titled "Does Ari Shavit Deserve Redemption?" Two were pieces published in *The Forward*: "Ari Shavit, Go Away and Don't Come Back" and "I Don't Believe Barry Freundel — Or Ari Shavit Either." All of these focused on the lack of genuine repentance and apology from Shavit. It is, again, notable that while coverage addressed the new allegations, much of it was prompted by the cancellation of Shavit from the 92nd Street Y event.

62 Wiesel charity calls woman's molestation allegation 'spurious,' *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, October 24, 2017, <https://www.jta.org/2017/10/24/united-states/woman-says-elie-wiesel-molested-her>.

63 Andrew Sillow-Carroll, "Why we waited before publishing that story about Elie Wiesel," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, October 24, 2017, <https://www.jta.org/2017/10/24/opinion/why-we-waited-before-publishing-that-story-about-elie-wiesel>.

64 Ben Sales, "Ari Shavit accused again of sexual misconduct, prompting comeback cancellation," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, December 15, 2017, <https://www.jta.org/2017/12/15/united-states/ari-shavit-accused-again-of-sexual-misconduct-prompting-comeback-cancellation>.

65 Ibid.

This issue was also covered in mainstream media in an opinion piece published by the *New York Times* by Shavit's original accuser titled "Should We Forgive the Men Who Assaulted Us?" The author describes her experiences and discusses the question of the limits of forgiveness and the focus of Judaism on restorative rather than punitive justice. She describes the apology she received from Shavit and its lack of genuineness, outlining the criteria for atonement and concluding,

"I'm not ready to forgive him — at least not yet. Until restitution is made publicly as well as privately, his reckoning rings hollow. But as Judaism reminds me: It is never too late to repair what's been broken."⁶⁶

In April 2018, Leonard Robinson resigned under pressure from his post as Executive Director of NJY Camps after allegations of sexual harassment surfaced.⁶⁷ The allegations were in a role prior to his employment at NJY Camps and emerged in a *Jewish Week* opinion article from a JCC supervisor detailing sexual harassment. Although the author did not name the supervisor in the article, she later disclosed that it was Leonard Robinson.⁶⁸ After Robinson was publicly named, *The Jewish Week* published another article in which several more women came forward with allegations of harassment spanning decades.⁶⁹ The cases suggested a troubling pattern of rehires and promotions after known abuses.⁷⁰

In addition to these two articles, the media analysis yielded only two more news stories covering this incident. The coverage of these allegations all featured first-hand victim narratives. The *JTA* published one follow-up article in February 2019 when, the entire board of NJY Camps suspended itself after an investigation found that it had failed to address Robinson's predatory behavior. Though the article describes the action as self-imposed, it also includes a statement from NYJ Camps's publicist asserting that almost all board members had no knowledge of Robinson's actions, seemingly contradicting the stated findings of the investigation.⁷¹

In June 2018, Rabbi Larry Bach resigned from his synagogue for a problem the synagogue lawyer described as "sexual in nature," referring to a yearlong sexual relationship with a woman who regularly worshiped at the synagogue.⁷² The content analysis search yielded two articles that covered this case; the first prompted by his resignation and the second prompted by his backing out of an Institute for Jewish Spirituality (IJS) retreat. This was because the event's leaders were deliberating whether to let him attend or not after the woman who accused him of sexual misconduct found out about his attendance and reached out to the IJS.⁷³ Both of the articles describe the relationship as an "affair" and "inappropriate sexual behavior." They also both reference Larry Bach's marital status; however, though one article detailed the woman's allegations of sexual misconduct, neither analyzed the rabbi-congregant power dynamic nor the potentially coercive aspects of the "relationship."

In July 2018, claims from women emerged against American-Jewish sociologist Steven M. Cohen.⁷⁴ Cohen did not deny the allegations and apologized for them in a statement to *The Jewish Week* in July.⁷⁵ Seven of the articles in the content analysis addressed Cohen, several of which discussed the

66 Danielle Berrin, "Should We Forgive the Men Who Assaulted Us?" *The New York Times*, December 22, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/22/opinion/metoo-sexual-assault-forgiveness.html>.

67 Hannah Dreyfus, "NJY Camps Director Resigns Over Past Sexual Harassment Claims: Has the Jewish community's #MeToo reckoning begun?," *The New York Jewish Week*, April 13, 2018, <https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/nj-jewish-camps-director-resigns-over-past-sexual-harassment-claims/>.

68 Hannah Dreyfus, "More Women Come Forward Against N.J. Camp Exec Alleging Sexual Harassment," *The New York Jewish Week*, April 18, 2018, <https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/after-n-j-camp-exec-sacked-last-week-more-women-alleging-sexual-harassment-come-forward/>.

69 Ibid.

70 Ibid.

71 "NJ camps' board resigns over handling of director's predatory behavior," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, February 7, 2019, <https://www.jta.org/2019/02/07/united-states/nj-camps-board-resigns-over-handling-of-directors-predatory-behavior>.

72 Ari Feldman, "Reform Rabbi Was Secretly Censured for Affair With Congregant," *The Forward*, June 3, 2018, <https://forward.com/news/402226/reform-rabbi-was-secretly-censured-for-affair-with-congregant/>.

73 Ari Feldman, "Rabbi Accused Of Sexual Misconduct Asked Not To Attend Spiritual Retreat," *The Forward*, June 28, 2018, <https://forward.com/news/national/404365/rabbi-accused-of-sexual-misconduct-asked-not-to-attend-spiritual-retreat/>.

74 Hannah Dreyfus, "Harassment Allegations Mount Against Leading Jewish Sociologist," *The New York Jewish Week*, July 19, 2018, <https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/harassment-allegations-mount-against-leading-jewish-sociologist/>.

75 "Steven Cohen resigns from Hebrew Union College following sexual misconduct investigation," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, August 22, 2018, <https://www.jta.org/2018/08/22/united-states/steven-cohen-resigns-hebrew-union-college-following-sexual-misconduct-investigation>.

implications of his work on Jewish demography and its relationship to problematic and sexist norms regarding Jewish continuity, as previously discussed. Four of these articles were prompted by the allegations brought to light in a *Jewish Week* investigation. The remaining three were prompted by his resignation from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, resignation from the Berman Jewish Policy Archive, and removal from his position as a board member of *New Voices*, and the communal fallout.⁷⁶ Only two of the articles reviewed featured first-hand victim narratives.

The following month saw allegations of inaction in multiple instances by administrators following alleged sexual abuse of students by three former employees, as well as allegations of sexual misconduct against three additional former employees at Ramaz School.⁷⁷ This story broke following an investigation by *The Forward* which asserted that Stanley Rosenfeld had been a serial predator in the 1970s while teaching at a number of Jewish day schools and working at multiple summer camps.⁷⁸ Nine of the articles from this content analysis related specifically to the Rosenfeld case, some of which also addressed the handling of the case by Ramaz School. Three of the articles covering the allegations against Rosenfeld and the handling of

the cases feature the first-hand narratives of victim-survivors, all then-adult males who experienced their abuses when they were minors at the school. Two of the stories covering Rosenfeld also discussed the abuses of Albert Goetz, a teacher who had predatory relationships with female students over a period of more than two decades ranging from photographing their feet to brushing the girls' hair to "physical and romantic relationships" with them.⁷⁹ However, in discussing Goetz's abuses, the quotes from former students were not from his female victims but, instead, from male Ramaz School alumni. Only one other article in the content analysis specifically focused on Goetz's abuses, and it included quotes and narrative from a then-adult female victim of the alleged abuse.

In February 2019, after Robert Kraft was chosen to receive the Genesis Prize, he was charged with two cases of soliciting sex, in relation to what was described in media as an investigation into prostitution and suspected human trafficking.⁸⁰ One article yielded in the content analysis search focused on his "legendary" giving and commentary from the Boston Jewish community, almost the entirety of which narrates his philanthropic contributions. Though the allegations pertained to non-Jewish spaces, the notable feature of the

public discourse came in the response from the Genesis Prize Foundation, which chose to still give its 2019 award to Kraft in the aftermath of the charges. An email sent from the president of the foundation on February 28th, titled "The Genesis Prize Foundation Stands with 2019 Laureate Robert Kraft," praised Kraft for being at the "forefront of fighting antisemitism" and remaining "a close friend and major supporter of Israel." The email made no mention of the charges.⁸¹ Later statements called the charges against Kraft "unfortunate," but said that he remained a "highly deserving" laureate for his Jewish philanthropy.⁸²

One of the articles yielded in the content analysis search covered the resignation of the Genesis Foundation from the SRE Coalition following this incident.⁸³ Another notable feature of this incident was that the Genesis Prize Foundation, in partnership with the Jewish Funders Network (JFN), had recently selected winners to the North American Women's Empowerment Challenge, a matching grants competition aimed at supporting organizations that promote female leadership and address sexual harassment, abuse, and discrimination in the Jewish community.⁸⁴

76 Ibid.

77 Ari Feldman, "Legendary Orthodox Rabbi Aware of Sexual Abuse Of Children, Report Says," *The Forward*, August 30, 2018, <https://forward.com/news/national/409376/legendary-orthodox-rabbi-aware-of-sexual-abuse-of-children-report-says/>.

78 Allison Kaplan Sommer, "Not Just Weinstein: The Year #MeToo Rocked and Shocked the Jewish World," *Haaretz*, September 18, 2018, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/premium-not-just-weinstein-the-year-metoo-rocked-and-shocked-the-jewish-world-1.6480994>.

79 Ari Feldman, "Teacher With A Foot Fetish Was Allowed To Prey On Jewish Students For Years," *The Forward*, September 20, 2018, <https://forward.com/news/national/410231/lookstein-was-made-aware-of-teachers-physical-relationship-with-a-student/>.

80 Patricia Mazzei, Kevin Draper and Mark Leibovich, "Patriots Owner Robert Kraft Charged in Florida Prostitution Investigation," *The New York Times*, February 22, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/22/sports/robert-kraft-jupiter-orchids-arrest.html>.

81 Hannah Dreyfus, "Standing By Kraft, Genesis Prize Foundation Resigns From #MeToo Coalition," *The New York Jewish Week*, March 14, 2019, <https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/genesis-foundation-resigns-from-metoo-coalition-after-standing-by-kraft/>.

82 Gabe Friedman, "Martin Short Wants You To RSVP For Genesis Prize Ceremony Honoring Robert Kraft," *The Forward*, April 18, 2019, <https://forward.com/fast-forward/422915/genesis-prize-robert-kraft-martin-short/>.

83 Hannah Dreyfus, "Standing By Kraft, Genesis Prize Foundation Resigns From #MeToo Coalition," 2019.

84 Ibid.

Finally, following a *Jewish Week* story from September 2018 that revealed that megadonor and Birthright co-founder Michael Steinhardt had reportedly been barred from taking solo meetings with female staffers at Hillel International due to inappropriate behavior,⁸⁵ a more in-depth investigative piece was published by the *New York Times* in collaboration with *ProPublica* in March 2019. It discussed Steinhardt's alleged pattern of sexual harassment and abuse of power in the world of Jewish philanthropy.⁸⁶ The *New York Times* story was based on interviews with seven women who shared allegations going back to the 1990s regarding propositions that were sexual in nature from Steinhardt.⁸⁷ As with the allegations against Steven M. Cohen, Ari Shavit, and Leonard Robinson, the allegations made included those from well-known and respected Jewish female professionals. A notable feature of this allegation was that it was initially reported in a mainstream media source as a news story rather than in a Jewish publication and/or as an opinion piece.

Steinhardt's family and foundations issued a public response to the article. They stated that the remarks that women said made them feel debased were made in "jest" and that Steinhardt's humor can be "insensitive."⁸⁸ A statement from his son and professional leaders of his two main philanthropies said that the *New York Times* article "[went] out of its way to leave the false impression that Michael propositioned a handful of women" and went on to say that "He, of course, did no such thing. Nor does the article actually claim that he ever tried to have sex with anyone. But the innuendo and purposeful distortions are clearly designed to harm Michael and mislead readers."⁸⁹ It also acknowledged that, as in a previous article, Steinhardt "apologized for the unintended bad feelings his remarks have caused."⁹⁰

There was notably more public acknowledgement of this case, with 16 articles specifically addressing the Steinhardt allegations among the articles yielded in the Jewish media search. Even among influential Jewish Twitter users, there was an uptick in posts related to SRE issues following the Steinhardt articles. The statement from Steinhardt's family and foundations was explicitly criticized in several sources. The coverage addressed donor dynamics and issues regarding association with known abusers, especially from the perspective of beneficiaries, including a follow-up *Washington Post* opinion piece, "Michael Steinhardt and the Takeover of Jewish Philanthropy by Mega-Donors." Acknowledging broader systemic issues in the community within the context of the Steinhardt allegations was a marked feature of the coverage of these accusations.

85 <https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/hillel-investigating-allegations-against-major-philanthropist/>

86 Sharon Otterman and Hannah Dreyfus, "Michael Steinhardt, a Leader in Jewish Philanthropy, Is Accused of a Pattern of Sexual Harassment," *The New York Times*, March 21, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/21/nyregion/michael-steinhardt-sexual-harassment.html>.

87 Ibid.

88 The Steinhardt Foundation for Jewish Life, <https://steinhardtfoundation.org/home/an-important-message-from-the-steinhardt-family-and-foundations/>.

89 Ibid.

90 Ibid.

91 Allison Kaplan Sommer, "Not Just Weinstein: The Year #MeToo Rocked and Shocked the Jewish World," 2018.

On the whole across all content reviewed from major Jewish organizations, there were very few statements or responses to specific allegations or cases. However, in the wake of the Steinhardt allegations the SRE Coalition and several Jewish organizations made public statements. In this specific case, e-Jewish Philanthropy published a selection of statements from funder organizations, with the note that

"eJP has a long history of not circulating public statements made by organizations on any subject. Today's *New York Times* article, and the self-serving response by the Steinhardt Foundation, has caused us to revisit our policy. We welcome additional statements from any funder organization."

Following #MeToo, the Jewish community also saw renewed attention on the legacy of earlier offenders like "Peeping Tom" Rabbi Barry Freundel and the late Shlomo Carlebach.⁹¹ In the articles yielded from the search applied to Jewish American media, Barry Freundel was mentioned in three articles, two of which were in conversation with each other regarding the prevention of similar abuse and then the congregation defending their response actions

after Freundel's case. Carlebach also featured in six articles, centering around discussions regarding the primacy of his music in Jewish communal life in light of the allegations of sexual misconduct in the #MeToo era. There was also a focus on his daughter following public statements that she was "angry with her father" and that as a child she was sexually molested by "a trusted friend of my father's, also a rabbi, a fixture in my home."⁹²

Similar to broader issues of SRE in the Jewish community, high profile cases were generally covered less prominently in mainstream media than in sources primarily targeting Jewish audiences. Five of the articles from mainstream media that the search yielded covered specific instances of abuses related to safety, respect, or equity. One of these was the investigative article from the *New York Times* and *ProPublica* regarding the sexual harassment allegations against Michael Steinhardt⁹³ and another was the *Washington Post* follow-up perspective piece about the incident and megadonors in Jewish philanthropy.⁹⁴ Another covered an instance specifically related to sexual abuse of children in a Jewish Washington, D.C., preschool,⁹⁵ and one was an op-ed personal narrative alleging sexual harassment by Ari Shavit.

It is important to note that targeted searches for content related to specific incidents found that in some instances, such as Rabbi Barry Freundel's case, the issue was covered in mainstream media but the articles did not use the terms "sexual" or "gender" in their text. As such, they were not found in the search using the terms described in Appendix A. The same was true regarding coverage in Jewish-audience media. This means that even when incidents related to sexual harassment and abuse are covered and discussed in public discourse, a notable amount of coverage may not describe the allegations using those terms.

Notably, the articles in Jewish audience media discussing specific cases were mostly presented with a focus on the perpetrator—their role, background, and/or perspective (58% of the articles on specific cases or allegations). Additionally, it was notable that many articles were prompted and framed around the removal of individuals who had been accused of abuses or harassment from their positions, rather than around the actual allegations.

Only 25% of the articles reviewed primarily focused on the experiences and narratives of the victims. In the 97 articles about specific cases, 1 referred explicitly to a rabbi as the victim, 16 to staff, 5 to campers, and 11 to students. In 20 of these articles,

the victims were minors. Further highlighting the absence of victim-survivor voices is that only 9% of the articles contained personal narratives.

FEATURES OF PUBLIC DISCOURSE ON SRE ISSUES IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

A number of distinct features of public discourse on SRE issues in the Jewish community were observed in the content analysis. Many of the themes relate to factors contributing to a lack of safety, respect, and equity in Jewish spaces, and several can be tied to broader Jewish values and norms within the Jewish community.

Norms on Naming Names and "Gossip"

The content review indicated a hesitance to "name names" and explicitly call out perpetrators. While this can be attributed to liabilities associated with naming names in the press, other research has noted that Jewish laws and customs around *lashon hara* can mean that disclosing abuse is cast as "gossip," especially among religiously observant groups. Even in non-Orthodox circles, values such as *kavod harav* (respecting rabbis), *shalom bayit* (maintaining peace in the home), and even *teshuva* (the ability to repent) can easily be invoked in the process of silencing victims.⁹⁶

A March 2018 opinion article from Mira Wasserman in *The Forward* titled "Does The Torah Require Us To Publicize Names Of Sexual Abusers?" asked, "Why are things playing out differently in the Jewish

92 <https://www.jta.org/2018/01/02/united-states/neshama-carlebach-responds-to-allegations-of-sexual-misconduct-against-her-father>

93 Sharon Otterman and Hannah Dreyfus, "Michael Steinhardt, a Leader in Jewish Philanthropy, Is Accused of a Pattern of Sexual Harassment," 2019.

94 Lila Corwin Berman, "Michael Steinhardt and the takeover of Jewish philanthropy by mega-donors," *The Washington Post*, March 22, 2019, <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=4&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwi-pcmN9fjhAhUJQH0KHd23DkcQFjADegQIABAB&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.washingtonpost.com>

[%2Foutlook%2F2019%2F03%2F22%2Fmichael-steinhardt-takeover-jewish-philanthropy-by-mega-donors%2F&usq=AOvVaw1m20S5Bw3jSM6GKtqxviV0](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/police-investigate-sexual-abuse-allegations-at-jewish-preschool-in-district/2018/08/27/1c80e05a-aa34-11e8-a8d7-0f63ab8b1370_story.html?utm_term=.a7f83168682a)

95 Perry Stein, "Police investigate sexual abuse allegations at Jewish D.C. preschool," *The Washington Post*, August 27, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/police-investigate-sexual-abuse-allegations-at-jewish-preschool-in-district/2018/08/27/1c80e05a-aa34-11e8-a8d7-0f63ab8b1370_story.html?utm_term=.a7f83168682a.

96 Dr. Elana Maryles Sztokman, "#metoo in the Jewish Community," 2018.

community than in other sectors of American society?"⁹⁷ To this, the author asserted that part of the answer may be in Jewish ethics and warnings against socially destructive uses of speech like gossip, which places great value on respecting people's reputations. She asserts that through these values people are taught not to speak ill of people behind their backs or publicly humiliate them. She asserts that such ethical principles are being invoked as reasons not to go public with accusations in the absence of irrefutable proof or a confession. Concerns about Jewish ethics present yet another obstacle, particularly when well-meaning leaders presume that to address victims' complaints openly would be to transgress Jewish teachings.⁹⁸

She further asserted:

Since the start of #MeToo, not a single perpetrator from within the world of American Jewish institutional life has been publicly brought to account, and no one has stepped forward to offer a public apology. For us, the big disclosure of the past months has not been to publicize the names and actions of particular perpetrators, but rather to first acknowledge that the problem of sexual harassment and gender bias exists within Jewish organizations, and that it might be pervasive.

An opinion article in *e-Jewish Philanthropy* from Shifra Bronznick, Barbara Dobkin and Rabbi Joanna Samuels similarly noted, "In fact, much of what takes place in Jewish communities has been obscured by the pretense that we are one big happy family, and the rule that we don't wash our dirty laundry in public."⁹⁹

Responding to Public Accusations Against Beloved Men and Minimizing Abuses

The focus on perpetrators in the articles discussed above was often framed more in terms of who they were and their contributions to the Jewish community. Attention was drawn to what was at stake for the community if the allegations led to their dismissal or other consequences rather than framing the accusations as abuses and discussing them in terms of the harm inflicted on the victim-survivors.

In her research on #MeToo within the Jewish community with Barbara Dobkin, Dr. Sztokman raised the question of what has made the organized Jewish community so late to the game in terms of addressing and recognizing these issues internally. They identified some key characteristics of Jewish organizational life that make it particularly difficult for victims to come forward.

One distinctive feature they noted is the community dynamic so valued in Jewish life, which often means that abusers are almost always beloved by someone, often high-profile community members.¹⁰⁰

This dynamic was similarly noted in previous sections as a contributing factor to a lack of safety, respect, and equity in Jewish spaces.

This observation surfaced in many examples across the content analysis. The aforementioned explanation from *e-Jewish Philanthropy* on their decision to publish statements from funder organizations about Steinhardt explained their justification:

A long-time pro emailed me tonight, 'The alleged statements and acts, even if true, can no way be compared to the good he has done for the Jewish People. It is people like you who don't understand this.' This mentality is pervasive; and therein lies the bigger problem.¹⁰¹

Birthright's former chief executive officer responded to the Steinhardt allegations by saying, "I appreciate

97 Mira Wasserman, "Does The Torah Require Us To Publicize Names Of Sexual Abusers?" *The Forward*, March 27, 2018, <https://forward.com/life/faith/397539/is-there-a-jewish-ethical-imperative-to-publicize-names-of-accused/>.

98 Ibid

99 Shifra Bronznick, Barbara Dobkin and Rabbi Joanna Samuels, "We Too," *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, January 18, 2018, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/we-too/>.

100 Dr. Elana Maryles Sztokman, "#metoo in the Jewish Community," 2018.

101 "Jewish Funders Speak Out on Michael Steinhardt," *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, March 22, 2019, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/jewish-funders-speak-out-on-michael-steinhardt/>.

him very, very much. Even if there were some comments, about sex, about women, I wouldn't take it seriously, because he made important decisions in other areas concerning Birthright."¹⁰²

The *JTA* editorial regarding the allegations against Elie Wiesel introduced into the public discourse a particularly relevant perspective around prioritization of reputation over alleged victim-survivors and assertions of "grey area" abuses. In the piece, the issue is not whether or not to believe the accuser, but how the discussion is framed:

I think the gender divide also informed my sense of the severity of what Wiesel is alleged to have done...[the allegation] sounds gross, but absent reports that this was habitual behavior, I found myself asking, does it belong in the same category as Weinstein's serial and extended stalking and hostage-like encounters with women, or Ailes' lengthy legacy of sexual harassment and coercion? Does Wiesel's name deserve to be forever linked with this boorish moment from nearly 30 years ago?

That may make me sound sexist, but I am trying to be honest here. I have seen women raise similar questions in discussions...on social media (and, for that matter, in our office). At some level, I don't think I or they are blindly defending a male or diminishing incidents of unwanted touching or trying to argue [the accuser] out of the hurt and anger she still feels. Perhaps it has something to do with the specific cause Wiesel represents. The Holocaust is sacrosanct and central to modern Jewish identity. Wiesel gave voice to all who died in and survived the Shoah, and prodded the conscience of the West to make sure its memory stayed alive and its lessons relevant. Maybe some people recoiled from [the accuser's] account — and want not to believe it — because they feel to discredit Wiesel would sully Holocaust memory itself.¹⁰³

The thread of "not so bad" abuses as being to some degree "excusable" is mirrored in other places in public discourse as well. "Unfairly Pillorying Michael Steinhardt," an opinion letter authored by Steinhardt's personal friend and published by the *New York Times*, stated, "As the article makes clear, there are no accusations that he ever forced, or even attempted, unwanted physical contact. And yet *The Times* devotes a coveted front-page slot and two full inside pages to the story. Isn't that a bit of overkill?"¹⁰⁴ The assertion that as long as abuses weren't "too serious," people who had done a lot of good for the community should be given a pass surfaced throughout the public discourse, particularly in relation to high profile, wealthy or influential, white, straight, cisgender male abusers.

102 Sharon Otterman and Hannah Dreyfus, "Michael Steinhardt, a Leader in Jewish Philanthropy, Is Accused of a Pattern of Sexual Harassment," 2019.

103 Andrew Sillow-Carroll, "Why we waited before publishing that story about Elie Wiesel," 2017.

104 "Unfairly Pillorying Michael Steinhardt," Letter in *The New York Times*, March 22, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/22/opinion/letters/michael-steinhardt.html>.

105 Nathan Guttman, "Harvey Weinstein Wave' Topples High-Profile Jewish Intellectual Leon Wieseltier," *The Forward*, October 27, 2017, <https://forward.com/news/national/386317/harvey-weinstein-wave-topples-high-profile-jewish-intellectual-leon-wieseltier/>.

106 Dr. Keren R. McGinty, "True Equity Requires Rejecting the Status Quo," 2019.

The issue of the beloved accused men extended beyond the accused individuals themselves and blurred into a broader focus on mourning what their guilt would deprive the Jewish community of.

For example, in discussing the news of Jewish intellectual Leon Wieseltier's sexual misconduct and harassment of female co-workers that emerged in October 2017, professor Dov Waxman of Northeastern stated, "At a time when there seem to be fewer and fewer American Jewish public intellectuals, Leon Wieseltier's public downfall and disgrace, however well deserved, is another stain on American Jewish public life."¹⁰⁵ While softer in tone and short of suggesting forgiveness or excusal of the accused, sentiments of this nature focus on the contributions of the perpetrator and overlook the harm inflicted upon victim-survivors. An opinion piece on public responses to the allegations against Cohen echoed this observation in noting:

A famous author wrote about her struggles coming to terms with the actions of her "long-term acquaintance" Steven M. Cohen and his resignation from his place of employment. She opined: "I don't want him or his family to starve" (Moment magazine November-December, 2018). There was no concern evinced for how Cohen's sexual misconduct and abuse of power influenced women's incomes or whether they were starving.¹⁰⁶

Another article concluded:

American Jewry is very good at singing its own praises, celebrating people's Jewish identities when they do something worthwhile or admirable. But it's time for the Jewish community to face its own #MeToo crisis. If we want to create positive cultural change for ourselves and for our daughters, women must speak out and the Jewish community must act – regardless of the individual's position or influence.¹⁰⁷

Abuses Treated as Isolated Events and Lack of Context within Systemic Issues

Across the content from major Jewish organizations, there were very few statements or references to broader systemic issues related to sexual harassment, assault, and discrimination within Jewish workplaces and communal spaces. Only 28% of the Jewish audience media articles related specifically to safety framed the content in terms of larger systemic issues in Jewish institutions and communal life. The remaining 72% discussed content in terms of isolated incidents in the absence of any larger causal or system issues, trends, or patterns.

A March 2018 article from *Jewish Week* discussed a list circulating in the Jewish community of the names of men involved in Jewish communal life accused over the years of sexual harassment

and/or abuse, a list compiled by Jewish women which apparently predated #MeToo¹⁰⁸ The list was described as akin to the “Shitty Media Men” list, which named (and in some cases led to the firing of) 70 prestigious male media professionals. According to the article, Naomi Eisenberger, the Executive Director of The Good People Fund, described the document as “not a small list” of names of men of authority in the Jewish communal world and that “many ... are easily recognizable.” Taken in context of the relatively few cases that have been broadly publicly acknowledged, it is very likely that many of the names on the list have not been brought to account.

Beyond the *Jewish Week* article, the list received

limited attention in Jewish or broader media, even though its existence makes clear that the known cases are not isolated occurrences. One opinion article in *e-Jewish Philanthropy* noted that:

The American Jewish public has started to recognize that while we perceive our communities to be holy spaces, our institutions and communities are not always safe and equitable. Though this reality has always existed, it has remained largely unspoken. Even a move last year to create a list to “warn other women” was shrouded in secrecy and anonymity, for fear of retaliation and consequence.¹⁰⁹

The existence of the #GamAni Facebook group, and its growing popularity with almost 1200 members, further reflects a hard-to-ignore void in the Jewish community. That is, there is a lack of consistent, significant communal structures and channels through which those who are sexually harassed and discriminated against can seek redress.

There is also a lack of institutionalized standards of behavior and respect across the spectrum of workplaces and environments.¹¹⁰

Where broader issues were addressed, it was largely in terms of institutional measures for prevention or specific procedures regarding how such instances would be addressed. There was a noticeable lack of broader discursive introspection or assessment regarding what the state of safety, respect, and equity is in Jewish workplaces and communal spaces, what kinds of structural issues may contribute to the occurrence of sexual harassment or discrimination within Jewish communities, and where Jewish institutions stand on the cases and issues that have emerged in the wake of #MeToo.

One article encouraged a move away from viewing these cases as occurring only between individual perpetrators and victims and uses restorative justice,

107 Keren R. McGinty, “American Jewry’s #MeToo Problem: A First-Person Encounter,” 2018,

108 Hannah Dreyfus, “#MeToo List Circulating In Jewish Nonprofit World,” *The New York Jewish Week*, February 9, 2018, <https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/metoo-list-circulating-in-jewish-nonprofit-world/>.

109 Rabbi Ruth Abusch-Magder, Leah Strigler and Shira Puce, “B’Kavod: The Honor System for #MeToo Voices,” *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, August 27, 2018, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/bkavod-the-honor-system-for-metoo-voices/>.

110 Naomi Eisenberger and Jamie Allen Black, “Sexual Harassment is Not a Jewish Value,” *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, November 12, 2017, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/sexual-harassment-is-not-a-jewish-value/>.

which is also addressed below, as an example to do so. It asserted:

Additionally, recent conversations about sexual misconduct within Jewish communities have focused almost exclusively on a few specific individuals. This overlooks Jewish systems and structures that permit or enable sexual misconduct. Ignoring this is to look away from our part in the harm caused to so many. While statements of support for those who have disclosed are helpful, we must consider the need for communal restorative justice and *teshuva* especially in cases where we have turned a blind eye, claimed ignorance, or created an unsafe and silencing environment.¹¹¹

SRE Issues in Relation to Judaism and Jewish Values

A focus on SRE issues in Judaism and Jewish values was another key feature of public discourse. Common themes across the content of the posts, statements, events, and resources on SRE from major Jewish organizations included “Jewish community,” which was mentioned in 51% of content, as well as “Jewish life” (30% of content). 57% of content made explicit reference to “Judaism,” nearly 40% “Torah,” the “Talmud” (26%), “Jewish law” (13%), and 14% made explicit reference to “Jewish values.” Across all 251 Jewish audience media articles addressing safety, respect, and equity, 42% had content related to Judaism or Jewish values related to SRE issues. 25% of articles discussed norms from Judaism or Jewish history and traditions that were framed as problematic for promoting safety, respect, and equity, whereas 16% advanced norms that were framed as supportive.

Many articles focused on problematic Torah and Biblical stories, while other articles also pointed to Jewish texts that can guide the Jewish response to victimization. 14 articles discussed incidents from Jewish history and 5 articles focused on reframing or reinterpreting norms. There was a strong trend of referencing the story of Vashti and Esther,¹¹² with a number of articles appearing around the timeframe and theme of Purim. Several articles discussed reframing Vashti as a woman who stood up to her husband and chose banishment over being objectified.¹¹³

The articles also focused on the lack of analysis of her husband as an abuser and the absence of critical

conversations around consent in discussing the Purim story.¹¹⁴ One article noted:

In the #MeToo era, it might be questionable to make a virtue of the classic Purim themes and traditions: getting so drunk that one loses control, patriarchal authority...the Book of Esther is a story filled with elitist excess, non-consenting sexual and marital relations, and state-sanctioned violence. It’s easy enough to get lost in the surface understanding of the story, and to find plenty to take offense against.¹¹⁵

However, several of these articles called for using Purim and the story of Vashti to have important conversations about assault, harassment, and consent, as well as positive reinterpretation of traditional texts:

Purim gives us an opportunity to see how these problems have played out throughout our history, but also how we’ve brought our understanding of gender to our texts in the past and how we can have a fresh view of our texts with a new understanding of gender and women’s experience.¹¹⁶

Several of the articles yielded in the content analysis search were prompted by Supreme Court nominee

111 Alissa Ackerman and Guila Benchimol, “Restorative Justice and Teshuva Following Sexual Misconduct,” *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, September 12, 2018, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/restorative-justice-and-teshuva-following-sexual-misconduct/>.

112 The story of Queen Vashti is found in the first chapter of the book of Esther in the Bible. King Ahasuerus throws a seven day party, and on the seventh day the king boasts of her beauty and sends for her so he can display her before his guests, to which Vashti refuses. In his concern that wives will feel empowered to disobey their husbands, the king banishes her from his presence, a national beauty pageant is held to find a replacement is held, and Vashti is replaced by a compliant Esther. Esther saves the Jewish people by her intervention with the king, which is the focus for the Purim Festival. Esther disobeys her husband’s commands, as did Vashti, but in Esther’s case, she does so with a display of humility that wins her the king’s favor.

113 Meredith Jacobs, “#IAmVashti,” *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, February 20, 2018, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/iamvashti/>.

114 Ibid.

115 Cantor Jamie Marx, “#MeToo and the Most Ridiculous of Rituals,” *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, November 4, 2018, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/metoo-and-the-most-ridiculous-of-rituals/>.

116 Josefin Dolsten, “Was Vashti The First ‘#MeToo?’” *The Forward*, February 20, 2018, <https://forward.com/faith/394862/was-vashti-the-first-metoo/>.

Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation hearing and allegations and an analysis of what Jewish traditions have to say on these issues. One article referenced the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, being used by some to discredit and blame victim-survivors.¹¹⁷ This article dissected how this story can often depict Potiphar's wife as a hyper-sexualized seductress and the victimization of Joseph as the "tempted," focusing on her lie about being raped instead of her abusive actions of coercion and sexual assault. It also emphasized that the story is rarely taught from this perspective.¹¹⁸ Another article discussed the story of Sodom as a story of rape culture¹¹⁹ and another, the biblical story of King David and Batsheva¹²⁰ and abuse of power and women's bodies.¹²¹

Other articles also talked about Torah wisdom and Jewish tradition on SRE issues. One article explored how Jewish tradition clarifies that sexual harassment in all forms is wrong, tied to *b'tselem Elohim* and *kavod* – the notion that we are created in the Divine image and the attributes of honor or respect. While also acknowledging that this message has contributed to the sensibility of protecting powerful individuals by invoking the prohibition of speaking *lashon hara*, the article emphasized that it is not an absolute principle and that there is a requirement to speak out in the form of warning to save someone from danger. The article also argued that Jewish tradition requires *tokhekha*, or rebuke, when someone has done wrong.¹²²

Another commonly discussed Jewish tradition was *teshuvah* and the obligation of wrongdoers to apologize and not repeat their behaviors in the future. *Teshuva* requires asking for forgiveness and making amends after one genuinely owns their behavior. This is accomplished through specific steps including regretting, renouncing, and confessing one's actions without justifications and resolving to do better in the future.¹²³ Restorative justice extends the *teshuvah* process by involving the communities around the wrongdoing. As it relates to issues of safety, respect, and equity, one article explains:

Regarding stories of sexual victimization in the Jewish world, we have heard from colleagues and friends of men who have harassed and victimized about their complicated feelings. They are angry with their friend and at a loss about what to do. They wonder whether and how they can continue these relationships and

simultaneously stand with survivors. They feel guilty for not knowing or looking away from their friend's behavior. They feel responsible for bringing these individuals in contact with the people they have harmed. Restorative justice acknowledges these individuals and provides them, too, with the opportunity to confront the wrongdoer and apologize to those who have been harmed.¹²⁴

Although the concept of *teshuvah* was invoked by some in public discourse as a means of trying to brush past disclosures and assert forgiveness of perpetrators, much of the content yielded in the content analysis search focused on *teshuvah* and restorative justice as a means of holding individuals accountable for their actions and acting responsibly as a Jewish community.¹²⁵ Another article suggested, "Repentance...must involve modeling what it looks like to treat women with respect as full human persons. Maybe then the offenders would deserve forgiveness, and could move our society forward toward repentance and change as well."¹²⁶

Another article described the Jewish prohibition of accepting money or gifts that are directly tainted by theft or other misdeeds and contrasted it against the absence of a prohibition on accepting

117 In this story, Joseph was a servant in the household of a powerful Egyptian official, Potiphar. He was approached by Potiphar's wife, who repeatedly tried to coerce Joseph into having sex with her, to which he refused. One day, she grabbed him by his clothes and tried to force him to have sex with her. He escaped, but later, Potiphar's wife told her husband that Joseph had tried to rape her, and Joseph was locked away in prison after being falsely accused of sexual assault.

118 Alma - Stop Using This Biblical Story to Discredit Survivors of

119 Laura Duhan Kaplan, "Are You Living in Sodom? #MeToo," *My Jewish Learning*, October 19, 2017, <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/rabbis-without-borders/are-you-living-in-sodom-metoo/>.

120 The biblical story has the king spying the beautiful Batsheva bathing on her rooftop. Liking what he sees, he summons her, sleeps with her and has her husband killed before making Batsheva his wife.

121 Ruth Abusch-Magdeer, "King David, Batsheva and #MeToo," *My Jewish Learning*, October 18, 2017, <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/rabbis-without-borders/king-david-batsheva-and-metoo/>.

122 David Teutsch, Mira Wasserman and Deborah Waxman, "B'tselem Elohim: Jewish Ethics, Sexual Harassment and the Workplace of the Future," *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, December 15, 2017, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/btselem-elohim-jewish-ethics-sexual-harassment-and-the-workplace-of-the-future/>.

123 Alisha Ackerman and Guila Benchimol, "Restorative Justice and Teshuva Following Sexual Misconduct," 2018.

124 Ibid.

125 Ibid.

126 Jennifer Thompson, "MeToo Needs A Forgiveness Option, And Judaism Can Provide It," *The Forward*, December 15, 2017, <https://forward.com/opinion/390186/metoo-needs-a-forgiveness-option-and-judaism-can-provide-it/>.

donations from known wrongdoers in the context of powerful donor abusers and the concept of giving *tzedakah* as a part of a part of the process of doing *teshuvah*. **However, the article also stressed that genuine teshuvah requires full acknowledgment of wrongdoing and sincere efforts to repair harm, which has been notably missing from the public apologies of many harassers.**¹²⁷

A number of articles discussed atonement prayers in the #MeToo era. One article covered a post written by a male rabbi in the format of the *Ashamnu* confessional prayer recited on the day of Yom Kippur, a Hebrew acrostic listing the ways people collectively have sinned. The post was meant to be a personal confession in the style of this prayer, declaring the ways in which he has wronged women and pledging to take action to prevent abuse in the future.¹²⁸ Another article offered alternate versions of two traditional confession prayers—*AlChet* and *Ashamnu*—for the #MeToo era.¹²⁹

Reviewed works also addressed the absence of women's voices in the Passover Haggadah. One article discussed the Rabbinic *midrash* that introduces the role of women's mirrors and the focus on having children and heterosexual marriage. It described how the Israelite women in the *Midrash Tanchuma* defied Pharaoh's decree prohibiting sexual relations,¹³⁰ but framed it as an example of positive

intimacy, with women taking the lead and seeing themselves as both desirable and empowered. This analysis lends itself to a discussion of empowering women to claim their rights, refocus positive masculinity, and embrace transgender and nonbinary youth.

Another article discussed the potential healing power of the *mikvah*, or ritual bath, suggesting that survivors of sexual assault could voluntarily immerse themselves as a means of Jewish communal support for survivors of sexual assault in recovering from their trauma. There were also a number of articles on the theme of *yichud* and modesty that disputed assertions by Jewish actress Mayim Bialik and religious figures that modesty and seclusion will protect people from becoming victims of sexual abuse.

Articles also discussed interpretations of nonbinary sex and gender categories within Jewish textual tradition. Three articles included in the search results discussed LGBTQ issues within the Jewish community; one acknowledged portions of Jewish law and the Torah as being opposed to homosexuality while also expressing interpretations of the Torah to support gay marriage; another discussed the author's reasons for attending a temple catering specifically to LGBTQ people; and the third drew parallels between Purim and Esther's

story to the process of coming out.

SRE Issues in Relation to Anti-Semitism

In understanding public discourse around SRE issues in the Jewish community, it seems necessary to acknowledge discussions that have taken place in this discourse that relate to anti-Semitism. In the wake of #MeToo, with accusations levied against Harvey Weinstein and a number of other Jewish men, some public discourse centered around Weinstein's Jewish identity as an explanation for his abusive behavior towards women. Some of these were attempts at discussing possibly problematic features of American Jewish masculinity, most notably a piece that was met with substantial backlash penned by Jewish author Mark Oppenheimer in *Tablet Magazine* titled "The Specifically Jewy Perviness of Harvey Weinstein."¹³¹ Additionally, in the year after #MeToo, it was clear that many men in the headlines were Jewish, and the community had to grapple with what that meant, as well as consider how anti-Semitism may play into who tells the stories and how they are told.¹³² Weinstein and others' Jewish identities were also invoked in clearly anti-Semitic terms. These dynamics present a challenge, whereby anti-Semitism can be used to silence individuals and prevent victim-survivors from coming forward and telling their stories, but their stories can also be fodder for anti-Semitism.

127 Rabbi David A. Teutsch and Rabbi Mira Beth Wasserman, "The Unethical Donor: A Moral Challenge," *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, April 3, 2019, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/the-unethical-donor-a-moral-challenge/>.

128 Ben Sales, "Amid #MeToo Wave, A Rabbi Seeks To Atone For His Wrongs," *The Forward*, October 16, 2017, <https://forward.com/fast-forward/385290/amid-metoo-wave-a-rabbi-seeks-to-atone-for-his-wrongs/>.

129 Abby Citrin, Danya Ruttenberg, Emily Becker, Guila Benchimol, Leah Greenblum, S. Bear Bergman and Shira Berkovits, "The Atonement Prayers We Should All Say, In The #MeToo Era," *The Forward*, September 7, 2018, <https://forward.com/life/faith/409841/the-atonement-prayers-we-should-all-say-in-the-metoo-era/>.

130 They made picnics in the fields for their labor-weary partners and then led them in playful flirtation. As translated by Aviva Zornberg, "The women would take mirrors and look into them with their husbands. A woman would say, 'I am more beautiful than you,' and then he would say, 'I am more beautiful than you.' As a result they would accustom themselves to desire and they were fruitful and multiplied."

131 Mark Oppenheimer, "The Specifically Jewy Perviness of Harvey Weinstein," *Tablet Magazine*, October 9, 2017, <https://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/246724/the-specifically-jewy-perviness-of-harvey-weinstein>.

132 Allison Kaplan Sommer, "Not Just Weinstein: The Year #MeToo Rocked and Shocked the Jewish World," *Haaretz*, September 18, 2018, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/premium-not-just-weinstein-the-year-metoo-rocked-and-shocked-the-jewish-world-1.6480994>.

Discussion

Understanding Victimization and Disclosures

Many of the takeaways from this research are consistent with existing research findings. First, our research revealed that the majority of perpetrators of sexual harassment and victimization were male and that the majority of those victimized were female. Both the survivor narratives and the content analysis also indicated that those who sexually harass others in the Jewish world have an existing relationship with them. Similarly, external research on sexual violence shows that the majority of sexual violence is committed by perpetrators who are male against those who are female and that the perpetrators know their victims.¹³³

Second, this research reinforced demonstrated links between inequity and sexual harassment. As Rebecca Traister explains, while Tarana Burke's original use of #MeToo was for survivors of sexual violence and assault, the broader #MeToo usage addressed:

...a broader range of power abuses, chief among them sexual harassment. Yes, sexual and professional damage were certainly related, and in some cases were combined. But the reason that they were sharing conversational and journalistic space during this reckoning was because sexual harassment is understood as a crime not because it is a sexual violation, but because it is a form of discrimination.¹³⁴

¹³³ Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN), "Statistics," 2019. <https://www.rainn.org/statistics>. Eliana Suarez and Tahany M. Gadalla, "Stop Blaming the Victim: A Meta-Analysis on Rape Myths," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 25, no. 11 (2010): 2010-2035.

¹³⁴ Rebecca Traister. *Good and Mad: The Revolutionary Power of Women's Anger*, 2018, Simon and Schuster: New York.

What united all of these different revelations, she says, “wasn’t sexual harm, but professional harm and power abuse.”¹³⁵ What came into view, therefore, was the sexism that tied all of these behaviors together as well as the “systemic damage that it did.”¹³⁶ Our research echoed these findings in the Jewish world, where mistreatment and victimization have led some individuals to leave Jewish workplaces and communal spaces altogether. A 2019 study similarly found that victimization that is experienced at the hands of a religious figure or in a religious group negatively impacts survivors’ relationships to their faith communities and to their faith.¹³⁷

Third, the well-documented silence of survivors following sexual victimization was also evident in the survivor and media content reviewed in this research. Consistent with what survivors in this research shared, other researchers have found that the silence may be due to humiliation, minimization, avoiding reliving the pain or the victim label, or to the internalization of blame.¹³⁸ Likewise, this review of the experiences of survivors in the Jewish community mirrors previous research about other survivors of sexual violence and how the

emotional or other costs of disclosing may outweigh either the benefits of doing so or the victimization itself.¹³⁹ Speaking out is also difficult when one’s experiences do not look like popular conceptions of victimization.¹⁴⁰

Deciding whether or not to disclose also involves wondering “whether one will be heard and believed. Moreover, the literature on the disclosure practices of survivors suggests that disclosing is an ongoing, iterative process about which survivors make context-based decisions.”¹⁴¹ These decisions include assessing whether the people that survivors “disclose to will be supportive, especially if they have previously had negative disclosure experiences.”¹⁴² Many of the survivor narratives reviewed in this research reflected that these considerations are paramount among victims in the Jewish world as well.

That survivors recognize the potential negative consequences to disclosing and make decisions about “whether to speak or stay silent based on their experiences with past disclosures and negative reactions”¹⁴³ underscores the importance of

supportive individual and organizational responses to disclosures. It also highlights the need to support and promote potential benefits for those who choose to disclose. Other research points to the potential for disclosures to shift power dynamics,¹⁴⁴ facilitate healing among survivors,¹⁴⁵ help draw attention to sexual victimization to reduce the risk for future potential victims, and to situate survivors’ experiences “within a broader system of power relations.”¹⁴⁶ Our research shows that some survivors who have disclosed within the Jewish world have experienced some of these positive outcomes. Of course, it is important to note that a survivor’s individual power and circumstances will impact whether or not they can recognize and name their experiences as well as whether they can speak out about them and be heard.

135 Ibid.

136 Ibid.

137 Guila Benchimol, “Victims Are Doing It for Themselves: Examining the Move from Victim to Advocate,” 2019. PhD Dissertation, University of Guelph, Ontario.

138 Jan Breckenridge, “Subjugation and Silences: The Role of Professions in Silencing Victims of Sexual and Domestic Violence,” Pp. 6-32 in *Challenging Silence: Innovative Responses to Sexual and Domestic Violence*, edited by Jan Breckenridge and Lesley Laing, 1999, Australia: Allen & Ulwin.

Simon Hallsworth and Tara Young, “Crime and Silence,” *Theoretical Criminology* 12, no. 2 (2008): 131-152.

Patrizia Romito, *A Deafening Silence: Hidden Violence against Women and Children.*, 2008, Bristol: Policy Press.

Shaquita Tillman, Thema Bryant-Davis, Kimberly Smith, and Alison Marks, “Shattering Silence: Exploring Barriers to Disclosure for African American Sexual Assault Survivors,” *Trauma, Violence & Abuse* 11, no. 2 (2010): 59-70.

139 Bianca Fileborn, “Naming the Unspeakable Harm of Street Harassment: A Survey-Based Examination of Disclosure Practices,” *Violence Against Women* 25, no. 2 (2018): 1-26.

140 Rachel Loney-Howes, “Shifting the Rape Script: ‘Coming Out’ Online as a Rape Victim,” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 39, no. 2 (2018): 26-57.

Tanya Serisier, “Speaking Out, and Beginning to be Heard: Feminism, Survivor Narratives and Representations of Rape in the 1980s,” *Continuum* 32, no. 1 (2018): 52-61

141 Guila Benchimol, “Victims Are Doing It for Themselves: Examining the Move from Victim to Advocate,” 2019. PhD Dissertation, University of Guelph, Ontario.

142 Bianca Fileborn, “Naming the Unspeakable Harm of Street Harassment,” 2018.

143 Courtney E. Ahrens, “Being Silenced: The Impact of Negative Social Reactions on the Disclosure of Rape,” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 38 (2006): 263-274.

144 Eric D. Lister, “Forced Silence: A Neglected Dimension of Trauma,” *American Journal of Psychiatry* 139 (1982): 872-76.

Ramona Alaggia. “Many Ways of Telling: Expanding Conceptualizations of Child Sexual Abuse Disclosure.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 28, no. 11 (2004): 1213-27.

145 Rachel Loney-Howes, “Shifting the Rape Script,” 2018.

146 Bianca Fileborn, “Naming the Unspeakable Harm of Street Harassment,” 2018.

Future research should include an intersectional approach to understanding sexual victimization and the experiences of survivors, with a focus on those who are most marginalized and ignored, as similarly emphasized by Tarana Burke regarding the broader #MeToo movement.¹⁴⁷

Other researchers assert that gender and sexual violence are “shaped in and through factors such as race, class, and sexuality”¹⁴⁸ and that one’s identities impact one’s experiences with sexual victimization as well as one’s ability to speak out, be believed, and be heard.¹⁴⁹ Due to the lack of secondary data and public content on these factors, this research was not able to adequately address issues of race and sexual orientation, nor of age, disability, ethnicity, social class, and other identities. Doing so is necessary, however, because it would nuance our understanding of sexual victimization, not just as an individual problem but one with structural and systemic issues that underlie it.¹⁵⁰ In light of a recent study on the number of Jews of color in the American Jewish community, it could also reveal opportunities to strengthen the community’s response to sexual violence against those most marginalized and ignored, including an acknowledgement that “both men and women can be perpetrators or victims” and that sexual victimization is not limited to heterosexual relationships.¹⁵¹

Misalignment of Public Discourse with Findings on Victim-Survivor Experiences

One discrepancy in the findings of this research was the scope of the problem of sexual harassment and discrimination within the Jewish community as intimated by survivor experiences versus that intimated by public discourse. This project’s review of victim-survivor experiences suggest that transgressions related to safety, respect, and equity are common occurrences in Jewish spaces; very few respondents say they have never heard of or experienced sexual harassment in Jewish workplaces. Yet, in a time period of over a year, only 97 articles from Jewish audience media related to safety referenced a specific case or allegation and, in a time period of over a year and a half, only 22 articles from Jewish audience media sources addressed

specific safety-related cases in Jewish workplaces, foundations, and non-profits. Juxtaposed, these findings reveal inconsistencies between the scale and seriousness of the problem as reported by victim-survivors to that which is surfacing in the public discourse.

Another discrepancy is the root of the transgressions. Victim-survivors pointed to numerous environmental and cultural factors that they believe led to their victimization. In contrast, the content analysis of both public and Jewish media reflects that the public discourse more often focuses on individual perpetrators rather than systemic issues. For example, the tone of the response to the Steinhardt allegations, while alluding to broader power dynamics of “megadonors” and the organizations they support within the Jewish community, often seemed to imply that Steinhardt was the problem rather than the culture surrounding his actions. Additionally, several of the reviewed accounts from victim-survivors described physical harassment by individuals in the donor community. Taken together with the context of the cases that have been discussed publicly and the list of men involved in Jewish communal life accused of sexual harassment and/or abuse, one can speculate that there are other donors who harass and are not being held accountable.

There also appears to be a gap in who victim-survivors identify as their harassers and who is identified in the public discourse—whether by name or by role. Numerous survivors recounted victimization at the hands of board members of

147 Adetiba, Elizabeth. “Tarana Burke Says #MeToo Should Center Marginalized Communities,” *The Nation*, November 17, 2017, <https://www.thenation.com/article/tarana-burke-says-metoo-isnt-just-for-white-people/>.

148 Ibid.

149 Melanie Randall, “Sexual Assault Law, Credibility, and ‘Ideal Victims’: Consent, Resistance, and Victim Blaming,” *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* 22, no. 2 (2010): 397-434.

150 Sarah E. Ullman, “Talking About Sexual Assault: Society’s Response to Survivors,” 2010, Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

151 Ibid.

Jewish workplaces and communal spaces, yet none of the specific cases found in the content analysis referenced cases involving boards members. Finally, the review of survivor experiences stresses the familial sense of community as a complicating factor in issues of SRE within the Jewish community. While the issue of the “Living Room Syndrome” in Jewish workplaces is referenced in a small handful of opinion pieces by Jewish women and published in Jewish audience media, this topic is largely missing in articles about specific cases of workplace abuses within the Jewish community.

Silencing Stories or Silencing the Conversation

That this review of both survivor experiences and the content analysis found that Jewish values and texts have been used to silence survivors or revelations of harassing or abusive perpetrators is not surprising. Prior research on sexual victimization in religious communities has found that disclosures are often suppressed using religious ideas and cultural or ethnic values.¹⁵² This includes promoting silence as a way to preserve the honor of the religious group.¹⁵³

Two substantive concerns identified in our research are the naming of perpetrators and the damage to the Jewish community’s reputation by sharing these stories. Survivors’ narratives about responses to

their disclosures, as well as the discourse analysis, show the presence of cognitive dissonance when beloved, powerful, or useful men are accused. Although it does not justify the behaviors, cognitive dissonance can explain why organizations have continued to respond in harmful ways to survivors’ disclosure.

As Dr. Shira Berkovits, founder and CEO of Sacred Spaces has noted, “Cognitive dissonance often plays a role in abuse cases, particularly when the alleged perpetrator is a leader or respected community member. Faced with allegations of abuse against someone they know and respect, institutional leaders all too often reject the evidence, privileging their prior beliefs about the individual instead. In fact, sexual offenders report exploiting this tendency by intentionally situating themselves at the center of the community, as generous, kind, learned, and pious leaders, who are truly exemplars in every way. Their sexual abuse behind closed doors thus remains hidden with the victims, and the community often refuses to accept allegations that may eventually emerge.”¹⁵⁴

What is needed, then, is a recognition that when organizations do respond in these ways, they are prioritizing the perpetrator over the survivor as well as organizational or financial needs over the needs of those they serve or those who work for them. To

explain the prioritization of male perpetrators, Kat Mann coined the term “himpathy,” which she defines as “the inappropriate and disproportionate sympathy powerful men often enjoy in cases of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, homicide and other misogynistic behavior.”¹⁵⁵

Another way in which this report found that stories are silenced is through the relative weighting of which kinds of stories are worse than others, which merited publishing, and which merited consequences for the perpetrator (even if these meaningful consequences have yet to be imposed).

To resist the oversimplification of some acts of sexual violence as serious and others as less-so, Liz Kelly’s¹⁵⁶ model of the “continuum of sexual violence” helps explain the range of behaviors included under the category of sexual violence and victimization. The continuum points to how various forms of violence routinely punctuate “the lives of women in particular sociocultural and political situations.”¹⁵⁷ Such tools enable the consideration of each individual story separately from other stories and allows us to see the systemic problems that give rise to, encourage, enable, or hide victimization in the Jewish world. As Fran Sepler, “an expert on

152 Lisa Aronson Fontes and Carol Plummer, “Cultural Issues in Disclosure of Child Sexual Abuse.” 2010.

153 Karen L. Haboush and Hala Alya., “Who Can You Tell?” 2013.

154 Shira Berkovits. Institutional Abuse In The Jewish Community, Tradition, Summer 2017, Vol.50(2), pp.11-49.

155 Kate Manne, “Brett Kavanaugh and America’s ‘Himpathy’ Reckoning,” *The New York Times*, September 26, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/26/opinion/brett-kavanaugh-hearing-himpathy.html>

156 Liz Kelly, *Surviving Sexual Violence*, 1988, Cambridge: Polity Press

157 Rachel Loney-Howes, “Shifting the Rape Script,” 2018.

workplace harassment who developed programs used by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission¹⁵⁸ who has been conducting trainings in and outside of Jewish spaces has similarly noted, harassment is “part of a continuum of behaviors,” with “rude and uncivil behavior” at one end and “harassment and abuse” on the other.¹⁵⁹

On the other hand, invoking the evil acts of a perpetrator that were ignored or encouraged by organizations, even through their silence, will not lead to systemic, organizational, preventative change.¹⁶⁰ This allows Jewish organizations to wash their hands of their responsibility in these stories, framing them as a perpetrator’s responsibility to do something about it rather than their own. In contrast, survivors have said that the victimization that greatly harmed them was from the organizations and individuals working within when they came forward. This is known as “secondary victimization,” a “second wounding”¹⁶¹ or secondary trauma or injury¹⁶² that occurs when victims’ disclosures are not received well by others or when they are rejected or stigmatized following their disclosures.¹⁶³

A further way in which content related to safety, respect, and equity appears to be silenced is through who is and is not having and promoting the conversation about these issues in Jewish spaces. For example, a majority of the related content came from major Jewish organizations whose work is focused on women’s issues. This prompts questions about whether safety, respect, and equity are seen to be women’s issues that must also be dealt with by

women. This is problematic given that the research simultaneously shows that women are rarely the heads of Jewish organizations and perceive fewer opportunities for advancement into leadership roles. How, then, can women be expected to solve their victimization and discrimination in Jewish spaces on their own? As Jackson Katz notes, the way in which we discuss violence against women “conspires to keep our attention off of men.”¹⁶⁴ In other words, we have shifted attention from the (mostly) men who are committing these acts to women and others who are experiencing sexual violence; rather than ask why men are behaving as they do, we blame the victim. We should instead ask: What is men’s role in preventing and addressing victimization and in what ways does it go beyond seeking forgiveness?

Survivor-Centered Public Responses

So much of the conversation regarding public discourse on specific allegations has focused on whether or not we should name names and on Jewish values regarding not gossiping or tarnishing peoples’ reputations. The content analysis revealed that the question of whether we should discuss allegations publicly may be the wrong question—they are already being discussed. A better question is how we should be discussing them, and how we can extend the same courtesy in supporting and protecting victim-survivors that we are currently extending to the accused in public discourse. This research is not suggesting that we should not take care in discussing alleged perpetrators, but that we should be equally concerned about how hearing these conversations in the public sphere may affect victim-survivors (both in terms of the case being discussed, as well as more broadly victim-survivors with personal lived experiences of similar abuses) and what kinds of norms around safety, respect, and equity the discussions we are having promote.

We also need to be able to talk about allegations without qualifying them as ‘just’ a grope, or ‘just’ verbal, or attributing it to someone’s ‘sense of humor’. We need to describe abuses as abuses, and use language descriptive of the type and dynamics that underly it (i.e. sexual, gender, abuses of power, coercion, etc.). We should similarly reflect on whether and how we can discuss these stories prior to conclusions around the guilt and consequences for the accused. When public allegations are made, is there a way we can respond that conveys support for victim-survivors and broadly condemns the type of abuse or harassment that has

158 <https://www.jta.org/2018/02/26/united-states/for-women-in-jewish-fundraising-harassment-is-an-occupational-hazard>

159 <https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/me-too-in-the-jewish-community-where-are-we-now/>

160 Mike Hartill, “Concealment of Child Sexual Abuse in Sports,” *Quest* 65, no. 2 (2013): 241-254.

Anson Shupe and Peter Iadicola, “Issues in Conceptualizing Clergy Malfeasance,” pp. 13-38 in *Bad Pastors: Clergy Misconduct in Modern America*, edited by Anson Shupe, Stacey William and Susan Darnell. 2000. New York: NYU Press.

161 Rachel Loney-Howes, “Shifting the Rape Script,” 2018.

162 Courtney E. Ahrens, “Being Silenced: The Impact of Negative Social Reactions on the Disclosure of Rape,” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 38 (2006): 263-274.

163 Amy Grubb and Emily Turner, “Attribution of Blame in Rape Cases: A Review of the Impact of Rape Myth Acceptance, Gender Role Conformity and Substance Use on Victim Blaming,” *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 17, no. 5 (2012): 443-452.

164 Jackson Katz, “Violence against women – it’s a men’s issue,” TED Talk, November 2012, https://www.ted.com/talks/jackson_katz_violence_against_women_it_s_a_men_s_issue?language=en.

been alleged, while noting that we are not ready to comment on the specific case at hand? When individuals are accused, it is critical to focus on the victim-survivor, what they have to say, and the impact their experiences has had on their lives. It is also important to not minimize the accusations, for example by introducing an accused's contributions into the conversation. When an accused's position and contributions become the focus of public stories it can appear that it is okay to 'pay to play.' In other words, the story can seem to suggest that they may be absolved of their actions because of the other positive actions that they have done. This is one of the factors that may keep victim-survivors from coming forward, fearing that they will not be believed or that their perpetrator will not be held accountable. This is particularly troublesome when considering cases where the accuser is unknown and/or holds little or no power, or has no assumed credibility through their own position in the community. The 'pay to play' messaging could also serve to further embolden abusers.

An agenda for future research could address victim-survivors' reactions to public discourse around these cases. As an example, since survivors spoke about both harmful and helpful responses to their disclosures by Jewish organizations, knowing what survivors in these situations would identify as either harmful or helpful may assist organizations in making decisions about how to respond. Did the survivors of these alleged incidents feel supported by the public statements? How did survivors of other incidents feel about the lack of public statements in their cases? How do victim-survivors feel when

media responses include lengthy accolades to the individual they have accused for their contributions to the community? How might hearing a public response that happens when an allegation is made condemning the type of abuse even if we can't yet confirm or deny the guilt or innocence of the accused convey the community's position on these behaviors to other victim-survivors who have experienced similar types of abuses, as well as to past, current, and possible future perpetrators? How might hearing such a public response help to remove barriers for other victim-survivors through demonstrating that if they want to come forward, the community will support them, and they won't be alone or dragged through the mud as they have to endure the ensuing public and private ordeal? This research agenda could also shape key questions and inform survivor-centered considerations for organizations deciding whether or not to issue a public statement about revelations of harassment or abuse.

Additionally, the public discourse about specific men have led to several dilemmas about Jewish organizations' relationship to those men. For example, should Jewish organizations continue to play the music composed by accused men or accept donations from named perpetrators? Such questions were common across the discourse analysis. What appears to be absent, however, is a reflection about Jewish organizations' relationships to victims. Even as survivors have said that they have left their careers in the Jewish world or even their faith following victimization and/or their subsequent disclosures, there does not seem to be much conversation around what this means for Jewish

spaces. The lack of safety, respect, and equity and its impact on the Jewish community demands introspection that goes beyond asking how to support survivors; Jewish organizations should also be deliberating about how to respond to the harm they have caused by ignoring victims when they came forward or when their stories were publicized. Here, too, a victim-centered approach is imperative. Survivors can offer their opinions on some of the dilemmas that organizations face, yet too often communal leaders fail to listen to those who have been most impacted—causing further damage in the process.

The Role of the Media

Since mainstream media sources cover stories about harassment and victimization in the Jewish community less than Jewish media does, Jewish media has an important role to play in unearthing these stories. Survivors spoke about a culture of open secrets in Jewish workplaces and in the communal world. Jewish media can, therefore, give voice to survivors and amplify their stories. Without the attention of Jewish media on stories about harassment in Jewish workplaces and communal spaces, who will bring attention to the realities of the state of safety, respect, and equity in the Jewish world? Where can victims go to tell their stories? Moreover, how will the Jewish world become aware of the changes it needs to make if these stories are not told?

Since these stories appear primarily in Jewish media, it appears that the warning to survivors to

not disclose their experiences because it would lead to anti-Semitism is weighted too heavily in favor of perpetrators and concern for protecting the community without regard for survivors and the health of the wider community. Nonetheless, other research indicates that concerns over how minority communities will be portrayed after revelations of sexual misconduct and abuse as well as how to respond in light of those fears is an issue that other groups, such as Muslims and Arab-Americans, face as well.¹⁶⁵

Another notable trend across the public discourse findings is that the majority of articles and content are discussed in “opinion”-focused forums. This suggests that issues of safety, respect, and equity—including specific cases—are still not being treated as ‘news.’ Articles on these issues tend to be published as opinion pieces, often authored by “expert” individuals who are already highly engaged in this area of work. This is significant in that it may impact the likely reach of these stories to those who would be unlikely to seek out these topics and the general public’s engagement with these issues. Nonetheless, existing research suggests that discussion in the realm of opinion still has potential for meaningful transformative impact. Through two randomized experiments, researchers found that op-ed pieces had large and long-lasting effects on people’s views among both the general public and policy experts.¹⁶⁶

With these conclusions, it is critical to highlight that the impetus for these shifts lies not only on the media itself. It is important to acknowledge that while media has a critical role in shaping public discourse, it is also often simultaneously shaped by it as well. The agenda-setting theoretical model is interested in how public agendas are formulated, with a focus on the role of the media in that process. The core proposition of agenda-setting is the transfer of salience due to media selection and framing, but an essential condition of this is that selected and framed content by branded media is conditioned by a desire to cater to a certain audience’s perspective.¹⁶⁷ Similarly, while the scope of this research focused on news media, as emerging agendas are defined by wider ranges of content and communication channels including social media and other sources, agenda setting by media is only one of numerous agenda setting processes.¹⁶⁸

Through this lens, it is essential that reflection focus not only media agenda-setting for Jewish communal spaces and organizations, but also critically reflect on what other forms of public and ‘insider’ discourse in the Jewish community are conveying regarding communal norms and audience preferences that may shape how the media and other sources of public discourse frame and discuss these issues. It is critical to even further reflect on how power relations and dynamics within the Jewish community may be playing into which issues and whose perspectives are dominant in public discourse and which are marginalized.

REMAINING QUESTIONS FOLLOWING MEDIA COVERAGE OF SPECIFIC CASES

Among the allegations that were covered in the content analysis, many were against individuals who were already known to be harassers within the community; largely cases of verbal harassment rather than physical assault or abuse; involved more than one accuser; and entailed the accused having to some degree admitted to the allegations, albeit disingenuously (per public perception). Several public responses and articles were prompted by the dismissal or action taken against the alleged perpetrator, not by the victim-survivor’s allegation. Other cases were more widely covered and less publicly questioned when the allegations—including those against Steinhardt—were made by well-reputed and well-respected women within the Jewish community. Additionally, while Jewish media cover specific cases and allegations, generally

165 Karen L. Haboush and Hala Alya, “Who Can You Tell? Features of Arab Culture that Influence Conceptualization and Treatment of Childhood Sexual Abuse,” *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* 22, no. 5 (2013): 499-518.

166 Alexander Coppock, Emily Ekins, and David Kirby, “The Long-lasting Effects of Newspaper Op-Eds on Public Opinion,” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 13, no. 1 (2018): 59-87, <https://www.nowpublishers.com/article/Details/QJPS-16112>.

167 John A. Fortunato and Shannon E. Martin, “The Intersection of Agenda-Setting, the Media Environment, and Election Campaign Laws,” *Journal of Information Policy* 6 (2016): 129-153, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/jinfopoli.6.2016.0129#metadata_info_tab_contents.

168 Ibid.

Jewish organizations had not made public statements about those cases until the Steinhardt stories broke. The factors related to public coverage of and response to such cases raise new potential future research questions as well as practical implications. Two are highlighted below.

Taken in the context of the broader trends in the public discourse, the question remains as to whether the response to the Steinhardt allegations constitute an actual shift in how the Jewish community acknowledges and responds to abusers, or whether other factors (i.e., those named above) made that particular story easier to publicly discuss and comment on. Another question that remains is why it is less common to see other stories about harassment in public discourse even in the face of research demonstrating that harassment is pervasive, spanning a wide range of abuses by a wide range of abusers.

Reframing Jewish Narratives

The content analysis pointed to a re-thinking or reframing of Jewish texts, stories, and prayers in light of the revelations about victimization in the Jewish community as well as the broader world. Whether through stories in the *Tanach* or through Jewish texts and values, this research suggested that the Jewish tradition is a rich source of material from which to mine the issues of safety, respect, and equity. It can provide a framework through which to examine current events related to safety, respect, and equity, as well as offer guidance on some of the dilemmas that have arisen following #MeToo. Jewish values can also serve as inspiration for repairing the harm caused through victimization and for holding people and organizations accountable.

The content analysis further highlighted that components within Jewish stories, texts, prayers, and laws may not give voice to women nor be supportive of survivors (especially female, LGBTQ, and other marginalized survivors). Therefore, the Jewish tradition can be a useful educational tool and one that can lead to greater insight about the intersection between victimization and one's Judaism. Since sexual victimization is primarily about power.¹⁶⁹ Jewish texts about power between members of the same and/or opposite sex can serve as supplemental teaching tools in addition to Jewish texts explicitly about sexual relationships between members of the opposite sex.

Gaps in the Jewish World Regarding Sexual Victimization

In light of victims' experiences both with victimization and in attempting to bring it to the attention of Jewish organizations and employers, Jewish organizations should consider including survivors in the work they do to prevent and address victimization. This ensures that the policies and training materials that come out of their efforts are informed by the lived experiences of survivors as well as the realities of how Jewish workplaces and communal spaces function. The findings of the qualitative review in particular suggest numerous opportunities to address gaps regarding sexual victimization in Jewish workplaces and communal spaces. They also underscore the imperative to do so given the harm experienced by victims and the impact on the professional Jewish world.

Education around victimization and its many dynamics in Jewish workplaces and communal spaces is necessary. We cannot address what we cannot recognize or name.

¹⁶⁹ Andrew Karmen, *Crime Victims: An Introduction to Victimology*, 6th ed., 2007, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Survivors have explained that they need ongoing support including financial, emotional, and legal support, as well as tailored career coaching after experiencing or disclosing harassment and other forms of victimization. Such supports are available more broadly and the Jewish community must step up to connect survivors to them.

One of these needs is education around the appropriate response to disclosures – whether by individual Jewish community members or those in the workplace – and an understanding of the secondary victimization that occurs following unhelpful responses. Through training and storytelling, Jewish organizations and people can be better prepared to respond to disclosures of victimization in helpful rather than harmful ways.

Additionally, strengthening institutional infrastructure can go a long way in creating supportive environments. As the SRE Standards dictate, this means systems such as clear and transparent reporting and investigative guidelines in workplaces and communal spaces—including potentially an independent body that would hold Jewish organizations and professionals accountable—and trained experts to conduct trainings or investigations around sexual victimization.

Addressing the culture of open secrets is also a key need. Efforts at accountability and protection should consider how to warn people about known harassers and to prevent perpetrators from being hired at Jewish institutions, given that secret censoring and passing known harassers from one organization to another puts potential victims at risk. Additionally, since many victims discussed the lack of bystander intervention combined with the lack of organizational support upon reporting or disclosure, funders and lay leaders need to take a leadership role in calling out their peers when they harass and victimize. Additionally, while there was a recognition that steps are being taken to prevent and address current instances of victimization, efforts at responding to disclosures about historical cases need to be addressed.

Finally, the Jewish community should simultaneously work on ridding itself of harassment as well as inequity but in both survivor narratives and the content analysis it appears that there has been a heavier focus on addressing victimization than ensuring the safety, respect, *and* equity of all who live and work in Jewish spaces.

This research has highlighted important findings, concerns, and gaps and is evidence that further research on safety, respect, and equity in Jewish communities is necessary and valuable to creating much needed change.



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Appendix A:

Research Methodology, Scope, and Limitations

This research utilized three key methods: **(1)** a qualitative review of available secondary data; **(2)** analysis of the SRE Coalition Standards Diagnostic primary dataset; and **(3)** a content analysis of public discourse within and beyond the Jewish community.

Qualitative Secondary Data Review

To understand the experiences of survivors, this research reviewed the findings of several recent surveys and projects conducted in the Jewish world in the wake of #MeToo between 2018 and 2019.

The individual reports utilized in the secondary data review from which findings are drawn are typically not mentioned unless a direct quote is used. Rather, this report attempts to convey what survivors have broadly said about their experiences based on the aforementioned surveys and projects. Additionally, because the reports on which this research is based did not generally provide information about the Jewish denomination to which respondents belong, there is no discussion of distinctions across the various denominations in the Jewish world.

- 01 Leading Edge. “Are Jewish Organizations Great Places to Work? Results from the Third Annual Employee Experience Survey,” Leading Edge, 2018, <https://leadingedge.org/lptw/>.

“In May 2018, Leading Edge conducted its third annual Employee Experience Survey. Participants included 7,300 employees from 105 Jewish nonprofit organizations with different missions, budgets, staff sizes, and geographic locations. Leading Edge’s primary purpose is to use the survey to help these willing organizations create even better places to work.” “The goal of this survey is to help Jewish organizations assess and improve their workplace culture because a great workplace culture is key to attracting and retaining top talent. Organizations were invited to participate through an open application process and through individual outreach. Personal invitations were extended to previous participants.”

- 02 B’Kavod. “Survey on Sexual Harassment in the Jewish Communal World.” 2017.

In 2017, B’kavod, together with JWFNY and The Good People Fund, launched a survey via email and social media to gather the experiences of those who have been harassed in Jewish workplaces. The survey was open to all Jewish professionals and 161 experiences were collected. The findings of this survey were synthesized and shared privately with the researcher by B’Kavod.

- 03 Rosenbaum, Judith. “#MeToo: The Shaping of Gender and Jewish Identity.” 2018. Paper delivered at the Association for Jewish Studies conference, December 2018.

Judith Rosenbaum writes in her report on the stories of survivors collected by JWA: “In January 2018, JWA put out a call to collect MeToo stories experienced by Jews, both within the Jewish community and outside of it. Through a webform on our site, with five simple prompts, and with the outreach help of ten Jewish organizational partners and counting, JWA aims to capture and preserve these stories in their breadth and diversity...the material submitted thus far, which comes from nearly 100 women ages 18-90, from the US, Canada, and Israel, mostly submitted anonymously.”

- 04 Safety, Respect, Equity Coalition. Focus groups, interviews, and surveys with survivors of sexual harassment and victimization in the Jewish professional and communal world. 2018.

The SRE Coalition conducted one focus group with 5 female participants and received 7 responses to their survey on victimization in Jewish spaces. Of the survey responses, 2 one-on-one interviews were conducted with individuals who wanted to share more in-depth. These interviews were carried out to center survivor voices in the programmatic decision-making of the SRE Coalition.

- 05 Sztokman, Elana Maryles. Sexual abuse in the Jewish community: The role of the rabbi. June 2019, Unpublished (under review).

Dr Elana Sztokman’s report on clergy sexual misconduct is “a qualitative research study based on 26 testimonies about clergy abuse in the Jewish community.” It “is based on testimonies collected as part of a larger research project on sexual abuse in Jewish communal life more broadly. The larger study is based on a collection of 84 testimonies of abuse in Jewish communal life, which includes incidences from synagogues, Jewish schools, Jewish camps, Jewish youth groups, Jewish professional life, volunteering in Jewish settings, Jewish campus experiences (e.g., Hillel), and Jewish informal communal settings. Testimonies were collected via in-person interview, online interview, chat, and online study, including sections that were contributed by two Jewish organizations that conducted online studies on this subject. The purpose of the study was not necessarily to explore the issue of clergy abuse per se, but rather to understand social and cultural dynamics that may be distinct in Jewish communal settings. However, of those 84 victim testimonies (which included far more than 84 stories, actually, since many interviewees related more than one experience of abuse), some 26 respondents described incidents involving rabbis or clergy (e.g., cantors, rabbinical students, or teachers in rabbinical school – which, for the purposes of simplicity here, will be called “rabbis” or “clergy”). Interviewees range in age from 21 to 78, live across North America and in a few cases in Israel, span the professional and socio-economic spectrum, and are all Jewish. (All but one self-identify as women.) Incidences of abuse took place in some cases in the 1960s and 1970s, and in other cases in the past year. Some victims disclosed, many did not. There is no particular pattern to the stories

themselves or to how respondents found me. Some saw my posts online, some heard about my research from friends, and some people are acquaintances whom I told about my research and said that they have a story. The sample is not representative. Yet, the stories here are all connected in a straightforward way: They all involve sexual abuse and Jewish clergy.”

SRE Coalition Diagnostic Data

This research also utilized the data drawn from the SRE Coalition Diagnostic Tool. The Diagnostic consists of 25 questions and was structured to help organizations and their leadership assess whether and how their organization promotes safety, respect, and equity through their leadership, policies, procedures, and internal training and education.

The Diagnostic was piloted with a selection of organizations in November 2018 and made available to the 47 organizations that comprise the SRE Coalition leadership in January 2019. It was opened to all SRE Commitment Adopters (98 organizations inclusive of leadership) in April 2019. As of May 7, 2019, 41 organizations had completed the Diagnostic. This includes a number of foundations or philanthropic institutions, national network organizations, youth or teen serving programs, academic institutions, Federations, national Jewish social justice organizations, national organizations, international organizations, Jewish communal spaces, campus serving institutions, synagogues or religious institutions, rabbinical associations, and religious academic institutions. Approximately 34% of respondents had over 50 employees, 22% 16 to 50 employees, 22% 6 to 15 employees, and the remaining 17% had 5 or fewer employees.¹⁷⁰

It is important to note that the process for carrying out the SRE Diagnostic is generally at organizations’ discretion. They can carry out the exercise as a consultative process involving multiple stakeholders or assign an individual to complete it based on their own personal knowledge of what is and is not in place and available within the organization. As the data does not include a process description of how it was carried out within the organization completing it, this report does not thoroughly assess the quality of data.

Content Analysis

This research also employed the approach of a qualitative content analysis, which is used to collect and analyze data to understand the meanings ascribed to an issue within a given context. This process involves discerning meaning about attitudes, symbols, cultures, and institutions from which inferences are ultimately drawn. The analysis approach focuses on identification of patterns and trends that are not immediately observable.

Language is not inherently objective or fixed in meaning, but is colored by a range of situational factors: belief systems, the political, economic and social contexts, the community/ies to which the author belongs, as well as the immediate situation in which the text was written. In addition, content analysis is not only applicable to what was said and the language used to say it, but also what was not said, what is absent, and the silences in discourse.

This discourse analysis had three key components:

1. reviewing the websites and Twitter accounts of major Jewish organizations;
2. reviewing the accounts of influential Twitter users in the Jewish community; and
3. media analysis reviewing major US-based news publications, both Jewish and mainstream, on issues related to safety, respect, and equity within the Jewish community.

¹⁷⁰ Two respondents did not disclose their organization size.

To maximize objectivity and avoid the introduction of bias, the scope of sources for components one and two were based on an externally defined list. The first component involved reviews of the 52 organizations comprising the membership of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations,¹⁷¹ with the addition of the Foundation for Jewish Camp, who is not a member of this institution. 13 of the organizations reviewed are members of the SRE Coalition, The second component involved reviews of the Twitter accounts of individuals identified on the JTA list of "The 50 Jews everyone should follow on Twitter."¹⁷²

For the third component of the content analysis, the mainstream media sources reviewed included Associated Press, Gannett Syndication Service, National Public Radio, the *New York Times*, and the *Washington Post*. Jewish audience media sources included *Alma*, *eJewish Philanthropy*, *The Forward*, *Jewish Insider*, *Jewish Week*, *Kveller*, *My Jewish Learning*, *Tablet*, and *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*.¹⁷³

For the website review of major Jewish organizations, no date limitations were set and any materials available on the organizations' websites were reviewed. For the Twitter review of the first component and all of components two and three, the review was limited to posts since October 1, 2017, at the beginning of the #MeToo movement, to April 18, 2019.

To compile the resources for the content analysis, the following search terms and platforms were utilized:

COMPONENT

SEARCH TERM

1. Websites and Twitter accounts of major Jewish organizations

Search carried out in Google

Site:[*homepage url*] ("metoo" OR "harassment" OR "sexual harassment" OR "discrimination" OR "victimization" OR "abuse" OR "sexual abuse" OR "sexual assault" OR "sexual victimization" OR "sexual violence" OR "clergy abuse" OR "abuse of power" OR "inequality") AND ("gender" OR "sexual orientation" OR "sexuality" OR "sexual")

2. Influential Twitter users in the Jewish community

Search carried out directly in Twitter

from:@[*account*] since:2017-10-01 until:2019-04-18 ("metoo" OR "harassment" OR "sexual harassment" OR "discrimination" OR "victimization" OR "abuse" OR "sexual abuse" OR "sexual assault" OR "sexual victimization" OR "sexual violence" OR "clergy abuse" OR "abuse of power" OR "inequality") AND ("gender" OR "sexual orientation" OR "sexuality" OR "sexual")

3. Mainstream media

Associated Press, Gannett Syndication Service, National Public Radio, the New York Times, and the Washington Post

Search carried out in Feedly

("metoo" OR "harassment" OR "sexual harassment" OR "discrimination" OR "victimization" OR "abuse" OR "sexual abuse" OR "sexual assault" OR "sexual victimization" OR "sexual violence" OR "clergy abuse" OR "abuse of power" OR "inequality") AND ("gender" OR "sexual orientation" OR "sexuality" OR "sexual") AND ("jewish" OR "jew" OR "judaism" OR "rabbi")

4. Jewish audience media

Alma, eJewish Philanthropy, Forward, Jewish insider, Jewish Week, Kveller, My Jewish Learning, Tablet, Jewish Telegraphic Agency

Search carried out in Feedly

("metoo" OR "harassment" OR "sexual harassment" OR "discrimination" OR "victimization" OR "abuse" OR "sexual abuse" OR "sexual assault" OR "sexual victimization" OR "sexual violence" OR "clergy abuse" OR "abuse of power" OR "inequality") AND ("gender" OR "sexual orientation" OR "sexuality" OR "sexual")

171 <https://www.conferenceofpresidents.org/about/members> ; three organizations that are members of this list were not reviewed as they are primarily Israel-based.

172. <https://www.jta.org/2019/01/03/culture/50-jews-to-follow-on-twitter>

173 Considering the scope of the research and its focus on Jewish American community, prominent Jewish media sources that were Israel-based or

It is important to note that the scope of the content analysis was limited to SRE issues and #MeToo in the American Jewish community. Content specifically addressing issues in Israel, the global Jewish community, or internationally did not fall within the scope of this research. Considering the focus of the SRE Coalition work on Jewish communal life, the scope of this research also did not include content that broadly addressed issues related to safety, respect, and equity unrelated to Jewish communal life and institutions. This includes a large number of articles and posts about abusers who were Jewish individuals but whose abuses were not within Jewish communal life or institutions.

While there has been broader public discourse about the abuse of children, this research was primarily focused on SRE issues within the Jewish community as it relates to adults. Some of the content analysis includes articles and content related to cases involving minors. These were included where they were presented with specific dynamics related to gender and consent and where they were linked to broader systemic issues within the Jewish community related to safety, respect, and equity.

The content that the various searches for the content analysis yielded is limited to the terms that were included in the search parameters (see endnotes) and is inherently not exhaustive. If the article or page content did not explicitly use the terms “gender” or “sexual” verbatim in its text, it would not have been included in the search results, even if it were an SRE-related issue.

