Part 8: Why Blog

- outlet for frustrations, serves as therapy - therapeutic mechanism for coping with stress
- virtual space for women to communicate & development of their own voice
- crave and expanded community and horizon of life where their voice can be heard
- share and compare experiences
- facilitates public expression while masked by a perceived fiction like veil of anonymity that creates illusion of privacy
- challenge conventional ideas about domesticity in the Orthodox world
- chronicle the daily joys and frustrations of life
- may sometimes circumvent restrictions placed on them by their social circles and gain a strong public voice
- spread knowledge by hyperlinking to other sites of interest
- democratizing force
- forum that leads to self-actualization to combat isolation
- Reach out in search of community and support
- embrace blogs for business, education, and outreach purposes
Web 2.0 technology

- Like other interactive web genres such as listservs, chatrooms, and wikis, the blog is a key feature of Web 2.0 the internet’s second generation, in that it enables web users to create, rather than simply consume, the content available on the WWW.

- RSS (Real simple syndication) and permalink technologies allows web users to be notified whenever there is an update of any kind to a particular webpage, simulating a “live web” or incremental web”, making possible the layered, communal nature of the blog.
Blogs that consist of online diaries or journals

• Blogs are journals that at once combine the intimacy of personal reflection in the diary format with the instantaneously and global accessible arena of the www

Lieber, Andrea “A Virtual Veibershul: Blogging and the Blurring of Public and Private Among...
Sampling of Orthodox Jewish Women Blogosphere

(1) The Fancy Schmancy Complaining Maven- “help bring Moshiach in special way”, chronicling daily joys and frustrations of mundane aspects of her life
(2) Mommyblog
(3) PeturbedMom
(4) Orthomom
(5) Chayyei Sara
(6) AidelMaidel
(7) Nice Jewish Girl
(8) Virtual Veibershul
(9) Onion Soup Mix

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Critique Marcus Freed’s London Jewish Chronicle Febr. 2006 “How the Internet is lifting the veil from Orthodox Jewish Women” [irony]

• Chayyei Sara- Orthodox Jewish 30 something living, playing, writing, dating in Jerusalem
• “Until blogs came along, the Orthodox community was so closed. There was no way to really get to know any Orthodox people! Orthodox women in particular were shut up in their homes with no one to talk to and their lives were state secrets! But now thanks to the internet, we’re learning, fascinating things! Rebbetzins can have a sense of humor! Check it out at Renreb.com! Shomer negiah women have sexual urges? OMG Who knew? Get the details at shomernegiahblogspot.com Woha, Orthodox mothers in the Five Towns have Political opinions! This is breaking news. The veil has been lifted! It’s a window into the Orthodox world! The internet is just amazing

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Critique of Marcus Freed’s London Jewish Chronicle piece on “Lifting the Veil...”

- Orthomom’s blog
- Sun. Feb 26, 2006
- Shifra: It’s good we have blogging or else Orthodox women like us would never be able to speak our minds. Thank G-d the veil has been lifted- we’d been suffering in silence much too long! Give me a BREAK! I think it’s great that you and the Rebbitzen are getting well earned press but man... someone needs to get out more.
- SephardiLady: Veil? I express these opinions at the table. I’m sure that most of the female bloggers do too
- Hirshel Tzig: Explain to me the great freedom that is tot blog? Are you trying to tell us that Orthodox Women are victims of the Taliban or some other terrible regime, and that their only outlet is the internet?

Lieber, Andrea “A Virtual Veibershul: Blogging and the Blurring of Public and Private Among
Why Orthodox Women Blog

• AidelMaidel
• I’m so sorry
• I started to blog 2 yrs. ago. I intended it as my place to vent about all the things I couldn’t talk about with the people in my real life. It grew from there to become a record of my trials and tribulations, my mazel tovs and my sorrows.
• *regarding a divorce AidelMaidel withdrew early blog posts to protect the privacy of her family and censored her need for an outlet out of concern for the psychological well being of her children caught between a divorce

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The Forward and NY Jewish Week Feature Nice Jewish Girl (NJG)

- NJG calls her blog her primal scream
- Discusses issues of repression when one is shomer negiah and unmarried
- Brings private into public sphere
- Shocks sensibility of some ultra-frum
- Blogging combats the melancholy that comes from their sense of isolation
- Reaching out in search of community and support

Virtual Veibershul by Kressel Hausman: married hasidic woman doing outreach

• Kressel’s Corner [www.beingjewish.com/kresel](http://www.beingjewish.com/kresel)
• Features article on various subjects of interest to frum Jewish women
• Posts also to Beyondbt.com discussion site for newly observant
• From outreach site link to [www.livejournal.com](http://www.livejournal.com) called Aishes Chayil: Mi Yimtza? For those “striving to find the aishes chayil within themselves”
• Affirm separation of sexes as husband maintain analogue sites for men i.e. yingelach vs. veibelach
• Affirm boundaries that structure her home and ideological community life “Virtual Womens’ section”

Lieber, Andrea “A Virtual Veibershul: Blogging and the Blurring of Public and Private Among
Orthoprax bloggers- Keep everything but question

• OnionSoupMix (OSM)
• Gives voice to conflicted feelings about hypocrisy and misdirection in her community
• Conscious decision not to blog about her children on family life
• **Dry ironic humor to critique separate seating at son’s Chumash party** where the boy sang and received a chumash vs. Kressel who employs rhetoric on importance of mehitsah
Breaking NEWS: Urgent Psak Din

“A question has come up on a women’s forum regarding whether or not shoveling of the driveway is a tznius behavior for a woman?

Psak Din: In response to this I Hagaonit, Harabbanit Onion Soup Mix have researched this issue extensively consulting the sifrei halacha that address this timeless question and reviewed the numerous hsailos and teshuvos that pertain to this sensitive matter. After an exhaustive study, I must conclude that shoveling the driveway is a coarse unrefined behavior that does not befit a Bas Yisrael. Not only that, but due to the darkness of this Golus and the depth of depravity of the society around us, I must inform you that women are also not permitted to move furniture, mow the lawn, or take out the trash. Additional questionable behaviors include washing the floor, vacuuming, and possibly according to some poskim folding laundry. A G-d fearing woman, a true Bas Melech will also recognize that the most tznius behavior includes sitting on the couch and eating chocolate bon-bons or pints of ice cream.
Orthodox Jewish Women Forums

- Mikolot Mayim Rabim (from the voices of many waters- begun by MO female lawyer in 2005 devoted to TH
- Frummarrieds- begun 2007 by right wing Orthodox woman in Israel, to discuss intimate aspects of OJW physical lives
- Imamother- exclusively OJ forum created as Maand me in 2004 by Lubavitchin Montreal
- BTDT founded in 2007 by a Lubavitch American living in Israel to discuss intellectual issues from Orthodox point of view
- Jewish Women’s Forum (JWF) in march 2005 as the Jewish Women’s Network by Lubavitch in USA
- ChabadTalk founded in 2001 as mixed sex Lubavitch discussion
- Eshet Chayil – founded 2002 by MO in Israel
- Tisha Kabin- forum founded in 2002 by MO in Israel
- CalmKallahs- founded in 2003 by MO American female wedding planner
- Haskafa.com- founded in 2003 founded 2003 of all Orthodox backgrounds

Schwartz-Baumel, Judy Tydor, Frum Surfing: Orthodox Jewish Women’s Internet Forums as a
Forum abbreviations and nomenclature

- DH = dear husband
- DD = dear daughter
- DS = dear son
- LOR = Local Orthodox Rabbi
- MO = Modern Orthodox
- OJW = Orthodox Jewish Women’s
- TH = Family purity = Taharat Hamishpacha
- OMG = O My G-d
- BT = Baal Teshuva or Babylonian Talmud

Schwartz-Baumel, Judy Tydor, Frum Surfing: Orthodox Jewish Women’s Internet Forums as a
Blogs

• (1) www.blogger.com
• (2) www.blogspot.com
• (3) www.livejournal.com
• For Women
• (4) www.blogher.com
• (5) www.allwomenstalk.com
• (6) www.blogsdaisy.com
• (7) Jewishblogging.com
Summary

• Dangers of Internet/ Responsible Use of Internet
• Jewish Educational Leaders: i.e. Tziporah Heller, Sara Yoheved Rigler, Rebbetzin Jungreis, Aviva Zornberg, Susan Heschel, Blue Greenberg,
• Dinur Center for Jewish History: Gender Studies
• Nashim BiTanakh- Midrash- Talmud- Responsa- History
• Mordecai Torczyner’s WebShas- Family Life
• Beshert & zivugim: Jewish Dating Sites, listservs, websites
• Bar Ilan Demo of 3 Women Mitzvot: Hallah, family purity, bench licht
• HebrewBooks.org: Rambam on Women
• Rambi Subject Headings
• Cairo Geniza and Women
• Dina Ripsman Eylon: Women in Judaism Journal and Internet Sources for Study of Jewish Women
• JWA, JOFA, Ritual Well, Ma’yan, Israel Women’s Network, JWI, Women of the Wall
• Jewish Women Blogging: Blogosphere