

Sh'ma — An independent “think tank” of diverse ideas and conversations published online and in print to incubate issues of significance to Jewish community conversations.

Our Vision

Each month, *Sh'ma* creates a “conversation” — in print and online. It brings together an array of voices that cross the spectrum of Judaism: secular and religious, communal and nonpartisan, engaged and dispassionately scholarly. We raise relevant questions thoughtfully and wrestle lovingly with Jewish concerns as we attempt to navigate the intellectual, communal, and spiritual challenges of contemporary Judaism. Our focus is on ideas — their complexity, their range, and their power. *Sh'ma* is a vibrant intellectual arena that hosts intelligent and creative conversations about ideas that reside outside of any particular institution. Our readers open *Sh'ma* to find what they cannot find elsewhere — the concise, accessible, informative, and intelligent discussion of Jewish issues. Sometimes focusing on personal belief, other times on communal policy issues, we look to *Sh'ma* for incisive articles that illuminate a range of opinions.

Who are *Sh'ma* Readers?

“They are deeply committed to Jewish tradition and Jewish continuity; spiritually curious and at times adventurous; at home, at least to some extent, with the world of Jewish texts and the texture of Jewish rituals; appreciative of the many genuine intellectual, ethical, and political benefits of secular modernity, though not unaware of its fraught relationship with Jewish life; people for whom their Jewish identity is a vital component in an ongoing process of self-creation and expression by the light of their understanding of morals, community, and spirituality, a process they share with other families of humanity, and with concerned individuals everywhere.”

Yehudah Mirsky, Brandeis University

Are You One of Our Readers?

Join a growing number of informed Jews — rabbis, philanthropists, federation directors, educators, lay leaders, students — who read *Sh'ma* each month to view the world through a Jewish lens that is **inclusive, expansive, and thought-provoking.**

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of fellow Jews comes from their hearts as well as their heads. Neither should be reduced to blind allegiance or, worse, mere ignorance. *That which is hateful to you, do not do to others.*

A cherished lay leader once told me that he made it his business to sit next to the newest person at a board meeting and that he approached strangers at an *Oneg Shabbat*; he wanted everyone to feel part of the conversation and community. He didn't pick out people who looked or voted like him; indeed, quite often it was the opposite. He didn't trade any of his passion for debate, but when those debates occurred, he saw the humanity in others, and they in him.

After all, if we can act out conflict on small stages, why can't we also act out reconciliation? 

Discussion Guide

1. Do Jewish values inform workplace policies in Jewish communal institutions? How so?
2. Does the Jewish workplace — from day schools to federations to synagogues — provide working conditions that support young families? Are professionals appropriately compensated? Are lay leaders appropriately acknowledged?
3. Is the Jewish communal infrastructure creating avenues for the best Jewish talent and creativity?
4. Have difficult conversations about Israel been stifled in the Jewish community? How are we attempting to create an environment of trust and openness that is conducive to civil conversations of difference?
5. Jews talk about bringing passion to the workplace. How do we keep it ignited?

Upcoming December 2012

Movements for Social & Political Change

- **Julian Voloj** on photography as social commentary
- **Eitan Kensky** on the power of music
- **Philip Spiegel** revisits the Save Soviet Jewry movement
- **Shaul Kelner** on *tikkun olam* and social change
- **Eddy Portnoy** on two historical moments of political change
- **Judith Rosenbaum** on feminism
- **Steven Windmueller** on the Tea Party
- **Maya Balakirsky Katz** on Chabad
- **Tomer Persico** on Israel's settlement movement
- **Lili Ben-Ami** on the Israel Tent City movement
- **Noam Pianko, Elisheva Goldberg, Aharon Horowitz & Ken Bob** on Zionism
- **Or Rose** on interfaith collaboration and social change
- **Eric Levine** on the theory of social change
- **Tony Michels** on Jews and the left