Media Monitoring Reports

1. November 2014 to present
2. September - October 2014

Prepared January 2015
November-present

NATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL JEWISH

Chicago rabbi receives Pomegranate Prize from the Covenant Foundation

Jewish United Fund
November 12
Five young, passionate and exceptional Jewish educators making impact today, and holding great promise to be leaders in the field in the future, are the 2014 recipients of The Covenant Foundation’s Pomegranate Prize.

Advice for after the vows

Jewish Journal
November 13
Before most couples get married, they don’t know what to expect. They’re excited and scared, but ready to make one of their biggest life decisions: forming a union with the one they love. Local rabbis from all different backgrounds and denominations shared their best marital advice for partners about to make the leap.

Rabbinical students prevented from holding egalitarian minyan in Knesset

Jewish Telegraphic Agency
November 27
American rabbinical students from the Conservative movement were prevented from holding afternoon prayers in the Knesset synagogue. The students, who attempted to hold the service on Tuesday, were told that the synagogue is to be used exclusively for Orthodox prayer services, the Masorti Foundation for Conservative Judaism in Israel said in a Facebook post.

Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis, ‘Rabbi of Rabbis’ and world-renowned Jewish leader, dies at 89

Jewish Journal
December 18
Rabbi Harold Schulweis, regarded as the most influential synagogue leader of his generation, died at his home after a long struggle with heart disease. He was 89.

Social Media Roundup

Facebook

After the excitement of Inauguration, RRC’s social media imprint continued to grow at three times the rate of the previous year, due largely to the news items listed below and strategic use of boosted posts on Facebook (see case study). We engaged exponentially larger groups of people and expanded our fan base. Key drivers were:

- Tikkun olam writing and activity by our students and graduates related to the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO, and similar incidents elsewhere.
- Israel-related news (a bombing in Jerusalem and a special offer for Reconstructionists from the Tivnu Gap Year Program) and the launch Facebook page Gateways to Israeli-Jewish Renaissance on December 8.
- Rabbi Deborah Waxman's appearance at the White House for Hanukkah.

Facebook High Points

- “A Prayer for Ferguson,” written by student Sandra Lawson, reached 25,000 people on Facebook - 4,000 of those due to a paid boost. This was an all-time high for RRC. The Ferguson post led to 1,200 actions by viewers (e.g., LIKES, SHARES, CLICKS, COMMENTS) and we added 12 new fans to our page on a single day, six of them from the boosted campaign.
- “Join the Gateways to Israeli-Jewish Renaissance Project” reached 2,085 people during a two-day boosted post campaign. This new page has gained 236 fans in just one month.
- “The Guide to Jewish Practice – Volume Three is here” reached 2,545 people during another two-day boosted post; it received 85 LIKES.

The Jewish community remembers Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis

Jewish Journal
December 19
An excerpt from the eulogy of Janice Kaminer-
Reznik, president and co-founder with Rabbi Schulweis of Jewish World Watch: Of all of the visits and conversations I have had with Rabbi Schulweis, it is our very last conversation less than two weeks ago that was perhaps the most profound. It will stay with me forever.

**To-Do List for the Social Justice Movement:**
* Cultivate Compassion, Emphasize Connections & Mourn Losses (Don’t Just Celebrate Triumphs)*

Zeek  
December 23  
This past week, I was thrilled to read Yaira Robinson’s piece on how her spiritual practice sustains her activism work. As a community organizer and a future rabbi (b’ezrat HaShem), this is the work I hope to do in the world — supporting individuals, communities, and movements to develop and foster deep spiritual practices that sustain our work for a redeemed world.

**Where Are the Jewish Liberals Marching For Decency?**

Algemeiner Journal  
December 25  

**Jewish Activists Struggle for Right Tone on Racism After Murders of Police Officers**

The Jewish Daily Forward  
December 26  
Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum was observing the Sabbath on December 20 when New York police officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos were shot and killed in their patrol car in Brooklyn by 28-year-old Ismaaiyl Brinsley, who then took his own life.

**U.S. rabbis protest racism, preach compassion**

Ha’aretz  
December 27  
Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum was observing the Sabbath on December 20 when New York police officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos were shot and killed in their patrol car in Brooklyn by 28-year-old Ismaaiyl Brinsley, who then took his own life.

**REGIONAL BROADCAST**

Rabbi moves to work for the Quakers  
WBEZ

We continue having success using Twitter strategically to cultivate organizational partners and influential individuals in order to magnify our reach and add followers. The following for @RRCommunity was up 31% during the last quarter of 2014. Significant new followers include:

- Sam Kestenbaum (1,092 followers): journalist who writes for major Jewish web magazines and is a newsroom staffer at the New York Times; often retweets our multifaith and social justice posts.
- Erika Davis (1,798 followers): Jewish Black Gay activist who guest blogged for Ritualwell and retweeted our links to that blog.

Other Twitter partners who often mention @RRCommunity, link to our content, and repeat our Twitter messages include:

- Keshet GLBT Jews (5,576 followers)  
- Zeek Magazine (3,420 followers)  
- Rabbi Rachel Barenblatt (2,880 followers)  
- Truah (2,703 followers)  
- A Wider Bridge LGBTQ Connections to Israel (1,945 followers)

Experimenting with a new form of engagement, we used the Journeys e-newsletter to send people to a page about Musar on our website and invited them to sign up to receive a Middah of the Month from Rabbi Jacob Staub; 74 people opted-in for this new email stream.

We also used email blasts and social media to drive people to two new landing pages in the Ethics Center section of our website devoted to the newest volume in A Guide to Jewish Practice - The Life Cycle. Over 300 unique users spent approximately 4-7 minutes on each these pages, which is far above the average three-minute visit on
Can Jews still be Jews and not believe in God?

Hanover Eagle
November 3
Rabbi Amy Joy Small, founder of Deborah’s Palm Center for Jewish Learning & Experiences in Morristown, will lead a three-part series called “Is It Necessary to Believe in God to Be Jewish?” at the Morris County Library, 30 E. Hanover Ave., in Whippany.

Bill de Blasio Appoints New Chair of Human Rights Commission
New York Observer
November 21
Mayor Bill de Blasio announced this afternoon he has appointed a new chair of the City Commission on Human Rights—several weeks after the public advocate demanded he sack the Bloomberg era holdover.

Reconstructionist rabbi to speak in Keene
The Keene Sentinel
December 6
The Reconstructionist movement of Judaism is viewed as the religion’s most progressive. So it isn’t surprising that the recently inaugurated president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Rabbi Deborah Waxman, is believed to be the first woman president of a religious seminary in the United States, and is certainly the first woman rabbi to head a major Jewish movement. The fact that she is a lesbian makes her presidency that much more noteworthy.

Jewish Groups Light Candles to Illuminate Injustice
Jewish Exponent
December 17
How do you shine a light on issues of social justice during Chanukah without it becoming too political? That’s a question some leaders in the Philadelphia Jewish community considered as they linked candlelightings to the continuing outcry over black men being killed in police altercations.

Two Delaware rabbis head to White House
The News Journal
December 17
Rabbi Michael Beals couldn’t deal with the Orkin man knocking on his door Tuesday afternoon. The rabbi for the Conservative Congregation Beth
Shalom in north Wilmington had places to go. "I'm sorry," he told the pest control worker. "I'm on my way to the White House."

**Harold Schulweis, longtime noted rabbi in Oakland, dies at 89**
*San Francisco Chronicle*
December 22
Rabbi Harold Schulweis, considered to be among the most influential rabbis of his generation in a career spanning his work not only as a religious leader but also as a social activist and prolific author, died early Thursday at his home in the Los Angeles community of Reseda after a long fight with heart disease. He was 89.

**Generations of Indian Valley in Souderton hosts ‘Longest Night’ winter solstice program**
*The Lansdale Reporter*
December 24
Seated by a fireplace flame and a tree lit for the holidays, a group of people at Generations of Indian Valley took note Dec. 22 of “The Longest Night.” The winter solstice has been observed from earliest times, Carl Yusavitz, Penn Foundation director of pastoral services and a Generations board member, said.

**New year time for central Ohioans to reflect on renewing their faith**
*The Columbus Dispatch*
January 2
As 2014 was coming to a close, Jessica Shimberg spent a week at a silent retreat in Connecticut. She left behind hustle, bustle and technology for meditation and prayer, gaining new insights from the Jewish and Buddhist practices of mindfulness, stillness and connection to the divine.

**NATIONAL ONLINE**

**Making Interfaith Marriage Work: The Questions I Am Asked Most**
*Huffington Post*
November 29
Interfaith marriage is one of the most persistent spiritual realities and challenges of our time. As a rabbi who has officiated at interfaith ceremonies for over 37 years I have watched as the rate of intermarriage has risen every year so that today more Jews may actually marry non-Jews than Jews and I see no reason to believe that this trend will
reverse itself any time soon. I have always considered finding non-judgmental ways of supporting every couple and family, regardless of the religious lifestyle that they choose to create for themselves as one of my most important professional and personal challenges.

**Liberal Orthodoxy, Not Jewish Orthodoxy: 'Repairing The World' Isn't In The Torah**

*The Daily Caller*

December 10

To thunderous applause, President Barack Obama described himself in a March 2013 Jerusalem speech as “a man who’s been inspired in my own life by that timeless calling within the Jewish experience – *tikkun olam* … the work of repairing this world.”

**Hanukah: Still Fighting for Freedom After 2000 Years**

*Huffington Post*

December 19

Hanukah is undoubtedly the best known of all Jewish holidays. It owes this fame, in no small part, to its annual proximity to Christmas. Originally a relatively minor holiday in Jewish tradition, Hanukah has assumed greater and greater importance over time as Jews have felt a need to compete with the glamour and attraction created by the commercialization and heavy promotion of Christmas.

**Other Stories, Others' Stories (Parshat Vayechi, Genesis 47:28 - 50:26)**

*Huffington Post*

January 2

This November, I attended the first annual conference of the Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom. Afterwards, I posted on my Facebook page a picture of 100 Jewish and Muslim women—old and young; bareheaded, hijabi, and a few in yarmulkes. One of my Jewish friends commented on the posting, "Did you discuss how Islamic women can win basic rights and freedom from abuse and oppression in their native countries?"

**NATIONAL PRINT**

**Harold Schulweis dies at 89; influential rabbi stressed deed over ritual**

*Los Angeles Times*

December 18

Uri Herscher remembers the day 55 years ago when
he heard the rabbi at an Oakland synagogue telling the biblical story of the binding of Isaac. Herscher, then a freshman at UC Berkeley who had gone to temple reluctantly, listened as Rabbi Harold Schulweis said that the angel who stopped Abraham from slaughtering his son was not a supernatural being, but Abraham's conscience.

**Balancing Faith and Reason**
*Wall Street Journal*
January 2
A high percentage of the best historical novels have been written with the classical world as background. One thinks of Marguerite Yourcenar’s “Memoirs of Hadrian,” Robert Graves’s “I, Claudius,” John Williams’s “Augustus,” Steven Pressfield’s “Gates of Fire,” and those of Mary Renault's novels set in ancient Greece.

**REGIONAL / ONLINE JEWISH-FOCUSED & OTHER**

‘People vs. Joseph's Brothers’ mock trial Nov. 15
*Cleveland Jewish News*
November 6
Attendees will decide the fate of Joseph’s Brothers during Kol HaLev’s mock trial, “The People vs. Joseph’s Brothers,” at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 15. This is the fourth year Kol HaLev, Cleveland's Reconstructionist Community, has hosted a mock trial. Greg Selker, the trial spokesperson at Kol HaLev, said he first became aware of biblical mock trials when he attended a Reconstructionist convention about five years ago.

**Welcome the Stranger**
*Baltimore Jewish Times*
November 26
As partisans haggle over the legality of President Barack Obama’s executive order on immigration, the American Jewish community is applauding an effort many Jews have long fought for. Rabbi Michael Ramberg has been working with Philadelphia’s immigrant community since he was a rabbinical student.

**Rabbinical students prevented from holding egalitarian minyan in Knesset synagogue**
*Jewish News of Greater Phoenix*
November 28
American rabbinical students from the Conservative movement were prevented from holding afternoon
prayers in the Knesset synagogue. The students, who attempted to hold the service Tuesday (Nov. 25), were told that the synagogue is to be used exclusively for Orthodox prayer services, the Masorti Foundation for Conservative Judaism in Israel said in a Facebook post.

**Jewish Reconstructionist Movement Makes History**  
*Atlanta Jewish Times*  
December 4  
The Jewish Reconstructionist movement made history October 26, when Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D., was inaugurated as the first woman president of both a seminary, the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC), and a major Jewish movement in Jewish Reconstructionist Communities. This historic event took place at 2:30 p.m. at The National Museum of American Jewish History.

**New rabbi was shaped by her parents’ choices**  
*New Jersey Jewish News*  
December 8  
Anna Boswell-Levy’s father was her clerical role model. When she was 10, he left biophysics to pursue music and then the cantorate. After growing up in a small “heimish” (homey) synagogue in Bryan-College Station, Texas, that welcomed her non-Jewish mother (who eventually decided to convert), Boswell-Levy found herself in Jerusalem for her father’s first year in cantorial school at the Hebrew Union College Israel campus.

**Darchei Noam, JSpace host frank talk with Israeli envoy**  
*The Canadian Jewish News*  
December 9  
A conversation between moderator Ralph Benmergui, Canadian radio and television personality turned political advisor, and DJ Schneeweiss, Israel’s consul general to Toronto and Western Canada, was occasionally tense at an event held at Congregation Darchei Noam Dec. 3, co-hosted by the Reconstructionist synagogue and the progressive Jewish organization JSpace Canada.

**Jewish Music Fine-Tunes Cultural Identity**  
*Jewish Exponent*  
December 10  
One of the surest signs that the winter holidays are coming is the mushrooming of stations dedicated to playing nothing but the music of the season. And there have never been more options for listening to Chanukah music, even if the offerings don’t come close to the level of Christmas music on both
terrestrial and satellite radio.

**Issues Of Race, Bias Come To Fore**  
*New York Jewish Week*  
December 10

Yevilah McCoy grew up in Crown Heights, where her father studied under one of the great Chabad rebbes. She attended yeshivas and, later, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and she is now an executive at Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston. Her husband is a physician and, together, they live in one of Boston's most comfortable suburbs.

**Reconstructing Beit Tikvah**  
*Baltimore Jewish Times*  
December 11

It has been just over a year since Rabbi Larry Pinsker joined Congregation Beit Tikvah as its spiritual leader. But on Nov. 22, the Reconstructionist synagogue, which turns 30 next year, officially celebrated the rabbi’s installation.

**For L.I. Synagogues A More Perfect Union?**  
*New York Jewish Week*  
December 17

And the coffee and danish shall bind them. Fueled by demographic changes on Long Island’s South Shore and in a bid to stay afloat, members of a Reconstructionist congregation sold their building in Hewlett in 2012 and began renting space in a Reform synagogue in Rockville Centre. At first, it was every shul for itself: Congregation Beth Emeth, the Reconstructionist synagogue, and Central Synagogue, the Reform one, held separate Sabbath services, Hebrew school classes and other programs.

**Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis, 89, z”l**  
*San Diego Jewish World*  
December 18

Rabbi Harold Schulweis, regarded as the most influential synagogue leader of his generation, died Wednesday, Dec. 17, at his home after a long struggle with heart disease, his longtime congregation, Valley Beth Shalom, announced. Rabbi Schulweis was 89 years old.

**Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis Influential Synagogue Leader, Author and Social Activist Dies at 89**  
*IT Business Net*  
December 18

Rabbi Harold Schulweis, regarded as the most influential synagogue leader of his generation, died
late Wednesday evening, Dec. 17, 2014. His death was announced by Rabbi Edward Feinstein, Senior Rabbi of Valley Beth Shalom in Encino, California.

**Pioneering Rabbi, Harold Schulweis, Dies At 89 In Los Angeles**

New York Jewish Week

December 19

Rabbi Harold Schulweis, regarded as one of the most influential synagogue leaders of his generation, died Dec. 18 at his Los Angeles home after a long struggle with heart disease. He was 89 years old.

**“Prayer for Ferguson” ad in St. Louis Jewish Light**

December 10

A photo of Deborah Waxman at White House ran in the Jewish Exponent online photo slide show of the event.
The below resultant coverage from media outreach efforts by the Strategic Advancement team targets outlets including national/international Jewish media (The Forward, Haaretz), regional broadcast network affiliates (ABC6, CBS3), regional print media (Philadelphia Inquirer), and several regional and online Jewish-focused media outlets (Jewish Exponent, Algemeiner). The below list does not include exhaustive coverage of the event, as stories continue to post. For example, the St. Louis Jewish Light has indicated that they have a story forthcoming. We will continue to post signature news stories on the RRC website here. If you haven’t had a chance to see it, or would like to see it again, watch the inauguration video on our website.

Also included in the right-hand column are a few highlights from our social media efforts in conjunction with those of our supporters, which have helped to boost the impact of the news stories. For example, editors from The New York Times and The New Republic re-tweeted the Philadelphia Inquirer news story, in effect putting the story in front of tens of thousands more readers while simultaneously helping us build our brand and credibility.
**NATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL JEWISH**

*Reconstructionists name Deborah Waxman first woman president of seminary*
*Haaretz*
October 27
Rabbi sees challenge in `making the case for being religious, especially from a progressive perspective, offering an alternative to fundamentalism or secularism.'

*A First in the Jewish World*
*Jewish Daily Forward*
October 31
Rabbi Deborah Waxman has been many firsts in her life. She was one of the first bat mitzvahs to be celebrated on a Saturday morning in her hometown of West Hartford, Connecticut in 1979 and now she is the first female rabbi, and the first lesbian, to lead a Jewish congregational institution.

*Deborah Waxman Inaugurated as First Woman Rabbi to Lead Jewish Reconstructionist Movement and Seminary*
*American Jewish Press Association*
Featured release on AJP homepage
October 27
Rabbi Deborah Waxman, the newly inaugurated president of the Reconstructionist movement, says that being Jewish grounds her in tradition, orients her with a sense of wonder, and fortifies her to be unafraid of the unknown. “Or if I’m afraid, to venture forth anyway,” she said. “Living a Jewish life gives me the companionship of others on a similar journey.”

*Reconstructionist rabbinical College Inaugurates First Female President*
*Jewish News Service*
October 27
The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Additionally, two of our graduates live-tweeted the event from their seats at the inauguration:
- Rabbi Joshua Lesser to 1,488 followers
- Rabbi Danielle Leshaw to 508 followers

RRC’s own Twitter account, @RRCommunity, gained nearly 100 followers in the weeks surrounding Inauguration.

In addition to driving significantly more traffic to our various web properties, including www.rrc.edu and www.jewishrecon.org, more than 750 people have viewed Rabbi Waxman’s inaugural address video.
inaugurated its first female president on Sunday, an appointment also marking the first time a woman has been elected president of both a seminary and a Jewish religious movement. It is also the first time an openly gay woman has attained such a role.

**Reconstructionist Rabbinical College Inaugurates First Female President**
**Algemeiner Journal**
October 27
The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College inaugurated its first female president on Sunday, an appointment also marking the first time a woman has been elected president of both a seminary and a Jewish religious movement. It is also the first time an openly gay woman has attained such a role.

**REGIONAL BROADCAST**

Jewish Reconstructionist Movement gets first female president
(LINK TO VIDEO)
**6 ABC Action News, at 6 and 11 p.m.**
October 26

New Leader for the Reconstructionist Movement
(LINK TO VIDEO)
**CBS 3, 6 p.m. News**
October 26

**REGIONAL PRINT**

Woman makes history at college and in Judaism
**Philadelphia Inquirer**
October 23
Rabbi Deborah Waxman leafed through her mail before unwrapping a small orange, the punch line to a fabled Jewish myth. As it went, a rabbi once teased that a woman rabbi was like an orange on a ceremonial seder plate used during Passover. Neither belonged.
In history-making move, rabbinical college gets out female prez

Philadelphia Gay News
October 16
Rabbi Deborah Waxman has a lengthy affiliation with the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College as a student, vice president and professor. And now, she adds the title of president to that list.

REGIONAL / ONLINE JEWISH-FOCUSED & OTHER

Waxman Inaugurated as Head of Reconstructionist Rabbinical College
Jewish Exponent
October 27
Rabbi Deborah Waxman was officially inaugurated as the leader of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and the Reconstructionist movement on Oct. 26, marking a dual achievement for the rabbi, ordained at RRC in 1999: She became the first female rabbi to lead the seminary and the first female rabbi to head a Jewish denomination.

She’s a Rabbi, She’s a Lesbian & She’s Ready to Reconstruct Judaism
The Blot Magazine
October 25
Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D. is the first female rabbi to lead a Jewish congregation and a seminary. She is also the first lesbian in such a high level of leadership, and she will be celebrated by the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and Jewish Reconstructionist Communities at an inauguration ceremony in Philadelphia Sunday, Oct. 26.