

DELVE DEEPER READING LIST

93QUEEN

A film by Paula Eiselt



This list of fiction and nonfiction books, compiled by Sarah Burris, MLIS of Bay County Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *93Queen*.

Set in the Hasidic enclave of Borough Park, Brooklyn, *93Queen* follows a group of tenacious Hasidic women who are smashing the patriarchy in their community by creating the first all-female volunteer ambulance corps in New York City. With unprecedented and insider access, *93Queen* offers a unique portrayal of a group of religious women who are taking matters into their own hands to change their own community from within.

ADULT NONFICTION

Berwin, Mel, Jennifer Sartori and Judith Rosenbaum. *Making our Wilderness Bloom: 350 Years of Extraordinary Jewish Women in America*. Jewish Women's Archive, 2004.

Making Our Wilderness Bloom celebrates 350 years of extraordinary Jewish women with biographies, historical context, primary source interviews and photographs. One segment of the book introduces Jewish women who save lives through medicine and health. This represents the Jewish value of *pikuach nefesh*—"saving a life"—where the preservation of life overrides all other religious considerations.

Biale, David et al. *Hasidism: A New History*. Princeton University Press, 2017.

This is the first comprehensive history of the pietistic movement that shaped modern Judaism. The book's unique blend of intellectual, religious, and social history offers perspectives on the movement's leaders as well as its followers, and demonstrates that, far from being a throwback to the Middle Ages, Hasidism is a product of modernity that forged its identity as a radical alternative to the secular world.

Fader, Ayala. *Mitzvah Girls: Bringing up the Next Generation of Hasidic Jews in Brooklyn*. Princeton University Press, 2009.

Mitzvah Girls is the first book about bringing up Hasidic Jewish girls in North America, providing an in-depth look into a closed community. Ayala Fader examines language, gender, and the body from infancy to adulthood, showing how Hasidic girls in Brooklyn become women responsible for rearing the next generation of nonliberal Jewish believers. To uncover how girls learn the practices of Hasidic Judaism, Fader looks beyond the synagogue to everyday talk in the context of homes, classrooms, and city streets.

Levine, Stephanie Wellen. *Mystics, Mavericks, and Merrymakers: An Intimate Journey among Hasidic Girls*. New York University Press, 2003.

Mystics, Mavericks, and Merrymakers includes over thirty exclusive interviews with young Hasidic women transitioning from their teenage years to adulthood. While some of the girls are rebels, others strive for higher education and successful careers while remaining rooted in their faith community. The author lived in Crown Heights, Brooklyn for a year in the Orthodox Jewish Lubavitch community.

Stern, Jane. *Ambulance Girl: How I Saved Myself by Becoming an EMT*. Crown Publishing Group, 2003.

Jane Stern began her second career as an emergency medical technician late in life. For years, she had battled panic attacks, depression, and hypochondria. While her plane was grounded at the Minneapolis airport for 6 hours, she was able to help a young man experiencing a health crisis. This small but satisfying act of helping someone else led her to EMT training. Stern shares her on-the-job experiences which often included emotional and physical challenges. Through all of her hard work, Jane eventually becomes the first woman officer of her department.

Zipora, Malka. *Rather Laugh Than Cry: Stories from a Hassidic Household*. Montreal, Canada: Véhicule Press, 2007.

Rather Laugh than Cry is a glimpse into the daily life of a contemporary Hassidic woman living in a large urban setting. Malka Zipora is the pseudonym of a Montreal Hassidic woman who has raised a family of twelve children who now range in age between nine and thirty years old. Zipora has taken the unusual step of drawing back the curtain on her life as a Hassidic woman, and what she tells us about her everyday life gives us a very human view into a world that seems very much apart from the mainstream.

Berger, Joseph. *The Pious Ones: The World of Hasidim and Their Battles with America*. HarperCollins, 2014.

As the population of ultra-Orthodox Jews in the United States increases to astonishing proportions, veteran *New York Times* journalist Joseph Berger takes us inside the notoriously insular world of the Hasidim to explore their origins, beliefs, and struggles—and the social and political implications of their expanding presence in America.

ADULT FICTION

Rich, Roberta. *The Midwife of Venice*. Simon and Schuster, 2012.

Hannah Levi is renowned throughout Venice for her gift at coaxing reluctant babies from their mothers using her secret "birthing spoons." When a count implores her to attend his dying wife and save their unborn son, she is torn. A Papal edict forbids Jews from rendering medical treatment to Christians, but his payment is enough to ransom her husband Isaac, who has been captured at sea. Can she refuse her duty to a woman who is suffering?

Abraham, Pearl. *The Romance Reader*. Riverhead Books, 1995.

The Romance Reader is a coming-of-age story about the bonds of family and religion within the Hasidic community juxtaposed with the desire for independence. Rachel Benjamin is the eldest daughter of a strict rabbi. She defies the rules set by her family and religion, applying for a library card so she can read her romance novels. Rachel dreams of being one of the heroines in her novels, but reality has her lined up with an impending arranged marriage. Will she remain within the Hasidic community or abandon it for a different world?

Diamant, Anita. *The Boston Girl*. Scribner Book Company, 2014.

Addie Baum is born in 1900 to immigrant Jewish parents in Boston. The story begins when her twenty-two year old granddaughter asks, "How did you get to be the woman you are today?" Addie describes coming of age in a time when the role of women was drastically different.

Ragen, Naomi. *The Sisters Weiss*. St. Martin's Press, 2013.

In 1950's Brooklyn, sisters Rose and Pearl Weiss grow up in a loving but strict ultra-Orthodox family, never dreaming of defying their parents or their community's unbending and intrusive demands. Then, a chance meeting with a young French immigrant turns Rose's world upside down, its once bearable strictures suddenly tightening like a noose around her neck.

NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Winter, Jonah. *Ruth Bader Ginsburg: The Case of R.B.G. vs. Inequality*. Harry N. Abrams, 2017.

To become the first female Jewish Supreme Court Justice, the unsinkable Ruth Bader Ginsburg had to overcome countless injustices. Growing up in Brooklyn in the 1930s and '40s, Ginsburg was discouraged from working by her father, who thought a woman's place was in the home. Regardless, she went to Cornell University, where men outnumbered women four to one. There, she met her husband, Martin Ginsburg, and found her calling as a lawyer. Despite discrimination against Jews, females, and working mothers, Ginsburg went on to become Columbia Law School's first tenured female professor, a judge for the US Court of Appeals, and finally, a Supreme Court Justice.

Kaplan, Paul. *Lillian Wald: America's Great Social and Healthcare Reformer*. Pelican Publishing Company, 2018.

Franklin Roosevelt called Lillian Wald "one of the least known yet most important people" of her time. Wald, a relentless advocate for the welfare of children, was responsible for many of the social and health related programs we take for granted today. She campaigned for school lunches and nurses in public schools, founded the Henry Street Settlement, and was an early promoter of women's suffrage. Wald was adept at navigating both the poorest, most densely populated neighborhoods, as well as the upper circles of society, where she sought donors to support her efforts.

Stone, Tanya Lee, illustrated by Rebecca Gibbon. *Elizabeth Leads the Way: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Right to Vote*. Square Fish, 2010.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton stood up and fought for what she believed in. From an early age, she knew that women were not given rights equal to men. But rather than accept her lesser status, Elizabeth went to college and later gathered other like-minded women to challenge the right to vote. Here is the inspiring story of an extraordinary woman who changed America forever because she wouldn't take "no" for an answer.

Benisch, Pearl. *Carry Me in Your Heart: The Life & Legacy of Sarah Schenirer*. Feldheim Publishers, 2003.

This is the fascinating story of Sarah Schenirer, legendary founder of the Bais Yaakov movement, as told through the eyes of one of her students.

FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Deutsch, Barry. *Hereville: How Mirka Met a Meteorite*. Harry N. Abrams, 2012.

Welcome to Hereville, home of the first-ever wisecracking, adventure-loving, sword-wielding Orthodox Jewish heroine. A delightful mix of fantasy, adventure, cultural traditions, and preteen commotion, this fun, quirky graphic novel series will captivate middle-school readers with its exciting visuals and entertaining new heroine. Mirka is back, and she's still the only sword-brandishing, monster-fighting Orthodox Jewish girl in town. Or so she thinks.

Simpson, Lesley. *A Song for My Sister*. Random House Books for Young Readers, 2012.

Mira eagerly waits for her baby sister to be born. However, once the baby arrives, she is not what Mira expected. Despite all efforts to soothe her, the baby's cries cannot be stopped. As the baby cries through her simchat bat, a Jewish naming ceremony, Mira sings her sister a niggun, a wordless lullaby, which then inspires her sister's name.

Herman, Debbie. *Rosie Saves the World*. Kar-Ben Publishing, 2018.

Rosie can't wait to start doing good deeds to save the world. But as she helps the people in her neighborhood, she is soon so busy saving the world that she doesn't have time for her own family! It turns out, though, that the greatest acts of *tikkun olam*—repairing the world—start in her own home.

Oppenheim, Joanne. *The Knish War on Rivington Street*. Albert Whitman & Company, 2017.

Benny's family owns a knishery and sells delicious round dumplings. Then the Tisch family opens a store across the street—selling square knishes—and Benny's papa worries. So he lowers his prices! But Mr. Tisch does too. As each knishery tries to outdo the other, Benny helps his papa realize there's room on Rivington Street for more than one knishery.