

The Kranjec Test

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Towards Female Inclusion in Our Teaching

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The Kranjec Test posits that a source-sheet with more than two sources must include at least one non-male-identified voice.

What would it look like if we challenged ourselves to build source sheets that include at least one woman's voice? Source sheets are part of the DNA of Jewish learning, and yet too few of them draw from the teaching of Jewish women. When we curate all-male source sheets, we send the message that men have a monopoly on Jewish wisdom. We know that this is not the case. The Kranjec Test is an invitation to reimagine whose wisdom we teach.

Specifically, it invites us to draw from more women and relegate male-only source sheets to the dustbin of history.

The Kranjec Test takes its name from a combination of the Bechdel Test and Danielle Kranjec, Senior Jewish Educator for the Hillel Jewish University Center of Pittsburgh, who set a challenge for herself to learn and teach more women's voices.

For the last several months, our team at Hillel U's Center for Jewish and Israel Education challenged ourselves to meet the Kranjec Test's standard, working toward the authentic inclusion of non-male voices, including transwomen and gender queer people, in our teaching and curricula.

Success in the Kranjec Test has been difficult for our team to achieve, and we have often failed. We have a natural bias towards our training, which was curated and largely male-dominated. We also tend towards pre-modern Jewish sources, most of which were composed by men. But putting together source sheets should not be a perusal of our existing rolodex; it should be an opportunity to expand our knowledge bases and libraries. This has motivated us to become students again in a way that requires time, energy, and humility.

The Kranjec Test is about more than inclusive source sheets; it is about expanding our learning, emboldening our teaching, and reimagining what we think of as "core Jewish wisdom." In order to more regularly pass the Kranjec Test, we must:

Learn women's Torah. We cannot teach what we haven't learned, and so we have an obligation to actively seek out women's Torah. If you're not sure where to start, [this list](#) includes resources that we have found powerful and inspiring.

Elevate women's voices. We must give platforms to women who have been otherwise relegated to the sidelines. Not only does this include (re)discovering female memoirs from generations past, but also celebrating and centering the Torah of contemporary female scholars, rabbis, and educators.

Teach women's wisdom. We all have materials we like and return to frequently. But if those sessions do not include women's voices, we must be ready to revise them so that they more accurately reflect the collective teachings of our people and traditions.

As we continue the work of bringing forward the voices of those unseen and unheard in our communities, we must remember that gender is only one axis for inclusion. Our hope is that The Kranjec Test will be a step in thinking and acting critically about the texts we study, the voices we cite, and the ways we teach.

We are committed to a 5781 in which our teaching more regularly passes the Kranjec Test. We invite you to join us.

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