



On Division **by Goldie Goldbloom**

Anticipating the birth of her first great-grandchild, a 57-year-old Chasidic woman in Williamsburg, Brooklyn feels exposed and ashamed by a late-in-life pregnancy that slowly separates her from her community.

See Also:

The Paperbark Shoe (2011)

Gin Boyle, an albino and gifted pianist who was abandoned by her stepfather, endures the hardships of rural life after a farmer, Mr. Toad, marries her, but their lives are changed forever when two Italian prisoners of war are sent by the Australian government to work on their farm.

FURTHER READING:

***The Pious Ones: The World of Hasidim and Their Battles with America* by Joseph Berger**

A New York Times journalist and author takes readers 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.

***Becoming un-Orthodox: Stories of ex-Hasidic Jews* by Lynn Davidman**

Based on her in-depth conversations with over forty male and female Haredi "defectors," Lynn Davidman, the Beren Distinguished Professor of Modern Jewish Studies at the University of Kansas, explores what prompts some ultra-Orthodox Jews to abandon their insulated lives and shed their distinctive clothes and behaviors to enter the secular world.

***All Who Go Do Not Return* by Shulem Deen**

A former Skverer Hasid openly documents his harrowing loss of faith, which forced him into a life of deception, while providing a thought-provoking look at one of the most insular Hasidic sects in the U.S.

***Unorthodox: The Scandalous Rejection of My Hasidic Roots* by Deborah Feldman**

Traces the author's upbringing in the Hasidic community of Satmar in Brooklyn's Williamsburg, describing the strict rules that governed every aspect of her life, denial of a traditional education and arranged marriage at 17 to a stranger before the birth of her son led to her plan to escape her cloistered world. See also *Exodus* and the new Netflix series based on the books.

***Keep Your Wives Away from Them: Orthodox Women, Unorthodox Desires: An Anthology* edited by Miryam Kabakov**

Draws on the voices of women and genderqueer people who have reconciled their sexual identity with Orthodox Judaism, documenting not only the coming out process but also how these individuals build families and participate in mainstream Orthodox Jewish communities.

***Hasidic Williamsburg: A Contemporary American Hasidic Community* by George Kranzler**

Presents the findings of a decade of research into the survival and life-style of Hasidic Williamsburg as a functioning community and portrays the desperate struggle and relentless efforts of its leaders to stem the progressive disintegration of the Jewish neighborhood.

***Becoming Eve: My Journey from Ultra-Orthodox Rabbi to Transgender Woman* by Abby Stein**

A former member of Brooklyn's founding Hasidic Jewish family traces the remarkable story of how she transitioned from a non-English speaking rabbinic leader to a woman and outspoken advocate for gender freedom.

***The New American Judaism: How Jews Practice Their Religion Today* by Jack Wertheimer**

A leading expert provides an engaging firsthand portrait of American Judaism today.

READ-ALIKES:

***Disobedience* by Naomi Alderman**

Learning that her Orthodox Jewish rabbi father has passed away, Manhattan single woman Ronit Krushka returns to the home she fled years earlier and reconnects with a beloved cousin and a forbidden childhood sweetheart, only to become a threat to her former community.

***The Immortalists* by Chloe Benjamin**

Sneaking out to get readings from a traveling psychic reputed to be able to tell customers when they will die, four adolescent siblings from New York City's 1969 Lower East Side hide what they learn from each other before embarking on five decades of respective experiences shaped by their determination to control fate.

***Hush* by Eishes Chayil**

After remembering the cause of her best friend Devory's suicide at age nine, Gittel is determined to raise awareness of sexual abuse in her Borough Park, New York, community, despite the rules of Chassidim that require her to be silent.

***Invisible City* by Julia Dahl**

Investigating the murder of a Hasidic Jewish woman who because of religious laws will be buried without an autopsy, journalist Rebekah Roberts intercedes to prevent the woman's killer from getting away with the crime. See also *Conviction* and *Run You Down*.

***Kaddish.com* by Nathan Englander**

An atheist son in an Orthodox Jewish family refuses to recite the Kaddish for his father after he dies, horrifying his mother and sisters, but then decides to hire a stranger through the Internet to recite the daily prayer.

***I Am Forbidden* by Anouk Markovits**

Set inside the insular Hasidic sect, the Satmar, two devoted sisters are forced apart when one begins to question their religion's ancient doctrine.

***The Outside World* by Tova Mirvis**

Follows the whimsical courtship and marriage of Bryan and Tzippy, the former of whom astonishes his family by rejecting their liberal way of life in favor of a strict Orthodox lifestyle, and the latter, who longs to escape the expectations of religious structure and familial obligation. See also: *The Ladies Auxiliary*, *Visible City* and *The Book of Separation: A Memoir*.

***An Unorthodox Match* by Naomi Ragen**

Struggling financially and spiritually in the aftermath of his wife's death, a Talmud scholar enters a marriage of convenience with a secular woman who would overcome personal tragedy by joining Brooklyn's Orthodox community. See other novels by Naomi Ragen about the Orthodox community.

Shtisel

The popular Israeli television series portrays a Haredi family living in an ultra-Orthodox neighborhood of Jerusalem who reckons with love, loss and the doldrums of daily life. (2 seasons, available on Netflix)

**Rachel Kamin, CLC Director
North Suburban Synagogue Beth El, Highland Park
847/926-7902 or rkamin@nssbethel.org**