



# Life on the Fringes: A Feminist Journey Toward Traditional Rabbinic Ordination

*Haviva Ner-David*

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**Life on the Fringes: A Feminist Journey Toward Traditional Rabbinic Ordination** Haviva Ner-David Part memoir, part commentary, *Life on the Fringes* charts a startling Jewish feminist journey both solitary and engaging. Haviva Ner-David draws us into the many facets of her life's story: a complex modern Orthodox childhood (including a battle with anorexia); adherence to a unique combination of Jewish observances; the emergence of her feminist commitments and support of gays and lesbians in Jewish life; a serious engagement with Jewish texts -- and now, studying for rabbinic ordination with an Orthodox rabbi in Israel, where Ner-David and her family have made their home.

Over time, we see Ner-David take on both traditionally male practices -- donning a tallit and tefillin every day, wearing tzitzit at all times -- as well as those of traditional Jewish women -- covering her head, and observing in great detail the laws of niddah which govern a woman's separation from her husband in the days surrounding her menstrual period. Her personal wrestling and her halakhic analysis help us see Jewish tradition in new, more textured ways -- and lets us see new possibilities for our own lives.

Writing with warmth, vision, and passion, Ner-David unwraps her often startling package of Jewish choices, inviting readers into her many worlds, even as she challenges us to examine and deepen our own allegiances and Jewish feminist journeys. No one who takes seriously the intersection of feminism and traditional Judaism will be able to ignore this book.

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