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[Rabbinate and State](#)

by [Milta Agav Orchei](#) · Monday, March 23rd, 2009

For those of us who live in the U.S. and who, at least in this country, are committed to the ideal of separation of church and state- it is odd to see our own religion so deeply intertwined in the workings of a Democratic Jewish state. In her first documentary, [Amy Beth Oppenheimer](#) explores the role of the **Rabbinate** in Israeli life, mostly in terms of what it means for marriage. Her Film, [Faces of Israel](#) raises provocative questions- What is the role of the **Rabbinate**? Who should be included in it? What are the alternatives to it? Should Israel allow Same-sex or secular Civil Unions? Her presentation, in the form of a series of interviews, is surprisingly evenhanded, and broad in scope. She allows her subjects, who range from rabbinic leaders to average Israeli citizens, to speak for themselves. That even-handedness is the strength of this movie, and I hope it will inspire viewers to hear the many disparate voices in this conversation.

Faces of Israel opens Tues. March 24th at the Riverdale Y and will be followed by a panel discussion. Tickets can be purchased in advance at www.facesthemovie.com, or at the door.

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"I may attack a certain point of view which I consider false, but I will never attack a person who preaches it. I have always a high regard for the individual who is honest and moral, even when I am not in agreement with him. Such a relation is in accord with the concept of kavod habriyot, for beloved is man for he is created in the image of God." —Rav Joseph Soloveitchik



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