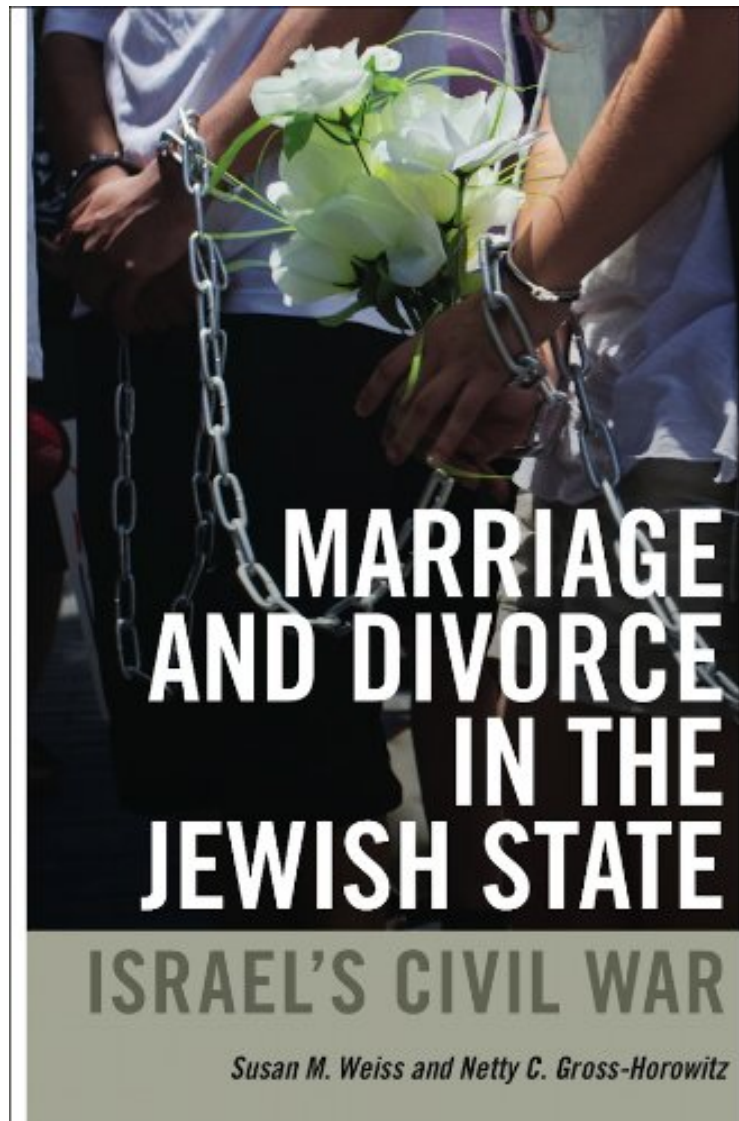


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## **Marriage and Divorce in the Jewish State: Israel's Civil War (Brandeis Series on Gender, Culture, Religion, and Law HBI Series on Jewish Women)**

*Susan M. Weiss, Netty C. Gross-Horowitz*  
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Susan M. Weiss, Netty C. Gross-Horowitz : **Marriage and Divorce in the Jewish State: Israel's Civil War (Brandeis Series on Gender, Culture, Religion, and Law HBI Series on Jewish Women)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Marriage and Divorce in the Jewish State:

Israel's Civil War (Brandeis Series on Gender, Culture, Religion, and Law HBI Series on Jewish Women):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Important resource material  
By Judith J. Wurtman  
The writers are excellent and present a comprehensive history of the divorce laws since the founding of the state of Israel. The first part of the book is slow reading for people not interested in the status of the laws over the past 60 odd years but it is an extremely important resource. The case histories are heart breaking and the reader should be prepared for teeth

gnashing when reading about them because what of the terrible plight of the women described. Perhaps the authors should consider another book for women considering an Orthodox marriage that gives them practical advice in a short form to avoid the problem of getting an Orthodox divorce.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An Important Book  
By Achlasaba  
Marriage and divorce in Israel falls under the aegis of the Orthodox rabbinical courts where, under strict Jewish law, divorce is only possible if the husband agrees. Susan Weiss has dedicated much of her professional life to alleviating the situation of women in Israel - agunot - who remain undivorced and in personal limbo because the husband refuses to give them a divorce. This tremendously important book - Marriage and Divorce in the Jewish State: Israel's Civil War - co-authored by Susan M. Weiss and Netty C. Gross-Horowitz, brings to the forefront a religious legal system where the woman does not have the same rights as the man; where equality before law does not exist and where evidence produced by the wife in a divorce case has to be rock solid and even then it is not enough while any allegation, however tenuous, made by the husband can be used against her. The authors take us through the Byzantine labyrinth of the rabbinical courts and, with sorrow in our hearts for women whose lives has been so hurt, we wonder how Israel can be considered to be a democratic society. This book is essential reading - perhaps together with a medication to lower blood pressure.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Compelling Call For Action  
By Silver Spring  
This chilling account of the inequities caused by Israel's current family law system is a plea for reform. A compelling argument for separation of Church and State, this book explains why the valiant efforts of the Center for Women's Justice and other public interest advocates have not been sufficient to maintain human rights and individual autonomy and dignity. The authors do not seek to replace religious marriage and divorce, but want Israel to offer a civil alternative as well. They suggest that Israel adapt the American model of religious tolerance and choice. An important book for people who love Israel and want it to remain a democracy.

Israel currently has two recognized systems of law operating side by side: civil and religious. Israeli religious courts possess the exclusive right to conduct and terminate marriages. There is no civil marriage or divorce in Israel, irrespective of ones religious inclinations. All Muslims must marry and divorce in accordance with shariya laws, all Catholics in accordance with canon law, and all Jews in accordance with Torah law (halakha). The interpretation and implementation of Torah law is in the hands of the Orthodox religious establishment, the only stream of Judaism that enjoys legal recognition in Israel. The rabbinic courts strenuously oppose any changes to this so-called status quo arrangement between religious and secular authorities. In fact, religious courts in Israel are currently pressing for expanded jurisdiction beyond personal status, stressing their importance to Israels growing religious community. This book shows how religious courts, based on centuries-old patriarchal law, undermine the full civil and human rights of Jewish women in Israel. Making a broad argument for civil marriage and divorce in Israel, the authors also emphasize that religious marriages and divorces, when they do occur, must benefit from legislation that makes divorce easier to obtain. Making this issue their focal point, they speak to a larger question: Is Israel a democracy or a theocracy?

An important new book on an important issue. Jewish Ideas Daily