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The New Reform Judaism: Challenges and Reflections.

Kaplan, Dana Evan (author). Nov. 2013. 392p. Jewish Publication Society, hardcover, \$39.95 (9780827609341). 296.8.

[BOOKLIST REVIEW](#). First published November 15, 2013.

Rabbi Kaplan's accessible and compelling exploration of the makings, markings, and current state of Reform Judaism provides an informative, comprehensive tour for both those new to the subject and those familiar with it. Kaplan surveys contemporary scholars, American Reform leaders, and "everyday" people who have come to Reform Judaism from other traditions or have become more aware of their identities as Reform Jews to personalize his presentation of history, social anthropology, and theology. Kaplan also does a fine job of explaining facts and discussing experiences. With a focus on individuals who reside elsewhere than the Northeastern U.S. seaboard and his own current association with a synagogue in Jamaica, the often exaggerated points of geographic and cultural connections fall away and give this book a feeling of broadness. An ideal candidate for those who find intellectual nurture in books like Martin Gilbert's *Jews in the Twentieth Century* (2001) or simply wonder what exactly is this thing called being Jewish means for many in the twenty-first century.

— *Francisca Goldsmith*