



Marilyn Kleinberg Neimark and
Donna Nevel.
photo: Alan Levine

We co-founded JFREJ because:

- racism and economic injustice permeated US society, flourishing in the rich soil of privatization, deregulation, individualism, materialism, indifference, militarism and corporatism—and they still do;
- in New York City a conservative Jewish voice not only defined what were so-called Jewish interests, but also influenced the city's priorities more generally—and it still does;
- the absence of a strong alternative to the self-appointed conservative spokespeople for New York City's Jews was distorting political life in New York and sadly, despite JFREJ's impact these 10 years—it often still does;
- it was time to reexamine the centrality American Jews gave to the state of Israel in forming Jewish identity and building political alliances—and it still is.

We did not form JFREJ to build an institution.

We did not form JFREJ to be the “good Jews.”

We formed JFREJ to reject apathy and quiescence, to demand the city address the desperate needs of the vulnerable and the oppressed, to build on and expand alliances with other progressive communities, to keep focused on the long-term goal of building a more just society, to offer a place where Jewish identity and commitment to social justice are not at odds.

We formed JFREJ to disturb the peace.



MARILYN KLEINBERG NEIMARK, a long-time activist on such global issues as anti-militarism, U.S. intervention in Latin America, and Israel-Palestine peace, has been acting locally for the last decade through JFREJ, which she co-founded with Donna Nevel. As is well-known by listeners to the weekly JFREJ radio program she co-hosts with Esther Kaplan, *Beyond the Pale: The Progressive Jewish Radio Hour* (Sundays at 11 a.m. on WBAI, 99.5FM), Marilyn is also a perceptive analyst of political and economic affairs. In her day job, she is a Professor of Accountancy at Baruch College-CUNY; her research ranges across issues in critical accounting, business ethics, and the corporatization of higher education. She is an organizer at Baruch, too, as a member of the Delegate Assembly of the Professional Staff Congress, the union of CUNY faculty and staff.

DONNA NEVEL, co-founder of JFREJ with Marilyn Kleinberg Neimark, is a community educator and organizer who has translated a consuming passion for fairness and justice into 25 years of political and social engagement. During that time, she has organized Palestinian-Israeli peace efforts; worked in Costa Rica with an indigenous human rights group; been involved in feminist organizing around economic empowerment; and coordinated education projects for social change with cultural and community groups, parents, and young people. She is currently co-coordinator of the Center for Immigrant Families, which she founded in 1996. Inseparable from her deep commitment to social justice activism is her intensely passionate love for her family, for her friends, and for music and dance.

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