

KOL



The End of an Era

The Vatikín (in Italy), p. 4

Cherem Against G-chat

Ilana Basya "Tree Pile"
Weitzentraegger Gadish, p. 5

How to Solve the Problem of Shomer Negi'ah and Enjoy Life Better

Jaded Narrative, p. 7

New Dead Sea Sect Found

Sheketah Akh Katlanit, p. 11

Dr. Seuss' 'The Matter with Madda'

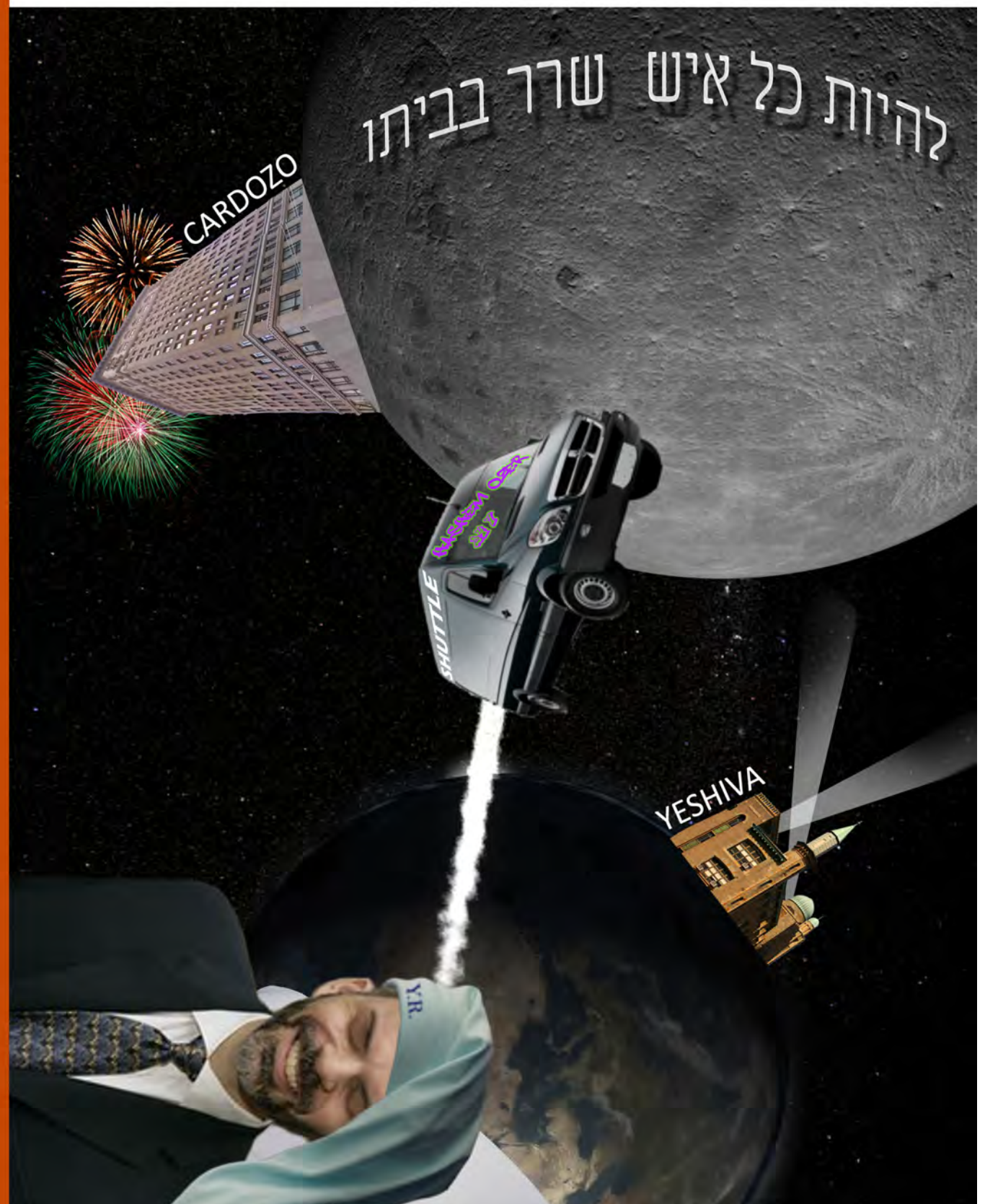
Anonymous, p. 16

Volume III, Issue 5

February 27, 2010 / 14 Adar 5770

HAMISHTAKKER

The Jewish Thought Magazine of the Yeshiva University Student Body





Kol Hamishtakker

The Student Thought Magazine of the Yeshiva
University Student body

Staph

Editors-in-Chief

Sarit "Mashiah" Bendavid
Shaul "The Enforcer" Seidler-Feller

Associate Editors

Ilana "Good Old Gad" Gadish
Shlomo "Yam shel Edmond" Zuckier

Censorship Committee

R' M. Joel
R' Eli Baruch Shulman
R' Mayer Twersky

Layout Editor

Menachem "Still Here" Spira

Copy Editor

Benjamin "Editor, I Barely Even Know Her!" Abramowitz

Editors Emeritus [Denied Tenure (Due to Madoff)]

R' Yona Reiss
Alex Sonnenwirth-Ozar

Staph Writers

A, J, P, E, D, and R Berkovitz
Chaya "Peri Ets Hadar" Citrin
Jake "Gush Guy" Friedman
Nicole "Home of the Olympics" Grubner
Nate "The Negi'ah Guy" Jaret
Ori "O.K." Kanefsky
Alex "Grand Duchy of" Luxenberg
Emmanuel "Flanders" Sanders
Yossi "Chuent" Steinberger
Jonathan "Lil 'Ling" Zirling

Disgraced Former Staph Writers

Yoni "See Jay Eff Junior" Brandler

Webmeister, Shlit"ta

Ben Kandel, N"Y

Cover Design

Yehezkel "Carlton" Carl "Carlson"

About Coal Hammy Vasser

Coal Hammy Vasser was established two and a half years ago by a few guys searching for meaning and philophosy. They embarked on a journey of supererogatory and biblical proportions, spanning the globe in their search for a Torah u-Madda belief system that would ennoble and ennoble, ennoble and enneble, enfeeble like a shtiebel, and be filling like a fliegel. In this endeavor, they entrusted members (and memberettes) of both campi as their trusted servants and steeds, heeding both philosophy and pragmatism, Halakhah and melakhah, and all other things goodly in their quest for the heylige grail of TuM. Oh, and on Purim they wrote articles making fun of everything YU, with a kernel of truth so strong it could never be ignored. Kol ha-Mishtakker, all who get smashed, is meant to connect you to hundreds of years of Hamevaser tradition in the Purim spirit of nikhnas yayin, yatsa sod, and we hope you are all the (spiritually) richer for it.

Ingredients

Volume III, Issue 5

February 27, 2010

14 Adar 5770

Paul the Apostle	3	<i>Qrum Hamevaser</i> : The Jewish Thought Magazine of the <i>Qrum</i> , by the <i>Qrum</i> , and for the <i>Qrum</i>
Dover Emes	4	Reexamining the Halakhot of <i>Maharat</i> -hood
The Vatinin (in Italy)	4	The End of an Era
Ilana Basya "Tree Pile" Weitzentraegger Gadish	5	<i>Cherem</i> Against G-Chat
Some Irresponsible Feminist (Pseudonym: Stephanie Greenberg)	7	A Short Proposal for Female Rabbis
Jaded Narrative	7	How to Solve the Problem of <i>Shomer Negi'ah</i> and Enjoy Life Better
Nathaniel Jaret	8	The <i>Shiddukh</i> Crisis Reconsidered: A 'Plural'istic Approach
Alex Luxenberg	9	<i>Anu Ratzim, ve-Hem Shkotzim</i> : Keeping with Menachem Butler
Sheketah Akh Katlanit	11	New Dead Sea Sect Found
Alex Luxenberg	13	OH MY G-DISH!: An Interview with <i>Kol Hamevaser</i> Associate Editor Ilana Gadish
Friedrich Wilhelm Benjamin von Rosenzweig	13	Critical Studies: The Authorship of the "Documentary Hypothesis" Wikipedia Article
Rabbi Shalom Carmy	14	Torah u-Media: A Survey of Stories True, Historical, and Carmesian
Chaya Citrin	15	<i>Kol Hamevaser</i> : A New Jewish Thought Magazine of the Yeshiva University Student Body
Noam Friedman	15	CJF Winter Missions Focus On Repairing the World
Dr. Fish	16	One Jew, Two Jew
Anonymous	16	Dr. Seuss' "The Matter with Madda"
Dr. Shmuess	17	" <i>Bistu Modernish?</i> " / "Are You Modern Orthodox?": A Cautionary Tale (with a Bit of Social Commentary) from the <i>Vimsical Velt</i> of Dr. Schmuess
A Newswriter with No Bias	21	Panel Convened on the Topic of Coveting Wives
Yossi Steinberger	21	<i>Cholent</i> : A Short Story
Moishie Dokterlawyerstein	22	Ultra-Orthodoxee Meets Ultra-Orthodoxtree

This magazine may or may not contain words of Torah, depending on which of the Rashei Yeshivah you hold like, and please treat it accordingly (i.e., either respect it or burn it).

Qrum Hamevaser. The Jewish Thought Magazine of the Qrum, by the Qrum, and for the Qrum

BY: Paul the Apostle

As is well known in yeshivah circles, Purim is a time for reflection, both on one's past deeds and on the events of the day itself (assuming one retains the necessary level of consciousness to do so).ⁱ With that in mind, the Editorial Staff of Kol Hamevaser has decided it proper to conduct a thorough heshbon ha-nefesh and viddui at this point in the year, surveying its many successes and many more failures in an effort to build towards the future.

Thank God, we have, so far, made some impressive strides in educating the Yeshiva University student population through interesting and thought-provoking articles on topics ranging from the ethics of medical animal testingⁱⁱ to the singularity of the Jewish people,ⁱⁱⁱ from the nature of biblical interpretation^{iv} to the obsolescence of the Hasid-Mitnaged divide.^v Authors have expressed themselves learnedly, passionately, and meaningfully throughout their pieces and have contributed to a vibrant, intellectual discourse on campus in ways heretofore unknown to YU. People talk about Kol Hamevaser wherever they are – during hazarat ha-Shats, during "batling time" time in the beit, and even during those precious few moments in between classes – because it has become a symbol of tolerance, intellectual honesty, and freedom of expression.

And yet, the publication is by no means perfect, nor is it universally liked. Indeed, while Kol Hamevaser's openness has facilitated dialogue on a whole range of important issues in the Orthodox and broader Jewish communities, it has also, along the way, led to some unexpectedly negative results. The paper's detractors point to the fact that, during this year alone, Kol Hamevaser articles have encouraged an unprecedented amount of deviant behavior and thought. The length of lines at miqva'ot, number of tefillin dates, and the rate of pre-marital pregnancy have all shot up this year.^{vi} More and more people have been caught sneaking under their rebbe's beds to find out about the intricacies of Hilkhos Tseni'ut.^{vii} In addition, YU's retention rate has dropped drastically, with disillusioned students, having realized the extent of the gap between their personal hashqafot and those of their rabbe'im, dropping out of the institution by the dozen.^{viii} Worse yet, kefirah has reared its ugly head on campus, claiming the thought of youth everywhere.^{ix} Some have even come away from reading Kol Hamevaser with the impression that women should and must learn Torah!^x

To what can we attribute these recent developments? What about the paper is so qrum that it has led to such heresy and heterodoxy? Some would place the blame on the Staff. After all, among the members of the Staff can be

found a Haredi lifestyle-dropout, several KBY-turned-Gush guys, and even a few subscribers to the Talmudic maxim "These and those are the words of the Living God."^{xi} Others point to the lack of faculty oversight, arguing that college students should not be entrusted with the awesome power of editorship and publication.

Because of these concerns and the above-mentioned disturbing trends of qrumqayt in the ranks of Kol Hamevaser, the magazine's editorship has decided to implement some slight policy changes. Not only is the Staff being completely revamped and started afresh, but no one from anywhere to the left of ToMo and the Mir will be allowed on it.^{xii} In addition, the official language of the magazine will be nehepach to a more hey mishke shprach than the tomei, metuov one that it currently publishes



in, so that no gayim^{xiii} will be able to partake. The paper will primarily publish kol koreis from the Rashei Yeshivah as well as Friday night divrei Torah and it will, farshteyt zich, be under the strict hashgoche of the RIETS administration. Even the most noki of the nekiyyei hadaas Shebiyerusholoyim will be willing to sign on to this publication; es veln zayn nisht keyn tarumeys af dem.

My broche to all of you this Purim is that we should all be zeyche to be meshabed ourselves to the eyl malchus Shomayim and, bizchus dem, veln mir ale zeyche zayn tzu zeyn di teg fun Moshiech Tzidkeynu bimheyre veyeymeynu, Omeyn.

Paul the Apostle recently converted to Christianity from Judaism after taking Dr. Chaviva Levin's "Conversions in Medieval Europe" course in Yeshiva College. He is trying to return to the Jewish community through his involvement in Kol Hamevaser, but it seems that he has hurt, rather than helped, his situation by doing so.

ⁱ See Tiqqunei Zohar, tiqqun 21, the source of the adage we all learned in elementary school that Yom ha-Kippurim is only ke-Purim in its religious significance. This comparison takes on new meaning for anyone who has experienced the Wilf Campus Purim Hagigah with its uplifting, morally edifying entertainment and festivities.

ⁱⁱ Ilana Gadish, "He Made a Snail, Which is Helpful for Curing a Scab..." Medical Animal Testing and Halakhah," Kol Hamevaser 3,1 (September 2009): 19-20.

ⁱⁱⁱ Nicole Grubner, "'Am le-Badad Yishkon:' Must the Singular Nation Always Reside Alone?," Kol Hamevaser 3,2 (November 2009): 10-11.

^{iv} Ori Kanefsky, "Bible Study: Interpretation and Experience," Kol Hamevaser 3,3 (December 2009): 19-20.

^v Periel Shapiro, "Hasidim: The Aharonim of Torat Nistar," Kol Hamevaser 3,4 (February 2010): 14-15.

^{vi} Some attribute the increases to an article by Nesanel Ferret, "A Halakhic Approach to Dropping Shemirat Negi'ah Like It's Hot," but others claim it has more to do with the uptick in male-female havrutot at non-denominational yeshivot in the New York area. In any case, the advent of women's ordination cannot have helped this process – "ki Rabba ha-'azuvah be-kerev ha-'Arets."

^{vii} See Emmanuel Sanders, "Be Not Overly Modest: Tseni'ut and the Inability to Speak About Sex," Kol Hamevaser 3,2 (November 2009): 13-14. It should be noted that while the author does not explicitly endorse these behaviors in his piece, his mention of them has been taken by some as implicit agreement, a strategy adopted by some local newspapers in (mis)construing public figures' words.

^{viii} For more information on this, please contact tinokshenishbah@gmail.com.

^{ix} Implicated articles include anything written by Reuven "Benedict" Rand, Eli Putterman, and/or AJ Berkovitz.

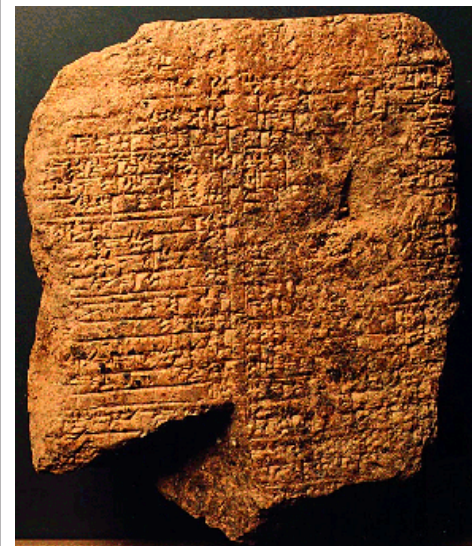
^x The R-V, "A Yid iz Geglichn tzu a Seyfer Toyre, part IV," Kol Hamevaser 3,4 (February 2010): 18-19, at p. 18. Opponents of this view have claimed that the heylige R-V would never have used those words – that the translator must have inserted them himself in order to push his own agenda. No definitive conclusion has been reached, as of now, to this question.

^{xi} Gittin 6b.

^{xii} Obviously, the female contingent of the Kol Hamevaser Staff will be discontinued, though not much missed; it's not like girls write articles for us anyway!

^{xiii} Since this is a Litvishe yeshivah, Litvishe havoreys will be expected of all talmidim.

HAMMURABI HALOCHO YOMIS



"If a judge tries a case, reaches a decision, and presents his judgment in writing; and later it is discovered that his decision was in error, and it was his own fault, he shall pay twelve times the fine set by him in the case and be removed from the judge's bench."

We see from this makor the very important chashivus of being very makpid on what you write. As Reb Chayyim once said, not everything thought should be said; not everything said should be written down; and not everything written down should be published. And if this is true for merely publishing, kal vachoymer how much it's true legabei pesak din. This is the yesoid behind R. Hammurabi's halocho of the day.

Reexamining the Halakhot of Maharat -hood

BY: Dover Emes

Recently, with the advent of Yeshivat Maharat, a new set of halakhic questions have arisen. Perhaps the most intriguing is whether or not a man can be ordained as a *Maharat* (*Manhig Hilkhati Ruhani Torani*). For obvious reasons, this question finds no explicit mention in the Talmud, Rishonim, or even the Aharonim. Thus, in the absence of a precedent, we must attempt to analyze the relevant legal and philosophical principles and thus discern what the *Da'as Torah* would say about the issue, if only they would have been *zokheh* to see this phenomenon.

The first issue is that of *serarah*. We know that there is prohibition for a woman to be a king, and Rambam extends this to all positions of power. However, clearly the institution of *Maharat* does not violate *serarah*, or else no one could have established it as a position for women. Although we cannot find any sources that would legitimate having a woman take such a position, we see that many rabbinic authoritiesⁱ have established it. That being the case, we can assume that this has taken the status of a *minhag vatik* (an ancient custom), which Maharik describes as the type of *minhag* that can overturn Halakhah.ⁱⁱ If so, we can call this non-*serarah* leadership. However, it seems clear that just as Rambam prohibits women from taking *serarah*-like positions of leadership, he would prohibit men from assuming non-*serarah*-like positions. This line of reasoning was used by R. Akiva Schlesinger to prohibit Jews from learning secular studies. He argued that the reason non-Jews are liable to the death penalty for learning Torah is that they are engaged in that which does not belong to them. So too, Jews should be liable to the death penalty for learning secular subjects, as that is the realm of non-Jews. By the same token, it follows that men should be prohibited from taking those positions of non-*serarah* leadership that are specific to women.

However, as R. Moshe Feinstein points out, Tosafot reject the opinion of Rambam and allow women to take positions of leadership, though not the kingship. If so, then there would be no issue of *serarah* for women and no prohibition of non-*serarah* leadership for men.

The second issue is that of *keli gever*. In the Midrash of Pseudo-Jonathan, there is a passage that says that “*lo yihyeh keli gever al ishah*”ⁱⁱⁱ refers to the prohibition for women to wear *tefillin* and *tsitsit*. Less known is the continuation of the Midrash that prohibits men from becoming *Maharats*, as it is a violation of “*lo yilbash gever simlat ishah*.” It is passages like this one that lead people to assume that Targum Yonatan is, in fact, a late commentary, and was not actually written by R.

Yonatan ben Uzziel. It is because of this that R. Moshe rejects the Targum, quoting as a source Maharats Chajes who, in turn, quotes Moses Mendelssohn. Hence, we can reject the position of the Targum.

The third issue is that of *tseni'ut*. As we all know, there is an obligation to be modest and not to do things that will call undue attention to oneself. While there are sources indicating that women should have a heightened sense of *tseni'ut*, the basic obligation applies to both men and women. That being the case, it is possible to argue that if a man would want to be the first *Maharat*, especially amidst the controversy it would arouse, it would be a violation of *tseni'ut*. However, while that may be the case, it seems that the fence has already been breached – *ha-geder nifrats* – by the institution of *Maharat* in the first place, and thus I do not think that a further expansion would constitute a violation of *tseni'ut*.

The real problem here may be that the position *Maharat* no longer exists. Since Sara Hurwitz has been renamed “*Rabba*,” there is no such thing as a *Maharat* anymore. One could posit that there exists some theoretical *Maharat* in the world of ideas, but, as the only manifestation of *Maharat* in this world was short-lived, I am not sure that there really is such a thing. It could be that it was just a mistake or some transition-stage before the position of Rosh Yeshivah. There is nothing in the middle, as we have seen: after being ordained as *Maharat*, Sara Hurwitz was immediately named a Rosh Yeshivah, a feat accomplished by few Rabbis in history, which really makes one think. Now, one might say that we should still ask the question and get *sakhar* for dealing with theoretical Torah *sugyot*, but I think our time would be better spent dealing with issues that are actually *alibba de-hilkhetah* – you know, like whether you refer to Sara Hurwitz as “*Rabba*” while learning a *sugya* about *Rabbah* in the Gemara, or whether that would be like calling someone with your father’s name by his name while in your father’s presence.

ⁱ When I say many, I of course mean this in the sense of more than one. In this particular case I mean two, but *trei ke-me'ah*.

ⁱⁱ Whether or not it is actually overturning Halakhah is beyond the scope of this article. Furthermore, whether this can be considered a *minhag vatik* when it has only existed for a year is questionable. But, let us assume. You know only good things can come of assuming, for you and me, *ve-hamevin yavin*.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Devarim* 22:5.

THE END OF AN ERA

BY: The Vatikin (in Italy)

This May, Yeshiva College will see the end of an era. Here in Yeshiva University, we pride ourselves on being open-minded, broadminded, pluralistic and tolerant. In this vein, faculty and students alike have been extremely proud to have greatness in our midst: I speak, of course, of Josh Lustiger.

Josh, you see, comes from a family which any YC student should envy. Josh’s family has achieved the ultimate synthesis of their ancient Jewish roots and worldliness. Better than visiting a brothel in the quest for *tikkun olam*; bet-

Torah u-Madda, religious study and general culture, Catholic Israel and *frume* saintliness, and *achilas Yoshke* and *teshuvas ha-mishkal nusah Yeshu* all benefited in proportion.

In order to gain a deeper appreciation for Josh’s greatness before he leaves the hallowed halls of Yeshiva College, and perhaps give future students at Yeshiva a true model of the Torah u-Madda values which we all hold so dear, *Kol Hamevaser* decided to interview Josh and present some of the highlight-experiences which he remembers fondly from his upbringing.

The first story Josh shared from his life history goes back Sukkot 1994. Josh was still



ter than having *sefarim* share library-shelf-space with Spinoza; better than having a Super Bowl party right outside the beit midrash; even better than having a gay panel in a yeshivah – Josh’s family has merged the *heyilige* Catholic Church with the beit midrash. In Josh’s household, Pope and Rabbi share the mantle as the Old and New stand side-by-side in this family held up as the paragons of true Modern Orthodoxy.

On one side of Josh’s illustrious family, Dr. Arnold Lustiger is world-renowned for his ability to mesh Yeshiva University’s preeminent personality, Rav Joseph B. Soloveitchik, with his own Philadelphia Yeshiva upbringing. Thus, representing the pinnacle of Orthodox Judaism, Josh’s uncle functions as the anchor of Traditional Judaism. On the other side, Cardinal Jean Marie Lustiger served as the Archbishop of Paris for more than twenty years and exposed Josh’s family to a brand new culture and world of ideas and religious views. Thus, Josh grew up in a household where these two giants of their respective religions were each held in great esteem, and it is clear that his

young then, but he recalls his family visiting cousins and seeing their *sukkah* decorations. They had the classic pictures up on the wall, including the Hazon Ish, the Brisker Rav, Rav Shach and Rav Elyashiv, and then another guy with a nice big beard that looked just like them – except that he was wearing a red frock and *yarmulke* instead of their drab black ones. At the time, Josh assumed this was probably a *Sefaradi* rabbi or *Chasidic* Rebbe of some obscure city in Europe. However, after seeing captioned pictures of the Pope visiting our very own Yeshiva University, Josh realized who exactly was gracing the walls of his cousin’s *sukkah* all those years earlier. He realized that his family had embraced the whole gamut of monotheism (or, as Uncle Jean preferred to call it, monotheism-plus) and could open their arms to people who wore different colored cloths and *yarmulkes*.

Initially, Josh was hesitant. Was it really okay to be so nice? Aren’t we taught that we are right and everyone else is incorrect? How can we respect people who look so different? It just seemed so wrong!

Later, however, Josh recovered from his brief lapse into insanity and was blessed with a deep appreciation for the true gifts he was receiving from his bi-religious and scarring-for-life experience. You see, Josh is blessed with a computer, and, upon Googling “Christian-Jewish relations,” he came across an article by the Center for the Jewish Future about *tikkun olam* explaining the importance of embracing everyone – from prostitutes in Thailand (or anywhere else, for that matter) to our Christian neighbors. In addition, he found an article in the Jewish Theological Seminary weekly publication praising Yeshiva University for coming out of the cave and allowing the Church dignitaries to spend time enjoying the sights, sounds and smells of lovely Washington Heights. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, Josh discovered heated debates in the comments sections of curiousjew.blogspot.com and hirhurim.blogspot.com which opened up his eyes to what a blessing he had. Suddenly, he realized he did not have another one of those run-of-the-mill families that paid lip-service to Torah u-Madda and Modern Orthodoxy. Rather, his family was the real deal; they really opened their doors to anything and everything, priding themselves on their fabulous breadth and openness.

On a somewhat different note, Josh remarked that even in such a tolerant, open-minded and modern family as his own, tensions do rise. It was Pesach 2003 and both sides of his family’s most esteemed religious devotees were present. The tension, Josh recalled, began at the very beginning when the Jewish side of the family explained that because the redemption of the Jewish people from Egypt marked an eternal covenant between God and the Jews, nothing in the Jewish community would ever change. Jean Marie, however, countered that although mainstream Judaism – following the Hatam Sofer’s maxim that “*hadash asur min ha-Torah*” – abhors alterations, there are certain Jews who believe that such *kefiradik* things as change are possible. He proceeded to cite a number of examples of totally new, innovative Jewish ideas – Rav Hayyim’s *derekh*, *Da’as Torah*, Torah u-Madda, Academic Jewish Studies, Nagel Bagel, *gedolim* stories instead of night *seder* and Rashei Yeshiva getting their own offices – as well as a number of things in everyday Judaism which seem to be in a continual state of flux, such as the beard-length of Simcha Gross and Rav Twersky (both of whom also happen to wear white socks), the number of open seats in the beit midrash, how much money YU lost in the Madoff scandal, YU’s fifth year scholarship policy and whether there will be tablecloths this Shabbat in Glueck. Moreover, he noted that there are even certain concepts in Judaism which are constantly changing, citing the title of Maharat-gone-Rabba (can you hear Rabbi???) Sara Hurwitz as his primary example. Of course, he did observe that many things – such as the stifling heat in the library, girls swarming the library, cheating in YU, YU rabbeim not being around, broken elevators in Furst, scantily-clad Dean’s secretaries and registrar’s office workers and rising Caf prices –

as being solid examples of age-old traditions which will never change. Still, he argued, the very fact that things can change so drastically in the Jewish community is reflective of a larger tendency towards evolution and development. Thus, he concluded by saying that if Mishpacha™ can feature a front-page article that distorts Rav Schachter and the Rav, the Church can say whatever it wants to about the Jews and God – regardless of accuracy.

Further, as Josh replayed that fateful *seder* night in his head, he vividly remembered the remarkable way it all ended. Following the early tension, the *seder* continued quickly and awkwardly (as tends to happen when people share personal and provocative ideas – instead of a *gematriya* they read in a mass e-mail *devar torah*) until after *Shulhan Orekh*. Josh recalls his cousin opening the door for Eliyahu and Uncle Jean getting very excited because he thought that his arguments had convinced everyone to accept Jesus and await the Second Coming. (Uncle Jean even thought they were getting a cup of blood ready for Jesus in case he needed a transfusion). However, after Dr. Lustiger realized the mistake he disabused Uncle Jean of his idea and explained that ever since Dr. David Berger delegitimized Chabad, nobody in YU believes in Second Comings, *Tehiyat ha-Metim*, Hannukah, spirituality, or *keiruv rehokim*.

To close this appreciate-Torah-u-Madda-Yeshiva-University-tolerance-moment, we asked Josh if he had any advice to the future of Modern Orthodoxy. He responded that after reminiscing about these memories, which are so close to his heart, he only asks that “the YU community forget their biases, stop being bigots and leave the bullying to Lakewood – we’re the tolerant ones, after all.”

GHEREM AGAINST G-CHAT

BY: Ilana Basya “Tree Pile”
Weitzentraegger Gadish

A horrible evil has befallen *Am Yisroel*. Greater than all other evils imaginable. More detrimental to *klal Yisroel* than all these evils combined: Television. *Avodah Zarah sheitls*. Academic Jewish studies (*lo aleinu!*). Those not-quite-but-almost-three-quarter-sleeved shirts. Jewish “thought” magazines. Britney Spears. Women’s “learning” (*chas ve-shalom!*). Culture. Artsroll *Shas*. Ben Yehuda. Feathered headbands. Spicy *cholent*. YSTUDS and SSTUDS and all other

Torah. Sites on the internet that are toxic to a *yiddishe neshama* run the gamut from Facebook to YouTube, wikipedia.com to JOFA.org, and of course, the most detrimental of all, *kolhamevaser.com*. But beyond all of these *assur* forms of internet use, one stands alone in its ability to destroy *Am Yisroel*. This great evil is destroying the *yesod* of *Yahadus* as we know it. It is the most prominent cause of *hirhurim assurim* (as opposed to *hirhurim mutarim*, which are halakhically allowed according to the *shitta* found in “*Ma Yedidus*”ⁱⁱⁱ). The destructive force threatening to cause the final dissolution of *Am Yisroel* is the flagrant obsession with one of the most evil innovations of



kinds of YU studs. Seminary choir competitions. Slits in skirts. *Chochmas Yevanis*, from Aristotle to all Malcolm Gladwell books. Coasting. Co-ed gatherings at the Jewish Scholarship table at the Seforim Sale. “*Amen*” parties. Jewish rock music.

What is the biggest issue facing the Jewish community today? Surprisingly enough, it is not the feathered headbands, or the bad Jewish music, or any of the other, terrible and horrific *nisyonos* mentioned above. This evil is obviously not something futile, such as whether homosexuality in the Orthodox community should be discussed openly or privately, or the heated debate over MaHaRa”T vs. Rabbah vs. EChSo”Mⁱ, nor does it have anything to do with Chabad. The greatest evil of today’s world is an awful, treacherous, technological innovation that many *yidden* have become addicted to. God created all things with potential for both *tov va-ra’*, good and evil. The internet, for example, has many good uses for a modern day Jew. Some *muttar* forms of internet use include: e-daf.com, myzmanim.org, OnlySimchas.com, and *sometimes* YU-

the 21st century: G-chat.

G-chat, like Pesach trips to Miami, promotes *pritzus* amongst *klal isroel* in its ability to enable intermingling of the sexes (*lo aleinu*). G-chat also has dangerous effects on the body similar to those of alcohol, affecting the frontal cortex causing compromised judgment.ⁱⁱⁱ One of the worst manifestations of the alcohol-like effects of G-chat is excess laughter that is experienced during these sin-ridden G-chat conversations, often expressed in written forms such as “hahaha,” “hehe,” or “rotfl.” Worst of all, G-chat is causing people to have “lol *malchut shamayim*,” instead of *ol malchut shamayim*.

Furthermore, G-chat is clearly *bittul Torah*, as it takes over a person’s^{iv} mind, as it allows men to speak to people outside of their *beis medrash*, which puts them in great *sakana* of discussing things like the weather, how somebody else’s day was, world news, humorous things, and other dangerous, foreign ideas. Additionally, it has been revealed that men and women discuss Torah over G-chat. This is utterly distressing, as we know that *kol hame-*

lamed bitto Torah, ke'ilu lomdah tiflus^v], one who teaches his daughter Torah, is as if he teaches her *tiflus*. If one cannot teach his own daughter Torah, *kal va-homer* he cannot discuss it with some other woman! Such actions would truly constitute *tiflus*!

What is *tiflus*? Two possible meanings can be derived from the word itself. Splitting the word into two, we see that the two possible meanings of *tiflus* are “tiff,” and “loose.” Tiff, what does this mean? That when a woman learns Torah, it can only bring a tiff, a quarrel, into the world. Clearly, since women are incapable of intellectual thought, they can only possibly misunderstand the meaning of what you might be trying to teach them. Furthermore, they are argumentative and petty, and thus they will insist that their understanding is the correct one. When you tell them otherwise, a tiff ensues, and soon after that they are crying. This only brings more crying, since the fact that they are crying makes them upset that they are ruining their make-up, which makes them more distressed because they have been under the impression this whole time that you were not aware of the fact that they wear make-up. Since make-up is *assur* anyhow, they feel ashamed of this great, *hamur* sin which all of their fellow women have a *ta'ava* for, and suddenly you have a sobfest on your hands.

The second meaning, “loose,” refers to the licentiousness that is always the end result of all women learning Torah. Women are crafty in their nature, and they will use their Torah learning to evade halakhah. We see a *remez* to the destruction of men by women via G-chat in *Mishlei*: “She also lieth in wait as a robber, and increaseth the faithless among men.”^{vi} The Hebrew word that is translated here as “increaseth” is *tosif*. *Tosif* can also be translated as “she will add,” and this is the exact *mayseh* done by one who would like to be able to G-chat with somebody else. “Add me on G-chat” is a phrase exchanged between suspicious peoples, oft-heard in dark alleyways, the Uptown library, the Brookdale Lounge, and many other *pritzudikke mekoymes*. If one “adds” someone on G-chat, they add on to their *tzures*. For it is known that if women actually knew halakhah, they would be able to contrive ways to break it,^{vii} and therefore men must prevent themselves from allowing the spread of Torah to women, especially via G-chat. Thus, G-chat is a threat to traditional Judaism; it is pure *tiflus*, in both senses of the word and *benei Torah* should be wary of the fear of “*tosif*.”

It is also imperative to discuss one of the most negative aspects of G-chat, the G-chat status message (GCSM). Statuses can be very dangerous. One might think the concern of GCSM's would be that they propagate *lashon ha-ra*, but the real problem with statuses is that they allow freedom of expression in a public forum. While this is *vadai assur* in a general sense, it is even more *chomur* regarding women. One of the fundamental principles of Judaism, which was censored out of as number thirteen of Rambam's Thirteen Principles

of Faith by the first-wave feminists during the early twentieth century^{viii} and replaced with Resurrection of the Dead,^{ix} is the principle of *kol kevudah bat-melech penimah*^x, “the glory of the king's daughter is within.” If one looks at the manuscript containing the accurate *girsah* of Rambam's Thirteen Principles, one sees the lengthy discussion there which explicitly states that women should not only remain at home, unseen by the public, but should also refrain from expressing themselves verbally or in writing, if somehow they even know how to write.^{xi} G-chat uproots these basic fundamental principles, so essential to life as a Jew.

G-chat has also been a great source of stress for shadchanim. With new forms of technology, the complex world of shidduchim is changing rapidly. With the innovation of G-chat, men and women can converse with each other between dates, without knowledge of the



shadchan. While this may seem like a positive change, shadchanim have begun to realize that with G-chat, couples can converse *outside* of hotel lobbies and kosher restaurants. One shadchan recently lamented that, “it was once easy to find out about how a date was going, or even to find a bisser of information about what the topics of conversation were. Did he look interested, did she sit in a *tznius* way? How many years *koyllet*? Six? *Takeh!* Seven, maybe. My usual spies—uh, I mean assistant shadchanim—never had to worry about how to overhear conversations. But now with this G-chat *shtus* we have no way of finding out what is really going on.” With G-chat, shadchanim have less control over the way the couple functions. Additionally, G-chat creates a false sense of security, which allows couples to be open and honest with each other. This could cause tremendous damage, and be an awful addition to the already horrendous “age-gap shidduch crisis.”

G-chat is also causing *klal Yisroel* to be tempted to be *over* one of the most important *takanos* set up by Chazal. The *Takana for Refraining from Emoticon Use During E-mails*, known in the halakhic literature as *TaFoR- FEUD*™^{Em}, was instituted right at the beginning of the era of e-mail. Emoticons^{xii}, they decided, clearly fell under the category of “*derech chibbah*,” and they consequently made a *takkanah* forbidding everyone from using them. The only emoticons *muttar* to use were : (, : / although that last one is debat-

able. The most *assur* emoticons are: the wink ;) the kiss face :* and the heart <3. A recent article discusses the great problem this has posed for couples that use G-chat longer than 3 months, as the *tayva* for emoticons becomes too great. The author then maintains that TaFoRFEUD™^{Em} constitutes a *gezeirah al ha-tsibbur she-rov ha-tsibbur lo yekholin la-amod bah*, a “restriction upon the community that majority of the community cannot withstand.”^{xiii} Consequently, the author calls for the assembly of a *beit din* to annul this edict, as it clearly violates the principle found in *Bava Kamma*^{xiv} of “*ein gozerin gezeirah al ha-tsibbur ela im kein rov ha-tsibbur yekholin la-amod bah*— we do not impose a restriction upon the community unless the majority of the community will be able to withstand it.”^{xv} The *takana* set up by Hazal forbidding the use of the emoticons of the wink, kiss and heart

should be reversed. Every time a person sends a wink in jest, or a heart to even someone you are “just friends” with, they violate a huge *issur* that could be avoided if the TaFoR- FEUD™^{Em} was revoked.

G-chat is destroying *klal Yisroel*, is a source of *bittul Torah* and *tiflus*, and is the number one cause for today's Shidduch Crisis. It is clear that G-chat leads directly to all sorts of *aveiros* and is a vehicle for *cheit*. In fact, the original writing of G-chat was not *haser*, as we have it today, but in fact was written *malleh*, with a *yud* between the “cha-” and the “t,” thus showing us that the true word for G-chat is “G-chait,” pronounced like G-*cheit*, G-sin. *Ad kan*.

Ilana Batya Gadish is a junior at Stern College for Women, and is an Associate Editor for Kol Hamevaser. Gadish is majoring in Jewish Studies and is still pretending that she's also majoring in Biology. To conclude, as it says in Bava Kamma and Shemot 22:5, Gadish is (always) on fire; she is a true "Eishes Lapidot." She also wants to remind everyone that, "im ein kemah, ein Torah."

ⁱ EChSo™M- “Eishes Chayil Soccer Mom,” the title Agudas Yisroel came up with for female Jewish leaders in the Orthodox community.

ⁱⁱ “Mah Yedidus.” NCSY Bencher Pocket Size: A Book of Prayer and Song. Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America: (No-

vember 1993) p. 29.

ⁱⁱⁱ From the unpublished *teshuvot* of *Ma'ayanei Hilkhot ha-Chen*.

^{iv} **Person's** - *Ish ve-lo isha*, since it is *assur* for *nashim* to be involved in any *limmud Torah* whatsoever. The JPS Gender-sensitive Commentary to this article, however, differs on the meaning of the meaning of “person's.” The Gender-sensitive Commentary should be officially published in the next few months.

^v *Sotah* 20a.

^{vi} *Mishlei* 23:28. Translation found at: <http://www.mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt2823.htm>.

^{vii} See, for example, *Tosafot* to *Gittin* 17a, s.v. “*Gaziyya la-zman ve-yehavei nihalah mai*.” If a woman was an *eshet ish* and wanted to prevent herself from being executed by cutting out the date on her *get* in order to create the illusion that she had been divorced at the time she committed adultery, she most likely would think that if the *beit din* saw her *get* with the *zman* cut out they would put her to death anyway. However, as the *Tosafot* explain[s], if she actually knew the halakhah she would know that she would in fact *not* be put to death if the date on her *get* was cut out (this contradicts Rashi's statement there). But since women don't know the halakhah, they will remain in fear of execution and thus not try to evade being convicted of adultery. From this *sugya* we further prove how much “*tifloose*” is involved in women's learning.

^{viii} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First-wave_feminism.

^{ix} Originally, the uncensored reading stated, “*ve-ha-yesod ha-shelosha assar: kol kevudah bat-melech penimah*” (*Tehillim* 45:13). The rewritten version done by the early feminists states, “*ve-ha-yesod ha-shelosha assar tehiyyat ha-meittim*,” which up until the discovery of the uncensored version stirred much debate as to whether Maimonides actually believed in his last principle or felt pressured to add it in due to the protests of the Jews of his time. See Joshua Abelson's “Maimonides on the Jewish Creed.” *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 19, No. 1. University of Pennsylvania Press: (October 1906), p. 56.

^x *Tehillim* 45:13.

^{xi} Many Medieval thinkers believed that a female demon would come to women at night and teach them how to read in their dreams. It is now believed that Jane Austen was a *gilgul neshamah* of this demon.

^{xii} Some Emoticons include:

:) :(;) :-* 8-) =) :D

^{xiii} An adaptation of the translation cited in end-note *xiv*, below.

^{xiv} *Bava Kamma* 79b.

^{xv} Translation taken from the gender-sensitive edition of Nathanielle Jarette's “*Shemirat Negi'ah* and Reality.” *Kolah Hamevaseret* 3,2 (November 2009): 17-19, at p. 18. By the way, I promise there will be no more gender-sensitive jokes. Or jokettes. Okay, that wasn't even a good one. But *be-emette*. That was the last one. Really.

Short Proposal for Female Rabbis

BY: Some Irresponsible Feminist
(Pseudonym: Stephanie Greenberg)

Well have heard all the arguments for and against giving semikhah to women. There are good arguments, decent arguments, and bad arguments, and they have been rehashed so many times over that I feel no need to re-rehash this *kasa di-harsena*, and if I do then the word *harsena* will take on a whole new meaning.

Anyway, it is clear that for some reason, (though it is not clear what that reason is) that no woman will ever become a rabbi. However, I have a plan that will still grant us our first and all-important attainment of female rabbi. But how, you may ask? And the answer is simple- maybe it is impossible for us to give a woman the status of rabbi, but what stops us, may I ask, from giving a rabbi the status of woman? Yes, I am prepared to go *la-din* (to court) over this issue. *Be-Simhah* (with joy)! If we take some nice RIETS (or, better yet, YCT) graduate and circumscribe their male status to the point of nonexistence, behold we have created a female with semikhah, a.k.a. a female rabbi, and note that it will be called a rabbi and not a Maharituta or Rabbabbah or anything weird like that. Once we have one female rabbi, the door is open for there to be more female rabbis, and for more women to get *semikhah*, and all other good things.

Anyone who opposes this approach is either a sexist or Haredi or both. And we need no panels to settle this score.

Stephanie Greenberg is a human who is personally invested in this article.

How to Solve the Problem of Shomer Negi'ah and Enjoy Life Better

BY: Jaded Narrative

As I'm sure everyone knows, because they all read Kol Hamevaser, there is a huge problem in our Modern Orthodox world. People spend too much time getting caught up in halakhic minutiae and details, and do not spend enough time enjoying life. The *Yerushalmi* says that anyone who leaves this world without enjoying it deserves death, and who are we to argue with the holy words of our sages. Now, don't get me wrong- I'm not saying we don't have to follow the minutiae; we definitely have to and we're bound to the Torah and I'm very *frum* and all sorts of other superlatives. All I'm saying is that we need to find lots of sketchy *heterim* for this whole *shomer negi'ah* business that will get around the letter of the law, so that we can fulfill the spirit of the law and just have a darn good time with ourselves (and our significant others). If anyone does not understand what I am trying to say, they obviously have not internalized the Torah's metahalakhic concepts, and they should make it their business to read all the respected Torah-observant hedonistic treatises on the meaning of life.

Now that I have set out my *sitz-im-leben*, I'm not going to *zetz-avek* on the halakhah, leaving it no *lebensraum*, and crush it to a pulp, in order to allow for increased anti-halakhic maneuvering. The plan is like this- since I have no argument that could actually work in a satisfactory manner, the goal will instead be to garner several sub-par arguments and throw them out there for what they are worth, so that everyone can be very scared of me and try to censor Kol Hemevaser. Ready? Set? Go!

The Hush-Hush Method: I think we should censor all *halakhot* relevant to *shomer negi'ah* and not teach them to the next generation. We might actually be obligated to hide the halakhic truth from our offspring based on the concept of *mutav she-yihyu shoggegim ve-al yihyu mezidim*.ⁱⁱ If the law is not going to be followed, better that it not be followed in a state of utter blissful ignorance than to tell people the halakhah and expect them to actually follow it!

The Gemara there says that not only do we say this for laws of rabbinic level, but that this rule applies even to the *de-oraytas*, as seen by the fact that we apply it to cases in which women were eating and drinking up to nightfall on *erev* Yom Kippur (even though there is an obligation to be *mosif* to the fast). The Ram-

bam mentions the fact that every *de-orayta* like this would also fall under the *heter*. The Kesef Mishneh comments that this rule would apply to *halakhot* that a) are not stated explicitly in the Torah, b) people are not stringent about and, c) apply to everyone (*masur la-kol*).

The Prophet Method: Rambam *Hilkhot Yesodei Ha-Torah* 9:3 writes that if one convinces a *navi* to do his dirty work for him, a *navi* is allowed to tell you to be *over* any halakhah except for *avodah zarah*. There is the one catch that the *navi* can only change the law if the change is non-permanent. To remedy our situation here, what we have to say is that the *arayot* are only allowed temporarily, until the time one is married. *Wallah!* We took the ha-



lakhah and dropped it like it's hot.ⁱⁱⁱ

How does one find a prophet? It's all a matter of paying off the right people (for the Hebrew edition of this article, *tzarikh iyyun gadol vi-hamevin yavin*).

The Sin For Her Sake: We all know about the very important idea of *aveirah li-shmah*. The *Tosafot* in *Yoma* 82 point to Siserah's sin as one which was necessary and positive in order to further the existence of *kelal Yisrael*. Here, also, Israel faces a true crisis; with the *shiddukh* crisis upon us, we will not be able to maintain high enough numbers for survival and we must raise our observance of *peru u-revu*. Thus, we must take upon ourselves the great religious endeavor of violating the sin of *negi'ah* in order to further *kelal Yisrael*. In that vein, I would like to proffer a further interpretation for the phrase *aveirah li-shmah*. The phrase *aveirah li-shmah* means, "a sin for her sake." Now, this is most usually read as for the sake of God or for its own positive value, but the simplest reading of the phrase is that *aveirah li-shmah* means "a sin for the purposes of her," namely, the girl in question. This is the strongest source, since it militates for not just allowing *negi'ah* but for mandating it.

You're Grounded!: The Karka Olam Answer: This answer is very complicated, and

it relates to the story of Purim, making it very relevant to this time of year.^{iv} The problem of *negi'ah* is that one takes actions to violate the command of *lo tikrevu le-gallot ervah*. But what if one is completely passive in the act? The Gemara in *Sanhedrin* 74 points out that Esther was passive (*karka olam*) in her relationship with Ahaseurus, so there was no halakhic problem for her. There are, of course many issues with this resolution. First of all, it only solves the problem for the woman, but at this point I guess we will take what we can get. Second of all, *Rishonim* point out that if she intends to do the act she still is responsible for it, or that if she has *hana'ah* from the act she is responsible. And this is all not taking into account that not in every situation is the woman passive. So this answer is very complicated, but it can go a long way in allowing immoral activities in our community, so that's at least a good thing.

That 'Aint My Woman: *Pesah* has shown us that *bal yera'eh* and *bal yimatseh* is not violated if one sells the *hamets* to a goy. We can make a *hekesheh* between *hamets* and *niddah*. The Gemara in *Makkot* brings a three-way *mahaloket* as to whether or

not we can give *malkot* to *chayyavei mittah* and *karet*, and in the context of the discussion there, the Gemara draws a comparison between *arayot* and the rest of *keritut* (at least for Rashi's reading). We can apply this connection to the relationship between *arayot* and *hamets*, one case of *keritut*. Just like one is allowed to have a non-Jew's *hamets* in his home on *Pesah*, so too one may have all sorts of premarital relations with a young lady owned by a goy. Q.E.D.

Now that we have successfully allowed the sin of *negi'ah* to be *muttar*, I sincerely hope that our religious community grows and is inspired by the increased observance of its laws. The fact that our campus will look like Ahaseurus' harem is a side problem we can manage to ignore. Peace out!

ⁱ *Kiddushin* 4:12.

ⁱⁱ *Beitsah* 30a, Rambam *Hilkhot Shevitat Asor* 1:7.

ⁱⁱⁱ Sorry, I stole that line from Snoop Dawg, and also from Nate Jaret's article on a similar topic to this one...

^{iv} The previous answer also relates to this time of year, at least for *Tosafot* who connect Esther's sin to Yael's.

The SHIDDUKH CRISIS RECONSIDERED: A 'PLURAL'ISTIC APPROACH

BY: Nathaniel Jaret

It is on no one's lips, but everyone's mind. Especially the minds of Stern girls. (Except those select few *Chait-y* Stern girls who read Rambam literally and are convinced, perforce, that they do not have minds. Not those non-minds.)

Those three loathsome words, lurking just around the corner, crouching at the door like sin, ready to strike: The. *Shiddukh*. Crisis.

"I'm 20 years old, still single, and addicted to the semi-kosher Dunkin' Donuts across the street from Brookdale!" wails one girl from Teaneck. "No one will ever love me," cries a Tiferet girl into her pillow after her subpar results in *Hallah* Baking shi'ur in seminary. "*Shir la-Ma'alot...*" whisper hundreds, chanting daily invocations at some *kever* of some Tanna in the middle of some forest in the Galil.

As a community of halakhically committed people, let us be honest with ourselves. After doing our time in Israel, post-high school, undergoing our respective religious epiphanies, and having our libidos brutally stuffed into a rucksack and replaced with the various adages of *Mesillat Yesharim* or Rav Nahman, many of us cannot help but wonder, "When do I get my *chelek* in *peru u-revu*, to build a *bayis ne'eman* and send my *kinderlech* to learn *Toyre?!?*" More often than not, this is nothing more than the psychological sublimation of another, more hormonal drive, to the effect of, "I want to be just like Shira Schwartz." Either way, the question resonates. What do we do with all the single ladies? Somehow, Ms. Knowles' vision on the matter, prophetic and catchy as it may be, does not quite intersect with the values we wish to sustain and impart in our communities, nor does it contribute to the physical continuity we are hoping to achieve. So alas, what do we do?

We can join the ranks of the Right, bury our heads in the sand with regard to this issue as well, repeat over and over in our heads there is no crisis, there *could not be* a crisis, since the Torah is *emes* – and ignore the suffering of our holy *aidel maidels*. Alternatively, we can spearhead pseudo-successful dating websites, conceived and implemented primarily to *create the illusion* that the problem is being addressed and relish our ineffectuality. Or we can tackle the problem head-on from within the parameters of our halakhic tradition, as is our responsibility. True, I Saw You at Sinai, but I was far too busy paying attention to ordinances and methodology. By all means, go ahead and Meet The Connectors – I'll talk Halakhah.

Around the year 1000, Rabbi Gershom

ben Yehudah of Mainz (alias: Rabbeinu Gershom Me'or ha-Golah) convened a rabbinic synod to halakhically address certain issues that were plaguing the Jewish communities of *Aratsot Ashkenaz*. Amongst the edicts and innovations (purported to have been!) enacted and introduced by Rabbeinu Gershom were: the requirement of mutual consent to a divorce, the prohibition of opening the private mail of others, a modification of the halakhic attitude towards coerced apostasy, and finally, and most famously, the prohibition against polygamy. Some have speculated that this ban against polygamy was meant to curb rampant



anti-Semitism.

Today, we as a community have come to accept the reality of monogamy as an unquestionable given. With the ideas of *bashert*, of Manolsonian sanctity, of the aforementioned "*bayis ne'eman*," and of those cookie-cutter apartment complexes, those "little boxes on the hillside" in Ramat Beit Shemesh, so incessantly drilled into our heads and idealized during our year plus in Israel, can our ideological misdirection be blamed?

We are left with another, more poignant matter to address – that polygamy is an ethical reality, as condoned, and thus confirmed, by the Torah. Whether we want to relegate it to the status of "concession to human mores," as does Maimonides with the biblical institution of *korbanot*, is another question, but on the most basic level, there is something holy and divine about *actualized*, and not just theoretical, polygamy, whether it tickles our modern fancy or not. This is something that both the Right and the Left are hard-pressed to explain – the idea of taking multiple wives violently jars their falsely constructed model of monog-

amous *kedushah*. In reality, though, this social edifice of monogamy is recent, and even, I daresay, *modern* (sorry, the Right), and, quite frankly, not rooted in the classical texts of Judaism. A man who is disturbed by the idea of a second (or third, or fourteenth) wife has been, without doubt, thoroughly cleansed by the tossing tides of modernity. This particular high tide, however, began to swell at the turn of the *previous* millennium.

It goes without saying that "*ma'aseh avot siman le-banim* (the act of the forefathers is a sign for their descendants)" and that the model created for us by our holy matriarchs and pa-

history. Enforced monogamy is not "*yofyafuto shel Yefet be-ohalei Shem*." It is a travesty, an imposition, a blasphemy in the face of God's eternal Torah!

Our young women find themselves older and older, and their biological clocks tick more and more impatiently; we cannot simply sit back and watch them fall victim to the patently anti-Jewish sentiment of monogamy.

According to Rabbi Shelomoh ben Adret (Rashba), Rabbeinu Gershom's edict expired in the Hebrew year 5000, or the Gregorian year 1240. The relevance of this could not be more obvious. For those in the rabbinic community who do not wish to rely on this minority opinion, a "*hetter me'ah rabbanim*" could accomplish the same thing.

The benefits of such a move are glaring. First, and perhaps foremost, we would reclaim our Halakhah from the modernist distortion that *Herem de-Rabbeinu Gershom* is, demonstrating our immense *yir'at Shamayim* and hopefully hastening the coming of *Mashiah ben David*. We would effectively solve the *shiddukh* crisis overnight, since any man who would have dumped a girl out of uncertainty would no longer have that dilemma: "Well, if Miriam gets annoying, I'll simply move in with Batya for a few weeks!" And there is *no* woman in the Jewish dating world, I assure you, who isn't *even* the fourth best option.

A reacceptance of the practice of polygamy into its rightful and historical place in authentic halakhic Judaism is long overdue. We owe it to *Benot Yisrael*, we owe it to our *masorah*, and we owe it to *Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu*. Now, with a halakhic method with which to do so, we can only wait for the most courageous of our *posekim* to get to work. Inaction would be far worse.

Nathaniel Jaret is a sophomore at YC majoring in English. He only dates Stern girls two at a time, for the sake of efficiency. Ha-Yom katser ve-ha-melakhah merubbah – ve-hamevin yavin.

triarchs should be affirmed and incorporated into our lives. Two out of three of the *Avot* took multiple wives, one of them marrying four women. David ha-Melekh took many, many wives, as *Nakh* readily relates. The precedent is obvious.

The Babylonian Talmud, too, embraces the idea of polygamy wholeheartedly. The entire principle of *yibbum* assumes the existence and acceptability of polygamy in order *to require it!* Indeed, *Shas* is replete with practical questions that arise from polygamy, including matters of inheritance and connubial responsibilities. *Yoma* 18b and *Yevamot* 37b both relate the fact that Rava himself had multiple wives! These are not theoretical musings – these are pragmatic explorations of real halakhic practice!

Let it be said, because someone must say it. Yes, the practice of polygamy smacks of barbarism and chauvinist machinations. Yes, jealousy may arise. But at the end of the day, when push comes to shove, it is halakhic, and it is celebrated by our traditional sources and put into practice by the greatest figures in our

ⁱ See Avraham Grossman, "The Historical Background to the Ordinances on Family Affairs Attributed to Rabbeinu Gershom Me'or ha-Golah ('The Light of the Exile')," in Ada Rapoport-Albert and Steven J. Zipperstein (eds.), *Jewish History: Essays in Honour of Chimen Abramsky* (London: Peter Halban Publishers, 1988), pp. 3-23.

Anu Ratzim, ve-Hem Shkotzim: Keeping Up with Menachem Butler

BY: Alex Luxenberg

Editor's note: Menachem Butler is studying Medieval Jewish History at the Bernard Revel Graduate School of Jewish Studies (BRGS), Yeshiva University, and rabbinics at the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS), an affiliate of Yeshiva University. When not "sitting in the stacks" of the Gottesman Library, Menachem can be found jogging across the George Washington Bridge. A lifelong resident of Jamaica Estates, Queens, and consultant for SeeYouOnShabbos.com, Menachem is a dues-paying-member at the Mt. Sinai Jewish Center of Washington Heights and also enjoys spending Shabbatot in communities throughout North America. We were elated to hear that Alex Luxenberg recently caught up with Menachem, an avid reader of Kol Hamevaser, during half-time of the PrimeGrill dinner feast at WhiskyFest 2010. Their conversation below, slightly modified for coherency, has not been censored for content.

What do you have to say about the Mendel Gottesman Library?

With the exception of the waiting area outside of President Richard M. Joel's office, complete with the comfy couches and erudite reading material, the Gottesman Library is my favorite place on campus. When I returned from my post-high school experience in Eretz Yisrael – itself a riot and a half, during which I (despite my many attempts) sadly did not flip out – I was pointed towards the fifth floor of the Gottesman Library, as well as to the hallowed cloisters of Floor 5a (a.k.a. "5a"). Over the past few years, I must admit that I have seen some really sketchy things, some of which should not be recounted even in *Kol Hamevaser*. It was there in the Gottesman Library that I sat and read and read and read. I was, and still am, I must admit, a bit of a dork. I spent so many tireless evenings in the Gottesman Library that often when I would hear the Burns Security guards heading to shut down the floor at 1 AM, I would yell at the top of my lungs: "Closin' up, library's closed, let's go." In fact, I perfected my accent so well that one guard once screamed up to me: "Sorry, I didn't realize that you were on shift tonight." It was there, as well, that I experienced first-hand Yeshiva University's brilliant efforts to introduce students at Yeshiva College and RIETS to their counterparts at Stern College, Wurzwiler, Azrieli, and, of course, Revel – and this predated YUConnects by several years! I often wonder if librarian Judah Wohlgeleer of the Gottesman Library – the *shadkhan* par excellence! – ever received *shadkhanus gelt* for his many efforts.

What are your thoughts on Yeshiva College and Stern College merging campuses?

Intercampus shuttles, each ride lasting only twenty-eight to forty-seven minutes (depending on the driver) is a good start to bringing the campuses together from a nine-mile or so distance. Have you any idea how long it took to travel from KBY to visit "a friend" at either Midreshet Lindenbaum or MMY in Jerusalem when I was in Shanah Alef?! The bigger issue, however, revolves around what will be done with the various undergraduate libraries should the campus merger come to fruition. Allow me to explain. Currently, there are several shuttle-loads of students from Stern who trek up to WaHi each afternoon/evening to study and meet with friends in the Library – and please, do not bring any non-Judaic studies discussions to the fifth floor of the Gottesman Library – and at the same time, there are a growing number of guys who take the shuttle down to Midtown to utilize the Hedi Steinberg Library each evening. The reasoning is quite simple. All of the books that are on the various reference, reserve, closed-shelf, non-circulating shelves in the Gottesman Library are (generally) on the open-stacks downtown. My fear, then, if the campus merger would come to fruition, is: what will become of my beloved Hedi Steinberg Library? Unless, of course, the plans are for us to abandon our ship of Washington Heights and move the whole institution down to Midtown. Then, I think, we'll be talking.

Where is the best place to go on a date in NYC? What are your thoughts about YUConnects? What are your thoughts on the "Shiddukh Crisis"? What can the Orthodox community do in order to ameliorate this phenomenon?

My personal preference is to remain in centrally-located Midtown Manhattan. Dinner at Kosher Delight (37th and Broadway) – where I order the Burger Delight Special (Burger Delight, fries, and a large coke) – followed by a trip up Broadway to the Toys 'R Us store in Times Square (to pick up Taboo, Jenga, Monopoly, Twister, etc.), and, if they are out of interesting games, the Barnes & Noble near Rockefeller Center (yes, a bit of a walk, but a wonderful opportunity to get to know the young lady) has a nice table of game selections on the second floor near the window. Alternatively, I would bring along an unopened box of "Ver Iz 'Em" (a.k.a.: Yiddish "Guess Who") which I purchased at Scharf's Judaica in Boro Park (718-484-0341). Armed with the game in hand, we cross the street to the Marriott Marquis lobby and pick up some beverages from the bar in the lobby, and voila! – a terrific way to prepare for the next two hours of the date.

All too often, when couples within our

Yeshiva University community get married, both the husband and wife shun their single friends and focus, instead, on only hanging out with their married friends during the *kiddush* in Shenk *shul* or at their weekly Sunday afternoon outings to Bed Bath & Beyond, but I have found in recent years that a growing number of married couples act as YUConnects *shadkhanim* and set up their friends and acquaintances with others who fall into similar hashkafic stereotypes. I make sure to send my *shadkhanim* personalized gift cards on their birthdays, flowers for Shavuot and Sukkot, and a bottle of red wine for Purim and Simchat Torah. YUConnects is truly a wonderful organization – perhaps even the diamond in the CJF crown? – and we should encourage all married students at Yeshiva University (together with their parents and in-laws) to consider joining as *shadkhanim* for this most special effort. The future of *Klal Yisrael* is at stake.

As for potential solutions to the "shiddukh crisis," I have long had the idea to establish a weekly game night at the Marriott Marquis lobby in Midtown, where facilitators (i.e., married couples who would like a night away from their children) would gather together all of the random dates that don't look like they're going too well and bring them to the middle of the room and offer one big game of Taboo (or Twister). It can be accordingly billed as "Taboo (or Twister) at the Marriott," and, like all good pre-Madoff events hosted by Yeshiva University, refreshments must be served. Again, the future of *Klal Yisrael* is at stake.

There also need to be more co-ed events on campus. Three weeks of browsing the aisles at the SOY Seforim Sale is simply not enough. YUConnects should host shi'urim and lectures, bake sales and *cholent* cook-offs. There should be *shiddukh*-oriented day-trips (skiing and snowboarding, white-water rafting, and ice-skating, etc.) and YUConnects should sponsor a co-ed flag-football league in Fort Tryon Park or a co-ed ice-hockey league at Chelsea Piers to bring us back to our Friday afternoons in Jerusalem during Shanah Alef. Most importantly, YUConnects should organize trips to hospitals and old age homes to visit sick children and the elderly; it's all about the "circle of life" and finding the one who will join us in the next link in the chain. In addition, I think that it is time for YUConnects to create a Facebook application as both have long been used in tandem and a formal partnership must be considered. I cannot stress enough that the future of *Klal Yisrael* is at stake.

Is it true that you are one of the principle investors in the Tzomet Kindle for Shabbat?

I have opened negotiations with Makhon Tzomet in Alon Shvut to discuss a way to reconfigure the AmazonKindle to read PDFs on

Shabbat, *gerama*-style! At the same time, I have a team of writers ready to prepare the denunciation posters that will be plastered all around Bnei Brak, Ramat Beit Shemesh, and Passaic and hung up in my *sukkah* each year. It'll be *mamesh a gevald*.

What is your favorite joke (and explanation) that you've heard uttered by Prof. David Berger?

A *yeshiva bochur* asked his rebbe if it's *muttar* to go to the opera. The rebbe replied, "You're not *over* till the fat lady sings." Explained Prof. Berger: "To understand this one line, you have to know about *kol islah*, you have to know *Yeshivish*, and you have to know the American expression about the fat lady."

If you were to win a raffle to spend an entire day with Prof. David Berger, where would you go?

Our day would begin with lunch at Mendy's in Crown Heights, followed by Shacharit at 770, and then a quick tour of the Jewish Children's Museum, with time for a visit to the gift shop. In the afternoon, we would catch a Mets game in the YU luxury suite at CitiField decked out in our matching blue and orange outfits, followed by dinner at Kasbah on the Upper West Side (I'd order "The David Burger"), before a return trip to the Glueck Beit Medrash for a post-10 PM Ma'ariv Thursday night learning session with the Lubavitcher *yungeloyt*, and then a midnight pilgrimage to the Rebbe's Ohel in Cambria Heights, Queens.

Do you believe that Prof. David Berger is the Messiah?

I would not rule out such a possibility.

What are your thoughts on Da'as Torah?

I once fell asleep during morning *seder* and imagined that I wore a t-shirt that read: "My Da'as Torah is smarter than your Da'as Torah. Punk." I woke up when someone removed the *Kovetz Meforshim* (Bava Batra, vol. 1) that served as my headrest.

Does the work of non-Orthodox theologians have any relevance for Orthodox Jewry? What about non-Jewish theologians?

Neither the *Mishnah Berurah*, nor the *Arukh ha-Shulhan*, *paskns* that works of academic scholarship are four-cornered, and thus *tzitzis*-checks are not required.

"Spirituality" is a very fashionable term. What are your thoughts on the practical relationship between Judaism and Spirituality?

Spirituality, specifically within the context of Orthodox Judaism, is a very weighty term. To some, it demands an immediate rejec-

tion for fear of the unknown, while for others spirituality represents the ultimate embrace that can often guide the inquisitive seeker away from the rubric of Orthodox Judaism and all that we love about her. However, as good Modern Orthodox posers, we need to ensure that the Golden Mean of Maimonidean proportions remains nurtured. Long before becoming (in)famous for his well-intentioned efforts at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah and its sister seminary Yeshivat Maharat, Rabbi Avi Weiss served as one of our community's foremost lights of Orthodox spirituality and social activism, leading *kumzitzes* and offering infusions of Torah ideals and Hasidic *machashavot* during spiritual gatherings. While some at YU dream of a YU infused with some of the more liberal ideas of Rabbi Weiss' rabbinical seminaries, I dream of an even higher elevation of campus spirituality with expressions of music, dance, and song on campus. We should clap like wild, dance like wild, and feel free to spiritually express ourselves during 2:30 Minchah in the Glueck Beit Medrash. There are not nearly enough *kumzitzes* that take place on 185th Street after Minchah. *Davening* until 2:50 (though some say 3:00) is a great opportunity to connect with the One Above, but imagine if there were a six-minute opportunity for us all to sit on the now-closed street and share song and stories amongst friends, and perhaps to even dance a little *rikkud*. It can truly be *mamesh a gevald*. Extra points for each Rosh Yeshivah to join in the dancing!

What are your thoughts on the recent controversy that erupted over the symposium on homosexuality at YU? What advice can you offer to our institution to prepare a generation of rabbinic and communal leaders who will continue to confront these issues on a frequent basis?

I think that following the prescription of the timeless teaching from *Tamid* 32a – “the official tractate of the Nine Days” (for those of us who can't go a week without a burger or steak) – of “Who is Wise? *Ha-Ro'eh es hanolad* (he who foresees the end result),” might prove instructive for dealing with these matters in the future.

In light of the recent symposium on homosexuality, what are your thoughts on the YU administration's last-minute decision to relocate the Purim women's Chagigah from its long-standing location in Weissberg Commons to the Cardozo Law School in an effort to curtail inappropriate mingling between the sexes?

It's a bit ironic, don't you think?

Is there a place for non-traditional methods of Talmud learning in Jewish education?

Are you suggesting that we introduce “Talmud and Yoga,” a very popular class at JCCs across North America, into the MYP Masmidim Honors Program and have it taught by Rav Moshe D. Tendler? Or should RIETS offer a class on *Chasidische* Acharonim and their pilpulistic approaches to *aggadets* in *Shas* in light of 19th-century Italian Maskilic thought taught by Rav Jeremy Wieder? Take

your pick. I like both – at the same time.

What do you see as the most serious issue facing Modern Orthodoxy today?

Not enough kosher pizza shops open on Motzaei Shabbat.

What do you see as the least serious issue facing Modern Orthodoxy today?

The legacy of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik. I am confident that his family will agree, so don't bother censoring my answer.

As is widely known, the New York area has the largest concentration of Jews outside of Ramat Beit Shemesh and its environs. As a result of its size, what problems do you antici-



pate the Teaneck Jewish community will face in the years ahead?

For the past two years, I have been sharing the following thoughts with friends and/or whoever else will listen: the Teaneck Jewish community – once hailed as “the Jerusalem of America” – is facing a major crisis in the near future. After viewing an internal and confidential Yeshiva University student survey of children born per year and currently in attendance in each elementary school grade in the area, I was struck with the reality that in five years, for a period of ten years, there will be a bar/bat mitzvah in every *shul* on every Shabbat of the year (and this is not even to mention *aufrufs* and/or Shabbat *Sheva Berachot*). While, of course, the caterers, dentists, and dietitians, are quite happy with this new reality, I think that the rabbis in Teaneck need to reconsider how the growth of the Jewish community will continue to have an affect on the *davening* habits of *balabatim*, the sermon writing of the rabbis themselves (a.k.a. ripping off from the 50-year online archive of Rabbi Norman Lamm's magisterial sermons), their abilities to maintain connections and cultivate relationships with their flock, and the proliferation of Shabbat

morning *hashkamah minyanim*.

Additionally, there is an even more pressing crisis that is affecting the Teaneck community. In a five-mile radius of Chickies – the only restaurant in Teaneck open until 11:00 PM, with the exception of Motzaei Shabbat (by strict-orders of the Teaneck Vaad) – there are several public high schools with Jewish teenagers that number in the hundreds of students, many of whom who are religiously unaffiliated. One can only wonder that each of the dozen or so Orthodox synagogues in Teaneck (and in the Bergenfield, New Milford, and Bogota areas, too) have not banded together to develop programs to bring young adults in their community to learn one afternoon a week with students at the area public schools, and to have their parents – either families or young couples

– invite those teenagers and their families over for traditional Shabbat meals.

What is the difference, in your opinion, between Modern Orthodoxy and Centrist Orthodoxy?

Just about the same as the difference between “Modern Orthodox Machmir” and “Modern Orthodox Liberal” on YUConnects: stereotypes that only divide the Jewish community and which I despise. I prefer the designation of being “a traditional Jew,” or, as the rebbe Reb Lipa teaches, “*Ich bin ayn pushiter Yid.*”

What are your top five stories and top five songs of Reb Shlomo Carlebach?

Stories: Schvartza Wolf, Yossele 1550, Yossele 1974, Holy Hunchback, and The Blind Chazzan of Lemberg. Songs: Original *Mimkomcha*, *Shomer Yisrael*, *Be-Shem Hashem*, *Yehi Shalom*, and *Am Yisrael Chai*.

You are currently studying for your rabbinic ordination. At such time as you finish all of your behinot, complete semikhah, and walk down the aisle at the RIETS Chag ha-Semi-

khah, what would you like your title to be?

Whoa, don't be making assumptions that you can't back up. I think that it is important to remember that there is a longstanding vow that each student at RIETS (no matter the track) affirms at the start of his *semikhah* studies, which dates back to the days before Rabbi Soloveitchik came to YU (yes, there was a time before Rabbi Soloveitchik came to YU): never finish *semikhah!* Alas! Bills need to be paid, pulpits and educational positions throughout North America and the world need to be filled, and the other rabbinical institutions aren't catching them quickly enough, and (notwithstanding several notable examples) one cannot remain in the *semikhah*-system forever (though, if you can convince the RIETS administration that you are essential to the fabric of our great tapestry, then, my friend, you have a place here forever). And so, once every four years, around one hundred RIETS students – some of whom who have already been ministering to their flock for several years – converge on Lampton Auditorium for the Chag ha-Semikhah and jointly recite a prayer that is only known to them: *hattaras nedarim*, to release the vow never to finish *semikhah*. Each one then walks up on stage to receive “the final hug” from his shi'ur rebbe and/or the rebbe whose name he never remembers, as well as the “bear hug” from President Richard M. Joel. (Note: Due to recent events on campus, all Chag ha-Semikhah hugs must be less than five seconds long.)

As for the title that I would like to adorn my *semikhah kelaf*, I think that “Rava” is a wonderful Amoraic name, dating back to 4th-century Babylonia and referencing one of the most-cited rabbis of the Talmud, and I believe only appropriate for the otherwise irrelevant title of a 21st-century Orthodox Jewish male clergy member and am petitioning for the title of “Rava” on my *kelaf*. That way, our equals in the beit medrash and throughout the rabbinic world would be our “Abbayeri's.”

Which beit medrash at Yeshiva University do you find most conducive for learning and which for batling?

The GPATS Beit Medrash (housed on the seventh floor of the main building at Stern College for Women) is an enjoyable place to learn and study, especially in the back corner overlooking Lexington Avenue downtown (a.k.a. “The Office”), while the Glueck Beit Medrash on 185th Street is my “*batling beis* of choice.”

If you would be a contestant on “Who Wants To Be A Millionaire” and could choose a RIETS Rosh Yeshivah for the “Phone a Friend” option, whom would you choose?

Rav Aharon Kahn, and I'd ask him questions in German and request that he respond in French.

With which RIETS Rosh Yeshivah would you NOT want to get into a bar fight?

Rav Yitzchok Cohen, for the same reason that I want him on my flag football team for the annual student/faculty YUConnects-hosted Flag Football *Shiddukh* Bowl.

New Dead Sea Sect Found

BY: Sheketah Akh Katlanit

Amazing discoveries were recently found in cavs along the East River in the Heights of Washington containing a wealth of information on an obscure culture. This exciting cache of treasures resembles earlier finds in the Judean Hills near the Dead Sea from the Second Temple period and reveals that the people who lived there were a unique sect of Jews. The sectarians seem to have withdrawn from general society to their new location after the Maccabean Revolt, an event colloquially referred to as “the Festival of Lights.” Apparently, they were unimpressed with the Maccabean rendition of “Ma’oz Tsur” and were disillusioned by the priestly band’s efforts to dominate the political arena as YU’s poster children.

Archaeological analysis reveals that this secluded Jewish settlement in the midst of a barren desert, an oasis of spirituality amidst a secular culture, in fact includes two separate communities with some contact between them, although the extent of interaction is debatable. Additionally, a satellite community with similar artifacts, known today as Cardozo and located on 12th Street, was also identified and seemingly functioned as an emergency venue in order to prevent inappropriate behavior from transpiring between the sexes, especially when under the influence.

Were the members of this sect in the Heights of Washington ascetic? No, explains noted scholar Florence Miffman, for there were apparently some scattered females among them, known as “library girls.”ⁱ They were not ascetic but were merely encouraged to wait until they were “ready” to date. “Ready” seems to mean that they were one year out of Israel for females, and two or three years for males, since documents show that men desired to use this additional time to learn more Gemara and figure out how to support their wives. We know what “ready” means from looking at the term in other contexts from that period. A “G-chat conversation,” a medium used then to communicate with anyone you have ever e-mailed, including professors, records a conversation in which a male refused a “shiddukh” date (a type of meeting in which two people who do not know each other awkwardly decide to become acquainted in an intimate fashion), claiming he was not “ready” for the aforementioned reasons.

While not many characteristically female items were found, a handful of artifacts were excavated. One example is a women’s headband found together with a paper that said “Sefor[jim] Sale” that seemed to have some type of calendar of events on it. Scholars de-

bate whether this sale was a forum for selling religious texts or more like a social venue for courting. It seems clear though that “Seforim Sales” and headbands went together. Maybe these headbands were typically worn to such events? Alternatively, they were, perhaps, bought at the Sales, along with “seforim.” In truth, the answer to this question depends on the meaning of “sefer,” which is also debated by scholars. Ilana Gadish, a prominent academic who has done extensive research on the sect, asserts that a “sefer” is any book that would be learned in a beit midrash, although that in itself is quite ambiguous.ⁱⁱ The headbands seem to have had some type of animal feather on them. One scholar suggests that they were worn as ritualistic items that expressed their unity with nature, especially with individuals who suffered from “Recyclemania,” a condition in which a person is overly obsessed with the environment.

One document found at the site, called the “Dimona Document,” relates the



story of how Middle-Eastern Jewry immigrated to New York and opened up “Golan Heights” out of nostalgia for the Old Country. Another text describes a war between “the Sons of Darkness” and “the Sons of Light,” possibly alluding to the eschatological battle between the light exuding from Torah and the dark forces of Madda. Many fragments of texts were excavated that seem to resemble the Masoretic Bible, though a somewhat rewritten form. For example, concerning Deuteronomy 22:5, “A woman must not put on man’s apparel, nor shall a man wear woman’s clothing; for whoever does these things is abhorrent to the Lord your God,” the sect adds words into the text:

A woman must not put on men’s apparel of black slacks and a white button-down shirt underneath an argyle sweater, nor shall a man wear women’s knee-length jean skirts, three-quarter length blouses, and Uggs.ⁱⁱⁱ

A certain form of exegesis, called a *peshar*, was also found. This type of commentary provides an interlinear interpretation of the biblical text, but contemporizes it, presenting the original text as if it were intended for the current readership. One of the discovered *pe-*

sharim concerns the verse in Deuteronomy 6:10, “When the Lord your God brings you into the land that He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, to assign to you –great and flourishing cities that you did not build.” The *peshar* contemporizes this verse to refer to the sect’s ritual of sending their children into the wilderness as a rite-of-passage:

“When the Lord your God brings you into the land”

[*pesharo* (its interpretation): When you go to the Land of Israel for *Shanah ba-Arets*] “that He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”

[*pesharo*: Abraham Isaac ha-Kohen Kook, Isaac Elhanan, and Jacob Shwekey]

“to assign to you – great and flourishing cities that you did not build”

[*pesharo*: Jerusalem, Alon Shvut, Ramat Bet Shemesh].^{iv}

This commentary sheds light on who the sect’s role models were and what the main urban centers were at that time.

This sect had a revered leader, known officially as the Teacher of Righteousness. It is unclear what his real name was, for he was usually just referred to as “the Rav.” One document was found containing the epithet “Rebbe,” although most scholars believe this to have referred to the leader of a different sect living nearby in a different Heights, those of the Crown. The sect in the Heights of Washington also had female pseudo-leaders who advised on matters of purity, an

issue the sect took very seriously as is evident by their many ritual baths. However, it is unclear how much authority these female “legal advisors” (*yo’atsot Halakhah*) actually had.

There is hopefully much more to be learned about this newly discovered sect. Maybe, through learning about other sects within our historical tradition, we can come to a better understanding of our own lives today.

Sheketah Akh Katlanit is an Editor-in-Chief for Kol Hamevaser who may seem silent at first, but has occasional expressions of deadly personality, especially concerning scrolls found near the Dead Sea. She hopes that different sects of Judaism can learn to live in harmony, be-Yahad.

ⁱ Florence Miffman, *Were the YUscenes Actually A-scenes?* (New York: KHM Publishing, 2005), p. 12-22.

ⁱⁱ See Ilana Gadish, “*Tsiluta ke-Yoma de-Istana: Creating Clarity in the Beit Midrash,*” *Kol Hamevaser* 3,3 (December 2009): 18-19.

ⁱⁱⁱ Found in fragment 5Q101a.

^{iv} Found in fragment 6Q220.

If you could be stranded on a desert island with any RIETS Rosh Yeshivah, whom would you choose and what would you bring?

Rav Hershel Schachter, and I would bring a Watergate-era tape recording device to collect material for my forthcoming volume, tentatively titled *Thinking Aloud: Personal Conversations That Were Recorded Without the Permission of Rav Hershel Schachter and Thus Should Not Be Published* (New York: YU Press, 2010). I would also bring several bags of pretzels, some bottles of Coca-Cola, a beach chair and maybe even sandals, a beige polo shirt, and matching dungarees for Rav Schachter and me. OMG, we could dress as twins!

Which RIETS Rosh Yeshivah dresses most similar to JayZ?

Rav J. David Bleich (a.k.a. JayD). Have you ever compared their vests?!

What song do you think about when you see Rav Gershon Yankelovitch?

Whatever song they sang at *Mattan Torah*. It was most likely Reb Shlomo Carlebach’s “*Orekh Yamim*.” Over and over again (KBY *kumzitz*-style).

Which RIETS Rosh Yeshivah could serve as both a Rosh Yeshivah in Lakewood and a Professor at Harvard?

Rav Mayer Twersky, and that’s why he is perfect for Yeshiva University.

In your earliest years on campus at Yeshiva University, you often had the privilege of sitting on the benches outside of Furst Hall with Rav Melech Schachter, the longtime RIETS Rosh Yeshivah and father of our beloved Rav Hershel Schachter. As our yeshivah has commemorated Rav Melech’s third *yahrzeit* this week, are there any questions that you wish that you could have asked, and what might his response be?

I would ask: “Which values are important to instill in one’s children as they grow up?” His response would likely be “*Toras Hashem temimah*” and “*Ivdu es Hashem be-simchah*.”

RAV REUVEN FEINSTEIN, SHLITA, ON CHANUKAH



הנהגות Mishpacha JEWISH FAMILY WE

PRIZE DISCIPLE OF MAHARAT SARA HURWITZ MAN

RAV HERSEL SCHACHTER, SHLITA
on Rav Yoshe Ber Soloveitchik, ztz"l



**IS ISRAEL
ANY SAFER?**
One year after
Operation Cast Lead

**IRON WILL VS.
IRON CURTAIN**
Teaching Torah in the
USSR was worth any risk

Junior Family
ISSUE 288
20 Kopeck \$7.70
December 26, 2009
PRICE:
NY/NJ \$3.99
Out of NY/NJ \$4.99
Canada CAD \$5.50
Israel NIS 11.90
UK £3.20

This advertisement was printed with the approval of R. Hershel Schachter, shlit"l

OH MY G-DISH! An Interview with Kol Hamevaser Associate Editor Ilana Gadish

BY: Alex Luxenberg

Author's note: This interview was conducted via Gmail video chat, though we were in the same room.

How are you?
Are you serious? (Taps heel...)

Women of the Wall?
(No Response)

Slaves?
As long as it is men being slaves and not women.

Actually, I have a question for you. I want to know the guys' perspective on why girls don't write for *Kol Hamevaser*. And I think I know why. It is all rooted in the fact that we live in a chauvinistic society. For instance, we basically do not have a library at Stern and I am not allowed to have a *makom* in the beis. And I walk up the escalator!

How do you feel about the ordination of women in Orthodoxy?
(Sigh) Do you know what it is like to be a woman?

(Silence)
Seriously, do you?

No, no I do not.
Imagine knowing more Torah than your male peers, being more passionate about Judaism in all facets, having no official *makom* in the beis – and still not be able to rise to the highest official level of religious authority! On that note, for the rest of this interview, I would prefer to be called “Rabbeinu.”

OK, Rabbeinu. Which living woman should be appointed a *rosh yeshivah*, in your opinion?
Tamar Ross and Gilah Kletenik, duh.

Both?
Well, YU has a bunch.

Did you hear that there was a petition to shut down this year's YU Super Bowl party?
Men have time to watch sports because they don't have to struggle for equality.

How do you feel about the panel that took place on homosexuality?
The Rashei Yeshivah made no statements about lesbians, which is clearly anti-feminist.

How do you feel about the new Glueck Building?
The reason why they built a Nagel Bagel uptown but not one in Stern is that they want

to make sure the girls have to come uptown for food, thus perpetuating the model of male as breadwinner, woman as child-bearing occupational therapist. It's really all a big conspiracy organized by YU and the OU – if Stern wasn't in Manhattan, all of the kosher restaurants within a 20-block radius would shut down, since the guys wouldn't have to come down to Midtown to take girls on *shiddukh* dates.

You seem to be contradicting yourself.

No, it fits into our capitalist society – Nagel Bagel is now competition. Additionally, the building of Nagel was a philosophical move, driven by the same *hashkafah* that comes out of the *pasuk* of “*Ve-Hu yimshol bakh.*” Stern being in Midtown in order to feed (no pun intended) the local kosher restaurants only makes sense from an economic standpoint.

Anyone who goes to Stern knows that the desks are tiny, ensuring that girls remain self-conscious about their weight when they don't quite fit into the chairs. This leads them to starve themselves so that they look good when they get sold on the meat market, fresh off the “*Shiddukh Shuttle.*”

What are your thoughts on the supposed “shiddukh crisis?”

I think merging campuses would solve the *shiddukh* crisis much faster than the proposed Shidduch Vision method, or the ELIMINATION OF THE AGE GAP CRISIS. And, refer readers to YouTube (if they go on such sites, *has ve-shalom*) and have them search for both “*Shidduch vision releases video*” and “*Shidduch crisis age gap.*”

Do you have any male friends that are feminist?

Of course... But he says things like, “But don't tell them that I'm still the bigger feminist” – what a chauvinist!

Have you heard that the Purim Hagigot will be separate this year?

Have I told you my feelings on the *shiddukh* crisis....?

Ilana Gadish is the Feminist-in-Chief of Kol Hamevaser and is writing her senior thesis on: “So, You Think You're Better Than Me?”

Alex Luxenberg is famous for his articles on pop-academics and controversial social issues. He can be reached at: tinokshenishbah@gmail.com.

Critical Studies: The Authorship of the “Documentary Hypothesis” Wikipedia Article

BY: Friedrich Wilhelm Benjamin
von Rosenzweig

A revolution has taken place in the academic world. For the first time in history, scholars are applying the tools of modern textual criticism to writings once held sacrosanct by significant portions of society. Nowhere has this revolution been more mind-provoking and thought-boggling than in a series of recent revelations revealed by a group of French, German, English and American scholars studying the famed Internet encyclopedia “Wikipedia.” Their research on the famous “Documentary Hypothesis” Wiki has led to the formulation of what has come to be known as the “Documentary Documentary Hypothesis,” or the “ADHD” for short. The ADHD has shown that the Documentary Hypothesis article found on Wikipedia is the product not of a single author, as previously believed, but of multiple authors – in some versions of the theory, as many as nineteen.

The earliest proponent of the ADHD was the man after whom some have christened the new theory the “Badehäuser Hypothesis” – German Wikipedia scholar Julius “Groucho” Badehäuser. Badehäuser first formulated his eponymous hypothesis in an 1883 monograph entitled *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Wikidokumentarischens*, which took the academic world by storm and enabled Badehäuser, in 1884, to achieve what was at that time the world's single highest-scoring Scrabble play.ⁱⁱ

In the *Prolegomena* (now known in academic circles by the acronym ‘PzGdW’ⁱⁱⁱ), Badehäuser first set about identifying the primary narrative threads in the DH Wiki. These threads, besides their internal narrative continuity, were differentiated by certain unique grammatical and lexical features. “The most primitive stratum Julius discovered he referred to as ‘J’ – the Jewish author,” explains fellow Wikipedia critic and part-time keyboard player Martin North. “J's style is distinctive for his occasional VSO syntax,^{iv} in contrast to the typical Wikipedian SVO.^v This clearly demonstrates a strong Yiddish influence.” His writing

exhibits other clearly Judaic characteristics: J prefers the word “Torah” over “Pentateuch” and focuses his discussion on the contributions of Jewish scholars such as Richard “Dick” Friedman, Baruch “Benedict” Spinoza, and Harvard scholar James “Potato” Kugel. On top of this, “J's writing,” writes WikiCritic and part-time keyboard Albrecht “Ctrl” Alt, “is peppered with Yiddishisms such as *chutzpah*, *schmaltz* – and, of course, *kugel*.”^{vi}

A second narrative stratum was authored by “E,” a writer distinguished by his prolific use of endnotes:

“E is concerned first and foremost with textual organization. In addition to endnotes and references he makes extensive use of hyperlinks to other articles within Wikipedia and elsewhere. E's work, while most apparent in the later sections of the

article, is distributed throughout the Documentary Hypothesis webpage. This led Badehäuser to assign E a later date than J.”^{vii}

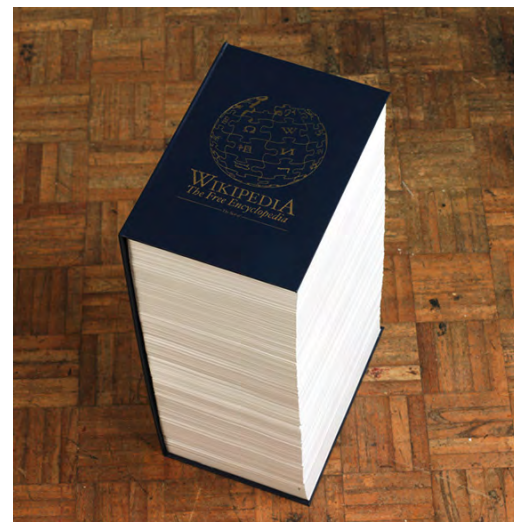
At some points, the J and E strata are so interwoven that they appear to have been combined by a later redactor, known as “R.”^{viii} R, or other redactors, is responsible for

the final compilation of the article as well as the introduction of further independent sources such as the third author, “P.”

P is distinguished by his distinctively prosaic style, complex yet pleasant sentence structures, and use of fancy words, such as “endeavor” and “antiquity.” “P's style,” wrote Badehäuser,^{ix} “is nonlinear and makes use of simile, metaphor, consonance, and even assonance. It is both prosaic and poetic, yet it maintains an overriding concern for technical detail.”^x

According to Badehäuser, an isolated section of the DH article under the subheading “Dating the Sources” was written by a fourth author. This author, “D,” “[...] was the most historically conscious of the four primary authors, though he shared many of his theoretical concerns with P. Like P, his narrative style [...] was [...] somewhat [...] [...] fractured.”^{xi}

Since Badehäuser, numerous scholars have expanded on his theories. They have discovered additional stylistically distinct content



in the Wikipedia article, such as “S,” an author who makes extensive use of subordinate clauses; “R,” one who tends to write in run-on sentences; “Q,” who puts everything in quotations; and “H,” who probably went to Harvard.^{xii}

The Documentary Hypothesis and its followers are not without their critics.^{xiii} Famed geneticist and part-time English person R. N. A. Whybray wrote, in the 1970s, a stinging critique of Badehäuser. Whybray pointed out a logical paradox inherent in Badehäuser’s theory: Badehäuser assumed that the article had been authored by internally consistent authors, yet redacted by internally inconsistent redactors. “It’s like Joyce writing Shakespeare,” Whybray was known to say frequently at cocktail parties.

Dr. Elman James, of the University of Oslo, has voiced a more serious concern. “I find it strange that the so-called ‘Documentary Hypothesis’ was posited solely in regard to a single Wiki,” he remarks. “Badehäuser and his followers were not trained in the full breadth of Wikipedia scholarship, and since their time not a single WikiCritic has applied these critical techniques to other Wikipedia pages. To even suggest that the Gilgamesh Wiki or the Enuma Elish Wiki, for example, were written by a dozen different people – it would be ridiculous! Clearly, these ADHD guys have something against the DH.” Continental scholars have also been critical of the ADHD. Princeton professor Rocci Raton-Laveurs has attacked the recent trends in critical Wikipedia scholarship on aesthetic grounds: “*C’est trop désordonné – J, P, D, Q – comme la soupe alphabet. Le plus gros problème de Badehäuser est qu’il n’est pas propre.*”^{xiv}

However, recent and startling archaeological evidence has come to light which supports the Badehäuser Hypothesis. The 2010 discovery by a team of British archeologists of the “discussion tab” located at the head of the webpage proved to be an unexpected windfall for Documentary Hypothesis scholars. “Not only do we now have concrete evidence that the text has undergone multiple redactions,” said WikiCritic and part-time alligator wrestler Joseph “Joe” Blanketsopp, “but we even have what appears to be a record of conversations between the redactors themselves.”

The discussion tab sheds light on the contributions of the currently recognized redactors as well as redactors and editors whose words are not found in extant manuscripts of the webpage. “We’ve found a new redactor – we call him the ‘frum’ redactor – whose sole contribution to the article was the sentence: ‘*James Kugel is an appikoros.*’”^{xv} It seems to have been deleted only last week,” enthused Joseph Blanketsopp’s sister.^{xvi} The material recovered in the discussion tab is providing contemporary scholars a truly remarkable insight into the inner workings of the DH’s scribal community.

“Obviously,” admitted Blanketsopp, “there are many questions that must still be answered. We know practically nothing about the redactors themselves. We have their names – ‘Taiwan boi,’ ‘SlimVirgin,’ ‘PiCo’^{xvii} – but

these reveal little about who they were and what they stood for. Were they priests? Scribes? Political dissidents? Professors at Yeshiva College? Or members of the royal aristocracy? We may never know for sure.”

Friedrich Wilhelm Benjamin von Rosenzweig, the author of this article, is currently asleep. As far as we know he is not related to any YU Rashei Yeshivah. In addition, Mr. Rosenzweig would like it to be made clear that this article was authored entirely by himself, without the interference of any editors or redactors.

ⁱ “Documentary Hypothesis.” *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Accessed: February 21, 2010. Available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Documentary_hypothesis.

ⁱⁱ “*Wikidokumentarischens*” on two triple-word-scores. In 1890, was surpassed by Heimlich Magenschmerzen with *Constantinoplischendudelsackmachengesellschaft*. Needless to say, neither score has been beaten outside of Germany.

ⁱⁱⁱ Pronounced “PIZ-ge-doo.”

^{iv} Verb-Subject-Object. Also known, for insurance purposes, as Verb-Agent-Object.

^v Subject-Verb-Object. We bet you could’ve figured that one out on your own. Without looking at this footnote. Shame on you.

^{vi} Albrecht “Ctrl” Alt, *Gott der Väter: Ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte der Dokumentarischen Religion* (Stuttgart: IBM-Verlag, 1929), pp. 113-114, *supra*, *ad hoc*, *quod est et sequens* (s. l. et a.).

^{vii} Taken from the work *The Documentary Hypothesis and the Composition of the Documentary Hypothesis* (Jerusalem: Manganese Press, 1943) by famed WikiCritic and part-time opera singer Umberto “Moshe” Casuto. While himself highly critical of Badehäuser and the German WikiCritics, Casuto later remarked that “Richard Wagner wrote some pretty good tunes.”

^{viii} Or, when contrasted with later redactors, “JE.”

^{ix} In German, of course.

^x Later scholars have, after extensive research, discovered a sentence nearly identical to this one inside a fortune cookie.

^{xi} Badehäuser, p. 17.

^{xii} Or Gush – we’re not sure which.

^{xiii} Like any good hypothesis.

^{xiv} Raton-Laveurs, Personal communication: Brown paper bag, behind the dumpster on 42nd Street, 2009.

^{xv} More recent evidence has indicated that this author’s identity could be connected to the initials “MJB,” a moniker traced to other postings associated with his IP address.

^{xvi} And part-time alligator wrestler.

^{xvii} Actual names from the actual “Documentary Hypothesis” discussion page. Honest.

TORAH U-MEDIA: A SURVEY OF STORIES TRUE, HISTORICAL, AND CARMESIAN

BY: Rabbi Shalom Carmy

“There are three types of stories: true stories, truer stories, and truant stories.” The truest words ever said. To quote Carmy: “The author of the words in quotation is sitting in the room here right now as I solitarily write this in confinement in my Brooklyn apartment.”

In order to properly analyze these three categories of stories (or catestories, as some have termed it), we will take the assistance of a story. Once upon a werewolf, it was the last

Jay Leno, and Conan O’Brien rolled into one, except he never conflicted with himself about his time slot – and it was very exciting. They were switching off between *lomdus* and bashing Haredim and political philosophy and German philology, and Battle of Wounded Knee, and religious perspicacity. That was the knight that changed my life forever, when the riding horseman dove at the R-v but was parried expertly by the Torah u-Madda sword and shield. Of course, most people forget that knight, because it was the same night as the Miracle on Ice in Lake Spastic, 1980.

Some stories are best told not as stories,



The Police Philosopher

possible day to say *kiddush levanah* and everyone was congregating outside, waiting for the clouds to clear away. Finally, at the last possible moment, the sky cleared up, and everyone was able to say *kiddush levanah*, and then the werewolf came out in his full glory and threatened to eat them. Now, the story ends the way it ends, but what is important for our purposes is to note that this is a truer story. It may or may not have happened (as it happens, this one did take place, in Flatbush on October 13, 1986), but it is truer because it “can help dramatize and clarify whatever I [was] teaching” at the time.

I have skipped over the true stories for a certain reason, but I will definitely get back to them later.

Truant stories relate to my escapades that I undertook while missing school and evading my truant officer, Effie Urbach. Most of these stories involve intellectual history of Hazal, and you can hear about them in the Intellectual History class. The ones that do not involve intellectual history are not really worth hearing about anyway, so you can ignore them.

Anyway, not all stories are about me; some are about the R-v, Rabbi Joseph B., master educator of the past century, who taught people like me, was my Rebbe, Jam Master 3, drove an SUV, father of three, etc. Anyway, the Rav appeared on the Johnny Carson Show – he was the combination of David Letterman,

but as television shows. It is for this reason that I have memorized all four seasons of Police Philosopher, my favorite TV show. I hold public showings of the favored episodes from time to time in my apartment in Brooklyn. I have also memorized every line on the Simpsons, though I have never watched the show, by reading the transcripts online (I have similarly done this with 70% of the material aired on television over the past 70 years, especially British ‘50s comedy...). There are (Upper) West Side Stories, horror stories, and R-v stories – in short, lots of stories.

My favorite story involves a *Chasidische* Rebbe, the *Doyver Shekorim*, who is really a disguised vampire, and he tries to seduce a certain *eyshes chayyil*, but I do not want to give away too many details of that story in this forum. I also like the stories of hopscotch contests between all the Greek philosophers and R. Akiva on one side, and Mike Ditka and the Briskers on the other, captured on video on YouTube.ⁱ

I have recently begun working on a book that collects all of my narratives into one cohesive story of Jewish history. It is called “The Making of a Carmy,” and it hits bookshelves this coming May.

ⁱ Accessible at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ur5fGSBsfq8>.

Kol Hamevater: The *New* Jewish Thought Magazine of the Yeshiva University Student Body

BY: Chaya Citrin

A *kol kore*, signed by a number of prominent YU Rashei Yeshivah, has recently begun circulating around the Wilf and Beren Campuses. Citing the well-known biblical dictum, “*Ha-Kol kol Ya’akov ve-ha-mevasser yedei Eisav* (the voice is the voice of Ya’akov, and the herald is the hands of Eisav),”ⁱ the signatories have pronounced a *herem* against the editors and staff writers of *Kol Hamevasser*, the so-called “Jewish Thought Magazine of the Yeshiva University Student Body.”

Male editors and staff writers are no longer allowed to receive *aliyyot* at YU *minyanim*, and female editors and staff writers will not be allowed to read the *megillah* at the women’s *megillah* reading on the Beren Campus.ⁱⁱ The *herem* affects not only the staff of the publication, but the readership as well. Due to the suspicion of *Kol Hamevasser* may, *has ve-shalom*, agree with the “*apikorsusdik devarim betelim*”ⁱⁱⁱ printed in the magazine, Rashei Yeshivah have prohibited the consumption of meat slaughtered by readers of *Kol Hamevasser*.^{iv}

Student response to the *kol kore* has been minimal due to the limited number of students aware of *Kol Hamevasser*’s existence. One student, however, questioned the *herem*’s force, remarking that he does not think that *Kol Hamevasser* has “*davening* types” on staff anyway. The Environmental/Energy Club released a statement online condemning the *kol kore* as a waste of paper: “As everyone knows, no one reads *Kol Hamevasser* anyway. As such, the wanton killing of trees that was perpetrated in the publication of this *kol kore* was unnecessary and constitutes a violation of the biblical prohibition of *bal tashhit*.”^v The YU Tolerance Club also issued an official announcement on its Facebook page in response to the *herem*: “In the spirit of acceptance and understanding, we tolerate the Rashei Yeshivah’s *herem*, but we refuse to endorse it. We invite the staff and readers of *Kol Hamevasser* to eat *fleishigs* with us at our club meetings in the Heights Lounge, unless they are vegetarians. In that case, we admire their self-discipline and ethical integrity and invite them to partake in our monthly tofu potluck dinner.”^{vi}

The official response by the *Kol Hamevasser* staff has been uncharacteristically non-confrontational. It has simply officially disbanded. One former *Kol Hamevasser* editor explained, “We respectfully disagree with the Rashei Yeshivah’s condemnation of our publi-

cation and their excommunication of us from the YU community. However, in deference to the Rashei Yeshivah and in the interest of re-joining the mainstream YU *velt*, we have decided to be *mevatter* and abandon *Kol Hamevasser*. We anticipate that this decision will result in the immediate repeal of the *herem*, allowing our female staff members to read the *megillah* this Purim.”

Although the former *Kol Hamevasser* staff members took an ostensibly conciliatory approach in dealing with their excommunication by shutting down their magazine, they immediately established a new journal, entitled “*Kol Hamevater*.” One *Kol Hamevater* editor provided justification, “In keeping with *Kohelet*’s teaching, ‘*ve-zarah ha-shemesh u-va ha-shamesh* (the sun rises and the sun sets),’^{vii} we, the former staff of *Kol Hamevasser*, have re-

newed our mission to provide a forum for the free discussion of controversial and nominally interesting issues in Jewish thought.”

Interest in the first issue of *Kol Hamevater* is high, as Rashei Yeshivah wait to see how, if at all, *Kol Hamevater* will differ from its black-sheep older brother. Due to the unprecedented high profile that the *kol kore* gen-

erated for *Kol Hamevater*, conspiracy theories have already begun to abound regarding the true origins of the *herem*. One particularly popular theory is that the introduction of the *herem* was just a pathetically elaborate marketing ploy executed by the *Kol Hamevasser* editors to create interest in their unpopular publication.

Chaya Citrin is a senior at SCW and is excited to graduate before any more haramim can be leveled against her.

ⁱ Genesis 27:22.

ⁱⁱ YU has decided to permit a women’s *megillah* reading this year in order to have a medium through which to exercise the *herem* against the female members of the *Kol Hamevasser* staff.

ⁱⁱⁱ See the text of the *kol kore* posted in Nagel Bagel.

^{iv} See Estee Goldschmidt, “Chabad: Issues that Have Not Been Discussed on Campus,” *Kol Hamevasser* 3,4 (February 2010): 11.

^v Deuteronomy 20:19-20.

^{vi} Available at: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=34947151003>.

^{vii} Ecclesiastes 1:5.



CJF WINTER MISSIONS FOCUS ON REPAIRING THE WORLD

BY: Noam Friedman

During the winter break, the Center for Jeopardizing the Future (CJF) coordinated several service missions to exotic North American locations. The unifying theme of the three trips was *tikkun olam*, loosely translated as “repairing the world.” One trip brought students to Bibb County, Alabama, an area with not only the third lowest high school graduation rate in all of Alabama but the highest national per-capita rate of devious husbands who prepare and send divorce documents only to subsequently nullify them, notifying neither the messenger nor the would-be divorcee. “We had no idea what we

were getting ourselves into,” said Orly Goyim, a SCW junior who participated in the mission, coined ODD (Operation Divorce Defense). “As soon as we landed at Birmingham International, we were horded into tiger trucks and told to patrol the streets, searching for conniving spontaneous divorce nullifiers.” The students spent the duration of the mission on patrols such as these, stopping only briefly to eat, sleep, pray, and gallivant about town with rubber hats on their heads. “It was hard work,” continued Goyim, “but we knew that we were making the world a better place.”

Across the continent, in Sheba, New Brunswick, another group of determined YU students was also trying to make a difference in the world. Sheba, a relatively quiet town, springs to life for three weeks out of the year for the annual Sheba University Book Sale. The sale, run in its entirety by undergraduate students, is the largest vendor of *sifrei Torah*, *tefillin* and *mezuzot* in North America. As such, Jews from the four corners of Canada flock to Sheba during these three weeks, eager to shell out exorbitant sums of money to meet the ludicrous prices the sale has set for these items. The YU mission, dubbed SSS (Stopping the *Stam* Swindle), was planned in an attempt to protest overspending for these sacred articles. Students set up outside the sale (between the booth collecting money for the Organization for the Ruining of the Aguddah and the booth selling tickets for the Gift of

“Life Cereal” raffle) and protested loudly. “I think we convinced some people that the *mezuzot* in those flowery cases were way overpriced,” said Sel M. Ello-Kim, an SSSB senior. “‘2 for 2 grand?’ You’ve gotta be kidding me. I could’ve spent my summer basking in the Miami sun, but I felt a moral obligation to come out here and repair the world, you know?”

A third mission travelled to Federal Correction Institute Butner Medium in Butner, North Carolina, the facility in which Bernie Madoff is incarcerated, to protest a group attempting to release Madoff from prison.

“We’re very proud of all the students who participated in these missions,” remarked Benny Lander, Dean of the CJF. “We try to in-

fuse the student body with a spirit of leadership and sense of responsibility to *Kelal Yisrael* such that they will help build and support communities that embody the vision and promote the values of Yeshiva University.” Added Lander: “We also want to inspire our students to force

joint slave-owners whose partners have already freed their partial share of slaves to relinquish their portion of these slaves as well. That’s really what Yeshiva University is all about.”

Noam Friedman is a Junior at YC majoring in Psychology. He has issued many pruzbols but has never participated in a CJF mission.



ELLEH VA-REKHEV VE-ELLEH VASUS IM.

ONE JEW, TWO JEW

By: Dr. Fish

One Jew,
Two Jew,
Me Jew,
You Jew.

Smart Jew,
Dumb Jew,
Fray Jew,
Frum Jew.

This one has a long white beard,
This one looks a little weird.

Yes! Some are Yeshivish,
And some are Chasidish,
Some are even Jews for Jesus!

Here are some who sit and learn –
They never look at girls from Stern –
From here to there,
From there to here,
They want to sit and learn in Mir.

Who am I? My name is Nat,
I used to wear a big black hat.
Until my friend said, “Don’t wear that!”

“Just wear your *serugi*, if you’re able
The last thing you want is a label!”

Say – what a lot of Jews there are!
They come from near, they come from far,
Some are new and some are old,
But all will eventually get pigeonholed.

Once we had a great big box,
It could hold all the Orthodox;
Side by side we slept and ate,
We learned to accept and tolerate.

But one day came a great divide,
We cannot live side by side!
If you don’t have sidelocks,
We can’t stay in the same big box!
And if you want to go to RIETS – ah,
We’ll have to make a big *mechitzah*!

They sadly left – the Modern Orthodox,
You see, they never had sidelocks.
Far away they built their box,
From the Charedim, who were throwing rocks.

My hands are cold,



My clothes are old,
When I went to the *shadchan* I was told,
“Where was your education?
What kind of denomination?
Bobov, Satmar or Boyaner?
Sefardi? Litvak? Galitzyaner?”

“I don’t know – I’m just a Jew!”
“Aha! You must be from YU!
From me, a *shidduch* you’ll never get
I know you go on the Internet!”

Did you ever think, my friends,
If our fighting ever ends,
Even if I’m not Chasidish,
And I can’t speak any Yiddish,
Could we unite,
Instead of fight?

Will we ever learn to love?
I do not know, go ask your rov.

*Dr. Fish (YC ‘79, AECOM ‘83) may or
may not bear any relation to Dr. Horse.*

DR. SEUSS’ THE MATTER WITH MADDA”

Editor’s note: The following is an annotated version of an article reprinted from Purim Hamevaser 5750 (the Phenomenavaser) 29,4 (1990): 4-5.

In this wide world from Grundoon to Granada
No one has ever seen Torah U’Madda.
Come with us North, with us South, West and East,
Together we’ll search for this mythical beast.

First we will visit Mt. Muddle-Dum-Dominick
Home of the last living Torah U’Madda-nik.
“Recall, I recall,” he says with redundancy,
“When Torah U’Madda was found in abundance.

“We’d pluck it off vines, fish it out of the sea.
We’d harvest it right off the Synthesis Tree.
Of course, the Torah-Onlies were oftentimes fumin’
Seeing us feasting on John Cardinal Newman.ⁱ

“They told us Philosophy Fruit could be harmful.
But didn’t Maimonides eat by the armful?
They answered ‘Your Monides may, but *ours*
would never
Engage in a non-Torah-only endeavor.’

“‘And what about Hirsch?’ we challenged that troupe,
‘He had a recipe for Synthesis Soup.’
‘He didn’t! He didn’t!’ cried the Breuer Boys Choir,ⁱⁱ
‘Anyone saying he did is a liar!’

“‘No Torah U’Madda! That beast is a myth,
No realer than Feeler-Fa-Zooms from Fa-Zith!’
But despite all the nays of those nay-saying sayers,
We placed Torah U’Madda – just without other players.”

Away from this mountain – Let’s head for the Gush!
Where Rav Lichtenstein tends to the poetry bush,ⁱⁱⁱ
Speaking of “But,” “While on the other hand,”
Dancing to an utterly Acharon-less band.

Then we are told, “The problematic is plural,
The tension’s two-tiered, the dilemma is dual,
God is our guide, the Torah totality,
Yet Dante^{iv} can deepen our spi-rit-uality.”

“I’d like to add,” says the Carmy-Army-Man,^v
“That Torah U’Madda is Kierkegaardian.”^{vi}

“Now take the limo on a little Lamm ride,
Up to a penthouse on the Upper West Side,^{vii}
The President gives away books by the dozen,
On Torah U’Madda and Chaim Volozhin.”^{viii}

“Where has that Torah U’Madda thing went...
Where has it gone, to where was it sent?
I think I can say, without confabulation,
That this office of mine needs more information.

“Our promising Project progresses apace,^{ix}
With lectures and lectures all over the place.
Refer to our journal^x quite stuffed with alotta Talkin’ and balking ‘bout Torah and Madda.”

“And what of the Ramim who roam around RIETS,
Do they look beyond the Ketzos to read Keats?”

We ask a Parnesian,^{xi} “Sir does your teacher Believe in a Torah U’Madda-like creature?”
But he keeps on learning, like he never heard.
He answers my question, not saying a word.

Now come take a ride on the Schachter Express.^{xii}
A tour of the Shas in two hours or less.
“Can we stop in Madda-Land?” I would like to know.
“No time, we have four hundred shitos to go.”

Next we will visit the Tendler-Lab-Lair,^{xiii}
Home of the Prince Pre-Med, the Quoter of Shver,^{xiv}
He says, “Queen Ester, your question has an easy solution,
More easy than ethics or than evolution.
Torah U’Madda means Law and Biology,
It doesn’t include that humanisticology.”

Maybe Rav Rosensweig^{xv} knows where to find it?
“First, we must count all the ways to define it.
Then we’ll examine the theories behind it.
Read all the rishonim, and then we’ll refine it.

“Watch out for aspects that might undermine it.
And notice the shitos who like to malign it.
Then, if there’s time, we will try to assign it
To where God’s expecting us all to consign it.”

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO DR SEUSS THIS PURIM

Now we are done, yet there's so much to do,
Work that will fill up a lifetime or two.
Maybe you'll work on this after YU,
I can't imagine work finer. Can you?

ⁱ A 19th-century Catholic priest. The reference probably has no relation to the Seinfeld character, as this piece was originally written after only one season of the show.

ⁱⁱ The *shul* near Mount Sinai regularly has young *Yekkes* sing, in what is often a painful proceeding.

ⁱⁱⁱ See Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein, "'The Woods are Lovely, Dark and Deep' – Reading a Poem by Robert Frost," *Alei Etzion* 16 (2009): 129-134. Obviously this article could not have been the intention of the author, but it is most definitely the closest thing to a poetry bush that one can find written by Rav Lichtenstein, *shlit*'a.

^{iv} This author has apparently not read much more than one page of Rav Lichtenstein's writings. In his *Leaves of Faith: The World of Jewish Learning* (Jersey City, NJ: Ktav, 2003), p. 114, Rav Lichtenstein mentions both Dante and a short analysis of Frost's poem.

^v Possibly a prophetic reference to the course R. Carmy will co-teach next semester on "Military Ethics."

^{vi} He's Soren.

^{vii} This refers to the apartment building that Han Solo and Indiana Jones live in.

^{viii} Nowadays, during the current presidential era, you can go to Riverdale and President Richard M. Joel will give away West Wing videos.

^{ix} This refers to the "Torah u-Madda Project," a creature specific to the late '80s that yielded many Club Hour presentations and somehow still managed to foster almost no Torah u-Madda-ism on campus.

^x *The Torah u-Madda Journal*, which first appeared in 1989, was a direct product of the Torah u-Madda Project. See R. Dr. J.J. Schacter's discussion of the history of this project in pp. 13-14 of the first *Torah u-Madda Journal* volume.

^{xi} This refers to a student of R. Yehuda Parnes, formerly a right-wing Rosh Yeshivah at YU who is now a Rosh Yeshivah at Lander College for Men (remind me what the difference is, again?).

^{xii} R. Hershel Schachter, then as now, moves in shiur at the pace of a speeding bullet.

^{xiii} The rabbi who has a Ph.D. in Biology and an M.D. in his name and teaches pre-Med courses in YC and has a permanent lair in the Furst Hall basement. (Not to be confused with the rabbi who has a Ph.D. in Jewish Philosophy and a J.D. in his name, who teaches law school courses... Wow, that was complicated!)

^{xiv} His father-in-law, Rav Moshe Feinstein, z"l.

^{xv} Jr., not Sr. Don't be confused, like you were over this past Shabbat.

"BISTU MODERNISH?" / "ARE YOU MODERN ORTHODOX?": A CAUTIONARY TALE (WITH A BIT OF SOCIAL COMMENTARY) FROM THE VIMSICAL VELT OF DR. SCHMUESS^{i,ii}

BY: Dr. Schmuess

Translator's Note: The following is a translation from the Yiddish of Dr. Schmuess's classic essay entitled "Bistu Modernish?" Originally published in the Fall 1922 edition of Tradition, this masterpiece quickly became a standard text for introductory collegiate through graduate studies of Modern Orthodoxy. Unfortunately, as the Yiddish language fell into disuse in the world of higher education, English texts replaced the old Yiddish sources and "Bistu Modernish?" became a little-known relic of the past.

The present translation – the first rendition of this essay into English – along with its accompanying footnotes, was prepared by Riley Chapman with help from Google® Translate™, an old and battered Yiddish-English dictionary, and some clever guesswork. Thanks go to Green Vault, Mountain Dew Code Red, Mike, and Ike for their assistance in refining and editing this work.

Yitzy was such a wonderful boy.
Oh, how he brought those around him such joy!
An Israeli yeshivah on a beautiful hill –
That was where, of Torah, he found his fill.
Daf after *daf*, he grew and he *shtayed*,
He sharpened his head and galoofed and *fur-mayged*!

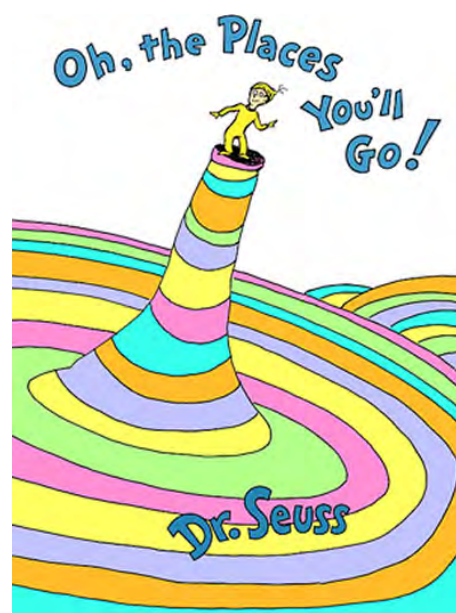
One day, it was time to go take on the world,
To seek his fortune and zadice some gumlurld.
So off Yitzy set, excited yet scared,
To deal with the "outside" for which he'd prepared.

Soon after he'd left, not even an hour,
Another approached with an expression quite sour –
A monocled man, quite tall and obese,ⁱⁱⁱ
Looking as if he would eat Yitzy's wheese!

Said the man, "I am General Zeeko^{iv} Fala,
And I demand of you, what is your Hashkafah?"
Relieved that his wheese was safe in his chest,
Yitzy replied, "My vocab's not the best,

But as sure as all Jews love bagels and lox,^v
I – yes, sir, I – am Modern Orthodox!"
Said Fala, "As I thought, a simple freshback!
A flip-out who's right on the *kolel* track!

"You mean what you say and you say what you mean,
But your mind's as complex as a soup tureen!
You say you are modern, but from hearing you speak,
I can see in your mind, your soul and your pleak,



"That despite all that you may say or do,
The definition of MO is unknown to you!"
With that, General Zeeko Fala turned aside,
Marched off to the distance (and, possibly, died).

Yitzy thought to himself, "The general's right!
For might as I try and try as I might,
I cannot – I cannot – clearly define
That which directs me and inspires my mind!"

So, being an honest and upright young man,
Yitzy came up with a brand new plan.
Right there and right then, not a moment's delay,
He set off on a quest (he's still on it today),

To gather the data as best as he could,
To make sure he truly understood,
That with which the general knocked off his socks –
The question, "What is Modern Orthodox?"

It was rather soon that Yitz made his first stop,

In a town well-known for its Judaica shop.
He approached one teenager carrying a box,
And he asked, "My friend, are you Modern Orthodox?"

The boy replied, "Dude, you got the right guy!
Yeshiva high school is where go I.^{vi}
We have shiur for an hour, and do Science and Math,
And we read Walt Whitman and Sylvia Plath.^{vii}

"On Shabbos, teen minyan's the place to be,
But of course Minchah's optional – anyway,
I'm asleep by three.
It might sound a bit strange, but as you can see –
It's modern and Orthodox, and it works for me!

"You'll have to excuse me – my cell phone is ringing,
And I'm going to a play where my girlfriend is singing!"
A bit disillusioned, Yitzy said, "Thanks,"
And held back his internal vomit tanks.

He thought, "This kid's in the community,
But he's clearly deficient spiritually!
Where is the passion, the drive, the resolve,
Which I saw in yeshivah? Around here, it's dissolved!
Yet perhaps, before I reject what I see,
I should ask some folks who are wiser than me."

A few hours later, Yitzy spotted a rav,
Dressed warmly, including a long coat and gloves,
A hat and a beard and a *sefer* in hand,
He thought, "Maybe this rabbi will understand!"

He said, "Sir, you look as clever as a fox!
Please tell me – are you Modern Orthodox?"
The rav smiled and chuckled, and said, "Certainly!
I believe in *parnasah* quite faithfully!

"I lead a *shul* that says 'Avinu she-ba-Shamayim,'
Though I don't say 'amen' (because that would be lying –
I don't think it's '*reshis tzmichas ge'ulaseinu*').
But why do you ask? What's it to you?"

Yitzy responded, "I'm trying to define
What's modern and what's not – where is the

line?”
The rabbi guffawed, amused and plurdawl,
“When you *chap* the answer, please give me a call!

“I know where I stand, but others debate,
And I’ve yet to meet one who can set everyone straight!
They want to say Madda is useful and good,
That to learn it is something a Jew can and should,

“But *Shas u-Poskim* say differently,
And yet they persist rebelliously!”
Yitzzy then questioned, “What makes you modern?”
The rabbi replied, “Are your ears full of klum?”

“I told you before – one should have a job.
It’s the one valid point in the whole mishk-abob.”
Downcast and forlorn, Yitzzy turned away,
Thinking, “My hopes were so high that it’d pay,

“To speak with him – yet he’s off the wall!
That man is not modern, not modern at all!”

While Yitzzy considered what to do next,
He spotted a professor, engrossed in a text,
A small *kippah serugah* gracing his head.
Surely this one would be more well-read!

Yitzzy cried, “Perhaps you’ll solve my paradox!
O, wise-looking man, are you Modern Orthodox?”
Pushing his glasses to the bridge of his nose,
The professor replied, “Just look at me – it shows!

“In all that I do and I think and I say,
I’m Modern Orthodox in every way!
I have no pretense of close-mindedness,
So I know that the monster who lives in Loch Ness,

“More likely exists than Creation occurred –
That silly thee-oh-ree has since been interred.
Evolutionists and Bible critics,
For our silly myths, are quite the fix!

“Adam and Noah and the Fathers three
Are brilliant creations of J, E, P, and D,
Though of course all inspired by the Lord Above,
Which is why I study their works with love.

“My son, I am thrilled that you’ve asked me this question.
(The answer, of course, may need some digestion.)
For all roads must lead to the academic,
Who’ll fill your mind with his brilliant polemic,

“And tell you the truth, with not one bit of lie
On those things distorted by your rabbi.
The Talmudic sages were miserable quacks,
Who couldn’t quite tell their fronts from their backs,

“And basically all that we have in our day
Is Hammurabi’s code, read the Jewish way!^{viii}
By the way, did you go to Yeshivat Har Etzion?
I’m trying to get a job in their Machon.”^{ix}

Yitzzy could tell something here was amiss,
So politely he did himself dismiss,
And, glad that he knew when something was wrong,
He ever-so-quickly moved right along.

After that troubling communication,
Yitzzy broke off for a brief vacation,
And entered a building of wood, glass, and stone –
A *yeshivish* Beis Medrash, to learn on his own,

To do some *chazarah* and calm his poor mind.
But he was cut short by a tap from behind:
“Excuse me, dear *bochur*, I simply must ask,
(Though it is a somewhat unpleasant task):

“From your clothes, and the accent of your voice-box,
It seems to me that you’re Modern Orthodox!”
Yitzzy spun around to see who had spoken,
And saw an old rabbi looking heartbroken.

Yitzzy just nodded and asked, “What is wrong?”
The rabbi replied, “You’ve been fooled all along!
I was the best *talmid* in the Rav’s shi’ur,
I drank from his Torah year after year,

“I took in each gem that he had to say;
Twelve decades in all I spent in this way.
The modern world quotes him as their inspiration,
As if loyalty to him is their motivation,

“But let it be known, he’d have never approved,
Of the direction the movement has moved.
He never held of the Israeli *Medinah!*
Torah u-Madda is not *le-cha-tchillah!*

“He’d never allow a mixed *kiddush* in *shul*,
And he didn’t found Maimonides School.
Last night, the Rav came to me in a dream!
He said, ‘Shmiel Yankel, it’s truly obscene,

“‘The way that the world misuses my name.
The things that they do – they put me to shame!’
So if you had thought to follow this track,
I beg you – to true Torah, please do come back!”

His head spinning from what Reb Shmiel had said,
Yitzzy barely managed, “I must clear my head.
I thank you most kindly for the input,
But if I seek truth and not giddywhoot,

“I cannot allow one man’s word to prevail,
Especially not with a *mechudishe*^x tale.
But if I hear more folks agreeing with you,
I’ll listen to you more – I promise! I do!”

Yitzzy now knew he could not pause his quest,
He couldn’t get one precious moment of rest.

“If so,” thought our hero, “I have not a choice,
I must hear an authentic Modern-O voice!

“I must journey to the Modern world’s center;
The monster’s labyrinth is where I must enter!”
And so, intending to split wrong from right,
He set off to Washogezuntingon Heights.

Glancing around in this brand-new context,
Yitzzy was shocked, confused and perplexed.
For rather than one uniform type of Jew,
Each one was different, through and through!

He asked one student sporting T-shirt and Crocs®,
“Dear *talmid*, pray tell – are you Modern Orthodox?”
The fellow replied, “My name is Sam,
But you can call me Lamm-I-Am!^{xi}

“I spend several hours each day in the ‘Beit.’
There isn’t a night I don’t go to sleep late.
And yet more important in my own worldview,
Is that secular studies – Madda, mind you –

“Is not just the icing on top of the cake.
This is the philosophy of my namesake!
Only through Madda can we serve the Lord.
Torah and Madda are like the Megazord!TM,

“Uniting together to form a great whole,
Like lettuce and tomatoes in a great salad bowl.
I would not eat green eggs and ham,
I would not eat them with strawberry jam.^{xii}

“But I would study them seriously,
Compare their values to a tree,^{xiii}
Criticize them morally,
And analyze them scientifically.

“I would not eat them in the shower,
I would not eat them with a flower.^{xiv}
I’ll just use them to make a *kiddush Hashem*.
The Torah-only folks – well, I’ll show them!

“I’ll write and talk, philosophize,
Show that they’re all a pack of lies!
Torah u-Madda will carry the day,
And blast its enemies out of the way.

“I will not eat green eggs and ham.
I will not eat them, Lamm-I-am!”
Slightly confused by this fancy oration,
And (in his mind) questioning his motivation,

Yitzzy said, “I thank you for this *Musar schmooze*.
But I must ask more people – what have I to lose?”

Yitzzy continued to wander around,
Seeing the sights and absorbing the sounds.
As he watched one fellow after another,
Yitzzy heard, “I’m Duvie.^{xv} How are you, my brother?”

Speedily finding the one who’d said hi,
Yitzzy could not quite believe his two eyes.
A beard and long *peyes* surrounded a face,
Topped by a large *srugi*, slightly off-place.

The neck and below were enshrouded in silk.
Tzitzis hung down, gleaming white as pure milk,
With one light-blue string attached to each group.
The whole picture threw our dear Yitzzy for a loop!

Yitzzy said, “*Baruch Hashem*, I am fine!
And if I may have just one minute of time,
I must ask you that which does gore my mind’s ox.^{xvi}
Dear brother, are you Modern Orthodox?”

Duvie replied, “But of course, can’t you see?
I am one thousand percent *Tziyyoni!*
Science and Math – that’s not at the center;
Our main goal is Eretz Yisrael to enter.

“Finding a way to make *aliyyah*,
Is right at the crux of our dear Hashkafah.
Clothing and such – these are all just external,
(Though they may help us to serve the Eternal.)

“But when you get down to the basic *yesodos*,
Just look at all the essential *mekoros* –
Ein Ayah and *Likkutei Moharan*,
Lev ha-Shamayim (it’s so high, my son),

“*Orot* by Ha-Rav^{xvii} and *Kol Dodi Dofek*.
Get the truth straight, for all of our sakes!
Of course, don’t forget about Am Yisrael;
We must take them out of this *Galus* jail-cell.

“With music and dancing and small Breslov books,
We’ll soon bring *Mashiach!* For joy! Oh, gadzooks!^{xviii}
Caught off-guard by Duvie’s exuberance,
Yitzzy joined Duvie for a brief dance.

Then Yitzzy said, “My friend, I must go.
My journey is long; please don’t say no!”
With that, the two newfound friends parted ways,
Perhaps to meet, following many more days.

Thinking he’d found what was there to be found,
Yitzzy decided to travel downtown.
A subway ride later and two dollars lighter,
Yitzzy emerged to a world that seemed brighter.

Buildings were taller, with grand architecture.
“This must be Midtown,” Yitzzy did conjecture.
Combing the turf for some Jewish sign,
Hoping for luck – that his stars would align –

Yitzzy perceived a great gaggle of girls,
Skirts and long sleeves, a couple in curls.
Trailing them, Yitzzy found out their home base.
If there was what to learn, this was the place!

On a street corner, two women in hats –
One wearing heels, the other in flats –
Stood looking angry, engaged in debate.
Yitzzy hoped that one of them could set him straight.

Yitzzy asked them, “Can you pause for a bit?”

There is just one question I'd like to submit,
Heavy as those buildings dotting these blocks.
Please tell me – are you Modern Orthodox?"

One woman laughed at Yitz's inquiry.
The other one smiled and said, "Yes, times
three!

I am a trained *yo'etzet Halachah*.
Each day I field questions in *Hilchot Niddah!*

"I do *daf be-iyyun* and I teach Tanach,
(Although my true passion is Rambam with
Grach).

I am living proof that in today's age,
Women have roles to play on Torah's stage.

"While my dear family is my true treasure,
Spreading the Torah is such a great pleasure.
This is enough to fill my life with light,
But my dear colleague thinks I can't be right –

"That this type of role is just not enough.
Yet I disagree – it's already tough,
To mother and wife, to instruct and reply
To questions. Who needs to be a rabbi?"

The other one burst in, "Oh, pay her no mind!
It's just those Haredim^{xix} – they've rendered
her blind!

In our modern world, the glass ceiling must
crack,
Letting each person pursue the grand track,

"Of being a rabbi, regardless of sex.
Traditionalists can bite their own necks!^{xx}
True women's rights must come to the fore,
Whereas gender bias must exit the door!

"Empowerment – yes, that's the way of the fu-
ture.
The wounds on our women – for them, it's the
suture.

When I was still young, they said, 'You're in-
sane!
Your dream of the rabbinate's truly inane!

"Just learn Tanach, Halachah and Musar,
And, as a good wife, you'll go oh-so-far!
Mothering – that's where your true mission
lies.'
Well, I sure showed them – yes, I got my prize!

"You see, my dear child, you now do lay eye,
On Orthodoxy's only woman rabbi!
My new position, rabbinically cleared,
By at least two folks each of whom has a
beard,

"Will pave a new road, to be followed by lots,
Who want to be Mahoxerozovalats!^{xxi}
With these responses, which they felt sufficed,
The two then resumed. How they fought,
blurred, and quiced!

Somewhat afraid to remain in this setting,
Yitz ran away, fast enough to start sweating.^{xxii}

Stopped at a corner to wait for a light,
Yitz saw a young man who looked rather
bright,
Stuffing a *kippah* into his briefcase,

Managing this without breaking his pace.

Racing to follow this entrepreneur,
(Though he did not seem so *frum*, to be sure),
Yitz caught up and gave a loud call,
"Excuse me – yes, you, you young pro-feh-
sho-nawl,

"I must ask – are you Modern Orthodox?"
"Yes," he replied, "and I work here in stocks.
Each day's 16 hours, clock-in to clock-out,
With just a lunch break – for ten minutes,
about.

"My family doesn't get much sight of me,
But off to yeshivah I'll send my kids three,
Preschool and day school (which cost too
much money),
High school, and Israel, where it's oh-so-
sunny.

"I just hope that they
don't decide to flip
out.

That would be so
tragic. Why, I'd
kick them out!
In any event, as you
might have
guessed,
Shabbos is my one
day when I can
rest.

"Honestly speaking,
I'm mostly asleep;
I spend the whole
night and day just
counting sheep.
Don't think, of
course, that to *shul*
I don't go!
(I just might get there
a little late,
though.)

"If I did not, my week
would be lacking,
A fully-formed Jew-
ish spiritual back-
ing –
Which is not to say
shul is no fun and
games.

For *shul* is an enterprise with several aims:

"To say *Shemoneh Esreh*, not just once but
twice,
To let children play (I hope they don't catch
lice),
To catch up with friends on the latest sports
news,
Predict who'll win next, and who's gonna lose,

"To have a quick drink – maybe two, maybe
more,
To talk about our rabbi; he's such a bore!
I'd tell you much more, but I have to go.
My meeting's in here, in suite 15-O."^{xxiii}

With these sudden words, he turned to the right

And entered glass doors, which slammed shut
with might.

Ere Yitz managed to take this all in,
He heard a call which around made him spin.
"You there, young Jew, would you mind if we
talked?"

I heard what you heard from that man that you
stalked.

"I am quite sure that you've taken some
shocks.

Let me tell you about Modern Orthodox!
My name is Rabbi Joe Yankelweissram.
I've made my job to uncover each sham,

"Whether it comes from the left or the right.
I'll work hard all day, and I'll work hard all
night,
Spreading the message which just must be



spread.
Our great community has to be led,

"To far greater heights than it's been 'til now.
Leaders with courage – they can show us how,
To balance these frustrating Orthodox rules,
With all the modern things taught in our
schools.

"We must have the courage to pave a new road,
Modern and Orthodox – both lines being toed.
Social justice, interfaith conversation,
Secular studies, women's ordination,

"Throwing our standards for *geirus* away,
Letting anyone in Halachah hold sway,
Uniting with Jews, no matter how *fray* –
This way the path of true progress does lie.

"A light to the nations is what we must be
(Our nation excepted, obviously.)
Come, join with me on a marvelous quest.
Of God's true servants, we'll surely be best!"

Yitz replied, "Thanks, but we're on different
planes.

Well, if I'm honest – I think you're insane!
Our precious Torah – it tells us what's right.
Frauds just like you – it's just not worth the
fight.

"With little respect, I bid you adieu,
Hoping I'll never again witness you."^{xxiv}
Shocked at these words, Rabbi Y. said, "Har-
rumph,"
And walked off with anger and lollagalumph.

Weary from all of his travels that day,
Yitz knew now that there was just one way,
To reach the real truth that had started this trip.
From Torah's waters he must drink and sip,

Letting its beauty envelop his heart.
So from busy Midtown he then did depart.
Setting his sights for his previous stop,
Where his poor head at last he could drop,

Into a good *sugya*, late-night in the Beis,
Yitz returned to his previous place.
In the Beis Medrash, he found a good spot,
And he started reading, "*Chezkas ha-Batt*-"

But before he reached "*im*," a great kindly face
Appeared out of nowhere and swallowed the
Beis.

Now all was quite dark, with but one thing to
see:
A Cheshire-cat smile, as tall as a tree!

Out of this smile materializing,
A wise-looking creature, constantly rising,
Appeared and said gently, "You've fallen
asleep.
You've fallen asleep, asleep, so deep.

"You might be wondering what's going on.
Well, I am here to help you, my son.
Due to my great size, they call me the SNORT.
Do you want *pshat*? Well, here's *take the vort*:"

"Modern Orthodoxy,' as you call it,
Is just like money inside of your wallet.
Assuming you have some, spend it as you
please.
No one can stop you, or tell you to freeze.

"I'm not quite sure if you got this at all,
So let me try a slightly different *mashal*:
M.O.'s a term that has no real meaning,
Like 'army intel' or even 'dry cleaning.'

"(Honestly, what can you clean just with
'dry?'"^{xxv}
But now I digress. Alright, where was I?)
Ah, yes, I was helping you sort it all out.
And thus I do tell you, without any doubt,

"That M.O. cannot, just cannot, be defined.
How one applies it is left to each mind.

Each unique person, in his or her way,
Interprets the term as seen fit on that day.

“Now let me untie this grand human knot.
Some are sincere, while others are not,
Instead motivated by private concerns.
This is the truth, as sure as the world turns.

“Ay, yet, here – yes, here, my boy – here is the
rub,
These words of the Sages you surely shan’t
snub:
“Who is the wise one? Who learns from each
man!”^{xxvi}
You must include this in your great learning
plan,

“For whatever, whyever, each dear *Yid zugs*,
There’s what to learn from his or her ideas,
Whether they’re wrong or whether they’re
right,
Whether they’re green, blue, mauve, fuchsia,
or white!

“How can you choose which path you will fol-
low?
Here’s the idea – please chew it and swallow –
Aseh lecha rav, ve-chaver keneh lecha!
Learn all you can from Hashem’s great Torah!

“Study the breadth of *Machsheves Yisrael*,
Across the whole spectrum, from Brisk to Beit-
El!
This is especially true for one man,
Whose words are often distorted and canned.

“I speak, of course, of Rabbi Soloveitchik.
Some things that they’ve said in his name are
quite sick.
If you would like to know his true outlooks,
Your real best bet is to read through his books.

“One last advice bit which I’ve got to offer,
Before I move on to the next whipper-
snoffer,^{xxvii}
Is how to choose friends. This is *chashuv
me’od!*
Seek out those people who’ve realized this *sod*
–

“Those of pure heart and pristine motivation,
Those faithful to the Divine revelation,
Those who completely and fully revere,
The great basic truths which a Jew must hold
dear.

“Even if you and they aren’t the same,
You must team up to succeed at this game.
Now that I’ve said this, I really must go.”
And so the SNORT vanished, with green^{xxviii}
afterglow.

Yitzy awoke with a start, and thought, “Wow,
This SNORT guy is right! It all makes sense
now!
General Fala missed out on this lesson,
(Maybe because he was so busy *fressin*’).

“The problem lies all across M-O-doxy!
It’s so undefined – what does he want from
me?

I meant what I said, and I said what I meant;
I’m Modern Orthodox, one hundred percent!”

Yitzy no longer travels the world,
Since seeing how the debate has unfurled.
With so many options plainly laid out,
Yitz has become rather briggly-skout,

On finding his answer – though the question
stays;
“What is Modern Orthodox?” in his head still
plays.
For Yitz has concluded, after deliberation,
That it should not be his sole vocation,

To find his answer – for there’s no *nafeka
minah*,
As each individual will keep his own *shittah*.
All Yitz can do is find his own place,
And do his best, with God’s good grace,

To fix the world however he can –
To learn and grow and fulfill God’s plan.
But every so often, Yitz gets in a mood,
Where all he can do is sit and brood,

About these grand questions that once filled his
mind,
And the quasi-answers that he left behind.
He thinks, contemplates, considers, reflects,
And tries to see if it all connects.

And invariably – with innovation and flair,
He emerges with an article for *Kol Hamevaser*.

ⁱ The original printing of this essay included
the following introduction:

I would like to thank the inspirations for
this piece: the many volumes composed
by Theodore S. Geisel, the works of P.D.
Eastman (particularly the classic *Are You
My Mother?*), various rabbis in America
and Erets Yisrael, community members,
and friends. On legal grounds, it should
also be noted that all similarities to real
persons or institutions, living or dead,
should only be considered intentional if it
would not count as grounds for a lawsuit.
Also, they are all extremely exaggerated.
Every last one.

ⁱⁱ Some words were best left in their original
Yiddish and Hebrew. Hence, the following
translations may be helpful in understanding
this piece: *chap* – understand; *Shas u-Posekim*
– the Talmud and its commentaries; *Reshis
Tzmichas Ge’ulaseinu* – the beginning of the
flowering of our redemption; *Parnasah* –
livelihood; *Beis Medrash* – Jewish study hall;
Chazarah – review; *Talmid* – student; *Medinah*
– state; *Le-cha-tchillah* – ideal; *Mechudishe* –
novel; *Kippah Serugah/Srugi* – knitted skull-
cap; *Peyes* – side locks; *Tziyyoni* – Zionist;
aliyyah – immigration to Israel; *Yesodos* – ba-
sics; *Mekoros* – sources; *Daf be-Iyyun* – daily
folio page of Talmud with in-depth study;
Rambam – Maimonides; *Grach* – R. Chaim
Soloveitchik; *Geirus* – conversions; *Fray* –
non-religious; *Sugya* – Talmudic topic; *Beis* –

short form of “Beis Medrash” (see above);
Pshat – explanation; *Vort* – idea (lit., word);
Yid – Jew; *Zugs* – Anglicized version of the
Yiddish word for “says”; *Aseh Lecha Rav, ve-
Chaver Keneh Lecha* – distorted form of *Avos*
1:6, meaning, “Assign for yourself a rabbi, and
acquire a friend for yourself”; *Machsheves Yis-
rael* – Jewish thought; *Chashuv Me’od* – very
important; *Sod* – secret; *Nafeka Minah* – ram-
ification; *Shittah* – opinion.

ⁱⁱⁱ The obesity of the general may be an indica-
tion of his breadth and depth of Torah knowl-
edge, a la the phrase, “one who has filled his
belly with *Shas u-Posekim*,” used in various
halachic sources.

^{iv} This may be a subtle, Ashkenized reference
to the concept of *zikkah*, which refers to the re-
lationship of a *yevamah* to her dead husband’s
brother. The author may have intended to in-
voke this idea in order to foreshadow Yitzy’s
upcoming loss of grounding and his ensuing
search for the sense of direction in life which
he once had. Alternatively, it may reference
the general’s imminent, untimely death.

^v In this line, Yitzy demonstrates his limited fa-
miliarity with world Jewry; few and far be-
tween are the Sephardic Jews who appreciate
bagels and lox.

^{vi} This type of talk was way cool in 1964. Trust
me.

^{vii} Sylvia Plath (1932-1963) was a poet who
committed suicide at a young age. This refer-
ence may hint at Yitzy’s perception that this
form of Orthodoxy is essentially self-destructive
and cannot last.

^{viii} As with other exaggerated examples in this
piece, it seems that this is meant as a typecast
extreme rather than an actual characterization
of all academics, some of whom may actually
be completely religious.

^{ix} This seems to be a reference to the stereotyp-
ical perception of Gush and its attached Ma-
chon, one which might be accepted by this
particular academic, rather than a real expres-
sion of the author’s own perception of the
yeshivah.

^x This may be a paraprax on Yitzy’s part; he
implies that the very man who wishes to cast
the Rav as a more classically-oriented figure is
actually himself an innovator.

^{xi} This is definitely not meant to refer to Rabbi
Dr. Norman Lamm. The author does not have
enough *chutzpah* to caricaturize him, nor is
there any particular motivation to do so.

^{xii} This may be an attempt by Lamm-I-am to
express that he is punctilious about mitzvah
observance, such that he would not eat straw-
berries for fear of consuming insects.

^{xiii} While his reference is most likely to a phys-
ical tree, Lamm-I-am may be subtly implying
that he feels a need to compare green eggs and
ham with Torah, the Tree of Life.

^{xiv} It is unclear whether Lamm-I-am means that
he would not eat green eggs and ham while a
flower was present, or that he would not eat
green eggs and ham with a flower as part of
what was being eaten.

^{xv} We all know someone like this. But no real
person fulfills all the criteria.

^{xvi} The idea of goring oxen brings to mind the
halachos of *tam* and *mu’ad*, as discussed in

Tractate *Bava Kamma*. Through this refer-
ence, Yitzy simultaneously implies that he is a
tam (simpleton) regarding the hashkafic issues
at hand and that he is *mu’ad* (prepared) for a
discussion of these questions.

^{xvii} As a member of the *Dati Le’umi* commu-
nity, Duvie refers to Rav Kook as “Ha-Rav.”

^{xviii} Believe it or not, the word “gadzooks” is at
least 300 years old. See [http://www.merriam-
webster.com/dictionary/gadzooks](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gadzooks).

^{xix} Pronounced “hair-dim.”

^{xx} It is unclear why this character chooses to
compare traditionalists to both Ya’akov and
Esav, based on *Be-Reshis Rabbah* 78:9.

^{xxi} Some later versions of this text read,
“Rabloxomonkengurbahs.” However, investi-
gation of old manuscripts indicates that the
word given is the correct original form.

^{xxii} By discussing sweating unnecessarily, the
author seems to be referencing *Pesachim* 24b,
which describes fruit juice as “mere sweat.”
The obvious implication is that through all his
experiences, Yitzy is beginning to see results,
to squeeze the juice out of the experiences to
which he is being exposed.

^{xxiii} O is the 15th letter of the alphabet. It is un-
clear if this combination of letter and number
is intended to be symbolic in some way.

^{xxiv} Although Rabbi Yankelweissram seems
much closer to Yitzy’s Hashkafah than most of
the other characters, Yitzy reacts far more ve-
hemently in this situation than in any other.
This may stem from a feeling that, as opposed
to a less serious but fundamentally religious in-
dividual, or a more right-wing person, Rabbi
Yankelweissram represents a clear and present
danger to the upkeep of the *masorah* within
Yitzy’s community.

^{xxv} This joke was blatantly ripped off of: Jerry
Seinfeld, *SeinLanguage* (New York: Bantam
Books, 1993).

^{xxvi} *Avos* 4:1.

^{xxvii} The SNORT may be Israeli, leading to a
mispronunciation of the word “whippersnap-
per.” This might occur because in unpointed
Hebrew, the letter “*peh*” may be pronounced
“p” or “f,” and vowels are left for the reader to
infer. Hence, the pronunciation “whipper-
snoffer” would be a perfectly understandable
mistake. The hypothesis that the SNORT is in-
deed Israeli may garner further support from
his usage of the term *chashuv me’od* in the next
line.

^{xxviii} The green glow may hint that the SNORT
is some sort of alien life form. (This would ob-
viously contradict the hypothesis, put forth in
the previous footnote, that it is Israeli.) Alter-
natively, since green is the color of plant life,
it may suggest a moment of growth for Yitzy.

PANEL CONVENED ON THE TOPIC OF COVETING WIVES

BY: A Newswriter With No Bias

This past Monday night, following a concerted effort on the part of R' Twersky to convene such a forum, a group of three not-so-discreet individuals held tish in the Belfer Commons to a crowd of 8.3 million people, and that's not counting the 200,000 left outside to freeze in the cold. The topic of the day was "Sachmod: Wife-Coveting in Yeshiva University," and it presented the autobiographical stories of these three very proud individuals.

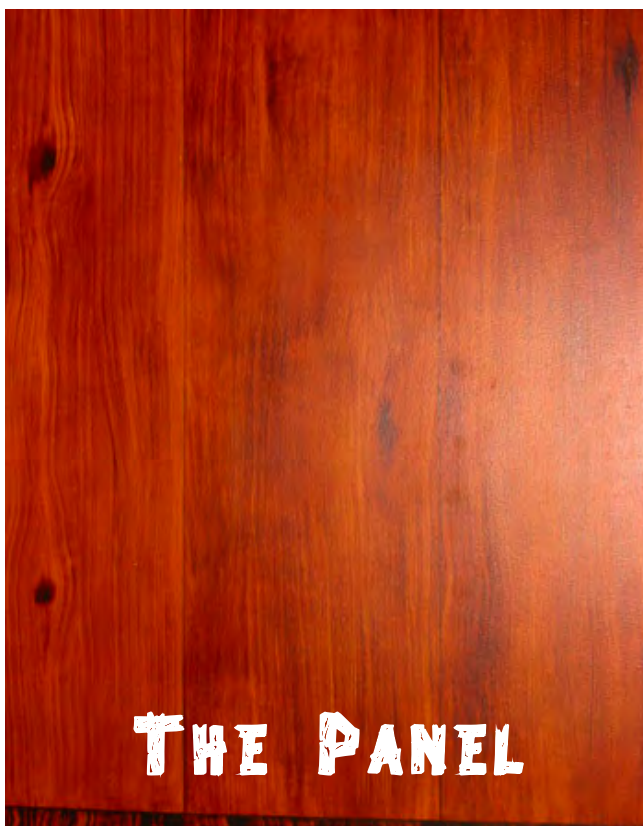
The meeting started off with Rabbi Blau stating, clearly for the record, that "We all know that holding panels on homosexuality is an *issur de-oraysa*. It is for this reason that we are instead holding a panel on coveting wives, which, though obviously extremely comparable, is not as bad because it's much less dangerous." Following his wise words of introduction, there was wild clapping and cheering, followed by beer-chugging (\$2 for the uncovetting, a reduced \$1 For coveters!) and raucous cheers.

The three speakers at the event were, Rabbi Leib Tropper, former head of the Eternal Jewish Family organization, famous polygamist and recent convert to Sefardic Judaism Tom Greene, and a current YC student who founded the Sachmod club. Though not represented in person, the Dead Yavam Society also sent a letter in order to be represented at this panel (a new code word for gathering-panel).

Reactions by YU Roshei Yeshivah to the panel were varied. Some Roshei Yeshivah published a letter that we should have compassion for these people, but there should be no event. A *sihah* by other Roshei yeshivah said that there should be no event, but we should still have compassion for these people. Richard Joel and Rabbi Reiss also signed a letter, saying that compassion was called for,

but the event should not have happened. Also, there was a petition that said that the event should not have happened but we should still have compassion. Among all these variegated responses, there might have been a common theme, but it wasn't fully clear what that theme was.

The entire YU administration viewed the whole experience as a major success, and intends to hold many more such panels in the



future. At the advice of R' Twersky shlit"a, events have been planned for those who covet animal's wives and those who struggle with finishing shenayim mikra on a weekly basis.

Cholent: A Short Story

BY: Yossi Steinberger

Midnight Madness! In a flash, the YU men rushed towards that hallowed sanctuary, leaning forward, walking purposefully, as if trying to blast off. In crazed, kinetic motion, their neurons buzzing furiously, they flew forks-first for the mounds and mounds of steaming goo. The large stampeded the small, the small out-maneuvered the large, each seeking unity with the turbulent blend of brown hues. Lifting their bowls high, the victorious flashed distorted, stretched smiles, high-fiving battle-worn buddies. But reflected in the victors' gleaming eyes were the masses' scattered limbs. Woe! At that time, students stole from under their classmates, ignoring pitiful reminders of friendship past. The very heavens cried...

Year One, Garden of Eden. God created Adam from earth, Eve from his rib, and

warned them both, "Now, this tree, you must not eat from." Eve ate an apple and fed Adam some. God decreed, "From now on, you will have a desire for any strong-

smelling combination of meat, potatoes, beans, and rice. You will worship this strange foodstuff, but from it you will suffer dreadful afflictions." Evicted from Paradise, they wandered, hapless victims of insane yearning for *cholent*; and afterwards they would gnash their teeth painfully.

For thousands of years, Jews have suffered too much to describe. Writing from Vienna in 1180, R. Yitzchak describes how *shtetl Yidn*, driven by angry demons, would bring uncooked *cholent* to the communal oven on Friday nights, to which they returned, the next day, in happy anticipation.ⁱⁱ In 1998, Israelis gathered at the Dan Panorama Hotel in Haifa. 131 semi-finalists waited anxiously, as thirty judges chewed and swallowed their way through enough *cholent* to feed a small army. Esther Israel, 39, of Kfar Saba got first prize for her spinach-flavored *cholent*. Overjoyed, she commented, "I've fulfilled a dream. I've always wanted many people to eat my cooking, because my children don't appreciate it."ⁱⁱⁱ Even the farthest-flung soul knows no peace

from *cholent* cravings. Christian Heinrich Heine, one of the most significant romantic German poets (1797-1856), born a Jew but baptized as a child, gushes (using the German word "*schalet*" for *cholent*):

"*Schalet, ray of light immortal!
Schalet, daughter of Elysium!*"
*So had Schiller's song resounded,
Had he ever tasted schalet.*
*For this schalet is the very
Food of heaven, which, on Sinai,
God Himself instructed Moses in the secret of preparing.*^{iv}

Thus, the nations speak sadly of the Jewish people, whose intestines and hearts bare the trauma of their compulsive *cholent* consumption.

Midnight Madness was the last straw, causing God to convene with the angels to review the situation. It was readily apparent that the situation on earth was spiraling out of con-



trol; the Jews were worshipping *cholent* with wild abandon. Feldheim Publishers had just published a hugely popular coffee-table book on *cholent*, filled with large glossy photographs of *cholents* from communities around the world, a scratch-n-sniff section, and a page explaining the molecular composition of *cholent*. *Kol Hamevaser* staff-writers were hotly debating the correctness of "*khulent*" versus "*xulent*." Philosophers had excitedly announced their conclusion that *cholent* by definition could not be defined. The most-discussed halakhic topic concerned whether or not a person is permitted to eat *cholent* now, if it will certainly detract from the person's *oneg Shabbat* later. Jews just could not get enough of *cholent*; from the humid, greasy basements of Vizhnitz, to the airy, expansive halls of the Conservative Community Center; from the gas stations of Monsey, to the *bikkur holim* room of New York-Presbyterian hospital.

Deciding that enough was enough, the heavenly tribunal removed the *yetser ha-ra* for *cholent*. The guys in that sanctuary, finally

able to see, embarrassedly avoided the eyes of their friends, with whom they were sharing second and third-hand bowls. That Shabbat, the *gabba'im* announced, "After *davening*, there will be hot garbage and drinks downstairs, in honor of the *simhah*." At the Sattmarer Rebbe's *tish*, the Rebbe's *shirayim*, ten beans organically glued to *kishke*, circulated aimlessly amongst the apprehensive Hasidim. The next Shabbat, everyone stayed home. Breslov Hasidim stopped bouncing.

Tens of millions of Jews faced the heavens and voiced their fundamental belief in *cholent*. They yelled in unison, "We all love *cholent*!" One man in the crowd said, "I don't. I like *Kugel*," but Dr. Bernstein quickly slew him. They yelled and yelped, and yelped and yelled, "We all love to eat *cholent*!" But they could not penetrate the highest levels of the heavens. The organizers spied one little boy, named Yossele, who was reading a book, off to the side. Red-faced, they bellowed, "Your family, town, and nation, are in danger! Now help us, you must!" Yossele whispered, "I love *cholent*!" Then, the heavens finally heard the Jews' cry.

...Just in time for the world-famous Yeshiva University *Cholent* Cook-Off.

ⁱ Rough translation of *Be-Reshit* 2:7.

ⁱⁱ "Cholent." *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Accessed Feb. 15, 2010. Available at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cholent>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Helen Kaye, "Strong to the Finish, Spinach Dish Wins Cholent Contest," *JWeekly*, February 13, 1998. Accessed: February 15, 2010. Available at: <http://www.jweekly.com/article/full/7597/strong-to-the-finish-spinach-dish-wins-cholent-contest/>.

^{iv} Heinrich Heine, "Princess Sabbath," in *The Works of Heinrich Heine*, vol. 9, *Romancero, Third Book: Hebrew Melodies*, transl. Margaret Armour (London: William Heineman, 1905), pp. 7-8.

Ultra-Orthodox Meets Ultra-Orthodox tree

BY: Moishie Dokterlawyerstein

When Halakhah puts life at risk, *pikkuah nefesh* (the saving of a life) nearly always takes precedence. Although we are all familiar with the three major exceptions to this rule (making sure your *tsitsit* are out, pronouncing *birkat hamannah*, and being seen at the Seforim Sale), do we consider the other mitsvot for which we sacrifice life all the time? Yes, I am talking about the *arba'at ha-minim* (four species).

Every year, Jews slice down thousands of thriving *lulavim* and *etrogim* and an even greater number of prospering branches of *hadassim* and *aravot*. The arboreal community quivers in fear as the human *Yamim Nor'aim* approach. For them, "*Mi yihyeh u-mi yamut?* (Who will live and who will die?)" has more impact than it does for most people. The yearly massacre of these lovely growing things is a glossed-over atrocity on par with the unprotested cruelty of the popular custom to eat dried carob on Tu bi-Shevat – another inhumane practice chalked up to religious observance.

This year, though, a group of ultra-Orthodox trees has wised up and decided to take action. After spending two days in *shul* on their Rosh ha-Shanah, Tu bi-Shevat, then repenting with their leaves all a-shaking ten days later, the trees have decided that fifteen days after their Rosh ha-Shanah must be their Sukkot. Humans – beware!

Based on the *pasuk* of "*Ki ha-adam ets ha-sadeh* (for a human being is a tree of the field),"ⁱ the tree community has reinterpreted the *pesukim* pertaining to the *arba'at ha-minim* as referring to human limbs and organs. As their mantra, they have adopted the Midrashⁱⁱ about the *minim* representing spines, hearts, lips, and eyes, and they mean it in a whole new, far more gruesome, way. The grisly *ma'aseh ha-mitsvah* (act of the mitzvah) that the trees have been *mehaddesh* (innovated) means that humans are in danger of being sliced, bound, and shaken.

Rabbis across the world are engaging in discussions questioning whether our centuries of tree cruelty were too much. The liberal Rabbi Poppel R. Opinyun asks, "Perhaps we were meant to find some way of being *mekayyem* [fulfilling] the mitzvah without

hurting any trees?" But hard-liner Rabbi Letdan Vironment Eatmaishortz maintains a tougher stance: "If the trees want to shake us, let them try. If they want trouble, we'll start using paper for *Sifrei Torah* instead of *kelaf* (animal hide). That'll show 'em." The battle

being spared. "We had it nice when we were forgotten for a millennium and a half," explained some of the snails. "Then, some rabbis come 'round looking for *tekhelet*. Now, we know we've got the stuff, but our neighbors, the cuttlefish, are always having these parties late at night – and they keep us up. So we told the rabbis it's the cuttlefish they're looking for, and that kept us safe for a while. But of course, the rabbis went and learned organic chemistry and now we can't come up on the beach without being cracked open and cooked up by some science-rabbis for their *tsitsit*."

In response to these grievances, some community leaders are urging their followers to reexamine their customary practices to avoid problems like this in the future. Among the institutions under scrutiny is the ubiquitous Friday night cranberry-crunch *kugel*. A mitzvah-food according to many, widespread preparation of this delicacy entails the excessive destruction of cranberries.

In a proactive move on the part of the rabbis, Rabbi Vutter V. Gunnadoo approached the chickens to discuss the sticky issue of *kapparat* (atonements). Surprisingly, the chickens were okay with the ongoing practice. Gordon Fliegelman, negotiating on behalf of the chickens, explained, "The chickens are sympathetic to your needs, and they are willing to offer their ongoing cooperation. But they still want to be allowed to poop on your heads occasionally." Rabbi Gunnadoo acceded to their demands.

This era of heightened environmental awareness presents interesting, if slightly minor, obstacles in many areas of Jewish practice. Maybe, out of *hakkarat ha-tov* for that enormous tree that let Haman hang, we can ask the *etrog* tree nicely before we pick next year's specimen.

Moishie Dokterlawyerstein is currently Undeclared, but he excels at gauging the frumness of his peers based on their style of clothing.



rages on, but as Sukkot le-Ilanot approaches, the trees are getting restless, and people who live near trees face mounting danger.

In light of the trees' vocal rebellion, other creatures that are consumed in the practice of Jewish rituals have mounted their own revolts. For instance, *parot adumot* (red heifers) have found the courage to unite against the Jews. Carmen Bovinitas, spokeswoman for the Red Cow Initiative, complains, "This mitzvah doesn't even make sense." In general, their claim is that Jews have been burning the rarest specimens of red cows, and then they complain about how it is so hard to find a good *parah adumah* – "Maybe don't burn us up so much," many *parot* have been heard complaining.

Murex snails, the mollusks whose life-juices dye our *tsitsit* blue, expressed their distaste at being rediscovered, too. Interestingly, further inquest into their story revealed that this is not the first effort they have made at

ⁱ *Devarim* 20:19.

ⁱⁱ *Va-Yikra Rabbah* 30:12.

Besides Purim issues, *Kol Hamevaser* also occasionally publishes semi-serious issues. Get a head-start on writing for these exciting upcoming editions of the paper. Please send all submissions, letters-to-the-editor, and queries to:

kolhamevaser@gmail.com

Torah, Literature, and the Arts

Possible topics include: The Use of the Bible in English/Hebrew Literature; The Relationship between Torah and Literature; The Use of Literature in Learning Torah; Literary Approaches to Bible and Talmud; The Value of the Humanities and Artistic Expression in Judaism; Beauty and Aesthetics; Jewish Art History, Art in the Synagogue, Beit Midrash, and School; Art in Halakhah; and much more!

Submissions due: March 2, 2010

Halakhah and Minhag

Possible topics include: Methodologies of Pesak (*Yere Shamayim Yetse Yedei Sheneihem, Mah Tov, Kohah de-Hetteira Adifa, Ha-Mahmir Tavo Alav Berakhah*); Sefaradic, Mizrahi, Ashkenazic, German Jewish, and Hasidic Halakhah; *Minhag ha-Makom (Lo Titgodedu)*; When is *Minhag Oker* Halakhah?; *Minhag Yisrael Torah Hi (Ve-Al Tittosh Torat Immekha)*; Philosophy of Halakhah; History of Halakhic Development (Tamar Ross and Rav Kook); The Concept of a Universal Law Code for all Jews (*Shulhan Arukh*); Kabbalah in Halakhah; *Minhag Shetut*; Innovation in *Pesak*; The Power of *Beit Din*; and much more!

Submissions due: March 22, 2010

Judaism in America

Possible topics include: So-Called "Minhag America" (Hanukkah Presents, Lack of Hair Covering for Women); American Religious Zionism; The Impact of the Year in Israel on American Orthodoxy; *Aliyyah* to Israel vs. Staying in America; Jews and Sports; Interdenominational Relations; Unique Challenges to Jewish Life in America; America vs. "the Old Country" as Diaspora Communities; Affluence in the American Jewish Community; and much more!

Submissions due: April 19, 2010



R. Moshe Meiselman

R. Yehuda Parnes

R. Abba Bronspiegel

R. Michel Shurkin

R. Chaim Ilson



R. Moshe Twersky

R. Steven Greenberg

Gilah Kletenik

Rabba Sara Hurwitz

R. Avi Weiss



R. Joseph Telushkin

R. David Hartman

R. Eliahu Ben-Haim

The Lubavitcher Rebbe

The Spinka Rebbe



Bernard Madoff

J. Ezra Merkin

R. Mordechai Kaplan

R. Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg

The Satmer Rebbe

~ והיו עיניך ראות את מוריד ~