

Volume V, Issue 4 Purim, March 8, 2012 15 Adar 5772

# KOL HAMESHAKKER



**BACK  TO THE  
JEWISH FUTURE**

**...And How We Will Dictate It.**

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This manuscript was found in an old time-warped cave by Ariel "archeologist" Krakowski, dating from the year 2219.

ArtScroll Talmud KiPshuto THE ARTSCROLL GEMARA: THE CLASSIC NEW YORK EDITION, WITH AN ANNOTATIVE INTERPRATIVE ILLUMINATED ENLIGHTENING ELUCIDATED EXPOSITION, AS AN AID TO ARTSCROLL TALMUD STUDY.

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE PUBLICATION OF THIS WORK INVOLVED EXTENSIVE RESEARCH FOR AT LEAST HALF AN HOUR AND WE HAVE LOTS OF LAWYERS.

Haskamas HaGedolim

The ArtScroll is  
the soul,  
the inner  
meaning  
of the laws.

Although people once learned the Talmud without an ArtScroll, due to Yeridas HaDoros we can no longer understand the Talmud without the words of ArtScroll to explain it. Even ArtScroll itself, with its difficult language and complicated concepts, is difficult to understand. Other books have tried explaining it quickly, without proper respect. Therefore, there is no greater "Es La'asos" than now to explain the words of ArtScroll. It is also important to understand it in the original language in which it was written and to keep the original Tzuras HaDaf [the original form of the page from when dried-tree books were used - Ed.].

The Gedolim

The ArtScroll  
must be learned,  
and not merely  
read.  
Doesn't that  
sound profound  
in italics?

Publisher's Preface

The ArtScroll Talmud consists of two components - Gemara and ArtScroll. One cannot understand Gemara without ArtScroll. The ArtScroll is the soul, the inner meaning of the laws. Thus, the ArtScroll cannot be "translated," but rather it must be elucidated, enucleated, expatiated, explained, explicated and expounded. It is not the purpose of this edition of the ArtScroll to provide a substitute for the original text of ArtScroll or a detour around the classic manner of learning Gemara with ArtScroll. Its purpose is to help the student understand the ArtScroll itself and improve his ability to learn from the original, preferably under the guidance of a Rebbe. The ArtScroll must be learned, and not merely read. As clear and great and wonderful as we believe our vernacular elucidation to be, thanks to the dedicated and noble work of an exceptional brilliant team of Torah scholars, the reader must contribute to the process by himself. He must think, analyze, explore, investigate, and thus understand. This elucidation is far from a substitute for the original ArtScroll, or a shortcut to learning. Instead, it is intended to bring the student closer to the study of ArtScroll as it has been learned for centuries.

The Editors

Megillah 4b<sup>4</sup>

In the last passage in ArtScroll, all opinions held that the Megillah cannot be read on Shabbos. ArtScroll now asks why that is the case:

The Gemara seeks looks for the reason for the prohibition not-allowed thing<sup>1</sup> against reading the Megillah on Sabbath: At any rate either way,<sup>2</sup> all the Tannaim Gedolim who lived 2000-2400 years ago mentioned above [4b<sup>1d</sup> - 4b<sup>4</sup>] agree that we do not have a ba'al keriah read the Megillah on Sabbath. What is the reason for this restriction not-allowed thing?

The Gemara answers:

Rabbah said: Everyone is obligated in must do the Megillah reading (and shofar blowing)<sup>3</sup> but not everyone is competent in Megillah reading able to do the Megillah reading correctly. Therefore the Rabbis ruled that the Megillah is not read on the Sabbath<sup>4</sup> as a precautionary decree protective law lest in case one take [a Megillah] in one's hands, and go to an expert to learn how to read the Megillah<sup>5</sup>, and thereby carry four amos 8-12 feet<sup>6</sup> in a reshush harabim, a Biblical violation<sup>7</sup> a doing of a thing not allowed by the Torah. The Gemara notes that this reason applies in other cases as well:

And this is the reason why we do not have a ba'al teki'ah blow the shofar when Rosh Hashanah falls on takes place on the

same day as the Sabbath<sup>8</sup>. And this is the reason why we each of us do not hold<sup>9</sup> the lulav when Succos falls out on takes place on the same day as the Sabbath. The Rabbis were concerned The gedolim of long ago were afraid lest one in case one would carry the shofar or lulav four amos 6-12 feet in a reshush harabim and thereby commit a Biblical violation a doing of a not-allowed thing.

1 Milon Kol Kisvei ArtScroll.

2 "At any rate" - ArtScroll uses this phrase in many places to mean "either way," which seems to be the translation of the Aramaic. This fits with the translation of Rabbeinu Soncino, a predecessor to ArtScroll.

3 The parentheses mean that these word do not belong there, but it is unclear where the parentheses themselves belong. In the original ArtScroll text, they appear to include the next line. However, we follow the position of the Sefer Sograyim al HaArtScroll that they were only intended for the words "and shofar blowing."

4 The Megillah should not be read on the Sabbath - ArtScroll explains that the Gemara is giving the reason for why the Megillah is not read on Shabbos, which is different from Steinsaltz's explanation of the Gemara. See What's Bothering ArtScroll? for why ArtScroll explained it this way.

5 To learn how to read the Megillah -

4b<sup>4</sup>

MEGILLAH NIKREIS CHAPTER ONE MEGILLAH

ArtScroll explains that the person will go to learn how to read the Megillah. However, this raises the following issue: The Gemara simply said the person would have gone to learn, which presumably means he was going to learn some Lomdus, so why does ArtScroll say he was going to learn how to read Tanakh? See the Maharam Shtus for a possible explanation.

6 Four amos - An "amah" is a Torah measure the size of a person's forearm. People used to have longer arms, from 24 to 36 inches long.

7 A Biblical violation - ArtScroll explains that this gezeirah was intended to prevent one from committing a biblical violation of carrying. Rabbeinu Tosafot al Mesorahpress (Rabbeinu Tam) raises the following difficulty: ArtScroll in Eruvin explains that one cannot make an eruv to permit carrying in a place where it is biblically forbidden to carry. Yet it is known that the ba'alei ArtScroll permitted people to carry in New York, a city much larger than cities in the time of the Gemara! See Rabbeinu Tam for a possible resolution.

8 When Rosh Hashanah falls on Sabbath - Without this explanation of ArtScroll, one may have thought that you can never blow the shofar on Rosh Hashanah because of the gezeirah against musical instruments. ArtScroll informs us that one can blow the shofar on Tuesday or Thursday.

reading the Megillah on the Sabbath:

דבולו עלמא מיקא מניחא משבת לא קרינן - At any rate, all the Tannaim mentioned above agree that we do not read the Megillah on the Sabbath. מאי טעמא - What is the reason for this restriction?

The Gemara answers:

ל תיבין בקריאת מגילה (וכתקיעת) - אמר רבה - אמר רבה - שוקר - Everyone is obligated in the Megillah reading (and shofar blowing).<sup>3</sup> ואין הכל בקיאין במקרא מגילה - but everyone is competent in Megillah reading. Therefore the Rabbis ruled that the Megillah is not read on the Sabbath. מה רבנה ארבע אמות ברשות - שטא ועלנה בידו וילך אצל בקי ללמוד - as a precautionary decree lest one take [a Megillah] in one's hands, and go to an expert to learn how to read the Megillah. והרביב - and thereby carry it four amos in a reshush harabim Biblical violation.<sup>7</sup>

The Gemara notes that this reason applies in other cases as well: וישינו טעמא דשוקר - And this is the reason why we do not blow the shofar<sup>8</sup> when Rosh Hashanah falls on the Sabbath. וישינו טעמא דלולב - And this is the reason why we do not hold the lulav<sup>9</sup> when Succos falls on the Sabbath. The Rabbis were concerned lest one carry the shofar or lulav four amos in a reshush harabim and thereby commit a Biblical violation.<sup>7</sup>

The Gemara gives another reason why the Megillah is not read on Sabbath:

רב יוסף אמר - רב יוסף אמר - רב יוסף אמר - Because poor people anxiously await the Megillah reading, in anticipation of receiving the gifts that are normally allocated when the Megillah is read.<sup>9</sup> Since these gifts cannot be allocated on the Sabbath,<sup>9</sup> the Rabbis shifted the Megillah reading from the Sabbath to another day of the week.

9 And this is the reason why we do not hold - By choosing the word "hold" ArtScroll is alluding to the halakhah that one must hold the lulav, but does not need to wave it to be yotsei. See however Sefer Na'anu'in Kehilchaso, Vol. 5, for a discussion of this issue.

פירוש הרב (היינו הברטנורא ולא הגרי"ד)

מודעה. מלשון "מודעה רבה לאורייתא". כלומר שמכאן ואילך מפסיקין ללמוד, ומתחילין להכין לפורים עיני להבין דא: ולהוסיף על הסדרים. היינו בשאר ישיבות. או אפשר לומר דכוונתו גם על ישיבתנו, ולבין הזמנים בקיץ: וקריאה. אחרי המודעה להפסיק הלימוד קוראים גם לחזק הלימוד. וכי תימא דסדרי אהדדי, אין הדבר כן, דהרי בישיבתנו נותנים בחירה ביד כל אחד ואחד לעשות כל מה שיחפץ, "את החיים ואת הטוב ואת המות ואת הרע". בסדרי הישיבה. ולא מחוץ לסדרי הישיבה, שאיסור גמור הוא להוסיף על הסדרים. ותימה, שהרי בט"ו באב מוסיפין על הסדרים, כדאיתא בבא בתרא "כיון שהגיע ט"ו באב דמוסיף יוסיף", ובישיבתנו כל השנה היו מעין ט"ו באב, ועיין בספרייה: בבקר ובליילה. אבל לא בצהרים. דמבטלים מת"ת ללמוד שאר "חכמות." ולפיקר יש נקודה מודגשת קודם המילים "כנהוג בכל הישיבות," דבשאר ישיבות לומדים גם בצהרים וגדלים בתורה ויראת שמים כדבעי: עד ערבי פסחים. תימה, דתני דכך נהגו בכל הישיבות, ובאמת רק בישיבתנו לומדים עד ערבי פסחים, וכמעט אין מניחים זמן לבני מדינת הים לחזור לבתיהם קודם החג. ואני תפילה שה' יאיר הדירות פחותי ערך בלי מזגן ובקומה הכי גבוהה. ואולי סברתם היא שממה נפשך ישאר בשבת:

## Sem Girl Says: A Testament To the Depth of Human Insight

BY: Hannah Dreyfus

Ah, the seminary year. Mention it to any FTOC (true Freshmen are few and far between, and, therefore, empirically irrelevant) and her eyes immediately glaze over in reminiscent nostalgia. It is described as a year of unparalleled enlightenment and growth.<sup>1</sup> It is a year of delving into esoteric texts and enigmatic existential qualms, with no background of which to speak, but a piety so fierce that it makes up for any lack. It is a year of flaming zealotry and impassioned epiphany. It is year of skirts gaining pleats and pleats gaining more pleats. It is year of rich stereotyping and offensive generalizations. It is a year that marks your prospects for a future spouse as surely and indelibly as a permanent marker on a spotless whiteboard. It is a year of rich indoctrination which, if all goes as planned, will last a lifetime. It is a year of hibernation in the Beit Midrash (for all those over the Green Line, and, of course, MMY), and a year of piercing self-awareness.

Who but the seminary girl can be found at the Western Wall in the dead of night, shedding tears for her long lost Temple and praying, voice rattling at the doors of Heaven, for the return to Zion. She is a blur of religious fervor, frocking to and fro on Ben Yehuda, bestowing *agurot* on the needy, single-handedly supporting the Israeli economy and the frozen yogurt industry. Her benevolence indubitable; her fidelity unquestioned.

But, above all else, it is a year of thought.

That is why the Facebook page "Sem Girl Says" came as no surprise to the Jewish community. On this epic contribution to the Facebook Empire, the many introspective, astute comments, dropped so effortlessly

from the lips of our sagacious seminary attendees, are recorded for the benefit of the greater Jewish community. And, no doubt, for posterity. The insights recorded on this inconspicuous Facebook page are riveting, clearly products of the depth of insight for which seminary girls are so commonly known. Here, I have recorded some of these penetrating remarks, so gratuitously dropped. I embark on a journey of analysis, attempting to discover the greater ontological

*My limited facilities cannot hope to grasp the full profundity of these remarks. However, knowing of the rich potential that lies therein, I cannot but apply my mind to these jewels of human thought, these pearls of human understanding.*

ramifications of these statements. My limited facilities cannot hope to grasp the full profundity of these remarks. However, knowing of the rich potential that lies therein, I cannot but apply my mind to these jewels of human thought, these pearls of human understanding. And so, dear reader, embark with me on the intellectual journey of a lifetime.

**Overheard in Malcha:** "I'm definitely the *gilgul* of someone awesome. Because I'm awesome."

In this brief but occult statement, anonymous seminary girl #1 reveals her knowledge of the arcane topic of the *gilgulim*, the reincarnation of a soul from a previous existence. As is clear from her sound syllogistic reasoning, her

conclusion, subjected to rigorous analysis, must be valid. As the deductive rule of logic, *modus ponens*, so parsimoniously affirms: "If p then q. p, therefore q." As seen in the above example, anonymous seminary girl #1 applies this rudimentary reasoning to the complex topic of posthumous resurrection. If I am

*awesome, than I am the gilgul of someone awesome. I am awesome. Therefore, I am a gilgul of someone awesome.*

The confluence of exoteric reasoning and esoteric subject matter creates a statement that at once challenges and enriches the mind.

**Overheard in Manny's:** "Sorry, do you have this *sefer* in purple? It's a present and I want it to match her *neshamah*."

A statement that at once touches upon the topic of the incorporeal, eternal soul and exposes the exceptionally caring nature of anonymous seminary girl #2. *Gnosis* is the Greek noun for "knowledge." In context, *gnosis* refers to spiritual



knowledge or mystical enlightenment. Clearly, this seminary girl has had more than her fair share of *gnosis*. She knows what color her friend's soul is. Need I say more? Or, perhaps, she is speaking in some sort of complex metaphor, the color purple known to be deeply representative of majesty. This comment makes it clear that this enlightened seminary specimen is not bound by the plebian limitations of human perception.

**Overheard in the Rova:** "How do you plug in a blender?"

Although I have spent much time trying to decode the profound ontological implications of this question, I have as yet been unsuccessful. I do welcome further suggestions. The multiplicity of meaning abounds.

**Overheard on the 15:** "I heard Stern has like this, like, *shidduch bus* thing. OMG! Can you imagine if, like, I meet

my husband on there?"

This statement hits very close to home. A seemingly obvious sociological observation, this comment in fact reveals the prophetic knowledge of its speaker. Although *Ruah ha-Kodesh*, Divine spirit, was thought to be lost after the destruction of the First Temple, that clearly does not apply to seminary girls. Just examine the facts: this individual has never even been to Stern College. And yet, she so adroitly identifies the colloquially termed 'shuttle' by its official title (so termed by President Joel and all other proponents of a YU eugenics initiative): "shidduch bus thing." How else could this seminary girl have known of the "shuttle's" true title and purpose? There is no other conclusion but direct Divine revelation.

**Overheard in the Rova:** "I really want to do that thing where you daven at the Kotel for 40 days in a row because those stairs will make my legs so toned."

With intentions of such unadulterated purity and altruism, there is no doubt her prayers will be answered. Just knock knock knockin' on heaven's door.

**Overheard on the bus:** "Nahag, ani tzricha laledet!"

This seminary jewel seems to be expressing her eschatological yearnings in a very public manner. Although it is rare to hear a seminary girl raise her voice above a timid whisper while aboard any mode of public transportation, this individual was obviously too ridden with inner turmoil to contain herself. Here, she calls out to all who will listen, including said driver: the birth pangs of the Messiah have come! And who could have known, she would be the one to experience them! The depth and poignancy of her analogy, so passionately vocalized, left listeners and readers alike speechless. The driver, unable to bear the vast implications of her message, gave her a dirty look in his rear-view mirror, muttered to himself about "stupid Americans," and kept driving.

**Overheard in Malcha:** "What does the word 'ma'afeh' mean and why is it written on all the bakeries?"

If only there was a chivalrous Yeshiva Bachur around to help this seminary-maiden in distress. Lost in translation, she looks around wildly for someone, anyone, to help her solve this mystery of meaning. Then, from the fog, there emerges a figure. The sleek silhouette of his black hat cuts a jagged line across the dark Saturday-night sky of *Rehov Yaffo*. Black jacket becomes visible as he strolls toward her. Crisp white shirt. Prada belt fastened to perfection. And, really, really fancy shoes.

From beneath fluttering lashes, seminary girl looks up and timorously restates her question. His response leaves her breathless: "Umm, is this where the 21 bus stops?"

**Overheard on the bus:** "I'm trying to find a street, but I forgot the name of it. I know that it starts with *Rechov*."

The seminary girl, as a collective, knows how to provide information only most pertinent and pressing when asking for directions. Here, she shyly approaches the bus-driver, not wanting to waste a minute of his time by asking a silly question. She rephrases the question over and over in her mind, wanting every word to matter. She arrives at this perfectly formulated query—all content, no ambiguity. Just precision of thought, and clearness of mind. There is no doubt that this individual will find the destination which she seeks; save the doubt that this girl doesn't even realize just how lost she already is.

**Overheard in the Rova:** "I thought when you step over the Green Line, you die?"

To all my dedicated Gush and Migdol Oz alumni, perhaps you can contact this concerned individual. Inform her that, yes, indeed, when you step over the Green Line, you die. Do not pass go. Do not collect \$200.<sup>2</sup>

**Overheard in Neve Ya'akov:** "Sometimes when I'm in Target, and I see two non-Jews together, I just wonder how they know each other."

*Am ehad, Lev ehad*—this seminary girl is clearly referencing the mysterious oneness of the Jewish people. Because of this recognition, she is left unsure of how those outside the patriarchal covenant know each other. A good question. Personally, I've got nothing.

And, with this treasure trove, I conclude: **Overheard at the KOTEL:** "So, which way do we daven?"

1 The term "growth" commonly associated with the seminary year remains determinedly nebulous, despite its ubiquity. However, contextual clues can lead one to believe that it either refers to the direct Divine revelation to which seminary girls are privy (\*note: guaranteed after Chanukah or your money back) or the significant weight gain that is commonly associated with this year.

2 Editor's Note: In addition, according to international law, the *Rova* is already over the Green Line. Extra points if you figure out which editor is responsible for this note.

## From the Censorship Committee: The Case for Banning *Massekhet Yevamot*

BY: Re'uvon Ben-Shimon, Committee Chair

It has come to our attention that *massekhet Yevamot* is inappropriate to learn in a *beit midrash*. There are many concepts which are integral to the *massekhet*, yet are inappropriate for study by a *ben* or *bat Torah*. We are afraid that learning this *massekhet* could pose a danger to the spiritual lives of our students, as it could lead them to incorrect conclusions about what is valued in the model Jewish society of Modern Orthodoxy. We would like to make you aware of the problems that learning this *massekhet* could cause, and inform you of the steps that we will be taking to combat them.

One major problem in the text is its frequent references to death, to the point that those who study this *massekhet* become desensitized to the tragedy of people dying. Just yesterday, a member of this committee walked into the *beit midrash* and heard the following conversation:

"Ok, so we have three brothers, Re'uvon, Shimon, and Levi. Re'uvon dies."

"No, that's not it, both Re'uvon and Shimon die."

"But that can't make sense, we need to have two brothers left... Oh, I get it. There are four brothers, Re'uvon, Shimon, Levi, and Yehudah. Re'uvon and Shimon are married to Rachel and Leah, who are sisters, and then Re'uvon and Shimon both die. And then Rachel dies. Can Yehudah do *yibbum* with Leah?"

"I have an idea- let's kill Levi off too. Then what will happen?"

There are many problems with this conversation, including, but not limited to, the fact that all sensitivity to the value of human life has been lost. Since when do God-fearing Jews talk about "killing people off?" And yet, what is to be expected when the *massekhet* has passages like the following?:

If his daughter's co-wife went and married his second brother, who also had another wife, and then [the second brother] died, just as his daughter's co-wife is exempt, so too is her co-wife's co-wife exempt, even if they are one hundred brothers.<sup>1</sup>

In this passage, one hundred people die, and the text does not even bat an eye. Clearly, something must be done, such as censoring the text, so that our students will not learn this lack of sensitivity. We must prevent our students from learning this material until they will be sufficiently ready to treat it with the somber mien

that it requires.

This *massekhet* encourages a similar lack of sensitivity when it rules that in order to do *yibbum*, the dead man must have no children.<sup>2</sup> When discussing these cases, students take for granted the fact that the man is childless, to the point that they do not even mention this clause in each case. Such an attitude is problematic, however, because there are many people who, unfortunately, are unable to have children. Students must be able to sympathize with such individuals, instead of thinking so matter-of-factly about childlessness.

Another, and far more dangerous, problem with *massekhet Yevamot* is its widespread references to *bi'ah*. For example, the Gemara states:

It was taught in another Baraita: By stating, "Her *yavam* shall cohabit with her," the Torah indicates that the cohabitation done in its natural manner effects *yibbum*. Thus, when the verse continues: "And take her," it conveys that even cohabitation that is not done in its natural manner effects *yibbum*.<sup>3</sup>

Mentioning *bi'ah* in such a blatantly explicit manner is provocative and distasteful. Yet this *massekhet* discusses it constantly, and this is even one of the milder examples! While one of the more provocative examples might demonstrate our point better, we would rather leave your mind unexposed to such things.

Imagine what would happen if students would learn this *massekhet* in the *beit midrash*, and then continue their learning out into the streets. Passersby might think that this is an acceptable topic to broach in public! What would they say about our institution? That it is a place where we are open about discussing such personal matters before it gets to Fox News? Granted, the use of the term *bi'ah* does help, as it is a euphemism that no one understands unless he is learning this *massekhet* anyway. But mere euphemisms are not enough. The substitution of one set of words for another does not make this conversation any more acceptable as long as the ideas remain racy. We must, therefore, avoid discussion of the topic of *bi'ah* at all costs. We all know what controversies appear when *bi'ah* is discussed in an open matter in this institution.

Which leads us into another problem with this *massekhet*: the prominence of *bi'ah* before marriage. The Beraita referenced earlier continues:

The verse then states: "And perform *yibbum*," to signify that only cohabitation finalizes marriage with her, but the transfer of money or a document does not finalize marriage with her.<sup>4</sup>

While the Rabbis instituted the practice of *ma'amar*<sup>5</sup> to mirror *kiddushin*, on the *de-oraita* level, it is sufficient to simply do *bi'ah* with the *yevamah* without any *kiddushin*. If the student body were to hear that there are cases when *bi'ah* without *kiddushin* is *muttar*, there would be an uproar. Some students might mistakenly believe that the *bi'ah* is pre-marital *bi'ah*, and could even go so far as to assume that the Gemara legalizes premarital *bi'ah* in all situations. Do not think that we should not worry about this mistaken view because it is so unlikely, for we see in this *massekhet* itself that there are situations where the Rabbis make laws for some far-out cases. For example, the Gemara suggests that, for one case, R. Shimon says that a woman requires *halitsah* though he would generally say she is *peturah* (exempt), because:

This is a decree that was enacted because if we allow both widows to be released through a single act perhaps [people] will say that when there are two *yevamot* who come from two different houses to a *yavam* only one of them requires *yibbum* and the other one is thereby released without anything.<sup>6</sup>

Rashi there states that the case being referred to is when two wives fell to *yibbum* at exactly the same time, because this is the only case for which R. Shimon holds that two *yevamot* can come from two houses.<sup>7</sup> Such a case is clearly rare—how likely is it that two things actually occurred simultaneously rather than several milliseconds apart? If the *massekhet* is worried about uncommon cases such as this, we should be too. We too must consider even the most gullible students when creating the rules for our university in order to ensure that no one will overstep the boundaries of Halakhah.

Another place where students might disastrously overstep their bounds is if they would learn that for *yibbum*, *bi'ah al korhah* (against her will) is successful in acquiring the *yevamah* as a wife. The Mishnah states:

One who cohabits with his *yevamah*, whether mistakenly or wantonly, whether under coercion or willingly, even if he was mistaken and she was wanton, or he was wanton and she was mistaken, or he was coerced and she was not coerced, or she was coerced and he was not coerced; whether one only begins cohabitation or one completes the act; he has acquired.<sup>8</sup>

In summary, a woman can be forced into *yibbum* against her will. If our students would learn that this is halakhically permissible, the consequences could

be catastrophic. First, students might erroneously become convinced that such an action is *le-ka-tehillah*, that is, that *bi'ah al korhah* is the most proper way to perform *yibbum*. They then might extend the halakhah and state that even in non-*yibbum* situations, it is permissible to do *bi'ah* against the desires of the woman. Such a ruling might result in a rash of cases of date rape, after which the men will claim that the women are now married to them. Clearly, this is not the ideal solution to the *shiddukh* crisis. We do not want to teach our students that females are valueless and simply *bi'ah* objects. While they may not be allowed into the Glueck *beit midrash*, women are still important members of *kelal Yisrael* and must be treated with the utmost respect and dignity.

On the topic of *shiddukhim*, the whole concept of *yibbum* counters everything we hold dear in our view of this lofty pursuit. There is a concept that *yibbum* is a "*kinyan min ha-shamayim*," an acquisition from heaven,<sup>9</sup> meaning that the connection between the *yavam* and the *yevamah* was not made by man, as are most marital relationships, but rather was created by the intervention of God, and as such is subject to slightly different laws. However, this goes against our priority of using our human *hishdaddut* in most situations. Rather than sit back and wait for Hashem to do the work for us, we need to be proactive and try our hardest to make the things we want happen. *Shiddukhim* are no different; it is for this reason that our great university formed the CJF. It needs to be through human efforts that people meet their *basherts*, even if it requires awkward icebreakers and forcing members of opposite genders to talk to each other. We cannot teach our students something which will encourage them to sit on their laurels rather than looking out to find their other half.

Again related to marriage is the problem of people in this *massekhet* marrying *ketanim*. A Mishnah states: "Someone who was married to two *yevamot* who were *ketanot*, and died, doing *bi'ah* or *halitsah* with one of them makes the other one *peturah*."<sup>10</sup> A similar Mishnah speaks of male *ketanim*: "A nine-years-and-one-day-old boy who does *bi'ah* with his *yevamah* and dies, they do *halitsah* but not *yibbum*."<sup>11</sup>

In both of these cases, the marriage takes place when the child is much too young. In addition to creating complications within the cases, these youngsters are *perutim* (licentious ones<sup>12</sup>) who are not acting like true *beni Torah*. Anyone with a yeshivah high school education today knows that talking to members of the other gender is strongly discouraged until dating age, at which point young adults suddenly become mature enough to start dating. Teaching students about married

*ketanim* might give them the impression that interacting with members of the other gender is completely acceptable. We cannot sit back and watch our students ruin their *neshamot* (souls) by engaging in such interactions before they are fully ready for it.

Furthermore, in this *massekhet*, it is not uncommon for one of the characters in the case to be married to more than one person. This premise is behind the whole idea of *tsarot*, co-wives, as the Mishnah states:

How do [the fifteen *arayot*] exempt their co-wives? If [a man's] daughter or any other one of these *arayot* was married to his brother, who had another wife as well, and [the brother] died childless, just as [the *yavam*'s] daughter is exempt from *halitsah* and *yibbum*, so too, is her co-wife exempt.<sup>13</sup>

We have multiple stories in Tanakh that teach us that co-wife relationships like these can be dangerous, such as when Sarah chases away Hagar,<sup>14</sup> Rachel becomes jealous of Leah,<sup>15</sup> and Chana causes Penina's children to die.<sup>16</sup> However, our main concern is not that male students will try to marry more than one wife; *herem de-Rabbeinu Gershom*<sup>17</sup> is still going strong, and as such the men would never try such a thing. No, what could happen is that a man could date two women at the same time. Especially considering that many of the co-wife relationships in this *massekhet* are not even real wives at all, but are rather wives in *zikah* (a bond between the *yavam* and the *yevamah* before *yibbum* takes place), it is not unfathomable to maintain that two women could be considered co-wives in girlfriendhood. Dating two people is, at best, awkward and unpleasant and, at worst, disastrous. We do not want it to even enter our students' minds that they could try such a thing.

On a completely different note, a final problem with the content of *massekhet Yevamot* is that the *yavam* inherits the property of his dead brother by marrying his wife. A Beraita interprets the *pasuk*, "Shall succeed to the name of his deceased brother,"<sup>18</sup> to mean that the brother who does *yibbum* is the only brother who inherits from the dead man, and he receives the whole property.<sup>19</sup> It would not be unheard of for the *yavam* to marry the *yevamah* just to receive the inheritance. However, in this institution, we have learned the hard way that it is not a good idea to obtain property through such shady means. Marriage is not a common way to inherit property from a dead brother. After the incident when Madoff lost our school so much money, we must be extra careful to monitor how we receive funds. One way to be cautious is to make sure that we only take money in cases where it is clear to all that it was obtained with only the purest

motives in mind.

Because of all of the aforementioned problems with studying *massekhet Yevamot*, we have decided that we must take steps to ensure that the *neshamot* of our students will not be harmed by learning this material. As the Censorship Committee, we have come to the conclusion that the most effective way to do so would be by censoring out those sections that we consider to be the most improper. Unlike the Christians, who censored the Talmud because they were trying to shy away from the truth that their God was not the real God, we will be doing this censoring in the name of heaven. We will not be cutting out the whole *massekhet*, just those parts which we deem offensive. We will let our students know which pages are permissible as soon as we find some that are in no way problematic— we still have not found any. Our next step will be to investigate the effect that learning *Hilkhot Niddah* has on students in RIETS and GPATS. Stay posted for any updates on the situation.

*Re'uven Ben-Shimon is a member of the mysterious Censorship Committee. No one really knows who he is or what he does, other than that he is some high up bureaucrat.*

1 *Yevamot* 2b. All translations are Artscroll's unless otherwise noted.

2 See *Yevamot* 35b.

3 *Yevamot* 54a.

4 *Ibid.*

5 Because *yibbum* does not require any *kiddushin*, the Rabbis instituted that a *yavam* should give the *yevamah* a *ma'amar*, which is a type of document that acts as a *kiddushin de-rabbanan*. See *Kehati to Yevamot* 2:1.

6 *Yevamot* 19a.

7 Rashi ad loc.

8 *Yevamot* 53b.

9 *Yevamot* 39a.

10 *Yevamot* 110a. Author's translation.

11 *Yevamot* 96b. Author's translation.

12 Author's translation.

13 *Yevamot* 2b.

14 *Be-Reshit* 16.

15 *Be-Reshit* 30:1.

16 *Pesikta Rabbati* 43.

17 Rabbeinu Gershom, a German Rabbi, made several decrees toward the beginning of the medieval period that applies to Ashkenazi Jewry until today. Included among those decrees are the prohibitions of polygamy, divorcing a woman against her will, and opening another person's mail.

18 *Devarim* 25:6.

19 *Yevamot* 24a.

## Cast Aside: Confronting *Hadarat Anashim* in the Modern Orthodox Community

BY: Rally Capman

It is an average night *seider* in the Glueck Beit Midrash. *Havrutot* debate fine points in a *sugya*. Some, tired out from a long day of Torah u-Madda, have caved in to their weariness and let their heads drop into their open *gemarot*. A few daring individuals have snuck in M&Ms from the Nagel Bagel into the Beit Midrash, carefully avoiding the watchful eye of the Beit Midrash coordinator. There is a pleasant buzz of learning, laughing, and *shtender*-banging; the Beit Midrash is alive with the music of Talmud Torah. I close my eyes for a moment and thank God for the fact that, unlike in centuries past when only a select group of men were able to devote significant portions of their lives to Torah study, today even an average man like myself can spend five years post-high school in a Beit Midrash setting.

But not all is well in Glueck tonight. As I proceed through the Gemara's description of the *halitsah* ceremony, I realize: yet again, *Torah she-be'al peh* has thrown me a curveball. Once more, Torah law discriminates against men. But this is just too much: rather than simply excluding men from a particular privilege, the Gemara prescribes nothing short of humiliation: in front of *beit din* and a crowd of onlookers, the *yevamah* actually spits at the *yavam*!

It is sometimes challenging, as a halakhically committed man, to feel comfortable with a system that is so one-sided, so clearly tilted toward women. It would be tough enough if *halitsah* were the only instance of discrimination. But it is not. We men are forbidden to shave our faces with razors or cut off our sideburns; women are free to raze head and facial hair without restraint. Male *kohanim* cannot enter cemeteries or attend the funerals of close friends, while females are barely impacted by their priestly lineage. The only obligatory surgery (and a painful one, at that) mentioned in the Torah is mandated only for - you guessed it! - cute little baby boys. Yes, even from the cradle, the prejudice makes its mark.

All this is on the Biblical level, but the rabbis are no friendlier in their treatment of men. The rabbis gave special status to women's *mitsvot*: *niddah*, taking *hallah*, and lighting candles for Shabbat and Yom Tov. They emphasized this by writing that if women are lax in these *mitsvot*, they will die in childbirth.<sup>1</sup> Reading this at the end of *kabbalat shabbat* every week, I wonder: what if men are lax in these *mitsvot*? Why must it be, I think to myself as I cry silently in my heart, that if I violate the laws of

*niddah*, fail to take *hallah*, or neglect to light Shabbat candles, I will not suffer a bloody, painful death in childbirth? Does God not care about *my* dedication, *my* spirituality, *my* commitment to Torah and *mitsvot*?

In recent days, one more issue of men's rights has come to the forefront. Israeli soldiers were at a military ceremony when a woman got up to sing. The religious soldiers, bound by the strictures of the halakhic system, realized that this would violate the prohibition of *kol islah*, having a man hear a woman's singing voice. In front of everyone, they had to leave the ceremony, regardless of the consequences for their military service. This is a shameful case of exclusion of men from public life; these *hayyalim*, who wanted to faithfully serve their country, were forced out of the ranks, and all because

how much of one's body is covered,"<sup>3</sup> but woe to the man whose gaze is directed at a woman who is not fully dressed! Since the responsibility is placed squarely on men to avoid looking, any form of public prayer, whether an amusement park *minhah* or even something as simple as a *berakhah rishonah*, is hindered by the fact that prayers may not be said while facing a woman who is not dressed in accordance with the rules. Since today's women insensitively dress in a manner that forbids men to gaze in their direction while reciting *berakhot*, it is nearly impossible to eat lunch in a public park today.

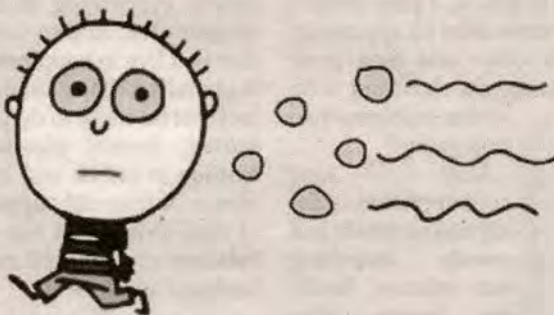
Of course, as we might expect, the *haredi* world is far worse in their expressions of misandry. For years already, the *haredim* have arranged bus lines where the men sit in the front and the women sit in the

young *dati le'umi* girls on their way to school every morning. I certainly never had this sort of encouragement in my learning!

Still, I would expect that in the Modern Orthodox community, we would be above this type of behavior. However, the reality could not be any more depressing. It seems like every time there is a *yom iyyun*, a special shiur, or a scholar-in-residence in a *shul*, the topic surrounds women: "Women in *Tanakh*," "Women in the Synagogue," "Can a Woman be a Rabbi?," "Changing Roles of Women in the Modern Orthodox Community," "Women's Education"... and the list goes on. Why do we not care about all the *men* in *Tanakh*, *men's* education, or whether *men* can be rabbis? Beyond the focus in study, there is the reality on the ground: so many organizations exist for women, and men are simply left in the cold. Why is there a Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance, but no Jewish Orthodox Male Chauvinist Alliance? An Organization for the Resolution of Agunot, but no Organization for the Resolution of Agunim? Why is there no program for ordination of male Maharats or Rabbas, not even an opportunity to become a Yoetz Halakhah? Why does the Drisha Institute offer only coed and women's-only programs, but no men's-only program? And in our own beloved institution, why are men barred from the Masters Program in Biblical and Talmudic Interpretation? Clearly, the Modern Orthodox community has also lost its way, and forgotten about men's learning and men's spiritual leadership.

Some might belittle this characterization of reality as exaggerated and androcentric, but I truly believe that the danger is great. Many men no longer feel like they have a place in Modern Orthodoxy, and are drifting off to other, more egalitarian communities. I am strong in my faith despite the challenges, but I see so many dear friends losing their footing and beginning to seek other avenues for their religious devotion. Only by finding a proper framework for men's expressions of spirituality in the Modern Orthodox community can we ensure that the *masorah* will be properly passed down to the next generation.

What is the first step? I have one suggestion, and it goes back to *halitsah*. Why should it be that the humiliation of being spat at is unidirectional? After all, just as the *yavam* has failed to maintain the name of his brother by fulfilling the *mitsvah* of *yibum*, the *yevamah* has failed



BOYS ARE STUPID,  
THROW ROCKS AT THEM!

PHOTO CREDIT: DAVID AND GOLLATH

of a rabbinic decree. It is sad enough that proud religious Israeli soldiers were essentially evicted from the premises. But what is worse, there is so much which is off-limits to men because of the suffocating rules of *tseni'ut*. Men cannot listen to half the music in the world. Men cannot turn on almost any radio station. Even in malls and supermarkets, it is almost impossible to avoid the alluring sound of women's singing voices.

Furthermore, R. Dov Linzer writes that "the Talmud... places the responsibility for controlling men's licentious thoughts about women squarely on the men," and emphasizes that avoiding situations where men look at women inappropriately is the man's responsibility.<sup>2</sup> Women can essentially walk around naked in public, because "modesty is not defined by...

back. As any third-grader knows, when it is time to board a bus, everyone jostles to be first, so that he or she might glean the coveted "backity-back" seat, because it is more bumpy and hence more fun. In the *haredi* community, this privilege is reserved for women only. (As an aside, there is a wonderful Israeli organization called Believers Religiously Opposing Any Discrimination (BROAD) which is currently seeking men to be Freedom Riders and ride in the back of so-called "Mehadrin" buses, which the Israeli Supreme Court has anyway ruled illegal.) Furthermore, the *haredi* community in Beit Shemesh has lately become so enthused about women's education that, despite the differences in *hashkafah* between themselves and the *dati le'umi* community, they have dispatched men to cheer on

## CJF: Bringing Yibbum to Life

BY: Rachel and Leah

to carry on the name of her husband. Perhaps we should change the procedure to a double-spitting ceremony, which would also include the man spitting at the woman. This bilateral action of spitting would preserve the image of both parties, not violate any *halakhot* as far as I know (though I have not bothered to consult any rabbis about this), and make the man feel less like an outcast. As the *holets* expectorates, his floating saliva will be a symbol of the Torah, which is compared to water, and which - despite my personal confusion - I am certain has a proper place for men to fit in, if only we seek it diligently enough.

Rally "Hey Mikey!" Capman is a sub-freshman at College Yeshiva majoring in Basket Weaving, with a minor in Men's Studies. He used to be the Poet Laureate of Kol Hameshakker, but was recently demoted to Blurb Composer for his use of "he" instead of "he or she."

1 Mishnayot Shabbat 2:6.

2 Dov Linzer, "Lechery, Immodesty and the Talmud," *The New York Times*, January 19, 2012, available at: [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com).

3 Ibid.

With the numerous references to husbands or wives going to "*medinat ha-yam*" (overseas) and never coming back (or coming back after *yibbum* had already been done and messing everything up), *Massekhet Yevamot* is just one of those areas of Torah that can easily be viewed as *me-ever la-yam* (across the sea)<sup>1</sup> if there ever was one. So how are we supposed to relate to *Yevamot*? How are we ever supposed to gain an appreciation for it that goes beyond the joy of finding excuses to listen to "I'm My Own Grandpa"<sup>2</sup>?

The number one tactic used by teachers to make learning material real: Act it out! But imagine acting out *Yevamot*. The lack of a stage due to the sale of the Schottenstein Cultural Center would be the least of our worries. Who would want to be the widow? Or the dead person? Or the other dead person? Or the brother that's not even born yet? Or, worse yet, the co-wife (Artscroll's translation)? And, anyway, who would want to sit and watch, let alone be able to follow, a play about a series of related wives who all apparently die one after the other and then come back to life, leaving the husband with worse problems than polygamy?<sup>3</sup>

After long contemplation, the myriad of sstuds and ystuds assaulting our inboxes finally hit home: Who better to give advice on how to make *Yevamot* come alive than the CJF, home of Experiential Jewish Education?<sup>4</sup>

Experiential education is, shall we say, rather popular these days. Just walk into the CJF and you're bound to find someone willing to give you a long *shpiel* on the amazingness of experiential education (as long as said CJF employee is not too busy designing complicated applications). So how would they suggest that we go about making *Yevamot* relatable? According to the

Yeshiva University's Center for the Jewish Future Certificate Program in Experiential Jewish Education more words more words more words website, the four foundations of experiential education are imparting values, creating experiences, cultivating communities, and self-development.<sup>5</sup> How can these foundations be adapted to *Yevamot*? Here are some suggestions:

**Foundation #1: Imparting Values:** "... seeks to impart values, spark spiritual growth and share knowledge rooted in the rich tradition of Judaism."<sup>6</sup>

*Yibbum vort:*

Rabbi: I would like to bless you on the momentous occasion of your levirate marriage, on the day on which the *issur* of *eshet ah* (prohibition to marry the wife of your brother) has been so creepily lifted. My *berakhah* (blessing) to you, my *chosson*, is that your identity be erased and you become your brother, *alav ha-shalom*, procreating in his name instead of your own. And to you, my dear *kallah*, that you live in happiness with your dead husband's brother, finding solace in the fact that he chose to do *yibbum* rather than *halitsah*, thereby allowing you to avoid spitting in public and being left with no means of financial support. By the power of *zikah* (bond) that may or may not exist between you, you will now be considered husband and wife.

**Foundation #2: Creating Experiences:** "...transform[s] routine activities into innovative and inspiring experiences."<sup>7</sup>

*Flower Shop ad:*

"Marriage is about Love" flower shop is offering a 15% discount for all *ma'amar* ceremonies! Whether you hold that *ma'amar* is *koneh de-oraita, de-rabbanan*, or not at all and you're just having a ceremony for the sake of inviting back those couples who invited you for shabbos lunch and you never got to invite back, flowers are a sure way of enhancing the *simhah*!

*Magazine Advertisement:*

Looking for the perfect shoe for your *halitsah* ceremony? Look no further! "Chaim's Chalitzah" shoes are now available! *Posekim* agree that the "loafers" send the guy the message that he is just that, and the black color represents his disgraceful soul. Order now to receive a free standard sock so as not to further embarrass your family with holes or polka dots.

Available in men's sizes 6-13. For more

information email: [brothernumber2@halitsahisamitzvahtoo.com](mailto:brothernumber2@halitsahisamitzvahtoo.com).

**Foundation #3: Cultivating Communities:** "...master the art of listening, and identifying with their audience's passions, struggles and challenges."<sup>8</sup>

*At school:*

Fourth grader: "My parents met at camp. My mom was a counselor and my dad was the division head. They used to talk all night and their campers would sing songs about them. They dated for four years and then got married and had me! How did your parents meet?"

Friend: "First my mom was married to my uncle. Then he died before he had kids, so she married my dad instead."

Awkward silence.

*Your grandmother (to be read in her accent):* So, Rochel, you really lucked out. You married a *mehannekh* and you ended up with a doctor! I always said you should've gone for the brother. God works in mysterious ways. *Barukh Hashem, mazal, mazal!*

**Foundation #4: Self-Development:** "...teaching...the importance of confidence, humility, compassion and integrity."<sup>9</sup>

*Breaking News:*

Simeon sues younger brother Levi after the latter eloped with Rachel, the brothers' deceased brother Reuben's wife, leaving lawyers scratching their heads. "I am the elder," Simeon explained, "I have dibs."<sup>10</sup>

*Text Message:*

10-year-old boy: sry tht shim died. u wanna do ybm or chlza?<sup>11</sup>  
38-year-old sister-in-law: ?

We hope that these examples have made *Yevamot* more relatable, and, of course, have inspired you to become a Jewish leader. Next time you are breaking your teeth on a *sugya*, just be thankful that *yibbum* is only happening on the *daf* and not in reality.

\* To help us improve, please fill out the survey that will be sent to you shortly. It should only take you three months to complete!

*Rachel and Leah are havrutot who are getting increasingly frustrated with the continued use of their names in depressing Yevamot situations.*

1 *Devarim* 30:13.

# SPITTING IS

- UNLAWFUL
- UNSANITARY
- UNHEALTHY
- DANGEROUS

# IT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED



## Internet Filtering in the Yeshiva University Dormitories: The True Abomination

By: Yiftach "Patch" Scraply

Recently, the YU community has been rocked by news of the administration's plan to filter internet access in the dormitories.<sup>1</sup> Students (which in this article will refer to uptown-dwelling male students, rather than the downtown-living female students who of course are perfectly pure *aidel maidelakh* and have not a trace of sexual desire) have expressed both support for and opposition to the measure. As American Orthodox Jews, it behooves us to set aside our personal predilections and examine the issue on the firm grounds of Halakhah and Jewish Thought, as well as consider this decision's implications on our place in contemporary society. In other words, we must look at the issue through the lenses of Halakhic Man, Cognitive Man, and Captain America.

As good halakhists, we must search for the *nafka minah* - the practical implications of installing an internet filter in the dormitory. After all, many sorts of filters exist, with varying degrees of stringency. According to Rabbi Yona Reiss, the community assigned to investigate internet filtering found "a reliable, precise filter that well fit YU's needs."<sup>2</sup> But what are these needs? For this, we must turn to YU's mission statement. This document establishes that for undergraduate students, "We bring wisdom to life by combining the finest contemporary academic education with the timeless teachings of Torah."<sup>3</sup> Presumably, a filter that fits YU's needs would not compromise "the finest contemporary academic education" by limiting any resources necessary for the said education. Hence, only recreational websites would be subject to regulation. In this author's opinion, then, what seems to be at stake is the yeshiva students' privilege to use university bandwidth to stimulate their neural pleasure centers by drinking in internet-derived visions of X-rated material.

The question is, then: how should we relate to the attempt by the administration to "block" these students from fulfilling their hearts' desires? In keeping with YU's mantra of "enable and ennoble,"<sup>4</sup> we must ask: is the *disabling* perpetrated by internet filtering justified by some sort of ennobling?

Our first instinct might be to support the move based on *Avodah Zarah* 20a, which forbids looking [sexually] at "an attractive woman, even unmarried; a married woman, even unattractive," based on the

verse: "Then thou shalt keep thee from every evil thing."<sup>5</sup> However, we should note that ogling unattractive unmarried women is not explicitly forbidden by this gemara, and "The Torah did not mention all the permitted things, but rather only the forbidden things"<sup>6</sup> - meaning, if something is not explicitly forbidden by the Torah, it is permitted. Accordingly, a man should be allowed to gaze at an unattractive single woman. We should further note that, according to *Nedarim* 9:10, Rabbi Ishmael stated, "Jewish women are beautiful,"<sup>7</sup> which clearly implies that non-Jewish women are not beautiful. If so, there should be no problem with staring at unmarried non-Jewish women. Since the vast

*On a more cheerful note, if yeshiva students can satisfy their sexual cravings through pornography, they can further push off dating, preventing them from violating the cardinal sin of missing night seder.*

majority of pornography features unmarried non-Jewish women, there should be no problem with viewing it. Furthermore, since marriage cannot be contracted with a non-Jew,<sup>8</sup> we might consider non-Jewish marriages irrelevant for the purposes of staring at women. Hence, it appears permitted to view pornography, as long as the women featured therein are not Jewish, whether they are legally married or unmarried.

One caveat should be noted: *Bava Batra* 57b states that a man should avoid looking at women while they are doing laundry. Hence, the ever-popular field of laundry pornography is, sadly, inarguably off-limits to Jewish men.

Furthermore, there are halakhic and hashkafic positives to allowing yeshiva students to view pornography. Yeshiva students who are able to sate their desires visually will feel less compelled to seek out physical means of fulfilling them. Furthermore, as we have recently learned, by allowing yeshiva students to be tempted by their *femme fatale* counterparts downtown (and perhaps elsewhere), we run the risk of some women expressing their light inklings of thought in public fora, creating indescribable *hillul ha-Shem* (desecration of the divine Name). Although the yeshiva students do not intend to create *hillul ha-Shem* by their

sexual promiscuity, the fact remains that "Both accidental and intentional [offenders are liable] for *hillul ha-shem*."<sup>9</sup> Since *hillul ha-shem* is the worst of sins,<sup>10</sup> it should be our first concern, and push aside any minor considerations of sin involved in pornographic viewing. On a more cheerful note, if yeshiva students can satisfy their sexual cravings through pornography, they can further push off dating, preventing them from violating the cardinal sin of missing night *seder*.

One modern Jewish thinker has pointed to some disturbing hashkafic considerations which suggest that internet filtering is unhealthy on a spiritual plane: "Rather than confronting and addressing the very troubling core issues underlying the fact that so much pornography is watched in the dorms, this seems to be a way for the institution to sweep a disturbing phenomenon under the rug."<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the university is completely failing to address the underlying cause of pornographic viewing in the dormitories, which might be summarized as "Males get sexual pleasure from viewing naked females." Some might suggest that mandatory castration of incoming male students would be the ideal solution, but

I am hesitant to recommend this course of action, considering the biblical prohibition on castration,<sup>12</sup> as well as this policy's potential to worsen The Shidduch Crisis™. It might be better to subject all incoming yeshiva students to a program of brainwashing designed to prevent them from feeling any attraction to females until the moment of marriage.

Another modern scholar of Jewish thought has stated, "Public intrusion on students' private sexual practices is itself a lewd and tasteless action - unfit for a university's administration."<sup>13</sup> Indeed, the Sanhedrin of old may have whipped and beaten the rebellious sinner "until his soul leaves his body" for infractions such as failing to pick up a *lulav* or place *tsitsit* on his garment,<sup>14</sup> and even without *semikhah, beit din* (Jewish courts) can punish extralegally,<sup>15</sup> but these considerations are irrelevant. An important distinction has been made here - we are dealing with a university administration, which is not authorized as is *beit din*, and therefore unable to act with the same impunity to prevent yeshiva students from indulging in sensuous experiences.

Finally, we must address American societal considerations. The United States Constitution famously states, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." If all men are endowed with the unalienable right to the pursuit of Happiness, it is clear that we

<sup>2</sup> See YouTube video available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eYIJH81dSiw>.

The diagrams are reminiscent of convoluted *yibbum* diagrams. In the interest of easiness, the words are below:

I was married to a widow, who was pretty as can be.  
This widow, had a grown-up daughter,  
Who had hair of red.  
My father fell in love with her and soon they too were wed.  
This made my dad my son-in-law,  
And really changed my life.  
Now my daughter was my mother,  
Cause she was my father's wife.  
And to complicate the matter,  
Even though it brought me joy,  
I soon became the father of a bouncing baby boy.  
My little baby then became a brother-in-law to dad,  
And so became my uncle, though it made me very sad.  
For, if-if he were my uncle, then that also made him brother.  
Of the widow's grown up daughter, who was of course, my stepmother.  
Uh huh.  
Father's wife then had a son who kept them on the run,  
And he became my grandchild, for he was my daughter's son.  
My wife is now my mother's mother, and it makes me blue.  
Because although she is my wife, she's my grandmother too.  
God.

Now, if my wife is my grandmother, I am her grandchild, yeah.  
And every time I think of it, heh! Nearly drives me wild.  
Cause now I have become, the strangest case you ever saw,  
As husband of my grandmother, I am my own grandpaw.  
Oh I'm my own grandpaw.  
I'm my own grandpaw.  
It sounds funny I know, but it really is so,  
Oh I'm my own grandpaw.  
I'm my own grandpaw.  
I'm my own grandpaw.  
Talk about incest!  
It sounds funny I know, but it really is so,  
I'm my own grandpaw.

<sup>3</sup> See *Yevamot* 10:5 for a similar case.

<sup>4</sup> "Experiential education is a philosophy of education that describes the process that occurs between a teacher and student that infuses direct experience with the learning environment and content." Wikipedia.org.

<sup>5</sup> "The Four Foundations," available at: [www.ejewisheducation.com](http://www.ejewisheducation.com).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> See *Yevamot* 4:5.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, *Yevamot* 96b.

cannot forbid the viewing of pornography in the dormitories. Though we might trumpet regarding Torah study that, "The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart,"<sup>16</sup> we cannot but acknowledge the Talmudic dictum that "Any man who has no woman dwells without joy."<sup>17</sup> The population of yeshiva students in the dormitories has essentially zero access to women - indeed, women are not even allowed into the dormitories<sup>18</sup> - and hence exists in a perpetually depressed state. This is a constitutionally untenable situation, which can only be remedied by the import of sexually explicit images and videos of women into the dormitories.

Based on all these factors, it is abundantly clear that Yeshiva University, as the

international symbol of Torah u-Madda, is doing its students and community a great disservice by blocking free and open access to the internet. But for the sake of all that is good and holy, we must demand of the administration, "Let freedom ring!"<sup>19</sup>

I would love to help with the effort on the front lines, barging into administrative offices and bellowing the message of truth. But until the anticipated date of filter implementation, I, um, need to be in my room.

1 See, for example: Benjamin Abramowitz, "Rabbi Yona Reiss Unveils Plan for Internet Censorship: Dormitory Pornography to Be Blocked," December 9, 2011; Readers, "Letters & Responses," Decem-

ber 9, 2011; Readers, "Letters & Responses," December 25, 2011; Nathan Hyman, "Internet Filtration at YU," December 26, 2011; all from *Yeshiva University Commentator*, available at: [www.yucommentator.org](http://www.yucommentator.org).

2 Abramowitz.

3 "Mission Statement," *Yeshiva University Website*, available at: [www.yu.edu](http://www.yu.edu).

4 Richard Joel, every speech he has given in the last eight years.

5 Deuteronomy 23:10. JPS 1917 translation.

6 *Tiferet Yisra'el to Yadayim* 4:3. Author's translation.

7 Author's translation.

8 *Kiddushin* 68b.

9 *Avot* 4:4.

10 See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 1:4.

11 Abramowitz.

12 *Leviticus* 22:24; see commentary of Rashi ad loc.

13 Abramowitz.

14 *Hullin* 132b et al. Author's translation.

15 *Yevamot* 90b et al. Author's translation.

16 *Psalms* 19:9. JPS 1917 translation.

17 *Yevamot* 62b. Author's translation.

18 "Men's Housing: Guest Policy," *Yeshiva University Website*, available at: [www.yu.edu](http://www.yu.edu).

19 Samuel Francis Smith, "America," 1831, Stanza 1.

## Me-Hermann Ad Herman Lo Kam ke-Herman

BY: Pee Wee

Every hundred years or so, a figure enters the scene who so profoundly shifts its basic identity as to render it unrecognizable to the uninformed observer. It is these great historical figures who are remembered for years to come in history books, which trace the influence of these great men. It is only in cases of great coincidence - or *kah* incidence, as some render it - that these great movers and shakers of history may share a name. One case is Rabad, the medieval halakhist and so much more, whose authority was so great that one person could not contain all his greatness, and the Rabad persona had to be bifurcated into three different human bodies in order to promulgate his greatness.

Which brings us to Herman(n). Th is mustachioed, bespectacled man of ideas, who had great influence on rabbinic figures at Yeshiva University, figures prominently in any study of 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> century philosophy and thought. And to think that this man - or these two doppelgangers of a man, rather - was so powerful a radical and innovative thinker, points to some divine intervention in our story. (It is even possible to see the connection between these men based on their alike visages, and the reader is encouraged to view the accompanying photos.) Thus, this essay will analyze the deep affinities and distinctions between Hermann Cohen and Herman Cain.

The one difference that really makes these men stand apart is the pronunciation of their last name. Both have a traditional priestly appellation as their surname, and it is fitting for these great teachers that it be so,<sup>1</sup> but there are radically different pronunciations of said name. Whether to pronounce the last name Cohen, as the German Hermann did, or Cain, as the American of Lithuanian descent preferred, is the only, slight difference between these two men of importance. And with the exhaustion of the differences between the men, we now move to an examination of their similarities.

As was pointed out, both of these thinkers sport a countenance with a haired philtrum

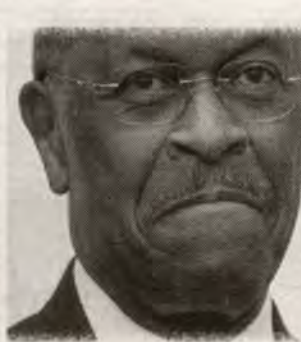
and double monocles. Whether this makes them "classy," "cool," "old-fashioned European," or just plain spooky, this mouthpiece is an integral part of their presented self.

Beyond that, Cain began his career as the CEO of Godfather's pizza, while Cohen was the veritable godfather of Jewish German neo-Kantianism. And, thanks to Google Maps,<sup>2</sup> I recently learned that the distance between Coswig, Germany, the birthplace of Cohen, and Uzbekistan (a.k.a. Uzbekibekibekistanstan), favored location of Cain, is 5,779 kilometers when traveled on the "Cain Train" campaign bus. If this doesn't indicate a fundamental closeness between the men, I don't know what does.

If this is the case, these men's provenances are connected at the deepest of levels. But I would like to claim that it is not only their source, but their accomplishments and messages, as well, that extend, interdigitate and interweave, to create an eternal golden braid of their influences on society.

Hermann Cohen, a major Existentialist thinker, was the most outspoken opponent of Adolf Trendelenburg's interpretation of Kant's philosophy. In fact, when presented with this opposing approach, he is reputed to have screamed "Nein, nein, nein" at his foil, and to have engaged in a formal debate on the matter. This well-known fact may remind readers of an historical detail pertaining to Herman Cain, where he would often argue "nine, nine, nine" as the basis for a platform he had yet to construct.

The affinity between the Herman(n)s continues on to the influence they had on their



students. In fact, each very much affected the philosophy of a Rabbi Solovei(t) chik in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. As we all know, for we have all read R.

J. B. S.'s dissertation,<sup>3</sup> the topic was Hermann Cohen's philosophy of Kant itself, as the Rav meditated on his neo-Kantian philosophy. And if Hermann Cohen is the Rav's intellectual forebear, Herman Cain has picked up where Rabbi Soloveitchik left off; transcending the dialectic, he has moved towards outright contradiction at every turn. Never leaving a ridiculous possibility unexamined, his approach is downright Cohenian, if not Rozensweigian.

When all the information is considered, the German Cohen and Lithuanian-American Cain are two Herman(n)s cut from the same cloth. They look alike, have similar influences, and think alike, shaping the face of modern Orthodoxy. The Yeshiva University community must embrace the contemporary Cain as one of its own, as a scholar of Jewish thought *par excellence*, and then, and only then, can YU call itself a university truly committed to Torah U-Madda (and everything Rav). Given the depth of YU's commitment to these ideals, I call upon President Richard Joel, though he may be a Democrat, to take upon himself the yoke of responsibility for the Jewish future and open a new Center for Herman. We may still be able to win the future, but only if we have Herman on our side.

Pee Wee Herman is a scholar of Hermaneitics in the Department of Hermanities at the Gherman University of the Hermitage. He

wishes you a Happy Hurim!

1 Rambam on becoming a *kohen*.

2 Accessible at <http://maps.google.com/maps?saddr=Coswig,+Germany&daddr=uzbekistan&hl=en&sl=37.0625,-95.677068&sspn=29.219963,81.386719&geocode=FZYwDAMdwy7PAck0jwRSdEJRzFaYdb921--mA%-3BFdNedwldLn7ZAymxdtaIUuODEgHoRrW0KyG&mra=ls&t=m&z=4>

3 Available at: [www.halakhah.com/solo2.pdf](http://www.halakhah.com/solo2.pdf).



[For all the *shkotzim*, *kofrim*, and *apikorsim* who won't bother to read the Hebrew, here it is in English.]

# A Great Protest and Expression of Daas Torah

From a simple Jew with way too much money

## Washington Heights, don sackcloth!

Due to our many sins, a woman left the kitchen to learn a trade, God forbid, in "Stern College," and learned "Torah u-Madda, even though every Jew knows that "If there is sword, then there is no learning, and if there is learning, there is no sword," and all the more so, "If there is no Torah, there is no Madda, and if there is Madda, there is no Torah," and most likely she lost on both counts, since "women's understanding is light." And although King Solomon wrote, "One man in a thousand I found, and a woman among all those I did not find," and the commentator explained that he meant that the daughters of Israel are modest and are not found amongst the men, God forbid, this woman did not listen to the words of the wisest among men, and she went out and mingled amongst the men. And her situation declined to the point that she started "going out" with one of them, Heaven help us, and she removed him from the holy Beit Midrash of Yeshivat Rabbeinu Yitzchak Elchonon in Washington Heights (may it be built up and established speedily in our days, Amen) through many schemes in accordance with the guidance of Miss Middot, and through immodest dress.

And although there is no place here to extensively address the issue of immodest dress in the Heights Family Lounge and the Pollack and Gottesman libraries, it is impossible to excuse ourselves without any discussion, and since it has come to our hands, let us say something about it. Behold, it is known that it is entirely forbidden for a woman to wear pants, as it is stated in Tehillim regarding the Splitting of the Sea: "He gathers (כנס) like a wall the waters of the sea," and in the Song at the Sea it is written, "Hashem is a man of war," so it is clear to anyone with intelligence that pants (מכנסיים), which come from the language of gathering (כנס), are only for a man, and not for a woman. If so, we are responsible to stand against this abomination and to scold these women according to our ability, to separate them from prohibitions. But because our country of heretics made evil decrees against us, and strongly forbade any disturbance to them "that we might not approach to spit," we have no choice but to stare at them until the "little daughter of Israel" within their hearts will wake up and feel that this practice is uncomfortable for their modesty, and they will leave here forever and ever, Amen and so may it be His will. And it appears that the community is already aware of this point, and therefore Yeshiva students have a practice to stare at women in the library for durations of minutes at a time.

And behold, this licentious woman took with her a "Longchamp" bag and a "Hadaya" necklace (and it is known that all this was through the actions of Satan, as "Longchamp" plus "Hadayah" in gematria equals "Your licentiousness") and she secluded herself with one young man from our sacred Yeshiva, and she drank and became drunk with him with beer called Stella Artois (whose gematria is "also Lot" and "death") and then they watched television together, which is

### A CLEAR PROHIBITION ACCORDING TO ALL OUR MASTERS AND RABBIS, MAY THEY LIVE LONG AND GOOD YEARS

May Hashem have mercy. And it is not enough for her that she committed this abomination, but she desecrated the Name of God in public by writing an article on the matter, which she placed in the "YU Beacon" (whose gematria is "sword," because it is a sharp sword placed on the neck of the Yeshiva administration). And although our masters and rabbis the Roshei Yeshiva and the Mashgichim and the Sganei Mashgichim and the "Shabbos Coordinator" and the "Assistant Shabbos Coordinator" and the "Beis Medrash Coordinator" and the Senior Scholar of the CJF and the Presidential Fellows and the Stern student council president and the Groggers complained about this, still the Anonymous Girl from Stern remains unknown, and we cannot excommunicate and ostracize her as appropriate. And even though we need not worry that this ever happened in our holy Yeshiva more than once,

### WE ARE OBLIGATED TO CREATE A CENSORSHIP COMMITTEE TO SILENCE ANYONE WHO WOULD DARE CRITICIZE THE YESHIVA STUDENTS

in the Beacon or the Commentator, in the Associate or in the Quipster (which is like "that German"), for when your son asks you tomorrow what this is,

### HOW CAN WE EVEN BEGIN TO EXPLAIN THIS?

[SIGNATURES]

# מתאה גדולה ודעת תורה

מאת יהודי פשוט עם יותר מדי כסף

## מעלות וואשינגטאן חגרי שק!!!

בעוה"ר יצתה אשה מתוך המטבח ללמוד אומנות ח"ו ב"סטרוך קולג" ולמדה "תורה ומדע" ואף דיודע לכל בר ישראל אי סייפא לא ספרא ואי ספרא לא סייפא, וכ"ש דאי תורה אין מדע ואי מדע אין תורה, ומסתמא יצתה קרחת מכאן ומכאן דנשים דעתן קלה עליהן. ואף שכתב שלמה המלך ע"ה "אדם אחד מאלף מצאתי ואשה בכל אלה לא מצאתי" ופירש המפרש דר"ל שבנות ישראל צנועות הנה ואינן נמצאות בין האנשים ח"ו, לא הקשיבה אותה האשה לדברי החכם מכל אדם, ויצתה ונתערבה בין האנשים. ונתדרדרה מצבה עד שהתחילה "לצאת" עם אחד מהם ר"ל, והוציאה אותו מבית המדרש הקדוש של ישיבת רבינו יצחק אלחנן במעלות וושינגטון תוכב"א על ידי תחבולות רבות ע"פ הדרכת מיס מידות וע"י לבוש שאינו צנוע.

ואף שאין כאן מקום להאריך בענין לבוש שאינו צנוע במועדון ע"ש משפחת הייטס ובספריות פולק וגוטסמן, פטור בלא כלום אי אפשר, וכיון דאתא לידן נימא בה מילתא. הרי ידוע דאיסור גמור הוא לאשה ללבוש מכנסים, דהא איתא בתהלים לענין קריאת ים סוף "כנס כנר מי הים" ובשירת הים כתיב "ה' איש מלחמה" וא"כ ברור לעין כל בר דעת דמכנסים שהם מלשון כנס הם רק לאיש ולא לאשה. וא"כ עלינו לעמוד בפני התועבה הזאת ולגעור בנשים אלו כפי יכולתנו לאפרושינהו מאיסורא. אבל מפני שמדינת הכופרים דילן גזרה עלינו רעות ואסרה בכל תוקף שום הפרעה להם "למען לא ניגע לירוק" אין לנו אלא להסתכל בהם עד שתתעורר ה"פינטעלע בת ישראל" בקרב לבכותיהן ותרגישנה שאין מנהג זה נוח לצניעותן, ותצאנה מכאן לעולם ועד, אמן וכך יהי רצון. ונראה שכבר נתעוררו הציבור לנקודה זו, ולכן נהגו בני הישיבה להסתכל בנשים בספרייה במשך כמה וכמה דקות ברציפות.

והנה האי אשה זונה לקחה עמה שק "לונגשמפ" ושרשרת "הדיה" (וידוע שכל זה היה ע"י מעשה שטן דהוי "לונגשמפ" עם "הדיה" בגימטריא "זנותיכם") ונתיחדה עם בחור אחד משיבתנו הקדושה ותשתה ותשכרה עמו ע"י חמר מדינה "סטעלא ארטוס" (שגמטרייתו "ואת לוט" ו"מות") ואז הסתכלו בטלוויזיה ביחד דהוא

## איסור גמור לדברי כל מרנן ורבנן הפוסקים שליט"א

ה' ירחם. ולא די לה שעשתה תועבה הדא, אלא דחיללה שם שמים ברבים ע"י כתיבת מאמר בענין שהכניסה ל"ויי יו ביקון" (שגמטרייתו "חרב" מפני שהוא חרב חדה המונח על צווארת הנהלת הישיבה). ואף שהתלוננו על כך מרנן ורבנן ראשי הישיבה והמשגיחים וסגני המשגיחים וה"שאבעס קואורדיניטור" וה"אסיסטענט שאבעס קואורדיניטור" וה"בית מדרש קואורדיניטור" וחכם הוותיק של המרכז לעתיד היהודי והפרעזידענשאל פעלוס ונשיאת וועד נשי סטערן והגראגערס, מ"מ הבחורה האנונימית מסטערן לא נודעה מי היא ולא נוכל להחרימה ולנדותה כראוי. ואף שאין לחוש שזה באמת קרה בישיבתנו הקדושה יותר מפעם אחת

## חייבים אנו להעמיד וועדת צנזורה לחסום בפי כל מי שיעיז להלשין על בני הישיבה

בין בביקון ובין בקומנטיטור, בין באסוסייעט ובין בקוויפסטער (שהוא כאותו הגרמני), דכי ישאלך בנך מחר לאמר מה זאת,

## איככה נוכל אפילו להתחיל לבאר את זה?

באנו על החתום למען קדושת וטהרת עמנו

הרב פרח יאק  
מורינר הרב רבינו ת'  
אימאם חולד אל-שיניים

הרב אברהם יהושע השלוביץ  
הרב גמין פשטידה  
הרב אהוד סורה-נא

הרב גיל קטלנית  
הרב איל ברונשפיגל  
הרב עידן צוקער

הרב ששון בלעך  
הרב אילן קרשקש  
הרב שמאלני קלמנוביץ'

וועד מועצת גדולי התיקו כאן במעלות וואשינגטאן