

Yeshiva University Commentator

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New Jersey's Governor Whitman To Speak At Chanukah Dinner

BY JONATHAN TIGER

The Honorable Christine Todd Whitman, governor of the State of New Jersey, will be the featured speaker at Yeshiva University's 72nd Annual Chanukah Convocation and Dinner. Whitman will be awarded an honorary doctorate at the dinner, to be held Sunday, December 3 at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.

The dinner, YU's largest event of the year, is expected to attract close to one thousand guests, at a cost of five hundred dollars per person. In past years, the dinner has attracted such speakers as Vice President Al Gore, General Colin Powell, then-Senator Bob Dole, and other political leaders from both Israel and the United



Gov. Christine Todd-Whitman

States.

This year's event will begin with an address by the Governor at the pre-dinner convocation, when she will be awarded an honorary doctoral degree from Yeshiva University. Also

receiving honorary degrees will be YU board members and benefactors Dr. Monique C. Katz, Hirschell E. Levine, James C. Slaughter, Mrs. Hyman Muss and Walter H. Weiner. Finally, YU President Norman Lamm will deliver a *Dvar Torah*.

According to YU Director of Public Relations David Rosen, the dinner is, "the premiere event of the YU year." He also points out that the dinner functions as a "celebration of philanthropy" in that it enables the university to recognize in proper fashion the donors who keep the institution running. The dinner itself, however, is not a fund raiser, with the price of admission barely covering the cost per plate.

Originally, Israeli Prime

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Rabbi Lamm addresses students at Dorm Talks

Rabbi Lamm Discusses Dating and Marriage

BY MICHAEL SAMUELS

Discussing what he called "the most sensitive topic of all" at the first "Dorm Talks" of the year, Yeshiva University President Norman Lamm spoke to a standing-room-only crowd about the pleasure and perils of the "Shidduch Process."

The talk, officially titled "I've Got the Post Modern Blues, or: Love, Self-Definition, and the Generation Gap," was delivered on October 28 in Morgenstern Lounge at the recommendation of a student committee of dorm counselors. "Dorm Talks" is the name given to an informal question and answer period coordinated quarterly by the Residence Halls Office. The topics selected usually deal with sensitive student issues which could not be discussed during class or shiur time.

Dr. Efreim Nulman, the Dean of Students and a member of the board that created "Dorm Talks," pointed out that the event was instituted "to help students clarify their values by being able to consult the Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Lamm, in an informal setting."

That spirit of informality was evident, as most students seemed to enjoy the frank and light-hearted manner in which Rabbi Lamm spoke. While seriously warning students that attraction to one's spouse is a critical factor in a relationship, Rabbi Lamm jokingly said, "Don't underestimate looks. I don't think that you do." This evoked laughter from the crowd. Rabbi Lamm then cited references to the beauty of Chava, Sara, and Esther, illustrating that students should consider physical appearance, but he pointed out that they shouldn't consider this the most important characteristic in a potential mate.

R' Lamm also noted the need

for each student to rely on his own judgment when searching for a suitable match. He reminded the students, "She has to please you, not your friends."

One YU student asked Rabbi Lamm if it is appropriate for young men to meet women at social gatherings such as shabbatons and co-ed summer camps. Responding immediately, Rabbi Lamm firmly stated, "Of course it is. I'm very much in favor of meeting people in places of social gathering, especially at shabbatons where you foster ideas and can find common views, since the whole weekend is centered around themes of Torah, *kedusha*, and *yahadut*."

Rabbi Lamm went on to speak about appropriate places for dates. Referring to dates at the airports and hotel lobbies that have seemingly become a trend among some students, Rabbi Lamm insisted that when a man takes out a young lady, he "can't be cheap" and "must act like a gentleman because it reflects on everyone and is a *chilul Hashem* (if he acts miserly)." While acknowledging that some students may not have a lot of money, he recommended that the students still find a place that is reasonable and within their budget rather than being frugal and risk insulting the girl.

While dating is a difficult process, making sure that one has chosen the right person is even more mind-boggling. R. Lamm asserted that there are "no formulas or check lists when looking for a spouse" and "all you can get in these areas are general guidelines...and of course, you need a lot of *tefillah* that you will make the right choice."

Rabbi Lamm insisted that the critical choices to be made when dating should not be based on resumés or fixed standards.

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YC/SSSB Faculty Still Grossly Underpaid

Professors Demand Salary Increase

BY NOAH STREIT

Yeshiva University undergraduate professors are dissatisfied with their current salaries, finding them at least \$15,000 below those received by professors at comparable universities. Senior professors are particularly perturbed because they have worked for so many years without adequate compensation. One professor, for example, asked, "how long must I wait 'til I see my salary match those of my colleagues? I have worked for over

thirty years; I will retire soon; and my pay will still not match professors who are younger and of lower rank."

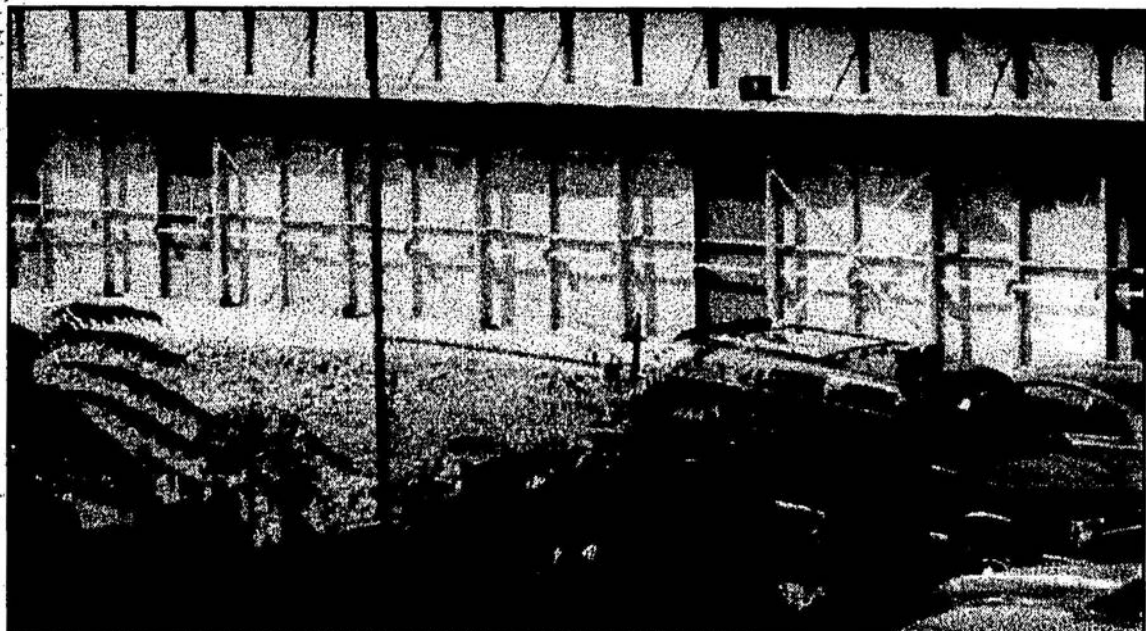
In the AAUP (American Association of University Professors) Yeshiva University chapter newsletter from May 1996, a comparison is made with institutions of similar and even lower endowments. The findings depict a vast salary difference between YU and universities like Hofstra, Lehigh, and Fordham. The largest discrepancies were between full professors at YU and full

professors at other universities.

English Professor Dr. Joan Haahr wrote in the AAUP newsletter that, "Yeshiva University's undergraduate faculty salaries - most strikingly those of [full] professors - lag behind even those at institutions located in low cost-of-living areas or those whose endowments are only a fraction of YU's."


Though never mentioned specifically, many in the administration alluded to senior professors' being the most

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YU recently demolished this block of vacant apartments to make way for additional parking. Students wonder if the additional space will allow them to access the guarded lots.

The Commentator



**AMERICAN JEWISH
PRESS ASSOCIATION**

P I C T O R I A L

The Sy Syms School of Business has come a long way, and is constantly growing. However, part of the growing experience includes the constant inspection of each major, and making changes to improve it. There is no question that Finance is conceived by the YU community as a difficult and challenging major. However, something must be done to make the global business community, where each of the other majors has been accepted, acknowledge Finance in the same light.



Election Day in YU: One man, one vote... three midterms

*Mazel Tov to the
following couples:*

Yosef Rothstein & Elisheva Wohlgemuth
Aari Itzkowitz & Aviva Hanfling

on their recent engagements

Rosh Yeshiva Testifies in Nation's Capital

BY J.J. LANDO

Two weeks ago, Rosh Yeshiva and biology professor Rabbi Doctor Moshe Tendler testified before an *ad hoc* advisory committee in Washington, D. C. He delivered testimony for the National Association on Biological Ethics in Research and Reproduction (N.A.B.E.R.) about the methods of fertilization performed by fertility clinics offering money-back guarantees.

Recently, N.A.B.E.R. dealt with the commoditification, or commercialization, of the human body through the sale of organs. For instance, someone with two kidneys might sell one kidney to a person in need, or a younger woman might sell some of her own eggs to older women having difficulty producing viable ones.

The Rabbi's expertise was requested in a meeting concerning fertility clinics that offer a full guarantee if the patient does not conceive. These clinics charge in excess of \$16,000, about two and a half times the normal fee. The patient is then entitled to three tries at *in vitro* fertilization, and if all three fail, the \$16,000 fee is returned.

R' Tendler demonstrated that the labs which perform the money-back *in vitro* fertilization place both the mother and the would-be child at great risk. Realizing that having to return \$16,000 to the patient be a severe blow to the business, the clinics increase their chances of success by implanting four to six embryos, rather than to the recommended two. According to Tendler, if too many of the eggs are successfully fertilized, problems may arise for the mother and children, as the mother is forced to carry several babies at once and is put in mortal danger during the delivery. Since there is only a limited amount of space inside the womb, the children may not develop properly.

Rabbi Tendler pointed to Australia as an example of a government that understands the risk of multiple births and refuses to allow the implantation of more than two embryos at once. He further testified that the intrusion of business tactics into the medical world has always been considered



Rabbi Dr. Moshe David Tendler

unethical. Such practices violate the Hippocratic Oath, in which doctors vow to charge a fee for service, not for success. He also charged that these practices are further embarrassing the medical profession, which already suffers from increased litigation and the emergence of HMOs.

Halachically, claimed R' Tendler, doctors are not to be paid for their services. Obviously, Orthodox doctors are paid, but their payment is technically viewed as compensation for lost time which could have been spent otherwise. This loophole developed as a result of the fact that Jewish communities needed skilled public servants, such as judges and doctors, and qualified people would not abandon their paying jobs to work *pro bono*.

Tendler voiced his concern over a loss of confidence and trust of patients in their doctors as a root cause of the current dilemma. Because so much of the doctor-patient relationship is based upon trust, anything that threatens this trust also threatens the medical profession. By putting a stop to the intrusion of business into medicine, asserted R. Tendler, the government could and should protect mothers-to-be and their children.

President Speaks Candidly On Delicate Issues

continued from page one

Obviously, students should have a basic idea of what type of girl they are looking for, but they should be flexible. He offered the students a personal story of a man who refused to go out with a woman because she didn't fit the requirements of his "shopping list." "And I'll have you know," Rabbi Lamm said, "he married a woman who did not meet a single one of the standards on his checklist, and they are living happily ever after to this day." "Do leave a place for the effect that someone holds on your heart." As a student of Rav Soloveitchik, Rabbi Lamm reminded the skeptics that "the Rav himself was too much of an individual to go for conformity in every aspect, and he was the giant of them all."

The Baal Teshuva Question

During the discussion, one student posed a very sensitive question to Rabbi Lamm regarding the perceived desire for conformity among young Jewish women. He asked how the Rabbi felt about Jewish girls who snub *ba'alei teshuva* and often overlook students enrolled in the JSS morning program, supposedly wanting someone with greater learning abilities.

"Unfortunately," Rabbi Lamm lamented, "what you're saying is true. My theory on this situation has always been, though, that 'if you think I'm not good enough for you then you're not good enough for me.' Don't worry," Rabbi Lamm assured the student, "your integrity will bring you to a good place in life."

Rabbi Lamm then spoke fondly of his daughter who, when ready to get married, had told her father that she only wanted to marry a *ba'al teshuva* because she wanted to marry someone who had chosen to be Orthodox, and had not simply inherited their convictions. Consequently, she found a husband who was a *ba'al teshuva*, and as Rabbi Lamm proudly told the YU students, "I'm happy with her choice to this day."

The President spoke next about the proper consideration students should give to their parents' opinions of prospective mates. He began by saying that parents must always be respected, yet they can

not coerce their children into marrying anyone. Nevertheless, because parents have experience, students should consult them, concerning "the most important decision that you'll ever make in your life" because "not giving them credit is just as foolish as blindly following them." Moreover, they can help to guide their children's life properly because they have already been through many of the experiences and dead ends that their children may come to.

Two Girls For Every Guy

Speaking "as a parent and the Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva College and Stern College," Rabbi Lamm posited: "Since when is there an *issur* (prohibition) to see more than one person at the same time?" He also wondered how students can get married after having only gone on a few dates. To the surprised crowd of students, he likened the process of finding one's spouse to buying a car in that "you are making the most important decision of your life." Thus, if students would do comparative shopping and be so meticulous when buying a car, they should at least be that thorough when searching for their spouse. After all, said R. Lamm, one must have some experience with various individuals so that he learns about himself and what he wants in a mate.

Rabbi Lamm suggested to one student who asked about blind dates, "Unless you're positive that it's wrong [for you], you should try it. At most, you lose an evening, but you can gain a world." Rabbi Lamm added that individuals should be open to invitations because people usually mean well in setting their friends up and sometimes they even use great intellect in doing so.

"If I had to leave you with one word of advice," Rabbi Lamm said, "it would be 'relax.'" He concluded that there is too much anxiety in dating circles. Students should not get nervous; they should remember that dating is process of learning and experiencing which can only help them make the right choice in marriage.



Yeshiva College Student Council



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday, November 12

YURG presents a French lecture by Dr. Shmuel Trigano on Post Modernism in France.

Wednesday, November 13

Scholarship Group meeting with Dr. D. Shatz

Open YCSC Meeting - Morg Basement Lounge - 10:30 PM

Thursday, November 14

YURG Speech Attention Engineering Majors! YURG presents Ophir Chermin who will discuss his research in micrometers and

answer questions about careers in Engineering during club hour (2:45-3:45)

Wednesday, November 20

Chemistry Club presents Dr. Rothstein, Dean of Kaplan and Dr. Asher Korn, Dean of Mt. Sinai.

Notice:

The **Tzitzit Sale**, sponsored by the JSS Student Council, is now in progress. For information call JSS President, Isaac Menasha @ 928-0384.

Yeshiva College



Campus News



Rabbi Avraham Sherman, Center, learning in the Furst Hall Beis Medrash during seder.

Acclaimed Authors Speak at YU

BY ARI GRUEN

This semester, students have been privileged to hear two acclaimed writers lecture as part of the new Authors-in-Residence program. Richard Rodriguez, a noted journalist, media commentator, and author, spoke to YU students in September, and Cynthia Ozick, an award-winning author, poet and short-story writer, spoke in October.

The writers came to YU as part of the Authors-in-Residence program, a new initiative bringing noted authors and literary celebrities to the university during the fall semester to teach undergraduates at both the uptown and downtown campuses, and to keynote a public forum. The program is a part of the Gottesman Program for Academic Excellence in Undergraduate Education and is funded by YU Board of Trustees Chairman David S. Gottesman and his wife Dr. Ruth L. Gottesman.

Dr. Norman Adler, Dean of Yeshiva College, describes the Authors-in-Residence program as an opportunity for YU students to be exposed to "what the secular world has to offer in terms of insights and ideas into the human condition."

Rodriguez is an editor for the Pacific News Service, contributing editor to several national publications, and is a commentator on PBS's MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour. He also has authored several works, one of which, *Days of Obligation: An Argument With My Mexican Father*, was nominated for the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for non-fiction finalists.

On September 9th, Rodriguez delivered a public lecture to a capacity crowd in Belfer Hall's Weissberg Commons. His speech touched on themes of concern to the YU student body, focusing on questions of definition of identity in a confusing world and assimilation into American pop culture.

Rodriguez rejected any labeling of identity based on nationality or race. He scoffed at the term "Hispanic," remarking that there is no place in the world called "Hispaniola." Rodriguez, born to Mexican parents and raised in California, seemed to reject the concept of any defined identity, describing a world in which cultures meet and ultimately swallow each other. At various points in the lecture, he even called himself Chinese and African American, based on those peoples' influences on his life, finally concluding, "I tell you that I am you and you are me."

Cynthia Ozick is a YU honorary degree recipient and award-winning

poet, essayist, and novelist whose writing focuses on Jewish and feminist themes. Among her works are *The Pagan Rabbi and Other Stories*, *The Cannibal Galaxy*, and *The Messiah of Stockholm*. "The Shawl," her play about a Polish-born Holocaust survivor in 1979 Miami, was recently featured at the Jewish Repertory Theater Playhouse in New York City. In addition, Ozick is the recipient of numerous honors for her work, including the 1983 Mildred and Harold Strauss Living Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Rea Award for short stories in 1986.

Ozick's lecture, on Sunday, October 13th, at the Louis Koch Auditorium at YU's Midtown Center was titled "Isaac Babel: A Jewish Cossack." She attempted to give some insight into the personality of Isaac Babel, the famous Russian Jewish short story writer who rode, for a period of time in the early 1920's, with the Cossacks, a group notorious for its anti-Semitic brutality.

Ozick read from the diary Babel kept during his time with the Cossacks. Through the words of the diary, she described the tortured mindset of a writer who was compelled, in her words, "To see, to see, to see." Yet, that same person was a Jew, witnessing the pillaging, murder, and rape of countless Jewish communities. She noted that, "Coiled in the bottom-most pit of every driven writer is an impersonator ... volatile, restless...." Since he had this personality of a writer, Ozick went so far as to ask, "How could Babel not don the uniform of a Cossack?"

Rodriguez and Ozick both taught several classes at Yeshiva College and at Stern, during which they touched on many of the same themes discussed in their public lectures. Rodriguez' classes discussed issues of minority assimilation in the US, while Ozick discussed the role of a writer in society.

Both writers were very impressed with the caliber of the University's students. Rodriguez commented, "I found the students to be not only open to ideas and interested in my point of view, but enormously challenging to me; probably among the most challenging students I have ever met." Comparing YU students to other students he has met, Rodriguez noted: "These students at Yeshiva are clearly of a class and of a determination much more sophisticated."

Among future participants in the Authors-in-Residence program will be Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Jane Smiley and best-selling suspense writers Jonathan and Faye Kellerman.

Tel Aviv Av Beth Din Visits YU

BY MATTYAHU BALAS

Visiting YU this semester is one of Israel's most esteemed rabbis, Rabbi Avraham Sherman. An expert in the application of halakha to modern society and head of the Beth Din in Tel Aviv, R' Sherman will lecture on human rights and values.

YU President Norman Lamm initially asked Rabbi Sherman to address the Commission on Judaism and Human Values, which Lamm established after the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin just over a year ago. Although laws pertaining to human rights are considered constitutional issues, the halakhic court examines and often judges such cases as well. Rabbi Sherman has presided over many such cases and has done extensive research on many divisive issues.

Mashgiach Ruchani Rabbi Yosef Blau explained that the purpose of Rabbi Sherman's visit was to allow students the opportunity to see that the laws set forth in the Talmud are neither obsolete nor archaic.

Rather, these laws and rulings are used today to pass judgements in religious courts. Rabbi Sherman said that the institution of halakhic Beth Din is gaining more power from the government. For instance, in Tel Aviv there are nine halakhic courts, some of which judge divorce cases, while others rule on monetary and other issues.

In keeping with his claim that the basis of Judaism is the Halakhically observant family, he spoke about his experiences as a judge presiding over cases involving family matters, particularly marriage and divorce.

Rabbi Sherman, who received his rabbinic education at Yeshivat Hevron, went on to study *dayanut* at the Harry Fischel Institute in Jerusalem. He served as Chief Chaplain of Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria in the Israeli Defense Force for eight years, after which he earned his position as a judge, awarded by the Israeli government, its officers, and the Bet Din HaGadol. He has served in his current capacity as head of the Beth Din for the past seven years.

Students Rock Chicago City Limits

BY JEREMY KROLL

Thursday night, October 31, marked the first Sophomore and Junior class outing of the school year. Over two hundred students attended a night out at Chicago City Limits, one of New York City's premiere comedy clubs.

YCSC Junior Class President David Schreiber said that Chicago City Limits was chosen for its appeal to the majority of the student body. One student, Ari Farkas, commented, "I feel that this excursion to Chicago City Limits is a fabulous idea, giving me a breather from my intense studying for midterms to relax and have a good laugh."

Some students were somewhat less excited about the prospects for the evening. "I was undecided about going, but after much deliberation and the urging of my friends I decided to go," said Rafi Spero.

A large crowd gathered on the sidewalk in front of the entrance to the comedy club.

As the theater filled up, one student

expressed his dismay at the lack of an opportunity to socialize. "I expected a different seating arrangement, where I could walk around and mingle," said Neal Landerer. "This theater style setup is not conducive to social interaction."

The show started off slowly. The actors needed time to get acquainted and comfortable with the audience, but soon adapted to the environment. YC senior Moshe Feldhendler, thought the show was "hilarious, exhilarating, and intelligent. The best I've seen in years." One Stern student commented that, "there were a couple [of] rough spots in the beginning, but they paled in comparison with the rest of the performance, which was spectacular."

Schreiber called the night a success, though was cautiously optimistic in his assessment of the first school event in his term. "All that my administration and the sophomore class administration wanted to accomplish was to have fun and unify the school at the same time. And I'm proud to say that I think we've done that."

Professor Looks At Life On Other Planets *Uses Torah as Looking Glass*

BY DAVID SWIDLER

In the inaugural Uptown Torah U'Madda lecture of the 1996 fall semester, Dr. Carl Feit addressed the theoretical impact of the existence of extraterrestrial life on Jewish thought.

Dr. Feit, who holds the Ades chair in Health Sciences at YU, addressed students, faculty and Deans during club hour on Thursday, October 31, in Belfer Hall. Notably in attendance were YC Dean Norman Adler and Assistant Dean Avery Horowitz.

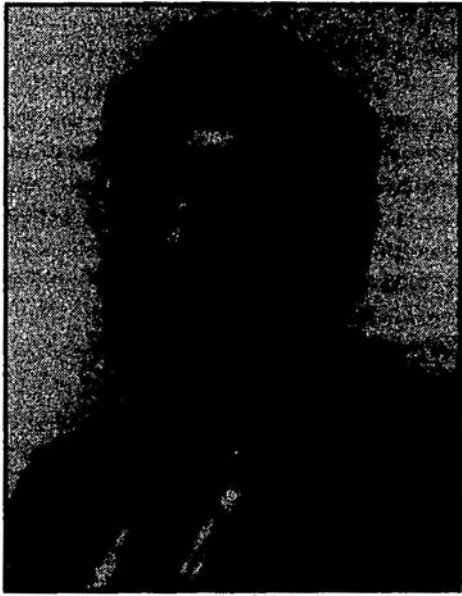
The Max Stern Division of Community Services coordinated the lecture, entitled, "The Heaven and Earth and All their Host: the Contemplation of Extraterrestrial Life", as part of its ongoing Torah U'Madda Project. The various Student Councils uptown and at Stern College helped to sponsor the lecture, as did *Hamevaser*, the publication of the Jewish Studies Division of Yeshiva University.

Dr. Feit began his talk by explaining his choice of subject matter. Over the summer, when he was asked to speak, a major story in the news was the alleged discovery of the existence of prehistoric life on Mars. Though exaggerated, the possibilities intrigued Feit, who has always been partial to science fiction, so he selected this topic for the lecture.

An asteroid discovered in Antarctica in 1984 proved to originate on Mars, and in subsequent years, electron micrography and chemical analysis of the rock revealed strong indications that some form of life, however primitive, lived near the Martian surface some three-and-a-half million years ago.

NASA documented and released a report on the research, which the news media gave much attention, sometimes jumping to conclusive affirmation of the possibility that "we are not alone."

After relating this background, Feit examined the challenges that the existence



Dr. Carl Feit

of such life presents to the Torah view of Creation, specifically regarding Man's uniqueness and his centrality. Presenting selections from several Jewish sources, including the Midrash, the Talmud, the writings of Rav Hasdai Crescas and Sefer Habris, which either implied or suggested explicitly that life exists on other worlds, Dr. Feit arrived at varying, if inconclusive, answers to the question.

Feit then formulated a response to the possibility of extraterrestrial life. He invoked the teachings of Rav Soloveitchik, who said that the duality of Man's humility and his majesty is manifest throughout Scripture, notably Psalms eight, where the contemplation of the cosmos prompts the Psalmist to ponder Man's seeming insignificance in such a vast universe, but then he glorifies Man as dominant over all other creatures.

This duality, says Feit, should characterize our response to any "little green men". On the one hand, we might be intimidated by the existence of intelligent life elsewhere, but we must also be aware and confident that the very same God who designed the universe for Man's benefit continues to watch over us.

Whitman To Speak At YU Fundraising Gala

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Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was slated to be the featured guest. However, he will be in the New York area in November for a meeting of the general assembly of the United Nations, and a second trip could not be scheduled in such a short period of time.

"I very much look forward to participating in Yeshiva University's 72nd Annual Convocation and Dinner next month," Whitman told *The Commentator*, "I'm especially honored to be receiving an honorary degree from one of the nation's older and most revered universities."

Whitman is New Jersey's fiftieth governor and is currently the only female governor in the country. Though an emblem of traditional Republican fiscal conservatism, Whitman also supports abortion rights and opposes school prayer.

Her unique blend of conservative and moderate views has made Whitman very popular among voters in her home state,

where she became the first gubernatorial candidate to unseat an incumbent governor in a general election in modern state history. She defeated Democrat Jim Florio in 1993.

Whitman was the first governor ever chosen to give the formal response to a President's State of the Union Address, which she did this January. Some political gurus had expected her to be Bob Dole's running mate.

The Zalman Mlotek Orchestra, world-renowned for its Klezmer music, will provide the entertainment for the evening. Zalman Mlotek is the choral director at the Philip and Sarah Belz School of Jewish Music at YU's affiliated Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary. His professional credits include service as co-creator, musical director, and conductor of the Broadway show "Those Were The Days," and as musical director of the 1995 Festival of Klezmer Music at Lincoln Center.

Survey Conducted on Students' Computers

BY AVI HELFAND

The university recently took steps toward considering upgrading the campus computer systems, attempting to assess the number of personal computers on campus. To do so, YU enlisted the resident advisors to survey all dorm students.

The goal of the survey is to give the MIS department, which now runs academic computing, a better idea of what the norm among students is in their purchases and updating of their computers.

Dr. Efreim Nulman, Dean of Students, initiated the process to help the MIS department in "getting an idea of what the students need," so that Yeshiva University can start, "moving into the 21st century." Technological advancement, now essential and instrumental in a college education, has become a priority on campus.

These new advancements will include

additional upgrading of the computer lab and the computers on the second floor of the Gottesman Library. The survey is intended to help ensure that changes made in the computer systems will meet the demands of the students adequately.

Most students are very pleased with the new direction that YU has taken towards the campus' computer capabilities and were more than happy to answer the questions on the survey, such as how many computers they have in their rooms and whether those computers are notebooks or desktops.

Dean Nulman's hope is that the information provided by the survey will allow the MIS department to create a more connected campus, where the college facilities will meet the demands of a computer-oriented student body. Although no official date has been set, completion of these improvements is expected sometime in the spring semester.

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Student Notebook

Planning A European Vacation

With winter vacation fast approaching, and with students fumbling about trying to plan the perfect thing to do during their free time, only to stare out their windows at home for two weeks, *The Commentator* presents the first in a series of columns of unique student experiences during winter break, in the hope that you may have one of your own.

BY MORDY PLOTSKER

Venice, Prague, Zurich. You may have thought that the only position in which you'd encounter these locations was sitting in your recliner staring at the television as Robyn Leach whisked you away to the hideaways of the rich and famous. However, as I found out, this wasn't the case. To visit Europe, one need neither be rich nor speak with an Australian accent. I brought a friend, my curiosity, and sense of adventure and had the time of my life.

Making the most of our journey, we crisscrossed the continent, stopping in twelve cities in fourteen days.

Monday, January 14, 1996:

Leaving from JFK, we arrived at Schussel International Airport, in Amsterdam, Holland. Our first day was spent touring Amsterdam. Some of the highlights of our stay in Amsterdam were Rembrandt's Museum, the Public Theater of Holland, the Anne Frank House, the Escona Shul, better known as the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue which was built in 1675, and the Jewish Museum, where there were kosher eats. To our great regret we missed the opportunity to wash down the food with some Heineken, at their factory tour, where they reportedly distribute unlimited bottles of beer. Oh, well. By the way, watch out for the bicycles—they have the right of way. With more than 550,000 bicycles in a city of 700,000 people, things got quite interesting.

Amsterdam is a "free city", meaning anything and everything is legal. Nice place to visit, but we didn't sleep there overnight and I wouldn't recommend you do it either. At night the country's beds and breakfasts turn into bongs and brothels. We left Amsterdam that evening and traveled throughout the night to Prague, Czechoslovakia.

Tuesday, January 15, 1996:

At 7am, twelve hours after leaving Amsterdam, we arrived in Praha (Prague) only to get off at the wrong station. We asked for help at the information desk, but to no avail, for there was a bit of a communication problem. Lost, we picked up a map and boarded a train heading west, in the direction of Prague's central terminal. There are only three trains in Prague, so getting around is fairly simple. All trains run on the "honor system." This worked out well, as we were honored to ride their train, but hadn't changed any money. Please don't tell the authorities.

Prague was spared from ruin during the dark years of World War II. Thus, it has retained its medieval European beauty. I thought it was one of the most beautiful cities we visited.

Never get into a conversation before or immediately after changing money. Prague is known for petty theft, especially at the central terminal, so be

careful. The natives aren't wealthy and most congregate inside the terminal looking for tourists to rent their apartments for around \$20.00 a night. We accepted an offer of \$18.00 from a man named Leo, who not only gave us a great rate on a place to stay, but spoke English too. We were in luck, as Leo told us of the spots to see during our three day stay.

Although the cabs are cheap, the drivers tend to rip off tourists. If you

Charles Bridge, en route to the Castle, is another great sight. You will inevitably walk across this piece of history first built in the 9th century by King Charles (Charlemagne). The John Lennon Wall is located parallel to the French Embassy, and a must-see for fans of classic rock, especially the Beatles.

In addition to the secular sites, Prague

At night, in the center of the city's town square, a Jewish guy named Michael Foster gives ghost tours for \$8.00. It might be worth your while to attend. We thought the stories were interesting. They range from "The Merchant of the Marketplace" to "The Golem." (Nearly everyone has heard of the Golem, and it's not because they are Jewish Press subscribers)

We had the unique honor of meeting Chaim Potok, author of *The Chosen*, *The Promise*, and *My Name is Asher Lev*, who brought a film crew to the Mahara Shul to make a documentary which, if memory serves me well, is titled *The Golem: A History of Prague*. My friend and I both made an unassuming (but conscious) effort to get into the film. We succeeded, as Potok later informed me, and supposedly are in for a second or two as extras.

Another site to see is the City of Terézin, better known in German as Theresanstadt. This is a concentration camp built like a fortress. For a small fee of \$20.00, there are daily tours leaving from the Lufthansa office directly across from the Mahara Shul. The trip takes approximately an hour, and leaves you just ten kilometers from Munich. Even if you have been on the March of the Living, you owe it to yourself to go.

That Thursday night, we left for Zurich, Switzerland, a journey of several hours. Cutting through Germany, we stopped in Stuttgart for a short while, where we tried to find the Porsche factory. No luck.

Friday, January 18, 1996:

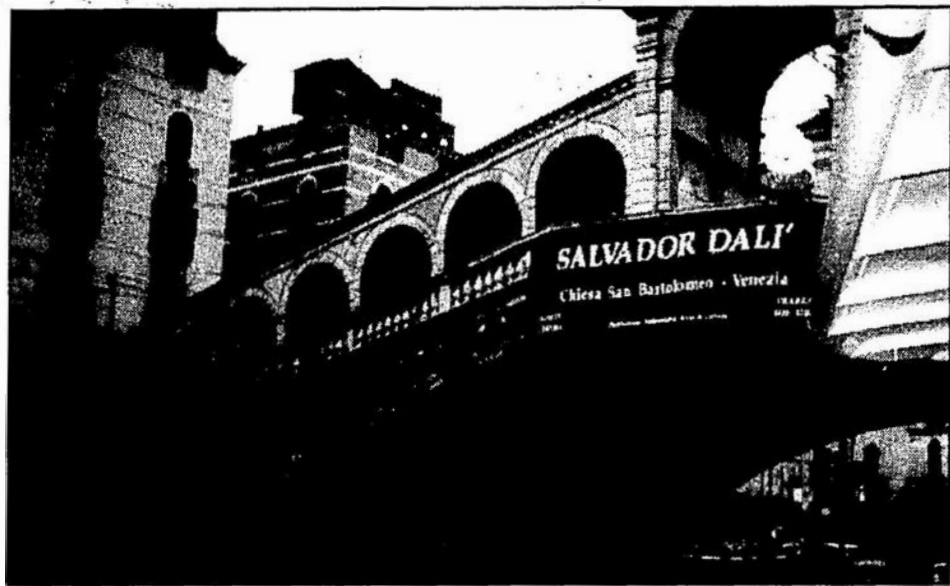
We arrived in Zurich in the morning and stayed for Shabbos. We toured the old, as well as the new city. Zurich is home to a large Jewish community and there was no problem finding the kosher bakery. Aside from the bakery, Swiss people have no clue what the word kosher means, so it's best to ask someone what the numerical ingredients mean. Goods and services were more expensive in Zurich than in Prague.

Sunday was day eight of our trip. We went to Rigi, a ski resort located at an elevation of 6,000 feet, or above two layers of clouds for those of you who don't want to use a ruler. Rigi is a must-see when in Switzerland; we had a blast. At night, we were treated, thanks to our hosts, to an Avraham Fried concert in the Central Concert Hall of Zurich. There was a crowd of about 2,000 people, a tenth of the Swiss Jewish population.

Monday, January 21, 1996:

We went to Lucern. Having arrived late for the tour, we created one of our own. If you like skiing, you must go to Grindelwald/Interlochen, located in the heart of the country. This is where Hotel

continued on page 13



TRAVEL TIPS

We had the time of our lives. I know that you won't experience all the same follies that we did, but if you try, you should build up your own share of wild and crazy stories to treasure from an adventure you'll never forget. Don't pass up this wonderful opportunity to go; it may not knock again.

You will learn what not to forget when packing for such a trip, where the fun is, or at least as much fun as two religious guys can have, where to go, and other valuable information that will help make your trip enjoyable, safe and memorable.

- ◆ Go to Barnes and Noble and buy a book entitled *How to Travel Around Europe - Under \$50 a Day* (or something similar). Such a book is very valuable and should be guarded as safely as your passport.
- ◆ Get a EuroRail ticket. This is a necessity. Otherwise you'll spend a lot of extra money needlessly. Bring along a camera with a proven track record of picture-perfect-pictures.
- ◆ Get an ISTA card, for student discounts. It will save you money. Knowing Yiddish (pseudo German) is a big help, trust me.
- ◆ Buy a money belt that can be easily concealed. Dress for winter, you won't regret it.
- ◆ Food is always a problem, so be sure to pack lots of tuna fish, powdered milk, peanut butter and jelly, and Lenders bagels. You might consider adding cereal as a snack, and tangerines, if you know what I mean, for the long train rides and hours spent walking/touring.

realize that you are getting ripped off (when the meter is moving faster than the car), scream your head off and exit the cab. The cabbie will understand. It happened to us. We were getting ripped off, and when we realized it, we began to yell that we were American tourists and he ought to know better. We jumped out of the cab after a few miles and didn't pay that thief a *Korun Ceskyh*.

Among the sites I would urge you to see in Prague is the Royal Castle of Prague, which is the home of the Duke of Hapsburg. One could easily spend the entire day there. The castle houses a huge array of relics from the Duke.

is the home of numerous sites sacred to Jews. One such place is the Mahara's synagogue, in the well-known Jewish quarter of Prague. There are several additional synagogues within the vicinity, each with a museum adjacent to its sanctuary.

Though it is best to arrive early, should you arrive late, take off your hat exposing your *kippah*, thus proving to them you're Jewish, and explain that you're leaving the following day. It worked for us, so it may work for you. In case you should get bored, movies are only a \$1.50, a real steal, just not too recent.

YU's Torah Tape Library: Daf Yomi and More

BY EPHRAIM SHAPIRO

Recent additions to the Yeshiva University Torah Tape Library have become very popular with the student body. In a quiet corner of the fifth floor of the Gottesman Library, students can now hear *Shiurim* on *Halacha*, *Hashkafa* and *Tanach* given by YU Roshei Yeshiva. *Daf Yomi* tapes are also available.

The tape library began with the donation of over 2500 *Daf Yomi* cassettes, which originally belonged to the late Rabbi David Simcha Paritzky. Rabbi Paritzky loved learning the *Daf Yomi*, and during his life completed all of *Shas* six times. Ten years prior to his passing, due to his failing eyesight, Rabbi Paritzky purchased the learning tapes as a substitute for the pages of Gemara he could no longer see.

After Rabbi Paritzky's death in February of 1993, his wife and children, including son Michael, a YU alumnus, decided to donate the collection to the Gottesman Library. Pearl Berger, Dean of Libraries at Yeshiva, accepted the gift as an appropriate addition to the fifth floor collection of literary Judaica. In September 1994, the tape collection was officially established, and cassette players and headphones were purchased

for listening purposes.

Since then, many sets of tapes have been added to the shelves. Students can now hear a series by Rabbi Yonason Sacks on the weekly torah portion, as well as classes on specific aspects of every Jewish holiday. One of the most popular sets of tapes is a series entitled "Memories of The Rav, zt"l." This series compiles the personal memories of several YU Roshei Yeshiva eulogizing Rav Soloveitchik zt"l. Recordings of various *shiurim* given by Rabbi Mordechai Tendler are constantly being submitted. Other recent additions include "Pathways of the Prophets," a popular weekly *Navi Shiur* given by Rabbi Yisroel Reisman of Brooklyn.

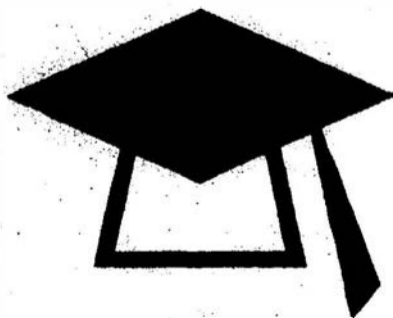
The current policy allows students to listen to the tapes in the library only. Later this year, when the library officially "goes online," the Deans will reevaluate the present policy about borrowing cassettes. "At that time," explained one Librarian, "every part of the libraries will be easier to circulate."

Future additions to the Torah Tape Library, according to Dean Berger, will be up to the students: "We in the library would be interested to hear what students would like to see [hear] with regards to tapes."

COMMENCEMENT 1997

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Commentator: First of all, congratulations on having completed 20 years as President.

NL: "Survived" is the word.

Commentator: 20 years ago, you became President of Yeshiva, no doubt with certain goals in mind and a certain vision for the future of Yeshiva. Have you reached those goals, has your perception of Yeshiva changed, and did you envision then that we would be where we are today?

NL: Well, let me answer those in reverse order. Did I think then we'd be where we are today - no. You must remember that 20 years ago, when I came into office, it was a brand new experience - very intimidating, very discombobulating. It took me a long while to get a handle on things, and when I got the handle on things, I discovered there was no food in that pot of which I was holding the handle. We were in desperate financial conditions. At that time, I couldn't have dreamed that we would develop the way we did, *Be'ezras Hashem*. If I ever had any doubts it was G-d's hand at work, the doubts were quickly erased. I did not imagine that.

Have all my goals been realized? I hope not. I think a man's goals should be such that he can never realize them completely. They should be a spur to doing things, but it's like a graph in which your line is asymptotic - it always comes closer to what you want, but never reaches it. If my goals were such that they could be attained in a few years, then they should have had another president here. No, I think that a lot of things have been accomplished. I'm happy, but I'm not satisfied. There are still many things to be done.

Commentator: What would you say were the high and low points of your presidency so far? For example, cite an achievement of which you are particularly proud, or discuss any decisions you now regret.

NL: I think the high and low points were identical, and that took place in March of 1978 in the law offices of our lawyers, when I had to sign Chapter 11 papers to be the first major University to go bankrupt. I had to sign 7 copies in order to go to federal court the next morning. I signed 3 copies and the fourth copy I couldn't - I don't know why, I couldn't sign - it didn't work. And the Chairman of the Board was there, the lawyers were there, very distinguished lawyers, and I just couldn't do it. The best statement



Rabbi Lamm speaks with Rabbi Cheifetz and Dean Schmidman

is, and you have it very often in Rabbinic Literature, "*Ikvuni min hashamayyim*" - I felt that from up above they were holding my hand. It was a low point because we were just going bankrupt and had I simply refused and not gone to Chapter 11, we would have had to close shop, *chas veshalom*. It was a high point because as a result we woke up (NY) Governor Carey who proved to be very helpful, and he woke up the bankers (apparently bankers go to sleep very early) and we got a one-week postponement, then a two-week, then we settled with them, and that's how Yeshiva was redeemed. So the low-point was the high-point, interestingly.

Are there decisions of which I'm proud - yes. It would be arrogant of me to tell you what they are. Are there those which I regret - some. It would be foolish of me to tell you, so I'm not going to answer that question.

Commentator: You are not only an administrator and a fundraiser, but you also act as the intellectual and philosophical heartbeat of Torah U'Madda, and thus of YU. How do you define your role?

NL: I'm like a housewife. You know, I do the dishes, I do the laundry, I'm a mother, I'm a wife, I have a job on the side, I balance the budget. You've got to do everything. The one thing I cannot complain about on this job is boredom. There are so many things happening, so many aspects of life that you're involved in, including things I was never prepared for. I was never prepared for fund-raising. I did a minor amount before I came in, but never on this level. I had nothing to do with money. I barely was able to balance my checkbook; I still have trouble sometimes. So it's hard to say. About being an expositor and an advocate of *Torah U'Madda*, yes, I feel extremely strongly about it. It's one of the reasons I came here in the first place as a student. I was a student in *Torah Vodaath* and I was simply attracted by the whole concept of *Torah U'Madda*. I felt that this is really the *derech Hashem*, this is really the way a Jew should be. And that's why I came to Yeshiva. I came because of that and because of the Rav. I wanted to learn under the Rav, I had heard so much about him. So *Torah U'Madda* to me is something that I imbibed here, I learned here.

This place fashioned my life. And if I didn't get paid a single penny for what I do, I would still feel that I

have not repaid my debt to Yeshiva. I don't know if the students today are sufficiently sensitive to how critical this institution can be in their lives, and probably will be. With all its faults, and we have many, it's the only place in the world that gives this particular slant and produces this kind of personality and advocates this kind of *hashkafa*. There's no other place in the world that's quite like it. And it's something to which I feel personally I owe a great deal for my own development, for my children's development, my children-in-law, all of whom are graduates of Yeshiva. And it's inconceivable of me not to do what I'm doing, because I believe in it. And if you believe in it, then you want to have others be persuaded of the same beliefs.

Commentator: We want to turn now to some questions about the inner workings of Yeshiva, namely the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and the Cardozo School of Law. How do they fit into the *Torah U'Madda* scheme? Would you like to see a closer affiliation between those schools and the Yeshiva, and do you think they have a responsibility to give preference to Yeshiva and Stern students in their acceptance procedures? And conversely, how do they feel about us? Are they pleased with the association with YU?

NL: Well, again, let me start with the end. Of course they give preference to Yeshiva students. It's the way it should be. Columbia gives preference to the children of Columbia alumni, Harvard gives preference to the children of Harvard alumni, and we do too. That's the way it should be. Do we have an open enrollment, that anyone who graduates from Yeshiva or Stern or Syms gets into these 'schools? I should say not! Graduate schools are graduate schools. Professional schools are professional schools. They have standards. So not everyone has entry. But every student who wants to go to medical school will get an interview at Einstein. No guarantee of being accepted.

Commentator: But the fact that all YU students get an interview, does that detract from the significance of the interview?

NL: I should say not. You've got to sell yourself. And not every interview is the same as every other interview. Some interviewers are more mature, more objective, more intuitively gifted. Others are not such good interviewers. But everyone gets a chance, which is, again, what I'm satisfied with. I do follow carefully every year, the percentage of Yeshiva undergraduates who get into these schools and it's good. The people who didn't get in will always squawk about it, but that's normal, it's human. I don't blame them. But objectively speaking, we do well with our undergraduates, in Cardozo, and in Einstein, and in Ferkauf, which is very hard to get into, and in Wurzeiler. We even are pretty good to our undergraduates in RIETS.

What else do you have there? "What do they think of us?"

Commentator: Do they [the graduate schools] welcome the association with Yeshiva?

NL: Well, it's hard to say. They have no choice. They're creations of Yeshiva. If they're happy or not isn't a

question of whether the school is happy, but whether individual faculty members are happy. And that is irrelevant. I think that most of them who are intelligent, and who have not been especially infected with the virus of self-deprecation, are pleased. I know people who come without prejudice and speak highly of Yeshiva. We internally frequently are hyper-critical of Yeshiva. We say things that perhaps we will later regret from a different perspective. Strangers who come here generally are very high on Yeshiva. Talk to new faculty who come here. They have some criticism of Yeshiva. Most of them are correct. But by and large, they're very high on us. Again, I'm never completely satisfied, but I think that we are

a good deal better than we tell ourselves.

There's an old, old tradition in Yeshiva, going back over a hundred years, of self-denigration, which is not a mark of mature *anivus* and character, but a psychological streak that needs treatment. But we don't have here a good psychologist of the collectivity. But it's an old thing, we look down on ourselves very often, and sometimes strangers look at us and say "what are you talking about?" So having a fault or two is human. No institution, like no individual, is

In honor of his 20th year anniversary, Commentator Editors Nick Muzin & Ari Kahn interviewed Yeshiva University President Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm. Following are the excerpts of the first half of the hour-long interview. The second half will follow in the next issue.

THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY

perfect. However, from there to the kind of massive self-denigration that often takes place with Yeshiva students and alumni is quite a jump. It's not a healthy one.

Commentator: What about denigration of Yeshiva that comes from the outside world? For example, how do you deal with the "Yeshiva World's" intense criticism of YU? Do you think they raise any valid points?

NL: First of all, you have to see it in perspective. I came to Yeshiva in 1945 when I was 18 years old.

That I came here was a minor miracle. I was brain washed. When I came from *Torah Vodaath*, one man in particular, I shall never forget it,

said "How is it there?" I said "Where there?" He said "uptown." I said "You mean Yeshivas Rabbeinu Yitzchak Elchanan?" He said, "Yeah, that's the place." I said "It's very nice." He said "So is a church."

They gave me a very hard time. They ostracized me because I was coming here. This was 1945. That's over 50 years ago. There's a French expression: *Le plus ce change, le plus c'est la meme chose*, the more things change,

the more they are the same. It's the same today. Perhaps it's more poignant today, more mean-spirited today. But it's there. Essentially what happened before happens now. The *loshon hara* - somehow, I don't know where they found a *heter* for collective *loshon hara*, but I suppose they must have found some source for it...but after a while you make up your mind that you've got to do what you think is right *be'eiunei Hashem* and *be'eiunei yisroel* and not worry about what unfair critics say even while you pay attention to what fair critics say. Do they have any valid points? Yes, here and there, of course they do, because we're not perfect. But for people who are passionate in their enmity for what we are, I answer with a shrug of the shoulders and I have to go on doing that. We have to go on doing our own thing and we can't be overly concerned with the relentless critics because nothing is going to help. There's no propitiating them.

For those in the Yeshiva world who are not of this ilk, but who are decent people who have a different approach, I say fine, they have a different approach, we have a different approach. I have enormous respect for them because we are still part of the same world, part of the same continuum, but with a different slant. Many of them do not want to give us the same freedom to be what we are as we give them. OK, so be it. I will not deny them that freedom, nor will I ever be unfairly critical of them, nor will I ever want to deny them the right to say their piece. And *afal pichein*, we're the *same mishpacha*, we're the same family, and whether they like it or not, that's the way we are.

Commentator: There is a perception among many Jews that you are the leader of Modern Orthodoxy. Do you see yourself in this leadership role? How does this responsibility impact on you?

NL: People see me as the leader of Modern Orthodoxy. I don't know, it's not an official position. So if one sees me in that position, so for him I have something to say. If he doesn't see me in that role, I have nothing to say that would be of tremendous importance to that person. It's not an official thing.

Commentator: Do you feel a tremendous sense of responsibility?

NL: Yes, an enormous sense of responsibility. Not because I am "a leader of Modern Orthodoxy", but because in my position I normally am looked upon as someone who has some views on where Orthodoxy should go. Yes I have those views, I worry over them very much. I like to think through the problems that we have. We're living in changing times, but then again, every epoch in history is a changing time, you can't get away from it. And now it's stronger and more angular because of the pace of contemporary life. So the decisions have to be made more quickly. They generally are more consequential than they were in the past. I can't escape that. Whether I like it or not, I'm on the spot. I tend very much not to say anything that gets me involved in partisan politics, either here or in Israel. Unlike other University presidents, I don't endorse candidates. And unlike other *roshai yeshivos*, I don't endorse candidates in Israel. I don't do that because,



Rabbi Lamm addresses the Yeshiva at the recent Dorm Talks

number one, not being a politician, I have no more authority and no more wisdom to offer than anybody else. And second, even if I did, my first obligation is to Yeshiva, so I cannot and will not alienate any of my constituency because of partisanship. When it comes to ideology, when it comes to *hashkafa*, that's a different story, but not on political matters.

Commentator: Is there a fundamental conflict between *Torah and Madda*, between a Yeshiva and a University? Explain how certain conflicts which have come up in past years have challenged your vision of Yeshiva, and how have you resolved these conflicts, practically and personally?

NL: Well, the most concise answer I can give to those questions is "read my *Torah U'Madda*." That's what I dedicated it to. So the answer would be simple. Is there a fundamental conflict? No. Are there conflicts? Yes. But then again, any two ideas in the world are not congruent necessarily, yet they both may be true. No, there is no fundamental conflict between *Torah and Madda*, between Torah and science. It is the understanding of Torah and the understanding of science where you may find conflict. In the methodologies, which are mostly different, you may find conflict. But essentially, fundamentally, no, of course not. It doesn't mean they're identical, but you don't have to be identical in order not to have conflicts. My brother and I are not identical, but we have no conflicts, *baruch Hashem*. The same thing is true of *Torah and Madda*. They're not the same, but they have the same source. They both come from *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*.

Who created the world? *Bereishis* begins with "*Bereishis bara Elokim*." The high point of *Shemos* is "*Vayered Hashem al Har Sinai*." So both come from *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, each one in a different formula, a different facet, a different phase, but they both come from *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, so how can one say there is a fundamental conflict?

Commentator: Have you had any trouble with specific conflicts that have come up in past years? How did these problems challenge your convictions?

NL: Oh, always, ever since I was a kid. I started out with the great problem of the age of Earth. I had the problem of evolution. I settled the problem much before the Pope did. And we have

problems of conflict between modern knowledge and Torah all the time. So we have one of several choices. Either you don't read the newspapers or journals; or you throw in the towel and every village atheist now has control over your destiny and your life; or you take an attitude of equanimity, which is "yes, you say this, the Torah says that, and if I have time and the ability, I will try to investigate it. Otherwise, if I hold my breath long enough, scientific attitudes will change, as they have, and if not, you can live with conflicts."

I've learned to shield my *emunah* from such temporary fluctuations. Because they are fluctuations and they are temporary. As a matter of fact, I took a long look, ever since I started college and even in the middle of high school, when I became vitally interested in such matters. By and large, the great conflict that we had when I was younger no longer exist, namely: where the world comes from, the great mystery of the origin of the universe, the Big Bang. And when I was younger it was the Steady State of the Universe. The Rambam says in the *Moreh Nevuchim* that we believe in creation, whereas the Aristotelians, the philosophers, believe in the eternity of the universe, that it has no beginning and no end. And he said that if the people who believe in the eternity of the universe could prove their point, then we could find a way of reinterpreting the Torah, but since they didn't prove their point, and I can go either way, I accept the Torah. I say the same thing. Had the Steady State people proved their point I would have said "OK, we can somehow manage to live with it. It requires deeper interpretation." But since then the Big Bang theory has taken over completely, and then it's just a question of: did the firecracker create itself or did the *Ribbono Shel Olam* light the fire? So one of the major problems has disappeared.

There are problems that go into areas more sophisticated than evolution or geology, but we can handle them. I would recommend if anyone is interested in the approach on how to handle them, to read the lead essay in my book *Faith and Doubt*, which grew, incidentally, out of a course I gave in Yeshiva, because that was my interest at that time of talking to students on how you deal with doubt, which comes as a result of the kind of question you just asked me. So, I'm not trying to sell books, but I take it up in much more detail.

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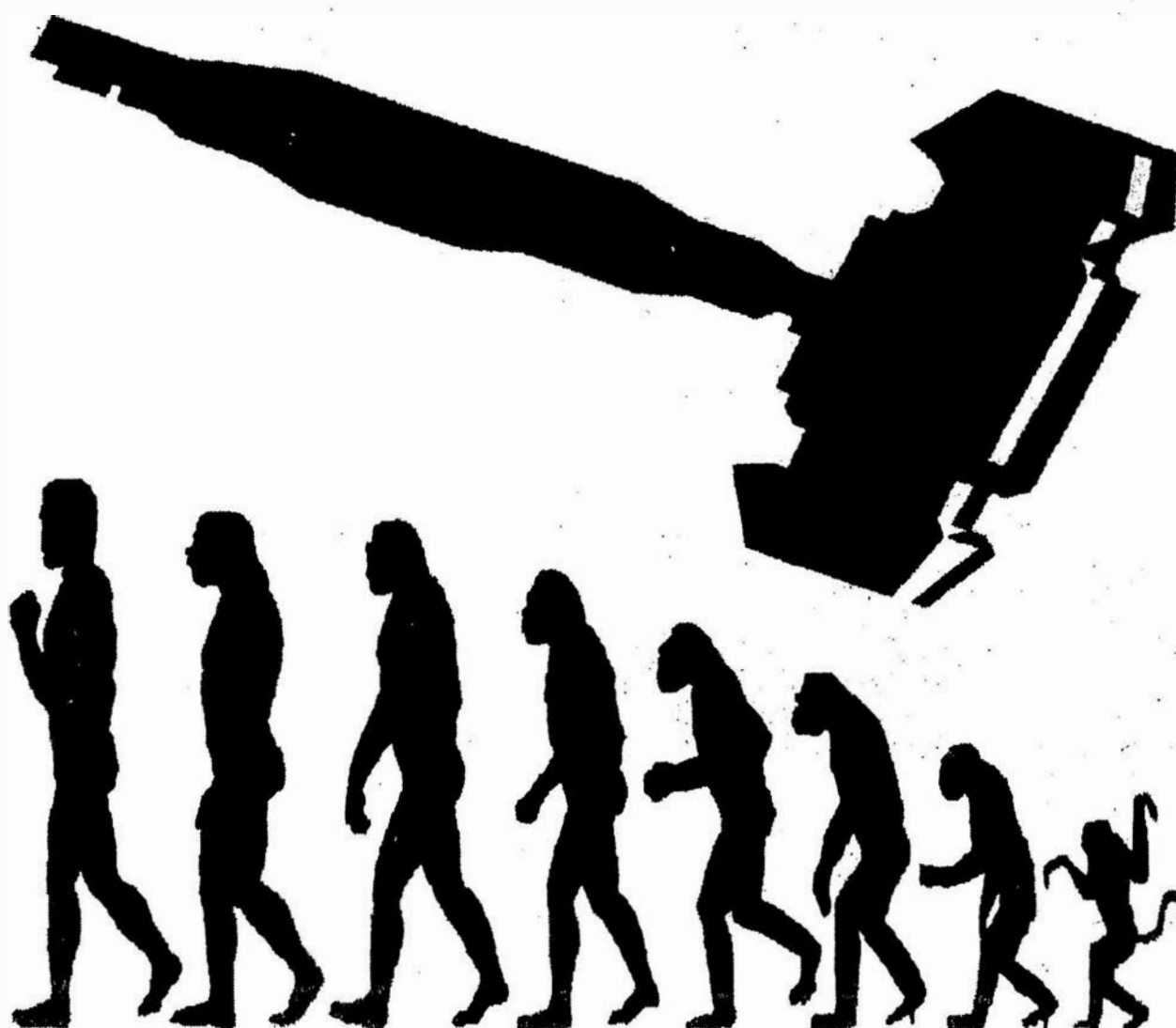
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BY ADAM MOSES

The euphoria spills out into the streets as the *l'chain* rages on into the night. The midnight revelers dance feverishly in the Morgenstern lobby around an elated *chossan*. It is another night at the Yeshiva University Main Campus. Meanwhile, in midtown, a conspicuous placard announcing current engagements is mounted above the pay telephone in the Brookdale Hall lobby of Stern College. Women consult the sign quickly and flock to dance in honor of the most recently crowned *kallah* in a hall she reserved well in advance for this purpose. The magnificent tradition of the Jewish marriage process is perpetuated.

Whether or not YU is actually a "modern Orthodox marriage facilitator," the *shidduch*/marriage experience is deeply rooted in its culture and has long been the focus of appreciation, amusement, and apprehension amongst its students, faculty members, and observers. Reflecting this focus, marriage even was the focus of President Norman Lamm's recent "Dorm Talks" on the Main Campus. President Lamm addressed a number of theoreti-*cal shidduch* scenarios and discussed ways of resolving them. Underlying the levity of the exchanges between President Lamm and the students was the anxiety that many associate with the *shidduch* process.

Ari Farkas, a YC junior, acknowledged this pressure, stating, "I not only feel personal pressure to get married, but also additional pressure from seeing so many other people around me getting engaged and married."

President Lamm made offhand remarks pertaining to the Jewish perspective on romantic love and the necessity for spousal attraction in marriage. He advised students to "relax" and not "rush into the most important decision of your lives." He further emphasized that one's personal impression of a prospective spouse means more than that of friends and peers and should be the most influential factor in a marriage decision.

Rabbi Lamm concluded the talks by expressing his general dissatisfaction with the current dating scenario which he characterized as a "disservice" to students since it artificially "limits experience" as a result of a narrow definition of *tachlis*, or purpose, required to date. He advocated a broader understanding of the principle of *tachlis* to incorporate casual dating that provides the "experience necessary to seriously pursue marital dating" at a subsequent point. Finally, he asserted that "there is no *issur d'oraysah* (Biblical prohibition) on dating two women at the same time" assuming it prepares the young man for marriage in some way.

Most students appeared to concur with President Lamm's general sentiment regarding the importance of marriage while finding some of his personal observations on dating more challenging to stomach. Yechiel Hirth, a YC junior who attended the "Dorm Talks" commented, "I agree wholeheartedly with Dr. Lamm that marriage is a very important decision that must be decided by a guy and not his friends. After all, he's the one who will be living with her. However, I really don't think it's appropriate to seriously go out with two girls at the same time. It's not like college, where I take history and math courses at the same time. Women are more than subjects."

A SCW senior, who spoke not for

attribution, agreed with Hirth. "If I'm going out with a guy, there's no way I would want him to be seeing somebody else at the same time, regardless of what his intentions were."

Pressure

While many YC students acknowledge that pressure to get married exists for male students, the general consensus among both male and female students is that women bear the biggest brunt of this pressure. Emily Shapiro, president of the Stern Torah Activities Council remarked that there is a "tremendous amount of pressure for Stern women to get married. It generally affects women at a younger age and hits harder than what the men at YU experience." Ephraim Gopin, a recently engaged YC graduate of three years ago agreed. "I felt very limited pressure to get married while I was at YU. The women, however, appeared to have significantly more pressure."

Debbie Bielory, Stern senior class president, provided some insights into the origin of the pressure experienced at Stern. "The root is definitely in peer pressure. Underclassmen go through their first year or two seeing many of the upperclassmen getting engaged... It seems like everyone

Stern to get married, as everyone claims, where is that pressure in turn directed? To the people they want to marry, guys at YU."

Mrs. Efrat Sobolofsky, wife of BMP Talmud Instructor Rabbi Tsvi Sobolofsky, agreed that "the pressure certainly exists for the men as well as the women. Although the women generally experience more pressure, they're only one side of the equation. They are generally marrying men from YU, who also experience pressure."

Rabbi and Mrs. Sobolofsky serve as facilitators in arranging meetings between YC men and SCW women "who don't feel comfortable in the traditional Yeshiva University social scene." While acknowledging that "when women or men have roommates who get engaged, pressure increases as a result of the peers, even subconsciously sometimes," Mrs. Sobolofsky alluded to parental pressure as also being "a significant source of tension for some students. I've gotten calls from mothers of women who come to Stern from outside of New York who express concern over their daughters not meeting guys to eventually marry."

Tzvi Harow, a recently engaged YC sophomore, developed a novel method of

most disturbing aspect of it. There is an extreme resistance to people doing anything remotely individualistic in this area — like being ready to get married before getting engaged!"

The Age Factor

Another concern voiced by observers of YU marriages is the youthful ages at which the marriages frequently take place. Skeptics speculate that marriage at a young age, specifically while still attending college, can have catastrophic consequences if the couple is not sufficiently mature to contend with their burgeoning responsibilities. Others believe that while younger, some are subject to tendencies to marry for the wrong reasons and are influenced purely by emotion, not a more realistic, sober evaluation of the circumstances.

Rabbi Blau, *nashgiach* of the Mazer Yeshiva Program at YC, articulated his contention that it is a necessity for caution to be exercised in marriages by younger couples. "Early marriages concern me for two main reasons. First, when people get married at a young age, especially when in college and after returning from study in Israel, they generally are still developing and maturing.

Their life beliefs and even personalities are still evolving at that point. Marriage should only take place once these issues have been resolved and compatibility is assured. Second, I think it's always a good idea for the couple to have some idea of how they're going to support themselves after the marriage, and not just rely on the parents to bail them out. This is very difficult to do while the couple is in college."

A YC junior, who withheld his name, agreed. "While many of us don't want to hear these arguments, I personally think they are somewhat true." Others

dissented, asserting that if a couple is prepared to make the commitment to get married they are probably "in the *parshah* of necessary maturity" and will begin supporting themselves independently upon graduation from college.

Tzvi Harow, 20, expressed his satisfaction and comfort with his decision to get engaged and married at a relatively young age, characterizing marriage as an "ideal and something that is important to be done early in a Jew's life. This is the path I've chosen, and although it is somewhat out of the norm, I feel that I definitely made the right decision."

A Stern junior, who spoke on condition of anonymity, believed that concern over the phenomenon of women marrying at a young age was being illogically focused specifically on Stern College. "This is not a specifically Stern-related happening. It's a reality that *frum* girls get married young. In fact, all of my close friends who don't attend Stern are married or engaged already. I go to Stern and I'm not engaged yet. I think it's foolish to indicate that this is somehow something that only happens at Stern or to interpret this as a 'Stern issue.'"

Most students agree that the appropriate age for marriage varies in every circumstance. Establishing formal parameters "for when it is acceptable to get married" would just backfire," remarked a YC junior.

Rabbi Blau reflected this sentiment in referring to YU as "too diverse to categorize. That's why I can't commit to a general 'YU formula'—it doesn't exist." Every YU student has a place within this complex fabric of divergent ideals. There is no single correct way for all people. There is not an ideal age. There is, unfortunately, pressure.

Ha'Isha Nikneis:

The Drama, The Trauma, & The Truth About *Shidduchim* And Marriages At YU

around you is getting engaged." Additionally, Bielory mentioned, "when a student gets engaged, her door is decorated and she is treated royally. This is all very appealing to other students around her. There is also a significant stigma in graduating from Stern without being married." According to Bielory, these factors contribute greatly to the high proportion of SCW women who get engaged quickly during their college years. Bielory noted that "this unfortunate trend of rushing into engagements is in large part responsible for the wave of broken engagements that we've experienced of late. Some women are unfortunately settling for people who are not suitable for them because of the pressure they are feeling."

Other Stern students disagreed with the assessment that there exists such extreme pressure. One junior, who withheld her name, commented that "pressure exists, but it's not all-pervasive. I don't personally feel any pressure, but I know others who do. Obviously, a lot of people have friends who try to set them up with guys, but the pressure is not extreme. These offers can be declined." Additionally, she asserted that "engagement is a distraction from the college schedule. If I were to get engaged now, I wouldn't have time to go out with friends and participate in activities the way I can now."

Some YC students, although acknowledging the greater pressure at SCW, questioned the claim that there is virtually no pressure for men at YU. Brent Kessler, a YC sophomore, commented, "although I don't personally experience any pressure right now, it stands to reason that many guys, especially the upperclassmen, do. If there is incredible pressure experienced at

avoiding marriage pressure while at YU. "I didn't want to contend with pressure for marriage while at YU, so I went ahead and basically got engaged almost before I got here." This innovative preemptive strike worked well; however, Harow acknowledged that "it has definitely affected my learning and secular studies as well as other pursuits here at Yeshiva University. Thinking about marriage and dating can be cumbersome and takes a lot of time." This is the flip-side of the scenario. After the frequent distractions of going out with potential mates, once you locate one, an even greater diversion appears.

Others at YC, such as recently engaged senior Matthew Rosen, experienced "no pressure from the YU environment to get engaged." He concurred, though, that "it has added some extra pressures in terms of handling my course load and extra-curricular activities now that I have to plan a wedding. It is in a theoretical sense worthwhile to wait until after graduation to get married, since your plans for future life and student life may otherwise be affected. But, if I had to do it again (get engaged prior to graduation), I would."

A virtually universal theme expressed by both YC and SCW students, whether they have directly experienced pressure to get married or not, is that the general anxiety that permeates the environment of the campuses is an unfortunate and irrational consequence of an overly-formulaic structure for when one should get married. One frustrated YC junior commented, "there is no established incubation period for marriage. You have to be ready!" A Stern junior added, "the pressure to conform is the

Recent Pay Increases Still Fall Short of Mark

continued from page one

underpaid. One professor gave a preliminary estimate of this year's salaries: a full professor will receive \$55,570 — 8% above 1995-96, an associate professor will receive \$45,792 — 6% above 1995-96 and assistant professor will receive \$42,400 — 4% above 1995-96. Though only estimates, these figures are based on salary information gathered from numerous professors. Adding an average increase of only 4% (a conservative estimate, including cost of living and inflation adjustments) to the salaries of professors at other universities, a discrepancy of \$15,000 to \$20,000 exists. There are also deviations in the associate and assistant professor range, but they are significantly less than those of full professors.

Over the last two years there has been a significant increase in professors' salaries. Dr. William Lee points to "the past two years of substantial increases on average as the first period of time since I've been here that the university has bettered faculty salaries vis a vis inflation." Dr. Lee's sentiments seem to mirror the opinions of most of the faculty and administration. The mean increase over the last two years is estimated to have been about 6% per year. In fact, Dean of YC Dr. Norman Adler stated that, "we've given a percentage raise that is larger than any school that we know of." Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. William Schwartz added that "this is happening at a time where most other universities are offering significantly less for raises."

In 1979, the professors of Yeshiva University lost what they still consider to be a monumentally important Supreme Court case. The professors had attempted to form a union under the National Labor Relations Act, in order to collectively bargain for their salaries. The University sued the union, denying its right to exist. Eventually, the case went to the Supreme Court, which ruled against the union, claiming that the professors were filling managerial and supervising capacities, rather than acting as mere employees.

According to many of the current professors, the ripples of this lawsuit can still be felt today. With no collective body to represent them, the professors of Yeshiva University must fend for themselves when requesting a raise or renegotiating a contract, and, until the past two years, they feel they have been unsuccessful.

The Powers That Be

Currently, the salary process proceeds as follows: Deans Karen Bacon of SCW, Norman Adler of YC, and Ira Jaskoll of SSSB evaluate their faculty and submit a salary proposal to Vice President for Academic Affairs William Schwartz. Schwartz also receives the budget allotment for faculty members from the board of trustees. Then Schwartz, consulting the Deans' recommendations and the board's budget allotment, makes his final decisions as to what salary each faculty member will receive.

In response to the findings of the newsletter, Bernard Pittinski, head of Accounting, said that "Unless you put an endowment in context, it has no meaning. The true measure of the value of an endowment is twofold. The first is the

purpose of an endowment and the second is how much endowed money you have behind each student. If you take our student body and divide it into our endowment, you will find that we are not heavily endowed." He further explained that the endowment must be divided among all the colleges under Yeshiva University's auspices.

Dr. Edward Levy of the Music Department, along with many of the faculty, disagreed. "If you've heard what the president gets on perks," said Dr. Levy, "there is money. If you've heard what some administrators get, there is money." Dean Adler stated that "We're OK and alive, especially compared to 20 years ago, but we're not wealthy." VP Schwartz argued that "it depends what you use as your comparison. If you compare us to schools of similar tuition, we fare very well in that regard. We are at the top and not at the bottom."

But, as many professors and administrators pointed out, YU generally does not compare itself to universities of similar tuition, especially after having attained the national rank of 45 in *US News and World Report*.

Money Allotted for Other Needs

The second point of contention is the apportionment of the money that is available. In the October 1996 AAUP newsletter, questions are raised as to funds transferred out of an account known as "Current Unrestricted Fund." This account contains money that has not been previously allocated. In this newsletter, Dr. Haahr contends that "During the years 1990-1995, YU transferred a significant portion of its current operating revenues into other funds ... from which they have not been expended. These transfers are purely elective." In other words, money that could have been used to raise professors' salaries was instead placed into other "funds," for no apparent reason. This transfer of funds often leaves the "Current Unrestricted Fund" in a deficit.

According to her interpretation of events, then, the claim made by YU that it had no money to raise professor's salaries was nothing but creative bookkeeping. Dr. Haahr, in the AAUP newsletter, offers the following analogy: "At the end of the month, after paying all your bills, you have \$100 remaining in your checking account. You decide to put \$50 in your children's college fund and the remaining \$50 in a 'capital acquisition fund' for purchase of a new car. Your 'net worth' has thus increased by \$100. The following month you are committed to putting equivalent amounts into the two accounts and you do so, despite the fact that your bills have been a bit higher and your checking account is now in deficit. When your daughter then asks for a raise in her allowance, you agree that she deserves it but, showing her the checking account deficit, you tell her you can't afford it. What you omit to tell her, however, is that you have made a 'management' decision to move \$200 from your 'operating budget' into another 'fund' and that your 'net worth' is actually greater than it was two months earlier."

Mr. Pittinski also responded to this

allegation: "What's missing from the analyses and what they [the professors] don't want to deal with, is to what use the money was put. The transfers to the 'Loan Fund' are for student aid and the transfers to the 'Unexpended Plant Fund' are needed to continually maintain the labs and building of the universities ... Yes, we don't have to transfer funds and yes, we can let our buildings deteriorate ... It was not done to hide the money."

In response Dr. Haahr readily agreed that Yeshiva needs to maintain the campus and provide sufficient student aid. But if the "Unexpended Plant fund" and the "Loan Fund" grow each and every year, meaning that the money is accumulating because it is not being used, that might reflect an intentional over-budgeting to these funds.

As mentioned earlier, Schwartz decides upon the final salaries based on the recommendations of Deans Adler, Bacon and Jaskoll. Dean Adler insisted that his criteria for this recommendation are purely merit, "Merit is the basis at Yeshiva ... The standard three criteria are teaching, research and service." Vice President Schwartz concurred, as did Dean Bacon.

In response Dr. Levy said that "VP Schwartz hasn't the faintest idea as to who is meritorious. He's never seen any of us teach. If anybody is incompetent to judge salaries, it's Dr. Schwartz. Luckily the Deans are the ones who make the recommendations. The faculty is protected by the competence of the Deans." Dr. Carol Silver also offered this critique, saying, "the faculty is never consulted for their input on salaries."

Furthermore, many professors are unhappy with the concept of merit based raises. According to Dr. Lee, "There is considerable faculty opposition to the whole principle. The consensus is that everyone is meritorious. Also, many faculty members are in effect saying, 'talk to me about merit once everybody earns a competitive salary.'" Dr. Silver agrees with Dr. Lee and says that when "the base salaries are where they should be, then merit may be discussed. If everybody were making what they should be we would not object strenuously." Dr. Levy added, "Don't give us icing on the cake till we actually have the cake."

Dean Adler countered that although "segments of the faculty population demographically aren't where they should be, I intend to see it raised ... How do you get there? Different schools use different techniques ... We believe that we can bring the faculty where they should be, but in bringing a group along you do it by rewarding individuals. It's a meritocracy."

Ultimately, the professors of Yeshiva University still feel "they are paid undeserved low salaries, almost without exception," according to Dr. Noyes Bartholomew. "The bottom line is, one can't keep a family going on a salary at Yeshiva University ... I know professors who have driven a cab. I've done similar things in my field ... If we earned what public high school teachers earn, that is about \$60,000, we would be happy." Agreeing, Dr. Silver said that her salary is still \$15,000 below the norm. Dr. Levy, a tenured professor of Music, disclosed his salary at a little over \$50,000, significantly below what most tenured professors receive.

In a scathing statement, Dr. Levy blamed Dr. Lamm for low faculty salaries. "Nobody is as responsible as much as Dr. Lamm is, because the buck stops there. Dr. Socol could never do anything that he does not approve of. If Dr. Lamm went once to the board of trustees and said 'you can't allow me to embarrass myself for my faculty, [which I do] by having poorly paid faculty,' then the board of trustees probably would have responded. He never said it after all these years. They claim there is no money, that's not true. ... I don't believe that Sheldon [Socol] is cheating, but he should not have responsibility for academic decisions."

Despite their disappointment, these professors continue to teach. Dr. Bartholomew explained, "No one in his right mind goes into this profession thinking they are going to become rich. People become professors because they love it ... Our administration has offered this same argument and it's tough to counter, but it's indicative of the market place argument, [that] 'we're going to pay what the market will afford.' We remain because finding another [job] can be challenging. Also, one buys a house, one has children in schools and colleges. It's not a particularly attractive situation to move, nor is it that simple. Also, the students are wonderful."

Most professors and administrators noted the idealism involved in teaching. "I am deeply committed to this institution and the education of Jewish women at Stern," said Dr. Silver. "People don't want to and can't leave. I couldn't see leaving. The market is dried up in terms of jobs. I have really good students and terrific colleagues." Dr. Levy agreed: "I've decided to stay because the market is extraordinarily difficult and tough, but even more so, the students allow me to have more job satisfaction than I would get at another school."

What remains to be seen, however, is how long professors will be willing to sacrifice higher salaries for more fulfilling jobs.

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Two Guys, Twelve Cities, Fourteen Days

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Silberhorn, the only kosher hotel in Switzerland is found, and where we personally met Avraham Fried and his wife, who treated us Yeshiva boys to a free meal (a three-course meal: I had roast beef and asparagus, vegetable soup, and then liver steak).

With only seconds to spare, we boarded the last outgoing train leaving Grindelwald, and traveled to Florence (Firenze), Italy. The Italians didn't respect the International Student Travel Association card, which had served us so well until then. "Italians give discounts to Italian students," said a receptionist at the famous Palazzo Vecchio museum, which houses works of Michelangelo, Vasari, Raphael, and Dante, to name a few.

In addition to the museum, we visited the beautiful Florence Shul, a model of which can be found in the Gottesman Library. Although several thousand sefarim were destroyed during a flood in 1955, this Orthodox shul still functions.

Wednesday, January 23, 1996:

From Florence we traveled 45 minutes to Venice. Though the train was packed with as many commuters as the F train during rush hour, we somehow managed to find a seat for both our luggage and ourselves.

The key to a successful day of touring in Venice is to lock up your luggage for a minimal fee in a vault located within the central train terminal. Make sure to guard your ticket/key well since there aren't

many service technicians available.

Venice is literally a "City on Water", where people travel to and from the marketplace with their own boat, taxiboat, gondola, or commuter boat. The city boasts a low crime rate and polluted water. In our estimation, Venice was the most difficult city to figure out, so we were advised in advance to just "get lost." Sure enough, after two hours spent searching for the Jewish Ghetto, we ended up right back where we started.

Baffled, we walked toward Palazzo San Marco, only to stumble into the Royal Palace of Venice, a must-see, where, to our surprise, we saw a man with a beard and black hat boarding a boat. Quickly we rushed toward the boat, jumping on it as it began to leave. We yelled "Shalom aleichem!" to get the man's attention. As it turned out, the man was the Lubavicher Rabbi of the Venice Jewish community. He welcomed us and invited us to join him for a meal at his home. We jumped at the offer and after a short ride and ten minute walk, we were busy feasting on our first home-cooked meal in days.

Walking, even when we didn't know where we were going was thrilling. Looking around, we saw a number of mezuzah markings on buildings which were once inhabited by Jewish people prior to World War II.



The Matterhorn, Swiss Alps

Thursday, January 24, 1996:

We found Belgium to be the most unexciting country on our tour. Nonetheless, the country had a few redeeming qualities. In Brussels, for example, we stopped at the Parliament, as well as the National Theater, Military, and Car Museums. These are good places if you're interested and can easily occupy you for a day, if not two.

Unlike the majority of major cities in Europe, Antwerp was home to a number of kosher restaurants including pizza, and Chinese, as well as bakeries and delis all of which are located in the heart of the Jewish community.

Sunday, January 27, 1996:

The day before we left for home, we took a planned excursion to Brugge, located on the northernmost tip of Belgium. On a clear day from a good vantage point, one can see the

southern tip of England. This city stands apart from other cities in Belgium for its majestic beauty. Like Venice, Brugge doesn't have cars (or very few at best), however there is no lack of horses, deserted streets and open parks left for tourists and townspeople to visit and frequent. The noise level is so low, you'd think the city was asleep. It's a great place to visit.

The following morning, 14 days after we arrived, we took off from Schlusel Airport in Amsterdam, Holland.

We had the time of our lives. I know that you won't experience all the same follies that we did, but if you try, you should build up your own share of wild and crazy stories to treasure from an adventure you'll never forget. Don't pass up this wonderful opportunity to go; it may not knock again.

Macs Let Loose Before Home Crowd

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contest."

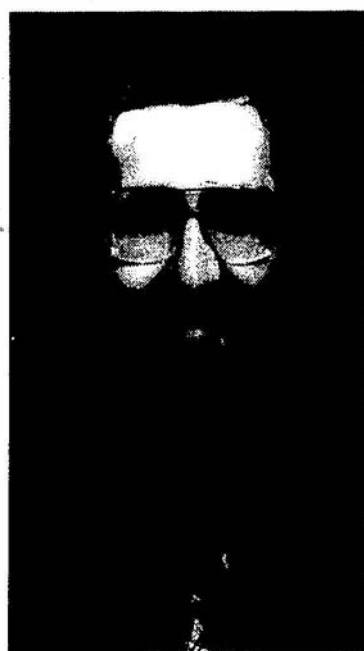
In addition to the slam dunk contest, the Macs showcased their sharp shooting ability, as the Macs best spotted up from downtown. Point Guard Ira Landsman, Alon Zaibert, center and Co-Captain Steve Kupferman, and small forward Neil Bronstien battled each other. Each participant was to hit as many shots as possible in one minute. After Landsman defeated Bronstien and Kupferman beat Zaibert, the two winners were set to face each other. Kupferman went on to win, sinking six shots to Landsman's five.

Spectators were given a shot to show they "got skills" too. Four people were called out of the stands and were instructed to circle a cone several times and then take a lay-up shot in as little time as possible. The winner was Avi Karesh, who received the Midnight Madness T-

shirt worn by the Macabees that evening. Guard Landsman hoped the event got "the school more involved with the basketball team and improved school spirit." The team hopes it will make up for the small number of home games in the upcoming season.

In the final event, spectators were again called out to try to win a pair of Nike sneakers. They took shots first from the foul line, then from the 3-point line and finally from the half-court line. Six participants took the challenge. Though none of them hit the half-court shot to win the sneakers, several hit the foul shot to win T-shirts. The remaining T-shirts and the pair of sneakers were raffled off.

The Macs regular season schedule begins November 23 in Boston against Massachusetts College of Pharmacy.



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Editorials OPINION

The Rabin Assassination: One Year Later

BY RABBI YOSEF BLAU

Last Thursday was marked in Israel by commemorations in memory of the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. The first anniversary of his assassination produced many articles both about his life and the effects and implications of the assassination. In the orthodox Jewish community of America, on the other hand, the day passed without comment. While admittedly some articles were written, and in Yeshiva an impressive commission of high level academicians was assembled, nothing has changed in the actual schooling. In effect, the event is seen as not requiring any ongoing reaction.

The terrorist attacks during the year, which transformed the Israeli political climate, were somehow seen as balancing the assassination on a moral plane as well. This inability to separate political positions from religious values is an unfortunate consequence of Orthodox involvement in Israeli politics. To one for whom opposing the return of Chevron is a halakhic requirement, not merely a security concern, a goal of preventing its return might partially justify extreme actions. Once one accepts the argument that the emergence of the state of Israel and its victory in the Six-Day War have demonstrated the divine hand in Jewish history, Netanyahu's winning the election after the murder can also be seen as a sign of Hashem's approval. Ironically, a similar argument can be made about Hamas's terrorist acts.

I suspect that much of our community, while not supportive of Yigal Amir, are not unequivocally opposed to what he did. It is more palatable to express this by suggesting conspiracy theories or by explaining how a misguided idealist could misinterpret religious teachings about *rodef* or *kanait*. Even washing our hands of any guilt by describing his actions as that of an isolated individual serves to soften any impetus for serious self-analysis or change that would otherwise have resulted. The unquestionable fact that we are, as it is, subject to orthodoxy-bashing also leads to our being defensive and making every attempt to paint this action as one for which we are not, as a community, responsible.

Tragically, such behavior only invites more similar actions. We must learn to differentiate between deep sincere religious commitment and the misguided certainty that we are privy to G-d's plans. *Ahavat Yisrael* neither means hating non-Jews nor excluding those secular Jews who do not share our nationalistic values. Religious

nationalism, while a legitimate approach, is not obviously true. Nor is it true that religion and nationalism are automatically connected.

Perhaps my concern is somewhat exaggerated. There has admittedly been a toning down of rhetoric, though this may merely reflect the change of government. Those in rabbinical leadership positions who had previously openly participated at meetings where extreme statements condemning Prime Ministers Rabin and Peres were made, are now clearly avoiding doing or saying anything provocative. During the campaign before the Israeli elections, Yeshiva students, while strong in their feelings, were restrained in their manner of expressing their preferences.

Nevertheless, many of us see two camps with visions so far apart as to virtually eliminate any common ground. While most analysts in Israel see the possibility of moderate elements in Likud and Labor working together, many in the orthodox community here identify with what is perceived in Israel as the extreme. Such opinions are expressed weekly in such publications as *The Jewish Press* with no acknowledgment that acts of violence have been committed by those who see their role as defending the right of Jews to the full territory of Israel from Jewish as well as Arab enemies.

As long as one's opposition is not allowed to have any legitimate complaints and all actions done to further one's cause are defended, the critical lesson has not been learned. The fact that other groups may stereotype us and have their own hatreds should not prevent us from creating a climate of respect for the sincerity of others despite their radically different views. Incitement to violence must be condemned and provocations avoided.

I suspect that the lure of messianism, with the resultant rejection of realism and pragmatism, is still strong. It is noteworthy that the Rav Z.T.L. (in a letter to *Hadoar* in 1960 and subsequently included in a few collections of his articles) stated that the term *Meshichiut*, the corresponding Hebrew word, was foreign to his vocabulary. Until we drop the certainty that political control of all of biblical Israel will bring the Messiah, the possibility of additional Yigal Amirs who will feel justified in preventing traitors from destroying this unfolding process, will remain real.

On Israel: The Lesson Not Yet Learned

BY JOSEPH J. SUSSMAN

Here's a little news flash for those of you who might be too engrossed in midterms. This past Monday marked one year since Yigal Amir murdered Yitzhak Rabin Z"L.

To the denizens of the three block island stretching from 184th street to 187th street along Amsterdam Avenue, this bit of information might come as somewhat of a surprise.

Nobody at Yeshiva College felt it necessary to officially commemorate the first *yahrtzeit* of the late Prime Minister of Israel. No memorial *shiur*. No commemorative lecture. *Noteshuva* campaign. Nothing! Not YCSC. Not SOY. Not The Israel Club. Not the administration. Nobody! Do we feel no responsibility to remember and commemorate the day when a Religious Zionist Jew assassinated the Prime Minister of Israel? Do we feel that nothing is to be learned from such a tragedy?

I will not argue here whether or not Rabin, the man, deserves our recognition and commemoration. Personally, I don't think there's any argument. However, November 4, 1995 also represents the first time a "religious" Jew, or any Jew, killed a Prime Minister of Israel. It marks the day when the Jewish nation became a nation like all others in that we too assassinate our leaders to vent our displeasure with their policies. For this regretful reason alone, the day merits our attention.

After Rabin's death, many leaders within our community justifiably called for introspection. Many authorities strongly denounced the murder and implored all of us to dislodge those who agreed with Amir's actions from within our community. Others went further and specifically stressed that we not label the murderer a crazy lunatic. Instead, we ought to recognize that just as before the assassination we could have singled out Yigal Amir as a paragon of our community, so too after the tragedy, we must take responsibility for his crass actions. Almost everyone agreed that the lack of tolerance and understanding between disagreeing parties had caused tremendous hatred. All of us pledged to work on becoming more sensitive to one another and to those with whom we disagree.

YU has taken some steps in assisting us towards furthering our sense of tolerance. At Freshmen Orientation, Rabbi Lamm eloquently addressed a crowded Weissberg Commons on this

topic. Rabbi Avraham Sherman, the *Av Beit Din* in Tel Aviv, was invited to YU in part to give *shiurim* dealing with topics related to sensitivity towards others.

However, one merely has to look at the facade of Morg to get an idea of the work that remains to be done in teaching tolerance and non-violence. I will not go so far as to say that another Yigal Amir presently resides on this campus. I don't believe that. Nevertheless, as of two weeks ago, the three flags that adorned the windows facing Amsterdam Avenue between 185th and 186th street were a Canadian flag, an Israeli flag and a black and yellow flag with a clenched fist blended into a Magen David representing the illegal terrorist group - Kahane Chai. Kahane Chai is an organization which not only employs violence to achieve its goals, but also glorifies the murderous actions of Baruch Goldstein and Yigal Amir. That such a person resides on campus doesn't bother me so much. Constitutionally, he may even be permitted to display the flag. However, that we allow such a student to exhibit this flag in his window without approaching him and convincing him otherwise is outrageous. While there certainly lies room for debate on Israel's peace policies, we must remain within certain boundaries. Glorifying and supporting needless violence and murder falls out of bounds.

Frankly, I don't think he is alone in his way of thinking. How many of us when reading last week that Israeli authorities pressed charges on a religious Jew for intentionally pouring hot tea on Yael Dayan reacted with a remark akin to: "maybe she deserved it"? Violence must not be the answer. Disagreement must reveal its face through verbal arguments and must not escalate to physical attacks. We must strongly denounce and isolate those who feel otherwise. Let November 4, 1995 serve to remind us of the depths to which we can sink if we are not sensitive to those with whom we disagree.

Editor's Note:

Joseph J. Sussman, a senior in SSSB, co-founded the Round Table Discussion Group on campus along with David Y. Greenstone.

LETTERS

To The Editor

To See and to Be Seen

To the Editor:

Every year, the most notable and influential leaders of American Jewry, unabashedly displaying their vibrant variety, gather together to debate and to discuss, to plan and to allocate, to see and to be seen, in a giant forum that has become known as the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations. This year, November 13-16, inside the hallowed halls of downtown Seattle's Convention Center, participants from around the world will hear from the likes of Bibi Netanyahu (no sitting Prime Minister of Israel has ever missed the event), Natan Scharansky, and Shimon Peres, and will sit over a cup of Starbucks espresso with educators like Yitz Greenberg and with the likes of Richard Joel, International Director of Hillel. Outside, trapped in a maze of police cordons, hordes of activists will be protesting and counter-protesting. Hundreds of undergraduates from across the nation will fly in, many to take part in a special student journalism program called "Do the Write Thing."

And yet, one university will be conspicuously absent from all this bustling activity on the cutting edge of Jewish communal life. Since mid-September, I have been naively appealing to the powers that be within that mythically aloof entity we call the "YU Administration" to ask that a student delegation be sent to proudly represent our esteemed (first-tier) college. I wrote to the deans: "YU, to assume the mantle of youthful Jewish leadership and to attain the positive recognition it so obviously deserves, would be conspicuously derelict were it to lack a strong and vocal representation." I argued and implored and beseeched and supplicated, all to no avail. I was either ignored or politely rebuffed. My pleas fell on deaf ears, and as a consequence, whereas our friendly rivals to the south, the Jewish Theological Seminary, for instance, will have 11 students (many at least partially subsidized by J.T.S.), a Vice-Chancellor, and a booth to represent them at the GA, YU will

have nothing and nobody. (Two RIETS students will participate, but as Wexner Scholars and only incidentally as YU students.)

Were this only a personal gripe, an individual expression of brittle bitterness, it would have a place in the venerable pages of *The Commentator*. But it is not. It is symptomatic of a much larger, much deeper malaise on campus, of pathetic apathy and scornful indifference. As one head of a national Jewish organization told me: "If there is to be any influence by the modern Orthodox, the GA is the place where it should happen. If one of the goals of YU is to produce well-rounded Jewish leaders, this does not augur well."

Our abstention not only allows other groups and denominations to set the national Jewish agenda, but also perpetuates the myth that Orthodox Jewry, safely ensconced within its dimly lit *batei midrash*, ghettoizes itself; that it insulates itself from - and even shuns - the more global concerns of the larger Jewish community. And it is, in a respect, true. We are indeed guilty of being *poresh min ha'tzibbur* - segregating ourselves from the interests of the larger community - in the most direct sense of the term. It seems we in YU look inward to the point of narcissism. How can we hope to exert positive influence, to foster authentic Jewish values, to exemplify Jewish ideals, without deigning to leave the confines of 185th and Amsterdam? Seclusion is comfortable, but never healthy.

Yeshiva University, our much beloved bastion of modern Orthodoxy, should affirm not only the synthesis of Jewish learning with the greatest of secular knowledge, but also the synthesis of learning and activism - at the very least participation in Jewish communal life. Its students should learn (if not now, when?) never to divorce their learning from their public behaviors. Judaism is meant to be implemented, to instill in its adherents the positive commitment to be involved in the surrounding society. Today we have failed both ourselves and our fellows.

Benjamin Balint, YC '98

Just Plain Madness

To the Editor:

On Sunday night, October 27, I attended the midnight madness basketball festivities hosted by the Yeshiva University Athletic Department. While I will admit that I had a fun time watching the slam dunk and three point contests and enjoyed the free pizza and drinks (I mean come on which college guy doesn't enjoy free food), I left the event with a bitter feeling toward the event and the athletic department as a whole.

My problem can be summed up in one telling scene. While leaving the MSAC with some friends, there happened to be four local Hispanic youths in front of me and while neither I nor my friends walked out having won any of the prizes, each of these youths was the proud owner of brand new T-shirts, thanks to the athletic department at Yeshiva University.

Now let's backtrack: why these people were even at this event, I am not quite sure. Am I upset that I personally did not win a T-shirt? Well quite honestly, yes, but I would not be quite as upset if a fellow student had won the T-shirt. True, the raffle tickets were given out free, but maybe they should only have been given to Y.U. students. In the various shooting competitions throughout the night, only approximately half of the participants were students. This was an event designed to drum up student interest in the basketball program, yet in the end it seemed like it was to drum up neighborhood interest.

While I am the one speaking up, I am not the only one disturbed by this; many students agree with my point. I have even witnessed many students in the gym gripe about having to wait out a game while some of these local youths play. Their complaint is "Why should I, who pays tuition here to use these facilities, have to sit on the side while these guys play?" Now, I understand that these kids come around to help Vic and (Coach) Stan (Watson) out and in turn are allowed to play, but this is not always understood by all

students and needs to be clarified. Still, that does not mean they should have partaken in the festivities, where prizes from student-designated funds should wind up in their hands, instead of the students'. Let me clarify this: I do not blame these people for being there, rather I blame the Athletic Department for the way the event was run.

Now, to squeeze two problems into one. I was further irked the next night while talking to my intramural basketball captain when I found out that the Athletic Department expected the students to pay for uniforms for the league. It wasn't that I could not afford it, or am too cheap to pay for a uniform. But I had just the night before witnessed the athletic department spending lavishly on the basketball program, giving out free T-shirts and other prizes; surely they could find funds to pay for T-shirts in a program that the Athletic Department runs! Intramural Basketball officially includes more than one tenth of the student body! In what other area could the Athletic Department give to the most possible students? When I mentioned this fact to my captain he brought it up with Steve Young, the Athletic Director, who agreed to subsidize the uniforms. Well, Bravo! But wait, he refused to order the uniforms until all of the student money was turned in. This was because he was afraid some students will not pay, as he claims happened last year. So, I have an idea for Mr. Young: spend some money on the *students* and go ahead and order the uniforms, but don't give them out until the student pays you the subsidized fee for his uniform. And what if a student doesn't pay and you are stuck with leftover uniforms? Here is another idea: you can use the extra uniforms next year.

So I ask Mr. Young, and the Athletic Department of Yeshiva University as a whole: isn't it about time that you began doing things for the larger student body rather than just for a selected few?

Yudy Sheinfeld, SSSB '98

Weightroom or Waitroom

To the Editor:

The current state of the weight room is a subject that deserves immediate attention. To the average new student entering Yeshiva University, the weight room may be viewed as sufficient and acceptable. However, this is a feeling that is sure to wear off in the years that follow.

As a senior and frequent visitor of the weight room, I can honestly say, that the present weight room leaves much to be desired. As a freshman, I too was satisfied with the state of the equipment. Nevertheless, over the past two years, when I entered the gym after summer vacation, I was greeted by the same machines that I had bid farewell

to, the year before. True, I was almost fooled into believing the gym had been graced with new equipment, but as I took a closer look, I found the equipment had been rearranged — their way of making the gym appear new and different.

The equipment in the weight room is severely outdated, and several of the machines frequently require fixing. This can be attributed to the many students who enter the weight room for the first time and improperly use the equipment. For example, students often toss the weights around, causing them to loosen. Requiring students to take a one time class on how to properly use the weight room, would be a good solution.

In addition, the size of the room itself should be taken into consideration. On any given night the room can be so overcrowded that one loses the desire to "work out." A larger room would not only accommodate more students, but it would also allow room for new equipment. When asked to comment about these and other problems, Steve Young, Athletic Director of Yeshiva University, was eager to respond. He stated that two proposals were presented, in July, to Jeffrey Rosengarten, Director of Supporting Service Administration. The first proposal was to move the game room downstairs and the weightroom upstairs, with additional renovations. The second proposal was to use the current weight room strictly for free

weights, while using the upstairs for exercise machines. Furthermore, a request was made to upgrade the machines to those produced by Trotter, found in many of the nation's leading gyms. Although these solutions seem sensible, they have fallen on deaf ears.

It is a disgrace that students must wait an obscene amount of time to make use of the limited resources present in the weightroom. Free time is severely restricted at YU, therefore students should not have to waste their time waiting to use the machines. This is a problem that should be addressed immediately to ensure the appropriate changes by this time next year.

Josh Klein



The 1996-1997 Yeshiva University Macabee Basketball Team

Midnight Madness in the MSAC

BY YONI BAK

A hungry crowd eager to see their 1996-97 YU Macabees and to eat some free pizza piled into the Max Stern Athletic Center just before midnight on October 27 for some high flying acrobatics as Co-Captain Yehudah Halpert led the YU Maccabees out onto the court. As the players dribbled around the court taking lay-ups, Small Forward Brian "Air" Wein and Center Alex "Shak" Shakhmurov exploded to the hoop, electrifying the fans and psyching them up for the monster jams that were to come later in the program.

"Midnight Madness," as the event is known on college campuses across the nation, is a celebration of the end of the period during which the National Collegiate Athletic Association's rule bar college teams from practicing. Wein and shooting guard Alon "Oak" Zaibert suggested the introduction of the ritual last year, but it never materialized. This year, with the help of the Student

Council, the Dean of Students and Athletic Department Assistant Director Stan Watson, who patterned the night after a similar exhibition at Manhattan College, Macs fans were treated to a rare "letting loose" by the team.

In an arial assault blitz Wein, Jacobson and Shakhmurov took turns dunking the ball in various extravagant styles. After a display of Kiss-the-Rims, 360 reversals and windmill dunks, "Shak" and "Air" tied and faced each other in a one-on-one competition. This time Wein was declared the sole winner, and showed his appreciation by blowing kisses to the crowd.

Mr. Watson was confidently optimistic after seeing Wein practice dunking in the gym before the game. "He was working with his brother, where his brother threw one off the backboard and he caught it and threw it down. He did a couple of windmills and reverse dunks. He looked like the strong favorite in this

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Macs Cross Finish Line

BY COMMENTATOR SPORTS STAFF

The 1996 track season was unique in many ways. It was the smallest roster during Coach Stan Watson's nine year tenure as Yeshiva cross country coach. It also was a year of serious transition which saw the cross country team post a (1-4) record. The lone, but glorious victory was posted on October 20, against fellow IAC opponents Mt. St. Vincent, and Polytechnic University of Riverdale, Bronx, and Brooklyn, respectively.

The season opened with a scrimmage run at Vassar College. The highlight of this meet was first time cross country participant, Moshe Abesera, posting an excellent sub 38:00 minute run. Moshe, a sophomore at Yeshiva will grace the Macs this season as an additional point guard. According to Coach Watson "Moshe, is a very promising runner with

a lot of heart." Other seasonal standouts (and newcomers) were Joel Keizner, Joel Korb, and Howard Shapiro, who were no less than champions in the eyes of their grateful coach, for their responsible and respectable running during the entire five meet season.

Other races included the IAC Championship/dual Halloween Invitational, which on October 27, saw Maritime winning the championship and Yeshiva, unfortunately, failing to medal. There was also Steven's Tech Invitational in Jersey City. The season fittingly ended on Sunday November 3, the same day as the New York City Marathon.

The Commentator would like to commend all those who trained and competed for this year's track season. Cross country is never easy. Ask anyone who has recently ran 5 miles.

YESHIVA SPORTS

Intramural Basketball Update

BY COMMENTATOR SPORTS STAFF

Week One

Grizzlies 42 Nuggets 33

Commissioner Neikrugs Nuggets, led by Joseph Dykman's 15 points, lost this years intramural opener to John Lifschutz's Grizzlies. Not Even Tal Sharon's impeccable three point shooting could keep pace with the Grizzlies' Josh Hasten, who led all scorers with 22 points.

Celtics 46 Lakers 39

David Samet scored 11 and Avi "The Chief" Karesh had 13 in a losing effort as the Celtics, led by Dizik's stellar 18 point performance, walked all over the Lakers as if they were the pavement lining Rodeo Drive.

T'Wolves 51 Cavs 50

You thought you had had seen it all when Marky "Don't You Dare Call a Foul on Me" Goldman was tossed from the game early in the first half by Referee/VP Netanel Leibowitz. There was more to come, lots more, well, at least offensively. Six players scored in double figures (Graubard, Bransdorfer and Levine for the T'Wolves; Weinblatt, Wild, and Miller for the Cavs) as this see-saw battle culminated in a double overtime victory for the superbly coached T'Wolves.

Clippers 39 Raptors 35

For each team, only four words are necessary to sum up this overtime game. For the Clippers: Daniel "Big Country" Lowe (18 points). For the Raptors: Turnovers, turnovers, more turnovers (20+ turnovers).

Week Two

Knicks 48 Nuggets 36

Cavs 58 Grizzlies 51

Celtics 37 T'wolves 31

Lakers 42 Raptors 40

Week Three

Clippers 38 Lakers 31

Pesky guards were the story in this one and the Clippers have an abundance of them. Though Daniel "Big Country" Lowe did score 24 points, it was his guard teammates, with their steals and fast breaks, that put this game away early. Samet's Lakers did make a run at the Clippers, but fell too short in the end.

Knicks 34 Grizzlies 32

The game was close and the Knicks won, but the story in this nailbiter was team turmoil. One did not need to be Scooby Doo to hear the constant bickering between teammates, on both sides of the scorers table. If either of these teams plans on making it to the post-season, they must work out the problems, or at least trade them to another team.

T'wolves Won; Raptors Lost

Sussman's team was never in this one as the Feder-led T'Wolves slaughtered the Raptors by a score so obscene, even the book-keeper lost track. One bright spot for the Raptors was the strong effort inside by Daniel "Saismon" Appel who led the team in scoring with 13 points.

Nuggets vs. Bulls *

Standings

Cavs 1-1

Celtics 2-0

Clippers 2-0

Grizzlies 1-2

Knicks 2-0

Lakers 1-2

Nuggets 0-2

Raptors 0-3

T'Wolves 2-1

* Too late for this edition

The Commentator

500 West 185th Street
New York, NY 10033