

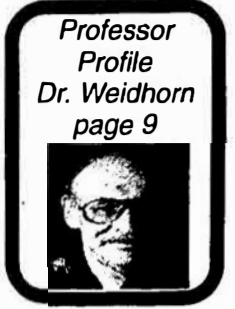
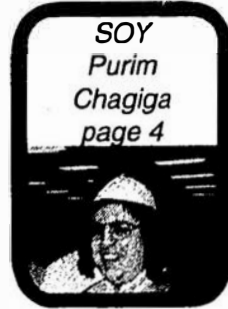
Yeshiva University Commentator

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Rabbis Goldwicht, Ben Haim, Simon, and Blau amongst hundreds of others dancing at the annual SOY Purim Chagiga.

Arts Festival

Students Display Artistic Ability

BY AARON KLEIN

The Second Annual Yeshiva College Arts Festival, arranged by YC Dean Norman Adler and students Harold Willig and Yonaton Kagonoff, took place the last week in February, with a series of events that were open for both faculty and students. According to the administration, the aim of the festival was to stress the importance of students exercising intellectual and artistic talents outside the classroom.

Dean Adler instituted the festival last year in hopes of enlarging the aesthetic scope of Yeshiva College by giving the students a chance to artistically express themselves. He calls the festival a "playground for the mind and spirit." Although the faculty provided the general background, Adler asserted that it was the students who made the this event possible.

Dean Jesionowski feels that the classroom is where intellectual life begins, but forums such as the Arts Festival are where intellectual life is expanded by students deriving pleasure from each others accomplishments. She observed, "Through the festival, I am able to see a completely different side to the students I have been dealing with all semester. I get to know them in a new light and it's truly a tremendous experience."

The festival began Monday February 23 with a poetry reading enabling students to recite their expressive works in an intimate environment. Introductory remarks were delivered by Dr. William Lee, YC Professor of English, and Dean Adler. The evening allowed students to use poetry as an outlet of various feelings and ideas, with many

students tackling religious themes in their works.

Dr. Lee thinks that last year's poetry reading was superior to this year's "mainly because poets from Stern as well as Yeshiva College read, and the audience was larger and more enthusiastic." There were about twenty people in attendance this time, which Dr. Lee attributes to the fact that poetry will always have a limited audience and "whatever can be done to expand that audience is well worth doing, whether here or across the country. After all, that's what the Arts Festival is about."

There was a student art display Tuesday night at which works created by Yeshiva University students were viewed. This was followed by a classical music recital with talented students performing famous concert pieces. Daniel Robins, Joseph Zelefsky and Eric Freeman performed Beethoven in a trio sonata form. Violin selections from Mozart and Bartok were played by Eli Pritykin and Yochanon Donath. Jake Solomon and Joseph Zelefsky played a sonata for the violin and piano by Brahms. A sonata by Mozart was performed by Ruthi Rosenkranz and Eric Freeman. The concluding performance was by the YU Jazz Ensemble.

On Wednesday a reading of fictional stories was held during lunch time in the writing center. Students had the opportunity to share their fictional works. Dr. Lauren Fitzgerald, director of the writing center and faculty coordinator of this event, said that the Yeshiva Arts Festival "is a

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Resignations at the Exchange

Editor-In-Chief and Managing Editor Blame Lack of Funds and Small Staff

BY CHANAN HOSCHANDER

Jeffrey Gamss, Co-Editor-in-Chief and Mitchell Rich, Managing Editor, of *The Exchange*, the official student periodical of the Sy Syms School of Business have both resigned effective as soon as successors for their respective positions can be found. This is the latest development in a string of setbacks that have beleaguered the business publication over the course of this academic year.

Difficulty in obtaining funding for printing expenses and inadequate staff support to sustain regular publication intervals caused the departures according to Gamss. The funding concerns reportedly stem from the past failure of the SSSB Student Council to honor a commitment to cover the cost of *Exchange* publication.

On February 23, Gamss and Rich both resigned following the publication of the paper's second edition of this year. Gamss who has only served in the top post of *The Exchange* since January indicated that he no longer had adequate time to address the funding and staffing difficulties that have plagued the publication.

There is no formal publication schedule for the number of editions to be published each

semester. However, there had been general agreement, as well as acknowledgement from the editorial staff that they have not published as often as appropriate so far this year. In the recent February 23 issue, Gamss in his column, attributed this deficiency to the difficulty that *The Exchange* has faced in obtaining the funding, computer equipment, and space necessary to publish regularly. He thanked *The Commentator* for permitting *The Exchange* use of its resources but explained that not having the means to prepare the business paper for publication independently has hindered its effort to publish regularly.

Michael Insel, the Editor-in-Chief prior to Oppenheim and Gamss, reportedly told the incoming editors of the arrangement through which SSSBSC was to cover all *Exchange* publication expenses. However, when the new editors took their posts, they learned that *The Exchange* had incurred a substantial debt with Richner Publication for services rendered as far back as March 1997.

Simcha Gissinger, President of SSSBSC, claimed that his organization is willing to cover all printing expenses including the outstanding debt on the condition that *The Exchange* pays what

it can from past revenues. This became the tentative agreement between Gissinger and Oppenheim as of February 24. Gissinger noted that the SSSBSC has historically supported the business oriented paper and that it will "continue to work in conjunction with *The Exchange* and its editors in order to provide for a very qualitative and worthwhile publication."

Gamss told *The Commentator* that he has other obligations that predated his editorial service at *The Exchange* that require his attention. He added that he had intended to be able to add the post of editor-in-chief to his list of responsibilities and had hoped to make a significant contribution to the third year publication which had been in need of new leaders. However, he has found that "with all the problems that I was not informed about, I realized that I did not have the time to successfully serve in the editor-in-chief position."

Oppenheim was optimistic about the future of *The Exchange* despite the latest setback. He declared that "we already have one issue out this semester and the articles for the next issue have been disbursed and are due back next week. We still have editors ready and committed to edit and we intend to move full speed ahead."

Search For the Academic VP

What Does the Future Hold?

News Analysis

News Analysis

BY MORDECHAI FISHMAN

What do you do when a supposedly vital and influential corporate position becomes suddenly vacant, leaving no apparent successor or deputy to inherit the throne and its duties and responsibilities?

This is the urgent question facing Yeshiva University following the resignation of Dr. William Schwartz, Vice-President for Academic Affairs. After Schwartz announced his imminent departure last month, the Office of the President and the Board of Trustees have begun to take steps to find suitable candidates to fill the all-important office on the twelfth floor of Belfer Hall.

Schwartz resigned after serving nearly five years in the position of Academic VP, a position here at YU that is the equivalent office to that of the Provost at other major American universities. A Provost is traditionally one of the most powerful and

influential men in a university hierarchy, usually second to only the president of the institution himself. And while the Academic VP at YU may not wield the clout of an Ivy League Provost, he certainly holds a powerful post, with the ability to impact almost every segment of the University's numerous schools and divisions.

Schwartz's duties and responsibilities included overseeing all matters pertaining to faculty and academic curriculums. He was in charge of the hiring and firing of all faculty and deans, and any decision involving tenure or salary increases. During his tenure, deans were hired for Yeshiva College and Cardozo Law School, and overall salaries were increased across the board. Schwartz instituted popular academic innovations such as the visiting author lecture series and the CEO lecture program given to Sy Syms seniors. He stressed interdisciplinary study, and oversaw changes in the tradi-

tional YU academic requirements, such as cutting the mandatory bible requirement from six classes to four, and setting a cap on outside and Israel credits.

"Academic excellence is a voyage, not a harbor," went Schwartz's well-worn and often-used adage to describe his attempts and efforts at YU. And after captaining the ship of YU's academics for five years, Schwartz decided that other oceans and voyages beckoned him, and he tendered his resignation to President Lamm, effective at the end of the academic year.

In a speech to the Executive Council of the University, President Lamm thanked Dr. Schwartz for his contributions to YU, and announced that executive search ("headhunting") firms had been retained by YU to begin the process of finding a suitable replacement to

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... EDITORIALS

Your School, Your Opportunity

- Don't miss your chance to make a difference. All candidates who wish to appear on the ballots during student council elections must turn in the required number of signatures by Friday. Positions are available on the YC, SSSB, SOY, BMP, IBC, and JSS student councils, and on the Junior and Senior class boards.

These are positions for student leaders.

We have heard a plethora of student complaints about our institution. The time has come to put up or shut up. If you see a problem that you would like to solve or that you think you know how to solve, instead of constantly griping about it, take action - run for a position.

Last year apathy reigned and students were left with few or no options. There was one candidate for YCSC president, and most other positions had only one or two candidates vying for them. Student interest in having more than one candidate for a given position is regardless of whether that candidate is the best person for the job. A second candidate will help both campaigns address the current issues on the minds of the students.

Remember, change is not instantaneous. It is a long and arduous process. However, as an elected student leader, you have a year's worth of opportunities to remedy the ills and to improve upon the good.

Correction

In our editorial entitled "Skeptical Optimism," it was stated that there is no resident doctor on campus included in the new health care plan. There is in fact a doctor on campus several days a week. We regret the misstatement.



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MESSAGE FROM THE YCSC PRESIDENT

SRULI TANNENBAUM

Welcome back from your Purim vacation. I hope everyone had a pleasant break as we continue through the endless weeks of YU midterms. Before I continue with my address I would like to note that, despite what you might think after reading the Purim edition of *The Commentator*, Dougie and I are not partners. Now that I have cleared that up let us get down to business.

Student council elections are right around the corner, so if you are considering running for an elected position be sure to submit your name before the Thursday deadline. If you have any questions about the requirements, feel free to give either myself, or Canvassing Committee chairman Mark Posner, a call or stop by to discuss them. Remember that this is your opportunity to give back to Yeshiva College and Sy Syms by running for an elected office.

Even though elections are upon us, YCSC is not through working for the year, not by a long shot. In the next few days you will be receiving questionnaires in your mailboxes regarding student life, please take a moment to fill these out these forms and let us know what you are thinking. We need the input directly from you, the students, in order to show the administration what the students want.

In other news Morg Mart is finally off the ground, thanks to Charlie Ness who has spent tireless hours getting the store ready for business. Stop by and visit the

store in the basement of Morg between 8pm and 1am, Sunday through Wednesday. On Sunday March 8th, YCSC, in conjunction with SCWSC and the Presidents Circle, sent a delegation of students to the Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C. It was a special trip, which could not have happened without the generous contribution of the Presidents Circle. I would also like to thank Heshy Willig whose hard work helped make the trip possible.

Congratulations to the Sophomore Class on their successful trip to Skirmish USA (a paintball establishment). It was an event that was truly enjoyed by all those who participated, and will be followed up with another trip after Pesach. In recent weeks YCSC has sponsored testing for Tay Sachs, Bone Marrow and our award winning Blood Drive. Thanks to all those who participated and especially those who put their time and effort into organizing the events.

Lastly, this week there will be voting for Senior Awards, so don't forget to come out and vote on Thursday, March 19th in the Rubin Lobby from 1 to 3 PM. If you would like to nominate either yourself or someone else for any of the awards, do so before Wednesday. For further information look for signs posted or contact Mark Posner in MO 202.

Your President,
Sruli Tannenbaum

"Orthodox, Conservative and Reform Jews in the United States"

Second Article of a Series on Responsa of Orthodox Judaism in the United States

By RABBI DR. JOSEPH B.

SOLOVEICHIK ZT"L

Question: American Jewish organizations tend to become more and more centralized and in some instances, even integrated. What is the position of orthodox Judaism toward this tendency? Is cooperation between orthodox and non-orthodox congregations and between *Musmachim* of Yeshivoth and other spiritual leaders permissible or not? Especially, we should like to know why orthodoxy fights the conservative movement, notwithstanding that the spokesmen of

Conservative Judaism claim to recognize the authority of the *Halakha*?

Responsum: The question of cooperation between the various groups (orthodox, conservative, and reform Jews) is a very complex one. It is currently one of the most burning issues on the agenda of the Rabbinical Council of America (RCA). I should like to review briefly here with the proposal which I presented at the last conference of the RCA this past summer in Detroit (1954). The proposal is based upon a Halakhic-Aggadic concept.

First, "unity" in Israel is a basic principle in Judaism. We have formulated this principle in one sentence: "You are One, Your name is One, and who is like your people Israel, a unique nation on the earth?" [Afternoon Amidah for Sabbath]

The principle of unity expresses itself in two ways. First, the unity of Jews as members of a spiritual community, as a congregation which was through the conclusion of a covenant at Mt. Sinai: "And you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex. XIX, 6). The unity of Kneseth Israel (the Jewish People) as a community is based upon the uniqueness of the Jewish way of life, as practiced by us, through Torah existence (Torah way of life) of the Jewish people. What ties the Yeminite water carrier in Tel Aviv to the Jews of Boston? A uniform Orach Chayim, the Shema Yisroel, Shabbos, the Kol Nidrei night, the Seder night, Kashruth, Tefillin, the characteristic trait of kindness, the hope of waiting for redemption. The Hebrew word *Edah*

(congregation) is the same as *Ed* (witness) and *Eduth* (testimony), thus a spiritual-religious entity is tied through a transcendental-ethical consciousness to a vast memory of a people about a divine Law with regard to a common past and a collective future. In brief, a collective testimony united us all into a Jewish community. It therefore goes without saying, that the Jew, who erases from his memory this great testimony, and destroys the unique collective tradition breaks the tie which joins him with the Jewish community as a congregation, as a spiritual Torah entity.

Secondly, unity of Israel manifests itself also in our unique political-historical lot as a nation. We

The following is an English translation of the *issur* issued by several *roshei yeshivah*.

We have been asked by a number of rabbis in the country and by alumni and *musmachim* of *yeshivos* if it is permissible to participate with and be a member of the New York Board of Rabbis and similar groups in other communities, which are composed of Reform and Conservative "rabbis."

Having gathered together to clarify this matter, it has been ruled by the undersigned that it is forbidden by the law of our sacred Torah to be a member of and to participate in such an organization.

We have also been asked if it is permissible to participate with and to be a member of the Synagogue Council of America, which is also composed of Reform and Conservative organizations.

We have ruled that it is forbidden by the law of our sacred Torah to participate with them either as an individual or as an organized body.

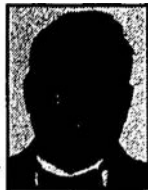
May Hashem Yisbarach have mercy on His people and seal the breaches [in Torah life] and may we be worthy of the elevation of the glory of our sacred Torah and our people Israel.

Signed this fifth day, the week of Parshas Ki Seesa, the eighteenth day of Adar, 5716, [1956], in the City of New York.

Reb Avraham Joffen
Reb Avraham Kalmanowitz
Reb Aharon Kotler
Reb Gedalia Shorr
Reb David Lifshutz
Reb Chaim Mordechai Katz
Reb Yaakov Kaminecki
Reb Yaakov Yitzchak Halevi Ruderman
Reb Yitzchak Hutner
Reb Menachme Yosef Zachs
Reb Moshe Feinstein

are unique not only in our way of life, but also in our historical transmigrations and in our paradoxical fate. Our history would not fit into a different historical framework, and our fate is incomprehensible. The enigma of our existence is primarily revealed through our loneliness and our affliction in all times; the current era included. "Lo, it is a people that shall live alone, and among the nations shall not reckon itself" (Numbers XXIII, 9). The State of Israel did not ignore the unique fate, but quite the contrary, it has given the expression to it in more concrete fashion. No Jew can renounce his part in this unity which is based upon a fate of loneliness of the Jewish people as a nation. Religious Jews or irreligious Jews, Mapai, Mizrahi or Agudah, all are included in one nation, which stands lonesome and in misery in a large and often antagonistic world. The political-historical unity as a nation based upon the conclusion of the covenant in Egypt which occurred even prior to handing down the Torah at Sinai: "And I shall take you unto me as a nation, and I shall be unto you a G-d." (Ex. VI, 7). And (this covenant) forced upon us all one uniform historical fate. The Hebrew word *Am* (nation) is identical with the Hebrew word *Im* (with). Our fate of unity manifests itself through a historical indispensable union.

The conclusion of the above is very simple. When we are faced with a problem for Jews and Jewish interests toward the world without, regarding the defense of Jewish rights in the non-Jewish world, then all groups and movements must be



FROM THE EDITOR

ARI KAHN

When a YU student faces an issue involving both complex halacha and a perceived need for social sensitivity, he has no shortage of people to seek out for help.

In the third chapter of tractate Sukka (34b), we learn the important role of social sensitivity in the halachic process. To prevent price gouging of the whole hadassim necessary to perform the commandment of taking the four species, Shmuel threatens the merchants by insisting that he will declare the opinion of R' Tarfon as the halacha. R' Tarfon held that even hadassim without their tips could be used as a component of the four species, and since cut up hadassim were plentiful, the gambit would effectively end the financial stranglehold of the merchants on the local population.

The last Tosfos on the page and other rishonim ask whether Shmuel really held like R' Tarfon or whether he just tried to bluff the merchants into lowering their prices, but the message gleaned is the same either way: social pressures effect halachic decisions.

However, one crucial point cannot be overlooked. Even when Shmuel thought of changing accepted halachic practice, the change would only be to another halachically valid opinion, that of R' Tarfon.

To clarify this point, My rebbe, (R' Tendler) compares halacha to a box. We can move anywhere within this box depending on the needs of the situation. However, the walls of the box are immovable, and we can neither change them nor leave their confines.

If I were to ask you to name the number one issue facing the Israeli public, most of you would mention the peace process. Most of you would be wrong.

An Israeli public opinion poll published two weeks ago showed barely 30% of respondents felt the peace process was the number one issue. Over 60% of respondents claimed that foremost on

their mind was the increasing divide between the secular and religious populations.

Are we, as orthodox Jews, permitted to work with Reform and Conservative centers established through the Ne'eman Commission? Do we differentiate between working with them on internal religious issues and working with them to present a united front to the world on external issues?

With the Reform and Conservative movements "declaring war" on Orthodox authority over religious matters in Israel, and amidst the ongoing media "battle for the soul of the Jewish people," every student in YU should be trying to figure out how they approach this eternal problem with Jewish unity.

You must choose a side. There is no such thing as neutrality in the face of atrocity. *Shtika K'Hoda'a Dami*. Silence is complicity.

If you remain indecisive, caught in the middle, you will be caught in the cross-fire.

In an effort to assist those interested in answering the above questions, we decided to publish a thirty-year old article authored by R' J.B. Soloveichik. He addresses question that are as applicable today as they were back then. So are the answers. Many leaders today claim to base their personal philosophy on the Rav's teachings. Hear him in his own words and judge for yourself.

Specifically, look for the Rav's sensitivity and aversion towards personal attacks, but see how without a valid halachic option, he firmly and clearly defines the halacha.

I implore you to seek advice, guidance, p'sak, or whatever else you want to call it, to gain an approach to this issue. There is no shortage of Rebbeim willing to help.

Feel free to take social sensitivities into account, but don't leave our box.

united. In this area there may not be any division, because any friction in the Jewish camp may be disastrous for the entire people. In this realm we must consider the ideal of unity, as a political-historical nation, which includes everyone -- from Mendes-France to the old fashioned (sic) Jew in Meah She'arim -- without exception. In the Crematoria, the ashes of the chasidim and pious Jews were put together with the ashes of the radicals and atheists. And we all must fight the enemy, who does not differentiate between those who believe in G-d and those who reject Him.

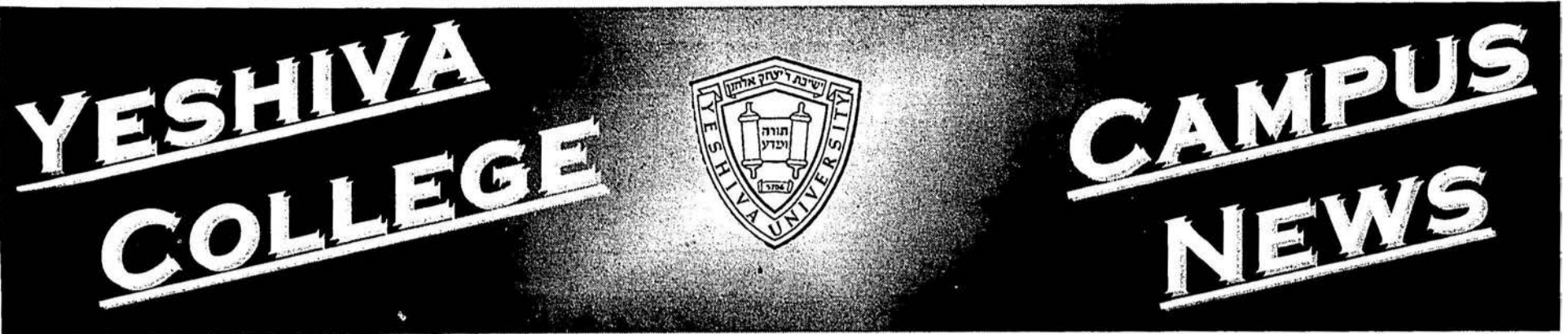
With regards to our problem within (the Jewish community), however, our spiritual-religious interests, such as Jewish education, synagogues, councils of rabbis, where unity is expressed through spiritual-ideological collectivism as a Torah community, it is my opinion, that *Orthodoxy cannot and should not unite with such groups which deny the fundamentals of our Weltanschauung*. It is impossible for me to comprehend, for example, how Orthodox Rabbis, who spend their best years in Yeshivoth and absorbed the spirit of the Oral Law and its tradition, for which Rabbi Akiba, Maimonides, Reb Moshe Iserlis, The Gaon of Vilna, Reb Chaim Brisker and other Jewish sages are the pillars upon which their spiritual

world rests, can join with spiritual leaders for whom all this is worthless. A rabbinical organization is not a professional fraternity, which fights for the economic interests of the rabbi. It is an ideological entity where members work for one purpose and for one ideal. *The fundamental difference in ideology and in observance make such a unity impossible*. From the point of view of the Torah, we find the difference between orthodoxy and reform Judaism much greater than that which separated the Pharisees from the Saducees in the days of the Second Commonwealth, and between the Karaites and traditionalists in the Gaonic era. Has Jewish history ever recorded an instance of a joint Community Council or a joint Rabbinical Council which consisted of Karaites and Torah-true Jews?

In internal problems, where the unity of Israel is based upon the concept of *Edah* (congregation), it is halachically more advisable and practically wiser not to unite with reform or semi-reform movements. Too much harmony and peace can cause confusion of the minds and will erase outwardly the boundaries between orthodox and other movements.

Let us consider the second part of our question, which deals with the battle

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Advanced Biotechnology Course Introduced: Students Involved in Original Research

BY CHANAN HOSCHANDER

Yeshiva College is continuing its efforts to establish itself as a respected research facility for the twenty-first century and to prepare its students for science at the graduate level. To further these endeavors, a new course has been established. The course, Advanced Biotechnology, is the brainchild of Dr. Kenneth Danishefsky who proposed its

creation to Norman Adler, Dean of YC, and Dr. Carl Feit, senior professor of biology, earlier this year.

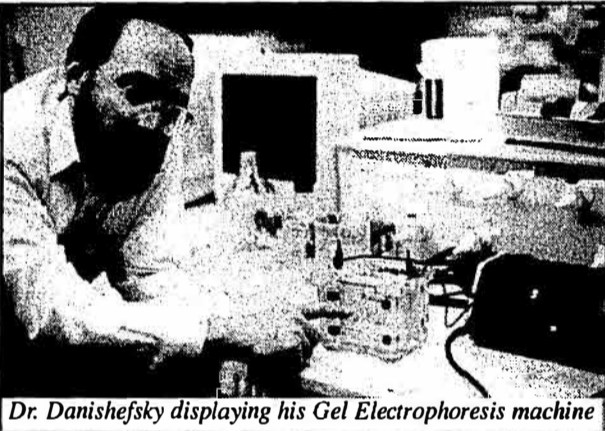
Advanced Biotechnology is an advanced laboratory course that focuses on original research to be completed by the students under the auspices of Dr. Danishefsky. The official time slot for the course is Sunday 1:30-6:30, but it requires students to come in throughout the week depending on the needs of specific experiments.

There were early doubts as to whether the course would attract the necessary four students due to the difficult time commitment. However, six students, all of whom were personally admitted by the instructor, Dr. Danishefsky, are currently enrolled.

The course is designed to give students a post-graduate or professional experience in research and train the students to think like scientists. Therefore, students are required to take part in all aspects of the research project. They are obligated to design, as well as conduct experiments utilizing the proper controls in order to further the research goals.

This semester's project is to facilitate the study of HFREP-1, a novel fibrinogen-related protein whose gene was characterized and cloned in 1993. Investigations concerning this protein, which may play a role in blood clotting, have been limited.

The initial focus of the students in Advanced Biotechnology is to express the gene by inserting it into a living cell that would produce the protein. Once made, they can investigate the role it plays in the clotting process and discover what unique structural properties allow it to function properly. To date, the young investigators have multiplied the gene and using an enzyme called ligase, inserted it into a plasmid.



Dr. Danishefsky displaying his Gel Electrophoresis machine

A plasmid is a circular piece of DNA which can be read and processed by bacteria. The researchers introduced their plasmid into bacteria hoping the bacteria will read their

gene and reproduce it successfully. In the final step of their project, the working genes isolated from this bacteria are to be inserted into a virus which will be used to infect a type of insect cell that will, in the end, mass produce the protein.

Dr. Danishefsky is encouraged by the apparent success of the course. He expressed his hope that "this experience will make the students better scientists and more attractive candidates for programs at the graduate level." He described the enthusiasm of the students as "personally motivating."

Jeff Bander, a YC Junior enrolled in the course echoed that feeling, "It's not like other courses where everything is mapped out for you and an instructor is standing over your shoulder. Here it's exciting because the work involves a measure of independence and the outcome of our experiments is unknown."

Dean Adler called Advance Biotechnology another opportunity for students at YC to participate in honors type classes. Dr. Feit stressed the fact that recent renovations of the molecular biology lab, which is now considered state-of-the-art, made this course possible.

Arts Festival Continued from page 1

wonderful idea that helps brings students and faculty together in new and different ways." The luncheon was attended by sixteen people, with five students reading their works. Benjamin Joffe, a writing center tutor and student coordinator of the fiction reading, was happy with the turnout. He said that "we actually got rid of most of the food. Everyone who read their work delivered great stories and I was proud to put my name on this afternoons event."

Wednesday night brought the festival's concluding event, a student cinema exhibition. YC Sophomores Yoni Leiter and Eric Harbor played short films they made during the summer.

Leiter showed a film he directed about a surgical technique used to internally cauterize fetal twins whose arteries are dangerously fused together. This film was previously shown at an international conference of obstetricians and parts were later aired on the Fox Evening News. Eric Harbor showed the students four short films he produced and directed while at University of Southern California studying cinematography using 8 mm cameras. A total of eighteen students were present at the evening's event

With the exception of the music recital, student attendance at the Arts Festival was low. Although signs were posted around the campus, some say that poor advertising was to blame for the lack of student participation. Certain students

complained that they were not aware of any of the events and that none of their professors mentioned it during class. When asked why he did not attend any of the festival events, Jake Weintraub, an SSSB/BMP Sophomore replied "What Arts Festival?" Still others felt that the administration tried their best to make this years festival a success but the students themselves are to blame for not participating. One YC/IBC Sophomore said

"It's lame. I looked over the schedule and it's not what I want to see. I don't want to hear some stupid poetry that people wrote."

Many of the students who did attend were outraged by the lack of participation on the part

of their fellow colleagues. Eli Gurock, a YC/IBC Sophomore who read a short story at the writing center's lunchtime reading said, "The student body of Yeshiva University is quite apathetic, students just don't care. There's no sense of school spirit or excitement and I am happy that we even got this turnout."

Of the people who did attend, most agreed that the administration did a good job planning the weeks events and that the students gave creative presentations that exemplified their artistic capabilities and talents. All seemed to enjoy the festival despite the small attendance and many expressed hopes that next year more students will be motivated to take advantage of the opportunity by participating in some way.



Students' art displayed at the festival

Hundreds Attend SOY Purim Chagigah

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

On Wednesday, March 11, Purim eve, the Student Organization of Yeshiva's annual SOY Purim Chagigah drew close to 1000 students including highschool students and alumni to the main Beit Midrash where they joined their present and former Rebbeim in an incredibly festive celebration of Purim. Alumni ranged from recent graduates to those who graduated as far back as thirty years ago.

One of the more memorable highlights of the evening was the sight of over 300 students dancing up 186th Street and Amsterdam Avenue with Rav Baruch Simon and Rav Meir Goldwicht on their way to the Chagigah. Other Rebbeim making appearances included R'Schachter, R'Willig, R'Blau, R'Parnes, R'Ben Haim and members of the faculty of the various programs at YU.

The evening was greatly enhanced by the eight-piece band from Neshomah Orchestra as well as a seemingly endless supply of food and drinks provided by

SOY. Furthermore, in a surprise change of SOY policy, this year's Chagigah did not have an entrance fee. Menachem Luftglass, SOY President, reasoned that "to charge our own students for their own Chagigah seems absurd. Our goal through SOY is to promote a communal feeling among all our fellow talmidim and even such a small measure as removing the five dollar door fee makes a sincere attempt at making the chagigah feel as inclusive as possible." One IBC junior remarked that he "honestly felt this token gesture greatly increased my feeling of belonging."

The feeling of Yeshiva unity permeated the Beis Medrash when the band took their first break after three hours of music. "One Yeshiva, One circle," was announced as everyone parted to display one circle around the room while several students danced with a YU flag.

Though Burns Security attempted to usher the students from the beit midrash, the students continued to dance even after the lights were turned out until 2am.

KOSHER-D



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Search for New VP

Continued from page 1

Schwartz. He also said that if a successor was not found by the end of the school year, an acting Academic VP would be appointed from within the University. Lamm stated that this could either be a solitary dean who would fulfill the duties of the office, or a committee of deans could be appointed to split the responsibilities between themselves.

Sources in the administration have confirmed that multiple headhunting firms have been retained by the University, but a comprehensive search of the type needed to fill such a prestigious post inevitably takes time. It is almost a given, that barring a miraculous appearance of an appropriate person to ascend to the position, a successor will not have been found by the summer and an acting, or a group of acting VP's must take command.

The are logical candidates from within the ranks of the undergraduate deans to assume acting duties. Harold Neirenberg, the dean of Sy Syms, has already served a tour as acting Academic VP, after the resignation of former VP Egon Brenner. Norman Adler, Dean of Yeshiva College, was provost at Northeastern University and has administrative experience at the upper levels of university academics. And since the Office of Academic Affairs oversees the graduate schools as well, their deans can not be discounted, and must be included for consideration as well.

Selection Committee

Who will make the decisions concerning the entire process? Who will decide which candidates to screen, interview, and ultimately, hire?

The final decision on all matters is the president's. Lamm will decide whom to hire, and will present him to the Board of Trustees for their approval. But before that final step, a committee must be formed representing the disparate and diverse segments of the University, in order for everyone, students included, to have their say and advise the president. The decision on the exact composition and size of the committee is due to be announced by the Office of the President, but the Commentator has been informed that the committee will contain undergraduate students.

The questions are however, how large will the committee be, and what role will the students play in its deliberations? The last committee formed of this nature was to hire a new dean for Cardozo Law School, which eventually chose Dean Paul Verkiul. The committee was composed of thirty-six people, and had one student sitting on it, the president of the student bar association. While being a large group, that committee was formed merely to find a dean for one of YU's sixteen academic divisions. The committee to choose an academic overseer for all of Yeshiva University, must, by sheer necessity of numbers, be considerably larger. It must have representation from all of the University's schools, graduate, undergraduate, and high schools. There has to be faculty representation, administrative representation, Board of Trustees representation, and the Office of Finance will have an extremely large say as well.

With a group so large, the process promises to be an unwieldy and divisive one. Which students will be chosen to sit on the committee, has yet to be decided, and needs to be addressed by the president's office. Will they come from the student councils, or will they be chosen by the dean's office? Will they come solely from the undergraduate schools, or will graduate students also be represented? These, and other matters remain unclear.

And what duties will the students have on the committee? On the Cardozo committee, the lone student was involved in every step of the process, from deciding which candidates to interview, to the actual interviewing and recommendations. However, on a committee of large size, it is almost impossible to have everyone doing everything. If students are relegated to merely interviewing the potential candidates selected by others, their power is reduced greatly, and they become a de facto rubber stamp to choices made previously by others. In order for students to truly have a say in the process, they must be involved in every step of the committee's deliberations. Will the administration and the president give students such broad purview over the selection of the next academic VP? It remains to be seen.

Ben Gurion University Professor Delivers Philosophy Lecture at YC

BY JOSHUA ABRAHAM

On Tuesday Feb. 24th, Dr. Yehudah Gellman, Professor of Philosophy at Ben Gurion University of the Negev, lectured to students and professors in Furst Hall. The lecture was co-sponsored by the Philosophy Club of Yeshiva University and the Bernard Revel Graduate School. Dr. Gellman, who taught for a number of years at Yeshiva, is the author of *The Fear, the Trembling and the Fire: Kierkegaard and Hasidic Masters on the Binding of Isaac* (University Press of America) and more recently, *Experience of G-d and the Rationality of Theistic Belief* (Cornell University Press), which served as the topic of his lecture. I

Prior to the lecture, the Philosophy Club hosted Dr. Gellman and an estimated 30 students for a dinner funded by YCSC.

Following the dinner, Dr. Hyman, Dean of BRGS, introduced Dr. Gellman, who then proceeded to the rostrum. Dr. Gellman was welcomed with a warm round of applause to which he commented, "In Israel, we clap at the end if the speech is worthy." The lecture was in fact worthy, and the applause that Dr. Gellman received afterwards was sufficient validation—even by Israeli standards.

Dr. Gellman explained that the thrust of his argument lies in "using purported experiences of G-d, as the basis for the rationality of believing in G-d." While not claiming to offer a sound proof for G-d's existence, Dr. Gellman argued that, at the very least, mystical and religious experience can serve as a "strong" rational justification for believing in G-d's existence. Dr. Gellman asked the audience to accept "the premise that there might be genuine experience of G-d within Jewish and religious traditions." To support this premise, Dr. Gellman argued that "the view that we can only experience physical reality is too restrictive. We cannot a priori rule out the possibility of what people claim to experience," by which he meant the Divine pres-

ence. In other words, if people claim to have had exposure to the Divine, their experiences may in fact be genuine; and if that possibility is accepted, belief in G-d can be logically justified.

Dr. Gellman termed the principle underlying his argument, the "Best Explanation of Experience," or BEE. BEE states that if a person has an experience which seems to be of a particular object, then everything else being equal, the best explanation of that experience is that that person actually experienced that object. Thus, if a person claims to have experienced G-d, and everything else being equal, it can be argued that he actually experienced G-d.

While Dr. Gellman carefully advanced his position, he was quick to point out that the validity of his argument was predicated on the condition of *everything else being equal*. In fact, the objections to Dr. Gellman's approach assume that everything else *isn't* equal. Dr. Gellman then proceeded to articulate the objections to his argument. A typical objection to Dr. Gellman's position would be as follows: How can the person who claims to have had mystical experience ever be sure that it was G-d whom he was experiencing? A better explanation for this experience might be that the person is psychologically impaired or that the experience was contrived to attract attention. The delineation of the numerous objections to his argument took up the bulk of Dr. Gellman's hour long lecture.

The students who attended the event were noticeably stirred by Dr. Gellman's lecture. Following the lecture, students gathered around the professors who attended, and sought their insight into Dr. Gellman's presentation. But the overall response to Dr. Gellman's lecture was best captured by Nathan Mintz, a philosophy major at Yeshiva College, who said that "while the topic of the lecture was intriguing, clearly more time was needed to sufficiently explore the nuances of Professor Gellman's argument."

Sophomores Open Fire

BY MORDECHAI FISHMAN

On Sunday, March 1, the sophomore class student council sponsored an outing to Skirmish, a paintball war-games field in rural Pennsylvania. Students were issued camouflage fatigues, military-style paintball guns, and protective gear, and played "capture the flag" against each other in teams. The day-long event met with acclaim from students, and was hailed as a success by student leaders.

The outing was the first of its kind for Yeshiva University student activities. There had never been a paintball outing of any kind held under the auspices of YU, due to the inherent risks accompanying an activity of this nature, and the legal problems that could arise from any mishap. But after clearing the activity with the YU legal department and presenting every aspect of the trip to the department for their approval, permission for the excursion was granted by the administration.

"There had been issues concerning this type of activity in the past that former student leaders were unwilling or unable to tackle," said Sruli Tannenbaum, president of YCSC, "but this year, due to the dedication and perseverance of the sophomore class student council, we were able to find our way around these problems." Tannenbaum specifically singled out Dov Brandstatter, the sophomore class president, as one who's efforts and input were vital in ensuring the success of the

endeavor.

The event was sparsely attended, with only twenty participants, which student leaders attributed to the relatively high cost of the outing. The cost to each individual student was thirty-five dollars, even after a student council subsidy of six dollars. Yet the students who did attend expressed satisfaction, and felt that their money was well spent. "I had a great time, and I would definitely do it again," said Jason Buskin, YC '99. "Everyone who went enjoyed it immensely, and it was a great way to blow off the tensions and aggravations of everyday YU life."

"It was a great experience," said Tannenbaum. "I think that everyone who went had a blast. We hopefully will be returning to Skirmish after Pesach, and I look forward to more people joining us."

There was one facet of the outing that differed from the standard procedure of a regular student council event. YCSC usually requests that Student Services rent the coach busses used to transport students, and then the administration bills YCSC for the rental costs. However, because this trip was to take place on a Sunday, Student Services refused to rent the transportation vehicles. This was due to the fact that they felt the trip discriminated against YP students who have mandatory shiur on Sundays, and would be unable to attend. YCSC was forced to hire the bus on their own, and were unable to benefit from any institutional discount that YU may usually receive.

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Business Careers in Israel: Students Hear From the Director of Bar Ilan University's International MBA Program

BY CHANAN HOSCHANDER

On Wednesday, February 18, in the evening, more than fifty students who are considering the possibility of living and working in Israel filled Belfer Hall 411. The event featured Dr. Jeffrey Kantor, the director of Bar-Ilan University's International MBA Program as a speaker. The talk was co-sponsored by The Office of Placement and Career Services and The Israel Club. It was intended to inform students about the current Israeli job market, industry trends, job searching in Israel, as well as Bar Ilan's International MBA program and its Junior Year Abroad Program.

Dr. Kantor began by discussing the general economic outlook in Israel which he claimed to be quite favorable at present. His advice to the attendees was that this is the optimal time to invest in real estate there and specified that both Jerusalem and Tel Aviv are currently prime locations for exceptionally low prices. He also claimed that the job market is very inviting and that high-tech is "the place to be."

Students were provided an insider's look into the cultural idiosyncrasies of business interaction in Israel. Dr. Kantor stated that there are no extraordinarily special deals to be found in Israel since its residents are too shrewd and aggressive. However, he claimed that the bureaucracy is not as bad as commonly perceived by outsiders. He counseled the prospective participants in Israeli business to be assertive, rude, and arrogant in order to succeed. He added that they should "be tough or [they] will be stepped on."

Kantor emphasized that it is highly

advisable to attain a post-graduate degree such as an MBA in order to compete for jobs in the Israeli market. To that end, Bar Ilan's program serves a unique purpose for foreign nationals who are not capable of completing the necessary studies in Hebrew. He claimed that satellite programs of U.S. universities in Israel are not considered by Israeli businesses to be respectable. In addition, Bar Ilan's status as an Israeli institution and its primarily native alumni who have maintained contact with the University help the international students to establish the connections that they will need in the Israeli business world. According to Kantor, in Israel, "protectsia is everything."

Kantor also shared information regarding undergraduate preparation for the Bar Ilan and similar programs. He noted that his most successful students are generally ones who have strong liberal arts educational backgrounds as opposed to the standard business school education. This revelation was met with questions and comments from the apparently distraught listeners, many of whom were students in the Sy Syms School of Business. In the clearest expression of the concern which seemed to pervade the room, one Midtown student of SSSB asked, "Why should anyone bother with [an undergraduate degree] in business?"

"I don't know," was the response from Kantor.

The general consensus was that the evening was successful. Students felt that the discussion was informative and that much was learned about the options available to prospective *olot*.

Dean's Coffee Hour Enriches College Experience

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

Last Thursday, during club hour, approximately twenty five students; Deans Adler, Hecht, and Jesionowsky; and a few YC teachers-- Rabbi Shalom Carmy, Dr. M.J. Bernstein, Dr. Jacob Lindenthal, and Dr. Manfred Weidhorn-- met to discuss *The Hedgehog and the Fox*, the best-know masterpiece of the famous essayist, Isaiah Berlin. The meeting was the first official "Dean's Coffee Hour," which is expected to meet every second and fourth Thursday each month during club hour.

An opportunity for informal discussion of the various topics of interest, the program aims to enhance the liberal arts ambiance at Yeshiva. Instituted by Dean Adler and a few interested students-- the set of meetings will be devoted to whatever issues most interest students with a special focus on topics that would otherwise fall between the cracks in the typical, college education. Another goal of the project, according to Dean Adler, is to stimulate "madda lishma," -- general studies for its own sake.

The Dean's Coffee Hour joins other student and teacher run programs like the Galileo Project, the Arts Festival, the Philosophy and Poetry clubs, in furthering this goal. YC owes special thanks to students like Yonatan Kaganoff and teachers like Rabbi Carmy who are involved in many of these projects

Copies of the essay were distributed in advance of the meeting, and the discussion that took place in the Office of the Deans-- over coffee, soda, and cookies-- was lively and interesting. Dean Adler chose the topic to commemorate the recent death of the great scholar, Sir Isaiah Berlin. A Russian born Jew who studied in *cheder* during his childhood, Berlin went on to be the foremost exponent of the pluralistic ideology in his generation-- one of openness to the legitimacy and



Students enjoying a tasty repast during Deans' Coffee Hour

contributions of different, often opposing ideas coming from various cultures.

Berlin's essay, *The Hedgehog and the Fox*, introduced two new terms into the intellectual's vocabulary, distinguishing between the scholar who seeks to unify all of his ideas under one larger rubric, seeks to uncover one, great idea, to which all of his other ideas are subordinated. The fox, on the other hand, looks for truth wherever truth pops its head, and makes small, often disparate contributions to the world of ideas. The hedgehog's vision is more grandiose and attractive, but the fox-- as does Berlin-- often appeals to the fallacy of thinking one can roll a whole subject or the whole of humanity into a little ball.

The response of the student body to the idea has been encouraging. In upcoming sessions, students will also have the opportunity to learn how to prepare for various fellowship programs in which the University is attempting to increase participation.

COMMENCEMENT

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Responsa of Orthodox Judaism...

Continued from page three

waged by orthodoxy against the conservative movement.

Before I present my point of view, I should like to offer the following introduction. I use the term "battle" always in the ideological vein, and never in the personal sense. I may attack a certain point of view which I consider false, but I will never attack a person who preaches it. I have always a high regard for the individual, who is honest and moral, even when I am not in agreement with him. Such a relation is in accord with the concept of *Kovod Habriyoth* (respect for fellow man). "Beloved is man for he is created in the image of G-d" (Ethics of the Fathers III, 18).

There exists a hypothesis that the Conservative movement recognizes the authority of *Halakhah*. Let us analyze this hypothesis a bit, and let us establish how true it is. *Halakhah*, is unfortunately in style today, just as in the twenties and thirties it was fashionable in Western Europe and in America to use psychoanalytical jargon, and just as rabbis even today like to operate in their sermons with physical terminology, so it is now very popular in some circles to speak about *Halakhah*, *halakhic* Judaism etc. Even in the radical-Yidishist world they toy with the concept of *Halakhah*.

I do not enjoy to appear as cruel, and to destroy a beautiful illusion, but I cannot help myself, and I must disappoint the *Halakhah* enthusiasts with the following statement:

In order to be able to occupy oneself with *Halakhah*, one must fulfill three qualifications:

First, one must be a scholar (lamdan). Just as one who speaks about mathematics or physics must have thorough knowledge of his field, so must one first know the *Halakhah* in order to be able to discuss its problems. But scholarship (*lomduth*) cannot be achieved without study, nor by the process of divine revelation. One must sacrifice many years of study of *Halakhah*, in order to understand it.

Secondly, one must unconditionally accept the sacredness of the halakhah in its eternal and absolute character. One must confess that it obligates everyone to realize its demands in all times and under all conditions, social political or cultural (conditions). One cannot be selective with regard to the *Halakhah*, and to say: "This part pleases me, and the other does not; lighting candles I will accept, but not the laws of purity of the family. Either one believes in the *Torah Min Hashamyim* (the divine origin of the Torah), and one accepts the *Halakhah* in its totality, or one does not believe in this basic principle, and rejects it entirely. *Halakhah*, to be accepted only in part, is impossible.

Thirdly, the interpretation of Halakhah must be accomplished in accordance with the methods, principles and categorical forms of the Halakhic logic, which were hammered out by the sages of the Torah, *Rishonim* (early rabbinic period) and *Achronim* (late rabbinic period), Rashi, the Tosafists, Ramban, the *Shach*, Reb Akiba Eiger, Reb Chaim Brister etc... The substance of the *Halakhah* is tradition. Not only the content and the text, but also the formal instruments of *Halakhic* thinking have been handed down the generation to generation.

If the conservative movement honestly and truthfully recognizes the authority of the *Halakhah*, then it must also fulfill the

three conditions which are tied in with *Halakhah*-research, and must publicly declare that the representatives of the conservative rabbinic devote day and night to the study of the Torah, and that they believe in the divine origin of the Law, and in the characteristic tradition and interpretation. *Such a declaration must be made in simple terms and without sophisticated interpretation and without ambiguous phrases*. If this miracle will happen, and if such a declaration will be made public, then I shall be troubled with the following problem: How can *Halakhah* based upon scholarship, faith and sacredness and in its principle of continuity permit the riding [in cars] on the Sabbath, to the Temple, permit marriages between divorcees and *Cohanim*, permit changes in the traditional prayer service, permit the introduction of mixed choirs in the Temples and other similar things.

You see, in this respect the Reform movement conducts itself [with] much more integrity. It does the same as the Christian apostle, Saul of Tarsis, did in his days. It rejects the *Halakhah* and its *Mitzvoth Maasiyoth* entirely and selects the universal ethical principles of the Torah. With regards to its ideology, we know at least where we stand, and we can identify our opponents. When the Conservative movement, however speaks of the *Halakhah*, we are unable to perceive what kind of a *Halakhah* it means: the *Halakhah* of Rabbi Akiba, Rav Ashi, Reb Yosef Karo, The *Ramo*, or a new kind of "Halakhah" which was invented at the conference of the Rabbinical Assembly where a *Halakhah* is, by the way, very convenient and very modest in its demands! *Against this kind of confusion orthodoxy wages a battle, for it sees in it a very great danger*.

If this new "Halakhah" should begin to meddle in laws of marriage, which not only effects the individual in our times, but also the *halakhic* status for countless generations to come, then a bitter struggle will develop on the part of orthodoxy against such an attempt. I hope, that the representatives of the Conservative camp will act just as carefully as the atheist Mapai did in Israel. The Mapai realized, that if they want to avoid a schism in the ranks of Jewish family life, it must transfer the authority over the laws of marriage into the hands of the Chief Rabbinate. The same must be clearly understood by the leaders of the Conservative movement, because obstinacy in this instance may split the American Jewish community into two camps.

Two things I should like them to remember (leaders of the Conservative movement): *First, with regard to this question there is no difference of opinion in Orthodoxy*. The ranks of Mizrachi, Agudah, Hapoel Hamizrachi, Poalei Agudas Israel, the Union of Orthodox Rabbis in America and Canada, the RCA, the Rabbinical Alliance of America and other organizations will join hands in this battle. Secondly, Orthodoxy has yet much strength which one should not underestimate. Let them (the Conservative Jews) not commit the same error which Ben Gurion committed with his obstinacy pertaining to the *conscription of women*, and with his disregard for the pious Jew. As chairman of the *Halakhah* commission of the RCA, I should like to serve notice that we shall unite with the entire Orthodoxy in order to defend the *Halakhic* principles of the sacred laws of purity of the family.

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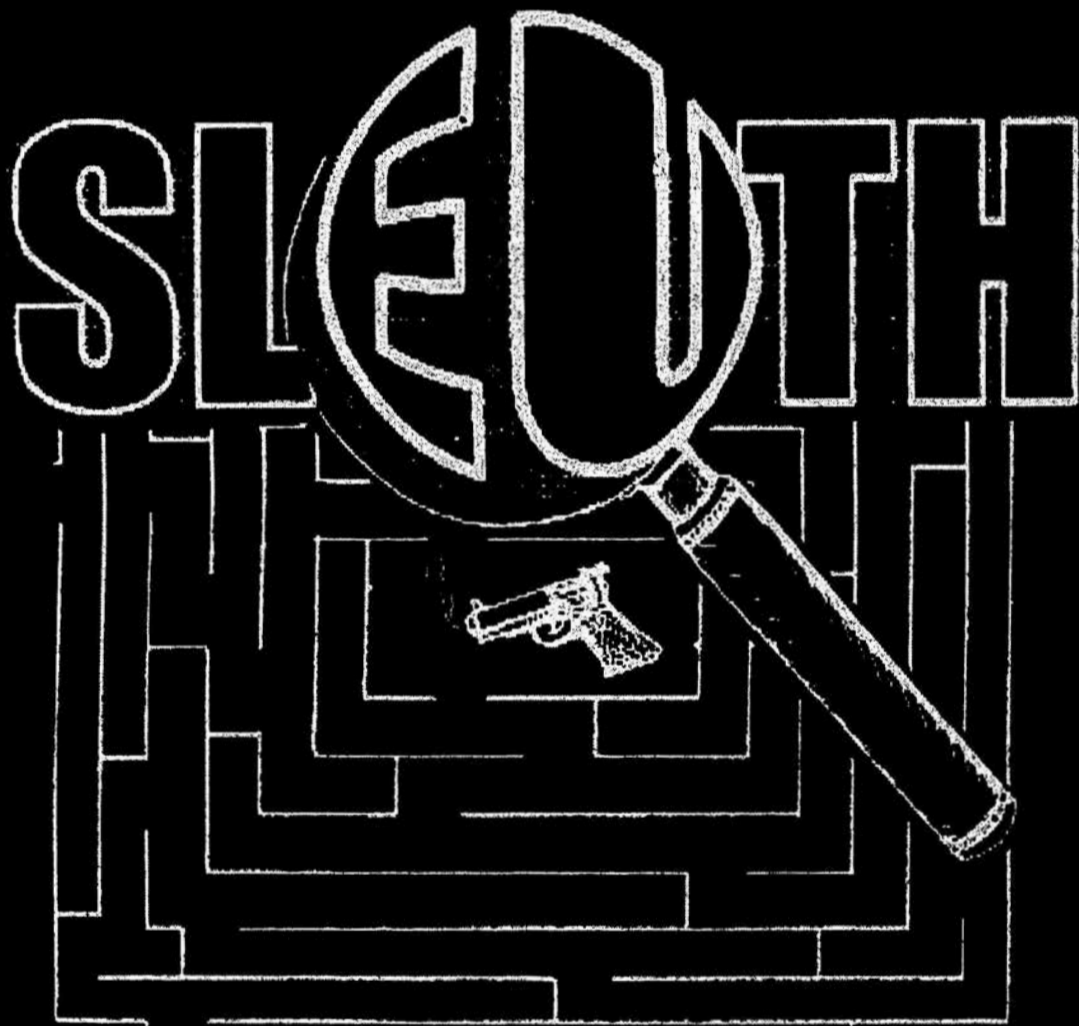
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Fowl Play at YU

BY CHAIM WOOLF

It is Friday morning and most of the classrooms on the YU campus are dark and deserted, but the doors are open and the lights are on in the MTA biology lab. Inside, a group of students, looking older than the average high school senior, wear grim faces and wield sharp knives. No, this isn't a remedial high school class that managed to smuggle their weapons past Burns security, this is *Shchita* 101, with the master of slaughter himself, Rabbi Serels.

The class entitled *shchita*, which literally means the process of ritual slaughter, teaches and graphically depicts the laws and process of kosher *schita*. The class is open to all students at YU. Every year after Succot, Rabbi Serels offers this class which meets on Friday mornings throughout the remainder school year. Fifteen to twenty is the mean number of students that generally sign up for the class, however about a third of these don't make the cut, literally speaking. The reason is quite simple. After two weeks, Rabbi Serels makes the cut on a large chicken and only those with a powerful stomach continue on.

Fowls are the only animals on the menu in Rabbi Serels's course. Each week the class studies the various laws of slaughter from the halachic texts and then they or Rabbi Serels slaughter a bird. Passing the written and practical examinations on slaughtering fowl are the goals of the class. After learning the laws, students are given the opportunity to visit a slaughter-

house and slaughter 35 to 40 fowl in preparation for the test

One of the most important aspects of the class entails learning how to sharpen the *shchita* knife. Each student must be able to conclude whether or not the knife is properly sharpened. Nigh the end of the course, students should be able to determine the knife's merit by simply running a fingernail along the edge. Additionally, Rabbi Serels not only instructs his students on the art of slaughter, he also educates them in culinary technique, for instance, how to salt and soak meat. This way can travel directly from slaughter to Shabbat dinner without the middle man.

Aside from providing practical knowledge of ritual slaughter, Rabbi Serels explained that the class indirectly provides his students with an enhanced value of life. "The class teaches about life," he said, "...one minute the chicken is alive, and the next it is dead. When you see this you realize how fragile life is. In this class students begin to learn about themselves. It is interesting to note that most people think of *shochtim* as cruel people. But most of the students have become much more sensitive since they began taking this class."

Rabbi Serels' statement that students become "more sensitive" was attested to by one student, Neil Berman. Since enrolling in the class, Berman has developed increased sensitivity to his father's desires, stating, "My father has high expectations for next Thanksgiving."



Students Praying in the Beit Midrash in different directions

A Matter of Degrees: How Students Have Become Lost in Prayer

BY ROBERT GUTTMANN

Since the beginning of time, the religious man has always been troubled by the question, "where is G-d?"

One Jewish answer, taught to many YU students as early as kindergarten is "here, there, and everywhere," and those who daven (pray) in the Main Beit Midrash seem to have taken it to heart.

Even for people who have prayed in Orthodox synagogues all their lives, the scene in the YU beit midrash is very unusual. One particular student may be at a ninety-degree angle facing the front of the shul, while his neighbor may be at a forty-five-degree angle facing the door. One young man may be facing the ark, while his friend adjacent to him may be facing the other way.

One may wonder whether this variety is to be attributed to the differing philosophies, which find a home in our University. Or, perhaps the range of practice is due to more esoteric reasons. Both justifications, however, prove unable to answer this above-mentioned phenome-

non. The answer, ultimately, is to be found in a matter of degrees.

Normally, shuls are situated so that the *aron* faces east. The reason for this is that since the destruction of the *Bais Hamikdash*, it has been customary for Jews when praying to direct their prayers to Yerushalayim. Unfortunately, ideal does not always translate into reality; for some structural or architectural reason, the *aron* in the Main Beit Midrash faces south. This raises a conundrum. Does one face towards the Aron and consequently leave the dictum of facing Jerusalem unfulfilled; or does one face east, away from the *aron*, and thus give the impression of disrespect to the *Sifrei Torah*?

There in a nutshell is the reason why there are so many in YU who deal with this problem in their own unique way. Of course, to one unfamiliar with the *halachic* implications, the varieties of practice regarding this issue may seem perplexing.

Eliyahu Parker, who is spending his first year on campus, is among the confused. "For someone walking into the Beit Midrash for the first time," he said, "it can

Professor Profile

Dr. Manfred Weidhorn

BY BARRY KISLOWICZ

In classrooms around YU, exhausted students slump down in their chairs, under the usually safe assumption that nothing will disturb their catatonic state.

However, a new scenario develops in the English literature classes of Dr. Manfred Weidhorn, who absolutely refuses to cooperate with students' efforts to slumber. With bold statements meant to evoke responses from his classes, Dr. Weidhorn challenges many sleepily conceived notions of his students. Each time a student shuts his eyes and attempts to withdraw into his own peaceful world, Dr. Weidhorn knocks loudly on his door.

What was he saying? The scientific revolution was evil? The student has no choice but to respond.

To anyone who has witnessed the passion that Dr. Weidhorn displays in his class discussion, it comes as no surprise to learn that Dr. Weidhorn's current research is focused on "The Great Paradigm Shift," the cultural revolution accompanying the scientific one. It was by sharing his personal interests and exciting view of literature with his class that Dr. Weidhorn had enticed many students to peer outside the boundaries of their own worlds.

While "The Great Paradigm Shift" is Dr. Weidhorn's present fancy (he has lectured on it both in class and as part of the Galileo lecture series), it is certainly not his only interest. In his 25 years at YU, Dr. Weidhorn has published 10 scholarly books and over 70 essays. The focus of his earliest work being the depiction of dreams in 17th century non-dramatic literature, Dr. Weidhorn has moved on to write four books dealing with the life of Winston Churchill and three biographies for young adults. His essays have dealt with a range of literary themes.

Dr. Weidhorn's earliest passion for the English language stemmed not from reading its literature, however, but from a desire to make his own contribution to it. Moving from Vienna to Boro Park at the age of ten and making his way through Yeshivat Eitz Chaim, Stuyvesant High School and Columbia college, Dr. Weidhorn dreamed of being "the great American novelist." Novels were useful

to him simply as tools to sharpen his own talent; writing handbooks filled his room, and he spent countless hours studying them. It is this intensive study which he credits for his ability to successfully write non-fiction works. Despite his dreams of being a novelist, Dr. Weidhorn soon realized that his career lay not in the realm of fiction, but in the reality of academia. After he had finished two years of military service, he returned to Columbia, and earned a Ph.D. in English Literature.

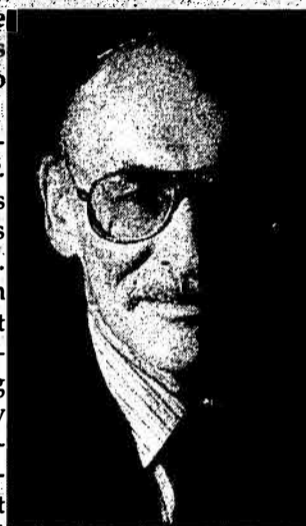
Dr. Weidhorn joined the YU faculty after having spent one year teaching in Alabama and three years at Brooklyn College. Over time, he has developed strong feelings for YU. He described the

atmosphere here as "heimish," and he praised the student-teacher ratio at YU. Dr. Weidhorn also noted that the unique religious character of YU's student body has added a special intriguing challenge to his job.

In fact, Dr. Weidhorn has adapted his teaching technique over the years, in order to teach YU students more proficiently. Realizing that YU students spend the first half of their days engaging in the study of what he

terms "prescriptive" texts, he has found it necessary to differentiate between these and the "descriptive" texts encountered in the study of English literature. The usefulness of literature, in Dr. Weidhorn's experienced opinion, lies not in its ability to provide answers, but in its talent of raising questions. By "bringing students to literature and bringing literature to the students," Dr. Weidhorn says that he hopes to unlock vast worlds of experience and the knowledge therein.

Dr. Weidhorn is in no way similar to the stereotypical notion of the boring pedagogue. With his humor and uncanny ability to arouse student interest in English literature, Dr. Weidhorn ardently tries to firmly implant the lens of literature in each of his students' personal microscopes. The Greek philosopher Socrates said, "The unexamined life is not worth living"; Dr. Weidhorn firmly adheres to this statement enjoying reading and writing, as well as teaching. In fact, even were he to "win the lottery," Dr. Weidhorn humorously swore that he would never release either his pen or his chalk.



seem pretty strange that everyone is davening in a different direction." Many others students share Parker's feelings.

In *Nefesh Harav*, Rav Hershel Shachter's biography on Rav Yosef Dov Soleiveitchik, Rav Shachter notes that the Rav was, indeed, bothered by this very same issue: the placement of the *aron* in the main beit midrash. This may be the reason, Rav Shachter writes, that the Rav did not as a rule, *daven* in the main beit midrash. As a consequence, Rav Shachter ruled that it is imperative for one to face east when saying the *shmona esrei*.

Rav Yosef Blau, Mashgiach Ruchani of the Yeshiva, said the issue is complex. He cited the *Mishna Berura's* ruling that one should always face east when davening, even in the case of the *aron* being situated in a different direction. However, the *Beur Halacha*, when confronted with the same situation offers no definite answer but instead writes that the issue requires "further study." Furthermore, Rav Blau stated that although the Rav did not normally *daven* in the Beit Midrash, he did *daven* at a shul during the Yomim Noraim for a

number of years, whose *aron* did not face East.

Rav Blau also cited the noted *halachic* authority Rav Henkin, who says that in such a situation one should always face the *aron* in deference to it. This, indeed, is the tradition of most shuls face with a similar problem. Finally, Rav Blau did state that the practice of some students to face a 45 degree angle so that their backs are not to the Aron while their faces are somewhat in the direction of east, may be a suitable compromise. His reasoning: airplanes flying to Israel from New York also ascend at such an angle.

Thus, depending on which opinion one subscribes to, there is either a definite or an ambiguous answer to the question of which way to face in the main beit midrash. While there may be disagreement over which way to face when praying, everyone agrees that ultimately the efficacy of our prayers depends not so much on the direction of our feet, as the direction of our minds.

Morg Mart Returns to YU

BY YEHUDA BURNS

Morg Mart finally reopened last week amid little fanfare. The much-troubled, student-run convenience store had been the object of many students' frustrations, but now its managers hope that it can recapture the spotlight which it once held.

Despite the problems it has faced, Morg Mart now gives students a second option to the Caf Store come an attack of the midnight munchies.

Charlie Ness is president of the Joint Business Society of Sy Syms, which runs Morg Mart. He explained that the purpose of Morg Mart is not simply to give students another place to buy a late night snack, but also to give students an opportunity to participate in running their own business. Morg Mart is entirely student run, calling on the skills of accounting, management and marketing majors to run the business successfully. "It's a challenge to make a successful business," he explained, "and Morg Mart gives students a chance to test their business skills."

There has been much speculation as to why it took Morg Mart so long to reopen this year, especially considering the success they've had in recent years. Throughout the confusion, some had even called on YCSC to wrest operations away from the JBS. Ness explained that reopening involved much planning, including developing relationships with new distributors. "We wanted to bring in new products, including Arizona Iced Tea, which recently became Kosher." Besides simply filling the shelves, Morg Mart faced other problems from within the

University. YU Security and Facilities Management were initially uncooperative, not fully understanding who would be responsible, YCSC president Sruli Tannenbaum described the situation. "It was a scenario," he said, "in which someone came, seemingly out of nowhere, and asked YU to get the store ready to open for business. They don't respond immediately to requests like that." YCSC intervention and student pressure ultimately helped work out the kinks.

Now that Morg Mart is open, some students may be wondering whether the Caf Store will lose out, but Tannenbaum, who works at the Caf Store, wasn't worried. "It just gives students another place to go for a late night snack,"

he said. "They stock different items, so I don't think there will be any conflicts."

Ness echoed the sentiment. "I don't want to take any business away from the Caf, but I do want students to know that they can get a real meal here." Often students have late classes and can't get to dinner in the Caf. Morg Mart's hours,

Sunday through Wednesday, from 8:00-1:15, give them another place to buy dinner.

Yitzhak Moshel, a SSSB Junior, lives in Morg and eagerly awaited the opening of Morg Mart. He said, "I think it's great that now we can get different foods than what the Caf Store offered. It seemed as if they never had what I was looking for." Ness stressed that their selection distinguished



Charles Ness, Steve Polenesky, and Andrew Weiss

Morg Mart from its Rubin counterpart: "We offer many different snack items, as well as hot dogs and Chinese take out." He said that they hope to bring in many more specialty items that the Caf Store can't offer. "We want to have Dougies one night a week, and have a selection of fresh sand-

wiches as well." By stocking different items than the Caf Store, Morg Mart hopes to attract its own crowd.

Besides the food, Ness stressed that Morg Mart stands out because of its location. "We have a nicer environment, with our own lounge and plenty of room for students to sit down and relax." The

atmosphere at Morg Mart is very relaxing. There is music playing and students have a chance to socialize with each other. Ness stressed this as the key to Morg Mart's success. "We don't have a true campus, so any place where students can come together and hang out only adds to campus life." This, he noted, was a major motivation for opening the store.

Students reacted positively to the store's opening drawing over two hundred students in only two nights. Joey London, also a Morg resident, was excited about having a store in his own basement. "Now I don't have to go all the way to Rubin just to get a sandwich. In Rubin, they were very lucky. Now, we won't be so bad off." Similar responses characterized the students' overall view of Morg Mart. Others saw the benefits of a student-run store. Andrew Weiss, who works in the store, described what motivated him to work there. "It's a learning experience to be in charge of your own business. It's also a fun way to get to see people and interact."

While some startup money came from YCSC, Morg Mart is a self sustaining business. "We're not out to make a profit for anyone," Ness explained. "Any profits we make are either reinvested in the business or given to Tzedakah. This allows us to offer lower prices than the Caf Store but still stay in business. We just want to give students a chance to work, eat, and enjoy." Tannenbaum echoed Ness's enthusiasm about the store. "It offers students a second option and is very convenient to those in Morg. I think it's great."

Problems, or Perceptions? The YU Premed

BY YEHUDA BURNS

Every February, the halls of Yeshiva College echo with familiar complaints. As students receive acceptance and rejection letters from graduate schools, we hear bitter cries about the unfairness of the application process. Some of the claims have merit, while others are patently untrue; but the final decision of whom gets in where is usually based on the merits of the individual applicant. How do Yeshiva students stack up against those from other universities, and where do they fall short?

In competition for medical school admissions, these concerns play a crucial role. Yeshiva University boasts an impressive acceptance rate to medical school. Our 85% ranking is above some of the most prestigious colleges in the nation. Harvard, Yale, Cornell, and Johns Hopkins frequently accept one or two students from Yeshiva each year. Last year, an estimated 18 students attended YU's own prestigious Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Other students predominantly chose among Downstate, Sachler, or Touro-Technion in Israel.

What is it about YU students that catches the eye of admissions officials, and what turns them off? Interviews with officials at Einstein, as well as with professors at YU involved in the admissions process shed light on the issues facing YU students.

The Advantages

One prominent factor is the dual curriculum that many YU students receive. Despite what some students and faculty perceive as a weak science program, YU students traditionally excel at the basic sciences in their first two years of medical school. Dr. Stephen Bosworth, a pre-med advisor at YU, stated emphatically, "They remain aware of their grades and course work while taking on an entirely other curriculum. This is a major plus."

Stacey Radinsky, a fourth year student at Einstein, called the transition from YU to Einstein "a breeze." The study skills and time management developed at YU help students excel; they soften the transition into medical school. While the dropout rate from med school is less than 5%, many still

find it difficult to cope with the rigors of a grueling schedule. In contrast, YU students find the adjustment relatively easy. In addition to Radinsky's explanation for success, others suggest that the close-knit structure of the Jewish family make YU students more emotionally stable than those from other universities.

Another influential factor, is the training in critical and analytical thinking provided by YU. The success of YU students on exams like the LSAT bears evidence to this trait. The result is a mind attuned to the analytical thinking that schools look for. The ability to solve problems and make inferences is a key trait, extremely helpful on the hospital wards.

The Problems

Despite the current high acceptance rate to medical school, both students and faculty believe it could be even higher and concur that the "elite" schools should accept more YU students. The MCAT scores of YU students support this claim. YU students average between 27 and 28 on the MCAT, considerably higher than the national average of 24.

With MCAT scores higher than the national average, applying students are concerned as to how their GPA reflects on their application. A comparison between the average GPA of applying students from YU with that of students from other colleges, shows that our average is significantly higher. YU faculty attribute this to the small size of classes and increased scholarship on the part of students. They support their claim by pointing to the MCAT scores, which should allow a basis of comparison between a student's ability and the grades he has received. But officials elsewhere said, "that (the high average GPA) is a negative already weighed into the admissions process."

Dr. Barry Potvin, YC biology professor and former pre-med advisor, described a notable concern for science majors. "They are particularly worried that they don't come out of YU with a strong enough background in the sciences. Our demanding schedule, coupled with the fact that many try to graduate in only three years explains why the requirements for the major are less at YU. Med schools take note

of this and it plays a major role in how they look at the quality of a YU education."

Associate Dean Michael Hecht described what is perhaps the greatest oddity about a Yeshiva College transcript - the fact that it is largely incomplete. "After spending a year in Israel, most people graduate with only three years of college, some applying with only four semesters' work to show. In comparison to other students, this is a clear weakness." He explained his long held belief that students need at least one more year before they apply. "They're at a loss simply because it's so competitive. With other great students who have performed at a high level for one extra year, it's just another reason to reject him."

Dr. Potvin described another, more fundamental gap, between YU students and those from other colleges. "There is a depth of secular experience, that is lacking on the part of Yeshiva students. Other top tier colleges provide their students with ample honors research possibilities, an opportunity almost nonexistent at YU." Honors work shows that the student is both capable and motivated in the area of scientific research. It shows his ability to work with others, and fine-tune the important interpersonal social skills that medical schools look for. Yet this option is limited for YU students, since there are no major undergraduate research facilities. YU prides itself on the wide range of research at Einstein, but this opportunity is largely lost to undergraduate students. In addition, the small faculty is forced to spend a majority of its time teaching, further reducing the lab work done.

Dr. Weisbrod, also a pre-med advisor, said that a medical school admissions committee often considers secondary factors, besides the worth of the student, when evaluating candidates. He said, "You have to remember that these people will be working as a team for the next four years, so the job of the admissions committee is to put together a very cohesive unit. They want a nice mixture of people with different interests and backgrounds... (Yeshiva students) tend to be very isolated and to stick together. They can be overly quiet and not as outgoing as some others." Dr. Potvin attributes this to two factors: the fact that so many YU

students apply when they are very young and that students don't find the time to do more diverse things.

Organic chemistry professor Wayne Schnatter deals with many students the year before they apply to medical school. He discussed what he felt to be a bigger problem for many YU students. "The interview is not about grades or the MCAT; rather, it's a chance to get to know the applicant. While an interviewer often asks about course content and topics of medical interest, the focus is on determining the student's personality." He expressed his reservations about the communications skills of many of YU students. "Some of our students have poor interviewing skills," he said. "They can be uncommunicative and let their attention wander." He stressed, however, that it's -more alluring to YU students. The question remains, does the fact that so many YU students choose Einstein over other top programs deter these schools from accepting YU students in the first place?

Top schools do not appreciate rejection, as Dr. Bosworth explained, "The schools suspect that there is no point in interviewing a YU student for he will probably go to Einstein anyway." Dr. Potvin added, "It's bad for their statistics if students choose Einstein instead. And they consider it personally insulting."

For YU students, the overriding consensus is that time is the biggest problem. They miss out on research, volunteer, and social opportunities that strengthen both their applications and their character. The strengths of a YU student stem from his devotion to hard work and the dual curriculum. To an extent, schools are willing to forgive some of the deficiencies of YU students and even give them credit. Still, there remain fundamental concerns such as the ability of YU students to integrate with people of all backgrounds, and a demonstrated narrow range of experiences.

Nevertheless, a YC junior, BenZion Radinsky, was insouciant about the problems or perceptions that may face the YU student. He said, "With the acceptance rate as high as it is, do we really have a right to complain?"

*“Hinach Yafah Rayasi,
Hinach Yafah Einayim Yonim...”*
(Shir Hashirim 4:1)



**Michal,
I Love You.
Will You
Marry Me?**

ARI

CULTURE

Music, Theatre, Restaurants, Cinema

Putrescent Presidents

BY YITZCHAK INSELMINN

From the earliest woodcut cartoons of kings and queens to the latest Clinton sketches on Saturday Night Live, leaders have often been the butts of jokes. Now, with the White House producing a slightly more scandalous than articles of legislation, it seems like a good time to cash in on the craze.

At least that was what Nathan Miller, author of "Star Spangled Men: America's Worst Presidents" must have thought when he authored a listing of the ten worst Presidents the White House has ever seen. Outside of the obvious question of how you can limit yourself to only ten, the obvious objection of whether such a book is premature until the current President qualifies himself for an appearance on that list by finishing his term of office (in one way or another), should be cast as well.

Although Richard Nixon makes the list, most of our favorite candidates do not, and those that do, seem inserted for haphazard and almost trivial reasons. Placing Jimmy Carter as the worst President America has ever had seems a bit of an unnecessary tribute to someone so fundamentally mediocre, and the reasons cited by Miller are far from compelling. Similarly, few of Mr. Miller's choices have much to do with any significant actions by the various presidents; rather he relies on their reputations and the various inefficiencies and corruptions

of their administrations.

Many of the tales of Presidents, which have been long forgotten to all but historians and political science majors, are fascinating, yet Miller rarely manages to connect them and their administrations to a greater political picture, or to create a

BOOK REVIEW

STAR-SPANGLED MEN



For those interested "Star Spangled Men: America's Ten Worst Presidents" by Nathan Miller can be had for \$23.00 but will undoubtedly be coming to the 3-for-a-dollar discount pile at an outdoor book sale near you.

greater relevance to the present day. Many of his analyses of present day Presidents are overly tinged with naiveté and a far too personalized view of politics.

"Star Spangled Men" is written with the sort of genuine enthusiasm, disregard for prose style, and utter absorption in the subject matter which is generally found in popularized science books such as "Controversial Mathematics throughout the ages," "The Dark Voyages of the Blowfish," and "Space, the Academy of the Future."

Discussing and writing on political topics does not by any means require ethics, honesty or even sanity (witness the ever mentally-unstable McLaughlin of the McLaughlin Group.) It does, however, require a readable prose style, the ability to arrange your material into a somewhat coherent statement, and the possession of some nugget of an idea to convey to your potential audience. "Star Spangled Men" fails on all those accounts, making it eligible for...the Star Spangled Books 1998: The ten worst political books on the market this year.

Now that's a book I wouldn't mind reviewing.

Know Your Alternatives

Pearl Jam and Lewinsky

BY DAVID RAPPAPORT

I feel bad for you, the readers of my column. If only you could see what my columns look like before they are edited to death and all hilarity is lost.

Alas, it is early February and there aren't many records to review and destroy. However, I was handed an advance copy of the new Spacehog record. Although lacking an "In the Meantime," it is much more of a cohesive unit, containing all of their live theatrics and what have you.

Several weeks ago, we were graced by a new release from the American champions Pearl Jam. In all honesty, the only reason why they are the world's most famous American

band (besides maybe Metallica, but they don't even deserve to be thought of) is because Kurt Cobain took a shotgun to his head. I have serious issues with actually listening to this band. However, I am a brave soul. I believe that it is my duty, as the only connection to pop culture that this university has, to review what you would want reviewed. My only remaining (rhetorical) question is why seventy-five percent of this university hasn't heard of even two of the bands that made my top ten list. You people are sad. Do you all live in a ghetto?

Pearl Jam-----Yield (EPIC)

Nothing new. This is the same record we all bought way back in 1992. The tunes are somewhat new but contain all the same dynamics that propelled this band into the stratosphere in mid 1993. The first 3 songs pass by without having much impact. Track number 4, "Given to Fly" (the first single) is the first thing that contemplates grabbing your attention. Strangely, the track reminds me of U2. It seems that Pearl Jam may have been attempting to create the same mood that U2 created with the song "All I Want Is You." The fifth song begins showing promise as well. I am especially surprised because the song uses the same chord structures as many power pop songs. Unfortunately, Eddie Vedder decided to write lyrics of self loathing, and but one minute into.... I am bored. I hit next on my CD player.

Wait! I looked at the accompanying lyric book. The words aren't bad at all. The song is called "WishList." If only someone in Seattle besides someone I'm not mentioning (but his initials are Kurt Cobain) could write a melody or pilfer a good chord sequence. The next two tracks are unbelievably boring, showing little innovation. This record makes you

realize why all those LA hair metal bands are starting to tour again. They hear this bunk and say to themselves "If this is what the kids like, imagine what they'll think of music that doesn't support their desire to commit suicide!" Hey, I get it. I know why all you high school kids love this stuff. You think "Oh boy, someone older really knows how I feel." I do like the album separator and the hidden track, it reminds me of really bad Ween.

The rest of the record is more of the same, but hey! I finally figured out what



annoys me the most about this record. Every song has the lyrical structure of someone who is trying too hard to impress the public with his writing skills. Stating phrases in a cohesive man-

ner without fully forming sentences is not brilliant in a vague way, it is vague, pseudo intellectual wank. It sounds as if this band writes completely apart from each other, with Eddie Vedder hanging out writing words and phrases down in one corner of the world, while the rest of the band practices in another corner of the world. When the band finished writing thirteen songs and Eddie wrote down enough words for the tunes, they reunited and tried to put the puzzle together. Unfortunately, it is all too obvious which pieces are missing. Yet this is still better stuff than the Squirrel Nut Zippers and Billy Joel.

So what's up? I've been thinking about President Clinton, Titanic, and other assorted horrors.

Titanic has been giving me nightmares; I've decided to never go on a cruise. I also have a newfound respect for Captain Stubbing and Gopher. In all those episodes the Love Boat never did sink. As for President Clinton, here's my opinion.... The poor guy. The President of the United States should have a few perks. Here's a guy with perhaps the greatest pickup line in the history of the world, and he can't even use it. That's wrong. Think about it. You're hanging out in the White House cafeteria, and you spy a lovely brunette sitting at the third table from the right (remember folks, beauty is in the eye of the beholder). How can you help yourself? "Hey good looking, you want to know who I am? I'm the President of the United States of America, leader of the free world. How about dinner?" Hey! Even better, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask how you can do your country." Hahaha. I'm so embarrassed to call myself a citizen of this country that I'm thinking of defecting to England.

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CULTURE

Music, Theatre, Restaurants, Cinema

Monkey, Monkey

Review of the Stern Play

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

Hello, Dolly! In recent months, this phrase has changed from the title of a popular musical to a buzzword. This past year, man sampled a taste of what it is like to play G-d as scientists achieved the first successful sheep cloning. As with any great advance in history, this monumental event carries with it the profound questions of who we are and what moral and ethical rights we have to meddle with G-d's world. Unfortunately, most people would rather count sheep than address the issues that come attached to genetic engineering. Herein lies the concept of The Stern College Dramatics Society's production of Marsha Sheiness' *Monkey Monkey Bottle of Beer, How Many Monkeys Have We Here?*

Monkey Monkey centers around five mothers who have volunteered their mentally retarded children to partake in an experiment which will boost their intellectual capabilities to that of a normal child and then some. Two months have passed since the mothers have dropped their sons and daughters off at the hospital and they meet for the first time to pick up their progeny. Each mother is a unique individual and has her own reason for having her child subjected to the experiment. The distinctiveness of the characters allows for interesting confrontation between the women. Mrs. Amber (Sarah Harris), the rich-witch sophisticated upper-class woman is contrasted to Mrs. Luther, (Marina Klochan) the poor religious dominated widow. Mrs. Lewis, (Adrienne Segal) who is a money-hungry miser with an attitude, strongly clashes with Mrs. Evans (Deborah Jeff), the loving mother of Josephine (Cindy Basch-Markovits). Somewhere in midst of these four women, not quite confident of herself or of her involvement with the experiment, is Mrs. Todd (Dorah Fine), the wino. As

the five women impatiently wait for their turn to be reunited with their children, numerous altercations occur. One by one, the nurse (Allison Cheryl Witty) ushers the ladies into the doctor's office and they discover their *new* children. What the women discover may not necessarily be exactly what they anticipated.

The one flaw in this play has to be its characters. The actresses played extremely well off each other and the dialogue was well written. However, the five mothers seemed to be a tad presentational and came across as caricatures rather than characters. This was no more the fault of the actresses than it was of the playwright. *Monkey Monkey* was written in during the 1970's when genetic engineering was a fanciful dream. The over-the-top quality of the characters fits in well when the script is looked at as a fantasy. However, since we live in the age of Dolly (and Dolly and Dolly and Dolly), science fiction has become science fact and representational characters would suit the play better. Ironically, this one small fault created an even better production. It allowed the players to rise to the challenge of shaping real characters for themselves. The actresses did a fantastic job creating truthful personas.

It is always a treat to attend a play in the Koch auditorium. It is magical to see a cafeteria transformed into a theater. There is a homey feeling there which cannot be found in the Schottenstein Theater. Though they are not as well-to-do as their uptown brothers, SCDS truly makes the most of what little assets they have. These talented women don't need a glitzy light and sound show when presenting a play. With *Monkey Monkey Bottle of Beer, How Many Monkeys Have We Here?* SCDS once again proves that art can thrive in a technically less-than-adequate environment.

The Sins of the Past

BY YITZCHAK INSELMINN

The legacy of black oppression does not end with liberation and freedom, as Edward Ball, a descendant of slave owners, discovers when he sets out on a journey to discover the true history of his family and finds a way to understand how the past and his ancestry connect him to the oppressed. Using the document archives of his family as a starting point, he begins a personal quest that takes him from the descendants of slaveholders to the descendants of slaves in an attempt to understand and transcribe an intimate corner of the slavery experience.

As former colonial powers attempt to rewrite their colonial pasts, and as the nations of Europe attempt to collectively forget the reality of the Holocaust, Ball's family too attempt to whitewash (no pun intended) the past. Like the descendants of modern-day Germans and the nations of oppressor countries, Ball's search is marked by a certain frustration: a sense that he has been deprived of an important history that he needs to recapture and understand.

This frustration drives him from meeting to meeting of organizations of diverse natures and goals, to seek out the descen-

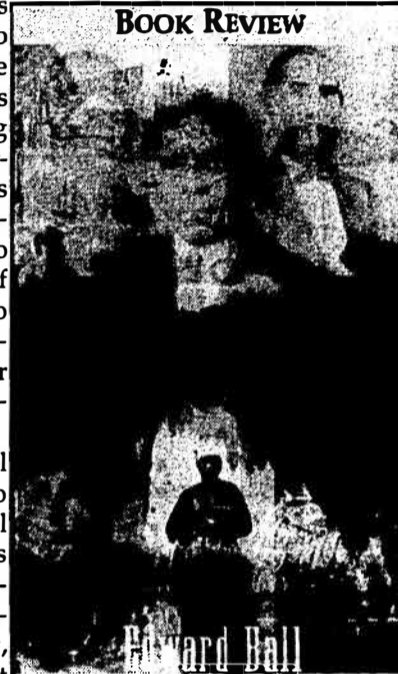
dants of the slaves his family once owned, at their homes, and finally visit Africa itself. As the personal narratives of numerous slaves are reeled off and the bloody history is recounted, "Slaves in the Family" shifts from personal narrative to an exercise in memory. In the remembrance of families and individuals who

were thought of as property, who were used as property, beaten as property, killed as property, bought, sold and even occasionally married as property, the reader comes in contact with the ordinary people whose lives comprise a historical tragedy.

Although Ball's prose is only adequate and his writing abilities do not nearly approach the level his material requires, it is also marked by the sincerity of a man searching for the truth. As the narrative progresses, the title "Slaves in the Family" comes to mean more than a questionable pun, but rather the author's idea that there exists a link between the oppressor and the oppressed. Whether in

the form of American slave owners, African slave sellers, or the African-American slaves whose identities were defined by these dual oppressions, all are brought together by a common darkness in their pasts. A darkness that can never be eliminated, but perhaps someday

BOOK REVIEW



"Slaves in the Family" by Edward Ball is available for \$30 at most local bookstores. A limited number of half-price reviewer copies are available at Strand's 12th St. and Broadway location.

Cafe Wha?

The Bleeker Street Experience

BY SENYA MALER

One of the crucial venues of the 1960's village scene now typifies the current Bleeker Street experience. This mellow underground has changed little since the times when James Brown and Bob Dylan were regulars on its stage, only adding to the vintage charm that is slowly giving up its claim on Greenwich Village.

As you walk down the black-light illuminated staircase you are immediately greeted with the refreshing blend of music and atmosphere that is the Cafe' Wha?. The essential ingredient in this blend is the seven-person house band featuring Ilan, an intense and extremely capable vocalist, as well as three guitarists including Noam, owner and Ramaz alumnus, and Jayson, who, along with his reggae capabilities, delivers an epic rendition of *Purple Rain*. The solid percussion section and bassist Ron Long also combine, to form the most talent packed and versatile ensemble found in any village nightspot. The set boasts a wide variety of music including the best of modern and classic rock, reggae, soul, funk, R&B and an occasional hot Latin number.

Expect many surprise guests to take to the stage during your visit. Among them

are the freshest NYC comics and Eugene, an eighteen year old Julliard prodigy who brings down the roof with his modified electric violin. Between sets the stage lights go out and laser-strobe lights compliment the pumping bass as the Wha? transforms into a mini-club playing all your favorite dance rhythms.

Cafe' Wha? caters to a more mature crowd including many tourists, but becomes mostly a college (NYU) scene after about 1 A.M. on most week nights. Good attendance and dancers in the aisles usually fill the Wha?, and this, coupled with the high volume, keeps the energy up and renders conversational capability low. Reservations are strongly recommended for Saturday night but not necessary throughout the week. Dress according to mood and enjoy.

*Monday - Brazilian I Calypso night (featuring Linda Fellabella and the Wha? band)

*Tuesday - R&B/Soul night (featuring assorted performers and the Wha? band)

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Continuing Education and Special Programs

CULTURE

Music, Theatre, Restaurants, Cinema

About Town

The City of Inwood: A Hidden Treasure

BY DANIEL ANZISKA

Venturing out to Inwood, the vibrant neighborhood located next to Washington Heights, can be an interesting if not enlightening experience. The subway station, where one disembarks from the train, serves as a portal to a different world. Its graffiti-filled walls and urine stained floors reminds one what New York, and especially the once decaying subway system, used to be like before Rudolph Guilliani rode into town sweeping away vagabonds, petty criminals and squeegee men. However, once one is able to get past the subway station, Inwood has much to offer.

Although its streets seem to be rather ordinary -- garbage is strewn haphazardly all over the sidewalk, sirens and car alarms blare harmoniously -- demographically, Inwood is a rarity. The neighborhood is one of the few areas in urban America where people from all walks of life, Hispanics, African Americans, and Jews, interact with each other on a daily basis. Indeed, when walking past the various eateries, "mom-and-pop" shops, hair parlors, and clothes stores, one almost feels that David Dinkin's "glorious mosaic" has been fulfilled. An immigrant shopkeeper, moving to the sound of the cash register, sells fresh fruit to a cantankerous Jewish Grandmother looking for the best buy possible. A Latino teen-ager fits a "struggling" artist with a second-rate suit at discount store, always remaining courteous to the sometimes difficult customer. A middle-aged man finally attaining his dream of owning his own sportswear line, peddles merchandise to anyone willing to buy. Simply put, it is Capitalism at its rigorous best, a commercial gallery full of business enterprises and ventures of all sorts.

More importantly, Inwood is able to maintain its unique nature because of what it lacks: "chic" coffeehouses and trendy restaurants, where churlish college students and pushy yuppies tend to congregate. Inwood even has the distinction of being one of the few neighborhoods that does not have a Starbucks. While many might see this as a fault, this sentiment could not be further from the truth. Unlike Midtown or the Village, where stores and people tend to be artificial, Inwood has a "genuine" feel to it. When buying food at a grocery, one does not feel that he is on display for other people to make acerbic comments about. Drove of twenty-somethings do not walk the streets as if they own them, laughing and recounting scenes from Quentin Tarantino movies. Hip, young married couples do not saunter about, while letting their snotty children run wild. High-powered businessmen talking on their cellular phones and high-strung profession-

als do not bump into you when crossing the street. The pedestrians walking the sidewalk seem to walk with less urgency than normal New Yorkers. Although the people of Inwood can be rude, most of them lack the swagger and cockiness one usually associates with Manhattanites. In other words, Inwood can be seen as the Anti-Manhattan - a place where people are crabby, not angry, cranky, not snooty, busy, not self-absorbed.

However, it would be difficult to truly enjoy the Inwood experience without visiting its two most valued treasures: the Dyckman House Museum and Inwood Park. Built originally in 1784, the Dyckman House (located on 204th street in Broadway) is Manhattan's last colonial farmhouse. The house was the center to one of the largest estates in Manhattan's history, some 450 acres of grazing pasture, apple orchards, pear trees and tomato gardens. After being sold by the Dyckman family in 1871, the house, decrepit and in disrepair, was repurchased by Mrs. Mary Alice Dyckman and Mrs. Fanny Dyckman-Welch in 1916. Thankfully, they methodically restored the house to its quaint beauty, furnishing it with works from the 18th and 19th centuries. Currently, the Dyckman house contains three bedrooms, each more memorable than the next, a living room and dining room, a kitchen and a relic room. Much like any colonial house, it is the museum's aerie legends and odd artifacts that leave its imprint on a person. In the relic room, are guns actually used by members of the Dyckman family during the American revolution, uniforms worn by American soldiers, and official city documents that are nearly 220 years old. In the living room, a 300 year old Bible lies innocently on a table, daring observers to look at it, while a portrait of a stern looking man (the original family patriarch, Jan Dyckman) hangs over a fire place, with his leering eyes staring at all who pass by. Pictures of the house taken at the turn of the century line the walls of the hallway, thereby adding to the place's mystique. These black and white pictures give us glimpses of what northern Manhattan, before the residential apartment buildings and urban development, must have looked like. In these pictures Broadway is merely a dirt road; horse-driven carriages and crude automobiles move along steadily, eventually causing a mild traffic jam; resplendent greenery and large trees surround homes, giving new meaning to the concept of a town house.

Yet, the most peculiar feature about the Dyckman house is the surreal backdrop it provides for the street. With its gambrel roof and impressive garden in the front, the Dyckman house seems out of place when contrasted with the

Rock Balaila

Featuring "Inasense"

BY SENYA MALER

The venue, The Union for Traditional Judaism in Teaneck, promised much on their flyers, but left much to be desired. What was supposed to recreate the informal closeness and mellow atmosphere of a village night spot turned out to be a dark Beit Midrash studded with tables, each with a glowing candle illuminating the blue plastic that covered them. Around the tables were plastic folding chairs that also did not help achieve the effect that the organizers had hoped for. The stage, shining under two angled flood lights, seemed out of place but was well stocked and fairly impressive.

"Inasense" (In-A-Sense) was scheduled to play back-to-back shows. The crowd for the second show began to assemble outside (in the rain) at around 10 p.m., and what a crowd it turned out to be. It might as well have been officially called an NCSY event, as about a hundred local Yeshiva high school students, donned in their best or baddest or down right phattest Urban Outfitter garb, formed a line in front of the ticket counter, eagerly announcing their reservations, while reaching deep into their baggy pants to separate \$8.50 from their chained-linked leather wallets. The line, dampened with rain and saturated in CK-1, was completely filtered in as the 10:30 show began precisely at 10:55. The MC tried to look appealing to all of the three major divisions in his audience: the kids who came psyched for a Motzai Shabbat kumzitz, those mentioned above who weren't

allowed to drive to Philly to see Green Day, and their parents.

Inasense opened up with a Tambukka drum solo, and then went into a very warm Shlomo Carlebach medley that seemed to pump some positive vibes into the audience or at least reminded people of what they came to see. The band, carried by a truly talented and genuinely soulful guitarist, as well as a versatile vocalist created an excellent blend of percussion and harmony that broke the ice with the audience and did Shlomo justice. At one point one could actually shut their eyes and imagine themselves in Talpiyot or the Russian Compound, where a band like this, when complimented by a wet bar that goes beyond tea and Pepsi, as well as a slightly more mature crowd, would provide a much better experience.

The high point of the evening, as expected, came after Inasense decided to do "a couple from their new CD," the morbid words of death at most concerts. However, it wasn't a Carlebach song that did it but that of another Jew who influenced millions, Bobby Zimmerman a.k.a. Bob Dylan. Their excellent rendition of "Tangled Up in Blue" raised spirits again, this time for good. The venue seemed less inhibited and the atmosphere became much more inviting. The encore was another very warm Carlebach medley that lasted for over ten minutes. Taking everything into consideration, a night that started with slightly mixed emotions ended with truly positive ones.

multi-story apartment buildings that surround it. The museum's exterior lends a serene quality to the street, as cars slow down and pedestrians literally stop in their footsteps to get a sight of this last remnant from Manhattan's rural past. The plants in the foreground mix with the wooden benches and ruddy sidewalks, forming an image full of contradiction and conflict. The Dyckman House is the only place in Manhattan where modern industrialization and this country's yeoman heritage converge. It is this convergence that leads one to venture out to Inwood park and see how urban planners have tried to recapture New York's agrarian tradition.

Beginning on 209th street, Inwood Park constitutes an urban landscapist's dream: basketball courts, baseball fields and plain grass are deftly woven together, flowing fluidly from one to the next; concrete walkways traverse the entire park, enabling one to cover as much ground as possible. Nestled next to the Hudson River, the park seems both limitless and confining. The water acts more as an extension than a boundary park. At the heart of the park, one is afforded the opportunity to have an awe-inspiring view of the Manhattan Bridge. On misty, foggy days, the Bridge, as it

floats in the air, makes for varnished imagery, an airborne vessel searching for a place to land.

But it is only until playing on the basketball courts with the natives, that one is able to truly glean Inwood Park's essence. As one plays one intense game after another, fleetingly joining forces with the local businessmen, teachers, school students, shopkeepers and policemen, all of the city's myriad problems, at least for a moment, are inconsequential. For those few hours, Italians, Dominicans and Jews put aside their petty differences and play on the same team, united under the same mission: defeat the opposition and remain on the court. Indeed, it is the palpable scent of body sweat, not vile hatred, that permeates the air. Complete strangers curse, hiss, yell and pant at each other meaning no harm in the process. Although throughout the afternoon's duration there are the occasional flare-ups and heated arguments that threaten to become more serious, more often than not they are fanned out. After the sun sets and the people make their way home, one finally realizes what it means to live in New York - to live in a city, where every neighborhood has its own story to tell.

Editorials

OPINION

When Everything Else Fails, Tell the Truth!

BY RABBI MOSES TENDLER
GUEST COLUMNIST

Why the interest of the Reform in obtaining rights to convert non-Jews in Israel?

Why the support of the Conservatives for Reform conversions without circumcision, mikveh, or promise of ritual observances - conversion which will not be recognized by the conservative movement?

Why the charade of the proposal for a Bais Din consisting of a preparatory tribunal of Conservative/Reform clergy unfit for participating in a Reform conversion, to be followed by a ritual conversion under Orthodox auspices? Will not the ritual Beis Din reject every proposed convert for failure to adhere to all mitzvot and "minhagim" of Orthodoxy as demanded by the halacha? The rare true convert does not need the help of a preparatory Reform/ Conservative *Ulpan*. There are enough *ulpanim* under Orthodox auspices.

Why are the Reform/ Conservative clergy willing to accept the denigration of being declared unfit for ritual conversion because they are not "really Rabbis" and accept the role of *ulpan* teachers?

It is time to tell the truth.

1) There is no difference in ideology/theology between Reform and Conservative.

2) Both are deviant offshoots, as was Christianity, except that unlike Christianity, they do not profess a belief in a Bible (Torah) divinely given by G-d.

3) The Reform movement does not require belief in a G-d as a prerequisite to join their clergy. "A non-theist Rabbi" - despite its oxymoronic status - is fully acceptable in the Reform movement.

4) By denying the divinity of the Torah and thus silencing G-d, and the voice of prophecy, they have irrevocably removed themselves from the congregation of Israel, and no longer share its destiny.

5) Any convert to Reform/ Conservative is not a Jew or Jewess, having converted to a religion other than Judaism.

6) Their marriage ceremonies have no religious import. Their clergymen serve in the role of a "Justice of the Peace" authorized by the secular government to perform secular marriages, AKA as "religious ceremonies."

7) January 18, 1998, in Baltimore, a Reform "Rabbi" married his male lover in a full religious ceremony attended by 250

invited guests with three "Rabbis" reciting the seven b'rachot, ketuba, breaking of a glass, and the couple donating money for the purchase of "books for Torah study." This cynical, disgraceful display of Jewish self-degradation was evaluated by the Conservative "Rabbi" in attendance as a holy act.

8) The support by Conservative/Reform clergy of the "Ne'eman Proposal" is their diabolical attempt to gain any measure of recognition as co-clergy with the Orthodox. The decision of the Chief Rabbinate (February 10, 1998) to reject any cooperation with the non-Orthodox [non-Jewish] branches of Judaism on conversions and religious rites is to be viewed as finally "telling the truth." No, you are not Rabbis; many of you have never been Jewish; most of you have left our faith no less than one who converts to Christianity. You converted to the religion of humanism/atheism. If you want to return to the faith of your fathers, our traditions require that you undergo a conversion protocol at an Orthodox Jewish Beit Din.

9) We must now wage battle for the hearts and minds of the "captive children" - the members of the Conservative/Reform temples. Most who "belong," do not! They are nominal members for social reasons. Those who do attend their services must hear the truth repeated in the media without pause. Our message must be: "Ask your Rabbi." Does he believe in G-d? Will he perform same-sex marriages? Does he live a moral life? Will his grandchildren be Jewish - or are they now Jewish? Will he participate with a priest in interfaith marriages? Then ask yourself, "Is this a Jewish Rabbi?" Is he teaching the ways of G-d to his nation Israel, or is he a charlatan - an actor masquerading as a "man of the cloth," but not even coming close to imitating a Rabbi?

Every Jew - especially every student of our great yeshiva - must accept the obligation to "tell the truth" at every opportunity. The "seal of our G-d" is *emet*. We are imprinted with this seal as children of Yaakov: "*titen emet l'Yaakov*."

Our task was assigned by the prophet Zechariah: "*dab'ru et ish el re'ehu emet umishpat, shalom shaf'tu b'shaareichem*" - (Speak truthfully with each other; truth and peaceful justice will reign in your gates) [8:17].

"Then you will be prepared for the true salvation - the coming of moshiach" [Malbim].

LETTERS

To the Editor

Who is at Fault?

To the Editor:

I read your article in the last issue of *The Commentator*, "Deconstructing Haredi - Rabbi Svei and his culture of Hatred" and find that your article is based on a distortion of the facts, not only of Rabbi Svei's speech, but of Dr Lamm's speech as well. I find it necessary to respond to your misstatements.

1) Rabbi Svei, in his calling Dr Lamm a "sonah Hashem," was referring to Dr. Lamm's proclamation that "Those who advocate it are told: go back to your cave." No one disputes that this was directed at Bnai Torah that are totally dedicated to torah learning, whether they learn in YU, i.e.: Rabbi Shachter, Rabbi Bronspiegel, etc. or the Kollel man in Lakewood. His words were based on Rabbaenu Yonah's interpretation of what constitutes a "sonah Hashem." The occasion of Dr Lamm's speech was only secondary to the content of his speech.

2) You talk about "Traditional battle lines have been redrawn in preparation for a return to legitimacy jihad's that pit vanquishing rabbinic ayatollahs against infidels with the audacity to spout the value of moderation." When "moderation" is substituted with modernization, when compromise is offered at the cost of halacha, how dare we stand by and watch our mesorah uprooted in the name of "Orthodox Unity"!!!

3) Where in Rabbi Svei's speech does he ask Dr. Lamm to acknowledge the contributions the Yeshiva community made to Orthodoxy? I don't think that Rabbi Svei needs Dr. Lamm's acknowledgement of their contributions. The Orthodox world bears the stamp of the "Yeshiva" proudly with all its different organizations, be they Agudah, Torah U'Mesorah, Seed Programs, Aish Hatorah, Ohr Somayach, Lev Leachim, Bikur Cholim etc...

4) With reference to the Neeman Commission, I don't know to whom you are referring when you state that The Neeman commission is the position of much of mainstream Orthodox Jewry. All the leading Orthodox Rabbonim in Israel, including the Chief Rabbis, have denounced the Neeman Commission. Almost all Orthodox rabbonim in America have denounced it. Rabbi Gifter in a speech 10 years ago denounced Dr. Lamm on these same issues (the Denver Proposal).

5) The fact that Rabbi Svei considers the Neeman Proposal an unacceptable capitulation, to you - "Is indeed surprising since the Neeman Commission does not purport to have the authority nor the intention to modify halacha, but on the contrary wishes to propose pragmatic solutions to denominational conflicts that are amenable to all Jewish groups." You state further that

the Commission, "Must be viewed as nothing short of a communal imperative employed in the pursuit of the laudable end of engendering conciliatory discussion among the ranks of our splintered people." Rav Moshe Feinstein ZTL in his *Igros Moshe* said it is forbidden to form any kind of organization that legitimizes the Reform or Conservative movements. By having this Commission we are allowing the Reform and Conservative movements the foot in the door that they so desperately want, for the legitimacy they so desperately need down the road. Those that support such discussion do in fact display animosity toward G-D.

6) In reference to the RCA statement. Rabbi Rubinstein himself admitted that at the time he sent the letter to the Agudah he actually never heard Rabbi Svei's speech basing all his knowledge on hearsay.

7) I think your point of contention with the Yated Neeman would have been valid if you stated only that "The only English Publication many rightist Orthodox individuals will permit themselves access to." But to blame the Yated for the resentment of Modern Orthodoxy is pathetic. I don't think it is resentment but rather it is pain over the blatant destruction of our Mesorah by the leadership of the Modern Orthodox. No one stood up and denounced Rackman for his statements and his so called Bais din. No one denounced Dr. Shapiro at the Feminist debacle for defaming the Rambam. How do you expect us to even consider respecting the Modern Orthodox? As far as reading other English Publications I don't think I need my children reading other "Jewish" Weekly's to learn from a prominent Orthodox Rabbi if our President was "Over" any *issurim* by his latest scandal.

8) Last but certainly not least. Your statement, "The hegemony of the Shtetl master reigns supreme" doesn't even warrant a response. To make a statement like that about the Jews that have accepted the "*Da'as Torah*" of our Gedolim for thousands of years, is unconceivable. Look in the mirror and ask yourself "Maybe it is the Modern Orthodox who are "Exacerbating their resentment of 'Haredi' Orthodoxy" and not vice versa?"

I think you owe Rabbi Svei and the many millions of mainstream Orthodox Jews from Moshe Rabainu through modern times (those that have accepted upon themselves the "Talmudic photocopy culture") an apology for your maligning them and their leaders. Your blatant misrepresentation of the facts is inexcusable.

I sign for the sake of Kavod Hatorah and its leaders.

Daniel Goldstein

The Commentator

welcomes letters from its readers.

Letters must include the writer's name, address and telephone number. Students should also include school enrolled in and graduation date.

The Commentator reserves the right to edit all letters for syntax, content, and size.

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Fencing Season Comes to an End

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

This weekend brought to an end a rocky season for the fencing team, as they had a large number of new freshmen fencers join the team. However, there were some delightful highlights along the way. For the first time ever, a Yeshiva University fencer went to the NCAA Regional Finals, with senior sabreman Yekutiel "Siel" Sandman becoming the number ten sabreman in the Northeast Region. The Columbia University coach watched Siel's ascent through the ranks in simple spoken disbelief, commenting, "Unbelievable." Siel, a devout Lubavitch chassid, afterwards had two things to say about his win, the first being that he thanked the Rebbe for helping him with his win, and that he hoped that his win would be taken as proof by the other Yeshiva fencers that it was possible to do what he did, and that they should continue and exceed his footholds. Well, okay, he didn't actually say either of those things, but he gave me permission to quote him as saying anything I wanted to, and I like the sound of that. Along the way, Sandman directly eliminated one NYU fencer and by his numbers of touches scored and received eliminated another, to the horror of the NYU coach, the archenemy of ours. Sandman went over to Pete Rosaros, our sabre coach, after his win over NYU and sentimentally told him "Pete, that was for you."

Freshman epee fencer Steve Mellner advanced to the second round, having pulled out two wins in the first round, one over an excellent fencer from Brandeis by the name of Boris (no, not Russian). Steve also beat an NYU fencer in his second round (which also delighted our coaches), however, his single win was not enough to propel him to the finals. The rest of the team had a decent through disappointing showing, with only other epeeist Hadar Weiss and Alex Traiman winning one each in their first round, yet failing to make the second round. Shaun Azari in foil and Akiva Herzfeld in sabre, while usually excellent fencers, both failed to compete effectively against their tough opponents.

This past Sunday, three fencers, each traditionally at the top of the game in their weapon, went down to fence at Johns Hopkins University in order to end the fencing season at a tournament known as the Blue Jay's.

This tournament is looked upon in dif-

ferent ways: one fencer described its occurrence simply because Hopkins desired more trophies (and they usually win), while others look at it as an opportunity to fence with other top fencers in their weapon. For Yeshiva U fencers it meant travelling down for a relaxing weekend in the Shomrei Emunah community in Baltimore.

Arriving a tad bit early on Sunday to ensure that they made check-in time- otherwise they would not be allowed to fence, the fencers waited in a hall outside the fencing room for almost an hour before someone showed up to unlock the door. Not to be scorned, the fencers decided on a plan of revenge, namely, beat everyone. They failed, but not miserably. In fact, they managed to go 10-8 and win the third place plaque, led by the excellent fencing of senior foil fencer Shaun Azari who only lost one bout on his way to winning the individual silver medal in foil. Adding three wins was junior epee fencer Hadar Weiss, who disappointingly lost his last bout against William and Mary College which would have earned him the individual bronze medal. The final two wins which secured the school's new plaque were reeled in by senior sabre fencer Zev Neuemier, whose Southern attitude helped him fence well despite only winning two bouts. One side comment on the directing, while not intended to degrade the tournament, would be that as it is run by, for and of Johns Hopkins fencers and alumni, there was some private grumbling among some other coaches about some of the sabre calls which were obviously in Hopkins favor.

As seven teams participated, four wins were needed to secure an individual bronze medal, five for the silver and six for the gold. Hopkins took gold in sabre and foil, however, their epeeist ran into some trouble from a man in a white costume and black shoes from New Hampshire. Hopkins overall went 17-1, University of New Hampshire went 13-5, and Yeshiva went 10-8, just over William and Mary's 9-9.

The Yeshiva U Mac's fencing team is planning on working on their weaknesses in order to do even better next year. They could use some more fencers, however, especially in foil where most of the senior fencers will be graduating. As of next season, there will be openings in the starting line up in foil and sabre, and those that are interested should sign up next semester for the team.

1997-1998 Tennis Team Hits 30

BY JONATHAN BANDLER AND SHAI SAMET

The YU tennis team did not drop a single set en route to a 9-0 shutout of NY Polytechnic March 8 in the first match of the season.

The win was the 30th straight for the Macs, who have not lost since 1994. In spring 1997, the Macs put up a perfect 11-0 record, after winning all of their 9 matches in each of the 1995 and 1996 seasons. The highly talented '98 tennis squad, which consists of many returning players from last year, opened up the season with yet another win giving Bandler his 30th victory as coach and a lot to look forward to the rest of the season.

Senior captains Josh Hasten, Tsvi Zilbershteyn and Shai Samet paced the win with straight set singles victories. Top seeded Hasten set his record at YU to 19-1 with a 6-0, 6-0 win over Poly's Quang Zhang. Zilbershteyn beat Danny Mui in second-seed singles, 6-3, 6-2 and third-

seeded Samet defeated Tim Zung 6-0, 6-2.

Edon Hirt won his fourth seed match 6-1, 6-0 and David Schwartz and Oren Koslowe rounded out the singles wins.

Following singles, Hasten, nursing a cold, sat out for doubles as Samet and Yonatan Bendheim won the top doubles match 6-2, 6-2. The other pairs, Zilbershteyn and Schwartz and Hirt and Koslowe, also won easily, allowing Samet to arrive on time to the wedding of a former teammate, Mark Schlossberg. It took the Macs only 2 hours and 10 minutes to polish off their first opponent.

The tennis Macs will face Brooklyn and Baruch toward the end of March, and even tougher competitors, including St. Joseph's and City College, in April and May. Although the YU tennis team has already set the record for being the only varsity team in YU history to go undefeated three straight seasons, they hope to extend their success to even greater heights.

YESHIVA SPORTS

MACS' Season In Review

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

As the clock ticked off the final seconds, time seemed to be suspended. With a whistle blow, it was all over. The basketball season for the Yeshiva University Macs came to end and with it all of the hopes, dreams, and aspirations faded as the team stood on the court for the last time this season. In contention to be invited to ECAC tournament for the second year in a row, what would have been an unprecedented feat, the Macs fought furiously to give themselves and their fans one last hope of advancing. Ending with a 15-8 record the Macs fell just short of being invited to the tournament. No matter how one looks at it, the '97-'98 basketball season was a success.

This season, in the immortal words of Stan Watson, the YU Assistant Athletic Director, marked "The end of an era." With the graduation of a great part of the current team, feelings were running high as many players realized that with the end of the season came the end of their college basketball careers. Their contributions to the team, some for many seasons, extend beyond the points scored in the games or the smiles that they have brought to the faces of many cheering fans. In perhaps their most important contribution to the team in all of their years on it, the veterans served as guides. They acted as role models, as molds for the younger less experienced players. They helped them adjust not only to the style of college play that exists on the court, but to the mental and physical tolls that playing consistent ball while staying afloat academically in a dual curriculum environment creates. This guidance allowed the younger players to manage the stress that goes along with playing in pressure situations while performing well academically.

This season was not wholly good. It was marked by record lows in attendance and fan support for the Macs who at times had more fans of the opposing teams present at home games than of their own YU crowd.

1997-1998 Macs

In a moment of extreme emotion, Mac's Center Joel Jacobson capped his all-star career scoring his 1000th point. Joel came well-equipped with everything an all-star player needs; his threat from the outside was exemplified by the havoc he created in the paint area, never overshadowing his ability to run the floor quicker than most big men. A staple of the Macs for the past few seasons, Joel's talent on the floor and his leadership off the court will be missed greatly. Look for Joel to make an impact as he heads to play in Israel next year.

Shooting Guard/Forward Alon Zaibert, Co-Captain, another cornerstone of the Macs let his game do most of the talking. A key player down the stretch, Alon allowed the Macs to effectively move the ball drawing defenders and creating plays where there seemed to be none. Making key shots down the stretch, he kept the Macs in crucial games, once

again proving just how much this team will miss him come next season.

Guard/Forward Brian Wein, arguably one of the best athletes this team has ever seen, possessing the rawest talent a player can. Sparking the team with monstrous dunks and razzle-dazzle in the paint, Brian's attitude, which served to fire up the team along with his unmatched talent, will be terribly missed.

Guard Marc Nadritch is one of the few athletes that can be called an all-around team player. Running the floor and creating plays, Marc allowed others to take the glory for his work. He quietly controlled the tempo of the game calling many plays and allowing the big men to convert. Look for Marc to step up big next season in the absence of the passing veterans.

Guard Steve Martinek, an unselfish freshman, came on strong in the second half of the year. After being taken off the bench and given a job in the starting rotation, Steve showed his capabilities. His range, depth, and skills are just what the team is looking for as it attempts to make the transition from one era to the next. Look for Steve to become a very important fixture of the Macs in the future.

Forward David Neiss, one of the team's silent leaders, proved to be an incredible asset to the team. Coming off the bench for the better part of the season, David ripped rebounds everywhere, gathered up loose balls, and forced turnovers everywhere he went. His persistence hustle and stifling defense make him one of the indispensable parts of the team.

Guard Joel Kruger, a solid bench, who took the time to make this season a learning experience. Improving his abundant talent, Joel showed that he is indeed the solid team player that people say he is. Look for Joel to continue forward next season.

Guard Gabi Lakser is one of those few players who is fun to watch. Gabi's stifling defense combined with his incredible will to win and ability to make things happen will be missed.

Forward Neil Bronstein an all around team oriented player was the first of the seniors to make his exit due to uncontrollable circumstances.

Look for Shane Rabin, Moshe Garmai, Avi Karesh, Jonathan Zadok all to build on this past season as they aspire to become the next generation of Mac stars.

Not to be overshadowed by the players themselves, the people who also deserve credit for the team's growth and success are the coaches. Coach Jonathan Halpert and his Assistant Coach Evan Goldstein combined to match last year's unprecedented achievement of 15 wins. Keeping the players in shape and disciplined is not an easy task, yet Coach Halpert who has done just that for the past 26 seasons, seems to do it with ease.

With the end of one era and the beginning of another, the future of the Macs seems uncertain. However, the feeling on campus seems to be that it will indeed be a bright one.

The Commentator

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