

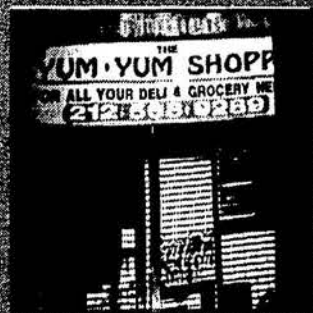
# COMMENTATOR

September 6, 1999 25 Elul 5759

The Official Newspaper of Yeshiva College

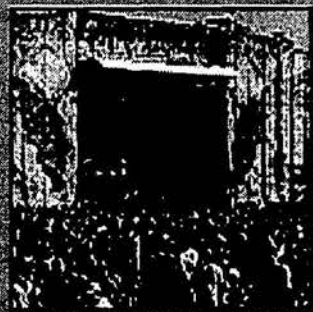
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## YU GARNERS TOP FIFTY STATUS FOR FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

BY PINCHAS SHAPIRO

For the fourth year in a row, Yeshiva University appeared in the first tier of *US News and World Report's* ranking of the top national universities in the United States. Dropping two places from its number forty-two listing last year, Yeshiva failed to move out of the bottom ten of the first tier, falling to number forty-four. Ranked along side four other universities, Yeshiva was tied with Tulane, University of California-Santa Barbra, University of Texas-Austin, and the University of Washington.

"We are pleased that *US News* has again rated Yeshiva University as a top tier university," said President and Rosh HaYeshiva Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm of the new rankings. "We have an outstanding faculty and a dedicated group of deans and administrators. Their hard work is reflected in this continuing recognition of the excellence of our academic programs. The rating also reflects enhancements we have made and scholarships we are able to pro-



vide thanks to the strong support we continue to receive from so many alumni and friends."

*U.S. News* took into account a broad array of considerations including academic reputation, student SAT performance, financial resources, distribution of class size, relative selectivity, graduation rate, alumni giving rate, and other considerations in compiling its list.

In most areas, Yeshiva maintained poor ratings, with only a few topics ranking high. This uneven performance revealed some lopsided figures. Of first tier universities, Yeshiva tied only with Wake Forest in boasting the lowest proportion of courses with enrollments of over fifty students. On the flip side, Yeshiva's reputation rank, the average rating of the quality of a school's academic programs as evaluated by officials at similar institutions, mimicked last years performance by posting a meek 3.0 on a five point scale. This number once again lagged behind all other top fifty universi-

ties.

Only one first tier institution, forty-ninth placed University of California-Irvine, posted a worse selectivity rank than Yeshiva. Coupled with this result was Yeshiva's corollary rate of acceptance, seventy-nine percent, the least impressive among its top tier peers.

A number of robust performances in select areas, however, salvaged Yeshiva's top tier placement. Yeshiva's financial resources rank landed it in the fourteenth slot nationally, placing it squarely above Cornell, Brown, and Dartmouth. The financial resources rank considers a university's total educational expenditures per full time student. Yeshiva's success in this category is thought to be advantaged by its dual faculty of both secular and Judaic instructors.

Although it dropped sixteen places from last year's rankings, Yeshiva's twenty-eighth ranked faculty resources level also merits attention. This figure considers a university's faculty compensation level, proportion of faculty members with Ph.D. degrees, proportion of full-time faculty members, student/faculty ratio, and class size distribution. Yeshiva fell fourteen places behind Stanford, the school it was previously tied with in this category, and fell behind Brown, Columbia and Dartmouth in this area, three schools that it eclipsed in last years scoring.



## RADIO TO ROCK YESHIVA AIRWAVES

BY JASON CYRULNIK

WYUR, the Yeshiva University student run radio station, began to test its broadcasting this week for the first time in over three years. After being shut down in 1995 due to equipment problems and lack of financial resources, WYUR plans to commence full operations in the coming week.

After months of planning and installations, the technical aspects of the radio station were completed early this summer. Renovations costing in the thousands were needed to restore the station to complete functionality.

A carrier-current station, WYUR requires that buildings receiving broadcasts are telephone wired and equipped with transmitters to redirect the thirty-watt radio waves to the restricted listening area. Currently, all dormitory buildings on the Uptown and Midtown Campuses are equipped to carry WYUR transmissions.

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## Rabbi Cohen Appointed MYP Rosh Yeshiva

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

Rav Yitzchak Cohen, who for decades has served as both *maagid shiur* and *mashgiach ruchani* at MTA, was recently named Rosh HaYeshiva of MYP by Rabbi Zevulun Charlop, Dean of MYP and RIETS. Rabbi Cohen will be shifting primary roles from the high school to MYP, and in the process devoting more time to the college than he has been able to afford in the past.

Charlop explained, "The reorganization of the high school gave the Yeshiva an opportunity to look at the entire picture, and some of the focus fell upon Rav Cohen, who has been a very precious resource, not only to the high school but to the entire Yeshiva." That focus led to the decision to capitalize on Rabbi Cohen's distinct personality, to fill a void that Rabbi Charlop felt was lacking in the Yeshiva Beis Medrash during the hours that Rabbi Cohen had to devote to the high school. According to Charlop, Rabbi Cohen's "unique style" is reminiscent of the late Rav Dovid



Lifschitz zt"l, a former YU Rosh HaYeshiva. Both have succeeded in developing an extremely strong affinity with a distinct group of followers who respond very well to the discrete methods employed by the *rebbeim*.

It is for this reason Charlop asserts that the Rosh HaYeshiva role assumed by Rav Cohen will be somewhat unlike the traditional position held by the other MYP Rebbeim. Rabbi Cohen, as Rosh Yeshiva, will be giving a shiur, but will not be assigned talmidim from the outset. Instead, the RIETS office deems his to be an "open shiur," a

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## CONSTRUCTION WORKER PLUMMETS TO DEATH

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

On Wednesday August 18, a construction worker plummeted eighteen stories off the roof of Belfer Hall to his death after a scaffolding collapsed. The worker, thirty-three year old Marek Soltys, frequently appeared on the Main Campus participating in many campus construction projects. Working atop Belfer Hall, construction workers from Jerrick Waterproofing were conducting a routine roof inspection and replacing loose bricks at the time of the accident.

Soltys, who was not wearing a safety harness at the time of the accident, was an experienced construction worker familiar with the tall building. After the catastrophic fall, Mr. Soltys landed at the feet of fellow construction worker Leonardo Galvan, 25, who was jack hammering the concrete patio in front of Tenzer Gardens where a jagged-edged statue stood just days before. Said Galvan of what he saw, "When he fell, he fell right by me and there was blood everywhere."

Sources within the university believe that one of the ropes used to hold the scaffolding in place may have snapped, pulling items off the roof which apparently hit Mr. Soltys causing the ensuing fall.

Pinchas Mikhli, YC MYP '00, Head RA of Rubin Hall, commented, "When I was about forty feet from the body, which at that time was covered with a yellow sheet, the wind blew the sheet up and I saw the mangled body. It was truly a horrific site - one that I would hope to never again see."

Former YCSC President Sruli Tannenbaum, YC '99, knew Mr. Soltys from his work on campus. "He was one of those guys who was really nice and helpful. He put himself out for the students when we needed him." On one occasion, when the Yeshiva College Dramatics Society needed stage work done in the Schottenstein Theater for the production of "I Hate Hamlet," Mr. Soltys personally assisted in the construction and hanging of new scaffolding for the play.

A dedicated worker and genuinely kind person, Mr. Soltys is survived by a wife and young daughter. The entire Yeshiva Community extends its heartfelt condolences to the Soltys family on the tragic loss of Marek.

# YESHIVA UNIVERSITY COMMENTATOR

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## THE COMMENTATOR

**is looking for students  
interested in contributing  
to one of the most powerful  
student voices at Yeshiva University.**

### Recruitment Meeting

**Tuesday September 7th, 1999**

**10:20 PM in the Rubin Shul**

**Staff Positions Available**

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News, Features, Sports, Arts & Culture, Opinion,

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## A Matter Of Truth

*The New York Times* recently published a front page article featuring a major and unfortunate revision in Israeli text books that has stirred controversy throughout the world. Secularist theory has spread to all new texts being introduced into the Israeli public school system. For example, scholars are now teaching Israeli youngsters that, "On nearly every front and in nearly every battle [of the War of Independence], the Jewish side had the advantage over the Arabs in terms of planning, organization...and in the number of trained fighters who participated."

Aside from asserting a gross distortion of facts – such as minimizing the disparity in numbers between the 650,000 Jews versus the combined 40 million Arabs – this sort of "New History" makes room for an "education" that is not necessarily truthful or accurate.

It is one thing to teach elementary and high school children about historic cruelty, however these new books actually justify the changing of recorded facts. Any soldier who was killed in the battle would surely affirm that the War of Independence was nothing short of a miracle.

This new method of teaching is viewed as a biting insult to Modern Orthodoxy. An entire generation of Israeli's are now receiving a new history of their country – a history that doesn't include *Hashem*, Torah, or any concept of *Kedushas Eretz Yisroel* whatsoever.

The Israeli Ministry of Education has effectively enlarged the already wide gap that exists between the religious and non-religious. Although supporters of the "New History," such as Eyal Naveh, a professor of history at Hebrew University, claim "this marks a higher level in Israel's maturity," there is a lack of responsibility on the side of these supporters: They have failed to include input from any traditional scholars.

It is truly a sad, sad time when political, religious, and philosophical controversy is brought into kindergarten classrooms.

## Human Dignity and Respect

The recent stories reported within this publication reveal some very cruel events transpiring at this university. Perhaps even more shocking are the events we have yet to report. The vindictive nature of this institution and the deceitful manner in which many issues have been handled is not just upsetting, it's downright frightening.

This is not to say that all professionals who have the misfortune of being caught in this university's web of destruction are evil. There are many moral individuals who grace the halls of Belfer and Furst, but rest assured that immediately following the realization of this fact by a member of the fragile ivory tower, you will be thrown so far from this institution that you'll wish you've never met a Jew.

Something is sickeningly wrong here. All values that Judaism is supposed to hold dear seems to be missing from the upper echelons. We often get so caught in the mindless bickering and insinuation of political objectives for personal gain that we forget to treat each other with the proper dignity and respect that being a human usually commands.

Realize though, that we do possess the power to change, all that's required is the desire to improve ourselves so that we can work together and not feel threatened by those who may think differently or may be more talented in certain areas. This university is sitting on a time bomb and we must make the necessary attitude adjustments before its disastrous detonation.

**The Yeshiva University  
Community extends its  
heartfelt condolences to  
Rabbi Joshua Cheifetz  
on the death of his brother.  
May the Almighty comfort you  
among the mourners  
of Zion and Jerusalem.**





## FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**AARON KLEIN**

### Cleaning The Slate

In the beginning of the summer, I had the opportunity to browse through *The Commentator* archives dating back to the monumental first edition in 1935. I was surprised by some of what I read; it seems as though Yeshiva University used to be a fun and peaceful institution where students and administration would make important decisions together. Throughout the academic year, the administration used to host "smokers" - lively parties in which faculty members (including the president) and students would assemble in a large room to socialize, discuss issues pertaining to the welfare of Yeshiva, sing and smoke thousands of university-supplied cigarettes! Students were granted such power and influence that if they collectively disapproved of a faculty or administration member (and in one documented case, a dean), that member was relieved of his/her position. It is remarkably difficult to believe that we now attend the phantom university I read about in the old papers.

In more recent years, *The Commentator* has been forced to maintain a somewhat schizophrenic relationship with the administration of Yeshiva University. It's the mission of this esteemed publication to incessantly defend the rights of the students and to heatedly campaign for an improved quality of life both on and off campus. This charge often requires the editors to act ruthlessly - to frequently expose university voids while hoping that our unrelenting tirades lead to rectification of the existing problem. We usually fire the first missile in a strategic battle of words directed to end the administrative apathy that now exists. Unfortunately, in fulfilling our civic duties, we have acquired a reputation for embodying all that is negative and despairing about this college. Moreover, we sometimes make enemies of the very people whose help we may later solicit.

I believe that this prevailing philosophy, which has lately served as the trademark of *The Commentator*, is in need of immediate reconstruction. It is unwise to wage war on a country without first negotiating a peace agreement; it's far more resourceful to work with the administration, to find a common ground between the seemingly deviant factions that exist within the consecrated walls of Yeshiva. However, the full assistance and cooperation of everyone is required before we can accomplish such a lofty goal:

The students must speak in a singular and contemporaneously immutable voice; we must prove that we are serious about reclaiming this university as ours. We should do so respectfully and patiently; only after using honey may we resort to vinegar.

The administration should see that it's the students who will make or break the institution. We are the fruits of your labor, the windows through which the public gazes piercingly, and the potent winds that will carry your values throughout the world. Understand our need for you to be more open-minded when dealing with students and student leaders. Take our requests into consideration and allow room for change so we may improve our yeshiva and ultimately improve ourselves. You listened fifty years ago, please do so again.

The teaching faculty is asked to realize that they maintain a dual position in the University food chain, serving as influential organs to both the students and the administration. They have the distinct ability to notice problems, the power to address them through proper channels, and the knowledge to offer suggestions that will serve everyone's interests.

Some of the issues we wish to tackle this year include an ethernet connection in the dormitories, improved cafeteria service with higher quality food and lower prices, and improved communication between the students and the faculty/administration. We also hope to infuse a more positive attitude into the veins of this university, and bring about all of these changes with the help of the entire YU family.

From this point on, *The Commentator* hopes to work with the administration to bring Yeshiva University into the next millenium as a changed body, a university bereft of inner-fighting, unnecessary politics, or belligerent acts of any kind. A university that ranks its students as top priority, not merely as migrant workers who happen to be passing through.

We are about to embark on a journey filled with magnificent shades and staining colors. With the start of the new academic year comes a plethora of hope and possibility. I urge all of you to join me in this campaign to take back our university and to create a more peaceful atmosphere in which to prosper and grow. I beseech the administration to realize the wonderful opportunity being offered to them, and to take full advantage by stepping forward and extending their hands in an effort to bolster a university that is so inconceivably rich in promise.

## THE COMMENTATOR

is currently soliciting submissions  
for the Student Soap Box,  
a feature devoted  
to sharing student viewpoints  
with the broader University community.  
Preliminary drafts may be sent to:  
*The Commentator*  
500 W. 185th St.  
New York, NY 10033  
[commie@ymail.yu.edu](mailto:commie@ymail.yu.edu)



## FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**ALEX TRAIMAN**

For the fourth year in a row, Yeshiva University finds its name upon the list of elite national colleges in the United States. While it gives me great pride to announce I attend the forty-fourth best college in the country, I am forced to wonder which Yeshiva University shares a spot on US News and World Report's top 50 colleges list.

Is the Yeshiva commended by US News and World Report the college with a recently implemented Liberal Arts Honors college? Or the Yeshiva permitting half its students to study religion for six hours a day, before attending an unaccredited trade school for a degree in business?

Is the Yeshiva praised the university with enrollment continuing to grow at a record pace? Or the Yeshiva watching aspiring Ba'alei Teshuva fall further and further from religion after enrolling?

Is the Yeshiva applauded the one now requiring professors to compose new finals every year? Or the Yeshiva seemingly employing less full time professors per student than other top 50 colleges?

Is the Yeshiva acclaimed the university allowing a student to tailor his own religious education by selecting from four Judaic Studies Colleges? Or the Yeshiva preaching Torah U'Madda as a general philosophy unless one's Rebbe preaches otherwise?

Is the Yeshiva exalted the school constantly making noticeable campus improvements? Or the Yeshiva viewing students as merely part of the business, rather than paying customers that need to be satisfied?

Is the Yeshiva lauded the fertile incubator of Jewish thought? Or the college being stretched further to the left by Yeshiva College and further to the right by RIETS, leaving a dangerously thin middle ground?

Yeshiva University is being pulled in many different directions at the same time to the point it is difficult to determine the direction envisioned by our esteemed President Lamm and the Board of Trustees. It is time to pinpoint the current state of Yeshiva University and redefine Yeshiva's mission statement in an attempt to solidify the long term future of our school.

It shall be the goal of this publication, via in depth coverage, to establish a forum discussing the issues pertinent to the current status of Yeshiva. As students, the responsibility rests upon our shoulders to utilize our voices and work together with our university to implement the steps needed to ensure this school's successful future.

Not half a year ago, our feeder high school, TMSTA, underwent a tumultuous period in which their immediate future was in jeopardy. To this day, a long term plan has not yet been established for the high school and it is indeterminable whether or not TMSTA will be on the Yeshiva campus in years ahead. Unfortunately, I am forced to wonder whether or not a major university can survive such instability. It is imperative that blueprints for a long term future be developed and implemented.

I challenge the students, alumni, faculty, and administration alike to bring forth opinions and ideas for our future. Whether it be through letters to *The Commentator* or any other one of many student publications on campus, calls placed to WYUR, or even student rallies, whatever the method, it is time bring the ideas to the table. It is time to set forth this University's five year plan. It is time to safeguard our reputation as one of the top fifty universities in America and ensure our elite status is no passing phase.

## GRANDMA'S COOKIE JAR

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Students should include the school  
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## MESSAGE FROM THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

**RABBI DR. NORMAN LAMM**

### Last Opportunities: A Rosh Hashanah Message

*Shalom Uverkha* to all students, old and new, as your faculties and administration welcome you (back) to our undergraduate campuses.

We are proud of you, our student body. You have entrusted to us your academic development and Jewish growth, and we have every intention of fulfilling our responsibilities to you. It is our interest and the interest of the entire Jewish community that you mature in personality, improve in character, express latent talents, and grow in both Torah and Mada - and in *yirat shamayim*.

In order to accomplish that, we have provided you with improved facilities, experienced counseling and, above all, an outstanding faculty in both the academic and Torah spheres. Yeshiva University has been recognized throughout the country, and beyond, as a first-rate institution of higher education and as a Torah institution of the highest caliber. And this year, for the first time officially, we have a superb Honors Program that will be available to both Yeshiva College and Stern College for Women students.

This means that you have before you unparalleled opportunities to grow in all facets of your life, to learn at the feet of masters, to elevate your aspirations, to find meaning in your existence. It would be tragic if you allowed yourselves to be distracted from such lofty goals by wasting time or indulgence in non-productive conduct that is the mark of lingering immaturity.

Someone once asked the Gerer Rebbe - the great Hasidic teacher known by his *halachic* work, "the *Hiddushei Ha-Rim*" - why is it that the one point in the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur service that proves most emotional, that more than any other prayer evokes tears from serious worshiper, is the paragraph that begins that begins with *Adam yesodo mei'afar ve'sofa le'afar*, "man's origin is dust and his end is dust." Since we leave as we came, we have lost nothing; so why cry? His wise answer was: True, man's origin is dust, but he was endowed by his Creator with the capacity to elevate that dust to Heaven, to break out of the inexorable biological cycle and achieve spiritual eminence. Failure to avail yourself of this priceless opportunity is something to weep and wail about!

So, *carpe diem*, seize the opportunities that Yeshiva offers you. Exploit them - for your own benefit and the greater glory of Torah, *Am Yisrael*, and all humanity.

You have my best wishes for a *ketivah ve'hatimah tova*.



## MESSAGE FROM THE YCSC PRESIDENT

**JONATHAN MELL**

Dear Friends,

As we begin this new school year, I invite you to take a moment to join me in expressing gratitude with regard to the vast opportunities that were available to us. Whether working, learning, or relaxing, do not forget to thank those who provided us with opportunities for growth and enlightenment.

Gratitude should also be expressed to the two coordinators of Orientation '99 for their hard work in planning what has so far been a fantastic orientation. Ari Wiesen and Moishe Schmerler worked painstakingly throughout the summer to plan the weeklong celebration and welcome to those new students joining us. Their hard work, synthesized with the vital assistance of Andrew Liebowitz and the Office of Student Services, has certainly not gone unnoticed. All of the Resident Advisors, as well, have been working hard to help create a welcoming Orientation '99 environment, and I would like to thank them.

I'd like to welcome all the new students to campus. Whether you're joining us from Israel, high school, or another college, I am confident that you will find that YU is place of opportunity and community. The faculty and administration truly desire our involvement and input, so be sure to utilize your student resources. We'll be sure to keep them at your ceaseless disposal.

From Yeshiva College Student Council's interaction with the administration this summer, we have paved the path for a prosperous year. Combining new technology with an old medium, we are proud to reintroduce WYUR, the radio voice of Yeshiva University students. WYUR has been missed on campus for quite a few years, and we are quite excited to have gotten the station up and running. All programming will be by the students, of the students, and for the students. We're still working on quality and range, but the Station Manager Eli Gurock has been working day and night to provide all of us with the bonds of the airwaves.

The summer of 1999 will be remembered as not only the final summer of the millennium, but as an unfortunate season of suffering. As this column goes to print, recovery efforts are still just beginning in Turkey for the devastating earthquake; a funeral is being held for a foreman who has worked to improve our campus who fell to an unfortunate death; and the Jewish community in my hometown Los Angeles is trying to heal from the shootings at the JCC there, along with national Jewish community. But we, the leaders of our generation, must strive to learn from our afflictions. Adversity is the foundation of growth, and with the help of Hashem, we will, despite all of life's challenges, heal, grow, and prevail.

Join me in the journey of the 1999-2000 year... I promise it will be exciting, but only if each of us participates and works hard to make it so.



## MESSAGE FROM THE SOY PRESIDENT

**ATON HOLZER**

Our revered Rebbe, Rav Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *zt"l*, noted that the liturgy of the *Yamim Nord'im* reflect two major themes. The period that we now enter is perceived both as a time in which we coronate God as our King as is expressed on Rosh Hashanah in *malkhuyot*, and one in which we stand before Him in judgment best conveyed in *zikronot*. As such, two perspectives emerge in our *piyut* with regard to the Divine. While some of our high holiday liturgy focus on Divine majesty - *Imru L'Elokim, Melekh Elyon*, other *piyutim* focus on Divine humility, e.g., *Asher Ometz Tehillatekha*, and ultimately *Keter Yitnu Lekha... Im Amekha Yisrael Kevutzei Matah* emphasizes that God prefers to be exalted by mankind. As a direct result, a dual perspective emerges vis-a-vis man; the *Selichot* emphasize the worthlessness of man, his transience and nihility, while the latter *piyutim* express the greatness of humankind and man's ability to rise above the angels in sublime sanctity.

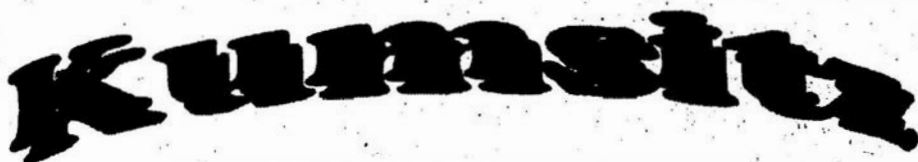
This dialectic is not ignored by the Hassidic masters, though some give it a slightly different twist; the *Netivot Shalom* of Slonim notes that the *devekut* necessary for exoneration on the *Yom HaDin*, which is possible only via *bitul ha-yesh*, negation of the self and absorption into the Infinite, may be accomplished in two ways: either by recognition of the awesome majesty of the Divine, and hence man's own insignificance - which is achieved via the *piyut* on Rosh Hashanah - or by acknowledgment of his own lowly state due to his defilement through sin. While the *tekiyah* crowns God as the King, the *teruah* banishes man's internal enemy.

The essence of Rosh Hashanah is thus a paradox - we are nonentities before the King, but He is not King unless we crown Him as such. This relationship with regard to *malkhut* holds true as regards *kedushah* as well, as perhaps is best expressed in the short passage of *chamol al ma'asekha v'tismach b'ma'asekha* - "[if You] have compassion on Your handiwork, You will rejoice in Your handiwork; ... ki makdishekha b'kedushatcha kidashta - 'for with Your own holiness You have sanctified those who sanctify You'. We are reliant upon God for every aspect of our existence, yet He chooses to derive kingship and sanctity from us; the service of mere flesh and blood has impact upon the highest spheres. Hence is it indeed fitting that our observance of Rosh Hashanah is a dual one, *chatzi lashem, chatzi lakhem*, 'half unto God, half unto you' - intertwined in our recognition and service of the Divine is our ability to exalt ourselves, to raise ourselves from beasts to angels in so doing.

*Chatzi lashem, chatzi lakhem* is typical of our experience at Yeshiva University; it applies quite literally to the philosophy of our education, combining Torah with our secular pursuits, but it also characterizes the Torah-oriented activities in which we engage during our college years; by becoming active in the committees and events that SOY offers, by attending *shiurim*, *mishmarot* and even *chagigot*, by spending *shabbatot*, *selichot*, and Yom Kippur in Yeshiva, we are not merely engaging in one-time acts of *avodat Hashem* (though that would certainly be sufficient); we are building ourselves as Torah personalities, inculcating within ourselves the dedication that will remain with us throughout our lives. The projects that we begin here infuse our lives with meaning, and they alone will remain with us during and after our attainment of all our mundane, secular goals. Contrary to the spurious claims of its detractors, our Yeshiva, *Yeshivas Rabbeinu Yitzchak Elchanan*, is matchless in its range and depth of Torah scholarship and peerless as concerns the erudition of its Rabbeim and staff; nonetheless, some make the terrible mistake of focusing all their energies toward pursuit of their careers in the precious few years they are afforded at this unique *Makom Torah*. Don't miss out on your life's single greatest opportunity. This Elul, be sure to attend our "Toward Tishrei Series," *Sichot Mussar* and our Labor Day *Yom Iyun*. Come to our Massive Mishmar; stay at YU for *Selichot* and Shabbat Shuvah, if not Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Look for signs detailing future events. Get involved in our publications - *Enayim LaTorah*, *Beis Yitzchak*, *Hamevaser*, *Nachalah*, *Bein Koslei HaYeshiva*, *Orchos Aliyah* and *Gesher*, and our new *Zemiron* and *Haggadah*; be active in our committees, be they *Sefarim Sale*, *Chaglgah*, *Special Events*, *Political Action*, *Chesed*, *Kiruv*, and so forth. If you perceive a deficiency, take the initiative and create a committee to address it. Please don't hesitate to approach myself or any member of our most competent board - Aryeh Morris, Adam Scheier and Avi Oppenheimer - with your suggestions and ideas.

To paraphrase the *piyut*: Elevate yourself by allowing Him to rejoice in **your** handiwork. Join us.

A paraphrase of Moshe's blessing upon the completion of the Mishkan, the symbol of *avodat Hashem* par excellence, could aptly serve as our own prayer as we embark upon our own journey in *avodat Hashem*: *Yehi ratzon she-tishreh Shekhinah be-ma'aseh yadeinu, ve-yehi no'am Hashem Elokeinu aleinu u-ma'aseh yadeinu konenah aleinu, u-ma'aseh yadeinu konenehu*.



This Motzei Shabbat  
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Program Will begin at 9:30 P.M.  
In Weissberg Commons

Pizza and Refreshments will be served





ב"ס"ד

# Elul-Tishrei 5760

## September 1999

### SOY Calendar of Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>Seforim Sale</b>	<b>Seforim Sale</b>	<b>Seforim Sale</b>	<b>Seforim Sale</b>	<b>Seforim Sale</b>		Nitzavim-Vavelech Mincha: 7:07
	7:30 PM ORIENTATION '99	4:00 PM	9:30 PM	<b>UNITY MINYAN</b> Bagel Breakfast THE MAIN BEIS MEDRASH Opening	3 7:40 AM	4 OPENING SHABBOSES SELA & HALKAL/ANNUAL TO FOLLO
17 ELUL Morgenshtern Basement <b>Nightly Seforim Sale</b>	שיעור כללי Rav Norman Lamm The Main Beis Medrash 4:30 PM	BOOK DISCUSSION: RAY MAYER INTENSITY 19 ELUL	התעוררת Ray Yosef Blau The Main Beis Medrash 20 ELUL	22 ELUL Rav Norman Lamm The Main Beis Medrash	9:40 PM 11:40 PM	SELICHOT RAY MEIR GOLDWICH RAY YOSEF BLAU 28 ELUL
5 <b>Seforim Sale</b>	<b>Alumni-Student YOM IYUN!</b> 11:00: Rav Ya'akov Kenberger 12:00: Refreshments 1:00: Rav Aharon Kahn The Main Beis Medrash 25 ELUL	7 9:40 PM	8 9:00 PM	9 15 DAYS LEFT TO BUY RAY NORMAN LAMM MASSIVE MISHMAR! 9:00: Rav Hershel Schachter 10:35: Rav Mordechai Willig 12:50: Rav Baruch Simon THE ANNEX	10 Mikva'os: Rav Meir Goldwicht Danhof, Bernett's etc.	11 השנה החדשה IN YESHIVA
24 ELUL <b>Last Day</b>		Rav Yitzchak Cohen The Main Beis Medrash 26 ELUL	Rav Moshe D. Tendler Beisef Commons 27 ELUL	29 ELUL		1 TISHREI
12 השנה החדשה IN YESHIVA	13 Tzom Gedalyah Fast Ends: 7:49 PM 8:30 PM 9:40 PM	9 AM - 3 PM: RIETS YOM IYUN TOWARD TISHREI Dr. David Berger Beisef Commons	15 Minim Sale 8:00 PM Hausman-Stern כינוס צעירים Ray David Horwitz Beisef Commons 5 TISHREI	16 Minim Sale 1:45 PM MB	17	Ha azinu 18 SOY SHABBOSES RAY LAMM, RAY SCHACKER RAY GOLDWICH, RAY BLAU שבת
2 TISHREI	3 TISHREI	Rav Binyamin Yudin The Main Beis Medrash		6 TISHREI	7 TISHREI	8 TISHREI
19 Mikva'os: Rav Meir Goldwicht Danhof, Bernett's etc.	20	21	22	23	24	25
<b>בין הזמנים - סוכות</b>						
9 TISHREI	10 TISHREI	11 TISHREI	12 TISHREI	13 TISHREI	14 TISHREI	15 TISHREI
26	27	28	29	30		
<b>בין הזמנים - סוכות</b>						
16 TISHREI	17 TISHREI	18 TISHREI	19 TISHREI	20 TISHREI		
					August S M T W T F S	October S M T W T F S

# Say No to the War on Drugs

Drugs. Our esteemed President used them. The Vice President used them. Our leading Republican candidate for the position of Commander-in-Chief used them. We know of these politicians insufferable lying and dissembling, their pathetic attempts to sweep this issue under the rug and change the topic. We know Clinton's famous weaseling: "I never inhaled." We know Bush's ambiguous attempts at denial: "I was young and irresponsible." Yet we also know how tough these leaders have been on drug offenders. Bush is the Governor who instituted the harshest legislation in the nation for first time drug offenders, and for his part, Clinton has been the toughest president on drugs since Nancy Reagan roamed the halls of the White House with her astrology charts.

Their hypocrisy, and the general hypocrisy of the baby-boomer generation concerning drug usage, is rampant. They constantly parade slogans saying drugs are only for losers while they, drug users themselves, occupy the top echelons of our government and society. Obviously drugs aren't only for losers.

So why do they do it? Why do those same people who used drugs in their lives, turn around and become the strident enforcers of our country's muddled drug policy? Why do individuals who have first-hand experience with the subject matter perpetuate the needless destruction of whole segments of society in the name of public morality?

Have they forgotten the consequences of Prohibition? The bootleggers and criminal gangs, the speakeasies and gangster wars? Alcohol is a serious and dangerous drug. The majority of traffic fatalities and domestic abuse incidents today involve alcohol. But Prohibition did absolutely nothing in curtailing alcohol consumption, directly led to skyrocketing crime rates, and was eventually and rightfully repealed. Today alcohol is legal and regulated, as it should be, and the taxes upon alcoholic products are generating billions of dollars for the government. On the other hand, over half of the 1.8 million inmates in our jails are non-violent drug offenders, hundreds of billions of dollars are wasted in waging this crazy war, and individual liberties are constantly violated. The war on drugs is the Prohibition of today, creating an entire criminal underclass of traffickers and abusers. Because we have forsaken the lessons of history we have fallen prey to our government's lies and propaganda.

Drugs are not necessarily good for you or for society as a whole, but that does not give the government the right to criminalize them. Cigarettes kill your lungs. Alcohol kills your liver. Video games kill your mind. Yet they are all legal. Should our government be allowed to make arbitrary distinctions on what is or is not morally permissible?

When speaking of drug legalization, a differentiation must be made between destructive killer drugs and those that are not. Crack, cocaine, and heroin, are potent, addictive, and immediately destructive. A valid case can be made to place these drugs outside the law. But other drugs should be legalized; licensed, and taxed by our government. This would put traffickers and pushers out of business, it would make drugs safer for those who choose to use them, and it would keep regular folks who use drugs (like baby-boomers, presidents, and college kids) out of our jails.

The drug epidemic affects the Jewish community as well. More Jewish kids are being thrown out of their educational institutions for using drugs today than ever before. That includes our very own YU high school, TSMTA. There is a serious drug problem amongst our Jewish youth that nobody seems to acknowledge. Yeshiva kids on Long Island with rich parents and warm loving homes know more about drug consumption than Timothy Leary's ghost. Yet we condone

## THE PUPIL



Yishai  
Fleisher

throwing these kids to the dogs, we call them "drug addicts," "losers." The minute one of these kids is thrown out of a Jewish institution, almost none other will accept him. He goes to public school where he learns no Torah and probably gets a better education in drugs than he ever had in Yeshiva. Is that any way to deal with our own? Send them to rehab, have a talk with them, put them on suspension, but just keep in mind that he's probably just a kid caught up in a bad circle, and experimenting (Clinton, Gore, Bush) with some pot.

The real culprit behind the drug epidemic is the lack of self-value that kids today experience. The utter dearth of spirituality and fulfillment in their lives drives them to paths of escapism. To them drugs are the only means by which they can flee their perceived dreary life. In order to truly curtail the flow of drugs we need only address that which makes the drugs initially attractive to kids. Once youngsters realize that their lives do have meaning and that every second of that life should be celebrated, then this nation will see a dramatic decrease in the use of drugs. To do this parents and teachers must first realize that their monumental responsibility is not only to give over knowledge but also to teach love, love of life, love of family, love of God and love of oneself. However, making drugs illegal does not alleviate the problem and only serves as a catalyst to draw the already rebellious youth into the bosom of self-destruction.

Our country's obsession with the war on drugs verges on the manic. We place marijuana smokers in jail, we burn crops on other nations soil, we legislate against already poor and backwards countries that deal in them. Kids in public schools are subject to random locker searches and urine tests. Search and seizure laws, once a cornerstone of our individual liberties minded constitution, have gone out the window in favor of draconian laws that harass the public. Those who say that legalizing drugs will lead to an escalation of use and violence need only look to Europe to see that such a system can be established without those unwanted side affects. Once drugs aren't a big deal then most rational people will choose rationally.

(\*Conspiracy theorists note: somebody is making a buck off this so called war. Whenever harsh laws are put in place to limit people from doing what they want to do, one must ask himself who stands to benefit)

As is the trademark of modern America, this issue, like many others, is dealt with in the realm of slogans. Drugs are a complex issue, as are abortion and gun-control. However, instead of an in-depth debate we are given slogans to memorize and to chant loudly. "Pro-choice" he screams, "pro-life" she says, "guns kill people," "no, people kill people," "support the troops," "buy American," and so on and so forth. "Say no to drugs" is simply another slogan which depletes the issue of its complex character and fits well into a politicians sound bite. These are the same politicians who preach family values yet constantly have affairs, and they are the ones screaming "don't do drugs" while they themselves do it.

So let us not fall into the trap of single-phrase myopic thinking. Let's not buy everything that the media and the politicians have to sell. If people think for themselves they will come to question our country's subjective differentiation between drugs and alcohol, and the methods by which the government plans on 'curing' the drug epidemic through modern day Prohibition.

# FORUM OPINION

## Student Soap Box

### STUDENTS NEED LESS DIRECTION, MORE OPPORTUNITY

#### "Break A Leg" is Only a Figure of Speech!

BY BENJAMIN J. MANTELL

As a senior here at YU, I have become very proud of our campus and our faculty. You see, someone once called the college experience a "factory of opportunity," and Yeshiva University has always been just that. In my experience, the administration and faculty have always been receptive, even begging for ideas that create opportunity for the enrichment of the YU student experience.

In the three years that I have been here, however, not once has a student ever had the opportunity to direct a drama. This is an unhappy situation for the many students who either have established talent in play direction, or wish to explore such talent. Arguments against this claim include the actual lack of talent. However the purpose of college plays (or any extracurricular events for that matter) are not necessarily to give us the opportunity to show off our already existing talent; but rather to teach and to give us a chance to explore our skills. For example, in the Athletic Department I know that students who are amateur or not particularly skilled in a particular sport are

absolutely given the chance to participate in sports. (I hit 120 on the golf course, and was still encouraged to go out with the team.)

Another claim is the lack of space, only one stage. True. So either we could rotate and build our sets quickly (this is done at many other, much larger universities); or allow students to direct the one play each semester that our Yeshiva College Student Council already puts money towards!

The most disturbing aspect of this unfortunate situation is that those students who do wish to direct – and I know of at least a handful – cannot come forward and voice their wishes for more opportunity out of fear of being banished from the Yeshiva College Dramatic Society subculture. This is certainly the only case that I know of where, rather than being open to suggestion, the administration in question has created an environment where maintaining the status quo is more than encouraged, it's enforced. College life should not be closed off from opportunity, and those in charge should be more open to improvements, and less daunting towards suggestion. "Break a leg" is only a figure of speech.

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- \*RECOMMENDATIONS

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GRAD SCHOOL ORIENTATION

## Rabbi Cohen

### Continued from page 1

move that will enable those students who have developed a close relationship with Rabbi Cohen to actively choose to join his shiur. Rabbi Dr. Michael Hecht, current Dean of MTA, envisions that decision to be a result of the special relationships that Rabbi Cohen has advanced with many of his former talmidim from their high school days or their time in the YU Beis Medrash - "a certain niche who deeply appreciate his style."

In addition, Rabbi Cohen will be formally named the "shoel u'maishav" for YU's night seder, a position that Charlop reiterates Rabbi Cohen has already held "in everything but name for decades."

While the move to shift Rabbi Cohen's focus might excite many talmidim in the college, it has drawn some criticism from a number of Rabbi Cohen's former high school talmidim who feel that others will miss out on what one of them deemed "the experience of a lifetime." Being in Rabbi Cohen's high school shiur, according to one MTA alumnus and current YC junior, "was indeed unforgettable. He can light the desire to learn like few others, and his passion is contagious."

According to Hecht, Rabbi Cohen will remain in his capacity as MTA's *bochen*, testing both incoming students as he has done in the past and anchoring a more constant program that Dean Hecht believes can aid in his constant pursuit to add to the Torah atmosphere at MTA. "When I was a student in our high school," Rabbi Hecht recalls, "Rav Mendel Zaks, the Chofetz Chaim's son-in-law, served as *bochen* of the high school. One of

the highest points of the year was the opportunity I had to go into Rav Zaks' office and talk with him for an hour. This program had a tremendous impact on the *limud hatorah* in the high school. In short, I want Rabbi Cohen to be the Rav Mendel of the High School."

At the same time, Dean Hecht does recognize that Rabbi Cohen's distinct style has in the past been both a strength and weakness for his relationship with a wide array of high school students. Accordingly, Hecht feels that it is "part of an administrator's job to maximize the strengths of his faculty." In this case, Hecht feels that this is exactly what is being done. Hecht claims the niche that Rabbi Cohen connects with best is the upper echelon of students, who will be the primary focus of the *bochen* program. Regardless of the distinct style, Hecht is confident that Rabbi Cohen "has the charisma and the *hadras panim*" to assume a difficult, but essential role.

Regardless of this new role, one thing seems clear to everyone involved in the change; perhaps the most valuable role that anyone can play is in providing a presence that can be felt by those around him. According to Rabbi Charlop, "no other Rebbe or talmid can match Rabbi Cohen's *hasmada* in the Beis Medrash itself - both day and night. Just his being there serves a profound contribution that neither the high school or college administration can afford to threaten." It is for that reason his role was what administrators deemed "changed and enhanced."

## Yeshiva Basketball Star Leaves Jewish High School

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

Tamir Goodman, the orthodox high school basketball phenomena whose non-binding basketball scholarship offer from the University of Maryland drew national attention last spring, has transferred to Takoma Academy, a Seventh-Day Adventist private school in Takoma Park, MD for his senior year. The announcement was made by his father, Karl Goodman, on August 13th while Tamir studied in Israel.

Heralded in the news media as "Jewish Jordan," Tamir previously attended Torah Academy of Baltimore. His father proclaimed, "I don't think he can play Division 3 and 4 high school basketball anymore." Taking this quote literally, the national media reported that Tamir was leaving the

Torah Academy because he wished to "step up his level of competition." This however, is far from the entire truth.

Sources inform The Commentator that Goodman left Torah Academy because the high school closed their basketball program. Faced with high publicity and exuberant media attention, the Yeshiva confronted a conflict that existed both externally and internally. Problems of how to handle the evolving media circus arose and were difficult to resolve, effectively ending what became the Tamir Goodman Saga.

Tamir plans to move to the orthodox community of Silver Spring, Maryland. Once there, he hopes to establish close relationships with local Rabbonim to maintain some semblance of Torah in his everyday life.

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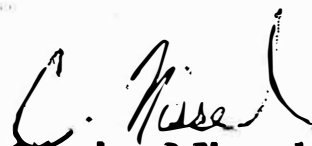
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# ARTS & CULTURE

## THE COMMENTATOR TAKES WOODSTOCK BY STORM

BY AARON KLEIN

The Editors-In-Chief of The Commentator obtained complimentary Woodstock tickets and press passes from the producers of Woodstock 99. Below, you'll find a detailed account of this incredible experience.

### The Scene:

Woodstock 99 took place at Griffiss Park, a 3,600 acre decommissioned air force base in Rome, New York. Two majestic stages graced the large grounds - the east and west - set half a mile apart, allowing for two bands to play simultaneously. The east stage usually featured the "more popular" artists. At the middle of the site rested an old airplane hanger that had been converted into an Emerging Artist stage where new bands could showcase their talents to thousands of willing listeners.

### The unbelievable talent lineup featured:

James Brown, Oleander, The Umbilical Brothers, Sugar Ray, Jamiroquai, moe., LIT, Buckcherry, The Roots, Insane Clown Posse, Live, Sheryl Crow, DMX, The Offspring, Korn, George Clinton, Bush, The Tragically Hip, Kid Rock, Wyclef Jean, Counting Crows, Dave Matthews Band, Alanis Morissette, Limp Bizkit, Rage Against The Machine, Metallica, Guster, The Bruce Hornsby Group, Everclear, Ice Cube, Los Lobos, Mickey Hart, Planet Drum, Chemical Brothers, Willie Nelson, Brian Setzer Orchestra, Everlast, Elvis Costello, Jewel, Creed, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Mike Ness, Our Lady Peace, Rusted Root, Sevendust, Collective Soul, Godsmack, and Megadeth.

### Day One:

The first day found us furiously searching through the crowded grounds for an open campsite, walking for over an hour toting heavy camping equipment while Live distantly concluded their performance and Sheryl



Crow prepared to take the east stage.

After finally locating a site that satisfied us, we decided to find the car and move it to a more convenient location. It was on this suspect journey that we learned just how massive the air force grounds are. We hiked empty fields that sprouted with strange buildings, we jumped across streams of water, we walked on an endless runway, we trailed several fences to dead ends, we followed the Woodstock gate around its many and curious corners, we took a "short cut," we strolled through an irritatingly infinite garden of parked vehicles. All this and we couldn't find our car.

After walking for what seemed like hours, we decided to continue the impossible search another time and hurriedly sprinted toward the main stage to catch the end of Offspring's punk-infused performance. They seemed to have most of the crowdswaying to their juvenile but honest lyrics.

The east grounds held well over a hundred fifty thousand people listening attentively to the music and watching the glorious sun set above us in an intoxicating dance of light and color.

As the dark and cloudless sky settled, we headed out to the west stage, where George Clinton performed a sixty minute set that ran a little low on energy. The people flocking at the front of the stage remained so submerged in the collective experience, they didn't seem to care which band currently played. At the outskirts of the west grounds, people sat on sun-stained grass, mostly talking to their group of friends while the music of Clinton sounded off in the background.

The night's energy level considerably lifted when Bush took the east stage and lead singer Gavin Rossdale - who seemed so high it is doubtful he knew he was at Woodstock - pranced up and down the platform, screaming

lyrics at the top of his tired lungs. The crowd greatly enjoyed Bush's music, waving lighters for their fine performance of "Glycerine" and singing along with most of their recognizable tunes, such as "Comedown," "Machinehead" and "Everything Zen."

As most people headed to an all night rave taking place inside an airplane hanger and hosted by MOBY, we walked a mile to the Media Compound, where press members could interview the artists after their performances. More importantly, it is where we could stock up on free drinks being generously offered to the media. The prices on the Woodstock grounds were outrageous - \$4.00 for a bottle of water or soda. (Each person spent an average of \$24 a day on drinks).

### Day Two:

continued on page 11

FILM REVIEWS

## The Blair Witch Project

BY YAIR OPPENHEIM

Starring: Heather Donahue, Michael Williams and Joshua Leonard

Fairly warned be thee, for garbage takes many forms. Garbage is sometimes hailed as art, often with new-age platitudes defining interpretations that never measure up to actual worth. The Blair Witch Project, stripped of hype, of its hit website, of its budget miracle and profits, fits its namesake: it's an amateur student project, not deemed worthy of being a film. The plot of the film, also its ad tag line, is brief and clear: In October 1994, three student filmmakers disappeared into the woods near Burkittsville, Maryland, while shooting a documentary. One year later, their footage was found. The film examines the content of the documentary, their "behind the scenes" discussions, their arguments when things get tense, and finally, their "encounter" with the witch. To the average observer, it seems like an interesting premise, and admittedly, the idea is quite original, not to mention that audiences haven't seen any witch movies in a while. The film's basic problem is that it looks great on paper, but just can't cut it on big screen.

One of the basic problems is that in order for the film to work, to justify itself as the remains of a tape, the film's background summary gives away the ending — the opening lines state the end clearly. A bold move, truly, though for certain people, it will lower interest and expectations. Honestly, once a man gets a death sentence penalty, is it more exciting to know that he gets the chair or lethal injection? The next big mistake lies in the concept as well: The choice



moments of this remaining film are honestly disappointing at times; watching a film showing people filming a bad film is not on anyone's must see list, at least not anyone normal.

Making a bad film about a bad film is no excuse for one's own shortcomings. The documentary dialogue is pathetic, as is the professionalism, or lack thereof. The basic underlying logic flaw in the premise is that some films advertise themselves as just cinema, while others try to say that they are real. The film is completely believable to a point. That point comes pretty soon as the film becomes tiresome. Sure the film we see is compiled from the rest that was found, but it's just impossible for the group to have filmed every waking moment they were there, which is what they claim. Certain other events also seem preposterous. How can people walk in circles if they had a compass? Without giving more details, why would anyone deem a map unusable? The acting in the film is equally good, and quite realistic, though with all of these supposed moments captured, one would think

there was some thought put into protecting the reality of the film, which is the key. Consider the fact that the last half of the film is devoted to scenes of the trio getting lost. It's tiresome and irritating to watch three people complain about the same things for about an hour. Checking one's watch is certainly more entertaining. Walking out isn't a bad idea either.

There are definitely rationalizations for all of this, yet they are also flawed; true, the fact that viewers know the end is somewhat intoxicating in a voyeuristic way, yet the simple response is that road accidents have the same attraction to everyday people, but does anyone want to watch a family's boring road trip just for the interesting five minutes of how they 'get it'? There are fifteen good minutes that will catch the interest of audience members, genuine spooky moments in fact, but the slice is hardly justifiable for the rest of the 'pie' unless it was done right. Make no mistake, the film could have been superb even in its experienced format; the filmmakers simply stretched the material for all it's worth, and could have injected more suspense — even the psychological kind without having to show much. Redundant scenes could have been replaced with more refreshing material to develop the film.

Other conceptual problems lie in this film. It's a great idea to use a home video camera to make things hit the audience as cinema verite — the backlash though is that the sheer amount of home video use — especially during scenes where the actors are running and the camera is shaking even more than normal. This leads to viewers getting motion sickness from watching a shaking screen. If the film still sounds interesting, by all means, indulge, though if this share of the Blair Witch is enough, avoid contact.



ARTS &

Defending the Schmutz

BY MORDECHAI LEVOVITZ

The resplendent fanfare of flickering lights, colorful images and psychedelic virtual reality decorating New York's Times Square mirrors the even more amazing kaleidoscopic array of people hurrying along through its busy streets. What is more astounding than the sheer number of people circulating this relatively small area is the incredible variety of people. The wealthy business man, homeless woman, black hatted Chasid, gay actor, rich Jewish liberal, African American activist, and of course Japanese tourist, seem to exist here symbiotically, creating one great media driven equilibrium. Thousands of years of social racial and sexual barriers are completely obliterated within four city blocks. This is modern culture. Big cities like, New York, LA, Paris, and London help to create and cultivate modern culture by facilitating so many different types of

people living together in such close proximity. In a community made up of myriad ethnic backgrounds, social statuses, and basic lifestyles, the status quo is constantly being questioned; nothing becomes beyond reproach. The only thing constant is change. The only way in which modern society can establish some semblance of consistency and uniformity, is to whole heartily accept this reality. Pluralism is just the post civil rights movement manifestation of freedom. It is the logical offspring of a seventeenth century concept of liberty and a later twentieth century concept of equality. The societal notion that no culture, idea, or desire, is more inherently ethical than another has become in of itself a moral imperative. However, in a social climate in which the constituents are extensively different, pluralism is an inevitable phenomenon if society wants to protect its underlying intuition of justice for the individual. The greatest threat to such a community is prejudice, hate and intolerance, consequently, these concepts have emerged to become the new sociological evils. The media, culture's new forum for artistic expression, has the task of defending and reinforcing the idealization of diversity and demonization of prejudice. Even expression such as fashion reflects the rejection of antiquated social prejudices by no longer idealizing the dress of the rich, the white, or the elders. Now designer clothing is sometimes fashioned after the poor, the ethnic minority, and the young.

The table of social mores has been turned on its head. For countless centuries, social status, moral fundamentalism and, above all, conformity, were the building blocks of a strong society. Individuals who challenged or did not fit into the system were shunned and persecuted. How many millions of people were killed and tortured throughout history, simply because they were born to the wrong race, sex, or religion, or they had the chutzpah to speak their mind. Prejudice was so built into the bedrock of accepted society that even now we live with the ramifications. It is a sad historical truth, but it remains that outside modern culture systematic racism, sexual persecution, slavery, eugenics, genocide, and ethnic cleansing have been the rule rather than the exception. Humanity truly has a very dark past. This has been a gracious approach to modern culture, however there is most definitely an alternative approach, which is echoed in almost every Yeshivish Yeshiva and by



continued on page 12

Woodstock  
Continued from page 10

The concerts started in the afternoon, with Tragically Hip opening the days lineup. Their performance could be neatly synopsisized by the first word of the bands name. They basically shouted unclear words and stroked their guitars with no apparent regard for the rules of music or concordance. Kid Rock took the stage next. Somehow the entire crowd was drawn by their offensive lyrics and immoral promotion of sex and drugs for little children. We decided to walk to the west stage, which drew a smaller crowd and possessed a more quaint atmosphere, to hear The Bruce Hornsby Group. It was very peaceful to lie on the ground, look at the blue sky and listen to the calming lyrics of Hornsby permeate the still air. He delivered a modest but passionate performance, and most seemed to enjoy it. We returned to the east stage in time to catch the beginning of the Counting Crows sixty minute set. I am a big fan of the Crows, but must sadly report that they didn't give their best performance. They tried to improvise lyrics, seemingly changing and adding lines on the spot. This didn't work, however, and most of the crowd entertained themselves while the Crows shouted away on the large stage. Dave Matthews Band offered one of the best performances of the festival. Their energy remained high and the sound they delivered was at once clear and stinging. They preceded the pharmaceutically-altered Alanis Morissette. I stood transfixed by the cords emanating from the mouth of Morissette, as her strong voice converged with the instruments in a fiery wave of sound and creativity that was so appealing it quickly brought the listener into the depths of her enraged lair, keeping him bound there, mesmerized, until the very end of her set. Alex, who had been dragged to the stage against his will, thought her performance was average. After eating dinner, we arrived at the now dark east stage in complete shock. Almost everyone on the grounds stood on the east field waiting for the next band to take stage. I had never seen so many people collectively gathered. Over two hundred fifty thousand eager fans packed into one field, leaving little room for anyone to move. Within minutes, we too were shoved into the crowd and surrounded by thousands of people - dim faces that we could not clearly fathom. At this point I realized we were part of something grand, perhaps even monumental. The aura of Woodstock had finally arrived and it grabbed me by the throat. We heard the blustering shouts of a quarter million people, and the sound of the live-ly instruments playing as Rage Against The Machine took Woodstock by storm with an electrifying ninety minute set that ended with an illegal burning of the American flag. The entire field shook and swayed like a giant glob of Jell-O, changing pace with the altering rhythm of each new song. Although I wouldn't categorize myself as a Rage fan, I admit their show was unbelievable, as it resonated with bouncing energy and absorbing lyrics that most people already knew by heart. Metallica served as the last performance of the day. They had a tough act to follow, but they played very well. Their performance was immediately interrupted by the Woodstock host (who's name I still do not know), who announced to a thrilled crowd that a heavy thunderstorm ruthlessly headed



in our direction. The penetrating night grew more intense by the minute. The crowd cheered as the clouds crept slowly behind us, and Metallica resumed playing to a now hysterically-charged audience. We waited for the rain to pour down on us - a rain that would mark our foreheads with the legendary Woodstock trademark, a rain that would highlight an already unforgettable experience, a rain that would initiate us into an exclusive society that had been started in 1969, a rain that would leave us standing in a muddy field. A rain that would ultimately not come. We returned to our tents as dry as a grain of sand in the Judean desert. We attended part of the all-night rave hosted by Fatboy Slim, and then went to the media compound for some more free drinks and artist interviews. Day Three: The third day of Woodstock, which featured all kinds of music, was hailed by one reporter as "the most diverse day of music in history." It was kicked off by old-timer Willie Nelson, who predictably drew an older crowd. We watched as aged fans emerged from under the woodwork to watch an incredibly talented and senile man sing. He performed many songs that I like, but went way over his one hour limit and slowly began to wear off his welcome. When Willie finally staggered his way off the platform, Brian Setzer Orchestra, the first swing band to ever play at Woodstock, brought their hip tunes to the east stage. The crowd really enjoyed the swing scene, and during the one hour spirited performance it began to feel as if the year was 1920. Everlast sang their monotonous tunes next, and with the exclusion of their one hit single, "What It's Like," they really didn't have the crowd going. The following act, Elvis Costello, certainly won "The Most Boring Woodstock Performance Award." It really wasn't his fault, though; all his lyrics just happen to be slow. Perhaps if he wasn't preceded by two dry performances the crowd would have been more kind. We were surprised when the nameless host came on stage to announce that there was rain on the way, "and this time it will hit us for sure." His announcement served as mental coffee for the tired and hot audience. Jewel took the east stage as the rain clouds quickly formed above us. The Atlantic recording sensation flaunted her beautiful voice for an enthusiastic crowd. If only the Counting Crows possessed her virtuous skills they too could have taken Woodstock by storm. Jewel conversed with the audience and seemed to improvise lyrics on the spot, turning her quick single, "Who Will Save Your Soul," into a ten minute ballad filled with surprise cadences and accentuation. The clouds soon initiated their two minute sob on the crowd, and the rain left as quickly as it had arrived. Once again, Alex felt the performance was mere-

ly average. As the sun began to set and the fading golden rays merged one last time with the brilliant sky, we returned to the darkening east stage for the last Woodstock performance - that of Red Hot Chili Peppers. They came onto the stage flaunting their green and white hair (at the last Woodstock, they dressed up as light bulbs); bassist Flea played completely naked. They had the audience jumping in no time. Everyone on the field swayed, rocked and clapped to the catchy tunes of the Peppers as I came to the silent realization that Woodstock was about to end. It would only be minutes before all of hell would break lose. The Peppers played the Jimi Hendrix classic, "Fire," when a few intelligent concert goers decided to start a bon fire in the middle of the crowd. Shortly thereafter, large fires were lit throughout the east stage, and animated fans started to jump over the flames, dancing around them in a neo-satanic trance, throwing in tables and chairs. The Chili Peppers finished their set, and a laser tribute to Jimi Hendrix formally concluded the festival. A video of Hendrix's legendary rendition of "The Star Spangled Banner" was showing when a nearby tower caught fire and immediately exploded, spreading a fierce three alarm blaze to two other towers. Aggressive security guards surrounded the area wearing shields and helmets, completely blocking off the Woodstock site. Some rebellious fans jumped on trailers, looted the venders and kicked down the Woodstock murals. An event that was innocently created to spread peace and love, had abruptly ended in violence and mayhem. "Was it like '69?" That is the singular question most people asked upon my return from Woodstock. Many skeptics have predictably questioned whether the spirit of Woodstock was present at this years massive, well-attended and well-sponsored extravaganza. I feel that Woodstock '69 can never be recreated, nor should it. Times have changed, and so have priorities. We didn't witness a Vietnam in our lifetime, there is no universal cause that ignites the souls of every college-aged kid nowadays. The original Woodstock attendees bathed in rain and mud, we remained dry; '69 concert goers were isolated from the rest of human society for three days, we had "computer tents" to check our e-mail; our tickets were priced at 150.00, the first Woodstock cost nothing; the original was held in Max Yasgur's dairy farm, this year's festival took place in a military zone. But the one thing we unquestionably share with the previous generation is our love for good music and our desire to break all restrictive rules. This was certainly one of those experiences I hope to one day glorify to my grandchildren and pointlessly include within the adjective-saturated pages of a future novel.

CULTURE

# ARTS & CULTURE

## Schmutz

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almost every Right-wing Christian fundamentalist. All you need to do is walk into any Yeshiva schmooze and you'll hear a very different story about modern culture. Commonly, you will hear modern culture being called 'the most morally corrupt culture the world has known'. They claim that modern society is inherently perverse, and that the last traces of ethical values are quickly becoming lost. In their eyes our culture is equitable to that of Sodom and Gomorra, or the generation of the great flood, which were all destroyed by God for being cultures imbued with sin and abomination. Particularly in both the Yeshivish and Christian Right worlds, the qualitative conclusion of this being the worst culture in history, has risen to the level of dogma.

In order to analyze this claim about modern culture it is first important to clarify what we should expect from a secular society and why. We need a basis from which to judge our culture by. Should we expect our secular culture to enforce the laws of any one religion? Are the *Rabbeim* angry because modern culture does not embrace and cultivate the laws of Judaism? Do they want society to enforce Christian law on everybody? How Moral should we expect a secular society to be? Once we create a standard of morality that secular society is expected to adopt, each objection to modern culture should be measured individually against this standard to see if the specific society is indeed at fault. Finally, the cons of modern society should ultimately be weighed against the pros before concluding any assessment.

Is society responsible to instill and enforce morality? According to the critics of modern culture this seems to be a given. However, at least in Jewish literature, ethical laws which man is expected to come up with on his own, is severely distinguished from Divine morality. The Kuzari, in *Shar Shlishi* concerning Rational laws as a basis for dogmatic *mitzvos*, clearly differentiates social morality from divine morality. Translated by Rabbi Avrohom Davis, The Kuzari reads:

"Social and rational moral laws are known to the human mind, where as divine laws, which God's people received in addition to the rational ones, were unknown until made explicit by God through revelation."

Secular society is one that has not received revelation. As a whole they have little to no relationship with the Jewish mandate, let alone Jewish belief concerning *Noachite* laws. Furthermore, it would be hard pressed to argue that they have any responsibility to accept this. How and why would the Vietnamese investment banker come to be aware and accept his *Noachite* religious social status. Surely, we do not want to impose our concept of their religious role on them.

Instead, we can only expect secular society to embrace a morality that can be attained rationally. There are certain Ethical Ideas that are indispensable to the maintenance of human society. These are the ethics we expect society to uphold. As the Kuzari explains, the adoption of the fundamental concepts of a utilitarian social moral code is what makes a society good or bad.

What are these essential ideals that a flourishing society is so dependent upon? They are the moral equivalent of *Mitzvos bein Adom le Chaveyro* (laws between man and his friend.) Protecting the relationship between man and his neighbor is the first step to a healthy community. When this relationship is threatened it is impossible to attain the power of unity. Society would crumble without laws against murder, thievery, abuse, and rape. The common denominator to all these evils is the concept of not forcing a fate on ones neighbor against his will. If we delve even deeper into this idea we see that the

morality does not lie in the inherent evil of harm but instead in each individual's inherent moral right to be free from the harm. Cultural ethics consist of the rights that society bestows to its constituents. We should expect even a secular society to give each individual the right not to be taken advantage of physically, monetary, or sexually by any other individual in that society. This is the bedrock for all sociological mores.

Now let us examine the specific criticism that our society receives from the right wing. They are yelling about a cultural wide breakdown of values, but which and who's values? Some say that modern media has desensitized us from violence and consequently, modern culture is responsible for the increasing amount of violent crimes. This sounds all very nice except for the fact that every pole has shown that national and city wide violent crimes have been steadily declining, even gun crimes are decreasing. This idea that we are in the most violent society that ever has lived is an utter fabrication. Granted this year we have witnessed some unspeakable school shootings. Although they would love to blame the media and modern culture for these unfortunate phenomena, that would be ignoring where these killings took place and what kind of society produced these killers. In all the horrible school killings, the killers never came from the media driven cities that so exemplify modern culture, instead everyone of these killers, including the latest monster that opened fire on pre-schoolers, came from relatively southern middle American religious conservative suburbs. The only other common denominator between the murderers is that they were all Racist and had easy access to guns.

The other major criticism against modern culture concerns the recent destruction of sexual taboo. Unlike the fabricated claim concerning the rise in violence, the claim that Modern culture has desensitized society to almost any kind of consensual sexual expression is true. The key word here being consen-

sual. Because of the unusual nature of sexual behavior and its unique relationship to power, sexual perversion should be split into two categories. Perversion as it relates to Divine mandate of what physical activities one can and cannot take part in, and perversion as it relates to The predatory aspect of coercive sexual behavior. The latter is certainly related to the rational sociological moral culture is supposed to uphold. However, the former, seems far more comparable to Divine laws such as *Shabbos* and circumcision, where without specific revelation man could not possibly have come to such ethical conclusions. Consequently, this aspect of sexual perversion should not be used to cast society in any light, for secular society can not be expected to take up divine mandate.

The specific outlawing of predatorial sexual behavior has been part of societal moral since the earliest cultures. The Hittite code explicitly bans homosexual rape. When the Gemorah speaks about the evil of Homosexuality it is almost never in the context of consensual relationship. Instead it always concerns those who violently prey upon others, one

who rapes another man captured in war, or one who preys upon children (*Sanhedrin* 54b). According to Rabbinical legend Ham was guilty of sodomizing his helpless father while King Nevuchadnazar of Babylon was believed to have sodomized captive kings. Sodom itself was known for the prevalence of incest and violent homosexual raping. There is close to no account on how ancient society would view a consensual pair of gay adult behavior. These stories, which have served as a polemic against sexual deviance's all deal with some kind of coercion; the rational aspect of sexual perversion.

While today's culture does not concern itself with addressing the revelation type of sexual perversions, it has done more than any other culture in the world to ensure that sexual predators of any kind be punished. For the first time in history sexual harassment and the abuse of ones spouse have been publicly denounced and prosecuted regularly. Age of consent laws are still enforced because that too has more to do with cognitive ability of choice than inherent moral uncleanness. This distinction becomes most clear when examining our society's view toward infidelity. The issue is the cheating and the lying not the sex. In last years Clinton/Lewinsky fiasco, even the right wing Republicans finally admitted that if the issue really was only consensual sex, it should be thrown out immediately. The moral problem was with the lying not the sex.

It is important not to confuse social ethical intuition with mass social bigotry. Like societies in the past who have reinforced systematic prejudices concerning certain races or beliefs, culture has also developed a keen sense of discrimination toward sexual

deviance's. Due to its relative importance to the human personality, sexual behavior and orientation have been used to separate and classify different facets of society. Therefore just because many people still have a seemingly inert repulsion to certain kinds of sexual activity and desires doesn't mean that laws restricting sexual activity are rational. It just means that thousands of years of prejudice have become imbued into sociological development and that with proper exposure, these prejudices like all others will fade.

Once we analyze modern culture in the light of what man should expect the moral responsibility of secular culture to be, the Rabbi's claim that this is the most morally corrupt culture in history, becomes intellectually insulting. Not only has modern culture come the closest to these expectations, in some ways our modern community has exceeded them to become the first society where freedom truly flourishes. Just think of the unbelievable amount of moral progress culture has made. We ended thousands of years of racial slavery, worked to integrate diverse races, established the basic equality of the sexes, gave females and minorities the right to vote, stopped the persecution of homosexuals, and outlawed basic prejudice activity. Why would anyone be morally nostalgic about the way life used to be? Life used to be cruel! People suffered for no reason other than their ethnicity, religion, sex, or orientation. Today, while there are still bias individuals and organizations; they are generally those who resist the influence of modern culture and consequently are not representative of modern culture.

The media serves as the primary source of expression for modern culture. It is used to remind us of the dangers that threaten modern culture and reclaim the ideals of diversity and pluralism. One way it accomplishes this is similar to the behavioral psychology approach to phobias, namely, Desensitization. Prejudice is a product of fear which is itself a product of sensitivity. Gradual exposure is an effective way to fight bigotry. However not everyone has the luxury of being exposed to everything; this is why t.v., cinema, music, and painting are so important in this changing age. Art facilitates desensitization without actual exposure. Media has taken the place of literature to become the new compensation for experience. None of us is without prejudice, the media helps us strip that away. This is why it is important that the media should continue to be provocative and even offensive. Much more than entertainment or expression, today media is a tool in which to prepare society's constituents for modern culture.

The essence of modern morality lies in society's granting the individual the right to spread his arms as far as the other persons neck. A moral society balances the concept of freedom and equality with rational sociological law. In this sense, modern culture is the greatest and most moral gentile culture to walk the face of this earth. Everything that we should expect culture to hail it halls, and everything that we should expect it to reject it rejects. Consequently instead of our meaningless criticisms, culture deserves our support and cultivation. The turn of the millennium is most definitely appropriate for sociological introspection. In our case we can step back with a smile and take pride in our ethical accomplishments.

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(HOW TO INTERVIEW AYLB-04)

## FILM ANALYSIS

## Deconstructing Star Wars

BY YAIR OPPENHEIM

It's a safe bet to say that there will never again be a cinematic experience quite like *Star Wars*. Just think of the sheer amount of people who have drooled over this phenomenon and the generous phrases it has bestowed on pop-culture over the past thirty years (once the current trilogy ends). Sure there's *Star Trek*, but *Star Wars* has attracted all types of people with significantly less exposure or development. Can nine hours of a fan's life be determined by a film? Should it? Even more importantly, should our shameless craving for *Star Wars* be continued after the *Phantom Menace*? Is it really the best thing since ice cream? That, my young apprentice, you shall soon find out.

Okay, there are a certain batch of people who couldn't care less about what is in the mind of George Lucas, but some did question this man's abilities when he stepped back up to the plate. Sure, the ignorant people say, "It's *Star Wars*, so does it really matter?" but I don't know about you, I remember that after *Star Wars*, Lucas went on to produce such hits as *Howard the Duck*, *Willow*, and the unforgettable *Tucker: The man and his dream*. The response to such a statement has usually been: "Hey, dude, this is the man who directed *American Graffiti*; he got nominated for a Best Director Oscar, like, eons before *Star Wars*, so be gone with you or I shall summon up the powers of the force and, like, become more powerful than you can imagine." And then there is also the crowd of "dark side" intellectuals who spouted things like: "Empire was only good because Irving Kershner directed it; Lucas would never have made it that dark, and Ewoks?... Come on, *Jedi* sucked, just admit it." Unfortunately, *The Phantom Menace* will also be debated for a while. It's cool, but it's also uncool - all in all, a very conflicted piece of work.

The first thing anyone should realize is that aside from an occasional film from Steven Spielberg or James Cameron, there will NEVER be films such as *Star Wars* made again. Lucas is only one of few directors that is actually interested in pushing the envelope (and spending lots of time) in creating effects for the purpose of story-enhancement. Most directors don't spend their time thinking of imaginary aliens and are only interested in finishing a project, because most direct other people's scripts. There's a reason why Hollywood doesn't have doors, marked: "Young and brilliant 20-somethings who want to direct their ultimate geek fantasy," simply because you don't often get films like *Close Encounters*, *Terminator 2*, or *Star Wars*, each written by its director. That said, the effects job done in this film is beyond discussion or argument. It sets a new benchmark in the realm of visual storytelling for decades on. The sheer amount of detail that Lucas layered *The Phantom Menace* with goes far beyond the effort and intelligence communicated by other directors in down-to-earth dramas. This, of course, going hand in hand with the mythologically framed world Lucas modeled after his mentor's work (Joseph Campbell's *The Power of Myth*), makes the trilogy far more accessible than it would have been as a mere visual spectacle.

This is where the *Phantom Menace* is somewhat lacking. *Phantom* lacks dramatic focus. Any fool who believes the *Phantom Menace* should win Best Picture is undeserving of his high school diploma. We all remember those moments in the Trilogy — the binary sunset in *A New Hope*, the open-arm gesture of Vader in *Empire* for Luke to join the family — and whatever it was in *Jedi* that took your mind off the Ewoks. These were pieces of film making that justified the trilogy as a work of art. *Phantom* has a scene where Anakin leaves his mother — can you say lack of emotion? What could have been



a great scene was rushed and downright cold — forced.

Let's reexamine the beginning, shall we? The first ten minutes of the film, with those awful excuses for aliens, was poor film making. You'd think you were watching a made for cable B-movie. *Phantom* works as entertainment, but when you look closer, things don't work consistently. Anakin Skywalker, had a great role in the film; he was a young boy, who, mature beyond his years, needed to reach into himself to feel the force. The first half of the movie proved that. The end of the film, where he has to stop the invasion, suddenly has his character revert to some little squirt who saves the day by saying things like "Wheel!" and who could forget the cliché, "I wonder what this button does?" Where was the closing of his eyes with the maturity that we were told he possessed?

And then we get to Jar Jar. He must rank somewhere on the top ten list of "Worst Crimes in Cinema History." I don't know about you, but where I come from, you get beaten up if you admit to liking him. This was an insult to the intelligence of the audience. Who was the target audience for this vile excuse for screen time? Kids? Chewbacca, for all of his ape-like rumblings is a regular Marlon Brando compared to Jar Jar, and yet even as a hook to children, Chewie was still acted respectfully, with intelligence so that he didn't insult any adults. This leads to other problems. Was it so necessary to



have Boss Nass cater to children by drooling at the end of each monologue? Please don't tell me it was a form of sentence punctuation. What was up with the alien characterizations (racism?) of some of the aliens? Could something be more unoriginal? First you've got the green aliens in the beginning, who look to be equivalents of Asian businessmen. Then there's Jar-Jar, who is clearly Jamaican, as well as Watto, the typical greasy Jewish businessman. People say fans are reading into this, but this was just too blatant. What of those other turnoffs? Well, there's that immaculate conception thing with Anakin and his mother. Fine, it's deemed as a necessary plot point, but it's lame.

Even worse, possibly the worst crime in the *Star Wars* universe was done — magic was lost. What if they revealed in the *Phantom Menace* that lightsabers were powered by Duracell batteries? Well, frankly, it would suck. To think that the amount of "force" you have was simply a factor of how many mitochondria you have in a blood sample, is about as exciting as your doctor telling you about your cholesterol level. It's a wonder how the idea was inserted. You don't have a magician reveal his tricks; you don't deconstruct magic. Some things must exist as they are, or the awe is lost. Similarly, the music, another fine job by John Williams, is for some reason, lacking in magic — only used to serve the film, not elevate it. The first trilogy prided itself on the way leitmotif was used as a musical way to make characters accessible to the audience. Character themes were the way to go. There were love themes, character themes, all memorable melodies. They gave emotional backing to characters; they offered presence. If you wish to argue, try convincing 100 John Williams fans that the Imperial March is pure drivel.

Now that a line of *Star Wars* fans are knocking at my door so that I can autograph their baseball bats with my liquid living essence, I shall state why this film could have been nominated for Best Picture. A change of heart? No. So why was this film a somewhat letdown? Because it was bad? Heavens, no. It was great — it just could have been better. There were marks of true brilliance in this film. Lucas is no slacker. Sure you've got all the familiar faces - Yoda, C3PO, R2D2 and other such things that were inherently cool. *Phantom's* pod race is just as classic as the Ben-Hur Chariot race it paid homage to. The scenes involving Senator Palpatine's rise to power were brilliant. The fact that this trade war was a *Phantom Menace*, a ploy orchestrated by Palpatine to mask his evil purpose was great cinema. The line "Ah, young Skywalker, I shall be following your career with much interest" was magnificently executed and brought a chill to everyone's spines. The dramatic punch was dead-on in these scenes. And who can forget Darth Maul? If someone asked me a few years back what's the most memorable face of cinematic evil, I, like anyone else, would say: Darth Vader. So if I was told that there would be a face as equally fearsome as Vader's, and as intoxicating to look at, I wouldn't believe it. Lo and behold, this machine of rage had the attention of EVERY audience member. As for the end, the lightsaber fight put the previous ones to shame, thanks to Ray Park's (Darth Maul) exciting choreography — the man did his own stunts. This scene, would have to be called a perfect piece of film making. Flawless editing, combined with adrenaline-pumping visuals and the music of *Duel of the Fates*, the best piece of music Williams injected into the film. Lucas did good. Well, my apprentice, you have learned the ways of the *Phantom Menace*, so do not fear for the quality of the upcoming films, because a wise puppet once said, "Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, hate leads to suffering."

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## Technology in the 21st Century

**Chaim Jaskoll**

*As we forcefully march into the twenty-first century, American society is becoming more and more reliant on computers and technology.*

*The COMMENTATOR will now be running a Technology Column in every edition.*

### High Speed Internet Access

Now that we're back from summer vacation, there is one question we will all be asking: "Why is this Internet connection so slow?" The answer, I believe, is simple. In comparison to the connection your summer internship (or computer camp, for the lucky ones) boasted, the YU computer labs/libraries are painfully slow. And waiting for your 56 kbps (kilobits per second) modem in your dorm room to bring up a web page is out of the question.

Well, you're in luck. In the past, high-speed Internet connections were practically ruled out for residential customers. Each possibility was a dead end. The fastest option, a T-1 connection, boasted a whopping 1.5 mbps (megabits per second) speed, but costs upwards of \$1000 a month. Next was ISDN, or Integrated Services Digital Network. Originally developed years before the Internet was born, ISDN became popular once again with the promise of providing the inexpensive net-access we all coveted. Well, it never happened. Although it was possible of achieving 128 kbps throughput (two channels) in a static solution (more about that later), high prices and limited service areas hindered its growth in the residential market.

Another recent underachiever was satellite-dish access. DirecPC had, and still has, a service allowing up to 400 kbps download speeds, but slim upload speeds of 33.6 and expensive installation prices (\$300 to \$800) prevented any real promise.

But things are about to change. Two new technologies have emerged, finally allowing static (always-on) high-speed Internet access at a fraction of previous prices. I am talking about Cable and DSL connections, of course.

Cable Internet access uses existing wire that has been placed for cable television access, although one signal doesn't interfere with the other (I know you were worried.)

More popular than DSL, industry analysts predict there will be close to 2.5 million Cable Internet users by the end of the year (to DSL's 900,000), and you might have even seen some people with domains from @Home, Media One, Road Runner, and Optimum Online. And talk about fast! The download speeds on cable modems range from 384 kbps to 4 mbps (7 to 70 times as fast as your modem), depending on how much you want to pay, and how many people are in your neighborhood. You see, Cable's biggest disadvantage is that the people in your neighborhood, that is, the ten to one-hundred households in your area, share bandwidth. This can affect performance drastically at high-traffic times or negligibly at other times.

Additionally, sharing access also means less security. Your neighborhood is like a small LAN (local area network), placing your computer at higher risk of attack (although I don't think the average home user has much to worry about.) Aside from its earlier introduction into the American market, Cable's success over DSL can also be attributed to its affordable pricing.

Depending on your desired speed and area, monthly charges can range from \$30 - \$50, which is great for people who are already paying \$20 a month for 56k access. Additional costs include installation (\$175 or free if you catch a promotion), a network interface card (\$20 - \$70), and a cable modem (not really a modem at all, this piece of hardware can cost up to \$350, although you might be able to rent one from your Cable company for around \$10 a month.)

Next month we'll discuss DSL service, and what it means to us.

Any questions or comments? Please email commie@ymail.yu.edu Remember, if your question gets published you get a free subscription to *The Commentator* next month.

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## US News & World Report Top 50 National Universities

- 1 CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
- 2 HARVARD UNIVERSITY
- 3 MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
- 4 PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
- 4 YALE UNIVERSITY
- 6 STANFORD UNIVERSITY
- 7 DUKE UNIVERSITY
- 7 JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
- 7 UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
- 10 COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
- 11 CORNELL UNIVERSITY
- 11 DARTMOUTH UNIVERSITY
- 13 UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
- 14 BROWN UNIVERSITY
- 14 NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
- 14 RICE UNIVERSITY
- 17 WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
- 18 EMORY UNIVERSITY
- 19 UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
- 20 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-BERKELEY
- 20 VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
- 22 UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
- 23 CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY
- 23 GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
- 25 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-LOS ANGELES
- 25 UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-ANN ARBOR
- 27 UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA-CHAPEL HILL
- 28 WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY
- 29 COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY
- 29 TUFTS UNIVERSITY
- 31 BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY
- 32 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-SAN DIEGO
- 32 UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER
- 34 CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY
- 34 LEHIGH UNIVERSITY
- 34 NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
- 34 UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
- 34 UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
- 39 BOSTON COLLEGE
- 40 GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
- 40 PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
- 42 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-DAVIS
- 42 UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
- 44 TULANE UNIVERSITY
- 44 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-SANTA BARBARA
- 44 UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-AUSTIN
- 44 UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
- 44 YESHIVA UNIVERSITY
- 49 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-IRVINE
- 49 UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

# WELCOME TO THE OFFICE OF PLACEMENT & CAREER SERVICES

BY BOB BOMERSBACH

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OPCS

## Introduction

The Office of Placement & Career Services (OPCS) of Yeshiva University, located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of Beifer Hall of the Main Campus and on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor of Stern College's Midtown Center, has undergone a number of recent changes in order to more effectively serve the needs of the student body. An effective job or internship search involves a number of components, none of which need be complicated if put into an easy-to-understand framework. It is toward this end that we have outlined the following steps to assist students with the utilization of OPCS resources and services. It should be noted that this article will focus exclusively on the job search process, though extensive OPCS support is also provided for students interested in graduate schools, career exploration, and self-assessment. Our goal is to provide YU undergraduate students in every discipline with the guidance, tools, and support needed to achieve a productive and rewarding future in the workplace or in continued education.

Each career field or graduate school has its own set of rules, protocols, and deadlines. The more quickly a student familiarizes himself/herself with these guidelines, the greater the likelihood the student will be prepared to conduct a thorough and timely pursuit of his/her objectives. The hiring schedules for entry-level and internship positions in individual fields vary somewhat. Generally, May graduates seeking entry-level Accounting, INF, and investment banking positions will begin the interview process early in the preceding autumn semester. May graduates with majors in other business and liberal arts curriculums begin the entry-level interview process late in the preceding autumn and during the spring semester. Similar rules apply to students seeking summer internships. Accounting and INF majors apply for summer internships beginning in January. Students in other disciplines should begin to apply for summer internships in March. All students interested in internships during the academic year should apply in mid-August for the autumn and in mid-December for the spring.

These time tables are merely benchmarks intended to help student gauge their own preparatory efforts and to alleviate the anxiety students in one discipline may experience when their peers in another discipline are further along in the recruiting process. The differing time-tables have everything to do with the demand for students in a particular field and because some industries have more formal, structured recruiting and training programs. The greater the demand, the earlier the recruiting process is begun. It is important to note that large companies/firms routinely begin their search processes earlier than others. When in doubt, it is better to submit materials too early rather than too late.

## Counseling

Students considering career paths frequently find it necessary to sort through a myriad of personal and academic issues. The career counseling services of the OPCS are designed to assist students in what can be a confusing time of their lives through the use of individual counseling and testing. By assisting students with the first phase, that of self-assessment, OPCS counselors can help a student identify his/her personality style, values, interests, and skills. The OPCS can then propose career options. During the second phase, career research, a student can assess the appropriateness of the options proposed by an OPCS counselor by weighing reality factors such as lifestyle, additional training, salary, job opportunities, and career advancement. For those careers requiring further education, graduate/professional school advisement is available at the OPCS. For others deciding to pursue full-time employment upon graduation, job search assistance is offered by our professional staff.

## Resumes

Resumes are an employer's first impression of the student as job candidate, and as we know, first impressions can be quite important. A *Career Planning & Placement Handbook* is available in the OPCS and includes sample resumes, cover letters, and thank you letters. Students must complete adequate drafts of their individual resumes and cover letters before scheduling meetings with OPCS representatives. This permits us to focus our attention on the fine points of a resume and cover letter, creating a better work product. It also permits us to reduce students' waiting time.

It is essential that a resume be an honest representation of a student's academic, extracurricular, and work experience. Any detail found to be lacking in supportable fact has the potential to disqualify a student from a company's hiring process, as well as that of the OPCS itself. Any misrepresentation would also reflect quite negatively on YU as an institution. Only the most rigorous standards of honesty must apply when working with the OPCS and potential employers.

## Cover Letters

Cover letters are an essential component of a student's introduction to a company or firm. In fact, some students are invited to interview with an employer on the weight of their cover letters to a degree commensurate with that of their resumes. Sample cover letters are included in the *Handbook* available in the OPCS.

A cover letter is a student's opportunity to expound upon the strengths cited in a resume and/or to add information not included in the resume due to space limitations. Meticulous care must be paid to both the substance and form of a cover letter. The ethical standards laid out in the previous section on resumes apply equally to cover letters. Any deviation from a student's factual history may disqualify a student from the OPCS placement process.

## Game Plan

Formulating a game plan for your job/internship search involves an organized and concentrated effort to put a student's candidacy before an employer. This can take place in a number of different ways. First and foremost, a student's plan must be discussed with an OPCS representative. This will serve to ensure that students optimize their potential as candidates while guaranteeing correct channels are used in dealings with companies/firms with which the University maintains a relationship.

Students seeking entry-level positions may have their resumes submitted to employers through the OPCS using two methods, the On-Campus interview process and the Resume Referral system. Materials for both systems are made available to students during the autumn and spring Orientations in the Orientation Packet. The first process, the On-Campus interview, involves the setting up of interviews on the Main and Midtown campuses by the OPCS itself. The hiring prerequisites of a visiting company/firm are used in selecting students for the interviews. In addition to the selection criteria of a company/firm, students also have input in the on-campus recruitment process by ranking the firms listed in the On-Campus portion of the Orientation Packet in the order of their preference. This information will be utilized in determining which students are added to a schedule in the event of a shortage of interview spots. The result is that students will have a better chance of getting to meet with a representative of a company/firm to which they have given top ranking.

The second method, the Resume Referral system, ensures that resumes are mailed to all companies a student selects from the Resume Referral portion of the Orientation Packet. All submitted resumes are then sorted and sent to companies/firms. When indicated, students must also supply the OPCS with appropriate cover letters. Companies/firms taking part in the Resume Referral system then contact the students they wish to interview at their office location. Both the On-Campus and Resume

# Veteran Secretary Forced to Retire

BY JASON CYRULNIK

Just days after the 1998-99 academic year came to a close, the career of Ms. Ceil Levinson came to an end after thirty-six years of dedicated service at Yeshiva. The seventy-six year old Yeshiva College secretary decided to close the Yeshiva chapter of her life, officially announcing her retirement on Thursday, June 10th.

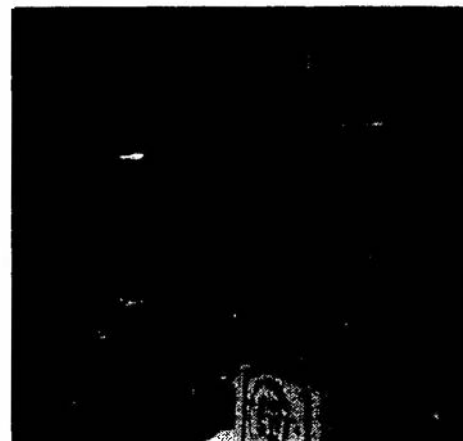
As Levinson's distinguished career came to a seemingly abrupt and unexpected end, a cloud of skepticism immediately arose and continues to envelop the circumstances surrounding Levinson's decision.

Why now? Representatives from the Department of Human Resources would offer no explanation as to why this year became Levinson's last, citing that the office holds the policy of not commenting on any issues related to a university employee. Co-workers confirmed that the aging secretary seemed to have been physically healthy, but that her age was indeed taking its toll on her job performance. However, such claims have been floating around for years. Some students cite "a tension-filled environment" that seemed to permeate the relationship between Levinson and two of her office mates, Dean Joyce Jesionowski and her secretary, Ms. Phoebe Rock, as a possible reason for Levinson's retirement. "Suffice it to say that it didn't seem like a match made in heaven," pointed out one YC Junior who had worked in the deans office and expressed his sincere regret over the Levinson retirement.

The speculation that office mates played key roles in Levinson's retirement were met with extreme unease from YU administrators. Beyond a confirmation of Levinson's "desire to retire," Dean Adler chose not to comment on "such personnel decisions."

The cagey and defensive official reaction to questions regarding Levinson's retirement is itself enough to raise some eyebrows. Both Adler and Jesionowski refused to deny or confirm reports of an ultimatum issued by the University to Levinson effectively forcing her retirement. Workers in Levinson's office informed *The Commentator* that they were distinctly warned by their superiors to withhold any comment on the Levinson situation - a seemingly displaced order in light of the University's characterization of that very situation as nothing more than a simple "decision to retire."

Perhaps the best evidence that YU may be attempting to shield itself from the potential backlash that could result from its speculated unfair treatment of an employee who had worked at Yeshiva for more than a third of a century shines through most clearly in Levinson's own reaction. Insiders confirmed that Levinson received a phone call from the employment office in early June and that she was asked to retire immediately or face the penalty of being fired and its accompanying loss of benefits. These same sources informed *The Commentator* that the University issued



similar calls to Levinson on two separate occasions within the past six years. Most shocking this time, however, was the finality of the demand and the short amount of time in which Levinson was given to offer a final decision - allegedly under an hour.

Within the hour, Levinson indeed arrived at a conclusion. Frightened by the prospect of losing her pension if she refused the retirement demands - a threat that union employees affirm could never have been carried out and was only used to intimidate the unsuspecting employee - Levinson folded. Before informing YU of her decision, Levinson first told *The Commentator* that "they [YU employment officials] were very rude to me. I've been working here for over thirty years, I deserve to be treated with more respect." Hours later, on what turned out to be her final day of employment, a tearful and emotional Levinson buckled up about YU treatment: "You know what, now I'm happy that I can retire. I can enjoy myself," she explained as she packed her bags and disappeared.

Other employees point not at the fact Levinson was asked to retire, but instead to the manner in which Levinson's situation was handled, as the true source of their gripes. They claim the one hour time limit serves as evidence to their concerns. Some recall the reception held for Levinson the day following her retirement: a cake rushed to a bare table-top painted the scene for what they said should have been a true thank-you tribute to one of Yeshiva's most dedicated workers. Adler recognized that "Ceil was indeed a wonderful lady who offered more than thirty years of devoted service to the University," but would offer no rebuttal comment on the gripes of the Yeshiva employees. In the words of one well-respected professor who wished to remain anonymous, "this episode proves once and for all that what was once viewed as a YU family has changed into a harsh, almost cold workplace."

The University is still searching for a permanent replacement to fill Levinson's position. Reflecting upon her dedication to a place that she might have previously felt comfortable deeming "home," Adler added that "Ceil truly found a warm spot in everybody's heart." It is that characterization that leads one YC student to exclaim, "her perennial warm presence will be very difficult to do without."

## WYUR

### Continued from page 1

Eli Gurock, WYUR's co-station manager, is currently compiling a list of shows that will make up the station's programming. The selectivity of the programs will be strict. Gurock will not only examine proposals for relevance and content, but live auditions will also be conducted to ensure quality and appropriateness of shows. "We are having DJ auditions next Tuesday and Wednesday from 8-2, check the flyers around campus and sign up for a slot. Stop by, show us what you got," said Gurock.

While the official schedule has not yet been completed, the station managers are attempting to complete a lineup that represents the full range of Yeshiva and Stern College inter-

ests. Among the types of shows being planned are music, serious and fun-talking call-in shows, live campus events including sports events YCSC functions and *shuirim*.

Nachum Segal, a YU alumnus and one of the most famous Jewish radio personalities in the country, initiated his professional communications career while working as a DJ for WYUR. The "resurrection" of the Yeshiva radio station affords students the unique ability to bring together all factions of the greater student body. With overwhelmingly positive student response and administrative support, the radio station possesses the promise and foundation to become a driving force in the Yeshiva world.



## WYUR IS BACK Yeah baby, Yeah!

By HADAR WEISS

It took cajoling. It took imploring. It took pleading, and even some bargaining, but the effect will soon resound off dormitory walls throughout the Yeshiva University undergraduate campuses. WYUR, the official undergraduate voice of the students, stands resurrected due to the hard work of a number of people during the past school year and extending into this summer.

WYUR went off the air three years ago due to mechanical difficulties, and while Neil Berman, the Station Manager two years ago, attempted to begin repair on the station, he was stymied by a number of factors. Last year, with a desire to have an operating radio station broadcast once more, as well as being under the threat of the loss of monetary support for the project from the President's Circle if it was further delayed, Student Council Presidents Shaindy Kahn and Dror Barber declared WYUR a top priority. In fact, even with the aid of the President's Circle, the two Student Councils laid out at least \$5,000 from their budgets to revamp the studio.

Some of the changes are expected to improve the station, with the equipment set up in a more precise fashion, the music library reshelfed and organized, and the frequency moved to 530 KHz AM, where less traffic should cause less interference.

Eli Gurock, the current men's Station Manager spent a lot of his spare time this summer cleaning the library room, which, after years of disarray, now gleams and smells faintly lemon fresh. LPB Manufacturers replaced the aged and broken transmitters in the uptown dorms, placed a unit in the new Schottenstein dorm downtown as well, and then came in to rewire the various mic's, CD and tape players into the main switchboard. That internal-wire juggling operation, accomplished by a dedicated man named John Ladley, determined which pieces of studio equipment needed replacement. Bell Atlantic laid new telephone lines designated specifically for the signal running out of the studio to each dorm separately, so that each will receive the signal independent of the other. This means that, as opposed to the way the signal used to run, if a line goes down to one dorm, the others are not affected by this tragic occurrence and continue to receive the voice of the students of Torah U'Maddah. Ever helpful was the YU Facilities Department, whose many employees were made available at the beck and call of the studio repairmen, and

their help is greatly appreciated by the WYUR staff.

Because the signal runs on a carrier-current system, similar to set-ups in many other colleges and universities, radios only receive the feed when they are plugged into a building in which the radio lines run into a transmitter. All five undergraduate dormitories (Uptown: Muss, Rubin, and Morg; Midtown: Brookdale and Schottenstein) have transmitters connected to the buildings' electrical systems and receive the signal. However, the students living in outside apartments or in the Independent Housing Program (IHP) remain as unable to tune into the shows as they were four years ago, the last time the station operated.

Currently, there exist no plans to have WYUR broadcast with an antenna, on amplitude-modulated (AM) or frequency modulated (FM) bands in the manner of popular radio stations such as Z100 and Q104.3. The costs are too prohibitive, and the details too complex for a small university to be involved with, as the university would have to register with the FCC, and pay royalties for every song played. Currently, because the signal can only be picked up in the dorms, one flat fee is paid to a third party who covers all the royalty costs for both the radio station and events with music, such as the kind that will be played on the new broadcast system in the gym, once that is installed. Furthermore, the limits as to what can and can't be said, broadcast or otherwise transmitted over the air are set by the board of WYUR in accordance with the standards of Yeshiva University.

As for the content of WYUR's programs, in the past all types of shows were given equal time, with talk shows, contemporary and classical music shows, as well as *Shiurim*, *Divrei Torah*, and live YU sporting events from the gym. According to the new Station Managers, Eli Gurock and Lisa Younger, this will continue, and they are currently in the middle of arranging the shows. "We are having DJ auditions next Tuesday and Wednesday from 8-2, check the flyers around campus and sign up for a slot. Stop by, show us what you got," mustered Gurock as he quickly stuck his head into *The Commentator's* office.

This new start of the Yeshiva radio station affords students the unique ability to bring together all factions of the greater student body. With overwhelmingly positive student response and administrative support, the radio station possesses the promise and foundation to become a driving force in the Yeshiva world.

## OPCS

### Continued from page 16

Referral systems require students to submit the appropriate forms and contracts included in the Orientation Packet. The OPCS uses resumes on file so it is imperative that students meet the established resume deadlines for their disciplines.

Another method used in conducting a job search is the Direct Mail Campaign. This can be used for both entry level and internship positions, and involves direct student submission of a resume and cover letter to potential employers. Companies/firms within the University network will post present openings in the Job Books located in the Main and Midtown OPCS offices. Companies/firms posting jobs in this way are usually doing so on an on-need basis and do not do regular cyclical hiring. Students may also submit resumes to companies listed in industry job indexes, newspaper help wanted sections, job websites, and through leads received at networking events.

A student should submit his/her approved resume and cover letter to a company/firm via mail and fax, unless the latter is prohibited by the policy of the company/firm. Students using a Direct Mail Campaign must first have their resumes and cover letters approved by an OPCS advisor. Do not mass mail resumes and cover letters to companies/firms as part of a Direct Mail Campaign, but rather send materials as a follow up to a phone conversation with a representative of a company/firm. Companies/firms included in the On-Campus or Resume Referral systems seeking entry-level employees will not consider resumes submitted independently by students. In fact, the company/firm receiving an independent submission may think negatively of the OPCS's own program if recruiting efforts appear to be uncoordinated. It is, therefore, very important that students first avail themselves of the services offered by the On-Campus and Resume Referral systems of the OPCS.

#### The Interviewing Process

As mentioned, companies/firms pursuing candidates by means other than the On-Campus interview process will directly contact students in whom they are interested. It is therefore essential that students ensure that roommates and family members taking calls from potential employers be prepared to take messages. Likewise, outgoing messages on answering machines should offer a professionally mannered representation of a student. In the event that a student has trouble reaching or being reached by a potential employer, it is wise for the student to leave a message suggesting several potential meeting dates and times.

The OPCS provides preparatory mock interviews before scheduled company/firm interviews take place. In a mock interview, a student will be asked questions of the type anticipated in an actual interview and given feedback regarding his/her strengths and suggested areas in need of improvement. Mock interviews will be conducted by the OPCS representative overseeing a student's discipline of study. Students are urged to schedule mock interviews far in advance of actual interviews as there is often a waiting list.

The type of interview given by a company/firm may fall into a number of categories. The most common is the traditional interview and is based upon a review of the student candidate's resume. Questions used in this model explore the academic, extracurricular, and work information provided in the resume. Some additional questions regarding career goals, strengths and weaknesses, knowledge of the industry, and job history may also be asked. This interview type generally lasts about half an hour.

A relatively new interviewing technique being utilized by many top tier accounting, management consulting, and financial firms is the behavioral interview. Here recruiters ask thought provoking questions of applicants based upon a series of values and skills that the company has identified as key to success in that firm. For example, an employer who wants to determine whether or not an individual pos-

sesses the requisite team-work abilities may ask a candidate to describe a time when he/she worked with others to achieve a goal and what his/her role was in the process. When asked such a question a candidate should provide an answer with a detailed example of his/her contributions to the process and end result. These interviews generally last 45 minutes to one hour in length.

Some companies use a mixture of both traditional and behavioral interviews. This modified behavioral format includes questions from both modalities and allows the student candidate to both highlight his/her accomplishments from the resume and to provide occasions on which he/she demonstrated the behavioral qualities the company is seeking.

Following an interview, it is imperative that a thank-you note be sent to each one of the individuals that took the time to meet with you. This should be done immediately following your interview and/or visit to a company/firm. An interviewer may factor into his/her decision whether or not a thank-you note has been received in a timely manner. If this has not been the case, you may lose an opportunity to be invited back for another round of interviews. Thank-you notes must be sent in professional letter format and should not only express appreciation for the time and information given by the interviewer but also mention the candidate's ongoing interest in the position if such is the case.

Response times vary from one company/firm to another due to a multitude of reasons that involve incidentals of workflow, holiday schedules, and the sequence of the candidate's interview in the overall process. Generally, a job candidate should wait one and a half to two weeks for a response and then contact the company/firm regarding the status of his/her candidacy unless the firm indicates otherwise. A candidate may be given an offer after a first interview but it is much more likely he/she will be invited back for a subsequent interview.

#### Offer and Acceptance

When an offer is extended to a candidate, it is appropriate for the candidate to immediately express gratitude for the opportunity extended to him/her. It is likely that the company/firm extending the offer will request a timely response so as not to lose other back-up candidates in the event that the individual receiving the offer chooses to decline it. It is, however, appropriate for the candidate receiving the offer to request some time to make his/her decision. The standard deliberation period is two weeks but may be less due to the needs of the company/firm. This is the most important time for a student to maintain contact with his/her OPCS advisor. A careful negotiation of the offer/acceptance process makes it possible for a candidate to accept or reject an offer in a professional manner and so preserve the relationship of the company/firm with YU.

Once a student has accepted an offer, he/she may not continue to interview nor may he/she accept another better subsequent offer. An oral acceptance is binding upon a YU student as the OPCS is committed to maintaining the highest degree of professionalism and ethical conduct.

#### Closing

It is the mission of the OPCS to assist every YU student with his/her individual job search from inception to successful completion. The OPCS possesses an excellent placement record due to its provision of early counseling and research tools, oversight of resume/cover letter quality, and its development/maintenance of an extensive professional network. The earlier a student's participation in the job search process begins, the more likely he/she is to establish and achieve career goals. The urban job market is a competitive one demanding a degree of knowledge and level of sophistication that the OPCS can help a student to develop. The OPCS is committed to assisting all YU students with the successful attainment of exciting and fulfilling careers. We look forward to seeing you!

## HOW DOES \$800/WEEK EXTRA INCOME SOUND TO YOU?

### AMAZINGLY, PROFITABLE OPPORTUNITY.

Send self-addressed stamped envelope to:

**GROUP FIVE**  
**6547 N. Academy Blvd.,**  
**PMB-N**  
**Colorado Springs, CO 80918**

# CAMPUS BULLETIN BOARD

**WYUR YESHIVA UNIVERSITY**  
**RADIO 530AM DJ AUDITIONS**  
 Tuesday September 7th & Wednesday September 8th From 8-2 at 3rd Floor Schottenstein Uptown Sign up in the student service office 4th floor Furst Hall and 4th floor bulletin at Brookdale hall. 5 minutes, show us what you got for more info call Eli Gurock 212-740-8579

**TORAH TAPE LIBRARY**  
 The Torah Tape Library needs volunteers so that it can reopen. It is not a big job, but it is a big mitzvah! If you can volunteer or need more info, please speak to Yitz Motzen in Muss 269. (ymotzen@ymail.yu.edu)

**WRITING CENTER**  
 Stumped? Afraid to approach that first paper? Or, would you like to broaden your creativity and writing skills? Writing Center Tutors are Ready, Willing, and Able to help you with any and all writing assignments. We can

also help you compose Internship and Grad school applications. The Yeshiva College Writing Center Furst Hall, Rm. 202

**MASMID 2000**  
 Resume looking a little short? Have some extra time on your hands? Want to help yourself and your class? The yearbook committee has openings, and you could help your resume, and your class by volunteering for a position.

**YOUR PLACE IN YU HISTORY**  
 For Information about openings please call Alex Teichman (212) 740 1413 until Sept. 8th and Josh Swedarsky (212) 928 2050 after Sept. 8th

**MORG MART**  
 SNACKS, COLD DRINKS, HOT DOGS  
 Wednesday Nights- Chinese Night  
 Tuesday Night - Sub Night (More nightly special coming after the holidays) Morg. Basement (Off the side-from Morg. Basement Lounge) ANY-ONE INTERESTED IN WORKING FOR MORG. MART THIS SEMESTER PLEASE SEE ELAN IN RUBIN 225.

**YU TENNIS TEAM TRYOUTS**  
 Wednesday September 8th, 1999 Van Leaves Bookstore 7:30AM Any questions, Call Coach Jon Bandler at: (212) 666-4624

**6:45 AM MINYAN**  
 Are you a working folk? Do you want to put in an extra seder in the morning? Planning on pulling an all nighter for that paper? (Maybe you just want to avoid the lines in Grandma's or time out.) Join us for the Daily Minyan at the crack of dawn 6:45AM, Monday through Thursday in the Morg Basement.

**CAMPUS BULLETIN BOARD**  
 Is your CLUB OR CLASS RUNNING A SPECIAL EVENT YOU'D LIKE TO PUBLICIZE? HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT YOU'D LIKE TO SEE ON THE CAMPUS BULLETIN BOARD? EMAIL THE PARTICULARS TO COMMIE@YUCOMMENTATOR.COM

**Yeshiva College Dramatics Society**  
**AUDITIONS!!!**  
**TUESDAY NIGHT 9:00 P.M.**  
**SCHOTTENSTEIN THEATER**  
**185th St. Right Before St. Nicholas Ave.**

**Yeshiva College Dramatics Society**  
**Tech. Applications**  
**TUESDAY NIGHT 9:00 P.M.**  
**SCHOTTENSTEIN THEATER**  
**185th St. Right Before St. Nicholas Ave.**

**PRE-SLICHOT SHIURIM**  
*Rav Meir Goldwicht - 11:40 P.M.*  
*Rav Yosef Blau - 12:15 A.M.*  
*In the Main Beis Medrash Followed by Slichot*  
*Orientation Shabbat '99 Don't Miss It!*

**The Student Organization of Yeshiva and the Yeshiva College Alumni Association cordially invite the greater YU community FOR**

# AMORNING OF LEARNING

IN PREPARATION FOR THE YAMIM NORATIM

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1999**  
**LABOR DAY**  
 יום ב', כ"ה אלול, ה'תשנ"ט

**8:45 AM SHACHARIS, FOLLOWED BY COFFEE AND CAKE**

**Two Shiurim will be given:**

**10:00 AM** ייעד עליו יודע תעלומות...  
**Teshuvah Thoughts**  
 BY **Rav Ya'akov Neuburger**

**11:00 AM** כדצין יבורא עזרי?  
**Reflections on Selichos and Tekias Shofar**  
 BY **Rav Aharon Kahn**

**THE MAIN BEIS MIDRASH**  
 Yeshiva University • Main Building  
 2540 Amsterdam Avenue • New York, NY 10033



**THURSDAY MAY 25 11 AM**

**THE THEATER  
MADISON SQUARE GARDEN**

# *Commencement 2000*

**SENIORS, HAVE  
YOU FILED FOR  
GRADUATION?**

**IF NOT, PICK UP KIT  
FROM THE OFFICE  
OF THE REGISTRAR  
ON YOUR CAMPUS**



# YESHIVA COLLEGE

## CAMPUS NEWS

September 6, 1999 25 Elul 5759

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Volume LXIV Issue 2

## NEW BOOKSTORE TO OPEN ACROSS FROM BELFER HALL

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

Construction has officially been started for a new university bookstore to be located across from Belfer Hall. The large new store, Posman Books, which recently acquired ownership of the Collegiate Bookstore that current exists at 186<sup>th</sup> and Amsterdam, is scheduled to open sometime during the fall semester. Although the property across from Belfer is owned by a private landlord, the University played an important role in locating a resourceful company to fill the empty space and brokering negotiations between the landlord and that company. Throughout the years, the building played host to several smaller stores including Yum Yum Shoppe Deli and a pizza shop. When the two stores left the Yeshiva campus, YU held several talks with the landlord to keep the area open so that a large store could ultimately move in.

The Department of Facilities Management searched for an appropriate store to occupy the vacant lot. Negotiations fell through with several major companies, including Mailboxes Etcetera, an international shipping company. After a year of talks, Posman Books, a small-chain bookstore that currently sells books to downtown Stern College and, agreed to open a store on our campus.

Thus far, the exterior has been removed, and a new storefront is currently being installed. The inside of the store will soon

be demolished and completely remodeled. Old supplies from the current bookstore will be transferred to the new site, and many new books and other products will be brought in.

Some of the new products and services the bookstore will provide include a "trade book" section which will feature magazines, journals and books of interest to students and faculty. The store will also house a self-serve coffee and tea bar with snacks to allow students with free time to browse the books while relaxing with a beverage. Additionally, there will be an expanded area for Imprinted YU items, a copy machine and a wider range of school supplies. Posman Books has pledged to specially order any book they do not have in stock.

Maxene Posman, President and CEO of Posman Collegiate Bookstores commented, "We are pleased that Yeshiva, its students and faculty will soon have a bookstore equal in status to such a fine center of learning." Although the Manager and Assistant Manager of the new store will be solicited professional personnel, Posman did mention the possibility of employing students to staff the store.

Jeffrey Rosengarten, Director of Facilities Management, said, "The University is pleased that negotiations between Posman and the landlord have reached completion. We anxiously await the opening of a store that will provide our students with high quality products and extensive services."



## University Raises Caf Card \$100 Per Semester

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

Yeshiva University's Department of Food Services recently raised the starting value of the "Caf Card" one hundred dollars, beginning with the fall '99 semester. The raise from six hundred and fifty dollars to seven hundred and fifty dollars is the first increase in the card's starting value in almost a decade.

Many feel the increase serves as the Department of Food Services' temporary solution to a problem that arose last spring when swarms of students found themselves with insufficient funds on their debit cards with weeks remaining in the semester. The depletion of personal resources to pay for meals has been a constant problem for many students, however last spring was the first time the problem was widespread.

Faced with debatable quality, marginal quantity and high pricing, outraged students demanded some form of change within the Food Services system. YCSC President Jonathan Mell, a champion for student issues, particularly the contentious Food Services debate, was instrumental in airing the student body's concerns. Mell commented, "YCSC hopes that despite the increase, the Department of Food Services will continue to work with us in our efforts

to provide the students with the highest level of cafeteria service."

In the past, many students had to cough up large funds late in the semester to replenish their card's value. With the new rate, students will begin each semester with an additional hundred dollars. As in the past, students will have to either spend the caf dollars or forfeit any remaining money to Food Services at the end of the semester. With the new charge of seven hundred and fifty dollars, the "solution" for some students represents a great monetary loss.

The manner in which Food Services came to the increase is not clear, as about a dozen calls to Jake Leiberman, Director of Food Services, have not been returned. Nor is it known how this increase, seemingly the only tangible change made by Food Services for this academic year, addresses the various concerns of the student body.

As it stands, the increase will generate well over one hundred fifty thousand dollars in additional revenue every year. How this money will be spent is unclear and how this money will factor into solving the Department of Food Services' "debt" problem is also unclear, again due to the salient fact that *The Commentator* has not been able to establish contact with anyone in the department.

## Student-Run Counseling Program Initiated On Campus

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

A new student-run peer counseling service has been initiated this year to offer confidential guidance to all students enrolled within Yeshiva College and Sy Syms School of Business on the uptown campus.

The peer counseling program created by JSS President Fred Kreizman, aims to provide a secure environment for students to discuss their personal problems and concerns ranging from academia to addictions. Student Counselors will serve as listeners who help to clarify issues and assist students in dealing more effectively with their problems. The six students who will be on-call during the week from 5:30 PM to 1:00 AM all received direction from Dean of Students Dr. Efreim

Nulman. Nulman, with Doctorate in Psychology, explained to the student counselors all pertinent legal issues, and advised them on how to best handle certain psychologically related situations. All cases that require professional help can be referred to a health care professional at Beth Israel Center.

Kreizman commented, "This program is a friendly and confidential way to help individuals with personal problems. Students are encouraged to utilize these free services."

The program officially begins September 22, 1999. Peer Counselors are available by beeper at 1-800-800-7759. Students in need of a friendly ear are asked to inform the paging operator that you wish to leave a message for "Fred Kreizman" or "Norman Shafar."

## Spruced Up University Campuses Welcome Back Students

BY PINCHAS SHAPIRO

Yeshiva's attempt to modernize its Uptown infrastructure has brought many welcoming changes to the century old campus. One cannot trek far without being confronted by one of the many construction projects that have been undertaken since spring of last year.

The most glaring changes have taken place at The Max Stern Athletic Center. Firstly, the floor of the Furst Gymnasium has been aesthetically updated to meet the needs of a playoff contending Division III basketball team. The Gym floor was stripped and sanded in order that it could be later repainted in Yeshiva colors. The "paint" area under the main baskets are now a bright royal blue, matching the Yeshiva crest in the middle of the floor. Macs logos are on opposite ends of the floor, and end lines on the practice courts have been drawn. The floor was then given a new wax finish. The entire athletic center has received a new roof, and is currently awaiting a new speaker system.

The (Rubin) lounge above the center has been recarpeted, and repainted. The lounge is also equipped with new chairs, two new table tennis and bumper pool tables.

Much needed changes have also been made to the Uptown dormitories, improving the aesthetics of the living quarters. The hallways of Rubin Hall have re-carpeted, with the second and third floors receiving new modernized closets and new floor tiling. The walls of Morgenstern Hall have received a new coat of paint and both Morg and Muss Hall residences are the beneficiaries of a new smoke alarm system. Elevator renewal in all Uptown campus buildings is almost complete.

Perhaps the most serious of the improve-

ment projects underway is the continued removal of asbestos from Muss Hall. A problem with many buildings its age, Muss's asbestos removal project has been a matter of grave concern to many students as well as their families. The health risks involved in the asbestos removal have forced those working on the job to continue to carry on with the greatest of care and diligence.

Most students see the campus improvements as welcomed additions in a quest to make the campus more livable and enjoyable for all its inhabitants. However, others have dwelled on the inconvenience of the construction projects and the lack of substance to costly renovations. "It's 3:03, they spent thousands of dollars on these elevators and they're all still on the 15 floor," growled one student late for class while standing frustrated at the Belfer Hall elevator bank.

While the uptown campus has received the majority of Yeshiva campus work, construction efforts have been made elsewhere as well. Renovations have recently commenced in the new Midtown campus theater. Also at the Midtown campus, chemistry students welcome the upgrade of their fifth floor lab and Brookdale residents applaud the installation of new windows in their building.

The apartments accommodating Cardozo Law students as well as the food services area in Cardozo's instructional facility have both been renovated and updated.

Like the improvements or not, students cannot help but take notice of the concerted efforts being made by the administration. Their willingness to spend undisclosed amounts of money to improve the campus stands as a testament to their commitment to further advance student life.

THE COMMENTATOR

500 West 185th Street

New York, NY 10033