

COMMENTATOR

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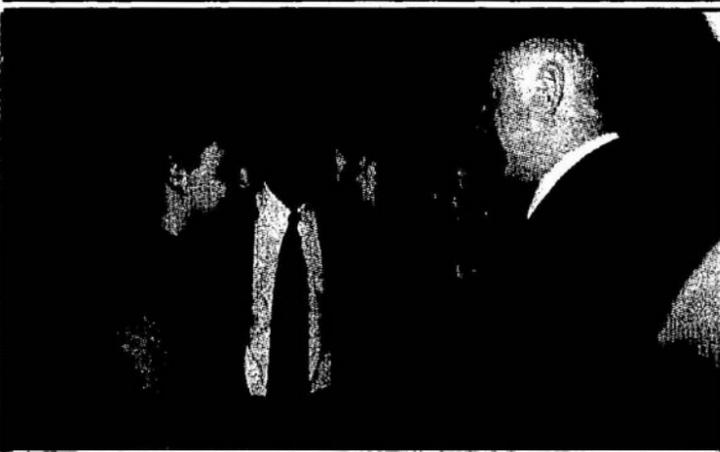
University Registrar Submits Resignation

BY PINCHAS SHAPIRO

At the alleged urging of university officials, Rabbi Melvin Davis, University Registrar, submitted his resignation three weeks ago effective the end of the fall semester. Currently, no specific plan for a replacement or for the future of the office has been made available.

According to administrative officials, Davis was called into the office of Dr. John B. Fisher, Director of Enrollment Management, three weeks ago and was informed that his services were no longer needed at Yeshiva. Davis was then

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(L-R) Editor-in-Chief Aaron Klein, Editor-in-Chief Alex Traiman, Chief of Yeshiva Security Don Summers, Sara Netanyahu, and Benjamin Netanyahu

Bibi Visits Yeshiva

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

Former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gave the first in a series of guest lectures on October 7 at the Benjamin Cardozo School of Law, speaking to a full house in the Moot Court Room on "Bringing the Past Century into the New Millennium."

On November 17, Netanyahu is scheduled to present the second guest lecture at the Stern College for Women, to a select group of students under the auspices of the honors program. On the following day, Netanyahu will present a similar speech to Yeshiva College honor students, before giving a lecture later that evening in Lampport Auditorium open to all undergradu-

ate students.

In light of recent events in Israel, specifically the investigation into governmental funds that may have been misused, Former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been declining all media requests. However, Mr. Netanyahu recently announced his promise to grant *The Commentator* an exclusive interview which has garnered international media attention. The printing of this interview is being postponed, however, due to the ongoing police probe and interrogation.

After engaging in lengthy discussions with his chief of staff on a daily basis, it has been promised that we "will be able to feature this interview in the next edition."

NEW BUILDING TO BE CONSTRUCTED AT MAIN CAMPUS

BY JASON CYRULNIK

An eight million dollar donation from philanthropist Jacob Glueck will be utilized to erect a new building on the undergraduate men's campus of Yeshiva. The structure is to serve as a 'Torah Technology' facility combining Torah study with modern technological advances.

The building will mark the first upgrade of such magnitude on the uptown campus since the addition of the Max Stern Athletic Center, constructed in 1982. The new structure marks Yeshiva's ongoing commitment to remain in the Washington Heights location for years to come.

Parking Lot A, situated directly behind the library on W185th Street between Amsterdam and Audobon Avenues, has been selected to house the new facility. The specific location will enable a connection to the University Library, a feature which would allow students easy access to and from both buildings. Whether or not the two buildings will match in their architectural styles is yet to be seen, but it is certain the center will fit in the eclectic works that comprise the uptown campus.

The new building is an encouraging idea in the minds of both students and administrators; however, most students anticipated



Philanthropist Jacob Glueck

that any new building on the uptown campus would serve to help alleviate the ongoing men's housing crisis. Only one year ago, President Norman Lamm announced to students that a new dormitory would sit atop the list of priorities for upcoming University construction projects. In response to questions from students regard-

ing the promise, Rabbi Lamm was quick to respond that a dormitory could not be built with the donated money, as the funds were earmarked by Glueck for "Torah purposes."

Unfortunately, many are worried University officials may not be following through on the specific intentions that Glueck had expressed for his contribution. A high-level university administrator informed *The Commentator* that the contract being drawn up between Glueck and the university was indeed "extremely vague, clearly leaving open the possibility of misusing the funds after they are transferred." One Yeshiva administrator points to the obvious, confirming such suspicions: "Why would we require an eight million dollar, five story building from which to run a technological *beit medrash* - something that would seem to require only a couple of

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Undergraduate Professors Voice Complaints Over Low Salaries

BY PINCHAS SHAPIRO

Thirty-two senior professors of Yeshiva College and the Stern College for Women submitted a formal complaint to the University expressing their extreme disappointment with the "inadequate salary increments" received this year. The letter sent directly to University President, Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm on September 14, 1999 addresses the unfulfilled university commitment to bring salaries "into line with those of comparable institutions."

For yet another year, Yeshiva's most senior undergraduate faculty find their salaries lagging far behind that of professors working at comparable institutions. During the last academic year, the average undergraduate senior professor salary in Yeshiva was \$67,343, a figure that lags far behind the \$86,600 senior professors in comparable Amherst College receive. Every year the administration examines Yeshiva's salaries with comparable institutions in terms of size, geographic location, and other factors to determine where we reside in reference to other colleges. This year, Amherst was figured to be the most comparable school to Yeshiva.

Yeshiva University undergraduate salaries have suffered since the debt and inflation days of the seventies, and although the endowment since then has grown from practically nothing to over

\$734,174,298.00 in 1998 according to tax returns filed by the university, senior professors have not found themselves beneficiaries of Yeshiva's plentiful bounty, experiencing only a three percent increase in their salaries this year. The three percent raise barely compensates inflation rates in a year when even social security was raised two-point-four percent.

While large disparity between senior undergraduate salaries in Yeshiva and other institutions have existed for decades, the University previously showed signs of correcting the trend. In 1996, the administration recognized that senior professor's low salaries were indeed a serious issue and concluded that considerable raises were in order. In the first year of the salary increases, professors experienced an eight-percent addition to their base salaries, according to senior staffers. While that initial year's increase was a substantial one, the raises over the subsequent semesters have dwindled considerably to this year's meager three percent, according to university employees. One professor remarked, "I think the increase will cover gas money for my car."

Dr. Karen Bacon, Dean of Stern College for Women, explained that it is the administration's goal to raise faculty salaries, but she asserted that such an effort is hampered

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500 West 185th Street, New York, NY 10033,
E-Mail: commie@yucomentator.com.
Telephone/Fax : (212) 740-2155.

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AARON KLEIN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ALEX TRAIMAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

JASON CYRULNIK
NEWS EDITOR

PINCHAS SHAPIRO
NEWS EDITOR

EPHRAIM SHAPIRO
WEBMASTER

YISHAI FLEISHER
FORUM EDITOR

DUDI FEUER
SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR

DAVID WALLACH
PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

ARI ELLENBERG
LAYOUT EDITOR

HADAR WEISS
COPY EDITOR

MICHAEL ZAIDEL
FEATURES EDITOR

EDMUNDO ROSENBERG
BUSINESS EDITOR

MARC SCHMERLER
BUSINESS EDITOR

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Business
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MESSAGE FROM THE YCSC PRESIDENT

JONATHAN MELL

Dear Friends,

We're at an interesting point in the year. We've recently been inundated with "Occasions of Opportunity" in the way of the Career Fair, which was successful thanks to the overwhelming turnout, and the Club Fair (at which I believe there was a club for each letter of the Alphabet), also successful because of the many interests represented. Now, we must enter the grand doors that have been opened to us. Success will not come easy, but with work and perseverance, we'll continue to pave the road for a fantastic year. The pitfalls that we now must look out for are not the most obvious ones.

Charles MacArthur, a playwright, had once been brought to Hollywood to do a screenplay, but was finding it difficult to write visual jokes. He asked Charlie Chaplin for advice.

"What's the problem?" asked Chaplin.

"How, for example, could I make a fat lady, walking down Fifth Avenue, slip on a banana peel and still get a laugh? It's been done a million times," said MacArthur. "What's the best way to GET the laugh? Do I show first the banana peel, then the fat lady approaching, then she slips? Or do I show the fat lady first, then the banana peel, and THEN she slips?"

Chaplin responded, "Neither," without a moment's hesitation. "You show the fat lady approaching," he said. "Then you show the banana peel; then you show the fat lady and the banana peel together; then she steps OVER the banana peel and disappears down a manhole."

Our administration is here to help us watch out for these, less obvious hazards. Dean Dr. Nulman, Dean Mr. Himber, and Mr. Andrew Leibowitz compose the Office of Student Services, one of the greatest resources on campus. Together with Dr. Chaim Nissel and Rabbi Marc Spivak, along with the Resident Advisors, we, as students and campus residents, have our bases covered.

As I hope became clear at the Club Fair, YCSC is here to give you the extracurricular opportunities that you wish for. I can tell you we'll certainly try to accommodate every club as much as we can. There are other events throughout the year that we organize, and you'll be hearing about those soon...

The most recent such event is the upcoming Chanukah Concert, a "Woodstock of Jewish music," featuring Avrohom Fried, Dedi, and Shloimie Dachs. Every year we have record turnout, and with this year's lineup, be sure to pick up your tickets as they become available. Without the dedicated work of Naftali Olivestone and Dov Brandstatter, who worked tirelessly to pull together the fantastic bill of singers, the anticipated concert would never have gotten off the ground.

Stay tuned for more events and gatherings... As for AM 530? We're working on bringing you better sound (the programming is already in place!)... You know what they say: Give us [a little time], we'll give you the world!

Before closing, I'd like to ask for any suggestions and ideas... please feel free to approach me around campus, or e-mail me with serious suggestions, please!

I look forward to hearing from you.

Education Redefined

What's the point of a university? Is it only to cram society's settled opinions into the minds of young adults, to prepare them for a smooth transition into the workplace once they've snatched a diploma? Or is it also to ignite those minds, to expand upon a student's innate abilities, and encourage him to challenge and improve the received wisdom while stretching the boundaries of theory and research? To rephrase the question with regard to current news: Does controversial ethicist Peter Singer belong at Princeton University? Princeton obviously think so, since it hired the Australian thinker as a professor of bioethics.

At issue is the subject of Mr. Singer's new book, *Practical Ethics*, which has lately been the recipient of international media attention, and had been discussed widely in the Yeshiva classrooms. In *Ethics*, Singer outlines his argument that parents of a severely disabled infant may, depending on circumstance, be ethically justified in choosing euthanasia for their child.

His views, which have sparked a series of protests and seem to disagree with the moral and ethical values of Judaism, are no doubt unsettling; his discussions are carefully nuanced but highly disturbing and debatable nonetheless. However, to defend Mr. Singer's presence at a great American university is not to defend his arguments, not to declare them off-limits for criticism. Conversely, probing the soundness of any unorthodox view is a vital part of scholarly debate, and it is to the peril of their souls that some professors have previously tinkered with ideologic clampdowns on such speech. Princeton should not necessarily be condemned for hiring Singer. To let social protest short-circuit the academic dialogue that will in the end judge the worth of a man's views would be to violate Princeton's mission as a university.

College professors should not indoctrinate, and few students fall for it when they try. The teacher's job is to inspire intellectual ferment in students who don't taste it enough in their drably utilitarian education. That's the point of a university, and if we don't grasp that point, the phrase "American university" might someday become a rueful oxymoron.

Repairing Our Academic Reputation

Over the past four years, Yeshiva has been recognized by *US News and World Report* as one of the top fifty national universities in the country; however, this distinction is fairly misleading. While our endowment and small class sizes allow for such a prestigious national ranking, our academic reputation lags far behind the elite status upon which Yeshiva has placed so much emphasis.

Yeshiva is fortunate to be blessed with fully qualified professors who are dedicated to the academic process, but these professors are overworked and terribly underpaid. They are forced to teach more courses per semester than their colleagues elsewhere, and at less-than-standard compensation rates.

Each year, teachers at Yeshiva receive payraises at continuously decreasing rates, and following the current pattern, it would be no surprise if teachers salaries soon begin to actually decrease yearly.

It is horrible and unfortunate that our professors do not receive paychecks commensurate to their worth, but the situation stretches far beyond the mistreatment of university employees. The low salaries and heavy course load burdens also serve as a deterrent to qualified professors who may consider employment at Yeshiva in the future, further hindering Yeshiva's ability to raise its academic reputation.

It is now up to the Deans of Yeshiva and Stern College, along with Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Morton Lowengrub, to take the burden upon themselves to push for the payraises of our professors. We have already seen Dr. Lowengrub's ability to stand for the academic process by acting to rectify the many problems the registrar's office has been facing. We hope that Dr. Lowengrub will again defend the academic process and set the salaries of our professors back on track.

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**FROM THE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

AARON KLEIN

Here's Some Food for Thought

Like many college students, I like to eat. I enjoy barbecued chicken, turkey sandwiches, stuffed peppers, waffles, salmon, veal, tuna salad, steak, fried vegetables, and just about any other cuisine that is considered somewhat palatable. Thankfully, I have been blessed with one of those teenage stomachs, allowing me to consume large quantities of food without ever having to worry about an unwanted increase in weight.

For many, my appetite and metabolism would serve as a glorified blessing. This is certainly the way I used to feel about my particular eating habits until the memorable day I unsuspectingly arrived at Yeshiva University and tasted the cafeteria food for the first time. I have since learned to fear mealtime, to view it as a necessary tribulation that I must exhaustively endure three times per day. Since all dorming students are required to purchase their meals in advance, and since eating out remains an extremely expensive expedition, we are each forced to withstand the torment that dining in our cafeteria has become. I personally don't eat there to enjoy a meal, but simply to survive - to nourish my tired cells with some form of basic matter that is at least recognized as storable energy on a microbiologic level.

In my three years residence at this prestigious institution, I have yet to witness any substantial change with regard to the quality, pricing or variety of the food, and I find that entirely unacceptable. Breakfast is the only decent meal offered in the caf, perhaps because it primarily consists of packaged and pre-cooked items. Lunch seems to always include greasy noodles and that same savorless freeze-dried fish we have all come to dread. (I occasionally frequent the caf at lunchtime for the entertainment value - I think the chef's attempt to dress that fish is hilarious: sometimes it's baked with spaghetti sauce and becomes "Poisson de tomato," on other days they adventurously throw in some lemon, coining it "citrus fish." But, as my grandmother says, "You can paint a Chevy pink, you can wax it, you can give it a spit-shine, when you're finished it's still gonna be a Chevy.") Dinner is consistently composed of seasoned Shabbos leftovers and the feathery chicken that has over the years become a YU trademark.

It is interesting to note that there was a period in which Yeshiva featured some of the finest kosher cooking in the city. From the late sixties to the early eighties, a man named Mr. Parker ran the kitchen, and Jews from all over Manhattan flocked to Yeshiva for a fine meal. However, Mr. Parker left the University to start his own catering service, and it is now almost impossible for me to conceive of a time when people willingly ate in our cafeteria.

More frustrating, though, is the fact that most of our food currently borderlines the regulations set forth by the American Heart Association. There is so much oil in our meals, we could sell the leftovers to Mexico. Doesn't the University realize that serving cholesterol-saturated food is unhealthy? And instead of improving the quality or pricing, the administration has elected to increase the amount of dollars on the caf card to \$750 a semester, so now we are lucky enough to obtain more of the same nasty, overpriced food.

I don't feel comfortable complaining; I like to investigate a problem and attempt to insinuate positive change in hopes of an ultimate rectification. To that degree, I attempted to personally meet with Jake Leiberman, Associate Director of Food Services, three times in June, but he was "too busy." *The Commentator* Features Department placed numerous calls to Food Services throughout the summer, but they were not able to interview a Department administrator. Faxes have been recently sent, each garnering no response.

In my first column of the year, I expressed *The Commentator's* sincere desire to work with the administration, a willingness that is certainly extended to the Department of Food Services. To be completely fair, I'm not aware of the future plans of the Department, as I have not yet been able to successfully establish contact with anyone in it. I know not of their goals, their excuses or of the obstacles that impede their arrival at some sort of resolution. I only judge from that which I can see - the same inferior food, lack of variety and unreasonable prices.

And so Mr. Chef: I beg you to please try out some new recipes, experiment, read a housewife magazine, or maybe take a few culinary courses because the degree that you so obviously attained at the Bangladesh Institute of Orphanage Cooking just won't cut it here in the States. Perhaps with some new ideas you will generate a menu based on variety, substance and health-awareness.

Mr. Leiberman and Department, I extend to you one request: Please yield to the outcries of the students and of their official publication; recognize us as paying customers who deserve high quality services at a reasonable price; meet with us and maybe together we will discover a conclusive solution for a significant issue that has plagued Yeshiva students for generations.



**FROM THE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

ALEX TRAIMAN

I have been fortunate enough in my short tenure at Yeshiva to meet and befriend an eclectic collection of individuals. Yeshiva manages to attract students, faculty and administrators from the farthest corners of the earth; all with vastly differing Jewish backgrounds from orthodox, to conservative, to reform, to non-practicing, to unaffiliated. For any outsider not immersed in Yeshiva's curious culture, it is near impossible to fathom a diverse setting on our Washington Heights campus. However, a cornucopia of personalities create an extraordinarily healthy atmosphere at our upper, upper, upper west side college and distinguish the uptown campus of YU as the most diverse college in America serving over a thousand students of the same religion and gender.

I am constantly impressed and intrigued by the aforementioned uniqueness of our small top tier institution. Diversity is not an attribute Yeshiva can easily create through the selective admissions process. Affirmative action does not apply to our student body. Students of different faiths typically do not wish to attend our school. There is only one minority heavily considered for admissions. Coincidentally or not so coincidentally, that minority represents Yeshiva's majority.

With the exception of a number of faculty members practicing different religions, Yeshiva is comprised only of Jewish males. That alone should not set off the siren on the diversity alarm. The diversity to which I am referring is not necessarily in the faces themselves, but rather in the stories behind each and every one.

If you ask around, you will find that the road to Yeshiva is not a straight one. The path is often curved, bumpy and occasionally unpaved. Many students viewed YU as their only option from the beginning, as Yeshiva provides the only logistical method of learning Torah while receiving a valid bachelor's degree. For others, pressure from family members, friends and rabbeim nudged students into their stays here. Many arrived due to Yeshiva's outstanding reputation both as a religious center and a secular college. Some found their way to Washington Heights in an attempt to strengthen their basic Jewish education and take on a completely new way of life. For a few, this was the only university their parents would even consider sending their children to. Many students currently enrolled never could have imagined they would ever be attending Yeshiva. Amazingly enough, there are those that are to this day not exactly sure how they arrived here at all.

There are students that spent every day of their educations in private religious institutions, while public school dwellers also inhabit our campus. Students spending a year at various Yeshivot in Israel now share the same college as those never stepping foot in our Holy land. English and Hebrew are not the only tongues spoken on the YU campus. Russian, French, Spanish, Arabic as well as many other assorted languages are familiar sounds to Yeshiva students. There are Chabad and Chassidic contingencies as well as those few that try their best to steer clear of religious observance. Yeshiva sports 'gym rats' and those unfit for physical activity. There are the big wigs on campus and there are anti-big wigs as well. There are students taking part in various clubs and activities while some are focused only on school work. There are the guys who will dress only in slacks and solid button down shirts, but there are others who will occasionally wear stripes, plaid or even sweats.

Of those attending, many have found what they are looking for at Yeshiva. Unfortunately, others have not. Certain students have found YU to be everything they expected. Many others have found Yeshiva to be nothing at all like they imagined, enjoying the experience none-the-less.

I can only wish for my fellow students, that you have a sense of fulfillment in your decision to come to Yeshiva. Someone, somewhere saw a purpose for your arrival at this unique, sometimes bizarre institution. My hope is that each and every student will identify that purpose which landed them in our bastion of modern orthodoxy and much, much more, and I hope that you can come to understand that purpose, and live your lives accordingly.

I struggle every day to find the driving force that sent me to Yeshiva, and it is only fair that I follow my own advice. Hopefully before I go, I will identify my own purpose for arriving here along with the plethora of different characters that make up the college I will one day call my alma mater.

But should I fail to do so, all is not necessarily lost. The path of life is similar to the road that leads to Yeshiva. It too is often curved, bumpy and occasionally unpaved. Many times, we do not see the turns that lie ahead, and we cannot understand how one stopping point can lead to another later down the road. But for some reason or another, we all have arrived to spend what many deem the best years of our lives at Yeshiva. Lets take advantage of these years, and everything this university has to offer. For if nothing else, Yeshiva is a diverse university that is surely one of a kind.

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MESSAGE FROM THE SOY PRESIDENT ATON HOLZER

October is the perfect month for the reading of Parshat Noach. It is at this time of year that our entire world becomes murky and damp; the bright, sunny summer and its ambience of excitement is now but a memory, and all its vivid colors and discrete organisms, flora and fauna, are melting into gray tedium; our rich biosphere has devolved to a primordial soup. The calm summer breeze has given way to a harsher draft, providing a harbinger of the chill that awaits in the months ahead. The deluge has begun.

For many of us, Marcheshvan is the time of our personal deluge. The carefree summer months are unquestionably behind us. No longer are we individuals living out our personal dreams; as we reach midterms, we oft become lost in the shuffle; in class, we are indistinct, not clearly superior to those around us, and our minds become clouded. Despair envelops many as we convince ourselves of our own mediocrity; the concomitant insecurity emboldens some, but embitters most, and leads some to do their utmost to prove their self-worth, be it through artificial mechanisms of self-aggrandizement or disparagement of others. Afloat in a raging sea, we lack an ark, and grasp at driftwood which ultimately will not hold our weight.

The message of Parshat Noach is clear: there is hope. The waters will recede, and when they do, a better world will emerge. Rav Soloveitchik, *zt"l*, faulted Noach for his unwillingness to champion humanity before God due to his inability to perceive the *keshet*, the rainbow, the light that cannot be extinguished that is tucked away in even the murkiest souls; as such, God had to present it to him in a physical manifestation. The *keshet* inheres in our hearts, as well; we may not ever dismiss others, regardless of their demeanor or their activities, but most fundamentally, we must never dis-

miss ourselves. We, too, possess the *keshet*; we all have inherent worth, and we all contain the reserves, the potential to excel which simply needs to be tapped. Yes, as Noach, we are fundamentally alone in our personal quest, but we must not sell ourselves short; nor are we truly alone, for God, too, is a passenger on our *teivah*. *Gam ki eilekh be-gei tzalmavet, lo iyra ra ki atah imadi.*

Dear reader: you are special. You are unique, the apogee of creation; no one perceives the world in quite the same way that you do, and hence you are a microcosm – an *olam malei*. Whether you are a member of MYP, BMP, IBC, JSS or an alumnus, whether you spend your nights in the Beit Midrash or Rubin Lounge, our Torah speaks specifically to you; there is no one of superior or inferior importance to you. Your potential is unlimited, and you can easily actualize it; *lo ba-shamayim hi*. Don't flail; get on our boat and row. We're here for you.

Hakaras HaTov to all who have helped thus far – Aryeh, Adam and Avi, and Amichai Erdfarb (Seforim), Ben Skydell, Azik Schwlechter (Cholent), David Regev (Hamin), David Blum (Clean-up), Moshe Singer (Guides!), Danny Gilbert, Jonathan Strauss, Ephraim Shapiro (Enayim L'Torah), Jonathan Gross and Donny Rose (Bagels), Ben Breda (forthcoming SOY Chesed Club), Jeremy Frenkel (SOY-Yad Ozer Tzedakah Committee), Chaim Jaskoll and Rabbi Marc Spivak (CD-Rom Committee). Special thanks to Jason Leib, Uri Goldstein, Mordy Friedman and Dov Karoll, and to The Commentator, for assisting us in our noble mission. And our utmost thanks to Andrew Leibowitz, Jeff Socol, Rav Adler, Rav Bronstein, Rav Ben-Haim, Rav Blau, Rav Charlop, Rav Hochberg, Rav Reichman and Rav Schachter, who have helped make our Cheshvan events heretofore most successful.



RABBI DR. MOSHE TENDLER The Princeton Devaluation: Man, the Animal-Man

The value system which directed the development of Torah Judaism places humans at the apex of creation. The developmental principle of Torah ethics is the axiom: a human being is of infinite worth. When Noah left the ark after the flood waters receded, G-d instructed him as to the new relationship between man and animal. Indeed, Torah law obligates us to care for our animals and proscribes us from causing them unnecessary pain. However, there is no equality between man and animal. The relationship is one of owner and possession, as expressed in Genesis [9:2-3], "all the animals that inhabit the earth and the stars I have given to you...to consume."

Man is not an animal although he shares many animal traits with infrahuman species. Man is the only species created in G-d's Image, "To populate this world and to master it." [Genesis 1:28] Last month, Princeton University appointed Peter Singer, an Australian philosopher, to a tenured professorship of bioethics. Who is this Peter Singer whose three grandparents died in the Holocaust? Dr. Harold Shapiro, President of Princeton University and Chairman of the National Bioethics Advisory Commission, defined him as one who "challenges long established ways of thinking."

And what are his challenges? I quote:

- 1) "Truly ethical behavior will not flourish until we abandon the fallacy of 'sanctity of life.'"
- 2) "The moral order that supposes that human beings are extraordinarily precious because G-d made them so, must be rejected."
- 3) "To consider that the pleasures and suffering of other species are of inferior significance is to be guilty of 'specieism.' Some infanticide is not as important as killing a happy cat."
- 4) "Until a baby is capable of self-awareness, there is no controlling reason not to kill it to serve the preferences of the parents...a period of twenty-eight days after birth might be

allowed before an infant is accepted as having the same right to live as others."

5) "It might be more compassionate to carry out medical experiments on hopelessly disabled, unconscious orphans than on healthy rats."

A headline in an Australian newspaper read, "Good Riddance to a Warped Philosopher." But just how warped is he when measured to our societal ethics? Do we not permit first trimester abortion even if the fetus is perfectly healthy, but in the opinion of the parents, of the "wrong sex?" A study of two hundred medical students at Ben Gurion University to determine their attitudes toward animal rights revealed frightening statistics. The study was directed by Professor and Dean, Shimon Glick, a fine *talmud chochom* and internationally acclaimed endocrinologist. He posed a dilemma in which students had to choose between saving their dog or an unknown vagrant from drowning in a situation where only one of the two could be saved. Only seventy-three percent chose to save the vagrant instead of the dog. Their attitude toward sanctity of life was revealed in their answer to the preposition: Do you agree that humans deserve different treatment than animals because of the "sanctity of human life?" Only seventy-one percent of these future physicians agree.

We have not done well enough in transmitting our value system to the next generation. Seventy-one percent is hardly a passing grade when dealing with life and death decisions. Princeton has forfeited the traditional role of a University, which is to transmit society's values to a new generation, in favor of sensationalism and intellectual ferment. It is a warped substitution of educational goals.

Rabbi Dr. Moshe Dovid Tendler is Rosh Yeshiva at RIETS, Professor of Biology and Medical Ethics at Yeshiva College.

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FORUM OPINION

Our Deep and Dreamless Slumber

BY YISHAI FLEISHER

Late at night, I was walking around campus dejected and sour after the usual day of dreary classes, dreary weather and dreary people. The drab neighborhood and the morose architecture surrounding me added to my somber spirits, and at that moment my only thoughts were to get to my apartment and finish some dreadfully monotonous homework that I had left for the last moment. But suddenly from afar I heard the lively beat of the tarbuka drums and voices singing songs that registered deep within my Jewish soul. There, on the fourth floor of Muss Hall boys had gathered to celebrate the engagement of one of their friends, and without thinking too much I headed straight for the joyous occasion. I had seen the face of the *chatan* around campus but I admit I did not recognize his name at first (I have a notorious weakness for name retention). Nevertheless I joined the circle dance with a feeling of complete belonging. And when it ended I shook the future groom's hand and wished him luck, leaving the scene rejuvenated and happy.

For me those are the beautiful moments of this University. The moments where our classical values come together with *simcha* and spontaneity. The moments where people around here smile effortlessly and throw off the yoke of rigidity that has crept up on their beings. Yet these days, as I am sure many of you have noticed, those wonderful moments are occurring at rarer and rarer intervals. There is an uptightness in the air that is suffocating our very lives. What's wrong here?

Could this uptightness and rigidity be a result of our generation's anxiety regarding "making it" in the real world? We are constantly trying to figure out our next step and calculate every move as to have the right resume, the right grad school and the right job. We are almost never alive in the present, rather, we live in a constant state of anticipation and preparation for the future. To attain our dream it seems as though we must follow a well-trodden, prescribed path veering neither this way or that, lest there be no pot of gold waiting at the end of our rainbow. To reach success these days means being able to master the proper bureaucracy, be it LSAT's or MCAT's, applications or forms. Personal creativity has gone the way of the eight-track, and with it personality has lost all value. Like prostitutes vying to seem seductive, we are a product on the market hoping to be bought.

As a humanities major myself, I am scared to death of the future. I see the business people doing very well with their expense accounts and late night limo's, and I see the computer people getting hired here and in Israel right out of college. But the humanities folk are left with very few choices, pigeon-holed into either academia or law school. Academia is saturated with qualified individuals, but at the same time no Jewish mother (or wife) wants her son to teach sociology in Iowa. Today's lawyers have all gone corporate essentially becoming humanity's accountants and it is no wonder that lawyers seem to be universally hated. Law schools in their money-oriented outlook neglect to go through the trouble of interviewing prospec-

THE PUPIL



Yishai
Fleisher

tive candidates. They don't care who the heck you are or what the heck you are going to do with your degree as long as you have the grades, LSAT's, and of course the money to pay them. Do you really think they expect someone owing sixty thousand dollars in tuition fees to do pro-bono work? Do you think law schools are concerned about your life or even the state of society that surrounds them? They never even look you in the eyes! Is this what I want for myself? In short, I too am concerned about the future.

Alas, it seems to me that our generation has lost perspective of what "making it" is really about. I am dismayed when the college students, fabled intellectuals, radicals, and innovators, in actuality look like zombies. Here at YU we have retired from our youth early in exchange for bourgeois aspirations and bourgeois lives. The worst part of this problem is that once young minds become accustomed to lethargy and once young eyes become accustomed to dimness, it becomes harder to breathe life into their dim lethargic souls. Stagnation leads to entropy, entropy leads to death, and death sucks.

But do you think I'm worried? HA!!! Not at all, because I know that we Jews are creative, dynamic, and exciting. And although at times our school looks like the charred desolate remains of a merciless nuclear holocaust, with our students at times resembling those unlucky few survivors left behind to walk the wasteland in horror; fear not for the phoenix of YU shall rise once again. However, in order to bring about the much needed salvation of our school, our society, and our souls, some fundamental changes must occur. If we are to reinvent ourselves we must wake up from our deep and dreamless slumber.

The first thing we must do is break out of the self-centered and myopic view of history which places us solely in the era in which money rules while morality wanes. A broader view of our history will serve to remind us of the great task which we have been given and the downright neglect which we have shown it. We have shirked our "light unto the nations" responsibility! Maybe, if the amnesia cloud that has settled upon us will dissipate, we might recall the importance we once placed upon social action, outreach, and care. The Jew, with his historical heritage, and his G-dly ordained mission, must rise to do good during his own life to affect the lives of others. Now that's what "making it," used to mean, or have we forgotten?

A second integral step which we must take in order to further comprehend our place in history is to develop an active awareness of the great miracles which G-d has made for us. This will once again serve as a reminder to the greater purpose of which every Jew is part of. Every time you see a Russian student walking around campus remember the great miracles and emancipation which G-d made for us way back in Egypt and in our own times in front of our very eyes in the Soviet Union. My parents escaped from

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there. Nor should we neglect the modern day in-your-face miracles of our country Israel. Do you get it? The Jews, after TWO THOUSAND YEARS, have returned to Zion and to Jerusalem, where G-d wins miraculous wars for us when he likes us, just like the good ole' days! Let us also not take for granted the miraculous success that we have had in this tolerant and benevolent country, and let us not think to ourselves (for that is a real sin) that it is our hands and our smarts that have given us this success. Lastly let's not forget the wonderful book G-d has given us, a personally autographed copy of his "Guide To Everything."

All of us here at YU are very confused by the clash between our modern lives and our classical values. Yet no matter where you end up on the varied spectrum of Judaism, remember that realizing G-d is the first step towards self-realization and that G-dliness that exists within all of us. This first step is also a giant leap towards the realization that we

Jews are part of a greater goal on this Earth and that we have a responsibility to it. So even if you are not the most religious guy on this campus or even in the tri-state area, try not to forsake, take for granted, or (worst of all) routinize G-d and spirituality in your life. Have at least one moment a day when you pinch yourself and say G-d created this world for me, and G-d wrote this Torah for me. At the same time take at least one moment to ask yourself: How can I make this world a better place for my brother and for my neighbor?

Once we have attained these realizations we will rid ourselves of fear and of pointless anxiety for the future, for we will clearly see that a hand guides us along our personal and collective paths. We will regain the confidence to be creative and alive and we will be happy for life as life's very essence is joy. How appropriate that such a renaissance will begin here at Yeshiva, where modernity and religion meet and where the combined wisdom of man and God are imparted to the young.

FORUM

LETTERS

It Could Be Worse

To the Editors:

Browsing by *The Commentator* web site, I happened to glance at the current Commie Online Poll, the one regarding the quality of the cafeteria food. I'm left wondering if there's an organized conspiracy against the cafeteria that I wasn't made aware of.

My first experience with YU food took place when I visited the campus for a day some time in the middle of my (Israeli) yeshiva's Pesach vacation. I distinctly remember my immediate reaction being something like: "Hey, not bad, I wish my yeshiva could make food like this." (Agreed,

it was a free meal...) I wonder if the 137 people who voted "unsatisfied" have ever had to contend with things like spoiled milk, pancakes for dinner, burnt hot cocoa, and other assorted grotesque oddities.

Fellow students, it just ain't that bad! True, five dollars for a piece of fish does more for the school coffers than for our health, but I think that if you approach the cafeteria with a positive, comparative attitude, you'll find it really isn't as horrendous as it seems. Anyone for Canadian shells?

Shloime Weiss
YC 2003

Easy Access

To the Editors:

I was amused by your news story about keys opening the wrong doors at YU. When I was studying at YU between 1987 and 1992 it was well-known that the keys in use were capable of opening other doors. In Morg, whenever I got locked out of my room I would borrow someone else's keys and work the key back and forth in the lock until it opened my door.

My brother, who lived in the MTA dorm, once discovered that his key easily opened the door to Morg Mart, in the basement of Morg, which was conveniently stocked with refreshments.

At that time a simple credit card was capable of opening doors in Belfer Hall as well as the Stern College School Building.

I remember once giving a speech in Dr. Beukas' speech class on breaching YU Security; the speech was easy to write, but was so funny that along with the listeners, I began laughing during the speech, which Dr. Beukas told me was not the preferred way to give a speech.

Maybe it makes sense to change the locks?

Sam Michelson
YC 1992

Deep Freeze

To the Editors:

It was a dark and stormy night when I last wrote an essay on a YU library computer. I did a wonderful job, if I do say so myself. Several thousand words and a catchy title. Yeah, life was good.

And that's when the library computer got me. No, it did not sneak up from behind to bite me, but it soon became a pain nonetheless. My computer didn't want to print. I shrugged it off and merrily attempted to save my essay on a disk, so as to print the paper from another computer. The computer just laughed at me and said, "Nope, I can't read your disk at the present time." No further instructions, certainly no apology forthcoming. No big deal, really. It's the 90's, and I can email it to myself at, that's right, another library computer! "No can do," said the computer with a smirk, "I'm really not in the mood to connect you to the Internet."

Well, when have the library computers EVER been in the mood?

If the computer works, the printer is down; if the printer works, the computers are down. Internet access comes and goes a dozen times during the course of a day, and the computers pick up more viruses than a newborn without booster shots. Can we please get these computers to work in unison? Can the students at YU actually be provided some peace of mind in using a YU library computer, perhaps even some semblance of sanity afforded in the aftermath?

If I stand alone, so be it...I've vented my frustration. If however, you too spent many an afternoon dreaming of flinging a chair through the computer screen, stand tall and proud. You're a student at a top tier university that has yet to prove they can wire a computer system, while your 12-year old sister is fluent in Java.

My-oh-my, what a lovely day.

Jeff Taub
YC 2000

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FORUM

OPINION

Student Soap Box

Why Debate Teams Are Bad

BY CHANANYA WEISSMAN

I was on the debate team in high school, and people told me I should wear a tie to the debates. "It's only proper," they said. "The judges will think there's something wrong with you if you don't wear a tie," they asserted. So I wore a tie. One with pictures of vegetables and a few recipes for G-d-knows-what. It was a pretty cool tie.

The judge of one of the rounds was a nice woman who was absolutely hypnotized by my tie. There I was, pleading that citizens between the ages of 18 and 25 should not be given batons and made into an auxiliary police force (honest!), and her eyes were riveted on a garlic, a tomato, and a palate-pleasing possibility. We lost that particular round.

The following year I declined to stay on the team and have had a sour view of the whole "sport" of debating ever since. One would naturally assume that my negative experiences distorted my objectivity, and they would of course be correct. Nevertheless, I feel quite strongly that debating provides greater detriment than education to the participants, and that my anecdote is a mere manifestation of this, albeit an unusual one.

In principle, debating is supposed to enhance one's research and speaking abilities, while obviously helping one learn to develop and present cogent arguments. In reality and by inherent necessity, debating also teaches people to mimic the same lawyers and politicians whose persuasive tactics they scorn. Points are awarded, after all, not for arriving at truthful conclusions, but for presenting one's case in the most convincing fashion. Judges are not impressed by courtesy and integrity, but by the systematic dissection of the other side. Indeed, anyone who's ever debated

knows that it's bad tactics to allow the other guy to speak uninterrupted during the cross examination. Doing so allows the judges to listen to their side and, G-d forbid, possibly find merit in what they have to say.

A popular form of debate nowadays is blind style. A topic is chosen in advance, but the participants don't find out which side they must support until the time of debate itself. The idea, of course, is to teach people to see both sides of an issue and build a case respectively. The result is that what should be a legitimate discussion becomes a sham. Both sides can conceivably be arguing for what they intensely disagree with, yet they must fight and plead all the same. Their faces belie the convictions of their heart as they attack their own beliefs. What's the point? Do they really learn to give credence to the opposition, or merely to play poker just long enough to win the attention of the judge?

And what of this judge? This supposed idealized, impartial representative of the common man is not there to arrive at the truth, whatever that may be, but to award smooth speech, swagger, impeccable looks, and a killer instinct. The meaning of the words is secondary to the package they come in. Just the sort of thing true debate is supposed to transcend.

In an ideal situation, if one side were to find themselves arguing for something crazy, say, that people with brown hair and green eyes should be fairly represented in television sitcoms, that side would have a near-impossible time winning the debate. As it is, all they need to do is dress well, speak well, and brutalize the other side, and they stand a fighting chance.

After all, moderated debate neither educates the participants nor clarifies anyone's beliefs. It teaches them to be convincing liars.

Don't Forget The Student Court!

BY SHLOMO TROODLER

Although it has often been neglected in recent years, the Student Court is one of the most significant student organizations here on campus. In adjudicating any and all disputes, regardless of nature, that students deem appropriate to be brought in front of the Court, its role has the potential to be an integral part of student life, if students so desire.

The Court consists of a Chief Justice, an associate justice, two senior justices and one junior justice. A clerk is appointed to keep records of all the proceedings of the court. The Court is selected on the basis of their impartiality and ability to serve the student body morally and honestly. Its jurisdiction is wide-ranging, from all activities sponsored by YCSC and its subsidiaries (class boards, clubs, committees, etc.) to all students who are acting as spectators at all Yeshiva College athletic events. In fact, the power of the Court is such that it can enforce its subpoenas by means of disciplinary action against those who do not appear.

It has been unfortunate that in past years, students may not have been aware that the Student Court exists, and if they did, they often confused it with the Student Senate, another unheralded student organization. However, the differences between the court and the Senate are extensive, as the Senate is

comprised of students and faculty, and works exclusively with academic issues, a sharp contrast to the Court. Additionally, the Senate has no affiliation with the Student Council whatsoever, while the Court is appointed by the YCSC President and is responsible for arbitration of any disputes which may arise in any of the Student Council's extensions (i.e. YCDS, WYUR, The Masmid, etc.). The Court, as opposed to the Senate, is a judicial body determined to adjudicate any conflict brought to the Court and deal with all students violating the administration's rules and regulations concerning extracurricular activities.

In discussing his hopes for this year's Student Court, Ari Wiesen, the Chief Justice, told me that he hopes students this year we become more aware of its existence. He said that it would be very nice for students to be able to come to the Court with the hope of something being accomplished quickly and effectively.

If the usage of the Court is augmented here on campus, I think the potential gain for the entire student body will be noticeable. In addition, it is important that everyone see students who impartially demonstrate the desire to maintain a peaceful and congenial student body in judging these cases. Overall, the Court aims to ensure that harmonious relationships are maintained amongst members of the student body in hopes that people will

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High Speed Internet Access

BY CHAIM JASKOLL

Last month we discussed the promises of high-speed Internet access using Cable technologies. Now we will continue our talk with the exciting world of DSL.

DSL, or Digital Subscriber Lines, is a technology that uses the existing copper wire from the POTS (Plain Old Telephone System) in your house, running at a different frequency than your phone conversations. This service, which is usually provided by: the Traditional Telephone Companies (large companies like Southwestern Bell, Pacific Bell, Bell Atlantic, BellSouth, USWest, Ameritech and GTE); the new, competitive telephone companies (created after The Telecommunications Act of 1996 was passed); or an ISP (Internet Service Provider), supports up to 8.1 mbps downstream speeds if you're close enough to a CO (Central Office) or switch. That's five times faster than a T-1!

However, the type of service we are going to focus on is ADSL, the one most often found in residential areas. Asynchronous DSL, in difference to Synchronous DSL, is unique in that it reserves more bandwidth going down toward the user and less upstream, an ideal situation for most home users.

Performance is spectacular with 144 kbps - 1.5 mbps/120 kbps - 1.1 mbps speeds at prices ranging from \$50 to \$190 a month. Not included in this price are installation costs (\$100 - \$500), a digital modem ("terminal adapter") (\$300 - \$600), and a network interface card (\$25).

Yet, an industry standard that should be out shortly, G. Lite (formerly Universal ADSL), promises to eliminate the compatibility issues and high prices found with existing ADSL service. G. Lite will not require the phone company to send a technician over to your house, eliminating the installation costs, and, furthermore, G. Lite modems can cost as little as \$200. Indeed, most of the major modem manufacturers have agreed on this standard, and you should see them hit the shelves soon (Compaq, IBM, and Dell have already offered them as "on-board chip" options). Although somewhat slower than traditional ADSL (max is 1.5 mbps/384 kbps), G. Lite service costs far less, with monthly charges right now set at \$50 - \$80 and looking to drop to the \$30 range at the end of the year 2000.

ADSL's biggest setback is that the technology requires a distance of less than 18,000 feet (2.8 miles) from your telephone company's nearest switch or CO. Which means either you got it or you don't. But

Technology in
the 21st Century
Chaim Jaskoll

don't worry; most rural and urban users in the NY/NJ area shouldn't have that problem. The most exciting feature of ADSL (besides its speed) is that, as opposed to Cable technologies, there is no sharing. Each user has a direct connection to the Internet, which means your speeds won't decrease just because your neighbor is on the net all day; and that your security won't be compromised just because your neighbor is a MIS major.

In conclusion, although both Cable and ADSL technologies have finally provided high-speed Internet access at competitive costs, the availability in your specific area might be limited at the present. For example, no companies presently provide service in the thriving business district of Washington Heights, although some companies have promised service by October/November. Yet, some areas of Long Island already have \$30/month Cable access from Optimum Online (www.cablevision.com), a local cable TV provider.

Bell Atlantic (www.bellatlantic.com) is also starting its own DSL service, InfoSpeed DSL, in the metropolitan area at a very competitive price of \$50 / month (for 384 kbps/128 kbps service). A great place to check the availability in your area, including the distance of your house from the nearest switch or central office, is www.getspeed.com, which keeps a database of many different Cable and DSL providers. Most other companies (www.redconnect.net, www.flashcom.com, www.bway.net) will tell you if there is service in your area, or will contact you when it becomes available.

A final note: if you do decide to get one of these services and want to set it up on a home network, make sure you find out about their policies regarding multiple users in residential plans. Some companies support it, others forbid it, and still others allow it but won't support it. And remember that you will still need a hub, LAN bridge, and proxy server to make your Internet connection network-able, though there are some all-in-one products known as residential gateways just emerging in the market that can make this step easier.

Next month we will hopefully discuss SPAM and methods of fighting it.

Any questions or comments? Please send an email to commie@ymail.yu.edu.

SOY and TAC Begin Rosh Chodesh Shiur Series

BY MOISH SCHMERLER

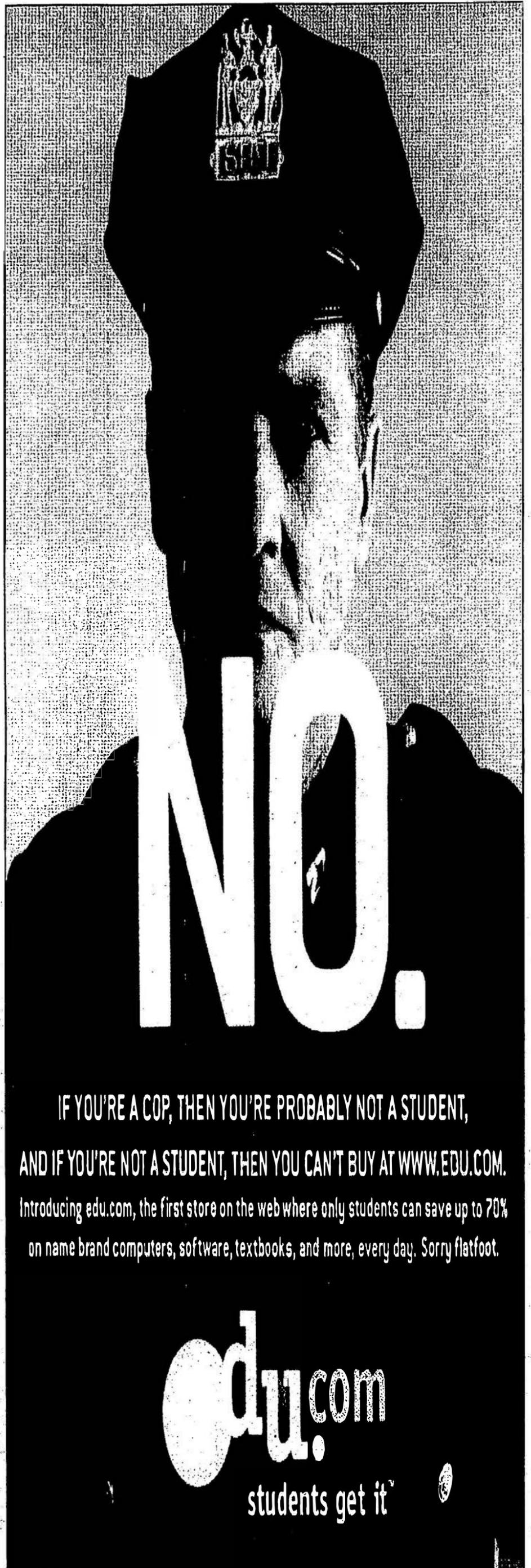
On Wednesday evening, October 6th, two hundred fifty students packed into Weisberg Commons for a joint SOY/TAC shiur. The shiur served as the initiation to a monthly Rosh Hodesh lecture series. The featured speakers were Rav Hochberg and Rav Schachter.

Rav Hochberg gave a moving lecture on the *Tzelem Elokim* between a man and a woman, and many noted that the shiur almost paralleled a lecture from the hit book "Men are From Mars Women Are from Venus." Rav Schachter spoke about *Megilat Kohelet*, focusing on the reason Kohelet tells us there is an impetus behind everything in this world. Rav Schachter emphasized, "even spider webs were created for a reason because they saved Dovid HaMelech. From

this we can see that everything has its purpose." After Schachter's riveting shiur, Dougies was served to the crowd.

When asked why he started a coed shiur, Aton Holzer, President of SOY, answered, "The singles problem in the Jewish community has reached epic proportions, and SOY must take the initiative in addressing this issue."

This shiur has only been a small representation of what SOY has done this year. For the first time ever, a JSS Rabbi gave the Wednesday night *Sichas Mussar* in the Main Beit Medrash. Students expressed their satisfaction in the fact that Rav Yudln was able to be appreciated by the entire Yeshiva, not only JSS students. The students also noted that SOY in conjunction with the other Judaic studies student councils, has been trying to infuse more *achdut* into YU, further enhancing the "yeshiva" aspect of Yeshiva University.



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ARTS & CULTURE

It's a Sensation!

BY ZOHAR AZOULAY

"The context of this exhibition may cause shock, vomiting, confusion, panic, euphoria and anxiety. If you suffer from high blood pressure, a nervous disorder or palpitation, you should consult your doctor. It includes material that some visitors may find objectionable. Viewers discretion and parental guidance are advised" (Excerpt from the exhibit promotion brochure).

When the Brooklyn Museum of Art decided to put on an exhibition featuring the contemporary art works of young British artists, they did not have any idea what they were getting into. The controversy surrounding the show made headlines long before it was open to audiences. Mayor Giuliani opted to cut the museum's budget for using public property and funding to desecrate people's feelings and beliefs. Before even seeing the show he described some pieces in the exhibition as "sick stuff" which, "may have a place in a biology laboratory rather than in a government funded museum." In addition, because the collection belongs to Saatchi and the exhibit was sponsored in part by Christie's, opponents of the museum suggested that there was more than mere artistic consideration in mind when putting the exhibit together. The money was also an issue, since both the collector and the auction house would benefit from increasing the value of the art pieces. Questions quickly rose again in a fiery contemporary controversy such as: What is art? Who is to decide where to put the fine line between art and incitement? And what should be protected under the first amendment?

However, if we put the politics aside, Sensation is not a conventional art exhibition but a unique visual and emotional experience. One can not ignore the importance of the political, sociological and cultural statements addressed by the artists. The pieces in the exhibition, which are dated mostly from 1996 to 1998, give a most unique and poignant view of our modern world. This collection investigates our culture's most pressing problems and persistent obsessions: class, race, gender, normalcy vs. eccentricity, sex and sexuality, as well as violence, disease, and death. It portrays good and bad, light and dark, and probes into the definition of art itself. Furthermore, unlike other art exhibitions, it asks questions, inhibits criticism and provokes thought rather than just projecting it. That is what makes this exhibition not only worth watching but definitely a must-see.

One of the most publicly criticized artists in the show is Damien Hirst, whose works include animals in formaldehyde tanks. A big scary shark, two sliced cows, a lamb (who had lost her heard, as its title suggests) and a sliced pig ("This Little Piggy Went to the Market, This Little Piggy Stayed Home"), all lay exposed to the wide eyed visitors. However, the most shocking piece is a dead cow's head (without the formaldehyde), stinking and full of blood, with countless flies surrounding it while an electric flytrap above the cow's head kills them in

masses. Some art critics claimed he wanted to shock for shock's sake alone, while activists from animal rights groups protested against the very killing of the animals. However, the artist claimed to have deeper meaning to his art. He emphasized the idea that people look at the detailed animals presented in the tanks and forget to pay attention to the tanks, which by itself are a piece of minimalist art taken to

the extreme with the basic shape of a cube. In addition, he tried to touch the audiences basic feelings and fears. He states that his art "deals with life and not with death as one might think." With a closer look, one sees many new things and comes away with a totally different effect than that which he received at first glance. It is this dynamic that makes this truly art.

Another piece that is widely criticized, is a portrait of "Virgin Mary"

by African artist Chris Ofili. It is considered by many to be profanity due to the fact that the artist used elephant dung to represent the virgin's breast. The artist stated that he wanted to show that his art comes from nature. In the background of this piece, pornographic picture cuts are used to decorate the portrait. At first glance, they look like innocent abstract forms. However, Ofili correctly claimed that classical portraits of the virgin are more sexually charged than his one.

Sensation also includes some very provocative and disturbing pieces such as a sculpture of multiple naked children whose facial features were replaced with sexual organs. There also is a sculpture of men hanged in various positions with their genitalia ripped. Shocking? Indeed! But the artist explains that the former piece was inspired by genetic experiments and accidents, and, therefore, is relevant for today's world, while the latter wanted to capture the horror of a war. Hatoum's Deep Throat is actually a video screened in a plate and was made by the artist swallowing a tiny camera and letting it go all the way to the stomach and then all the way back to the mouth. It gives one the notion of digestion and regurgitation. The artist chose a title with sexual connotation. Another artist made a bust sculpted out of his own congealed blood, which he had collected for five months. In this work, one could see a piece of the artist, literally.

As we can see in this exhibition, art is usual materials presented in unusual ways. A dresser was presented as an altar - a regular object presented in a slightly different way, which makes the piece as a whole look very different. A fresh-flower selling cart (probably the only piece in the museum that the artist did not make but bought) although it is an object which we are used to see in the streets; in this case, it would be considered as art because it carries new qualitative meaning as it is displayed in a museum. In another piece, we see London's underground map, but with names of famous people instead of stations, so one can change trains at Albert Einstein and go on the next stop at Jimmy Lee Curtis. A painting made of text shows that even the written words are

FACTS STOP OPINIONS

BY ILAN RUBENSTEIN

Welcome to Facts Stop Opinions, *The Commentator's* re-instituted column for the musically inclined. For those of you familiar with the journalism of my esteemed predecessor David Rappaport, you will soon realize that offering imaginative nuggets of researched, informative, and often convincing artistic insight will remain the focus of the words before you. I wish only that this column continues to serve as one of the crowning jewels of our collegiate newspaper and an asset to the Yeshiva University community at large (or at least those of us who have a shadow of an inclination towards popular culture). Only two things have changed: The author and the title. "Fact Not Opinion" has been replaced with the more suitable name "Facts Stop Opinions," make of it what you will.

Welcome back to school. It is a great time to listen to some good new records. As I type I am enjoying the new Royal Trux release "Veterans of Disorder," highly recommended to those of you who go for that far out grind pop. I am impressed with some of the Matador releases through the summer and right up until now. They have managed to offer up top-notch records in so many different musical barriers/categories. The Arsonists debut "As The World Burns" is as good as anything in the neo gangsta slap-hop category since 36 Chambers. "Terror Twilight," Pavement's summer release isn't their best or worst and may have initially upset some long time indi-enthusiasts. Give it a chance to crawl under your epidermis and into your hemoglobin; I guarantee at least a smile. Belle and Sebastian reissued their debut "Tigermilk" fully remastered and available for the first time on CD as well as LP. If you don't have it yet, and I'm assuming you have everything else they have donated to the world of music, buy it. For more information check out matadorrecs.com.

Welcome to my digression. My sister recently gave birth to twins. When I was back home I met the 'twins specialist' nurse that is currently taking care of the newborns. She is a friendly lady in her mid-fifties and hails from Liverpool, England. Naturally I ask her if she's ever heard of this pop group called The Beatles. Turns out her brother owned 'The

Cavern,' the club at which the fab four got their start. She used to go to all their early gigs (and I mean pre-Ringo), and would hang out with them occasionally. Amazing.

Welcome to the UK Korner: I cannot offer any information about this whole British wave going on (Gay Dad, Gomez, Stereophonics, Badly Drawn Boy, Basement Jaxx, or Robbie Williams to name a few) because I haven't been able to follow it closely enough. I am however quite excited about what some of England's old-timers are coming out with. Paul McCartney's new album "Run Devil Run" (Capitol) looks interesting, as does David Bowie's "Hours..." (Virgin). Rykodisc has released an assortment of solo material composed by the late Pete Ham (formerly of Badfinger). He was a tremendously gifted songwriter and I have no doubt that this collection, titled "Golders Green," will be an impressive one.

Welcome to the find of the column: The American Flag. Debuting as 'Hershel Savage and the American Flag,' this duo from my hometown Toronto Canada released a self-titled masterpiece last year on Bob Pollard's label - Rockathon Records. The album has been remastered and rereleased with a bonus 4-song EP. The eighteen track effort is full of honest to goodness glamdi mystery, with a tip of the hat to the likes of GBV, the Ween brothers, the good McCartney stuff, Alex Chilton, the Kinks, and even some Marc Bolan. The EP's sound is far more refined due to the painstakingly pristine engineering of famed Sloan sound wizard Brendan McGuire. Each song is a space voyage of its own, nostalgia, humor, fear, and friendship - tracks 1 through 4.

Welcome to trivial trivia. What do the following bands have in common: The Velvet Underground, The Doors, and Them? See my next column for the answer.

Welcome to my promotional opportunity: For those of you who are interested in hearing some of these records and other assorted ear candy please tune in to my weekly radio show every Tuesday at eleven PM. on WYUR. Also, there's all this buzz about some New York based band "Early Sunday Morning." They are scheduled to play Brownies on November 9 starting at eight p.m. See you there.

Until next time, goodbye.

art. Some pieces make obvious references to famous artists such as Warhol, Dali, Magritte, and Chuck Close. The interesting thing is that the artist did not deny it, on the contrary, in some cases they even mentioned the famous predecessors in the title.

The exhibit also contains extremely detailed sculptures and pieces that really make us think. One artist managed to capture the idea that empty spaces are actually "something" rather than "nothing" in two of her art works. One of them is "Ghost" - a plaster of her childhood room presented inside out like an ancient monument. Her second sculpture is a room with a hundred blocks made from the plastering of the empty spaces beneath chairs, the spaces no one thinks exist but also the ones children use to crawl into.

Thinking through the issue, one must realize that freedom of speech, thought and artistic expression is essential for the development of any society, especially one that at least on the surface pretends to be democratic and liberal. Art is subjective and open to interpreta-

tions and different opinions. It is this subjectivity that makes it art. There is no one message, and there is no concrete political motive. This is very different than Nazi propaganda or blatant pornography. Instead, the exhibit follows in the footsteps of other great modern art exhibitions, including surrealism and portraiture. It deserves to be treated with the same respect, admiration, and yes...funding.

Sensation is an exhibition that will blow your mind away. Personally, I think I will not be able to look at art the same way ever again. If you haven't seen Sensation, you haven't yet seen the full scope of art.

Sensation is being exhibited at the Brooklyn Museum of Art October 2- January 9. The admission is \$7.50 for a student with valid ID and it includes an interesting, free audio tour, (which, in my opinion, is essential for one to fully experience the show). The Brooklyn Museum is located at 200 Eastern Parkway, and can be easily reached by the subway (2&3 lines). It is also recommended to pay a visit to Brooklyn's Botanical Gardens located just outside the museum.

FILM REVIEWS

American Beauty

Starring: Kevin Spacey
and Annette Bening

BY YAIR OPPENHEIM

The American family as depicted by movies, television and books over the past century has gone through an unnecessary amount of permutations and image makeovers. We no longer know who we are; that which has typified us now exists as myth. Unfortunately, the only way to awake oneself from this "American dream" is to have a mid-life crisis. It is that very self-consciousness that permits one's self-examination in an objective manner; it shatters the rose-tinted glasses, and Lester Burnham just woke up.

Lester Burnham (played by Kevin Spacey) has sunk into depression. He doesn't have the best marriage and has lost his connection to his daughter. He also becomes infatuated with his daughter's friend. His wife Carolyn (played by Annette Bening) is a phony who doesn't appreciate life. She believes that a professional image should be used to keep emotions bottled up. Their daughter Jane is having an adolescent identity crisis.

Things begin to change when the Burnhams get new neighbors. The Fitts are not the average family either, but they don't live with the facade of the Burnhams. Colonel Fitts is a homophobic military man. His wife is an unappreciated shell of a former self. Their son Ricky (played by Wes Bentley) is trying to live normally after being institutionalized by his parents.

Once Lester meets Ricky his life turns around. Lester no longer feels that he should conform to what society or his family wants of him. He wants to truly enjoy life, subject only to his desires, not someone else's restrictions. Trouble is impending.

Kevin Spacey takes a juicy role and stretches his character to the seams, infusing it with true, bitter sincerity as he laughs at his life. It is his best on-screen performance to date. His role in "The Usual Suspects" was cool, and his role in "LA Confidential"



was charming, but Lester Burnham lights up the screen. The minute details that Spacey uses are precisely what makes him likeable. His facial expressions make him more endearing. Annette Bening comically overacts in a very effective performance on her part. Perhaps it was a bit over the top, but certainly not for someone experiencing a nervous breakdown. The surprise of the film is Wes Bentley's performance as Ricky Fitts. He exhibits a wry smile with every sentence, perhaps as a mark left from the mental hospital, or perhaps due to his cynical view on life. It marks his performance so much that it seems to give him assurance, confidence, and a clarity which the other characters lack.

The direction of the film is quite effective. Sam Mendes has made the shift from directing in Broadway to the motion picture screen with ease. It's too early to tell his style, though the standout drama in this film is not the dramatic monologues,

but rather the "moments". Each of the characters get to have their own vignettes to showcase their eccentricities with memorable lines, and though this can be attributed perhaps to Alan Ball's great script, it takes a competent fellow to hit the mark each time.

The message of the film is quite clear - re-examine your life and make the changes that you want. You'll be amazed at the results and at how easily you can soon touch others. That said, it seems practically impossible for all of these characters to suddenly hit the extremes of their personalities. The ridiculousness of the situation is clearly what makes Spacey so cynical in the film. For anyone to reach their edge would take more than mere coincidence would allow. It raises the question of whether Americans are really like this, which is a provoking issue. The film is clearly an Oscar contender and definitely one of the best dramas of the year.

Three Kings

Starring: George Clooney,
Mark Wahlberg and Ice Cube

BY YAIR OPPENHEIM

Slipping into G.I. Joe mode, George Clooney takes Ice Cube and Mark Wahlberg hunting for Kuwaiti gold stolen by Sadaam Hussein. This turns out to be a life changing experience for all involved. Three Kings manages to depict the Persian Gulf War rather effectively, which is impressive, given that the film takes place after the war has ended. Unconventional is an understatement.

The film begins with the cease-fire in Iraq. We are invited to witness some of the wild victory parties made by soldiers who didn't know why they were there. The situation forces the American withdrawal from Kuwait, leaving citizens to fend for themselves, with only verbal support from President Bush to lift their spirits. Citizens are still under the rule of Sadaam's remaining underlings, and though the bombing has stopped, the terror remains. Sadaam's soldiers simply ignore any US soldier presence. What thrusts this film into high gear is the underlying morality question: find the gold and go, or stay and fight the war the United States had abandoned.

George Clooney is, simply put: G.I. Joe, a role that he was born for. Most of Clooney's characters have always been unshaven rough looking men who deserve conviction and trust. Typically any testosterone based film full of men in uniforms holding firearms, is inherently cool, but this is Clooney's forte. Mark Wahlberg and Ice Cube add diversity to the mix, each contributing personalities that make the situations more exciting.

As far as the film's accuracy concerning the Persian Gulf War; though it is a fictional situation, the movie is rather accurate as for the tone it sets



and the details it displays. There is strong emphasis put on President Bush's poor involvement in patching up Kuwaiti lives, gas attacks, and violations of the civil rights of citizens by Sadaam's Army. No stone is left unturned, as characters are aware of the capitalist nature of the oil war.

Three Kings manages to step over any cliches and instead tries out a new type of war film. The best way to describe it would be as a combination of MASH, Pulp Fiction and basically any serious war film. Three Kings manages to be innovative and treads new territory in the genre combining a treasure heist with a war film. The film is quite funny, yet manages to stay serious when needed. The nail-biter of an ending is realistic and unpre-

dictable. David O' Russell's script and direction make for a very stylish film with the most notable scene being the "inside" look at the damage a bullet causes upon entry into the human body.

The film manages to be entertaining, original, and effective in expressing its message to the public about what the war was really like. The only other big-budget feature film to tackle Operation: Desert Storm was "Courage Under Fire," starring Denzel Washington and directed by Ed Zwick ("Glory," "Legends Of The Fall"). Courage was a great film as well, but its moral message could have been packaged around any war. Three Kings is one of the best films of the year. It would be hard to find another Desert Storm film that could possibly be as compelling.

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ARTS &

Americana

BY MATTHEW ROSEN

I step out of my apartment and turn to lock the door. I walk down the hallway and nod at one or two of the other people in the building. I consider how fortunate I am to be in an almost completely Orthodox apartment building in a predominantly Orthodox neighborhood. Not everyone in the building is Jewish nor is the neighborhood entirely without its other religions, but by in large we live symbiotically, tolerating each others' unique practices.

But as I walk up the street the change can be seen immediately. There is garbage on the street, the passing cars with their never ending bass pounding rhythms chorusing up into the air. I am now only a ten minute walk from where I started out and it seems like another world. An eclectic mix of shop peddlers are displaying their wares out in the street for all the pedestrians to sample. A man on the street corner asks me to spare some change for the bus. The store in front of me is advertising compact discs and calling cards.

I keep walking.

I stop in at the local Blockbuster to see about picking up a movie, but leave unsatisfied. I grab a bus into the heart of the city and eavesdrop on the couple sitting next to me, treated to the rare pleasure of hearing a conversation in English. The advertisements affirm that I am appropriately dressed in the latest fashion trend and that I am using the wrong Internet provider. The radio on the bus is playing yet another generic pop-culture-overnight-hit song that sounds like every other song on the Top 40.

I meet my friends at the local pizza shop and we grab a quick bite to eat. We head out to see the latest pseudo-horror-high-budget-heavily-special-effects-laden movie. After the movie we go over to a late night café, and while sipping

lattes we debate the merit of the surprise ending and the horrible typecasting. I take a cab back to my apartment and as I close the door behind me and get ready to retire, I think back on my eventful day. I can't help but think that being here in Jerusalem is really no different then being back in New York.

On my most recent trip to the Holy Land I realized the blatant presence of American culture that has embedded itself in our most holy city. Please, I do not mean for this column to mislead. I happen to consider our generation's brand of Americana to be one of the best cultures around. Yet, I always felt, perhaps due to a misplaced piece of naïveté, that Jerusalem was above modern culture. I've always felt that Jerusalem was supposed to be a safe haven of cultural purity, an island sanctuary on the tumultuous sea of moral depravity. Put simply, the more American Israel becomes, the less room the State has to be Israel.

When the front page of the New York Times displays José Bové's fist raised in a triumphant protest against the permeation of American culture in France, maybe it is time that we reconsider how far we want to spread our American culture. Maybe there is more to be gained by limiting our ethos to our natural borders. With ever increasing globalization of every division of life, what remains to identify the individual nations? The answer is each country's own values, ethics and way of life. If Israel stays its course then what is to remain of its own individuality; an individuality founded upon a history dating back to the dawn of time. No other country has the where-with-all to make such a claim. To forfeit such a prize for a Blockbuster video or Tower Records doesn't seem like a fair trade. Who is to say how far off is the day when a former wrestler will be appointed head of the Knesset?

FILM REVIEW

The Dinner Game (Le Diner de Cons)

Starring Thierry Lhermitte, Jacques Villeret, Francis Huster.

BY DAVID WARSHAWSKY



Although he is still relatively unknown in the US, the latest film by French director Francis Verber, is finally bringing his considerable talents to light for the general public. Involved either as writer or director in such popular films as *La Cage aux Folles*, *La Chèvre*, *Les Comperes* and *Les Fugitifs* (all of which were remade by Hollywood), Verber has always lacked high-end approval both at home and abroad. All that is changing now with his latest film *The Dinner Game*. The film has been receiving rave reviews all across the country ever since its release in August. *The Dinner Game* was not only the lone domestic film to seriously challenge *Titanic* at the French box office; it was also nominated for six Cesars, the French Oscar, winning three awards, including one for Verber for best script.

Set in Paris, *The Dinner Game* is about a successful publisher Pierre Bouchant (Thierry Lhermitte), who along with a group of his Yuppie friends is involved in a diabolical game. Everyone of the heartless conspirators must choose an idiot to bring along to their weekly dinner for a good laugh at his expense. Pierre is desperate for someone to bring, when his friend tips him off to a world class idiot in François Pignon (Jacques Villeret), a short, tubby, balding man with a puffy face and frizzy hair. He enjoys nothing more than to talk for days about his hobby of recreating architectural feats out of matches. Pignon is delighted when he is led to believe that Pierre wants to discuss publishing a book about his hobby. The fool joyfully relates that his construction of the Eiffel tower required 346,472 sticks, 37 tubes of glue and eight months' worth of work to complete.

The fun begins when Pignon arrives at Pierre's lavishly appointed apartment for tea in order for his supposed patron can check out this "A-1 idiot" before the dinner. Unfortunately Pierre badly wrenches his back playing golf the day of the dinner and so irritates his wife, who objects to him playing the game that she decides to leave him. This sets up one of the funniest routines I have ever seen, in which Pignon manages to alienate both Pierre's wife and mistress, as well as deliver him in to the hands of the most ferocious tax inspector in France.

Pignon is the most well-meaning of individuals. He'd love to help Bouchant, but this timid man turns out to be a world-class blunderer, someone with a gift for doing the worst possible thing at any given moment. The more he tries to assist his new friend, the more devastating, and funnier, the results turn out to be. The role of Pignon, the bumb ling idiot, is superbly acted. It seems as though Jacques Villaret was born for the role. It is hard to imagine anyone else performing it nearly as well. Equally as good is Daniel Prevost's portrayal of a ferret like tax auditor. He is able to bring riotous laughter with the slightest of glances. Steven Spielberg has purchased the rights to make his own version of *The Dinner Game* for DreamWorks. It is speculated, as a vehicle for Robin Williams. Although Williams is an excellent actor, the Hollywood propensity for sanitizing European imports will undoubtedly end up destroying this fine film.

The Dinner Game is a clever farce with impeccable timing and marvelous actors who have great chemistry. The film is currently playing at the Paris Theater located at: 4 W 58th St (Between 5th and 6th Aves), (212) 688-3800.

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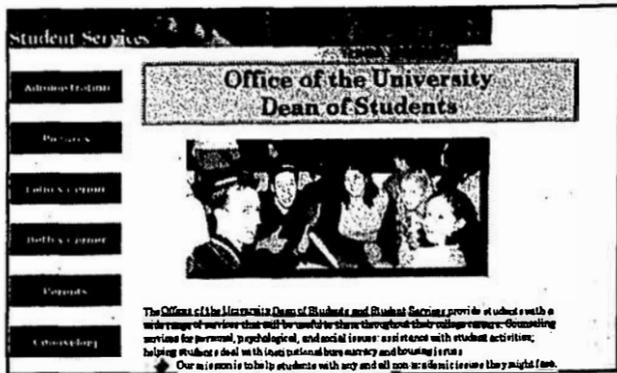
Student Services Gets Techno

BY SCOTT NADEL

Many students are turning to and embracing technology in all aspects of their lives, and accordingly The Office of Student Services has recently outstretched its hand to reach students through the Internet. Andrew Leibowitz, Coordinator of Student Services, has launched a website dedicated exclusively to the students. "This is just another way to reach out to students and make them aware of all the services that are available to them," says Leibowitz.

The services included in this website, among many, are links to the university's administration, health services, counseling, athletics, housing and student government. In addition, there is a site specifically geared toward parents of students. Within this site are articles by the counseling staff with tips on how to communicate with one's child while they are away at college.

Important to mention is the portion of the website deemed "Lebo's Corner." This is a forum used by Andrew Leibowitz to inform students of upcoming events and feedback on recent events with pictures and reviews. Additionally, the site is updated frequently to inform students of all events as they are planned. Also, links enable students to directly email the entire student services staff with problems, concerns and comments. Students can be assured that emails will be kept confidential and will be responded to promptly. If an email response is not sufficient, Leibowitz explains that he will "ask the person to give me a call or invite them to come and see



The Office of the University Dean of Students provides a website with a wide range of services that will be useful to them throughout their college years. Counseling services for personal, psychological, and social issues; and student with student activities, helping students deal with issues personal harassment and housing issues. Our mission is to help students with any and all non-academic issues they might face.

me." The site also contains a section called "Beth's Corner" for Stern College students to contact Beth Hait, the Stern College Coordinator of Student Services, and a link to email her with specific questions related to Stern life.

Leibowitz adds, "To me, the Website is important in that it's a way for both Yeshiva College/Sy Syms students as well as Stern College students to be made aware of the many events and services that are offered to them."

In addition to all of these new technological innovations, Mr. Leibowitz has initiated a program called "Muncheon with Lebo." This program is intended to allow new students to get to know each other, and more importantly Andrew Leibowitz, while becoming aware of the services provided by the Office of Student Services, over a school sponsored lunch. The program is specifically aimed to ensure the transition into college life for the students is a smooth one.

The website's address is <http://www.yu.edu/studentservices>. Andrew Leibowitz can be contacted at (212) 960-5480, or via email at aleibowl@gmail.yu.edu. All are welcome to stop in and see him in Furst hall room 419.

Rabbi Lamm Publishes New Book on Hasidism

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

Yaakov Yosef of Polennoye.

Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm, President of Yeshiva University, recently authored a book entitled, "The Religious Thought of Hasidism," which was published in September to high praise in scholarly and literary circles. In eighteen chapters topically arranged and preceded by introductions, "Hasidism" includes almost four hundred selections from works of over thirty *hasidic* masters.

Among the topics surveyed in the book are G-d, faith, and providence; the love and fear of G-d; clinging to G-d, and worship; the study of Torah; and the place of the righteous in the religious and social world of the *hasid*. The book also covers the first three generations of *hasidic* masters, including the Baal Shem Tov, Rabbi Dov Ber, the Magid of Mezeritch, and Rabbi

Rabbi Lamm notes in his preface, that "This book has had an extraordinarily long period of gestation. It began in my childhood. My paternal grandfather, whom I knew but slightly, had been a follower of the Rebbe of Belz. My maternal grandfather, with whom I studied Talmud and whom I admired endlessly, was a *hasidischer* Rav, an eminently scholarly rabbi of the classical mode who had profound ties with the *hasidic* giants of his generation, particularly those of the Sanzer dynasty. The atmosphere of my parents' home was observant but not *hasidic* in practice, yet it was filled with the lore and love of *hasidism*."

Rabbi Lamm is the author of ten books and numerous magazine and journal articles, and is editor or co-editor of over twenty volumes.

DEBATE TEAM READY TO GO

BY BRYAN KINZBRUNNER

Rochester, and Cornell.

For the third straight year, the Yeshiva University Debate Society (YUDS) will be competing in the Public Forum Debate League (PFDL). Andrew Jacobs, a renowned debate coach known throughout the local debate world and founder of the once three team league of Rochester Community College, Queens College, and YU, has watched the PFDL grow tremendously, now including such prestigious institutions as Columbia, NYU, Binghamton,

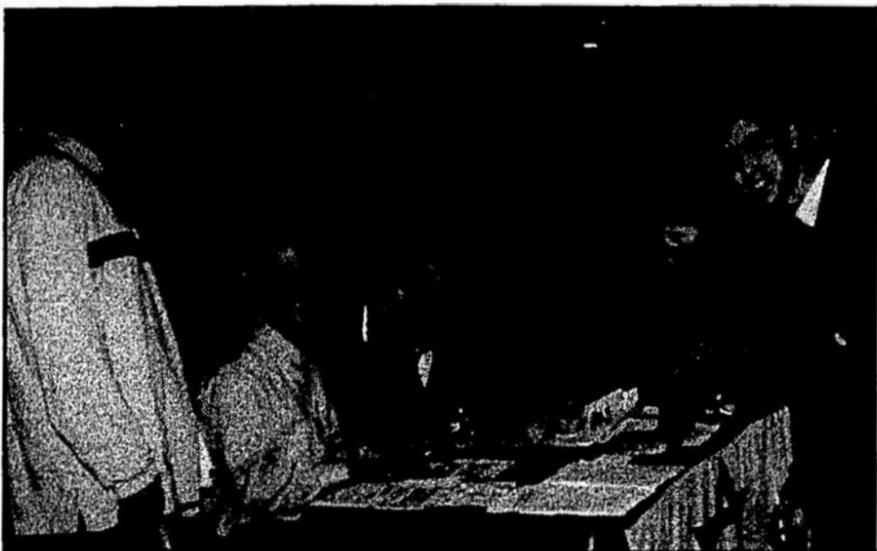
Yeshiva University will be hosting two debate tournaments during the academic year, and will be attending tournaments at Cornell, Columbia, NYU and Rochester. While competition is intense at these tournaments, many feel the Debate Society provides a forum for students to expand their horizons and become good public speakers. In addition to merely fluffing one's resume. For more information, email yudebate@hotmail.com or visit their website at <http://surf.to/yuds>.

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YC Club Fair A Success

BY SHMULI SINGER

Are you worried about security finding that bottle of vodka in your dorm fridge? Have you ever expressed a desire to arm the student body of Sy Syms? Are you a closet botanist? All of these interests were well represented at this year's YU Club Fair, along with more conventional clubs, such as Debate, Chess, and Philosophy.

A significant portion of the student body attended the event, held in Belfer Commons on October 12. The fair's goal was to offer information about various student-run clubs in an effort to recruit new members. "Clubs are a great opportunity for students to get involved in the various hobbies and activities that exist on campus," explained Dov Branstatter, the Vice-President of YCSC and organizer of the fair. He noted that he was "very pleased" with the turnout, and that there were over 40 clubs represented this year.

The clubs ran the gamut from familiar to offbeat. The newly established Mental Illness Awareness Club attracted many interested students. Co-founder Ezra Levine discussed the club's two-tiered format. "We have people who have relatives and friends that are mentally ill, and we have a whole slew of members who are themselves mentally ill in some way." The club's literature included plans of field trips to exhibitions of art by mentally ill artists.

The Botany Club, another new entry, struggled to get the requisite twenty members in order to maintain status as an official club. Ami Sanders, the founder of the club, appeared unconcerned with the low level of interest, maintaining that the true lovers of botany would eventually emerge. His optimism was well grounded, as the club finished the evening strongly, securing well over the required amount of signatures.

Predictably, the mainstays of the club scene, such as the YU Student Activity Club, generated the most interest. "We have had more people attending our past events than any other club," remarked YUSAC President Moishe Singer, "and we hope to have activities such as games at MSG, Broadway shows, and other cultural items such as the circus." Another well established club, the Debate Society, plans to continue its intermural competition. "YU had a debate society in the 60's," said Greg Samuels, the president of the society, "but it

was discontinued since most debates were held on Shabbos. We want to offer Yeshiva students a forum for good speakers to compete against one another, as well as help people to overcome their fear of public speaking." Samuels predicted that the first debate would be held in a few weeks.

A few clubs on hand were not actually registered participants in the fair. The Beer Bingeing Club attracted an overwhelming response after setting up shop midway through the evening. Club founder Isaac Kreiger defined his group's mission to successfully lobby for alcoholic beverages permitted in the dorm rooms. "This issue is as important as mental awareness," he asserted. After further questioning, Kreiger admitted to being underage himself, but insisted that the club supported only legalized drinking. Another libertarian upstart was the YU chapter of the National Rifle Association. YC Sophomore Ryder Dain, representing the club at the fair, envisioned trips to area shooting ranges. "American Jewry is not sufficiently armed," he warned, "we need to establish the Jewish right to self-defense, especially in light of recent Anti-Semitic attacks."

Other clubs used sound marketing to attract members. The Backgammon Club table featured a marathon match between Mike Shimensky and Donny Falik (Shimensky is up one hundred tournament points on the year) next to its sign-up sheet. The Philosophy Club distributed handouts entitled "The Value of Philosophy." The Physics Club advertised a contest called "The Cardboard Boat Race."

The evening included a touch of controversy, too. Ashkenazi students were surprised to discover that the Sephardic Club refused to admit non-Sephardim. Brams Moyal, the President of the Moroccan Club, expressed dissatisfaction with the Sephardic Club's position. "I think the purpose of the clubs is *achdut*, and this is not helped by keeping Ashkenazim out of the Sephardic Club," he complained. He contrasted this policy with that of his own club, which encouraged non-Moroccan students to join. Shimon Klayman, a visitor to the fair, echoed Moyal's position. "Clubs like these should not be exclusive, they should be open to everyone," he said. "There is no point for them to be insulated, they should allow students from other cultures to learn that other valid forms of Judaism do exist."

New Building continued from page 1

computers, some equipment, and a number of system administrators for maintenance?" More disturbing to some, is that only the two lower floors of the center will be utilized for Torah or technological purposes. The three upper floors will be filled with administrative or faculty offices, clearly a slight of Glueck's specific intentions for the building.

Nevertheless, a sense of optimism still permeates the administration. Rabbi Yosef Blau, *Mashgiach Ruchani* and University Guidance Counselor, stressed, "The fact that Yeshiva is doing something in technology is truly exciting in that it opens wonderful opportunities. Yeshiva University has tremendous internal resources both in terms of its Torah personalities and its technological connections - a feature that might truly enable something new to be realized."

Many on campus feel that a new Torah center may not be necessary at all, and they would rather see the donated funds devoted to the more traditional Torah-related avenues, like improvement of the current Beit Medrash. While the university's Main Beit Medrash was renovated and beautified only last year, space considerations and acoustic problems still plague Yeshiva's religious focal point. During this year's Yom Kippur services, over thirty Yeshiva students were locked out of the Beit Medrash by security due to a capacity crowd, with fire hazards cited as the primary concern. Security was monitoring the 'hazardous situation' closely, even though the chances that a fire marshal might come to inspect Yeshiva on Yom Kippur were highly unlikely. Acoustic problems in the Beit Medrash resulted in the moving of the *shlich tzibbur* from his traditional spot in the front of the room during this year's *Yamim Noraim* services to the middle of the room, where he could be heard by those sitting in back.

Discussions as to the application of the funds between Glueck and the University ensued, and the idea to combine technology and the study of Torah rose to the forefront. The result was what had originally been characterized as a 'Virtual Beit

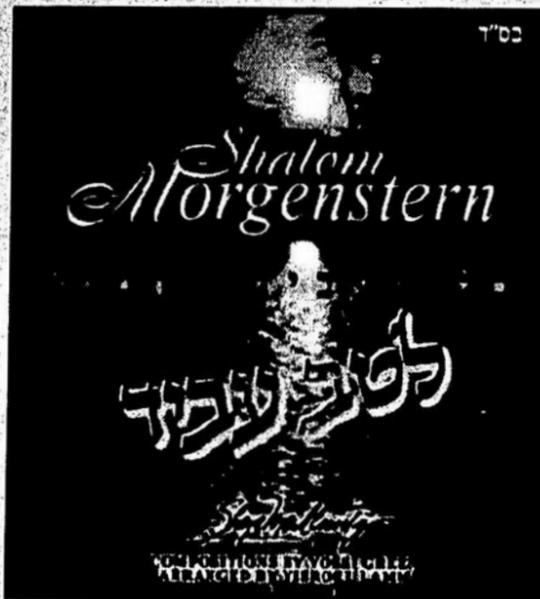
Medrash, and was later revised to the more encompassing technological Torah center. Lamm deemed such a facility as "the first of its kind," mirroring the unique nature of its donor, characterized by Rabbi Zevulun Charlop, Dean of RIETS, as "an extraordinary and unique human being."

A *Satmar Hasid*, Glueck has taken the initiative to lead meaningful lives in both the religious and secular worlds. Glueck has succeeded in leading what those close to him call "an exemplary life" as a devoted religious Jew coupled with an apt and successful approach to the business world. Glueck has always been a fond supporter of the *Torah U'Madda* message promoted by Yeshiva.

A close friend of both Rabbi Lamm and Rabbi Charlop, Glueck has been affiliated with Yeshiva for quite some time. Less than two years ago, Mr. Glueck was awarded the premier honor that RIETS bestows at its *Chag Hasmichah* - the *Etz Chaim* (tree of life) Award. The *Etz Chaim* award typically recognizes the philanthropic efforts of Yeshiva's most prominent donors. Many believed that the choice of Glueck as the recipient of the award foreshadowed his monumental contribution to our university.

Apparently 1999 was not the first time Glueck had met with Yeshiva representatives to discuss a possible donation. Several years ago, the generous philanthropist discussed a possible donation. At that time, Glueck was reportedly interested in funding a Torah-related project, more specifically the construction of a new and improved *beit medrash*. That effort was aborted however, when the amount of funding available from Glueck failed to match Yeshiva's monetary needs for implementing such a plan. After remaining stagnant for several years, Glueck met with University officials once again, this time willing to contribute the amounts necessary to fund such a large project. An eight million dollar donation was arranged, one quarter of which has already been sitting in YU accounts, according to administrative sources, for almost a year.

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Yeshiva Goes Prime Time

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

The individuals who claimed that our esteemed institution is not known in the world of entertainment were unilaterally disproved a few weeks ago when Yeshiva University was mentioned on the Prime Time NBC series, *The West Wing*.

The show, produced by Emmy Award nominee Aaron Sorkin ("A Few Good Men," "Sports Night") and Emmy Award winners Thomas Schlamme ("Tracey Takes On," "Sports Night") and John Wells ("ER"), gives its viewers a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the inner-workings of the Oval Office as seen through the eyes of its eclectic group of frenzied staffers.

In the second episode, two of the characters, Donna and Josh, were discussing their stakes in a football pool, when Josh states, "I'll tell you what. Can you give me Yeshiva University over the Dallas Cowboys?" Donna



THE WEST WING

then replies, "If you're not gonna take this seriously- -"

Aeden Babish, an assistant writer for the series, claims that Yeshiva University was selected randomly for the text, and that this "does not necessarily express negative sentiments toward your University...but let's face it you're not exactly known for your sports program." The producers and writers would not comment on whether Yeshiva will be mentioned in episodes to come, but one writer said, "Don't be surprised if we use the name again."

Cafeteria

Continued from page 20

with the food quality were recent Israel returnees, and admitted that the food was only good relative to what they ate while studying abroad. "I'm not saying that the food here is objectively so good," said Shmuel Singer, who attended Kol Torah, "but it's worlds better than what we were served in Israel." The mixed response concerning food quantity can be attributed to the difference in the size of individual appetites. One student, who considered himself satisfied with the amount of food served, based his response on what he called "the inordinate and insurmountable amount of fries served with the main dish at dinner."

The most glaring inadequacy revealed by the survey was the Cafeterias prices. Breakfast, consisting of cereal, either a roll or powdered eggs, and something to drink, costs on average over six dollars. In comparison, at Grandma's

Cookie Jar, a bagel with cream cheese, along with a pastry and a drink cost less than four dollars. A similar cost disparity exists with lunch and dinner. Both meals can cost upwards of eight dollars, while two slices of pizza and a Snapple run about four dollars at Time Out. "At Columbia University, dinner costs about seven dollars, and it's all you can eat," said Hadar Weiss, who noted that the food quality at Columbia is superior as well.

The only positive result of the survey was the complete satisfaction with the service provided by the staff. "Yeah, I like the people working at the Caf," said Dovid Feld, "but service with a smile can only get you so far." Feld's sentiments seem to reflect that of the general student population at Yeshiva. Obviously, the issue of food service deserves its place at the top of the list of problems at YU.

Jesse Jackson Visits YU

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., international human rights activist and President of the Rainbow Coalition, keynoted the third annual multi-disciplinary Conference on Black-Jewish Relations at Yeshiva University on Wednesday, October 27.

In his address, held in Weisberg Commons, Jackson heralded the next step in Black-Jewish relations, discussing the forge of ties between the two communities. Jackson was greeted by Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm, President of Yeshiva, and by Rabbi Marc Schneier, President of the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding and the New York Board of Rabbis.

The conference was followed by a two panel discussion focused on the potential for economic gain from the joining of forces of various ethnic communities. The panel topics were "Building a Black-Jewish Economic

Roundtable," and "Building Economic Relationships in the Community."

"We are at a critical juncture in the distinguished history of African-American and Jewish relations," said Rabbi Schneier. "I am pleased that Rev. Jackson and Yeshiva University have joined me and the Foundation in launching a new era in the state of Black/Jewish relations. The momentum is now shifting from the struggle for civil rights toward the building and strengthening of economic cooperation between the two communities."

Dr. Sheldon R. Gelman, Dean of the Wurzweiler School of Social Work, stated, "Jews have long been associated with the struggle for civil rights. We are now ready to engage in dialogue and collaborations that address economic opportunities in order to assure human rights. Obstacles to both civil and economic injustice must be overcome."

YCSC Holds Freshman and Sophomore Class Elections

BY SHLOMO TROODLER

On Thursday, October 21, YCSC held Freshman and Sophomore Class elections. In a series of hotly contested elections, an aspiring group of students emerged victorious with hopes and desires of improving student life on campus, despite an upsetting voter turnout. Avi Bloom managed to win the elections for Sophomore Class President, edging out Dov Feldman, K. Natanel Barookhian and Eric Gutman. Matthew Kreiger won the Sophomore Class Vice President and Elliot Iglicki was elected Secretary/Treasurer, both managing to beat

out a tough group of opponents.

Among Freshmen, Ben Breda garnered the most votes for President, beating out a tough campaign by Nerri Leviev, who had gone around the Muss dormitory all week trying to gain support. Breda is optimistic that he will be able to serve the interests of the Freshman Class in the best manner possible, and welcomes suggestions from fellow students. He will be accompanied by his Vice President, Elior Shilo, and his Secretary/Treasurer, Arthur Gutman. Shilo, although unopposed on the ballot, evaded a strong write-in campaign run by David Simon to win the vice-presidency.

Cardozo Art

Continued from page 20

Josephine Meckseper, Schachter clarifies that "if our society mainly views women in such a manner, when a woman herself turns the gaze back on us, why would it be disturbing? Have you seen the way most men view women?" However, some female students have been disturbed by that particular piece. Jamie Rothman, President of the Student Bar Association, says, "The displayed artwork must be screened better. I have personally received many complaints from students at Cardozo who have been offended by it. Further, I see a few teachers who every morning walk by the video that is playing, and pull the plug out."

Another student who asked to remain anonymous, remarked, "This is supposed to be a Jewish school where higher values are maintained, and I am disgusted by the fact that they would allow art that glorifies violence to be displayed. I was embarrassed that it was still up when Benjamin Netanyahu came here to speak. I personally heard Rabbi Lamm complain about it when he walked by." Sara Gershumi, Co-President of Cardozo's Lehman Society, shared a varying opinion, saying, "I don't find the display to be anything out of the ordinary. I think the students and faculty members are just sensationalizing because of the Brooklyn Museum Case."

Joanna Raby, an editor at Cardozo's Law Review, was involved in the Brooklyn Museum case, assisting in the preparation of an *amicus curiae* brief - a document that expresses a particular view of a court case by a lawyer who is not directly involved. She assisted Marci A. Hamilton, Professor of Constitutional Law at Cardozo, with preparation of the brief, arguing in favor of the Museum that censorship is in violation of the First Amendment. With regard to the display at Cardozo, she maintains, "While I don't support the art itself, I support the artists' right to display the work." She does, however, dichotomize between a governmental action as in the Brooklyn Museum case, and a private action, as would be the case with Cardozo. She explains that "In the

Cardozo case the constitution doesn't apply because the museum is privately funded, so if the University did take it down, it wouldn't be a violation of the First Amendment as it was in the Brooklyn Museum case."

Mr. Schachter initially expressed concern about bringing his collection to Cardozo because of complaints that were immediately raised as to the display's content. Two art works were originally censored by members of Facilities Management because, as one member put it, "I'm a man, and even I find this work offensive." Additionally another art piece by Sanford Biggers was found to be a potential hazard after its installation. Sources within the administration have conformed that Jeffrey Socol, Director of Facilities Management, unilaterally pulled off the floor Biggers' work after the artist and an assistant spent over five hours installing the piece. Schachter pronounced, "When I heard about this from the Office of the Dean, I just decided to pull the entire exhibit after the opening, but refrained when I was assured that the work could be reinstalled at the school's expense."

Paul R. Verkuil, Cardozo Dean and Professor of Law, supported the art display, stating, "This show brought younger artists to our campus and provided us with a way to engage a former student in the excitement and scholarly inquiry that takes place at Cardozo every day."

Schachter echoed Verkuil's sentiments, saying, "I think I struck a cord that is more authentic and refreshing than anything in an exhibit in a strictly art context. When was the last time anyone at the school engaged in a dialogue about art? I feel that maybe art can raise consciousness and be a viable means to foster a dialogue about issues concerning us all. I hate to say it, but it is thrilling and exhilarating to have a conversation about actual works of art. After twelve years in the professional art world, I was beginning to think there was no discourse other than that of a strictly commercial nature."



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Professors Salaries continued from page 1

by the University's operating deficit. This is in stark contrast to Yeshiva's 1998 financial reports as documented in its 990 Tax Form, which records the University's total expenditures in the year ending June 30, 1998 as \$118,650,697 less than its total revenue, a significant operating surplus.

The letter, which was also sent to Dr. Sheldon Socol, Vice President of Business Affairs at Yeshiva; Dr. Morton Lowengrub, Vice President of Academic Affairs; and Mr. David Gottesman, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, came after frustrated faculty members were dealt another blow in their struggle for just salaries. With the creation of an honors college and a teaching load that surpasses that of many institutions, a decrease in the raise percentage was not expected. In fact, it came as a shock to many senior staffers who are facing pensions that are extremely low.

With money placed in retirement plans based on matching funds, professors maintain that they have "horrible pension plans to complement their insufficient salaries." This is of grave concern to faculty who have been here for many years. "I can't even think about retirement, because I can't afford it," said one professor who remembers the days of salary freezes and five course semesters.

Although the letter was only signed by senior professors, adjunct, assistant, and associate professors are not immune from Yeshiva salary woes. While Yeshiva College Dean Dr. Norman Adler acknowledges that the junior staff's salaries are initially "competitive," many professors expressed that their salaries do not remain so throughout their tenures at Yeshiva. "Entry level salaries are very competitive, but the longer you stay, the worse off you are when aligned with comparable institutions," remarked one junior faculty member. Because there is no payment scale or track, associate, assistant and adjunct professor salaries do not remain competitive as pay rates are not raised at increments similar to other institutions.

In addition to the absence of the junior staff, the letter expressing faculty dissatisfaction was not signed by any professor who had personnel decisions pending. This was done, "To protect them [Professors with personnel decisions pending] from administrators who have the power to affect those decisions," explained a professor. This senior professor pointed to Dr. Sheldon Socol, as "the one most feared by faculty, and the administrator considered to have the most influence upon salary decisions."

"The fact that Yeshiva faculty are so poorly paid is surprising to some considering that they are among the hardest working liberal arts faculties in the nation," said one professor. The national average for courses taught in one semester is less than three, with many professors delivering one course per term. In Yeshiva however, a professor typically is required to teach up to four courses. Further adding to the frustration of teachers is the increasing workload they have experienced. Last year, many

professors spent extra hours working on the creation of the Honors College, while others have done more committee work than ever before, with little compensation to show for it.

In order to survive in the academic world, professors must publish and complete scholarly works. However, with such a heavy workload during the academic year, such scholarly work can only be done during the summer, which then causes further financial loss to professors who can no longer spend their summer months lecturing.

Small departments with limited numbers of full time faculty members have become an increasing phenomena on campus. Over fifty percent of this semester's courses are being taught by less-than-full-time professors.

Last year, the University called for an independent review of the Yeshiva College academic departments. According to senior professors, the recommendations for all departments showed that the college was understaffed while the teachers were overworked and underpaid. "Dr. Socol has no excuse in this instance," said one faculty member. "We had independent people come in here and review us, he heard what they had to say, but just chose not to listen."

For years, the relationship between the administrators and the faculty has been strained. Since 1977, Yeshiva has been on the probation list of the American Association of University Professors for having one of the worst relationships between faculty and administration. "This type of outside negative publicity not only reflects the utter disregard that is shown for University staff in this instance, but also points to the complete *chillul Hashem* that is created when parts of the administration behave in inexplicable ways," said one high level administrator.

Many faculty members feel their poor salaries stem from their own inability to have any affect over administrative decisions. In fact, according to a number of professors, it was not until September that faculty discovered the inadequate adjustments within their paychecks.

The lack of faculty influence over salaries and other administrative decisions are manifest in a Supreme Court case that dates back twenty years. In the late seventies, Yeshiva faculty wanted to unionize to place themselves in position to negotiate with university management. The university filed an injunction to prevent this from occurring, and a case arose that the university took all the way to the Supreme Court. The Court ruled that university professors are in actuality considered management, and therefore, are prohibited from unionizing against themselves.

"It is simply ironic that while the University fought so hard to call us management, we have no influence over anything. Either we are management or not, and it seems the University has rigged it so that we are nothing," vented one disgruntled professor.

Registrar Resigns continued from page 1

given two weeks to submit his resignation or risk having his position terminated.

The impetus behind the decision to force Davis' resignation is not clear. Not a single administrator was able to provide any specific reason as to why Davis was asked to resign. There have been a great number of speculative reasons and conspiracy theories offered by many sources, none of them confirmed. However, one person within the dean's office noted that the registrar's office has accumulated a track record of below par performance for some time.

According to high level University officials, Rabbi Davis' dismissal came only after the accumulation of this negative track record.

Student sentiment against the registrar's office has existed in the past and has been expressed numerous times on campus. According to students present, the registrar's office was discussed in a negative light at recent meetings of the Student Life Committee. "Many of the complaints involved the organization and day to day operation of the registrar's office. Students often were subject to negative attitudes as well as poor service, two qualities that should not be tolerated in the world of academia," explained one administrator.

According to University employees, the Office of the University Registrar, which serves the entire Yeshiva community with the exception of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, has been handicapped for some time due to understaffing, hampering the office's ability to execute everyday tasks in an efficient manner. A pattern of understaffing manifested itself last January 15, when Hanna Wolfe, Assistant Registrar of Stern College for Women, resigned. After her resignation, her office remained vacant for almost a full semester until Dr. Lea Honigwachs assumed the assistant registrar position. During the interim months, Davis was charged with the direction of the Midtown office while continuing his duties in the University office on the Main Campus.

Further impairing the office's ability to function was the departure of Associate Registrar Carol S. Roth in August of this year. Roth's position still remains vacant. In addition an assistant university registrar position at Yeshiva does not exist. However, the University recognized the need for this office when they placed an advertisement soliciting resumes for an assistant university registrar in June of last year. This position too remains vacant and undefined. "The easiest way to convince people that someone is inefficient is to strip him of his support; no man can do everything on his own," remarked one University official.

Davis, a former student of Yeshiva, (YC '68, RIETS '74) returned to his alma mater in 1994 after serving Long Island University for 15 years as Dean of Student Administrative Services and Director of University Information and Records. Hired as the Director of Enrollment Management, Davis was charged with operating both the registrar and admissions offices. During the two years in his capacity as director, enrollment increased an impressive seventeen percent. After a short stint as assistant to then Academic Vice President, Dr. William Schwartz, Davis was moved to University Registrar. Over his tenure in Yeshiva, Rabbi Davis instituted many changes and improvements in the University, all aimed at "making these offices more user friendly," he said.

When accepting the job, Davis took the initiative to institute a uniform, all inclusive student database that would allow recruit-

ing, admissions, enrollment, finances, and registration to utilize the same set of student data. Davis introduced the University to the Banner system, which has proved so successful that Alumni and Development are now looking at incorporating themselves into the network as well.

Recently, Davis drafted a proposal to add Banner Web 2000 to the University system to provide a secure medium for students to access their personal information relating to financial status and academic grades via the World Wide Web. According to the proposal, the program would also create the option for online registration, a feature offered at many universities across the country. Banner Web would also enable an automatic graduation check module creating a list of the classes already taken and the classes still required for degree completion. "The equivalent to senior check, quicker and any time," explained one registrar employee. Apparently, the University MIS department has hampered this effort.

Under Rabbi Davis' direction, the college course catalog was placed online by students so that their peers could plan academic schedules in advance of registration. In May 1998, Davis moved registration to the more comfortable Belfer Hall, a move that was made after years of using the inadequate registrars facilities in Furst Hall. However, one University official asserted that in fact Dr. Gelman was the catalyst behind the move.

Part of the contention surrounding Davis' dismissal is the timing of the event and the uncertainty of where the recommendation and order for dismissal came. Sources speculate that recently appointed Academic Vice President Dr. Morton Lowengrub was directly responsible for Davis' dismissal, leading to a possible explanation for the poor timing of the event. "Lowengrub was only in office for some four weeks when Davis resigned, not a sufficient amount of time to judge someone's worth or contribution to the institution," remarked one high level university employee.

Although Dr. Fisher informed Davis of his dismissal, many administrative officials maintain that Fisher could not have given the order or made the decision on his own. "Fisher is obviously the hatchet boy in this," asserted one high level administrator. "Hatchet boy for *who* is something that remains unclear."

Dr. Fisher's job as Director of Enrollment Management was at one time held by Rabbi Davis, however the duties of the position have changed dramatically since Davis left that post. When Dr. Fisher assumed the roll of Director, the position was changed to cover the financial aid office in addition to admissions and registration. The significance of this change with regards to whom Dr. Fisher reports. Previously, the Director only reported to the Academic Vice President; however with the addition of financial aid, the Director is responsible to Vice President of Business Affairs Sheldon Socol, as well.

Dr. Fisher was unavailable for comment, as he was attending to difficult situations in Yeshiva University's Israel Office. The Department of Human Resources, the Office of the Academic Vice President, and the Office of the Business Vice President all refused to comment on Davis' resignation, citing supposed rules of confidentiality.

"That is part of the problem here in Yeshiva," explained another high level administrator. "Someone can be fired, or forced to resign, and no reason has to be given, no people have to take responsibility."

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Goodman's Feet Back On The Ground

BY GREG SAMUELS

The Tamir Goodman engine lost most of its steam when Goodman recently announced that he would not be attending the University of Maryland next fall. Goodman claims that while Maryland Terrapins coach Gary Williams did not actually rescind his verbal scholarship offer, he instead told Goodman "missing practices for the Sabbath would be considered skipping practice and sanctioned accordingly."

This brought a fast end to what would have been the first Orthodox nationally known Division I basketball player. It had previously been reported that Maryland was to petition the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) to change all of their games to dates that did not conflict with the Jewish player's religious observance. However, Gary Williams had a change of heart due to Goodman's poor play over the summer. Goodman played in only one camp, yet his play proved enough to force Maryland to run. Faced with big time summer competition for the first time after a year of "Yeshiva ball," Goodman looked unimpressive.

This brought an end to a story that took a strange twist this summer. Over the summer, Goodman's high school, Torah Academy of Baltimore, tired of the media frenzy that surrounded their star, reportedly, decided to close their basketball program. Goodman, and his personal coach Chaim Katz, followed by leaving TA en route to a Seventh Day Adventist school. This move created a great deal of negative feedback from the Jewish community. Now, as Goodman no longer has an offer to Maryland, it appears ever so likely that he may end up at Yeshiva University, where many thought that he would be best suited to go from the beginning.

When questioned about the possibility of Goodman's arrival at Yeshiva during last year's Red Sarachek Invitational Tournament, Dr. Richard Zernick, YU Athletic Director, said, "It doesn't seem likely that he'll choose to come here, because of his well known offer from Maryland, but if he chooses to come here, we'd be happy to have him."

Mets Fans, Ya' Still Gotta Believe

BY ADAM COHEN

When Kenny Rogers threw ball four to Andruw Jones, walking in the National League Championship Series winning run, Mets fans fell into a state of depression. After all, less than half an hour before the team that had come so far was just two outs away from forcing a game seven in a series once trailed three games to none. In a season of incredible twists and unlikely outcomes, it seemed that the most unlikely of all would be a Mets loss in a game they had furiously fought so hard to win. A game that saw the Braves, with their best pitcher on the mound, score five times before the second out of the first inning was recorded. Yet, the Mets came back, twice, taking the lead on two separate occasions. It seemed for just a moment that the Amazin's would pull off another miracle. Oddly enough Mets fans were disappointed when that miracle fell short.

But the season as a whole was not a disappointment. The Mets showed tremendous growth over this past year and made terrific strides in the progression of their franchise. This coming a year after the Mets let a playoff spot fall through their finger tips. Although they gave everyone a scare in the waning moments of this year's regular season, the Mets not only made the playoffs, but made a mark by advancing past the first round. Even in losing the NLCS, the Amazin's showed the courage and strength that were that hallmarks of this year's team. By the end of the series, they proved to the Braves, and more importantly to themselves, that they will be a force to reckon with in the future.

This despite the fact that the Mets were dominated by the Braves, a better team, for the past three years. They played a brutally rough series, losing three games by one run and the other by only two. In addition, the games they won were played under extreme pressure; games in which they were trying to avoid being embarrassed by getting swept or by being knocked out in five games. With one out in the bottom of the tenth inning of game six the Mets had a nine to eight lead and the Braves had visions of a catastrophic collapse of unthinkable proportions, one so large it had never been matched in baseball history. No team down three games to none in a playoff series has ever forced a game seven. Do not think the 1999 Mets did not leave a lasting impression on the baseball world.

Baseball is a different game than it was thirteen years ago when the Mets won their last championship. In those years, every team that won a division, back then there were only four divisions and no wild card, had an even shot at winning the whole thing. Baseball was unique in this manner; the three other major sports had a playoff system of 4 rounds, while Baseball had only 2. A football team that got into the playoffs considered its season to be a success. After that, each playoff win added a measure of success to the season, with the ultimate goal being a Super Bowl win. Baseball was different. In Baseball, winning the division was nothing more than a vehicle to the post-season, in which two teams squared off for the first of two major goals: winning a pennant, or league championship. The loser of that League Championship Series went home feeling that his season was unfulfilled. The two Pennant winners squared off for the World Championship, but even the losers in that World Series went home winners as they could legitimately (without a stretch) call themselves Champions, for they were in fact Champions of their respective League. So Baseball in fact had two champions every year, the two league champions, one of which to become World Champion.

That all changed when Baseball realigned in 1995. The advent of the wild card in Baseball changed the entire landscape of the Baseball post-season. Now, like in other sports, teams try to set realistic goals. Ten years ago, a baseball team would never say, "Our goal this year is to make the playoffs."

Such a thing never happened, because a team would never sell themselves short by having such meager goals. Today, however, such a declaration is common. What happened was simple. Four additional teams were allowed into the playoff tournament. As a result, those four teams, who are now playoff teams, are necessarily as good as the playoff teams under the old alignment. Hence, teams that previously could not win their division, due to another team's sheer dominance, can now announce with excitement that they hope to make the playoffs. Right now, making the playoffs is a watermark to determine how a franchise is progressing.

For the Mets, therefore, making the playoffs means that their season was a success, and it shows just how much they improved over last year. Essentially, they are right now where they were in 1985. (Had the Wild Card been in place, they would have been in the playoffs that year, too.) This year, they won nothing. There is no merit to winning a Wild Card or a "Division Series" (Just what division are they the champions of, the Western Division?). What the Mets did show is that they are ready to take the next step, that they are not only a franchise on the rise but a franchise who next year (given they make a few shrewd off-season moves) will be in position to win the Pennant and beyond.

There are many similarities between the mid eighties Mets and the current Mets. Gary Carter was acquired in a trade prior to the 1985 season, and he joined Keith Hernandez as the team leaders. Jesse Orosco and Roger McDowell made a strong lefty/righty tandem out of the bullpen; each one chalked up seventeen saves. And the Mets were eliminated on the second-to-last day of the season, despite winning ninety-eight games, third best in the Majors. The Mets already had the Cy Young Award winner (Dwight Gooden) on their staff, along with two other pitchers with an ERA under three (Ron Darling, Sid Fernandez), and a slew of pitchers with ERAs under four, but they went out and got a top notch left handed pitcher in Bob Ojeda, who in 1986 went 18-5 with a 2.57 ERA. Other than that major acquisition, the Mets contented themselves to minor roster tweaks. They brought in backup catcher Ed Hearn, and infielder Tim Lincecum.

The 2000 Mets have similar needs. Although they already have their backup catcher in Todd Pratt and a slew of backup position players, they do need the minor tweaks and the big time pitcher. At the end of this year, the Mets had 7 starting pitchers. Octavio Dotel, has a big future ahead of him, and will likely be on the Opening Day roster. Al Leiter and Rick Reed will also be there. Free agent Kenny Rogers' fourth ball will be the last pitch he throws as a Met, and everyone is probably better off that way. Orel Hershiser was offered the Manager's job in Cleveland, so it is not clear whether or not he'll be back, although the Mets like his veteran leadership, not to mention his good pitching. Bobby Jones and Masato Yoshii are both under contract for next year although General Manager Steve Phillips probably wants to unload at least one of them and fill their spot with an ace. Believe it or not, both of those players have a lot of appeal to certain teams. They are both young and with a lot of upside. Unfortunately, they don't fit into the Mets plans right now. Neither of the two will not bring back an ace in a trade, but certainly have considerable value in a trade package.

Mets fans are disappointed. They were two outs away from history, and twenty-nine outs from the World Series. But Mets fans have plenty to look forward to. Now more than ever, Mets fans can be excited when they hear, "...just four months to Spring Training." And if that doesn't work, just remember that the Mets are the Western Division Champs.

Adam Cohen takes your calls and talks sports on WYUR 530 AM, Sunday nights from 11 PM to 11:30 PM (212) 923-2471.

Yeshiva Tennis Macs, A Team of Excellence

BY DORIAN LEVY

Since the 1994-1995 season until midway through last year, the Yeshiva University Mens Tennis Macs did not lose a single match. For four and a half glorious seasons, the undefeated teams enjoyed what one current team member described as "the ultimate goal: perfection." To acknowledge this impressive achievement, the Yeshiva Athletic Department plans to hang a banner from the rafters in the gym in the Max Stern Athletic Center. Dr. Richard Zernick, Director of Athletics, said, "I felt the banner was necessary to commemorate the excellence, that at least in my knowledge, is unprecedented in Yeshiva history. They deserve the recognition that only a permanent commemoration could provide."

In the meantime, though, banner or not, the Macs are enjoying a high level of respect. This year's first tennis tryouts, held on September 8th, enjoyed the largest turnout in team histo-

ry. In fact, coach John Bandier had to enroll Shai Samet, a leading member of the undefeated squads, to help conduct the tryouts. This year's team has high hopes with an unprecedented nine players returning from last year's squad, and an impressive crew of new players.

This year's returners include Micha Porat who played second singles last year, was named one of the tri-captains of this year's team along with returners Jeffrey Taub and Adam Cohen. Porat spent the summer involved with tennis while giving free lessons to kids from disadvantaged families. The other returning players include Ari Ellenberg, Eric Taub, Jonathan Laoui, Dorian Levy, Adam Aftergut, Eldo Jacobowitz, and Ari Raskas. The team is also graced with new players Ephraim and Raphael Horn, Oren Nidam, Michael Rouzenrouch, Ari Hoschander, Avi Bloom, and Joel Maza.

The large amount of returning players coupled with the new prospects give the Macs the

confidence that is sorely needed. Porat remarked, "This year's team has a lot of potential. It is an honor to be named captain to a team that besides being a great bunch of guys, also has so much promise." Another team member remarked, "Tennis is all about confidence. Even though we did pretty well last year (7-3), we just didn't have the swagger that we should have this year. Tennis is such a finesse game, that if you don't have belief in your shots, they will stray. This year, though, I assure you will be different."

Additionally exciting for the Macs, is their introduction into the Skyline Athletic Conference. Despite the teams' previous successes, they were never able to participate in any type of post-season, as they did not belong to any official conference. This year, with their newfound confidence, experienced players, and fresh talent, we are sure to see the Macs in post-season play, and perhaps to even earn their own banner of excellence.

THE COMMENTATOR

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

White Garbed Men to the Rescue: YU Fencing Team

BY HADAR WEISS

Close your eyes and imagine walking through this lovely surrounding neighborhood of ours. Or actually go for a stroll through the Heights. Now picture a large scary man looming over you, swatting your face with a glove and challenging you to a duel. Wouldn't you wish you knew how to fence?

There are three separate divisions in fencing split by the type of weapon one uses: sabre, foil and epee. Each differs slightly from the other two, yet the basic concept is the same, namely to prove that you could have killed your opponent if you had to. To accomplish that, you must score five touches on your opponent within the four-minute time slot allotted to each bout.

The two competitors face each other on a "strip" one meter wide and 14 meters long. If one backs all the way down the strip and steps fully off the strip with both feet, a touch is awarded to the other fencer.

In both sabre and foil the concept of "leading the attack" applies. This means that the fencer who began the attack first, whether moving his body or weapon forward, is given the right to finish his attack before the other fencer can commence his own attack. The opponent must first defend himself before he can lead his own attack, otherwise, as long as the first fencer, who has the attack, finishes and hits "on target," no matter what the other fencer has done, the attack continues and a point is awarded to the first fencer. If, on the other hand the opponent defended, and

then created his own attack and hits his opponent, then the second fencer is considered to have regained the attack and is awarded the point.

In epee, there is no rule limiting any attack, and it is the only weapon out of the three in which a double touch can be awarded, with each fencer gaining a point when the touches are scored simultaneously (within 1/125th of a second of one another). While fencing epee, the entire body qualifies as a target to score touches upon, and in fact it is looked highly upon to gain a touch in odd places such as the wrist or the toe.

In both foil and epee the touch must be scored by hitting the opponent with the tip of the blade, which depresses the springs contained within, closing an electrical circuit. The circuit in turn sends a signal along various wires and cables to a special box on a nearby table where a light turns on and a buzzer goes off alerting the official directing the bout that a touch has been scored.

There are no official weight/classifications in fencing, so that someone 5 feet tall and 100 pounds could fence against someone 6 feet tall and 200 pounds, but that is unlikely. Due to the fashion in which the weapons work, most fencers are divided into the weapons based on body build and height, not weight. The taller ones are placed in epee where the advantage of a long reach can be best exploited. Short and skinny tend to fence foil (a weapon that began as a training weapon for epee), because of the extreme target limitations. Those in between or with a stocky build

usually fence sabre since the entire blade can be used.

Fencing requires nine starters for the team, three in each of the three weapons. These three in each weapon fence in a rotation with the corresponding three from the other team for a total of 27 bouts per meet. Whichever team wins a minimum of 14 bouts wins the meet.

The fencing team here at YU currently has a double program: the NCAA and the Mid-Atlantic Collegiate Fencing Association (MACFA). Even though YU is a Division III school, the fencing team competes against all other schools, regardless of division, and has proven highly competitive and sometimes victorious against Division I schools. Every year the team goes to Boston for a weekend to participate in a "mega-meet" against five teams in one day, and fences against such colleges as Brandeis, MIT, North Carolina, Brown and Boston College. In the MACFA Conference a total of 15 universities from Virginia through New York compete against one another in a competition separate from the NCAA's. MACFA holds its own championships at the end of the fencing season, the same as the NCAA holds theirs. Some of the top teams from this conference include Haverford College, Johns Hopkins University, United States Military Academy (Army), Cornell, and the ever-so-popular Steven's Technical College of New Jersey.

Last year, the YU epee squad finished atop the MACFA conference, recording the first conference championship for any Yeshiva sport. This year the team hopes for continued success.

Spartan Sports Yeshiva Waitress

CAMPUS BULLETIN BOARD

SPIRES
is currently accepting submissions for its Fall 1999 issue. Now in its sixth year, Spires is an inter-collegiate literary journal committed to publishing works of undergraduate students from colleges and universities around the country. Please provide a copy of your poetry or prose on a PC compatible 3.5" diskette. (Which may be returned upon request). Contact Benji Schiller @ 781-5988.

SHATNEZ
Anyone need clothing tested for Shatnez please see Moshe Schreck or Yaakov Geffner in the Beis Medrash or call Moshe @ 782-1019.

FLOOR HOCKEY
All those interested in Floor Hockey Intramurals Contact Eric Distenfeld, disty@hotmail.com or Brian Glass bdglass@ymail.yu.edu. Helmet with cage and gloves a must!

TANYA SHIUR
The Chabad club announces its weekly Tanya Shiur; Wednesdays at 8:30PM Starting Oct. 27th, at Deli Kasbah. Spiritual Enrichment and free food :) All Students Invited.

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 Josh Swedarsky (212) 928-2050.

MORG MART

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

YU TANAKH JOURNAL
Submissions should focus on a theme, text, or parshanut issue in tanakh. Tentative deadline is March 1, 2000. For more information, please contact Aaron Koller at: koller@ymail.yu.edu.

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.

J.S.S. MINYAN
It's back and better than ever! J.S.S. minyan and breakfast. Time: Monday and Thursday - 7:50; Tuesday and Wednesday - 8:00. Place: Furst Hall Beis

Medrash (F301). All Welcome!!! Free breakfast every day!!!

YC DEANS' OFFICE WEB MAVENS
Are you interested in working for the YC Deans' office WebMavens? The WebMavens are looking for a few dedicated students interested in learning more about web publishing. If you're interested in finding out more, email Doron Simon at dsimon@ymail.yu.edu.

COMMUNITY LITERACY PROGRAM REVIVED!
All it takes is ONE HOUR A WEEK. The school is a block and a half past Belfer on Amsterdam Ave. You can tutor a student one-on-one, and if you want, you can have more of a mini-classroom with 6 students. One Hour A Week! (if you want more, it can be arranged of course). You decide when in the school day you are available, and we will match you up with a student who needs you. This is a great opportunity to perform some community service, to make a kidush Hashem, to have a good time. We would like to start the Program soon, so please respond quickly. David Hain hain@ymail.yu.edu or Daniel Robbin robbin@ymail.yu.edu

CHANUKAH CONCERT TO ROCK LAMPORT WITH DEDI AND AVRAHAM FRIED

BY EPHRAIM SHAPIRO

After months of intense planning and preparation, the Yeshiva College and Stern College for Women Student Councils are proud to announce one of the most eagerly anticipated events of the year – the annual Chanukah Concert Extravaganza. An honored school tradition, Chanukah Concert '99 will undoubtedly continue in the YU trend of ensuring each year's concert is better than its predecessor. Due to tireless efforts by Concert Coordinator, Naftali Olivestone, world-renowned singing sensations Avraham Fried and Dedi have been secured to co-headline a concert for the first time ever.

Fried, who headlined last year's concert, will be returning to Lamport once again as he himself has become a big fan of the YU audience. Known the world over as the foremost superstar in Jewish music today, this will be Fried's fourth time on the YU stage in the past five years. According to Fried, "Every year, I look forward to the YU concert because it gives me *chizuk* to perform the entire year. I am still recovering from the ruach of the crowd from last year.

A native of Petach Tikvah, Israel, Oded Groucher – known to the world simply as "Dedi" – has just released his fifth album, an immediate bestseller

due to his unique flavor and style. Dedi, who last appeared on the YU stage in 1997 alongside Mordechai Ben David, has also come to enjoy the exhilarating enthusiasm generated by the crowd in Lamport Auditorium. "I love YU!" Dedi exclaimed as he currently looks forward to once again rocking the house.

Also performing will be the revered Shloime Dachs. After wowing the world with his second hit album, "Acheinu," Shloime Dachs has quickly risen to the top of the charts as the most popular young star in Jewish music today. A well-established solo performer, Dachs appeared as part of the trio of singers in "Yachad," an act from last year's Chanukah Concert.

In keeping with another YU tradition, the concert extravaganza will introduce one of our own up-and-coming musicians. Possessing a beautiful voice, current RIETS student Shalom (Jonathan) Morgenstern (YC '98), will be making his concert debut in Lamport Auditorium. Morgenstern's performance will feature songs from his album, "L'tav Avid," to be released in November by Sheya Mendlowitz Productions.

The concert will take place Thursday evening, December 9th, the 7th night of Chanukah. Tickets are now on sale at both the uptown and midtown campuses.



Controversy Surrounds Art Exhibit at Cardozo

BY AARON KLEIN

In wake of the highly publicized Brooklyn Museum case in which Mayor Giuliani and many religious leaders objected to an exhibit of a Virgin Mary painting tinged with elephant dung, Yeshiva University's Cardozo School of Law recently found its own share of controversy surrounding a newly installed art exhibit. The collection of art now located in Cardozo's lobby, includes pictures of guns, gun wall paper, guns painted with glitter, graphic portrayals of the female anatomy, and a video depicting violence to women – causing some students, faculty and administration members to voice complaints to the University for allowing such works to be displayed.

The works in question, collectively entitled *Lifer*, were curated by Cardozo graduate Kenny Schachter, a world famous artist, curator and dealer who represents emerging artists by displaying their works in exchange shows and exhibitions. Mr. Schachter views this particular exhibit as representing the conflict between "who we are at birth versus the notions of choice and free will reflecting in some way inborn qualities and idiosyncrasies."

Schachter explains that guns are "fetishist objects obsessed over by many members of society," and that the artist is merely viewing with a critical eye society's love/hate relationship toward violence, and in particular, violence to woman. "Perhaps the artist is reclaiming an object often used against woman and others, making it into another fashion accessory, for which it has practically already become," offers Schachter.

With regard to the exposed female body parts, which is part of a work created by

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Yeshiva University Faced with Competition: New Yeshiva Established at Columbia

BY EZRA LEVIN

What does Columbia University have in common with our own venerable College – other than our sharing the pages of the "US News Top 50?" Both institutions now afford students the opportunity to learn in a yeshiva, while simultaneously pursuing their secular education.

Yeshivat Chovevei Torah was founded this past September to provide for the learning needs of the increasing numbers of observant students at Columbia. Rabbis Avi Weiss and Dov Lindzer are the Dean and Rosh HaYeshiva respectively for this new oasis of Torah situated at Congregation Ramath Orani on 110th St. "There was a sense that Columbia and Barnard students needed a yeshiva in the area to satisfy the needs of the large Orthodox population," says Magid Shiur, Rabbi Dov Weiss. "Our goal was to create a *makom* Torah.

The Yeshiva offers Chumash, Gemara, and Halacha shiurim for

women, and multi-level Gemara classes for men, with a co-ed Parsha shiur once a week. The classes have been well attended, with about fifty students and four kollel members present on a daily basis.

In addition to the rewards of studying Torah, each member of the Yeshiva receives a monthly stipend based on consistent attendance. While the extra cash may not be what is drawing such a crowd, Weiss explains, "It does function to motivate oneself to feel an obligation to attend shiurim regularly." The Hebrew Institute of Riverdale has provided the funding for the thousand-plus *seforim* and Bar-Ilan computer software, in addition to providing the monthly stipends.

Ari Hakimi, President of Orthodox Jews on Campus at Columbia is ecstatic over the success of the program. "It has enabled us to elevate the level of learning to what was once only thought to be attainable at a university with a double curriculum," exclaims Hakimi.

Though there are many Columbia students committed to regular learning schedules outside the Yeshiva program, one such student "could not help but notice the definite increase in serious learning on Columbia's campus on account of the new yeshiva."

Responses from Yeshiva University students have come with mixed reactions. SCW student Ellie London passionately extols that "if the Barnard girls were serious about continuing their learning they would have come to Stern, but I guess this is better than nothing." Elija Kaplan, a Yeshiva University student, is very content with the program. He believes that after their work in the Columbia Kollel, "female and male students will equally realize their dream of becoming a Rabbi."

Rabbi Weiss believes that "there should be a yeshiva program at every university" and through this we will see the "tremendous strengthening of Orthodoxy in America."

COMMENTATOR Survey: Eating In The Cafeteria

BY YAKOV FLEISCHMANN AND MIKE ZAIDEL

Take a look at the campaign platforms of students running for student office at Yeshiva. Most if not all highlight improving the quality of Cafeteria service as a major point. Clearly, the student body is unhappy with the food being serve. A recent survey conducted by The Commentator revealed exactly how unhappy students are.

The survey polled twenty percent of the students at YU (a statistically significant survey need only poll ten percent of a given population), and dealt with issues of

price, food quality and quantity, and overall satisfaction with the service provided in the Cafeteria. Ten percent of survey participants were satisfied with the overall quality of the food. None of the respondents considered the pricing reasonable, and none thought the food was particularly healthy. Half the students questioned felt the quantity of the food provided was enough to satisfy their appetites. Everyone surveyed viewed the cafeteria's cashiers and servers as friendly and helpful.

Many of the students who were happy

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THE COMMENTATOR

500 West 185th Street

New York, NY 10033

