

# COMMENTATOR

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The Official Newspaper of Yeshiva College

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Editor-in-Chief Alex Traiman, & SOY President Aton Holzer share a spiritual moment dancing circles around University President, Rabbi Norman Lamm at the annual SOY Chamukah Chagigah.

## UNIVERSITY PAYS COMMENTATOR IN CENSORSHIP CASE

BY AARON KLEIN AND ALEX TRAIMAN

As reported in *The New York Times*, *US News and World Report*, and other international media, the Yeshiva University administration last week paid the governing board of *The Commentator* \$1,850.00 for newspapers allegedly confiscated by members of Facilities Management at the directive of high-level University administrators. The administration issued a signed letter, serving as contract,

stating that the University will not again "remove or dispose of issues of *The Commentator*."

These events come after a month-and-a-half rampage by the Yeshiva administration to confiscate the printed editions of the feisty student newspaper of Yeshiva College. During that time, administrators stated publicly their unease with several articles appearing in recent *Commentator* additions. The most notable article questioned the intentions of the President's office in using an \$8 million donation.

The Yeshiva administration has allegedly maintained a long history of attempting to silence the student publications, however the newspaper removals intensified this year when employees of Facilities Management reportedly

discarded all copies of the newspapers in preparation for events that were open to the public, including speeches by former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Reverend Jesse Jackson, as well Open House programs for prospective students.

On November 23, Governing Board members of *The Commentator* contacted Assistant Director of Facilities Management, Paula Bomzer regarding what was deemed "a continued illegal and immoral practice on the part of the University." Mrs. Bomzer guaranteed that the newspapers would no longer be removed for any reason.

Yet, on November 30, when the N.Y.P.D. held a meeting downtown

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## State Board Member Questions Removal of Yeshiva Newspapers

BY AARON KLEIN

On Tuesday, December 21, the Yeshiva administration received a letter from Harold Levy, one of fourteen members of the New York State Board of Regents, asking that the university explain its reported silencing of student publications. The New York Board of Regents is the state entity responsible for chartering all colleges within New York.

Although Levy would not comment on the content of his letter, high level Yeshiva administrators informed *The Commentator* that the letter asked for an explanation of published reports that the administration has been removing

copies of *The Commentator* during public events.

Harold Cohen, a member of the Board of Regents and Chairman of The Higher and Professional Education Committee, explained that the letter was sent by Levy as a private citizen concerned about possible censorship practices, and was not sent by the Board of Regents itself. Cohen said, "It is possible that if the University does not respond properly to Levy's letter, he may bring the matter to the attention of the Board of Regents, but as of now, I believe Levy is acting as a private individual."

Almost immediately following receipt of the letter, the University held a meeting to discuss its con-

tents. In attendance were Dr. Sheldon Socol, Vice President for Business Affairs, Dr. Morton Lowengrub, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Mr. Jeffrey Rosengarten, Director of Supporting Service Administration and other high-level administrators. Notably absent was Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm, the person to whom Levy reportedly addressed the letter. It was decided that Yeshiva's General Council Martin H. Bockstein, Esq. will be responding on behalf of the University.

Cohen said that if a complaint was brought to the Board of Regents by Levy, the Board would visit the school to explore the matter further, and could then bring the matter to the attention of the Board of Higher Education, censure the school, abolish the Yeshiva Administrative Board, or ultimately remove the charter of the University.

The Board of Regents does not conduct yearly reviews of universities, but they do research all complaints brought to their attention. *The Commentator* has not filed a complaint with the Board of Regents, but internal pressure from Levy or pressure from the student newspaper would be enough to warrant further Board investigation.

Cohen said, "For the University to intrude on its own newspaper is wrong. This particular case seems to reflect improper behavior on behalf of the administration. I am a strong advocate of freedom of speech, it's a part of what a university is and should be."

## University Dean of Students Announces Resignation

BY ALEX TRAIMAN

Dr. Efreim Nulman, University Dean of Students, has announced his resignation from Yeshiva, after fifteen years of serving the student body. Citing personal reasons as the impetus for his decision, Nulman's departure will leave a sizable void at the helm of the Student Services Department.

The resignation, effective June 30, 2000 should give the University a significant span of time to find a suitable replacement. No formal committee has yet to be formed, though it is anticipated a national search committee will be created in the very near future.

A graduate of Queens College, Nulman then went on to receive a doctorate in the field of psychology. Nulman joined the ranks of the Yeshiva administration in 1984 as an Assistant to the Dean of Students. Slowly, Dr. Nulman worked his way up the administrative ladder, being named Associate Dean of Students, Dean of Students, and finally University Dean of Students, the title he carries today.

As University Dean, Nulman served as the highest ranking 'intermediary' between the student body and the administration, often working incredibly hard to



Dr. Efreim Nulman

find the appropriate compromise between student and administrative wishes and demands.

During his tenure at Yeshiva, Nulman focused his efforts on creating a "warm and friendly atmosphere for students at Yeshiva." When asked about his accomplishments during his fifteen year stay, Nulman stated "Who am I to judge accomplishments. If you want to know what I have accomplished, ask the students. It is their opinions that can determine my success here."

Jonathan Mell, YCSC President stated of Nulman, "His accomplishments are immeasurable. He was always there to help the students whenever there was a problem. The student body will certainly miss him."

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## Lowengrub Announces "New Plan" to Raise Teachers' Salaries

BY PINCHAS SHAPIRO

On September 14, 1999 over thirty undergraduate faculty members sent a letter to Yeshiva University President, Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm expressing their disappointment over what they termed 'inadequate salary increments.' Three months later, the professors claim they have yet to receive a response from the university president.

The problem of teacher salaries has existed for some time and prospects for considerable raises seem to follow a disheartening

pattern, explained one senior professor. A representative of Yeshiva's junior faculty further explained, "That members of the faculty can write a letter to the president and not receive a response just shows how much we matter to the ivory tower." "It's not like we ever really expected a response, we haven't received any in the past, why should this be any different," echoed another tenured professor.

Rabbi Lamm was unavailable to comment on the letter or the remarks made by members of

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## YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

## COMMENTATOR

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## PICTORIAL

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**Yeshiva Introduces  
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## EDITORIALS

### Swift Administrative Action

The confiscation of newspapers is an issue which has been felt on many college campuses across the country this year. At Yeshiva, this removal of *Commentators* had been a source of contention between students and administration for years. Fortunately, today students, faculty, alumni, parents, and distinguished guests can be fairly certain that as they arrive on campus, *Commentators* will be waiting there to greet them.

It is with this in mind that the Governing Board of *The Commentator* now thank the Yeshiva Administration, particularly University Dean of Students Dr. Efreim Nulman for acting swiftly and responsibly to ensure that Yeshiva's most powerful student voice will now remain a priority in the eyes of the University.

### Praying for our Leaders

Israel is set to begin a delicate peace negotiation with Syria at which discussions will focus on the sensitive Golan Heights issue. The Golan currently is home to 18,000 people in 33 settlements, and is of great strategic import to Israel's defense. The Golan stands as a buffer to possible enemy invasion and provides Israel with visual intelligence on military movement in Syria and Iraq. The Golan also houses Israel's main water supply.

Regardless of which side one falls on the political spectrum, one must realize the magnitude of this moment as the results of negotiation will without a shadow of doubt affect our homeland, Israel, and the Middle East as a whole. In times such as these it is incumbent upon every Jew to pray for our leaders in order that they will make the right decision, with safety on their minds and G-d's will in their hearts.

### MESSAGE FROM THE YCSC PRESIDENT

**JON MELL**

### Spread the News, YU is in NY!!

It wasn't long ago that I, fresh as ever from my year at an Israeli college, stepped foot on campus. I remember my amazement at the girth of our Yeshiva, the appearance of an actual quasi-campus, which I never imagined. I was so very happy to walk from one building to the next. Even having to walk around the almost dead grassy patch outside of Rubin didn't bother me that much.

However, despite my friend's insistence that we were "going to spend three years in the greatest city in the state!" I refused to accept that we were actually part of the city, especially once I got there.

He brought evidence from the MTA, not to be confused with TMSTA ("We're still part of Manhattan,") while I gave more visual proof ("Yeah, but the little map in the cabs doesn't show detail of Washington Heights, as it does the rest of the city"). He said, "People near YU vote for Manhattan offices," but I responded, "So what? We're just so far from the action. We may as well be in the Bronx!"

But this past week, as I was walking down 5th Avenue and 42nd street, I finally felt something different. Although I'm from South Africa, Los Angeles, and most recently, Washington Heights, which explains much about my personality, I finally felt a genuine heartstrings connection to New York City. I'll admit, it may have something to do with the beauty of the city that emerges during this (for us, post) holiday season, but I still comfortably strolled through Rockefeller Center without the gaze of a tourist, shopped on Madison Avenue less the astonishment of a foreigner, and I even ate at a popular steakhouse near Broadway lacking the wonder of a "West-Coaster" (where there are fewer kosher restaurants).

None of this is to say that I am without the love - or even with less love - of this city than before my newfound sentiment of residency. In fact, quite the opposite: Once I've gotten past those naïve barriers, the deep beauty, culture, and warmth of Manhattan emerges.

But, more importantly, what I declare is the true, real, actual, genuine, honest, absolute, definite, connection between Yeshiva University and the City of New York. Folks, our campus may be placed in Washington Heights, but we detract from much of our potential college experience when we separate ourselves - even begrudgingly - from the rest of our hometown. Even the *U.S. News* university rankings placed us on the cover as one of three "Colleges in [the New York City] Area."

Rather than focus on the importance of "declaring" YU as residing in NY, I say we need to focus on taking more from "the city that never sleeps." Take a look in the past few course catalogs: History of New York City; Architecture in New York; Halacha in New York; Art in New York; and Evolution of thy Skyscraper (ostensibly dealing primarily with Skyscrapers).

I know, I know: It's far, so very very far, it's a hassle, a bother, a nuisance, it takes time to go down, there. But we're not more than twenty minutes from a popular museum, a hit show, a comfortable movie theater, Teaneck, or a female Jewish college. The BD shuttles, the A train, the 1/9 train, or even, yes, Family San Juan, can take each and everyone to probe new parts of the City or even the world.

And, although, New York is, I insist, our home, try to come out, and see it like a tourist. When was the last time you went to a museum? (We have a museum on campus, and I have never been there.) There is absolutely a museum for whatever one's interest (even a museum of television and radio broadcasting). Have many of us purchased student price tickets for events at Lincoln Center, the 92nd Street Y or the Cloisters? Probably not, yet these are experiences that are "uniquely New York." And I don't use that phrase lightly, as do many designers (see Donna Karan, Kenneth Cole, Richard Siegel, To Boot, Kate Spade).

So, come out there! And if you find yourselves admiring the rubber Mickey Mouse dolls dressed as the Statue of Liberty, or wearing items that say, "I LOVE NY," or ogling the interesting and thought provoking crowds in Times Square, don't worry... just say no and go and tell someone you really trust. Think of it as hometown-pride! And, don't be surprised if you hear a, "What are you looking at?"



## FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AARON KLEIN

### Message In A Time Capsule

I offer this message to all those browsing *The Commentator* archives in hopes of discerning the quality of life at Yeshiva University right before the turn of the Millennium.

In writing this column, I try to gain some perspective on things, attempting to look with a distance at the people and places of this year, frozen in event and memory, calcified and motionless in a grand chronology that starts in August and ends for now in the month of January. Just as I think I reach the summit of this metaphorical hill, as I begin to conceptualize some understanding of recent events, I immediately realize that I cannot write an objective analysis of life at Yeshiva. I can only offer views colored by personal experience and tainted by innate predisposition.

Life has been interesting since assuming the reigns of *The Commentator*. I've felt like an energetic character trapped in a soap opera (a censored *Melrose Place*), immersed in a ceaseless flow of melodramatic events that would be entertaining if I were watching them on screen, and not living them on an imperceptible stage.

I have had the privilege of involving myself this year with the inner workings of Yeshiva, and in the process I've forged a relationship of infinite and timeless value with a school that continues to exemplify itself as an outstanding center for personal growth and maturation. I think I have also seen a side to Yeshiva that had been previously described by others - only I didn't believe in its existence until I unsuspectingly found myself standing at its core.

I will never forget the departing words of my predecessor, Mordechai Fishman, who wrote in his last column as editor-in-chief, "Individuals that I had the highest respect for, I can no longer stomach, having seen them for what they truly are." When I read it last year, those particular words struck me as exaggerated, cynical and sensationalistic. Surely he was not being serious, I thought. He was obviously brainwashed by *The Commentator's* constant assertion that evil lurks within the gloomy depths of administrative offices.

All I will say is that I now understand Fishman's words. But I am proud to report that the tables have somewhat turned since Fishman's days. It seems as though the students are now taking charge, becoming more active and less forgiving. And this is frightening to some members of the administration, who have pathetically attempted to retaliate because they are no longer able to implement the authoritarian practices that have over the years become silent tradition.

Student activism has recently produced much change. The administration attempted to silence student publications, and as a result their actions were reported in international media, causing members of the Board of Regents to demand an explanation. I think it's now safe to say that our papers will not again be removed under this *Commentator* regime.

The University was allegedly attempting to use a donation, delineated for Torah purposes, to construct a faculty office building. Student activism has ensured that plans are now underway for a full Torah Technology Center.

The administration last year announced that it will be closing The Marsha Stern Talmudic Academy (MTA), leading to immediate student protest and newspaper coverage. With this student intervention, MTA now stands proudly among the finest Yeshiva high schools in the country, and all strategies to close the school have been officially terminated.

Student protest has also led to the installation of speed bumps on Amsterdam Avenue, as well as the removal of a fence and "Keep of the Grass" signs that had previously graced the Dancziger Quadrangle.

The students continue to voice their opinions and demand that their rights be granted in full. Efforts for a student speaker at graduation have been initiated. Requests for a broader range of courses have been made. Demands that our professors receive immediate salary raises have been heard by the previously unresponsive administration.

And so I watch in amusement as Yeshiva continues to undergo change, not radical change, but gradual change, like the erosion of high rock during spring tides. A kind of revolution hides beneath the shadows of Yeshiva's stern buildings - unspoken, inchoate, but present nonetheless. There is no widespread denunciation of the old values, but the erosion of these same values is already irreparable.

For three years, I have been part of this institution and have seen it grow more tolerant of student activism as the past slowly crumbles and the old ways burn out in a final paroxysm of sputtering paralysis and rage. Out of the fumes rises a new generation with differing values and ideologies. Yeshiva still retains its die-hards and single-minded administrators, but they grow older and crankier with each passing day. Nature will soon take its course, and as their time unavoidably approaches, an entire council of Yeshiva administrators will be silenced and not heard from again. For now, though, these centenarians are simply soldiers of a rear guard, captains of a doomed army retreating through the snow, grumpy men who refuse to accept a new sun rising out of strange waters. The world is not the same anymore, and I know that it must be scary for them.

I will continue to bear witness as the eyes of Yeshiva turn with excruciating reluctance toward a more active flow. These eyes seem a bit brighter and less clouded, and it will be interesting to see where they lead us.



## MESSAGE FROM THE SOY PRESIDENT ATON HOLZER

We soon will enter the weeks known as "shovevim-tat"; in a Jewish leap year, the eight weeks spanning *parshiyot shemot* to *tetzaveh* are demarcated, according to the disciples of the Arizal (R. Isaac Luria), as days of introspection and repentance generally, and as days of atonement for sins of self-defilement in particular. The cycle of sin, repentance and acceptance for the future parallels the cycle of slavery, redemption and acceptance of the Torah in these *parshiyot*. Sins committed *bein adam le-atzmo*, between man and himself, are seen as the root of all other sins, and the rites of *shovavim-tat* are designed to strike at that root. R. Yekutiel Yehudah Halberstam of Klausenburg identifies that root as *ga'avah*, arrogance; *shovevim-tat* therefore calls for *bittul ha-yesh*, negating the self, physically (through fasting and self-deprivation) as well as emotionally and spiritually.

Perhaps there has been no year in which this message has been more meaningful than ours. The public affairs of the Jewish community of late have been marred by an air of self-defiling arrogance; prominent leaders from across the religious spectrum attack leaders of other synagogues or denominations *ad hominem*, and rancor and acrimony dominate public and private discourse. Perhaps the age of *chutzpah yasgei* has arrived, the period in which brazenness dominates as the tool of choice for winning over hearts and resources. Even at home, we have at times allowed passion to dictate our actions. We fail to temper our tempers, defiling ourselves with the *eish zarah* that we allow to burn and flare against others in our haste.

*Shovevim-tat* urges us to tone down the rhetoric, to abandon old habits and rebuild ourselves from the inside out. We begin at the core, struggling to replace our proclivity toward pursuit of self-interest with greater *hesed*, to temper our expressions of anger and dismay - our "*semol dokhah*" - with expressions of love and openness - our "*yemin mekarevet*." We struggle, for our own sakes and theirs, to be at least civil toward those with whom we differ.

Civility is, indeed, a Torah value. *Derakheha darkhei no'am*: pleasantness is the hallmark of the path of Torah Judaism. *Hevei mekabel et kol ha-adam be-sever panim yafot*: greet each person with a pleasant demeanor. *De-alakh sani le-chaverakh la ta'avid*: do not do unto others that which you dislike. The *malbin p'nei chaveiro be-rabbim*, who 'whitens his friend's face publicly,' is on par with a murderer and forfeits his portion in the world to come. Some of the most potent affirmations of *menschlichkeit* arise from the examples set by the Torah and Jewish tradition itself, which so often hides the names of sinners: in *parashat shemot*, the

*sh'nei anashim nitzim*, the two fighting men, remain nameless, as do the *mekoshesh*, the *megadef*, and other Jewish sinners. The Torah refuses to report their identities, even when that omission might obscure thematic unity. Perhaps most blatant is the use of "*peloni almoni*" in Ruth to conceal the true name of the reluctant redeemer. Elisha Ben Avuyah, the prototypical learned *apikores*, is known simply as *Acher*, 'the other.' The Talmud and our liturgy omit or cloak the role of the *mityavnim* in the Chanukah story; traditional sources conceal the identities of our corrupt coreligionists.

But beyond a grudging civility lies a greater challenge: *chakhamim hizaharu be-divreikhem*. As representatives of Halakhic Judaism, we must be diplomats all, measuring our every word. Every public or private pronouncement must be the proverbial *davar dabur al ofanav*. Our words and deeds should draw outsiders in by showcasing our values and our *ahavat Yisrael*. Tolerance is insufficient; treating no one with disdain is only a good start. *Shovevim-tat* coincides this year with the beginning of winter vacation, when our change of pace and location generally allows for introspection and self-improvement. Let us take a *permanent* vacation from old ways of behaving and return to Yeshiva re-committed not only to *shemirat Torah u-mitzvot*, but also to a more powerful expression of love and invitation for all Jews; *ve-nimtza shem shamayim mitkadesh al yadeinu*.

Hakaras HaTov to my A-men - Aryeh Morris, Adam Scheier, Avi Oppenheimer and Amichai Erdfarb; to Amichai and Simcha Goldstein (Seforim), Ben Skydell and Azik Schwlechter (Cholent), David Regev (Hamin), Moshe Farkash (Refreshments), Ezra Starr, Ephraim Shapiro and Jonathan Strauss (Publicity), Jonathan Gross and Donny Rose (Bagels), Chaim Strauchler (Mima'amakim Journal), Ben Breda (SOY Chesed Club) and Jeremy Frenkel (SOY-Yad Ozer Tzedakah Committee). Special thanks to Rabbi Eitan Mayer, Rabbi Daniel Reifman, Uri Goldstein, David Polsky, Jason Leib, Jeff Bander, Yehuda Balsam and Mark Rozenberg, and to my colleagues, Scott Nadel (BMP), Eric Schubert (IBC), Fred Kreizman (JSS) and Shlomit Zauderer (TAC) who collaborated to produce the beautiful Chanukah sheet, as well as to *The Commentator*, Andrew Leibowitz, the Offices of Student Services and Facilities Management, Deans Nulman and Himber, and Jeffreys Rosengarten and Socol. Our utmost thanks to Rav Lamm, Rav Bednarsh, Rav Berman, Rav Blau, Rav Bronstein, Rav Charlop, Rav Cohen, Rav Kahn, Rav Reichman, Rav Rosensweig, Rav Simon, Rav Taragin and Rav Willig, paragons of personal piety who prompt us to persevere in our pursuit of perfection.

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## FORUM

## OPINION

## City of Refuge

The people who founded the state of Israel foresaw the profound need for a homeland. Believing that the Jews would be safe only if protected by their own, they set out to establish a haven for the Jews from the persecutions of the *galut* (exile). However, their national aspirations did not emanate solely from defensive reasons. Brotherhood, social unity, and a utopian vision all propelled these pioneers along their victorious path to the dream. They followed their classically Jewish instincts to form a tight-knit community which evolved into a country. They believed this political entity would eventually solidify into an unbreakable stone, a cast-iron nation.

And they succeeded.

The ingathering of the exiles began, and Jews from the four corners of the Earth converged in Palestine, the land of their forefathers. Quickly, their neighbors assembled against them and tried to destroy them. But this newborn nation, armed with idealism and a will to survive, fought with tenacity and miraculously overcame all odds. Soon after, they turned their attention to productivity, and turned a wasteland into an Eden. They worked closely together not only to cultivate the land, but to create the infrastructure of a vibrant, modern society. This was the generation of ideologues, the generation of émigrés.

Their children, the first to be born in the new state, preoccupied with hostile neighbors and the need to establish themselves, retained their parents' strong beliefs in the importance of Jewish unity and the State itself. This generation still had a singular vision and a common goal to fight for.

A third generation was born unto them. In contrast to their parents however, these children inherited an established state with relatively safe borders. Thanks to their predecessors, they grew up without the hardships that their parents knew. Their reality differed drastically from that of the founders of the State and the people who fought for its existence. The new generation did not remember the tribulations of their parents, nor could they imagine a world without the country in which they had grown up. They looked around and saw nothing but a host of well-entrenched problems and social impasses, which had been ignored by the preceding generations while they focused on existential threats. They looked further to the West and saw a gold mine of opportunities—freedom from the constrictions of their tiny nation.

The post-Zionist Israeli emerged as a person lacking the historical perspective of the past. Nor did he care for the outmoded ideology of Zionism in a world in which the Jew was accepted equally without fear of persecution. For the first time Israeli youth repudiated the dying exclamation of Jozsef Trumpeldor, "It is good to die for the sake of our country," replacing it with the cynically jaded aphorism of Aviv Gefen, "It is good to die for the sake of ourselves." As Moshe Rabbenu A"H prophesied: "But Yeshurun grew fat, and kicked... then he forsook G-d who made him." (Devarim 32:15)

To what is this analogous? YU.

A century ago, when the status of the Jew in the United States was not yet what it

## THE PUPIL

Yishai  
Fleisher



is today, the founders of Yeshiva University foresaw the need for a Jewish university, one with the ability to provide the student with a quality secular education while still staying true to Torah values. The architects of this dream realized that the Orthodox Jew struggled in the face of assimilation and discrimination. They wanted to insulate him from the seductive siren call of American society while providing a refuge from the prejudices of the day. However, as in Israel, the establishment of YU was not solely predicated on defensive reasoning, rather, they too were armed with an ideology and a positive vision. Torah U'Maddah emerged as the new philosophy enabling the Jew not merely to cope, but to thrive in the modern world. Armed with the educational philosophy of YU, he would enter the world as a strong religious man and an educated citizen of the modern era.

In all these endeavors Yeshiva University has succeeded.

For years there was no alternative to this great school, for America had not yet morphed into the philo-semitic and generally tolerant society that we know today. However, due to this institution's far reaching influence and the rise of the Jewish socio-economic condition, new alternatives began to appear. Now you could be a religious Jew at Columbia or at Harvard and be just as well off. The YU persona began to question the worth of his Institution in comparison to the world-class facilities of the secular universities. The students who chose to remain at Yeshiva University spent a large portion of their time complaining about the many shortcomings of their school and the modern amenities they perceived YU as lacking.

The post-YU persona emerged as a student who did not remember the hardships of earlier times. Nor did he appreciate the significance of Torah U'Maddah ideals, for they had so completely succeeded in the mainstream that it became hard to distinguish YU from any other institution of higher learning. He grew thankless and unappreciative.

The irony of it all is, that only due to the existence of the State of Israel as a national home for the Jewish people can the Jew feel safely at home abroad. So too, it is the existence of Yeshiva University that has allowed the modern-day Jewish youth to feel comfortable in the environment of secular academia. Without them, it would be impossible to venture out into the world beyond the borders of our country and beyond the walls of our school. Without Israel and YU, we would have no place of refuge, no shelter from the storms of assimilation and persecution. It is also ironic that the obituaries have been written for both Zionism and Torah U'Maddah, while in truth, their victory has been total and overwhelming. Israel exists after an Interregnum of two thousand years, and Torah U'Maddah or some form of it is the prevail-

## To Heck With the Ranking

Quick: what was Y.U.'s ranking in that *U.S. News & World Report* listing of best colleges? What was YU's ranking last year? What's being done to improve our ranking next time around? If we just stay where we are, or, *chalila vechas*, move down a notch or two, G-d help us all. Especially whoever winds up with the blame.

Isn't this just a little ridiculous?

The public relations department here has done an outstanding job of spreading word of our national ranking to the four corners of the earth, to the extent that many people actually believe it's an important piece of news. One wonders if the administration makes a single decision anymore without the national ranking being taken into account. What do the deans at Harvard eat for breakfast? Do we measure up? If not, how can we prevent others from finding out?

Okay, so that's not what the ranking is based on. But it would be tragic for any administrative action to be influenced by the consequences it might have in a magazine editor's estimation of our school. We, the students and faculty, should be molding Yeshiva University to conform to our vision of what Yeshiva University should be, not someone else's.

Academic reputation is the most important "measure of quality" according to *U.S. News*, a whopping 25 percent. This is based entirely on the opinions of officials from other colleges, whose opinions are based on... well, who really knows? Is it really in our own best interests to live in a perpetual state of fear of what others think of us? This has been a uniquely Jewish problem for far too long, and has never panned out for us anyway.

Student selectivity is worth another 15 percent. Essentially, the better you are at turning people down, the better you rank. YU has long been known for opening its doors to all Jews, but the holy *U.S. News & World Report* frowns on such benevolent behavior. Better to thumb your nose in the air, stuff your head with helium, and let those who don't fit your vaulted standards go to some "lesser" college. We take only the best. Frightening! The trend has already begun at YU, and I hope and pray that all efforts in that direction fail miser-

ing modus operandi amongst Jews today.

That is the state of affairs in which we find ourselves. Israel, in many ways is in the best shape it has ever been, yet while its economy flourishes and its borders are relatively safe, its citizens are resentful and leave its shores to find their destiny elsewhere. For them, Zionism is dead, merely a relic of generations past. Similarly, here at YU, ours is the most privileged generation to appear in Jewish history. We command great wealth and respect in this benevolent country; Jews are to be found in the top echelons of business, government, and intelligentsia. Our University finds itself in the top rankings amongst secular universities and at the same time we are able to uphold our traditions and study our holy texts. Nevertheless, we jealously eye other schools and we are never content with our lot here at YU, a lot that Jews throughout

## MIXED NUTS

Chananya  
Weissman

ably. Our acceptance rate was 79 percent last year, according to the report. How can we make it higher without compromising the quality of everyone's experience?

Memo to the administrative faculty at YU: no one really cares about our national ranking (except for you, of course). It's nice to puff out your chest and say that you attend or are employed by a top-tier university, but no one's world would come to an end if we were 444th instead of 44th. It's nothing more than a statistic, and statistics can be bent and twisted more ways than a yoga master. If we're truly a better college than what this particular poll indicates, people will know, just as people know enough to dispute all the other polls and lists with which we are constantly presented. You try to convince us that our college experience should not be about grades and other superficialities, yet you place a neurotic's premium on your own form of grades. The hypocrisy of this is irrelevant to me; it's the ramifications that count.

Going against what you feel is best to satisfy the whims of a magazine is self-destructive. We may rise from 44th to 42nd, but is it worth what we may lose in the process, be it traditional Jewish values or sheer integrity? These are the measures that should matter most to us, regardless of what criteria others may deem most important, and only within these lines should we shape the rest of our policies.

If others recognize Yeshiva's status in the education world, by all means, be proud of it and let others know. But keep it all within perspective; the national ranking is an indication of Yeshiva's success, but by no means the ultimate indicator, nor an entirely accurate one.

If you keep this in mind, we can truly reach the top and attain the highest standards of excellence. Even if *U.S. News & World Report* sees it differently.

history could have only dreamed of and prayed for.

Is this any way to repay our predecessors who dedicated their lives for our futures? Is this any way to thank the Master of the Universe who in his merciful kindness has granted us our wishes? Indeed it is not.

We Jews must not drown in the river of forgetfulness which washes away the efforts of prior generations in a flood of discontent and apathy. There is much to better in our Israel and our Yeshiva University. But we must carefully weigh our words and emotions before we express them stridently, or in a negative fashion. We must make sure that our actions emanate from love and that our outlook is modest and thankful. For we are truly a blessed generation, and let it not be said of us "But Yeshurun grew fat and kicked."

# FORUM

# OPINION

## Curtains Closed on Co-Ed Plays

About a month ago when the first meetings for the upcoming undergraduate Arts Festival were held I approached a number of Rebbeim to inquire about the feasibility of featuring a coed play in the festival. I know that the Yeshiva College Dramatics Society is bound by the rules set forth by Rav Soloveitchik prohibiting female participation in their productions. I am also aware that YCDS productions are officially courses offered by Yeshiva College for which actors and crew receive credit. It seems fitting that women who are unable to enroll in Yeshiva College, are congruently prohibited from receiving credit for the play and cannot act in it.

Fair enough.

What would we gain from having a coed play? Everything. Most plays and scripts are not written for single-sex casts, use of these scripts significantly limits choice of plays, while use of coed scripts requires the rewriting of great literary works - not a simple feat. Why should Yeshiva not have a Shakespearean production, for example? Pick any, I dare you, and try to write out one gender, so that either uptown actors could put it on, or so that the midtown women could. Impossible. What is Hamlet minus Ophelia and his mother? Perhaps consider the absurdity of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* without the two gentlemen?

With the Arts Festival a new opportunity has presented itself. In fact, the opportunity is even greater this year as the Deans' offices of both Yeshiva and Stern College are equally sponsoring this year's festival. The point of the Arts Festival is to promote the artistic side of Yeshiva's undergraduates - both male and female. Why not stage a coed play, which is something that has yet to be accomplished in a Yeshiva University production/society/club/facility? This involves two realities. Firstly, it raises the question of who can issue a *halachik* ruling for the Yeshiva University community, and secondly, it asks what response a coed play would generate on campus.

Before any action was taken to select a script or to put up flyers announcing auditions, these thoughts brought me to ask a Rav of Yeshiva if a coed production could be accomplished in accordance with *halacha*. Yeshiva University places certain people in positions of authority; just as Dean Adler is the Dean of Yeshiva College, there is a specific Rav to whom *halachik* questions regarding Yeshiva University policy are addressed. I take his word as representative of *halacha* in the absolute sense of the word, as does every Yeshiva student. If he felt that a coed play was a violation of *halacha*, then you would not be reading this column now. Since, however, he sees no infringement of *halacha* in a coed play, then we must ask why he will not condone one. Foremost, he explained that the play will become a divisive issue among factions of students at Yeshiva, and to a lesser degree, that the subject will become a topic for some Rebbeim's *sichot*.

The widening of the gap between more religious students (a number of whom might take issue with a coed play) and some less religious students (a number of whom might support a coed play) is an incomparable loss in his eyes. That a coed play would be a dis-

**Hadar Weiss**  
Copy Editor

cordant force against student unity is enough of a reason to remove his support for such a play. In fact, the probability of men and women rehearsing together late at night proved to be less of a worry than this widening-of-the-abysms apprehension.

B'chvod HaRav, I must state that I truly believe that many of these so-called "divisive factors" are not causal, rather merely indicative, of the dichotomy. We must ask, if the play were to be allowed, what significant effects would its production have on the student body? Many of the *Yeshivish* guys participate in NCSY or other organizations that use coed plays that I believe our *bochrim* are used to seeing such displays, and that the administration is turning this into a bigger issue than it really would be otherwise. In fact, it was the Rav I asked who first mentioned that NCSY stages coed plays - it was not even part of my original argument.

There is a common saying: You are either part of the solution or part of the problem. If a coed play would cause more dichotomy, then its nonexistence would, necessarily help heal the factionism. But I doubt that it will. If the students planning the Arts Festival, who were aware of the internal debate, do not feel resentment towards fellow students that they cannot stage the play, then at the very least we have neither damaged nor improved the intra-student relationship. However, the part of the student body who would have opposed the play and who never knew about the possibility, are left with no idea why they should now feel closer to their fellow brother. So we now stand no closer to a united student body.

In reference to the Rav's second concern about providing a basis for *sichot*, allow me to re-emphasize that my suggestion was not to advocate the decadence of the morals and ethics of *Chazal*. I am opposed to breaking *halacha*. However, I hate, let me repeat that, I find it completely abhorrent that students in Yeshiva must be stymied and prohibited from activities or staging something like a coed play simply because of a fear that a Rebbe might exaggerate a Yeshiva University current event into a similar mutiny against the *Torah Hakedoshah* like *Korach's*. In this sense, the coed play possibility becomes another activity that is prohibited not because of substantive cause, but because of a dispensation towards reduction of *sichah* topics. Once again, fear of fear itself has felled a once noble cause.

I propose that we all take a step back. We at Yeshiva University, and by that I mean students, faculty and administrators, have a tendency of blowing things out of proportion instead of stopping to take a realistic look at the issues. Why can't we accept a reality for once without overstating the possible effects? It seems that we can't even find a basic common ground for the discussion, and therefore I will have to continue to figure this question out hypothetically since one program that the Arts Festival will not feature this February is a coed play. Our loss.

**RABBI YOSEF BLAU**

## Peace with Syria and Returning The Golan Heights

### IS IT A RELIGIOUS ISSUE?



The negotiations between Israel and Syria have barely started and the debate about the wisdom of returning the Golan Heights in order to make peace with Syria is already heated. It appears clear that there will be a religious secular split on the issue. Yet the question of whether territory in the Golan can be returned to Syrian control in return for security guarantees in a peace treaty is according to most views not a halachic one. Many prominent rabbinical authorities (e.g. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, Z.L.T., Rabbi Elazar Schach and Rabbi Ovadya Yosef) have ruled that land in Israel proper may be given to the Arabs in a peace agreement if this will save Jewish lives.

Moreover it is questionable whether the Golan Heights have the halachic status of Israel. Rabbi Yosef, in discussing a related question, assumes that the Golan Heights do not have the sanctity of Israel proper. Rabbi Shlomo Goren, Z.T.L., who considered any governmental decision to give over to the Palestinians any land in Yehuda, Shomron and Gaza as null and void, saw no religious problem in returning the Golan Heights to Syria. Land in Syria that was conquered by King David was not given the biblical status of Israel because the king did not complete conquering the land of the seven Canaanite nations first (Maimonides, *The Laws of Terumot* 1:3).

The dispute about how to best protect Israeli security is real and there are differing evaluations of the consequences of a treaty with Syria on Israel's relations with Lebanon and other Arab counties, but logically these should not be affected by religious orientation. A report on the second day of meetings between Prime Minister Barak and Foreign Minister al-Sharaa in the Associate Press mentioned a small demonstration by Orthodox Jews. Their quote was "This is not a religious matter; the lives of millions of Jews are at risk." A dozen American Jews were lecturing an Israeli Prime Minister, who had previously been the Chief of Staff of the armed forces, that he was endangering Israel's future existence.

If the issue is not primarily halachic, how do we understand the sharp contrast in perspective? Some claim that the religious Zionist opposition is primarily tactical, based on the assumption that it will be easier to defeat the referendum on the Golan than one on returning settlements as part of a peace treaty with the Palestinians. While this has been mentioned prominently in the Israeli media as a strategy of the Yeshiva leadership, it fails to explain the intensity of feelings that have been expressed and the sense of despair that Israel's survival is at stake.

There is a fundamental underlying difference between the religious and secular communities in how they view the meaning of the state of Israel and in particular the consequences of the Six Day War. In secular terms,

Israel is a haven for the Jews and an opportunity for Jews to live in their own country at peace with its neighbors. The Six Day War gave Israel the additional land that strengthened its ability to negotiate with its adversaries. After the Yom Kippur War, where casualties were high, the lesson learned was that peace eventually had to be reached with all of Israel's neighbors. After the Intifada the Palestinians became players as well.

For most religious Zionists, Israel represents the fulfillment of a dream, the beginning of the redemption. The Six Day War was a Divine Hand into history. What was learned from the Yom Kippur War was that the Israeli army should not rely on its own might but trust in G-d. A peace treaty with Syria and Assad, a Hitler-like figure in their eyes, is a betrayal of this vision. Security does not come out of agreements with enemies of the Jews. The religious non-Zionists share a suspicion of agreements with non-Jews and paradoxically do not acknowledge the secular state, while simultaneously opposing Israel's willingness to give any territories to the Arabs. Both groups combine a desire for maximum territory remaining in Jewish hands with a mistrust of the non-Jewish world.

Prior to the Six Day War the majority view within religious Zionism was not messianic and its leadership supported essentially the same political and military policies as the secular majority. The phrase "Reishit Tzmitat Geulatenu" (the beginning of the flowering of our redemption) was more an expression of hope that the miraculous rebirth of a Jewish state after nineteen hundred years of exile would ultimately lead to a full redemption than a plan for achieving redemption. Religious Jews not sharing the messianic fervor that followed the Six Day War would view Israel-Arab relations as not fundamentally different from those between other competing groups such as the Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland where peace is difficult but not impossible. Those sharing this perspective are willing to consider Arabs as peace partners and have greater trust in Israel's political and military leaders.

Active messianism, with its focusing only on retaining territory as the means of advancing the redemption, has had a devastating effect on internal Jewish relations in Israel. The corresponding vision of Arabs as eternal enemies automatically eliminates any possible peace agreement with them. If all messianic assumptions are eliminated and only rational analyses based on Israel's experiences is negotiating with Arab states and the Palestinians are utilized, the gap between religious and secular will be seriously reduced. Caring people will continue to differ in their judgements regarding how to best enhance Israel's security and future, but religious and secular Jews will be analyzing the risks and benefits from a common perspective.

## FORUM

## LETTERS

## University's Censorship

To the Editor:

I write to you as a former Editor-in-Chief of the *Commentator*. Just want to let you know that I laud your efforts to seek justice over the whole newspaper throwing out issue. About five years ago, our board held a meeting to discuss this very same issue. In fact, we even had a picture of a YU Facilities worker throwing out the newspapers. (It might be buried somewhere in your office.)

We were downright infuriated by YU's behavior. We also discussed the various steps we could take. Among them was threatening legal action, billing YU, and calling some of our friends in the local Jewish media to cover the story - all the things you guys did. In the end, we wrote an editorial about the issue, wrote a formal complaint letter (without invoice) to Rabbi Lamm and Dean Nulman.

To the Editor:

In regard to your article concerning the silencing of the YU staff writers.....Do you regularly sit down with the Roshei Yeshivot as to the permissibility of publishing certain articles? I would hope to discover that in this center of Torah U'Maddah we actually

To the Editor:

As an alum and a Hillel director at Northwestern University, I was appalled to read of the removal of the *Commentator* by members of the administration. While Yeshiva has improved in many ways since my days there 25 years ago, apparently the attitude of some administrators remains one of contempt for students. Such behav-

To the Editor:

As another editor of a college paper threatened with censorship this past week, I can relate to what you are all going through. In our circumstance, the College President threatened us with a lawsuit after seeing my quote in the *New York Times* about how our newspaper was going to take a stand against him for allegedly lying all the time.

Instead of letting it simply run its course in a small 5,000 circulated weekly campus paper, the president turned the issue into a local media frenzy. *Newsday* and the *New York Times* picked up the story instantly. Every single local newspaper picked up the story as well, running excerpts from the edi-

To the Editor:

As a former writer on the *Commentator*, I am appalled that the administration at Yeshiva would censor the news. But I am sadly not shocked. The school's attitude toward the truth, and toward the undergraduates and the press, has never been quite what people might expect. I have never given any money to YU since my graduation as the administration and especially Rabbi Lamm himself seem less dedicated to acting on the principles of Torah U'Mada than on running just another bland and mindless college. I also have to add that I work in publicity and find YU's actions quite dopey from that point of view as well. Didn't their PR people realize that the

We also refilled the bins on the morning of the Open House. But we didn't get anywhere with the letter.

My present concern is that Sheldon Sokol will continue to order the newspapers thrown out even with all the press coverage. He just doesn't care a whit about all the media coverage and is not really controlled by anyone in the YU administration. For him, throwing out the newspapers is ironclad policy. I don't know if even a *NY Times* article will make him change. I suggest that you, and the editors who follow you, stay on top of this story and publicize all attempts to throw out the newspapers.

Moshe Kinderlehrer  
Editor-in-Chief, *The Commentator* 1994-95  
YC '95, RIETS '00

believe and follow this philosophy to the fullest extent. If you do not sit down with these Roshei Yeshivot.....well then, what are we all about?

Menachem Brick  
YUHS, YC, RIETS

ior would never be tolerated in other private universities. Simply saying the *Commentator* would be given compensation is not enough, it should be the responsibility of Rabbi Lamm to hold these administrators accountable.

Rabbi Michael Balinsky  
YC, RIETS 74

torials in their papers.

In all, what started as a minor annoyance for administration ended up as a nightmare as more than 8,000,000 people had access to the editorial.

The power of the First Amendment was set up in part to keep authorities and their power in check. The authorities at both schools should note that as long as a newspaper is acting responsibly it is often more dangerous to quiet its voice than to not do so. For in the world of the student press, silence is NOT golden.

Avi Muchnick  
MTA '97  
Editor-in-Chief *The Queens College Quad*

actions of the school would inevitably make it into both *The Jewish Week* - where Jonathan Mark has an axe to grind against YU - and the *Times*?

At the same time, I am quite happy to see that the *Commentator* is continuing its stalwart tradition. I was a writer when Behnam Dayanlm was editor-in-chief and the scandal of the day was the Shabbos TV raids, and I think the standards he set all those years ago have been surpassed by today's writers and today's willingness to take on the administration with a strong voice.

Alex Wittenberg  
YC '89

## ... Censorship Continued

To the Editor:

I would like to express my displeasure with the continuing coverage of the confiscation of the *Commentator* in non-YU papers.

Obviously, this is an important issue that merits much discussion and exposure, but what benefit may be achieved by coverage in papers such as the *New York Times* (or why this issue merits discussion there, but that's

their issue) is beyond me. All that has been accomplished, as I see it, is a black eye given to a fine school by its own students (and possibly by a disgruntled former student), as well as some ill-gotten publicity and limelight for your paper and its staff.

Nachum Lamm  
YC '97, RIETS '00

To the Editor:

After an article appeared in the *New York Times* about the removal of newspapers from YU buildings, I heard some interesting reactions from current and past YU students. Several people expressed surprise that the *New York Times* would be interested in the story. Others assumed that the *Commentator* had somehow forced their way into the *Times*, and thought that it would have been better if they didn't say anything. After all, why make the school look bad?

Folks, it's time you realized that what you've been denying or not believing for years is true. That's right: YU is a real school. And it has been for quite some time now. That means that you go there to get a high quality education, and you have a right to expect that. It means that pro-

fessors have a right to be paid competitively, and treated fairly. And it means that when the administration tries to censor the main voice of student opinion, people are going to notice and care. And yes, censorship on a university campus is a big deal, at YU no less than at any other university.

When something like this comes up, I always here people say, "At any other university, this would never be allowed to happen." Well, as long as YU students continue to believe that YU isn't a "real school," they will continue to short-change themselves. If you don't respect the education you're getting and the school you're attending, why should anyone else?

Ben Sandler  
YC '99

In Defense Of YU's Potential...  
Let's Not Overact

To the Editors:

I write to defend the potential of our Yeshiva University against Aaron Ganz's attack. With reckless incoherence, illogical reasoning and overly emotional rhetoric, Mr. Ganz - who chose to transfer out of YU - condemned a constructive proposal to encourage YU students to expand their dramatic skills in directing plays. Simply put, I believe YU students should be encouraged and allowed to direct student plays. This effort to improve our student's learning, has nothing whatsoever to do with YU's esteemed speech and drama professor, Dr. Beukas, despite Mr. Ganz's repeated perception that it does.

I could not identify more with Ganz's esteem for YU's beloved Dr. Beukas. In fact, it is my admiration for this professor's qualities and the high standards he infuses into YU's dramatic presentations that permits me to make such a suggestion. Since Mr. Ganz is so fond of Dr. Beukas and our well-regarded Drama Department, I invite Ganz to return to Yeshiva University, reclaim his Jewish connection, and utilize our extensive dramatic faculties under the wonderful leadership of his favorite drama teacher. But, should he like so many others wish to direct, I invite him to join me and others in working to expand and improve the drama department with Dr. Beukas' blessings.

Ganz, perhaps unwittingly, short-changes Dr. Beukas in usurping from him the possibility to expand the Drama Department. He ignores the merit of giving students the chance to direct. Indeed, Dr. Beukas has done so well with bringing out acting skills, why not bring out stu-

dent's directing?

By slighting Dr. Beukas (the opportunity to teach) and any Yeshiva University dramatics student (the opportunity to learn), Ganz has merely solidified his reputation for overacting. My suggestion comes from abiding and enduring love and pride for Yeshiva University and yes, even our drama production department. Mr. Ganz, though, has chosen to leave Yeshiva. This is just another obvious example of a (now former) student underestimating the potential of YU, in every department. I am sorry that Mr. Ganz is too impatient to try to improve the University himself, rather than to accept the status quo (or leave).

Mr. Ganz misrepresented my suggestion, and implied a derogatory message where there was none. Mr. Ganz does not know me. I have faith in Dr. Beukas' tireless efforts and I am an avid fan of his work, every semester. I make my assertion because I believe in his ability to help YC/SSSB students engage in directing - not only as "production assistants" or "stage managers."

I wish YCDS continued success and much hatzlocha in their current play, and I thank Mr. Ganz for his continued interest in our University. However, I recommend that he show more respect for one of his many alma maters, and recognize YU's top-tier potential, not squash it. I also suggest Mr. Ganz reflect on what YU did teach him - dan l'chof z'chus. It is about time Dr. Beukas is given his due...and room to expand his superlative teaching practices.

Benjamin J. Mantell  
YC '00

# FORUM

# LETTERS

## In Response To Singer

To the Editor:

I believe that Dr. Peter Singer is mistaken when he writes, "[Rabbi] Tendler doesn't bother to react to my actual argument." Even a casual reading of R' Tendler's column demonstrates that he is strongly reacting to the absence of respect for the sanctity of human life in Singer's moral system.

According to Singer, thwarting "future desires" is the only "morally relevant" factor that gives us a reason for thinking it worse to kill typical humans than other species. In his article, he provides no moral basis for the assertion that future plans are more relevant than pain, suffering, or the loss of family connections, except that certain humans have this ability to plan for the future while other species lack this ability.

If that is the only basis for our moral distinction, then there are other abilities humanity as a whole enjoys which other species lack. We could arbitrarily argue that only humans have the capacity for speech and therefore assert that the moral reason killing a human is worse than killing an animal lies in the fact that we are depriving the human of the power to speak. Singer could still justify his arguments for infanticide since it is well established that within 28 days of birth a baby has no power of speech and he could also add a new category of humans to

his list of potential medical experiment subjects: deaf-mutes.

Or, if speech doesn't satisfy his search for a distinction between humans and other species, we could use the ability to read. This way, if a person can't read the form designating a procedure as dangerous or experimental, he becomes the perfect "moral" subject.

The point of R' Tendler's column, amply demonstrated by Singer's response, is that absent a Supreme Moral Authority, our notions of morality become arbitrary and subjective-determined only by factors we consider relevant at the time. If we consider pain a relevant factor then killing an animal becomes the moral equivalent of killing a human.

By dismissing religion as a "refuge," it is Singer who refuses to address the arguments and concerns of R' Tendler and the millions of Americans who believe in a G-d that created man in His image, separate from animals.

As R' Tendler implores in his column, we who believe in these religious values must transmit them and their moral source to both our generation and the next.

Ari Kahn  
Editor-In-Chief; *The Commentator* 1997  
YC 98

## English Lessons From Grandma

To the Editor:

I want to congratulate the entire staff of *The Commentator* for interesting and well-written articles. The present editors are doing a superb job. I enjoy the paper very much and read every word of every article (including advertisements) from the first page to the last.

However, in most every issue there are two words that are hard to believe a college student would misspell. I am referring to 40 and

4th. The correct spelling are forty (40) and fourth (4<sup>th</sup>).

I don't want to be critical, but it is a shame to spoil a terrific publication with a simple error. So gentlemen, forget your spellcheck on the computer, and use the old fashion dictionary.

Selma Klein  
Aaron Klein's Grandmother

## THE COMMENTATOR

welcomes letters from its readers.

Letters must include the writer's name, address and telephone number.

Students should include the school in which they are enrolled and expected date of graduation.

*THE COMMENTATOR* reserves the right to edit all letters for syntax, content, and length.

*The Commentator*

500 W. 185th St.

New York, NY 10033

[commie.yucommentator.com](http://commie.yucommentator.com)

## Keep up the Good Work

To the Editor:

I recently returned to my alma mater for a visit, and picked up the first issue of *The Commentator* that I had seen in over 22 years.

I read about a despotic university administration that works in secret, woefully low salaries and pensions for professors, and an inept registration process (November 1, 1999). It struck me that these are the same things I used to read in *Commentator* when I was a YC student in the 70's. I guess not much has changed over the years, except that in my day, the food at Parker's cafeteria

was cheap, plentiful and tasty.

We relied on *The Commentator* to report the news that the administration preferred we didn't hear. Keep up your good work. Your newspaper reaches a high standard of professionalism. And *The Commie* looks great with color pictures! When I was a student, *The Commie* was only black and white. Of course, I also remember when television was only black and white, but that was before your time...

Steven Lesser  
YC '77

## Keep your mouth shut!

To the Editor:

I think it is wonderful that *The Commentator* has a full Culture section, with movie reviews, play reviews and articles about music and radio. But I was disturbed to read the "Completely Objective Review" of SCDS's latest play. As much as the author views himself as a professional critic, his objectivity seemed to focus more on bashing the actresses' performances than reviewing the play. By calling the girls "wannabes" and wondering whether the girls remembered if they were no longer practicing, your reviewer completely put an ax on the whole performance. He claims "the cast failed to live up to my expectations." But who is he and how can he claim that his expectations are top priority? Did he take into consideration the size of Koch auditorium, or the fact that

the girls aren't even working in a real theater? Was he there for all of the practices to conclude that the girls were not up to par? Did he put in all of the hours? How does he know that what he saw was not exactly the way the show was supposed to be performed?

Your reviewer should reconsider his statements and fess up to the fact that he honestly does not know what he is talking about. He is not a professional, and therefore has no right to talk. I appreciate the amount of time I am sure was put into the preparation for the show. I saw the play and I had a good time. And if I have any criticism, at least I have the decency and common sense to keep my mouth shut.

Avi Billet  
YC '01



INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Orthodox Union's  
Institute for Public Affairs'  
Internship Program is seeking  
to place Orthodox Jewish  
college students in  
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The Internship program involves outstanding young adults in the political process and provides a link between our nation's Capitol and the Jewish community. Students will serve in Congressional and Senatorial offices and in Jewish political organizations.

Applications for the summer of 2000 are now available. Applicants must be sophomores or juniors in college and are required to submit letters of recommendation from academic advisors and to outline work done for Israel and the Jewish community. Stipends are available.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF  
APPLICATIONS IS FEBRUARY 15, 2000.

For application and further details,  
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1640 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W., 5th Floor, Washington, DC 20036  
or call (202) 857-2770.



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# FORUM

# LETTERS

## Learning Torah At Columbia

To the Editor:

It is with bit of annoyance that I read your latest article about your neighbors to the west, "Yeshiva founded at Columbia." Frankly speaking, I found the comments by YU students that were quoted, while exhibiting that oh-so-well-developed humor that is YU, distasteful and overtly jealous.

I think I speak for much of the Columbia community when I make the following statement: we're sick of hearing it. We're sick of hearing you babble away about how "frum" YU is, how morally reprehensible Columbia is, and how much better the world would be if only we'd all been good Jewish boys and girls and gone to YU like our rebbes told us.

Funny how a Stern student is quoted as saying that "if the Barnard girls were serious about learning they'd have gone to Stern" - that doesn't stop the YC guys from filling our Shabbat morning davening and poking their heads over the mechitza (which, by the way, is probably too low for you). What's the matter guys, the Stern students

are all too busy learning? Is that the problem?

You see, some of us actually believe in the value of going to a secular college (gasp!) That means we actually want to be at Columbia - it's not a compromise for us. Some of us are of the belief that Orthodox Judaism beyond the admittedly safe and non-threatening walls of the Yeshiva world is an experience that should be valued. Anyone can be a Jew at YU - and that's one of the great things about Yeshiva University, no doubt about it. But just try things on our side of the island for a while - arguing about theology with your floor mates at 3 AM, or being in a class where you're called upon to actively defend your beliefs, sometimes to a hostile audience.

But back to my original point: I think the *Commentator* made the point better than I ever could with the following quote: "It really made me feel like I was at a real college." ouch.

Yair Hakak  
Columbia '00

## What Happened to Moshiach?

Your inclusion of the late, great Lubavitcher Rebbe as one of the ten most influential Yidden of the twentieth century was an obvious and excellent choice. This great man directly, or through his army of devoted followers, influenced, and continues to influence, hundreds of thousands of Jews worldwide. However, I find it quite perplexing that you neglect to mention the great controversy that has followed his death. I refer to the belief of many, if not most, Chabbniks in the Rebbe as the Moshiach, despite his death. Thus, his influence continues even after his death, in a manner which many find to be quite dangerous. It is time we removed the "kid gloves" and dealt with the issue openly. A visit to Crown Heights on any given day will attest to the multitude of signs and banners referring to the "Melech Hamoshiach." No, the Rebbe never openly claimed to be our long-awaited Moshiach. And, the Rebbe's "coronation" as the Moshiach took place after he had suffered a series of strokes and could no longer speak nor make any meaningful gestures, in a public ceremony many viewed as pathetic and bordering on a "Chillul

Hashem."

However, even when he was well, he never stopped his followers from calling him "Melech Hamoshiach," and, even when old and frail, and having no children, he never appointed a successor. The Lubavitch main web site ("Moshiach.com") is replete with references to the validity of the belief in resurrection in Judaism, even for a potential Moshiach. The web site even slips up once in a while, and says things like the "Rebbe Shlita," totally confusing even the issue of whether he ever really died at all. This is a controversy which will not go away. It is also one which many say lends credence to why the great Vilna Gaon put the original Chassidim into Cheirem, fearing exactly such a "Meshichus" movement.

To have left out any reference to this in your review of the Rebbe's effect on twentieth-century Jewry left an important void in understanding the depth and power of the influence this great man had, and continues to have, on so many Jews.

Dr. Norman Gold  
YC '76

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# FORUM

# OPINION

## Student Soap Box

### Behind The Scenes: Food Services Exposed

BY ERIC GUTMAN

I must admit that I am totally baffled by the thought processes of the food service management. During the weeks of the baseball playoffs, we were treated to baseball tablecloths, simultaneous Yankees and Mets menus, and even baseball-looking cookies to complement one night's "World Series Dinner." The management seemed to be attempting to gain the affinity of the students, while remaining the most monopolistic, miserly establishment eyes ever laid upon.

Last year while serving on the YCSC Food Services Committee (which represents the student body in dealings with the food service), I began to see just how much Food Services takes full advantage of its forced monopoly. Though we met with its management only once, the sole meeting confirmed all of the infamous rumors that surround the 'establishment.' Jake Lieberman, Associate Director, arrived half an hour late. (I wonder just how timely he would have been if dining club membership was optional.) In any event, not much time remained in the short club hour for the meeting to develop. A few minor topics and requests were discussed, and all but one was rejected (the only consent made was for the exchange of two "side dishes" for a soup). As expected, the perennial price issue made its way to the forefront of our agenda. Lieberman promptly told us that prices were not up for discussion, and that the future only promised price hikes to make-up for the "thousands of dollars lost every year."

When pressed for details, we were led in circles. No offense, Mr. Lieberman, but the mere thought of Food Services losing money is laughable. Near the conclusion of the meeting, as representatives of the student body, we requested to look at their financial "books," and were promptly assured that in a matter of weeks we could have a look. To this day, that has not happened. It makes me wonder how soon our request would have been granted if Food Services had any competition whatsoever.

Our meeting was not entirely fruitless. Management did tell us that on average, the amount paid to create a particular dish is approximately 1/3 the student price. Of course, they were quick to qualify that statement with a barrage of exceptions to the otherwise surprising generalization. I suspect an even greater disparity between wholesale and "retail" prices. It is commonly forgotten, or more accurately cast aside, that Food Services serves all of Yeshiva University, including both undergraduate campuses, Cardozo, Ferkauf, and Einstein, as well as those attending Revel and RIETS on the main campus. The word "bulk" does not begin to describe the mass quantities in which they buy ingredients. To believe that they pay

\$2.30 ((1/3 of \$6.85) for a small dish of industrially-made beef jumbolia (whatever that is, I still don't know) is ludicrous. It is also highly doubtful that they pay \$.25 for every fresh fruit they buy in massive bulk. I invite anyone on the management to show me even one instance where they paid more than one-third what we pay.

Though all too often cast aside, the mandatory nature of the University's "dining club" is an important factor in assessing the real issue at hand. As a result of the "caf card requirement," Food Services can safely assure that they will collect \$750 per dorming student per semester, no two ways about it. If so, the real issue is not how much money they receive in a given semester, but rather, how much food they will give out. It is with this that Food Services management breaks all records of haggling. With high prices, Food Services hopes to deplete our food cards as quickly and efficiently as possible. And of course, this goal goes way beyond prices. It manifests its ugly head in portion sizes. Again looking at the factor of bulk, serving at least 2100 students with a potential for 2500 more (if you include the University schools where food cards are optional) for one week, it is likely that Food Services orders in the range of 5000 pounds of chicken in one shot. That is a lot of chicken. It highly doubtful that each chicken quarter costs as much as 50 cents. Yet servers are under strict orders to give only one quarter per customer. In fact, one employee of Food Services was fired last year for giving portions that his management deemed too large. Imagine what he now thinks of his former managers—miserly, soulless, "religious" Jews: The ultimate chillul Hashem.

These money saving moves merely make operating costs slightly lower than they should be. It is for this slight margin of extra profit that we, the student body, have such unpleasant experiences in our own cafeterias. The only semi-substantial extra profit that Food Services can attribute to their pettiness results from the students who are forced to turn to their parents to put more money on their food cards. This however, does not justify the management's cause for having students spend \$900 to \$1000

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per semester on food. In fact, this is nothing short of high-way robbery.

One last point. It is imperative that Food Services decide whether it is a business or a service (as its name implies). If a business, which, by definition, is primarily motivated by the drive for profit, it must stop serving up its usual "muck," as described by one of its own servers, and raise itself to business standards. Restaurant-quality dishes, as well as decorative servings, would be in order. Side dishes would have to consist of more than just a few spoonfuls of steamed vegetables, or the nastiest looking wild rice you've ever seen. Nice salt and pepper shakers would be expected on the tables, and of course, the Styrofoam containers would have to be replaced by decent plates. Practically all the self-service facets of the cafeteria would become full-service.

Obviously, this just isn't going to happen. Even if management opted to move in such a direction, this type of turn-around would take years, especially under the auspices of the present management. The only way to rectify the situation is for Food Services to declare itself a service (as opposed to a restaurant) and charge the corresponding prices. Morally, as an enterprise, it cannot provide as a service yet charge as a restaurant, as it has been doing for years. It must decide one way or the other.

Mr. Lieberman, don't try to win my affinity with Yankees menus or World Series dinners. Take back your baseball cookies and tablecloths. Give me lower prices.

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## Administrator Threatens Yeshiva With Legal Action

BY PINCHAS SHAPIRO

Last Friday, Diane Persky, Assistant to the Dean of the Sy Syms School of Business, accepted a contract offer making her a full time professor for the next three semesters. In response to prior personnel movements, Persky, the business school's midtown liaison, initiated legal action against the dean's office.

Three weeks ago, Professor Persky was allegedly informed by Director of Enrollment Management John B. Fisher that she would no longer be allowed to accompany the Yeshiva contingent on recruitment and registration trips to Israel. "Recruitment and registration in Israel are both major components to that job. By taking that away, they essentially took away her activity," explained one administrator.

According to sources close with the situation, the decision to exclude Persky from participation in the trips to Israel did not come from Yeshiva's Dean of Admissions Moshe Kranzler, rather it came from Fisher himself. While Fisher would not comment on the situation, citing its status as a personnel matter, a number of university employees claim that the reason Fisher decided to limit Persky's role was that she is "not the proper role model for our girls," referring to both current and prospective Stern College for Women students.

Shortly after Persky received the news from Fisher, she was offered the opportunity to become a full time professor in the business school. The proposition gave Persky the chance to sign a contract that would secure for her a faculty position for the remainder of this academic year and all of the next.

On December 13, 1999, just days after extending Persky the contract for a full-time professorship, Sy Syms Dean Harold Nierenberg received a hand delivered letter from the law offices of Beranbaum Menken Ben-Asher & Fishel LLP, informing the dean that "this law firm has been retained by...Diane Persky, to assist her in negotiating specific terms and conditions of her employment."

Sources have revealed that Persky hoped that her next move within the Yeshiva community would be to become the first ever assistant dean in the business school. Persky is currently working on her Ph.D. and has extensive administrative and classroom experience.

Bruce Menken Esq., the author of the letter, further stated that he "would welcome the opportunity to meet the University's legal counsel before the end of the year." According to administrators, official University policy when dealing with legal matters is for all correspondence to be conducted through the university's legal office. The law office of University General Counsel Martin H. Bockstein Esq. declined to comment on this matter.

According to administrators who could not officially discuss the pending legal and personnel issues, Persky had until last Friday to sign her three semester faculty contract before it was removed from the table. Persky has accepted the faculty job and will be vacating her position as assistant to the dean and the end of this semester. As of press time no replacement has been found, however sources informed *The Commentator* that the office is close securing a professional for the beginning of the spring semester.

## Chemistry Professor Claims To Receive Hate Letters

BY JASON CYRULNIK

A sense of unease now permeates the classroom of Dr. Fernando Commodari, Professor of Chemistry, after Commodari informed his students two weeks ago that he has received from an unnamed class member a slew of "hate e-mails."

On Wednesday, December 15, Commodari entered his classroom in Furst Hall to begin what his students expected to be a routine General Chemistry lecture. Instead, Commodari proceeded to preface the lesson with an admonition; he notified his students of his intent to swiftly investigate the threatening letters that were sent to his e-mail account via the Internet. Commodari did not elaborate on the content of the e-mails, but *The Commentator* has learned that included in the letters were both disparaging remarks against his mother and his personal life, and the word 'kill' - although the context of the word has yet to be clarified.

The day's peculiar events were just beginning for Mark, one YC junior who requested that his identity be withheld for "fear of retaliation." Commodari had informed Mark that he wanted to speak with him after class. During the class break, an unsuspecting Mark approached Commodari and the puzzled junior was then informed by his instructor that the aforementioned threats had been signed with Mark's name. Mark says that Commodari warned the student that a full investigation was under way, and that any discovered wrongdoing would be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

The student, baffled and intimidated, immediately proceeded to Andrew Leibowitz, Coordinator of Student Services, for advice on how to handle the unnerving situation. Leibowitz sent him to the Office of Security, where the student filed a report and

relayed the day's events to Don Summers, Chief of Yeshiva Security. Summers promised to investigate the story; the scene seemed relatively familiar to Summers, who according to sources has done "his fair share of research" on complaints registered against the professor.

One chemistry student in the class said, "I think this is a fabricated story, most probably invented by Commodari." Commodari has refused numerous requests to produce the actual letters, but guarantees their existence.

If this prevalent theory were proven to be true, Commodari's decision to single out Mark as the particular student remains a mystery. Other members of the class report no bad blood to have existed between the two prior to this incident. "Why would he sign his own name," asked one YC junior. "I know him; there's no chance that he was even involved." Commodari himself has changed his story over the course of the past week, at times telling newspaper sources that he believes the student, someone whom he outright labeled a "bastard," undoubtedly lays behind the threats, and at times denouncing, almost entirely, any suspicion of the committed student's involvement.

The internet server from which the e-mails originated, Yahoo, has confirmed the identity of the sender, according to Commodari, but will not release that information. As a result, Commodari has announced his intentions to sue them as well. The accused Junior attests that he has no Yahoo account whatsoever, significantly diminishing the specter of his involvement.

Without confirmation from Yahoo, Commodari's story remains suspect to many, and his refusal to produce the little evidence that he claims to possess continues to beg the question to his students - did anything really happen?

## Yeshiva Pays Commie

continued from page 1

In Schottenstein Residence Hall, Facilities again removed 200 copies of *The Commentator* from the student dormitory. Risa Solomon, a SCW Senior who witnessed facilities removing the newspapers stated, "I can't imagine why the Facilities Management would feel justified in removing the student newspapers whenever they feel like it. But I am pleased that *The Commentator* and *The Observer* have joined forces to defend the right to free speech on behalf of all the undergraduate students at YU."

On December 2, the editors-in-chief of *The Commentator* sent a formal letter to several Yeshiva administrators, including Rabbi Norman Lamm, President of Yeshiva, Dr. Sheldon Socol, Vice President of Business Affairs, and Mr. Jeffrey Rosengarten, Director of Supporting Service Administration. The letter stated, "We find this continued abuse to be unacceptable. We demand that the University state in writing that they will cease and desist removal of Commentators from any campus, at any time, without the written consent of the Governing Board of *The Commentator*."

Within twenty-four hours, *The Commentator* received a letter from Dr. Efreim Nulman, University Dean of Students, selected to respond on behalf of the administration, stating that "there is no university policy or unofficial practice that condones the disposal of *The Commentator*."

The editors of *The Commentator*, concerned that the University intentionally chose not to state that they will not again remove the newspapers, immediately

replied with a second letter, explaining "it may be that when Facilities Management removes copies of *The Commentator*, it is not their intention to dispose of the newspapers, although many times the papers are in fact not returned. Your stated clause, therefore, still leaves open the possibility of removing our newspapers, as long as they are eventually returned. Our original request still stands..."

Following a query from Karen W. Arenson, education editor for the *New York Times*, the University conceded, and stated clearly that they do not condone "disposal or removal of *The Commentator*. Through this letter we are recommitting ourselves to this in the future." Along with the signed contract came a reimbursement check for \$1,850.00.

After a requested apology for the sustained abuse of power by the administration, Rabbi Lamm during Dorm Talks answered, "it was done. What do you expect, a Chinese confession? [This issue] was relatively minor, we make mistakes and we gave you a response...but was it that great a crime?"

But the faculty and board of Yeshiva's Albert Einstein College of Medicine, generously supporting the charge of *The Commentator*, passed the following resolution: "We extend to the editors of *The Commentator*, the Official Undergraduate Newspaper of Yeshiva College, strong support for your efforts in maintaining freedom of expression in the face of the censorship imposed by the University. We wish you well in your efforts to maintain journalistic integrity at Yeshiva University."

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## Little Accomplished in Search for Syms Dean

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

A month after Sy Syms School of Business Dean Harold Nierenberg made his intentions to retire public, the University has taken few steps in pursuing a replacement for his position. According to his resignation letter, Dean Nierenberg will vacate his office at the end of August coinciding with the beginning of the fall semester.

A search committee to fill the vacancy and leadership void that will be created when Nierenberg leaves, has not yet been formed, according to University officials who anticipate being included in such a committee if one had been formed. Individuals close to the Syms Dean assert that it was precisely this type of non-action that Nierenberg feared when he decided to resign, precisely the reason he announced his intentions to retire ten months in advance.

Seeking to ease concerns, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Morton Lowengrub, explained that the university

has commenced the initial proceedings that in time will lead to a formal search committee charged with performing a national search for a new dean. When asked whether the committee would be looking for someone outside the Yeshiva community as opposed to in house, Lowengrub reiterated that it is the task of a national search committee to perform a thorough search, examining all potential candidates. The final decision will be made only after selecting the best possible candidate for the position. Lowengrub realistically expects that the search will find success rather quickly and a new dean will be in place at the start of next year's fall semester.

It has been rumored for some time that the creation and implementation of a masters of business affairs program would be atop the agenda of a new Syms administration. Lowengrub commented that while the idea has not vanished, "the number one priority will be to make the Sy Syms School of Business the number one undergraduate business school in the country."

## Confusion Amid Changes in Registration Department

BY PINCHAS SHAPIRO

Six weeks after University Registrar Rabbi Melvin Davis resigned, the Yeshiva University registrars office has once again undergone radical change. Lea Honigwachs, the recently hired Assistant Registrar at Stern College for Women, has been moved Uptown to the University's main registrar's office, with Pinchas Friedenberg, former University Registrar, temporarily filling the void left at the Stern College office.

Director of Enrollment Management, John B. Fisher is responsible for these most recent personnel changes. According to Mr. Fisher, the nature of Dr. Honigwachs' job and responsibilities will change dramatically as she is now filling the office left vacant by Carol Roth this summer.

While at Stern, Honigwachs learned the Banner System and administered all duties of the undergraduate registrar. With her move uptown, Honigwachs' work will primarily center around the university's graduate schools, the review of doctoral theses and the conferring of degrees. However, Honigwachs expects her workload to change slightly in the absence of a university registrar, as current Registrar Davis is expected to leave Yeshiva within the week.

According to Fisher, Pinchas Friedenberg was appointed to fill Honigwachs' position at Stern for the duration of the academic year. Friedenberg, the former University Registrar, left under unclear circumstances over five years ago. Fisher asserts that Friedenberg was hired only as a consultant to assist the Stern College Registrars Office until a permanent replacement can be found. According to Fisher, Friedenberg has not been given an official title to accompany his work.

The conditions under which Honigwachs was moved uptown and Friedenberg was slipped into the Stern position are also unclear at this time. Fisher said, "I offered her [Honigwachs] the job, and she accepted."

According to administrators close to

the situation, however, the terms of her acceptance were not so kind. At a standard registrars meeting uptown, Honigwachs was reportedly informed that she was being transferred to Carol Roth's former office. "Since this doubles her travel time from her home in Brooklyn, she [Honigwachs] said she would not accept a transfer," said one administrator. "But after some consideration of the benefits of a transfer versus unemployment, Lea decided to accept the offer and move Uptown." Dr. Honigwachs declined to comment on the conditions of her appointment and subsequent transfer.

Fisher asserted that the Registrars office will continue to undergo institutional changes over the next three months and there will be no void in office leadership.

The one concern that remains prevalent in most minds throughout the university, is the inability of the university to fill any of the vacant offices in the registration department. According to Fisher's office, the University has placed a number of advertisements soliciting applicants for associate, assistant, and university registrar positions. Currently, no suitable candidates have submitted resumes for consideration. "We are suffering from an extremely good economy right now," said Fisher, commenting on Yeshiva's inability to fill administrative vacancies. Fisher went on to explain that hiring good people from other universities would require engaging in bidding wars for professionals' services - something that Yeshiva is not prepared to do.

Despite all the maneuvers and positional voids within the registrar's office, many feel that undergraduate spring registration has been thus far glitch free. The course catalogues accompanied with student transcripts and registration forms were all prepared and distributed in advance, with only minor changes being made to the catalogue. "Mel has taken care of us this time around, and all the students should thank him, I am afraid we won't be so lucky in the spring," cautioned a University employee.



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# The Top Ten Jews of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

The governing board of The Commentator recently voted on the "Top Ten Jews of the Century," Jewish individuals who had the largest and most significant impact on society and the world-at-large. Presented here, in random order, are the remaining five individuals who comprise our list.

## LEON TROTSKY COMMUNIST THEORIST, LEADER OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

At the age of eight, Trotsky was sent to school in Odessa, and then moved to Nikolayev where he was drawn into an underground socialist circle and introduced to Marxism. After briefly attending the University of Odessa, he returned to Nikolayev, where he helped organize the underground South Russian Workers' Union. He then made his way to London where he joined the group of Russian Social-Democrats working on the newspaper, *Iskra*.

Upon outbreak of the revolutionary disturbances in 1903, Trotsky returned to Russia and became a leading spokesman for the St. Petersburg Council of Workers' Deputies when it organized a strike movement and other measures of defiance against the tsarist government. In the aftermath, Trotsky was jailed and bought to trial in 1906. While incarcerated, Trotsky wrote one of his major works, "Results and Perspectives," setting forth his theory of permanent revolution.

In 1907, after a second exile to Siberia, Trotsky once again escaped and settled in Vienna where he supported himself as a correspondent in the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. At the outbreak of WWI, Trotsky joined the majority of Russian Social-Democrats who condemned the war and refused to support the war efforts of the tsarist regime. His anti-war stance led to his expulsion from both France and Spain, two countries he had tried to inhabit. He reached New York City in 1917, where he joined the Bolshevik theorist Nikolay Bukharin in editing the newspaper, *The New World*.

During the 1917 Russian Revolution, Trotsky hailed the outbreak in Russia as the opening of the permanent revolution he had long ago predicted. He reached Petrograd in May 1917, and assumed the leadership of a left-wing Menshevik faction. After a brief arrest for his involvement in the faction, Trotsky was formally admitted to the Bolshevik Party and was elected to membership on the Bolshevik Central Committee, and then as Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

Trotsky functioned as the military leader of the Revolution when Kerensky vainly attempted to retake Petrograd with loyal troops. Trotsky organized and supervised



the forces that broke Kerensky's efforts, and immediately afterward, Trotsky joined Lenin in defeated proposals for a coalition government including Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries.

Trotsky next served as Foreign Commissar, where his charge was to implement the Bolsheviks program of peace by calling for immediate armistice negotiations among the warring powers. Following the concession of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Trotsky resigned as Foreign Commissar and became the War Commissar. Trotsky then proceeded to build a new Red Army out of the shambles of the Old Russian army, and attempted to defend Communism from the imminent threats of Civil War and foreign intervention. With the triumph of the Communist forces and the end of the Russian Civil War in 1920, Trotsky turned his energies into reconstructing the Russian economy.

After Lenin was stricken with a cerebral hemorrhage in 1922, Trotsky became the obvious candidate for succession. But Lenin soon recovered, and warned the government of Trotsky's "too far-reaching self-confidence." When Stalin soon gained the majority power, Trotsky left Russia for the Black Sea Coast.

In 1928, Trotsky and his followers were exiled to remote parts of the Soviet Union. In 1936 he was forced to seek asylum in Mexico where he was killed by an assassin, with the Soviet government disclaiming any responsibility.

## SIGMUND FREUD NEUROLOGIST FOUNDER OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

Freud entered the University of Vienna in 1873 as a medical student, and the General Hospital of Vienna in 1882. In 1885, he went to Paris to study with the neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot, which proved a turning point in his career. Charcot's work with patients classified as hysterics introduced Freud to the possibility that mental disorders might be caused by purely psychological factors rather than by organic brain disease.

Upon his return to Vienna, he entered into a fruitful partnership with the physician Josef Breuer. They collaborated on "Studies in Hysteria," which contains a presentation of Freud's pioneering psychoanalytic method of free association. It was this method that allowed Freud to arrive at numerous new insights; he developed theories concerning the deeper layers of the mind - the unconscious; he arrived at an understanding of neurosis; and in 1899 he published "The Interpretation of Dreams," in which he analyzed the highly complex symbolic processes underlying dream formation.

In 1905, appeared his controversial study "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality," in which he presented his discoveries concerning infantile sexuality, and in which he delin-



eated the complicated stages of psychosexual development, including the formation of the Oedipus complex.

Freud also applied his psychoanalytic insights to mythological, anthropological, cultural, and religious phenomena. Among his most noted works in this vein are "Totem and Taboo" (1913) and "Civilization and Its Discontents" (1930). Although he started his practice in the late 1800's, Freud exercised his greatest impact over civilization during the twentieth century. He died in 1939.

## STEVEN SPIELBERG DIRECTOR

One of the most acclaimed directors of the late 20th century, Steven Spielberg is an American and Jewish icon. From "Close Encounters" to "Schindler's List," Spielberg has never failed to amaze and delight his audience. His career, while still in its prime, has surpassed the level of household name and time again.

Born in Cincinnati on December 18, 1946, the Spielberg family moved from New Jersey to Scottsdale, AZ while Steven was still young. At the age of 13 Steven won a contest with his 40 minute film, "Escape to Nowhere." In 1963, at the age of 16, Spielberg produced the movie "Firelight" (which would later inspire "Close Encounters"). The movie made a \$100 profit at the local movie theater.

Spielberg a few years later started production on Amblin. It was a 24 minute movie about a pair of hitchhikers. The \$15,000 budget came from a friend of his, who was also trying to break into the movie business. Amblin won several film

festival awards, and more importantly, got him the attention of Universal Studios. Spielberg was signed for 7 years with the Television Division. He directed shows such as "The Night Gallery," "Marcus Welby MD," "The Name of the Game" and the first episode of "Columbo."

Spielberg's first feature film, "The Sugarland Express," in 1974, won critical acclaim including a Cannes Film Festival Award in 1974 for Best screenplay.

In 1975, Spielberg directed "Jaws." Only his second feature film, Jaws was a huge success. It was nominated for best film at the 1976 Academy Awards, and won 3 Oscars for Editing, Sound and Original Score. Jaws would later be named as one of the 100 best films of all time by the American Film Institute.

1982 was a big year for Spielberg. "E.T." became the first movie to be produced by Amblin Entertainment, which Spielberg founded.

Six months after the release of "E.T.,"

## CHAIM NACHMAN BIALIK POET



Chaim Bialik was considered the greatest Hebrew poet of modern times, and he exercised profound influence over both modern Jewish culture and contemporary World literature. He was famous for expressing in his verse the yearnings of the Jewish people, for making the modern Hebrew language a flexible medium of poetic expression and for exploring a wide range of profound themes.

Born into poverty, Bialik was left fatherless when he was five, and was brought up by his rigidly pious, learned grandfather. After an intensive education in the Jewish classics, he attended the Jewish Academy of Volozhin. It was these three influences - his poverty, being an orphan, and his study of religious classics - that are said to have served as the wellsprings of much of Bialik's poetry. In 1891, he went to Odessa - then the center of Jewish modernism - where he struck up a lifelong friendship with the Jewish author Ahad Ha'am, who encouraged Bialik in his creative writing.

The publication of his first poem, "Ha Matmid," in the periodical, Ha-Shiloah, estab-

lished his reputation as the outstanding Hebrew poet of his time. The poem is a sympathetic portrait of a student whose single-minded dedication to the study of Talmud is awe-inspiring, yet does not provide sustenance for such spirits. Bialik is said to have implemented that this situation may constitute the plight of the Jewish people itself.

His writing career assured, Bialik returned to the Odessa as a teacher in Hebrew school, at the same time publishing poems and some of the most highly regarded stories in modern Hebrew literature. His poems inspired by the pogrom that took place in 1903 in the city of Kishinyov contain some of the fiercest and most anguished verse in Hebrew poetry. Other poems include epic fragments and they imaginatively build on the "Jewish host who perished in the desert."

Bialik translated such European classics as Don Quixote, Wilhelm Tell, and the Yiddish play Der Dybbuk, into Hebrew. An indefatigable agent, editor, and literary organizer, Bialik was the co-founder of the publishing firm Devir and edited Safer ha-Aggadah, a collection of traditional Jewish homilies and legends. He also edited the poems of the great medieval poet and philosopher Ibn Gabirol, and began a popular modern commentary on the Mishna.

In 1921, Bialik left the Soviet Union for Germany, and then eventually settled in Palestine until his death in 1934.

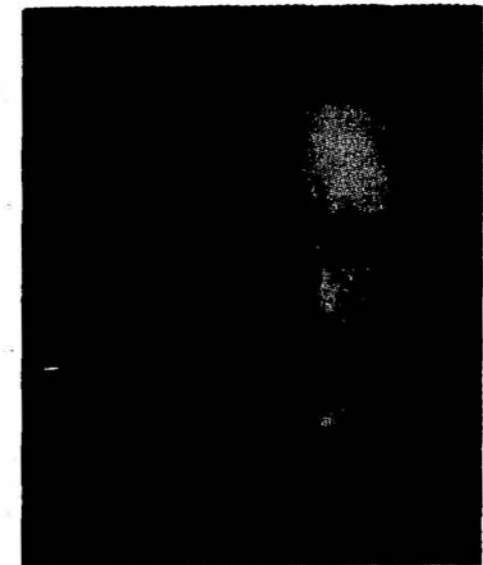
## DIRECTOR

Spielberg's friend and president of Universal/MCA Sidney Sheinberg attracted his attention on a book written by Thomas Keneally: Schindler's Ark. It was the true story of the good-hearted Nazi Party member Oskar Schindler who saved the lives of more than 1,100 Jews during W.W.II.

The film that it became, "Schindler's List" is now one of the most honored films of all time, earning Spielberg the long awaited Oscars for Best Director and Best Picture as well as 7 other Academy Awards and an exceptional number of other honors.

The Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation was founded by Steven Spielberg in 1994 after the filming of "Schindler's List" brought to light the many amazing stories of survival.

In 1994 Dreamworks SKG became the first new movie studio in Hollywood in over 75 years. The partnership between Steven Spielberg, Jeffery Katzenberg, and David Geffen formed a media company



that would reach into the fields of live action and animated movies (both traditional and CGI), music, computer games, arcades, television production and movie distribution.

With the release of his latest movie, "Saving Private Ryan," to video, Steven Spielberg continues to make monumental movies and lead the entertainment indus-

## SARAH SCHNEIRER FOUNDER OF THE BAIS YAAKOV MOVEMENT

Sarah Schneier, like most Jewish girls in her homeland, attended Polish schools, completing eight years of elementary school with honor. She exhibited at an early age great love of reading, and when absorbed in a book could be totally oblivious to her surroundings.

In 1913, Sarah Schneier and her family fled war-torn Poland, and found refuge in Vienna. There her first thoughts were for the upcoming Sabbath of Chanukah: She must find a Synagogue where she could pray. Following the directions of an obliging landlady, she entered the Synagogue of Rabbi Fleisch of the Stumpergasse. The Rabbi, Rabbi Fleisch, addressed the congregation, spoke of Maccabees, their challenge and their heroism. He spoke also of Judith and of what a Jewish woman could accomplish. Something stirred within Sarah Schneier's heart as she listened, enthralled, to his gripping words. Schneier became Rabbi Fleisch's most avid student, never missing a sermon, doggedly writing down each lesson.

Nebulous dreams of teaching Jewish women were beginning to take shape, were growing clearer in her mind. To ensure that her small part in transmitting the tradition of the Jewish people would be perfect, she overcame her shyness and showed Rabbi Fleisch herself her notes. The Rabbi was impressed with their accuracy and with the almost photographic memory of this unassuming seamstress. He suggested that she study the works of Rabbi Shmshon Rafael Hirsch and Rabbi Marcus Lehmann; by eating only one meal a day she managed to save enough money to buy one of Hirsch's books.

With war's end, Sarah Schneier was ready to return to Cracow -- and ready to give over all that she had learned. All she had to do was find someone to listen. Her efforts to reach out to women and older girls met with little success: To them her words sounded strange and outmoded. And then she turned to the children, beginning with only five. They listened, they learned, they remembered her lessons.

The school grew. After one year, more than eighty students were crowding to hear the classes, all given proudly in Yiddish. A larger apartment was rented. Former students, barely out of class themselves, were pressed into service, to teach those still younger. The school grew and a movement was slowly born.

In 1924, Schneier attended the conven-

tion of Agudath Israel, the organization that was such a strong force in the life of Polish Jewry. Her fierce determination and her beliefs communicated themselves to the assemblage, and Agudath Israel began its involvement with Bais Yaakov, with Schneier at its helm.

In a small side street in the Cracow ghetto, in a large tenement fronted by narrow stone steps leading to crowded flats, stood the Bais Yaakov Seminary. Schneier's first class consisted of twenty-five girls, none older than sixteen. They studied hand-written texts penned by their teacher, learning a methodology that was at the same time simple and effective, pages and pages of lessons designed to keep bright, eager children interested and excited about their Jewish heritage.

Even as she trained the teachers to teach, she helped establish the schools for them to teach in. She traveled the length and breadth of her land, accompanying her young charges as they embarked on their new adventure of teaching in--and often founding--Bais Yaakov schools. She spoke to groups that were sometimes interested, sometimes hostile, urging the opening of still another school.

The quiet seamstress stood at the head of a vibrant, growing movement. In 1931, at the ground-breaking ceremony of the new seminary building in Cracow, as she watched her dream come to fruition.

She was young, only fifty-two-years old, when she passed away, after a difficult illness. Even on her deathbed, she was still teaching, still writing, still penning lessons for her students.

**THE COMMENTATOR  
would like to thank  
all the members  
of the Governing  
Board, who have  
helped make this  
very special  
section possible**

# ARTS & CULTURE

## FILM REVIEW

### Sleepy Hollow

Starring: Johnny Depp  
and Christina Ricci

BY YAIR OPPENHEIM



After returning from a leave of absence in the genre, toying with his biopic "Ed Wood" and satire "Mars Attacks," Tim Burton once again proves his mastery over all that is morbid, brooding, and nightmarish in cinema, tackling material that fans should savor at: the retelling of an old American literary horror classic - the legend of Sleepy Hollow.

The story, which most are somewhat familiar with, is that of Ichabod Crane (played by Johnny Depp), a constable who wishes to use and develop techniques in forensic science to solve crimes, rather than watch bureaucracy simply dump corpses and fill out paperwork. As his attitude and quest for justice seems to annoy those around him, he is sent to Sleepy Hollow, a town clearly in need of his services. Murder is the crime, and the method is beheading. The culprit is claimed to be a headless horseman, who feels no pity or remorse in his crimes. What soon follows is Crane's search for truth, immersing himself in town politics, witchcraft, and even love.

What stands out in this film is not the content of the film, but the style. As Tim Burton is noted and judged by standards of style, this alone may rank "Sleepy Hollow" as his best film. Burton utilizes the autistic genius of numerous craftsmen in every aspect of the production design. The sets, costume, and cinematography are captivating as they completely recreate the period with all of its mystery and elegance. The cinematography alone is quite pictorial, as it strives to capture the most beautifully composed shots as possible, and added with the effects of mists and crackling sound (espe-

cially for the beheading sequences), the film creates a striking mystique for its viewers. Along with that comes a virtuoso score composed by Burton's musical partner-in-crime Danny Elfman, a story written by gore scribe Andrew Kevin Walker (famous for "Seven" and "The Game"), and sword fights choreographed by master of dueling Ray Park (Darth Maul of "Star Wars: The Phantom Menace").

Burton's actors are in on the magic as well. Depp manages to display bravado, weakness, femininity, wit, and a full range of quirky characteristics that cements him as the actor who can express vintage Burton. Christina Ricci, most probably known as "the Winona Ryder replacement for the Tim Burton actress slot," does well to define her role as the Crane's bewitching love interest.

Though a horror film, "Sleepy Hollow" manages to inject a surprisingly large amount of humor for a rather morbid and unsettling plot. The film also includes the token "nightmarish fantasy dream sequence," a staple of Burton's films. As a pure entertainer "Sleepy Hollow" does not disappoint. The beheading sequences are jaw-dropping for those with a testosterone inclination, so squeamish viewers beware. The script does take liberties with the original story, but Washington Irving would be proud of his classic being reborn.

ORCHESTRA	B 11	Thu. Dec. 16, 1999 - 9:00 PM	<b>SCHOTTENSTEIN CENTER</b>	ADM. \$5.00	ORCHESTRA	
			<b>STUDIO THEATER - 360 W. 185th ST. NYC</b>			
			Yeshiva College Speech And Drama Department Theater Workshop - SPE 2031			
			<b>The Shawshank Redemption</b>			
			based on the Novella by Stephen King			
			No Admission After Show Begins Limited Parking Available			
			<b>THURSDAY DEC 16 1999 9:00 PM</b>			

## Shawshank Redeems YCDS

BY ALEX TRAIMAN

Melodrama at its best, YCDS presented The Shawshank Redemption to the greater Yeshiva community earlier this month. The Shawshank Redemption is a story of hope, the lack thereof, and finally redemption.

Andy Dufresne, an honest banker, is incarcerated for the alleged murder of his wife and her lover. During his sentence, he befriends Red who represents the illegal black market of the prison. Andy soon learns he can manipulate the system using banking skills to survive the harsh prison life. Andy fights desperately against the corrupt prison system to realize that "hope is a good thing...and no good thing ever dies," finally escaping through a back door he created through years of work in his cell. The escape route led to a pool of feces and eventually freedom.

The performances of Andy (Joshua Summers) and Red (Yaacov Silberman) instilled hope in the entire audience. The bond created between Red and Andy in the original Steven King novella was felt within the onstage relationship of Silberman and Summers.

Red carried the play on his shoulders as the story's narrator, as well as leader of the inmates. His passion from the play's start set the tone for the entire production.

Noam Greenberg portrayed a harsh Warden Samuel Norton, a scholar of corruption who managed to amass a minor fortune before being ruined financially and emotionally, eventually leading to the simple decision to take his own life before being subjected to the same brutal treatment he had enforced on others in Shawshank.

Ben Franz was masterful in his portrayal of Brooks, the Shawshank librarian and bird-keeper extraordinaire. Hadar Weiss powerfully played a man whose word was law as

Captain Hadley. Though his performance seemed almost comical at times, his night stick restored order on the cast and crowd. Joey London's performance was stellar, as he successfully portrayed a young man willing to trade in experience in crime for a GED under the tutelage of Andy.

The inmates were a collective group of crazies portrayed as such by a cornucopia of student personalities, and the Shawshank guards were well positioned throughout the play.

While the cast certainly acted to their potential, and then way over and above, it was the lovable staples of all YCDS productions,

that gave Shawshank the Beukas Signature. Intricate lighting schemes added immensely to the truly wonderful set which successfully accommodated each of the play's eight different scenes. Fading to black was commonplace within the play, properly delineating one scene from another. Cast members utilized the entire Schottenstein Theatre as their stage, weaving in and out of the audience enhancing the overall comfort of all in attendance. Special effects included the increasingly popular smoke clouds, and a glass bottle which shattered over Rooster's head for a terrific effect minus the black and blue.

The show ended with a YCDS special effects triumph. As the floodwaters opened in the play's final scene, the rain prompted a standing ovation.

Overall, Shawshank was truly one of the best shows produced by YCDS in recent times. Dr. Beukas and the entire student body should take pride in the performances of a truly talented cast and crew.

The direction was terrific, the casting, blocking, and lighting were simply excellent on all accounts. A success all around, The Shawshank Redemption will certainly go down in YCDS history.



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# FILM REVIEWS

## The Insider

Starring: Russell Crowe,  
Al Pacino and Christopher Plummer

BY YAIR OPPENHEIM

In director Michael Mann's testosterone coated world, confrontation is key. Giants, icons, man-beasts lock horns in physical, mental and emotional combat. This staple of Mann's films, of conscience clashes and one-on-one wars always ends with the archetype winner and loser. But when the true to life events from 1994 involving hundreds of billions of dollars, a three-way tug of war between a whistle-blower, a television newsmagazine producer and a tobacco conglomerate, the consequences are a far cry from the stark contrast of black and white champions and victims. As battles are fought on legal, financial and personal fronts, the complexities mount and the tension factor rises exponentially.

Jeffrey Wigand, played by Russell Crowe, is faced with a situation that is painful to think about and difficult to deal with. After getting fired from his job as a chemist in charge of research and development at Brown and Williamson, he happens to be contacted by Lowell Bergman, a producer for 60 Minutes on CBS for some assistance. When it suddenly seems that Wigand is privy to information that can potentially lead to an expose on tobacco industry malpractice, Bergman's ears perk up and the story takes a turn a la "All the President's Men." Wigand, a hothead by nature, is pressured both to talk and to refrain from doing so. Staring him in the face is his moral choice, the good that would result from this interview. In the back of his mind, though, lies the threat of Brown and Williamson to cut his severance package, which would severely curtail the medical benefits his sick child requires. As Wigand proceeds to unwrap his story, corporate ferocity starts to unravel his life. He is the subject of a unmerciful smear campaign and is even threatened for arrest in certain states for breach of contract in his deposition testimony. Bergman is soon forced to succumb to different types of pressures as he is informed by CBS executives that Westinghouse, CBS's soon to be parent company, objects to the airing of the Wigand interview, which, should it occur, may influence their interest in the merger, with potential shock waves ranging in the billions, capable of tossing jobs and shattering industries. Bergman's loyalty to his source is fractured leaving Wigand to face his hunters alone.

In terms of sheer dramatic power, Mann is somehow able to keep the narrative to a riveting pace, and hits the ground running from the first minute up until the last hour. The film was written by Mann, the typical practice with his films, though he shares co-writing credit with Eric Roth, an Oscar winner for writing the "Forrest Gump" adaptation. The intelligence communicated in the script is mind blowing, which not only signifies the talent of the writers, but also reflects on the complexities of such a realistic situation. The film is potentially the most intelligent film to be released by Hollywood since "Quiz



Show," and defines the genre of the corporate thriller, as the only film it resembles is "All The President's Men," a political thriller.

The performances in "The Insider" leave nothing to be desired. Al Pacino, gives off a rock hard image as Lowell Bergman, an aggressive, defensive, and prodding television journalist. The real gem of a performance comes from Christopher Plummer as "60 Minutes" Mike Wallace. Plummer turns in a commanding presence, as he is required to mimic Wallace's rumored egotistical nature in real life. Even more powerful is the performance of the main actor of the film, Russell Crowe. Crowe manages to create an aura of explosive silence as a tortured personality caught between the battles of journalistic ethics and management concerns, constantly maintaining hold of his eye-grabbing performance.

Other accolades the film deserves are in the more creative departments. The cinematography is used as a subtle indication of Wigand's paranoia, as camera angles in the film emerge with a perspective from behind Wigand's head. Other moments of the film are quite picturesque. Daunt Spinet, Mann's cinematographer, has been responsible for the look of his other films, such as "Heat" and the gorgeously shot "Last of the Mohicans." The makeup should also be commended. Christopher Plummer miraculously mirrored Mike Wallace, and Russell Crowe was somehow transformed from the virile, young hero of "LA Confidential," to that of a 50 year old stoic presence.

"The Insider" has already won numerous industry awards in all major categories, and though has shown lackluster box office receipts, is clearly ahead of the game, as a benchmark for future real-life reenactments. It is perhaps Mann's best film because it is his best script and his actors keep creating powerful moments through their screen time. It is clearly among the best of the year.

## The Talented Mr. Ripley

Starring: Matt Damon,  
Gwyneth Paltrow, and Jude Law

BY YAIR OPPENHEIM

It's not often that a person's unique talent is in being someone else. The multitude of identity, or lack thereof, is what drives Anthony Minghella's worthy follow-up to his 1996 Oscar-laden film, "The English Patient." Tackling a plethora of themes such as the arrogance of blue-blooded ivy leaguers, the European tourist scene, the jazz era, and even homosexuality, Minghella's romantic thriller once again follows the reckless actions of already doomed people, weaving a highly complex psychological thriller that is as compelling in its plot as it is in its characters.

Matt Damon stars as Tom Ripley, a nobody, who through the machinations of circumstance, manages to meet Mr. Greenleaf, a shipping industry tycoon. Greenleaf offers to pay Ripley to retrieve his spoiled son Dickie from the shores of Italy and his girlfriend Marge (Gwyneth Paltrow). Ripley's errand quickly fails, and he soon leeches into the life of Dickie and Marge to their immediate content and later disapproval. Issues become far more difficult to manage as Ripley begins to assume Dickie's lifestyle, while maintaining his identity as Ripley, and further cosetting another persona.

Minghella manages to recreate the same elegance and enchantment seen in "The English Patient," and infuse it into "The Talented Mr. Ripley," though the situations are perhaps less grandiose only due to the content. The film, set against the colorful palette of Italian sunshine and sunsets (beautifully captured by Minghella's cinematographer John Seale), manages to maintain its balance as a period piece and thriller, while not falling prey to becoming an uneven mess. The music even switches from being saccharine to suddenly baroque as the shadow of murder closes in.

The most engaging aspect of Mr. Ripley, is in the method of the story's unraveling. One of the most fascinating elements in "The English Patient" was its unique narrative style. Minghella's script takes the same risks by having characters constantly reveal information to each other that from the point of view of an audience, should remain secret. The characters then have to deal with the mess resulting from these actions, as the non-conformist plot pays off by managing to defy viewer expectations, yet grab their attention from its unpre-



dictable nature.

Ripley, the character that is most influenced by the narrative style, must constantly compensate in his identity changes as the situation frequently fluctuates from safety to danger. His manipulation of identity is central to the plot's credence. The script, written by Minghella (based on the novel by Patricia Highsmith) is in itself a wonder to behold. The identities of Tom Ripley and Dickie Greenleaf rotate around each other, molding a plot out of their concentric circles. When circumstance and danger intertwine, Tom and Dickie swivel in closer and closer degrees, until they can get no closer than in the finale which takes place on a boat.

Damon is very convincing as the tortured and confused Tom Ripley. It is this combination of his very mysterious aura and frequent personality changes that manages to support the execution of his plans and solidify his career as an actor and not a mere one-time starlet. Jude Law, who plays Dickie Greenleaf is dynamic as he should be, and the supporting cast is effective in their bit roles as well. The film, another fine example of well crafted art, is one of the year's best, and should stake a claim as one of the best multi-genre pieces of the 1990's.

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## Nulman Announces Resignation

*continued from page 1*

When questioned about the timing of his departure, Nulman responded, "It is typically unusual for an administrator in my position to remain in one institution for fifteen years. I have been here a long time, and it is simply time for me to look at some other career options."

A personnel change at this level is certain to shake up the Student Service's department; however, it is hopeful that a replacement will be found rapidly, and the department will continue to function without missing a beat. "It has been a pleasure working with Dean Nulman," said David Himber, Yeshiva College Associate Dean of Students. "I was very shocked to hear about his resignation, and am still recovering from the news. He will certainly be missed. I look forward to working with the new Dean of Students, and will do anything to be helpful in finding a replacement."

Coordinator of Student Services, Andrew Leibowitz was also taken by Dr. Nulman's announcement. "I am deeply saddened to hear about Nulman's resignation. The care and concern he exhibits toward the students serves as an inspiration to us all. He is a deeply committed administrator, and more importantly, a wonderful person. I wish him luck with his future endeavors, he will be greatly missed."

Currently, Dean Nulman's future plans are not concrete. "I am very fortunate to have options. It is now time for me to explore those options."

When asked about his stay at Yeshiva, Nulman stated "It has been a wonderful fifteen years at Yeshiva. Working with the students has been an immensely positive experience I have nothing but warm feelings for Yeshiva and the entire University community."



## Memorial For Safra Held In Sephardic Beit Medresh

BY ELLIOT I. DABAH

On Monday, December 6, 1999, 27 Kislev, the Jacob E. Safra Institute for Sephardic Studies and the Sephardic Club of Yeshiva University sponsored a gathering in the Sephardic Beit Midrash in memory of Edmond J. Safra, Chairman of Republic National Bank and well-known philanthropist. Safra's death came as a great shock to the Jewish community.

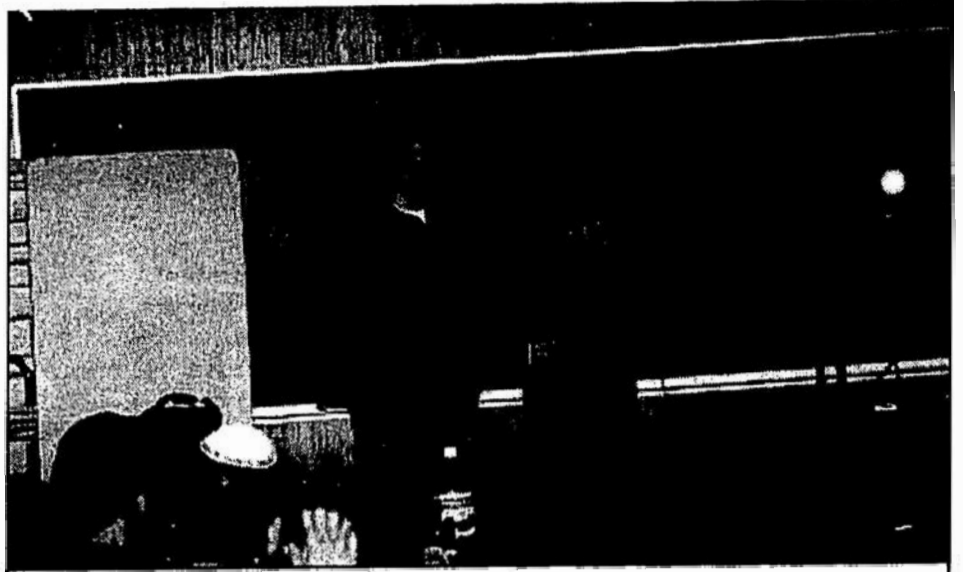
The tribute to Edmond Safra began with a Tehillim reading by students and faculty members. Rabbi Lamm, Dr. Dubrowsky, Rabbi Charlop, Dean Shmidman, Eliezer Zeytouneh, Rabbi Lieberman, and Rabbi Ben-Haim spoke about the wonderful qualities that Edmond Safra possessed.

Safra died on Friday, December 3, Erev Hanukkah, at his penthouse in Monte Carlo after his male nurse allegedly lit the house of the 67-year-old banker on fire. The nurse then informed Mr. Safra that intruders invaded the house and were after Safra. The

Edmond Safra was the chairman of Republic National Bank, and rated among the top 200 richest men in the world, according to Forbes magazine. Safra generously gave charity to many organizations, including Yeshiva University.

Safra's philanthropy was known all over the world. Organizations in need of large sums of money would often turn to Mr. Safra for support. Some organizations would approach Safra before they would turn to other sources of income, in order to lessen their financial burden. Other organizations would approach Safra after collecting contributions from all other philanthropists, in order that he might pay off the remaining debts.

Safra donated money to many shuls around the world. Many Sephardic shuls were only able to come into existence because of the unending support of the Safra family. Safra also donated money to yeshivot, community centers, organizations providing food, shelter, and clothing to the



## Assistant Director Speaks at YU

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

In its second coup of the year, hot off the heels of its documentary filmmaking lecture, the Yeshiva University Film Society witnessed a staggering success as its second event took place on Sunday, December 5th. The evening's lecturer, Assistant Director Bruce Franklin, a man whose credits have graced many a screen over the years, spoke about the inner workings of the Hollywood filmmaking industry.

Speaking to an audience of close to sixty students, Franklin spoke about how his career path led him from being a "kibbutznick" in Israel, working in an industrial factory, to landing a solid reputation in a career as an Assistant Director to the likes of Director John Singleton. Franklin mentioned the numerous attempts he made at laying a foothold in the industry, mentioning the well known Catch-22 he faced: "I told them that though I had no experience in the field, I would love to fill a position in their production, and got the response 'Well, what work have you done so far?'" He mentioned how difficult it was to get hired even with his experience, as one facet of his job was to tell a director about unwise decisions, and it isn't pleasing being the "no" person.

Speaking of his films, he first referenced John Singleton's "Higher Learning." After mentioning the final scene of the film (of a sniper shooting into a crowd of hundreds), he revealed a trade secret of how crowd dispersion was done. The crowd was divided into groups. Within each group, anyone born on a particular month would have to run in a particular direction, thus creating

"organized chaos" and averting stand-ins getting hurt. Referencing Gus Van Sant's 1998 "Psycho" remake, he mentioned the effort taken to recreate the scenes shot by shot, with some odd difficulties being the changes in technology, small as they may be, yet with enormous influence. Examples were different shower heads being used today, and different car models, which means exiting a car from a different side. In further reference to safety in technical situations, he explained how in the film "While You Were Sleeping," the subway cars and electrical rails were used, yet posed no danger. Shots were taken from one angle, giving the illusion of movement in a completely opposite direction, while scenes were shot in the portion of rail which wasn't electrified, or in which the electricity was shut off.

Though being absorbed into the Hollywood community, Franklin mentioned how there is opportunity at every moment for creativity in the production process. Every technical job requires creativity to cut corners, save time, or compose a shot, whether it be showing irony with a painting in the background, or trying to execute a scene with perfect comic timing. The most interesting fact? How the actors in "Cool Runnings" had to express comical chaos all the while, maneuvering the bobsled. What was done? "We put a midget in the inside front of the bobsled so that he would maneuver it unbeknownst to anyone watching," Franklin said. More events from the Yeshiva University Film Society will be coming up next semester, so be on the lookout.

## Yeshiva Holds Substance Abuse Workshop for Students

BY SHMULI SINGER

On Thursday December 2nd, Dr. Efram Nulman, University Dean of Students, conducted a workshop focused at answering student questions about all facets of drug use. Addressing thirteen riveted students during club hour, Nulman fielded inquiries ranging from the effects of smoking marijuana, to drug use in the orthodox community. Though the event attracted a relatively small number of students, Nulman still deemed the program "a success."

"I always wanted to work with adolescents, and that is the age when drug use typically starts," revealed Nulman, a psychologist who has participated in numerous stud-

used drugs less than the average population; however, there is more of a drug issue within the community now than ever before.

Aside from describing signs of addiction and consequences of habitual substance abuse, Nulman dealt with the broader causes of drug use. "While people in the 60's used drugs for 'mind expansion,'" he said, "drug use in the 90's more often than not stems from a problem, whether social, sexual, or school related. The substances themselves are not as dangerous as the motives behind their use." Nulman also noted that "any substance, from pot to aspirin, can be extremely dangerous if used improperly. Aside from telling people not to use drugs, we try to ensure that if someone is going to use them,

## Stern College Enrollment Numbers Misleading

BY RAMI COHEN

According to figures released for the fall of 1999, enrollment in Stern College for Women is now higher than enrollment in Yeshiva College. The difference places Stern Students on top by 71 enrollees. This is a rather large jump from last year, when Yeshiva College had forty-nine more students than Stern College for Women.

Contrary to published reports in *The Observer*, this is not the first time undergraduate women outnumber men. As recent as fall 1994 there were more students in SC than in YC and in fall of 1995 the figures were identical.

Dean Karen Bacon believes the fact that "there are more women interested in Stern College for Women than Men in Yeshiva College could possibly reflect a larger set of demographics - that women make up a slightly larger percentage of the total population of America than men. Attention to the liberal arts reflects a wide variety of choices for different career paths."

However, to say that there are more women in Stern College than men in Yeshiva College is slightly misleading. According to officials in the admissions office, all these numbers show is that there are more men going into business than into liberal arts.

What seems important to the admissions office is that both the Stern and the Yeshiva College numbers have increased since last year, following a pattern of steady growth that has continued to manifest over the last decade. Regarding the dispersion of students into the different schools on the respective campuses, the numbers are even more volatile.

The fluctuation of students in the various schools could be symptomatic of any number of factors, ranging from current trends and professors, to the major that statistically has the highest earning potential.

But university officials are unconcerned with the shift in figures, "We're not in competition with other schools on campus," explained John B. Fisher, Yeshiva Director of Enrollment. "If a student wants to be a philosophy major, I'm not going to tell him to go to Sy Syms. The only people who we're in competition with is other universities."

On the other hand, it would be incorrect to view the new enrollment figures as just a semantics game. The real issue is not the numbers in the different schools, it's the total number of undergraduate men and women. If Sy Syms were to disappear, those same people would be accounting majors, or finance majors in Yeshiva College.

While it is true that there are only 679 men enrolled in YC compared to 750 women enrolled in SCW, there are 496 men enrolled in the Sy Syms School of Business and only 169 women enrolled in the respective women's business school. This brings the grand total of men up to 1175; 256 more than the 919 women.

"This seems to be simply an illustration of shifting of emphasis," says Mr. Michael Kranzler, Director of Admissions. "More men seem interested in business."

Overall, administrators are quite pleased with the increase, as the growth in the student body allows YC to become more selective. Enrollment is up on both campuses; it is only in their breakdown that they differ.

## Professor Zilbert Resigns MIS Department Suffers Second Loss in Two Semesters

BY PINCHAS SHAPIRO

In a personal decision, The David H. Zysman Chair of information Systems Dr. Allen Zilbert submitted his resignation last week effective the end of the fall semester. The resignation letter, handed into the Dean of the Sy Syms School of Business Harold Nierenberg, cited "general reasons" for the resignation.

Professor Zilbert, a man who some faculty members claim 'lives to teach,' leaves Yeshiva after years of dedicated service to the students. His hard work led to the establishment of the MIS department as a serious, advanced program. The backbone of the department, Zilbert was aided by former Yeshiva Professor Michael Ross, who left Sy Syms over the summer. "Dr. Zilbert was the most influential MIS professor, both as a teacher and as a mentor. Many who took his classes and Senior Research Paper understand what a great loss this is to the MIS department. We only hope Dr. Fullerton can follow by meeting the students needs and advancing the state of the department," said Dudi Feuer, a MIS major and student of Zilbert's. The impact of Zilbert's departure is magnified in light of the resignation of Professor Michael Ross, another favorite among students, who left the business school over the summer. Admittedly, administrators are worried about a lack of experienced personnel in

the department in the wake of the resignations.

Students are concerned that no concerted effort was made to inform them of Zilbert's resignation before registration. Students fear a repeat of the fall semester, when Ross resigned and students who registered for his course were assigned to his replacement.

According to faculty members close with Zilbert, he is likely to teach part time at another institution while serving the private sector as a consultant. Ross, servicing as a consultant, is now one of the nation's premier experts on Y2K and is sought after by many large companies. Since Zilbert's expertise is in COBOL programming, and COBOL programming is one of the most sought-after skills in Y2K bug fixing, Zilbert is likely to join Ross in high-level Y2K consulting.

Many students are also concerned that the administration neglected to search for a replacement for Dr. Ross until it was too late. The department did hire an excellent part-time staff member, Rabbi Avi Rosenfeld, who has taught both intro and advanced C++ classes. But while Rosenfeld does cover some classes, administrators are concerned that there is no stability in the department and that a full time professor is needed. Zilbert filled that void, and now that he is leaving, the administration is looking for a replacement.

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# "Jewish Lure" of Yeshiva Graduate Schools

BY SHMULI SINGER

Yeshiva University's graduate schools offer YC and Stern alumni the option of completing their education under the banner of Torah U'Madda. The Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, and Ferkauf Graduate School of Psychology all attract numerous students from Yeshiva's undergraduate programs, partly due to their Jewish natures, kosher cafeterias, and no classes on Jewish holidays.

After actually attending one of Yeshiva's graduate programs, however, some students question this perceived Jewish character. Other students profess different motivations altogether for choosing to stay within the YU system, perhaps raising the question of whether the connection to Yeshiva is not just one in name.

Einstein perennially achieves standing among the top medical schools in the country, and accordingly, claims the status of Yeshiva's premiere graduate school. This position garners the lion's share of funding from YU, and makes the school an attractive option for the college's erstwhile medical students. Gita Lisker, SCW '95 viewed the affinity for Einstein at YU and Stern partially as a function of its Jewish nature. "I find Einstein very accommodating to Jewish needs," she remarked, "possibly even to the aggravation of its secular and non-Jewish students. For instance, the library and gym are closed on Shabbos, the caf is kosher, and the whole school is run as a religious institution." "However," she added, "it also happens to be a wonderful top-tier medical school, aside from being one with a thriving Jewish community and environment." Jay Lisker, YC '96, another Einstein student agreed with this perception. "When I was in YU, people were gung-ho about going to Einstein," he said. "It's good that the university has a great medical school that students strive to get into."

The lure of Einstein contrasts somewhat with the lower level of YC and Stern interest in other Yeshiva graduate schools. Students at Ferkauf describe a lower profile connection between their school and the general University administration. "Ferkauf is not like Stern at all," noted Aliza Diamond, SCW '99, "if not for the letterhead, you wouldn't know it was Jewish." Despite this, she pointed out that friends of hers had considered the Jewish factor in choosing Ferkauf over other schools. "The fact that there are no classes

on Yom Tov makes Ferkauf ideal for Jewish students," she concluded. Other students did not adopt such a favorable view. One former YC student noted that Ferkauf's lack of Jewish character manifested itself in the dependence on nearby Einstein for Jewish-related facilities. "It isn't convenient to have to run over to Einstein whenever you need a minyan," he grumbled. "It seems as though Einstein's Jewish nature eclipses Jewish life in Ferkauf."

Many Cardozo students coming from YU's colleges portray their school in a positive light. "Cardozo lived up to the expectations I had when I chose it," said David Rosenfeld, SSSB '96, who graduated from the law school this year. "The Jewish environment was one of the main reasons I went there, and this atmosphere was present, while not detracting from the multicultural experience that distinguished the school from Sy Syms. Every event at the school is kosher, and the Torah U'Madda insignia is right there on the front doors as a reminder of the Jewish roots of the institution," added Rosenfeld. Josh Fine, YC '96, a current Cardozo student, echoed this sentiment. "I know the uptown administration very well," said Fine, who served as YCSC President in the '95-'96 academic year, "and I currently work with them closely as Vice President of the Student Bar Association. They definitely are very helpful on many issues here, but the important thing is that the Cardozo administration is completely on our side, both on Jewish and secular questions."

Other students contested this assertion, however. "YU in general, and Cardozo in particular, are not nearly as sensitive to Jewish problems as a completely secular university would be," complained a former YC student who graduated from Cardozo in '99. "We pushed for a beis medrash, since the one in the library only permitted quiet study," he recalled, "but we were not successful in getting one." One former Sy Syms graduate, who attended Fordham Law, viewed Einstein's success as part of Cardozo's problem. "Cardozo has been called one of the 'up and coming law schools' by the Yeshiva administration for as long as I can recall, but it remains a second tier law school, year after year. If YU would take half as much interest in Cardozo as it does in Einstein, the school would move up in the list almost immediately. Until that happens, YU guys who get into a better law school will go there, irrespective of Jewish character."



COMMIE Staff enjoying every moment of controversial Dorm Talks.

## Dorm Talks

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chassidic methods yet who may be interested in those methods, to use their spare time developing a deeper understanding of the daily liturgy and to reach higher levels of *kavana*, intention, in their *davening*.

As for Rav Shlomo Carlebach himself, A'H', Rabbi Lamm had only high praise for both the man and his single-handed efforts to create a renaissance within Jewish music this century. Rabbi Lamm did warn Carlebachian followers of two negatives, however. Lamm explained that if an individual had *kavana* only when *davening* with *Carlebach* tunes, then that person was in a serious religious quandary, and should take the time to ensure that he/she has the proper *kavana* even without the *nigunim*. The other problem Lamm addressed was the stereotypical nature of the Dorm Talk scenario primer. Rabbi Lamm felt that the scenario labeled fellow students. This same notion was later mirrored by Steven I. Weiss, and Rabbi Lamm reiterated his disgust for labels within the student body.

The second topic of the evening ended on a tense note, but began with Rabbi Lamm offering a simple philosophy. When reporting, and even when criticizing the administration, writers should not cross the line of outright gall. Rabbi Lamm mentioned that while he was a student he himself criticized the administration in the newspaper, yet he did it with the proper respect, something which he feels current writers may sometimes lack.

In this discussion, Rabbi Lamm stated that criticism is in-and-of-itself not inherently evil, and that he even encourages criticism, if done with the correct intentions. Lamm went on to address a reporters responsibility as Jews and B'nai Torah, explaining that all people are deserving of a basic level of respect, as all people are created *b'tzelem elokim*, in God's form. Moreover, Lamm urged students to think about the issues involved before openly criticizing anyone, for even a shred of doubt calls into account the *halakha* of *heval dan et kal adam l'chaf zechut*: judging people, and their actions, for the better. Rabbi Lamm pointed out that this is a *halakha*, not just a nice thing to do, and an obligation upon everyone, especially those at the helm of a public medium.

Rabbi Lamm offered a solution to reporters, suggesting that writers should merely allude to wrongdoings by others rather than striking the Issue head on, a principle inconsistent with a writer's responsibility as a journalist and reporter.

The evening grew tense as *Commentator* Editor-in-Chief Alex Traiman broke Rabbi Lamm's "ground rules," by addressing a recent issue rather than merely alluding to a worldly problem. Traiman commented on *The Commentator's* disappearances from their normal places throughout the campus, asking Rabbi Lamm for his opinion about these disappearances. Rabbi Lamm outrightly refused to discuss the issue explaining the issue had already been settled. Rabbi Lamm then turned harsh, reiterating that reporters must do their jobs with the proper respect, later charging Traiman and co-editor Aaron Klein to always make double and triple sure he and his staff are representing student opinion at all times.

*Commentator* columnist Yishai Fleisher later questioned Lamm as to why he would not discuss the issue, mentioning that he took it as an affront to the student body, stating administration members purposely removed the most powerful student voice on campus when outsiders arrived on campus. Rabbi Lamm then grew slightly irate, stating once again that the administration had already sent a letter to the governing board of *The Commentator* along with a check to reimburse the paper for lost issues. Lamm then went on to state that he would not get down on his knees and bow his head and beg for apology as he was afraid of creating his prowess. After a short interruption, giving Rabbi Lamm a chance to calmly collect his thoughts, he replied to Yishai with a slightly evened temper and professed to the two hundred plus students, exactly how hard the administration works for the students. Rabbi Lamm referred to himself, acting at times as a mendicant when asking potential donors for funds. He followed this with a quasi-apology to the students for the occurrences.

Overall, the students enjoyed the discussion and the opportunity that Dorm Talks presented for the students to have a direct discussion with

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## The Beggars of Yeshiva

BY DANIEL ZALMAN KRONENGOLD

Al Linder, age 54, grew up in Hoboken, New Jersey. His family, Orthodox, was wealthy. His grandparents owned a women's coat factory in Hoboken. Al and his father worked at the factory, which was inherited by his parents when his grandparents died. Al completed high school at Hoboken High School but did not go on to college. It seemed that the family's prosperity would be passed on to Al, ensuring him financial security for life.

His parents lost the business in 1979, and Al started to work at Queens Department Store in Hoboken, delivering furniture, televisions and appliances. When he lost this job in 1981, he had nowhere to go. On January 14th, 1981, he began his career as a collector of tzedakah at the Yeshiva uptown campus. This marks his 19th year at Yeshiva.

Al can be seen in the mornings and afternoons sitting on the bench in front of Furst Hall. In the evenings, he moves to the bench in front of the Main Building the Morgenstern dormitory.

A widower for nine years, Al and his 11-year-old daughter Sara live in an apartment on 178th Street in Washington Heights. While he won't receive a pension until he is 62, his daughter receives Social Security Survivors' Benefits for his wife, amounting to \$328 per month. Their rent is \$475. Al begs in order to pay the rest of the rent and other expenses.

Sara goes to Hillel Academy on scholarship. Al says, "My daughter doesn't have to worry about going to college. My mother-in-law left a trust fund of \$180,000 to my daughter, which she'll be able to take out when she's 18. She offered me \$25,000 of it, but I won't take it. I'll be an old man, what do I need? At least I won't have to worry about her going to college."

How much money does Al receive at our campus? "It depends on how long I stay. If I stay from 5 O'Clock to 10 O'Clock (Maariv), I make \$50. When I was healthier, I'd go to 21st Street in Flatbush first, where I made \$60-\$65. But I don't go anymore; I have bad legs."

Indeed, Al says he has a number of health problems, including diabetes, a diabetic leg ulcer and plenty of dental problems. He wears regular bandages covered by Ace bandages on his legs. They bleed every two to three years, when his skin dries.

Al's daughter also has a history of illness. She has only one kidney and falls ill every so often, especially during winter. Combined costs of health care for his household can get steep. A Yeshiva graduate handed him an application for Medicaid a few months ago. The Medicaid he now receives covers 20% of his daughter's medical costs, in addition to the 80% coverage from Medicare she was already receiving.

Al says he dreams of working for YU. "See, I could collect money from donors for YU—because I did very good in 19 years col-

lecting for myself. But I could collect for YU and get millions upon millions of dollars—through my connections in Brooklyn and all over. All I would want: 15% of what I bring in - no salary. I'll prove to YU how great I am... If I bring in \$15 million a year, I've gotta get \$750,000, which I think I'm entitled to if I bring that into YU."

Despite his reservations about more menial types of work, Al admits that if someone offered him a job as a janitor, he would take it and that if someone gave him another application for employment at YU, he would fill it out.



Richard Sieger, age 47, grew up in a middle-class New Jersey family. His mother was Conservative, his father Orthodox. He has been asking for help at YU for about four years. A college graduate, he is well educated and just a year ago was working on a real estate project.

Making and having made a fortune in real estate, he moved with his wife to peaceful Waltham, Massachusetts. They had two sons. Then there was the divorce. It devastated him. Clinical depression hit, and Richard found it difficult to perform even simple tasks.

"I couldn't even tie my shoelaces," he says. He lost everything. Until a few months ago he had an apartment on 184th Street. Evicted, he is now homeless. A resident of Washington Heights is kind enough to let him sleep in his apartment, but every two weeks he is kicked out and has to find a place for the night; sometimes other people's apartments, sometimes emergency rooms.

Richard also begs at Breuer's. In addition, he does some odd jobs at Breuer's and at a shul downtown. He says he receives about \$12 a day begging.

So, Richard is homeless, and at age 47, has a decent education and looks like he can work. Why does he not have a full-time job? "I would be glad to take a job, if someone offered me one. Not an application or an interview, but a job. I made more money in a day when I worked than I do now in a week. I would rather work. I miss work."

"People say I should work at McDonald's or something, but after having such high-rung jobs, I find it humiliating to do something like that. I would like to work at YU. I applied for a low-rung job but they rejected me because I was over-qualified."

Richard blames his inability to go through the job application process on the mild form of clinical depression he has. Recently, on the urging of a social worker, he started seeing a psychiatrist to be treated for this illness. He says, "I often cry. I mask my depression when I'm at YU, so you might not see it so easily."

"People complain that I have nice clothing. But this is the clothing I had before I got poor. They can't expect me to get rid of it. Besides, many of the clothes I wear are donations from the students here."

## Teachers' Salaries

*continued from page 1*

the faculty.

In the past, while raises in salaries were fickle, monetary bonuses were for the most part nonexistent. According to two senior professors, the faculty would occasionally receive a T-shirt or umbrella as a gift. While some department heads have received monies added to their salaries, those bonuses have been small with and fairly insignificant over the years.

Another complaint of the faculty is the absence of a formal pay scale structuring professor salaries. To the contrary, one high-level administrator insisted that there does exist a pay scale for university faculty. Clarification was asked of Dr. Sheldon Socol, Vice President of Business Affairs, however he refused to comment.

Many Yeshiva and Stern College professors expressed feelings of disappointment to the salary issue, claiming that there was little hope their pleas will be taken seriously. "That is until Dr. Lowengrub came on the scene," remarked a social science professor to the agreement of colleagues present. The faculty member was referring to the redoubled efforts of Dr. Morton Lowengrub, the University's new Vice President of Academic Affairs. "He has instilled hope and the prospects for progress among the undergraduate faculty."

"The low salary increments are just symbols of our inability to properly represent ourselves, [Sheldon] Socol has seen to that," claimed one faculty member mirroring accusations others made at a group discussion of general faculty discontent. Lowengrub however has set out to repair that aspect of faculty-administration relations as well, "creating a faculty committee which will represent the faculty to the administration."

According to Dr. Lowengrub, teachers' salaries are a high priority for the university and plans are being made to address the problem. Dr. Lowengrub is currently examining a system where professor salaries will remain competitive throughout the duration of their employment at Yeshiva, and not just

at the entry level as was reported in a past edition of *The Commentator*.

One system being considered for implementation is that of merit based salaries. Under this plan a professor will earn an increase or bonus based upon their performance as judged by deans and respectable review committees. A re-creation of a faculty appeals process is also a top priority. According to one administrator, the current process by which faculty can appeal administrative decisions has been seemingly nonexistent, failing many professors.

The incorporation of a faculty committee and other governing bodies will assure that such problems as favoritism and arbitrary decisions can be circumvented and avoided.

Another effort Dr. Lowengrub is making on behalf of the teachers is the inauguration of a summer program for continued scholarship. The program will sponsor professors who wish to perform summer research with intentions of developing new curricula or drafting scholarly works for publication. Dr. Lowengrub envisions the program as one of great benefit to the professors while providing a service to the university and the academic world at large.

Undergraduate students will also stand to benefit from the program. Students will be given the opportunity to serve as research assistants to the professors, earning stipends. A separate endowment and outside funding for the new research department will not be necessary as Lowengrub noted substantial monies have been found within the existing budget for the program. The research office is part of a larger plan Lowengrub has for fostering faculty research and providing distinguished students the opportunity to gain valuable experience.

"Things have been real bad here for a long time. It seems that we just might have found an ally in Dr. Lowengrub, here's hoping anyway," remarked one optimistic professor who saw the potential for a bright future under Dr. Lowengrub's leadership.

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## Chanukah Concert continued from page 24

back at YU two years in a row," Dachs informed the crowd. "You always hear about the famous YU concert, and when I was called to do it last year, people told me to make it good, because you get there once and maybe they invite you back in five years. So I'm really flattered that you invited me back again." "Indeed, he is one of the best," commented Olivestone, who raved about Dachs' performance. "Shloime has quickly distinguished himself as an audience favorite."

Continuing a long first half, the lights were dimmed to blackness for the entrance of special guest star, Dedi. Bedecked in a black t-shirt not bearing his trademark insignia, but rather the official logo of YU Chanukah Concert '99, Dedi explained that his casual garb was an indication that "when I come to YU, I am not performing, I come to party with you. I love YU!" Dedi belted out a full set of popular tunes including songs from his newest album as well as signature songs from past recordings. Of particular enjoyment to the crowd was Dedi's performance of an almost forgotten song of Shlomo Carlebach, as he displayed his talent at playing guitar. Dedi's set concluded with house shaking, rocking renditions of "Ki Va Moed" and "Hu Yigal," which had the entire crowd off their seats and screaming and begging for more.

The intermission featured some of the year's most intense mixed, shiduch-encouraging socialization. A smattering of pick-up *ma'ariv* minyanim also sprang up in the Lampport foyer. YUSSR used the break in the action to sell tickets for its annual raffle while concert goers had the opportunity to partake of the senior class concession stands, or purchase Morgenstern's best selling tape and CD. Free T-Shirts from J&R Music World, the concert's corporate sponsor, were distributed along with free catalogs.

Subsequent to a brief Chanukah medley by the Neginah Orchestra, YU favorite and undisputed superstar Avraham Fried stole the night away with his headline performance. The most eagerly anticipated part of the night, Fried reminded all present why they had been so excitingly looking forward to his unsurpassed stellar performance. Fried whipped out an array of tunes ranging from his most popular classics to his most

recent upbeat favorites. His set opened to the number one song of the 1990's, "Didoh Bei," which set the tone for what was yet to come. His soulful rendition of the classic "No Jew will be Left Behind," accompanied by images of fire and Stars of David had the audience cheering to no avail. By the time Fried had sung seven songs, he had the crowd on the edge of their seats, begging to hear "Chazak," the song that Fried performed for the first time ever on the YU stage three years ago. When Fried reached the first chorus of the song, two flashpots exploded on each side of the stage, sending fire and smoke upward. The crowd roared its approval of Rabbi Dr. John Krug's lighting effects, only to be surprised once more when two canons fired massive amounts of confetti over the entire auditorium.

After Fried's set, much of the audience assumed the concert was over. However, an announcement was made over the sound system for everyone to take their seats, as the show was by no means over. Olivestone, with the help of Etan Walls, got the crowd roaring again, and then announced that there was a surprise finale. World famous composer Yossi Green was in attendance, and after a piano was set up, Green strolled onto the stage. The audience voiced its approval, chanting "Yossi, Yossi!" Green began to play on the piano and promptly, Morgenstern walked onto the stage singing "Shalom Aleichem." Dachs then appeared in the left aisle and joined in the singing. For the last verse of the song, Fried and Dedi walked down the right aisle surrounded by the audience. When they reached the stage, all of the performers joined Green for two of his most popular compositions, Dedi's "Rotzoh," and Fried's "Rifoeni." The finale ended with YU homesong "Simcha L'artzecha" and "Mizmor L'David" as all five stars huddled together in an unsurpassed performance of Pop-Hassidic music. The performers walked offstage with the crowd still loudly singing, dancing and applauding.

This year's was undoubtedly the best concert ever, due in no small part to the tireless weeks of work by Olivestone and his concert committee. "The concert was everything it was built up to be and more," declared one anxious concert-goer. The thoroughly enjoyable event is one that people will be talking



# YU Alumnus Shalom Morgenstern Opens Chanukah Concert

BY EPHRAIM SHAPIRO

In a stellar performance kicking off what undoubtedly will be a long and prosperous musical career, YC alumnus and RIETS student Shalom Morgenstern opened up Chanukah concert '99 to rave reviews.

Nearly one month following the successful release of his top-selling debut album, "Ltav Avid," Morgenstern wowed the crowd of 1,100 in Lampport Auditorium with his sensational performance. Morgenstern, known on the YC campus simply as "Jon," stole the stage as he displayed his phenomenal voice while singing three of his signature songs and later returned to the stage for the big finale, led by Yossi Green.

An MTA graduate as well, Morgenstern joked that he feels he has been here forever, as he reminded the audience that his last performance on the YU stage was when he sang as a soloist for the Miami Boys Choir the memorable "Torah Today."

The Concert opened with awesome renditions of the all empowering "Ltav Avid," followed by a very emotional "K'ayol," and the effervescent hora, "Bitchu" - already a favorite dancing tune at Jewish weddings.

Possessing an astoundingly gifted and harmonious voice, Morgenstern is quickly becoming well known in the world of Jewish Music and making his mark as one of the most popular and talented young stars. Chanukah Concert '99 followed his triumphantly raved Shabbos Chanukah week-end show at the well attended Homowack hotel in Upstate New York.

Toward the end of the concert, Morgenstern returned to the stage amidst deafening applause, to begin the concert's grand finale with a superb and inspiring



lead-in to the song "Shalom Aleichem." Following his entrance, Shloime Dachs joined with Shalom center stage, as they locked arms and exquisitely harmonized together in a most memorable and dazzling performance. Throughout the finale's series of Green and Carlebach tunes, Morgenstern and Dachs vocalized together with Avraham Fried, Dedi and Yossi Green as the five stars of the evening synchronized their voices with unsurpassed synergy.

"It is fitting to be singing here at home in YU," exclaimed Morgenstern who fit right in with the seasoned big name stars of the show. One final "at home" touch was added as Morgenstern, the YU guy, chanted the infamous "Oy Ribbono Shel Olam, Yeshivas Yitzchak Elchonon," Yeshiva's patriotic lyrics to the tune of the world famous Carlebach song "Simcha L'Artzecha."

"He really has beautiful voice" exclaimed Sruli Tannenbaum, former YCSC president who still hangs around Yeshiva and thoroughly enjoyed Shalom's performance.

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# STUDENT EVENTS ROCK YESHIVA

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

Dispelling rumors that student life on campus was all but dead, the collective undergraduate student body of Yeshiva University showed incredible signs of life in recent weeks. In the days proceeding and following the festive holiday of Chanukah, the undergraduate campuses were imbued with a hubbub that has seldom been visible in recent years.

Beginning with a pre-Chanukah Dougies shiur cosponsored by the Student Organization of Yeshiva and the Torah Activities Council featuring Rabbi Ephraim Kanarfogel and Rabbi Mordechai Willig and commencing with the opening night of the Yeshiva College Dramatics Society's 69th production, *The Shawshank Redemption*, during the week of Chanukah provided an additional social and entertainment outlet for all members of the Yeshiva student body.

The freshman classes of Yeshiva College and Stern College for Women cosponsored a trip to a local comedy club in the city, while the Office of Placements and Career Services held a career exploration program for people interested in politics with such noted speakers as Rockland County Legislature and Yeshiva College alum Ryan Karben. On Wednesday, December 1, at 9:40 PM in the main bais medrash, Rav Lamm delivered the weekly Sichas Mussar to all present before maariv. After much publicity and hype, the Iranian club held their first event of the year and it was deemed an incredible success.

In a unanimously appreciated collaborative effort, SOY, TAC, BMPSC, JSSC and IBCSC distributed convenient pamphlets with instructions and order of blessings for the Chanukah candles. SOY also unveiled a brand new updated Roshei Yeshiva poster, available for a very minimal price.

The Office of Student Services and the undergraduate student councils invited the entire student body to spend an evening in New Jersey's Continental Airlines Arena to watch the New Jersey Nets give the San Antonio Spurs a run for their money. A well attended riveting game was only one of two Nets losses at home this month.

For all those not fortunate enough to make it into New Jersey for the evening, SOY provided ample reason to stay in yeshiva by serving up a Massive Mishmar. On Thursday, December 2nd at 9 PM: Rav Michael Rosensweig delivered a shiur and at 10:30 PM: Rav Baruch Simon spoke Torah in advance of the 12:30 AM arrival of Chinese food from Chopstix. Below the main bais medrash in the MTA cafeteria, a D'var Torah by R. Assaf Bednarsh was delivered.

The undergraduate Chess Club of Yeshiva University held an event in the 3rd floor lounge of the Schottenstein Center just adjacent to the Commentator office. On December 5th, the Yeshiva University Debate Society hosted their first home tournament of the year and the Stern College Political Science Society presented a lecture in the midtown Schottenstein Residence Hall.

The following evening, SOY and TAC held their annual Chanukah Chaggigot in the Main Bais Medrash and Kotch



Auditorium respectively. The festive events brought a unity driven by excitement to the campuses as the participants danced the night away. Among the notables in attendance were Rav Lamm, Rav Kahn, Rav Parnes, Rav Simon, Rav Goldwicht, Rav Charlop, Rav Blau, and many others. That same Monday evening of the chaggigot, SOY arranged a shiur by Rav Aharon Kahn in Lampport

Auditorium at 8 PM and served donuts and soda throughout the evening.

On December 7, Scott Nadel President of the Stone Bais Medrash Program student council and his board conducted the first annual SBMP Chanukah Luncheon in Belfer Hall's Weissberg Commons. Keynote speaker Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm delivered a spirited message that made his attendance greatly appreciated. That evening Aton Holtzer and the Student Organization of Yeshiva held another in their series of nonstop events, a lecture by Rav Reichman in the rooms across from the bais medrash followed by servings of dougies.

December 8th showed how important the students of Yeshiva University are to the Jewish community and the outside community at large with the undergraduate student councils sponsoring and running a bone marrow drive in the Ivy Center and in Morgenstern Hall. This critical program registered hundreds of people into the global bone marrow registry that has saved countless lives by providing matches for transplants in critically ill patients. Yitz Motzen and Howie Felderman worked tirelessly for countless hours organizing the drive and then running around campus to ensure that everyone on campus gave of themselves for this noble cause.

Wednesday in the evening there was a Russian Chanukah Chaggigah and a SOY Kiruv program at Mt. Sinai Shul in Washington Heights.

Just one day after the successful SBMP luncheon, Fred Krelzman, Jonathan Finklestein and the entire board of the undergraduate student council of the James Striar School held their annual Chanukah Luncheon in Belfer Hall's Weissberg Commons with keynote speaker Rabbi Dr. Michael Schmidman. That same afternoon, the TAC Adopt-A-Bubbie Program held a chesed event in the Midtown Center.

Thursday, Rosh Chodesh Tevet, December 9 after the 7:40 AM minyan in the main bais medrash SOY served up their monthly Bagel Breakfast for Rosh Chodesh. After a day of no classes on the uptown campus, the undergraduate student councils hosted Yeshiva University's annual Chanukah Concert. Produced by Naftali Olivestone and cosponsored by J&R Music World, the worlds best home entertainment, music and largest computer mega-store, the concert was an incredible success, selling out and filling the room to a capacity crowd. For hours Lampport auditorium rocked with the best of Jewish pop music.

On Motzie Shabbos, December 11th, Dr. Anthony S. Beukas and the Yeshiva College Dramatics Society took center stage in what will go down in YUCS history as one of the best productions of all time. Performed in the Schottenstein Theater, *The Shawshank Redemption* drew capacity crowds

night after night as audiences sat awestruck at the technical mastery of this screenplay adapted to stage production. Extra seating and standing room did not provide ample space for the sellout crowds as the managers were forced to turn people away at the door.

On December 12th, TAC hosted a lecture in Koch Auditorium and the following day the Speech Pathology Club of Stern College for Women had an evening speaker. On the 14th Shlomit Zauderer and the TAC board hosted yet another Shiur in Koch Auditorium. Also on Tuesday, the 14th at 9 PM Rav Ari Berman delivered a joint SOY/BMP Shiur in the Morg Shul, followed of course by Dougies. YUCS, the computer science clubs, held several workshop classes on web design and how to purchase a computer.

December 20th saw the coming of the much anticipated Uptown Dorm Talks featuring Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm. With an attendance that dwarfed the numbers for his orientation shiur four months earlier, this session's controversial topics and internal publicity packed Morg lounge as Rabbi Lamm addressed the crowd and fielded questions masterfully for two hours. That very evening on the midtown campus, TAC hosted yet another lecture in the Midtown Center. Also on the 20 was the final Academic Colloquia Lecture Series of the semester, given by Dr. Mareleyn Schneider, Professor of Sociology.

On Thursday, December 23 at 8 PM, SOY held another Torah Talks with guest speaker Rabbi Reuven (Kevi) Taragin.

During this time there were other notable events such as the lecture hosted by the Yeshiva College Dean's office on the dismantlement of the Israeli settlements given by Dr. Naomi Weinberger and a special lecture on Jewish-Christian Relations in Apocalyptic Times, the Dangers and Opportunities that was given by Richard Landes, Ph.D. Director of the Center for Millennial Studies Boston University. Numerous Dean's roundtable discussions and coffee hours were held as was the Kukin chemistry lecture in Belfer Hall. Dr. Ruth Bevan also hosted a number of post hour "video lectures" with her Russian Politics class. The Torah Umadda lecture series conducted a number of sessions of this few week time span and students should keep their eyes open for future lectures.

Also on campus during these weeks was a shabbos with Hanoch Teller, the world renowned *maggid*. Only to be topped last shabbos by the on campus attendance of Rav Herschel Schechter. Look forward to the first shabbos back after winter break when the students of Yeshiva will be privileged to spend shabbos with the esteemed University President, Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm.

One thing is clear: there is no shortage of campus activities to be involved in. The campus these past few weeks was engulfed in student life, voice and action. The beginning of next semester that will supposedly see the return of WYUR and Hamevaser, an *Inasense* concert, the induction of many new and exciting classes, the Yeshiva University arts Festival, the SOY Seforim Sale, more opportunities to work with the feisty University newspaper, the *Commentator*, and the yearbook.





## Tora Dojo Back Where It Started

BY RAMI COHEN

Tora Dojo has returned to Yeshiva in full force. Under the auspices of Sensei Eric Andron, the classes take place on the third floor of Schottenstein, right outside the often noisy Commentator office, every Tuesday night, from 8:30PM to 10:30PM. Sensei Andron emphasizes self-control and discipline as a general philosophy, and views teaching Karate as a way to perfect his own martial arts style while sharing the Yeshiva's rich tradition of Tora Dojo with fellow students. The two-hour classes are intense, to say the least, but students find themselves enjoying the classes

despite the strenuous workout. Andron's franchise: Heng En Rui Tora Dojo Karate (each black belt becomes his or her own franchise of Tora Dojo), offers students an alternative to the mandatory PED classes, which are not always suited to an individual student's expectations.

One factor preventing more students from participating in the martial arts course is that no credit is received for participation. In the already hectic students' schedule, it is hard enough to find time to do homework, let alone two hours a week for karate. However, those involved in the class feel they will reap the benefits of their hard work and commitment for years to come.

## Hockey: Behind the Scenes

BY ADAM COHEN

Steve Webb, the New York Islanders right winger, blindsides Mats Sundin of the Toronto Maple Leafs against the boards as the Leafs superstar heads innocently towards the bench. Mayhem erupts, and an on-ice pile-up ensues, with Webb on the bottom, between members of both teams. The officials, led by Dave Jackson, quickly prevent a bench-clearing brawl. Two minutes later, as Webb exits the penalty box and skates towards the Islanders' bench, he is met on-ice by Leafs' bruiser Tie Domi, who is clearly disturbed with Webb's lack of respect for Sundin. Domi tries to prevent Webb from reaching the Islanders bench, but when Webb gets there anyway, Domi grabs his sweater and tries to pull him back onto the ice. Again, Dave Jackson is hasty to act as he swiftly pulls Domi away from the horde of Islanders.

Such is the life of one of the National Hockey League most experienced on-ice officials. Over fourteen years of professional refereeing, the past seven at the major league level, Dave Jackson has established himself as one of the premier referees in a league once renowned for its violence and insurgent nature.

"I love my job. I love what I do," Jackson beams. "Gary Bettman has made hockey one of the best products out there." Jackson, a Montreal native, has seen the face of the sport that consumes him undergo the most dramatic changes of its history both on and off the ice. Over the past few years in particular, there have been many radical changes in the job requirements of an NHL official. Last year the league initiated a "two referee system," in which two refs patrol the ice as opposed to the traditional single referee. But this transition is not yet complete. While this year only sixty percent of games are officiated by a referee tandem, next year the league plans on introducing the new system as the standard policy for officiating all matches.

But Jackson looks forward to working under the new system. "It would have been done much sooner but the league just doesn't have enough guys available." However, whether he has another partner or not, Jackson feels that the on-ice relationship between players and officials is a fixed one. "The respect factor is very high," Jackson insists.

On this night, however, with the Islanders and Maple Leafs at war, all the respect in the world won't keep these players in line. Jackson hits Domi with a two-minute unsportsmanlike conduct penalty for his altercation with Webb, and no sooner has Domi left the box than he is called for another minor. The Leafs current penalty leader (99 minutes coming into the game, more than double anyone else on his team) would wind up spending six minutes in

the box.

Jackson, then, has to alter his respect theory a little. "The players all have my respect until they lose it. The league tells us to be careful with what we say to the players, so when a player mouths off, I either give him a penalty, or I just tell him that he can't talk to me for the rest of the game."

The players, however, are not always receptive to the fact that they can no longer bring issues to Dave's attention. "They'll come up to me and say, 'I have an A on my sweater, I have to talk to the referee.' And I'll tell them, 'Talking to the referee is a privilege, not a right.'"

During a TV timeout, Jackson goes over to the penalty box and gives Domi some friendly advice. "I told him that he just had to play smarter. His team was in a close situation and they needed him on the ice. A player can never take matters into his own hand. I let him know that he was really hurting his team by taking these kinds of penalties."

Jackson, a Montreal native, spent seven years in the minors before making the jump to The Show. Coming from Montreal, where hockey and life are synonymous, Dave spent his childhood idolizing 'Les Canadiens,' playing street hockey on the icy roads of Pointe-Claire, a pleasant suburb nestled near Montreal's cosmopolitan airport. But all the time spent on the road in the minors, living in dingy motel quarters side by side with the players - of whom many are now playing in the NHL - wiped out any nepotism toward his former favorite team, or biases he may have had against certain other clubs. Jackson believes that "at this point in my career every team is equal."

Refereeing wasn't always in Jackson's life plans. Like all other Canadian children, Jackson dreamed of NHL stardom. It was not in the cards however, and Jackson turned to officiating; a way to get as close as possible to the game. When he first started out in the pinstripes Dave served as both a linesman and a referee. But, Jackson eventually turned to full-time refereeing after being "told by a supervisor, in no uncertain terms, that I was a terrible linesman."

Jackson's tight control of the game is apparent. Just seven minutes and forty-one seconds into the game, it looked like these two teams would be in for a long night of dirty hitting and nasty scuffling. But as the final horn sounds, the game turns out to be one of the more tranquil. Steve Webb even manages to escape alive and unharmed, despite the contrary seeming like a foregone conclusion after his dirty after-the-change hit.

The referee's life on the road is a challenging and exciting one, but Dave Jackson is a tough zebra; unfazed by the hazards that would drive a lesser man to pursue a less demanding line of work. Besides, Jackson, believes, "that's why we have summer!"

## The Pete Rose Issue

BY ADAM COHEN

A number of recent events have caused the Pete Rose issue to resurface. Pete Rose is currently serving a lifetime suspension from Baseball "in accordance with Major League Rule 21," which defines and describes "misconduct" and the applicable penalties.

Before I continue, let me say that I have read the Dowd report, and there is no doubt in my mind that Rose bet on baseball, and more specifically, on the Reds. While there is no evidence that he ever bet on the Reds to lose, there were days when he chose not to bet on the Reds at all. This is a very big problem.

In a 1989 article, Gerald Posner explains why Rose's actions were so hurtful to the game. "The possibility exists that decisions won't be made in the team's best interests, but rather because of the money riding on the game. If a manager bets on a game, he may bring a player off injured reserves sooner than he should in order to win, or he may pitch a reliever without enough rest, not caring that he won't be able to pitch for several extra days.

If a betting manager gets in large debt to bookies, he can clear his account by merely revealing inside information about the team. The opportunity for corruption is greatly increased. This is not to suggest that Rose compromised the Reds in any way. The chance that such impropriety could result is the reason for such a strict taboo on betting baseball. "This is why Pete Rose should never be allowed back into baseball. What Rose did is the worst possible thing that anyone in Baseball could possibly do (with the possible exception of purposely throwing a game), as it undermines the genuineness of the game. I don't believe that I could ever go to a Major League game that Rose was managing and have confidence in the integrity of what I was watching. In fact, I would argue that anyone watching a game that Rose had any hand in, would, on some level, have at least a modicum

of doubt regarding the authentic nature of the game.

Major League Rule 21, posted in the clubhouse of every major-league team, is very clear on the due punishment for Rose's actions:

(d) *BETTING ON BALL GAMES.* Any player, umpire, or club official or employee, who shall bet any sum whatsoever upon any baseball game in connection with which the bettor has no duty to perform shall be declared ineligible for one year.

Any player, umpire, or club or league official or employee, who shall bet any sum whatsoever upon any baseball game in connection with which the bettor has a duty to perform shall be declared permanently ineligible.

Rose was given a choice. A) A hearing would take place and he could continue to deny the charges. At this hearing the public would find out everything he did. As Rose was shown all the evidence against him, he could have predicted being found guilty, and being banned from baseball forever, in accordance with Rule 21(d). B) While not admitting to anything incriminating, he could agree to place himself on the permanently ineligible list, effectively keeping himself from the game forever. Baseball would agree not to publicize any of the evidence against him. (A judge later decided to make the report public, but Baseball tried to suppress it.) It was an easy decision for him to make. He accepted upon himself a punishment more lenient than the one baseball was going to levy on him. He would never have been allowed back into baseball if he were banned for life. The detail that he placed *himself* on the permanently ineligible list should not change that fact. If Rose were back in Baseball, fans could not have confidence that everyone involved was doing his best to win, no matter what Rose did to try and regain the trust of the fans. The bottom line: Pete Rose is bad for the interests of Baseball, and as such, should never be allowed back in.

## The Fan

BY JEREMY CHERNIKOFF

Last week, I found myself leafing through the newspaper, quickly bypassing any article having to do with the New York Rangers. Luckily, my eyes caught the inch high letters of an advertisement that proclaimed "MARYAND vs. WILDCATS Tonight!!!" This was referring to the NCAA Division I Pre-Season NIT, to be held at Madison Square Garden. As I happen to be a fan of the Maryland Terrapins, I couldn't stop myself from hopping on the A train and heading to midtown to cheer on my team.

In the first half of the game, the Maryland defense simply did not play and Kentucky led by 13 points at the half. The Terps stormed back quickly as the second half began and they tied the game with six and a half minutes to play. The score remained close for the duration of the contest. With two seconds left on the clock, Maryland guard Juan Dixon fired up a three-pointer that would have tied the game had it not ricocheted off the rim with a resounding clang. Despite the loss, I left as a proud fan, having watched the Terps give a tremendous effort against a Kentucky team that was ranked 11<sup>th</sup> in the nation. The play of Terrance Morris, a Maryland guard and an All-American candidate fell nothing short of spectacular. Morris, a sophomore, is a favorite of Terrapin fans. Unfortunately, after this season, Morris will follow the paths of others before him and will enter the NBA well before he is scheduled to graduate.

For many years now, players have been forgoing their senior year of college in order to enter the NBA draft. Players have even gone to the pros directly from high school. From the player's point of view this practice is more than understandable. They are by no means wealthy and the prospect of making millions of dollars before they turn twenty is a no-

brainer. Let's imagine that the *New York Times* wrote me a letter saying: "Jeremy, we really want you to cover sports for our paper, we'll start you at \$40,000 a year." Would I even consider telling them that sorry, but I still have two bibles and a gym to complete first? Not a chance. The fault must then lie on the NBA. The National Football League has a rule stating that before a player can be drafted, he must have completed his junior year of college. The NBA has no such rule and as a result, anyone with enough skill can play professional ball, despite having never seen the inside of a college classroom.

This early entry creates a number of problems. First, fans of college basketball are cheated as their favorite players leave when they develop enough talent. Take Maryland as an example. Last season, the Terrapins were one game away from playing in the Final Four for the first time in school history. One major reason for their success was guard Steve Francis. Originally, Francis expressed interest in returning to the Terps the following year. Soon after Maryland's season ended, however, Francis changed his mind and left college early to enter the draft. Had he remained for an additional season, Maryland would no doubt be one of the country's top ranked teams.

The second and more important problem these players are creating is that they are setting a terrible example for children. Why should a fourteen-year-old, who is a talented basketball player go to school when he can play ball all day? Hey, he does not have to worry about college or even high school! Kobe Bryant of the Los Angeles Lakers entered the NBA without worrying about entrance exams, fulfilling requirements, or going to a single class! Children must learn that an education is essential. They cannot do this on their own. The NBA must not accept players who are

## MACS ENJOY IMPRESSIVE START

BY AARON FRIED

The Macs, in their first season in the Skyline conference, have rolled to an impressive 7-4 start. It's been a very exciting season thus far, with a number of close games and an incredible level of play. The Yeshiva fans have responded to their team's strong effort and consequently have been delighted witness an impressive 5-1 home record, with a 7-4 record overall and (6-3 conference).

The Macs started off their season at the United States Merchant Military Academy Nov. 21. The game was close, but the Marines pulled away at the end. The game was closer than the final score (72-58), but the early loss served to motivate the team, as they continued to win six out of their next seven games. Yeshiva's home opener saw the Macs pull off a victory over a hot shooting Old Westbury. Led by co-captains Yossi Gev and David Neiss, the team also continued by blowing out Polytechnic on the road and a crowd pleaser against Mt. St. Mary's at home. The Mt. St. Mary's game saw the MSAC reach decibel levels not traditionally heard in Yeshiva sports. The crowd was brought to their feet with gravity defying alley-oops (for a definition of alley oop, see Palefsky, Nachum), three pointers, and a block into the year 3000 by crowd favorite Tuvy Meyer. These three games concluded Yeshiva's inaugural week into the Skyline conference, and resulted in Gev being named the year's



Co-captain Yossi Gev (33) with two of his team high twenty-five points.

first player of the week, with a 26.3 point per game average on 60 percent shooting. Congratulations Yossi.

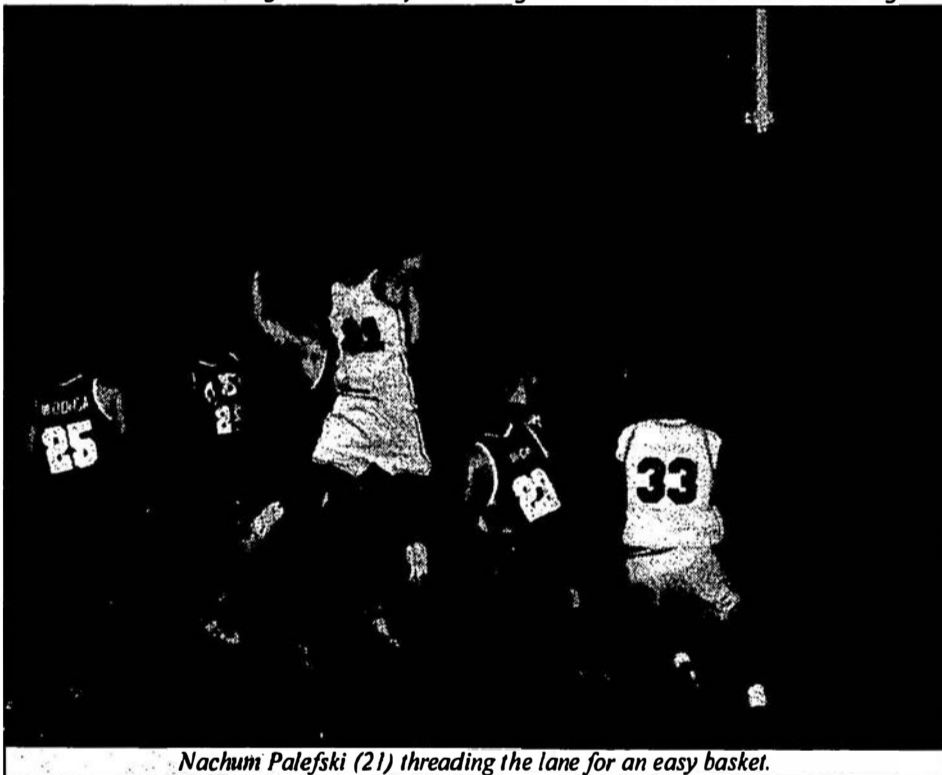
The Macs continued their winning streak with a big victory over preseason conference favorite, Manhattanville, who took the early lead, but Palefsky, point guard Dov Weiner, and Neiss all had big games hitting the crucial shots at the end of the game. However, after the Manhattanville game, the third in just five days, the Macs found themselves coming up just a little too short, losing a non-conference heartbreaker against

Baruch, 72-66 after a bruised Neiss suffered one too many injuries and was forced to sit out the second half.

But much to conference opponent SUNY Maritime's chagrin, Neiss was able to return just two days later, providing for a game leading 21 points as the Macs gave the home crowd a very special Chanukah gift. Continuing the generous spirit, Yeshiva just kept on giving, proceeding to hand out a 104-78 blowout over SUNY Purchase a few days later.

The last few games of the semester were somewhat more disappointing as the Macs finished losing two out of their last three games. The team lost an away game to Old Westbury and beat Mt. St. Vincent, historically a fierce rival, at home. Unfortunately tough scheduling once again played a role, as Yeshiva played four games in just seven days. As a result, the team fell apart in the second half against St. Joe's in the fourth game, blowing a hard earned thirteen point second half lead.

The team looks forward to the second half of the season and has high hopes to finish competing for the conference title. They will be traveling to Los Angeles over the upcoming break to showcase their talents to the West Coast Jewish community and to bask in both the warmth of sunny California, as well as in the enjoyment of their own accomplishments. We look forward to watching the Macs continue their quest for the title, resuming January 17th away, and returning home to the MSAC to avenge themselves against the Merchant Marines February 3rd.



Nachum Palefski (21) threading the lane for an easy basket.

## The Yeshiva Athletic Department

BY DORIAN LEVY

Last Tuesday, Stan Watson cleaned up the gym after the last intramural game of the night. It was 1:30AM and Stan was clearly exhausted. Under the circumstances, exhaustion was clearly understandable. Stan had just finished refereeing his second game of the night, and had been at Yeshiva since around 1PM that afternoon. The day before, he had been at YU the entire day starting at 9:30AM and finishing at 1AM the following calendar day. Yet, despite his fatigue, Stan was sporting the smile that so many of us have grown accustomed to seeing.

Stan has good reason to smile. The dedication that he exhibits daily has earned him the respect of everyone at Yeshiva, as his work has helped the athletic department grow tremendously in his thirteen-year tenure.

Stan began working at Yeshiva in 1986 (October 25, 1986 at 7:30PM., he estimates). When Stan first arrived, the Max Stern Athletic Center did not resemble the center as we know it today. The Olympic size pool was not around and the area the pool now fills served as storage space until the pool's

completion in 1995. Today in addition to the pool, the MSAC sports a jacuzzi, sauna, steam room, and locker room.

In the aquatic center, classes ranging from elementary swimming to scuba diving have been offered regularly. Lifeguards of the pool are Yeshiva students, certified by the athletic department. Many of the lifeguards obtained their training for certification through the lifeguarding course given on campus by Joe Bendnarsh. The pool is open from 3PM through 1AM Monday through Thursday, and during regular gym hours on Friday and Sunday.

Another structural change emerging during the Stan Watson era, is the addition of the downstairs classroom. The classroom serves as a home for seasonal sports, martial arts classes, and athletic teams wishing to show video of past performances. The basketball team also utilizes the classroom during half-time of their home matches.

The weight room, has been fully stocked and renovated, giving students a chance to get in shape. For anybody who may overdo it in the weight room or on the basketball court, the training room, has been recently stocked with the latest in physical training

technology. Aaron Meyer, the proud purveyor of the facility, is the first full-time, fully certified trainer to work at Yeshiva.

Besides the aforementioned additions, YU has successfully maintained seven NCAA varsity athletic teams. They include basketball, tennis, volleyball, cross-country, fencing, golf, and wrestling. For those who are unable to compete in varsity competition, there are three intramural leagues: football, basketball, and softball. The game room provides Ping-Pong and bumper pool for the occasional quick sports fix in between classes. For those who believe that sports involvement should be limited to watching the game with chips and a drink, the large screen TV in the Rubin lounge is a great place to watch the game with the other 35 NY sports experts watching the game as well.

Whatever your preference, whatever your schedule, there is a sports regiment that can fit each and every Yeshiva student. The YU Athletic Department is proud to boast that it is currently better than ever, largely due to the efforts of Athletic Director Dr. Richard Zerneck, and our favorite thirteen-year veteran, Stan Watson.

Yeshiva Sports

# CAMPUS NEWS

December 28, 1999/19 Tevet 5760

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Volume XIV Issue 6

## Rabbi Lamm Addresses 200 Plus Students in Years' First Dorm Talks

BY HADAR WEISS

On December 20<sup>th</sup> Yeshiva University President Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm spoke to a capacity crowd in the Morg Lounge during this year's inaugural Dorm Talks. At the talks, Rabbi Lamm addressed two topics selected the prior week by a student committee: the growing popularity of Rav Shlomo Carlebach's brand of *chassidus* and its effects upon the Jewish world, and responsibility in reporting when writing for *The Commentator*, with the newspaper being the primary representative of the undergraduate voice.

Rabbi Lamm prefaced his remarks about Charlebachian *chassidus* with an introduction into the background of *chassidus* itself, mainly delving into two issues. The first highlighted the approaches of classic leaders of the *chassidic* movement, stressing the internalization of *chassidic* aspects within a person, while refraining from exaggerating one's motions in public, so as not to cause a *Chillul Hashem*.



The second highlighted issue was that of *Hishpashtus Hagashmiyus*, literally the undressing of one's physical self for the purpose of reaching higher spiritual levels, the goal of *chassidism*. In this discussion, Lamm urged those with *chassidic* tendencies to use moderation, and those who tend to shy away from

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## Hundreds Attend SOY Chanukah Chagigah

BY EPHRAIM SHAPIRO

On the evening of December 9th, the fourth light of Chanukah, the Student Organization of Yeshiva (SOY) held its annual Chanukah *Chagigah* in the Main Beit Medrash. The joyous crowd that escalated to over 500 was treated to live music by the Neshoma Orchestra, dancing, and of course, jelly doughnuts.

Traditionally, the *chagigah* is preceded by a special *shiur* in the Lamport Auditorium. The *shiur* was given by Rav Aharon Kahn, whose riveting style was greatly anticipated by all who attended.

Following the *shiur*, students began to fill the large expanse that had been cleared in the Beit Medrash. The Orchestra whipped into a frenzy of celebratory tunes as hundreds of students gathered in circles to sing and dance. Men from all Jewish Studies programs joined together and displayed their fancy (and clumsy) footwork, prancing about the room. In the center of the numerous circles, various *rabbeim* excitedly added to the fervor and happiness that filled the air. At one point, a Red Sea style split was made in the crowd, to form a path for Rabbi Lamm, as he entered the room to lock hands with *rabbeim* and students and dance the night away.

Other *rabbeim* in attendance included Rabbi Meir Goldwicht, Rabbi Yosef Blau, Rabbi Zevulun Charlop, Rabbi Yitzchak Cohen, Rabbi Boruch Simon, Rabbi Yehuda Parnes and Rabbi Harari. Even Rabbi Boruch Mendelson of MTA, encouraged his *talmidim* to celebrate Chanukah in a Yeshiva style. The energetic

and oft sweaty dancing continued for several hours, as the ceaseless flow of students flooded the doorways and many retreated to room 002 for a feast of junk food sponsored by SOY. Many students stood by and cheered during a "Hora" by Coordinator of Student Services, Andrew Leibowitz, together with SOY President, Aton Holzer, *Commentator* Editor-in-Chief Alex Traiman, Sephardic Club President Salim Baghdadi and BMP President Scott Nadel, and other student leaders who took time out of their busy schedules to perspire amongst the natives.

The enthusiastic revelers could not close the festivities without the standard rendition of Yeshiva's traditional "Tzavei Yeshuos Yaakov," a favorite of Ray Dovid Lirshitz, ZTL. The entire student populace present formed one united circle as Rabbis Goldwicht and Charlop escalated into a spirited frenzy to conclude the evening's energetic display of student unity and *simchas hachag*.

Binyamin Mayefsky, a YC senior, gushed, "The celebration was highly enjoyable, and really added to the overall spirituality of our Yeshiva."

Despite a severe shortage of ice cubes, the evening was a great success. The large turnout and extensive participation greatly pleased SOY President Aton Holzer, and left many students looking forward to the Purim *Chagigah*. "Thanks to the Students, *Rabbeim*, Student Services and Facilities Management, as well as the efforts of my Vice President, Aryeh Morris, this Chanukah *Chagigah* has proven to be one of the most successful, both qualitatively and quantitatively, in recent memory" said Holzer.



## Chanukah Concert Rocks Lamport Auditorium

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

The undergraduate campuses were all abuzz in the weeks prior to Chanukah in eager and excited anticipation of the most popular and enjoyable event of the year. Surprising many, the event exceeded any and all expectation. On December 9, YCSC and SCWSC played host to the preeminent names in Jewish music at the annual Chanukah Concert. An energetic crowd of over 1,100 attendees from YC, SCW, and an array of local Jewish high schools, deluged the theologically charged moshpit of Lamport Auditorium in a memorable event that afforded students the rare opportunity to engage in on-campus recreational activity.

The star-studded concert featured Avraham Fried, Dedi, Shloime Dachs, and Shalom Morgenstern. All of the performers enjoyed the musical accompaniment of the Neginah Orchestra. Shalom Morgenstern, a

recent YC graduate, sang a set of three songs from his brand new album, *L'Tav Avid*, to get the evening's performance underway. Morgensern's sweet voice and hometown style received a rousing ovation as his fellow YU students rose to their feet chanting for their friend, a talented new star in the enigmatic field of Modern American Jewish Music. Concert Producer Naftali Olivestone noted that following Morgenstern's performance, "at least a dozen people mentioned to me that they feel Shalom is going to be a big hit."

Following Morgenstern's successful debut, the ever-popular Shloime Dachs entered from side stage singing an accapella intro to his famous "Yerav," evoking cheers and ear piercing shrieks from the audience. The screeching and shrieking subsided as he calmly and soulfully sang his most popular song "Hamalach." "It's really a pleasure to be

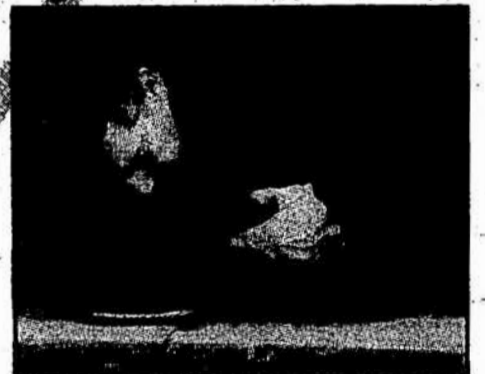
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## Frantic Farewell For Friendly Feline

BY JASON CYRULNIK

On Saturday, December 18, a local resident was walking his dog along Amsterdam Avenue, when his stroll was interrupted by an encounter with a lonely gray kitten, an animal who has won over the hearts of many main campus students, particularly the residents of the Morgenstern Dormitory, by patrolling Amsterdam Avenue for more than a month.

When the Washington Heights native and his "best friend" passed by the cat, a scuffle ensued between the two not quite domesticated animals. The dog's owner promptly decided to intervene and break up the exchange. He soon discovered exactly how difficult taking on the hometown kitten could be. The dog's owner was badly bruised on both legs and managed to be scratched up and down his body, but was fortunate to escape with what most consider minor injuries.



Just five days later, University Security contacted the local police department, and within hours the unsuspecting kitten was taken from its home in the grassy knoll of the Morgenstern Dorm, and brought to a local shelter. Don Summers, Yeshiva University Chief of Security, oversaw the operation, ensuring that there would remain no threat of harm to any Yeshiva students or Washington Heights residents from the "wild pussy cat."

THE COMMENTATOR

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