

THE OBSERVER

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One *chavruta* among many in Koch Auditorium.

Widespread *Chavruta* Program at Stern in Wake of War

by Tikvah Ben Zvi

On Wednesday evenings between 9:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., Koch Auditorium is filled with Stern College women participating in what began as **Operation Torah Shield—The Home Front**. SCW's response to the Gulf War crisis, but what has transformed into the largest *chavruta* learning program in SCW's history.

The *chavruta* program, under the auspices of the Torah Activities Committee, features pairs of SCW women learning different *parshiot* of the Torah so that together, the whole Torah is being studied. The program's goal is to finish learning the entire Torah by Shavuot. A *siyum* is scheduled for the end of May to celebrate this laudable accomplishment.

Entering its fourth week, the program is showing definite signs of success. The first night two hundred students appeared in the auditorium, and each subsequent week approximately seventy-five students attended.

According to SCW freshman Shani Feiner who organized and directs the *chavruta* program, there are approximately fifty students who are unable to be present dur-

ing the allotted time period and instead have chosen to learn on their own. Feiner added that the enthusiasm and consistency of the students who do participate, whether it be in the auditorium or in their own rooms, are wonderful to witness.

L.E. Kagan, a junior who is learning Rabeinu Bachya's commentary on *B'reith* feels that the weekly atmosphere in the auditorium is truly uplifting. She stated that walking into the auditorium, seeing each pair of women learning together and everyone in the room caught up in the excitement of the program and of the learning, is "a really good feeling."

The first night of the program an index card was presented to each student indicating the student's name, the name of her *chavruta* and the *parsha* they were assigned to learn. They were instructed to sit with the other *chavrutot* who were learning a *parsha* from the same Book, so that the seating in the vast room would be organized according to what people were learning.

For Kagan, details such as this made the program even more memorable. "Of course the learn-

ing is what's important," she said, "but it helps that so much hard work went into it."

An anonymous participant also had only praise for the program. She stated that the program is "probably one of the most elevating and inspiring hours of the week," and it is the closest she feels to being back in Israel.

Feiner revealed that the students are not the only ones involved with and excited about the program. Dean Karen Bacon and Dean Ethel Orlian have been invited to participate. Director of Student Services, Zeldia Braun, has not only been invited to join, but also promised to have the *siyum* in May catered.

In addition, Braun is inviting the local Jewish press to attend the celebration to publicize the intense serious learning going on at SCW. Feiner was extremely grateful for such interest on the part of the administration.

President of TAC, senior Chayala Weissman, added that students who want to join the program now can still do so and either form their own *chavrutot* or join an existing group.

Brookdale Thefts Halted

by Laura Gordimer

A crime wave swept over Stern College for Women beginning with the week of March 1. Within a fortnight, credit cards, clothing and large sums of money were stolen from Brookdale Hall. The dormitory was immediately saturated with flyers urging students to be more security conscious and to double lock their dorm room doors.

An extensive investigation was subsequently conducted by Yeshiva University commander Ernie McNamee and Assistant Chief Frank Morris; Chief of Security Don Sommers served as overseer of the ordeal.

The investigation was initiated by a victim of the thefts who suspected a fellow student of stealing, thus reporting her to university security. Through close scrutiny, the student was found with the stolen merchandise.

As a result of security's pursuits, three Stern women have been expelled. According to Chief Sommers, the students "had actual

look outs" and most definitely "worked as a team." Sommers stated that the thefts took place during all hours of the day. In eight out of ten cases, the thefts were from vacant and unlocked rooms. The remainder of the incidents occurred by students breaking into rooms that were not double locked. Yeshiva University, therefore, emphasized the need for students to concentrate on double locking their doors to prevent further disturbances.

Burns Security Officers Rivera and Lal commented that the majority of students are cooperating by locking their doors. In addition, since the students were requested to leave, security affirmed that no further thefts have been reported.

Additionally, the investigation revealed a Burns security captain's guilty of monetary thefts from the Office of the Dean in Stern College, resulting in his immediate dismissal from YU's staff and from Burns security.

Students Initiate Schedule Change

by Banji D. Latkin

In a landmark administrative decision, Stern College women were given the opportunity to make a change in the official school schedule for themselves, by themselves. The conflict in question was scheduled classes on *erev Pesach*. Karen Bacon, SCW dean, distributed ballots to all students to vote on the problematic vacation schedule. Only 105 students responded.

According to Dean Bacon, "the students raised it [the scheduling conflict] as a problem. It was a large oversight on our behalf." The problem was first brought to the attention of the administration and publicized to the students through an editorial which appeared in the February issue of the *OBSERVER*.

The dean, wanting to accommodate the students, met with student leaders to formulate a solution. The problem lay in the New York state educational policy. Apparently, every undergraduate semester in any accredited university must contain a specific number of school days. Because of its extended *Pesach* vacation, YU was short one full day of classes.

Besides *Taanit Esther*, *Purim* and *Pesach*, the only other day of vacation during the spring semester is *Yom Ha'Atzma'ut*, celebrated on April 18 this year. The only viable option appeared to be switching the days and cancelling school on the Thursday before *Pesach*, and in its stead, hold classes on *Yom Ha'Atzma'ut*.

"We scrutinized the schedule

together and discussed all possible solutions," said *OBSERVER* editor-in-chief, Shoshana Levine. "The best solution was to let the students themselves decide based on their preferences. This way, nobody could complain that the decision was made over her head without taking her needs into account."

Dean Bacon immediately proceeded to write up an official school ballot to enable the students to vote on which day they preferred to have classes cancelled. The ballots were distributed to all the students in the dormitory through inter-office mail.

The ballot consisted of two choices. The first choice was to hold classes on *erev Pesach* and have off on *Yom Ha'Atzma'ut*, and the second was to cancel classes on *erev Pesach* and have half a day on *Yom Ha'Atzma'ut*. The remaining half a day, in that option, would be made up on a Friday morning.

Of the 105 students who responded to the vote, the majority expressed a desire to change the schedule and cancel classes on March 28. The consensus was that having off on *erev Pesach* was more advantageous.

"Because of the setting in which they [the ballots] were distributed, it was easy to put the questionnaires aside," Dean Bacon noted. She realized that the method used for a positive student response was not the most beneficial. A more recent questionnaire on Jewish education was distributed in the

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EDITORIAL

Change through Action-Not Apathy

Kudos to the administration for immediately replying to student complaints about the ill-timed date originally scheduled to begin Passover vacation. Proving to be amenable to our requests, the administration opened the door to students to voice their opinions. Yet, the response was so weak, it could hardly be heard.

The opportunity for students to take an active role in an administrative decision by taking one minute to fill out the distributed poll forms, was neglected by a majority of the student body. The fact that less than 20% of the stu-

dent body bothered to fill out the sheets which addressed an issue that directly affects them, is mind-boggling.

Can it be that we are only willing to complain verbally without ever taking action to improve our conditions? It's very easy to voice a complaint, but where did everyone go when the time came to affect a change?

This apathetic attitude of the student body must go, because if we students are not willing to extend ourselves, the administration, in turn, will not extend itself to our needs.

Paradise Lost

Very often students at Stern find something to complain about, whether it be the scheduling of tests, a closed out class, or an unfair professor. It is quite puzzling why students who complained for so long about the overcrowding in the cafeteria have refused to patronize the new "Garden of Eatin'", which is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Koch auditorium.

Having responded to the complaints about overcrowding, the food committee, together with Food Services, worked diligently to devise a plan by which students could eat their meals in comfort, without feeling "boxed in", and long caf lines could be shortened. However, since the "Garden of Eatin'" has opened four weeks ago, only 18-29 students have come there to eat.

When students complained that

they could only use dining cars for their purchases, Food Services began accepting cash. The goal was to accommodate the students to the extent that televisions were brought in so that the students could catch their favorite soaps without having to cram into the overcrowded, uncomfortable lounge.

Yet still only a handful of students patronize Koch. It is a wonder why after so much complaining about the problem students ignore the attempted solution. After Pesach, Food Services will evaluate the advantages of keeping the "Garden" open. Perhaps when the lines in the caf get longer and the tables more crowded and there is no alternative dining place, perhaps then students will learn to appreciate that which they are given.

THE OBSERVER

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THE OBSERVER Staff Wishes Everyone a chag kasher V'sameach LETTERS

Spurn Snobbery at Stern

To the Editor:

This Stern girl snobbery must stop. Of course I am not referring to you or me.

But the other Stern girl, the one that bumps into you in the hall and doesn't say "excuse me". She sees you walking back to Brookdale Hall as she walks to Stern and she averts her eyes to prevent acknowledging your nod "hello."

But that I can handle. Must you and I ride up the elevator together, alone in total silence? Can you admire the elevator paneling a bit longer... how carpentry can be so interesting to you while human beings are not beyond me.

When I hear that a girl ate her Purim *seudah* in the cafeteria alone because the only other people in

the cafeteria preferred she not sit with them, I am troubled, and I know it must bother you too.

We at Stern really have a lot in common; even though we don't dress alike and we're not all from the same state or country, we can at least be cordial. Those of you who consider yourselves to be of a friendlier nature should make an extra effort to go ahead and speak with that girl in the laundry room, or the only other girl in the orange lounge during the T.V. commercial.

That way we won't let "them" give the rest of us Stern women a bad name.

Debbie Potash
SCW '91

Just Plain Thanks

To the Editor:

Believe it or not this will not be a criticizing letter. In fact, this letter comes to praise the student council. I would like to thank student council for the copying machine, which was a great addition to the orange lounge.

In addition I would like to thank food services for the extended hours in the cafeteria and the opportunity to watch Days while eating.

Further, I would like to suggest the idea of purchasing a change machine in the laundry room - for all of us who never have change. Thank you again and keep up the good work.

Channie Weiss
SCW '93

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BROOKDALE BLUES...

DO YOU KNOW WHAT I HATE ABOUT STERN?!

I RESENT THE FACT THAT BECAUSE I GO TO STERN, PEOPLE ASSUME THAT I FIT ALLEMAN'S STEREOTYPE

PEOPLE DON'T REALIZE THAT THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF GIRLS IN THIS INSTITUTION... WE ARE NOT ALL THE SAME!

I MAKE MY OWN DECISIONS! I CHOOSE MY CAREER! I CHOOSE MY FRIENDS!

I LEAD MY OWN LIFE! YES, I AM AN INDIVIDUAL!!!

NICE OUTFIT! (SHE ASKS THE OTHER GIRL)

(SHE TELLS THE OTHER GIRL)

Defining Freedom

by Shoshana Levine

Survey research has repeatedly proven that Pesach is the most frequently observed holiday among American Jews. The meaning behind this interesting statistic is questionable and can be understood from different perspectives.

One can argue that Pesach is the highlight of the Jewish calendar because at this time of year Jews congregate with other Jews, and in doing so, perceive themselves as performing an exclusively Jewish act.

Others, however, may question whether attendance at a Pesach seder genuinely proclaims involvement in a Jewish activity, or if it simply signifies participation in a family meal under the guise of a feigned Jewish ritual.

For a minority of American Jews, the Pesach seder truly signifies participation in the recitation of the *hagaddah*, praise of G-d and commemoration of the day of our national redemption from Egypt. In these cases, the seder meals, prepared in strict accordance with the special Pesach *kashrut* laws,

take on secondary importance while the retelling and analysis of the redemption story becomes the primary focus.

For others, Pesach means little more than an opportunity to have a family reunion at a festive occasion.

Chances are that for most Jews, the reality of Pesach lies somewhere in between; and for Jews in America particularly, it is the holiday that best combines elements of Jewish tradition with modern American consciousness.

Jews have perceived America as the land of opportunity — a country in which Jews (as all other peoples) have been completely free to practice as they wish and to mold their own destiny. The freedom that America offers is both on the individual level, as the freedom to become personally fulfilled, and on the communal level, as the freedom to exhibit commitment to others. Our celebration of freedom not only permits us to lead our individual lives as free citizens, but compels us to assume the responsibility of building our community

and extending the freedom we cherish to those less fortunate than ourselves.

The increased sense of Jewish identity is manifested in the powerful messages of Pesach concerning the importance of family. The Pesach seder itself creates a common familial bond between Jews. The *Korban Pesach* could only be eaten in a communal setting. The seder begins with the recitation of "*Ha Lachma Anya* — "*kol dichvin yetei veyechol...*" — proclaiming our responsibility to care and provide for our fellow Jews who are in need.

In addition to the strong emphasis on communal obligations, Pesach expresses values that we, as members of a western democracy can fully appreciate and identify with even more strongly than those living under more restrictive conditions. The endorsement of freedom and the conviction that tyranny and totalitarianism are anti-Jewish phenomena, are values that we espouse.

Freedom itself, however, is multi-dimensional, and its dual

nature is frightening. Although freedom can cultivate communal responsibility, abuse of freedom can result in the loss of one's identity. Some prefer the safety and security of tyranny and authoritarian rule in order to "escape from freedom," as psychologist, B.F. Skinner wrote. The way in which our freedom is employed is crucial to the future of the Jews.

Unfortunately, exploitation of freedom is rampant throughout American Jewish communities, and is manifested in the exorbitant rate of assimilation and intermarriage among American Jews. The dichotomy in the liberalism of America is such that the same freedom that we are given to practice Judaism openly and establish Jewish communities, also enables us to divorce ourselves from those communities. Though America may be a success story for Jews, for Judaism it may not be.

And that is where the essence of community is crucial.

The distressing plight of American Jews is clearly not a result of a shortage of Jews nor a

dearth of Jewish educational material and publications. Likewise, Jewish self-hatred is not the current issue. The problem lies in the lack of a sense of community.

The emphasis that Chazal placed on the community, or *tzibor*, whether in *halachah* or Jewish thought, displays their insight into the importance of the community in order to preserve a strong Jewish identity and ensure an illustrious future for *K'lal Yisrael*. Jewish values live within the community setting, and when an individual strays from the populace, or is in material, political or social need, it is the collective strength of the community that can bring him back and provide for him.

Pesach, commemorating the birth of *Am Yisrael*, renews pride in the Jewish identity. Only by fulfilling our communal responsibilities and taking heed of the intrinsic message of Pesach, can we produce communities where Judaism — not only Jews — is alive and well and thriving throughout the world.



The Lighter Side of Christianity

Dear Editor:

I'm writing to ask you and your readers to reconsider the following four overly broad generalizations from Brigitte Saffran's February 13 article, "The Darker Side of Christianity": Nazism, faithful to Christianity, punishes [sic] the Jews for decide, crucifixion of Jesus, the blood libels and desecration of the host. "The Holocaust can be traced back to a long line of Christian anti-Semitism rooted in the foundation of Christianity." "Shadow on the Cross, directed by Martin Feuerstein, is disturbing in that it presents the realization that a good Christian is a 'good' anti-Semite and a 'good' anti-Semite is a good Christian." "It is a film that will raise the consciousness of all who see it."

True, Gospel accounts blame the Jews more than the Roman Pontius Pilate for the crucifixion. True, Paul badmouths the Pharisees. True, Christian churches and clergy have all too often encouraged anti-Semitism ranging from the prejudicial to the deadly. True, Ms. Saffran does allude to recent progress: Polish Catholic clergy and the Vatican have belatedly begun to acknowledge the separate validity of Judaism and to explode Christian building blocks of anti-Semitism. Yet I am afraid that her article may inadvertently lower consciousness in that it reinforces anti-Christian stereotypes.

Any religion which has lasted as many hundreds of years and traveled as many thousands of miles as Judaism or Christianity (or Islam, for that matter) has sprouted impressive numbers of variations.

Not surprisingly, selective quotation from Jewish or Christian sources will uncover instances of prejudice against other peoples and religions. It will also uncover instances of toleration and admiration, as Prof. Lou Feldman's *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World*, a portion of which I am currently reading in typescript, details. Not all instances of Christian toleration and philo-Semitism postdate the Holocaust. In *Ulysses*, Leopold Bloom shouts, "Christ was a Jew like me," an insight which dawned not only on James Joyce but on multitudes of other Christians as well. Historically, some Christian denominations have proved inhospitable to anti-Semitism, many Christian leaders have denounced it, and some Christians, admittedly far too few, have protected Jews on moral, human, and, yes, religious grounds.

Christians have sown seeds of toleration as well as of hate. American Puritans in Massachusetts fled Anglican intolerance of dissent in England, only to exercise intolerance in their turn. Adding a further irony, that intolerance helped generate a tradition of toleration which the first amendment of our Constitution eventually came to reflect. The Bill of Rights, central to what has been called the American civil religion, sprang up from religious as well as political roots. As for the roots of Christianity, the deepest of which are biblical, some are tolerant and pro-Semitic, including most obviously what Christians call the Old Testament.

Biblical and institutional

Christianity formed only a few of the many streams which have flowed into anti-Semitism. The medieval blood libels, which various Popes tried to counteract, depended on the folkways of ignorant, superstitious people encouraged by some local clergy. In Hitler's case, political and economic resentments dating back to World War I joined jingoism, racism, pseudo-science, folk legends, and some specific Christian beliefs to form the deadliest anti-Semitic compounds in history.

It's worth remembering that many Christians have also fallen victim to hatred and violence based partly on religion. Consider the bloody history of the Americans, not to mention the earliest Christians, not to mention murderous wars between Catholics and Protestants in which Christians killed each other.

Far be it from me to defend any Christian individual or institution guilty of anti-Semitic words or acts. Undoubtedly, many Christians deserve far worse treatment than all but a select few receive at Ms. Saffran's hands. Myself neither Jewish nor Christian, I find anti-Semitism viscerally repugnant and recognize that its consequences for Jews have proved incomparably deadlier and more horrifying than the consequences for Christians of "anti-Christianism." I agree that Jews should never forget anti-Semitic atrocities, especially the Holocaust. What I am nonetheless arguing for is a much more sophisticated vision of the varieties,

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TO ATTEND

AROUND THE CAMPUS

NEWS BRIEFS

Copy Machine in Brookdale

In response to the needs expressed by students, a photocopy machine has been placed in Brookdale Hall's Orange Lounge. Its twenty four hour accessibility and convenient location has received student approval.

Zelda Braun, Director of Student Services, and Lisa Horowitz, President of SCWSC, have been working together for several months to secure the machine and to ensure that it would be used optimally. The copy machine that they selected operates on the

same copy system as do the machines in the School building. This machine however, can only be operated with copy cards to both maximize its efficiency and to preclude problems of coin usage.

In addition to being sold in the Dean's office, these copy cards can now be purchased in the dormitory from senior Ronit Ben-Ami. The profits that the machine earns are used to pay students to refill the paper, the toner, and to generally maintain the machine.

Annual Yemenite Festival

by Fortune Harari

On Sunday March 17, 1991, the fourth annual Yemenite Cultural Festival was held in Stern College's Koch Auditorium. The event was sponsored by the Institute of Yemenite Studies at YU. Dr Benjamin Gibli was invited to chair the event by Rabbi Dr. Mitchell Serelis, the Associate Director of the Jacob E. Safra Institute of Sephardic Studies, who was also the program coordinator.

The program featured a scholarly presentation, remarks by various speakers, as well as the presentation of traditional and modern melodies by Chaim Zadok and Ensemble. The issues

addressed included the preservation of *midrashim* and the role of the Yemenite Jews as guardians of their original ancient cultural tradition. Concluding remarks were made by Dr. Herbert C. Dobrinsky, Vice President of YU.

The Yemenite congregation was pleased by the progress made by the Institute. As a leader of the Yemenite community, Gibli expresses the hope that other centers of academia throughout the world will follow in the footsteps of YU in promoting a higher understanding and appreciation of Yemenite culture. He feels that this progress is long overdue.

DEAN'S FORUM: Levitt Speaks on Tomorrow's Success

by Adeeva Laya Graubard

The SSSB Dean's Forum series of lectures, which began during the fall semester, have continued this spring.

The first lecture of the semester was held on Wednesday, March 20. Forty faculty members and students from both YC and SCW came to Stern to hear the lecture, entitled "Marketing Successes for Tomorrow," delivered by Professor Theodore Levitt.

Levitt, who is the Edward W. Carter Professor of Business Administration at Harvard University's Graduate School of Business, came to America from his native Germany in 1935. He then received his Ph.D. from Ohio State and joined Harvard University in 1959.

Levitt has written numerous articles and texts in the business area, including *Thinking about Management*, and is the recipient of several management awards.

Levitt opened his remarks by stressing the importance of a good education, saying that "building equity today will let you reap in the profits tomorrow."

Tomorrow, he said, feeds off

the information learnt from past experiences. It is this knowledge from the past that helps one make more accurate decisions. The utility of knowledge is based on how it can help one make a decision with regard to future plans.

"The main goal of business," continued Levitt, "is to get and keep customers. A businessman has to look at the customer's alternatives and think of how he can make his product the best available."

In today's society, there is always a better product on the market than there was the day before. All this progress is due to an accelerated pace of technological advancement, intensified communication systems, the miniaturization of everything and demographic shifts (especially an increase in the elderly population).

One of the major factors of the increase in productivity is global competition. Japan, America, England and many other countries have business dealings throughout the world. Additionally, businesses that started off on the local level have expanded to national and in-

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The Grossman Duo signing and singing at the same time.

Speech Arts Forum Festival

By Jacki Ginsparg

The Speech Arts Forum sponsored its second yearly festival this month. The three separate events took place on March 4, 5 and 6.

On Monday March 4, the forum presented "*Siman Tov*," a concert of sign language for Hebrew songs, with Rabbi Daniel T. Grossman and Dr. Elayne Robinson Grossman. The husband and wife team are very active in Jewish outreach, as well as having developed some new signs for Hebrew words, which are used in Israel.

In their performance, Dr. Grossman played music and sang songs orally while her husband "sang" the songs in sign language. The Grossmans performed songs in Hebrew, English and Yiddish, and taught three silent songs to the audience. Members of the audience learned the signs to "*Al Sh'losha D'varim*," "*Shema Yisrael*" and "*Kol Ha'Olam*

Kuloh."

Jodi Bruck, a speech pathology major taking SCW's sign language course, found it "fascinating to see how sign language became so emotional when incorporated into music."

According to Angelica Fernandez, president of the Speech Arts Forum, "besides just learning the signs, we had to learn to keep the signs to the rhythm of the music - but everyone caught on." She also reported that one special audience member was an outside guest with a deaf relative he planned to visit on Pesach. By the end of the program, he knew songs in sign he could share.

The Tuesday night event was the Poetry Performance Ensemble with Judith Heineman. Heineman was an English literature teacher and later an actress, until she merged these two interests in producing the Poetry Performance

Ensemble.

At the event, she and a fellow actor read and dramatized modern poems with the help of a musical accompaniment. The audience, composed of SCW and YC students, was divided into groups and then asked to perform poetry using the techniques they had seen used. Over the course of the evening, two original poems by students were read, as well as poems written by Heineman.

Rachel Krentzman attended her first Speech Arts Forum event and was encouraged to come to future events. She said, "I had never been to a poetry reading before and it sounded interesting because I like poetry. I figured I'd like to hear it read out loud. It was fun - you understood the poem from the way they acted!"

The March 6 program was co-

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Middle States Evaluates

Sarita Rosenhaus

Reviewing the strengths as well as the weaknesses of Yeshiva University, 10 people from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools spent Sunday March 10 through Wednesday March 13 evaluating YU's faculty, board of trustees, students, academic departments, programs, facilities, financial and fund raising services, and all other aspects of the university.

This group, a voluntary peer review, comes every 10 years to provide re-accreditation to the university. It also "helps to establish an urgency and hierarchy of needs," said Karen Bacon, dean of SCW.

In preparation for the visit, YU conducted a self study for a year

and a half which identified existing problems and positive features of the university. Available in the central resource room at YU's uptown campus, this report and additional written material such as final exams and syllabi assisted the team in drawing their conclusions under the limited time constraint.

To further determine their assessment of the college, team members met with faculty and administrators and interviewed randomly selected groups of students.

In their appraisal of scholastic departments at SCW, each member of the Middle States team was assigned different primary responsibilities. At SCW, the group examined the Judaic Studies, Science, and Social Science depart-

ments, facilities, faculty, student services, student life and the library.

At the end of the four days, Dr. Jerome Pollack, former president of Fairleigh Dickinson University, presented an oral report to administration members as a summary of the final written report which will be sent to Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm by June. One of the areas for improvement noted by the team included the need for better facilities in the school.

Efrem Nulman, YU dean, related that, overall, the team "took a comprehensive and fair look at what we do." According to Dean Bacon, the Middle States members were "impressed with the student and faculty commitment to the university."

AROUND THE CAMPUS

A Taste of Israel in 48 Hours

by Alyssa Herman

On March 12 and 13, TAC's Israel Affairs Committee sponsored a "48 Hours of Israel" campaign. This event was a joint effort on the part of two Israel-oriented programs held on the two successive nights.

On March 12, a lecture entitled "Shivat Zion HaShlishit," was given by Rav Meir Goldvicht in Stern College's Orange Lounge. Rav Goldvicht, who is a *rosh yeshiva* at Yeshivat Keren B'Yavneh in Israel, is on sabbatical and is presently teaching at YC.

The audience which filled the room completely, and was largely composed of Israel enthusiasts, felt that Rav Goldvicht provided them with a refreshing taste of Israel. Many students were especially pleased that the lecture was given in Hebrew. SCW sophomore, Nomi Dworken, who spent the past year in Israel, asserts that she misses having *shuirim* in Hebrew and feels that without such *shuirim* her Hebrew proficiency and learning skills suffer.

SCW senior, Vera Sacharow, states that she "thoroughly enjoys

any speakers in Hebrew or about Israel" and hopes that such speakers are brought to Stern College on a more regular basis in the future.

On March 13, an Israel party was held in the Orange Lounge. In line with the theme, students were requested to come dressed in blue and white attire. Many of the students that attended complied.

The event featured three main components; free falafel, *divrei Torah*, and Israeli dance. An additional Israeli touch was the "guess how many *garinim* (sunflower seeds) are in the jar" contest. SCW sophomore, Joyce Markowitz, won the contest having guessed the appropriate number which was 1948.

The 48 hour event was coordinated by the Israel affairs committee's co-presidents Yael Bloom and Malkie Russ. The objective of the event was to increase students involvement with and enhance their connection to Israel. Bloom asserts that many more events in the Israel mode are being planned for the future.



Laurie James on the set performing "The Yellow Wallpaper"

Women's History Month Celebrated at SCW

by Leah Frankel

In celebration of Women's History Month, the SCW history department, in conjunction with the Speech Arts Forum, co-sponsored a dramatization of Charlotte Perkins Gillman's short story, "The Yellow Wallpaper." The production was held on Wednesday March 6 in SCW's Koch Auditorium.

The solo dramatization of Gillman's classic story was originally adapted by actress Laurie James. James' performance of the short story is done almost verba-

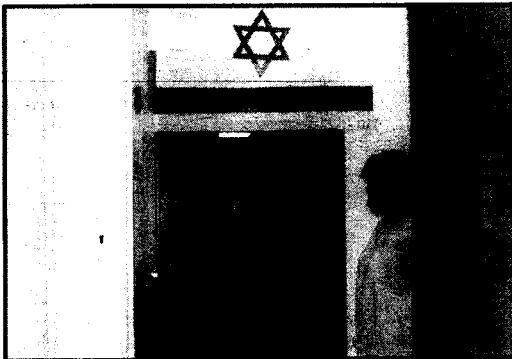
tim. She alternates live performance with taped audio speech. She maintains that through this medium the feelings conveyed by the book come across more clearly.

James herself is actively involved in promoting the spread of interest in and knowledge of women's history. She has performed her one-woman drama over 300 times at both conferences and universities throughout the United States. James has also spent time writing books on the life and works of suffragette Margaret Fuller.

In the past, SCW has brought in speakers to celebrate Women's History month. Dr. Schrecker, the head of SCW's history department, thought that this sort of event would appeal to a whole new audience. The event was well attended and drew a larger audience than have similar events in the past.

The selection of "The Yellow Wallpaper" was based upon several criteria. For one, many SCW students have been assigned to read the story through assignments in English and history classes. Its

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Orange Lounge decorated for Israel night

Who's in Who's Who

by Ann Aidelson

Sixteen Stern College students have been selected to be part of the 1991 "Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges." The "Who's Who" is an annual publication designed to recognize outstanding students and to be a source of information to prospective employers. This hardcover book includes an alphabetical listing of participating universities and colleges, followed by an alphabetical listing of all selected students. A short biography is also provided, which includes information about each student, including her degree, major and extracurricular achievements.

In order to qualify, students must be graduating seniors. According to Dr. Israel Miller, vice president of YU, they are nominated in several ways. Dean Karen Bacon and Zeldia Braun, director of student services, select students

based on a combination of academic achievement and student involvement. This list of candidates is reviewed by Dr. Miller and the president of Student Council, who determines whether the student has played an active role in school activities. Each school is limited by a quota established by the "Who's Who," determined based on the size of its student body.

The following Stern College students will have entries in this year's edition of the "Who's Who": Deborah Aharon, Sherry Aronson, Sharona Cunin, Gyta Ehrman, Jennifer Epstein, Sharon Fischer, Nechama Goldman, Lisa Horowitz, Michal Jona, Lisa Lasher, Shoshana Levine, Shoshana Levitz, Rachel Markowitz, Rachel Mohl, Deborah Potash, and Karen Weissman.

Congratulations to all those who have been selected.

by Lori Turkel

The Stern Student Senate held its second and third meetings of the academic year on February 20 and March 6, respectively. Topics discussed included the need for the availability of course syllabi at the time of registration and the importance of the prompt return of the mid-term grades, in time for the P/N (pass/fail registration) deadline.

All six members of the faculty that serve on the Senate, Dr. Babich, Professor Cohen, Dr. DeSantis, Dr. Horowitz, Dr. Neaman and Dr. Sykes were present, as were SCW's Dean Bacon and Dean Orlian, SSSB's Dean Jaskoll, and Zeldia Braun, from the Office of Student Services. Only two student senators, Ruchie Sasnowitz and Melissa Gabel, attended.

Sasnowitz, who occupies the position of secretary of the Senate, explained that the Senate is an "intermediary body between the faculty and the students. It allows students to voice their opinions regarding academic issues, and is a great tool if one takes advantage of it."

Before this year the Senate was basically inactive. Meetings were rarely held and senators, elected by the student body, were handed the

title with no responsibilities attached to it.

Sasnowitz organized this first meeting of the year after recognizing that such meetings could be a productive means by which the Senate could finally deal with academic issues.

The discussion at the February 20 meeting centered around two matters: conducting a review of one academic major at each Senate meeting until SCW's entire curriculum is evaluated, and course syllabi from previous years being made available for students entering a new class.

Although Dr. Babich and Dean Orlian felt that individual departmental meetings may be productive and therefore should be held, Dean Bacon asserted that such meetings would not be practical due to the large faculty member-to-student ratio that exists within some of the departments. Instead, she stated, faculty members will attempt to provide individual guidance sessions to students within their departments.

The senators present at the meeting represented the SCW student body when they complained about the lack of syllabi available, not allowing students the opportunity to examine the nature of the

course before registering for it. Course descriptions are usually insufficient, students feel, and word of mouth is usually useless because many classes are only given once every four semesters.

At the next meeting on March 6, Gabel resolved the issue by bringing to the attention of students that all course syllabi are kept on file in the library for two years. Students interested in looking at the syllabus for a course may in fact do so.

At the same meeting, the issue of returning mid-term exams was also resolved. It was decided that it is the responsibility of the students to ensure that the exams are promptly returned. Students must be the one to impress on their teachers the importance of a prompt return of exams.

Future Senate meetings will be held during Club Hour every other week, in room 819, and all students, especially the senators, are invited to attend. Students are also encouraged to talk to their senators and inform them of issues that they would like to see addressed. As Sasnowitz emphasized, the Senate is "an opportunity and forum for them [the students] to speak their minds and effect change."

UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY

YU Hands Across The World

Socially . . .

by Malka Fogel
One of the undisclosed wonders of the world remains to be the Stern student's schedule. The dual curriculum which comprises her program of study, speeches, shiurim, dates, as well as engagement parties galore, represent only a handful of the events she is involved in on a weekly basis. Yet, these very students are frequently spotted, arms laden with packages, delivering food to homeless people or bringing warm smiles to those confined to hospital rooms or homes.

A newcomer to Stern who approaches the bulletin board in Brookdale Hall must take a double take when she sees the scores of posters announcing volunteer activities. These activities take her from the Lower East Side up to Washington Heights, as well as many places in between where assistance is needed. Many of the programs are coordinated by Stern while others, independent of the college, have liaisons in school who organize the activities.

Project Dorot enlisted volunteers from Stern to lend physical as well as emotional support to the elderly who live on the Upper West Side. In many cases, the clients, often unable to leave their homes, schedule appointments with their doctors and are unable to walk alone. Some find their refrigerators bare and cannot go shopping alone.

The volunteers bring packages of food, phonethe elderly, and even stop by to say hello. They escort the clients to their various appointments or accompany them on walks around the city. Social workers maintain contact with the volunteers to ensure that all the clients' needs are met.

However, the friendship the volunteers bring has a far greater impact. "Sometimes, the woman I visit lapses into depression because her family is unable to see her as often as she would like and she gets lonely," says volunteer Rachel Krentzman, an SCW junior. "I try to call often enough to show I care and when I'm there we talk about current events and compare how we've spent our day."

The service also provides a "University Without Walls" program where

volunteers attend telephone classes which link them to up to eight people on a conference line. The student teachers inform the participants about the Jewish holidays and customs. "The first time I listened in on a session, I was extremely moved," Krentzman recalled. It was an experience hearing so many people who otherwise would not have any exposure to Jewish concepts get to learn so much. It definitely improves their quality of life."

Project Ore, sponsored by the Educational Alliance, operates a drop in center in the Emunas Israel Synagogue in midtown Manhattan for isolated and homeless Jews. Yeshiva College students regularly volunteer there and now Stern students are becoming involved as well. The program serves from thirty to forty people daily, bringing them a hot, catered lunch and tending to some of their other needs. A lawyer offers free legal counsel and YC students teach classes in Jewish studies.

The coordinator, Michael Schwartz, a YU alumnus, heads a group of people dedicated to the well-being of these people who live primarily in welfare shelters and even on the streets of New York. "The clients," describes Ben Wiener, coordinator from YC, "are from all different spectrums of Judaism. Many are orphaned and have become alcoholics, while others are handicapped. One day, a drug addict stopped in to daven *mincha*."

The goal of the program, rehabilitation of the clients to the point where they will rejoin the work force, is accomplished by assigning them their responsibilities. They answer phones and perform other office tasks which help them feel needed.

The program had been closed on Sundays due to lack of funds. However, the 14 YU students involved in the problem have begun to bring bagged lunches which are prepared by cafeteria

to distribute to the clients. They do not, however, merely deliver food and then leave. Each Sunday, the students check up on the clients with whom they have established relationships. Many of the people have lived through extreme hardship and do not easily trust others. However, after interacting with the volunteers, they begin to open up and become friendly.

The people frequenting this shelter are not the atypical group.

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Culturally . . .

by Deborah Aharon

The Jewish community is multi-faceted and multi-dimensional in both the realms of religious observance and social structure. But there exists another aspect of the community, often overlooked, that is intrinsic to both of these realms: the cultural aspect.

The culture of a people is an important part of their identification with themselves and is reflected in the manner in which they interact with others. In fact, social adjustment usually requires adaptation in or compromise on the part of one's culture.

This is particularly important for the Yeshiva University scholar to understand since the American Jewish community is composed of people who originate from many

different countries and backgrounds.

While many Jewish communities rich in tradition were successful in maintaining their heritage while simultaneously adjusting to society around them, there were those that found it very difficult. The difficulty depended on the strength of their own religious commitment, and on the Jewish and secular expectations of the American people.

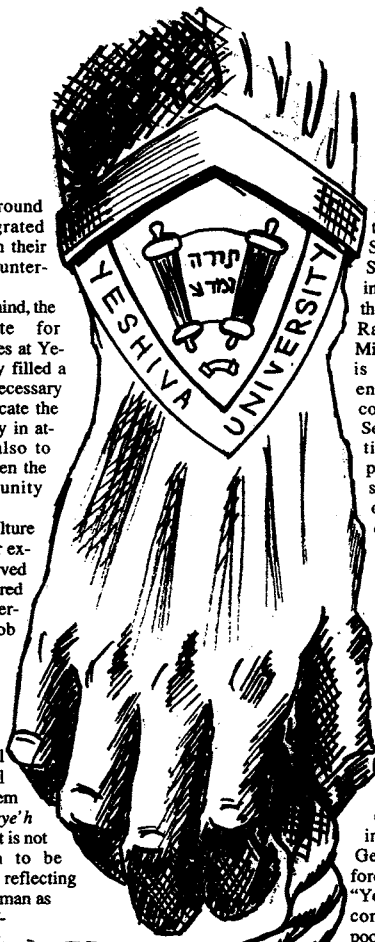
Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jewry in America suffered similar losses in the religious sphere but culturally, the Sephardim were, and still are the minority and therefore had more difficulty upholding their tradition.

For this reason, many communities either closed themselves off

to the world around them or integrated themselves with their Ashkenazic counterparts.

With this in mind, the Safra Institute for Sephardic Studies at Yeshiva University filled a role that was necessary not only to educate the students actually in attendance but also to serve to enlighten the Jewish community outside of YU.

Sephardic culture and customs, for example, are preserved and further nurtured within the university via the Jacob



E. Safra Institute for Sephardic Studies. The institute, under the direction of Rabbi Dr. Mitchell Serels, is dedicated to ensuring the continuance of Sephardic traditions through programs and special events on and off campus.

The Sephardic Club, for instance, plays a significant

role in uniting students on the YU campus in an educational and social atmosphere.

The Institute for Yemenite studies achieves cultural integration through incorporation of special classes into the regular YU curriculum.

This year the Belz School of Music offered, for the first time, a course in Yemenite Liturgical Music. Other courses that have been offered for a few years now include those at SCW given by Haham Solomon Gaon-including Sephardic Life Cycles and Sephardic Festivals.

But the outreach to Sephardic and Yemenite communities outside of YU who are struggling to maintain their cultural standard is fascinating. Yair Yaish, a

one approaches communal contribution in levels. The Gemara therefore teaches us: "Your own poor come first...the poor of your own city come first" (*Bava Metzia* 71a). Each unit of society satisfies its own needs and then extends itself to the next larger unit.

Even if one feels that it is too hard

to contribute to a specific group in society requiring *chesed* (e.g. physically or mentally handicapped, elderly, terminally ill), *halacha* has provided us with a means of associating with the entity of a community. Hillel, therefore, says in *Pirkei Avot* that once society has consolidated in agreement on a certain issue, "Do not separate [yourself] from the community" (2:4)

The MaHaRal comments that when members of a community form a cohesive unit, the whole becomes greater than the sum of

its parts. The unified strength of the community cannot make an impact on mankind without individual support and encouragement (*Derech Chaim, Pirkei Avot* 2:4). Thus, the individual and community have a symbiotic relationship with one another. While the desires of the individual must sometimes be sacrificed for the sake of the community, the latter in turn has a positive effect on the individual.

If, however, society has become corrupt, then the Rambam maintains that the individual can no longer gain and should live in seclusion (*Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Deot*, 6:2).

In most cases, the halacha regarding communal sacrifice is clear. We are commanded over 36 times in the Torah to take care of the converts; concern and *tzedakah* must be given to the poor, widowed and orphaned. We must recognize the invaluable existence of every member of society and sometimes even forsake our own interests to fulfill the will of Hashem, manifesting concern for fellow Jews.

Halacha is sensitive as well, however, to cases where benefits of both the individual and society

are at stake. Such a situation illustrated by our *chachamim* is when a mourner - one who, mandated by Jewish law must observe *shiva*, fills a vital position in his community, such as a doctor.

In this case, *halacha* leaves the option open for the individual to decide. He may relinquish his right to a complete emotional recovery by returning to his post for the well-being of his community, or he may take the time to reconcile his personal tragedy though the community may suffer. Shortening the *shiva* period is an option as opposed to an obligation. Likewise, in any situation that endangers both individual and community rights, the individual is at liberty to decide what course of action to pursue.

He may never, however, detach himself from his community when the potential exists for self-development and universal good. The progress of the individual and society are intertwined: the good of one ultimately balances the good of the other. Communal service, therefore, does not only fulfill a social ethic but a Torah ethic as well. For without the development of relationships prescribed by Torah and *halacha*, a Jew is not complete.

Religiously . . .

by Ricki Lieber

How many lives have you touched? How many people have you influenced?

Any given person may have a few examples of individuals he or she has affected. However, it is extremely difficult, almost impossible, to determine precisely the extent of one's contributions to society.

With this idea in mind, a recognition must be developed for one of the Yeshiva University's Max Stern Division of Communal Services' most noble causes: outreach.

MSDCS has been running a variety of outreach programs for many years. These religious communal services began as far back as the 1950's. The programs were originally geared toward training rabbis and teachers, and helping schools and synagogues.

Presently, MSDCS runs a variety of programs and seminars, each targeting a specific audience. The Torah Leadership Training Seminar for Yeshiva high school students, was formed through the MSDCS office. Eventually, these seminars paved the way for the increasingly popular "seminar" shabbatonim of today.

The Yeshiva high school Seminar is designed to give students a positive Jewish experience in an informal Torah atmosphere. For five days, students are inundated with Jewish music, sessions and skits. The goal is for the Yeshiva University students to act as role models, to whom the "seminarians" can look up and respect.

Rachel Mohl, a recent SCW graduate, attended six seminars including two as a "seminarian". Mohl says that, "As a kid I remembered the YU advisors and looked forward to that stage of my life when I too could be one. These kids are tomorrow's leaders. Hopefully, Seminar will provide them with a basis to fall back on later in life."

There is, of course, an element of recruitment involved as well. However, the main focus is to provide a positive Jewish experience for the high school students, within a halachic framework.

Similar to YHS Seminar is a program called Counterpoint. It is run in three cities: Winnipeg in Canada and Perth and Melbourne in Australia. In Winnipeg there are two retreats. The group and the staff are both smaller than that of Seminar. The Australian program runs a series of five retreats throughout a six week period.

The goals of Counterpoint and Seminar are similar. The main difference lies in the audience. The high school students who attend Counterpoint generally have weaker Judaic backgrounds than the students on the YHS Seminar. Although their schools do offer Jewish courses and are run in an Orthodox manner, the schools offer very little religious guidance for the students.

Therefore, methods utilized on Counterpoint must be altered slightly to accommodate possible initial hostilities or skepticism. On the positive side, the lack of extensive previous exposure to religion lends for a more inquisitive and interested attitude.

Finally, since they all come from the same school, they know each other, and there is no distracting social element involved as there is on Seminar. The students, therefore, drink in the experience and take advantage of the unique opportunity offered to them. It is this positive experience which is the main focus; any change in religious practice on the part of the students is simply looked upon as an additional positive result.

Barry Bender, director of Kiruv-College Outreach, another organization under the auspices of MSDCS, expresses similar ideas. He explains that the original purpose of Kiruv, when it began in 1986, was to combat assimilation and intermarriage by heightening students' senses of Jewish identity. The goal remains intact today.

However, once someone's Jewish identity is touched upon, he or she will naturally want to study more.

"They will inevitably study more about their culture and tradition, possibly leading to a change," he asserted. "But this change is an outgrowth, not the focus. To expect it to be the focus is asking for a lot." Kiruv firmly believes that it is up to the individual to make the decision to change his or her religious commitment. YU students simply spend a Shabbat as guests of the Jewish community of a university; at times, the Jewish communities there are almost nonexistent. Each of these communities appreciates the dis-

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The Question Rekindled : To Return or Not to Return

Elana Hartstein

Out of the 58 students who returned from Israel due to the Gulf Crisis and joined Stern College for Women, 22 have returned to Israel to continue their studies in their respective *yeshivot* and *michlatot*. Sixteen others have decided to remain enrolled at Stern full time, and the remaining 20 are unaccounted for according to the registrar.

Due to the unforeseen circumstances of the Gulf war, Stern had to determine how to accommodate the sudden increase of students in an already overcrowded and overtaxed college. Challenges facing Stern included trying to create new classes, over-tally others and find the perpetually searched for extra dorm space.

Because of the uncertainty surrounding the crisis, and not knowing when it would end, Yeshiva University allowed returnees the opportunity to enroll at Stern and receive a full tuition refund should they decide to return to Israel by February 11th. This gave students the time they needed to decide if they wanted to return to Israel, without being penalized financially.

When a cease-fire was announced on February 28th, the deadline to decide whether to re-

turn to Israel was extended to March 5th. This gave parents and students more time to evaluate the situation and determine if they felt it was still too dangerous to return to Israel.

For students who were on the Joint-Israel program, the financial matters were dealt with more smoothly. The only money that was non-refundable was the dorm fee, which had been agreed upon by the students in the early stages of the crisis.

"They [Stern Administrators] were so accommodating," one student returning to Israel exclaimed. "The administration was so helpful and interested in our well-being. Everyone was so nice — I'm looking forward to coming here [to Stern] to stay next year."

The 16 students who decided to continue the year in Stern did so for many different reasons. Some had planned to return home for Pesach anyway; they felt that the year was basically over now and therefore it did not pay for them to return. Others cited the expensive cost of a flight to Israel, and said that they just could not afford it.

Many of these students, including Navi Bardash, SCW freshman, and Leah Frankel, SCW sophomore, both of whom returned before the January 15th deadline,

are planning to return to Israel next semester. Frankel said she wants to go back because she feels that she missed out on her "year in Israel." She wants to experience the true meaning of Yom Yerushalayim, Yom Ha'atzma'ut, Purim, learning all night on Shavuot and "walking to the Kotel and seeing the sun rise in the early morning."

The 22 students who did return to Israel said that they were happy to return and "pick up where they left off." According to Atara Dickstein, although Stern offers excellent Judaic Studies, "it's not the same as being in Israel and studying Torah."

Chana Ringel, one of the first students to return to Israel before the official announcement of the anticipated cease-fire, said that she felt that it was important to return immediately, because the war was the reason that they left so suddenly.

Jullian Borowich returned to Israel for the remainder of the year, even though she had planned to spend Pesach home with her family in the United States. Although Pesach is usually a holiday most students spend with their families, Borowich asked herself how many more opportunities she would have to spend Pesach in Israel.

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Women don't from p.5 col 5

accessibility, as well as its appearance on Mayor Dinkins' Women's Month suggested reading list, made it a viable choice.

"The Yellow Wallpaper," written in the late 19th century, illustrates a woman's internal tension between having an extramarital life and a family. The protagonist, longing for something beyond her position as a wife, is trapped within the constraints of her traditional role. Schrecker feels that a parallel exists in the lives of Stern College women who may feel tension between choosing a career and desiring a family.

Schrecker believes that "gimmicks" such as Women's History

Month and productions such as "The Yellow Wallpaper" focus the public's attention on women's history and retroactively provoke more interest in women's issues. She asserts that a production such as this one is felt to be important, both as an art form and as a "way of giving women a knowledge of their own history and an awareness of what it means to them."

Schrecker would like to both broaden and develop SCW students' understanding of women's studies. She asserts that this is the goal and primary function of such events and of courses such as the one that she is presently offering. The History of Women in the United States.

Peace in the Middle East?

by Elizabeth Botterman

The end of the Gulf war brought freedom to Kuwait, and pride and joy to the hearts of Americans. Banking on its recent success, and its new Arab allies, the United States has pledged to ensure the establishment of lasting peace between the Arabs and Israelis.

Praised for her restraint during the incessant SCUD attacks which caused damage estimated at millions of dollars, Israel is once again facing pressure to give back the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan Heights.

In his address to Congress two weeks ago, President Bush said that he would like to see Israel and the Arab nations negotiate a peace settlement. He also said that Israel would have to entertain the idea of engaging in a "land for peace" settlement in order to solve the Palestinian problem.

On his trip to the Middle East last week, Secretary of State James Baker met with representatives of Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia before making his first visit to Israel. Notably absent from the meetings were King Hussein of Jordan and Yasir Arafat, both of whom supported President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, and are now suffering from a lack of credibility.

The representatives of these countries were championing for an

international conference on the Palestinian problem, a proposal that the Shamir government has opposed. However, Baker said that this is not an opportune time to convene an international conference, and that it will have to wait until a later date.

During his visit to Israel, Baker was taken on a helicopter ride from the western Mediterranean border to the green line, a ride that took approximately five minutes, illustrating Israel's vulnerability to terrorist attacks and its need for secure borders. Baker was also taken to Yad Vashem Holocaust museum and memorial. After this visit, he commented that "Israel is really the answer to what I've seen." His visit was marred by the brutal stabbing of four women in Jerusalem on the day of his arrival. Baker called the murders an attempt to "kill peace," and pledged to continue working and not be deterred.

Current statements by the Shamir government seem to suggest that the Israeli government will not consider giving back the West Bank or the Golan Heights, especially in light of recent terrorist activities within the country. Two years ago, Shamir had proposed a plan which would allow Palestinians in the West Bank to elect officials and rule themselves, but it was never initiated.

The increasing warmth between Syria and the United States has worried many in Israel. Israelis are also concerned about America aligning herself with a nation that is a known sponsor of worldwide terrorism. In the past weeks there has been much talk about a possible peace initiative beginning between Syria and Israel. However, many in Israel point to Syria's recent acquisition of its own SCUD missiles, capable of doing worse damage than Iraq's, as evidence that Syria is not ready to make peace with Israel.

Congressman Stephen Solarz (Dem-New York), a long-term strong advocate of Israel who just returned from a trip to Israel and Syria, said that Syria's recent overtures to Israel would have to be "put to a test."

According to Uriel Savir, counsel general of Israel, Israelis are relieved to once again "breathe fresh air" without the use of a gas mask. He says, however, that because Saddam Hussein is still in power, "the game isn't over yet." He also said that Israel is willing to negotiate on anything but its security.

What remains to be seen is whether America can indeed secure a lasting peace in the Middle East. And for that, only time will tell.



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Topol: The Traditional Man

By Shoshana Levine

Chaim Topol, traditionally and affectionately known as Tevye, has touched the lives of thousands of "Fiddler on the Roof" fans across the globe. Born and bred in Tel Aviv, the 55-year-old actor spent some years acting with the Haifa Theater, and among his roles was that of Tevye in "Fiddler on the Roof."

Topol made his film debut in the Israeli comedy "I Like Mike," and then starred in the award winning "Sallah Shabati." It was his inspiring performance as the elderly roguish Sallah that led to his playing Tevye, once again, 14 years later, this time in the London stage production of "Fiddler on the Roof."

The young actor became a star overnight. His memorable Tevye captivated the public and critics alike. In 1970 he repeated his performance as Tevye in Norman Jewison's film "Fiddler on the Roof." For that performance he won a Golden Globe and was nominated for an Oscar.

Since then he has appeared in various other shows including "The Caucasian Chalk Circle" and "Othello," and many films including "Winds of War" and "Flash Gordon."

In 1983, Topol returned to London to re-create his role in "Fiddler" to packed houses at the Apollo Victoria Theater. Earlier this year he made his debut on Broadway and is scheduled to perform as Tevye through the end of April.

Topol is married and has three children who all live in Israel in the Tel Aviv area. He divides his time between Israel, London and now New York. In Israel, he directs the Popular Theater of Israel and is the managing director of Multi-Images, a production company in London.

OBSERVER: How did you get involved in acting? Did you always aspire to be an actor since you were young?

TOPOL: No - I was in the army and I didn't know what my future would bring. One day I was fooling around with a bunch of guys - acting, singing and telling jokes - and my army commander who observed my little performance, approached me when I was done

and told me to report to the military theater immediately. My acting career took off from there.

OBSERVER: Although you are mainly identified as Tevye, Tevye is also identified by other actors. Have you ever met Zero Mostel and discussed your roles?

TOPOL: Yes. I've met him on several occasions. Each one of us plays the role very differently based on our varied backgrounds. There are many differences in each of our performances — some more subtle than others. We each have our own nuances, some that we put into the script and plan beforehand, and others that we just demonstrate as we go along. There's one funny scene when Golda is trying to speak with Tevye about a shiduch for their daughter, and Tevye hushes her and pretends to be praying. That's my innovation and unique to my performance. It's true, we all play the same character, Tevye, but just as any two actors are different, their portrayals of identical characters are varied too.

OBSERVER: After playing the same role of Tevye for so many years, have you reached the point at which you have become stagnated in the role and do not vary or improve from performance to performance? Have you ever felt before a show that you cannot possibly perform this role again?

TOPOL: No — to both questions. First of all, I haven't played this part for so many years. I performed in London in '67 and in '85 and now on Broadway, and I acted in the movie. There are constant variations in my performances, and I always believe any performance can be improved upon in some way. I'm always finding new angles and new ways of enhancing the role.

OBSERVER: Is it much different playing the role now at age 55 than it was playing it when you were only 26 years old?

TOPOL: Yes, it's a different experience. Now I'm playing the role based on my life's experiences — my wife and my children. I think I can identify with the part better because of that.

OBSERVER: Is it true that you just picked up in the middle of the show to spend time in Israel, and

if so, did the director give you a hard time?

TOPOL: Do I look like someone that people give him a hard time? Yes - I travelled to Israel and spent eight days there. My family is there and I felt that I wanted to be there with them. My heart was with my children, my parents, my friends. That's why I went. I left my show to go to Israel also in '67 when the war broke out. My family's there, my home is there and in times like that I should be there.

I went through this experience years ago in 1948 when Israel was struggling for its independence and I was living in the same Tel Aviv neighborhood that I live in now. The Arabs were shelling us all night. My father, who was a mem-



Topol as Tevye

ber of the underground, the Haganah, came with his friends in the morning in a pickup truck and evacuated everybody. But no matter where we went to hide, the shelling continued. The three nights of shelling I went through from Iraqi Scuds brought back memories. This is nothing new. We went through this and we survived. I can't wait to get back to Israel when this show is over.

OBSERVER: How do you identify with American Jewry?

TOPOL: I don't. The truth is, I'm used to being away a lot because of all the work I do abroad in Europe, especially London. I

travel around a lot, but I always return to Israel as soon as I can.

OBSERVER: What do you as Topol, not Tevye, think about the message of the play — the gradual breakdown of the once steadfast Jewish tradition? Do you feel the message is relevant today? Has this play changed your outlook on life and sensitivities about Jewish values?

TOPOL: No. I don't think so. My Jewish values and ideas about Judaism don't come from the theater. My Jewish values come from my upbringing, from what my parents taught me and what my teachers taught me, what I taught myself, what my rabbi taught me, and from what my experiences in life taught me. I'm not being educated by the theater.

In my opinion, theater is for entertainment and not for education. It's probably a nice way to acquire a literary knowledge, but you can't come out of the theater with messages about life. Theater is for entertainment. Onstage, I play the part of Tevye like I played the part of Othello. Both plays' sole purpose is entertainment and as an actor, that's what I do — entertain. "Fiddler on the Roof" has good music, good dialogue, good acting and that's its real value.

OBSERVER: But don't you think people who see the play can identify with you more as Tevye because you're Jewish and you stand for the values that you're representing in the play?

TOPOL: I don't think that it matters. As far as I know, and I won't mention any names, two of the people who played Tevye were married to gentiles and they were very good actors and when you sat in the theater you identified with their Tevye even though they had nothing to do with the so-called values of the play.

OBSERVER: Do you empathize with Tevye at the end of the play when he disowns his favorite daughter because she marries a goy? Having your own negative feelings about Jewish intermarriage, can't you identify with that more than you can with a role like Othello?

TOPOL: Again, like I told you before, the value of the play is entertainment and that's all I do.

Also, I don't know if you noticed, but in the play he doesn't disown her. In Shalom Aleichem's original story he does. Tevye sits shiva for Chava in the original story. Here he says to her "may G-d be with you."

OBSERVER: What do you think triggered that change?

TOPOL: To make sure the entertainment values weren't disturbed for the audience, because as you know, there are quite a lot of intermarriages among American Jewry.

OBSERVER: Do you feel there's a difference in the level of audience identification between your Israeli and American audiences?

TOPOL: No. I don't think there are differences anywhere, wherever you go. You're trying to embrace the play as a Bible, but you mustn't do that because the next play that you see, which might be very good and very meaningful, might be promoting other messages which you might not stand for. So when you see a play that promotes a specific message, you must be very careful and make sure that you are not being carried away by the entertainment while swallowing all kinds of potentially harmful messages.

OBSERVER: Do you have any message for Yeshiva University students, like "come see the play" or "make aliya"?

TOPOL: Just make aliya. The truth is, I'm not a philosopher — I'm an actor. I don't deliver messages. I don't have any inclinations of being a leader. I'm just trying to be a good actor. The only warning I can give you is to go to the theater to be entertained — don't go looking for messages.

Messages, lessons and ideas you have to develop by learning and by studying and by listening to clever people and good teachers and examine and think about it and work hard. No one will report a message in the theater between the jokes and the dances and the music. For serious messages one has to work hard and we have, thank G-d, a wonderful Book. So, look into the Good Book and read it and all the messages you need are there. We don't have to look for them in the theater.

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Dr. Lamm Re-Examines the Shema

by Miriam Bacon and Shuli Riber

In the past month, SCW has had the privilege of hosting Dr. Norman Lamm's final two lectures in a series of talks on "Shema Yisrael." The first several lectures focused on the understanding of the words "Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu," while the last talks concentrated primarily on the meaning of "Hashem Echad" - G-d is One.

Dr. Lamm stressed three initial approaches in dealing with the word "Echad." The first is the opinion of the Sifre, quoted by Rashi. This is the eschatological (dealing with the end of time) definition, which says "Hashem, who is our G-d now, will in the future appear as One to all of the other nations." The unity of G-d will ultimately be accepted and understood by the entire world in the time of *Mashiach*, as it is stated liturgically in Aleinu, "On that day (i.e., when *Mashiach* comes), G-d will be one and His name will be one."

Another view is expressed by a Gemara in *Brachot* 13b. In this Gemara, R. Yirmiya is criticized by R. Chiya for taking too much time to recite *Shema*. R. Yirmiya is told that as long as his intention is to accept and acknowledge the rulership of G-d over all four directions in addition to the heavens

and the earth, "it is enough." This presents a complication: whose intention is preferable - the Sifre's or the Gemara's?

An answer can be found in the Rif, who brings down a slightly different text of the Gemara. By analyzing the Rif, one may understand that R. Chiya meant for his statement to be understood strictly in regard to the time limit. One's concentration should last as long as it takes him to meditate fully on G-d's all encompassing kingship. Yet, in that space of time, another intention, such as that of the Rif, may be expressed.

A third view is offered by the Rashbam and the Shadal. They concentrate on the uniqueness of G-d *Echad* means that there is no one like G-d in the universe; G-d is absolutely and uniquely one.

Dr. Lamm then brought the issue of "Hashem Echad" toward a contemporary relevance. It is interesting to note, he said, how there is an underlying conflict in the grand world theory among physicists. Some will argue that there is a basic, common connection that binds the universe and all its phenomena together, while others assert that the cosmos are made up of conflicting and competing forces which contain no fundamental bond.

This debate can be traced back to the times of R. Saadya Gaon and

the Rambam. R. Saadya states that if G-d is truly unique, then by definition nothing else can have the capacity to be unique. The unity of G-d is so exclusive that oneness may not exist within anything other than G-d.

The Rambam, on the other hand, emphasizes the fact that the oneness and unity of G-d must lead to a unitary nature in creation. The cosmos in its entirety is simply one unified being. Just as a person is made up of many limbs and organs which function together to produce a whole and healthy creature, so too the universe is composed of celestial orbs and bodies, which, once intertwined together, yield a complete structure.

This debate can be extended even further. R. Chaim Volozhin and the Ba'al HaTanya respond to R. Saadya's argument an extreme fashion. They contend that if the concept of unity is stretched to its absolute meaning, than nothing else in this world can exist; G-d is one, and therefore there can exist no other than G-d.

R. Chaim Volozhin and the Ba'al HaTanya interpret the verse "That Hashem is G-d; from the heavens above until the earth below, there is no other" - literally. There is nothing else besides G-d. This theory is termed *acosmism* (there is no world) or *illusionism*.

This view shakes the very

foundations of the Torah, for all of halacha deals with the world as we know it - that it is real and we exist within it. R. Chaim and the Ba'al HaTanya answer that it is the will of G-d that we act as if the world is real. Therefore, the very unity of G-d entails accepting that the world is real and thereby acknowledging that G-d is our king and we are His subjects.

R. Tzvi Hirsch from Zeditchev opposes this view. He states that people will mistake *acosmism* for pantheism (the belief that everything is G-d), a belief which is antithetical to the Torah. The Zeditchever instead proposes the *cosmos-affirming* definition, which reflects the earlier view of the Rambam.

These two positions bring out two different practiced intentions when reciting the verses "Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad" and "Baruch Shem Kevod Malchuto l'Olam Va'ed." Based on the Zohar, which says that the first verse of *Shema* demonstrates a heavenly unity and the second depicts an earthly oneness, these two opinions arrive at alternate conclusions in regard to one's intentions.

The Zeditchever explains that while saying *Shema Yisrael*, one should focus on bringing the whole world together in a unity that reflects that of G-d. This should be

uplifting, in essence moving the entire universe upwards together to try and attain the level of heavenly oneness. After this, *Baruch Shem* should be said in a manner of taking some of the heavenly unity one has acquired and bringing it back down to earth, enforcing and strengthening an earthly oneness.

R. Chaim and the Ba'al HaTanya's position yield another option to the issue of heavenly unity and earthly unity. Based on the Ramak, they state that there are two ways to perceive the world: from G-d's point of view (*M'tzido*) and from our perspective (*M'tzideinu*). The verse *Shema Yisrael* is *M'tzido*; everyone should understand and accept that G-d is one and nothing else can exist. However, for human purposes, the verse *Baruch Shem* is said, for in order to fulfill G-d's divine will, it is necessary that one considers the world to be real and acts within its halachic parameters.

Dr. Lamm's inspiring and thought provoking talks made an indelible impression on those who attended. One may be fairly certain that not a single person present left the room without a new and uplifting focus on *Shema*.

Esther Wolf, a junior at SCW, remarked, "I found the lectures intellectually stimulating and I'm glad I had the opportunity to hear Dr. Lamm speak."

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MSDCS: OUTREACH

Continued from pg. 7, col. 5.

cussions and the spirit brought to them on these Shabbatot.

Another MSDCS program which brings zeal to communities is the Torah Tour Project, of which approximately fifteen communities become involved. Their goal is to bring vitality to isolated Orthodox areas.

Mr. Daniel Ehrlich, assistant director of MSDCS and coordinator of youth and outreach programs, feels that the students who participate in this project have a "tremendous impact on these communities."

How much of an impact do any of these programs have? Many people question the necessity for programs designed to have a religious affect on people. Often, "outreach" programs are looked upon as futile attempts to change people's ways of thinking. However, before judging the effectiveness of these methods, it is crucial to realize that the main focus of the programs is not to change people's minds. It is to provide Jewish experiences in order to heighten people's awareness of their Judaism.

How, then, is success measured in this area? Moshe Rothchild, a student at RIETS and a participant on numerous shabbatonim, including Counterpoint and Seminar, says that it is virtually impossible to know how effective the programs are on students. "The in-

herent problem is that when you're working in any part of kiruv, it is extremely difficult to measure success. The bottom line is that you just don't know." The only possible way to gauge the usefulness of these programs is by the response. On Kiruv-College Outreach, programs which initially began with ten or fifteen students now have over a hundred participants.

Bender explains, "It is a long process to develop a presence on campus. Not all the places are receptive to Jewish groups in general, and certainly not to traditional Orthodox ones." According to him, the mere fact that these universities request the return of YU students on campus is an accomplishment in itself.

Ehrlich, who has been involved in communal services for 16 years, including positions in B'nei Akiva, Tehila and NCSY, comments on the positive responses from schools and communities which experience these programs. He also describes a different level of success. "One purpose is to train and inspire people for future Jewish activity." Many of the students involved in running the programs are receiving invaluable experience in communal work. Mohl seems to agree with Ehrlich's observation. "One of the reasons I chose Stern is because I knew I'd be able to be involved in Seminar

and other outreach programs."

Sometimes the results become apparent through comments of the participants. When I spent Shabbat at a university as a part of the Kiruv program, I realized a very sad reality. People outside of the Orthodox community often have set impressions and stereotypes of Orthodoxy. One student at the university told me about a conversation he had with his parents after we visited them the first time. He said that they could not understand why he enjoyed our visit. Their reaction was, "Aren't they fanatics?"

Sadly, there are large portions of the Jewish community which simply have a fixed view of the Orthodox community. Their impression is one of a rigid, unaccepting society. Is that what a Torah-filled lifestyle should consist of?

We, as members of the Yeshiva University community constitute a significant part of the Orthodox community. It is our duty, as halachically aware Jews, to present Torah in a positive light. We must dispel the misconceptions. We must extend our arms, and reach out to every spectrum of the Jewish community. Maybe through understanding and *ahavat chinam*, this disjointed community will finally be unified.

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DEAN'S FORUM

Continued from pg. 4, col. 2.

international proportions. All of these businesses will grow tremendously in the future, a factor that, according to Levitt, is of utmost importance to any student entering the world of marketing at this time.

To be successful in the future, continued Levitt, one must always have the latest information. "The secret to productive merchandising is to make a good judgement call on very little information." The business with the most efficient information processing system will

be the one that comes out on top. Major banks, such as Chemical Bank and Citicorp., have three times as many employees working on information processing as there are in the actual bank setting, conducting transactions with customers.

SCW senior Andrea Lowenstein commented that "Professor Levitt presented a refreshingly optimistic view of today's market, despite the popularly conceived notion of a severely depressed economy."

SOCIAL OUTREACH

Continued from pg. 6, col. 2.

In fact, an estimated two to three thousand Jews do not have homes and reside on the streets of New York.

The program welcomes participants from Stern who would like to involve themselves in this worthy cause. Says Wiener, "There are plenty of opportunities out there. These people need someone to talk to." Besides strengthening their spirits, the volunteers' actual distribution of food is of extreme importance. Wiener recounts one man telling him, "The food I get from you is the only food I get."

The Educational Alliance also works with YC and SCW students in Project Sages, in conjunction with the Ivan Tillem Program For the Elderly, and The Wurzweller Graduate School of Social Work. On a weekly basis, volunteers from both campuses visit the elderly in Washington Heights and the Lower East Side. The volunteers visit people who are homebound, as well as people living in nursing homes. Many of them are not visited by relatives and become consumed with loneliness. The weekly visit brings them happiness when they realize that the outside world has not abandoned them and that people actually still care.

The program, coordinated by Professor Bonnie Beck of Wurzweller, also runs parties and programs for the students and their clients before Jewish holidays. At these events, the people sometimes sing their favorite Yiddish songs from childhood, and tears come to their eyes when they remember family and friends no longer with them. Yet they smile with appreciation when they look at their new friends.

The Bikur Cholim committee sponsors another program at Stern, in which students make weekly visits to some of the hospitals in Midtown. From Monday through Thursday, a van from Stern goes to Beth Israel and the Hospital for Joint Diseases. Rabbis in the area refer the volunteers to the Jewish patients who need companionship and help during their illnesses. Presently, the group is composed of 30 people, and they are actively encouraging their fellow students to join them. Rochel Dinewitz, an SCW junior, heads the committee, and all would-be volunteers should contact her about joining the program.

Miriam Granatstein, another junior, recalls one of her memorable experiences on Purim. "We all dressed up in bright costumes and makeup and the kids and adults were so excited. They thought that this year, Purim just wouldn't be the same as usual and instead, they were happy to see that they could celebrate it after all."

Not all the patients visited are Orthodox, but many have strong Jewish identities. Shayna Greenstone says, "Many do not have any religious background at all but most have a strong feeling for Jews and Judaism which is rekindled each time they see us."

The students organizing this program, like all those heading the others, concur that not all senior citizens, homeless, or sick people want companionship. Some react adversely to these visits and do not want pity. Still, most of the clients seem to anxiously await the visits of their YU friends and these one or two hours a week bring into their otherwise sad and lonely lives, a spark of joy.

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Dr. Carol Silver: The Myth, The Folklore, The Reality

Chana Rosenthal

Dr. Carol Silver: the myth, the folklore, the reality. Dr. Silver, professor of English at Stern College, chairs the humanities division at Yeshiva University. Having majored in English literature, history, and political science, she graduated from Alfred University, and went on to receive her master's degree in British and American literature from the University of Michigan. She received her Ph.D. in English from Columbia University.

Famous for her tough grading and her "murderous" exams, Dr. Silver says that "any rumors of my niceness have been overrated." Those who know her better, however, can attest that this is, in reality, a myth. After having her as a professor, many students realize that Dr. Silver is deeply committed to her profession, her students and Stern College.

In her usually closed out literature classes, Dr. Silver, who harbors a special love for history, presents interesting background information about the time period, history and culture of each novel she teaches. Though for the most part her classes are lectures, Dr. Silver says that she loves to be challenged by students who say, "yes, but..." She prefers teaching

students who are alert and thinking.

Over the years, Dr. Silver has monitored the growth and development of her students. She notices a change from their freshman year, when they have not begun to think for themselves, to their senior year when their thought processes and analytical skills "have blossomed".

Because of the small staff, which she would like to see grow larger, popular classes like the Survey of Literature course fill up immediately. Dr. Silver feels that such a large class does not allow for adequate class participation. She finds herself lecturing more, when she would rather listen to her students' interpretations and analyses.

Dr. Silver has been teaching at Stern College since 1968, after teaching English at both Hunter and Vassar Colleges. Comparing students from those institutions to students at Stern, Dr. Silver says that the women at Stern "tend to be more cooperative, non-resistant to learning, caring, pleasant, and fun to teach." She added that if she is unable to hold a class, there are students who are happy about not having class, and others who worry about missing the class.

Dr. Silver finds the students at Stern college to be intellectually as bright as the Ivy Leaguers. "They have a sense of excitement and eagerness toward learning that goes beyond their desire for an easy A."

Although she taught at Stern for



Dr. Carol Silver

over 23 years, she is still shocked by the plagiarism and cheating that occurs at times. She believes that morals and values of Stern women are certainly higher than students at other institutions, because ethics are constantly being stressed in Stern.

During her teaching career, Dr.

Silver has seen many different types of women at Stern College. "Whoever sees the Orthodox as a homogenous group is mistaken." She believes that students at Stern need to be exposed to other ethnic groups, and not just concerned with Israel and the Jewish people.

Aside from teaching full time, Dr. Silver chairs the humanities division at Yeshiva University, which includes the English, history, music, foreign languages, and philosophy departments of the university. Her duties entail acting as a liaison between the teachers and the executive vice president in the event of a conflict. She is also responsible for decisions regarding tenure, sabbatical requests, and curriculum changes, as well as solving faculty problems. Yet, despite her impressive lists of responsibilities, Dr. Silver claims that she does not wield any real power.

As if these two jobs are not enough to keep her occupied, Dr. Silver is an extensive writer. She is currently revising and expanding a book she wrote with Dr. Nearman titled, "Kind Words: a Thesaurus of Euphemisms," which will be available later this month. Another project that she is working on is a book about the Victorian fascina-

tion with supernatural beings. Dr. Silver's fascination with fairies began when she was a child. But this curiosity was increased mainly by research she did in preparation for a course on mythology and folklore.

Much of the material for her book and articles took her to England where she researched at the British Library Museum. Her research is under the auspices of the National Endowment for Humanities, a prestigious award and the second largest grant allocated by Berkeley University. It was there, four and a half years ago, that she met her husband of one month, Dr. Levy, an economic historian from South Africa.

Although Dr. Silver admits that it is difficult being away from her newly wed husband, she contends that she is still used to her independence. She might, however, take a leave of absence and spend some time with her husband.

But for now, Dr. Silver plans to remain at Stern, "unless someone offers an equally good job for a larger salary." All joking aside, Dr. Silver enjoys teaching at Stern, and has a "lot of loyalty" toward the college.

CHRISTIANITY

Continued from p. 3, col. 3

complexities, histories, and particularities of Christians, a vision which assigns blame precisely rather than indiscriminately.

Stereotyped, overgeneral thinking produced the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which continues to nourish ignorant anti-Semites in Japan and Russia to this day. Even in its milder forms, such thinking will never serve the cause of human understanding and mutual respect.

Over the years in my classes, I have discovered that most of my students are just as ignorant about branches of Christianity as I was about religious branches of Juda-

ism when I first arrived at YU several years ago. If Ms. Saffran's innocent, credulous movie review was not the only article on Christianity which I remember seeing in any of the undergraduate newspapers, I would not have run this risk of being misinterpreted by various members of the Yeshiva community. What frightens me is that emotionally loaded issues invite the easy, unquestioning acceptance of stereotypes, whether anti-Semitic or anti-Christian. At a minimum, a college education should inoculate people against both thoughtless prejudice and simplistic thinking.

Dr. Will Lee

Professor of English, YC

SPEECH & ARTS

Continued from p. 4, col. 5

sponsored by the SCW history department. In honor of Woman's History Month, Dr. Schrecker arranged for the dramatic performance of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper," by actress Laurie James.

James is also an author interested in American feminists. For eight years, she has been performing "The Yellow Wallpaper," the story of a middle class, educated woman with post-partum depression. The woman becomes more ill because of the stifling life she is forced to lead as a woman.

According to Dr. Schrecker, the novella is a true story based on the author's life and it portrays classic aspects of feminism. Ac-

tress Laurie James said she hoped the women who saw her perform would learn they "need to find themselves and take on significant work or interests, so they lead fulfilled lives". Over 60 people - the largest audience of all three programs - attended this last festival event.

Fernandez summed up her feelings about this second Speech Arts Forum festival. She said she hopes the festival continues next year because the Speech Arts Forum brings programs to SCW that students would probably otherwise miss. She hopes that more students will participate in the future and commented that "although the turnout for two of the three events was disappointing, I was very pleased with the events themselves and the students who attended felt the same. Everyone enjoyed the programs and felt they benefited."

SCHEDULE

Continued from p. 1, col. 5

classroom to be submitted to the teacher upon completion; this was a more conducive setting to receive responses.

SCW junior Deena Cohen did not receive a ballot. "If I had known about the vote, I would have filled it out immediately."

"It made me feel not only like a student, but an active participant in school decisions," said SCW senior, Cindy Tuckman, echoing a common feeling among those who voted.

"This incident showed that the school is on our side," Levine said. "The administration at Stern is clearly willing and eager to respond to our needs. We just have to voice them, because they can't respond to needs they don't know exist."

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