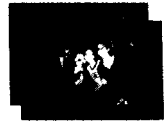




THE YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

# Observer



The greatest show on Earth  
page 15

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF STERN COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

April 6, 1998

VOLUME XLI NUMBER 9

10 Nissan, 5758

## Second Class Sports? Equality of Athletics Funding for SCW

**Aviva Laufer**  
*Observer Staff Writer*

While Stern College for Women (SCW) does not have as many athletic teams and equipment as Yeshiva College (YC), Dr. Richard Zerneck, Director of Athletics for YU, says that he uses his discretion to ensure that both SCW and YC receive sufficient funds to

meet their needs.

"I was brought here to strengthen both programs and indeed to equalize them," he said.

YU does not give Zerneck a set amount of money to spend per student or per school.

Yet Zerneck noted that he has "yet to encounter funding vis-à-vis one program vs. another."

Each year, an equity report must be submitted to the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA). As Joe Bednarsh, Director of Aquatics at YU, noted, last year's NCAA report showed that more money was spent per capita for each member of any SCW team than for members of YC teams that year.

Miriam Grossman, SCW '2000, commented that while the SCW athletic department may be receiving no less funding than the YC athletic department, that does not equate the two. Funding for SCW athletic programs is spent largely on compensating for what they lack, namely a swimming pool and a larger basketball

court, rather than enhancement.

Zerneck expressed his intentions to "rectify the problems when he sees them." Among his goals is "a commitment to significantly expand the [SCW basketball team and tennis team] schedules" in order that they be

see SCW sports, page 8

## No more bunk-beds in Brookdale



**Shira Graber**  
*Observer Staff Writer*

For the first time in the last nine years, the "infamous" five person rooms at Brookdale Hall will no longer exist. The decision for housing next year, to remove bunk beds from the five person rooms was an effort to make more comfortable living conditions in Brookdale.

According to Miriam Gold, Residence Supervisor, the idea to eliminate bunk beds has been discussed for awhile. "At the orientation meeting the possibility was discussed, and finally Jeff Rosengarten informed us that our desire to have the bunk beds eliminated was able to come to fruition," she explained. "Our goal is to make Brookdale more comfortable; it's been noted that bunk beds [make life] more difficult for students."

Dr. Efreim Sulman, University Dean of Students echoed this attitude. "We'd like to make life more comfortable and easier for them," he stated.

Speculation as to why the

see Bunk-beds, page 9

The five person bunk-bed room is soon to be extinct. The decision to remove the beds was made to improve the quality of dorm life.

## New editors chosen for *The Observer*

**Observer Staff**

The editors for *The Observer*, Volume XLII have been chosen. Susan Jacobs will succeed Leslie Ginsparg as editor-in-chief and Ayelet Grun will serve as executive editor.

Jacobs served this year as executive editor, working closely with Ginsparg to ensure the newspaper's continuity. A junior from Charleston, West Virginia, Jacobs is double majoring in English Communications/Journalism and Judaic Studies. She interned this year for the

Jewish Telegraphic Agency, and has been published in Jewish newspapers across the country.

"I hope that I will be able to maintain the quality *The Observer* has achieved this year," said Jacobs. "I will miss Leslie, and I am glad I had the opportunity to work so closely with her. I have learned a lot from her example."

Grun, who was promoted from the position of news editor, is a junior from Silver Spring, Maryland. She is majoring in English Communications/Journalism and has a business minor. She interned for two sum-



Susan Jacobs, Editor-in-Chief



Ayelet Grun, Executive Editor

mers with an Environmental Protection Agency consulting company, where her responsibilities included writing. During her sophomore year she interned for the public relations division of the American Associates of Ben Gurion University.

"It's a great opportunity for me to be elected to the position," said Grun. "I hope we can continue the large strides that have been taken thus far to improve *The Observer*."

# VIEWS

## Observer

LESLIE GINSPARG  
editor-in-chief

SUSAN JACOBS  
executive editor

AYELET GRUN  
news editor

LAUREN KRIEGER  
design editor

RACHEL LINSIDER  
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JULIE STAMPNITZKY  
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NAVA BAK  
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associate news editors

KAYLA PLISKIN  
associate features editor

DINA GIELCHINSKY  
associate cultural arts editor

ELANA STEINER  
associate arts editor

SHAINDY FRANKEL  
associate sports editor

ELISHEVA GARBER  
associate business editor

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245 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10016  
(212) 683-4943 observer@ymail.yu.edu  
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## Allow YC Students in the SCW Computer Lab

For the past few years YC students have been barred from the SCW computer lab. A few years ago, some YC students thought it would be funny to put a virus on the SCW system, causing damage to important files and disabling the system.

Since then, the official policy has been to bar YC students from the lab.

Most of the time this policy does not pose a problem. YC students have access to computer services on the Main Campus and have no need to use SCW's facilities. But there are notable exceptions.

This year students editing the psychology journal enlisted the help of two YC stu-

dents. The men sat down in the lab on a recent evening to lay out the journal and were informed by Burns security guards that they would have to leave. In the end, the students compromised by having the two YC students sit outside the lab where they could be consulted.

In this situation it was clear that the YC students posed no harm to the computer-lab. Indeed, during the day when Mrs. Gordon, the computer room manager, is on duty students can appeal to her to suspend the rule for situations like this. However, the psychology students were working at night, when there was no authority to appeal to.

Unaware of the rule, they had innocent-

ly set aside that evening to work on the journal.

Students should be able to work on academic projects when and where they need to work. Busy schedules make evenings the best time to work on these projects. When help is needed from YC students, evening is the most convenient time. It is only fair that YC students be able to use the SCW computer lab if SCW students can use the computer facilities Uptown. Women are as capable of installing viruses as men are. The school must trust that students will use the facilities responsibly.

## Opportunity's knocking. Answer the door.

College is more than books. It is an opportunity to grow as an individual. Outside of classes, SCW affords an individual many chances to become involved in activities which will help her become a more complete person.

Unfortunately, some students make the mistake of shutting their ears to opportunity's knock.

The Observer would like to congratulate those students who chose to get involved and ran or applied for positions for next year and those students who participated in events over the past year, contributing to the quality of student life at SCW. You all deserve commendation.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

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**FREE LARGE PRINT HAGGADAH**  
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**condition to:**

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## For your information: Financial aid processing for 1998-1999 is underway

Applications for financial aid for the academic year 1998-1999 are available in either paper or electronic versions and should be filed by April 15th.

In order to apply for financial aid, whether from federal or university sources, students and parents must complete the

**FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA).** Student Finances strongly requests that applicants use financial information from a completed 1997 1040 form only. The FAFSA is the only form that is required to apply for aid. New York State residents will be sent a TAP application by NYS HESC based upon filing the FAFSA.

Everyone is urged to complete the FAFSA through the web.

Renewal and original FAFSA forms may be accessed at [WWW.Fafsa.ed.gov](http://WWW.Fafsa.ed.gov).

The FAFSA is the document that collects information

regarding family finances and is used to compute eligibility for all aid programs. Yeshiva University's Title IV code number is "002903" and must be listed in Section "G". The results of the FAFSA (SAR) will be electronically transmitted to YU by the federal processor if our Title IV code number has been listed.

Please read the instructions carefully in completing all forms. Errors and missing information will result in delayed processing and decreased availability of aid. Be sure to use the student's full legal name in completing all applications. Student Finances is aware of the complexities of requesting financial aid and stands ready to assist parents and students. Please do not hesitate to consult with them if you have any questions at 212-960-5269.

## observer views

## Taking care of ourselves



leslie ginsparg  
editor-in-chief

A couple of weeks ago, I was walking down the street when I noticed a man, who was obviously drunk, walking towards me. I was instantly aware that I, as a young woman walking alone, was an easy target. But I wasn't afraid, because I had learned exactly what to do in this situation.

Since the beginning of the year, safety has been a big issue at SCW. Two sexual assaults and an armed robbery (at which two SCW student were present) brought the issue home for many SCW women. After all, we are a college of women living in Midtown Manhattan, a city not known for its friendliness and serenity, and we are accustomed to walking alone (or even in small groups) at all hours.

I was one of those people who became concerned with safety. I remember one time I got lost in Washington Heights alone at night (around Broadway

and 180th Street - not exactly Mr. Roger's Neighborhood) and I thought to myself, "This was really dumb. I sure hope I get home alive."

Some people, my mother for example, suggest that I shouldn't walk around at night. Other people, my father for example, suggest that I should walk in groups. But crimes happen in broad daylight (and in New York, with crowds of people watching) and people are attacked in groups. And no matter what I do, I always find myself in these "alone in the Heights-type" situations. I hate taking the local van (maybe because I could walk from the school building to Brookdale and back 10 times before the van would get there) and I often have other places to go. While the Office of Safety and Security has made a great effort to watch over the Midtown "Campus," they cannot be everywhere.

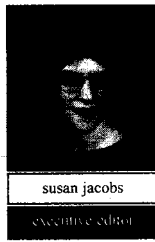
So instead I took the suggestion of one of my friends. I took a self-defense class. Not Karate or any other martial arts. I took a class designed to teach women how to defend themselves on the streets. I learned how to be more aware, how to use verbal skills to deescalate situations - preventing them from becoming dangerous - and when not to fight (for property or

anything material). I also learned how a woman can disable an attacker, even though he is physically stronger than she is. Should I ever (G-d forbid) find myself in a situation where my life is in imminent danger, I learned how to use my strengths and fight to save my life.

The class I took was called Prepare-Impact Personal Safety (1-800-442-7273) and I highly recommend it to anyone (for other classes, you can look in the yellow pages under self defense). I know it's not easy to fit another class into your schedule (it wasn't easy for me to juggle it with the paper and a full course-load). But it might be one of the most important things you do in your life and when something is that essential, you can always find a way to make it work.

When I saw that man approaching me, I stared him straight in the eyes and watched him very closely as he passed by, always making sure that there were two arm-lengths between us. He left me alone and I was very happy about that. But should that situation have taken a turn for the worse, I would have known what to do. That knowledge is priceless.

## West Virginia dreaming



susan jacobs  
executive editor

I'm from West Virginia. It's the sort of place where you get excited when you hear of someone with a Jewish-sounding last name that you haven't met yet. It's the kind of place where you realize the importance of being with other Jews.

So here I am at Yeshiva University in New York City, the most Jewish university in the United States. But the abundance of Jews in New York allows us to divide ourselves and take for granted the uniqueness of being Jewish.

At Stern I often miss the chance to interact with Jews who aren't Orthodox. This is a shame. I believe we are isolating ourselves from the broader Jewish community at our own peril.

For all our discussions about how we should treat non-observant Jews, I wonder how many of us really have meaningful contact with Jews who aren't somehow included in the category of Orthodox Jews. We tend to assume that if Jews are not traditionally observant, then they don't care about Judaism. How many of us have ever had a serious conversation with someone who is devoted to Reconstructionist Judaism?

I realize that the forces that be are nervous about conferring legitimization on non-Orthodox streams of Judaism. And they have good reason to feel this way. However, does this mean that we should cut ourselves off from the possibility of establishing friendships with our Jewish brethren? This issue has plagued me lately. It would not be an issue if I had chosen to attend any other college. Even universities with large Orthodox populations require one to interact with non-Orthodox Jews at least some of the time.

As individuals in the Orthodox community, we need to make more of an effort to establish communica-

tion with non-Orthodox Jews. Sometimes kiruv organizations see less-observant Jews as objects who need to be made religious. While our ultimate goal may be to bring others closer to Torah observance, the way to do that is by being genuine friends to all Jews, and by respecting them as people and as equals, even if they never budge from their perceptions of Orthodox observance. We need to make an effort to understand the struggles people have with Orthodoxy. If we are true friends, despite our differences, then we establish trust and maybe, but not definitely, they will understand and adhere to our religious ideals.

This Pesach we should recall the euphoria the Jewish nation felt when they were redeemed from Mizraim together. How Jews delighted in the company of other Jews.

As for me, I'll be home, in a community that is less than ideal for an Orthodox Jew, but one that is home nevertheless. West Virginia awaits.

**Have you heard KOL SHIRA?**

**Don't you think it's about time you did?**

**Have you heard the BELLES sing since Chanukah?**

**Do you know where the Schottenstein Shul is?**

**Take care of all three in one shot!**

**SCWSC is proud to present:**

**A CAPELLA NIGHT**

**Monday, April 6**

**The Schottenstein Shul**

**9:30 PM**

**Featuring performances by the Belles and Kol Shira**

# NEWS

## Schwartz looks for new opportunities after Yeshiva University

Sara Kostant

Observer Staff Writer

Following the January 9th announcement that Dr. William Schwartz, current Vice President of Academic Affairs, will resign, Yeshiva University began to search for a new Chief Academic Officer.

In a letter to Dr. Norman Lamm, President of YU, Dr. Schwartz wrote, "it is with considerable regret that I inform you of my personal decision and need to climb new mountains which present new challenges."

Lamm answered Dr. Schwartz's letter on January 27th, and expressed his regret that Schwartz would be leaving the YU faculty. "Your professional training has helped you become a peace-maker and conciliator," Lamm stated, adding that Schwartz has "a talent much needed in a diverse university."

Schwartz's letter of resignation was publicized the next day.

Dr. Schwartz initially planned to leave his position as Academic VP at the end of the spring semester, but said that he may have to continue his work at Belfer Hall until the end of August if YU cannot find an interim or permanent successor.

When questioned about the search

"It is with considerable regret that I inform you of my personal decision and need to climb new mountains which present new changes."

-Dr William Schwartz

Vice President of Academic Affairs,

for a substitute, Deans Karen Bacon and Ethel Orlian said that they, like most of the faculty and student body, are still awaiting news about the replacement process and possible candidates. University Dean of Students, Dr. Efreim Nulman assured that students would be a part of the selection process.

Lamm could not be reached to comment on the search, but in his letter responding to Schwartz's resignation, he remarked: "I am comforted by the offer you [Schwartz] made of continuing to be of assistance to the University if called upon, and I expect to take advantage of the offer."

It appears that Schwartz will still be in touch with YU in the future.

**Schwartz's diverse responsibilities**

The role of "peace-maker" and "conciliator" is one aspect of the many roles

which Schwartz has filled since he accepted the position of Vice-President of Academic Affairs five years ago. Officially, the office of the Academic VP oversees faculty appointments and re-appointments, recommendations for promotion and tenure, student disciplinary appeals, and financial requests from the academic side of the university. The Deans of all YU associated schools, except for the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, answer to this office.

The Academic Affairs Office is also responsible for reporting to state regulatory agencies.

In a March 18th interview, Schwartz stated that while he has enjoyed supervising the more mundane features of his position, he has received tremendous satisfaction from its "aspect of innovation."

Among the programs initiated under

Schwartz's direction were the "Authors-in-Residence" lecture series, the CEO Series, new Joint Degree programs in Dentistry, Optometry, and Business Administration and the Stone Beit Midrash program.

**Plans for the future**

Life after YU will be far from empty for Schwartz. "I look forward to working as hard, if not harder" he said, listing the various directorships and teaching responsibilities which will fill up his time next year.

Schwartz will serve on the corporate board of Viacom, Inc., the company that co-produced the movie Titanic. He will also be Chairman of the Executive Compensation Committee, Advisory Director of WCI Steel and Chairman of the Board of UST Corp. Schwartz said, "before my vice-presidency and during, I was and am a university professor." He will resume teaching at Cardozo School of Law at the end of August.

Schwartz will continue in his roles as counsel to the law firm of Cadwalader, Wickersham, and Taft, the oldest law firm in the nation, and as president of the Fifth Avenue Synagogue. He also hopes to involve himself in research and writing, perhaps adding to the eighteen books and fifty-three articles he has authored.

## Student Council's financial straits

Shira Graber

Observer Staff Writer

Excessive spending by last year's Stern College for Women Student Council caused the current SCWSC to begin the year in a state of financial problems. "We entered the year in significant debt, but since there are more students this year, it worked out because we had more funds," explained Jennie Weiss, SCW '98, treasurer of SCWSC.

Last year, many more activities were sponsored by SCWSC than have been this year. Due to the tight financial situation, SCWSC was not able to distribute funds as freely. Each club was required to hand in a detailed budget request, and a strict request form process for additional funds was implemented. "Since last year's student council overspent, the debt carried over to this year, and we had to be strict to get the year off," Weiss clarified. "We asked the club presidents to be creative and innovative, and to be thoughtful in how they spend the money - for example not spend extravagant amounts on a speaker."

This year, due to the significant debt, SCWSC received a greater amount of help from the President's Circle, an alumni association that donates money based on proposals from the student leadership. According to Weiss, the journals published by the clubs, such as Nefesh, Besamim and the Sounding Board, would not have had the funds to publish without their help. Extra support also came from the Office of Student Services and the Dean's Office, both of which contributed funds this year, sponsoring events such as a boat ride and New York Mets game, part of the Fall '97 orientation.

Both Yeshiva College's and SCW's student councils are primarily funded by the student body itself. Every student pays an activity fee of \$110 for the year that is paid with tuition. The money passes through the university and is then received by the student councils in installments. Both councils

receive additional funding from the President's Circle. "Donations are based basically on what Student Council requests and what they [President's Circle] give," said Joseph Glass, YC '98, YCSC treasurer.

The total sum is allocated to the three major organizations within the colleges. At both YC and SCW, a portion is designated for the Sy Syms School of Business Student Council. At SCW, the money is split between SCWSC and the Torah Activities Council (TAC); in Yeshiva College it is divided among YCSC and the Student Organization of Yeshiva College (SOY).

The Sephardic Club gets its funding from outside sources, and the Sophomore Class had a fundraising project to give money to tzedakah. "We give money to clubs that had creative events that people would go to, for example SAGA's leaders were very creative so they received more," said Weiss.

YCSC has a similar process. The club presidents turn in budget proposals, and they receive money based on how active the club is. "College Republicans and Democrats are not the most active clubs; however the Political Science Club always requests a lot because of YUNMUN and YMIK," said Glass. "Sometimes there is a set amount and more is given when it is actually needed."

Once the available funds are distributed at the start of the year, the cabinets of the student councils decide how to allocate the money to the various activities, clubs and organizations within their ranks. "We have the club presidents fill out detailed requests and see what is the best way to spend the money," said Weiss. "Since we entered in debt this year, we try to give the clubs what they ask for, but we have to be reasonable."

"Hopefully, between careful and better planned spending this year, we'll have enough left over for next year," said Weiss.

Gila Rosenthal

Observer Staff Writer

**Besamim**, the arts and literature journal, recently brought in art historian Betzeal Narkiss.

Look for **Bina Yeteira's** Pesach edition which will soon be coming out. Students who wish to write for the weekly parsha newsletter can sign up in the Beit Midrash in the school building. To sponsor an issue, contact Ayelet Grun.

**The Biomedical Journal Club** held a meeting on Thursday, March 19.

**The Chabad Club** recently participated in the annual Chabad intercollegiate Shabbaton in Crown Heights, on March 20-21.

**The Freshman Class** sponsored a Shabbaton on March 20-21, featuring Dr. Peninah Schram, head of the Speech Communications Department.

**Kol Shira**, SCW's newest a capella group, will be performing on Tuesday night, April 7, together with the **Belles**.

**The Russian Club** attend-

ed a performance of the Broadway musical *Beauty and the Beast*, on Thursday, March 26.

**The Shemiras HaLashon Club**, recently formed at SCW, meets Tuesday nights in the Brookdale Beit Midrash at 11pm.

**The Speech Pathology and Audiology Club** brought in a speaker, Fran Santore, on Wednesday, March 18 during club hour. She discussed her experiences in the field of speech pathology.

**Sternbucks**, featuring an evening of art and Starbucks coffee, was held on Tuesday, March 31 in Koch Auditorium. It is sponsored by **Besamim** and **The Fine Arts Society**.

TAC Elections were held on Wednesday, March 25. A run-off election for the presidency was held on Monday, March 30. SCWSC and SSSBSC held their elections on Wednesday, April 1.

**The Tzedakah Club** recently held a jelly bean count and *matanot Teyyonim* drive to raise money for tzedakah.

campus news

# TAC Presidential candidates tie second year in a row

Baron wins run-off, Kahn to lead SCWSC, Loberfeld to head SSSBSC

**Eileen Chudow**  
*Observer Staff Writer*

The Torah Activities Council has elected a new executive board. On Wednesday, March 25, students voted for TAC positions. Stern College for Women Student Council and Sy Syms School of Business Student Councils held election the following Wednesday, April 1.

Due to an exact tie between the two TAC presidential candidates, Zemira Baron, SCW '99, and Rachelle Goldfisher, SCW '99, a runoff election took place in conjunction with the SCWSC elections. Baron won the run-off election.

A similar runoff election for TAC president was held last year when Mechal Weiss, SCW '98, and Nitzan Pelman, SCW '98, tied for TAC president. Weiss won the runoff election.

As with last year's elections, a special committee comprised of several students organize the election, supervise the candidates and count the final votes. This year, the committee was run by Esther Finkle, SCW '98, Naama Dinewitz, SCW '99, and Alyssa Shulman, SCW '99.

Baron explained that one impromptu campaign device she used, that of her roommate, accompanied by guitar, serenading SCW students in the elevator with songs about Zemira, was especially effective because "there are a lot of students in the elevator." Baron also commented that she had hoped not to run opposed and expressed the hope that she and Goldfisher could work together as co-presidents.

Tammy Cohen, SCW '99, and Rebecca Feldman, SCW '99, won the two TAC vice presidential positions. Tova Rhein, SCW '2000, and Elisheva Langner, SCW '99, won the offices of TAC secretary and treasurer, respectively.

Cohen indicated that she is "excited to work with a wonderful board," especially with Feldman, and that she hopes to "bring in more shiurim and events for all types of students, on all levels." She added that everyone deserves to benefit from SCW's dual curriculum, not just students from one particular background, and while there are many opportunities at SCW, "the clubs need to be developed more." Langner, currently one of the heads of the TAC Adopt A Bubbie Committee, said she "can't wait to start pulling things together for next year, running activities, getting the entire school involved in TAC, and making TAC exciting."

She added that she's certain



SCW students vote in recent elections.

that "people have incredible ideas we don't even know about. We want to give everyone the opportunity to give ideas and start new clubs."

Many of the candidates for SCWSC echoed the words of the newly elected TAC officers, expressing the hope that more students will become involved in student activities.

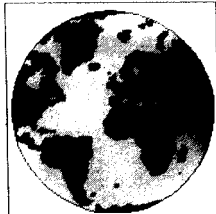
Shaindy Kahn, SSSB '99, currently the Junior Class Board treasurer, a chairperson for the Sy Syms dinner and a chairperson of Orientation, ran for SCWSC Executive Board president.

She said that she "enjoys working with people" and hopes to obtain student input and participation in events and to give students greater interaction with the deans and faculty.

Charna Schwartz, SCW '99, won for vice president. Bracha Schiffmiller, SCW '99, ran unopposed for corresponding secretary, and Melanie Keller, SCW '99, ran and won for treasurer.

SSSBSC positions were filled by Adina Loberfeld, SSSB '99, as president. Marina Klochan, SSSB '99, as vice president. Susan Wohlgelemer, SSSB '2000, as treasurer, and Carla Sharon, SSSB '2000, as secretary.

Some positions were unfilled until names were filled in by individual voters on the election day. According to Finkle, people at the ballots saw that no one was running and decided to run. "One person can vote for themselves and they can win. That's how it works," said Finkle.



## Campus News from around the Country

it-wire

**A** February 11 snow storm that hit Stanford University with over five inches of rain destroyed buildings and cars throughout the campus. Classes were cancelled for the undergraduate schools, but not for some of the graduate schools. Thousands of library books and recordings were ruined.  
- **The Stanford Daily, Stanford University**

**T**exas A&M officials announced in February that they would not require prospective medical school students to take the MCAT exam to apply. The decision was made to bolster minority enrollments at the school.  
- **The Daily Texan, University of Texas at Austin**

**T**he Pennsylvania State chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) urged Pennsylvania school districts to ban Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn from their mandatory reading lists. The organization feels that the repeated use of racial slurs in the novel leads to well-documented psychological damage to African American children's self-esteem, especially in the classroom.  
- **The Daily Collegian, Pennsylvania State University**

**A** University of Maryland shuttle bus was car-jacked on March 30 and was arrested approximately an hour later. The man ordered the driver to travel from the University's campus to Longfellow Street in Northwest Washington, DC. The felon faces federal interstate armed car-jacking charges, since he crossed state lines.  
- **The Diamondback, University of Maryland**

## Senior Class

- President: Jennie Weiss**
- Vice President: Naama Dinwitz**
- Treasurer: Adina Weinstein**
- Secretary: Dassi Zeidel**

## Junior Class

- President: April Simon**
- Vice President: Miriam Eljas**
- Treasurer: Lauren Hamburger**
- Secretary: Rachel Salamon**

## Sophomore Class

- President: Estee Sandler**
- Vice President: Sarah Monchar**
- Treasurer: Michelle Rothberg**
- Secretary: Bella Friedman**

## Allegra Goodman Describes "Becoming A Jewish Woman Writer"

Eileen Cudow  
Observer Staff Writer

**D**uring Allegra Goodman, a novelist and author of short stories, delivered a lecture on "Becoming A Jewish Woman Writer" to a men's full audience in Koch Auditorium on Tuesday night, March 3, 1998. Goodman was invited to SCW by the Morris Epstein Forum on the Arts, named for the late chairman of the Stern College for Women English Department, Morris Epstein, who initiated the program.

Goodman discussed both her writings and the process by which she became a writer. She explained that *The Family Markowitz*, her recent collection of short stories, achieved a "compassionate satire" in dealing with three generations of a Jewish American family and the generational, religious, and personal conflicts the family members confront. She believes that since the entire volume is about the same family, there is greater depth to her characters and described the whole as "greater than the sum of its parts."

Goodman insisted that her stories are not autobiographical, instead coming from "experience displaced by imagina-

tion." Goodman read a short selection from *The Family Markowitz*, and responded to questions from her audience. In response to a comment by Dr. Judith Neuman, SCW English professor, that students dislike the lack of creativity in critical writing, Goodman said that writing can be "very creative" because of the rigor of the thought involved. She urged students to "read carefully and develop arguments" about those readings in order to gain the ability to conceptualize about one's own writing.

When asked whether she would rewrite something if a reader were to misinterpret her meaning, Goodman said that she leaves her works to her readers to interpret and joked that "all the greatest writers have been misinterpreted."

Goodman said that she would write about non-Jewish characters, and has previously written about non-Jewish Hawaiians, but added that there are "so many kinds of Jewish life to write about" and does not feel the need to "dramatize only one perspective of Judaism."

On balancing work and family, Goodman said that writing has flexibility,

but like any job, a writer with children needs child care since you can't "write a chapter while your child takes a nap," and she writes while her children are in school. She continued to explain that although *The Family Markowitz* was written over an eight year period, in that time Goodman completed college, received her doctorate in English literature, and gave birth to two children.

Her audience, SCW students, faculty and several guests from outside of the YU community, enjoyed Goodman's lecture.

Barbara Axelrod, a library technician at SCW, commented that she gained from it as someone who has written "while the baby slept" and that she relates to the need of every writer to have "inspiration and a mentor." Mindy Lamm, a visitor who attended the lecture, remarked that she enjoyed the lecture "very, very much" because Goodman is a family oriented professional. Lamm added that although she hasn't read Goodman's books yet, after hearing her lecture, she certainly will.

Miriam Eljas, SCW '2000, found Goodman's "liveliness inspiring" as well as the "experience of meeting a Jewish



Allegra Goodman

woman who became a published author."

Tanya Aharanoff, SCW '2001, said that she thinks Goodman's "characters are brilliant" and plans to read Goodman's books.

*The Family Markowitz* was chosen as New York Times Notable Book of the Year for 1996 and won the Salon Magazine 1997 First Annual Book Award for Fiction.

## President's circle sponsors Holocaust museum trip

Esther Finkle  
Observer Staff Writer

**T**he Zachor Club of Stern College for Women and Yeshiva College recently sponsored a trip to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. The March 8 trip was funded by Yeshiva University's President's Circle, an association of alumni that donates money for projects based on student proposals.

The Zachor Club had been considering the trip for a long time, but was lacking the necessary funds to subsidize the trip. Mechal Weiss, SCW '98, president of the Torah Activities Council, appealed to the

**"B**ecause it was an organized trip, it was a good opportunity to do something I would have otherwise not done on my own. It was an excellent experience."

-Charna Schwartz, SCW '99

President's Circle in November 1997 to sponsor the event. She was pleased that they could help the students financially.

According to Orly Goldenthal, SCW '98, committee chair of the Zachor Club, "if it wasn't for the funding of the President's Circle, this trip would

have not come into being."

Weiss said that the President's Circle "was very helpful" and "honored" the student's request to the best of their ability.

Upon arriving at the museum at 11:30 a.m. via bus, the students who attended the event were able to spend several hours

in the museum or visit other sites in Washington D.C.

"The trip was especially meaningful to me considering it was my first visit to the Washington museum," said one of the SCW students.

Charna Schwartz, SCW '99, said, "Because it was an organized trip, it was a good opportunity to do something I would have otherwise not done on my own. It was an excellent experience."

Goldenthal felt that overall, the trip was a success. "Due to everyone's effort, we were able to put it together," she said.

The Zachor Club intends to make additional trips to the museum in the future.

## Yeshiva University offers essay awards

Sara Kostant  
Observer Staff Writer

**T**hree endowed essay awards have been made available to undergraduates of Yeshiva College and Stern College for Women. The Lawrence P. Fischer Memorial Award is given for the best paper submitted by an undergraduate on some aspect of Jewish history. This paper must be written in Hebrew, and receives a cash award of \$750.

The Edward A. Rothman Memorial Award is given for the best paper on the topic of "Issues in Orthodox Judaism in Practice" and should be between 2000 to 3000 words in

length. The cash award for this essay is \$550. The Fannie and Asher Scharfstein Memorial Award is given for the best paper on the topic of Gemilat Hessed, and must deal with the definition of this term in its broadest interpretation, and its importance. A cash award of \$600 is included.

In addition to the above awards, two essay prizes will be awarded to SCW students only. The Professorcy Laurel Hatvany Award is given for excellence in creative writing; although it is open to all SCW students, preference is given to seniors for this award, which includes a \$100 cash prize. The Dean David Mirsky Memorial Award is available to a SCW senior and may be awarded for an

essay in any subject. This award includes a cash prize of \$500.

All entries must be submitted to the Dean's office no later than April 20, 1998. The typed essay should be submitted in a manila envelope simply stating "Essay submitted for the (Fischer, Rothman, Scharfstein, etc.) Award." To insure objectivity, the title page of the essay should not give the student's name but a pseudonym. Attached to the essay should be a sealed envelope on the outside of which is the same pseudonym as on the title page, and inside of which is the author's true name, class, and school.

## Nehama Leibowitz, one year yahrzeit

**J**ust one year ago, the world lost a unique Torah personality. On her first yahrzeit Rabbi Mordechai Cohen, one of her talmidim, offered the following thoughts.

"Nehama Leibowitz had a profound impact on learning Tanach in the Jewish community. She taught literally thousands of students who themselves became teachers. Her method indirectly impacts hundreds of thousands of students.

"She changed the way Tanach is learned. Instead of by rote, she trained people to think, ask questions, investigate on their own - to make Tanach more meaningful.

"She was someone who was completely devoted to teaching to the exclusion of everything else. Everybody was her student. She would treat everybody with respect.

"Most people are part time teachers. Her heart, spirit, and soul were completely devoted to teaching. Learning Torah was her entire life and I think that's why she had such an impact." *On Monday, March 30, Dr. Tamar Ross lectured on "The Dialectics of Faith: The Role of Doubt in Religious Belief" as a tribute to Nehama Leibowitz's yahrzeit.*

CAMPUS TALKS

# SCW women's studies questioned

Shira Greenland  
Observer Staff Writer

Despite the efforts to organize a lecture in honor of Women's History Month, students at SCW have noticed the disproportionate attention given to the commemorative month that took place in March, as compared to various other women's colleges.

To commemorate Women's History Month this year, the Stern College for Women history department invited Professor Marion Kaplan of Queens College to address the student body. Kaplan spoke about Jewish women under Nazi power. According to Dr. Ellen Schrecker, associate professor of history at SCW, the college has been coordinating such speakers for the past few years as a way of commemorating the month for women's history. The speakers have generally combined the theme of women in history with some Jewish theme, making such lectures particularly pertinent to SCW students.

Most women's colleges have an entire women's studies department with its own major and research opportunities. The Barnard College course book, for example, lists 27 courses under the women's studies major, adding that "There are too many courses offered in other departments [relating to women's studies]" to list them all. SCW offers only a few courses each semester on women's topics.

According to a January 19 article in U.S. News & World Report, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst is going as far as to revamp its entire curriculum to better accommodate its feminist population. All students and faculty will have to undergo "gender sensitivity training," and each course will be "woman friendly," taking into account a woman's tendency to learn better through personal experience,

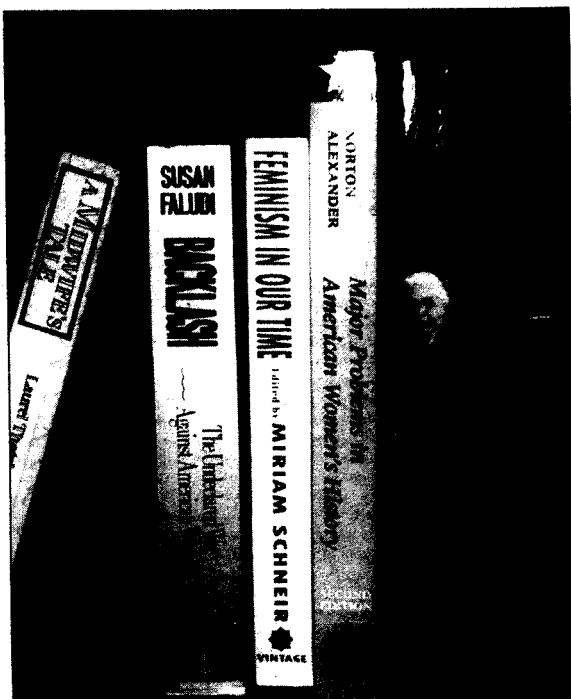
emotion and cooperation than through abstract argument, debating and logic. No course will be permitted to "over-represent" males, even forcing a Renaissance art course to focus equally on female artists when they only comprise 1% of Renaissance artists. This program is criticized as intellectually unequal.

Schrecker explained the difference between the SCW curriculum and other college curricula by saying that SCW students, while interested in women's studies, have higher priorities academically and in their extra-curricular activities. The one lecture for Women's History Month is, therefore, a representation of the student interest in and demand for such activities. While students would like to hear one speaker, there is little demand for many more than one. Similarly, many SCW students are interested in taking a course or two in women's studies, but few are actually want to pursue the area as a full major.

When interviewed, responses of SCW students to questions on women's studies varied greatly. A number of students were harsh in expressing their opinion that any extra focus on women is too much. These students are upset by the feminist undertones a women's focus carries with it, and do not see women's courses as adding anything positive to the college.

One recent transfer student from Barnard, suggested that there is a significant difference in the motivation for students to attend the two colleges. While Barnard specifically attracts those students interested in being in a women's college, with a focus on women's studies, SCW attracts those primarily interested in being in a Jewish college. For most students, she explained, the fact that SCW is a women's college is simply a function of its being an Orthodox Jewish college.

Other students were disturbed by the lack of interest in women's issues by their peers, and would like to see more courses

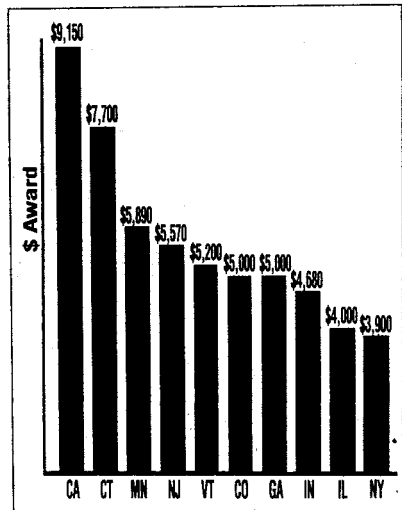


Students enrolled in The History of Women in the US are required to read a variety of women's studies books.

offered in the area, stating that they would even consider a women's studies major, were it to be available. Most students, however, stood somewhere in between these two extremes. They were pleased to be offered a small selection of courses,

regardless of whether they had ever taken such courses, or planned to take them in the future, but they did not see the need to significantly expand the course selection.

## New York State Tuition Program Limited



Observer Staff

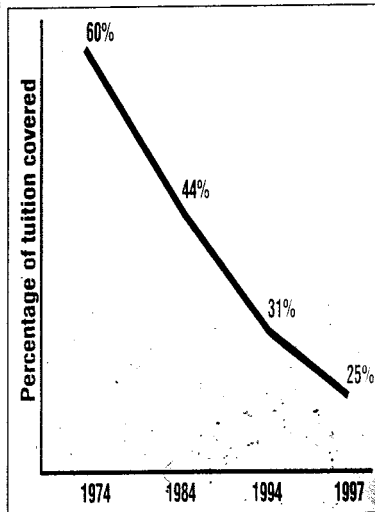
In recent years, there has been a sharp decline in the percentage of Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) dollars received by students at independent colleges and universities, including Yeshiva University. 24 years ago, New York State's TAP was established to provide the financial assistance that would enable students to attend an independent college or university.

The shift in funding has seriously limited students' choice of attending an independent college or university. These schools and their students are making a case for their 1998 legislative priority - restoring fairness and equity to TAP.

When TAP was established, the maximum TAP award narrowed the tuition price differential between an independent institution and the State University to \$1,000. Today, TAP leaves a differential of \$11,000.

Not long ago, New York led all states in providing financial aid to students.

In recent years, however, the state has fallen to tenth place. The 60% tuition coverage that TAP used to pay for students' college education in 1974 is now only 25%. 80,000 students depend on TAP funds for tuition assistance.



CAMPUS NEWS

# SCW athletics

continued from page 1  
comparable to the men's schedules.

In addition, for the first time this year, a merit award will be given to the woman who is the most outstanding in the classroom and in the competitive range. This award, titled the Eastern College Athletics Conference merit award, was only given to men in the past.

Zerneck added that "athletes are athletes," and no distinctions should be made between the men's and women's athletic programs.

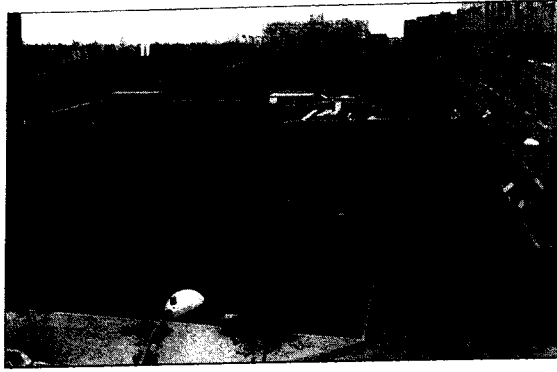
"If we're not there yet," he said, "we'll be there soon."

SCW students have voiced concern regarding the minimal amounts of athletic space allotted to them. Several activities that SCW students wish to participate in exceed the capacity of the SCW gym.

Efforts to improve athletic opportunities for SCW students are being implemented. However, SCW students face inconveniences, and greater improvements are still necessary. Zerneck explained that he is "moving everything in that direction."

Blima Sasson, SCW '99, a member of the SCW basketball team, described the SCW basketball court as "half the size of a real court." She said that practices there "don't even seem real."

In efforts to remedy the situation, a larger court has been made available for the team to use at St. Helen and Hughes on the Upper West Side. "The ride there usually takes between 45 minutes and an hour since it is at a time of heavy traffic," said Sasson. "Practice lasts an hour and a half



The Max Stern Athletic Center, YC's athletic facility.

and then it takes between 25 minutes and a half hour to get back."

Sasson said that the process "takes up the whole night!" She said that many students are hesitant to join the team for this reason.

Zerneck recognizes this issue and explained that he is "looking for alternative closer spots." In addition, he has supplied the basketball team members with brand new uniforms this year.

SCW students feel that they are missing out on not having a swimming pool on campus. Although YU owns a swimming pool in the Max Stern Athletic Center, women are not allowed to use the pool for reasons of modesty.

Instead, swimming opportunities are provided for SCW students at Columbia Grammar School - located on West 93rd

Street - on Monday nights: A swimming class is given from 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. and recreational swimming is available between 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. Van service is provided to take students there and back.

Zerneck said that he is looking for closer alternatives for swimming opportunities.

Zerneck also said that while this year there was insufficient equipment for the SCW fencing team, he blames it on a problem of communication. He intends to correct the problem for next year. He explained that while he treats each team equally, the coaches still have to get used to that idea.

Bednarsh commented that while there are yet more improvements to be made, "we're on the right track." Having

worked in the YU athletic department since 1991, Bednarsh claims that "the division line [between the YC and SCW athletic programs] used to be much larger. He described Zerneck as serving as being "the great equalizer here."

SCW's "athletic center" consists of the eleventh floor of the Midtown Center. Approximately 850 students utilize this area for their physical education classes. Only one class can be given at a time. "There are certain times that are more convenient to take physical education classes than others. If more space was available, then a larger variety of classes could be offered each hour," said Ronit Yaish, SCW '99.

Efforts have been made to accommodate SCW students who want to work out using exercise machines at their own leisure. Equipment such as treadmills, exercise bikes, stair masters and weights are accessible on the 11th floor of the Midtown Center, the first floor of Brookdale Hall, and on the basement floor of Schottenstein Hall.

Aviva Zemel, SCW '2000, uses the exercise room in Brookdale Hall often. "I appreciate having the exercise equipment available so conveniently in the dorm," she said. "But I often feel extremely claustrophobic while exercising because of the small size of the room."

It has been suggested that if a student has a particular concern, they address it directly and constructively. In this case however, it may be difficult. The athletic offices are located at YU's Main Campus. Zerneck does not have office hours at the Midtown Center.

# Gordon, Olsen address SCW

Celia Sporer  
Observer Staff Writer

Mary Gordon, the third author to speak this semester as part of the Gottesman Authors in Residence series, spoke about the experience of writing and the various pieces of literature that influenced her work. She also read excerpts from her new book, *The Spending*, in the lecture on February 22 at the Benjamin P. Cardozo Law School.

Following the lecture, Gordon was questioned about her method of writing, and how she creates the analogies and metaphors prevalent in her writing. She answered that these qualities are not something that can be explained or taught, but simply a gift, that needs to be perfected.

Currently a Millicent C. McIntosh Professor of English at Barnard College, Gordon is the author of a number of both fictional and autobiographical works.

Her first novel, *Final Payments*, published in 1978 made Gordon an overnight success when it sold more than one million paperback copies. The *Company of Women* (1985), *Men and Angels* (1989), and *The Other Side* (1981), soon followed. Her short story works include *Temporary Shelter* (1987), *Good Boys and Dead Girls* (1992), and *The Rest of Life* (1993). Her first memoir, *The Shadow Man - A Daughter's Search for Her Father* was published in 1996.

According to Gordon, her works

focus on "how human beings love each other." In it, she discusses the topic of women and sex in literature. She says that she is "performing a revolution in literature" by creating female characters that can enjoy sex without the humiliation and punishment that had previously always been a part of it in literature.

Gordon believes that her "writing has taken a leap in the last three years" with *The Shadow Man*. In it, Gordon comes to understand her father as a person, not as the ideal she had created for him. The process of writing this book, Gordon said, was one of "loss, failure, madness that [has] blended into a [kind] of peace."

*The Spending* will be published later this year. She said that this was her first book that did not center around death, and that writing it "[was] not ignoble; it was okay to write a pleasant book."

Tillie Olsen, the award-winning author, essayist and short story writer addressed the student body on Sunday, March 22, in Koch Auditorium. Olsen read from her book, *Tell me a Riddle*, which won an O'Henry award.

Author William Joseph Kennedy addressed the student body in Koch Auditorium on Sunday, April 5.

Playwright Arthur Miller will speak on April 26. Tickets are necessary to attend the lecture. Students interested in attending should contact the Office of Academic Affairs at 960-5217.

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## No more bunk-beds in Brookdale

*continued from page 1*

school is able to remove bunk beds now included the possibility that enrollment is down. However, this is far from the truth. "Enrollment down? Not at all!" said Dean Nulman. "We're hoping as always enrollment will increase, or almost definitely stay. We've been discussing this possibility all along, so it's nothing new," he said.

Reasons behind the final decision include Schottenstein Hall and the Windsor Court independent apartments. "Now that we have Schottenstein, we bought the building so we can use it in different ways and we have more flexibility," said Dean Nulman. "Plus Windsor is a major component for overflow. We have a series of projects underway, including the refurbishing of Brookdale over the summer."

There is still a concern about where to house students misplaced by the new plans. "The second floor in Schottenstein is still undone, and could function as additional rooms," said Gold. "It might help because it would provide 10 more rooms."

Though it seems that the removal of bunk beds will leave students without a

place to go, the numbers prove otherwise. Schottenstein Hall houses 170 students, Brookdale Hall accommodates 565 this year. According to Ms. Gold, by removing bunk beds, this only brings the number down to 535-540, and only 25-30 beds are eliminated. Thus, the overflow is not as large as assumed. There are spots for the excess students, be it in Windsor or Schottenstein. The real rift is apparent among the students, who were not informed of the decision.

The majority of students living in Brookdale Hall were unaware of the plan to remove bunk beds. The students who were informed are the students currently living in five person rooms. However, some of them were not told until Monday March 23rd. Housing requests were due March 27th.

If these friends had planned or wanted to stay together next year, they had to look for new roommates. Many students in five person rooms or five friends who planned to room together next year are distraught by the decision. Instead of plans to be together next year, friends must now discuss who should pull out. Others are

worried because they've already handed in their requests for five person rooms, and don't know who will be left out or where they will end up.

By not publicizing the decision, more problems may be caused than helping the students. "Our R.A. told us and it screwed up our room," said Dina Barron, SCW '01. "They told us on Monday and the forms are due on Thursday. We were told if we were already turned in our form for five, they will pick one and put them potluck. Miriam Gold said the purpose of college is to mature, and by having rooms of four it will help us mature."

According to an anonymous R.A., the decision was not supposed to be public. "It's great they are getting rid of the bunk beds, but it's a stupid way to do it," she said, "Overall, it's a good thing, so there is no crowding, but now one person will have to leave. People are cut-off. Where are they going to put them? There's not so much room in Schottenstein."

Some students heard the rumors about the decision, but others had no idea. "I had no idea," said Adina Weinstein, SCW'99, "It's awful that they didn't tell

anyone, but it is good because rooms are severely overcrowded."

Elishvea Langner, SCW '99, said, "It's a good because it's a little squashy."

Nulman said, "This is a positive thing. And we tried to publicize it. Mrs. Braun called the editor of the newspaper to run a story to announce it. But we couldn't announce it until we knew for sure we were definitely doing it," he said. "We didn't want to announce it earlier because it was in the planning stages."

In regards to the fact that friends will be split up, Dean Nulman responded, "In Windsor there are four to six in each apartment. It won't affect people significantly," he said. "In rearranging some of the rooms there is unpleasant reality, but we will try to accommodate people to live with their friends."

Both Gold and Nulman reiterated their commitment to the students. "We are committed to improving the quality of life at Brookdale," said Gold. "We are trying to be responsive to the students' needs," said Nulman.

### Stern College For Women Office Of Academic Advisement



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# BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

## Drug abuse in the Orthodox Jewish community

Sarah Balch and Sarah Cate  
Observer Staff Writers

According to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), just under 40% of all 12th graders in 1996 used some type of illicit drug, marijuana, LSD, cocaine, or heroin.

Substance abuse, however, has not only been increasing in the secular world. Although numbers of users are rising at slower rates than they have in the past, the problem has been spreading and growing within the Jewish community.

Rabbi Joel Dinnerstein, director of Ohr Ki Tov, an out-patient treatment center, feels that the drug problem has reached "almost epidemic proportions in the Jewish community." He defined a drug-related problem as "anything that interferes with work, home, and school."

Dr. Efreim Nulman, Dean of Students at Yeshiva University, explained that "the Orthodox Jewish community is

witnessing younger abusers and harder drugs" than ever before.

He noted that it is a common perception that marijuana, nicotine, and alcohol usually serve as the gateway to an addiction and users then go on to experiment with more lethal, "harder" drugs such as cocaine, LSD, ecstasy and heroin. "But in fact," Nulman stated, "today it's a level playing field. First time marijuana users are unfortunately becoming first time users of harder drugs at the same time."

"Alcohol is available every day," commented Rabbi Dinnerstein, "whether through kiddush, a brit milah, or the local kiddush club." He added that there is a widespread abuse of prescription medications by women in the Orthodox Jewish community as well. "Substances are as readily available as those found in the home medicine cabinet," explained Barry Wilansky, Executive Director of Tempo, an out-patient treatment center.

Among 8th-graders  
Marijuana in the past year has  
TRIPLED since 1991 (from 6%  
to 18%)

Nulman explained that the precipitants for substance abuse are a result of several factors.

Certain people have a genetic predisposition to drug addiction. Other repeated users will use drugs to fill a spiritual and emotional void.

As with many juvenile users, popular culture affects the drug use in the Orthodox Jewish community. Media, such as television, plays a powerful role in the home, bringing both positive and negative images into the living room. "Television is controlled by people whose mission is not to elevate the community, but to sell something," Wilansky explained.

Nulman commented that popular music reflects people's emotions. "People often use drugs because they are bored with their lives and want something better, turning inward in a negative way."

The band Nirvana, for example, sings about teenage angst and drugs. "My heart is broke/ But I have some glue/ Help me inhale/ And mend it with you/ We'll float around/ And hang out on clouds/ Then we'll come down/ And have a hangover."

Additionally, information obtained from the website alt.culture, cites a Disney-owned label as "sending out bongos (instruments used to smoke drugs) to promote the latest album of its metal band Sacred Reich."

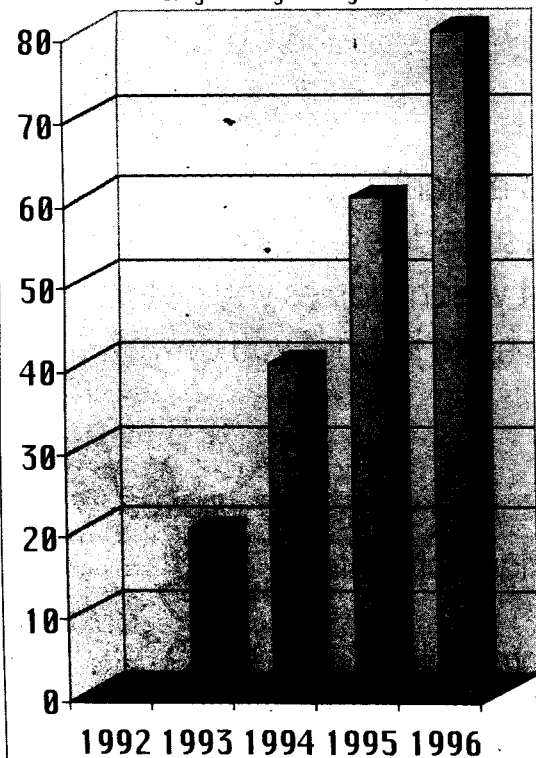
According to Wilansky, as the barriers between secular culture and the Orthodox community break down, the Jewish community becomes more vulnerable to negative influences.

Members of the Orthodox Jewish community obtain drugs and sell them to fellow Jews. Nulman said that "there are networks of dealers. People who want drugs know where to find them." Rabbi Dinnerstein commented that he is aware of three to four locations where drugs can be purchased, specifically in the Boro Park and Crown Heights areas.

He added that cocaine use is prevalent among Chassidic men. Drug use is on the rise in all different segments of the Jewish community.

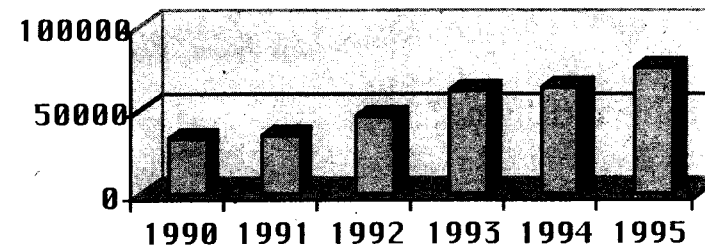
Although minimal, students attending YU admit that drug use exists within their school. One student at YC stated that he had been approached by both students at YC and members of the Washington Heights community with offers to purchase or try drugs. At SCW, another student explained that, although to her knowledge there is no "hard" drug use in the school, there are girls who smoke marijuana. There were students that were unaware that drug use in YU exists, and others who attested to the occurrence of drug abuse in the school, but at a minimal level compared to secular colleges.

Emergency Situation Among our Youth  
(percentage increase in lifetime use of an illicit  
drug among 8th graders)



Graphs courtesy of U.S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration

DAWN Emergency Room Episodes  
Heroin Nationally



Among 10th-graders  
Marijuana in the past year has DOUBLED  
since 1992 (from 15% to 34%)

addicts

Orthodox institutions have traditionally ignored drug problems, denying that substance abuse even exists. According to Wilansky, yeshivot and other religious institutions deal with the problem by expelling the offenders, rather than treating them.

Communal shame and denial only serve to isolate the abuser further.

Wilansky emphasized that abusers should be treated not as "bad" per se, but as needing support.

Once expelled, the offenders encounter a shortage of Orthodox affiliated treatment centers. Many 12 step programs for drug rehabilitation are held in churches, a deterrent to many religious abusers.

Rabbi Dinnerstein pointed out that these meetings are not generally held in church sanctuaries themselves, and attendance may be Halachically permissible. "People use this as an excuse for not attending a rehabilitation program" he noted.

Many programs are currently working with yeshivot and other religious institutions to prevent and treat

Ohr Ki Tov, which participates in a basic twelve step program with the Jewish Institution on Alcoholism and Addiction, treats the family of the abuser as the client. The center adds Jewish aspects and spirituality to the treatment. Tempo, an outpatient treatment center located in the Five Towns, a large Jewish community, uses a medical model of education to treat clients. First, they seek to master the addiction impulse and then examine the psychological roots of the addiction.

Torah plays an important role in recovery. Wilansky commented that "Torah encourages people to seek out spirituality, elevate themselves, and teaches them how to manage their body."

Nulman noted that parents need to play an active role in the rehabilitation of former addicts. He added that "parents who talk to their kids in general, and spend time doing things as a family have fewer problems with drugs."

According to Nulman, parents need to deal with their children in an honest fashion.

"You shouldn't say to your kid: 'You smoked a joint, that's terrible!' You have to define terrible, as in, if you do drugs you can get arrested or expelled."

Although Nulman felt that peer pressure may influence a person's behavior a great deal, parental involvement is the key to preventing substance abuse.

Wilansky urged friends to notice changes of behavior in their friends. "If your friend is in danger of dying, act immediately... Even at the risk of destroying the friendship."

He added that "specific intervention techniques can be learned, even over the phone."

In cases of occasional abuse, Nulman advised approaching a parent or professional for guidance and informing them of the situation without using names.

In general, he said, the best policy is to let the person know that you aren't trying to judge him or her for using drugs.

### The following Jewish agencies offer guidance for drug and alcohol addictions:

JACS (Jewish Alcoholics, Chemically Dependant and Significant Others)  
426 W 58th Street  
New York, NY 10019  
212-397-4197

Ohr Ki Tov  
4810 Beach 48th Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11224  
718-946-4545

Counter Force  
610 Ocean Pkwy  
Brooklyn, NY 11230  
718-854-7730

Tempo  
112 Franklin Place  
Woodmere, NY 11598  
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# Breaking YC's glass ceiling

**Rachel Linsider**  
Features Editor

Women have finally entered the hallowed halls of Yeshiva College. The school's administration recently added a new dean to the Main Campus Office. On January 5, 1998, Dr. Joyce Jesionowski assumed the position of assistant dean.

Jesionowski received a BA in humanities from Michigan State University. She did graduate work at Columbia University where she earned a MSA in cinema studies and a doctorate in cinema studies.

Jesionowski finds there is a positive and challenging work atmosphere in YC. She enjoys meeting and talking with the students. "They are very good students, and they drive themselves hard."

When asked about her first impressions at YC, she tells people, "I have very rarely been welcomed at any place, as I have been welcomed here. People will just come into my office, out of the blue, and welcome me to Yeshiva. It has been a really nice experience so far."

Jesionowski has various long-term goals as assistant dean. She is very focused



"I would like to have an accessible office for students. There are a lot of students who need to ask a lot of questions."

— Dr. Joyce Jesionowski  
Assistant Dean, YC

on catering to the needs of the students. "I would like to have an accessible office for students. There are a lot of students who need to ask a lot of questions," she said. Jesionowski firmly believes that when a student comes to the Office of the Dean, they should be able to get a fairly quick answer. "I try to keep my door open," she said. "Even if the answer is no, I try not to have people waiting weeks and weeks for an answer. Students should be able to rely on the dean's office to get information."

Jesionowski believes that one way of solving the problem of the constant confu-

sion that students experience, in regard to administrative paperwork, is to "begin to foster in students a confidence that they know how to get their business done in the institution...business such as forms, applications, and money matters."

"One thing we need to do as educators," she said, "is to teach students not just the intellectual things, but that the world is full of institutions...and all institutions can be managed, if you simply learn how to do it."

Jesionowski also hopes to work with the faculty in developing various curricu-

lums. "The faculty has been super. They are very smart people whom with I have had very lively discussions."

Although Jesionowski is the assistant dean of YC, and her responsibilities are for the Main Campus, she still is very interested in meeting the women of SCW. "I haven't had a chance to meet the SCW women, although I greatly look forward to that in the near future."

Jesionowski has worked for the Muscular Dystrophy Association where she was director of the audio/visual center. This included everything from producing slides and audio/visual presentations, to working for the Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon. She also worked on various media pieces for companies such as AT&T, Bell Telephone and Lifetime Television.

Her previous experience with academic institutions was at Adelphi University. She spent seven years there, first as Assistant Dean to the Academic Vice President and later as Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences. She worked there until she joined the administration of YU.

## THE Observer ARCHIVES

27 years ago in the observer...

### Distant in Time, Comparable in Rhyme?

**Michelle Waldman**  
Observer Staff Writer

Issues related to divisions between observant and non-observant Jews are not new to The Observer. 27 years ago, the Thursday, November 11, 1971, issue bestowed the students of SCW. In fact, three articles were devoted to this imminent, impending concern. An esteemed faculty member, the Observer editor-in-chief and an extracurricular foundation independently appealed to SCW.

An article titled, "Rabbi Lamm Addresses Stern Women, Expresses Concern in Israel, Geshet Can Help Bridge Gap," by Anette Becker, expressed concern for a "conflict...between the religious and the nonreligious in the State of Israel," "a cultural gap."

Becker wrote that Rabbi Lamm fears that the "religious community is far from prepared to intellectually confront the great challenge" of reconciling this conflict.

This situation is, unfortunately, still acute in current events, most recently, regarding the debate over the appropriate conversion policy in the state of Israel by Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox Jews.

In fact, the situation may be worse now. Currently, there is division among the American Jewish population as well with regard to Israel's conversion policy. Friction has mushroomed since Becker's observation of "a cultural gap between the Israeli Rabbinate and the modern Israeli Jew."

Dr. Lamm then proposed the Geshet Foundation would be "the greatest instrument" to

deal with this problem. Editor-in-chief Rachel D. Becker urged her fellow students to participate in a YU promotion of "lectures, seminars, discussions, training programs, articles and activities...directed to the presentation...of Geshet." A promotional ad submitted by the Geshet Foundation describes itself as "a bold attempt to reconcile brother with brother through the heritage of their fathers."

Do signs on the halls of SCW today beckon their readers to attend similar programs? In fact, a Geshet presentation, aimed at supporting understanding between different Jewish factions, was given in Tannafly, New Jersey on Thursday night, March 19. Were there any signs in SCW publicizing this important event? Does Geshet have any visible promotion from SCW today?

Perhaps no students actually attended the event in 1971. Perhaps, students did not use personal initiative in dealing with this pivotal issue. Perhaps apathy has always been a plague of overburdened SCW students. Yet, there was a cognizance of an issue amongst our Jewish brethren and an attempt to improve it.

On February 3, 1998 Campus Conversations was held in SCW with Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm, addressing the issue of division between religious and secular Jews. This time, however, the topic was chosen not only because it affects our brethren in our homeland, but because it is a "topic based on what affected the student body...that [students] possibly hadn't thought about and maybe should have," as stated by Micol Rubin SCW '98.

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# To Learn To Teach

**Rena Krakowski**

*Observer Staff Writer*

A common lament beginning the very first day of registration at SCW is that Rabbi Pesach Oratz's classes are "closed out." Sarit Barlev, SCW '2000, explained that that when she went to register for Rabbi Oratz's class, not only was the particular class she wanted closed out, but so were his other courses. Although she could not get into the class she had initially planned on attending, Barlev still wanted to take a Rabbi Oratz class, so she got signed into another.

No newcomer to the YU scene, Rabbi Oratz has been teaching in YU for 38 years, 15 of those in SCW. He has taught a variety of courses in Bible, Biblical Literature, Biblical Exegesis and Navi in JSS, IBC, YC, RIETS and SCW - to name just a few - as well as a course in the Maharal's educational doctrines at Fordham's Graduate School of Education.

Rabbi Oratz has taught in Beth Jacob Seminary and currently teaches in Shulamith High School for Girls and Kerem Sarah Seminary. In addition, much of Rabbi Oratz's experience comes from heading IBC's former Hebrew Teachers Training Program for 18 years. Although

Rabbi Oratz now teaches predominantly on the college level, his rich teaching experience spans the full gamut of education - from day school through graduate school.

Rabbi Oratz grew upon the Lower East Side. In high school, he switched from the Rabbi Jacob Joseph High School to MTA and then went on to YC. With a penchant for English Literature, Rabbi Oratz majored in English, although he "unofficially" double majored in Judaic Studies. Commenting on his "unofficial major," Rabbi Oratz said, "I enjoyed [the Judaic studies courses]. I took everything they had to offer, although the Bible classes were not [offered] for credit."

Rabbi Oratz continued his Talmudic studies in RIETS and received his *smicha* under Rabbi Sol, Shatkes and Belkin in the days when the *smicha* examination was administered orally. Rabbi Oratz also attended Bernard Revel Graduate School, where he earned his MA in Medieval Responsa and continued his studies on the doctoral level.

Rabbi Oratz ascribes his decision to pursue teaching to his mother, "an *isha melumedet* (learned woman) who knew a world in Tanach and [Rabbinic literature]." She influenced him



Rabbi Oratz meets with students between classes.

greatly and imbued him with a sense of the Torah's absolute value. Rabbi Oratz observed and absorbed the fact that "Torah kept her going." Thus, Rabbi Oratz always wanted to teach and to "share learning with everyone and allow everyone to become a part of the learning scene."

In deciding to teach at SCW, Rabbi Oratz points to two major factors. One of the influencing elements was his friendship with Rabbi Saul Berman, who was then the Chairman of Judaic Studies at SCW, which developed through their contact at Camp Morasha. The other significant component was the passing of Rabbi Moshé Besdin, the head of JSS, under whom Rabbi Oratz had been working. After Rabbi Besdin's death, Rabbi Oratz wanted to see a new aspect of YU. He found the change he desired in SCW and has been very pleased here.

Rabbi Oratz's teaching style is text oriented; the biblical texts form the central axis of the course around which the class revolves. He attributes this "strict

text-learning" method to Rabbi Besdin's profound influence on him. "I try to stick by [Rabbi Besdin's] 'Itology': learn IT, not about it," Barlev, who has taken one of Rabbi Oratz's courses each of her four semesters here, feels that this style is "very conducive to learning" and helps her gain a "thorough familiarity" with the texts.

Throughout Rabbi Oratz's years at YU, he has had the rewarding and exciting opportunity of teaching the children of his former students. He feared he had been in the teaching profession too long when one student raised her hand in the beginning of a semester to inform him that he had taught her grandfather. However, his concerns were alleviated when he discovered that he had taught him recently in a shiur outside of YU.

At SCW, Rabbi Oratz appreciates the "excellently receptive and vibrant student body... that keeps improving over the years." He enjoys watching students' "developments in the learning process" and seeing stu-

dents "grow in their abilities." He tries to share his enthusiasm and love of Torah with the student body. "Ultimately, I see my enthusiasm for learning shared by them," he said. Rachel Greenberg, SSSB '98, agrees. "The students are inspired by Rabbi Oratz's enthusiasm and sincerity for Torah. His gentle and kind manner influence every student."

Rabbi Oratz values the students' "thirst to be exposed to the learning patterns of *dorei dorot* (generations of generations) and to see what authentic Torah learning is about," he said. In his experience, students have been eager to exert themselves beyond what is required of the course. On many occasions, parents have reported that since their daughters have been his students, the family has had to expand its Judaica library. Whenever he would mention a *sefer*, even casually, the students would purchase it.

**The student body extends its appreciation to the Office of the Dean of Students and the Office of Student Services for sponsoring the X-S NY trip.**

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## Features

# Hillel Spitzer Forum brings together spectrum of Jewish students

Susan Jacobs  
Executive Editor

**T**ikkun olam (worldly repair) and social justice were the central focus of the 1998 Charlotte and Jack J. Spitzer B'nai B'rith Hillel Forum on Public Policy. The convention, held along with the annual Plenum of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs at a resort in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, attracted 250 college students from college campuses across the United States.

Three SCW students participated in the convention which included big name speakers like Labor Party leader Ehud Barak and Edgar M. Bronfman, head of the World Jewish Congress and CEO of Seagram's Corporation. Bronfman recently took over financing for Hillel: the Foundation for Jewish Campus Life.

Barak, who some believe will be the next prime minister of Israel, failed to deliver a substantive message about Israeli policy, but spoke fondly about the late Yitzhak Rabin. "His life is gone, but his light has not been extinguished," he said.

"I believe that the people of Israel are determined that he will not have died in vain."

Bronfman focused on the importance of Jewish involvement in politics. "The importance of our political activity can sometimes be measured in terms of justice," he said in reference to action the World Jewish Congress has taken to have Swiss banks return the dormant bank accounts of Holocaust survivors.

Absent from the conference was a direct confrontation of the issue that has been at the heart of Israel's internal strife in the past year: the issue of religious pluralism. Aggravated by the interests of the organized American Jewish community, the issue of conferring legitimization on the non-Orthodox streams of Judaism has been in the forefront of news emanating from the Jewish state.

However, the atmosphere of the convention itself was rather pluralistic. At all the convention's events, a handful of visibly Orthodox students could be found interacting with the convention's other participants who represented Judaism's other

denominations and the enormous percentage of unaffiliated Jews in the United States.

"If you set up a session to talk about the divides in the Jewish community, people will be divided," said Richard Joel, president and international director of Hillel.

Instead, the Spitzer Forum focused on practical ways of creating change on the college campus, and of creating Jewish programming that would attract a broad spectrum of Jewish students.

Dr. David Luchins, vice president of the Orthodox Union and senior assistant to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, emphasized unifying the Jewish community by focusing on social action. He compared this approach to the political philosophy of functionalism, which he defined as "finding that which we need each other for."

"Let us work together and from that will come unity," he said.

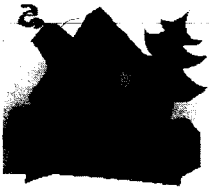
Sessions ranged from creating Passover programming that attracts student participation to running a voter registration drive. Social action sessions included

projects to help the homeless, the environment and battered women. One session focused on health issues on campus, including sexually transmitted diseases. On one afternoon of the three-day convention, students participated in service projects that ranged from volunteering at a nursing home to an environmental tour of the Everglades.

While many of the sessions were on serious topics, in between sessions, there was plenty of time for students to interact. The atmosphere of Florida lent itself to a certain amount of partying, but students also discussed substantive issues related to Jewish observance and campus life.

In spite of the various differences between the students who participated, the overwhelming atmosphere was of enthusiasm for being Jewish. Despite media reports characterizing the Jewish community in a state of disarray, the students who participated seemed to get along well, respecting each other's differences rather than exploiting them.

## Who are the people in your neighborhood?



Gila Rosenthal  
Observer Staff Writer

**F**or the past four years, Mrs. Gordon has been a fixture in the SCW computer room, a room that sees a sizeable proportion of the student population pass through its doors every day. However, she did not start out working in the computer industry.

Brooklyn-born and bred, Gordon attended Brooklyn College where she earned a bachelor's degree in math and physics, and Cooper Union, where she got a bachelor's in engineering. Unpopular fields for women even today, it was unheard of for women to pursue these interests when Gordon was a student.

**First woman to attend Cooper Union**

"I was the only woman at Cooper Union, and the first one ever to attend the college," she said. "There was once an incident where the Dean got over the loudspeaker and announced, 'only one person has made honor roll this semester - and it's a woman! Are you men going to let her get away with that?' That would never happen these days."

After graduating from Cooper Union, she went to work for the U.S. Navy Yard. She was a member of the design team for



Before working at SCW, Mrs. Betty Gordon designed missiles for the government.

the Polaris, one of the earliest missiles. Once again, she was the only woman. At that time, the missile was completely new, and she worked under such top-secret security that she was instructed to always carry a vial of poison around, to swallow if she were ever captured.

Her work at the Navy was "extremely interesting," but the neighborhood was a very dangerous one, and after a while she decided to leave. She then began her career in computers, at first designing systems and then as a systems analyst, becoming vice president of Standard Securities Insurance Company. This career

was abruptly ended when her first of two sons was born.

"Working as a computer programmer isn't just a 9-5 job. I would often be working long into the night. The day that my son was born, I first went into the office, and later went to the hospital!"

She didn't go back to work until her second son started college. She served as computer coordinator in schools in Merrick, Long Island, where she currently lives; and in Baldwin. As head of the computer departments there, her responsibilities included setting up the computer labs and teaching computer usage

to both students and teachers.

Gordon came to SCW in 1993. Aside from being in charge of the computer room, up until this semester, she taught beginning computer classes. She still conducts workshops.

She also teaches programming applications classes at night in Nassau. Adults, she finds, are different than the other students she has worked with. The hardest thing about teaching adults, Gordon said, is getting them to overcome their fear of the computer. She stressed that it is actually almost impossible to harm a computer unless you are trying to, so there is really no reason to

fear. The children she taught in Merrick and Baldwin were more adventurous and were actually taught programming.

Gordon has a fondness for children, calling her grandchildren her pride and joy.

When Gordon first started working, computer programming was done in machine language that was inaccessible to anyone untrained in the field. Today, however, programming is done in English; even a layman is capable of it, as long as he is trained in the logical underpinnings.

It is not just programming that is progressing.

"Students have really come a long way," said Gordon. "I can see a difference even since I've been here. People are realizing that in today's world it is very important to be computer literate - computers are the wave of the future."

"We make a big effort to get the girls on the computers - once they're on, they're going to learn how to use it, and become literate," she said. "E-mail, especially since it's become free, has been very instrumental. About fifty percent of SCW is on e-mail now."

Gordon defined computer literacy. "Being computer literate means knowing the basics - how to get into the computer and use the system," she said. "Anyone who knows how to type a paper on the computer is computer literate."

features



# THE CIRCUS COMES TO TOWN

SCW students turned out in record numbers this year for the annual midnight parade of Barnum and Bailey Circus animals down 34th Street.

This year clowns joined the parade from the East River to Madison Square Garden.

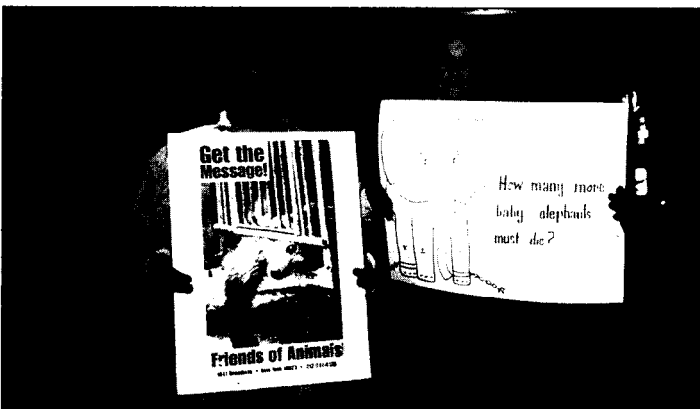
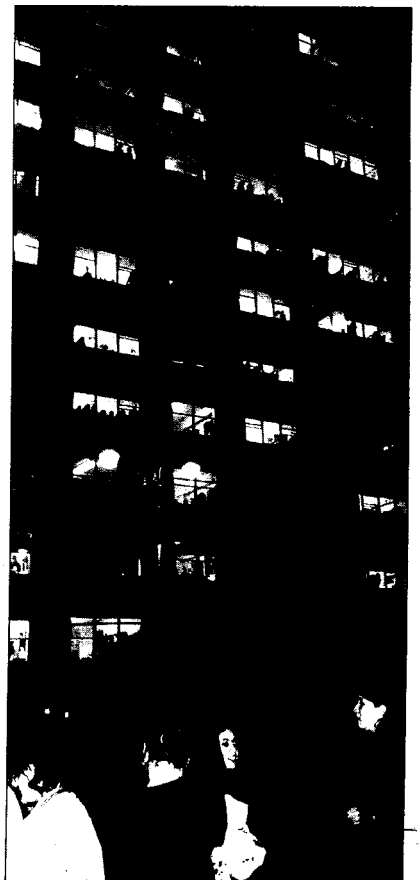
Animal rights advocates protested the inhumane treatment of circus animals.

The annual event unifies the student body, bringing huge numbers of students out of their rooms and on to 34th Street.

Top: Students pose with one of the clowns.

Right: Elephants marching past Brookdale Hall.

Bottom: Animal rights activists protesting the circus.



# student VOICES

opinion

## Commentator watch

**Julie Stampnitzky**  
Editorial Editor

**R**eading "Deconstructing Haredi- Rabbi Svei and his Culture of Hatred," a column by Adam Moses in a recent issue of the Commentator, I am perplexed. What motivated Moses to compose this torrent of invective? Did the Commentator publish this column to inform and stimulate its readers, or merely for the pleasure of seeing words in print?

The column takes Rabbi Svei to task for his attack on Rabbi Lamm, YU's president. However, rather than merely deploring Rabbi Svei's "incendiary invective," Moses chooses to jump into the fray and to add to the "conflagration" by criticizing both Rabbi Svei and haredi culture in general. Surely anyone with a stake in Jewish unity should be utilizing the power of the press for respectful debate rather than baseless attacks.

Moses' attempts to enlighten us on the true nature of "haredi" I assume to be based on his own prejudices, since he does not explain how he knows that "the 'yeshiva' community entrust[s] their leadership to provide them with the way they must think." Perhaps he has come to this conclusion based on the many letters and editorials which have appeared in the *Yated Neeman* supporting Rabbi Svei's position. If Adam Moses agrees with the position of Rabbi Lamm, it is because he has considered the issue and come to a logical conclusion; but if a haredi agrees with Rabbi Svei, he has obviously been brainwashed!

Ironically, I have heard the same charge from a different source- the comments that Reform and Conservative Jews make about the Orthodox.

"Orthodox Jews are brainwashed," a correspondent tells me by e-mail, "they do not think for themselves." No doubt Moses would be quick to condemn such a statement if applied to himself, yet he does not hesitate to tar others with this brush. Strangely, Moses uses "Talmudic" as a defamatory adjective, as in "Talmudic lord" or "the Talmudic photocopy culture." Is "Talmudic" meant to be a code word for the "haredi" who after all, have been known to study

Talmud? On the other hand, "Modern Orthodox" also study the Talmud. Of course, insults do not have to be logical. Sadly, I have seen the same figure of speech used by a Holocaust denier, who uses "Talmudic [reasoning]" as a code word for Jewish. Of course, I would never compare Moses to such a person. I merely wish to emphasize how distasteful this exchange of insults is.

While decrying haredi leaders who would tell their followers how they must think, Moses has no objection to saying that supporting the Ne'eman Commission "must be viewed as nothing short of a communal imperative." In reality, there is hardly one correct position on this issue; in their most recent issue, the editors of the Commentator published a column by Rabbi Moshe Tendler describing the proposed plan regarding conversions as a "charade."

The Commentator-ignorant, perhaps, of the fact that YC and SCW undergraduates may even have had teachers and rebbel who are "haredi"- continued its assault on haredim in the Purim issue. True, this entire issue was meant as a joke, but even jokes can be harmful. Jokes about a religious or ethnic group can be very amusing; the proper target for such jokes, in the traditions of Jewish humor, is one's own group. I suspect that when the editorial staff of the Commentator describe haredim as potentially murderous in regards to *din rodef*, *Amalek*, or *shmirat shabbat*, they did not intend these "jokes" to apply to themselves. Yet these jokes resonate uncomfortably with a comment by Shlomo Gazit, former head of intelligence for the Israeli Defense Forces, as quoted in *The Jewish Week*. He compared the *kipas* worn by some Israeli soldiers to the swastika worn by Nazis.

We are all aware of the current contentious state of relations between various Jewish groups. It should be obvious that the proper action on our part is not to respond in kind, and thereby to show that this is an acceptable technique. To paraphrase Adam Moses, you would be injecting the lethal venom of hatred not into an adversary, but into yourselves.

Miriam  
Elias is an  
SCW  
sophomore



## TURN

A Modest Proposal in Defense of Migraines

**I**t should be made clear that this article has been written according to the meter of the pounding next-door and all logic and cleverness thereof are due to the rhythm so provided.

I place in your hands a mere modest proposal, a simple suggestion for the preservation of the rhythmic pounding ever present in our ears. Several students have protested the continuous tapping of the jack hammer next door; these narrow minded students cling to the notion that this symphony thus produced by the neighborhood orchestra is cacophonous and disturbs the learning process. Such folly is preposterous and deserves none of our concern, yet it has come to my attention that this view is spreading among the student body like an epidemic and must be dealt with immediately. Right reason has escaped the minds of students who have overlooked the divine gift presented by our devout neighbors. Should one bother to devote even a moderate effort in contemplating these matters, the myriad of blessings so offered by our righteous friends next door far out number any possible complaints (should any be truly valid). The utter thoughtlessness and absurdity of their argumentation shall be exposed presently through a clear explanation of the advantages of the construction of the theological seminary.

Professors will learn to adapt their pedagogical systems to the measure of the pounding- lectures will proceed more quickly and provide for faster absorption and accelerated learning. This will sharpen the mind of the astute Stern student. The already hastened college education will be shortened, allowing students to marry more quickly, having obtained their collegiate degrees. Professors will even end lectures early due to frustration and confusion.

In addition, the faculty and the student body will abandon verbose speeches and lessons- the fast pace of the drilling will set the proper tone for speech. All persons will grow accustomed to miming words and speak more efficiently to be heard over the noise. Students will even be able to talk in the library because their speech will not be audible over the noise. People will learn to read lips, thus supporting the campaign for the deaf.

We will no longer need clocks; the incessant pounding and the lunch-break of the benevolent workers next door will measure our time.

Indeed, students will be encouraged to create more noise to compete with the banging and thus release their tension and stress. Stomping on the floor in mass hysteria will be encouraged; loud screams of exasperation will be released. I shall not be surprised in the least should a student take to learning another musical instrument, inspired by the melody created by our neighbors.

Microphones will be installed throughout the school, advocating the employment of modern technological advancements. Professors will learn how to use these devices and the university will be internationally renowned for its progressive trends. The expenditure on such devices will cause the students to realize that the administration does indeed care about the quality of student life at Stern College.

Should one think that the benefits of the hammering are limited to the development of one's mind, fear not for bodily improvements shall be found as well. The measure and tempo of the banging will offer a steady beat for the physical education classes and cause students to exercise at a higher rate. Calories will be burned, pounds lost and muscle gained. Students will also eat less because the beat provided will force students to eat faster and leave the cafeterias due to the overpowering noise. No longer will there be long lingering lunches of cheese and pastries and creams. Students will cut their daily intake to a minimum to escape the racket.

Finally, when the administration of our institution will see the new facilities next door, it will be inspired by the example thus set and realize the sorry state of affairs of its own building. During our reconstruction we will be temporarily relocated to our neighbors' campus. This will foster new relationships and create religious harmony.

It is obvious from the clear explanations above that we shall certainly benefit mentally, physically, economically and politically from our neighbors through this token of friendship. All groups shall be served by this advancement: student body, faculty, and administration. It is impossible for someone to suggest that the improvements to our college life as stated above are negligible without being a creature acting without reason and logic. We must continue to support this project till our neighbors are safely in their new home.



TAC sponsors sale of SCW t-shirts and sweatshirts. Long sleeve t-shirts will soon be available.

observer voices

letter to the editor

## Advice for the Stern woman

I applaud the Observer's attention to the issue of inequality between Midtown and Uptown. My overall feeling of the coverage to date; and I include Aviva Laufer's well-written articles, several editorials and Deborah Roth's letter; is that you are missing the forest for the trees.

There are hundreds of differences between Stern and other YU schools; some favor Stern, some do not. If one of these differences inconveniences someone, *The Observer* is correct to emphasize that person should politely ask for accommodation; rather than complain immoderately about cosmic injustice. But this is a solution without a problem. I have never noticed that Stern women are complainers who need lessons on how to behave.

The real issue is not these differences but an overall feeling that Stern is sometimes forgotten. Stern in comparison to the rest of YU is like Hawaii compared to the other 49 states: small, young and geographically distinct. A Hawaiian friend of mine complains that a major presidential speech on Hawaii was scheduled when Hawaiians were asleep, that her local Barnes and Noble has maps of Hawaii under "foreign maps" rather than "US maps," and that business with the federal government takes three times as long in Hawaii as in the rest of the United States.

Obviously, my friend is not claiming that these things are a serious blight on her life, or denying there are compensating advantages to living in Hawaii. She is using them as evidence that many people forget Hawaii. She is not interested in talking to the manager of her Barnes and Noble; she complains so that I will be more aware that Hawaii exists.

In ten years of teaching in Sy Syms, I have noticed many examples of Stern forgotten or Stern-as-afterthought. A Sy Syms club with Uptown and downtown members called a meeting, but did not post notices downtown or tell the Stern liaison. When I asked the uptown president why, he said "the girls never attend." So girls don't attend because they don't get notices, and girls don't get notices because they don't attend.

Or consider athletics. I like to attend basketball games, I can see the men without leaving my office building (making only one slightly illegal maneuver). To see Stern play I have to spend an hour on the subway and walk a mile-and that's for the "home" games. So Stern does not get the crowds, so they do not get the attention, so they are easy to forget.

I offer the following advice for Stern women who feel their school is too often overlooked.

1. Trust your judgement. Do not let people tell you that your complaints are false or trivial. If you feel ignored you have a right and duty to call

attention to it. If you are wrong, it will be quickly proven, no harm will be done. If you are right, you will have done a service for all of YU.

2. Look for allies, not enemies. To my knowledge, everyone at YU agrees that women's education is as important as men's, and that Stern students should receive equal treatment with uptown students. Therefore, the inequities that creep in are the result of oversight, historical accident or external circumstance. So it is better to ask administrators, faculty and uptown students to help solve the problem than to get maneuvered into a political struggle for resources.

3. Take the first step: participate. It can be a struggle to take the van uptown for activities, to represent Stern in a sport with no spectators other than boyfriends and families, to be the first woman or only woman at YU to do something. But everyone who makes that struggle chips away at the problem. Yes, it's unfair that the ignored people have to do most of the work, but that's the only way to get the ignorers to change.

4. Remember that Stern has an independent identity. The school is not a subsidiary of YU but an important institution in its own right. It has a proud history of educational innovation and social service; a small (but smart, proud and loyal) group of alumnae; and the goodwill of many outsiders. What other organization speaks with the same authority for the Modern Orthodox woman with a liberal education? If you support your school effectively, people may start forgetting YU, calling it "Stern's Uptown annex."

5. Do not be afraid of criticism. However clearly you say, "Stern deserves respect," some people will insist on hearing "the girls want a swimming pool." Some will react by calling you shallow or greedy, others will take it as a personal insult. The world is unfortunately full of thin-skinned people with bad hearing (I have always been puzzled that a disproportionate number of these people seem to choose jobs where these traits do the maximum possible damage). Let honor and truth be your shields against attack.

6. Remember the boys. As Stern students, you represent an important part of your generation of Modern Orthodox women. You have a responsibility to help educate your male counterparts. If you let them get away with ignoring women students today, who will teach them to listen to their wives and daughters tomorrow? Maybe you can plant a seed so that in 25 years a Stern student, sitting in the same seat you are in now, will be able to say "my dad really understands me and takes me seriously." She won't know who to thank, but you will.

Professor Aaron Brown  
Sy Syms School of Business

letter to the editor

## Stealing spots

You warn [in your editorial "Disregarding Jewish Law" in the Feb 23 issue of the Observer] against disregarding the commandment "Thou shalt not steal" in reference to wallets and other personal belongings being stolen within the confines of our school. However, there is another type of stealing that might be common on our campus grounds that we should be aware of.

When someone reserves a place on a van going Uptown, the spot on that van is technically "theirs" unless they fail to show up for the van when it is ready to depart. I have heard complaints that a person had reserved a seat on a van in advance, only to find that people who were not signed up had taken their place, and would not get off the van. It seems to me that that too violates the commandment "thou shalt not steal."

Deborah S. Roth, SCW 99

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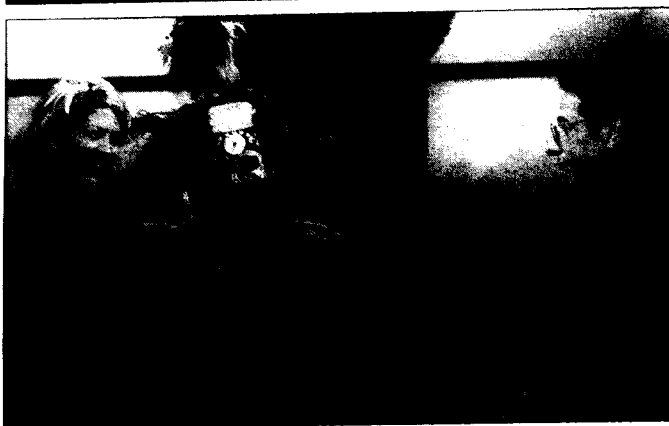
## Purim is no excuse

The recent Purim edition of the Commentator was an insult to human dignity and an embarrassment to the students of Yeshiva University. As an official student publication of Yeshiva University, the Commentator is a forum for the expression of new ideas and student opinion. The base language and crude humor of the past edition is no such expression. The holiday of Purim does not constitute free license for vulgarity and obscenity. Students who misrepresent the academic and religious values of the university to such an extent should not be in editorial positions of a student paper. It is up to the student body of YU to protest this unacceptable journalism, and to the YU administration to withhold funding from a student paper that does not accurately represent Yeshiva University.

Adena Saltzman SCW'98



# ARTS



Left: Jenna Elfman, Richard Dreyfuss and Peter Tilden in "Krippendorf's Tribe."  
Above: Dreyfuss (center) with Carl Michael Lindner (left) and Gregory Smith (right).

## Discovering the Shelmikedmu

**Dassi Zeidel**  
Cultural Arts Editor

In Touchstone Picture's latest comedy, Professor James Krippendorf (played by Richard Dreyfuss) falls prey to a malady which plagues every college student at some point or another: a deadline. A newly single father, Krippendorf has spent his grant money raising his children and has neglected his research. As he steps up to the podium to deliver a lecture on the lost tribe he was supposed to have discovered

in New Guinea, he stumbles and draws a blank. Out of desperation Krippendorf merges his children's names (Shelly, Mickey and Edmund), resulting in the name of his "newly discovered tribe" -- the Shelmikedmu.

Krippendorf's Tribe is the hilarious story of a father trying to save his career and reputation, using his children as tribesmen and documenting false research in his own backyard. His outrageous portrayal of circumcision and mating rituals gives the Shelmikedmu national popularity, furthering Krippendorf's dilemma. The longer the lie stands, the bigger it gets and everybody steps out on a limb to keep the truth from breaking through to the surface. Ironically,

the family that lies together stays together, and dad's new crisis has actually strengthened and renewed the family bond.

Jenna Elfman (of TV's Dharma & Greg) co-stars as the somewhat obsessive but well-intentioned Veronica Micelli, who is one of the driving forces behind the Shelmikedmu. Elfman and Dreyfuss possess enormous comedic talent and the chemistry between their characters is believable. Also starring are Lily Tomlin, as a jealous and suspicious rival professor, and Elaine Strich and Tom Poston, the straight-laced, horrified grandparents. Natasha Lyonne, Gregory Smith and Carl Michael Lindner play the Krippendorf children and star in the Shelmikedmu

home videos.

The film is hilarious and the dialogue moves the plot along without the usual static predictability that ruins many comedies. The scene where Krippendorf and Micelli take turns playing the role of the chief of the Shelmikedmu tribe finds them in the bathroom dressing and undressing, applying and removing body paint. This is largely reminiscent of Robin Williams's Mrs. Doubtfire in a similar movie of the comedic myth-perpetuating genre. Krippendorf's Tribe leaves some moral loose ends that fail to be tied up-- but hey, it's a comedy.



## The Sad Dance

**Dina Gielchinsky**  
Associate Cultural Arts Editor

Ruby Gonzalez, a little girl of no more than eight years old, wishes her fellow actress, Cookie Mejias, "Good health and happy children. No more pills to take. A bag of chocolate coins to eat."

Ruby and Cookie are two of the actresses in The Sad Dance, an original musical written and performed by clients living with AIDS and HIV. The actors work under the auspices of The Theater Project at Housing Works, directed by Victoria McElwaine. Housing Works is part of a larger program that was founded in 1990 and is now New York State's largest provider of housing and supportive services to people with HIV and AIDS. Six published New York City poets join the troupe onstage, lending a metrical tone to the par-

ticipants' stories. The play uses poetry, song, storytelling and humor to explore the promise and the challenge of new AIDS treatments.

The Sad Dance explores new territory in HIV and AIDS education, as the performers come to terms with their own diagnosis, as well as their treatments. The play offers a medical slant to the expectations and fear presented by the actors, to demonstrate to the audience the setbacks and fallen hopes confronted by some individuals with their treatments against AIDS. A bell clatters on stage numerous times to inform the performers, all dressed in hospital robes, to demonstrate to the audience the setbacks and fallen hopes confronted by some individuals with their treatments against AIDS. A bell clatters on stage numerous times to inform the performers, all dressed in hospital robes, to demonstrate to the audience the setbacks and fallen hopes confronted by some individuals with their treatments against AIDS.

What is most disconcerting is that the associated assurance that usually accompanies medicine is absent here. The pills are often joined by debilitating side effects, and don't always work.

"The mirage of medication shimmers in the distance, be it botch job or calibrated therapy," writes Scott Hightower, one of

the poets onstage. Even in the face of modern medical improvements and achievements, a cure for AIDS seems to be limboing between an impossible accomplishment and an imminent miracle. While some performers describe how their AIDS has become undetectable with the use of protease inhibitors, others explicate the rigid ritual and inflexible adherence to schedule and substance abstinence that must be followed when taking the pills. Those taking the medicine must dispense with any narcotics, which often alleviated the physical and emotional suffering of the initial diagnosis.

"Good wine makes me dance because it makes me feel bold and unbothered about anything," writes Cookie Mejias. The choice between abstaining from substances that numb pain and taking pills that often cause it is more difficult than one might think.

Perhaps what makes The Sad Dance so sincere is that the actors, although delivering choreographed dancing performances and thoughtfully scripted lines, are each telling their own true story. No one ends their performance and leaves their character



Poet Scott Hightower and Ruby Gonzalez in "The Sad Dance."

in the dressing room. The audience carries the play home with them as well, along with a new awareness and sanguinity. As Brenda Coultas, a poet mentor onstage writes,

"Plagues are as ancient as us, but so are beginnings."

The Sad Dance plays from March 14th through March 28th: Thursday, Friday and Saturdays at 7:00 PM, Tuesdays and

Wednesdays at 11:00 AM and Sundays at 3:00 PM. The Connelly Theater is located at 220 East 4th Street between Avenues A and B. Tickets are \$15 and may be arranged through Ticket Central (212) 279-4200. The Housing Works Program puts on two plays annually and has other projects to spread HIV and AIDS awareness. To find out more about Housing Works, contact (212) 966-0466.

Cultural Arts

**BARON'S REVIEW**

not guaranteed to improve GRE scores, grades or much of anything.

Zachary Baron, Columnist

**Put an end to rubbernecking**

Silence has enveloped the room. Girls sit at desks, intently poring over their studies. It's midterm season (again) and the conscientious students of SCW are lost in the world of history, sociology, and biology. Not a sound can be heard in the Brookdale Hall 11th floor study hall. And then...the door creaks open. Suddenly, 15 heads are pulled away from the books; 15 pairs of eyes are uncontrollably drawn to the study hall entrance. The silence is shattered. Concentration has been lost, all trains of thought have come to a screeching halt.

You may wonder what has just transpired. What could possibly have such power that a roomful of people, in one quick swoop, have been averted from their deep thoughts??? What has caused this tremendous distraction???

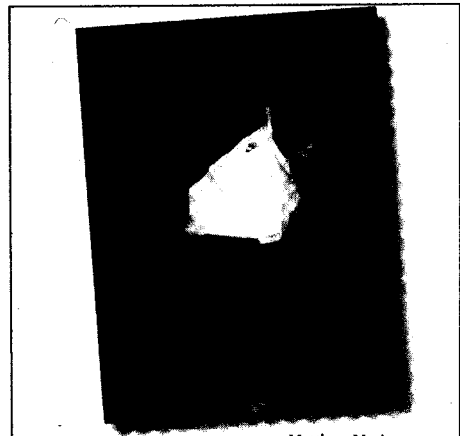
Most probably, it was yet another young woman who got sucked into the world of midterms - a young woman who had come to the realization that the time had come for her to begin to take her studies seriously. To stop the insanity of her chronic procrastination: to take the drastic plunge into the study hall. Or perhaps it was an unfortunate soul who found (to her utter shock and dismay) that no trace of toilet paper remained in her own bathroom and was thus forced to rush to the "alternative powder room" down the hall.

But in either case, the newest arrival to the study hall is probably not the most fascinating subject matter. She might be the nicest girl in the world, but when you have 5 more midterms to study for, do you really need to know who just joined the study convention???

And yet, time and time again, throughout the course of the long night, heads will be continuously drawn to the door. It's almost as if there's an invisible string tying the turning mechanism of the neck to the hinge of the door. It's seems like we've all been hypnotically programmed - we're no better than Pavlov's dogs.

This head-turning reflex is a common phenomenon - it goes on in just about every circle of life. It's especially prevalent in "social scenes," often found at *L'Chayims* and engagement parties. And the question I pose to you is - why????? What is the source of the crazy obsession to see who just walked in? Does it really make a difference?

And so, my dear readers, I turn the challenge over to you. I'm asking each and every one of you to take it upon yourselves to take control of this overpowering urge. Let that knob turn, let that door creak open. You're strong - you can handle the pressure. Keep your eyes at your own desk and see what happens. And if we each succeed at this task even just once a day, wouldn't the world be such a better place to live?



**Matthew Marino**  
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Another scandal rocks Hollywood in *Burn Hollywood Burn*. (L-R) Richard Jeni, Chuck D and Coolio star.

**Burn Hollywood Burn**

**Sarah Cate**  
*Observer Staff Writer*



From the moment that a particularly strong four-letter word appears onscreen at the beginning of the film, the movie *An Ala Smithee Film Burn Hollywood Burn* is a rollercoaster of profane language, sexual innuendoes, and blatant offensiveness. Joe Eszterhas, the screenwriter, has created a screenplay worthy of his past achievements, which include *Showgirls*.

The story chronicles the creation of a film, from its conception to its eventual disappearance. The story starts when film editor Alan Smithee (Eric Idle) gets a tremendous chance to direct a big-budget action film. Unaware of the power wielded by his producer James Edmunds (Ryan O'Neal) and studio head Jerry Glover (Richard Jeni), he pours his creative soul into the film. When Edmunds and Glover impose their changes on the film, Smithee is shocked and disillusioned by the resulting billion-dollar production. Smithee, however, is caught between a rock and a hard place, because he cannot take his name off of the movie, due to the fact that it is the



Eric Idle stars as first-time director Alan Smithee, who is distraught over the creative choices he's forced to make on his new film.

same as the pseudonym used by the Directors' Guild for directors who do not want to be accredited with a particular production.

Smithee proceeds to leave Los Angeles and takes the film's negatives with him. A great chase ensues, as detectives and fellow studio members frantically search for Smithee.

The film features Sylvester Stallone, Whoopi Goldberg, and Jackie Chan as the stars of Smithee's film, which gains the name of "Trio" during the course of its production. Ryan O'Neal gives a convincing performance as the sleazy and power-hungry director, while Richard Jeni gives a complimentary performance as the "family" man, who is actually

motivated by the same desire for power and money. Eric Idle gives a rather pathetic and unremarkable performance, as he whines and sings his way through the movie. As he sings the "Itsy-Bitsy Spider" for the fifth time in the movie, the audience should be ready to pull their hair out.

The film is also crude and unsophisticated. The humor was meant to be kitschy and hip, but remains mindless and base. Jokes, such as the song "I'm Giving Condoms for Christmas" are not only crude, but they demean the intelligence of the audience. *Burn Hollywood Burn* should take its title's own advice - burn the production before people waste their money seeing it.

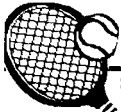
**Why You?**

Elana Steiner



Bad city planning

# SPORTS



## "We got Next"

Shaindy  
Frankel  
Sports Editor

Although it is merely ancient history now, what transpired nearly 3 months ago, is still very much clear in the minds of SCW's Tennis team. I am referring to the meeting the tennis team had with Richard Zerneck, "head honcho" of the Athletic Department. The players had never met Zerneck before. Ironically, they got the chance at their last practice of the year.

So what exactly was the meeting all about? Well, first of all, it was an opportunity for the SCW tennis team to meet Zerneck-better late than never. Secondly, it provided the players with the chance to vent their frustrations over their short and not so sweet season. If you have read one of my previous editorials, then you are most certainly aware of the tennis team's *Zernis*, namely the fact that their entire season

consisted of 4 matches all of which were scheduled in the span of a week and a half. Also, they played the matches without having received their uniforms. This sounds just as pathetic as when I informed you of this the first time. So the women let Zerneck know how disappointed they are with the athletic department.

The meeting itself lasted for about 20 minutes, but the players left the meeting feeling content. They were happy to finally let Zerneck in on their "no so nice" view of the athletic department. Zerneck seeming genuinely concerned and equally upset at what happened to the women's tennis team. He told the players that significant improvements will be made for next season. There will be better scheduling of matches, more matches and the team will receive uniforms on time. This sound like a tall order but all the women seemed confident that Zerneck will deliver. "Zerneck, Zerneck, he's our man..."

## Renovated fitness rooms still need work

Observer Staff

Thanks to the efforts of the 1996-1997 Student Life Committee, the fitness rooms in Brookdale Hall, Schottenstein Hall, and the Midtown Center are now equipped with modern, functioning equipment.

Located in room 1C, the fitness room in Brookdale Hall contains two treadmills, three bikes, a stair climber and a Nordic Track. A VCR hooked up to a monitor, is available for students that wish to use exercise videos to work out.

The Schottenstein Hall fitness room, in the residence's basement, has a weight machine, a rowing machine, three treadmills, five bikes and two stair massers.

The Midtown Center fitness room, the only one with sufficient air circulation, is located on the building's 11th floor. The room has a working radio, an ab roller, a rowing machine, two treadmills, three bikes and two stair climbers.

All three rooms are equipped with two sets of free weights, ranging from 1 to 15 pounds.

To make exercising more safe and enjoyable for the students, Dr. Richard Zerneck, YU's new Director of Athletics, had emergency telephones placed in each fitness room, updated first aid kits and hung posters all over the rooms.

Hannah Shonfield, last year's Student Life Committee chair, and current SCWSC president, said that the changes were decided while moving Brookdale Hall's fitness room from 4C to 1C in the early part of the 1997 Spring semester.

Yet due to problems with the equipment suppliers, the new exercise machines did not come in until the late summer. The old stair master and bike in Brookdale Hall were thrown away, but the Nordic Track remained.

Most of the equipment in the Midtown Center, still in good condition, remained in its place.

### What Improvements Are Needed

Although all three rooms have up-to-date equipment, there is still much to be done to bring the rooms up to par.

The Brookdale Hall fitness room is small and crowded. The room has poor air circulation that makes breathing difficult for those exercising in the room. Students must use a walkman to listen to music, since the old boom box is broken and has not been replaced. The Nordic Track, rarely used, takes up valuable space and should be removed. Zerneck requested that the machine be taken out of Brookdale Hall at the end of the Fall '97 semester, yet Facilities Management has not done what was requested.

Schottenstein Hall's fitness room is large, yet has poor air circulation as well. As in Brookdale Hall, there is no stereo system in the room. The large weight machine in the center of Schottenstein Hall's fitness center is dangerous for inexperienced students who are not familiar with that type of machinery.

The Midtown Center's fitness room is equipped with several showers, but they are old and corroding. The tape deck on the stereo system is broken, and needs to be replaced with a newer model.

In response to improving the already renovated fitness rooms, Yardena Osband, the 1997-1998 Student Life Committee Chair, said she will make various suggestions for the rooms to her committee in their monthly meeting.

Zerneck noted that he hopes to provide a training seminar in the 1998 Spring semester to educate SCW students how to exercise appropriately and how to use all the new equipment. If enough interest is shown, the seminar may run more than once during the course of the semester.

A student fitness committee, chaired by Ayelet Grun, SCW '99, and Abigail Gersten, SCW '01, was established to provide additional liaisons for the students.

Work study students have been working during peak hours to monitor machinery usage and to answer students' general questions regarding the equipment. Currently, there are still time slots where work study students are still needed.

As of 1998, the Brookdale and Schottenstein fitness rooms will be open from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m. The SCW fitness room is open in conjunction with the Midtown Center's hours. Students are encouraged to exercise with a friend, and notify security when exercising alone.

Zerneck said that the three rooms will be freely accessible to all students during operational hours, and submitting one's student identification card with the guards will not be required in any of the locations.

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