



Observer

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YU High Schools Face Unknown Future

Rabbi Lamm to Decide Schools' Fate by February 10

AVELET GRUN
Executive Editor

Parents, teachers and students affiliated with Yeshiva University's two high schools were startled to discover this past month that Yeshiva University (YU) has been negotiating the future of the Marsha Stern Talmudic Academy (MSTA) for boys and the Samuel H. Wang High Schools (Central) for girls.

Members from various boards—specifically, Yeshiva University, Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS) and the high school, have been meeting for over a year, said

Yeshiva University's Director of Public Relations, David Rosen. Three options are under discussion at this time, according to Rosen: making MSTA and Central independent from YU by separating the high school board from RIETS; merging students from the high schools with other Torah U'Maddah minded schools in the New York metropolitan area; and maintaining the status quo.

Elliot Gibber, chairman of the high school board, said that his goal is to "stay where we are." He pointed out that MSTA and Central will be accepting a freshman class for the 1999-2000 aca-

demical year. If any drastic changes are made with the high school, they will occur only after this freshman class graduates.

If MSTA and Central were to become independent of YU, they would be controlled by a single, unaffiliated board. The high schools would need to obtain financial support from philanthropists and the community to survive, Rosen said. The exact terms for possible independence are currently under negotiations, said Gibber.

YU is negotiating with schools in Long Island in the event a merger is decided, said Rosen. Torah Academy of Bergen

County in Teaneck, New Jersey, was removed as a possibility, Rosen said.

Modern Orthodox high schools in Long Island include Rambam High School, Hebrew Academy of Long Beach, Hebrew Academy of the Five Towns and Rockaway and Hebrew Academy of Nassau County.

Liran Hirschhorn, MSTA '99, hopes that MSTA will remain as is. "MTA is really the meaning of Torah U'Maddah," he said. "We have such a great advantage over other high schools because we are affiliated with YU." Use of YU's facilities, college-level courses

see High Schools, page 14



Registrar Copes with Wolf's Resignation

EILEEN CHUDOW
News Editor

Mrs. Hannah Wolf resigned from her position as Assistant Registrar at the Midtown Campus in late December, a serious loss for the already under-staffed Office of the Registrar.

Wolf, liked by students and staff, had informed her supervisor, University Registrar Melvin Davis, as well as SCW Dean Karen Bacon of her decision to resign. Her final day on the job was Friday, January 15, although the possibility of Wolf continuing to work in the Office of the Registrar on a part time basis is being investigated.

Wolf, originally hesitant to discuss her decision with the Observer due to her concern that doing so would jeopardize obtaining a job recommendation from the university, confirmed that she resigned because she felt underpaid and overworked. She said she gave much thought to the issue before making her decision. "I like the

people very much, I love the students and enjoy the work," she added. "No factors on this campus are responsible for my leaving."

Wolf feels that she is not the only one who is underpaid. "A lot of people at YU aren't being paid what they deserve," she said. "The people aren't just a little underpaid, but by a large margin." She explained that the Office of the Registrar staff is so busy that its members do not have time to rest. She stated her belief that people do not mind a lot of work if they are adequately paid, but if they are not, they grow angry.

Wolf said that she did not feel appropriately valued in her position. "I wouldn't have left if I'd been paid appropriately. It's just gone too far. I asked in the past for more money, and wasn't even given a response. It was



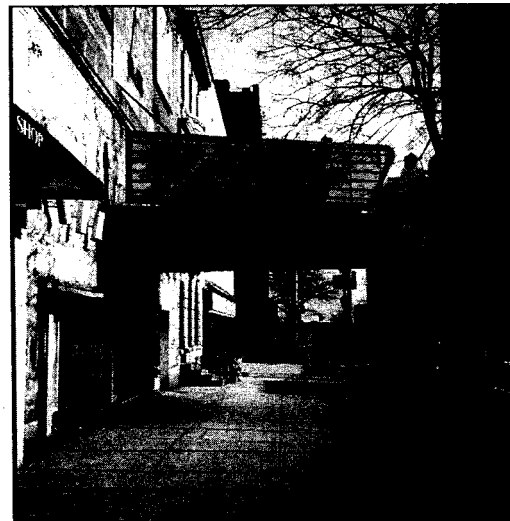
Mrs. Hannah Wolf

like talking to the wall. Treating people like that isn't appropriate." Wolf said that she does not wish to point the finger of blame at any individual, and said she would only discuss the matter of the low pay of the staff because "someone has to say it."

Wolf, who does not yet have another position, said she is disappointed to leave the university. She will miss the students, and said that people have approached her to say they are unhappy that she is leaving. "There will definitely be a difference in this office," she said, adding that "Mrs. Glick is excellent, and does a lot of the work."

According to Davis, his understanding was that Wolf decided to leave her position in order "to put her life back together" and because she "wants to take a different pace of life." In regard to Wolf's statement that she resigned because she believed she was underpaid, Davis said, "I don't know anything specific. There was not an immediate discussion that led to that decision. I was surprised when she handed in her resignation."

In regard to staff salaries, he said, "I don't think *see Wolf, page 16*



Renovations on the former Cineplex Odeon Theater, scheduled to open in January, are still not complete. See page 4 for related article.

Students Question Move to Posman Books Over Barnes and Noble

MICHELLE MULLER
Staff Writer

The normal routine of textbook shopping for SCW students has changed. Instead of SCW and SSSB faculty placing their book orders at Barnes & Noble on 18th Street and Fifth Avenue, they have been dealing with Posman Books, located on University Place since the Fall '98 semester.

Dr. Karen Bacon, dean of SCW, said that the decision was a joint one made by herself, Jeffrey Rosengarten, director of supporting service administration, Mr. Zenccheck, head of university purchasing, Mrs. Zeldra Braun, assistant dean of students, and the 1997-1998 SCW and SSSB Student Council presidents. According to Dean Bacon, Posman approached the YU administration, requesting to become their official university bookstore. Posman offered services that were not offered by Barnes & Noble, including transportation for students to and from Posman, a special section in the

store with books arranged according to SCW and SSSB faculty names and an agreement to work with Student Council presidents to provide imprinted materials. When Dean Bacon asked Barnes and Nobles if they could provide any of these same services, they responded that they could not.

Posman further facilitated the book buying and selling process by coming to the Midtown campus during the last week of finals to buy books back from students. Many students were very enthusiastic to have the opportunity to sell back their expensive textbooks, which they would be unlikely to use again. However, many were disappointed at the prices they were offered. Some prices were significantly lower than the expected 50 percent of the price that they paid. Rebecca Samson, SCW '99, was shocked at the \$3 she received for her \$57 book.

When asked about their buyback policy, a Posman representative explained that they only pay 50 percent of the original price for books that they can resell. All other books are *see Posman, page 8*

VIEWS

The

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Unfulfilled Promises

It probably came as no surprise to students that SCW's theater was not ready for its projected completion date at the start of this semester. Students have grown accustomed to unfulfilled promises from university administrators when it comes to renovating buildings for student uses.

Of course, some of the delays are unavoidable. Construction projects are often unpredictable, and the time estimated to complete a job can be grossly inaccurate. In addition, YU must contend with the wishes of donors who have expectations

for the facilities in which they invest money. Yes, there are many excuses, and the student body as a whole is generally very tolerant of the extenuating circumstances that always seem to crop up.

But as students of this university, we also have a right to ask if these building projects are really designed with our best interests in mind. Sure, it will be wonderful to have a completely redone, state-of-the-art theater when it is complete. We will be proud to use such a facility. But wouldn't it be better for the Stern College Dramatics Society to have some guarantee that they

won't be using Koch Auditorium yet again for their spring performance?

The chemistry labs were also supposed to be completed at the start of this semester. One of the reasons they are not ready is that a brand new ventilation system must be installed for the entire building before the labs can be completed and opened for use. The labs will be equipped with the latest available technology, aiding students in their lab research. But what matters most to students taking chemistry classes this year is that they have to travel to the Main Campus each week for a

class that should be taught at the Midtown Center.

The students of Stern College are grateful that YU has seen fit to acquire and refurbish various real estate acquisitions in the past few years for the direct benefit of the students. We don't take for granted that the university has the best interest of students at heart when it makes grandiose plans for new facilities. But what matters most to students is that we can take advantage of these wonderful facilities while we are students at SCW.

Watch Your Step: Hazards of the Midtown Center

On rainy days, students know to be careful walking down the steps in the Midtown Center. Because multiple coats of paint have been applied to the stairs over the years, they present a slippery hazard to students wearing shoes that don't grip properly. In recent years, at least a handful of students has reported injuries, some minor, some serious, resulting from slipping and falling on the Midtown Center's stairs.

One of the worst areas is the stairs leading to the basement

cafeteria. That is probably the most frequently used staircase in the building, and the one most likely to be wet or full of debris on days of inclement weather.

Another major hazard in the Midtown Center is the elevators. Even though security guards try to limit the crowds in the elevators, students still squeeze in until the elevators reach full capacity. It is not uncommon for an elevator to stop a few inches above or below the floor when it opens. Sometimes the elevators fail to stop flush with the floor

even when they are not crowded. Students don't always notice if the elevator is an inch or two off, and can easily trip and fall when exiting the elevator. Last year, one student was seriously injured when she tripped on the floor when exiting an elevator.

After several years of students tripping on either the stairs or the elevator, the university should be aware of these dangers. But no one has done anything noticeable to remedy these serious problems.

The stairs could easily

be made safer by applying textured strips to the edges of stairs so that students are less likely to slip even if the stairs are wet. The elevators are a more complicated issue. The only solution may be to replace the existing elevators in the Midtown Center. This is an expensive proposition, but if the university really cares about students' well-being, then it will make an effort to find a safer solution to the problem.

Quiet, Please

During the late afternoon hours, especially the half-hour before sunset, the SCW Beit Midrash is one of the busiest rooms in the school. Students go there to *daven mincha*, say *tehillim*, learn with friends and prepare for classes. Unfortunately, some people

choose to use the Beit Midrash as a social hall as well. On some days, students trying to concentrate on their prayers contend not only with the voices of their peers learning, but also with loud voices of students conversing.

Not only is such conversation disrespectful of students trying to pray, it is also inappro-

priate conduct for the Beit Midrash. Presumably, students conversing in the Beit Midrash gather there for a religious purpose. Once there, they run into a friend or friends and forget that their conversation might be disruptive to other students. This happens to all of us periodically, but it happens too frequently dur-

ing weekday afternoons at the SCW Beit Midrash.

Students are asked to refrain from disturbing their peers with loud conversations in the Beit Midrash.

Commentator Condemned

Thank G-d that someone finally had the guts to come out and say what a lot of us here at YC have been thinking. The Commentator has gotten completely out of hand. It's unfortunate that it's taken so long for anyone to point this out. The majority of the student body here still probably hasn't read the marvelous editorial in the Observer [Susan Jacobs's column "Raking the Muck, Yeshiva College Style" in the December 21, 1998 issue]

blasting the Commentator for its complete loss of any objectivity.

How can we be fairly represented to the outside world as a serious institution of higher learning when our paper belittles that notion every other week? Every top-tier school has a legitimate, unbiased paper that the student body can rely on. Of course, they also have alternative papers, where opinions and biases can be expressed and expected by the students. But at YU we're not

large enough of a school to have competing papers, yet. We desperately need our newspaper to be fair, objective and conforming to basic standards of journalistic integrity. Unfortunately, that doesn't seem to exist anymore.

Messrs Moses, Fishman and Hoschander, please listen to us! We all want a paper we can respect and proudly display as a badge of honor. Give that paper to us. Give us what we want.

It has become eminently

clear that YC deserves better representation than it's getting with the Commentator. The editors of "the Commie" had better start getting their act together, or they'll find themselves with some competition. Competition that has standards of decency, morality and *halacha*, unlike the current Commentator.

William Adler
YC/MYP '01

Submissions are now being accepted for the Purim edition of the Yeshiva University Observer. Students who are interested in contributing should turn in articles by February 10.

A Real College Experience



susan jacobson

editor-in-chief

Recently I've heard a lot of students complaining that Stern is not a "real college." Such complaints are not new, and, as usual, they often pass unchallenged. The problem is, whether they are meant to be taken seriously or not, such comments undermine the seriousness of this school and students' perceptions about attending Stern College.

It would be foolish not to admit that Stern has its shortcomings. Stern is definitely limited in its ability to offer certain classes and majors. And we miss out on an important part of the American college experience by isolating ourselves from coeducation and from society's diversity. It is no secret that Yeshiva University

is often an inefficient bureaucracy, sometimes creating more harm than help. (It is worth noting that almost all universities have their share of inefficiency and red tape.) But we have to ask ourselves if acquiring a college education at Stern is worth these pitfalls.

When I was deciding where I would attend college, one factor I weighed heavily was the sort of life I would have in college, both intellectually and socially. I wanted to go to a school where I would have the opportunity to study the essentials of a liberal arts education, and where I would feel comfortable expressing my opinions with my fellow students. I also wanted to be in a school that would not only provide opportunities to experience Jewish life with other Jewish students, but would foster that involvement.

Quite honestly, I was afraid I would be sacrificing the quality of my secular education for these ends. As a student here, I have taken classes that bored or

frustrated me. But most of my classes have been interesting and intellectually stimulating. I think that students at most colleges have similar experiences. Even the best schools have classes that are poorly taught, or that are not challenging.

Some students insist that the education is better in the vicinity of 185th and Amsterdam, but they rarely cite grounds for this belief. I challenge them to ask any professor who teaches on both campuses for his/her comparison of the academic rigors of both schools. Most will tell you that the two schools are comparable, and that Stern is superior to Yeshiva College in some subjects, and vice versa.

Being in an isolated environment does breed a certain amount of insecurity. We are never quite sure how we measure up. Whether we like to admit it or not, a lot of us are still insecure about how we measure up to men. We need to confront these insecurities and overcome them. Statistics say that women tend to thrive in all-female

environments because they are less intimidated to express themselves when men are not present. If anything, we should feel better about the education we receive here, knowing that, for all its limitations, Stern can also be a liberating place. We are only limited here by the limits we place upon ourselves.

I believe that is the real crux of the situation in this school. No, Stern does not have all the opportunities we would like it to have, and we should continue to press for improvements in the school's academics. But at the same time, there is so much to be gained from being a student here. Maybe in their rush to fulfill all their requirements in an average 2.5 years, students don't stop to take advantage of the many opportunities available to them. Maybe their experience here doesn't feel like a "real" college experience as a result, but that is their own fault, not the fault of the school.

Senior Stress



ayelet grun

executive editor

Inevitably, someone always writes a column like this one. I've read so many times about how being a senior, on the verge of leaving Stern College for Women, is traumatizing. I myself, would not go so far. Yet now, more than ever, I understand what those writers meant when they wrote how the senior year of college is a scary unknown.

As underclassmen (or should I be

politically correct and say underclasswomen?), SCW students go from class to class concerning themselves with school, social life and perhaps an occasional internship. We make our own schedules, sleep whenever we want, eat whenever the cafeteria is open and leave at our own will. Yes, we have roommates to contend with, grades to uphold, parents to please. But thought of life after school is rarely on our minds. At least it wasn't on mine until this year.

All of a sudden, we worry about next year. What and where will we spend our entire day? Will we continue our schooling or get a job? I see my senior classmates stare at the upcoming semester, hoping that no one asks them the question

of the hour: "So, what are you doing next year?"

Stern College tries to prepare us for these changes, but more often than not, they fail. The administration conducts seminars instructing seniors how to prepare for life after college, but no one really goes. Various offices jam our mailboxes with information that would be valuable, if anyone bothered to read them before throwing them out.

Seniors have a tendency to panic when it's too late. They live in denial for most of their last year at SCW, concentrating on finishing their major and exit requirements. No one thinks that they will have to find a place to live, roommates, a job/school and a completely new social

structure to adjust to.

The administration must be aware of the senior "ostrich" mentality. They should cater their seminars and leaflets when they are needed most, during the second semester of senior year. In return, seniors should act as responsible 21-22 year olds by upholding deadlines and asking questions.

In an ideal world, a joint effort between the university administration and the senior class would ease the transition from college life to the "real world." But until we get there, I ask that administrators be there to help, not admonish, the panicked senior entering their offices. Give us your time and helpful advice, not mere grief. *Aineinu b'yom koreinu.*

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Students Mourn the Death of Joshua Lipetz

NECHAMA MILLER
Staff Writer

When YU students returned to school after winter break, they were greeted by the tragic news that one of their own had died. Joshua Lipetz, a YU sophomore, died January 12th after a skiing accident during vacation.

Only in his first year on the YC campus. Lipetz spent the previous year learning at Yeshivat Shaarei Mevasseret Tzion (Mevasseret) in Israel, after attending MSTA, the YU high school for boys. A resident of Kew Garden Hills, Queens, Lipetz was a bright young man who wished to continue his Torah learning and pursue his goal of becoming a physician. His unexpected death devastated

his family and friends. Many acquaintances were too emotional to comment, remembering a loyal friend they had seen in good spirits only a week earlier. A classmate from Lipetz's Jewish History course last semester explained that he had only just started getting to know him. "He was such a smart and friendly guy," he said. "Josh always sat in the front row of the class and was always eager to learn. I can't believe I had just seen him the week before at the final."

Lipetz was in a deep coma before he died. During this time many students received phone calls or e-mails asking them to say *Tehillim* on his behalf. "What is so wonderful about the Jewish community is in times of tragedy we all pull together to help out, even when you don't

know the person involved," said Elana Sturm, SSSB '00.

University Dean of Students Efreim Nulman expressed deep regret and sorrow for the loss of Lipetz. "This is a terrible tragedy for Yeshiva University, the community, but especially for his family and friends," he said. Nulman also mentioned the unfortunate fact that Lipetz is the second YU student who had spent the previous year studying at Mevasseret to pass away with-



Joshua Lipetz, z"l, far left, with friends.

in the past year. (Joshua Bender, z"l, died nearly eight months ago).

"He was such a genial and warm human being with so much potential," said Nulman. Everyone in the YU community and the greater Jewish world deeply regrets the loss of Joshua Lipetz, a young man with a tremendous potential that will never be fulfilled.

Much Ado About Something: Yeshiva College Arts Festival 99' Approaching

DINA GIELCHINSKY
Cultural Arts Editor

By now, everyone has seen the curlicue lettered white-on-black stylized signs announcing the Yeshiva College Arts Festival. Only a few weeks away, the festival's planning has reached its final stages, and after much coercion, Director Benjamin Joffe agreed to offer a sneak preview of the events to come. Consider the following schedule an extremely skeletal list of the presentations, due to the myriad of surprise performances to be unveiled at the festival itself. Light refreshments will be served. February 7, 7:00 p.m.

The opening event will be an exciting concert with performances ranging from mellow to manic. Isaac and Seth Galena guarantee to double your pleasure, double your fun, double anything Dylan has ever done with their own original folk

songs. From there, David Keesey and Dov Pickholtz will be plugging in and sounding out folk rock. Rumor has it that David Rappaport and Elan Rubinstein collaborated as each other's accompaniment, a much-anticipated event for those who have heard them perform. For those who are guilty of never hearing their music, they promise their classics as well as some new material they've developed. Rappaport also hinted to a surprise musical presentation, but refuses to disclose any further information. February 8, 8:00 p.m.

Monday night's event is a poetry reading of original works by YC and SCW students. Joffe admitted that he is very excited about this event, since a wide selection of poetry offered, including works by contributors to the art and literary journals, Spires and Besamim. February 10, 8:00 p.m.

This event generated the most whispering and speculation of the whole

festival. In vague terms, it will consist of dramatic presentations of play scenes including Romeo and Juliet and Pygmalion. No information about the sets can be gleaned from the set director, Shalom Birson, although he promises an exciting and dramatic display. Widely acclaimed Mordechai Levovitz will be performing, however his exact character will not be revealed. February 14, 7:00 p.m.

Rabbi Shalom Carmi, professor of Bible and philosophy, and Professor Shoshana Golin, professor of studio arts, will each be addressing the participants in Sunday night's visual arts presentation. The evening will include drawings, paintings, photographs, design pieces, and as a special addition, two separate films created by Yoni Lietner and Nikki Paley. This writer has seen Paley's film and guarantees a dramatization exhibit of Paley's School for Visual Art's superb creative

training. It's also hysterically funny. February 15, 8:00 p.m.

Monday's event is an evening of short stories by YC and SCW students. A collection of stories has been amassed from students excelling in creative writing and fiction. Authors reputed for their rousing compositions and who have been published in Besamim and Spires contribute their stories to the festival. February 18, 7:00 p.m.

The festival concludes with a dinner for the festival's contributors, followed by an open dessert at 8:00 p.m., hosted by emcee David Rappaport, who again refuses to divulge any specifics of the evening. Rumors promise an evening of something above and beyond entertainment. The various YC and SCW clubs and journals will be delivering presentations about their ongoing achievements and invite everyone to join.

New Midtown Center Facilities Still Not Ready for Use

CHANA ROSENBLATT
Staff Writer

Approximately one year ago, YU purchased a theater on 34th Street between Second and Third Avenues and a multipurpose building at 150 East 35th Street. Recently, YU also acquired a controlling interest in a corporation that purchased two attached office buildings, located at 205-215 Lexington Avenue between 32nd and 33rd Streets.

The Cineplex Odeon theater (on 34th Street), now owned by YU, is being redesigned for student use, and was scheduled for completion at the start of the spring '99 semester. As of late December, Jeffrey Rosengarten, Director of YU's Supporting Services Administration, esti-

mated the theater would be completed in another two months, which would be late February. If the theater is actually complete then, the Stern College Dramatics Society could use the facility for its spring production.

David Rosen, Director of Public Relations for YU, said that the theater will be completely renovated. New seats will decorate the remodeled theater, as will state-of-the-art projection, sound and lighting equipment. The stage is being redesigned and expanded, and part of the theater will be redone to hold between 350 and 375 seats. The theater will be available for student plays, productions, and guest lecturers at SCW.

Dean Karen Bacon said that the three or four floors of office space located above the theater, can be used to hold dis-

cussion groups after a lecture and for receptions after performances. It can also be a quiet spot for rehearsals before performances. This building will be the first of the three sites to be completed and to become accessible to SCW students.

Residential in nature, but also containing several offices, the building on 35th Street has been completely gutted, so that, as Dean Bacon noted, "theoretically, we could use it for anything." Whether that means converting the space into offices, small classrooms, or even additional housing for students, the building will ease the strain of crowding. In the case that the building is turned into a housing facility, it would be able to accommodate between 100 and 150 students. According to Dean Bacon, the setup would be in the form of apartments, similar to

those in Windsor Court. "We have to see which layout would make most efficient use of the space available to us," she said. "Another factor in consideration," Dean Bacon added, "is determining which layout would be most appreciated and preferred by the students."

The two buildings on Lexington Avenue are only partially vacant as of now. Some tenants still occupy the space that will be designated for SCW. For this reason, Dean Bacon explained, the use of these buildings will take place in stages. The date set for some of the building being put into use is September 1999. Altogether, it will be several years before SCW will occupy all of its potential space.

Approximately \$50 million has been spent thus far on purchases and renovations for the SCW campus.

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NEWS

Viruses Cleaned from Computer Lab

BONNIE NATHANSON
Staff Writer

The virus running rampant through SCW was recently cured. A computer virus, that is.

During past months, students complained of papers and files disappearing from their computer diskettes, and of viruses suddenly attacking their laptop computers. It appears that the culprit was the SCW computer system.

One SCW sophomore completed her computer final on her disc and turned in the disc 25 minutes before the exam was due. "Everything seemed fine until the professor inserted the disc into the computer and couldn't pull up Excel. He said it was probably a virus," she said. "Thank G-d, I had my work saved on a computer at home and was not forced to start again."

While the SCW computers were equipped with a virus-scanning program, which was supposed to detect viruses and prevent them from destroying files, the program was not able to catch certain new viruses. One of these new viruses, specifically a micro-virus, invaded the computers.

How was it introduced into the computer lab in the first place? Mrs.

Betty Gordon, SCW computer lab coordinator, said, "The girls were bringing them [viruses] in from their own laptops!"

According to Gordon, the new virus can be transferred from a computer to a laptop and vice versa via discs. Students who inserted their virus-infested discs into SCW computers transferred the viruses onto the school computers. Any student who used the computers afterward risked transferring the virus onto her own disc, and possibly transferring it to her laptop computer as well.

When the updated version of the virus-scanning program, McAfee 4.01, was installed onto SCW computers in November, it detected viruses on students' discs. In most cases, the virus can be cleaned from discs without damaging important files. However, there is some risk of losing information.

In other computer news, America Online 4.0 was installed onto SCW computers. Students, however, may only log on as guests. Gordon found that when students attempted to download AOL, they brought viruses onto the computers. Now students have no reason to download the program, since AOL is available to any student with a name and password.

Dorms to Remain Open for Shavuot

RACHEL ELBAUM
Staff Writer

After much effort on the part of students at SCW, school housing will remain open during Shavuot, if a minimum of 20 students plans to stay in the dorms for the holiday. The decision was reached after Student Life Committee president, Mechal Weiss, SCW '99, presented a proposal to the Student Life Committee which detailed dissatisfaction with the planned closing. Shavuot falls out this year in the middle of spring semester finals.

Opposition to the closing began last spring when Rebecca Varnai, SCW '00, saw the schedule for the upcoming school year on the back of a Yeshiva College course booklet. She, along with Hilary Schwersenski, SCW '00, planned to petition the school to shorten reading week and have finals end before Shavuot, thereby ending school before the holiday.

"We knew we couldn't talk to the deans alone, so with the petition, we felt we would have 500 other girls to back us up," said Varnai. "They would realize that it is the majority."

Varnai and Schwersenski circulated the petition soon after Succot and collected 500 signatures from SCW students. They then submitted the petition to the Student Life Committee, which is

made up of both students and members of the administration.

Due to the requisite number of days in the school calendar, requests to shorten reading week were denied. However, the Student Life Committee proposed to keep the dorm open during the holiday so that students wouldn't feel that they had no where to go.

"Having the dorm closed was not done intentionally against students from out of town," said Weiss. If at least 20 students express interest in staying at SCW for Shavuot, the dorm will remain open and a program including various *shuirim* and learning opportunities will be planned.

Debbie Bienenfeld, SCW '01, from Florida said, "With the dorm open, I will not be forced to travel during finals and I will have the opportunity to spend the holiday in a good environment." Some students, however, felt that the decision will not affect them. "It's irrelevant to me if it's open. I don't think it is the right environment for me to be in during *yom tov*," said Elana Well, SCW '00, from Illinois. Dana Bienenfeld, SCW '00, from New York, echoed Well's sentiments. "It doesn't affect me," she said. "But I think it should be open for those people who need it."

SCDS To Stage "Nobody's Gilgul"

EILEEN CHUDOW
News Editor

Nearly 40 aspiring SCW and SSSB actresses auditioned for the 12 roles in Stern College Dramatics Society's (SCDS) spring semester production. The December 8 audition was for *Nobody's Gilgul*, a comedy, written by Lois Roisman. SCDS plans to stage the play March 14-18.

Devorah Cenker, SCW '99 and SCDS president, explained that the auditions were delayed due to difficulty choosing a play. Having decided on "Nobody's Gilgul," the society is working with the playwright to adapt the play, since it originally contained some inappropriate aspects.

Earlier this semester, SCDS held a playwrighting contest for SCW and SSSB students in the Midtown campus. Only two students, however, expressed interest in writing a play. Cenker said that the society is looking into the possibility of performing these student plays in the future.

Interest and enthusiasm in SCDS

activities is growing. Recently, SCDS jointly sponsored a shabbaton with the SAGA environmental club. According to Cenker, more students attended than she had expected or even hoped for. "We had phenomenal turnout, the speakers were enthusiastically received," she said. "Nothing could have prepared me for how amazing it was."

"I'm excited about what we're doing this year," said Cenker. She added that in past years the student productions were very well received, with high attendance rates. "We're trying to make people aware of the performances and build up interest." The society's efforts have been successful: interest is growing and the auditions had a good turnout. Students often approach Cenker wanting to become involved with SCDS.

Cenker encourages students to "keep their eyes open for our flyers for try-outs and performances."

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The Missing Freshman Class

SARA KOSTANT
Associate Features Editor

Maybe you have met her in one of your classes, or bumped into her in the cafeteria. She is the rare Stern College freshman, or rather, freshman. The freshman class has the lowest enrollment of any year in SCW because many students who would have been in this class boarded planes to Israel in August. At most universities, the freshman class consists of approximately a quarter of the student body, but at Stern College the freshman proportion is much less. The class population swells when students on the Joint Israel program return to SCW for their Israeli seminars, but how does the freshman class fare until then?

Most freshmen do not consider their small size a disadvantage. Rashka Balarsky, SCW '02, and Susanne Goldstone, SCW '02, said that they both knew before they came to SCW that their incoming class would be small. This fact did not deter them from enrollment. They still don't mind. Balarsky, who is president of the freshman class, says that she thinks that there is "a lot of spirit" in her year because it is smaller. "Even though we all have different cliques, we get along," she said. "Many freshmen hang out with other freshmen." Balarsky emphasized that her goal as the freshman class president is to "get as many freshmen as I can to meet each other." Goldstone, who is majoring in Political Science, noted that the low number of incoming students made it easier for her to obtain a position as vice-president on the freshman class student council. "I knew it wouldn't be as difficult to get a position," she said, "because I have to talk to less people" during elections.

Dr. John B. Fisher, director of enrollment management for YU (excluding its medical school) said that in the fall of 1998, 155 women entered SCW as freshmen instead of going to Israel. An additional 15 students joined the class for the spring semester, bring the freshman class population to 170 out of the 871 students currently studying at the Midtown Campus. Fisher said that if the students studying on the Joint Israel program this year are included in the number of freshmen at Stern College, the number comes out to about a fourth of the total SCW student body. Next year's sophomore class will experience a surge in numbers when the Israel students return.

The Jewish atmosphere is a major factor in the choice to enter SCW as a freshman. "I live in Texas, and I really wanted a Jewish environment," said Rashka Balarsky. "I wanted Jewish friends." Goldstone said that knowing people who were already in SCW, and the school's Manhattan location played a part in her decision. The Jewish setting, however, was the primary reason she enrolled at SCW. She said that while other colleges organize Jewish programming, SCW possesses a "pretty highly rated" Judaic studies program. This program includes the beginner's level Hebrew classes that are essential to her since she did not come to SCW with a strong religious background. Chana Batko-

Taylor, SCW '02, a philosophy major, said that she chose SCW for its "Jewish environment and Jewish curriculum. That's what makes Stern stand out."

Batko-Taylor also said that she does not "feel like a freshman. I feel very comfortable here, and people are very accepting." Once she arrived at SCW, she discovered that her apprehensions about not knowing anyone here disappeared. "The structure [at Stern College] is sound and somehow very reassuring," she said. "The doubts about going to college are not here at Stern. It's a great way to begin your independent life."

Spending a longer time at SCW than the returning Israel students does not faze Batko-Taylor, who sees it as an advantage. She said that students on a tight schedule may be more worried about choosing a major, and fitting all of their requirements into three years. She feels she has a "greater space of time to operate. If I change my major midyear, it's okay."

All of the freshmen interviewed for this article pointed out that most of their friends are scattered throughout the sophomore, junior, and senior classes at SCW, because their classes included students from all four years. Although most freshmen seemed satisfied with their experience in SCW thus far, one student pointed out that the freshmen receive the lowest priority when it comes to registration. "You see freshmen in the office crying and complaining," she said. "I only got into the classes that no one else wants."

This year's freshmen class will have the experience of a year to pass on to their new counterparts when they return from Israel this fall. All seem eager to help next year's new students. Balarsky said that she hopes to "mentor them in aspects of college," and Goldstone remarked that she "could help them with New York, and they can tell me about Israel" since she's never been there before. Batko-Taylor mentioned that the students returning from Israel will "already have their social structure set up," which might make it more difficult for the current freshmen to intermingle with the Israel students. Batko-Taylor, however, did not feel that this would be a long-term concern.

The freshman class will gain a lot from their decision to spend four years at Stern College, said Rachel Katz, SCW '00. She came to SCW from Hamilton, Ontario, not knowing a single person. Katz attended a public high school, and wanted to attend college in a Jewish atmosphere to make up for the Jewish education she had missed out on. She describes herself when she arrived at SCW as a shy, "small town girl in the big city" who was terrified of Manhattan. Katz is now a resident advisor in the Schottenstein Residence Hall, and is majoring in education. "I think I'd be stunting my growth if I were here for only two years," she said. "I've grown so much in this time. So many internal changes happen in your college years, and if you skip them, they [the changes] won't happen."

Posman

continued from page 1

sent to a national distributor and they must therefore follow the distributor's price guidelines, which are often very low when buying back books. Otherwise, Posman would have to take a loss.

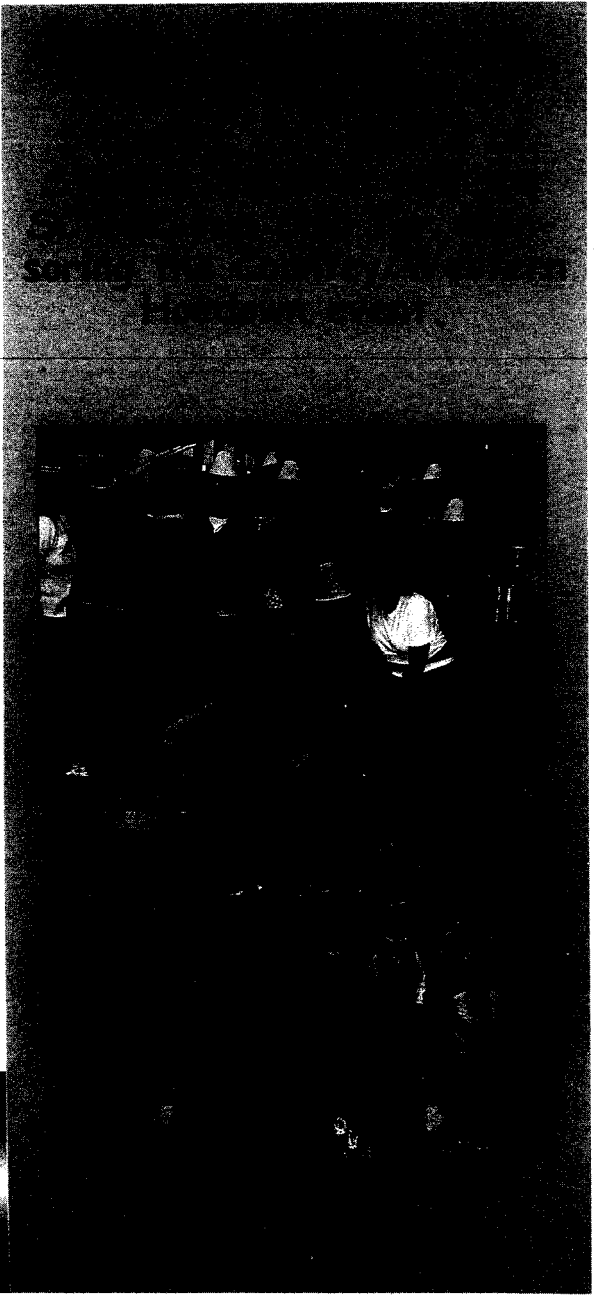
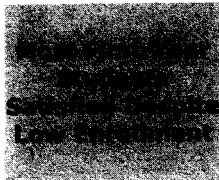
There have been both positive and negative responses to the change. Many students appreciate the transportation and the ease of shopping with the special SCW section. However, there was some confusion during the fall semester when some course books were not available during the first few days, and when some misinformed faculty members sent their orders to Barnes & Noble. Additionally, there have been reported problems of students receiving the wrong edition of a textbook or the wrong book altogether, by relying too heavily on the fact that books are divided by faculty name.

Many students are under the impression that prices at Posman are significantly higher than prices for the same books at Barnes & Noble. When a price comparison was completed by an

Observer staff member, she found that Posman charges the same prices as Barnes & Noble for many of the text books. Some books are more expensive, but only by about \$3.

Many SCW and SSSB students appreciate the fact that they receive free bus transportation to and from the bookstore. But the distance between Posman and the Midtown Campus irritates others. "I've found that Posman is not as conveniently located as Barnes and Noble," said Dina Gielchinsky, SCW '99. Others, such as Yael Dotz, SCW '99, appreciate the ease of shopping. "It only took me 10 minutes to buy my books, whereas it would have taken at least a half hour at Barnes & Noble," said Dotz. Dotz said that the service at Posman was excellent, with the employees very eager to help students find the books they need.

As for the future of Posman as SCW's bookstore, Dean Bacon said that the success of Posman would be reviewed at the end of the year. But at this point, "unless there are any major, unresolvable problems, the benefits are substantial" and SCW will continue to use Posman as its bookstore in the future.



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The President's Forum



Rabbi Norman Lamm
Norman Lamm, President and Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva University, was asked to respond to a list of questions compiled by the Observer staff. His responses to the first four questions are printed below. Answers to the remaining questions will appear in a future issue of the Observer.

1. What is the role of Modern Orthodoxy in bridging gaps between the liberal streams of Judaism and the so-called ultra-Orthodox movements? What will be the responsibility of current YU students in American Jewry in the next few years?

Dr. Lamm: The role of Modern Orthodoxy in the current Jewish community can be - and must be - a very creative one. We have got to be the bridge, the social cement that keeps the two opposing sides from flying apart. In order to serve such a function, Yeshiva University students have to be well prepared for this three-way dialogue (or triologue). We have to be scrupulous in our *chevrat ha-mitvos* and assiduous in our *taamei hashem*, otherwise, we will not have the confidence of the Haredi world. And our manner and demeanor must be gracious even if firm, never allowing ourselves to descend to name-calling or *ad hominem* attacks against the non-Orthodox. Yes, it is possible to disagree without denouncing. It is even possible to delegitimize an idea or practice of the non-Orthodox without descending into the rhetorical gutter. Our personal *mitvos* will reflect our genuine spirituality and thus create an opening to the Left, just as our Torah and *mitvos* will allow us to communicate with the Right. And above all, we must follow the path of moderation with passion and as principle, not compromise.

2. YU used to conduct formal outreach programs in American Jewish communities. Today, YU students are often individually involved in *kiruv* activities, but the formal student bodies have no programs that directly target college-aged peers. What can be done to create dialogue between YU undergraduate students and the thousands of less educated and less observant college students in New York City?

Dr. Lamm: There are such opportunities available for our students by YU and by kindred organizations with whom we usually cooperate. Check with our Division of Communal Services!

3. Does Rabbi Lamm have an established view of the latest peace negotiations since the Wye Plantation accord? Does the university have an established opinion? Is the issue merely political, or is it, as some claim, a religious imperative to hold a particular view? Is land for peace, including giving away portions of the West Bank, a religious decision?

Dr. Lamm: The university as such has no - repeat - no official stand on matters political. Neither professors nor Roshes Yeshivos are authorized to speak on behalf of Yeshiva University. That prerogative belongs to the president of the institution, and I have scrupulously avoided any political pronouncements. When I speak on other issues of wide concern, I make it clear that I speak as an individual, and not as an official of Yeshiva University. As to my view of the Wye agreements, why oh why should I change my practice now? ... Speak to me personally if you want my views. And should I decide to "go public" on any political issue, it will be as a person, not on behalf of Yeshiva. Remember: my views on any area outside of my limited areas of expertise are of no greater value or cogency than those of any other rabbi or educator - or

any other informed and intelligent layman. Which is to say, you may solicit your opinions, but think for yourself!

Let me now address the rest of the question: the religious dimension of the various political issues that now confront us so urgently and relentlessly. Halakic authorities throughout the generations have hardly paid attention to matters of national and international moment. The sheer volume of the responsa literature on *hilkhot shabbat* or *taaruvot* or *gi'at* overwhelmingly dwarfs all the writings on questions of war and peace. The Shulchan Aruch has nothing of great significance to say about such matters, because it limits itself to questions of contemporary relevance - and until 1948 such issues were theoretical, *hilkheta la-mashicha*, and hardly touched upon. Even those who expanded on such arcane issues as *kodoshim ve'toharos* did not bother with matters of national defense, the sanctity of international agreements, etc. Hence, the most we can do is offer suggestions that appear to us to conform generally to halakic values, but by no means may we arrogate to ourselves the right to pronounce authoritatively and issue *piskei halakha* upon such life-and-death questions for an entire state or people. We do not have the halakic authority for such ex cathera judgments, and we certainly do not have the political, diplomatic and military training to offer expert opinions. Of course, a number of my colleagues will differ with me, and that is their privilege. But I respectfully do not agree with them and that is why I will not speak out myself or permit others to pronounce on such matters in the name of Yeshiva.

4. Attitudes toward Israel and Zionism, especially among young American Jews, have shifted over the years. Most American Jews supported Israel and identified as Zionists at one point. That is no longer the case. Today, many Jews are highly critical of Israel. Is this shift positive or negative? How

much do you think the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin has contributed to this shift in attitudes?

Dr. Lamm: I think the disaffection of the younger secularist (and generally non-Orthodox) generation with Israel is deplorable. I do not believe the Rabin assassination can be blamed for this; the murder of the Prime Minister has much to do with the anger at Orthodoxy, but not with the cooling off of the ardor for Israel and Zionism. What is the source of this alienation? Simply this: Zionism or pro-Israel sentiment and activity alone do not have the gift of endurance. Nationalism by itself in this post-modern world, with its global companies that effectively skip over national borders, cannot survive because it cannot answer the fundamental existential questions that agitate serious young people. For this one has to come to Israel out of a larger context of Jewish values and practices and way of life that is anchored in the soul and mind metaphysically. Only then, if the Zionism is autochthonous, can it survive along with the rest of *Yiddishkeit*. A free trip for a couple of weeks to Israel cannot provide this.

I do not want to overstate the case. The relationship of non-Orthodox Jews to Israel is exceedingly important because it holds the line, even if only temporarily. This meager thread should be strengthened even without a religious dimension, because perhaps such people will at least refrain from out-marriage and feel ethnically and culturally part of *Am Yisrael*. Take that away, and total assimilation must perforce follow. That is why the Reform and Conservative leadership is proving myopic in threatening Israel with cutting off relations if they don't get their way on certain legal-political matters such as conversion and marriage. If their people do not have a firm commitment to Israel, they will be lost forever - *chas ve'shalom*. That would be a tragedy not only for them but for all of us, for all our people.

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The 1960's

**Shulamith Klavan
Goldstein, SCW '63**

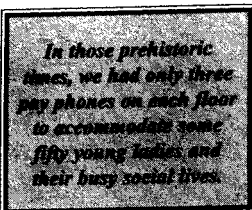
I recently had occasion to quote Dr. Dan Vogel who was the dean of Stern College during the sixties. He said, "I want to have dissatisfied alumnae," meaning that the college should always be improving. If I compare the Stern College that I attended from 1959 to 1963 to the Stern College that my daughters attended in the eighties and nineties (and which my youngest daughter will, *D'H*, attend in the new millennium), I am delighted that they have so many options in terms of courses, majors and career opportunities.

When I graduated from Stern, there were three hundred students; everyone knew everyone else, and there was a general atmosphere of warmth and friendship. The dorm was housed on three floors of a hotel, and only girls who could not commute were able to live there. It did cause a certain schism between New Yorkers and out-of-towners. In those prehistoric times, we had only three pay phones on each floor to accommodate some fifty young ladies and their busy social lives. Dorm life was fun, but was governed by an unbelievable number of rules and restrictions.

As someone who graduated just before the publication of Betty Friedan's "Feminine Mystique," I believe that my friends and I represented the last of a certain breed of college woman. Education was the number one major; other majors were a very standard line-up that

included chemistry, biology, psychology, sociology, history, English, math and a handful of others. Careers were definitely secondary to marriage and motherhood.

As you might have noticed, there was no Jewish studies major. Instead, there were four Hebrew tracks, based on background and proficiency, and everyone took between three and five Hebrew courses each semester. The students in the



highest Hebrew group had the option of pursuing a Bachelor of Hebrew Literature degree or Bachelor of Religious Education degree, together with a B.A. This meant taking the maximum number of courses each semester, in addition to student teaching (for the BRE) and three comprehensive exams, one in Jewish History, one in Tanach, and one in either Hebrew literature or Religious Studies.

The Hebrew courses on the highest level were conducted in Hebrew, and huge amounts of outside readings, in Hebrew, were assigned. Day school graduates in the fifties and sixties knew lots of *dikduk* but were not as knowledgeable as today's students in the areas of *parshanut* and *halacha*. No one went to Israel after graduating high

school; a small number opted to spend their junior year of college at Hebrew University. Bar Ilan or Machon Greenberg (a predecessor of Machon Gold). The Beit Midrash concept had not made an appearance in women's education. It is interesting to note, however, that in my junior and senior years, a *gemara* elective was offered and no eyebrows were raised, nor were there any snide comments.

The classes were small. On the advanced level, classes often had less than ten students. Many faculty members were warm and caring, and some invited their students to their homes for social evenings.

Stern College in the sixties was a four-year school, and there were no early admissions. The longer college residency allowed for greater participation in extracurricular activities and for the development of stronger ties to the institution and closer friendships.

The physical facilities were less than imposing - one small building on the corner of 35th and Lexington. The library was woefully inadequate, and serious students were forced to spend many hours at the 42nd Street branch of the public library. And yet, in spite of all these shortcomings, Stern was a wonderful place to be; there were many outstanding courses and professors, and especially for out-of-towners, it was the only place where one could be with other religious young women.

The 1970's

**Paula Goldstein From,
SCW '71**

I have been 28 years since I graduated from Stern College, so when I was asked to write an article for the Observer on what life was like "back then," I needed a little help. On the top shelf of my closet is a large envelope marked "Stern Memories." Sentimental fool that I am, I have saved Observer articles, calendars, skits I helped write, letters from faculty and administration, even grade reports! I read through all this memorabilia and as the song goes: "It's all coming back to me now."

The late sixties and early seventies were times when most



Paula From, SCW '71

college students sought meaning in life through sex, drugs and rebellion. At Stern College we reinforced each other in maintaining the Jewish outlook. We chose our own *derech*, one that would allow us to develop into a valuable member of *Klal Yisrael* through the proper influences and values of our environment. At the same time, we also had a responsibility to contribute our talents and interests to the growth of the school.

In 1967, Stern consisted of one school building, at the corner of 35th Street and Lexington Avenue. There was also a "Jailhouse Annex" down the block, which was used for some classes, clubs and the Co-op, a student operated store. In 1969, after students threatened a strike, ground was broken on the current 11-story school building. I watched it being built for two years and when I was a senior, finally attended classes in the brand new building. At this time there were approximately 570 students.

The scope of secular studies was rather narrow. There were no inter-departmental courses

Looking Forward

Ilana From, SCW '01

When you were here, you were here. I have only been here one semester, and I can already tell you that my

es nor majors in studio or performing arts. Most students majored in education, biology or English. There were no arrangements to take courses at other colleges. I was an education major, student teaching in the local public schools. I discovered early on in my career that this was not what I wanted to do with my life. Ultimately, I ended up becoming a counselor in a local community college. I should have known, even then, that I would be happiest in a college environment. The Judaic Studies department, or R.S. (Religious Studies) as it was called back then, was made up of three levels: beginning, intermediate and advanced. The 24-course Jewish Studies requirements came about due to student complaints that previous requirements were too lenient. Most teachers and *rebbeim* made themselves available for private conferences. All you had to do was ask and you could get help and personal attention.

From the moment I walked into Stern College, I was determined to get involved and I did. I can still remember running for freshman class president and losing. Even though I was disappointed, I was able to meet everyone in my class. After that I became sophomore class president, then vice-president of Student Council. Some of my happiest times were spent writing and then acting in skits for *chagigot*, playing Peppermint Patty in "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown," and riding the theme float in the Israeli Day parade. Apathy was not a word that existed in my vocabulary. Unfortunately, it did in so many others. As a commuter, I just could not see myself coming to school every day, going to classes, then going home again. I spent nights in the dorm when I had meetings and was constantly visiting friends. If I had one regret, it was that I did not dorm. Dorm life was the most memorable and warmest part of the Stern experience. However, being a commuter did not keep me from making wonderful and life-long friendships. I enjoyed bringing many friends home to Queens to spend Shabbos with my family. It enriched all of our lives.

Even after I graduated from Stern in 1971, I never totally left. Through alumni activities, I remained involved, although as time went on, less and less. The thread that connected me to Stern was never broken and now that thread has been picked up by my daughter. My hope is that the experiences she has are as wonderful and fulfilling as mine were.

College life goes far beyond the inside of a classroom. My primary incentive is to get a good education so I can pursue a career. College is a time to apply the skills I have acquired from previous years of education. Yes, college is also a time to set my path in life. The memories that my mother shared with you will

**Susan Kahr Schulman,
M.D., SCW '67**

When I first arrived in New York City in September of 1963 I was a 17 year old "out of townner" from Dayton Ohio. To me the Stern College dormitory, which was in the Prince Georges Hotel on 23rd Street, was as exciting a place it could possibly be. In the heart of Manhattan, with all of the dynamism of the most energized city in the world, I had a haven full of new found friends with whom I soon formed life-time bonds.

We soon became citizens of the city, going whenever we had time to libraries, museums, and all the unique New York venues. Some of us cleared our Wednesday afternoon schedules so we could go to all the Broadway matinees, taking advantage of cheap "standing room" tickets, which could only be bought immediately before the performance.

Life in the dorm centered around a very rigid set of rules requiring us to sign in at 7:00 pm and again at 11:00pm, after which time we

had to remain on our floor till the morning. With only one pay phone on each floor and no private phones much of our evening time was spent waiting for phone access.

None of these rules bothered us because we were very happy to be there, enjoying college, New York, and just being together in the camp-like dormitory. Such strong bonds were formed in the classroom and in the dormitory that I am still in close touch with many of my friends from those years.

The school was small, about 100 girls for each year. As a result the classes were not large and the teachers got to know the students as the year passed. I started out majoring in French and English, but I had to take a required biology course my freshman year. When it came time to register for the next year's courses my lab teacher, Dr. Phyllis Cahn, prevailed upon me to change my major to biology. Having never considered this as a possibility, I didn't know why she was so insistent. She felt I could do all the reading I wanted in French and English, but a science major was much more practical and, in her opinion, interesting.

This special attention, especially at the tender age of 17 had a strong influence on me. I did change to a Biology major and even worked as a research assistant for Dr. Cahn for the next two years. It turned out to be a major decision in my life and eventually led to my entering George Washington University Medical School after my graduation in 1967.

I met my husband Robert Schulman, a YU boy, in medical school. We went on to train in Maimonides Medical Center and then to establish private practices in our house in Brooklyn. Bob is in internal medicine and I am in pediatrics. We have *B'H* three kids, two girls who graduated from Stern (married YU boys, have five adorable kids between them and are now graduating from medical school), and one son who is graduating from YU in computer science. Now, after 30 years of being a pediatrician I look back and wonder what my life would have been like had I not gone to Stern. Stern College was a turning point in my life. I will always be grateful for the experience that helped me in so many ways.

always remain close to her heart. During the next three years at Stern, I hope to stretch my potential as far as it can reach, and to create some of my own experiences as well.

Up until now I have been under the sheltered care of my parents. Any challenge I was faced with was solved with their nurturing advice.

Now that I have begun college, I have the chance to make my own decisions.

Although my parents are only a phone call away, it's good to have some of my own space in the dorm. Besides,

dorming contains lots of adventures itself. When the school day ends, life in the dorm begins. The dorm is filled with all types of people with different study habits, and different methods of stress relief.

Some choose to raid Milner's Mart. Others need to veg-out for a while in the TV lounge. Personally, I like to visit friends, or have friends visit me. After all, the dorm is also a place to get to know other girls outside of the classroom. I say you don't really know a person until you have seen them in the stressed-out, study mode. Dorming is an opportunity that my mother never experienced. I am grateful for the chance to live

in a lively part of the city, and then return home to the comparatively quiet town of Monsey, New York.

Stern College adheres to the changing society, but never adopts its principles. That is one of the things that have not changed, and hopefully never will. In a society that is obsessed with success in business, it is important for us to remember that we are also Jewish women. Stern remains a source of religious and moral guidance. Now, with its increase in size there are more types of classes and teachers

to match everyone's personal *hashkafa*. I do not look at the double curriculum as a burden. Rather, I choose to think about how that I am gaining much more. When I graduate, I will not only be leaving with a degree, but also with a stronger sense of Jewish identity. That is why I enjoy taking part in some of the many lectures, *chagigot*, and *shabbatonim* offered. I am also a proud TAC representative for my floor.

Although I have chosen one of the more traditional majors, Stern has expanded its areas of study. In the 90's there are few jobs that women do not take part in. Stern acknowledges the fact that

women are becoming more educated, without losing sight of the fact that we are individuals. It has grown in size since my mother has attended, but the warm atmosphere that she

recounts as such a monumental part of her college experience still remains. I don't know many of my *rabbanim* and professors, but those that I do know always smile and say hello when I see them outside of the classroom.

Getting to know my teachers rather than just receive information from them adds to the uniqueness of Stern.

Among the advances at Stern is the addition of the computer lab. The computers give students the opportunity to type up necessary papers, or just to have fun. In my spare time I like to keep connected with my friends through e-mail. Others like to surf the Net. Whatever your pleasure may be, the computers have certainly added to the college experience.

Stern has also enlarged its opportunities for students to study away from its

Midtown Center, and still receive college credit. Last year, I was privileged to spend a year abroad at a seminary in *Yerushalayim*. The joint-program gave me the chance to devote a year to religious study without the formality of a college environment. Although attending seminary is a common practice these days, it is a rather new concept. My mom did not spend a year in Israel. I am appreciative to have had that unique experience.

So you see, Stern has not changed since 1971. Rather, it has only gotten better! My mother has been telling me about Stern since I was about four feet tall, and her continued devotion

to the college has inspired me even more to attend. The Stern administration has created many new opportunities for the student body that will take us far beyond our mothers. I plan on using all of them to further my college adventures. I hope that my experiences at Stern will be as good, or maybe even better than my mother's.



Ahuva From, SCW '01 and her mother Paula Goldstein From, SCW '71

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The 1980's

Dr. Annette Gnaat Berger, SCW '88

I graduated from Stern College in June 1988. In June

1984, Stern College was not part of my future plans. However, around the halfway mark during my post-high school year in Israel, my plans changed. I felt that I wanted to continue my education in an environment which would allow me to further cultivate my Jewish studies, identity, and social relationships.

I remember dorm life with fond memories. From the all-night study sessions in the hallways to Thursday night madness, there was always something going on. During my years at Brookdale Hall (the only dorm), I lived in the "penthouse," a two bedroom suite, and a dorm counselor's room. While not everyone dormed, for me living at the dorm allowed for continuity between the academic and social elements of my life.

What I remember most about Stern was the opportunity and personal attention given to young, Jewish women enabling them to gain knowledge and experience in whatever field of interest they wished; the opportunity to develop a sense of pride about being an Orthodox Jewish woman in the modern world; the experience to go to a *shiur*, a *shabbaton*, and then study art history and music appreciation. Stern defined a Torah U'Madda approach to life.

The personal attention that permeated the walls of the college was evident everywhere. Students and faculty

members would meet in the hallways and cafeteria to discuss academics. Faculty would advise students as to their career aspirations. For me, a future in the field of psychology was my goal. While I went through the standard requirements for a psychology major, I also found a mentor in Dr. Joshua Bacon. In addition to being a student in many of his classes, Dr. Bacon allowed me to assist him in an ongoing research project. He helped arrange an internship for me, and literally guided and advised me through the graduate school application process. The degree of time and personal attention that he gave me was something valuable, and something that I doubt I would have received in a larger college. To this day, I hold Dr. Bacon in high regard and appreciate all that he has done for me.

After Stern, I continued my education at the Ferkauf Graduate School of Psychology, and in September 1993 I received my Psy.D. Degree in clinical psychology. I spent the next five years working as a psychologist at the South Beach Psychiatric Center in Staten Island, N.Y. During those years, I obtained my New York State license to practice. Currently, I am the psychologist at the Yeshiva of North Jersey, in Bergen County. My life is a wonderful synthesis of all the elements that Stern College taught me. I am married, have two small children and a career, all while living my life as a Torah Jew. Thank you, Stern College, for being a role model, and preparing me for the years ahead.

The 1990's

Shoshana Levine Schechter, SCW '91

It was December of my senior year at Stern. My roommates and I had just watched President Bush on the ten o'clock news vowing again to attack Iraq if they did not pull out of Kuwait by the January 15th deadline, and Saddam Hussein threatening again to bomb Israel as a consequence of U.S. aggression. The newscast ended with pictures of Ben-Gurion Airport flooded with yeshiva students trying to leave the country before the 15th. The situation looked pretty bleak with neither Bush nor Hussein wavering even a little.

When I returned to my room, I had a message on my machine from the Yeshiva College student council vice president. When I called him back he informed me about a call he had received earlier that day from a man in Florida who was upset about the discouraging news from Israel, and felt that Jews pouring out was demoralizing for the rest of the country. He wanted to fund a plane filled with Jews who would arrive in Israel on the dreaded 15th to show the world that in the direst moment Jews do not desert their homeland. With the initial notion and money in hand, he had called upon the students of Yeshiva University to implement this mission. The point of the trip was not only to be present in Israel during this national crisis, but to be learning Torah there, filling up the yeshivot that had been emptying out, thus contributing both physically and spiritually in this moment of need.

Two and a half weeks later, amid a media frenzy worldwide, Operation Torah Shield got off the ground when a plane filled with 400 YU students, faculty members, administration and alumni left from Kennedy Airport, and would be the only plane arriving in Israel on January 15th. As I sat on the plane reflecting over the incredible events that had led up to this momentous flight, I realized the unique quality of the YU student body and institution as a whole. It was not that we, YU students, were so special because we organized the trip. It was that which inspired us to go through this ordeal. It was the communal involvement

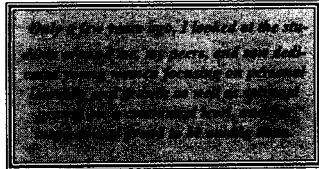
and love for Torah that the YU faculty instills in its students that led to us being called upon to implement this Torah mission. It was that which enabled us to take action with the knowledge we had accumulated. Learning at Stern was never merely an intellectual pursuit, but the prerequisite for being a contributing member of the Jewish community.

This sensitivity towards all members of *Klal Yisrael* was a character-molding trait that I personally felt was strengthened while being a student at Stern. From the nature of the institution and especially the student body, I learned that

there is a community of Jews outside my small world, many of whom are needy in some way. Whether they are persecuted and needing political support, destitute and needing physical support or searching for their roots and needing guidance and education. Whether in the Soviet Union or in Western Australia, on college campuses across the country, or in camps for the handicapped or very ill children, YU students are involved and sensitive to their needs. It is here that the "*Ilmod al menai la'asor* - learn in order to do - is put into action. This sense of community, of not being able to turn away, but taking responsibility, the implementation of the Pirkei Avot phrase, "*be'makom she'ein ish, hish-tadel le'heyot ish*" (in a place where there is not a man, endeavor to be a man.), together with the intense learning needed to take proper action, is what I found so inspiring at Stern, both as a student and now as a faculty member as well.

Only a few years ago, I looked at the students around me, my peers, and saw dedicated young women focusing on personal learning and growth as well as spiritual growth on a communal level, and felt inspired and proud to be among them. And now, as a faculty member in Stern, I look around at my students, proud of their intense commitment to learning and to *Klal Yisrael*. I can only hope that I can impact in a small way on their personal development as a part of their contribution to the *Klal*, as my teachers at Stern impacted me.

Shoshana Schechter teaches Bible at SCW. She was the editor-in-chief of The Observer her senior year at SCW, 1990-91.



Shoshana Levine Schechter, SCW '91

Resident Assistant Application Deadline Approaching

LISA YOUNGER
Staff Writer

It's that time of year again; the snow is falling, and competition is in the air. It is resident assistant (R.A.) and graduate assistant (G.A.) application time. Candidates have until the February 11th deadline to apply.

Students who are busy switching around their schedules, shopping for classes, and feeling cramped for time, are trying to evaluate their chances of acceptance to determine if they should extend the effort to apply.

The process has two main phases: gathering recommendations from previous employers, and participate in a personal interview with Ms. Miriam Gold, Residence Supervisor, Ms. Beth Hait, Coordinator of Student Services, and Mrs. Zeldra Braun, Assistant Dean of Students.

When asked why recommendations are needed, Gold said that they are "to attest to the applicant's administrative abilities, competency, maturity, and ability to work as a team player." The R.A. and G.A. selection process is intended to weed out those who are not creative enough to fulfill the job of mediator, floor programmer, and creator of a cohesive floor community.

While evaluating the appli-

cation and selection processes, some students wonder if the highly calculated procedure is followed consistently in all cases. Some suspect that underlying the competitive system, some form of corruption may exist. Dispelling these fears of favoritism and partiality, Gold said that even past R.A. employees need to re-interview.

All R.A.s and G.A.s were given strict instructions not to comment to the Observer about any aspect of the selection process or their experiences in these capacities.

Resident assistants are required to fulfill a certain number of responsibilities, but they are also given certain incentives as part of their job. In exchange for free housing and a stipend of \$100 per month, R.A.s must be on duty for Shabbat every few weeks, and one weekday shift each week. Whenever university housing is open, an R.A. must be on duty, including holidays and vacations.

While there are 20 R.A.s to share the times when someone must be on duty, there are only three graduate assistants each year. A G.A. must be on duty at all times, in addition to an R.A. The three G.A.s divide the year's *Shabbat* and weekday duties between them. Both R.A.s and G.A.s attend weekly mandatory meetings.

Colloquia Series Initiated at SCW

SARAH CATE
Staff Writer

A new discussion group, involving deans, faculty members and students, met for the first time in December, to discuss a work by Carol Gilligan. Yehudit Robinson, SCW '99, who started the group, said she hopes that it will foster intellectual thinking and increased dialogue at SCW. "I feel like people are so busy here," she said, "and that there isn't enough time to address issues that affect the student body."

Robinson said that currently the group plans to address issues pertaining to women in particular, since participants seemed to enjoy that topic last time. Dr. Karen Bacon, dean of SCW, said that Robinson's topic suggestions are really creative and that she has been "very impressed by her approach to selecting them."

Dean Bacon noted that the last discussion group was great, and that she regretted not having enough time in the discussion period to

address some of the issues that were raised. She said that the discussion group is based on the premise that presumably everyone has read the same text, but the discussion itself does not require any specific background in the area in order to participate.

The next discussion will address a reading from the book titled "The Obsession: Reflections on the Tyranny of Slenderness," by Kim Cherin. It is scheduled for Wednesday, February 10th, during Club Hour.

Several professors were invited to participate in the discussion, and Robinson added that even professors who were not directly invited, were made aware of it. "One of the students who attended the event came at the suggestion of her professor, since she was writing a term paper on the same piece of literature," Robinson said.

"I would like this to be one of the things that I leave to Stern," Robinson concluded. "I really just wanted this to be a forum for students to articulate their desires and ideas."

Student Services Sponsors Spring Orientation

TZIPPY WEISSMAN
Staff Writer

The Midtown Campus welcomed 49 incoming students during an orientation program held on Tuesday, January 19, 1999.

The program began at nine o'clock with residence hall check-in at Brookdale Residence Hall. Resident assistants gave the students their room keys and dorm assignments and directed them to their rooms. "Everything here was really organized," said Malka Mizrahi, SCW '01. "There were a lot of people here to meet us, and everything was planned to help us acclimate quickly."

After the students finished unpacking they went to the school building to continue the orientation process. The first item on the agenda was getting student ID cards made, followed shortly by a brief mandatory safety and security meeting. The undergraduate deans and administrators then invited all new students and their parents to join them for an informal luncheon. Administrators and student leaders attending the luncheon answered many of students and parents' questions.

Judaic studies and math placement examinations and the English composition eval-

uation essay were administered between lunch and registration. Administrators were available to meet with students and help plan their course schedules. These administrators include SCW Deans Karen Bacon and Ethel Oriian, Chairman of the Rebecca Ivry Department of Jewish Studies Rabbi Ephraim Kanarfogel, and Academic Advisors Mrs. Susan Ostreicher and Mrs. Miriam Schechter. Students then registered for their classes from 2-4 p.m.

Following registration, Mrs. Betty Gordon, SCW computer lab coordinator, offered a computer orientation for both parents and students. This orientation included Internet basics, and setting up new e-mail accounts for students.

A 5:30 p.m. dinner offered the "First Time on Campus Students" (FTOCs) a chance to meet informally with student leaders, resident assistants and upper classmen. In addition, Assistant Dean of Students Zeldra Braun and Coordinator of Student Services Beth Hait attended. SSSB President Adina Loberfeld, SSSB '99, TAC President Zemira Baron, SCW '00, and SCWSC Fun Club president Rachel Katz, SCW '00, briefly introduced themselves and volunteered their services.

Tu B'Shevat Seder

January 31, 1999



Photo Credit: Tzippy Weissman
(l-r) Deena Freedland and Sara Berkowitz.



Photo Credit: Tzippy Weissman
(l-r) Rachel Katz and Abigail Sasnowitz



Photo Credit: Tzippy Weissman
Tova Rhein, Secretary of TAC, coordinator of the Tu B'Shevat Seder

Journalist's Memoirs a Good Read

SIMONE ROSENZWEIG
Staff Writer

For anyone interested in international journalism, "Looking for Trouble: One Woman, Six Wars, and a Revolution" by Leslie Cockburn, is the book to read. The book is a compilation of the places Cockburn has visited and the events she has seen while reporting world news for many of the most prominent news organizations in the United States. "Looking For Trouble" is both informative and exciting. Cockburn seems to have gone to the most exciting places and met the most interesting people.

The book became a little tedious at some points where Cockburn reviews the political situations of the places she has traveled to. Since each chapter focuses on a different country and political situation, these technical background explanations are common. Once she gets beyond the background, however, the stories are gripping.

Cockburn has met with ruthless dictators, drug lords and top generals. She has traveled to countries in the midst of war and risked her life multiple times. All these incidents are vividly recounted in "Looking for Trouble." One chapter that struck me as particularly good is "The Island of Siam" in which she relates her wedding and introduction to CBS 60 Minutes

staff. It stands out as more humorous and less technical than many of the other segments.

Since each chapter is about an independent news event covered by Ms. Cockburn, there are no strong thematic connections between them. "Looking for Trouble" is easy to put down and then pick up at any time without losing flow of the story. This makes it an ideal book for midterms or finals, when most of us don't have time to get too absorbed in outside reading.

BOOK REVIEW

At times Ms. Cockburn comes across as arrogant, and sometimes too technical, but for the most part "Looking for Trouble" is an enjoyable book that makes journalism look like an excellent field to go into, full of drama and excitement, albeit with a lot of hard work.

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29th Street Shul's Rabbi Kleiman Perseveres Despite Age, Illness

EILEEN CRUDOW
News Editor

Several months ago Rabbi Sidney Kleiman, Senior Rabbi of Congregation Iahmad Torah Adereth El, suffered a minor stroke and is now recovering at a rehabilitation center in New Jersey.

Golda, the synagogue's receptionist for the past nine years, said that Rabbi Kleiman is expected to return within the next week, possibly to begin working. She described Kleiman as very smart and well educated, and added, "I love him. We all miss him here."

Kleiman has the longest active tenure of service in the same synagogue of any living rabbi. That

synagogue, Congregation Adereth El, better known as the 29th Street Synagogue, is the oldest synagogue in New York City existing in one location. First Vice President Jack Lazarus explained that the city has not granted the synagogue this official landmark status because it has renovated its facade in the past.

Kleiman became rabbi of Congregation Adereth El in 1939. He received *semicha* from

Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS) after having studied at City College, Columbia University and Yeshiva University, from which he received his B.S. in 1935. He joined several organizations, including the Rabbinical Council of America, and acts as chaplain at Belvue Hospital. Kleiman has two sons and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. His younger son heads a London yeshiva.

According to Lazarus, Kleiman is a man of small stature who has had great impact on many people over his 60 years as senior rabbi, and they hope he will return to act as rabbi emeritus.

In the journal commemorating the synagogue's 136th anniversary, Yeshiva University President Norman Lamm wrote in honor of Kleiman:

"He is a distinguished and revered rabbi, whom I have known since my pulpit rabbinic career began in Manhattan over three and a half decades ago. It was he who taught and preached traditional Orthodox Judaism at a time when it was neither in vogue nor fashionable...He has with kindness and smile also made numerous Stern College Women feel at home at Adereth El continuously, Shabbat after Shabbat, for many, many years. Rabbi Kleiman has with undiminished devotion been loyal to his alma mater and has provided educational, religious, and social programming, which have impacted Jews from many diverse backgrounds."

As the most senior rabbinic

YU alumnus currently serving a congregation, Kleiman has made a positive impression on many people in addition to Rabbi Lamm. The plaques on the wall thanking the synagogue for its generous contributions to organizations such as the Israel Bond Campaign and Americans for Hagana are only one indication.

"Being a rabbi isn't easy," Golda explained, "he has to please many people." She told how Kleiman fought to keep the synagogue Orthodox although there are few Orthodox Jews in the local area. "Women wanted to sit downstairs with the men, they would say they couldn't walk up the stairs," she said. "He said if they could walk here, they could walk up the stairs. He was fighting all his life for Orthodoxy."

Golda also described times

geared toward both singles and families. A once vibrant synagogue, Adereth El faces the constant challenge of expanding on its small number of local, young Orthodox Jews. The rabbis are trying to create a revival through a multitude of programs to help the synagogue grow and build a community.

One such program is presenting the synagogue as a meeting place for participants in the "Jewish Quality Singles" website. JQS is the first Jewish singles website that will offer participants the opportunity to meet one another in a Jewish location. The synagogue also offers Tuesday night learning programs which many SCW and YC students participate in. "Higher Wisdom" is a learning program for women, and the one-on-one Aish HaTorah Learning



Rabbi Sidney Kleiman, center, is the senior rabbi at the 29th Street Shul.

when the synagogue was so cold that people would refuse to attend *mincha*. "He would go out and get coal so there could be *mincha*," she said. She explained that during the summer months, many congregants would be away in Florida, causing the synagogue difficulty forming a morning *minyan*. "He'd come even at five or six in the morning so we could have a seven o'clock *minyan* - he'd call all his friends to come."

She recalled Kleiman's pride in telling the story of his arrest after having organized a march to a Washington D.C. embassy in order to fight for Russian Jews.

Assistant Rabbi Gideon Shloush joined the synagogue nearly three years ago. "Rabbi Shloush is a young rabbi so he will bring more young people in, make them feel welcome," Golda said. Shloush explained that many people who pray at the synagogue are not Orthodox. "We want to be easily approachable," he said. "It is important that people feel comfortable praying here regardless of their religious background."

Shloush explained that Kleiman felt very strongly that the synagogue must remain Orthodox and not institute mixed seating or microphones to amplify the Shabbat services. "He is very proud that he made it Orthodox 365 days a year," he said, and added that several members have become Orthodox through their involvement in the synagogue.

According to Shloush, Adereth El has approximately 100 member families and an additional 1,000 families on its mailing list. He explained that the synagogue is

One SCW junior who often attends Shabbat services at Adereth El said that she and her classmates very much enjoy Kleiman's speeches. She said that the synagogue always welcomes the SCW students although it can be difficult to host many non-members, and when the college does not have a Shabbat *minyan*, students attend services there. She described one student mentioning that she felt flattered when she met Kleiman outside of the synagogue context, and he recognized her and approached her to say hello.

Rabbi Steven Dworkin, the executive vice president of the RCA, has known Kleiman since Dworkin entered the rabbinate. He said that Rabbi Kleiman is a very special man with a wonderful sense of humor. "I've never seen a man his age with such dogged determination and spirit," he remarked. "He had bypass surgery a few years ago and that didn't stop him." He recalled that Kleiman would attend all RCA events, even taking a bus to Monsey and a train to Long Island in order to attend meetings. "He continues to be a part of everything," he said.

He explained that Kleiman received a "real thrill" from having SCW students attend his synagogue, and that Kleiman looked forward to their attendance. Dworkin was concerned about Kleiman's condition before he visited Kleiman at the Kessler Institute. "It was on a Friday afternoon," he said, "He told me a *d'var Torah*."

Program is open to both men and women. The synagogue's other offerings include *shabbatonim*, Hebrew courses and dance classes for women.

High Schools

continued from page 1

and the *masmichm* track for *gemara* give students at MSTA an edge no other schools can offer, he said. "If YU wanted to make MTA better than other schools, they should let us stay here [on the Main Campus] and work on ways to improve the school educationally" he suggested.

Rabbi Michael Taubes, MSTA's principal, said that he was not, and is not being consulted at any time during the negotiating process. "I only know what I hear," he said.

Like Hirschhorn, Rabbi Taubes said that he sees no reason why the status quo should be altered at this time. "Our high school is doing very well now," he said. Rabbi Taubes noted that since his arrival as principal at MSTA four years ago, he has worked to raise the admissions standards of the school. Years ago, said Rabbi Taubes, MSTA had a reputation that the school "will take anyone." In conjunction with university administration, Rabbi Taubes instituted more rigorous standards, "knowing that their would be lower numbers" in each class.

These numbers are precisely what university administration cite as the official reason for the high school negotiations. Enrollment in both Central and MSTA has "decreased significantly over the past several years," said Rosen. On the Main Campus, where the number of Yeshiva College students increased, a space problem arose, "focusing the tension on MTA," said Rosen.

MSTA has received 130 applications for the 1999-2000 freshman class, down from last year. Rabbi Taubes attributed the decline in applicants to floating rumors concerning the school's future "casting doubt in the mind of parents." "There is yet to see how much damage has been done," he added.

Rosen noted that the proliferation of Modern Orthodox schools in New Jersey and Long Island have also contributed to the decline in enrollment for both MSTA and Central. In effect, he said, YU has become "a victim of its own success."

Allegations that keeping MSTA and Central under university auspices was not financially wise, could not be confirmed. Rabbi Taubes pointed out that if finances do play a part in the negotiations, however, the fault lies with the University's financial managers, not the high schools. "Maybe the money is not being handled so well," he suggested. Dr. Sheldon Socol, a YU board member involved in both university finances and the high school negotiations could not be reached for comment.

YU founded both MSTA and Central high schools over 50 years ago and has controlled them since through the RIETS branch of the university. Giber said that university President Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm will make a final decision on the high schools' future by February 10, 1999.

Astronomer to Speak at SCW

On a personal survey of Copernicus' great book "De revolutionibus" earned him the Polish government's Order of Merit in 1981 and more recently an asteroid has been named in his honor.

His research interests range from the recomputation of an ancient Babylonian mathematical table to the interpretation of stellar spectra. Professor Gingerich is co-author of two successive standard models for the solar atmosphere, the first to take into account rocket and satellite observations of the sun. The second of these received over 500 literature citations. Also, he has written popular articles in several encyclopedias and journals. He was an advisor for "Cosmic Voyage," the latest Imax film at the National Air and Space Museum, and has given the George Darwin Lecture, the most prestigious lecture of the Royal Astronomical Society.

Professor Gingerich's lecture is made possible by a grant from the American Scientific Affiliation and is incorporated into the Science and Religion course taught by Dr. David Shatz, Professor of Philosophy, at SCW.

A leading authority on the 17th century German astronomer Johannes Kepler and on Nicholas Copernicus, the 16th century cosmologist who proposed the heliocentric system, Professor Gingerich has written over 400 technical or educational articles and reviews. His

President, SCWSC '98-'99

Shandy Kahn

Welcome Back, hope you all had a nice vacation, and a special welcome to all the new students.

In *Parshas Nitro*, we get the *Aseret Hadibrot*. That is the moment of a revelation where G-d comes down and speaks to *B'nei Yisroel*. Right after the *Aseret Hadibrot*, Hashem talks to Moshe about the laws that are going to govern the Jewish people from that day forward. The next week's *Parsha, Mishpatim*, begins with "These are the laws..." First of these new laws is about how we treat a Jewish slave. Why of all possible laws of the Torah is this the first *halacha*? So, our *Rishonim* talk about how important it is to know where we came from, even though we were a brand new strong nation with the help of Hashem, and had defeated the

most powerful empires on this planet. We still must remember the way we felt when we were abused as slaves, and therefore must not treat our slaves, as the *pasuk* says "Ki tov lo imach..." They should eat what we eat, do the kind of work we would do, and be treated with *Kavod Habrios*, the respect we would want from our Master in heaven to treat us. The truth is, our freedom lies with being servants of Hashem. In following with this *halacha*, I would like to thank those young women who helped give you, the Student Body, a great semester by planning fun and enjoyable events last semester.

It was great to see so many of you at the "Hoedown"-hats off to all those who came, and a *Yasher Koach* to the Fun Club of SCWSC, and Office of Student Services

for their help in coordinating this event. We have many great events planned for this semester. There are many great ways for students to be involved in on-campus activities this semester. Speak to your student leaders, and keep your eyes focused on the bulletin boards. If anyone has something to discuss or ideas to present, you can now contact any SCWSC Board member at SCWSC@ymail.yu.edu. Mark your calendar for these events in February.

Feb 11- Senior Class Rockin' Bowling. Rosh Chodesh Adar Chagigah. Feb 17- Sophomore 60's Night.

I hope that everyone who signed up for the Metropolitan Experience has a great time going to see the sights of the city and bonding with their teachers.

Since Shavuot this year falls dur-

ing finally, we are planning a learning program for those who would like to stay in school. We hope this puts you at ease. There will be a sign up sheet later in the semester for those who are interested.

Purim is less than a month away and besides the Chagigah, the Senior class will be providing *shalach manot* to send to your friends here at Stern College.

Don't forget to get INVOLVED, it's not too late, make a contribution to your school and help make a difference. As always you can reach me at anytime, except from 6 a.m. - 7 a.m., when I'm catching a nap.

"Mi Sh'Sichnas Adar Marbin B'Sincha"

Keep Smiling

President, TAC '98-'99

Zemira Baron

AAAAAAGG GGGGGHHH. HHHH!!!!!! Eleven kids!! Why me? What did I ever do to deserve such treatment? I volunteer last-minute to help at a Shabbaton and this is what they do to thank me??? Stick me in a house with 11 pipsqueaks!!! Why not just put me under a guillotine - at least then the torture would be over, nice and quick.

Okay, so I was exaggerating a little. It wouldn't be that bad - the kids that were quickly surrounding me, claiming to be mine for the weekend, were pretty cute - especially the one who began whining that she absolutely, under no circumstances, would stay in the same house as her cousin. The girl on Ritalin looked like she'd be a lot of fun, too. We were off to a great start, as we piled into a van, heading off to our temporary home. We pulled up to a small brick house and were met by a...DOG and just my luck, one of my charges had a severe case of canine-phobia

so she refused to enter the house! Now... to the point of this story.

Let me introduce you to our hosts, the biggest *baalei chesed* I've ever met. To start with, what kind of people actually invite 11 shrieking, giggly eleven-year olds into their home? It wasn't like they had all this extra room either - we literally ousted their 3 daughters from their room.

That Friday afternoon, instead of preparing for Shabbos, they spent hours on the phone trying to find a dog-free house for the petrified girl. When I asked to help, they firmly informed me that my job was to simply sit down, relax, and have a donut. That night, the girls slept in the basement, directly next door to the parents. They were up to all hours of the night, playing truth or dare and consequently, the father was up as well. But as he later quipped with a smile, "As long as my wife was able to sleep through it, why not let the girls have a little fun? What's one night of sleep?" On *Motzei Shabbos*, they combed the neighborhood streets in their minivan, hoping to find us on our way

home so that they could give us a ride. And on the way back to shul for the night activity, we were handed their phone number and a quarter with the request to call at any time to be picked up. What selfless *tzadikim!!!*

But what impressed me the most, was the way this family did everything in such a matter-of-fact way, that most of the time, I didn't even realize how much they were going out of their way for us. And these *middot* were reflected so beautifully in their children. Their kids waited on us, eagerly busying themselves finding pillows, blankets, and nosh for the girls. They became the advisors for the girls, taking care of their every little need. They entertained us until the wee hours of the night, never letting us know that the real reason why they weren't going to sleep was because we were all partying in the living room, their temporary quarters for the night. Even the youngest, a seven year old girl, sat all Friday afternoon with the dog-fearing girl, trying to comfort her in any way she could. One of my girls was a little

mentally disabled, but this didn't phase them one bit - they treated her with the utmost respect, taking extra care to help her with any special needs.

We are all aware of the mitzva of *hachnasat orchim* and practice it to some extent. But we often forget, what it really means to be *machsin* and *oreich* - to take in total strangers and make them feel completely comfortable, to give up your bed, your sleep, your Shabbos for their sake, to do anything to make sure they don't realize how much you've sacrificed. How many of us can claim to be able to do all that?

On that note, the next time you're looking for a Shabbos guest, instead of inviting over one of your best friends, why not choose the out-of-towner from your English class, the one you don't know so well, but who maybe really needs a place to stay? Give it a shot - you may just earn yourself a new friend!

Tizku l'Mitzvot!

President, SSSBSC '98-'99

Adina Loberfeld

I would like to welcome everyone back from what I hope was a very relaxing and enjoyable vacation. I would also like to welcome those of you who are new to Stern and Sy Syms. This semester started off with a very successful Sy Syms Shabbaton. There are many other events that are coming up in

the near future. On February 10, we will be going to a Knicks game. Tickets will be on sale soon.

Another program that we are sponsoring is with Sprint - we will be giving out free phone cards. Look for signs that will tell you the information you need

to know about obtaining these cards. This program will be during the week of February 8th. It is going to be a very exciting event, and I hope you participate.

This year's annual Sy Syms dinner is fast approaching. The dinner will be held on Monday March 22 and is open to all Sy Syms and Stern College students. It

is an opportunity for you to meet with representatives of many companies from various industries. I encourage you to attend, so look in your mailboxes for the invitations and sign up.

Have a great semester!

The Funny Papers

By: Leah Lubetski and Elana Davis

Answers on page 17

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
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ACROSS

- Dressing gown
- Swamp
- ___ Jones
- Opera solo
- Straightens
- Yalie
- Retired comic strip
- Magazines
- Ax
- Hee ___
- La. city
- Advanced degree
- ___ Crown
- Makes calls
- Russian CIA
- AOL quick chat
- Trellised
- Major artery
- Whole
- From a distance
- Native American
- Dined
- Puppy sound
- Chasm
- Skin
- Compute
- Drunkard
- Jacob's brother
- Death notice
- Thurs. night show
- First stock offering
- Sunbathe
- Retired comic strip
- G.B.
- Fable author
- Done
- "Broken" motel sign
- Choose
- Broker's job site

DOWN

- Ethnicity
- Aloud
- Cartoonist of 17 across
- Roof edge
- Prohibit
- ___ Peanut butter sand wiches"
- Opposite of yang
- ___ Nash
- Disconnect
- IOUs
- Immigrant in Israel
- Its capital is Mad.
- Spanish sun
- Around
- Airhead
- An Ocean
- Little
- Epic
- Inferno's author
- Pharmaceutical approver
- Cartoonist of 63 across
- Cousin ___
- ___ West
- Prof's aide
- Slippery
- Oxidize
- Courtenage
- Beater
- Intercom
- Sava
- Crowd
- Giant
- An article
- ___ of March
- French father
- Cham after S
- Alias
- Beginning for teric and phagus
- Dandy
- Likely
- Climbing vine

Life on the Edge: A Visit to the Grand Canyon

SARA KOSTANT

Associate Features Editor

I inched toward the edge of the cliff and started to peep over, hoping to get a better view of the sheer drop below me without experiencing it firsthand. My father's firm hands on my shoulders halted my foolhardy plan. "Don't worry, Dad," I joked, "I'm not that upset about finals!"

The cliff episode occurred on Day Two of my trip to Arizona with my father. A few weeks earlier, I had stared at the ten empty vacation days in my calendar, wishing I could fill them with an exciting activity. I needed a drastic change in scenery; in other words, I needed to get as close to nature as possible. I needed to see exotic animal and plant life -- or at least a tree or two. Of course, I immediately thought of visiting one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World, which would provide me with all of the awe and splendor of the environment I could ever want. The Grand Canyon just so happens to be a member of this club, and is also a convenient eight hour drive from my home in Los Angeles. I felt that the Grand Canyon was something I should see at least once in my lifetime, and I was in the mood for a road trip. I guess my father was too, because within 24 hours of my suggesting the idea for this excursion, my father had mapped out an itinerary and made hotel reservations in a variety of Motel 6's across the Southwest. We were on our way.

Early on the morning of January 17, my father and I left the urban sprawl of L.A. behind and headed eastward into the desert. The highway narrowed to only two lanes. Ours was one of only a few vehicles on the road, which stretched ahead as far as I could see. The desert on either side of us was bare, and dotted occasionally with Joshua trees, which have short, gnarled trunks topped with clusters of spiny leaves. Some of these trees are hundreds, and even thousands of years old.

Mountain ranges loomed on the horizon. As I felt the sun beat down on my face, my memories of a chilly Manhattan began to slowly fade away.

My father and I stopped for lunch in Needles, California, right by the Arizona border. Small towns that are far from urban areas tend to have colorful names. I discovered: Needles, Bullhead City, Coachella.

We ate our turkey sandwiches, lovingly packed by my mother, and listened to the Colorado River lap against the

shore. As my ears became used to the lack of city noises, I began to pick up sounds that I had not heard in recent memory: birds twittering, water trickling, leaves rustling in the wind, and unidentified wildlife scampering through the nearby brush.

Back on the road again, we crossed into Arizona. I was surprised to see so many hitchhikers, a phenomenon I had been warned about in grade school ("Never take rides from strangers! Never give rides to people you don't know!"). I wondered if the hitchhikers thought of the dangers they might encounter, or if they just brushed them off, telling themselves that nothing would happen to them. Maybe they were desperate. Most of them seemed about my age, and I wondered why they were on the road by themselves, so young.

Just as the sun was setting, we rolled into Williams, Arizona, which has a population equal to that of a city block in

Manhattan. A desert sunset is a natural wonder everyone should experience. Reds, purples and oranges lit up the western horizon, against a backdrop of distant mountains. The colors stayed long after the sun had dipped below the horizon. The transition from day to night is so routine for us, and actually seeing it occur helped me appreciate it more.

We stopped at a local mini-market (Williams is not large enough to support a supermarket) to load up on snacks, and I was struck by the warmth of the salesperson. This friendliness was repeated when we checked into our hotel. These people don't see new faces that often, I thought, and respond to meeting people with enthusiasm. Thus, the converse must be true: Take a city where there are millions of people jostling each other on the sidewalks each day, and the famous Manhattan personality comes into

perspective.

My father and I were up early the next morning for the two-hour train ride to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. There, our tour guide filled us in on all of the geographical facts of the Canyon. The gorges in the Canyon were formed by earthquake, flooding, or both, depending on the geologist you talk to. The Grand Canyon is 277 miles long from end to end,

with its North Rim close to the Utah border, and its deepest gorge as deep as five Empire State Buildings piled one on top of the other. The Grand Canyon is one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World, which also include Victoria Falls in Africa and the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. The New York City subway system is not included in this list.

After listening to our guide's monologue, I drifted away from our group to do a little bit of exploring on my own, which resulted in the cliff adventure described above.

Standing near the edge of the Grand Canyon gave me the impression that I was about to be swallowed up. The depth of the Canyon is difficult to describe, because it is deeper than anything I have ever experienced. Looking down made my heart flutter. I thought the Canyon looked like someone had taken a giant shovel and scraped it through the ground in a slightly zigzagged line. There are also small canyons that lead out of the main one. The plateaus of the Canyon stretched out as far as I could see. The sun hit the walls of the Canyon, making the yellowish rock seem even brighter. I took a couple of rolls of film that day, but I know that squeezing a mile-wide view onto a postcard-size paper will diminish the impact.

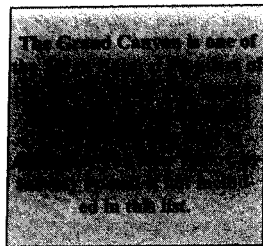
Our tour guide drove us to a few more scenic areas along the rim, each

more spectacular than the previous one. He "entertained" us on the way with stories of the mishaps hikers had encountered in the Canyon. "This year was a bad year-- we lost 19," he said somberly, "because people were STUPID this year, going places they shouldn't." My father looked at me pointedly. "Usually we lose only (only?) eight or nine," he said. This tour guide had worked in the Grand Canyon National Park for six years as a bus driver, he said, earning him the privilege of resting in its local cemetery when his time would come. He seemed very proud of this accomplishment.

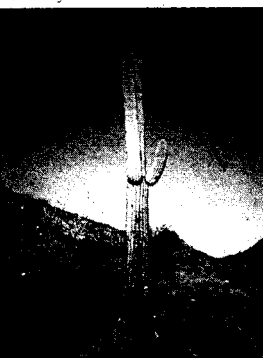
The Grand Canyon was not the only dramatic scenery I would see on my Arizona. On our way to Prescott, Arizona, my father and I drove on a narrow mountain road with sheer cliffs and drops on either side of our car. We passed through pine forests with streams, and as for wildlife, I saw an American bald eagle gliding above me when we were parked at a rest stop along the highway. We drove to Sedona, which is called "Red Rock Country" for its famous red sand and tall formations of red stone. At one point along our drive, I asked my father to pull over for a minute so I could look at the stars. He turned off the headlights of our car, and everything was plunged into darkness. I looked up at the sky and marveled at the millions of stars I had never known existed. They were always blocked out by the city lights of either Los Angeles or New York.

After three days of driving through unpopulated areas and small towns, we arrived in Phoenix, the capitol of Arizona and a large city by any standards. I actually felt relieved to return to "civilization." I realized that I had missed the bustling aspect of a metropolis, the people, buildings, and cars. I guess it's what I'm used to. Not that I don't love nature any less. But I couldn't imagine ever living in an isolated setting, especially without a Jewish community.

During all of the days my father and I had been on the road, we had traveled in areas barren of any Jewish presence. I began looking forward to Phoenix, because I knew that it's community, however small, would make me feel at home. I currently live in the largest Jewish population center in the world, so Jews are an ingrained part of my background. When they were missing, I felt lonely. Being away from New York gave me an opportunity to appreciate the community that I take for granted. But I'm still ready for my next road trip.



Sara Kostant visits Arizona



Sara Kostant visits Arizona

Wolf

continued from page 1

our salaries are the highest scale, but they're probably not the lowest either. I'd love to see the staff wages go up but my hands are tied." He explained that YU tries to pay a median of the pay range for people doing comparable work at other universities. However, it is not always possible to compare positions and university administration jobs generally do not pay well.

Davis explained that the position of Assistant Registrar is vacant, but the University plans to place advertisements in newspapers soon as part of an active search to fill the position. Davis added that he will spend more time on the Midtown Campus until that occurs. He said that his office is aware of students' needs for junior and senior checks, and will find a way to provide them. Possible solutions include pulling staff from other tasks, partially automating the system or streamlining requirement checks for the various majors. "I'd like to reassure students that the office will run smoothly and students won't be disadvantaged," said Davis.

Bacon said that she misses Wolf, and that Wolf's parting words to her were that they will stay in touch. Bacon said she was extremely surprised by Wolf's resignation, having assumed that she was a "lifer." She added that Wolf's job was difficult because it combined a high level of responsibility with little authority. For example, a registrar is unable to enter a student into a closed course. In addition, the position is difficult because it requires a great deal of interpersonal contact. Every student's situation is slightly different and emotions often run high. Bacon said someone in Wolf's position might require a lot of money in order to feel satisfied that she was being paid enough for her work.

"If she [Wolf] requested more money, and it was not a mistake that she was not responded to, it was inappropriate," said Bacon, comparing this situation to a dysfunctional family in which a member asks a question only to be ignored. She added that while YU has a communications problem, they ought to have fewer problems keeping staff happy because YU has high moral standards, higher than those of most institutions. Bacon stressed the importance of recognizing that people

are of equal value.

Mrs. Ruth Glick, whose position is termed "principal registrarial clerk seven" due to union vagaries, said she had many positive things to say about Wolf, including that "her 12 years here speak for themselves." She explained that Wolf's leaving is a hardship because she was good at her job, and that they had a wonderful relationship on both the personal and professional levels. Having worked with six assistant registrars, she said that she had the best relationship with Wolf. "There are workers and there are managers," she said. "She was a working registrar."

Glick added, however, that nobody is indispensable. While she does not perform junior or senior checks, she said that Davis will ensure that they are available although possibly not for a few weeks. She confirmed that the staff receives low pay, possibly not enough to live on, and that Wolf requested an increased salary at least twice in the past two years and did not receive a response. Glick said she stays in her position despite the low pay because of her strong belief that young Jewish women should get an education in an institution such as YU. She

said she feels gratified when students are accepted into graduate programs.

Glick explained that she arrives at work early each day, including Fridays, skips her breaks although she is entitled to them and will work on Sundays over the next few weeks in order to ensure that transcripts are sent out and grades are entered. She said that delays in students' grades appearing on GetGrades, the Website and automated phone service for retrieving grades, was due to professors waiting until after Intercession to hand in grades. In addition, once SCW grades are entered into the YU computer, a member of the Main Campus Office of the Registrar must enter them into GetGrades, but this person has too many tasks to consistently enter these grades.

"Students won't suffer from all this [Wolf's resignation]," Glick said. Students were surprised, however, by Wolf's resignation. Yehudit Robinson, SCW '99, said that she had no difficulty obtaining an appointment with Wolf earlier in the year, and that she was very helpful when they met. "I spoke with her last week," she added, "and then I called again and was told she resigned."

VIEWS

TURN

Kochava Sujnow

Searching for G-d at Summer Camp

I had a terrifying experience this summer.

I ran a theater unit at a camp this summer, where the children were Jewish, yet thoroughly assimilated. Many of us have read or heard statistics about the rate of assimilation in the United States. Most of us at one point have heard the statement, "The rate of intermarriage in the U.S. is 52% and rising." But statistics such as these did not make an impression on me until one bright sunny morning at the New Country Day Camp.

I was in charge of 30-50 kids each week, and together we'd stage a production to be performed for the whole camp. Because I had a different group of kids each week, I would play several "ice breaker" games with them to enable them to get to know each other on some level. One such game was called "Apply/Doesn't Apply." I would read off a statement, and if the statement applied to a child, they'd stand up, and if it didn't, they'd remain seated. So that when I would ask questions such as "I am an only child," or "I sing in the shower," those who identified with the statement got up, and those who didn't, remained seated.

One day I added the following question to my list and said, "I know what the word kosher means."

Not a single child stood up. I had 30 kids in my unit that week.

Outside, where we were sitting, there was a heat wave going on. I was chilled to the bone.

I knew that some of the kids attended Hebrew school and was sure they'd at least have a general understanding of the word. So I prodded them and said, "Come on. Not a single one of you knows what the word kosher means?"

One child's face suddenly lit up and she said, "Oh yeah! Now I remember, it means you have to be a vegetarian, and you eat things like tofu."

Another child offered, "No, no. It's when you can't eat yeast on Passover!" This, I thought was pretty clever until a third child yelled out, "No! Eating kosher food means eating foods like latkes on Purim!"

30 children. Not a single one of

them knew what the word kosher meant.

I set out to dispel their misconceptions and explained the term to them.

Aside from my overt job that summer as a drama director, I had two personal, covert goals. I knew that for many years from now I would probably have been the only observant Orthodox person they would come into contact with and get to know on a personal level. I wanted them to remember, twenty years down the line, that Orthodox people are not freaks - a notion which many of them had. They knew well that I was Orthodox and observant. ("Why do you always wear skirts? How come you don't go swimming with us?") I knew that one day down the line, when they would seriously be facing issues of Jewish identity, they'd think "Orthodox people? Sure, I remember an Orthodox person, she was normal, she sang all our Spice Girls songs with us." (My campers loved the Spice Girls. I was forced to memorize their lyrics overnight!) Many of my campers had confessed to me that they had never known that observant people can be "cool like you."

My second "goal," which I hadn't actually planned on, but was pleased with nonetheless, was that I wanted these children to have a relationship with G-d.

The running joke at the camp had been the walkie-talkies the unit heads had to wear to allow for quick communication on the huge camp grounds which were situated in a forest. My walkie-talkie would serve a double function as my means of communicating with G-d in camp. (1-800 G-d, do you hear me? Can you please make the lunches arrive, my campers are hungry." or "G-d, do you copy? Can you please make the earthworms stop attacking us?") My campers thought this was funny and laughed. But through osmosis they picked up a very important lesson. The fact that my goal had materialized became apparent to me one afternoon when I was in the locker room, and one camper who was feeling very ill slowly walked over, bent down to my walkie-talkie and quietly said, "1-800 G-d. I'm really feeling sick today, can you please make me feel better?"



TURN

Aviva Laufer, news editor

Examining the Self

Ok, try this. Take a few seconds; state your name and an aspect of yourself that makes you unique... What'd you come up with? (No, this isn't a dating game, or a magazine quiz). Try articulating your answer.

The other day, one of my English literature classes began with us going around the room and introducing ourselves in a similar way. I drew a total blank. If I've always considered myself a unique individual, then why couldn't I just think of a few words to express why? As challenging as it was, it got me thinking.

Defining your personality is no easy task. Saying something about yourself to a classroom of students isn't necessarily comparable to defining your personality, but when considering what makes you unique, it's likely that you'll feel propelled to consider why.

What I came to realize though, is that defining yourself isn't really constructive at all. Labels, like stereotypes, tend to be stifling. It's important to get a handle on what makes you who you are; your strengths and weaknesses, and what aspects

of yourself you pride yourself most in; doing so yields confidence and humility. Most importantly though, it paves the way for growth.

Rabbi Yissachar Frand once stated the following. Life is like a downward moving escalator. If you attempt to stand still, you will inevitably fall. In order to remain at your status quo, you have to persistently exert effort to resist the gravitating current. Moving upward would require not only perpetual movement, but extraordinary efforts to take great strides forward.

Now, instead of coming up with a few words to capture a unique element of your personality, look inside yourself and...and nothing. Just think. It may be rewarding to come up with a definition or method of articulation for it all. In doing so, however, we run the risk of setting too comfortably in a particular crevice of what could potentially result in stagnation. While performing introspection, pace your steps forward, muster your energy, and when the time is right, jump!

Answers to crossword from Page 15

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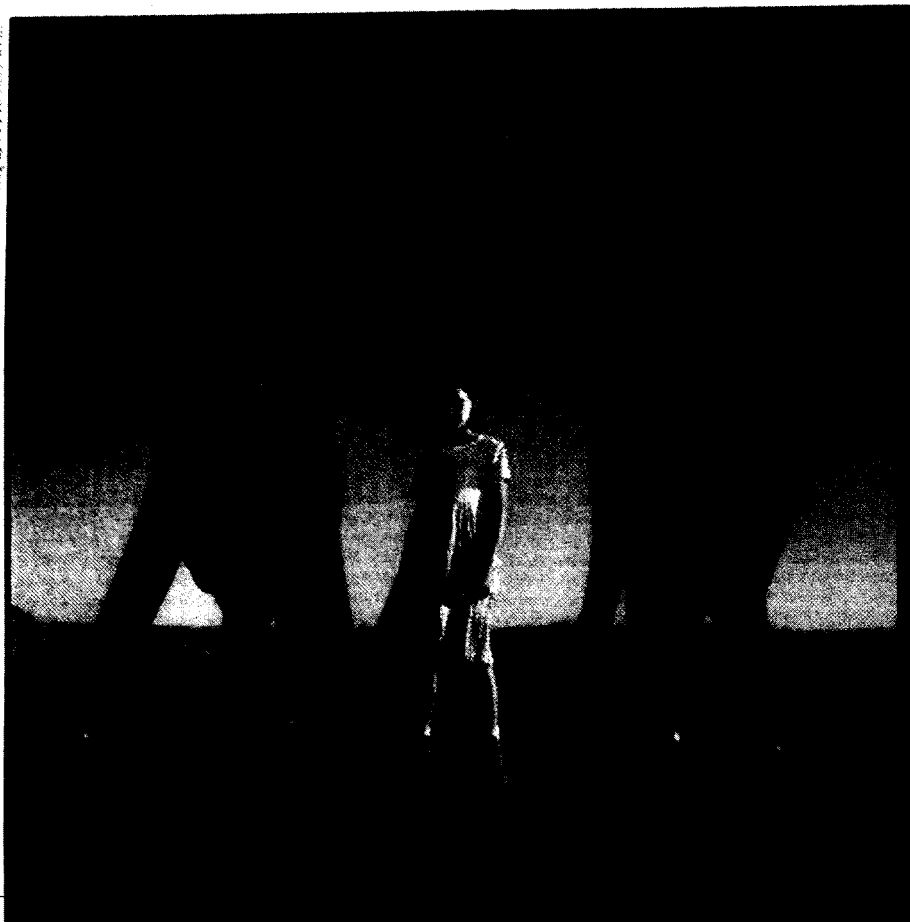
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ARTS

Life is Beautiful: The Holocaust with Gentle Humor

DASSI ZEIDEL
Cultural Arts Editor

Life is like a fable; it is fraught with both beauty and sorrow. This is the premise of Roberto Benigni's acclaimed film *Life is Beautiful* (*La Vita E Bella*).

Set in Italy in 1939, the story centers on Guido (played by Benigni himself), and idealist with childlike charisma who falls in love with a schoolteacher named Dora (played by his real-life wife, Nicoletta Braschi). The only thing standing in his way is Dora's Fascist fiancé, who has denied Guido permission to open a bookshop. Guido's face lights up every time he sees his beloved, whom he calls "Princess," and pursues her with unabashed and delightful enthusiasm.

After many humorous encounters, the Chaplain-esque Guido finally marries his Princess and the couple has a child named Giosue. Aside from the growing hostility of the war, the family is happy. Guido has the bookshop he always dreamed of and he happily rides down winding cobblestone streets on his bicycle with Giosue and Dora. Giosue notices signs on shop doors warning, "Jews and dogs not allowed," but when he questions his father, Guido makes a game of it. This tactic comes in handy when Guido and his son are deported to a concentration camp (which one is not important), and out of a deep sense of love and loyalty, Dora follows.

Guido shields his son from the horrors around them by explaining their situation as a game. He encourages Giosue by telling him whoever wins 1,000 points, earned by being good, will win a brand new tank, a prize his son desperately covets. Guido also manages to serenade his wife with the music from the opera they went to the night he began to win her over.

The Holocaust is an ironic subject for a comedy, but Benigni's talent as a screenwriter, actor and director gives the film a poignant feel. As one of Italy's foremost comedians, Benigni shines in the film; his wit is unsurpassable and he manages to make clean humor appealing in the wake of the usual fare (remember *There's Something About Mary?*). Guido woos Dora by dressing up as a Roman official and prancing around in front of a room full of school children, demonstrating what a member of the "superior race" looks like. This is especially amusing, given that Benigni looks like the antithesis of your typical heartthrob. It is his straggly thinning hair, his big nose and goofy smile, however, that make him so loveable.

Benigni's film is ultimately about the sacrifices parents make for their children and the deep love a father has for his son. Even in the mouth of the enemy, Guido is able to protect his child and brush off Giosue's suspicions so that he never learns the real reason they are living in a barracks, separated from Dora.

Many factors in the film are not



Photo Credit: Sergio Strizzi, Miramax films

Giorgio Cantarini (front left) and Nicoletta Braschi (right) with Roberto Benigni in Roberto Benigni's LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL (LA VITA E BELLA)

historically accurate, but are justified by poetic license. The labor camp does not show the full extent of the cruelties carried out by the Nazis, but the film is not about human suffering, but rather the beauty that life brings even in the most dire circumstances.

The cadences of spoken Italian set against the occasional brusque German commands make the film beautiful to listen to. In Italian with English subtitles, *Life is Beautiful* is currently showing in select theaters. One of the best films of the

year, it is the winner of the Grand Jury Prize at the 1998 Cannes Film Festival, the Best Jewish Experience Award at this year's Jerusalem International Film Festival, as well as the recipient of eight David di Donatello Awards (the Italian Oscars) including Best Picture, Best Actor, Best Director and Best Screenplay. If Oscar buzz is any indication, *Life is Beautiful* could become the first film since 1971's *The Emigrants* to win nominations for Best Picture and Best Foreign Language Film.

Restaurant Review: Madras Mahal

ILANA KASTEN AND SARAH CATE
Staff Writers

Getting tired of hot poppers, Jerusalem II Pizza, deep-fat fried chicken, Mom's overpriced bagels and the constant arguing with the manager at Café 1 2 3? So were we. That's why we decided to venture the block and a half from Schottenstein to Madras Mahal. We figured that Indian cuisine is as different as you could get, without actually having to move.

Even though the waiters made us glad we came in a group, and it took more time than anyone needs to cook a couple of potatoes, we absolutely loved it. We ordered three dishes and a bread; the bread is called *Alu Paratha* (\$3.95) and the dishes are titled *Onion Rava Masala Dosai* (\$8.75), *Alu Beingan* (\$8.95) and *Kala Chana* (\$8.95). So what are any of these things made of anyway you ask? Fear not, we wrote it down.

The bread was actually quite intimidating when it first appeared, and really shouldn't be called a bread at all, according to the Anglicized definition of the word. All it said on the menu was that it was a thin bread with spiced potatoes, but in actuality, if the bread hadn't been rolled up, it would have been the diameter of a Goodyear tire. After we conquered our fears and ripped apart the pockmarked bread, we discovered that it had some very tasty potatoes inside and two really good sauces.

The *Onion Rava Masala Dosai* turned out to be a little plate-sized crepe, filled with spiced potatoes, onion, and cilantro. As opposed to the other dishes that we ordered, this was really mild, though it was heavily seasoned with cilantro. Even though it was probably the

nearest to eat, it is the least amount of food for your money. The *Alu Beingan* was made of potatoes and eggplant in a sauce made of tomatoes, onion and spices. This dish, along with the *Kala Chana*, was served the way Chinese food is served, as a main dish and rice on the side. Sarah decided that this was her favorite because the combination of potatoes and eggplant, with the delicate tumeric flavoring, made it a little sour but at the same time very filling. The *Kala Chana* was the strangest of the dishes, and we thought it was the coolest. What made it so interesting was that the main ingredient was black chickpeas. They were mixed with tomatoes and onions in a spicy sweet and sour sauce that had a gooey gelatinous consistency. The chickpeas were a little hard and made the entire dish seem nutty.

Date potential: The restaurant is dimly lit, and the décor consists of maroon walls, with forest green trim, and simple, yet elegant black lacquered tables and chairs. Unlike the small square two-person tables in *Estihana*, *Provi Provi* and *My Most Favorite Dessert* (to name a few), the tables there are large enough not to have to balance one part of the meal on your knee at all times. In an attempt at authenticity, twangy, occasionally annoying Indian music resonates through the quiet interior.

Madras Mahal is located at 104 Lexington Avenue, between 27th and 28th Streets. We think that it deserves four out of five stars, and everyone should experience it, if for no other reason than it is 6 blocks away. Madras Mahal is under the supervision of Rabbi D.B. Gulevsky.

Schram's Book Revives Traditional Jewish Tales

DASSI ZEIDEL
Cultural Arts Editor

"Ten Classic Jewish Children's Stories" is the third in a series of books by Penninah Schram. Geared for children ages six to nine, the stories are Talmudic and Midrashic. Among them are tales about Aaron, Miriam and Honi, the rainmaker.

Each story is laid out on two facing pages with two facing pages of illustration between them. The stories are written in an exciting and inspirational manner. At the end of each story are a number of questions to assess and encourage the reader's enjoyment and understanding. Schram's goal is to keep the oral tradition alive in her stories. That comes through in this book. The illustrations, done by Jeffrey Allon, are beautifully executed and give the reader a wonderful tool with which to visualize the stories.

The tales in Schram's books are always chosen with careful thought. "I can't retell a story that I don't love," she said. Each story has a "deep meaning" for her. Schram feels that the goal of each story should be about "teaching a beautiful lesson."

This book has many tales of peace and conflict resolution, such as the story titled "Aaron the Peacemaker." "That

is a theme the runs through a lot of the stories I choose to tell," Schram said. Another theme Schram wanted to evoke in *Ten Classic Jewish Children's Stories* is strong female role models. "I do have Miriam arguing with her father...really speaking out for justice and for what is right. That is a very important lesson for us to have," she said.

Schram, Associate Professor of Speech and Drama at SCW, finds that people are occasionally confused by certain



Photo Credit: Frank English

Professor Peninnah Schram

stories. Many stories are "mystical" in approach, but she doesn't explain them because "sometimes we have to sit with these stories, we have to hear them again and again. We have to think about them, and that's the beauty of storytelling."

Schram, who is the founder of the Jewish Storytelling Center at the 92nd Street Y in New York City and the recipient of the Covenant Award for Outstanding Jewish Educators, is currently working on an anthology of frame stories including parables for adults and older children. *Ten Classic Jewish Children's Stories* is available at most Jewish bookstores.

SPORTS

Lack of Sports Facilities Troubles Students

CHANA ROSENBLATT
Associate Business Manager

Though SCW boasts of varied physical education classes and intercollegiate team competitions, the facilities for those activities do not meet student needs. Among the facilities criticized are the miniature workout rooms in the Midtown Center and Brookdale Hall and the Midtown Center gym. The few athletic activities and sports programs combined with the absence of a swimming pool leave students wondering how seriously their physical education is taken by the administration.

"The gym in my high school was three times the size of this one," said Sarah Balch, SSSB '01. "It would be really nice if we had larger facilities." Chedva Adler, SCW '01, said, "As a well-reputed college with high academic standards and expectations, SCW should carry over their high standards to areas of student life that matter to us, such as the gym and the exercise rooms."

As part of SCW's requirement, all students must pass two semesters of physical education. Classes in jazz dance, ballet, basketball, fencing and the like are held in a gym measuring perhaps half the size of a regulation basketball court.

While for some classes the gym is sufficient, for others, such as basketball, the game is significantly hindered. Mindy Fasman, SCW '00, explained the difficulties she encounters playing basketball. "In the case of a fast break, you're already by the basket before you've even started."

Enlarging the gym is not a realistic enterprise. Some students suggest building a larger gym in any of the new buildings recently purchased by YU in the vicinity of SCW.

For students actively involved in sports and athletic programs, the lack of facilities is regarded as more than just an unfortunate fact of life. Yael Wyszowski, SCW '99, said, "The lack of proper athletic facilities directly available to Stern students reflects the condescending attitude of the YU administration towards women's athletic activities."

"Frankly, I am sick of playing ball on a three quarter court," she said.

Shira Greenland, SCW '00, echoed Wyszowski, saying that "Stern has such a weak athletic program that despite its attractions, no accomplished athlete would even consider Stern as a college in which to pursue her sports career. Stemming from this is an athletic program

without the necessary athletes who could contribute greatly to Stern's teams and programs. It's an unfortunate cycle which could be remedied by improved and expanded facilities and equipment." Greenland added that if SCW wants to have a competitive basketball team, "they need to maximize the time spent practicing which is already far less than other teams. An on campus facility would increase access to team members and minimize the time spent traveling."

Many students take advantage of the opportunity to go swimming at Columbia Grammar School on the Upper West Side every Monday night. As arranged by SCW, the facility is available to all students who are interested in participating, and those who take part are grateful for what they view as a chance to keep in shape while having fun.

A tara Gutfreund, SCW '01, frequents the pool almost weekly. "It's a great opportunity for us because there aren't too many places where we can go separate swimming. It's also pretty convenient since we get door-to-door van service. I love it."

There are others who appreciate the effort that SCW is making, but still find it difficult to make use of the opportunities for a number of reasons. Naomi Rappaport, SCW '01, believes that having a swimming pool on campus is necessary for student life. "It takes a really long time to get to the Columbia Grammar pool, and it's annoying and exhausting after a long day of school to have to travel so far just to go swimming." Rappaport suggested building a pool in one of the buildings SCW recently purchased.

Another source of major frustration to students just looking for a good workout is the condition of the exercise rooms in the Midtown Center and Brookdale Hall. Small rooms containing a couple of treadmills, bikes, steppers and some free weights crowd the tiny workout rooms designated to provide equipment for hundreds of students.

"In terms of the workout facilities at the school building, Brookdale and Schottenstein, the equipment available in those rooms definitely suffices for the Stern student to have a good workout," said Melissa Rothenberg, SCW '01. "Even

though the workout room can be stifling, there remains the opportunity for every student to open the window (at least in Brookdale which has a window) and restore her breathing capabilities."

Suzanne Kupferman, SSSB '01, disagrees. She doesn't think that there is enough equipment to properly accommodate all the students wishing to make use of the facilities. "The room should be bigger, but I do realize that there just doesn't seem to be any more space" Hena Eisenstein, SCW '01, said that, "Although they do provide us with exercise rooms, the one in Brookdale is terribly hot."

Compared with the facilities available to students of other colleges, and more specifically, Yeshiva College, some students have voiced their discontent caused by what seems to be blatant inequality. "Weighed against the swimming pool at YU, and the full size gym, and the basketball court, and the weight rooms, we have no facilities," said Estee Sandler, SCW '01. "Our basketball court is a box, our weight rooms have no air, and we don't have a pool. The unequal

apportionment of funds and equipment is disturbing, to say the least."

In response to comments such as these, Dr. Richard Zerneck, Director of Athletics of YU, says that as far as he knows, there are no plans for new facilities at SCW. However, he said that, "It is my job to do whatever I can for the women. If girls come to me with requests and suggestions, I am more than happy to listen. I will do everything to make it easy for the students to get what they want. We don't want to restrict the girls or cause problems. My goal is to make things easy for the women and accommodate their requests."

Zerneck explained that the exercise rooms are open from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m. He continued to explain that, "in regards to the gym, if it is free, we'll make it available for student use. As long as someone is supervising, there is no problem." Students available for work-study in the gym should contact Dr. Zerneck. He said that if it were up to him, "we would build tennis courts, big fitness rooms, a swimming pool, and dance studios. Renting courts in the city is very expensive, but if there was real interest and a lasting commitment, we could probably rent space."

Current teams available to SCW students are tennis, basketball, and fencing. The basketball team practices off-campus at Chelsea Piers and plays their home games at Central High School. The tennis team also practices and plays off campus, while fencing takes place in the SCW gym. The tennis team ended the Fall '98 season undefeated, and the basketball and fencing teams have put in a tremendous effort thus far.

Shlomit Zauderer, SCW '01, a member of the fencing varsity team said that Zerneck has helped the team obtain equipment and uniforms, but that has not solved all the team's problems. "Since the gym is not regulation size, we aren't adequately provided to have an invitational," said Zauderer. "On the positive side, we have a party at fencing. On the negative side, we have no public relations for the team, nor do we have any supporters at our meets as a result of that. It would be really special to have an invitational here with cheering by our friends."

Intramurals are well underway for the basketball and volleyball teams. Both take place in the gym and are available to any student who wishes to participate. Nechama Maryles, SCW '00, and Shaunna Peters, SCW '99, are the coordinators of the basketball intramural teams. After much effort, they have organized a set time for competitive playing among the students. Maryles is very pleased with the way things have turned out. "The number of interested students is growing each semester," she said. "It's great to see that girls are interested in playing. Even though the facilities are small, girls are willing to play anyway. These teams are another option for girls who are looking to play ball but do not want to devote themselves to the varsity team for one reason or another." The number of girls presently enrolled in this program is 37, up 12 from last semester.

Jenny Horowitz, basketball instructor on the beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels, is quick to acknowledge that there have been improvements in the sports program since she started working at SCW two years ago. "The bottom line is that if the students are interested in implementing a program, they must stand firm and not be dissuaded from continuing if their requests are not realized immediately," said Horowitz. "If the students give up, they lose. They must present a unified front and continue to support each other. That's what will make things happen. If the students don't fight for what they want, who will?"

"The bottom line is that if the students are interested in implementing a program, they must stand firm and not be dissuaded from continuing if their requests are not realized immediately."

- Jenny Horowitz, Basketball Instructor

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