

# THE COMMENTATOR

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## 21 for No. 21: As Streak Continues, Men's Basketball Clinches First Place, Home Court for Skyline Championships

By CHANA WEINBERG

The Macs won their 21st consecutive game on Tuesday night with a 94-62 victory against St. Joseph's College Brooklyn (8-14) at the Max Stern Athletic Center (MSAC). With Tuesday's win, and losses by SUNY Purchase and the College at Old Westbury, the Macs clinched the No. 1 seed in the Skyline Conference Championships — their first No. 1 seed placement in history — ensuring home court through the postseason. The Macs are now 21-1 on the season and 13-0 in conference play.

"Nice to know we've locked in home court," Yeshiva University Head Coach Elliot Steinmetz (SSSB '02) said to YUMacs.com. "The guys have worked hard, but there's still a lot for this team to accomplish."

In addition to moving up from No. 22 to No. 21 in the D3hoops.com weekly national ranking, the Macs were ranked No. 2 in the NCAA Division III Atlantic Region, behind Stevens Institute of Technology. This is the highest regional ranking ever for the team. The first time the Macs made it to these rankings was in the 2018-2019 season, when they ranked sixth.

This is the first of three regional rankings that will be released by the NCAA during the course of the season, which will be followed by a fourth ranking after the tournament bracket

on Monday, March 2. There are eight regions in DIII, each of which contain between eight and eleven teams.

"It's wonderful to see our team ranked so high and set another YU 'first,'" Yeshiva University Director of Athletics Joe Bednarsh told YUMacs.com. "Our young men have worked so hard to get here and each accolade makes me prouder."

In their most recent victory, Gabriel Leifer (SSSB '20), now three-time Metropolitan Basketball Writers Association DII-DIII player of the week, produced his third triple-double with 10 points, 11 assists and 11 rebounds. The leading scorer of the game was freshman guard Ofek Reef (SSSB '23), who had 18 off the bench. Reigning Skyline Rookie of the Year, sophomore Ryan Turell (SSSB '22), scored 15 points on perfect 7-7 shooting, putting him just 10 points away from 1,000 for his career. If he continues at this pace, Turell will soon be the fastest player to 1,000 points in program history, with less than two full seasons under his belt.

The Macs have an extended break after Tuesday's win, their first three-day layoff since they returned from their mid-semester break. It seemed Steinmetz started the break early for some of his starters, none of whom played more than 29 minutes.

The Macs (21-1) play conference rival and reigning Skyline Champions Farmingdale State (12-10) on Saturday, Feb. 15 at MSAC. Tip off is at 8:30 p.m.



The Macs have won 21 games in a row.

YUMACS.COM

## Career Center Launches First-Ever YU-Mentoring Volunteer Program

By SRULI FRUCHTER

Yeshiva University's Career Center invited the undergraduate student body to participate in the first-ever "Yeshiva University Mentoring Volunteer Program" (YU-MVP) on Feb. 10. The program seeks to connect current students with YU alumni and contacts in various professional fields.

Operating on the online platform PeopleGrove, YU-MVP recruits volunteer mentors through YU's connections to alumni and university contacts or through external marketing. Students who sign up to participate must first complete a "matching quiz" to tailor the network's recommendations for themselves. The program allows students to partake in "flash mentoring," a short-term, virtual connection with volunteer mentors to discuss "help topics," such as application materials or work and life balance support.

Within the first week of its launch, a total of 122 students signed up for the YU-MVP, 34 from the Beren Campus and 88 from the Wilf Campus, according to Associate Director of Employer and Alumni Programs Matthew Garcia.

"The primary purpose of YU-MVP is to provide undergraduate students with the opportunity to connect with a captive audience of volunteer mentors," Garcia explained. "These are professionals who signed on to be ready and willing to provide insight, guidance, and support." There are almost 200 professionals and alumni in the network, according to Garcia.

Collaborated on between the Career Center and the Office of Alumni Affairs, YU-MVP was piloted in the fall semester of 2019 amongst a small group of finance students and volunteer mentors; this run sought to test the functionality and experience on the site during the finance recruiting cycle.

"I found the YU-MVP program extremely helpful for searching for a summer internship," shared Zack Lowinger (SSSB '21), a student who participated in the pilot run. "It connected me to many people I have never heard of and ended up helping me land a role." This summer, Lowinger plans to intern as an analyst at Morgan Stanley in the firm's Risk Management Division.

Other students were impressed with the program but experienced some difficulties during the pilot phase. "It

functioned similarly to LinkedIn but is tailored for the YU community," YSU President Zachary Greenberg (SSSB '21) remarked in describing his experience with the program. "A lot of the people I was connected to [through YU-MVP] turned out to still be in school and not yet working, so I hope kinks like that will be improved this semester because the concept is fantastic."

"Member feedback is welcome and sought after," Mr. Garcia said, "allowing us to work with our service providers to create the best user experience."

The Career Center hopes for YU-MVP to become as popular as YU CareerLink (YUCL), an online tool for students to access a database of job listings and to stay updated with Career Center events, among other things. According to Mr. Garcia, platforms like YU-MVP at other institutions yield a 10-20% participation rate from invitation to sign-up. He predicts that between 100-200 undergraduate students at YU will be "actively engaged" by the end of the semester.

"Knowledge is power," Mr. Garcia said, "and the knowledge these professionals are ready to share is extremely valuable."

## Student Council Abstains from LGBTQ Club Vote, Leaving Decision to YU Administration

By YITZCHAK CARROLL and ELISHEVA KOHN

The student council presidents of both campuses have abstained from voting whether or not to approve an LGBTQ club — the YU Alliance — on campus, effectively deflecting the decision to the university's administration.

The decision was announced in a statement via email to the student body, signed by YSU President Zachary Greenberg (SSSB '21), SOY President Yoni Broth (SSSB '20), Wilf SYMSSC President Chayim Mahgerefteh (SSSB '20), YCSA President Leib Wiener (YC '20), Wilf Student Life Committee Senior Co-Chair Yossi Zimilover (SSSB '20), TAC President Bella Adler (SCW '20), SCWSC President Aleeza Katz (SCW '20) and Beren SYMSSC President Miriam Schloss (SSSB '20).

Citing the matter's "larger implications" beyond the university's walls, student council presidents have decided to abstain from voting on the status

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# THE COMMENTATOR

2019-2020

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*For 85 years, The Commentator has served students and administrators as a communicative conduit; a kinetic vehicle disseminating undergraduate social, religious and academic beliefs across the student bodies; and a reliable reflection of Yeshiva student life to the broader Jewish and American communities.*

*The Commentator staff claims students spanning the diverse spectrum of backgrounds and beliefs represented at Yeshiva.*

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# FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

## YU's Problematic Power Dynamics Leave Its Students Disenfranchised

By AVI HIRSCH

The undergraduate students of YU have been disempowered by an administration that enacts policies on our behalf without giving us a say in determining what those policies will be. We are disenfranchised citizens of YU, lacking any substantive power to determine what laws we will be compelled to follow. These laws impact every aspect of the student experience; they define the classroom experience, affect student life on campus and ultimately influence virtually every aspect of the three or four years most undergraduates spend at YU.

There are practical reasons why this is the case. Students only attend YU for a few years before moving on with their lives, and it would therefore be unfeasible to enact any sort of democratic system that represents the will of those who happen to currently be students. Replacing administrators every few years to ensure that they accurately represent the will of the students would certainly be impractical.

Others will argue that college students are at a point in their lives when they are not yet full-fledged members of society and therefore not ready to make important decisions for themselves. At this stage in their lives, perhaps it is helpful to put those with more experience in charge of their day-to-day lives to help guide them to make informed decisions. The administration seems to have taken this approach, with the result that YU's students are often treated as children who are too immature to make meaningful decisions for themselves. Instead of empowering students to take charge of their own lives, the administration makes policy decisions for them, insisting that they have their best interest in mind.

But the fact is that administrators don't always have the students' best interest in mind. There are countless other priorities that YU's administrators juggle when deciding how to react to pleas from the student body, including the impact their decisions will have on the university's image, monetary matters such as how admissions and donations might be

affected as well as their own job security.

In theory, student government should be the remedy to this problem. An elected governing body consisting of student representatives with real power to influence decisions made by the administration could empower YU's students and help them take back some semblance of control over their own lives.

But the student government as it currently exists does none of these things.

issues." Whether President Berman was simply unaware of the powerlessness of the student body or was deflecting the uncomfortable question, he was right that "a lot of this has to come from the students." But we are sorely lacking "vehicles" for student-driven change.

In fact, one of the only avenues that students currently have to exert any degree of power over the policy decisions that affect their lives are the student news-

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*When [student councils] do represent student interests to administrators, they are given no real power to affect change. Instead, after arguing their case in meetings, they are forced to await whatever decision the administration will make on their behalf.*

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Although nominally representing the 2,000 undergraduate students at YU, the councils that comprise YU's student government spend much of their time planning events and divvying up money between various club events. When they do represent student interests to administrators, they are given no real power to affect change. Instead, after arguing their case in meetings, they are forced to await whatever decision the administration will make on their behalf.

And yet administrators seem utterly unaware of — or unconcerned by — how little say students have over the policies that affect their lives. In a Dec. 2018 interview with President Berman, the president was asked his thoughts on women giving *divrei Torah* on Shabbat, a controversial issue at the time. "A lot of this has to come from the students, meaning the students need to speak to each other, work with the right administrators and identify the right forums," he replied. "But it seems to me that there are vehicles that exist, and if they don't already exist, could exist." Elaborating, he explained that "the students should speak to each other with the right administrators and come up with the right vehicles ... I have confidence in our student body that if they work together, they can find the right directions and vehicles for these kinds of

papers on campus, The Commentator and The YU Observer. These newspapers are unique in their independence from the university, which means that the administration has no say in what we decide to publish; our budget comes exclusively from our own advertising in our paper, not the school itself. Reporting on YU events from an independent student perspective is so valuable because it is perhaps the only method of undergraduate student self-expression that can have (and has had) a real impact on the university, regardless of whether the administration wants it to or not. When student journalists publish stories on safety violations or problematic dining plans, for example, it subjects YU's administrators to the harsh reality that fundamental flaws within their operations can have consequences. When those flaws are exposed and publicized, the administration knows that they have the potential to impact the decision-making process of those considering attending or donating to YU. The voice of the student body as expressed in the student newspapers empowers YU's students to change policies at YU when other means are ineffective.

Perhaps the most significant time

*Continued on Page 3*



**1 Referring to President Ari Berman as PRDAB (purr-dab) because his titles take up half the article**

He wanted to be called the dab man but we said no. #HisGraceLordMinisterImamChancellorBerman



**2 MMY curriculum taught at IBC**

I thought there was nothing better than a female student at YP. I was wrong.



**3 The Rav Soloveitchik laptop sticker**

It's the Harvard of stickers! The epitome of *shtarkness*! The Torah stuck on the Madda!



**4 It's a bird! It's a plane!**

Nope. Just Ryan Turell. #1000points #YUMarketingandCommunications



**5 Visors versus tote bags**

Which of these items would make Commentator editors look more powerful and intimidating? Vote by yelling your pick at the editor-in-chief when you see him on campus.



**6 President Emeritus Richard Joel likes the Commentator sweaters!!**

He may or may not have asked if we had any vacancies... #townhallcoordinator



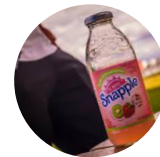
**7 Commentator events on the Beren Campus**

THERE WILL BE PIZZA!!!! 8 p.m. @ 245 Lex #ad #follow #gourmet #like4like

**7 UP**  
by Elisheva Kohn  
**NMODZ**

**"Non-Kosher Snapple sold in the Rubin cafeteria"**

Causing more *aveiros* than the gay club and co-ed uptown Shabbaton combined!



**Yu landers college 4 men club**

Of course the "Yu landers college 4 men club" could be approved with no controversy while the YU Alliance had to be sent along to the administration for *hashkafic* guidance. I'm glad we all have our priorities straight.



**YU's Policy on Policies**

Does the policy on policies have to follow the guidelines spelled out in the policy on policies, given that it is itself a policy? (For more policies, policies on policies and maybe even a few policies on those policies as well, go to: [yu.edu/ogc/policies](http://yu.edu/ogc/policies))



**"Parasite" Best Picture Win**

We did it!!!! We solved Americentrism!!!



**Saying "shkoiach" instead of "thank you"**

Like screaming "oy" on subways and wishing "*gut shabbes*" on Tuesdays, we all know that saying "*shkoiach*" any day makes you appear to be 0.01% *shtarker* than you actually are.



**The Oscar doesn't go to...**

Little Women. Heart equals shattered.



**LGBTQ club drama**

Shameful. But here's a picture of YET ANOTHER bRoKeN elevator!!!



POWER DYNAMICS,  
continued from Page 2

this year that students tried to wield power over policies at YU was regarding LGBTQ issues. From the Sept. 15 student-organized march to a petition signed by over 50 student leaders, student activists have been primarily arguing for five demands, including the formation of an LGBTQ club. But more than five months after President Berman announced that he has put together a team of rabbis and educators to address these matters, no word has reached YU's students about what progress if any this committee has made. And the many student efforts on this front have thus far been unsuccessful, at least insofar as zero of their five demands have been implemented — or even addressed — by YU's administration.

The recent abstention of YU's student council presidents on the question of whether or not to approve an LGBTQ club demonstrated just how powerless they are. The statement they released after meeting with Vice President Josh Joseph effectively surrendered their decision to the administration. Since the administration has the ability to veto any decision made by YU's student government on this or any other front, the abstention was not practically significant; it did, however, underscore how little power the student councils at YU have.

The remedy to the powerlessness of YU's students must take place in stages. First, the student government ought to take its primary responsibility of representing YU's student body to the administration seriously, even while its power remains limited. It should spend less time on event planning and club activities and more time working with the administration to do everything in its power to enact student-driven change at all levels of YU.

But ultimately, change will have to come from those in power, namely the administrators themselves. In order for the problematic power dynamics to shift, YU's administration must cede control instead of exerting it. They need to empower YU's students by not only speaking to them but listening to them, and not only listening to them but empowering them by giving them a say in determining the policies that affect them. Complaining about problems in a student newspaper should not be the only available recourse of YU's frustrated students, and the only way to change this is through a student government that is given the power to govern.

## An Informed Perspective on LGBTQ Involvement in Stomp Out The Stigma: Letter to the Editor

By ETAN NEIMAN

To the Editor,

As a former Active Minds club president and current mental health advocate in the Jewish community, I feel it is my obligation to address some disparaging remarks that have been directed at Active Minds for not including LGBTQ representation at this year's Stomp Out The Stigma event (SOTS). This narrative was stoked by the second paragraph in the most recent YU Observer editorial and supported by a tactless student quote. Stunningly, Mordechai Levovitz, the founder and clinical director of JQY — a prominent LGBTQ organization in the Jewish community — also wrote a Facebook post calling out the event for its “hypocrisy” in not addressing the stigma faced by

LGBTQ students. Additional disappointment has been expressed by many in the YU community, including through critical posts on YU social media forums.

Let me clear this up: The purpose of SOTS is to stomp out the mental illness (MI) stigma — not stigmas in general. To lump in other wrongly stigmatized groups (such as those with developmental disabilities, a stutter, or LGBTQ members) would not be in line with the event's crucial focus. Specifically, SOTS is designed to make sure students who have MI know they are not alone and can get healthier, to educate those without MI and those with MI who don't realize it and of course to empower the speakers. While each of those sentiments certainly applies to the LGBTQ community as well, a separate event would be the proper forum to advocate for

that specifically.

Many will point out that even while the purpose of the event is stomping out the MI stigma, members of the LGBTQ community battle MI at a disproportionately high rate and thus should be repre-

connection. However, understanding the realities of the MI would still be the focus of the speech, as it is for all SOTS speeches. It by no means diminishes the event by not having one or multiple speakers be LGBTQ.

event with the Office of Student Life and advertising the event. It is appalling to see their truly hard work be in any way denigrated, not to mention the potentially life-saving work of the speakers themselves.

The LGBTQ community should and must have a dedicated student club so they can have their own events like SOTS. It is past time for YU's administration to grow a backbone and approve the YU Alliance club. However, it is not fair to expect nor proper for Active Minds to make LGBTQ activism part of their mission.

*Etan Neiman (SSSB '17) is the former president of Active Minds (2016) and current Director of Operations of Refuat Hanefesh, a non-profit organization that deals with mental health issues in the Jewish community.*

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*Let me clear this up: The purpose of SOTS is to stomp out the mental illness (MI) stigma — not stigmas in general.*

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sented. While understanding those groups which are at a higher risk of developing MI is important, the point remains that SOTS is at its core designed for the reasons stated above. In the future, a speaker may very well have MI and be part of the LGBTQ community, and it would be wholly important for the student body to appreciate that

Finally, I'd like to point out the beyond countless and thankless hours it takes for the Active Minds presidents to put SOTS together. These hours include time spent recruiting potential speakers, selecting the speakers, choosing speaker liaisons, helping craft the speeches, readying the speakers, arranging the numerous logistics of the huge

## A Response To Rabbi Blau on Orthodox Jews and the Political Process: Letter to the Editor

By NOAH POLLACK

To the Editor,

I was greatly intrigued by Rabbi Blau's article entitled "Orthodox Jews and the Political Process." While he does not mention President Trump by name, I believe his critique is addressed to the 45th president as well as to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

In his article, Rabbi Blau makes the salient point that President Trump's character traits, specifically name-calling and dishonesty, should be a cause of consternation for Orthodox Jews, as we should hold dear the values of decency and integrity. While he is absolutely correct on that score, there are two main issues that I have with his presentation. First, one could get the mistaken impression from his article that President Trump is the only politician with ethical lapses, and that his political opponents are totally guiltless. Additionally, his article does not articulate the many wonderful policies that President Trump has enacted, which have already helped multitudes of people and are legitimate reasons to support him.

Rabbi Blau's piece makes no mention of the numerous Democratic officeholders who express the desire to impeach President Trump yet looked the other way when President Bill Clinton lied under oath. Indeed, some of the very people who voted twice for Bill Clinton are now criticizing those who support Donald Trump. Former Secretary Clinton also has a less than moral past, of which her voters were keenly aware. Whether it be her highly suspicious 1979 cattle futures windfall, her demonizing the numerous women who claimed her husband sexually abused them (apparently accusers are to be believed unless they make a claim against her powerful husband) and most recently, her irresponsible and suspect use of a personal email server for government business which put State Department information at a greater risk of compromise. Furthermore, if we are so concerned with

name-calling, *she* was the candidate who referred to half of her opponent's supporters as belonging in a basket of deplorables.

Yet, I do not recall Rabbi Blau or any other YU faculty members calling her to task for that or pleading that her supporters think twice before offering her their support. If Mr. Trump's supporters are to be critiqued for overlooking his faults, then it is only fair that the supporters of his opponents also be questioned for overlooking their faults.

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*We should strive to live lives of integrity and decency, and not aspire to many of the character traits practiced by our current president. But the same could also be said about many of his political opponents, and that's something their voters ought to be told as well.*

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On a broader note, history is full of individuals who did extraordinary things for society yet were deeply flawed in their personal lives. We know today that both President Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. were serial philanderers. Does that mean we are not supposed to celebrate their contributions to the world, such as preventing nuclear war during the Cuban Missile Crisis and fighting for civil rights?

An essential way of measuring a president's success is through his policies, and it is in that regard that I believe Rabbi Blau shortchanges President Trump, an avid and successful policymaker. Even more so, Rabbi Blau admonishes Orthodox rabbis and laymen for supporting President Trump but has not and does not acknowledge the policies currently being espoused and considered by the Democratic Party regarding Israel and the very understandable fear they evoke among many Orthodox Jews.

Former Democratic President Barack Obama frequently denigrated Prime Minister Netanyahu, signed the Iran Deal which, among its numerous faults, provided Iran with billions of dollars, allowed them to increase their amount of ballistic missiles,

did not allow inspections of every suspect site and enabled them to sponsor terrorist organizations around the Mideast that wreak havoc on the lives of innocent civilians. To top it off, towards the very end of his presidency, he refused to defend the Jewish State from United Nations Condemnation. This disgraceful decision was a first for a U.S. President and an action that the Simon Wiesenthal Center named the most anti-Semitic act of 2016.

Is it any wonder then why so many Orthodox Jews have developed a sense of gratitude to President Trump for acting in a manner much more supportive towards Israel than his predecessor? Whether it be moving the embassy to Jerusalem, getting out of the Iran Deal or declaring the settlements legal, American supporters of Israel can sleep at night knowing their president is protecting the Jewish state. Members of our community are absolutely justified in using this as a reason to support President Trump, especially when one considers the growing trend of anti-Israel rhetoric currently emanating from some of the Democratic presidential candidates and the liberal establishment in general.

Regarding social policy, it is this president who has appointed nearly 200 Conservative judges, including Supreme Court Justices Gorsuch and Kavanaugh, who are committed to stopping the disturbing tide of anti-religious sentiment fostering from the left. This is an issue that means a great deal to those in the Orthodox community who are highly concerned with the full-throated embrace of gay marriage and abortion on demand that has become accepted dogma

among the Democratic party.

Another issue that has been discussed in numerous communities is the high cost of yeshiva tuition. President Trump and the Republican Party favor vouchers and charter schools. This will ease the burden for Jewish families struggling to pay day school tuition for their children. To show his seriousness on the issue, President Trump named Betsy DeVos, a woman who has championed charter schools her whole career, to head the Department of Education. The vociferousness with which her nomination was opposed by the Democratic party is indicative of yet one more issue in which the interests of the current Democratic Party do not line up with those held by many Orthodox Jews.

To end where I began, we should strive to live lives of integrity and decency, and not aspire to many of the character traits practiced by our current president. But the same could also be said about many of his political opponents, and that's something their voters ought to be told as well.

When one combines that fact with the numerous policies emanating from this administration that are benefiting the Jewish community, it is clear why so many Orthodox Jews support this president and will enthusiastically vote for his reelection.

*Noah Pollack, Yeshiva College '11*

*LGBTQ CLUB VOTE,  
continued from Front Page*

of the YU Alliance. In their statement addressed to the YU student body, student council presidents argued that “the decision about a club focusing on LGBTQ matters at Yeshiva University is too complex and nuanced to be voted on by student council presidents,” and that their “role is not to determine major ideological decisions for the institution.”

“This is not the end of the conversation,” concludes the statement in reference to the decision to abstain, “it is a commitment to continued progress in creating a stigma-free campus towards LGBTQ+ students.”

According to Broth, all seven student council presidents, as well as Zimilover, unanimously agreed on the decision on Thursday night, Feb. 6. (Note: Zimilover currently serves as managing editor of *The Commentator*.) The statement was drafted by Wiener and Schloss and edited with help from the other student council presidents.

Currently, the YU Alliance is a student-run organization that does not receive funding from YU’s student councils and holds its LGBTQ-related events off-campus, as it has not received approval by the student councils to operate as an official, YU-sanctioned club. On Jan. 30, Molly Meisels (SCW ‘21) and Dov Alberstone (YC ‘20), board members of the Alliance, submitted a club application in order to receive official club status from the university. Prof. Daniel Kimmel, assistant professor of sociology at

YU, agreed to be a faculty advisor for the club.

Following students council’s decision to abstain from the vote regarding the status of their proposed club, the YU Alliance released a statement condemning the student councils’ decision, citing several laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. “The student councils’ decision to abstain has reinforced a hostile environment, further marginalizing the LGBTQ+ community and sending the implicit message that they are not openly welcome at YU,” wrote the YU Alliance, arguing that they “took all of the required steps and followed the proper procedures in applying for the club,” and should therefore “be afforded the same treatment as any other potential club on campus.”

The day before deciding to abstain from voting on the status of the YU Alliance club, student council presidents met with Vice President Josh Joseph to discuss LGBTQ matters on campus. According to Wiener, Dean of Students Chaim Nissel, Counseling Center Director Dr. Yael Muskat, RIETS Rosh Yeshiva Rabbi Yaakov Neuberger and all student council presidents except Katz were present.

“We discussed many of the concerns of the students and *rebbeim* whom we had met with and what steps the university was taking to address these concerns,” Greenberg said about the meeting. Broth added that Joseph “spoke of plans that he had to create a more inclusive environment,” but Broth declined to elaborate on the specifics of the plans discussed.

The Wilf Campus General Assembly — which includes student council presidents and the Senior Co-Chair of the Student Life Committee, in addition to the Beren student council presidents — vetted club applications for the spring semester on Thursday, Feb. 6. According to Greenberg, the YU Alliance club had submitted a club formation petition for consideration, which was supported by more than 50 student leaders.

Following the student council’s abstention, the matter has been sent to the university administration to decide on the proposed club’s fate. As of the time of publication, neither Joseph nor a university spokesperson responded

to *The Commentator*’s inquiries. Section 296(4) of the New York Executive Law bars an educational institution from “deny[ing] the use of its facilities to any person otherwise qualified ... by reason of ... sexual orientation.” A senior staff attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) previously told *The Commentator* “it would be discrimination for the university to not permit a gay club ... I would say with fair confidence that they need to let the club exist.” As of the time of publication, the New York State Division of Human Rights, which is tasked with enforcing the state’s anti-discrimination laws, did not respond to *The Commentator*’s inquiries.

*“The student councils are entrusted with representing and serving the entire student body, but they have here abdicated that responsibility.”*

—  
YU Alliance

to *The Commentator*’s inquiries.

Commenting on the rationale behind the student council’s decision, Broth remarked, “Our job as council presidents is to help the students, not determine the *hashkafa* and ideology of YU.” Broth also shared that after speaking to RIETS *roshei yeshiva*, whom he assumes “these decisions are definitely run through if not based upon,” he concluded that there will “very very likely not be a[n LGBTQ] club.”

The student council’s decision to abstain could result in significant

ramifications for the university. On Feb. 3, students of Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law published an open letter to President Ari Berman in *The YU Observer* in support of “undergraduate YU students in their efforts to secure an LGBTQ+ student group” on campus. That same day, *The Commentator* reported that the Jewish Activism Club (JAC) submitted a petition in favor of the formation of an LGBTQ club on campus to Joseph. Commenting on student council’s recent statement, JAC co-President Philip Nagler (YC ‘20) said, “I think the message that

the student council, the administration, and the *roshei yeshiva* are sending to LGBTQ students is clear: “We do not care about you. We care about our jobs, our grad school applications, and maintaining the status quo.”

“I think that having a place for LGBTQ students is extremely important in order to provide for their own mental health and well being,” commented Wiener. “How the administration, *roshei yeshiva*, and students decide to manifest that place is up to everyone to figure out through dialogue and most of all action.”

Matters regarding the LGBTQ community on campus have been especially contentious since the beginning of the academic year. In early September, President Ari Berman told *The Commentator* that he formed a commission of rabbis and educators, led by Joseph, “to address matters of inclusion on our undergraduate college campuses, which includes LGBTQ+.” On Sept. 15, students, allies and activists held a march and rally for LGBTQ inclusion on campus, along with a slate of five demands, which included the creation of a gay-straight alliance club at YU.

“The YU Alliance condemns the student councils’ decision to abstain from voting,” the group wrote in its statement, “and will take all possible steps — up to and including legal action — to ensure the safety of LGBTQ+ students at Yeshiva University.”

*Avi Hirsch contributed to this story.*



The Wilf Campus plaza, with Furst Hall on the left and the Gottesman Library and Glueck Center on the right

## Petition Supporting Formation of LGBTQ+ Club Signed by Over 50 Student Leaders

By YOSEF LEMEL and  
YITZCHAK CARROLL

More than 50 undergraduate student leaders signed a petition promoted by the Jewish Activism Club (JAC) supporting the creation of an LGBTQ club at Yeshiva University.

The petition was initially shared privately with individual student leaders on campus, including club presidents and vice presidents, before being emailed to approximately 200 club heads on Thursday evening, Jan. 30, by JAC co-president Phillip Nagler (YC '20). After the petition garnered 56 signatures, it was emailed to Senior Vice President Josh Joseph on Feb. 2. Joseph is leading a commission on LGBTQ matters relating to the YU community.

The petition observes that "LGBTQ+ individuals have always been a part of the Orthodox Jewish community" and notes that "the stigma and ostracism of queer people in the Orthodox community" has led to suicide and other mental health issues. "One of the goals of the Jewish Activism Club is to give representation and visibility to the LGBTQ+ community at Yeshiva University," the petition states, adding that the JAC itself "[does] not have the time to provide the necessary attention that [the LGBTQ+] community deserves."

"The formation of an LGBTQ+ club is the first step of granting visibility to LGBTQ+ individuals and paying reparations to a community that has suffered for years," it concludes.

In the aftermath of the LGBTQ march in September, a student group called the YU Pride Alliance was formed; according to the group's Facebook page, their goal is "to foster an environment of acceptance on campus for the LGBTQ+ community and its allies." Since it is not approved by the YU administration, the group does not receive funding from YU's Office of Student Life (OSL) and must hold their events off-campus.

Nagler told The Commentator that he wrote the petition in conjunction with the JAC's board. According to Nagler, the petition was part of an effort "to continue the momentum of the LGBTQ student rights movement that is happening this year." While Nagler is not a board member of the YU Pride Alliance, he stated that he felt "obligated as a student activist to help them in their very important cause."

Nagler said he was pleased with the number of student leaders who signed the petition. "Quite honestly, I did not have high hopes for collecting signatures; my original goal was to get 30," he said. "I was blown away with the number of student leaders who want this." According to Nagler, the JAC "reached out to some of the [student] council presidents" but was informed that "none of the presidents plan on signing and that they have a unified decision on this."

Commenting on his decision to sign the petition, Chaim Roffman (YC '21), president of both the Physics Club and the Engineering Club, said, "As a student leader, I think it is important for everyone to

be able to comfortably express their sexual identity." Roffman added that he expects YU to "make a formal remark on the issue from both the Yeshiva and the University."

Yeshiva Student Union (YSU) President Zachary Greenberg (SSSB '21) confirmed that YSU has received a submission for the formation of an LGBTQ-related club called the "YU Alliance" for the spring semester. According to Greenberg, the General Assembly (GA) will vote to approve or reject funding for all clubs on Thursday, Feb. 6. The GA is a student gov-

ernment organization comprised of Wilf student council presidents and the senior co-chair of the Wilf Student Life Committee. The GA is responsible for voting to approve or reject funding for all clubs under the purview of the Wilf student councils. According to Greenberg, it is unclear whether the YU Alliance will be approved by the GA.

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students at Yeshiva University's Cardozo School of Law signed an open letter addressed to President Ari Berman in favor of an undergraduate LGBTQ club. The letter, published in The YU Observer on Monday, Feb. 3, argues that "YU falls short of its duties to provide a moral education by marginalizing its LGBTQ+ students on its undergraduate campuses," and claims that "by delegitimizing LGBTQ+ students, and by silencing the discussions that they seek to start, Yeshiva University is operating counter to the basic function of a university — as a place where the free exchange of thoughts and ideas is paramount."

As of the time of publication, Joseph did not address The Commentator's inquiries on the matter.

Avi Hirsch and Elisheva Kohn contributed to this story.

"As a student leader, I think it is important for everyone to be able to comfortably express their sexual identity."

Chaim Roffman (YC '21), President of the Physics and Engineering Clubs



YU Pride Alliance logo

## Morning Minyan Launched on the Beren Campus

By KATE WEINBERG

A Tuesday morning *minyan* was launched on the Beren Campus on Feb. 11 by Beren Campus Rabbi Jacob Bernstein, the Torah Activities Council (TAC) and the Beit Midrash Committee. The new *minyan* will begin at 8:05 a.m. in the Lea and Leon Eisenberg Beit Midrash in Stanton Hall and will end in time for 9:00 a.m. classes. Rabbi Bernstein notified students about this new initiative via email and flyers were posted on Facebook announcing the new *minyan*.

Previous efforts to have *minyanim* on the Beren Campus, such as on *Rosh Chodesh*, have resulted in significant turnouts. However, attempts by Leora Moskowitz (SCW '21), President of the Beit Midrash Committee, and Fruma Landa (SCW '21), Minyan Men Coordinator of the Shabbat Enhancement Committee (SEC), to establish a regular weekly *minyan* were unsuccessful because they were unable to gather ten men to commit to regularly attending a *minyan* on the Beren Campus.

Despite prior unsuccessful attempts to start a regular morning *minyan*, during TAC's *tefillah* week, which took place the week of Feb. 3, a Tuesday morning *minyan* was held on the Beren Campus. After the success of that initiative, the *minyan* was officially launched to be an ongoing weekly occurrence.

Tuesday was chosen because it is the day most Jewish male faculty members at Beren Campus are around to attend a *minyan* there. These faculty members, together with male students uptown who agreed to travel to Beren Campus on Tuesday mornings, currently compose the regular weekly *minyan*.

While many students choose to pray on their own, a *minyan* provides the opportunity for students to have a more communal prayer experience. "There are many students *davening* by themselves," said Rabbi Bernstein. "The idea of having a *minyan* is a point of collection for the students to come together and *daven* together."

To comprise Tuesday's *minyan*, Rabbi Bernstein and student leaders contacted a number of Jewish male faculty members on the Beren Campus. Those who have committed to participate include Rabbi Yosef Blau, Rabbi David Nachbar, Rabbi Yisroel Meir Rosenzweig, Prof. Alan Broder, Prof. David Hornung and Rabbi Bernstein. Additionally, the Office of Student Life (OSL) will be covering travel expenses for male students coming downtown, and Rabbi Nachbar has offered to give a *shiur* following the *minyan*.

Zachary Orenshein (YC '20) was one of the seven Wilf students who attended the Tuesday *minyan* on Feb. 11. "Having a *minyan* on campus is a *bracha*," said Orenshein. "The Torah tells us to spread the *brachot* in our lives to others when we can." While a number of Wilf students who attended the

kickoff Tuesday morning *minyan* expressed interest in coming to future Tuesday *minyanim*, future attendees will change from week to week, according to Rabbi Bernstein. Ultimately, the goal is to eventually have a more concrete group commit to a regular *minyan*, which may take additional coordination. Rabbi Bernstein also expressed interest in reaching out to the staff working in dining services on the Beren Campus to see if they would attend as well.

One of Rabbi Bernstein's initial concerns that prevented the *minyan* from taking off until now was that the *minyan* could conflict with Rabbi Gideon Shloush's morning *minyan* at Adereth El, a synagogue on 29th Street. The Tuesday morning *minyan* at Beren was therefore scheduled to take place at a different time than the *minyan* at Adereth El. While some Beren students attend the morning *minyan* at Adereth El, Rabbi Bernstein hopes that more students will consistently choose to come to the *minyan* that is now offered on the Beren Campus.

TAC President Bella Adler (SCW '20) touted the success of the *minyan* and the efforts to create it. "We are so grateful for the big support from the student body and are very excited to be partnering with Rabbi Bernstein and the Office of Student Life to make Tuesday *minyan* a normative weekly experience," she said.

According to Rabbi Bernstein, the initiative to bring a morning *minyan* to the Beren Campus has received positive feedback from

students. This past Tuesday's *minyan* was attended by approximately 25 Beren students.

"The *minyan* on campus highlights some of the struggles some women on the Beren campus face," remarked Fruma Landa (SCW '21). "The Beren Campus does not have a morning yeshiva program like the Wilf Campus does; meaning, the women in my A slot *gemara shiur* need to find time for seder on their own."

Reflecting on the first Beren Tuesday *minyan*, she said, "I feel that the needs of all the women who are committed to *davening shacharis* with a *minyan* were noticed and I am looking positively towards a future where the Beren Campus will have three *minyanim* a day."

We are so grateful for the big support from the student body and are very excited to be partnering with Rabbi Bernstein and the Office of Student Life to make Tuesday *minyan* a normative weekly experience.

Adler lauded the *minyan* as a vehicle to further enrich Jewish life on the Beren Campus. "TAC's role on campus is to create as many opportunities for Jewish engagement on campus as possible, and we couldn't be more excited to help make *minyan* one of those opportunities," she said. "Minyan is just one more access point to build Jewish community, and we hope that the experience of *davening* together on campus can speak for itself."

# Milobsky's Break Out Leads No. 22 Men's Basketball to Record 18 Straight Wins

By CHANA WEINBERG

*Editor's Note: This article was originally published online on February 4.*

In a game where the sixth man was the lead scorer, the Macs set a program record for longest win streak with 18 wins in a row with a 77-68 win over Williams College in Williamstown, Mass. The previous record, set by the 2018-2019 Macs, was 17 in a row between Dec. 1 and Feb. 14. The Macs are now 18-1 and undefeated (10-0) in conference play.

Averaging 16.9 minutes-per-game so far this season, junior forward Caleb Milobsky (SSSB '22) produced in his extended playing time, scoring a career-high 19 points while shooting 5-6 from the 3-point line and 7-9 overall. Milobsky's three point shooting came in the clutch, slowing down a Williams 8-2 run early in the second half and breaking up a 56-56 tie with just over six minutes left in the game, giving the Macs the lead that they would hold for the rest of the night.

"My mentality was to not rush anything, and take good shots," said Milobsky

to MacsLive.com. "I'm playing with four other scorers, so there's no need to rush anything, but when I got open looks I was pulling [the trigger]."

*After debuting on the national ranking at No. 24, the Macs continued to impress the D3hoops.com voters by garnering 96 points and moving up to No. 22 in the season's ninth iteration.*

Milobsky's breakout proves the immense depth of this Macs team. On a night when back-to-back Conference Player of the Week and back-to-back Metropolitan Basketball Writers Association DII-III Player of the Week Gabriel Leifer (SSSB '20) missed all of his three point attempts, the Macs still came away with a win. But Leifer remained a force on the court, where he pulled 15 rebounds

to go along with seven assists. Leifer also scored 12 points, earning him his 15th double-double of the season. Furthermore, he and Simcha Halpert (SSSB '20) went 6-6 from the free throw line in the last minute, furthering the lead and clinching the Mac's 18th win.

This win streak is more impressive when considering the schedule the team has following their extended break resulting from the disparity in vacation schedules of the other Skyline Conference schools. From Saturday, Jan. 25 to Saturday, Feb. 1 the Macs played five games and won all of them, only to turn around and drive to Massachusetts and win another game on Monday. Their competition, Skyline teams fighting for playoff spots in Sarah Lawrence, Purchase and Manhattanville, and a perennial NCAA tournament contender in Williams, challenges the Macs almost nightly. And as students of YU can attest, having a dual curriculum in college does not leave much time for anything but school work. Despite the additional burden of being student athletes, the Macs continue to thrive.

After debuting on the national ranking at No. 24, the Macs continued to impress the

D3hoops.com voters by garnering 96 points and moving up to No. 22 in the season's ninth iteration. Questions about *if* the team will win are morphing into *how*, as the Macs athleticism and communication on the court amaze spectators.

"The Macs have three of the best players in YU history," said MacsLive beat reporter and Chief Content Officer Akiva Poppers (SSSB '22). "At all times they have five men of the court who are perfect fits for the motion offense, which makes them so efficient."

The record-tying 17th win over Manhattanville College on Saturday night guaranteed the Macs an extended season as they qualified for the Skyline Conference championships. This marks their sixth season in a row with a playoff appearance. The winner of the playoff receives a bid in the 2020 NCAA Division Three tournament. The Macs qualified for the tournament in 2018 after winning the Skyline but exited in the first round after a loss to York College of Pennsylvania.

The Macs will play to extend their historic streak against Mount St. Mary (6-13) in Newburgh, NY on Wednesday evening, Feb. 5.



Milobsky goes for a layup against Brooklyn College.

## Law Review

## Get Out of Jail Free or Equality in Criminal Justice?

By SRULI FRUCHTER

In pursuit of criminal justice, New York State has implemented legislation to revoke monetary bail and pre-trial detention in many criminal offenses. At the start of January 2020, these legal reforms went into effect.

Known as the “No Cash Bail” law, N.Y. Criminal Procedure Law § 530.20 was officially passed on April 1, 2019, in hopes of addressing the “failure of our bail system,” according to Gov. Andrew Cuomo. “A person is innocent until proven guilty. And yet, three-quarters of the people being held in New York City jails are awaiting trial... 45,500 people spent time in jail [for five days after bail was set] in New York last year... because they were poor,” he said.

While many have applauded these efforts of criminal justice reform, the law has gained public attention for some of its serious consequences. Brief examples include an alleged hit-and-run drunk driver, a woman who allegedly assaulted 3 Jewish women, and an alleged burglar, all of whom were arrested, charged, and subsequently released on their own recognizance pending trial under this new law.

What this new legislation *actually* says and its

practical applications are complex. Excluding what it classifies as “qualifying offenses,” the statute says a court must release a defendant pending trial on his own recognizance; this is contingent on the court believing the defendant will return. In the event the court doubts that the defendant will return, there are alternative — albeit limited — courses of action. Those options only allow releasing the defendant “under non-monetary conditions, selecting the least restrictive alternative and conditions” that will “reasonably assure” the court that the defendant will return. If that route is, in fact, chosen, the court must document its reasoning on the record or in writing.

Those “non-monetary conditions” can include requiring the defendant to abide by travel restrictions “reasonably related” to him being a flight risk, refrain from possessing a firearm or dangerous weapon, or wear an electronic monitoring device, *inter alia*.

Nearly all misdemeanors and nonviolent felonies are considered “non-qualifying” in the “No Cash Bail” law, meaning the aforementioned reforms would apply in those cases. Straight pre-trial detention, also known as “remand,” is completely eliminated in misdemeanor charges. Additionally, with the exception of misdemeanor

charges of sex offenses or criminal contempt of orders of protection in cases of domestic violence, cash bail is also eliminated. In the case of nonviolent felonies, the legal consequences are virtually the same, as money bail and remand are only applicable in a limited amount of cases. Some exceptional cases include defendants charged with witness intimidation, conspiracy to commit murder, some felony criminal contempt charges, or terrorism-related charges, *inter alia*.

Class A drug felonies, with the sole exception of operating as a major trafficker.”

While many actively dispute whether CPL § 530.20 is endangering the welfare of American society or is a long-overdue reform to the criminal justice system, it is important to note that the motivations behind the new statute are not unfounded. Cases like *Walker v. City of Calhoun*, 2016 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 12306 comes to mind when thinking about the state of incarceration in America.

those unable to afford bail to see a judge within 48 hours in order to request lower bail or their release on their own recognizance. Nevertheless, Walker’s initial legal suit against Calhoun continued, challenging the constitutionality of even a 48-hour waiting period. Ultimately, the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta upheld the 48-hour policy, and the Supreme Court of the United States denied the petition on appeal.

Other cases surrounding criminal justice reform include *People ex rel. McManus v. Horn*, 18 N.Y.3d 660 and *State v. Hance*, 2006 VT 97 where the Supreme Court ruled that the court cannot designate a fixed form of bail, and cash-only bail was — at least in this case — considered a denial of bail, respectively. These are only two examples of the abundant cases surfacing in which the function and application of bail are being challenged.

New York State is not the first state to implement a “No Cash Bail” law, nor will it be the last. Nevertheless, in the righteous pursuit of establishing fairness and equality in our criminal justice system, we must equally ensure that our safety and the integrity of our legal system are preserved and protected.

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*We must equally ensure that our safety and the integrity of our legal system are preserved and protected.*

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“Qualifying” criminal offenses are exempt from the “No Cash Bail” law, meaning that money bail and remand are permissible at the court’s discretion. Virtually all violent felony cases are considered under this category, as determined by nine criteria. The Center for Court Innovation succinctly explains that the “No Cash Bail” law only applies to limited violent felonies, as it mentions, “specific sub-sections of burglary and robbery in the second degree,” a “notable caveat” being “that bail and detention are eliminated for all

In 2015, Maurice Walker was arrested in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 40-6-95 (2017), a misdemeanor for being a pedestrian under the influence (PUI) of alcohol or drugs. His bail was subsequently set at \$160, a payment his monthly income of \$530 of Social Security disability payments could not meet; he spent six days in jail following his arrest. Ironically, the law itself does not even warrant jail time, rather it says a PUI “is punishable upon conviction by a fine not to exceed \$500.00.” Shortly after, Calhoun changed its policy to allow





# NFL Season Debriefing: Looking Backward and Forward

By **MAYER FINK**

Looking back on the 2019-2020 National Football League (NFL) season that has recently come to a close, I became aware of many new aspects of the game. This season provided the prospective decline of the New England Patriots' dynasty and a rise in the fortunes of other NFL teams that might become new longstanding dynasties. In this article, I will outline a number of unique themes I noticed in the past NFL season.

## Mobile Quarterbacks

Lamar Jackson — the MVP-winning quarterback for the Baltimore Ravens — and the dynamic Josh Allen — quarterback for the Buffalo Bills — reinforced the fact that teams can win with a running quarterback. Throughout the history of the NFL, there have been many dominant mobile quarterbacks from Fran Tarkenton to John Elway to Michael Vick. While fun to watch, mobile quarterbacks must still be capable of throwing effectively in order to see success in the NFL. Jackson's rookie season in 2018 proved that he was going to be one of the best threats on the ground. In 2019, Jackson proved he can scorch defenses in the passing game as well as the running game, being named the NFL's most valuable player in the process.

Looking forward, I see the upcoming 2020 quarterback draft class as not only being a class with multiple franchise-leading quarterbacks available but a class full of valuable mobile quarterbacks. Jalen Hurts of the University of Oklahoma comes to mind as one

prominent example of an up-and-coming mobile quarterback. If, in addition, he can prove that he can successfully make the accurate throws, he should be a high draft pick and could be an incredible success in the NFL.

## Turnover Within The League

The performance of the 49ers this season was an indication of how much turnover happens in the NFL. The 49ers went from last season's 4-12 record to winning 13 games and becoming the National Football Conference (NFC) champions this year. The 49ers give hope to any team that has a terrible season — whether it be through bad luck or lack of personnel — that they can always come back from a poor situation.

Plenty of teams have underperformed in the 2019 season. With valuable free-agent acquisitions on the table, a strong draft class and a little luck, almost any team can become next year's 49ers and dominate the league.

Likewise, there will be a handful of teams that made the playoffs this year that will fail to live up to the expectations and fall back to the middle — or even bottom — of the pack. A lot went right for the 49ers this season; I doubt it will happen again. The 49ers will have a tougher schedule, a target on their back as the previous season's NFC champions, and might be plagued with injuries to vital players on the roster. It's unlikely that the 49ers will replicate their success next season.

## The L.A. Football Experiment

Los Angeles currently has two football teams, namely, the Chargers and the Rams; they don't deserve one. I know this may upset the many Los Angeles folks in the YU community. Already a few years into the L.A. football experiment it looks like a rerun from the last time L.A. had two football teams. From 1982-94 Los Angeles had both the Raiders and the Rams. Both teams were popular when suc-

half-empty stadiums or in front of fans mostly of opposing teams. According to conventional wisdom, fans are not willing to watch a losing team. However, I didn't see the same reaction from other fan bases that saw equal or worse records for their teams, such as the Steelers, Raiders and Browns. Their fan bases stalwartly continue to support their teams.

And don't get me started on the Chargers. The Chargers play in an MLS (Major League Soccer) soccer stadium that holds 30,000 fans and still can't fill seats with Chargers fans. I don't think I've watched a Chargers home game that hasn't felt like a road game. The less said about the Chargers' situation the better.

## Necessity of Offensive Lines

This season also reinforced the fact that having a good offensive line is vital to a team's success. The teams that made the playoffs all had strong offensive lines. The two teams in the Super Bowl — the 49ers and the Chiefs — didn't have any weak links in their offensive lines. Some teams that many initially thought would make the playoffs didn't due to their bad offensive lines. Championship teams know that any good quarterback can only be as good as the protection he is given. They therefore usually invest in their quarterback and the unit that can protect their quarterback, namely, the offensive line. Many thought the Cleveland Browns were going to make the playoffs this season. One of their biggest struggles, however, was the lack of a competent offensive line, causing a lack of an offensive surge behind the line. The bottom line is

that blocking always matters.

## Importance of the Secondary

The 2019-20 season introduced me to a unit that every playoff team needs, namely, a good secondary. This doesn't just mean having a shutdown cornerback (a cornerback that can eliminate the top receiver on the opposing team) or a ball-hawking safety (a safety that seems to always know where the ball is going and can make game-changing plays). A good secondary needs five or six reliable defensive backs to eliminate many pass-heavy attacks. One could make the argument that a strong secondary is the most important player for a playoff team.

I used to be a strong believer in the idea that a good defense required depth at all positions and no glaring weakness. Watching the Louisiana State University (LSU) Tigers win the National Championship in college football and the Kansas City Chiefs win the Super Bowl forced me to reassess that belief. Overall, LSU didn't have a great defensive line, but that didn't matter because the LSU Tigers' secondary was one of the best in the nation; their secondary made up for the rest of the defense.

This season leaves more doubt than ever before. For the first time since I started intensely following Pro Football (circa 2012), I don't know which team will prove successful next year. That will primarily be determined by free-agency acquisitions and the strategic draft selections, both of which will carry much weight in determining the next NFL champions.

*This season provided the prospective decline of the New England Patriots' dynasty and a rise in the fortunes of other NFL teams that might become new longstanding dynasties.*

The fact that the 49ers had everything turn out in their favor can also allude to turnover in the league. Like the 2018 NFC Champion Rams the season before, I don't think the 49ers will make the playoffs next season. Some teams — like the 49ers — have the fortune of going from terrible to great from one season to the next.

Successful. However, when that was not the case, L.A. locals felt they had better things to do (like go to the beach) instead of attending a game. Recently — in a very similar manner — the Rams filled the stadium with fans *when* they were winning. Now that the Rams are an average team, they play most of their home games in front of



An NFL player being tackled

## FROM THE COMMIE ARCHIVES

*Editor's Note: In 1963, the Catholic Church convened the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, focusing on the relationship between the Church and other nations, with a focus on the Jewish people. At the same time, they were accused of sending missionaries to the land of Israel in an effort to convert Jews to their religion. Rabbi Soloveitchik wrote "Confrontation" to address this issue. He also addressed the undergraduate student body of Yeshiva University, informing them of the danger. The following set of archives detail the responses of Rabbi Soloveitchik and the students of Yeshiva University to the Catholic mission.*

## From the Archives (November 20, 1963; Volume 29 Issue 4) — The Catholics — Retraction

By MITCHEL WOLF and  
THE COMMENTATOR  
GOVERNING BOARD OF  
1963-4

Throughout the ages the appellation "Christ Killers" has been associated with the Jewish people. Persecution and persecutors followed the Jew wherever he lived, wherever he travelled. Inquisition, crusades, and mass murders were the methods employed to punish the people accused of participating in the death of Jesus. During these periods of massacres the Catholic Church often remained silent; frequently, it participated.

Only after examining the Catholic-Judaic relationship in history can we welcome the recent communique discussing the document, "The Attitudes of Catholics Toward Non-Christians, Particularly Toward the Jews."

The communique, issued two weeks ago at the Vatican Ecumenical Council, absolves the Jewish people of special responsibility for the crucifixion.

It further states that preachers and catechists "are admonished never to present a contrary position" to the assertion that "the sacred events of the Bible, and, in particular, its account of the crucifixion, cannot give rise to disdain or hatred or persecution of the Jews."

Although the document must be ratified in the Council, it is a significant move to combat anti-Semitism. We cannot, however, foresee the end of anti-Semitism in the near future. Too many youths and adults have been taught to persecute the Jews. To believe that this one document will end years of teaching is unrealistic. We hope that the Catholic Church will not stop with the approval of this document and will continue its fight to end intolerance in the world.

## From the Archives (December 4, 1963; Volume 29 Issue 5) — Letter Reveals What Is Going On!

By A.U. MICHELSON

*Ed. Note: We have no doubt heard much about missionaries. We have seen, however, little of their work. The following is a typical form letter circulated by "Christ for the Jews," The Hebrew Evangelization Society, Inc. It needs no explanation.*

November 1, 1963

Dear Friend:

There is evidence of a great upsurge in missionary activity among the Jews. New doors are opening everywhere and the spirit of Christ is moving in the hearts of our people. This is not surprising, because dear to the heart of the Saviour is the salvation of His own brethren after the flesh. The Scriptural order is, "The Gospel to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."

God has blessed our broadcast and used it to play an important part in binding up the affairs of this age. Not only do we reach thousands of Jews each day from coast to coast, but in our preach-

ing campaigns through this country and Canada men and women have surrendered their lives to Christ.

The suffering of the Jewish refugees in Algiers is still very great. The children suffer the most for they are undernourished and in very poor health. Many suffer from various diseases and some of them even have tuberculosis. In order to save their lives, we have decided to send as many as possible to a children's home in Switzerland. For ten weeks they will get nourishing food and proper treatment. They will hear the Gospel and be told about Christ. The cost is \$35.00 for one child.

In answer to prayer, the Lord has sent in the means to send 32 children to this home in Switzerland. Our missionary, Mrs. Chalhoub, informed us that 23 children have been sent and as soon as there is room available in the children's home the rest will be sent there.

In her letter, Mrs. Chalhoub wrote: "I think it is wonderful to be able to send all those Jewish children to a place where they will get nourishing food and proper treatment and where they will

have Bible study several times a week. They will hear the Gospel story and we pray that they will be moved to accept Christ."

We would like to send many more of the suffering Jewish children to this children's home, for we want to save their lives and win them to Christ. How we pray that the Lord will fill your heart with compassion for them, for then you will be willing to sacrifice.

At this Thanksgiving season, you will wish to express your gratitude to the Lord for all the blessings He has bestowed upon you. He is calling you to help this Mission, that we may be able to bring many more Jews to Him. What joy will fill your heart on Thanksgiving Day, knowing you have cooperated with the Lord to save precious Jewish souls.

Wishing you a very blessed Thanksgiving and praying God's benediction upon you, we remain  
Yours in His service for Israel,  
A.U. MICHELSON

## From the Archives (December 4, 1963; Volume 29 Issue 5) — Rabbi Soloveitchik Wants United Action Against Missionary Threat

By STEVEN PRYSTOWSKY

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik addressed the students and faculty of the three Hebrew divisions in a special assembly convoked "to meet one of the most awesome challenges in the millennia of our history."

Rabbi Soloveitchik discussed and analyzed the evangelical missions of the Christian Church in Israel and the Diaspora and the Ecumenical Council schema on anti-Semitism. This was the first time that Rabbi Soloveitchik has lectured before the student bodies on modern problems facing Jewry. He spoke at Nathan Lamport Auditorium on Thursday, November 21.

### Eternal Problems

The problems facing Jewry today, stated Rabbi Soloveitchik, are the same that faced Jacob. Esau asked Jacob's scouts, "Whose are you — and where are you going?" These two questions are now being asked by another Esau in a "new guise" — the Church, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. They ask to whom do you belong as a spiritual personality and what is your ultimate goal and way of life? Who is after G-d?

Our answers now, declared Rabbi Soloveitchik, are no different from those in the time of Jacob. Jacob and what he represented are highly relevant in 1963. "We are committed to Ja-

*Continued on Page 10*

## From the Archives (December 4, 1963; Volume 29 Issue 5) — We Must Overcome — An Editorial

By MITCHEL WOLF and  
THE COMMENTATOR  
GOVERNING BOARD OF  
1963-4

The problem of missionaries in Israel has always been disturbing and at last concrete action is being taken by a large number of Jewish organizations. Coverage in the Jewish papers is now extensive, though a great deal of space has unfortunately been wasted on exaggerations of picketing by *yeshiva* students.

Here at Yeshiva, questions have been raised concerning the problem to Mrs. Golda Meir, Dr. Yitzchak Raphael, and Dr. Joseph Burg. And undoubtedly the stirring speech of Rabbi Soloveitchik alerted the entire student body to the scope of the mission menace.

Questions may still rage but the time for action is now. With a positive program mapped out, a student coordinating commission is currently in the process of en-

listing the aid of American Jewry to voice a unified protest against missions.

Represented on the committee are leaders of Yeshiva College, RIETS, TI, JSP, Mizrahi Hatzair, Yavneh, Z'eiri Agudas Yisrael, and Young Israel with the list still growing. Some of the tasks which the committee is undertaking include:

1) Collecting and disseminating information. An extensive effort is being made to collect accurate and detailed information on the scope of missionary activity. Pamphlets from missions are available plus reports of organizations which are actively engaged in combating the evangelists and eyewitness reports from students in Israel.

2) A fund raising campaign. The money collected (and a drive is now underway in the morning divisions of YU) will go to aid anti-missionary organizations and help supply information to the Jewish populace.

3) A petition. This will present in outline form the need for a law to outlaw missions in Israel plus a possible formulation of that law based on statutes now extant in Egypt, India, and many of the new Afro-Asian countries.

4) A symposium. Jewish intellectuals from all walks of life will be asked to state their opinions on missionary activities and use their moral suasion on the Israeli government in a plea for action.

The committee needs active support. The students of Yeshiva must play a vital role in raising money, collecting information, and obtaining signatures. If we can show the Israeli government 100,000 names, we can expect to arouse the concern of the *Knesset*.

We finally have a chance to do more than bemoan a situation. There is no time to waste. Saving a Jewish child from *shmad* is equivalent *halachically* to saving a life and the opportunity is ours, now!

FROM THE COMMIE ARCHIVES

*MISSIONARY THREAT,*  
continued from Page 9

cob and the G-d of Israel... This is our only answer... No compromise and no retreat... We follow our destiny, we defy even our own common sense... we have our commitment." Rabbi Soloveitchik's address was fervid and emotional, but he spoke clearly and lucidly. "The Church suggests to us directly and indirectly a revision of our 2,000 year old decision against Christianity and its founder. The Church has decided to approach us again. The aim of the Church is to convert the Jews in Israel to Christianity and they are approaching us with these [Esau's] questions.

**Church Dogma**

"The evangelical mission of the Church is unequivocally a part of its dogma. Both Protestants and Roman Catholics concur on this mission, although they may differ slightly. While in the past the baptism of a single Jew — one, ten, or one thousand — was the goal, today the Church is out to evangelize the whole Jewish community as such."

The rise of the State of Israel is a prime reason for the new evangelical interests. The Church has taught that Jews can never return to Zion because they rejected Jesus, yet, they see that the State of Israel is established.

They are thus faced with a contradiction between theory and reality. According to Rabbi Soloveitchik, the Church's solution is baptism. Since the Jewish State is now secular, the Church sees a secular Jew, one who abandoned his identity as a "member of a metaphysical, Masoretic group."

**Reconciliation**

"The Church now feels that it is possible to explore a reconciliation between the Jewish community and the Church. There is no need for Meshumodim, converts, who are cast from Jewish society, for the new breed they hope to create will have reconciled within itself both Judaism and Christianity."

These are only two of the factors leading to the increase of evangelical interest. He also included Reform Judaism and the fact that the Jew of today has despiritualized his life. The Church realizes this and knows that since the human being needs eternal roots evangelization is now possible.

Rabbi Soloveitchik called for a law against missionaries in Israel. He described the law as not only "desirable" but also "indispensable." He did not see any conflict with freedom of religion.

Rabbi Soloveitchik's opening remark was one of anguish and sadness. He said, "I want to relate to you the disturbing thoughts on

# The Commentator

Official Undergraduate Newspaper of Yeshiva College

NEW YORK CITY, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1963 No. 5

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## Problems Need Religious Therapy

halachic roles as one proficient in active field work, counseling, and intellectual and spiritual attainments, is now obscured.

After classifying Yeshiva students into a host of psychological categories, Dr. Brayer called upon the rabbis to use traditional religious values as the basis for therapy. "Judaism," he declared, "lives in today and prepares for tomorrow. The clergy has learned much from psychological therapy and religion. The one a process, the other a goal, can help each other." Dr. Brayer added he could not sufficiently stress the need for rabbis to find time for religious counseling, especially since outside, non-religious agencies are not always suitable for the Yeshiva student.

College Syndromes  
Problems of Yeshiva College

## Rabbi Soloveitchik Wants United Action Against Missionary Threat

by Steven Prystowsky

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik addressed the students and faculty of the three Hebrew divisions in a special assembly convoked "to meet one of the most awesome challenges in the millenia of our history."

Rabbi Soloveitchik discussed and analyzed the evangelical missions of the Christian Church in Israel and the Diaspora and the Ecumenical Council schema on anti-Semitism. This was the first time that Rabbi Soloveitchik has lectured before the student bodies on modern problems facing Jewry. He spoke at Nathan Lampport Auditorium on Thursday, November 21.

Eternal Problems  
The problems facing Jewry to



THE COMMENTATOR

**The Commentator Archives**

my mind, and to show you the anxiety felt among us."

One disturbing thought, although not explicitly stated, was his deep displeasure at the reaction of the Jewish community to the communique if the Ecumenical Council. The communique stated that the Jewish people are absolved of any special responsibility for the crucifixion. Dr. Soloveitchik was upset that organizations hailed the communique without reading the complete

document (the communique only described the highlights) or waiting for it to be approved by the Ecumenical Council.

Rabbi Soloveitchik viewed the schema as an "evangelical document, a call for the Jewish people to be baptized. It is not a document of liberalism." He cited Cardinal Ruffini's question before the Ecumenical Council as one that supports his views. Cardinal Ruffini asked why the statement regarding the Jews should

be included in the schema of the Christian community. Obviously, observed Rabbi Soloveitchik, he did not comprehend that Jews are being considered as brethren similar to Protestants.

Dr. Soloveitchik's speech was met with a standing ovation and a determined effort by the students to alleviate the missionary problem in Israel.

## Ryan Turell: The Driving Force Behind the Macs' Historic 22 Game Win Streak



Ryan Turell

By MITCH GOULSON

Coming off a historic freshman season that saw him average 20.1 points per game (PPG) on a remarkable 56% shooting and take home the 2018-19 Skyline Conference Rookie of the Year honors, Ryan Turell (SSSB '22) is leading the Macs to even greater heights in 2020. As of the time of publication, the Macs have won 22 straight games and vaulted themselves to a national ranking of 21st in the Division III standings.

"It's cool to be recognized," Turell said of the team's national ranking, "but at the end of the day, it's not a Skyline Championship or an NCAA tourney win. It's great, but the job ain't done yet."

Asked if he expected the team to be so successful, Turell said "Yeah. When I skipped a year in Israel to come to YU early, I knew it would take a year for us to really gel together. We have great chemistry and we're playing really well right now."

To improve his game over the summer, Turell woke up at 8 a.m. daily and trained three times a day. He also worked out with and played against D-I and overseas players.

His rigorous summer routine allowed Turell to become a more efficient player, as his averages in points and rebounds have risen by nearly four (from 20.1 to 23.5 ppg) and two (from 5.0 to 6.7 rpg)

respectively from last season, even as his minutes and field goal attempts have remained identical to last season's (33 and 14 per game, respectively).

The team's 22nd straight win, a home tilt against rival Farmingdale State, saw Turell surpass 1,000 points for his career. Turell gave credit to his teammates for reaching the milestone. "It's a product of the system and the type of guys we have on the team," he remarked. "They don't care who's scoring that night, they just care about winning. We're chasing letters, not numbers. It's all about the W and it doesn't matter how we get there."

Turell described Coach Steinmetz's impact on his game, saying Steinmetz has "helped me stay patient and made sure I don't try to force anything. He makes sure I play within the offense and that's helped me become a much better player."

Coach Steinmetz's motion offense, simple yet crippling to opposing defenses, has allowed the offense to thrive, as it does not force-feed anyone the ball, thus frequently yielding easy baskets. This balanced approach on offense has been a critical part of the Macs' historic winning streak.

"Usually, teams revolve their offense around the player with the

*Continued on Page 11*

## Bioethics in Practice

# The End of an Era

By SHOSHANA ROCKOFF

Most children dream of a trip to an amusement park or a visit to the ice cream store, but the most exciting trip for my siblings and me growing up was an adventure to Poppy's office. Nothing was comparable to sitting in an examining chair twice my size with my feet dangling towards the ground while Poppy performed an eye exam. The waiting room chairs became roller coasters of their own, with every pair of glasses I assumed a new identity and putting quarters in the gumball machine for hours on end was somehow extremely entertaining.

Poppy has built up his optometry practice over the past fifty years and has developed deep connections with his staff and patients. He usually has a good sense as to what people are going through beyond the scope of their physical health.

Until recently, most patients in the U.S. consulted physicians in private medical practices; with the turn of the century, however, this model is in rapid decline. According to a study conducted by the Medical Group Management Association in 2005, more than two-thirds of medical practices were physician owned. Just three years later that number dropped by 50%. Analysts say that with each passing year the number decreases even more. Why is this happening? What is causing the medical world to change at such a fast rate?

When analyzing these questions it's important to note that physician-owned practices are a hot commodity on the market. According to FierceHealthcare, hospitals, private equity firms,

venture-capital groups and even insurance companies are buying out private practices across the country and turning them into big medical businesses. Many of these buyers are not even from the health care world. Private equity firms in general initially invest in reputable physician-owned practices to build a larger network. From there, they gradually increase their ownership of a practice to 60-80% of ownership, and within three to seven years they sell the practice to invest in another one.

While many of the staff in offices country-wide may look the same, the impact that these business transactions are having on patients and doctors is happening in a subtler way. According to MarketWatch, patient advocates are worried, and medical professionals are arguing that businessmen should not be dictating how they do their jobs. Marni Jameson Carey, Executive Director of the Association of Independent Doctors, said, "These folks don't have medical licenses to lose; they didn't take any Hippocratic oaths ... They are in it for the profit. And Americans are going to pay for it, either with their health or their finances or both."

With all of these large medical businesses taking the stage, it may no longer be feasible for private practices to survive, turning this into a process that feeds on itself. A survey conducted by the Doctor Patient Medical Association found that 95% of physicians see corporate-owned medicine as the future. According to an article in The New York Times, many doctors leave medical school with overwhelming debts and the desire for regular work hours. This makes a job at

a larger company more appealing, since it doesn't require start up funds, like building a private practice does, and there are a lot more staff on board in big companies, enabling doctors to have nine to five jobs. These decisions being made by new doctors directly impact older doctors who fear that they will not be able to recruit new junior partners. They therefore sell their practices to bigger businesses so that they can also get salaried jobs.

work in privately-owned practices have more autonomy over their decisions and don't have to work with huge bureaucracies to take action. An alternative theory is that patients are more compelled to visit their private practice physicians on a regular basis because they provide more personal care.

There is no doubt, however, that a huge part of the answer lies in the doctor-patient relationship that is cultivated by the private practice system. According to an article in

relationship results in greater overall satisfaction for both the doctor and the patient. This positive relationship is certainly more common among private practices.

With the rise of business medicine, there are, of course, some groundbreaking benefits for the medical world — change is good and healthy. As a society we certainly don't want our systems to remain stagnant, stifling growth and development. However, within the changing system, it is our responsibility to maintain our values as a society. For doctors, this means continuing to serve patients through relationships and consistency even within the larger system. Just because the method of overall health care is changing does not mean that the way doctors serve and treat patients needs to change too.

As I've gotten older, the examination chair in Poppy's office has become a little bit smaller and the gumball machine and waiting room chairs slightly less exciting. I've learned to view the adventure not just through the lense of fun but also of appreciation. To watch my grandfather work in his private practice, the office where he has devoted his time, energy and life to healing people, leaves me speechless. To see patients in their 50s and 60s come in and give my grandfather a hug before he examines their eyes because they've known him for decades is remarkable. As the next generation of physicians gets to work within the new health care system, it is important for physicians to adhere to the legacy of doctor-patient relationships that the previous generation has left for us to follow.

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*Until recently, most patients in the U.S. consulted physicians in private medical practices.*

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While this can be extremely difficult for physicians who own practices, this competition may bring about certain positive changes for patients. With the rise of technology, medical equipment is becoming increasingly more advanced and therefore more expensive. Physicians who own their own practices can no longer afford to compete with large companies who have the funds to constantly update and buy new and improved equipment and more organized, computerized record systems. This enables patients to benefit and be treated with the latest technologies owned by the big business medical practices that can afford them.

If this is the case, then why, according to a 2014 study conducted by the Commonwealth Fund, do physician-owned practices have "significantly lower" numbers of patients going to the hospital with preventable medical problems than corporate health care systems do? Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that doctors who

The New York Times, "a patient who chooses a doctor in private practice is more likely to see that same doctor during each office visit than a patient who chooses a doctor employed by a health system." The relationship with a doctor in a private practice is a real and personal one that can span years and even decades. The patient no longer becomes a name in the technologically advanced computer system or a treatment plan written down in the new efficient record system. The patient is a person who needs medical care, with an emphasis not just on the word "medical" but on the word "care," too.

A price tag cannot be placed on this relationship. This relationship fulfills an aspect of the job that the best medical technology can't by providing a personal level of medical care. Being a doctor isn't merely about knowledge — it's about emotional intelligence and connection. A study conducted by the American Journal of Public Health shows that a positive physician-patient

RYAN TURELL,  
continued from Page 10

ball in his hands, but we try to take the action away from the ball by setting lots of off-ball screens," Turell described as a reason for the success of the offensive scheme. "Because everyone on our team is a good passer, the guys that defenses need to pay attention to are the ones that are away from the ball."

A 6'7" unicorn with an efficient all-around game, Turell is used to commanding extra attention from defenders, but the style of the Macs' offense allows anyone with the ball in their hands to find the open man when the defense over-commits. No play exemplifies this more than at the end of the Sarah Lawrence game on Jan. 28.

With under 20 seconds left and the Macs down by one in the Gryphons' hostile home court, Turell drove to his left and was immediately swarmed by three defenders. Instead of hesitating, however, Turell calmly found the open man, forward Gabe Leifer (SSSB '21), wide open in the left corner. Leifer coolly drained the game-winner over his defender's outstretched arm with six seconds left.

"I told Gabe [Leifer] earlier in the game, 'If it's close at the end, it's gonna come down to either me or you,'" recalled Turell. "I had the ball at the top of the key and picked a

spot to try a pull-up jump shot. I saw Gabe leak out and his man stay near me. So I pump-faked, stepped through, and found Gabe open in the corner."

Of Leifer, Turell said "He's an amazing player. Scoring isn't even his best trait but he still broke 1,000 points for his college career. He's also a great passer and the best rebounder I've ever seen. Sometimes, it'll seem like he's having a bad night, but when you look at the stat sheet, he'll have 30 points, 12 rebounds, and five assists."

One of Leifer's several signature games came in a big win over Manhattanville on Feb. 1. The 6'5" power forward tallied a monster double-double, scoring 24 points, grabbing 16 rebounds, and distributing four assists. Leifer showed his prowess on defense in this one as well, adding a combined 5 steals plus blocks.

When asked if there was one glaring difference between the 2019 and 2020 teams, Turell immediately responded "Ofek [Reef]. Having Ofek has been a huge upgrade off the bench this season." Asked to name any specific players who have shown improvement over the season, Turell named "Caleb [Milobsky] and Eitan [Halpert]. They've been balling out."

Milobsky recently scored a career-high 19 points on a road trip to Boston at Williams University in a nail-biter. As a 6'6" big man, Milobsky's accuracy from deep was a delightful surprise; in addition to knocking down

77% of his attempts from the field, Milobsky shot an otherworldly 83% from beyond the three-point range.

Turell described that game as "the most exciting" of the season. "It was a pretty big game because that solidified the win streak [the team's 18th win in a row, breaking the school-record 17 game win streak of last season]," he remarked. "It was against a really good team that has multiple wins against ranked opponents. And since they're usually the ranked team when we play each other, it was really cool to play a game with those roles reversed."

It has been approximately one year since Farmingdale State snapped the Maccabees' then-17 game win streak. A game-tying three by then-senior guard Matthew Graham and game-winning layup by current senior forward Jermaine Fraser with one second remaining gave FSC a thrilling 80-78 victory.

When asked if he remembered that game, Turell replied "Of course I remember that game. They hit a really nice shot to tie it up, then after we turned it over, they hit a layup to win the game. We just didn't get the job done."

The Macs have not been perfect this season, as their 22 game win streak may suggest. Turell noted a few things that the team can improve on. "Offensively, we're probably the best team in the country, and there's no doubt in my mind we can score with anyone. But are we able to play tough, hard-nosed

defense for an entire game? That's what wins games in the Skyline playoffs and the NCAA tournament. If we can do that, there's no team that can beat us."

Turell's family is often the loudest in the bleachers, aiding Turell during the team's games. Jack (SSSB '17), Ryan's older brother, attends all his games and can be seen enthusiastically jumping up and down on the sidelines for all of Ryan's scores, from tough outside shots to uncontested layups. Their parents, Brad and Laurel, frequently fly out from Los Angeles to watch his games as well.

Turell described the impact of his family's presence on his play. "My mom and Jack definitely get the crowd going, they're the team's biggest fans and they make the game more exciting," he said. "My dad always gives me tips during the game, whether it's getting more lift on my shot, driving to the basket, or getting to the foul line. And knowing that my Bubbie, Zaidy, and Uncle Harvey always tune into my games is a really great feeling."

With starters Simcha Halpert (SSSB '20) and Dani Katz (SSSB '20) set to graduate at the end of the 2020 season, Turell will soon be required to improve further on his impressive numbers if the Macs expect to extend their record-breaking play into next season. The dedication he has already shown to consistently improving his game makes it safe to expect he will be up to the task.

## To the Silent Majority: We Need Your Voice

By ELAZAR ABRAHAMS

I have just begun my second semester here at Yeshiva University and absolutely love it. I've already chosen a career path, and formed bonds with my Rebbeim and professors. Most importantly, I've made great friends and found a group of like-minded students that share my Jewish and *halakhic* values.

These friends come from places like HAFTR, DRS, Frisch, MTA, and other high schools with mainstream modern orthodox *hashkafot*. I think it's fair to call the views associated with those institutions "standard." (I'm hesitant to use that word, because, of course, all this is very subjective, but I'm referring to the spectrum of Orthodox Judaism.) Students with that kind of background make up the bulk of our university. So when we read The Commentator and Observer or listen to the hock on campus, why are these not the views represented? It seems as if there is a silent majority. Why are two extremes – one pushing the university to the right, and the other pushing it to the left – the voices that get covered?

To explain what I mean, I'd like to highlight some examples from each side of the problem.

For a taste of the right, look no further than an article published last semester in the Observer about coed Shabbatons – everyone's favorite controversial topic. In the piece, a prominent student leader remarks that he and the other student leaders "had

hoped to find a way to expand our current Shabbat experience uptown for those students who do not appreciate the general caf-atmosphere with Roshei Yeshiva, Rebbeim, singing and Divrei Torah."

*So where are the middle-ground takes? Why can't you find this silent majority in the public conversation? I think it is because sadly, we aren't the ones who get involved.*

This kind of thinking is super problematic. Are those who feel comfortable attending coed programming against *divrei Torah* and *zemiroth*? Of course not! In fact, on the Shabbaton in question, plenty of *divrei Torah* were said, including a speech from a literal Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Weider. To the majority of us, it goes without saying that you can be a proud frum Jew and talk to the opposite gender! And yet, this is the perception of those in charge, creating a toxic culture on campus. No wonder these events come off as such a big deal when they should be business as usual for those who want to attend.

I've met plenty of students who share those right-wing views as well. They often scoff at any hint of liberalism. Everything that doesn't fit in their narrow worldview is labeled *kefira*. Respectfully, welcome to the world of *Torah Umadda*, where you might find something in your secular classes that makes you uncomfortable.

Then on the left, we have almost too many examples to choose from. Countless editorials in both of the papers seem like they

were selected by throwing darts at a board to randomly select what the writer is going to bash YU for this week. Most recently, an op-ed was published criticizing Stomp Out the Stigma, a popular event that brings

awareness to mental health, for its "lack of LGBTQ+ representation." The event is one of the most highly attended of the year, and blasting it for not being everything at once is just ridiculous. The organizers should be celebrated, not attacked. Let's let nice things be nice things.

The main article that comes to mind, however, is from December 2019. In the strongly-worded plea, the author calls for sweeping changes in YU's practice of Jewish law and a "fight [against] the injustices infecting" our university. In the very same article, she reveals that she no longer identifies as Orthodox, instead opting to spend Rosh Hashanah at a Conservative synagogue. Now, YU has plenty of students that aren't Orthodox, and that's more than okay. At any college, it is the right of anyone to attend. All are welcome at YU. At the same time, YU can be confident in what it is: a modern-orthodox Jewish university. As hard as it is to admit, the administration does not need to conform to any other set of values and adjust itself to fit you. Especially for those who willingly place themselves outside our

community (which again, is fine), it is arrogant and disrespectful to lead a crusade against YU.

So where are the middle-ground takes? Why can't you find this silent majority in the public conversation? I think it is because sadly, we aren't the ones who get involved. Centrists are fine standing on the sidelines while the radicals duke it out. In the world of college politics, that translates to just going about our days in class, chilling with our friends at night, with a little bit of homework thrown in. We won't be leading movements and causing a scene. There's no need for us to start a ruckus when YU's stances fit us fine. We'll laugh privately at the public feuds between the *chumrah*-heavy fringe who would love to drop the U from YU, and the boundary-pushing activists who would like nothing more than to get rid of the Y, but we will never speak up ourselves.

I know there are countless others at YU on both campuses who find themselves in the middle, in disagreement with both sides in this tug-of-war. Modern orthodoxy has worked for us our whole lives, there is no reason to fight about it now. So, to my fellow silent students out there, I urge you to get involved. That is the only way to make a difference here. Join a club. Write a piece for the Commentator. Find ways to express your opinion, even if it is not the one people usually ask for. Only then can we move past these petty arguments and focus on real progress at Yeshiva University, like fixing those cursed elevators.

## Let's Just Pretend for a Moment: Tarantino's Revisionist History Reconsidered

By JOSH LEICHTER

One of the most common phenomena in film is the billing of a film as "based on a true story" or "inspired by true events." Upon the release of these movies, however, further research indicates that they are often very loosely based on the actual events, taking creative liberties with the truth to make the movie more engaging to the audience paying to see it on the big screen. Interestingly, the backlash to this tactic of ignoring the historical truth is generally muted, as if we accept the idea that these movies are not meant to tell us what really happened. After all, isn't that what nonfiction is for? On the other side of the coin, there is furor in some circles that these movies are attempting to have their cake and eat it too, wanting us to believe this is a real event while never letting the audience consider whether or not what's being played out on screen matches reality.

With the release of "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood," director Quentin Tarantino has wrapped up what many unofficially refer to as his revisionist history trilogy, which began with 2009's "Inglorious Basterds," which followed a group of Jewish-American

soldiers during World War II eager for revenge against the Nazis and 2012's "Django Unchained," which saw the eponymous freed slave on a quest to free his wife from slavers in the pre-Civil War South. These three films look towards the historical events of World War II, American slavery and the Manson Murders of 1969 as jumping-off points for us to redirect our notions about them. Rather than being reminded of the terrible tragedies that transpired during these tumultuous times in history, the viewer is allowed to cheer when they see Hitler being killed by a Jewish soldier in a burning French theater or when a stuntman and a fading actor kill the members of the Manson Family dispatched to kill Sharon Tate, Jay Sebring and Abigail Folger on that tragic night of Aug. 8.

While some have said that these films dishonor the memory of those that suffered and perished at the hands of such sadistic individuals in history, I think that it is important to remember why we watch these types of films in the first place. We know walking into them, based on Tarantino's filmography, that we are not going to be getting a straight history lesson – if we wanted that, we'd watch a Spielberg movie instead. Rather, the way that the subject matter is addressed

by Tarantino is in such a highly stylized manner that we as the audience want to believe that this is the way the events should have taken place. That with all the blood squibs exploding in the foreground and background, maybe for just two hours we can believe that these villains did get what was coming to them and the good guys did save the day, whether by blowing up the plantation in "Django" or a theater full of the Nazi elites in "Inglorious Basterds." Yet tragically, we know once we see the card that reads "Written and Directed by Quentin Tarantino" that the reality was much more brutal to those same good guys and that unfortunately, the villains we longed to see collect their due got away with their crimes or were punished in a manner incommensurable to the atrocities they perpetrated against their victims.

But at the same time, to exist in that state of blissful ignorance is what movies are for: to let ourselves temporarily ignore the cold harshness of our world today, close our eyes to the tragedies around us and just pretend for a moment that those wearing the white hats always win and those who choose to wear black will always be foiled. Because that's what we need right now. And it's something we'll always need.



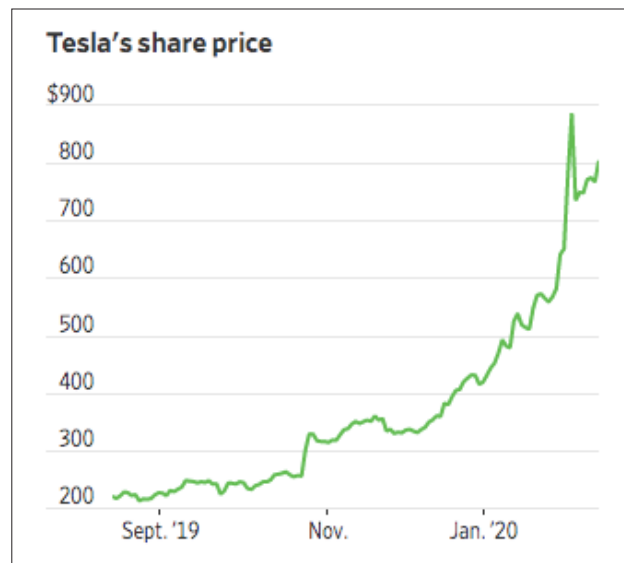
Quentin Tarantino at the Cannes Film Festival in 2014

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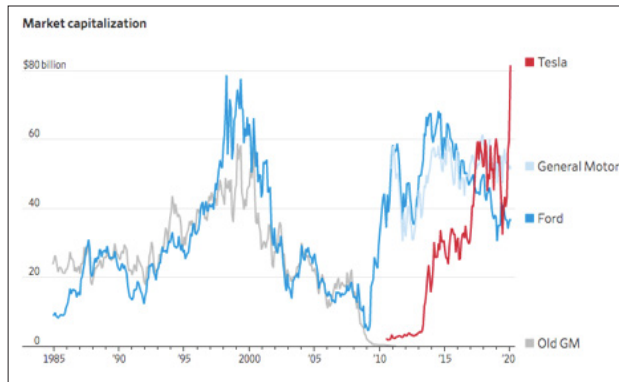
## Tesla's Electrifying Growth

By NATHAN HAKAKIAN

On Feb. 3, Tesla's stock jumped 20%, closing at a then-record \$780 per share. However, the following day, the stock was closed at \$887 a share – a 12% increase from their previous record-setting price. These stock increases followed the January announcement that Tesla had become the most valuable U.S. car producer of all-time – trailing only Toyota globally. Despite this recent success, Tesla has faced many roadblocks throughout its history, so the sudden change in fortune came as a shock to many analysts. Why the sudden increase in optimism surrounding Tesla?



Tesla was founded in 2003 by Martin Eberhard and Marc Tarpenning in San Carlos, California. A year later Elon Musk became a primary investor, pouring \$30 million into the company and securing a position as the chairman of the Board of Directors. After launching their pilot car, the Roadster, Tesla overhauled their staff and prepared to go public. In 2010 Tesla IPOed at \$17 a share (\$226 million market capitalization) despite being very unprofitable. From 2017 to 2019, Tesla experienced a series of tumultuous events that caused its stock price to drop.



Internally, CEO Elon Musk has drawn the attention of various government regulators due to a flurry of questionable tweets. In February 2018, Musk tweeted “Tesla made 0 cars in 2011 but will make around 500k in 2019.” Following this tweet, the SEC asked a local judge to hold Musk in contempt, claiming Musk had provided false information (Tesla only produced 400,000 vehicles in 2019). Additionally, on April 1, 2018, Musk tweeted “Despite intense efforts to raise money, including a last-ditch mass sale of Easter Eggs, we are sad to report that Tesla has gone completely and totally bankrupt.” This April Fool’s joke caused shares to drop by over 5%, reaching a low of \$244.59 the next day. Lastly, in August 2018, Musk tweeted that he was looking to take Tesla private at a price of \$82 billion, driving up the stock price to a high of \$371 a share. The SEC sued Musk, claiming he had misled investors (Musk settled the suit). It appeared as if every time Tesla had some positive momentum, Musk seemingly sabotaged Tesla’s growth, leading to many investors questioning his role as the face of Tesla.

But Twitter wasn’t Tesla’s only source of issues; the company has a long history of underperforming. In April 2019, Tesla reported a \$702 million loss from the first quarter of 2019. Much of this loss can be attributed to Tesla’s inability to produce the much-anticipated Model 3 which was supposed to be the car that introduced the middle class to electric vehicles. At a price of \$35,000 with a 322-mile charge and a 3.2 seconds 0-60 mph acceleration, the car was competitive with top-notch sedans. Because of its vast popularity, orders for the Model 3 sky-rocketed, leading to a mismatch in production and deliveries. Additionally, a class-action suit was brought against Tesla due to an “alarming number of

car fires” caused by damaged lithium-ion batteries.

The sudden increase in interest amongst investors was a result of the company’s recent release of its 2019 fourth-quarter financials. Tesla exceeded expectations by generating \$7.4 billion in revenue and \$105 million in net profit. Tesla has solved its delivery issues that plagued them throughout the preceding decade, delivering 367,500 vehicles in 2019. In addition to these figures, Tesla also announced that it was ahead of schedule with its production of the Model Y SUV. The current hope is that the Shanghai factory, the Gigafactory 3, will help increase sales in eco-friendly Asia. Tesla has also capitalized on short-selling, as the growing price has worried investors into buying back their stock. The panic amongst bearish investors has led to a price hike, with traders overpaying to buy back shares.



Looking forward, there is much to like about Tesla. The electric vehicle industry is growing rapidly and Tesla has a sizable head start on the rest of its competitors. Tesla is creating a collection of cars that appeal to all drivers: a sedan (Model 3), an SUV (Model X), a luxury vehicle (Model S) and a compact SUV (Model Y). What remains to be seen is if Tesla can properly scale. In a late November conference last year, Musk announced the Cybertruck, an all-electric pickup truck, which they hope will revolutionize the trucking industry. Investors were always intrigued by Tesla’s potential but just needed the numbers to validate their beliefs. Tesla has solved most of its execution problems and will continue to push the boundaries for electric vehicle production for years to come.

## An Evening with Austin Rief

By Yael Evgi

On Feb. 4, the TAMID Group, an on-campus club offering students an educational course that integrates business leadership principles with Israel’s economic landscape, brought in Morning Brew COO Austin Rief to speak about his company and journey, and to give advice to students.

For those who are unfamiliar with the company, Morning Brew is a successful newsletter subscription that delivers easily digestible news from the business world into your inbox daily. Morning Brew developed from an idea that the current CEO, Alex Lieberman, had during his college days at the University of Michigan. As a business student and tentative investment banker, Lieberman understood the necessity of keeping up with the world of the market. Almost anyone in the business world today will tell a student how important it is to keep up with the news. However, most college students do not choose to sit down with a copy of the Wall Street Journal every morning with their coffee. Lieberman came up with the idea to summarize business news in simplified English, which can be more easily understood by readers.

Lieberman decided to draft his idea by sending a sample email to the students in his fraternity and asked them for feedback. The first reply was from Rief, who thought this was a brilliant idea. Together, the two established Morning Brew in 2015. The successful newsletter has grown rapidly since



Austin Rief addressing the students of Yeshiva University

then and currently has 1.7 million subscribers. The majority of subscribers are college students and young professionals from the business world.

The newsletter now has a franchise of other specific newsletters focusing on retail news, artificial intelligence (AI), the presidential election and more. The Brew’s unique content and style of writing, which does not shy away from including memes and referencing pop culture, make reading the news enjoyable, conversational and most importantly, understandable.

Lieberman and Rief, who are 25 and 24 years old, respectively, initially aspired to be investment bankers. Both had impressive jobs at renowned firms ready for them as soon as they graduated, but the young entrepreneurs

changed the course of their careers and decided to pursue a different path. The story of Morning Brew’s success is inspiring to many students who look to pursue different trajectories in their careers but are unsure or afraid of the risk.

Rief’s session offered students ample time to ask questions and benefit from his advice. Rief explained topics ranging from venture capitalism to his personal experience working at an investment banking firm. The crowd of approximately 50 students at the event was impressive, and although the event was run by TAMID, many students who are not regular members of the club and do not attend Sy Syms School of Business were in attendance. Not everyone there was necessarily subscribed to or had even heard of

Morning Brew before, but they were there to learn about what made the corporation so successful.

“It was great speaking with TAMID YU,” commented Rief following the event. “I really enjoyed sharing the lessons I’ve learned with the students of TAMID.”

Students found the evening inspiring, and those in attendance learned a lot. Hearing Rief speak impelled me to continue reading the news and be more conscious of current events but also to see behind the lines. Being productive and aware of important current events does not strictly entail reading the daily paper. Even business news can be fun and personalized, perhaps so much so that it can even become a career.

TAMID

## The Global Economy's Coronavirus Infection

By **MAX ASH**

The world has been blindsided by the sudden outbreak of coronavirus in recent weeks and it does not look to be slowing down anytime soon. Obviously, the tragic effect the disease has had on the human population is not one to be ignored, with over 25,000 being infected and hundreds succumbing to the deadly infection. The virus emerged in Wuhan, China and has quickly swept throughout the province, with its tentacles reaching all the way out to the United States. Government officials in China have taken precautionary measures to combat the spread: a quarantine on Wuhan has been imposed, as well as a delayed opening of the stock market and travel restrictions. The markets crashed upon opening, though they stabilized the next day.

From a different perspective, investors globally are wary of the devastating effect that it can have on the global economy. In 2002, when the SARS outbreak struck China, the country was nothing like the superpower it is today. China's

share in the global economy at the time was around 5% — now it is hovering near 16%, thereby rendering comparisons to the potential impact of the coronavirus relatively useless. Not only that,

Airbus has halted production at their plant in Tianjin, which churns out six A320 aircrafts monthly. Foxconn, a major Apple supplier, shuttered most of its Chinese locations.

*Apparently, the only immunity GM holds is in its tax obligations — their factories in China have all but completely shut down.*

but the emergence of the virus during Chinese New Year celebrations has made it difficult to predict its impact, as all industries, with the exception of tourism, are normally shuttered during the period. In the commodities department, Brent crude oil prices have plunged from \$70 to \$55. One thing is definite, though: global markets have plummeted and investors are waiting for the barrage to end.

As its influence has grown, China's importance in the global supply chain has increased dramatically. Companies from Airbus to Nike manufacture components to be shipped all over the world.

Apparently, the only immunity GM holds is in its tax obligations — their factories in China have all but completely shut down. Honda has three factories in Wuhan, the epicenter of the virus. The auto industry as a whole has suffered immensely throughout this ordeal, with the estimated loss in car production expected to surpass 400,000 vehicles.

The virus has hit the retail side of companies just as hard. Retailers that rely on China for a chunk of their revenue have been hit on all sides. China's ever-present upper-middle and upper classes have been scared to go outside and visit their

favorite brands. Not that it even matters, though: virtually all global retailers have closed or imposed reduced hours at their locations in China. Nike, Adidas and Starbucks are among the brands taking these precautions. The importance of the Chinese consumer to global businesses is self-explanatory and those businesses' revenue predictions have been adjusted to account for recent developments. Thanks to its thriving middle class, Chinese spending accounts for roughly 33% of the luxury goods market. This puts fashion houses such as Burberry, which relies on 16% of its revenue from the Chinese consumer, in a bind.

With her population estimated at over 1.4 billion people, China, expectedly, sends out over 150 million tourists to locations throughout the world annually. According to the China Tourism Agency, over \$130 billion was spent by Chinese tourists overseas in the past year. In an expected move, virtually all countries have imposed some variation of travel restrictions on citizens traveling to and from China. Most major airlines have

suspended their flights involving China for the foreseeable future. Japan, whose tourism industry is dominated by Chinese tourists, has been knocked off balance.

There is a small yet intriguing positive element to the whole ordeal, though. With the majority of Chinese office workers being told to work from home, numerous companies are experimenting with video conferencing technologies such as Zoom, one of a few "winners" during this period. Zoom's stock price has jumped nearly 20% since the virus's emergence, and investors are optimistic at the company's prospects. How could this be a positive? Well, the "work from home" concept has slowly become more accepted across certain industries and the situation in China will undoubtedly serve as a mass-scale test to gauge the concept's strengths and weaknesses.

Chinese doctors have predicted the virus will peak soon, and only then will its true impact allow for markets to accurately adjust.

## Netflix in Your Local Theater

By **NOAM GERSHOV**

The 2020 Oscars are tucked away in the annals of entertainment history, but streaming-giant Netflix is just donning its figurative tuxedo. For more than a decade, Netflix has primarily operated as an online streaming platform. The company launched this service in 2007 after seeing that its DVD-by-mail rental model was faltering. The digital library started small with around 1,000 titles, but movies and TV shows were steadily added. In 2013, in addition to what it had already accumulated, Netflix initiated a new business strategy; namely, it began producing original content. House of Cards, the company's first production, became an immediate success, and other successful shows followed.

were not instantly placed on the site.

In order for a film to qualify for an Oscar nomination, the Academy requires that a film be shown in a theater for at least one week in either New York or Los Angeles. Considering that online streaming is therefore not a sufficient mode for dispensing its films, Netflix signed a lease with the owner of the Paris Theater near midtown Manhattan. "Marriage Story" aired in this theater and "The Irishman" in a second venue, turning these films into Oscar contenders. In fact, the company's efforts were not futile, as Netflix led the 2020 Oscars in nominations and even won two awards.

At first glance, associating itself with other impressive studios seems inconsistent. Netflix has become a successful company specifically because it offers its content digitally. Other

*Netflix must embark on a new direction to ensure that old customers renew their subscriptions and new ones are convinced to join.*

However, Netflix has not been the sole occupier of this market for quite some time. Amazon Prime Video, Hulu, Apple TV+, and Disney+ have become household names. Like Netflix, they also offer exclusive digital content and original productions, removing any competitive advantage Netflix once had. According to Forbes.com, the average American subscribes to 3.4 streaming services, so Netflix is forced to innovate in order to once again distinguish itself from its competitors. Netflix must embark on a new direction to ensure that old customers renew their subscriptions and new ones are convinced to join.

Netflix seems to have chosen a perplexing strategy. The company has gradually gravitated towards defining itself as an Oscar-worthy production studio, setting itself apart from most of its competitors. For instance, in August and September of 2019, Netflix collaborated with esteemed Hollywood directors to respectively release "Marriage Story" and "The Irishman." Unlike any of Netflix's previously produced films that were directly uploaded to its digital library, these movies

production studios create films for the big screens, but Netflix creates original content for the exclusive viewing of its subscribers. Nevertheless, these recent projects indicate that Netflix is attempting a new approach.

Perhaps Netflix values credibility. Oscar nominations and victories certainly establish the company as reputable and professional. This esteem places Netflix in a higher league, so subscribers may be willing to pay more for this content. Additionally, Netflix might see an opportunity to increase its revenues by entering the movie theater business. Although streaming in the United States and globally has grown exponentially, it is not killing movie theaters. On the contrary, a study conducted by EY's Quantitative Economics and Statistics group found that people who stream more also frequent the theaters more. This finding counterintuitively suggests that the more one streams online, the more one buys movie tickets. Thus, perceiving that the relationship is complementary, perhaps it is economically wise for Netflix to operate in physical theaters and create Oscar-winning films.



Taking Netflix to the movie theaters

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