



The Yeshiva University Observer

The Official Newspaper of Stern College for Women

December 19, 2000

Volume XLIV Number 3

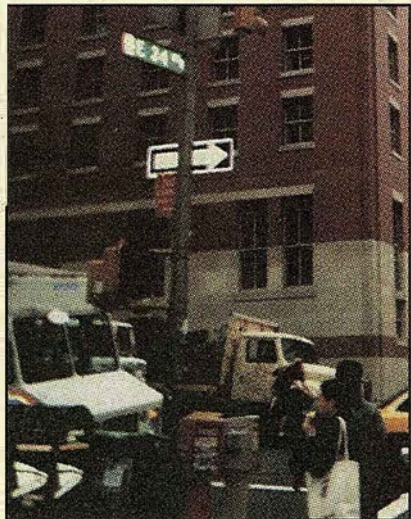
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Opus Dei Opens

Catholic Outreach Office Revamps 34th St.

By: Alexandra Beard

Murray Hill Place, the impressive new building on the corner of 34th Street and Lexington next to Stern College, has been mistaken for a Catholic Boys' school as well as Stern College for Women itself. But if one reads the sign in front, the name "Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei" makes the prospect of the seventeen-floor building less likely to be part of Stern.



Neither will there be hundreds of Catholic schoolboys bumping into coffee-clutching Stern women in long black skirts on their way to class. The building is the national headquarters of Opus Dei, meaning "Work of G-d," an organization founded by the Catholic Church. Its mission, according to Tona Varela, the assistant to the head of the national offices in NY, is to coach and teach Christian lay people, professionals, and students to bring Christianity into their everyday lives.

The mission of Opus Dei does not stop at helping only Christians to bring Christianity into their lives. According to opusdei.org, "The mission of Opus Dei is to promote among Christians of all social classes a life in the middle of the world fully consistent with their faith and to contribute to the evangelization of every sphere of society."

Furthermore, it states, "the faithful of the Prelature carry out the work of evangelization in every sector of society." With such an organization next to Stern College, threatening situations might be a possibility. "Be cautious and watchful," advises Rabbi Shlomo Hochberg, SCW Guidance Counselor and professor of Judaic Studies. "I wouldn't expect them to have contact with us, but if they do, we should be on guard."

According to Dean Karen Bacon, SCW was aware of the nature of Opus Dei before the building even went up. "We knew who they were," explains Bacon. "They do proselytize. But education protects all of us from threats and it is the door to freedom of choice. We have a very strong Jewish education system at Stern and it will enable students to make informed decisions in whatever situation they encounter. There's a book in the Stern library about a woman who was once involved in Opus Dei but dropped out because she said it was a secretive organization that didn't give its members freedom," Bacon said.

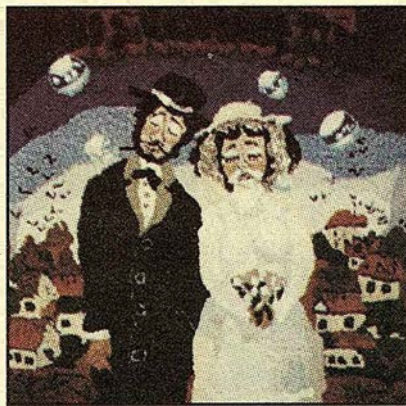
Opus Dei has two entrances, one for men and one for women. The building contains the US offices of Opus Dei, which function to oversee the activities of all US centers. The Opus Dei building also holds a conference center for overnight symposiums as well as residential space for staff who work at the headquarters and for guests. When fully staffed, Opus Dei will have approximately 75 people living in its housing. Although the building is fully functioning at present, construction will be completed in late Spring 2000.

What SCW Women Should Strive For Today

Answers May Lie in a Piece of Art

By: Sari Moskowitz

Recently the halls of SCW have been abuzz with discussions about the relatively new wall hanging in the SRH dining room. The tapestry displays an image of a bride and groom standing under a wedding canopy. Yet when looking at this piece of artwork, one cannot help but question why the SCW administration would choose to display a wedding scene in a school that already has a reputation for being a "marriage mart."



Tapestry hanging in Schottenstein Lobby

Many students have hypothesized that the tapestry conveys a subliminal message, subconsciously urging unsuspecting students to jump on the marriage bandwagon. Yet another group of students asserts that it is simply a beautiful piece of art, chosen to adorn an otherwise lackluster wall. Nevertheless, the question remains; what message is this image sending to the young, impressionable students of SCW?

The attention-grabbing wall hanging was fashioned by an Israeli artist, and was donated to SCW by Dr. Marcia Wilf, a member of the YU's board of directors who occasionally makes generous contributions to SCW, including a recent gift of \$1 million. Unfortunately, Dr. Wilf declined comment for this article. However, one SCW dean maintains that Dr. Wilf was captivated by the unique artistry on a recent trip to Israel, and decided to buy it for the school because it was an "attractive, whimsical picture."

Ariella Dworetzky, an SCW sophomore, is distressed at the undue emphasis placed on what should be a simple piece of artwork. Says Dworetzky, "I think people should stop searching for a hidden meaning in a modest wall hanging. It's just a nice piece of art." Leah, a SCW junior, agrees. She maintains that "based on the rising divorce rate among Americans, and increasingly among YU couples, one should not place unnecessary stress on the importance of getting married at such a young age. Such stress includes, of course, needlessly interpreting artwork in the Schottenstein dining room."

However, many students disagree with Leah, claiming that the new art work just encourages young, eligible women to start thinking about preparing for marriage in the future. Insists one SCW junior "there's nothing wrong with displaying a piece of art that clearly reminds SCW students that they are at the stage of life where it is appropriate to think about marriage. They are just prompting us to look ahead and think about the future." As if we need the reminder.

Schumer Discusses Peace Process at Chanukah Dinner

By: Chana Rosenblatt

Senator Charles Schumer urged Israel to continue with a peace process beset with problems from within and without despite the many setbacks it has encountered with its contentious peace partner in his keynote address delivered at YU's Annual

Chanukah Dinner in the Waldorf-Astoria in Midtown.

"My heart yearns for peace but my head says to be careful," said Schumer, D- New York. He spoke of the many years of violence and bloodshed that has characterized the Middle East peace process.

continued on page 6

Larceny in the Cafeteria

By: Michelle Fogel

An almost nonexistent crime rate allows students, faculty, and administration at Stern to enjoy a relatively safe campus, one where lost possessions are often returned and backpacks frequently left unguarded for short periods of time in lounge and study areas, with no harm done. But for some Midtown campus workers like Marco Figueroa, thinking the Stern campus was crime-free may have led to the theft of approximately \$1000 of his money, reportedly the largest amount of money stolen at YU.

Approximately one week ago, cafeteria worker Marco Figueroa, employee at SCW for nearly four years, was working in a cafeteria kitchen also occupied by a housekeeper, Mashgiach, two electricians and another cafeteria worker. He said he brought a cellphone in a case with \$800 in cash tucked inside to work and placed it on a high shelf in the kitchen while he went downstairs. When he came back, the cellphone, case and money were missing.

"I felt violated," Figueroa said. "I don't know who did it, but it made me so upset. That was my rent money."

As he was discussing his stolen items with another employee, the cafeteria worker who was in the kitchen when Figueroa left his cellphone unguarded approached him and offered him \$240 in cash, a blank check, and a credit card "for him to pay his rent." The worker told him not to worry about paying the cash back. Figueroa said he refused the money but was puzzled why a worker would offer him so much money with no strings attached, and described his relationship with this fellow cafeteria worker as "not on good terms."

Figueroa said he told YU security, his labor union, and the NYPD about his stolen possessions. An empty cellphone case was later recovered. Because of the \$1000 value of the stolen possessions, \$800 in cash and a \$200 cellphone, this theft counts as larceny, and is punishable by up to five years of jail time.

The day following the theft, Figueroa noted, the cafeteria worker who was in the kitchen when the cellphone was left unguarded was sent home, and apparently suspended indefinitely. The suspended worker is thought to have a previous record of petty crimes, but has not been charged

continued on page 7



SCW Students Faint at Blood Drives

Page 6



Review of the YU Plays

Page 8



Do Jewish Bar-Bands Corrupt Yeshiva Kids?

Page 8

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Message from the Editors



Deborah
Bienenfeld
Editor-in-Chief

A friend who is at Columbia University went to a popular kosher

restaurant recently with a fellow student, who happens to be Asian. The two of them were the subject of stares, and as he excused himself from the table for a moment, another patron in the restaurant (who knows my friend, though not well) went to find out about the situation. Why was she out with this guy? What's the deal? She did not answer, but seethed.

Someone asked me recently if I regret my decision to come to Stern. After all, other colleges could have offered me much more in terms of education, career opportunities, and campus life. But I believe that benefit can be had from every situation, provided there is an impetus to strive for it. I have gained tremendously from my experiences at Stern College; learning more than I once thought possible, and becoming involved in a way that might have been impossible elsewhere. Among my only regrets is the lack of diversity, which goes along with attending one of the only Orthodox women's colleges in the US.

It is not that there is something inherently good about people who are different, but that there is good in new and different perspectives. Is diversity that important? Are we really lacking by living in our ghettoized places which we call Yeshiva day school, Yeshiva University, the Upper West Side and Teaneck? Someone who follows that path might not realize they are lacking, but it often leads to prejudice and a sense of cultural and social superiority.

I regret missing out on multiculturalism and the ability to learn about and appreciate different backgrounds firsthand. While it's true that our student body is made up of women from all over, the diversity is not prevalent enough to overcome the dominant power of the Jewish, American, mid-upper class and orthodox majority. We have similar beliefs, ideals, lifestyles, and values, which do not lend themselves to future acceptance of other opinions, or the possibilities that someone with differences might be right too, or dare I say, instead.

I am angry that as much as I try, my view of the world as primarily Jewish remains. It is difficult to dispel the ingrained notion that we, Jews, are the center of the world. And it's difficult to change this mentality when our whole lives revolve around Jews in Jewish institutions. Of course, there will be those to say, "it's so nice that our whole lives are about Jews and we are able to create a Torah society in exile." But it is not nice when we develop a superiority, animosity and disrespect for other cultures. We don't want to associate with the evils of non-Jewish corrupt society, so we stick with our own. This is close-minded, prejudiced, and false. I am not proposing assimilation, which some who are reading will ignorantly accuse me of, I am merely discussing the importance of acceptance. But acceptance can only come through interaction, understanding and respect.

**The Observer
Wishes Everyone
Good Luck
on Finals**



Michelle Fogel
Executive Editor

Money. At YU, we see it every day. In the naming of buildings, in the various courses we take, on plaques as we walk through our school or residence halls, and in the selection of furniture for the dorms. The annual YU Chanukah Dinner, which took place two weeks ago at the Waldorf-Astoria, was full of it. Money was the code word of the evening, and boy was there plenty of it.

Presumably, to be a good philanthropist, one must believe in the cause he or she donates to, and at YU this is no exception. For every dollar donated to YU either in someone's name or anonymously, there is a philanthropist with a reason why, an underlying motive of their reasons for willingly parting with so much money in return for only dinner and a plaque. In fact, YU put together a video for the Chanukah Dinner which attempted to summarize the hopes and dreams of YU philanthropists in ten-second sound bites. Most have been active in their respective communities, and hoped to



Adina Levine
Executive Editor

My friend Carmit died a few months ago. Not that the pain was worse than when my great-grandmother died, my Bubby or my two Zaides passed away--but it was different. Different because she was a contemporary and contemporaries aren't supposed to die, not at 20 years old. Twenty year olds are supposed to dance at masquerades, go white-water rafting, and sing at birthday parties - as in fact she had done with me just a few months before in Camp Simcha. And now, unfortunately, she's gone to a better place while I sit here and write, left to carry on her legacy of an upbeat attitude in the face of death. And that lesson touched me deeply, having myself been diagnosed with cancer two years ago.

I didn't understand it at first. What was the doctor talking about? Cancer? Me? I was going shopping that afternoon. I had a Torah Bowl match the next day. I was strong and healthy. He had to be kidding.

And then I saw my dad crying. You have to understand something about my dad. He never cries. The only time I ever saw my dad cry was when my grandmother had died - almost 8 years before. Only then did I understand that this experience was going to be worse than I imagined.

The hardest thing at the begin-

ning was breaking the news to people when I hadn't fully come to terms with it myself. When I first told my friend of my diagnosis, I began by saying, "I have bad news. Are you alone?" She responded, "Are we in a fight?" And I marveled to myself at what an innocent life we led that the worst news heretofore was that we were in a fight.

Needless to say, at the beginning, there were a lot of tears. Why me? Why did I have to give up going to school? Why did I have to go to the hospital every day? I couldn't think about that. Asking the unanswerable question of "why" brought me down. But I'm here to tell you how: How I got through chemotherapy, how I fought radiation, how I survived cancer. And the answer is better than any prescription the specialists can recommend: an upbeat attitude. The secret to success is to go through the treatment with a laugh, and come home with a story to tell. I remember, during one of the numerous tests, watching as the technician wrote down that my race was Caucasian. I was very distraught and upset at this assessment, and reacted strongly, "I'm not Caucasian! I'm not Caucasian!"

The technician looked at me with a blank face, "So what are you?" "I'm white!" I answered. When the technician began to laugh, I became even more upset. Maybe I wasn't white? Maybe all these years I had thought I was white when I was really part of some obscure race called Caucasian? Maybe I was even adopted?!

The technician narrowly pre-

vented my nervous breakdown by explaining to me that "Caucasian" and "white" were the same race, in politically correct terms. At this point I was even more upset because on all my college applications, I had passed over "Caucasian," circled "Other," and written next to it "White." Luckily, I still got into Stern.

But as funny as this story was when it happened it became funnier each time I told it over, and it made someone else feel better to hear this funny anecdote in the face of sickness. If I was upbeat, I made others happy, which in turn made me feel better. It was a cyclical cycle of happiness that could have otherwise been a desert of gloom.

I won't pretend that there weren't emotional issues. I won't pretend that it wasn't hard. But - learning from Carmit, I know that a good attitude makes it easier. Carmit used to joke to us, to make us laugh, and I learned a lot from Carmit.

I still don't know the answer to why it happened to me, and probably never will. But I can say that looking back on it now, there was a lot of good that came out of it. I learned to appreciate things that I had previously taken for granted. When I look back at my sickness now, it is not with regret, it is not with sorrow, it is not with a question of "why?" It was something that was, an experience that I had that truly made me stronger. It is as Nietzsche said, What didn't kill me made me stronger.

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EDITORIALS

The Meaning of Tosh

By: Alexandra Beard

"You must view the world like a National Geographic photographer on the job-totally objectively," my father wisely explained to me. Three years ago I was privileged with the opportunity to visit Tosh, an Eastern European-style town in Broisband, Montreal, to see first hand how the Toshever Chassidim live. Tosh's complete separation of men and women in all aspects of life, 18th century dress, and pebbled roads with the stop signs in French puzzled me. But only now I can understand how much "their" lifestyle resembles "ours" as Jews living in the modern world.

But what impacted me the most about Tosh was their emphasis on the importance of beauty. Not beauty in the purely aesthetic sense, as in an end in of itself. Rather, beauty as dignity, as a means to serve our Creator, as a tool to channel the physical into the spiritual. From the gourmet food to the mikvah that was more like a sports complex than a hole in a frozen lake, Tosh taught me that Judasim is about using the material for loftier purposes. And the people of Tosh certainly accomplished this ideal.

Putting perspective into practice, the people of Tosh utilized beauty in creating one of the fundamental symbols of Jewish spiritual life: the beis medresh. This house of study was certainly not a house by any standard,

considering that it looked more like a university backed with a nice grant rather than a synagogue basement full of books. And similar to a university, it opened its doors to hundreds of students, many from all parts of the world. "Why we build a beautiful building for the students," the Toshever Rebbe has said, "is because if you treat students like kings, they will understand how to respect Hashem as the King."

During our week-end stay at Tosh, my family and I were invited to a luncheon at a family in the community. Among the guests were Mr. and Mrs. Jay Schottenstein, a name all too familiar to Stern students. The lunch was typical of Tosh's elevating the physical to the spiritual: exquisite food and dishes, and the men sitting in one room and the women in another. The afternoon was enjoyable, but only three years later did I realize its significance.

This year at Stern I live in the Schottenstein Residence Hall. Anyone who walks into this beautiful building can't help but not be impressed by its taste and dignity. Every aspect of Schottenstein is made from the best of the best, from the velour chairs and curtains in the shul to the leather in-bound tables and magnitude of sefarim in the beis medresh. While davening in the beis medresh on the second floor one morning, I

realized: *this is Tosh*. These beautiful surroundings are being used as a conduit for my fellow students and me to serve Hashem. It then occurred to me that, of course, it was the Schottenstein family who also understood the worth of using the physical for the spiritual, who had graciously endowed Stern College with this stunning residence hall. Tosh taught me a very important lesson. The Schottensteins have used that lesson to bring it to all of us, making it into a place where we live, sleep and enjoy each other's company. And in the spirit of that lesson, Stern College has done the same, creating a beautiful learning environment in 215 Lex, use the state-of-the-art computer labs, and appreciate for yourself the gift we have been given. Recall what the Toshever Rebbe said about treating students well. "Build a beautiful building for students because if they are treated as kings, they will understand how to respect Hashem as the King."

The next time you nonchalantly slump into those comfy velour chairs in Schottenstein or go up the escalator dazed in 215 Lex, remember that these places in SCW were created precisely with you in mind, to enhance your experience at Stern, and to bring home the valuable lesson that the physical is merely a means to a greater, more meaningful end.

Human Potential

By: Sari Strulowitz

At one point in Mother Teresa's career, the angelic woman was asked how she was able to maintain such a youthful appearance, especially with such a demanding lifestyle, she replied, "Sometimes a good feeling from inside is worth much more than a beautician."

I decided to do bikur cholim my first year at Stern. We knocked on the door and were told to "please come in" by a middle aged woman who was clearly an observant Jew. Mrs. Weiss had been rushed to the hospital one week ago by Hatzalah because she was short of breath, and the doctors discovered that Mrs. Weiss had a disease in which blood clots formed on her lungs.

For some reason after Mrs. Weiss told us about her illness, she opened up to us about her life at home. She told us to guess how many children she had, with a hint asking us if we ever heard people say that a woman who has seven sons has a special place in the world to come. But then Mrs. Weiss preceded to tell us that her own sister in law tells her that Mrs. Weiss will still not have that special place in the world to come because she has seven daughters as well. We had a newfound respect for this woman with fourteen children.

Suddenly, a well-dressed elderly lady appeared at the door. Mrs. Weiss was sincerely happy to see that her mother in law was the visitor. After all of the introductions were over, the elderly lady began to empty the contents of her bag onto the patient's table, but first neatly spread a newly ironed lace cloth napkin on the small standard hospital table. Then this great grandmother placed her finest china and silverware on top of the napkin. Finally, the homemade chicken cutlet, mashed potatoes, vegetables, and dessert were neatly arranged on the plates. I was in shock! This elderly woman had traveled, in the evening, from New Jersey into New York City to bring her sick daughter-in-law a home cooked dinner. And the dinner was to be served on fine china too!! Wow! I thought I was such a martyr for putting off my studying for a couple of hours in order to brighten up a sick person's night, boy was I wrong.

That night I was definitely put in my

place. I started to reevaluate how I had performed my acts of kindness all of these years and how much more I could have helped the people I thought I was impacting. Would I have even thought to bring a home-cooked meal to someone. I thought about all of the times I came home for a weekend and did not make the extra effort to visit my grandmother. But, people always comment on how nice I am... I thought of that homeless man who wears a kippah and that I did not even have the courage to look him in the eye when I passed by and did not take the time to offer him a dollar.

But, then I began to think about that fellow student who pushed the elevator button for me in the cafeteria when my hands were full. And then I remembered once noticing another homeless man eating out of a Stern Cafeteria lunch container. Or that other friend who gave up a vacation in Florida because he was needed to work at a home for the mentally challenged instead. I finally smiled to myself thinking about my friend who just called one night before a big test of hers to see how I was doing because I did not seem quite right earlier that day.

So all of this thinking brought me to a new conclusion. People really are nice and thoughtful; they just need that extra push sometimes to realize how much more thoughtful they can be. I realized that it was kind of me to go to the hospital that night, but that I should not think that I am doing all I can do. I realized that kind acts are really boundless and infinitesimal. And that is the brilliance of what Mother Teresa once said. Those people who make kind acts their life's mission truly are beautiful. It really is a simple equation, the more services one does for others, the better that individual feels on the inside, and in turn the happier and more vibrant the individual appears to others.

This is why when forty-five year old Mrs. Weiss asked me how old I thought she was, I said "thirty-five." Only a woman who devotes her entire existence to fourteen other individuals can look ten years younger, even when she is in the hospital and sick. This is also why Mrs. Weiss was sincerely happy to see her mother-in-law because the elderly lady's kind actions' clearly spread joy to others.

Now I challenge you to do one extra nice thing for someone else today, and let's see how much better you feel when you look at yourself in the mirror tonight.

All are invited to partake in free ice cream sundaes And watch Newsies on December 19 in the Brookdale lobby! Sponsored by the Sophomore Class of SCWSC

Dear Editor:

As I read the lovely article in the Observer written by Ms. Ester Yehudis Zipris, the words "Tzena, Tzena" leaped out to me. In the corner of my mind, I recalled my Savta singing this wonderful tune and telling me something about it. I showed Ms. Zipris's article to Savta and asked her to tell me once again her story of Tzena. I want to share this with you in her words:

"In the late 1940's, my friends and I loved to sing. We sang every chance we got. In the summertime, we would meet on the Boardwalk at Beach 85 Street in the Rockaways and harmonize Hebrew songs together with perhaps 100 other Orthodox young adults. My friends were part of a choral group led by the brilliant musician, Mr. Julius Grossman. Julius was the music director at the Brooklyn Jewish Center where I worked after school.

"One Sunday afternoon, as my group gathered on the Boardwalk, a newcomer was among us. His name was Davis - I think Yitzchok was his first name. He had just returned from Israel where he had lived for a while. He was very excited about a song they were singing in

Israel. He then sang 'Tzena, Tzena' to us. However the song had only two stanzas. The words were 'tzena tzena habanut urenna, chayalim bamoshava; al na titchabehah mi ben chayil ish tzava.' We thought that these verses and the lively music could work into a good piece for our choir.

"I personally brought this tune to our choirmaster, Julius Grossman. He listened and liked it. We could not trace the composer. Julius felt like it was missing a strong finish. He sat down at the piano. He began to play the two stanzas until he had it down pat, and so did I. As I sang one verse, he played the second. It sounded really good as a round but was not long enough. Then he began to finger some notes and quickly wrote them down. I was with him as he worked on this for an hour. He was not completely satisfied. So he put it away only to continue the next afternoon. When I arrived at my job, he excitedly called me to come to the music room. There, in my presence, he completed the third stanza was 'Tzena' with a clap of the hands and a great beat. At last he had the perfect stanza to round out the original two.

"He taught the completed song to us and we sang it as our finale in all our cantatas and performances

from then on. Everyone left our shows singing or humming 'Tzena.'

"It wasn't until several years later that we suddenly heard the Weavers' recording of 'Tzena, tzena' in English. And, sure enough, there - as the finale - was Julius Grossman's third stanza. We could not believe our ears. We were very excited for Julius but our excitement was premature. He was never able to get any recognition or royalties for his music because, from what I could gather, he did not hold a copywrite on it. His stanza was never copywritten. Can you imagine how it feels to hear your music all these years and never get anything out of it?

"Today, Julius is a resident in a home in Miami.

"Mr. Pete Seeger told the audience at the meeting celebrating Issachar Miron's birthday that he first heard the song when a young man brought it to his attention. Whoever this young man was, he must have heard it at one of Julius Grossman's performances since the final stanza was already in place and the music was there on the Weaver's recording."

And, as Paul Harvey would say, that's the rest of the story.

- Dafna Schindler

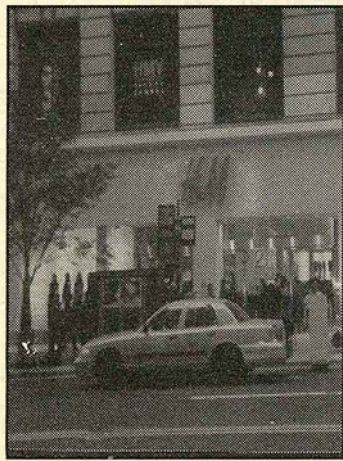
The Fashion Alien Lands in H&M

By: Devorah Helmus

When approached by the Observer to write an article on the clothing store H&M and given a budget of \$50, I thought it would be an interesting opportunity to see what all the hype was about since it's become such a huge part of Stern popular culture. Additionally it was the ideal opportunity to update my somewhat raggedy wardrobe. Since I have the fashion knowledge of a flea, I decided to write the article as a review from the perspective of a spectator.

I took a friend and walked over to H&M, located on 34th street between 5th and Broadway, and entered the store. "Huge" and "overwhelming" were words that first came to mind along with "mayhem" and "chaos." The store is enormous - almost a mini-mall in itself. There are three levels: the bottom floor consists of rack after rack of jackets, sweaters, shirts and slacks. The main level is filled with displays of women's clothing, with trays of accessories off to the side. The top floor contains children's clothing.

The overall impression of the store is like a flea market crossed with the Gap. There are tons of people, tons of racks, and trendy looking colorful clothing. Everything appeared at first glance to be either



spandex or fur. There was also glittery silver holiday clothing that looked like it belonged on a disco floor. Strong bright autumn colors, deep purples, browns and pinks caused overwhelming sensory overload. I realized though, that by picking through the racks, a person could find some less flamboyant, serviceable clothing.

There were throngs of people everywhere. Incidentally I was separated from my friend, and I never found her after that. Sorry Babette! While looking at items of clothing I was pushed and shoved by crowds of aggressive, scary, New York ladies. I found myself giving in to the mob mentality as I grabbed an armload of stuff to bring in to the dressing room, stomping over an old helpless woman. The area in front of the dressing room reminded me of a breadline in Moscow. A poor man in the front tried to maintain order, but unfortunately he was not equipped with a stun gun. His only recourse was to feebly shout "Order!" in the face of the stampede.

I finally got into the dressing room and tried on clothing. Oddly enough the sizes available don't cover a very broad spectrum. Or rather they cover the very broad and the very thin, but no one in between. However I managed to find some things that fit me.

They had very reasonable prices. Prices ranged from as little as \$5 for a shirt to a maximum of \$50 for a ski jacket. There was a buy-one-get-one-free deal on all marked items. I deliberated, and considered the budget of \$50 I was given. In the end the items I acquired were the following (with the two-for-one deal in consideration): two skirts for \$15, a cardigan for \$25, two t-shirts for \$3.50, and a shirt for \$13. Grand total = \$56.75, including tax. A bit over but I got so much I'll cover the difference.

My overall assessment of my H&M experience? Positive. It's given me a valuable crash course in New York sociological behavior of shoppers (completely barbaric, maybe they should rename it S&M) and additionally, though the environment is chaos I came out with good quality, cheap, warm clothing. My advice: if you have a lot of time, not a lot of cash, and military training, then H&M is a good choice.

What Do You Know About Sleep?

By: Romy Rosenbaum

What can give you a cold, make you clumsy, make you feel blue, and make studying for that test extra hard? Inadequate sleep. Inadequate sleep impairs the immune system, stifles learning and motor function, and contributes to poor mental health as well as hurting your well being and your happiness.

All of this might sound quite alarmist and overblown—but it's not. And if this seems to be new information, it's because we live in a society which usually ignores the necessity for sleep and the consequences of sleep deprivation. A National Sleep Foundation study revealed that the average college student sleeps 6.8 hours each night. Students experience tremendous pressure to do it all—school, extra-curricular activities, family, and a social life. With limited hours each day, something has to give, and that's usually sleep. But if students knew the consequences of too little sleep, they might act differently.

With lack of sleep the brain slows down, concentration suffers, simple tasks become much more dif-

icult, memory becomes impaired, and more mistakes happen at work and at home. Speech becomes slurred, and reaction time lengthens. Activities such as typing become slower, and sleep deprivation following a week of study can cause students to lose as much as 30% of what they learned (Study by Carlyle Smith at Trent University, Ontario, Canada).

Furthermore, sleep affects our mental state. Inadequate sleep causes irritability and mood swings. One study done at the University of Pennsylvania produced conclusive results. Dr. William C. Dement, a leading sleep expert, reported, "people who get less than a full night's sleep feel significantly less happy, more stressed, more physically frail, and more mentally and physically exhausted as a result. Overall scores for general mood and vigor declined steadily over the test days. When the volunteers were allowed to get more sleep again, their mood scores quickly bounced back to near what they had been before" (Dement, The Promise Of Sleep 277).

But even more importantly, the study

showed that the more sleep debt someone carries, and the longer they carry it, the worse they feel. The study showed that "the lousiness of the volunteers' mood rose right along with their accumulating sleep debt" (Dement 278). This means that even if somebody slept for seven hours each night, they felt worse the longer the sleep diet continued, even though they were sleeping the same amount. This is because they were accumulating a sleep debt. "This fact implies that even a little sleep debt will make us feel a little down, a little stressed, a little less happy than we would be if we got more sleep" (Dement 278).

Take notice: **most of us are walking around feeling lousy without understanding that this isn't how we have to feel.** Just as people think it's normal to feel sleepy while driving, while sitting in a hot room, or after a meal, we probably think it is normal to feel as cross as we do, to be as easily irritated at small annoyances, to feel as if we are just going through the motions all day long. **This research suggests that lowering sleep debt can make us feel better, happi-**

er, more vigorous and vital. (Dement 276).

Studies done by the American Cancer Society have found that sleep directly affects longevity even more than other factors such as blood pressure, cholesterol, diet or exercise. A study in Finland showed that poor male sleepers were 6.5 times more likely to die, and women were 3.5 times more likely to die than good sleepers. Other studies have shown that short sleepers have more doctors' visits a year, and get more infections, than those who sleep more. Finally, according to Dement, "There is plenty of compelling evidence supporting the argument that sleep is the most important predictor of how long you will live, perhaps more important than whether you smoke, exercise or have high blood pressure or cholesterol levels" (Dement 262).

Now you know you need sleep for your health, wealth and happiness. So stay tuned for your next installment of the sleep chronicles to find out if you're sleeping enough and to learn how to sleep better.

Right Wing Youth Group Tries to Reclaim Former Glory

By: Miriam Colton

While trying to rejuvenate itself to its former glory as one of the premier right wing Jewish youth, Betar sponsored a public forum aimed at inspiring youth activism in light of the current violence in Israel. The forum, cosponsored by the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), featured Moshe Arens, a member of the Israeli Knesset "There is a state of emergency in Israel," declared Arens. "Now we need Betar and the United States."

The forum was held at the ZOA building in Manhattan, with an audience of about one hundred and fifty, most of whom were students. The topic of the forum, "What CNN Doesn't Want You to Know," was aimed at educating the audience on the truth regarding Israel and the Middle East, thereby hoping to arouse them to activism.

Moshe Arens, former Israeli Foreign Minister and Defense Minister, explained how in the past decade the Palestinians have effectively turned to civil insurrection, terrorism and propaganda, intended to

make Israel appear brutal in the eyes of the world. Arens also described how the Intifada, the years of Palestinian unrest and violence beginning in 1987, succeeded in producing pictures of supposed Israeli brutality on television. "We must not accept the lies of the TV and the media," he emphasized. "We must respond."

The evening also featured speeches by college stu-

dents who are leaders in Betar. Aaron Horwitz, a freshman at Columbia University, explained how he was motivated to become an activist, and described his experiences the previous year in the Israeli army. Horwitz explained how in the past few weeks he has turned on the TV only to see friends and former comrades fighting in Gaza; boys who only want a normal and enjoyable life. "I had to do something," said Horwitz, rallying the audience. "People our age are fighting, guys who just want to have fun, hang out with their girlfriends, and go home

for the weekends. We must get involved and take the future of the Jewish people in our hands."

The leaders of Betar and the organizers of the event were satisfied with the turnout and the effectiveness of the forum. "We used

Arens' status to get students to attend and to get a database of young people," said Sagi Goldberg, a volunteer at

Betar, surveying the crowd. Recent Betar activities have included rallies in support of Israel, raising money for families of kidnapped Israeli soldiers, holding weekly discussion groups, and most recently, organizing the mass upcoming trip to lobby in the Capitol.

Matt Belsky, an American-Israeli junior at Lawrence High School, came with three friends to hear the famed Arens and to show his support for Israel. "My mom used to be in Betar, and my Dad fought in the Yom Kippur War," explained Belsky. "I used to be in the

Jewish Defense League (JDL) but they didn't do enough. I'm going to try out Betar." Ariela Dworetzky, from Long Island, also came to hear Arens and Klein, but was not especially impressed with the speeches and felt their almost forty-five minute speeches were too long. "They've got brains, but they're not great speakers," she said.

At the end of the event a spontaneous meeting of a dozen students gathered to discuss future events, such as the mass demonstration to take place February 22, 2001. "Get the word out," said Sari Strulowitz, a student at Stern College. "We want to create a huge movement."



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Deadline: April 3rd, 2001

on campus

Highest Rate of Fainting Occurs in Stern College Students Faint While Donating Blood

By: Debbie Bienenfeld

Stern College has the highest rate of fainting in the NYC area, says the American Red Cross, who comes to Stern College about every other month to take a pint of blood from each willing individual.

Although it depends on situation and circumstance, in a group of seventy donors, there are between two and five who faint. Typically, the drive at Stern attracts over forty women. Typically, there are approximately twenty women who pass out. This time, on December 11, when the Red Cross came, they took all precautions.

"Did you eat this morning?" asks Felicia, a blood technician who has worked at SCW before and knows the situation. It's a standard question, asked by at least two people before the donor is allowed to sit in the chair. A simple nod of the head does not suffice as it once did.

"What did you eat?" She asks accusingly. A bagel and juice gets a nod and welcome to the lounge chair, a "I drank half a juice" gets a point to the snack table and a "go eat. I'm not sticking you till you eat enough."

Why are Stern Women more prone to fainting than anyone else?

Elliot, the Blood Team manager

thinks, "the women tend not to eat enough," and Felicia echoing him says, "ya'll don't know how to eat!" Plus, if iron is not high enough or she does not weigh enough (minimum weight is 110), the donor is more prone to sickness and fainting. The best way to prevent getting sick, says Elliot, is to drink three cups of fluid and eat something balanced. "Volume is important." Eat a bagel or cereal, or even if you want to eat fruit, eat a lot of it.

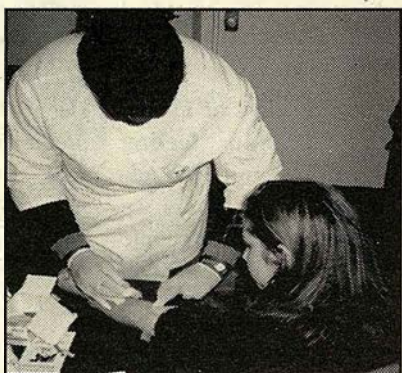
Additionally, for the week before donating, someone with propensity to faint should eat foods high in iron: raisins, leafy green vegetables, and red meat all will suffice.

Felicia also thinks its psychological. Women get worked up

and nervous about giving blood. Once, the second she stuck a donor with the needle, the donor passed out. "They get so worked up and then their bodies just can't take it, so they shut down."

It's too bad, says Elliot, "since when someone has a bad experience giving blood, she is not likely to give again." Felicia agrees. "People don't want to come back and donate," she says.

"Let me just say," says Elliot of the December 11 blood drive, "the women this morning are doing great! We appreciate all the donations and we want you to feel comfortable coming back." So eat!



SCW Students Angered at Basketball Blunder

By: Nili Epstein

Stern students have been voicing their displeasure with the administration because of the cancellation of a basketball class. Basketball, one of the more popular Physical Education courses offered at Stern College, has been taught for many years by Jenny Sarasohn. This past year, Stern hired a new teacher, Kim Taps, to teach the elementary, intermediate and advanced courses in basketball. However halfway into the semester, the class was cancelled and the students will not receive any credit for the class, though they have been attending regularly. Seniors who will be graduating in January were given the option to take a different Physical Education course, but the rest of the students were not given that option. The students are extremely upset about the amount of time they put in to the course and are disappointed that they will not receive credit for their effort. Several had worked their schedules out so that they would be able to take basketball, and missed out on opportunities take other courses that may have been of interest.

Mimi Schechter, from the guidance department at SCW said that Taps was pregnant, but athletic director Dr. Zernick had spoken with her numerous times and had confirmed that she would be able to attend all the classes. After it became clear that Taps would not be coming consistently, the administration worked very hard to find a replacement,

but to no avail. "We're very sorry about this, and it's very unfortunate, but the administration tried very hard," said Shechter.

Sara Trappler, a Junior at SCW said that "the teacher failed to show up consistently from the beginning of the semester. This wasn't a problem that suddenly occurred half way through the semester, so [the administration] should have at least cancelled it earlier. On top of that, notices were not posted on the many occasions that the coach did not show up, so the class never knew if she was here or not and we would have to wait for nothing."

"She only showed up twice to the advanced class, and never showed up to the beginner class," said Adina Levine a Junior at SCW "It's just not fair that it took the school until the middle of the semester to recognize that this was not working out."

Students were relying on this basketball class to count toward physical education credit and it seems now that they have wasted hours of their time for nothing. A number of students specifically did not take other classes on Monday and Wednesday nights because they were relying on the credit from the class.

The members of the advanced basketball class are particularly irritated, since they played basketball every week and feel that their effort should be deemed worthy to receive credit for the course.

Stern Seeks Accreditation from Middle States

By: Kayla Klatzkin

SCW is currently in the process of being evaluated for accreditation. According to Dean Bacon, "Universities undergo comprehensive evaluations approximately every ten years. We are currently preparing for such an evaluation. Our last full accreditation visit occurred in 1991 and our accreditation was reaffirmed at that time."

The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSACS) is the nonprofit organization which provides such accreditation. It is one of six organizations which together accredits colleges and schools across the country.

For over 75 years the organization has worked in the Middle Atlantic States Region to maintain standards of quality education. MSACS has a unit called The Commission on Higher Education (CHE) which is involved with evaluating and accrediting SCW. As with other colleges, CHE examines SCW as an institution, rather than examining specific programs.

What exactly is accreditation? According to MSACS it is "the affirmation that a school provides a quality of education that the community has a right to expect and the education world endorses. Accreditation is "the affirmation that a school provides a quality of education that the community has a right to expect and the education world endorses. Accreditation is a means of showing confidence in a school's performance." CHE's standards are set above the basic federal requirements in order to push institutions to achieve high standards of academic excellence. Accreditation is a voluntary process, yet if colleges want to attract students and acquire a good name, accreditation is necessary.

There are many standards which SCW must meet in order to become a candidate for accreditation. Among the many requirements are, according to MSACS, that an institution must, "Provide appropriate student services and student development programs consistent with student profiles; provide sufficient library/learning and other information resources and services to support the nature, scope, and level of program offered; provide key administrative support in the major areas of institutional operations."

Prior to meeting with CHE, SCW must determine through a self-study process how well these accreditation standards are being met. Next is the peer review, where the commission appoints various experts to evaluate the self-study, and the college itself, through meeting with various administrators, students, faculty and members of the community.

"By the way," says a reassuring Dr. Silver about the process. "We're not in trouble...It's routine." For SCW, all are confident, that with its high standards in all areas, this accreditation process is nothing to worry about.

IN YOUR OWN WORDS

By: Alexandra Beard

Do you feel challenged academically at Stern College?



Rachel Nivasch - "It depends on what the areas of study are, particularly regarding the major. Because I am a chemistry major and the department and number of chemistry majors are so small, I do not feel challenged by the students, but I do find the classes challenging since they require thinking on your own. I am not always worked so hard in the other general classes that I take. Some are too easy, and others are just not interesting enough for me to want to delve into more deeply."



Kirsten Hyman - "Coming from South Africa, I am taking a lot of courses that I wouldn't have taken back home because the whole education system is different. It is stimulating being in a class, like sociology, that I wouldn't have had the opportunity to take otherwise. A lot of the courses at Stern are made for the student to think, rather than the teacher just spoonfeeding students the information. In this way, I think that the classes at Stern are challenging and stimulating."



Ziva Lautman - "I feel busy at Stern, but not necessarily academically challenged. There's not enough development of trying to teach students to think on their own. Rather, they just want you to get through the courses. I do a lot of busy work and the intent behind it isn't to develop the student intellectually, but just to complete the coursework. YU doesn't provide the resources, such as a sufficient library or study labs in the dormitories, to create an intellectually stimulating environment."

Schumer

continued from page 1

Speaking of his impressions bluntly, Schumer pointed a finger both at the broken promises of Arafat and the Palestinians and at the naivete of the Israelis.

"When Arafat spoke on the White House lawn, he didn't talk of peace or of their hope of working together with Israel," noted the Senator. "He only spoke of how the Palestinians would prevail. It was like a blast of cold air."

Senator Schumer expressed his disillusionment with the implementation of the agreement. "Israelis were always naive in their longing for peace, so in each stage of the process, Israel gave up land and jeopardized the lives of Israeli citizens," emphasized Schumer. "But Arafat did nothing."

Nevertheless, Schumer believes that we must stick by the Oslo process. "Even though it's messy," admitted Schumer, "it's the best there is."

"As long as we don't give up hope, then I truly believe that in America as well as in Israel, Am Yisrael Chai."

on campus

News of Dress Code Shocks Some, Pleases Others

By: Ayelet Rivka Jaye

There's a dress code??" says stunned sophomore Civia Goldberg.

Surprise!

Many students, like Goldberg, sincerely were not aware that there is, in fact, a dress code for Stern College students. Those students who did know about it usually were unable to accurately articulate the rules of the dress code, but everyone had a lot to say on the matter.

Firstly, to clarify, the official dress code, as printed in the official memo distributed, is as follows: "You will not be permitted to enter the classroom building in pants, short skirts or sleeveless garb."

The dress code is an extremely touchy subject. Stern Women get very excited and emotional when the dress code is brought up, working themselves up into heated arguments and shouting matches over the laws of modesty. Interestingly, though, the dress code as established by the administration is not specifically aiming to reflect the laws of *tzniut* (defined loosely as modesty), but rather, as the memo states, to: "sustain the distinctive character of the Stern College Community." As Dr. Kanerfogel explains: "My impression is that the dress code was put into effect as a school regulation as a matter of *kedushat hamakom* (lit. "holiness of the place)." Regardless of the administration's intent, though, the women usually link the dress code automatically with the laws of *tzniut*.

There's a reason why it's such a sticky subject. If one would point out, for example, that in the official Stern College "Resident's Handbook" it says: "Observance of *shabbos* is a prerequisite for living in University Housing," (Rules and Regulations, VIII) nobody blinks an eyelash. No one would every say: How dare they impose keeping *shabbos* on people? Yet plenty of students say: How dare they impose laws of modesty on us? There is something about *tzniut* that touches people in a very personal, essential way. The fact that it can incite semi-riots reflects how significant an issue it is.

The opposing sides of this issue realistically reflect the diversity that exists among Stern students. Many are positively in favor of the dress code. "Because [Yeshiva University] is a religious institution, it has to uphold the standard of what orthodox religion uphold," said one sophomore. Atara Sender (SCW '03), agrees. "[The dress code] is a matter of self respect and respect of a Torah

institution."

Many focus on the more dignified environment the dress code creates. "I like the dress code because they're trying to establish a certain kind of environment conducive to Torah learning. People act in a certain way when they're dressed a certain way. You sit differently when you're wearing a skirt than how you'd sit wearing pants and you're also perceived differently. Even in secular society skirts are seen as more formal," says Abigail Malen (SCW '02). Tova Strahlberg (SCW '02) chose to come to Stern "because I wanted a religious atmosphere, and when students don't follow the dress code that atmosphere is diminished."

Many also feel that as long as there is a dress code, it should be fully enforced. "The impression I've gotten is that the dress code isn't enforced, but I think if the school makes rules, they should be enforced," says Rachel Esses ('04). One sophomore, Jessica Levine, says that it "undermines the authority of the institution" when the school "sends us rules about the dress code and then girls don't follow it."

However, many feel that it is enforced, and are not pleased about it. Super-senior Ilana Kasten says she has had "negative experiences" in which she feels she was treated rudely by staff members for wearing pants, and one time she says she wasn't allowed to register for classes because she was wearing pants. "It's pushing it a bit that you can't get help from the office if you're wearing pants," remarks Jessica Russak (SCW '02).

But whether it's enforced or not, the reality is that a dress code is most definitely in effect in Stern, and a lot of people are unhappy about it, for several reasons. One reason is that women feel that the laws of *tzniut* should not be imposed if they're not comfortable at that level yet. Senior Pamela Kleinman sensitively pointed out that "they have to realize that [these restrictions] are difficult for some people." One freshman, Raquel Green, says: "There are different levels of observance and everyone tries their hardest, so [laws of modesty] shouldn't be imposed on anyone. This is a school for every type of Jew, and everyone should feel comfortable here. Many women are coming here to be in a religious environment but they don't want to feel uncomfortable."



Modeling the dress code

Mock Trial Team Initiated at

By: Sari Moskowitz

SCW has always prided itself on its numerous extracurricular activities. From the Debate Society to the Chemistry Club, most SCW students have been able to find programs and clubs that they find interesting and exciting. However, while there has always been a club for people fascinated with biology, psychology and physics, there has never been a club for people interested in getting a hands-on experience of the legal field. To meet this need, Adina Levine, SCW junior, decided to form SCW's first mock trial team.

"I think its an important club that provides prelaw students with the experience they need and want," remarked Levine. "I'm frankly surprised that neither SCW nor YC has ever had a mock trial team before."

The seven members of the mock trial team work hard with the help of their coach, Stacey Schwartz, a lawyer from New York City to prepare their case. The participants must prepare direct examinations and cross

examinations, as well as opening and closing statements. Half of the team serves as the 'lawyers', while the other half act as the 'witnesses' in a case of liability that centers around a fatal accident on Mount Everest.

Like the dozens of New York colleges and universities that already have mock trial teams, SCW's team joined the national college mock trial association, with YC following in establishing a mock trial team.



However, this year SCW is unable to participate in the national competition, because the tournament takes place on Shabbat. To resolve this conflict, SCW will be hosting up to ten teams in its own weekend-long invitational tournament at the end of January.

In conjunction with the

preparation of the actual mock trial case, the mock trial team also requires a great deal of administrative work. When asked about all of the effort that it took for the team to materialize, captain and founder Adina Levine reflects her disappointment that "the administration did not provide more guidance in bringing this important activity to our school." She explains while she was forced to make every decision on her own, without the guidance of a faculty member. Richard Woolf, a YC senior and founder of the YC mock trial team, echoes Levine's sentiments, but admits that despite the hard work involved, he is "looking forward to the intramural tournament."

While the SCW mock trial team has yet to try its first case, the project can already be viewed as a victory. As Dafna Schindler, an SCW sophomore and mock trial member states, "mock trial is a great diversion from boring schoolwork. I'm finally able to learn and have fun at the same time."

Larceny

continued from page 1

with anything as the case is still being investigated. Additionally, names of those suspected have not been released as the case is not yet resolved.

"Nothing like this has ever happened before," he noted. "Larceny is wrong. I'm not pointing fingers at anyone because two wrongs don't make a right. I don't know who did it, but I'm just disgusted with the whole thing."

Mr. Moische Singer, in charge of Food Services at SCW, did not comment on this case, but said aside from this current incident, there has not been any reported acts of theft in the cafeteria for several years. "When we find something left in the cafeteria, we turn it over to Security immediately," he said.

According to the annual YU Security Report of Midtown Campus issued in October of this year, the last reported case of burglary, which involves taking items without permission from a place, was two years ago. In 1998, YU Security reported 5 cases of burglary, and in 1997, there was one case. No cases of robbery, which involves taking items without permission from a person, have been reported from 1997-1999.

"Incidents like this make me feel more insecure about safety," commented Chana Rosenblatt, SCW senior. "But the possibility exists that [Figueroa's belongings] were stolen before he came to Stern that day. Therefore, it doesn't necessarily have to be that his items were stolen in Stern."

Unnecessary Security at SCW

By: Toby Josovitz

It's a busy morning as students sprint out of Brookdale, running past the dancing ballerina, attempting to beat the flashing 'don't walk' sign at the corner of 34th and Park. They storm into the main building all at once and then the holdup begins.

Teachers complain about student tardiness. Five minutes, they can understand, but ten or fifteen is unacceptable. They are, however, as frustrated as the students. Dr. Joanne Jacobson says that her students are ten minutes late to class because there are eight checkpoints on the way in. (This is an approximation). While all agree that security is necessary, and no expense should be spared, some think that equal emphasis should be placed on other important issues, such as education.

"There is an odd allocation of energy," says Jacobson. Stern College seems to need paint jobs every few weeks, and there is also a lack of chalk and erasers in the school. There are, however, two to three people to greet students and professors at the door of each building, and to press elevator buttons to save time, continued Jacobson.

Is it really necessary to have four security guards operating the elevator in 215 Lexington? Is there really a need for a security guard on every elevator to press the button?

According to Burns Security and Stern College, there is a need for these seemingly extraneous elevator operators. "As of now, there is no way for us to shut off access to the elevator on other floors," says Don Sommers, Head of Security at Stern College for Women. "The building has vacant floors where construction is taking place, we don't want to risk the security of our students by allowing anyone to come off those elevators."



Many students are happy with the level of security and consider it to be one of the numerous benefits Stern College has to offer. "With the heightened situation in the Middle East and the increasing threat to Jews all over, I feel comfortable knowing that the extra security guards are there to protect us if necessary," says SCW sophomore Ariela Dworetzky.

When questioned, security personnel have expressed their concern for the safety of the students and feel that there should be an even greater increase in security. They are constantly assessing the need for precautions around campus, placing guards wherever they feel it necessary. According to one security guard, who wishes to remain nameless, "there can never be too much security. The building can only be protected if there is significant manpower here to patrol the area."

C u l t u r a l A r t s

Vertical Limit Could Use a Limit

By: Deborah Bienenfeld

Five people hang by a rope off a mountain thrashing and screaming in the first scene. And then there were three. And then there were two. Already at the edge of its seat, the audience is gripped, and stays gripped. This is gonna be good.

But as with these types of movies, which are more interested in pulse acceleration than about plot devel-



opment, Vertical Horizon lacks substance. Peter and Annie Garret, siblings, find themselves in the Himalayas together, after successful avoidance for three years. Peter is a photographer for National Geographic and Annie a champion mountain climber, on the cover of Sports Illustrated magazine.

Annie is enticed into climbing K2, a dangerously high mountain, with the entrepreneur Elliot Vaughn, who is, as it turns out—no surprise to the audi-

ence—to be manipulative. He puts fame before safety, himself before his girlfriend; he is a bad guy with a history. Planning goes awry and they are trapped in a ravine, dying from the moment they fall. But help is on the way.

Peter organizes a rescue mission and, using the most able recluse in the area, Montgomery Wick, they start on their not-so-very-merry way.

Of course, there are many more details. In fact, everything in the film is a detail beyond the somewhat clichéd plot. The characters are dynamic and fraught with possibility, but the possibility dies with each one of them. The subplots are too numerous and we don't feel that we get to know any of the characters sufficiently.

The rest of the story is filled with explosions and cliffhangers. The stunts and scenery are believable, even if the plot is not. The audience gasps on cue, but ultimately, there is no bond formed with the characters. They are too elusive and there are too many of them. When one of them (who we've been suspicious of from the beginning) turns bad, we are not surprised and we really don't care.

Bottom line: it's purely superficial entertainment. So sit back, relax (sort of), and enjoy the show.

Acting Saves the Play in SCW

By: Stephanie Golglanz

Jekyll and Hyde, is the story of a man who had everything in life and lost it all when he performed an experiment on himself which unleashed his inner demons. In the first week of its American debut, the actors were laughed off-stage. This is the mystery of Broadway. How could a show be strong in one place and stumble in another?

Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap* has been a play that has endured half a century being performed on the London stage. Its popularity in the United States, like *Jekyll and Hyde*, has not rivaled its success in England, and on Monday night I realized why. *The Mousetrap* is a murder mystery where every one of the characters is a suspect. The first guest is Christine Wren, a 22-year-old architect who is clearly "off her rocker". Next comes Mrs. Boyle, quite uptight and a natural malcontent. Major

Metcalf, a retired soldier who keeps quiet and is extremely elusive, accompanies Mrs. Boyle. Then there is Miss Casewell, a twenty-four year old loner with a painful past. Finally, an elegant older woman with a foreign accent, Paravacini, arrives. She is a shady character and is used by the playwright to keep



the audience guessing as to who the murderer is. However the play seems as if it were written with the audience in mind. The play overtly casts doubt on each of the characters' morale and location on the night of the murder. *The Mousetrap* leaves nothing for the audience to think about or even figure out, leaving audience

members bored. The acting though, serves as a temporary remedy to the script's flaws. The character most effective in masking the writing flaws is Christine Wren. This part, played by Rhonda Spector, thoroughly enraptures the audience due to her eccentric nature and zany antics. It breaks up the monotony of false accusations and flirting with admissions of guilt, until her character, too, succumbs to Agatha Christie's teasing. The play then moves on with more accusations until the climax is reached and the murderer found.

The play was quite interesting, though I left feeling frustrated as to how much better it could have been if only the writing hadn't been so flamboyantly obvious. The appeal of a murder mystery is the mystery itself. When a writer takes the mystery away, it compromises the play as a whole. When I did focus on the acting, it was apparent that the actors had fun with their parts. They

continued on page 9

Primal Fear: One of YC's Best

Observer Staff

From the first moments of eerie background music to the last sadistic smile, hundreds of students were hooked as they sat and watched the fall YCDS play *Primal Fear*.

The play begins with a barroom scene focusing on headline-chasing attorney Martin Vail (Ari Hoffman) addressing the great Archbishop Rushman (Josua Adams). Just a few minutes later, Bishop Rushman is

brutally murdered as the lead suspect Aaron Strampler (Jeffrey Feit) is caught at the crime scene. Prosecuting for the death penalty, Vail's brother stands on opposite sides of the courtroom. Throughout significant twists in the plot the revelation of the drawling accent southerner as a sexually harassment teacher, and the murder of a witness—the ultimate question becomes: did Aaron Stamper kill Bishop Rushman, and how will Vail

legally get him off the hook. With some humorous lines, the play proceeded with fast-paced dialogue and jarring action as the actors used the same scenery to host a courtroom as well as the murder site.

With a plot geared to captivate the attention of the audience, *Primal Fear* was a success in holding attention throughout the two-hour long performance. However, some audience members were disappointed in

the skills of the actors.

"The plot is wonderful, but if you look up close, you realize that they are not such great actors," criticized one SCW student. Many students disagreed, claiming the ability of the actors as the primary factor in making this play a success.

Surprisingly, a significant number of audience attendees had not seen the 1994 movie starring Richard Gere and Edward Norton. They were kept

in suspense from start to finish awaiting a surprising outcome. However, for the many students who had seen the preceding movie, the YCDS performance presented important omissions: for example, the lack of the "clapping" scene at Vail's final moment of revelation as to the true nature of Aaron Stamper.

Overall, the Siskel and Ebert of the Observer give it two thumbs up.

Jewish Bar-Bands Play for Yeshiva Kids: Who is Responsible?

By: Sara Trappler

The scene at the Wetlands is not an uncommon one for a New York City dance club: Swarming crowds dancing, smoking and drinking together as the band rocks the night away. What is unusual on an evening when the Inasense band, now known as Soulfarm, plays at the Wetlands on Hudson Street, is that many of the teenagers getting high, drinking underage and stage diving are Yeshiva kids from very observant homes.

They are at the club to see Soulfarm perform, because they recently heard them play at Jewish concerts and listen to their CDs sold at Jewish bookstores. Bands such as Soulfarm, who play to both Jewish and secular crowds, performing Carlebach songs at Jewish audiences and original rock songs at mixed crowds, have been given the nickname "Jewish Bar-Bands" because a majority of their performances are held in bars and clubs.

Binyomin Ginsburg, leader of The Binyomin Ginsburg Trio that plays

simcha music, feels that Jewish Bar-Bands targeting Orthodox teenagers who are not yet

set in their ways are responsible for the potential danger these kids are confronted with. He also feels that as a community we need to be more responsible. Ginsburg fears that these Yeshiva kids will return to the clubs to hear other Bands and they are not at the point where they know how to draw boundaries. "Good music from the heart I'm in favor of, whatever style," Ginsburg said. "The issue is not the rock music [of Jewish bands], but where they are choosing to perform, and to who." Ginsburg believes that the question to ask when featuring a band to an Orthodox audience is where else they play their music, not how they choose to express themselves.

This Chanukah, on December 23,

the West Side Institutional Synagogue, the oldest Orthodox synagogue in New York City, is putting on its annual "Chanukah Stock" performance, this year featuring the Soulfarm and Piamenta bands. Last year, the concert held 800 people, many of them SCW and YC students, and had separate sections for the young men and women to dance.



Moshav Band

Aaron Braunstein, the vice president of the WSIS and chairman of the Chanukah event, said that he does not allow the bands to advertise at the synagogue their future concerts at clubs. "I try to keep it as Glatt Kosher as possible," he said. "A hip band that can play at bars can also play religiously. The main focus is to follow Halacha and make a Kiddush Hashem and show that religion is fun, or else we'll never attract Ballei Teshuvot."

The Piamenta Band performs both in the Orthodox community and the secular world. The issue at stake is not one concerning the content of his musical expression, but him playing at the Wetlands and the Knitting Factory, another New York City club. His performances present two problems: he performs under the same name as the one widely known by the Jewish community, and flyers in Brooklyn Yeshiva neighborhoods advertise his performances at these clubs. Yeshiva kids who otherwise would not attend clubs are attracted by these advertisements, and are allowed to enter the Wetlands even under the age of eighteen on a night when a Jewish band is performing. "I would never put up a rock band and sell it as kosher," Ginsburg asserted. "As an artist I need to express myself... but [I] don't need to market it to this crowd." Ginsburg believes that Jewish Bar-Bands should call themselves by different names than they do when performing at synagogues, and should not cross-promote the

continued on page 12

Cultural Arts

Kippur: New Film Lacks Substance

By: Michal Leah Kanovsky

Spatters of paint are thrown on a sheet mixed together by a soldier and his girlfriend making love. The colors cover their bodies in dark greens and browns as their faces glow in pervasive pleasure. An hour later the same soldier is again covered in dark green and brown, but this time from mud as he tries to rescue wounded



Israelis from the fields during the Yom Kippur War.

Amos Gatai's film "Kippur" follows none of the conventional story telling structures. There is no plot. The characters are never fully introduced to us. If there is a climax, I couldn't tell. Gatai's purpose is to give the viewer a taste of what the war in itself was at the time it was, extraneous to the wider political implications that only became apparent in subsequent years. In doing so he ignores the main figureheads of the day, such as Golda Meir and Moshe Dayan. He also ignores the enemy, as not a single Arab is seen in the entire film. The

war was not about the political figures or the enemies; it was about the average Israeli. To this end Gatai zooms in on an average soldier and the unit he joins temporarily for a few days.

With the camera focused on the soldier Russo's head and Arabic music in the background, Gatai tries to show us what words cannot. The film is one of silence and imagery, the

lines such as "We don't load the dead onto helicopters" are there to serve as a background chant akin to the music in other scenes. Gatai wants us to see the humanity of his soldiers. He allows us small glimpses into their struggles, their hopes, and their fears. His choppy style, though, does not allow us to understand them. Gatai wants to show us war; he tries to exhibit the colors of war, the sights of war, and the sounds of war. But perhaps that, too, is too much to expect to be able to give over in a film of two hours. The only thought I had after sitting through this movie was that war is painful and so is this film.

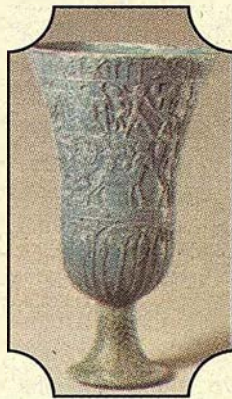
continued from previous page conveyed how much they loved being on stage and it carried over to the audience and made the audience more interested. In totality, the Stern production of The Mousetrap was impressive considering the confining script. Understandably, it is very difficult to choose a play that could be converted to an all-women

cast and therefore the choice of a play, which has been performed in England to great success, seemed like a good idea. However, before a choice was made, someone should have learned the lesson from Jekyll and Hyde: what is good for England is not necessarily good for America.

Current Exhibits at the Metropolitan

By: Sarah P. Cate

The Metropolitan Museum of Art has several exhibits of interest this month, which will continue over the next couple of months. One of particular fascination is the



Egyptian Chalice from 925 B.C.E. from Tuna el-Gebel

"Egyptian Art at Eton College: Selections from the Myers Museum." This is the private collection of Major William Myers, who donated the collection in its entirety to Eton College, an exclusive young men's preparatory school. The collection is composed of ancient Egyptian art pieces. The majority of the collection is objects of a substance called faience, meaning delicate, and is made of ground quartz or quartz sand mixed with lime and natron, a kind of salt. Water is then added, and a paste is made and put over a mold. It is meant to imitate turquoise or lapis lazuli in appearance. Myers collected faience objects of rare and historical importance. He donated the collection to Eton because he was an alumnus. Among the art pieces are a model of a coffin, dating from the 1st millennium

BCE, and a doll with beaded hair. The doll dates from the 12th Dynasty, and the Middle Kingdom of that era. She is made of linen thread and faience. There is exquisite detail that is inscribed onto the doll's body, and all the pieces demonstrate an extraordinary degree of beauty and detail. Some of them have small magnifying glasses in front of them to show the carvings. The exhibit will be at the Met through the end of January.

The second exhibit of interest is the "La Divine



"La Divine Comtesse", photographs of the Countess De Castiglione

Comtesse': Photographs of the Countess de Castiglione." The Countess de Castiglione was considered by most historical authorities to be the most beautiful woman of her time. She was the mistress of Napoleon III and infamous for her numerous love affairs. Pierre-Louis Pierson photographed her in a very raw, unadorned way, revealing her fantasies and narcissism. The collection is well worth viewing, as it details the ascent and demise of one of Italy's most powerful women. One can see that she did indeed live by her

cousin-Camillo Cavour's words, "Succeed by whatever means you wish- but succeed."

Of particular note are the photographs that expose the Countess' legs. Her head, however, is not shown, revealing her desire to shock, but her unwillingness to be vulgar. In all of the photographs, the Countess does not smile, perhaps out of a desire to remain mysterious to those who saw her. This exhibit is at the Met until the end of December.

The third exhibit that is of note is "Queen Victoria and Thomas Sully," which is at the Met until the end of December, as well. Thomas Sully was an American portrait artist, who lived from 1783 until 1872. He was commissioned for one year to paint Queen Victoria and the exhibit shows his work. The works show a young, beautiful Queen Victoria, elaborately



Queen Victoria by Thomas Sully, 1838

and sumptuously adorned with crown and robes. The exhibit includes items from his trip, as well as a collection of related works by other artists.

La Traviata: A Thrill at the New York Opera

By: Sarah P. Cate

For years, my friends have made fun of me because I always knew arias from operas, their composers, and their plot lines. It's not a genre that most people are familiar with, but why is my knowledge of opera so odd, when most of my friends can recite all of the lyrics from their favorite songs? I suppose it's because I can discuss opera with my parents' friends, and not mine. Whatever the case, I was thrilled to finally hear and see La Traviata, at the New York City Opera. It was, in a word, fabulous.

For years, I've listened to Kiri Te Kanawa sing the part of Violetta Valery, and for the soprano to even come close to her rendition of the performance is quite a feat. Virginia Grasso displayed an incredible range of vocal depth and agility.

Her voice is simply enchanting and her performance was as well. She plays the lead in the tragic story of a fickle young aristocrat who finally falls in love with the one young man whom she cannot have. Her lover is played by Gerard Powers, who was truly overshadowed by Grasso's vocal superiority. Although Powers wonderfully complemented Grasso during duets, he is rather weak when singing alone.

The story is set in France, and follows Violetta and Alfredo over the course of four months. Violetta is a hopeless flirt and hosts many lavish parties. At one of her brilliant events, she meets Alfredo. Although she likes him initially, she rejects his love for a life of hedonism. The next act shows them happily living together, so one assumes that she changed

her mind somewhere along the way. Their lifestyle, however, is causing Violetta financial difficulties, and she is surreptitiously selling her belongings to cover the immense debts that they owe. When Alfredo learns of this, he rushes off to Paris to pay all of the debts. In the mean



Scene from La Traviata

while, Alfredo's father invades their home to demand that Violetta release Alfredo from his commitment to her, so that his younger daughter's good name is not besmirched through their illicit living arrangement.

Although Violetta is heartbroken, she agrees and leaves Alfredo, without giving him the real reason for the separation.

Violetta becomes terminally ill, and Alfredo learns of her illness and her unwavering affection. He travels quickly to be with her, and Violetta immediately assumes a more healthy appearance. His arrival is too late, however, and she dies in his arms.

Based on a novel by Alexandre Dumas, Giuseppe Verdi's opera is timeless, although written in the mid-19th century. The emotions and characters are, although dramatized, very realistic. Verdi's music is of course the most timeless element of the entire piece. From beginning to end, the melodies are uplifting and thrilling. In addition, at the New York City Opera, the Italian lyrics are

translated into very readable English on a large screen above the stage in red lettering. Although it is initially distracting, the English lyrics add a deeper dimension of understanding and enjoyment to the opera experience.

Although La Traviata is no longer playing at the New York City Opera, many choice other operas will be playing there next semester, including La Boheme, Tosca, and Rigoletto. Tickets can be obtained by calling 212-307-4100. Performances are Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights. There are also weekend matinees. Don't be intimidated, just because your parents like opera. I promise- there really is a reason to enjoy for yourself in person.

BUSINESS NEWS

Do Women Get Paid Less in the Workplace?

By: Masha Lapina

One of the givens in any discussion about wage trends in the US is that there is a large gender gap which is patently unfair. Labor Department figures show that women workers earned only 76.5 percent as much as men in full-time jobs during 1999 – up from 62.5 percent two decades before. Still, it is far enough behind to suggest that something needs to be fixed and soon.

However, a growing group of economists are challenging the gender-gap figures, contending that they overstate the differential between men's and women's pay, and arguing that little of the genuine gap actually stems from wage-discrimination.

"The factors that lead to pay-differences between women and men are extremely difficult to measure," said June O'Neill, who headed the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office from 1995 to 1999.

There were actions, however, on the part of Congress to correct the imbalances in jobs and pay. In 1963, Equal Pay Act prohibits employers from paying women less than men for

doing substantially the same work. And by any measure, women have made stunning progress in breaking down barriers on jobs and pay.

Government surveys show that women now make up almost 29 percent of lawyers and judges, compared to 16 percent in 1983. They make up 59 percent of accountants, up from 39 percent. And they make up 17 percent of police officers, up from 6 percent. Their numbers have risen dramatically in fields where only a few decades ago they were barred or else were a small minority, from physicians and college professors to purchasing managers and (to lesser extent) construction workers.

So what are the reasons that the statistics show this huge gap in earnings of different sexes? A new study conducted at the Federal Reserve of St. Louis says that almost a third of wages gap comes because the Labor Department figures are based on median weekly hours and don't account for the fact that women generally work fewer hours each week than men.

Calculating the gap using hourly earnings instead

of weekly earning brings the difference between men's and women's wages to 16.2 cents an hour instead of 23.5 cents. By that measure, women's median hourly earnings in 1999 were 83.8 percent of men's.

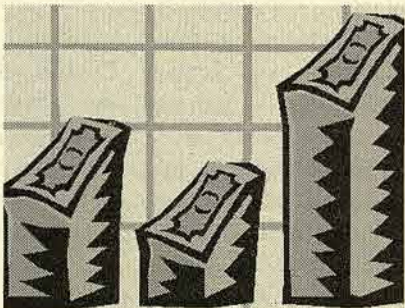
As for the rest of the gap, the study asserts, much of it reflects other factors, not bias. With some exceptions, women still tend to have less experience, to work in occupations that traditionally are lower paying and they often interrupt their careers to have children.

Economists Diana Furchtgott-Roth and Christine Stolba have found that the average hourly earnings of women aged 27 to 33 who have never had a child amount to 98 percent of what men earn, even before accounting for training, experience and occupation-choice. To be sure, attributing part of the gender gap to workplace realities such as job-experience, occupation choice and childbearing rather than discrimination by employers does not solve the problem of the gender gap issue. Society must still find the way to achieve equality in the workplace.

Presidential Elections Affect the US Economy

By Masha Lapina

Today, many people wonder whether the legacy of this year's closely contested US Presidential Election sour the climate for continued prosperity. That is a growing possibility as the nation moves towards the end of the second month since the Election Day. Stephen S. Roach, chief economist at Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, worried that if the election wasn't resolved soon, the damage could become more acute as uncertainty upsets financial markets – and spills over to hurt the real economy. "This election issue is a big deal," he said. To be sure, worries about the election process have had only a fleeting impact on investors so far.



The dollar slid briefly just after it became clear that the election would drag on, and the stock market has been uncomfortably volatile. Although both the Dow Jones Industrial Average and Nasdaq Composite Index have fallen, analysts say the election wasn't the spoiler. Indeed, some investors seem jubilant at the thought that the close vote – and a narrower Republican margin in Congress – is apt to ensure gridlock.

"The election thing is a distraction," said John Forelli of Independence Investment Associates in Boston. "The underlying reason we are down is earnings." "It's very hard to see any clear evidence" that the unresolved US presidential

election had an effect on markets, Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers said. Americans, too, reacted in blasé fashion. A New York Times/CBS poll showed that 62 percent of Americans thought that market was not affected by the election.

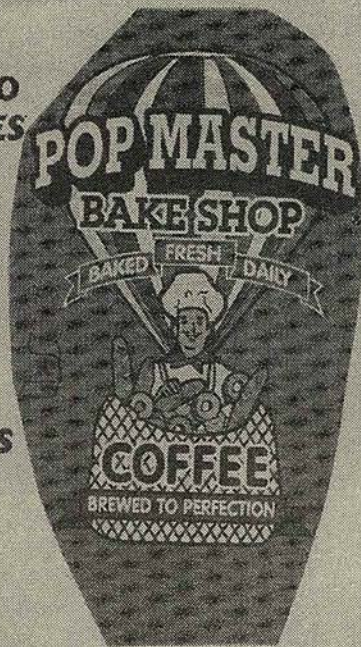
Some analysts also figure that with fiscal policy effectively blunted, figure, the Federal Reserve will continue to hold the reins on managing the economy. That should avert any major clash over spending and tax policy between the Fed and Congress. The prospect of protracted litigation would be enough to counter any sort of rally that would be likely to develop. That in turn could prompt consumers to cut back on spending and eventually crimp business capital

spending as well. Analysts say that prospect has become all the more worrisome in the face of recent signs that the recovery may prove more fragile than had been thought, with some forecasters now predicting a sharper slowdown than they did only a few weeks ago. Many analysts raised their eyebrows earlier this month by predicting that the decline in stock prices so far this year could cause a US and global recession in 2001. While other forecasters aren't quite that bearish many have begun paring back their predictions from the "soft-landing" scenario that they previously had foreseen for a decidedly more sluggish performance early next year.

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The Buzzword for Financial Distress: Fed's Inactivity.

By Masha Lapina

Everyone was waiting with their mouths open on November 16th. What were they waiting for and why was the news so crucial? Well, now of all times, with so much uncertainty in the economy the only certain player is the Fed, so the decision on the interest rates was absolutely critical to the financial markets. Finally, the Fed has spoken. The rates were to remain the same for at least until the next meeting. The market took it in and reacted. Now it's the time to look ahead.

It was expected that the Fed would be inactive on the interest rates and the retention of its outlook tilted toward the likelihood of higher inflation. What caught some folks off guard was the central bank's reluctance to suggest a more balanced outlook going forward, a between-the-lines neutrality. Judging from the behavior of the Treasury yield curve with long-term bonds out-performing short-term notes, and the missives from Wall Street research departments, the statement was interpreted as a reluctance on the part of the Fed to respond in any way to the slower growth unfolding.

The statement, while not ambiguous, left adequate room for interpretation. Specifically, is the reference to a period of below-trend growth a forecast based on the past rate increases and present data or is it the Fed's desired course?

Supporters of the non-accelerating inflation rate of unemployment theory believe that after a period of above-trend growth, whatever that is, the economy needs a period of below-trend growth to cool off. To complicate things

further, the Fed introduced a new fold, "financial conditions," in its statement for the first time. That means that corporate credit crunch is happening. Credit spreads are tightening and loan standards becoming more stringent. However, the senior economist at Chase Securities, Jim Glassman, says: "Widening spreads are a sign the credit markets are working. I would worry if spreads weren't widening when the economy slows down."

So while the Fed is formally biased toward higher rates, it's watching situations that could ultimately lead to lower ones. Increases in bad debts perform a dual purpose, according to Tim Bond, head of interest rate strategy at Barclays Capital Group in London. "First they provide factual corroboration for the theme of corporate credit deterioration that is visible in the upgrade/downgrade data and in the general tightening of credit conditions," Bond says. Secondly, and maybe even more importantly, "they reinforce the perpetuation of the trend, banks are being forced to write off or dispose of bad loans are unlikely to favor a generous extension of new credit."

Whether it's psychology, inflation expectations, worker insecurity, or nervousness about lending institutions, today's economic situation is the utmost concern to policy-makers. Even though, they know that financial crises are not like "run-of-the-mill" recessions, which, with a little demand stimulus evaporate, they still have to figure out the way to hit the soft landing and get back up.

Political Havoc Wreaks Israel

By: MW

Binyamin Netanyahu and Ariel Sharon, the two contenders for the Likud's top spot, addressed the Likud Central Committee. Netanyahu lashed out at the political and security approach of the Barak government, and promised to take a "different approach" for peace - one that would demand long-term quiet from the Palestinians before handing them any territory. Greeted with loud cheers, Netanyahu praised Sharon for the way he ran the party in the past year and a half, and promised to work together with him no matter what the final results of the primaries would be. He attacked Barak: "You resigned as Prime Minister only in order to run again? The entire public realizes that this is simply a trick to hold on to power... Your concessions have led to an Intifada and lynchings... I will lead to a cold peace with the Palestinians - because we have to recognize the reality." Netanyahu said this in response to Barak's recent resignation as Prime Minister, a move which legally enacted a law which maintains that anyone who is not currently apart of the Knesset may not run for Prime Minister in the upcoming election. Netanyahu is not

serving in the Knesset now. Sharon, in his speech, said that as Prime Minister, he would establish a national emergency government, with Netanyahu as Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, and Labor leader Ehud Barak as Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister. The party members greeted the proposal with derision.

The Likud voted to allow Netanyahu to run for the leadership of the party - in elections next Tuesday - even though it is not certain that he will be allowed to run. He is currently disqualified for running for Prime Minister because he is not a Knesset Member. The Knesset voted today, however, to approve the first draft of a bill allowing a non-MK to run - informally called the "Netanyahu law" - and will probably pass its first reading this afternoon. Another scenario in which Netanyahu would be able to run is if the entire Knesset is dissolved, leading to general Knesset elections. However, this possibility is beginning to appear more and more unlikely, as Shas and Labor - fearing the results of a general election - are against such a possibility.

Government Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer said that his party agreed to the Netanyahu law

continued on page 14

Modern Problems that Lay Hidden in the Orthodox World

"SHAAL AVICHA V'YAGAYDCHA"

By: Lisa Helprin



When I was learning in Israel for the year, my grandmother passed away. She was the last living Holocaust survivor in my family. Though it is not something any of us wish to think about, in the near future, my family situation will become representative of the worldwide Jewish community. The generation of Holocaust survivors is slowly disappearing. Soon, there will be no living witness to the horrors of the Nazis and World War Two. Though the Holocaust is the most well-documented event in history, as the future of Klal Yisrael, the responsibility rests on our shoulders to make sure the world remembers.

Martin Goldman, the Director of the Office of Survivor Affairs in the United States Holocaust Museum, recommends the following course of action. "Learn, read texts and memoirs, talk to survivors." The Associate Director of Education at the Simon Wiesenthal Center, Mark Weitzman, urges the younger generation "to maintain a connection to the event." He continued, "That means not just knowing broadly what happened, but having a good sense." Mr. Goldman also suggests that survivors write down their stories for later generations. At the museum, sixty-one survivors work with experts in the writing field, and together put memories down on paper for all future generations.

Another such program is the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation, established in 1994 by Steven Spielberg after his filming of *Schindler's List*. The Foundation, according to its website, was established "with an urgent mission: to chronicle, before it was too late, the firsthand accounts of sur-

vivors, liberators, rescuers, and other eyewitnesses of the Holocaust." The testimony "is for inclusion in repositories and universities worldwide, [as well as] historical and sociological research, and the development of educational materials."

As of November 18th, the foundation had 50,175 interviews on record.

In terms of what the world at large is doing to commemorate and bear witness to the Holocaust, Mr. Weitzman commented that last year in Stockholm, a conference took place of eighty countries to discuss ways to remember the Holocaust now and in the coming generations. The countries came together and each pledged that their government would enact some sort of Holocaust memorial to commemorate the event. "It won't solve everything," said Mr. Weitzman, "but it's a watershed when we look at years ago when no one was interested in looking at [the Holocaust]. We see today it has become an interest of the Western World." Mr. Weitzman commented, though, that for a political leader, Holocaust commemoration should never become "trite and political" such as a simple visit to a museum, and kal vachomer for us Jews.

To conclude, we must remember, "Shbechol Dor Vador Omdim Alaynu L'Chalotaynu, V'Hakadosh Baruch Hu Matzilaynu Miyadam" — That in every generation, someone rises up against us, and Hashem saves us from their hands. Each month we lose 1% of Holocaust survivors. The generation of Holocaust survivors dying out is a reality we must confront head on. These are people who had the physical and emotional koach to rebuild their lives after the horrors of World War Two, and who everyday tell the world that Adolph Hitler Y'S did not win. They bore witness to the salvation of Hashem, and to the day-to-day miracles He showed them to allow them to survive. The information is clearly out there, it is up to us to seek it. We owe it to them, to ourselves, and to the future of Klal Yisrael to take responsibility and prepare to pass the torch by listening to their stories and hearing what they have to say while we still can.

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S P O R T S P A G E

Lack of Support for Lady Macs

By: Debbie Michaels

The Lady Macs are off to an exciting season. Exciting because of the 4-3 record. The Macs are a team which is strong, skilled, and tries it's hardest until the end result. Like many students in Stern, I never went to a Lady Macs basketball game. The evening of November 21, the Mac's played against Baruch College. The game (which I attended) was exciting, and the Mac's pulled away with a winning score of 63-46. The next game that they played against the College of New Rochelle and won 84-44. Surprisingly, with wins like this, games should be packed with Yeshiva students.

Unfortunately, the games at most get 10 students. Why is this? We should go and support our winning women's basketball team, not ignore them. Show support for your basketball team. The next home game is Tuesday December 21, at Central High School in Queens, 7:30 p.m. If women come to this game and support Stern's winning basketball team, then they will feel like they are playing for not only their school but they will feel like they have support from their fellow classmates. For this game, the Athletics Department will supply a bus and if you would like to go, you can sign up in the office of student services. Come and support your team and show them that Stern College is behind them.

Kaleidoscope in Bryant Park

By: Sarah P. Cate

The Barnum and Ringling Brother's Circus has decided to present New York City with a winter circus experience. Set up in three heated tents in Bryant Park, the Kaleidoscope Circus, is more than you usual circus. There is a dearth of animals, but a plethora of fun and features not involving creatures. Set to the music of a live band, the tent is filled with an assortment of sights.

The show has contortionists, trapeze artists, jugglers, and gymnasts. In terms of animals, there are a few, but those are really just a gaggle of misbehaved geese. There was a set of six white horses that performed pretty incredible feats, to the whop of the trapeze artist. She was incredible, contorting her body gracefully and effortlessly into various poses, and all at an immense height above the ground, while suspended in mid-air.

The circus also sports clowns, who actively involve the audience at every set of the way. There is a particularly hilarious routine where the main clown picks four participants from the audience, and has them juggle plates. The whole audience dissolved into laughter.

Tickets range from \$25 to \$75 and can be obtained by calling 1-877-9BARNUM. The circus will be performing at Bryant Park until December 31.

Tennis Anyone?

By: Sara Lampert

The Stern Observer sits down with the captain of the tennis team, Shoshana Penstein.

Q: How has been playing on the tennis team been for you?

A: Playing for the Stern tennis team has been fabulous. It allows me to play the sport I love often, more than once a week and all this has made me into a better player. I met wonderful people and had the opportunity to visit numerous schools. We went to places with great playing facilities, which was a huge plus.

Q: As an experienced tennis player, what is your motivation?

A: I have loved tennis all my life and I've taken years of lessons. In the summertime I am always gathering friends together for matches.

Q: How has being on the tennis team benefited your game?

A: I have learned plenty, especially from the coach, Heidi who has helped me with my serve.

Q: What comes most easy to you, serving or being on the receiving end?

A: I personally would rather return the serve; most people think that the hardest part of tennis is the serve. I believe that if you have a great serve, the rest of the game can come to you naturally. Serving is important- you cannot be a good tennis player without a great serve.

Q: So, how did we do this semester?

A: Overall the team was 5-2

Q: Which match sticks out in your mind?

A: Well, actually two of them do. One was Lehmen College; we beat them 9-0. The other was St. Mary, we lost 5-4 but we were playing in 30-degree weather, which is quite unusual for tennis.

Q: Now that the tennis season is over, what are you going to do to occupy your time?

A: I want to continue playing, so most weeks I am going to help out with elementary tennis, a class from Stern.

Fassel's Crystal Ball Scores a Touchdown

By: Sara Lampert

Three weeks ago, New York Giants head coach Jim Fassel stood up and declared that the team would make the playoffs. Some fans wondered what Fassel had been drinking. The Giants had just come off two consecutive losses and were 7-4 with the Arizona Cardinals, coming up in a nationally televised ESPN Sunday night game. Apparently the coach's words sat well with the players. The Giants dominated the Cardinals in every aspect of the game winning by a score of 31 to 7.

Many fans were thrilled but were aware that the next game on the schedule could be compared to the Giants own "superbowl." Up next was the expensive Washington Redskins team. This was do or die for the Giants, it was time to prove if they could beat a competitor, a good team, as opposed to teams all under 500.

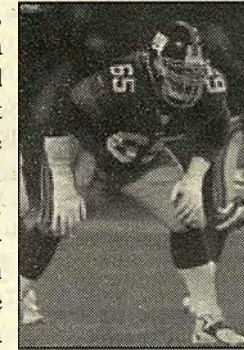
The result of the Giants- Redskins game was the firing of Norv Turner, the coach of the Redskins. In what proved to be a battle of the defenses, the game came down to 44 year old kicker Eddie Murray coming

onto the field to attempt a field goal with a little over a minute remaining in the fourth quarter. He missed and the Giants won the game 9-7, putting the Redskins at 7-6 and the Giants at 9-4.

Was Fassels prediction going to come true? Around Giants camp was a feeling of happiness. Beating their hated rivals was something the Giants needed to prove they were for real. Next up was the Pittsburgh Steelers, a team coming to Giants Stadium above .500 with a 7-6 record.

Week 15 came with the Giants continuing to play up to Fassels prediction. The Giants defense held up and allowed Jerome Bettis only 39 yards rushing, and Pittsburgh didn't score a touchdown until "garbage time" when there was no chance of a victory for them. The Giants won 30-10 in a game in which the Giants thoroughly dominated on every side of the ball.

This is all very exciting for Giants fans. The Giants have two regular season games ahead of them and at 10-4 it just might be that the rode to the Superbowl will be going through the Meadowlands.



G Ron Stone of the NY Giants

Music Corrupting Jewish Youth?

continued from page 8

Wetlands even under the age of eighteen on a night when a Jewish band is performing.

"I would never put up a rock band and sell it as kosher," Ginsburg asserted. "As an artist I need to express myself... but [I] don't need to market it to this crowd." Ginsburg believes that Jewish Bar-Bands should call themselves by different names than they do when performing at synagogues, and should not cross-promote the two types of concerts. "It's certainly not religious music and it's being marketed as religious music." In addition, these bands make their concerts at times when people in the Jewish communities are looking for entertainment, like on Jewish holidays.

An SCW junior, Michal Leah Kanovsky, was recently asked to help publicize a concert at the WSIS, specifically to high school students. She asked whether the performing band would be advertising gigs at bars and clubs to the high school kids who would attend, and mentioned that she felt uncomfortable advertising to these students if that would be the case. Kanovsky was offered no assurances that this would not occur and realized that the band would promote itself and its future engagements to the entire present audience. She declined to help with the advertising for the event. "I

can understand how such a band may justify themselves," Kanovsky said, "saying things like 'well, these kids listen to secular music anyway, better they should listen to a Jewish type of secular music,' or 'these kids would go to bars anyway, better they should go to a bar to hear a Jewish band and socialize with other Jewish kids.' However, I think that this is a weak justification... These bands are doing the opposite of kiruv, they're bringing the Jewish souls into the impure places."

"It's really up to the bands where they want to play," said SCW freshman Alia Kay, who is a fan of the Moshav Band. "I think if they want to play at clubs and target a different audience, then that's up to them. But, there's a lot of Jewish kids who go to their concerts in shuls and it's inappropriate to expose them to things their parents wouldn't want them to be involved with."

Soulfarm and the Moshav Band both have members who are brothers who grew up on Moshav Me'or Modiim in Israel, founded by the late Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, and whose music was greatly affected by Carlebach. The Moshav Band promotes themselves on their website as being influenced by Carlebach music in addition to 60s music, while Soulfarm says to play "New American

music," and "delivers it all with a flavor some like to call Middle Eastern." The Moshav Band says they have "repeatedly sparked the fire of Judaism in the hearts of students and young adults around the world and look forward to bringing their exciting show to your community." On Soulfarm's website they say their band is "New American music, with rhythms you can hear on any neighborhood corner in any city... Soulfarm has ignited a wide fan base that regularly sells out Manhattan clubs like the Wetlands and the Lion's Den."

"I've been to the Wetlands when certain Jewish bands play," said Kanovsky, "and the Jewish kids who come there are religious kids who are not there to hear the music, rather they go there to socialize... The solution to kids socializing in destructive areas is not to offer them less destructive areas, rather the solution is to offer positive environments and severely limit the destructive areas that are open to them."

Soulfarm quotes T.S. Elliot on their website who said he believed that good music is "music heard so deeply that it is not heard at all, but you are the music while the music lasts." The question is whether this is music that Yeshiva kids should be a part of.

OVER THE MECHITZAH

By: Mike Berezin and Greg Samuels

We would first like to say thank you to all of you who wrote in with your accolades and kudos. We hope that we have done some good



for many of you, and have been entertaining to most of you. Over The Mechitza is here to help you. Also, we would like to remind you that Mike is an eligible bachelor and is indeed looking. Please send all inquiries and resumes for Mike, along with your questions for us to gskylar2@aol.com

Dear MIKE AND GREG,

I am 20 years old, and still clueless: how do men think? It's obviously very different from the way that we members of the smarter sex do.

The Man-Hater in Midtown

First, we don't ask questions like that. It really doesn't help anyone or solve any problems. There are several other ways testosterone thought differs from estrogenic. For starters, guys think in terms of getting things done, and done quickly. We want sports, food, and Viking Uuber-babes. All things are categorized as things that either bring a guy closer to or send farther away from these Big Three. We are simple creatures that operate in a highly logical and straightforward fashion. We are big, cuddly and lovable, and ape-like in our primordial stupidity. That is why women love us.

Upon discussion of how much we know about thought and femininity in today's women, and after reading *Little Women*, we have come to the following conclusion: we have no clue how women think, and Louisa May Alcott needs to add more violence and sex. Yet, we should probably start with what we do know. We know women are born better at language and stuff, but on a practical every-day level at college age we have a lot to learn. Women in Stern College are often confused, they can be uncomfortable with their bodies, their thoughts, and their opinions. Self-esteem can sometimes be a problem, and in regard to that, you have to feel good about you. This is the unabridged version of male thought in motion trying to "solve a problem" that women "just want to talk about."

Dear MIKE AND GREG,

I know this sounds contrite, but

a lot of times, I feel fat. I'm not fat, and I work out on a regular basis, but no matter how thin I am, I see guys going after girls that are naturally skinnier than I am. Do guys really like anorexic girls-how skinny

is too skinny?

Jenny Craig in Brookdale

Dear Ms. Horizontally-Challenged, Sorry, but you deserve that.

Bubbie once said don't ask silly questions, or else you're gonna get silly answers. We grew up seeing and playing with Barbies. Most normal boys didn't, but we did. The long awaited point of this story is that society has given unnatural ideals in regard to women to today's men. There is Barbie with unrealistic curves, Pamela Anderson with her disproportions, and Oprah Winfrey who keeps changing sizes. All this leads men to dream the dream of a woman who is as unreal as she is imperfect due to her lack of imperfections.

Truth be told, a guy want a girl who is healthy-physically and emotionally. While we are firm believers in someone for everyone, men and women alike can stand to look their best. Working out and eating healthy is important, but first and foremost guys want a girl who believes that she is attractive. We don't want to marry a skinny girl who looks emaciated. On a side note, the waifish heroin chic look went out when the Kate Moss phase ended.

This leads us to the point that while women are often hesitant to admit it, they too are frequent connoisseurs of the exceptionally beautiful opposite sex specimen. One of us was walking through the city once with a few female friends, when out of the blue, one called out a "B." They were playing bingo for girls. Bingo for girls is a game in which you get a letter for each "hottie" that you see first and call out. Girls and guys both get Austin Powers-like sometimes, but it only proves that the 60's never really died. In the end, you must realize that you are beautiful. In her own way, each woman was blessed with a certain beauty that all guys who get to know them grow to see. Some beauties are easier to see than others, but ultimately all can be seen.

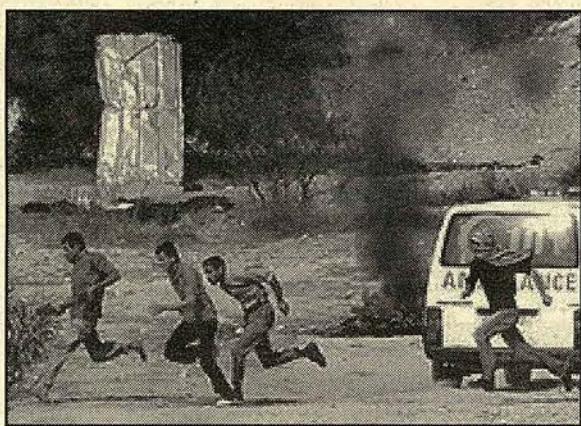
Until next time Stern College, this is Mike and Greg.

Israeli School Enrollment Decrease

continued from page 16

attend Israeli overseas programs go to Hebrew University and Haifa University. Another type of program that sends American students to Israel is the Birthright Israel program. Universities in the United States that have a Hillel, the national Jewish organization spread throughout college campuses, send students who have never been to Israel on a free two-week trip there. There are 33,000 applications for 7,500 slots to join Birthright. The campus Hillel at Baruch College, part of CUNY, was allocated 30 slots this year and had 180 applications. When students were recently selected, however, many did not respond in the usual excited manner, according to Rabbi Ian Azizofollahoff, Executive

Director of Hillel at Baruch. "We've seen students selected and then back out," said Azizofollahoff. When asked if this is related to the current situation in Israel, he answered, "yes, students have said it's directly related."



Other students who still have an interest in going to Israel, despite its problems, have filled the new places, so the program so far has not been cancelled or postponed. "If the situation [in Israel] is bad around the time of the trip, then it will be cancelled," Azizofollahoff asserted. Though exchange programs at Israeli universities

YU Panel on Current Mideast Crisis in Israel

By Alexandra Beard

Conflicting views regarding the welfare for the State of Israel and hopes for peace during the present Middle East crisis were expressed at Yeshiva University's Israel Club Panel Symposium, entitled "Prospects for Peace in Israel." The panel, on November 15th, composed of four experts on Middle Eastern affairs, represented varying opinions on how Israel, the Palestinians, and the United States should act in order to ensure the best interests of all involved.

Israel's current wave of violence and its causes served as the basis for much of the panel's discussion. According to Dr. Daniel Pipes, director of the Middle East Forum, the present violence is in stark contrast to the concessions made at Camp David in July. "There was talk of ending violence in July and talk of ending Israel in October," Pipes stated.

Pipes explained that the current violence is a result of an erosion of Arab fear of the Israeli's. "When Israel decided to leave Lebanon in 1993, it showed the Arabs that Israel was getting weaker in morale and failed to stand up for its own rights," Pipes said. "Israel will have to go to war to show that it's tough and show in word and deed that you don't mess with Israel." Pipes attributed Israel's growing vulnerability to the government's failure to react decisively to the recent Palestinian acts of violence, such as the burning of Joseph's tomb and the lynching of three Israeli soldiers.

Representing the official view of the Israeli government, Chaim Shacham, former Consul General to the State of Israel, also addressed the significance of the Camp David Summit in July with

Barak, Arafat, and President Clinton. "Camp David was a turning point because Israel tried to set a permanent status agreement with Palestine, but they refused to consider our proposals," said Shacham. "As a result, there was a change in image of the Palestinians, and the international community recognized that Palestine was in a non-negotiating mood."

According to Naomi Weinberger, Director of the U.N Studies Program at Columbia University, Arafat's refusal to compromise with Israel at Camp David shocked the United States and the international community. "At this point after the lost prospect of peace at Camp David, there is no IDF military solution possible that would appear as an acceptable cost to Israel," she stated. "The prospect of a greater Israel is strategically bankrupt."

Should Arafat declare a Palestinian state, Shacham stressed that Palestine would create an even more hostile relationship with Israel, opting for unilateral actions rather than compromise by agreeing to a negotiated settlement with Israel. "Palestine is not ready to make historic compromises, but Israel feels that now is the time to make an agreement," Shacham stated.

Marc Rosenblum, founder and political director of "Americans for Peace Now," agreed with Shacham regarding Palestinian statehood. "The worst news for Israel is a Palestinian state arising from a unilateral act rather than from an agreement with the Israeli's," Rosenblum commented. "Israel must defend itself, prevent escalation of this crisis, and get back to the negotiation table, acknowledging its enemies." In the meantime, the Palestinians are much

to blame, according to Shacham. "The Arabs have tactics to make themselves into victims by using children as victims," he explained. "They encourage violence and terrorism by releasing Jihad and Hamas prisoners and still hope that Israel will withdraw from the territories, but they are wrong."

Rosenblum also blamed the Palestinians for the pain felt in the Middle East. "There is no one with whom to talk, because Arafat is a liar and a cheap," Rosenblum said. "Israel needs a message from Barak to cut all ties with the Arabs." Nevertheless, Rosenblum recognized Israel's role in contributing to some potential wrongs over the past two months. "I won't deny Israel's responsibilities," he remarked. "Ariel Sharon's accessing his right to visit the Holy Mount was not judicious." All of the four panelists agreed that prospects for peace in the Middle East seem precarious, and Israel must take action soon before the situation worsens. "When the funerals on both sides end, there will still be 5 million Jews and 4 million Palestinians in Israel living together, neither of which are fated to disappear," commented Rosenblum.

Although the Panel Symposium did not produce clear-cut solutions to the Middle East crisis, it did accomplish exposing over 100 Yeshiva University students to the reality of the complicated situation facing Israel and the Palestinians. "Jewish college students are concerned about Israel," said Shayna Astor, the president of the Stern College Israel Club. "This symposium is to further our knowledge about the turbulent times in the Middle East and to examine the options for peace."

Coming Next Semester:

The Observer-Commentator Shabbaton
Stay Tuned!

typically involve students from around the world, Weinstein attributes the major concern of going to Israel to Americans, and mostly parents of students. "Students themselves are less tainted by the media coverage than the parents who are refusing to let their kids go," she said. For the spring semester, "only time will tell how many will end up going," Weinstein stated. Usually, the difference between students who apply to the Overseas Program at BGU and those who actually attend is a slight one. Weinstein predicts that the dif-

ference this year will be greater. The number of spring applications for the program this year has not decreased for BGU and this may be because the university is far enough from the violence for students to feel safe, yet close enough for them to visit Jerusalem by an hour bus ride. "A lot of students applying are optimistic that the situation will get better," explained Weinstein. Yet, the question remains as to how many students will ultimately make the flight to a country that is experiencing unpredictable violence.

CAMPUS BRIEFS

Cosponsored by SCWSC and YCSC, Chanukah this year will be celebrated in a new way: with a Chanukah Casino. "This is a dream," said Lou Shapp, organizer of the event. "I like to quote Kennedy: When I see something I ask 'why.' When I dream something, I ask 'why not?'" Boasting of blackjack, poker, and roulette - as well as delectable Chanukah treats - the Chanukah casino promises to bring a big crowd. The YU Band and Shalom Morgenstern will perform.

WYUR was not in service this semester, choosing instead to reconstruct some of the equipment to enable for better usage in the spring.

With the existence of Kol Shira, two SCW chorus groups existed - until recently. Belles floundered this semester - with only two singers showing up to the Sunday night practices. Without a clear differentiation between the clubs, they must both compete for the same singing population. Belles plans to have auditions again in the

spring.

To the disappointment of many, the second part of the Guide to the Perplexed never appeared. "I'm very perplexed," remarked one student. "What good will the guide be in March?"

Final schedules span a week and a half this year. Faculty members will now be required to proctor their own finals to enable students to ask questions to their instructor.

Preparations are underway for the Arts Festival to be held in the spring.

Israeli Politics

continued from page 11

to "show the country that we are not afraid of running against Bibi [Netanyahu], or anyone else..." The Labor party is, in fact, more interested in the Netanyahu law passing than in the Knesset dissolution: Even if Netanyahu beats Barak for Prime Minister, at least the left-wing parties will be spared the wrath of the voter in general elections. Both laws will probably be ready for final legislation next Monday - but if one passes, then the other one is likely not to. The question, therefore, is which one will be presented first? This is solely the prerogative of Knesset Speaker Avraham Burg, who is expected to go with his

party and present the Bibi law first.

Moshe Feiglin, head of the Zo Artzeinu movement who has been waging an independent run to head the Likud, may not be able to run against Netanyahu and Sharon for this Position. The reason is that Feiglin has been a member of the party for only six months, while the regulations require nine months. Feiglin's representative has turned to party head Sharon, who is authorized to waive the above requirement.

A point of interest, and maybe a little ironic is that the Yesha population is rising.

The Ethics of Getting the "A"

By: Simone Rosenzweig

Cheating. The word shows up all over, in many contexts. It has long been a common aspect of college life, and unfortunately Yeshiva University is no exception. YC, SCW, and SSSB all have regulations attempting to discourage this behavior. The Undergraduate Catalogue states that, "cheating on an examination will subject the offender to disciplinary action, including possible expulsion from the University...every student is expected to adhere to the ideals represented by the University...maintaining high standards of ethical and academic conduct...the submission...of any examination, course assignment...assumed to guarantee that the thought and expressions...are the student's own. Evidence to the contrary will result in appropriate penalties which may include failure in the course of disciplinary dismissal."

Despite these regulations and warnings from professors, cheating persists in all three colleges, especially during finals time. A YC-SSSB Junior told this reporter that he believes cheating is especially prevalent in Sy-Syms courses where the test format is often short-answer, or numeric problems, making it easy for students to share answers with one another. He recalls a finance exam he once took in Belfer where the cheating was especially obvious. Students were clearly exchanging exam answers. The professor of that particular course is known to have failed students for cheating in the past but this did not deter them.

Cheating exists in more forms than the simple sharing of test answers. YC has a long established tradition of Mesorah, the recycling of old tests amongst students for use by future classes. A YC Senior claimed, "almost everyone I

know uses Mesorah, and I never heard of anyone not using it because they felt it was morally wrong." The status of Mesorah remains debatable, as many professors are aware of the fact that tests from previous years circulate amongst their students. Certain professors themselves give out old tests for students to study from, and professors who allow students to keep their question sheets should be aware that they might be passed on to future classes. However, there are a number of professors who are known to have a problem with Mesorah. One professor is known to have changed the format of his exam after he was made aware of the fact that his old exams were being circulated.

Cheating exists at SCW as well. Deborah Bienenfeld, a SCW Senior, says that she has seen professors leave the room in the middle of a test, and there was no problem with students cheating. On the other hand, Chana Rosenblatt another SCW senior remembers taking a final in Koch Auditorium and witnessing a student continuously drop her pencil in order to catch a glimpse of another student's answers. Cheating is easier in a class with short answer exams, as opposed to essay format, which may explain why cheating is more prevalent in some classes than others.

When questioned about the prevalence of cheating in his courses, Professor Aaron Brown, SSSB, stated, "I feel cheating is a minor problem, present at all universities, high schools, and grade schools. Most people had at least one time in at least one class when the pressure was high and the opportunity presented itself...however, the problem is minor because only a few people cheat enough to alter their record significantly, and virtually all of them get caught sooner or later."

Election Disenfranchises Students

By: Michal Leah Kanovsky

Election 2000 came down to the very last vote. Though Bush's lead in Florida by just 537 votes was the deciding factor, there were tight races in countless states. But in Florida, New York and other states the college student vote raises issues.

Two weeks before Election Day, SCW Junior Felissa Elfenbein, attempted to get an absentee ballot from her home state Florida. She began online at RockTheVote.com, which referred her to an invalid site. She then got the phone number for the Florida ballot office. There she was referred her to another website that did not exist. Elfenbein called the office back and they told her to try the website again on another day. She did, but the website never came into existence.

At this point Elfenbein's father got involved. From Florida, he called the County Voting Center. They told him to contact the party headquarters. The Democratic Party phone number was not listed, so he was forced to contact the Republican Party headquarters. They told him to come in and they would give him an absentee ballot. When he showed up though, they refused to give him the ballot. They claimed that there would

get to New York and back to Florida to be counted.

Other Floridians at SCW complained also about not receiving their absentee ballots. Felissa comments on the experience that "I was upset with all the time and effort put into trying to get the ballot, that I never got to vote."

There were other cases of SCW students who did not receive their absentee ballots with enough time to mail them back before the election. Student's who registered to vote in New York also had problems locating their voter centers. One student called information four times, got four different phone numbers she could call to ask about where she was supposed to vote, and all four were not answered.

At the voting booths students reported not being asked to show any proof of identification whatsoever before voting. Eve Axelrod, a sophomore at Columbia University served as a poll watcher. She explained that "According to the laws of the US you don't have to show ID in order to vote." This is done to ensure that people are not intimidated into not voting. However the same method allows for votes to be discounted through fraud and other offenses.

At Marquette University in Milwaukee it

1,000 students surveyed, 174 admitted to voting more than once. 95 did so by obtaining an absentee ballot from their home state and then voting again in Wisconsin, the other 79 voted more than once in Wisconsin. 13 students claim that they voted four or more times. If out of a random poll 13 students deliberately misrepresented themselves to vote more than a few times, the wider implications are that many more people pulled this off nation-wide.

As a poll watcher Axelrod's function was "To make sure that everything was being run according to the law." When asked whether she thought the voting in this election was fair, she answered, "No, I think it was a close election and some of the things that weren't fair about this election aren't fair about any elections. But I think that the reason why these unfair practices made such a difference in this election where they haven't in previous elections was because the election was so close."

Election 2000 can best be summed up by Felissa Elfenbein who said that "being from Miami-Dade county, I now see that my vote really did count and still does count. I believe that there needs to be election reform, not only in Florida, but in other states as well."

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Academic Integrity?

By: *Shayna Aster and Golda Fleischmann*

When the current wave of violence in Israel escalated, we thought that it was appropriate that the Israel Club hold a symposium to address the conflict. We envisaged a panel of academics who would explain the background to the clashes and the prospects for the future. Our goal was to present a wide spectrum of opinions, thereby exposing the YU undergraduate student body to multiple perspectives that otherwise would not be raised. We planned on bringing speakers who would present the official Israeli position, the Israeli right and left platforms, as well as a speaker who would voice the Palestinian point of view.

Prior to this undertaking, Cardozo held a symposium concerning the prospects for peace in the Middle East. The panel was composed of three panelists who all called on Israel to end its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, and maintained that Israel was violating International law. Representing the Israeli position was a legal advisor to the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs, who was not persuasive in presenting the Israeli position. The main problem with this panel was its biased nature. The fact that there was only one representative of Israel while there were three representing the Palestinian viewpoint tilted the balance

of the panel and fostered a hostile environment in the room.

We were determined to avoid a reenactment of this bias in our panel, all the while maintaining a diverse spectrum of opinions. The importance of representing a plethora of opinions lies in the fact that in the YU community, limited points of view on this issue are heard.

Therefore, we composed a panel of Daniel Pipes, director of the Middle East Forum who has been known to call on Israel to toughen its stance; Marc Rosenblum, founder of Americans for Peace Now; and Naomi Weinberger, director of UN Studies at Columbia, who is generally considered dovish. To represent the official Israeli position, we invited Chaim Shacham, a representative of the Israeli consulate. Finally, we felt it imperative to have someone present the Palestinian platform and therefore, we extended such an invitation. This, to us, was a balanced panel.

The idea of bringing a spokesperson for the Palestinian cause was met with what we found to be a shocking response on the part of the Office of Student Services. Student Services felt that the suggestion was admirable in that it aspired to broaden student perspective on the issue, and that in an "academically honest institution" such a request would be granted with no qualms. However, given the

composition of the YU undergraduate student body and their highly charged emotions regarding this issue, such a panel would create a security hazard. For this reason, we were told that we could not have a speaker representing the Palestinian perspective at our symposium, regardless of whether the representative was Palestinian, Israeli, or American.

If YU truly aspires to be an institution of higher learning that embodies a stimulating academic environment, then should it not encourage diversity of thought? Our panel aspired to present a wide variety of opinions; not to advocate one position over the other. In presenting a broad spectrum of opinions from leading academics in the field, we were trying to make students more knowledgeable about the issues involved in this conflict. With this exposure to a variety of opinions, students would be more equipped with the tools to argue whatever position they happen to advocate, and would be better prepared to refute contrary opinions. Students should realize this is Yeshiva University, not yeshiva.

The panel, titled "Prospects for Peace in Israel," was successful, widely attended, and sparked animated debates between students and panelists, as well as among students. Academic integrity, however, was not at its best.

NEWS BRIEFS

George W. Bush to Become 43rd president

The 5 week fight for the presidency ended on the eve of December 13 after Vice President Al Gore conceded to Texas governor George Walker Bush, following a remarkable 5-4 Supreme Court vote to end the recount in Florida.

*Barak Resigns, Netanyahu Vows to Run in Early Elections

The Knesset passed the preliminary reading of

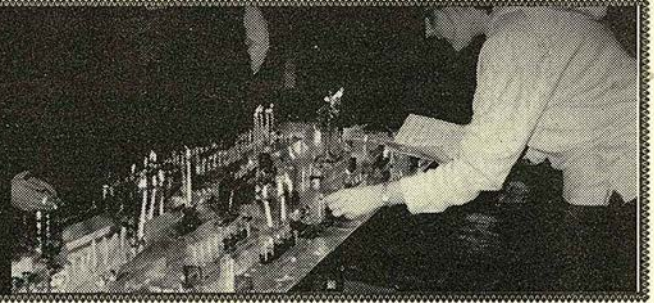
the "Bibi Bill," designed to clear the way for former Likud Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to become a contender in the upcoming elections for prime minister. Recent polls indicate that Netanyahu is supported by an overwhelming majority.

Negotiations Begin for Exchange of Prisoners

The al-Aqsa intifada is now in its 11th week, with over 300 people dead, and thousands

more injured. Yet despite continued violence, Israeli diplomats have begun negotiations with Hizbollah terrorists, to exchange hostages: four Israeli soldiers for as few as two known Muslim terrorists. The four Israeli soldiers include the three soldiers that were kidnapped in October, as well as Elchanan Tannenbaum, a businessman who was abducted abroad.

Happy Chanukah from The Observer



Stern Writes Officials for the Release of MIAs

By: *Deborah Bienenfeld*

Parents of the three soldiers captured in Lebanon during the Palestinian-Israeli violence appealed to YU students to help them on their mission for their children.

The forty students gathered to hear that nothing was being done to help these three young men. They cried, asking the students to do what it takes: write letters to officials, demonstrate in front of the UN.

Tova Kalkstein, one of the students present met with Geraldine Bitton to take action. They decided to create a letter writing campaign; the purpose was to bombard the officials with letters so that they would see the importance of

the issue and that it requires immediate action. The officials are Al Gore, Madeline Albright, William Cohen, Charles Schumer, Richard Holbrook, Hilary Clinton, and Kofi Annan.

They set up a table in the lobby of Stern College with letters, envelopes and pens, asking students to sign each letter and place them all in one envelope with a return address. Geraldine and Tova have spend the past few weeks stuffing and addressing each envelope, hoping to get the letters out before the change to Republican administration. Anyone who wants to volunteer should contact Tova (646-935-5973, email kalkstei@ymail.yu.edu) or Geraldine (646-935-6304, email gg713@yahoo.com.)

SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

RESUMES ARE DUE ON DECEMBER 20, 2000 FOR STUDENTS INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR THE SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

POSITIONS FOR ACCOUNTING, ADVERTISING, BUSINESS, COMPUTERS, FINANCE, AND MARKETING

JANUARY 24, 2001 – SUMMER INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT ORIENTATION (MIDTOWN – CLUB HOUR)

JANUARY 25, 2001 – SUMMER INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT ORIENTATION (MAIN—CLUB HOUR)

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Jewish Students Plan Mass Demonstration in Support of Israel

By: Danielle Bienenfeld

On February 22nd, 2001, thousands of Jewish high school and college students from the East Coast will unite on the footsteps of Capitol Hill to lobby our senators and congressmen on behalf of Israel in crisis. These students will be part of the The Mass Jewish Youth Mission (MJYM) to Washington, DC.



Sari Strulowitz, a SCW junior, the National Mission Chairperson, has formed the Student Coalition In Support of Israel (SCSI) to carry out this mission on February 8th. The SCSI includes all of the high school and college students who have agreed to participate in this mission. Strulowitz created the SCSI because she began to notice that "many students care about the current situation in Israel but feel helpless. Most people of my generation have not had the opportunity to actively participate in the democratic political system and all that it offers. Especially now, with the current presidential turmoil, we see how important an individual's actions can be."

Forty-five colleges are expected to partake in this program,

and as of now, 35 are most definitely participating. Some of the colleges besides for the students of Yeshiva University/ Stern College for Women include Duke University, Rutgers University, Columbia University, Brandeis University, Ohio State University, and Harvard. In addition to the colleges involved, there will be about 20 high schools joining in this mission from the Tri-state area and Maryland.

Funding for the MJYM will come from several Jewish and Zionist organizations, such as the activist organization, Betar Zionist Youth Movement and AIPAC, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. AIPAC is a Pro Israel organization working to strengthen relations between the United States and Israel through political and student activism in campaigns and elections. More funding will come from private donors who recognize this mission as crucial to the Jewish community.

This project is distinct from other recent student activist efforts in support of Israel, for this mission sets out to accomplish a more tangible task. Strulowitz explains that "although a properly orchestrated rally alone can be efficacious, we feel that based on the present situation in Israel, the combination of lobbying and rallying

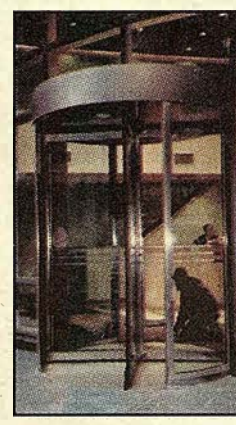
will be more productive." The reason that lobbying is more effective than rallying is because it has the potential to have immediate results. Therefore, shortly after Congress votes on the issues at hand, it will become clear if the students' lobbying efforts were successful. Previous student Jewish lobbying efforts have been successful, such as in the early 1980's, when Jewish students successfully fought for Soviet Jewry on Capitol Hill and helped win the battle. Now this mission will mirror the method and hopefully the result.

In this way, Jewish students will be able to combat this overwhelming feeling of helplessness that Strulowitz is referring to. Not only will the students be able to feel self-fulfilled for helping Israel in need, but simultaneously, they will also be strengthening themselves against the Palestinian students on their own campuses. According to the Jewish Week (11/17/00), in terms of the Israel-Palestinian conflict, "Israel is losing. Pro-Palestinian students are well-organized and well financed, staging large demonstrations and rallies." Therefore, it is imperative that Israel's call of help be answered immediately. Please email MJYM4israel@hotmail.com if you are interested in participating in this historic event.

Architectural Mistakes Plague 215 Lex

By: Adina Levine

Right after the front doors of the gorgeous new building opened to the burgeoning Stern College Campus, they immediately closed again. The reason: The revolving door entrance to 215 Lexington was built on the bottom of a slanted sidewalk, and would subsequently flood when it rained. Realizing this mistake after sukkot vacation, the Schuman, Lichtenstien, Clanan, and Efron Architects immediately began reconstructing the sidewalk, as the SCW students were forced to use the side entrance.



Further, Professor Ellen Schrecker claims that there were some architectural mistakes in the layout of the classrooms. "The large classroom on the 2nd floor - room 208 - is an absolute

disaster," Schrecker remarked. "It is long and narrow and it is impossible to teach in since the instructor cannot interact with, let alone even see, the students sitting in the back and vice versa. The room is essentially unusable for instruction and should be renovated immediately - either broken up into smaller, seminar-type rooms or else reconfigured into a wide, rather than long, room."

Schrecker blames this problem on the failure of the architects to consult the faculty during classroom design.

"We had one discussion with the faculty regarding the layout of their offices," recalled Dean Bacon.

"In any new place, we have to work out the kinks," said Dean Bacon. "But I think overall people are very excited about the new building."

Due to Continuing Israel Violence, SCW Students Rearrange Vacations

By: Adina Levine

As the first semester nears a conclusion, SCW students excitedly discuss vacation plans, this year with a new twist that excludes Israel from vacation options. In an exclusive Observer poll, only 16% of SCW students will be visiting Israel during winter vacation, as many students express their displeasure toward parental bans on visiting Israel.

"I really wanted to go to Israel, but my parents wouldn't let me," commented Suri Strobel, SCW sophomore.

In a sentiment expressed by many, parents appear to be more concerned with violence in Israel than their children. Claiming the ongoing violence as a source of danger for visiting college students, parents are prohibiting their children from visiting Israel, while allowing them to visit Miami, a city which boasts of a high crime rate.

"As much as I'm annoyed at the inconvenience that my parents won't let me go, I can understand it," said Aliza Weinstein, SCW junior. "If I were a parent, I don't know if I'd let my child go."

However, some students are defying the standard in attending some of the solidarity missions that have made visits to Israel cheaper than usual: with Bnei Akiva offering a solidarity mission for only \$300, and another YU sponsored solidarity mission only costing \$99.

"I'm proud to be able to tell people that I'm going to Israel," said Rachali Rubin, SCW sophomore who will be attending the

Bnei Akiva solidarity mission. "We cannot be supportive of Israel only when things are good. It's our responsibility to be there now."

"Our students' connection to Israel obviously goes beyond casual tourists," remarked Dean Karen Bacon. "I'm sure our students visiting Israel is still higher than the overall tourist rate. I saw a picture of the airport, and it looked like there were more soldiers with guns than arriving tourists. I can understand a parents' concern."

Perhaps due to closing off Israel as a vacation spot, Florida emerges as the overall preference of places for vacation.

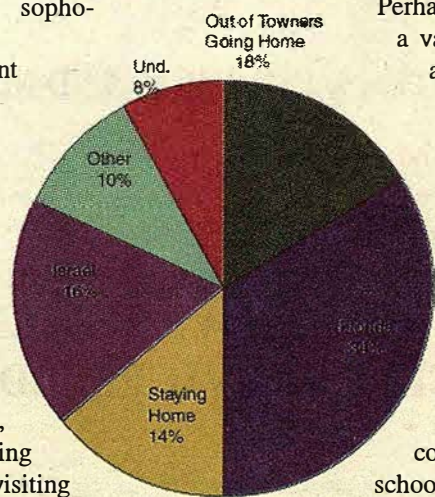
"I'm going to have fun," remarked Adina Ettinger, SCW freshman.

Yet, many students expressed dissatisfaction with the timing of vacation - that it misses the yeshiva high school vacation. "Now that my parents have some kids in college and some kids in high school, we can no longer travel as a family for vacation," complained Strobel.

Other students complain of the shortness of SCW vacation, especially in comparison to other colleges. "What am I going to do for vacation?" rhetorically questioned one SCW junior. "I'm going to blink and it will be over."

In a similar vein, another student remarked, "It's not fair that the city colleges have six weeks for vacation, and we barely have two. I can't go on vacation, get a job, and relax from the college pressure in that short amount of time."

But as much as SCW students have complaints about vacation, and whatever they are doing for vacation, one opinion is clear: Everyone is looking forward to it.



Israel Programs Experience Decrease in American Student Enrollment

By: Sara Trappler

With the eruption of violence in Israel over the past weeks, many American universities have cancelled their exchange programs with universities in Israel and American students studying in Israel have been told by their home universities to return to the United States. A minority of American students, however, decided to stay, according to Rebecca Weinstein, director of the Overseas Program at Ben-Gurion University of Beer Sheva. "Students could stay at the university and withdraw from the program, but most didn't," said Weinstein, who directs the Overseas program from an office in New York. "We had a lot of students drop out [of BGU], many of whom were pulled out by their home universities."

However, contrary to Weinstein's belief that most exchange programs in Israel have been significantly affected, many directors of exchange programs for Israeli Universities claimed that their numbers have not drastically

changed. Most of these overseas programs are directed from offices in the United States, where they work with American universities to recruit students on an exchange basis, granting students college credits and a semester or year break from their American university.

Ami Devir, Administrative Coordinator in New York for Tel Aviv University, said that the university's Overseas Program has had less than a ten-percent drop in enrollment from last spring semester. "The center of what's going on [in Israel] isn't in Tel Aviv," he said in regards to the conflict that was centered around Jerusalem for the past weeks. "It's been okay in terms of enrollment. There's been a slight decrease... but it's not so substantial." Raffi Cohen, Admissions Officer for Hebrew University, also maintained from his office in New York that there is not a significant decrease in the numbers of enrollment at Hebrew University. "There is some drop off," he said "but not enough to make

us think of changing any approach we have." The most noticeable change at Hebrew University's Overseas Program has been the concern from people calling wanting updates regarding the situation in Israel.

At Bar Ilan University, where the majority of exchange students are Orthodox Jews, the withdrawal rate over the past weeks has been next to nothing; only two students have dropped out. Unlike many American universities, Brandeis University is still sending many students to Israel on exchange programs, according to J. Scott Van Der Meid, Director of Study Abroad at Brandeis. "We have a special relationship with Israel, because there are so many Jewish students here," explained Van Der Meid. "Our numbers are down compared to the past, but it's not necessarily related [to the violence] because sometimes [the numbers] are up and sometimes [they are] down. So, I can't make a definite correlation."

Most of the Brandeis students that

continued on page 13