

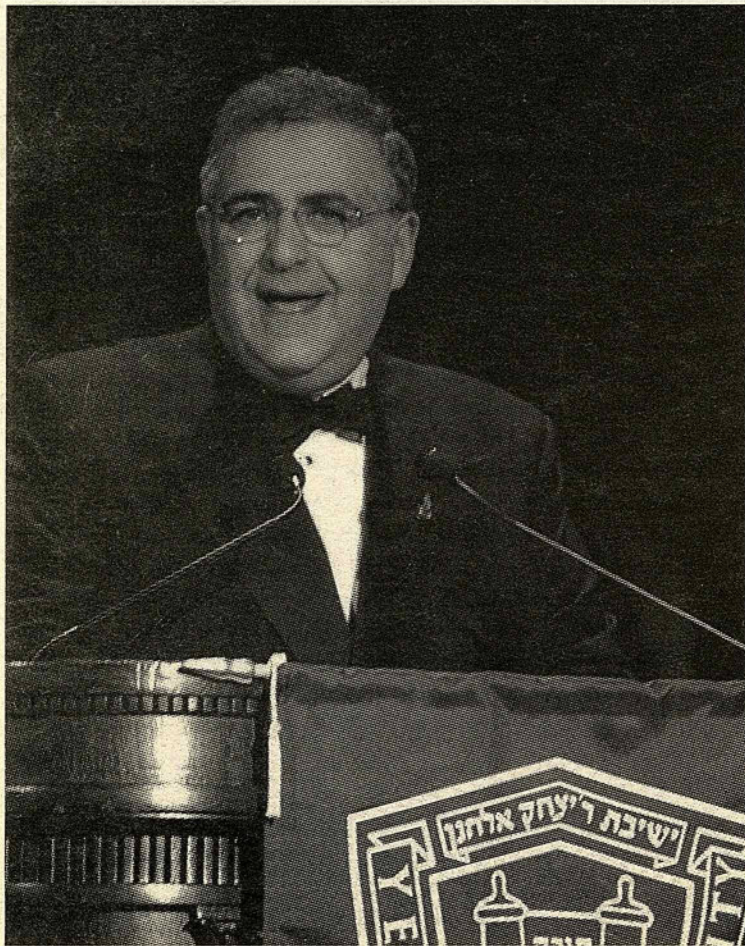


The Yeshiva University

OBSERVER

Volume XLVXI Number 5

December 2003 / Kislev 5674



Joel, above, announced the naming of the SCW Campus at the annual Hanukkah dinner

Joel Announces Naming of SCW Campus at Hanukkah Dinner Bacon Awarded Presidential Medallion Early Completion of \$400 Million Campaign Announced

By Shayndi Raice

Yeshiva's 79th Annual Hanukkah Dinner and Convocation honored various philanthropists and dedicated Yeshiva members and unveiled several major gifts to the university, most notably a gift by Robert M. Beren to have the SCW Midtown Campus named after his late uncle, Israel Henry Beren. The dinner attracted over 700 guests to the Waldorf Astoria Hotel where they announced the completion of Yeshiva's \$400 million campaign.

While the announcement of the campaign's success was expected, many were completely taken by surprise at Beren's gift. "I knew that President Joel was currently in negotiations with Mr. Beren, but I didn't know he

was concluding them," said SCW Dean Karen Bacon. The crowd burst into uproarious applause in response to the announcement.

According to Peter Ferrara, the senior director of the department of communications and public affairs, Beren had pledged \$15 million to the university and now allocated a major portion of the gift to name the Midtown Campus. Exact utilization of the gift has not yet been decided. "The parameter of the gift is to, number one, help support future plans for the Midtown Campus, and secondly to help defray some of the recent expenses that have been invested into the Midtown Campus," explained Daniel Forman, vice president for development.

People are enthusiastic about the gift and eager to

embrace the campus' new title. "We have a wonderful benefactor of the university and Midtown Campus - now referred to as the Beren Campus," said Ed Fox, deputy to the president.

Beren's generous gift was pledged early in Yeshiva's fundraising campaign. The campaign was initiated in 1999 by the University's Board of Trustees and provided donors with the opportunity to name and endow research funds, faculty chairs, deanships, residence halls and even the Midtown Campus. "The university campaign has reached its goal and will continue to raise funds for the university through December 31," clarified Forman. "Now the individual schools, including Stern College that have not yet

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Administrators and Student Leaders Seek to Enhance Mental Health Resources on Campus

By Esther Flaschner

For seven years, student Yigal Scher battled clinical depression and suicidal rage. A veritable survivor, Yigal not only conquered his mental illness but today retains the courage to speak about it publicly. An almost lone voice in the Orthodox community, Columbia undergraduate Scher insists on sharing his intimate story with others. "On a personal note...it's difficult to do all this," admits Scher. "But people need to be shown that they are not alone and that there is a way to get through this."

What distinguishes Scher's story is not so much his mental illness or long struggle with suicidal depression. According to the Jed Foundation, an organization dedicated to "improving the mental health safety net" of college students nationwide, suicide is the second leading cause of death among college students.

Of these victims, 90 percent have an active psychiatric illness. Scher's uniqueness lies in his success and ability to confront the situation directly. Mental illness among all college students has intensified dramatically in the last few years, prompting Scher and others to demand serious analysis of the problem's sources and solutions. Yeshiva, like many other universities, is preparing to join the bandwagon of stronger mental health facilities for college students.

Student Stress

According to many educators, the college years serve as an inherently stressful phase in a student's life. "Students are not sure where they're heading, and they feel cut off from the past," explained Rabbi Yehudah Sarna, religious life coordinator of the New York University Hillel. "There is a feeling of wandering and not really fitting in - a sense of volatility." SCW Associate Dean of Students Zeldia Braun

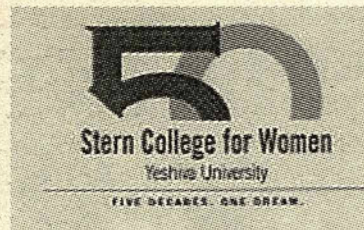
echoed the same hypothesis. "Students struggle with life issues," she asserted. "The transition from being a high school student to an adult seeking professional and lifelong goals is very stressful."

According to Braun, one of the foremost concerns prompting student stress is tremendous change in relationships. Students arriving on college campuses, while evolving into their own independent personas, must adjust to new relationships with their parents. Social relationships transform as friends become roommates with unique demands and tensions. High school friends suddenly "don't know them so well anymore" added Sarna, prompting a real sense of peer isolation.

Additionally, Braun articulated the stresses applied by rigorous college academia. The changes from high school or Israel yeshiva academics cannot

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Snow Deters Jubilee Event: "Back to School" Day Missing Bacon and Kanarfogel



By Aviva Balk

Despite a sudden winter snowstorm, covered roads and grueling traffic, the Stern College Alumnae Association held a successful "Back to School" affair on Sunday, December 14, at 245 Lexington on the Beren Campus. "For a first time event, especially considering the weather, we are happy," remarked Robert Saltzman, director of alumni affairs.

As the second in a series of SCW's Jubilee extravaganza, the event, which had over 25 alumnae in attendance, was an opportunity for former students to relive their college experience by attending classes given by pro-

fessors, reuniting with friends and former classmates, and touring the expanded Beren Campus.

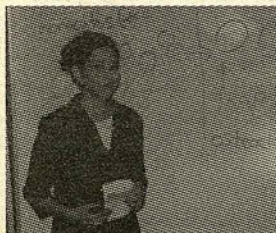
As with all of the Jubilee activities, "Back to School" was coordinated by alumnae, primarily by Vice Presidents for Programming Barbara Kessel and Paula From, both '71 SCW. "What's great about this is that it's all alumnae driven," said Saltzman.

"We wanted to find a way to combine the scholarship of Stern with the idea of alumnae getting together," noted Kessel. "This is a creative opportunity to see other Stern alumnae in a structure that also allows us to enjoy the learning that we experienced at Stern."

Saltzman and Chavi Eisenberg, director of undergraduate alumni programs, were responsible for running the event and making sure things went smoothly, especially when the sudden announcement arrived

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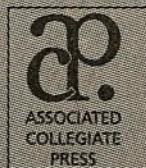
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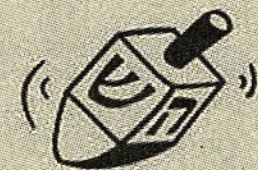
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The Offices of Student Affairs
Wish you good luck on finals
And a Happy Happy Chanukah!!!



ENJOY
YOUR
VACATION!!!



Effie Nulman, David Himber, Zelda Braun,
Beth Hait, Rochelle Ausubel, Shana Glasser,
Rachel Kraut, Marga Marx and Betty Kam

A Message from Your Editor



Shayndi Raice

A fellow writer suggested *The Observer* write an in depth feature on the new anti-Semitism. What makes this anti-Semitism different from previous genres of anti-Semitism is that it does not preach hatred toward Jews as Christ-killers or as a sub-human form. Rather, this new force shares common goals with the historic form of anti-Semitism, and hides its true colors by preaching the opposite of hate: love of human rights. The term human rights, sadly, has become a distasteful term among Israel supporters because it has become a guise for Palestinian supporters to charge Israel with gross violations of human rights, conveniently overlooking their own attitudes toward human life. A prime example of this occurred only a few years ago at the Anti-Racism Conference in Durban, South Africa.

Since I accept the premise that most often anti-Zionism is a guise for anti-Semitism (the only

acceptable form of criticism of Israel, in my eyes, is regarding the policies of a particular government, not the right of an entire country, and its people to exist), the story appealed to me. When deciding what stories are appropriate for the SCW readership, I take two things into account: how it affects us as Jews, and how it affects us as students of Yeshiva University. Anti-Semitism in any form obviously affects us as Jews. However, as women of Yeshiva specifically, it's harder to say we are faced with daily bouts of anti-Semitism. Or so it initially appeared to me.

We, as American Jews, particularly living in New York, think of ourselves as living in a bastion of freedom. In most ways we do. However, the unique aspect of this new anti-Semitism is far more subtle, far more successful at manipulating the mind into thinking that anti-Zionism truly is separate from anti-Semitism.

The day after my peer initially suggested this topic, we were discussing its merits when our professor walked into the room. While he was not a professor of history, politics or anything at all having to do with the Middle Eastern region, he decided to voice his personal opinion regarding our topic. "You can definitely believe that the State

of Israel came about in an illegal way and that it was one of the greatest mistakes of the 20th century and not be an anti-Semite," he said. I was flabbergasted by his statement. I do not understand how a person can claim that a democratic country, and therefore its people, does not have a right to exist.

However, the deep-seated hatred of Jews that I expect of an anti-Semite was not apparent in my professor. How could it be that someone espouses anti-Semitism and yet is not an anti-Semite?

I proceeded to ask him what about the creation of the State of Israel? Did he see it as illegal? He couldn't answer that. I asked him how the country could have come about illegally if it had been recognized by the United Nations. His next statement truly shocked me. "Sure it did," he said with total mockery. He did not believe, despite my insistence, that on May 14 of 1948, only days (hours in the case of the United States) after David Ben-Gurion declared the State of Israel in the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people, the United Nations, including the Soviet Union, recognized the new government.

To be honest, most of my confrontations with pro-Palestinian factions have come from volatile protests such as the

one at the University of Michigan last year. Such places are surrounded by an aura of non-communication and portrayal of the other as the devil. For a Jew, engaging in "civil discourse" while your enemy is screaming "kill the Jews" is tantamount to treason.

Furthermore, most often when I went to such events it was as a journalist. I was one of the few Yeshiva students that were able to talk with members of the opposing side. And when I did talk to them, my professionalism required me to ask questions, listen and write. I would never have dreamt of responding to statements I found offensive.

So the first time I was able to argue with a proponent of what I consider to be the new anti-Semitism, I was surprised to realize he was not an anti-Semite, but rather an ignoramus. Commenting on politics today requires that party lines are followed to the letter. Few liberals or conservatives are able to think independently from their party doctrine. Certainly, a man who identifies himself as a liberal New Yorker would find it distasteful, if not completely incomprehensible, to side with a decidedly anti-liberal view: that the Jews are entitled to live freely in safety as any other nation.

While I try my hardest to shy away from making compar-

isons between current events and the situation of the European Jews prior to and during the second World War, I find that those who blindly follow today's liberal dogmas to be frighteningly similar to the brainwashed followers of Hitler.

They say that hatred can be so strong that it can blind a person to the truth. The crux of the issue is, however, whether today's anti-Zionism stems from a true hatred of Jews or an ignorance that stems from blindly following liberal dogma. If the cause is different, but the outcome the same, i.e. the destruction of the Jews (or in this case the Jewish state), can we claim this is not hatred?

In all likelihood it is both liberals blindly towing their party's line and strong anti-Semites who are able to lead the masses astray from the truth. Regardless, one would not question whether a Nazi guard in the concentration camps was an anti-Semite, even if he later claimed he had been brainwashed or was simply following orders. The bottom line is that if a person denies basic human rights to only the Jews - the right to live freely and without fear for your life or the lives of your children - then you are, undoubtedly, an anti-Semite, although you may be a dumb one.

The Observer wishes a hearty
mazel tov to Rachel Horn
and Jason Cyrulnik
on their recent marriage

Letters to the Editors

Open debate on the Yeshiva campus: Can it exist?

To the editors:

I recently read your article about the Israel Club's decision not to host Guy Grossman as a speaker. Shame on those that protested his attendance and thank you Shayndi Raice for making some sense.

If college is not about the exchange of differing ideas and debating contrasting beliefs, then what is it? What are we here for if all we're going to do is reinforce and reiterate the same homogenous ideas that we have been hearing our whole lives?

SCW Israel President Hindy Poupko is quoted as saying that 'I strongly believe that it is the job of every Jew in the Diaspora, and even more so a religious Jew in Diaspora, to support the State of Israel and more importantly the Israeli government.'

Really? Not only don't I believe that, I highly doubt that you believe that. Of course I believe that one of our greatest responsibilities is to support the State of Israel. But the government? I don't think many religious American Jews were saying that, above all else, we need to support the Israeli government when Yitzhak Rabin or Ehud Barak were at the helm. That's not what I heard. It is our job to show support for the principles of Zionism and fight for Israel's right to continue existing as a Jewish homeland. But it is not our job to blindly support every one of Israel's policies just because we are Jews and to never question the Israeli government the way a two-year-old child never questions his mommy.

And as for Guy Grossman: say what you want about his politics and, if you so desire, question his decisions. But do not for a moment question his love for and loyalty to the State of Israel. The truth is, I have never met the man, but his resume speaks for itself. He was a member of the IDF for over a decade, reaching the rank of second lieutenant. This is a man who has put his life on the line for his country and dedicated the majority of his adult life to serving and protecting the right of a Jewish state in the land of Israel. Though I don't support his decision, it makes me proud of Israel and the Jewish people that he is one of us.

It's not so much the rationale behind these students' arguments that bothers me as much as the hubris. Sure, most of us went to study in Israel for the year. Some of us even went for two. And sure, we all buy our Israel bonds, wave our flags proudly at the Israeli Day Parade, and if we are really committed, attend a rally every once in a while. But I can't for the life of me understand how students on this campus could be so arro-

gant to think that they are vigorous supporters of Israel and that men like Guy Grossman (who, let me remind you, is a lieutenant in the IDF) are not?

May our college continue to be a home to pluralism and open discussion and debate of ideas, particularly about those issues which are dearest to us. And may this episode remind us all that there is still a lot of work to be done (even on this campus) in our advocacy for Israel and inspire us to expand our efforts on behalf of our homeland.

Avraham Sinensky, YC '04
News Editor,
The Commentator

To the editors:

Re: 'Rabbi Wieder Hosts Discussion Forum for Yeshiva Students' (Nov. 5, 2003), Josh Teplitsky's quote concerning Rabbi Wieder's new discussion forum, 'It's nice that in YU there can be events where concerned members of the community can come together to discuss important issues' misses perhaps its most telling aspect, namely, the fact that it is conducted in a café in Teaneck nowhere near YU. In other words, Rabbis Wieder and Blau could not find friendly space on campus to screen Trembling Before God and to discuss the very real issue of homosexuality within the Jewish community with their students. I am troubled by a culture on the various YU campuses that attempts to block out personalities and issues that may not be in lockstep with the modern Orthodox mainstream.

The indefinite postponement of Lieutenant Guy Grossman's visit is but another instance of this unfortunate pattern, as was Tikkun Magazine founder Michael Lerner being forced to speak in an off campus cafe as opposed to being allowed onto the campus proper last year. Even more recently, signs promoting a series of shiurim by Yeshivat Chovevei Torah's Rabbi Dov Linzer (to be given a block off campus, to wit) were removed from the bulletin board outside the main Beit Midrash within hours of being posted.

The Yeshiva community cannot afford to pretend as if the issues and discussions we are screening out do not exist and do not impact our world, and the YU campus could well be the 'safest' venue we will ever have for engaging and formulating responses to them. We should be taking better advantage.

Avraham Bronstein YC '03
BRGS '04 RIETS '05

Bialystoker: All Are Welcome

To the editors:

The recent article by Dodi-lee Hecht beautifully portrayed both the physical beauty and the spiritual vibrancy of the Bialystoker Synagogue. The article truly captured how the shul is both a link to past glories and a key to the future of the Lower East Side neighborhood.

A recently launched Torah Umesorah project at our shul may be of special interest to Stern College students and alumnae. Every Wednesday morning, between 10:30 and 12:45, two dynamic speakers present lectures on various topics in Sefer Devarim, Sefer Tehillim, and Sefer Shmuel Alef. The program attracts about 150 women of all ages and backgrounds from all around the New York area.

This is a special and welcome addition to our many other programs, which include four daily Shacharis minyanim, Daf Yomi, weekly classes for men and women, junior congregation and youth groups, sisterhood, and many more activities. The shul is proud to host scores of groups, both local and international, who come to tour our sanctuary and be impressed by the synagogue's grandeur.

Thank you again for a beautiful article. It would be our pleasure to host Stern students for Shabbat so that they can see the revitalized Lower East Side first hand. Please call the synagogue office at 212-475-0165.

Sincerely,
Rabbi Zvi Romm RIETS '99
Rabbi, Bialystoker
Synagogue Rebbe, Isaac
Breuer College

MD or Bust or ... More Choices

To the editors:

Recently, I read Reina Roth's wonderful article ('MD or Bust?..') about people who desire to work within the healthcare and medical professions, but then do not get into their graduate school of choice.

While specific alternative options were presented, I noticed when discussing programs available on the east coast, she mentioned only the 'osteopathic school' option (located in New York, New Jersey, Florida, and Massachusetts), leaving out those available for the aspiring nurse practitioner. The readership (on both campuses) would be interested in knowing that there are, in fact, a number of nurse practitioner degree programs available in the NY area alone, (at Adelphi, SUNY/Binghamton, NYU, Columbia, Pace, SUNY/Downstate, Stony Brook and University of Rochester).

Menachem Butler, YC '05

Support Our Computers

To the editors:

Aviva Balk ('Windows 95 and 98 to be Replaced with Windows XP' Vol XLVX Issue 4) seems to imply that Microsoft will be withdrawing support for Windows 95 and 98 in the near future. This however, is incorrect. While Microsoft will be ending extended support for Windows 95 and 98 Second Edition (SE) on January 16, 2004, both versions of Windows 98 finished the mainstream support cycle almost a year and a half ago. Windows 95, however, ended the extended support phase approximately two years ago on December 31, 2001. Windows Millennium will finish its extended support phase on December 31, 2004. All of this information is publicly available on Microsoft's website for interested parties.

The importance of security updates cannot be minimized. If a new vulnerability is found, the only way to fix it is to apply a patch. However, Microsoft will no longer be offering these patches for older versions of Windows.

That leaves one option: purchasing a new operating system and that can mean purchasing a new computer. As the dates above show, students have had, in some cases, more than two years to make the switch.

All undergraduate students have experienced what happens when their peers on RESNET have been infected with viruses or worms. As the internet connection slows to a crawl and as files and reports are maliciously deleted, students become upset and frustrated. All of this can be easily prevented by having an operating system which is kept up to date with security patches. This year alone I have helped dozens of students both on the Wilf and Beren campuses who have been infected with numerous viruses and worms. Students need to realize the responsibility that having a computer entails. That includes security updates, and when the vendor withdraws support for the product, that means a new operating system.

Adam Steiner
Computer Science - YC '04

Misquoted Lack of Support For Israel

To the editors:

A reporter from *The Observer* came up to me at lunch about a month ago and asked me how I felt about the security fence separating the West Bank from the rest of Israel. I responded: "Desperate times call for desperate measures."

But, in the paper's most

recent issue, they published my answer next to my picture in response to a *different question*. They changed the question to, "Do you believe the U.N. has the right to condemn Israel about the security fence?" My first public appearance in the Stern community, and they make me look like a clueless fool. In fact, I have lots to say on this subject. Do I agree that the U.N. has the right to condemn Israel about the security fence? No, I do not. It's just one more example of the U.N. lacking any moral credibility at all (ask Idi Amin or Robert Mugabe). The U.N. has never been in favor of anything Israel wants to do to improve Palestinian living conditions. Israel has been the most condemned nation in U.N. history.

Here's a great example: When Israel saw how quickly the thousands of Arab refugees multiplied to millions in only a few decades, Israel began to build housing projects so that the refugees could live in normal neighborhoods. The U.N. condemned them for violating "International Law" by providing permanent housing for temporary "refugees." Here's another example: Hezbollah members were randomly firing missiles from their base in Lebanon, which were landing in northern Israel. In March of 1996, Israel retaliated by firing missiles directly into Hezbollah headquarters in Beirut. But they missed. Instead of hitting the terrorist headquarters, Israel hit the United Nations headquarters at Qana, Lebanon killing one hundred. The U.N. claimed outrage and forced Israel to pay \$1.7 million in damages, withdraw from Lebanese soil, and of course, the U.N. condemned Israel's attack. So now there will be a fence. The U.N. thinks it's outrageous for Israel to restrict the Palestinians to that degree, but, as Charles Krauthammer wrote in an August article, "In America, we build stretches of fence along the Mexican border to prevent foreigners from coming in to take jobs. It takes a lot of audacity to demand that Israel stop building a fence whose purpose is to prevent foreigners from coming in to commit mass murder." I'm sure you agree. And, Yeshiva University, I agree too. That said could you imagine me telling the paper that "desperate times call for desperate measures" in support of the U.N.'s condemnation of Israel yet again because of this fence? No way! There is no excuse for the misuse of my quote and the skewed impression *The Observer* readers got of me (my Ivrit teacher had a fit).

Shoshi Butler, SCW 06

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Yeshiva's Mental Health

The country has witnessed a surge in suicides among college students. Suicides cut across class lines, pervading race, religion and affecting all ethnic groups. Ironically, the widespread rate of suicide underscores the common problems all college students may face - from severe mental illness to inability to cope with stress. In this sense, the cohesive world of Orthodox Jewry both conforms to these universal problems while also maintaining a unique difference. As an institution of this group, Yeshiva must seek to address these dual concerns.

Currently, Yeshiva administrators are working to create a mental health center, employing our own licensed psychiatrists to prescribe necessary medication. Such a center would bring us on par with other major universities, which provide students with on campus clinical care for mental illness. Mental illness does not discriminate between religions, and Yeshiva's current efforts are to be applauded.

Additionally, one must recognize both the advantages and constraints imposed by Orthodoxy. The close Jewish network and mentality promote medical attention to even the most minor discrepancies. Yet the social stigmas of noncompliance often prevent ailing students from risking alienation by seeking mental help. Yeshiva, seeking to overcome these barriers, will make its mental health center a campus facility, located off the campus site, and completely confidential. This move reflects an acute awareness of the facts and will hopefully materialize next year.

The Gift of Language

The naming of the Midtown Campus is a huge step towards acknowledging the importance of SCW in the world that is Yeshiva. While the Wilf Campus was named not two years ago, it continues to be referred to as the Main Campus. SCW should not be seen as holding a second class status (or third or fourth) to Yeshiva's other schools.

President Richard Joel has expressed his dislike of the terms "YU and Stern." Such terms used by the students on both campuses imply that YC is the main college of Yeshiva University while SCW is a separate entity.

The fact is that both Yeshiva College and Stern College together represent the undergraduate schools of Yeshiva University.

The same can be applied to the language referring to the campuses. We can finally change the language of the "Main Campus and the Midtown Campus." We are now, proudly, the Israel Henry Beren Campus.

OP-EDS

Reis - Guy:

What's on Yael Reisman's mind?

Every month I am faced with the same question: which burning topic should I address? Should I write about something school related? Should I passionately dissect some esoteric pop culture phenomenon at the risk of looking like a complete psycho and losing most of my readership? (Hi Mom.) Since beginning on this fabulous journey that is the Reis Guy, I have come to realize that choosing a topic is a lot harder than it sounds. Sometimes the problem lies in the fact that I have too many subjects to rant about, but this month was quite different. I couldn't find anything to say. Here's why.

It has come to my attention that I have come to be known as quite the Negative Nelly here on the Beren (thank you!!) Campus.

Apparently, when the student body needs a quick acerbic line about a misspelled flyer circulating the building, the latest Five Towns *schtick*, and especially the YU Hanukkah concert, I am the go-to guy. After some mild introspection I came to the following conclusion. Sure, I'm technically a critic, but can't a critic comment on the good as well as the bad?

With this revelation I began thinking of this month's column. I suddenly had an immense desire to write something extremely positive. I wanted to compose a manifesto of optimism; a beacon of joy that would inspire Braveheart-like sprints campus wide.

My newfound cheerfulness led me to chuck a variety of potential subjects immediately

due to their inherent, shall we say realistic tone. There would be no 1,000 word diatribe on the extremely poor elevator etiquette SCW students practice religiously. I would not address the complete disregard for personal space students have for one another, when crammed into the three tiny influenza infested cages which shuttle us daily. I would have to restrain myself from writing about how the most efficient and intelligent way to get on an elevator, is to let those departing, depart before invading the immense elevator floor space. As difficult as it is, I would have to let this go.

Where the Reis Guy of yore would have written an entire column condemning the students' unabashed disclosure to

continued on page 6

The Shabbat Rabbi: Do We Need a Man When There Are Capable Women?

By Shoshana Chaneles

As I registered for my final semester, I began to contemplate my feelings toward SCW. While I do not think that all of my thoughts are relevant to the entire student body, I came across one issue in my mind, that though extremely small, I find it very telling about the institution and student body as a whole: the Shabbat Rabbi.

I am happy that SCW finally found a Shabbat Rabbi after trying fruitlessly to recruit someone who would commit to the position over the summer.

Eventually, they found two men who were willing to take the position in September. However, to put it mildly, this position is absurd. They are called "Shabbat rabbis," however, neither of the two men filling it are actually ordained. From

what I understand, in reality the purpose is not really to have a rabbi at SCW, but rather to create a family environment on our campus. Hence, the college prefers to hire married men with children.

Given that objective, I am left with a more basic question. Why are the wives not taking a more active role when this is a women's college or given such positions in the first place? Is our institution trying to say that women are not capable of assuming these responsibilities as well as men? Currently, both wives of the Shabbat rabbis are recent SCW graduates. Do we not trust their education enough to hire them to give a *dvar Torah* (speech on the weekly Torah portion) on Shabbat.

What type of confidence does our college have in the women it graduates if it feels that men must be hired to create

the most effective Shabbat environment? To meet this objective, it seems most appropriate that the Shabbat rabbis' wives be more involved. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways: offering a *shiur* (lecture) on Shabbat, giving a *dvar Torah* at the meal, or leading the Friday night program.

At SCW every student is required to take a rigorous speech course so that the women of SCW can go out into the world and present themselves as intelligent, capable women. What kind of message does it send that our own college does not encourage this particular behavior within its own four walls?

I know that the men currently hired to be the Shabbat rabbis are wonderful, able people; however, why do we seek to hire men for a job that there are plenty of capable women to fill?

The Observer welcomes all letters to the editors. We reserve the right to edit letters for grammar, length and content. No unsigned letters will be printed. Letters should include the writer's address, as well as his or her school and expected date of graduation, if applicable. E-mail us at observer@ymail.yu.edu

artitonal by chaya glaser

Glazed over

Guide for the Graduate:
how to answer that
fated question...

"So what are you
doing next year?"

I'm kind of in the middle of getting married... does it

why is it so hot?!
panic
gasp! argh... you'd assume I know after 20+ years... of... lee way! gap...!

Lie...
uh... they've asked me to replace Madonna...

ask dad for advice...
I have one word for you, Sweetie: Elastics!

Staying Local!
TL
may I please take your order?

Opinion Forum

A Suggestion For Shabbat: Try HASC

By Riva Preil

"What should I do for Shabbat this weekend?" is a familiar and commonly asked question by many of us here at SCW. For those of us who are ahead of the game and plan in advance, it might look more like, "So what should I do in a month from now when I have an opening in my schedule?" Yet, in whatever shape, form, or fashion this question appears, it will undoubtedly face many of us at some point or another.

Especially for those of us from out of town who can't just hop on the 167 New Jersey Transit bus from Port Authority and go home to Bergenfield for Shabbat, myself not included. However, to quote the Almighty, *Imo Anochi Batzara* - and therefore, I try to the best of my ability to understand the plight of my fellow classmates, floor-mates, crowded elevator mates (you fill in the blank), and to put myself in the shoes of those who, week after week, have to find a place for Shabbat. It is for that reason that I am writing this article - to offer a possible answer to the aforementioned question.

While discussing this issue with my cousin, Avi Goldenberg,

last year, he mentioned that during college, he was a Shabbat counselor at a Hebrew Academy for Special Children (HASC) group home on a monthly basis. My naïve response was, "But isn't HASC a summer camp?" Avi then proceeded to explain that HASC is a large organization that does much more than provide fun in the sun. Like Petah Tikvah, Women's League and Beis Ezra, HASC runs several group homes year round which provide assisted living conditions for men and women who would otherwise be unable to live independently. These IRAs (Individual Residential Alternatives) are federally funded, and they also provide the residents, called consumers, with structured daily programs and activities. When the consumer is capable, they will even find a job for them, such as bagging groceries at a local supermarket. The goal of these programs is to help the consumers function to the best of their abilities and be productive members of society.

The assisted living clause was where Avi came in. Basically, every Shabbat, 4-5 Orthodox college aged counselors come and create a Shabbat atmosphere for the consumers. The counselors are responsible

for running the *seudot* Shabbat (meals), taking the consumers to synagogue and ensuring the overall safety of the residents. Aside from being a rewarding experience for the counselors, the impressive salary of approximately \$200 per Shabbat is definitely an added bonus to the package deal.

That night, Avi planted this creative and interesting idea in my head. It finally came to fruition when, over the summer, I started working as a Shabbat counselor in the I and 28th women's home. Furthermore, I took training courses at the HASC Day-Hab Center to receive AMAP, CPR and First Aid certification. Not only did I get to learn the Heimlich maneuver and practice on little Annie, but I was even paid to do so. Who could ask for anything more?

Overall, working in the home is an extremely meaningful yet challenging job. Fortunately, I have several friends working together with me in the home which enhances the experience. I'm not going to lie and say that it's all peaches and cream, and that I love every second of it. However, the overwhelming benefits make working at the home well worthwhile. For

example, the second time I worked at the home was Shabbat Shuva, the Shabbat in between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. One of the passages from the Haftara portion contains the words, *Kechu imachem devarim veshuvu el Hashem* and, like many other verses from Torah, has been coined into a popular song. Considering the relative simplicity of the song in comparison to others, we decided to teach this short and sweet song to our consumers. So we sang it on Friday night, and then again on Shabbat day, and then again at Seudah Shelishit. It didn't get boring in the slightest, because the more we reviewed the song, the more the women participated. We explained the concept of Teshuva and forgiveness to them, and, to whatever degree they were capable, they understood.

A similar story occurred that same Shabbat. After lunch, one of the consumers who is famous for her extensive Torah knowledge sat down next to me with one of her favorite books - a collection of midrashim. Time and time again, she requested that I read aloud the story of Rabbi Akiva. She would point to the words and excitedly read along with me as Rabbi Akiva described the eternity of the

burning Torah to his students. Her obsession with being a true servant of God is inspirational to all who meet her.

In summary, it's not just the free food or the wonderful Brooklyn neighbors (or even Avenue J, surprisingly enough) which draws me to Avenue I and 28th every several weeks. As much as I love meeting the missionizing natives on the subway, I have further reason (believe it or not) for trekking to Brooklyn every so often. Working at the home helps me actualize certain abilities that I never expressed before, and provides me the opportunity to perform charity in a unique way.

I'm just a regular girl like anybody else who happened to have an informative older cousin clue me in to one of Brooklyn's best kept secrets. So, please consider me your "Avi" in the respect that you too are now fortunate to know about this wonderful opportunity. And so, with this tiny glimpse into what working at a HASC home is like, I encourage you to strongly consider what your answer next week will be to the question, "What should I do for Shabbat?"

Reis-Guy

continued from page 5

professors far and wide that they simply do not read the assigned texts, the new, hopeful me would have to pass. I would not discuss how utterly embarrassing it is to sit in a class where students blatantly show no respect to the material being taught, the instructor who works tirelessly to present the material, and to the other students in the class who truly are interested in the subject. I would not be able to write about how if one does not do the assigned reading, one should have enough *sechel* to not ask questions and make comments, which clearly illustrate just how little reading she has done.

The tirade on the inappropriate male/female behavior in the residence hall lounges that I had considered writing about

would also have to be nixed. I would not be able to express my sheer resentment at those, who while not actually touching their Wilf/Beren counterpart, they do not act in a manner which is appropriate for a common, public recreation area. The new and improved columnist would not be able to note how if said couples actually did make physical contact they would cease and desist their behavior immediately upon another's entering the room, but because intensely amorous staring contests among other fun games and activities prove to be contact-free, there seems to be nothing wrong in carrying them out for the world to see.

With those topics shelved, I resigned myself to finding a matter which I could praise to the hilt. Something that I could speak highly of with utmost sincerity. And surprisingly, it was not too difficult to come up with some truly praiseworthy things

such as the way President Richard Joel and Co. have revitalized the university in ways that truly affect the average student's life on a day to day basis. There aren't enough words of praise to bestow upon YC Senior Dave Weinberg who has single handedly revived the long time abandoned WYUR. (Sure, some student leaders have elected to use their time on the air as yet another soapbox from which to pontificate, but heck, what is this column anyway?)

I also realized that I could spend hundreds of words describing the enormously diverse student population we have here at SCW and how genuinely important it is to appreciate them. And as I read these brief spurts of optimism, it hit me: boring.

I'll be honest with you folks. Even more boring than writing nice things, is reading them. Who wants to read about the merits of our faculty and admin-

istration? Who is interested to read page after page about how Facilities Management has completely made themselves over into a group of helpful and considerate problem solvers?

Obviously a campus brief updating the students on these sorts of matters is useful, but for me to devote my monthly newspaper space to written standing ovations does not behoove you or me. Perhaps this speaks poorly about our culture in that we are obsessed with and even thrive on negativity.

Why is it that we live in a culture that spends billions of dollars on tabloids which give detailed accounts of every misstep celebrities make? The paparazzi and other media leeches dedicate their lives to following people around in the hopes of catching them doing something illegal, mean spirited, and best of all, crass.

Does the public find it interesting when Paris Hilton is hon-

ored for her generous philanthropic work? No. Instead we choose to focus on her infamous home movie collection. Reporters don't write about the positive because people simply do not want to read about it. People are not attracted to the good and the virtuous. We want to see the dirty and disgraceful.

Somewhere along the way, society as a whole decided that the uncomplimentary is equivalent with the interesting and noteworthy, at the expense of making the positive no longer something of interest. And while this might not be righteous, it is the society we have created for ourselves and come to embrace. That being said, please remember just what it is that the general readership finds riveting and worthwhile. You don't really want me to write nice things. You like me the way I am and wouldn't have me any other way.

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A Message from Your Presidents



Anat Barber, SCWSC President

SCW this word may send a shiver down your spine. I can see already the faces of many Beren Campus inhabitants as they recoil toward the opposite corner in the proverbial "ring" so as not to ally themselves with the camp of the Feminist, (not to mention the grimace on the faces of our Wilf Campus counterparts-oops I didn't hear that). I often find myself on the opposing corner of that very same arena, and I ask myself what put me there. After much thought I realized that instead of our boxing match emerging with one victorious party, let's work instead as sparring partners who learn from each other.

Round 1: The saying goes, "I hate to tell you but..." In this case I will say quite the opposite, I am eager to tell you, "You are a femi-

nist." Every woman reading this article who studies in SCW is perhaps not a soldier on the frontlines of the battle of feminism, but you are definitely reaping the rewards of those predecessors who worked toward that end. Sorah Shneerer would surely have a gripe if she heard the women of SCW renouncing themselves from their alliance with a movement that aims to advance women's status in certain areas of society. Each time you enter the doors of a university devoted solely to the advancement of women's education you make a bold statement. You are telling the world the value of educated women.

Each time you approach a voting booth, or purchase a piece of property in your name, be thankful to the women who got

you here and embrace the fact that you value your rights as a human being enough to work on behalf of yourself. Because you happen to be a woman, this cause is called feminism. Don't allow yourself to be shamed by a title that we as a community have marginalized to the point of non-acceptance. Being a feminist is not only about reading the Torah in public settings or vying to be ordained as a rabbi, though the Shabbat accountants who make Kiddush do give us some battles still left not fought. It is merely the coinciding of a demand for human rights with the fact that you have two "x" chromosomes. We need only to realize that our desire is to be regarded for all that we have to offer, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. We must be willing to assert ourselves, and not tolerate less than 100% of our efforts and

excellence merely because we are women.

The message here is not a combative call for warfare against the 'heinous male dominated society'. I merely beseech that each of you be historically conscious enough to recognize the absolutely unique opportunity afforded to women at this time, in our university in particular. Be proud enough to recognize your role in the continually unfolding history of halakhically-conscious women who knew when to "push the envelope" and stand for themselves for the sake of the entire community. Rise to this challenge, empower yourselves and your peers and work together with me toward a stronger student population.

Women of SCW, after three months of conversing via newspaper columns I believe it is time that I shared with you a personal experience. It is time I talked about that day a few years ago when I first experienced a revelation that left me almost frightened with myself, though unnecessarily so.

Yes, you guessed it, it was the first time I used the "f" word, and I remember the stinging feeling it left inside me. That's right, "feminist" - there, I said it. For many of my counterparts in



Lisa Grundman, TAC President

behind all of these miracles?

Let us take a step back for a moment and think about the different *berachot* that we say on Hanukkah. Every night as we light the candles as well as in *shemonei esrei* we thank God for the miracles that took place - "*Bayamim Hahem, Bazman Hazach*" - "In those days, at this time." What exactly are we really saying when we recite these words? The Maharal suggests that when we light the menorah on Hanukkah we are not only acknowledging the miracles that took place then but also the miracles that take place each and every day in our lives.

Often, as we engage in our daily activity, we tend to over-

look these miracles and deem them to be ordinary or mundane. I think, though, that the essence of what the Maharal is trying to convey is that miracles should not be classified exclusively as supernatural occurrences. This is exactly what this *bracha* is trying to remind us. We are constantly looking for a huge miracle to come and save us when in reality, we miss all the "smaller" miracles on the way.

This Hanukkah I hope that we are all able to take a moment to reflect and think about the miracles that happen in our daily lives.

The Observer Wishes a Happy Hanukkah to the Entire Yeshiva Community

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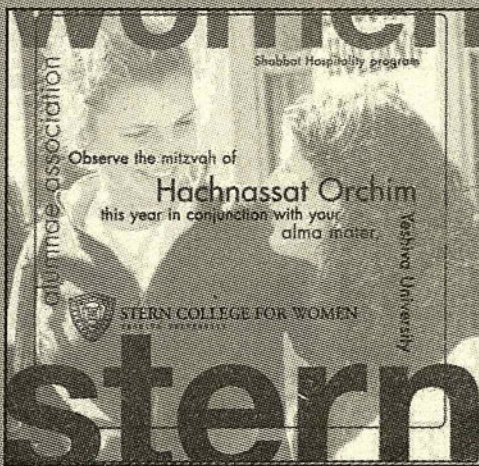
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or at alumdesk@yu.edu

On Campus

Back to School Program For SCW Alumnae Takes Place, Despite Snow

continued from front page

that both Dean Karen Bacon and Rabbi Dr. Ephraim Kanarfogel would be unable to attend. Bacon, scheduled to address the alumnae at lunch, became ill, while Kanarfogel, one of the class lecturers and the hopeful fill-in for Bacon, was stuck in gridlock traffic due to the snow and was unable to make it to the event on time.

Saltzman's quick thinking and the on campus technical and maintenance staff member-shelped with a solution. Necessary preparations were made in the seventh floor conference room for a live phone conference with Kanarfogel, direct from his home in Teaneck.

The five-hour event was divided into five time slots. After registration and refreshments, alumnae chose from two 45 minute classes. Dr. David Shatz, of the philosophy department, lectured about "Jewish Reflections on Terrorism," while Dr. Michelle Levine, from the Bible department, gave a class titled "Hanukkah: A Celebration of the Torah Sheh B'al Peh."

A second class period was

supposed to provide the option of hearing a session by Kanarfogel or the history department's Dr. Jeffrey Freedman, on "The Affair of the Poisoned Communion Wine and the European Enlightenment." Due to the circumstances, Freedman found himself with a full classroom. Linda Stock ('81), president of the association, described Freedman's session as "enlightening," recognizing a still-present thirst for learning among the women, even though the historical subjects of the class were not necessarily those they would have otherwise pursued in a class setting.

"I think it's important to maintain contact with alumni," Freedman said, mentioning that two of the women present had been his students, and one had worked with him. "They seemed very enthusiastic and responsive."

The attendees enjoyed a buffet lunch, provided by Yeshiva food services before joining the group phone forum with Kanarfogel.

"The message that the Dean [Bacon] and I want to give to all

of you is that even as there are improvements happening daily, in all areas, what we'd like to have from our alumni is really just pride and support of our institution," came Kanarfogel's voice through the black speaker-phone in the center of the table. He noted that SCW still remains somewhat of an unknown phenomenon as an example of a school that has top Jewish and secular studies from which students go out into the world and succeed. "Even as daily we are improving, adding, fixing, doing, there is a pride that carries us over."

Among the issues the alumnae raised were the concerns, that for a school ranked among the top 50 in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report*, there are not enough teachers in each department. Therefore, students majoring in a specific subject are really majoring in a specific teacher. Kanarfogel affirmed the concern and assured that the school was working to further improve an "already stellar faculty," specifically mentioning the long time presence of the English department's Dr. Carole Silver

and the recent addition of two renowned educators, Dr. Jay Ladin (English), and Dr. Joseph Luders (political science).

Alumnae also addressed concerns that there are only a few lucrative professions, and therefore majors, for women to choose from, while many of them end up unhappy with their careers down the line. The alumnae encouraged one another to attack this issue by coming in and speaking to undergraduates about what they are doing professionally, to inspire students to pursue fields that are often neglected.

The Back to School day ended with a guided tour of the Beren Campus by senior Sefi Kraut. "It was a way for the alumni to come back and see what Stern has turned into after all these years," she said. "The changes are amazing, and I think it was interesting for the alumnae to come back and see what Stern has turned into and what it has to offer."

The Stern Alumnae Association is responsible for producing numerous events for the SCW community. Family

Day, the first Jubilee event which was held in November, was extremely successful. The association meets about four times a year to work on its various programs, including the Belkin and Revel awards for YC and SCW graduates and a new Shabbat hospitality program, through which current students can spend Shabbat in different neighborhoods staying with SCW alumnae.

"We need to make the alumnae feel like they're still part of the Stern *mishpacha* (family)," Saltzman noted.

A list of upcoming alumni events distributed at the Back to School gathering included 15 upcoming meetings, festivals and lectures for the 2004 year. There was an overwhelming response by the alumnae to the idea of another back to school event in the spring.

"We're all so happy to be associated with Stern and to be working with it because we had such a positive experience," said Kessel. "I mean, that's why we send our children there. It has evolved in so many nice ways."

Promotions For Braun, Hait and Kraut of the Office for Student Affairs



Zelda Braun, associate dean of student

continued from back page
to the choice of promotion at this point in time. "This decision is a part of the extra emphasis that the new administration has been placing on student affairs," said Nulman. "We have been asked to put together strategy proposals, and the intent is to add people on who can offer more services."

Nulman listed improved mental health services among the new plans that he is beginning to formulate. "These promotions are based on merit," according to Davis. "We wanted to give recognition to these people, but we are also in the process now of putting together strategic plans for the future."

The general feeling among students about the promotions

has been positive. Elysia Rothenberg, SCW senior and a Brookdale Hall resident advisor, feels that the promotions are a positive change and looks forward to the innovations that they will bring. "The promotions are well deserved and long overdue," said Rothenberg. "These women give so much to the school - an important part of Stern College is not only the academics but community as well, and these women are the ones who facilitate that. They are always around, making sure that things are running as they should, they are there if a student is having a bad day, they listen to her problems, they plan breaks for finals, and are generally thoughtful and there for students. They are the ones who look after us."

While Rothenberg and others feel they have benefited from Braun, Hait and Kraut's services, she looks forward to seeing an expansion of the office for student affairs at SCW. "I definitely think the students could benefit from a mental health center in some form," she said. And Nulman agrees. "We are optimistic that things will move forward in a positive way."

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On Campus

Traveling Soloveitchik Exhibit Comes to SCW

By Adrienne Eichen

As the women of SCW return to school after winter break with a resumed vitality and thirst for an infusion of dual department knowledge, they will be offered the opportunity to catch a glimpse into the life and times of one of the most prominent and influential pioneers of Yeshiva's coined ideology, Torah U'Madda. SCW will host a traveling exhibit launched by the Brookline, Mass., based Joseph B. Soloveitchik Institute in honor of the 10th anniversary of Soloveitchik's death and 100th birthday, which took place last year.

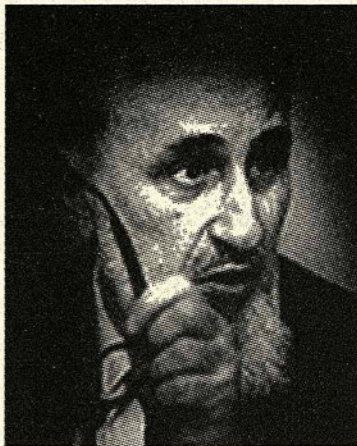
The exhibit, which will reach various synagogues and schools in communities across the country, will be on display in the Norman F. Levy Lobby on the Beren Campus at the end of January.

The exhibit is part of a major campaign consisting of numerous publications, lectures and conferences designed to help spread the works of the Rav (as Soloveitchik is called by his students). "The goal of the traveling exhibit, as well as all of the other programs initiated by the Rabbi Soloveitchik Institute this past year, is to spread knowledge about the Rav and his teachings

to as broad an audience as possible," said Rabbi Dr. Jacob J. Schacter, dean of the Soloveitchik Institute.

Consisting of 10 panels that include collected pictures, documents and quotes, the exhibit focuses on different aspects of the former REITS Rosh Yeshiva's influence, such as his position as a leader, his vision and his family life. According to exhibit developer, Sarah Morris, the layout of the exhibit is an essential component of the project. "We did not want it [the exhibit] to be a linear, chronological exhibit. We tried to break it down into the different roles the Rav played in his life," said Morris. "One of the things the exhibit shows is the complexity of the life he led."

The exhibit, which is presently circulating in New Jersey, has received largely positive feedback. Rabbi Jonathan Knapp, assistant principal of Yavneh Academy in Paramus, N.J., the exhibit's current home, felt it was important for the elementary school to host the exhibit. "It's important for our students to identify with the ideals and goals of Modern Orthodoxy," said Knapp. "The Rav was influential in bringing these ideas to the forefront of American and world Jewry." Knapp is extremely satisfied with the students' response. "Depending on their background, some students knew a tremendous amount about the Rav and some knew relatively little," he explained. "The beauty of the exhibit is it was able to teach every child at



The Soloveitchik Institute is bringing pictures like the one above to the Beren Campus as part of a travelling exhibit

his own level. No matter how much they knew going in, all the students were able to gain from the exhibit."

Dean Karen Bacon felt that it extremely important for the exhibit to be on display at SCW because of the Rav's involvement with the school. "His influence on this institution is truly profound," she said. Bacon believes the exhibit will be a valuable opportunity for the students. "I would like to give students an intimacy and immediacy to the Rav's legacy."

Students are also eagerly awaiting the exhibit's arrival. "It's important for Stern to enlighten girls about the founders and leaders of our own lifestyles and beliefs," said SCW junior Rebecca Stone. Sophomore Tehilla Stepansky agrees. "It's a good opportunity to learn about such an important figure in the Jewish world."

Kanarfogel Creates New Course Based on Penn Research

By Miriam Shapiro

In a continuing effort to expand and enrich curriculum, the SCW administration has added a recently developed honors course to its Jewish History department, to be given next semester. The course, based on the research of SCW's Chair of the Rebecca Ivy Department of Judaic Studies, Dr. Ephraim Kanarfogel, is designed to be conducted like a seminar and is an in depth study of Biblical Exegesis in Medieval Ashkenaz.

"The course is an integration between the two disciplines of bible and history, focusing on the commentaries associated with the *Pshat* level of interpretation," noted Dr. Kanarfogel. "There is a demand for this kind of integration in biblical study."

Students will be expected to complete a significant amount of preparation for the course. The preparation requirement is particularly appropriate for SCW students, who generally have considerable background in biblical interpretation. Kanarfogel, who will conduct the seminar, explained that the honors program exists as the proper venue for which he can successfully orchestrate the course in the high level, rigorous manner he desires.

"This is not meant to deprive other students, but the honors forum makes it appropriate and gives me the route to accomplish all that I hope to," said Kanarfogel.

Using printed material and manuscripts, Kanarfogel hopes to develop with the class different comparisons between the commentaries, remarking on

more simplistic levels such as Rashi and Rashbam, with those whose explanations are regarded as more in depth levels of interpretation based on class discussions and the students' individual research.

Students enrolled in the course will learn, prepare, present, and will observe the details of intellectual history while tracing the history of the simple level of biblical interpretation.

Kanarfogel also noted that the honors course he previously conducted touched slightly on this subject matter, and students expressed interest in further analysis and study of the material.

"Students really enjoyed it and wanted to continue the study," he said. "This is cutting edge material."

In addition, Kanarfogel commented that SCW students have a unique ability to examine this kind of material more successfully than other students engaged in this form of study because of their Jewish background.

"Our students can do this kind of work as well as students in other places," he said. "They can read the texts well and make good sense of it."

Kanarfogel said that the course is an excellent entrée for graduate programs and advance study in *Tanach*. He is thankful that the university grants him the opportunity to employ his research in a class that can award students a highly intellectual experience and education while simultaneously preparing them for their future. "The ability to allow our faculty to teach in their areas of expertise and publication is a great advantage for our students," he said.

Security Creates New Training Program

continued from back page

gency possibilities such as fires, snow storms, bomb threats and other types of terrorism.

Part of the training includes classes and lectures given by experienced emergency instructors, such as city officials from NYPD and FDNY, and McNamee himself, who served in the armed forces for six years, worked for the police department for 20 years and has been at Yeshiva for more than 13 years.

According to Patrick Crudo, operations coordinator, "we give them additional on the job training." This holds true for all security guards working on Yeshiva campuses, not just the Emergency Response Unit.

The emergency responders must go through practice sessions in which campus buildings are shut down to represent a fire or blackout and the teams exhibit how they would handle the situation given a building full of people.

Yeshiva now has three Emergency Operation Centers (EOC); one on the Wilf Campus, one at 29th street and Park Avenue, and one at the Benjamin N. Cordozo Law School. The

centers are named for John Peoneiel, the chief of security at the World Trade Center who died as a result of 9/11. "He gave me a lot of incentive," said McNamee, who not only attended college with Peoneiel, but attended many training seminars with him as well. Emergency reflective vests, helmets, goggles, lights, dust masks, water and nourishment for responders are kept in supply in the EOC in case of an emergency.

Emergencies are classified into a 10 code system, explained McNamee, with fires as the most serious under a code one and civil disorders on the Yeshiva campus as a code ten. Other possible emergencies include snow storms, bomb threats, criminal acts and power failures.

"We have to be able to help ourselves," asserted McNamee. "I felt [the emergency response unit] was needed, and in this day and age when so many acts could happen, we'll be the first on the scene, and we may be on our own for awhile until help can come."

This past summer, Yeshiva, along with the rest of the city, faced the major blackout that wiped out electricity affecting 50

million people in the United States and Canada. With the NYPD and FDNY busy throughout Manhattan, the response unit was equipped to handle the emergency well on both campuses. "The dedication of the blackout volunteers got great reviews from administration," said McNamee.

Emergency response training is never over. McNamee continues to give emergency response courses throughout the year and keeps responders updated on useful information regarding other emergency situations that have taken place, and how to prevent these instances from occurring on the YU campus.

According to McNamee, Yeshiva's emergency response units are the only emergency responders in the metropolitan area.

"My motto is, if we can save one life, it's all worth it," said McNamee. "We have to be on guard, because as YU, we're known worldwide."

SCW Student Attacked on Beren Campus

Security guards recently came to the aid of a student who was attacked and chased outside of the Windsor Court residence. "It all happened so fast," said Chani Trugman, the SCW senior who was assaulted at the back entrance of Windsor on 32nd street. Trugman explained that she saw the "sketchy looking guy" as she was talking to her roommate, a little before 10 o'clock at night. She clearly remembers that she did not want any interaction with him and refrained from making eye contact.

After parting with her roommate, with both hands occupied, "I looked up just in time to see him lunging towards me with his whole body," recalled Trugman. "Then he shoved me towards the street."

Trugman pushed the man off of her and took off running toward the 215 Lexington building. Upon reaching the building,

Trugman saw a security guard standing outside and began screaming for help. The man chasing her saw security, then took off running in the opposite direction.

"Security was awesome," declared Trugman. "I really felt their genuine concern, and they were very official about it."

Security had Trugman give a description of the suspect and file a report. They then called the police, and after filing a police report, Trugman drove around in a police car scouting the streets for the suspect.

To date, Trugman is in contact with the police department, but no suspect has been arrested. "It's just scary to think that at 10 o'clock at night, on a street I walk alone every day and every night, that if I hadn't had the strength or *seichel* (thought) to run, and if security hadn't been outside, what could've happened?" said Trugman.

On Campus

In Your Own Words

On Your Campus

Has the Norman F. Levy Lobby enhanced your campus life in any way?



Ayda Rottman '04

I think it is attractive, so it enhances the aesthetics of the campus, I like the trees. But I haven't used the room at all yet.



Yonina Bomzer '04

I think it was a waste of money who is really going to use that space. Even the Sy Syms people don't study there. Let the administration fix something up in the main Stern building instead.

In Your World

Do you think the Geneva accord peace proposal presents a new possibility for peace?



Sefi Kraut '04

"No, I think it represents wishful thinking rather than practical possibilities for peace."



Andrea Reinhard '05

"As long as terrorists and terrorism are so woven into their governing structure, I don't see any chance for peace. You can't make peace with people who want you destroyed."

YUstudent.org Struggling

continued from page 11

There are new features that are being planned for the new site such as having Yeshiva gear available for purchase, and offering Yeshiva clubs space on the site. There are a number of links that still work such as the OU, Bnei Akiva, and both the *Observer* and the *Commentator*.

The popularity of the site picked up quickly when it was launched at the beginning of last year, receiving 3,000 visits a week. Those numbers surpass the visits to YU Mesorah, a privately run student site that receives no funding, with the exception of the finals week

when it receives more hits. According to Goldfadder, many students have asked him why the website is only partially operable.

There had always been a student run website - it started off as YUCS.org, but was owned privately by a YC student who graduated in '02. Goldfadder chose to rewrite the site, which he says will now be difficult for someone else to take over and understand since he used six different languages. Many people who do websites can't even read it.

New Judaics Center at SCW Offers Help to Students

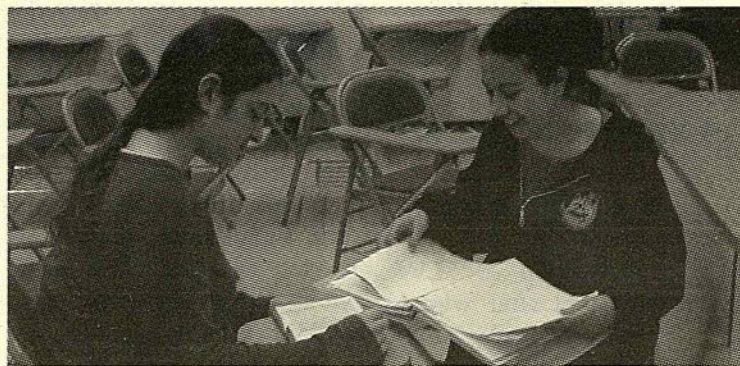
Sarah Kupferstein

A Student Judaic Studies Center, created to help students with difficulty in Judaic classes, has been formed by SCW students. The Center is based on the Writing Center in format and purpose, is geared to assisting students with their Jewish studies assignments.

"We want people to have a place to get their questions answered," said Navah Rosensweig, an SCW senior who heads the Judaics Center. "Many people are coming and they seem really happy to be able to come." The Center provides assistance for all Judaic topics, and is intended for those on an intermediate and lower level of learning, though all are welcome.

The Center has been well received by the administration. "I am thrilled with the Judaics Center," said Zelda Braun, assistant dean of students. "It's wonderful that students created the methodology to help others with *limudei kodesh* (Jewish subjects) in such a positive, encouraging manner. It's a creative way to fill a need."

The Center's atmosphere is warm and friendly, and the staff is happy to answer questions and assist in all kinds of requests, said Rosensweig. There are two



Juniors Sarah Nemzer and Malka Krupka at Judaica Center

student staff members present at all times who are fluent in Hebrew and capable of answering fellow students' questions. "If the demand grows, we will extend our staff," explained Rosensweig.

The concept of the Judaics Center was created by the Torah Lishma Club, a TAC sponsored club concerned with Jewish learning on the SCW campus. The club was formed by a group of friends, known by its participants as the "Thursday night seder," who would gather weekly on Thursday nights to have a learning session in the Beit Midrash. Last year, the group decided to officially form a club for the purpose of promoting and directing Torah-oriented activities. One of the club's primary goals was to form a Judaics Center.

Once Rosensweig and her fellow club members decided to establish the Center, they

approached Dr. Ephraim Kanarfogel, chairman of the Jewish Studies department, Rabbi Shlomo Hochberg, Mashgiach Ruchani, and Braun, for advice and help with the logistics. "All three agreed it was a good idea and that Stern was lacking in this area," said Rosensweig.

The response to the center has been overwhelmingly positive. "I really enjoy helping other people with trouble they're having," said Sarah Nemzer, an SCW junior, who volunteers as a staff member at the Judaics Center. "It's great that students are helping each other."

Students can either drop by or make appointments by emailing torahlishma@yahoo.com. The Judaics Center is in Room 501 at 245 Lexington Avenue and is open Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 6-8 pm.

Life After Stern: Felice Friedson Helping Israel in the Media

By Devorah Stein

Entrepreneur, broadcaster, journalist, lecturer, and mother are just a few of the titles that SCW alumna Felice Friedson, nee Bienenstock, can claim. Since she graduated from SCW in 1982 with a shaped communications major, Friedson has run a successful gift basket business that was listed in *The New York Times* as one of the best services, created a nationally syndicated radio program now in its 15th year, and raised three sons, one of whom is now a tank commander in the Israeli army. Her most massive undertaking yet is her role as founder, president and CEO of The Media Line, Ltd., a major non-profit media service organization that distributes international and educational programming from Israel and the Middle East.

Together with her husband Michael, Friedson started The Media Line to rectify the anti-Israel slant often perceived as permeating today's media. She explained that in attempting to reach this goal, "the most important thing to remember is to keep passion out of it and stick to the facts. We're not looking to skew the news or give it a slant." She also noted that sometimes news is biased because many journalists don't know any better.

"There is a difference between systemic bias and bias that's done on purpose." Systemic biases can be so common that a reporter is not even aware that he is no longer objective.

The Media Line seeks to remedy these biases with information, news, analysis, background, research, expert opinion and educational programming. Friedson and The Media Line staff members disseminate this information to media organizations around the world. "We have become the media's own source," Friedson remarked. "Over 1500 stories have come through our staff in a year and a half."

Friedson explained that when she started out in radio she realized that "media is a local phenomenon." Approximately 70 percent of the news that people get is from local affiliates, and that is what the Media Line was based on. "Our target was local affiliates, but now we work with many networks as well," she remarked. "We're on the BBC several times a week."

Friedson moved to Israel four years ago with her husband and three sons, the youngest of whom is 14 years old. "I don't think I could have done what I'm doing now when my children were young," she noted, explaining that she often works until one or two in the morning.



SCW alumna Felice Friedson

When her children were young, she worked part time or from home, feeling strongly that her children needed her. "Those are years you can't get back," she advised. "It's very important not to lose sight of what comes first."

Friedson found her experience at SCW to be very fulfilling, though she wishes there had been more courses in her field to choose from. She is especially thankful for the tremendous impact that Professor Laurel Hatvary and Professor Peninnah Schram had on her. "Professor Schram gave me the impetus to want to explore the field of communications," she remembered.

Friedson warns students who are interested in the media that "it's a very tough industry." Her advice for reporting is to "understand a region, look at more than one source, come educated and have the background."

For more information about The Media Line, Ltd. and to see articles, visit the organization online at www.themedialine.org.

On Campus

Registrar Offers Online Registration In The Hopes of More Efficient System

By Arie Staller

The long, stressful end of semester lines outside the registrar's office have officially become a condition of the past. All SCW students, regardless of class status, can now register online for classes for the following semester.

"It's now so convenient," said SSSB senior Esther Feld, "I don't have to worry about running to the registrar's office to make my appointment on time."

Although every student is able to register on the web, there are still assigned times for when each student is allowed to register in person. This ensures that those students with priority will get the classes they need.

"We want to make sure the system is fair," said Dr. John Fisher, director of enrollment management at Yeshiva. According to Fisher, this was a university-wide project including all of the Yeshiva campuses, and was therefore an expensive

undertaking that the administration has considered for some time.

Other universities have implemented online registration years ago, said Fisher, but because SCW is a smaller, residential college it really was not as urgent to have this system implemented as it was with larger public colleges.

Along with course booklets, students have been given user ID's and personal identification numbers to log in and register on the web. "It makes life so much easier to just register online," said Michell Amini, SCW senior. "Instead of having to stand on the long lines in the Stern building that stretch around the lobby."

The online registration began last spring as a pilot project in which a small group of last year's juniors tested out the online registration. It was an immediate success, which led to the university-wide online registration process.

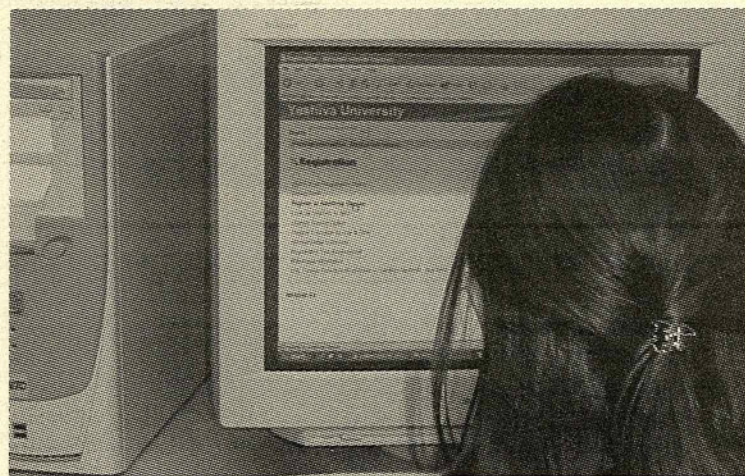
In addition to online registration, the new technological

development used for online registration also allows the faculty to enrich their curricula. According to Fisher, professors are currently able to post their syllabi and reading lists on the web as well as links to the articles that are usually kept on reserve in the SCW library.

Still underway is the possibility that courses with multiple-choice exams may even have the exams online. In addition, it is expected that by next semester faculty will be able to post grades immediately online rather than having to go through the registrar's office. Students will therefore be able to receive their grades faster than has previously been possible.

Responsible for these web advancements is a committee, which was responsible for deciding how to implement the online registration; the committee members went through days of training to learn the web tools.

The only drawback to online registration, reported in higher education literature, is that stu-



A student registers for her classes online

dents who do so have less of an opportunity to make friends. "This won't be a problem for Stern," asserted Fisher, who previously worked at Columbia University. He explains that in larger universities, registration time is an opportunity for new students to meet one another.

There might be another disadvantage to the students not registering in person. A clerk in the office of the registrar felt that the students should utilize the academic advisors. "The draw-

back [to online registration] is that there's no advisors to help choose your schedules," he said. "Advisors are here to help you make your schedules. It makes it easier especially for new students."

"In school, we're available to help," said Dean Ethel Orlian. "How this will relate to advisement, I don't know."



YUstudents.org Only Partially Operational

By Elisha Horen

If you visit www.YUstudents.org, you will find an image of SCW's 253 Lexington building overlapping YC's Zysman Hall, which peeks out from the corner of the homepage. This popular campus website, run by students, was down since last summer until last week when it started partially running again. YC senior Chanoch Goldfadder, the student in charge of YUstudents.org, reported that the site had problems with the company they were using as their provider last year, Interland. They switched to a cheaper and what they hoped would be a better company over the summer called Nvidia, which is the same company used by YUmesorah.

"We decided to start from scratch," explained Goldfadder. Working with little help, in addition to his course load has left him without time to devote to the website.

Goldfadder hopes to talk to the Yeshiva administration about the possibility of giving the school official jurisdiction over the website since student schedules don't allow enough time for the kind of maintenance

work the site needs.

"I would want it to be kept in students' hands and still be funded by the student council as it is now," he says. He envisions it running like a club, with a budget, heads, and participants who would all spend time on the project.

The cost of running the site is roughly a few hundred dollars a year, which is paid to the company for the use of their computers that house and run the site.

There were additional complications in the switch made over the summer that were unforeseen. "We lost the title to YUstudents, it officially expired through a government agency, and it was bought up by someone in Melbourne." They were eventually able to buy it back for thirty dollars.

Currently, the site is only operating on a limited basis, and the full student directory is no longer available. "There will be no phone numbers listed, only room numbers." This change came in response to numerous student complaints over the concern of privacy. "Students didn't want that much personal information available online," he said. "It was a bit of a fiasco last year, I had tons of people upset."

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COMMENCEMENT 2004

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Academic Advisement Responds to Negative Attention

By Miriam Shapiro

In attempt to restore its reputation after receiving a spread of negative attention, the Academic Advisement Committee at SCW has extended great efforts to remind students of their services.

"These doors are never closed," said Dean Ethel Orlian. "Students have entrée to these offices from eight in the morning until after six in the evening."

Signs providing a variety of significant and essential information have been placed in more strategic and highly visible locations offering students the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the office and its services. The bulletins range from those discussing the pre-registration orientation session presented by Academic Advisor Miriam Shechter to final examination schedules.

In addition, there is easily accessible information about exit projects, reminders about junior and senior checks, and registration dates. "These are things that we have been doing," said Orlian. "We are trying to sensitize students to what is available and assist them before they run into conflict."

She also explained that the goals of the Office of Academic Advisement remains to aid and advise students but especially to help them plan ahead. "The key is timely advice," she said.

In addition, Orlian explained that the reconstruction of the academic advisement website is well underway and nearing completion. The site lists the different majors and offers a complete delineation of the courses necessary for completion, reflecting the flyers containing this information available to students in the Office of Academic Advisement.

Only a mere four students attended the pre-registration orientation presented by Shechter Wednesday, December 10th during club hour, though large, visible flyers were put up in advance. This was a far cry from the 100 students Orlian hoped would attend. "We want students to come and be reassured," said Orlian prior to the orientation.

Shechter provided basic course outlines and requirement information on an overhead projector and printed a series of handouts so that students would have material in front of them. She clarified the details of SCW basic requirements and core, and discussed the distribution of courses and the number of transfer credits the school allows from studies in Israel. "Students say that they don't know," said Shechter in response to the poor attendance. "We put signs everywhere, we are prepared to answer questions and nobody

shows up."

When asked why she didn't attend the orientation, SCW senior Tsivya Gilnert said that she recently attended a personal meeting with an academic advisor to review her individual academic program.

"I do think that such an orientation is an important event to attend," she said. "There is a lot of detail, and one can suffer serious consequences if she doesn't fully understand all the requirements, and something can be easily overlooked."

However, there are a handful of students unlike Gilnert who did not attend the orientation due to dissatisfaction with the Office of Academic Advisement. "A lot of people don't bother going to them because they don't trust them," said one SCW senior. "I have not found them to be helpful or knowledgeable. I have friends that have been misinformed and it will take more than a semester of reforms to win back the confidence of the student body."

Orlian stated the importance for each student to read the bulletin boards in both the Office of the Registrar and in the Office of Academic Advisement daily.

"We are a dual curriculum university," said Orlian. There is a lot going on and a great deal of information to retain."

She added that the committee is continuing to launch its campaign to encourage students to have their ymail forwarded to their other personal e-mail accounts which they check more frequently. A multitude of significant reminders and miscellaneous information is sent to students via ymail.

Orlian suggested that perhaps some students' fail to take advantage of the Academic Advisement service because they fear that they might not receive the responses they desire in regard to their current course completion and credit status. She explained that students are

often progressing better than they would expect, and all questions and concerns are always considered.

"Sometimes students are pleased with the response and sometimes they are not," she said. "Most answers are readily available, but some warrant investigation. We want to give each student the proper guidance."

After her recent meeting with Academic Advisor Rochelle Mogilner, SCW junior Hindy Poupko was very pleased with the results of her junior check.

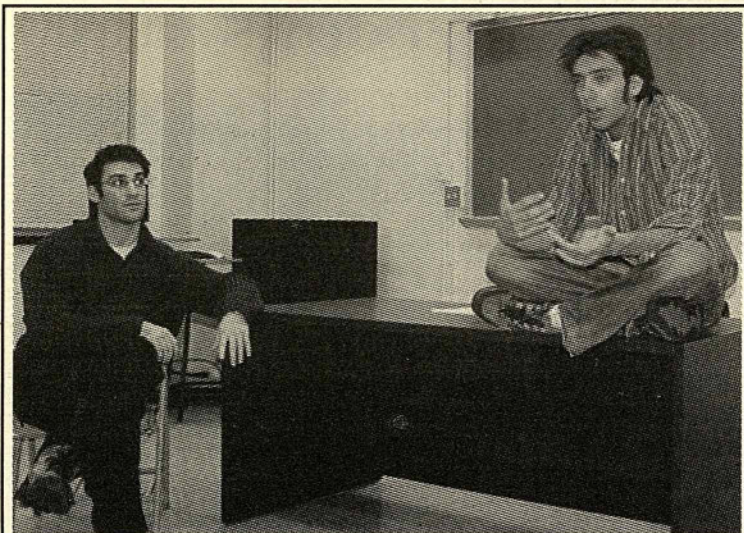
"Mrs. Mogilner was extremely helpful in our junior check meeting," said Poupko. "She carefully reviewed the courses that I have completed and highlighted the gaps so that way I have a clear picture of what I still need to complete. I was definitely reassured after I met with her."

In addition, Orlian stressed the need for students to frequent the Office of Academic Advisement throughout their college careers with the hopes that the consistent visits can help prevent future conflict and help avoid crisis. "Many wonderful relationships are formed here," she said. "And we want that to continue."

Orlian affirmed there is always room for improvement in every endeavor.

"One must always evaluate and reevaluate," she said. However, she commented that every effort is a two way street, and that there needs to be significant input from both parties.

"At some point there needs to be a partnership," she said. "The desire to help and the willingness is there."



Scher, (left), brought in special guest Will Frears, (right) for his seminars in theater

Drama Seminars Give Students Insight into Theater

By Observer Staff

SCW adjunct Joshua Scher hosted three enriching theatre seminars: playwriting, acting and directing. The event is geared toward, "Any and all who are interested in any form of theater," commented Scher. Held at the 245 Lexington building, each consisted of two to three hours of lecturing and theatrical exercises.

Scher said that the seminars are designed to, "Provide a basic understanding and entry point into the major aspects of theater." Secretary of the Stern College Dramatic Society Gila Rosen said that she benefited from the helpful and interactive learning environment. "We did a lot of acting exercises to work on focus, concentration and participating as a team on stage," she said.

Scher anticipates the skills the students have learned will culminate in a one night performance. "Instead of having a play first semester we wanted to expose people to drama," remarked Rosen. "We thought the seminars would be a good way of doing that."

Approximately fifteen students participated in each seminar and seemed to appreciate the professional help and guidance they received. Though each seminar was scheduled for three hours, Scher dismissed the students an hour early.

"Professor Scher is a well trained actor and screenwriter," said Rosen. "It is our chance to work with a real professional."

Professor Scher has a MFA from the Yale School of Drama and a BA, with Honors, in

Creative Writing from Brown University. He is a published playwright and his plays include, *Velvet Ropes*, produced by the Drama League in New York City, *Felling Giants*, which received Best Play in the 10th Annual Edward Albee Last Frontier Theater Conference, and *Flushed*, which was part of the September 2004 Herring Run Art Festival.

For the last of the three seminars, Professor Scher invited director Will Frears. Frears, a Yale School of Drama graduate, directed *Omnium Gatherum* at the 2003 Humana Festival at the Actors Theatre of Louisville and premiered *Where We Were Born* for Rattlesnake Productions. Frears has directed at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, Stamford Center for the Arts, Steppenwolf and the Shawnee Theater of Greene County.

"Frears spoke in depth about the many aspects of directing, like choosing and preparing for a play, said Rosen. "He also discussed the different schools of thought on directing."

President of the Stern College Dramatic Society Aliza Blumenfeld encouraged students to attend the seminars. "We aim to give students events that they wouldn't get anywhere else," she said. "Students should take advantage of that."

However, Blumenfeld was regretful that so few students participated. "I don't understand why people don't take advantage of the interesting events that are offered to them," she said. "Though many of us aren't going to go out and become these things it is still fascinating, fun and informative."



Students wait to speak with advisers in the Office for Academic Advisement

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On Campus

Newly Formed President's Circle Hears Student Requests

continued from the back page

ed so that few outside of those invited knew there was any meeting at all. "No one told me there was a meeting," remarked SCW Dean Karen Bacon.

At the onset of the meeting, Tuchman listed various projects the committee has awarded monies to in the past such as renovation of lounges, purchasing computer and gym equipment, and donating funding to organized Shabbatons, and stated his determination to clarify other areas of student life in need of financial support. He also explained that the nature of the committee is not to be the sole sponsor for these projects but rather to assist in jump-starting the specific endeavor.

"Our job is not to be the forefront of your projects," said Tuchman. "We are not a substitute for regular university funding, but we will help you get your projects started."

Saltzman added, "Historically, they want to help with new projects—plant the seeds for new initiatives."

Sender Cohen and Lanz Hirt, the committee's newest members from the Board of Trustees, both expressed their desire to hear from the student body directly, in addition to highlighting specific adjustments to the committee they hope to include as part of their administrative agenda.

"We are trying to make some changes," said Hirt. "There is a lot of time spent discussing as a group. We want to identify issues independently."

Tuchman, who resigned as chairman two years ago, explained that the process for proposal approval is far too lengthy and has been that way,

perhaps unnecessarily, since he resigned. He explained that students submit a proposal to the committee and the committee votes to approve the request or not. The committee then sends the money that was donated by alumni to the dean of students with an approval notice that this specific funding is awarded to a specific student need.

Before being evaluated by the Circle, however, students must submit their proposals to the dean of students. Tuchman mentioned three rationales for this criterion: less time given up by the Circle members to "nurse the students through the process" of presenting a proposal, a controlled flow of requests, and the assurance that the proposals are not offensive to the administration.

YC Student Council President Yisroel Schachter was the first among the students to suggest a cause in need of funding and spoke of the student council's hope to organize a mission to Israel, a proposal which he believes should be at the forefront of the committee's list.

"The first place student leaders want to turn to for funding a mission to Israel is the President's Circle," he explained.

In response to Schachter's request, Tuchman explained that while the committee has assisted in covering some of the mission costs in the past, grounds for a new discussion as to whether or not the committee would contribute to the cause would be in order for each individual case.

"If there is going to be a mission, each year there would have to be a different discussion to ask the President's Circle to pitch in," said Tuchman.

Sorah Shapiro, SCW junior

and active member on the Israel Club board, echoed Schachter's proposal for a mission to Israel and stressed the importance of the committee's support of the Israel club in general.

"A mission to Israel is still a tremendous need," she stated. "We, as students of Yeshiva University, have to show Israel our support."

In addition, President of the SCW Israel Club Hindy Poupko raised the concern that the group can only afford to host second-rate speakers at the club's events as opposed to inviting more renowned orators and spokesmen for the state of Israel and representatives of the Jewish community.

"Yeshiva University contains the largest number of pro-Israel youth outside the state itself," said Poupko. "We should be able to invite first-rate speakers to our events."

Followed by applause from the student body, Poupko explained that the Israel Club is the most active undergraduate student club, and that their events generally attract over 200 YC and SCW students. The committee was receptive to Poupko's requests.

"Send us a formal proposal and we will give you what you need in a heartbeat," replied Cohen.

YC senior David Weinberg submitted a formal proposal requesting support for the recently reinstated Yeshiva radio station, WYUR. The proposal outlined specific needs the station requires to continue to function. The list ranges from new technical equipment to purchasing new furniture, as the students currently use old filing cabinets and wooden planks as

makeshift tables. After being dormant for over five years, the station, which has existed for 40 years, received somewhat of an upgrade in 1994, one without which the station "would be in terrible shape," said Weinberg.

Weinberg, who is the station's manager and initiator of its reinstatement, explained that the members on his committee already requested donations from the various student councils and raised a significant amount of money from advertisers. "The money we raised is enough for our monthly costs but not nearly enough for everything else," he noted. In total, Weinberg said that the station would need about \$25,000 dollars to cover the cost of all the necessary improvements.

"We want to be able to keep WYUR running for the next forty years," he said.

Saltzman added that WYUR would serve as a successful venue for the President's Circle to advertise to alumni and publicize over the air.

Other proposals included funding for publications, specifically a Jubilee journal organized by TAC leaders. The journal would contain a history of SCW, discuss the diversity amongst the student body and would exist as an open forum for Orthodox women in the Jewish community. Editor of the *Mibayit V'lachutz* journal, Jona Rechnitz, also submitted a proposal to aid in covering the cost of producing the publication. The journal, which is published by SOY and printed four times a year around the Jewish holidays, is mailed to alumni and synagogues all over America.

"We usually get sponsors," explained Rechnitz. "For the

next issue we will be printing 13,000 copies and need a significant amount of money to cover the costs."

Chairman of the Student Life Committee Yaakov Green submitted a proposal for renovation of the first floor of the library on the Wilf Campus to reform the space into a social gathering area for students. This gathering area would reduce the noise level generated on the third floor of the library, where students tend to congregate.

Tuchman explained that major projects take time to implement and advised students to submit requests early on so that the committee can properly allocate the proposals. "The devil is in the detail," he remarked. "What we have articulated is our own set of rather flexible and informal criteria that we apply in deciding how to allocate funds."

"I think it was a very successful meeting," said Rechnitz at the conclusion of the event. "There were some very significant proposals submitted like those requests made by the Israel club, and by WYUR, and I'm sure they will be appropriately considered."

Shapiro commented, "I was honored to be a part of this meeting and was excited to see that students were being called upon for their suggestions and input to help improve student life in a process that guarantees results."

"While I did feel that there was an element of tension attached to the gathering," she continued, "I was extremely pleased that students were being heard and that I was able to be a part of a meeting that will affect the future of Yeshiva University undergraduates."

Former Slave Speaks to SCW Students

continued from back page

would shoot him or cut off his leg. Later that day, his master took him to see another slave who had lost animals while herding. "Another kid from the same tribe as me lost his cow," he said. "And they cut off his leg. When I saw him I cried."

When Bok turned fourteen he tried to escape but was caught and beaten. His master threatened to kill him if he did it again. But he said that, "I decided in my own heart, I have to do this and free myself."

Two days later he tried once more, but his master caught him, tied him to a tree, beat him and swore that he would kill him. He changed his mind at the last minute but promised Bok that if he did it again he would be killed.

Bok was determined but fearful and after his last attempt he waited three years before try-

ing to escape again. When he turned seventeen he ran away and with the assistance of many people, he arrived in Cairo, Egypt. There he was able to interview with United Nations' representatives. He said that they asked him what country he wanted to go to. He said, "I don't care where I go as long as I'm able to be free." He added, "But I never forgot my family or my village."

He waited a year before he was sent to America. He moved to several different cities and struggled immensely. He could not speak English and found it difficult to communicate with anyone. He worked 16-hour days and lived in relative isolation until the American Anti-Slavery Group contacted him. They asked him to work for them, speaking throughout the country about his experiences, and helping them to abolish slavery.

At first he said no, reluctant

to rehash the painful memories of his massacred village, and brutal treatment as a slave. But when he came to their Boston office and saw pictures of women and children in front of their burned-down houses in Sudan he changed his mind. "I thought to myself, I'm out of it [Sudan]," he said. "But what about all the kids still there who have dreams? I hoped some day I could help them."

More people have been killed in the 20-year Sudanese civil war than in Kosovo, Rwanda and Somalia combined. Bok feels strongly that the conflict in Sudan does not receive enough global attention, especially considering the astronomical number of casualties suffered.

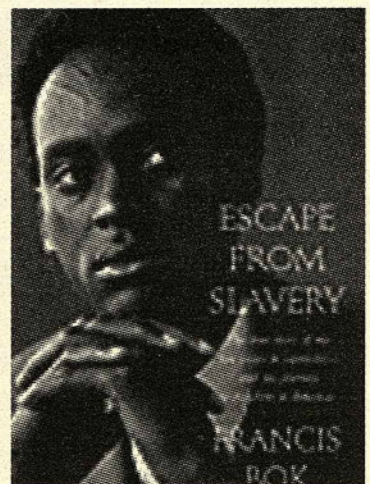
In addition, the issue of slavery, he feels, is not acknowledged as a legitimate problem by the western world. "There is no reason that this shouldn't be on the

front page of the New York Times every day," he said. "The most important thing for me is to raise public awareness. If people know more about modern day slavery it would help. But many people don't think slavery exists anymore."

Ultimately, Bok wants to educate people through his experiences and work toward improving the situation in his own country. "What good is your freedom if you can't use it to help others?" he asked. "One person can save the world."

Recently, Bok published his autobiography, *Escape from Slavery*, and thirty thousand copies have already been printed.

President of the Human Rights Club, Liora Casten, organized the event in an effort to expose SCW students to humanitarian issues. "This school has a very international focus because of its connection



Escape from Slavery is Bok's new book recounting his struggles as a Sudanese slave with Israel," she said. "But beyond that people aren't aware. I wanted to educate other people but also thought that it would be good for me."

The Human Rights Club, founded in the fall of this year, already has 45 members.

On Campus

Midtown Named Israel Henry Beren Campus

continued from front page
reached their goals, will continue their respective campaigns for capital."

The SCW campus, a \$56 million complex including eight buildings running from 36th street to 29th street across Park, Lexington and Third Avenues, is expected to undergo desperately needed renovations thanks to Beren's gift. The windows in the 245 Lexington building are in need of new insulation and the lobby has been awaiting much needed renovations, according to Bacon.

While most of the gift will go toward improving the quality

of life on campus, Bacon also stressed the need for money to pay off debts SCW has incurred due to the more recent purchases of the Schottenstein Residence Hall and the 215 Lexington building.

"I know it doesn't sound very exciting but these are things that have been needed for some time," said Bacon. The campus became home to SCW in 1954, starting as just one building. In 1987 the SSSB women's division campus was added to the Midtown complex.

However, one change students will notice is the placement of banners on the lamp posts along the campus displaying its new name. While the City

of New York will only allow the placement of the banners for a limited period of time, Bacon says the University has received permission to make use of ten to twelve lamp posts in the area.

The project is expected to take place over the coming years, which is in line with the administration's new focus on the quality of campus life at SCW. Other projects improving campus life was the addition of a new floor to the 215 Lexington building last semester. The Norman F. Levy Lobby in the same building was redesigned and dedicated only a few weeks ago. Facilities Management is currently in the process of negotiating a deal to purchase the 251 Lexington building located between the

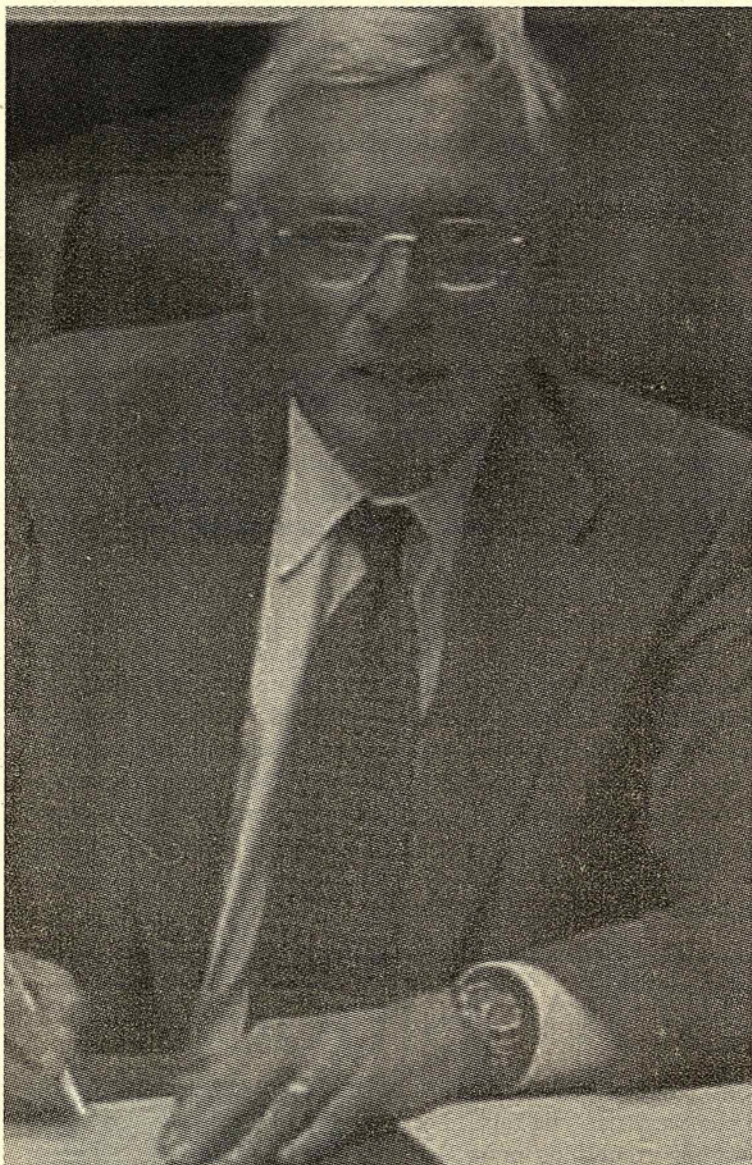
two SCW buildings running from 35th to 34th Street. "The whole deal will be wrapped up in four months," said Jeffrey Rosengarten, associate vice president for administrative services. Construction is also expected to begin in the basement of the 215 Lexington building for a new cafeteria that will include an entertainment center.

The \$400 million fundraising campaign, which was supposed to be accumulated over a five year period, has collected \$405 million two years ahead of schedule. Ronald P. Stanton, chairman of the university's board of trustees thanked those who contributed to the campaign, particularly noting the

continued onto next page



Bacon, above, receives presidential medallion. Stanton, below, announces success of \$400 million campaign.



Robert M. Beren has named the SCW Campus after his uncle, Israel Henry Beren

Robert M. Beren: A Lifetime of Giving

By Observer Staff

As one of the Campaign for Capital's largest supporters, Robert Beren donated the funds for The Robert M. Beren Foundation, Inc. and as Trustee of the Israel Henry Beren Charitable Trust Fund largely to memorialize his uncle, Israel H. Beren.

Based in Marietta, Ohio, Israel Beren made his fortune in an oil and gas exploration and production company. According to an official Yeshiva statement, Beren embodied Yeshiva's philosophy of Torah U'madda, "through his love of learning, commitment to excellence, and his philanthropic endeavors." His nephew Robert is currently owner and CEO of Berexco Inc., president of the Beren Corporation, and chairman of the Central Crude Corporation.

Robert Beren graduated Harvard University with a BA in 1947 and earned his MBA from

the same institution in 1950 (his son Adam also graduated from Harvard).

A longtime supporter of Yeshiva, Robert Beren served as a distinguished member of the Yeshiva Board of Trustees for more than twelve years, including a role as Chairman of the Board and now Chairman Emeritus.

Of his initial pledge of \$15 million to the Campaign for Capital, the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law received one million dollars as a challenge grant matched by another donor, enabling construction of its Brookdale Center Lobby.

Yeshiva's affiliated Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary also received one million dollars for a new program, and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (AECOM) received \$500,000. "This is Mr. Beren's first major commitment to the Midtown Campus," elucidated Forman. "But he has been extremely generous to others

benefactions to the university, including RIETS, Cordoza, and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine."

Robert Beren is also widely known for his philanthropy at a range of other universities. In 1981, Beren funded the construction of Harvard's current tennis courts. According to The Harvard University Gazette Beren has now donated \$3 million to a new state-of-the-art Robert M. Beren Tennis Center.

Additionally, Beren pledged \$500,000 to a modern Jewish studies program at the University of Kansas's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences called the Distinguished Professorship in Modern Jewish Studies. In addition, he funded the Robert M. Beren College and the Israel Henry Beren Academic Center of Beith Morasha in Jerusalem. These are merely a few examples of Beren's remarkable philanthropic work, both in the Jewish world and greater community.

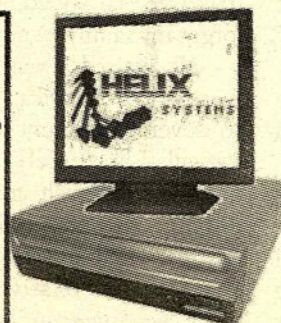
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On Campus

The Israel Henry Beren Campus

1. Geraldine Schottenstein Cultural Center

237 East 34th Street
Acquisition and renovation cost: \$3,766,201
Gross square feet: 3,700 sq. ft.

2. 36th Street Residence Hall

151 East 36th Street
Acquisition and renovation cost: \$9,138,822
Gross square feet: 38,986 sq. ft.

3a. 235 Lexington Avenue

Acquisition and renovation cost: \$12,033,616
Gross square feet: 37,753 sq. ft.

b. 245 Lexington Avenue

Acquisition and renovation cost: combined with 253 Lex
Gross square feet: 58,950 sq. ft.

4. Brookdale Residence Hall

50 East 34th Street
Acquisition and renovation cost: \$3,906,942
Gross square feet: 90,438 sq. ft.

5. 215 Lexington Avenue

Acquisition and renovation cost: \$16,143,859
Gross square feet: 59,552 sq. ft.

6. Lexington Plaza (Independent Housing)

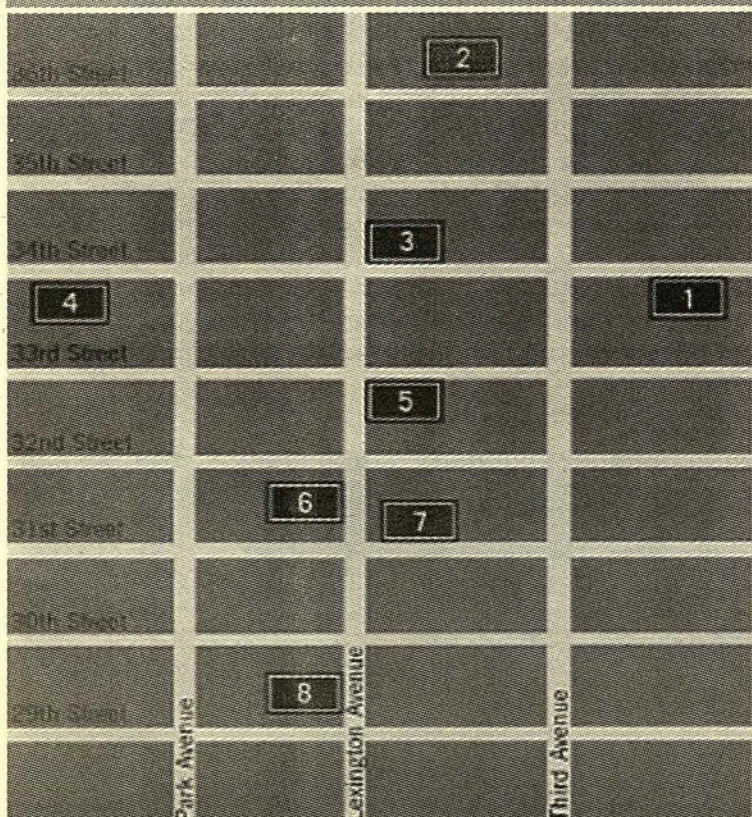
184 Lexington Avenue

7. Windsor Court (Independent Housing)

151-155 East 34th Street

8. Jerome and Geraldine Schottenstein Residence Hall

119-121 East 29th Street
Acquisition and renovation cost: \$3,906,942
Gross square feet: 90,438 sq. ft.



continued from previous page
number of academic and student life projects made possible by these gifts.

Joel specifically acknowledged Muriel Block for her \$15 million contribution to the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (AECOM). Block's contribution will go towards building the Harold and Muriel Block Research Pavilion located on the Jack and Perl Resnick Campus in the Bronx.

Bacon was honored at the dinner by being the first recipient of the Presidential Medallion, an award instituted by Joel to recognize members of the Yeshiva community who have displayed outstanding leadership qualities.

"The University usually does not award honorary degrees to professional staff, faculty or administrators who are still vibrant parts of it," explained Joel. "However, in light of the [SCW] Jubilee, I wanted to recognize

"The university campaign has reached its goal and will continue to raise funds for the university through December 31," clarified Forman. "Now the individual schools, including Stern College that have not yet reached their goals, will continue their respective campaigns for capital."

Dean Bacon. She is an alumna who has made the deepest contribution to Stern."

Bacon was also the featured speaker at the dinner, an honor given in past years to former

Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu and New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

Joel also conferred honorary doctorates upon Ruth L. Gottesman, professor emerita of pediatrics at AECOM; J. Ezra Merkin, managing partner of Gabriel Capital Group and chairman of Yeshiva's investment and Israel committees; Marcia Robbins-Wilf, a noted reading expert and founding member of the SCW board of directors; and Josh S. Weston, the former

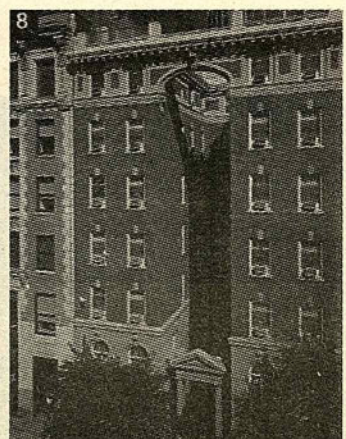
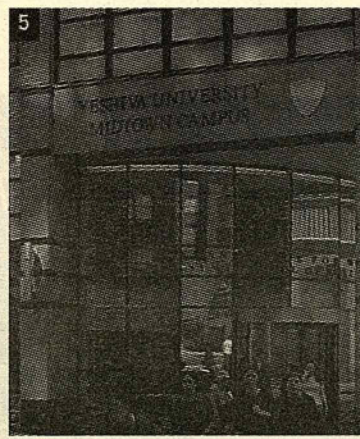
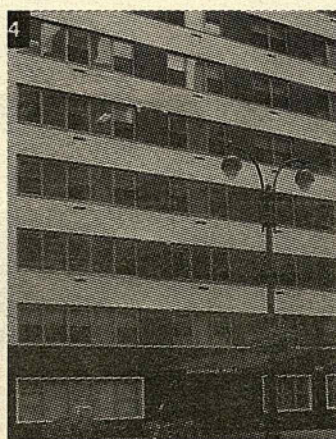
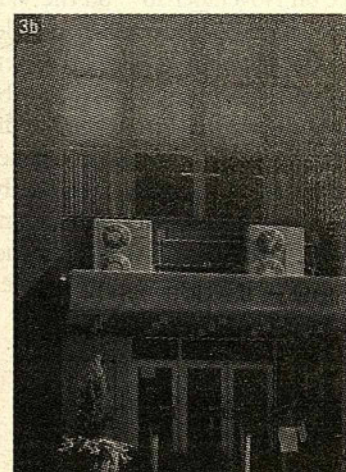
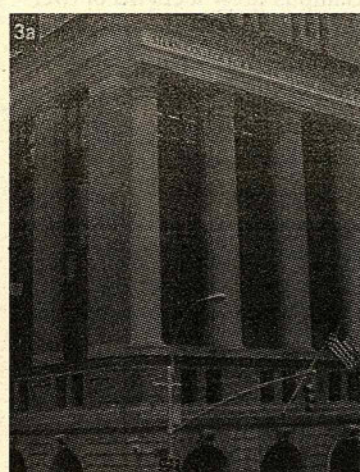
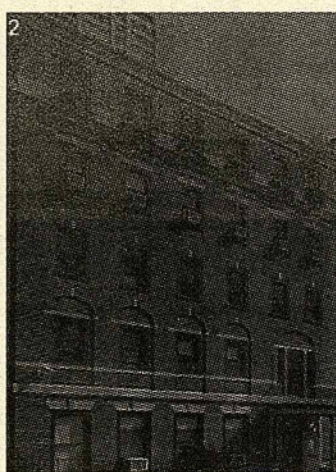
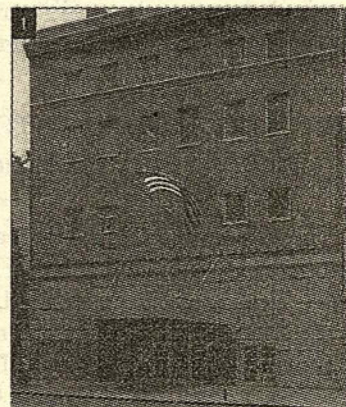
chairman and chief executive officer of Automatic Data Processing, Inc. and a chairman emeritus of the board of directors of SSSB.

BUILDINGS, ACQUISITION BY YEAR

253 Lexington Avenue	September 1952
Brookdale Residence Hall, 50 East 34th Street	August 1965
245 Lexington Avenue	September 1970
Jerome and Geraldine Schottenstein Residence Hall	August 1995
Geraldine Schottenstein Cultural Center	March 1997
215 Lexington Avenue	December 1999
151 East 36th Street	December 2000

MIDTOWN CAMPUS

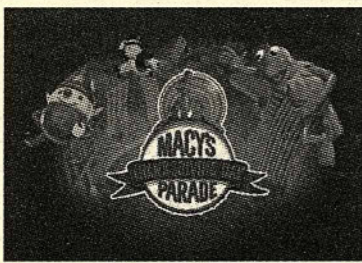
Total Square Footage	370,435 sq. ft.
Total Number of Students	Approx. 1000
Total Acquisition & Renovation Costs	\$56,441,661



Israeli Educators Visit YU

On Tuesday, December 2, a group of approximately 16 Israeli educators and community leaders visited Yeshiva as part of a ten-day trip, organized by the American Jewish Committee (AJC). The AJC arranged for the Israelis to visit various organizations, universities and institutions that are all representations of the greater Jewish community. The group met with President Richard Joel and a number of Yeshiva administrators and engaged in an intimate group discussion with students from YC, SCW and RIETS's. Judy Goldgrab, coordinator of educational leadership projects at the Max Stern Division of Communal Services (MSDCS), moderated the dialogue and found that the Israeli visitors were impressed with Yeshiva's model of devoting serious time to both Torah and secular studies. "They were also very impressed with how Jewishly aware the students were and by their commitment to Israel," Goldgrab noted. She explained that the conversation was unique in the sense that the Israeli educators spoke about everyday social issues that affect their lives in their communities in Israel. The trip was part of the AJC's ongoing effort to bridge gaps between Jews in Israel and in America, and improve Israeli-Diaspora relations. "The [Israeli] group was made up of all types of people," explained Goldgrab. "It crossed cultural, political and religious lines."

SCW Students March in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade



Five SCW students marched in this year's Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade, navigating Kermit the Frog's one-year-old balloon. Estee Zitter (SCW '04) and four other seniors were sponsored by Zitter's brother-in-law, an employee at Macy's corporate offices. Early Thanksgiving morning, Zitter, who

has marched in the parade for the past two years, and her four friends awoke at six am and walked to the New Yorker Hotel to pick up their costumes. Along with other parade participants dressed as everything from alligators to clowns, the SCW crew then boarded Macy's official bus and was shuttled uptown to 82nd street, where Kermit lay waiting. Along with 40 other balloon handlers, two pilots, one captain and two automobiles, the girls helped pull Kermit down the parade route. The street sidewalks were bursting with people who waved and shouted at the procession while more spectators gathered at windows facing the street. At twelve noon the tired group ended the parade on 34th street, helping to deflate the balloon with the rest of their team, and storing Kermit in a bin until next year.

Israel Club Hosts Symposium: Communal Involvement in America vs. Making Aliyah

The YC/SCW Israel Club held a Symposium debating communal involvement in America vs. making Aliyah. Keynote speakers included Vice President of University Life Dr. Hillel Davis, Mashgiach Ruchani Rabbi Yosef Blau, Director of Communal Affairs of MSDCS Rabbi Ari Rockoff, Director of KEDMA Barry Bender, and National Director of Yavneh Olami Dyonna Ginsburg. The event which took place on November 18th on the Wilf Campus drew a crowd of over 200 students, many, from other colleges throughout the metropolitan area. The general message of the evening informed students that there is a need for them to be active members of the Jewish community, and that "numbers matter" in the building of the Jewish State. Ginsburg noted that young, dynamic teachers are needed in Israeli society. President of SCW Israel Club Hindy Poupko commented, "I was very happy with the outcome of the event. It was the first event of its kind and it sparked important dialogue between the students and the speakers about serious issues, which unfortunately are not confronted enough."

C A M P U S B R I E F S

TAC Hanukkah Hagigah A Success



The TAC Sponsored Hanukkah Hagigah, held Monday night Dec 15th in SCW's Koch Auditorium, featured a concert by the Moshav Band. A well-known Israeli rock group with a unique new twist on Carlebach music, the band played behind a *mechitzah* (separation) of balloons and potted trees.

There were close to 250 students at the concert, many dancing wildly and clearly fans of the band. "We've played at all different venues- this is one of them," commented the lead singer for the group, Yehudah Solomon. Aside from music and dancing, the SCW women enjoyed Chanukah inspired refreshments, including *sufganiyot* (jelly donuts) and *latkes* (potato pancakes), and were able to purchase Chanukah lighting necessities such as *chanukiot*, candles and olive oil. The concert ran from 8:15 until 10:30, with an intermission for a SCW choir performance and a TAC d'var Torah.

Tabori Visits SCW

This year's E. Billi Ivry Visiting Scholar, Rav Binyamin Tabori, spent a week at SCW giving *shiurim* (lectures), reconnecting with students and serving as the guest of honor at the Junior Class Shabbaton. Billi Ivry established the E. Billi Ivry Visiting Scholar Fund last year, bringing Shani Taragin to SCW last spring. This year's scholar, Rav Tabori, serves as Ram at Yeshivat Har Etzion and teacher at Midreshet Moriah. In his week at SCW, Rav Tabori delivered numerous sessions on topics ranging from "Learning in an Electronic Age," to beautifying the mitzvah of kindling the Hanukkah lights. Students made appointments to meet with him or learn with him in chevruta. Many of his former students from Midreshet Moriah and the Moshava Beit Midrash program attend SCW and greeted Rav Tabori warmly.

Rabbi Paysach Krohn Comes to SCW

On December 8, Rabbi Paysach Krohn, noted speaker and author, addressed YC and SCW students discussing his trip to Lithuania and the many sites he visited. He witnessed the devastating effects of the Holocaust on a once vibrant Jewish community. "He also spoke a lot about how we have to reach out to other Jews and help bring them closer to *yiddishkeit* (Judaism) if they're not frum," noted Aliza Abrams, TAC vice president and SCW junior. "He told a lot of *kiruv* (outreach) stories that happened in his life. It was a very moving and meaningful speech with a tremendous turnout, both from YC and SCW." SCW junior Sari Stein found Krohn to be "particularly inspiring," noting, "I've always enjoyed his books but to actually hear him speak was something special."

SCW Hosts Yachad Shabbaton

Braving the snow, over 100 SCW and YC students joined 15 Yachad members to participate in SCW's annual Yachad Shabbaton on December 5-6. The Shabbaton, organized by SCW sophomore Riki Davidson and YC senior Jay Weinstein, began Friday night with a "getting to know you" game of Human Taboo. On Shabbat day, the group *davened* and ate lunch in the school building, with a special *dvar torah* given by TAC vice president and SCW junior Aliza Abrams. Due to the inclement weather, organizers were forced to cancel the planned *motzei* Shabbat scavenger hunt at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, but the group enjoyed pizza and a movie, *Finding Nemo*, in the Schottenstein lounge instead. "It was my third Shabbat spent in Stern this year, and it was definitely the most *leibedik* (joyous) one," remarked Abrams. "For some people it was their first *shabbos* with Yachad, and they all said they're coming back for many more."

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Ra'anana Gissin Speaks To Yeshiva Students

By Aviva Balk

In a private conference with 20 Yeshiva students, Ra'anana Gissin, senior advisor to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, stated that the solution to the Middle East conflict was dependent upon world recognition of the Jewish right to live in Israel. "I don't believe Israel has a *hasbara* [public relations platform] problem, it has an existential problem—the problem of explaining its very existence," he said. "I say the primordial sin in our *hasbara* for the past 30 years was the fact that we succeeded very well—maybe too well—in explaining our securities, but we failed in explaining the fact that Jews have rights in addition to needs."

Around a rectangular table in the Wilf Campus's Furst Hall, Gissin spoke about the importance of explaining this right to those he debates with over the issues of the Middle East. "In all the statements, documents, and agreements made with Arab countries today," he said, "there isn't the sentence that says that the Arabs or the Palestinians accept the right of the Jews to have a national Jewish homeland in their ancestral home." He therefore equated the act of recognizing Israel's rights with passing the "Balfour Test," since the Balfour Declaration of 1917 included the petition for "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."

To anti Israel activists who recognize the right of a Jewish state to exist in Israel, Gissin

maintains, "You don't recognize by right, you recognize by might."

Gissin noted the reprimand Israel has received when defending itself. "We always face this underlying assumption that we don't have a right to use force to defend ourselves," he remarked. "The only country that has been

"I don't believe Israel has a *hasbara* [public relations platform] problem, it has an existential problem—the problem of explaining its very existence," he said. "I say the primordial sin in our *hasbara* for the past 30 years was the fact that we succeeded very well—maybe too well—in explaining our securities, but we failed in explaining the fact that Jews have rights in addition to needs."

accused time and time again of using excessive force when exercising a right of self-defense is Israel. I don't know what the definition of excessive force is, but if you see the awesome firepower that was used to make that war of self-defense in Afghanistan or in Iraq, then it raises the question."

He observed that America isn't questioned for its use of force because everyone accepts the right of Americans to live in a free, democratic country in the United States of America. He said Israel, on the other hand, lacks the security of world recognition of such rights. "When you stand on the solid rock, the solid basis of your rights, [then] you can argue all the other issues," he explained.

The fence the Israeli government has been building along the 1967 Green Line border, for

example, is a subject of contention among world authorities. According to The Palestine Monitor (a media group organized by Palestinians from all over the world), the European Union claimed in October that Israel was breaking international law by building beyond the Green Line. Many compared it to the

Berlin Wall and the former Iron Curtain that divided Europe for half a century. Palestinians called the project a "landgrab," but Gissin reported otherwise. "It's not a political border," he said. "It's another measure to stop terrorist activity—to stop over 130 suicide bombers who have taken a toll of over 500 of our men, women, and children. Of the 898 people who have perished in this war, 500 of them were killed because of suicide bombers that came from [behind] the Green Line."

He added that the previous night, IDF soldiers intercepted two suicide bombers in Jenin who were on their way to a school in a place where the fence was not completed. In the past month, Israeli security has stopped at least 27 suicide bombers.

In addition, Gissin com-

mented that the battle over the Middle East runs deeper than guns and soldiers. "I'm a Zionist warrior on the battlefield," he said of his position as a defender of Israel's rights. "It's easy to win when you have to kill the bodies of soldiers, but it's much more difficult when you have to win over the hearts and minds of people."

He recognized some leaders of today who understand the position for which he is fighting, among them President Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin. "They understand that if we don't stop this culture of hatred that produces an industry of terror, the world as we know it, the civilized world, humanity...will be destroyed," he stated. "We not only have shared interests, but a shared destiny in protecting these values." He added that the war in Iraq was a component of a general world war that is present today, and that helping Israel is directly related to its outcome.

Gissin agreed to speak to the small group at Yeshiva University through Caravan for Democracy, an organization that aims to plant constructive dialogue on college campuses throughout the United States by bringing speakers from Israel to discuss the challenges Israel faces as the only democracy in the Middle East. According to YC/SCW Israel Club President Shaya Lerner, Gissin requested that the conference be limited to only 20 students from all of the schools.

"It was a really great experience to hear someone with such political importance in such a



Ra'anana Gissin spoke to a private gathering of Yeshiva students

small setting," said Diana Benmergui, a senior at SCW. "It made [Gissin] seem so much more personable and real than if he had been speaking in front of hundreds of students in a lecture hall."

Gissin told the students that he had come to New York via Baltimore, Md., where he received the Brandeis Award for outstanding achievement for Zionism and South Carolina, for a joint session with 900 Jews, Christians and "lovers of Zion." His presence at Yeshiva was even more noteworthy in light of such grandiose events.

"I think it was a very rare and unique opportunity for the students of YU to come in close contact with such a high profile member of the Israeli government," commented Hindy Poupko, Israel Club president. "I think everyone there benefited a tremendous amount by his words."

While students raised questions about the possibility of there ever being a solution to the problems when it seemed so difficult to ever assure the world of Israel's rights, Gissin replied, "There are no shortcuts to peace. We have a battle and we can win this battle."



THE JEWISH TEACHER CORPS*



KOL HANESHAMA

REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS OF TERRORISM IN ISRAEL



ARI YEHOShUA WEISS A Glowing Smile

Ari Weiss knew how to overcome challenges. After making Aliyah with his family from Dallas, Texas, Ari quickly acclimated to life in Israel. His giant smile and love of life immediately attracted many friends as his commitment and love of which his parents had instilled within him as a boy grew.

After graduating high school, Ari decided to spend a year in Mechina before joining the army. When ready to serve, Ari had many options and didn't have to choose between a combat unit, but he felt this was how he must serve his country. None of his friends and family could believe that the thin boy with a sweet heart was going to be fighting in the top units of the Israeli army.

Despite his many achievements, Ari remained humble. Even after a close call in an Arab village, Ari received Hagomel in a small, unassuming synagogue, so as not to draw attention to himself.

He was very close with his family, but especially his mother and younger brother, Yedidya who often boasted to his friends that Ari, who had earned the nickname "Peacemaker", loved to help people. Always worried about others more than he worried about himself.

He loved to listen to music, hang out with his friends, and just enjoy life.

Rav Peretz of Ranaana recalls that "Ari possessed a calm and exceptional neshama, of a quality which is rarely seen in this world." Ari's optimistic and good view of the world, and selfless attitude have left his family and everyone who knew him.

St.-Sgt ARI YEHOShUA WEISS, 21, OF RA'ANANA WAS KILLED WHEN PALESTINIAN GUNMEN OPENED FIRE ON AN ISRAELI ARMY POSITION IN THE BLUS CASBAH



ALEX CONSTYUK Courage for His Nation

Ever since he was a 15 year old, Alex Constyuk dreamed of moving to the land of Israel. His tremendous love of Israel and the Jewish people was instilled in him by his father. At the age of 17, Alex fulfilled his dream by leaving behind his entire family to make Aliyah by himself.

When Alex turned 18 the following year he began his service in the National Police. Alex's family followed him to Israel that year but faced some economic hardships. Alex became the breadwinner of the family and in order to support his family he found work as a security guard but quit soon after because his parents were frightened by the dangerous position.

After a couple of months however, Alex returned to his family. He was guarding a new Kfar Saba train station in Israel when he noticed a suspicious, teenage looking person, dressed in heavy clothing. Alex's intercession with the terrorist instantly but prevented a major catastrophe. His organization donated to three transplant recipients, allowing them to live longer.

At the age of 24, Alex died a hero, sacrificing himself to protect the people of the land he loved.

ALEX CONSTYUK WAS KILLED BY A SUICIDE BOMBER WHILE GUARDING A TRAIN STATION IN Kfar SABA, APRIL 24TH, 2003.



GILA SARA KESSLER Shining Beauty

"I don't know many people who died for their life at the age of 19. Gila accomplished in 19 years, what many people achieve in a lifetime." This is how Bridgette Kessler describes her daughter, winner of 5 gold medals in gymnastics, a beautiful and mature young woman who had high aspirations of becoming a fighter pilot.

Everyone who met Gila Kessler was smitten by her intelligence and her beauty. Described as being happy and full of life, her coworkers remember her as having "a smile and laugh that lit up the room just by looking at her. She had energy and an eagerness so full of life, that now that she is gone, only a void can be felt."

However, whenever Gila was complimented either for her intelligence or her talents, she would blush and shy away. Gila's mother always raved about her, was constantly reprimanded by her father. "I'm just a person." But Gila was not an ordinary person.

Times were very hard for Gila's family, and although she could have lived in Jerusalem with the rest of her co-workers in national service at the Jewish Agency, Gila wanted to stay in Israel to help and support her family. The week before she died, Gila was talking with friends about the hardship in Israel, and how many people had been killed due to terrorism. She reflected, "If G-d decides, I feel fulfilled with my life, and satisfied with what I've done."

GILA SARA KESSLER, 19, OF TEL AVIV, WAS ONE OF SEVEN PEOPLE KILLED WHEN A SUICIDE BOMBER BLEW HIMSELF UP AT A CROWDED AND HITCHHIKING POST AT FRENCH HILL INTERSECTION IN NEGEROTZ, JERUSALEM



NOAM APTER His Brothers' Keeper

Many people are remembering heroes in their deaths, but everyone who knew Noam Apter knew he was also a hero in every sense of the word. When terrorists broke into his yeshiva, 23-year-old Noam who was on kitchen duty that Friday night gave the last bit of strength after being shot, to lock the door to the dining hall full of students. However, it is not the act alone that makes Noam a hero. It only reflects the type of person he was and the way he lived each day.

Noam was a natural born leader and belonged to the most elite units of the army; the paratroopers. He was in Yeshivat Otniel where he started a Jewish outreach program that still exists today. He believed that it was extremely important for Jews to learn about their roots and identity, and his responsibility to educate them. Noam had pamphlets about each Jewish holiday, on buses wherever he went. He was the type of guy who was always speaking to strangers and bringing smiles to the faces of passengers on long bus rides. This is one of the reasons people loved Noam; he deeply cared about everyone and made each person feel special.

He loved going on hikes and joking around. Noam was an unbelievable imitator of people that would leave him rolling on the floor in laughter. As one of eight children, Noam was also very close with his family, especially his younger brother, 6 year old Shmuel.

Noam lives on through the memories he's left behind for his friends, family, and all who have had the privilege of knowing his path.

St.-Sgt NOAM APTER, 23, OF SHILO WAS ONE OF FIVE YESHIVA STUDENTS KILLED IN OTNIEL WHILE WORKING IN THE YESHIVA KITCHEN SERVING THE SHABBAT MEAL TO SOME 100 STUDENTS IN THE ADJACENT DINING ROOM



SHMUEL WEISS A Quiet Hero

Sergeant Shmuel Weiss did not like to call attention to himself. His father relates a story about how, on a family horseback-riding trip, "Shmuel's horse bucked and he fell to the ground. He just rolled over, absorbed the shock, and then he climbed right back up. This is the way he always was, calm and easygoing." The fourth child of nine siblings, Shmuel's giving and adaptive personality served as the glue that held the family together, always the one to ease tensions between his siblings. As a high school student at Yeshiva L'Yerushalayim, and later as a yeshiva student, Shmuel returned home frequently to be with his family. Shmuel's strong affinity towards music, the Weiss' loved to play instruments together. Shmuel not only played his reed instruments, "was always organizing us, being the director," says his father. After a year in yeshiva, Shmuel entered the army, keeping with his caring nature, served as a medic in the Golani Brigade. "Everything he did was done with his whole heart," his father says. "He was highly motivated and succeeded as a soldier and a medic. He was going to serve three years and then return to yeshiva. He wanted to use all his energy to the army." Shmuel's desire and ability to help others deeply touched his many friends who continue to miss him. Shmuel's Weiss family in Kiryat Arba. Despite Shmuel's obvious leadership, "he never pushed himself into the forefront, he wanted to help others feel good...He was just a normal person," says his father in summation. "He loved his family, he loved hiking, and loved the Torah."

SERGEANT SHMUEL WEISS WAS KILLED BY PALESTINIAN GUNFIRE IN THE ENIN REFUGEE CAMP APRIL 8, 2002 WHILE GIVING MEDICAL CARE TO A FELLOW SOLDIER WHO WAS FATALLY INJURED



JONATHAN YONI JESNER Everlasting Chessed

Yoni Jesner was always looking for ways to help others. A native of Glasgow, Scotland, Yoni was an integral part of a small Jewish community. He served as the head of the Scottish Akiva of all of Scotland and he gave bar mitzvah lessons. He was also involved in preparing dead bodies for burial. It was unusual for a teenager to be involved in such a task. Yoni saw he was needed, he stepped up to the task.

After graduating high school, Yoni came to Israel to study at Yeshivat Har Etzion. Yoni's commitment and enthusiasm for learning did not diminish his sense of humor, which endeared him to the other students at the yeshiva. He worked as the laundry man. He thrived at yeshiva and decided to spend a second year before returning to Scotland to attend school.

To his last day, Yoni was focused on helping others and using every moment to its fullest. The morning of the attack, Yoni was in his ashvaz house, and then went out of his house to return a pen that he had accidentally taken from a student.

It was in line with Yoni's intelligence and his giving nature that he planned to become a doctor. Even after his death, he continued to give to others. His family donated his organs which were used to save the life of a Palestinian girl and two Israeli men from Tel Aviv.

JONATHAN (YONI) JESNER, 19, WAS ONE OF SIX PEOPLE KILLED WHEN A SUICIDE TERRORIST DETONATED A BOMB ON BUS IN TEL-AVIV ON SEPTEMBER 9, 2002. HE WAS CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ATTACK

KOL HANESHAMA WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING NEWSPAPERS FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION:

- 5 Towns Jewish Times
- American Jewish World
- Blueprint
- Boston Jewish Advocate
- Buffalo Jewish Review
- Cleveland Jewish News
- Connecticut Jewish Ledger
- Deep South Jewish Voice
- Detroit Jewish News
- Illiana News of Northwest Indiana
- Indianapolis Jewish Post & Opinion
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- Jewish Herald-Voice
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- Jewish World
- Kentucky Jewish Post & Opinion
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- Las Vegas Jewish Reporter
- Lehigh Valley HaKol
- Long Island Jewish World
- Los Angeles Jewish Journal
- Memphis Hebrew Watchman
- Miami Jewish Herald
- Nashville Jewish Observer
- New Jersey Jewish Standard
- New Mexico Jewish Link
- New York Jewish Week
- Ohio Jewish Chronicle
- Reading, PA Shalom
- Rhode Island Jewish Herald & Voice
- Rochester Jewish Ledger
- Rockland Jewish Reporter
- St. Louis Jewish Light
- Stern College Observer
- Texas Jewish Post
- Washington Jewish Week
- Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle
- Yeshiva University Commentator



Kol Haneshama, a project of the students of Yeshiva university, would like to thank One Family for their help in remembering these victims.

If you wish to contact the families of the victims, please visit

www.walk4israel.com

To contact us, please write to: kolhaneshamah@hotmail.com or call us at 212-946-1940.

Kol Haneshama would also like to thank all of the kids on Eimatai for their hard work and enthusiasm.

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

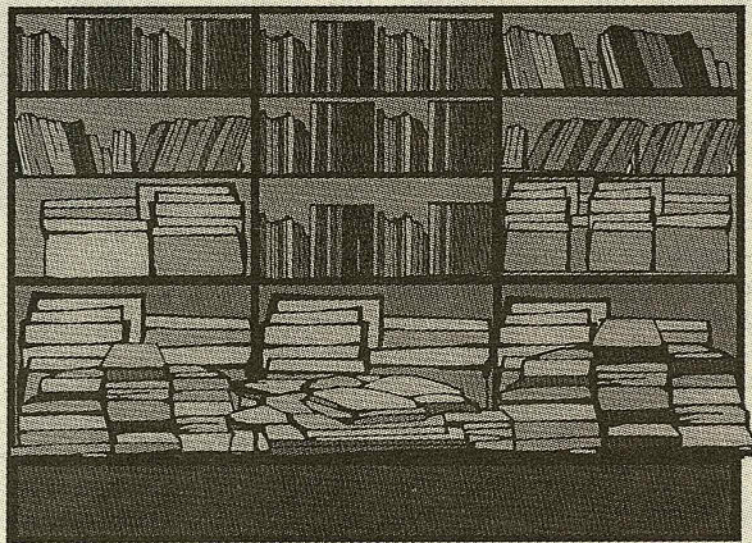
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Science & Health

Mental Health Resources Lacking on College Campuses: Yeshiva Looking to Update

continued from front page

be underestimated. With graduate schools and careers looming ahead, many students succumb to the pressure of academic success, particularly during midterm and final periods.

Undergraduate tensions also arise from changing attitudes and environments. Students, expected to independently choose classes, activities and lifelong careers, often falter under the weight of their new decisions. Physical changes in atmosphere unnerve the sense of comfort, as students adjust to being away from home in a completely new big city environment.

Serious Illness

Although strains of decisions and relationships impart a serious pressure on students, most manage the issues with their own unique coping mechanisms. Serious mental problems arise at the "point where whatever coping mechanisms a person normally uses to de-stress and manage, fail," explained Dr. Rochelle Ausubel, SCW psychologist. "The normal support systems are not helping and one is unable to function at whatever level is normal for them."

The area between normal stress and mental illness is a nebulous one, and the subject of continued scholarly debate. "No one knows if mental illness is on a continuum or not," clarified Ausubel. "Is mental illness a distinct entity or continuum of normal everyday functioning that is breaking down little by little?" Current scientific literature portrays mental illness as both an independent medical condition and an infirmity stemming from preexisting stressful factors.

Ausubel is careful to point out that only symptoms that persist for prolonged periods of time fall into the category of clinical mental illness. When the sense of sadness and inability to enjoy routine comforts continues for a minimum of two weeks, it can be defined as clinical illness. Consultation with professionals may be warranted earlier depending on the presenting circumstances.

Clinical depression, one of the most common illnesses affecting the general population, is the primary mental plague for undergraduates. Nationally, one in 10 individuals suffers from depression, and women prove twice as likely as men to succumb to systematic depression. Students in college, explained Ausubel, experience multitudes of changes and adjustments. When their prior support systems no longer suffice, students run an increased risk of falling into depression.

Another common infirmity,

anxiety disorder, strikes college undergraduates. Along with depression and anxiety, a slew of other issues, such as eating disorders, substance abuse and even suicide, can follow. The conditions tend to be related, and the effects can be devastating. "If you've ever seen anyone going through depression - it's really scary," revealed YSU President Yummy Schachter.

In addition to the illnesses that surface initially on the college campus, Dr. Efreim Nulman, senior university dean of students, called attention to the increased rate of incoming students already on prescription medication. When the common stresses of university life impart further strains on these students, they often cease to take their necessary medication.

Jewish Students and Mental Illness

"We do offer a reasonable amount of quality services to students," said Nulman. "But I don't think we're offering the type of services to bring us into the 21st century."

According to Nulman, Yeshiva undergraduates lack a university-based psychiatrist who can prescribe drugs to needy students. He is currently working to create this student mental health center, which will employ licensed doctors in a private site easily accessible to college students.

At a recent Shabbat *shiur* (lecture), Yigal Scher stood in front of an Orthodox crowd of undergraduates and asked how many personally know someone strongly suicidal. An astounding 20 percent reluctantly raised their hands. "We have to cultivate an awareness of what is and what is not happening in the Jewish community," explained Scher. "The issues are not on the agenda in important ways, and they should be because they have a lot to do with *pikuach nefesh* (saving a life)."

The distinct cohesiveness of the Orthodox community provides a unique setting for mental illness. "A community has pluses and minuses," remarked Braun. "It has assets that are nurturing and encouraging, but it can also minimize your privacy."

Sarna described the characteristics of the Orthodox community as mostly advantageous. In addition to the "Jewish mother" mentality that prompts constant medical attention, the broad Jewish network provides students with a tight community of peers. This connection and identification with others diffuses patterns of isolation.

Still, Sarna acknowledged

the stigmas associated with Orthodox students seeking help for mental illness. "There are certain expectations of formality...we feel compelled to fit the mold, we need to be a certain way," admitted Sarna. "If you're not in the 'in', you really feel that you're in the 'out'."

Although not uniquely Orthodox, the stigma of mental illness retains large power in the Jewish community. "Non-Jews are more open to going to psychiatrists and psychologists," said Schachter. "Orthodox people are not as open to saying 'you know what-I have a problem.' They look down on it."

The Yeshiva student body, representing a diverse segment of Orthodox Jewry and college-age individuals, embodies both these aspects. "As a community, or a microcosm of society at large, the same issues present themselves in smaller numbers," clarified

Braun. "Family, relationships, academics, learning - all the things one finds students of this age dealing with, our students deal with."

However, the strong benefits of the unique community enable greater solutions. "Our Orthodox community has a responsibility to one another," explained Schachter. "A smaller school should feel more like a family. Yeshiva University feels they have to take initiative and go out to reach out to people."

Yeshiva's Available Resources

SCW boasts a strong panel of professionally credentialed counselors and social workers dedicated to helping students. Along with Braun and Ausubel, Beth Hait, Rachel Kraut, Shana Glasser, Marga Marx and Rabbi Shlomo Hochberg, as officers of Student Services, provide students with crucial assistance and support. "The goal of Student Affairs is to enable students to negotiate their paths in the most productive and least problematic way possible," explained Braun.

This year, SCW initiated an innovative peer counseling program. Led by juniors Tova Warburg and Michal Safier, the



Braun makes herself available to students seeking guidance or advice for coping with new situations in a college atmosphere

program employs 11 women, always available by telephone or email, who offers counseling office hours and maintain an emergency hotline. "Our goal is to provide an informal forum for students to be able to talk about issues they have - whether academic or social," explained Safier.

three hospitals and aims to initiate some program by next year. Both Nulman and Schachter praise the university's administration, citing President Richard Joel's commitment to student mental health. "The new president is heading us in the right direction," Nulman remarked.

"We are very supportive and eagerly awaiting the formation of a student mental health center," added Braun. "It will benefit our student community greatly." The removed privacy of the physicians will enable students requiring attention to avoid any potential embarrassment, hopefully allowing students to seek help more readily.

In addition to this center, Schachter urges the need for expansion of current counseling options. "We need to hire more people in student services and enable them to reach out to students more," explained Schachter. "We need to be looking out for students. If a kid doesn't look good, we should check his record, see how he's doing academically, and have more of a connection."

Driven to look out for others and develop that connection, Yigal Scher overcame fear and reluctance to publicly speak about his personal ordeal. Initiating the project "Mental Jews Anonymous," Yigal aimed to create a uniquely Jewish support network for mentally ill students that can spread nationally. "Haza! (our rabbis) teach that whoever saved a single soul has saved the entire world," Scher explained. "If our efforts help even one person get better, and show people that they are not alone and there is a way to get through this, then it's all worth it."

Students interested in working with Scher are invited to contact him at yigz@aol.com.

"The response has been good, and people have been coming."

The women can handle low-grade stress and tension issues. "We are not, and we don't claim to be, professionally trained," cautioned Safier. Students requiring greater attention are referred to Ausubel and Braun. Any student who requests or needs additional assistance can be referred to mental health clinical practitioners outside the university system.

Future Plans

"We do offer a reasonable amount of quality services to students," said Nulman. "But I don't think we're offering the type of services to bring us into the 21st century." According to Nulman, Yeshiva undergraduates lack a university-based psychiatrist who can prescribe drugs to needy students. He is currently working to create this student mental health center, which will employ licensed doctors in a private site easily accessible to college students. "If YU had their own team who only worked for YU they would try to focus more on us," added Schachter.

According to Schachter, Yeshiva has negotiated with

Science & Health

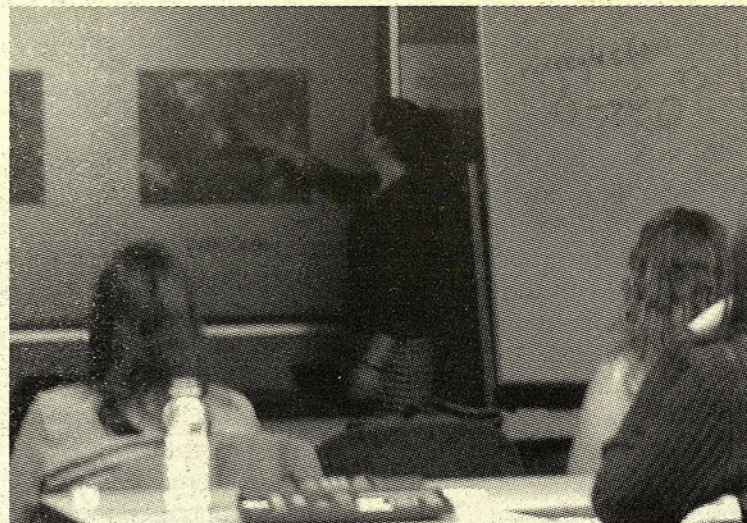
Second SURGE Meeting is Hailed as a Success

By Jessica Chernack

At the recent SCW Undergraduate Research Group Exchange (SURGE) meeting, two students presented their summer research projects before members of the student body. SCW junior Simone Suttner, who spent her summer working for the Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto, Canada, focused her presentation on the research she did in a dental research lab. SCW senior Nelli Fromer also centered her presentation on the research she did in the Neuroscience lab at SUNY Health Center.

Suttner spent most of her time at the lab searching for osteoclasts, multi-nucleated cells that function in remodeling bones in the body. She was able to identify them by the trap staining technique; a method that involves an enzyme that reveals multi-nucleated cells. She subsequently treated the osteoclasts with cytokine interleukin IL1B in order to enhance osteoclast activity. After a summer of research, she concluded that the cells containing IL1B did have an increase in the amount of osteoclasts as opposed to the control group.

They also added anti-IL1B in different concentrations and the ones with the most anti-IL1B showed the least amount of osteoclast formation. The group performed a similar experiment on human umbilical cord blood (HUCB). The lab received donations of HUCB from babies who



The SURGE meeting included presentations on students summer research projects.

were recently born. The team chose to use HUCB as opposed to adult blood because adult blood is too differentiated. The result of IL1B on HUCB was inconclusive. "I never realized the amount of time and patience that is needed in order to do research," Simone said. "And most of the time, conclusive results are not obtained."

When Nelli Fromer started her summer research, she knew nothing about neuroscience. By the end of the summer, she learned a significant amount about neuroscience. In her research, she used the rat brain to learn more about the Hippocampus.

The Hippocampus is part of the limbic system that is involved in spatial setting and memory. Place cells are located in the Hippocampus in two regions, CA1 and CA3, and by fire action potentials; they help animals solve spatial problems.

Therefore, when a rat is exposed to a new environment, he creates a map in the brain. If the environment changes then the Hippocampus creates a new map of the changed environment and fires different place cells. Nelli used her physics background to make electrodes that she planted into the brains of the rats to see amplitudes and waves

from the different cells. In the experiment, she would begin by placing the rat in one environment for two weeks after which the electrode was implanted. She used different computer programs to sort out the different wave forms. These programs used color identification having specific colors correspond to different areas that the place cells were firing from. She blocked the receptors of neurotransmitters being fired by giving them two drugs, scopolamine and mecamlamine. The drugs significantly blocked the receptors and affected the rat's memory. "My summer research allowed me to learn about neuroscience in a new way outside the classroom setting," Nelli said.

At the end of the presentation the floor was opened to student questions. SCW senior Elisheva Douglas asked, "How long did it take to implant the electrodes into the rats?" Nelli answered, "It took 5 days to implant them, and one week for the rats to recover." This interactive approach to learning about the students' research projects will continue next semester with the next SURGE meeting.

Nutrition Corner

By Cheryl Donath

A new trend has developed in the past few years among many universities such as Princeton, Fordham, Binghamton, Yale and Harvard who have been revamping their cafeterias by offering healthier choices and making the foods' nutrition facts available. Students out of their homes for the first time encounter many new challenges, including what to eat for dinner.

Many students come from environments where dinner is prepared by their mothers who make nutrition decisions. Since coming to SCW many students might feel that eating healthfully is a challenge. They decide what to eat, when and with who, which puts food into a new perspective. Unfortunately, SCW has failed to follow the trend of other universities; many students are unsatisfied with the food options available due to their lack of nutritious value.

Students on a daily basis complain of the food selections. "Oil is not part of the four food groups," said Deborah Whitman sarcastically, an SCW junior. Even the SCW faculty complains about the eating habits of their students. "The number one foods consumed in the cafeteria are french fries and frozen yogurt," said J.McEwen, an SCW gym instructor. "Stern should educate students more about proper nutrition, offer gym classes throughout the day, and nutrition facts should also be given, especially since it has just become an FDA requirement." However, not everyone agrees with McEwen. "I think the food is pretty healthy, we try not to fry any of our foods" said a cafeteria worker.

"You are what you eat,"

holds true. Most college students don't eat as well as they should, according to research being compiled at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts. The study says 66 percent of freshmen don't consume the recommended five servings of fruits and vegetables a day, and 60 percent eat too much saturated fat. Nutrition experts at the university blame college students' poor eating habits on the lack of education about nutrition, and the media's strong influences. Today, students care about what they eat. They have grown up in homes where health consciousness is part of everyday life. A nutrition newsletter should be published and distributed quarterly on campus including healthy eating tips, upcoming menus and special events, including current national trends. Nutritional information cards should be given for each item on the menu, or at least posted in places where they can be viewed by the students.

The definition of wellness includes the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, spiritual and occupational aspects of life. Nutrition plays a large role in all aspects stated above. Healthy eating is about eating well, feeling good and enjoying the food that you eat. Clearly, it might appear that eating healthfully should be easy, and yet it is often quite difficult. If knowledge were the motivating factor, then many Americans would be eating the right foods. It is often not a lack of information that prevents change but rather the lack of action to change that limits us. In SCW this is the motivating factor for this ongoing problem. It is the responsibility of the student body to not simply complain but become motivated enough to make a change.

Summer Internships

continued from page 22

PhD after obtaining an undergraduate degree. Students in this program work side by side with graduate students and faculty members on supervised research activities. The stipend for this two-week program is \$2,500 and housing is provided if necessary. The application deadline is February 1st. For more information regarding Mount Sinai's program, contact grads@mssm.edu, or see the website www.mssm.edu/grad-school.

Lastly, Albert Einstein College of Medicine offers a summer undergraduate research program. Approximately 40 students are chosen each year to participate, many of whom are students at SCW and YC. The nine week program begins in

mid-June. Students are matched with a faculty member depending on area of interest and work side by side with that researcher in one of the ten basic science departments.

They have the opportunity to conduct research in their chosen field of interest, learn many laboratory techniques in state of the art facilities, interact with world renowned scientists, and attend weekly seminars. The Roth Institute Scholars Program also involves social programs including attending a Yankees game, a Broadway show and participation in many on campus luncheons. Students wishing to apply to Einstein's summer program should have a strong background in biology, biochemistry, or chemistry. Participants are granted a \$2,500 stipend for the nine-week period. Pegah

Rabizadeh, a SCW senior majoring in Biochemistry, spent last summer at Einstein's Resnick campus.

"The opportunity to work in a laboratory as well as exposure to medical school are factors that will help prepare me for a career in medicine," she remarked. For further information regarding the Roth Program, contact pre-health advisor Dr. Barry Potvin at potvin@yu.edu. A more comprehensive listing of summer research opportunities can be found on Dr. Babich's website at <http://www.yu.edu/faculty/babich/Summer%20Internships/Summer%20Internships2003.pdf>

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A Pristine Vaccine for TB

By Shevie Moskowitz

Dr William R Jacobs Jr., professor of Microbiology & Immunology at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (AECOM), is at the forefront of the field of medical microbiology. He and his team of co-investigators are currently attempting to create a vaccine for tuberculosis that will help eradicate this worldwide health threat.

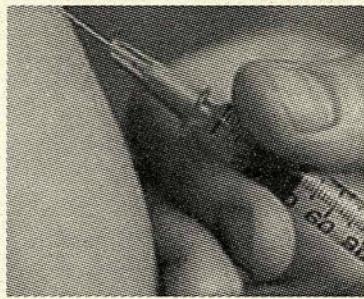
Over 100 years ago, Robert Koch, the father of medical microbiology, identified *Mycobacterium Tuberculosis* as the causative agent of tuberculosis, or TB.

At the time, TB was so rampant that it was responsible for nearly one out of every seven deaths in Europe. Today, TB remains a tremendous global health problem. There are an estimated one billion people infected with TB, and it is responsible for about three million deaths annually exceeding malaria, AIDS and all tropical diseases combined. Due to the spread of AIDS in recent years, TB has become even more common. Recently, increasing patient noncompliance to prescribed treatments has caused the bacterium to become more resistant to the drugs used in its treatment such as rifampin and isoniazid.

Jacobs and his team of co-investigators are attempting to manipulate the bacteria known as *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. This form of bacteria, the causative agent of TB, can be developed into an attenuated strain of *Mycobacterium Tuberculosis*, the pathogen responsible for causing Tuberculosis, to be used in the prevention of development of TB in both adults and children. The current vaccine termed Bacille Calmette Guèrin (BCG) is intended to prevent complications that arise from TB, including meningitis, which can be deadly.

The vaccine is derived from *Mycobacterium Bovis*, which is related to *Mycobacterium Tuberculosis*, but is only effective about 50 percent of the time. Currently, it has only proven efficient in providing protection for young children and against fatal forms of the infection.

Jacobs, together with other researchers from McGill University in Montreal, Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Harvard University in Boston, St. George's Hospital in London, Columbia University in New York, and The Rockefeller University in New York, are working on developing an atten-



Scientists at AECOM are trying to create a vaccine for Tuberculosis

uated strain of the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* that can be used as a more effective vaccine against TB infections in both adults and children alike than its relative *Mycobacterium Bovis*.

Soon after the discovery of the vaccine itself, scientists noticed that after 39 generations the bacteria underwent a transformation from a virulent to an attenuated form. The reason why has perplexed scientists for many years. Jacobs and his colleagues worked with strains of *Mycobacterium Tuberculosis* and hypothesized that the "RDI region" of the bacteria's genetic code must be involved, since this region was present in virulent strains of both *Mycobacterium Tuberculosis* and *Mycobacterium Bovis*, but absent in attenuated strains.

Somehow, after 39 generations, it was deleted, and this deletion affected the ability of the bacteria causing tuberculosis to exhibit its toxic effects. Eventually, they identified the mechanism of the weakening of virulence leading to attenuation after 39 generations pass.

Virulence depends on the presence of three RDI genes that are responsible for secreting a protein that destroys lung cells the bacteria has infected. With the deletion of these genes comes loss of the bacteria's ability to kill the cells it infects.

After making this groundbreaking discovery, Jacobs and his team injected mice with attenuated versions of *Mycobacterium Tuberculosis* and subsequently expose them to virulent strains and found that they were less susceptible to developing TB. Dr Jacobs is "very excited" about this new discovery, which will lead to the ability to produce attenuated strains of *Mycobacterium Tuberculosis* as vaccines for human use, stating "we were hopeful that learning why tuberculosis bacteria become attenuated will lead to better TB vaccines that can save more lives."

Jacobs' findings were published in the October 14th issue of the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. Dr Jones is not only a full Professor in the department of Microbiology and Immunology, but has a professorial appointment in the department of Medical Genetics as well. He is also a researcher at the prestigious Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

Opportunities Knocking at Your Door, Scientifically Speaking

By Shevie Moskowitz

Toward the end of the spring semester every student has one major question on their mind: what am I going to do this summer? Business students worry about internships in accounting and at marketing firms, and pre-law students look for summer positions at law firms.

For those majoring in biology, chemistry, or biochemistry, there is a plethora of academic opportunities available for students interested in careers in the biomedical sciences. Various programs exist nationwide in which students may choose from clinical or laboratorial work based on their specific fields of interest. Here are a few examples of the different prospects available to students this coming summer.

For those in the Baltimore area or those who want to be there, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine offers a Summer Research Program for undergraduate students. Students enrolled in the program will be paid a \$3,000 stipend for the eight-week internship beginning June 1 and lasting until July 30. For more information about the program at Hopkins, students should contact Joan Miller at joan@jhu.edu.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH), located in nearby Bethesda, Maryland, is the Federal Government's primary research agency. Approximately 1,000 undergraduate students are chosen annually to join the NIH team in Bethesda, Md., or in a lab in Baltimore, Md., Raleigh, NC, or Phoenix, Ariz. These students will work side by side with scientists for 8-10 weeks. Students are also invited to attend various lectures and symposia held throughout the summer at the NIH. The Deadline for applications to this program is March 1, 2004.

For students interested in visiting the Boston area, two very prestigious summer research programs are currently available. The University of Massachusetts School of Medicine offers a ten week fellowship program consisting of lab research with an assigned mentor. Students receive a \$3,700 stipend for their work and are provided with on campus housing.

The goal of this program is to not only provide students with in depth exposure to scientific research, but also inspire them to consider research careers and PhDs as a serious possibility. Applications for this program are due by February 28, 2004. The Mayo Clinic, also in Massachusetts, is world renowned for providing top of the line health care. Each sum-

mer, the Mayo Graduate School affords a select group of undergraduate students the chance to work closely with scientists on a broad range of biomedical topics. Students are invited to attend several lectures on a variety of subjects and to explore different areas of research independently as well as under the supervision of graduate students for ten weeks. Participants receive a stipend of \$4,000. One past participant in The Mayo's SURF program remarked that she "couldn't have possibly spent summer in a better way than this." For an application, or for any information regarding the program, contact gmuel@mayo.edu.

For students hailing from the West Coast or those craving the West Coast sun, Stanford University has a summer research program in the biomedical sciences. This program runs eight weeks and offers undergraduates, who want to prepare for and enter Ph.D. programs in the biomedical sciences, a unique opportunity to conduct research in a world class institution. Each participant is matched with a Stanford faculty member and will work in one of Stanford's labs, crafting a challenging and stimulating research project. The program culminates with a research symposium where students make presentations regarding their research.

Undergraduates who enroll in this program, set tentatively for June 20-August 14, have the opportunity to join a mentoring group led by a Stanford graduate student or post-doctoral student. The group leader guides them in the process of applying to graduate school and provides them with "tricks of the trade" from an insider's view. The student is awarded a \$2,000 stipend for participation in this program. In addition to lab work, students also participate in science field trips and social outings, including the Monterey Bay Aquarium and Hopkins Marine Station.

Finally, for those students who just can't get enough of New York, there are a number of different programs. The University of Rochester, in upstate New York offers a very unique program which affords students the opportunity to travel abroad and work with medical researchers and health care administrators in Europe. There is a \$30 application fee. For more information see their website at www.rochester.edu/College/study-abroad/europe.html, or contact abroad@mail.rochester.edu. The Health Research Training Program of The New York City Department of Public Health is very unique.

Not all students wish to spend their summers working in

laboratories, but are very interested in conducting scientific research. This program provides students with the opportunity to work in inner city clinics and hospitals but also conduct clinical or laboratory research in a variety of areas ranging from AIDS research to Yellow Fever. NYU offers a variety of summer programs for undergraduates. Students chosen as Howard Hughes Medical Institute Summer Undergraduate Research Fellows participate in an original research project in the cutting edge areas of genomics, bioinformatics or computational biology. Directed by a faculty member, they present the final result during the last week of the program. Fellows also have the opportunity to participate in weekly seminars delivered by faculty members and social events at the NYU School of Medicine. Students receive a stipend of \$4,000 as well as free housing. Prior research experience is expected, but students with an interest in research yet no previous experience are encouraged to apply nonetheless. Women are strongly encouraged to apply. The website for the Howard Hughes SURF can be found at <http://www.nyu.edu/cas/Academic/HonorsProgram/hhhsi/index.html> and contains an abundance of information regarding the program.

The Sackler Institute of the NYU School of Medicine also offers an eight-week summer internship program, from June 7 to August 6. This program allows undergraduate students interested in pursuing an MD, PhD, or both to work side by side with Physicians and Scientists in basic medical science research. Internships are available in the departments of biochemistry, cellular and molecular biology, developmental genetics, immunology, microbiology, molecular oncology, neuroscience, parasitology, pharmacology, physiology and virology.

Students wishing to participate must have completed their sophomore year of college and taken courses in biology, chemistry and mathematics. Prior research experience is preferable. Application forms can be downloaded from the internet (<http://www.med.nyu.edu/Sackler/summer.html>). For more information regarding this program, email Sackler-info@nyumed.med.nyu.edu.

Mount Sinai School of Medicine, conveniently located on the Upper East Side, offers a summer undergraduate research program as well. This program is designed for students who are interested in research and wish to obtain an MD, PhD or MD-

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Bottom Line: See *The Hebrew Hammer* and Ignore the Affront, Because It's That Funny

By Dodi-Lee Hecht

At one point in the midst of the chaotic comedy that is *The Hebrew Hammer*, the hero of the story, Mordechai Jefferson Carver (played exceptionally by Adam Goldberg), calls the Jewish Justice League (JLL) to request any and all movies that focus on positively portrayed Jewish characters.

Their response? The JLL ship out three Hollywood classics: "Yentl," "Fiddler on the Roof" and Chaim Potok's "The Chosen." The joke is simple — positive Jewish heroes are rare in the movie industry; however, the list is incomplete. This awkward parade comprised of a cross-dressing, turn-of-the-century, female Talmudic scholar and a musical, traditionally minded, Ukrainian milkman and two philosophically opposed, teenage, Orthodox Jewish New Yorkers must be joined, if not led, by Carver, who charges onto the scene in a successfully wacky attempt to save Hanukkah.

Carver, nicknamed the Hebrew Hammer, is a hero born from the backlash of anti-Semitism. The movie opens with a brief introduction to his childhood in an attempt to fulfill the necessary "making of a hero" segment of this story. It fails to truly provide said motive but it is, perhaps, one of the funniest openings in the history of comedy. Every facial expression and mis-

pronunciation of the word Hanukkah, squeezed into the first ten minutes, succeeded in eliciting boisterous laughter from all four corners of a crowded theater. Although most movies are better seen in silence, this movie needs the constant laughter as much as a new stand-up comic, but, don't worry — it earns every giggle and probably deserves more than is humanely possible to give.

As a comedy goes, this movie is perfect. The plot is comprehensive enough to warrant an intelligent audience. (In a nutshell, the evil son of Santa Claus, Damian, played with a diabolical ease by Andy Dick, kills his father and seizes control in order to destroy Hanukkah [and Kwanzaa] and ensure that Christmas is the exclusive winter holiday.) The jokes are fast-paced and quite original although it should be noted that

"For all the Jews who ever guiltily hummed carols or looked on with envy at a neighbor's Christmas lights and would have gladly given up the menorah for one moment during which the aura around the "Holiday Season" embraced them as well, Santa Claus himself couldn't send a better compensation than *The Hebrew Hammer*."

those who cannot abide racial humor should avoid this movie. And, finally, *The Hebrew Hammer* fulfills the "Marx Brothers' Duck Soup" criterion — it subtly steers the viewer face-to-face with a society's weaknesses and vulnerabilities.

In this case, it is Jewish society under the microscope, and it should be an unpleasant place to be. It isn't, in this case, unpleasant for the right reasons. Jonathan Kesselman, writer and director of *The Hebrew Hammer*, has attempted the near-impossible creation of a Jewish action hero complete with sexy sidekick (Judy Greer) and black compatriot (Mario Van Peebles). In a way Kesselman has succeeded and the result is quite a romp, but the uncomfortable truth is that in following the rules of Hollywood, once again the Jewish world must see itself distorted in the mirror that is the movie industry.

The fact of the matter is that the industry has yet to get it right. Purely on a superficial level, no mainstream movie to date has managed to capture the complex ritual structure inherent in Orthodox Judaism. While

The Hebrew Hammer states at the end of the credits that "No animals or Gentiles were harmed in the making of this motion picture," a pair of *tephillin* (phylacteries) was definitely mistreated and the laws of *shomer negia* (prohibition against touching mem-



Adam Goldberg, (right), stars in *The Hebrew Hammer*

bers of the opposite sex) were completely ignored. Once again, as with *Yentl*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *The Chosen*, the Torah and its precepts were harmed in the making of the motion picture.

Still, if the viewer can look past the reality that halakha is too multidimensional to ever be accurately portrayed on a two-dimensional screen, then this movie becomes an important tool in understanding the difficulties in being a Jew in a non-Jewish world and being subject to foreign definitions.

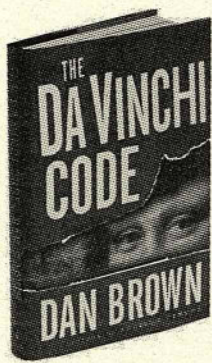
Every Jew recalls that moment when it became clear that certain events taken for granted by the rest of America would be forever denied him/her. For all the Jews who ever guiltily hummed carols or looked on with envy at a neighbor's Christmas lights and would have gladly given up the menorah for one moment during which the aura around the "Holiday Season" embraced them as well,

Santa Claus himself couldn't send a better compensation than *The Hebrew Hammer*. Kesselman may not have captured an accurate Orthodox Jew as a hero but he has accomplished something just as impossible and maybe just as vital; "The Hebrew Hammer is officially a holiday classic and can stand proud beside "It's a Wonderful Life" and "A Christmas Carol" as a token to the true meaning of the holiday season, even if it can't properly express the true meaning of the holiday.

Furthermore, *The Hebrew Hammer* thrives on stereotype and, in doing so, allows the Jewish world the luxury of laughing at itself while still being portrayed as the cool culture that it secretly is. Two benefits for the price of one — now what Jew could pass up a deal like that?

The Hebrew Hammer will be in theatres on December 19th, 2003.

Decoding "DaVinci"



By Sarah Rindner

I'm not usually a fan of literary thrillers let alone ones that feature conspiracy theories with far-fetched premises and questionable scholarship. Yet I found Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* to be a strangely compelling read. And I'm not the only one. With 37 straight weeks on top of the *New York Times Bestseller List*, and thousands of devotee websites popping up all over the Internet, *The Da Vinci Code* has become little less than a national phenomenon. This reveals something interesting about our conservative nation when considering the decidedly non-conservative premises of the book.

The hero of the novel is Robert Langdon, a world-renowned Harvard art-historian with that Harrison Ford, heart-throb professor turned seeker of the Holy Grail thing going on. He stumbles into the novel as clueless as we are and as the clock ticks and the suspense mounts, unearths a discovery that could shatter the world. The novel starts off with the disturbing circumstances surrounding the death of a famed curator of the Louvre, followed by the timely appearance of his smart and sensuous granddaughter, cryptologist Sophie Neveau. Together, they discover that Sophie's *grandpère* has left them more than his strangely contorted naked body; he has twisted himself to form the first step of a code. I won't give away all the details of this exciting chase that they are sent on, but I will tell you that it has to do with Leonardo Da Vinci.

Along the way, Robert reveals to Sophie the existence of an entire world of feminine symbolism, that the "sacred feminine" is manifested everywhere from Botticelli to Beethoven to those babes in Disney movies.

Apparently, the world was originally based on a symbiotic relationship between man and woman, yin and yang, tetragrammaton and *Shekhina*, that kind of thing. Goddess worship was the norm and everyone was happy. Then the Church fathers came along and disrupted this balance. In their desire to centralize authority around the Church, they decided to conceal the ability people have to reach God through relations between men and women. The Church accomplished this grand cover up through the vilification of women in Christian theology.

They used the Bible to rewrite history, inserting such things as "Original Sin" and hiding the fact that man originally came from a woman. Fortunately, a secret society of prominent artists and scientists has preserved the secret over the centuries, and is slowly but surely spreading its message of pagan girl power throughout the civilized world.

How Robert Langdon knows all this is beyond me, but

Continued on next page



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Continued from previous page

he makes a convincing case, drawing on some cool mathematical things that are true, such as the Fibonacci Sequence and the "Divine Proportion." And lots of other things that would be cool if they were true like that Mona Lisa is really smiling because she is also a guy.

Another "that could be true but it probably isn't" aspect of the novel that caught my attention was Brown's creative version of ancient Jewish History. I wish I could somehow broadcast to the millions of readers of "The DaVinci Code" that the inner sanctum of Solomon's Temple was not the home of priestesses to whom the priests would pay discreet visits as a form of religious expression. Also, Brown hints to the possibility that most of the Torah is a secret code written in ATBASH (Alephs are substituted for Tav, and so on). And that's not true. And I'm sure that Rashi script looks nothing like English letters turned upside down and backwards. On the other hand, there's always the undeniable appeal of reading an outsider's take on that which is familiar to you. Brown's information is not always that off, even if Langdon's conclusions sometimes border on the insane. And of course, those conclusions are what make the novel such a scintillating read.

One actually true thing that Brown brought to my attention was the alarming proximity of Opus Dei, a radical branch of Catholicism that maintains disturbing practices such as "corporeal mortification," to our very own SCW. Included on the "Fact" page that begins the novel is mention of the world headquarters of the Opus-Dei cult at, 245 Lexington Avenue!

Creepy coincidences like that serve as a reminder why conspiracy theories remain so compelling. Some things are just too weird, or great, to be accidents. And that's the leap of faith that "The DaVinci Code" elicits from you as it takes you on its ridiculous but breathtaking ride. The suspension of disbelief is not all that difficult when the journey is so much fun. And sometimes, well, he does make some good points.

I wouldn't pass up something important to read "The Da Vinci Code" but if you are ever in the mood for a light read that makes you think, then I highly recommend this one. Be prepared to devote several consecutive hours of your life to this novel, because, like it or not, you won't be able to put it down.

SCW Professor's Debut Collection of Poetry: A Triumphant Journey with Every Alternative

By Dodi-Lee Hecht

It has been said that poetry is as important to humanity as the very air we breathe and rivals only philosophy as the oxygen of the mind. If that is so, then minds everywhere should be very grateful to Dr. Jay Ladin for *Alternatives to History*, a new and refreshing burst of poetry to fill their metaphorical lungs.

The volume is divided into four sections, which serve to counter the essential wanderings through which the reader is led. With the exception of the last section, "The Situation," the sections are untitled. This is a welcome absence as the poems in the first three sections seem loosely linked at best and the reader will find more meaning in the work upon discovery of his/her personal thread of commonality.

It would be a mistake to look cynically at these 86 pages and lazily sit down to an hours of intense reading, but it might possibly be the best kind of mistake to make with Ladin's collection. As long as the reader is willing to return to the slim volume in days to come, no harm can come from such a first perusal. However, *Alternatives to History*, will take the reader through many emotional and mental twists and turns, and certain readers may be

inclined to forget about the whole thing after being forced through such an exhaustive process. To forget about *Alternatives to History* is, without a doubt, the worst kind of mistake. *Alternatives to History* will offer the reader epiphany and doubt and leave a person's inner poet breathless with anticipation for the next moment that can be stolen from one's routine to flip silently through and settle, relieved, on a perfect verbal image such as "...Sobbing in Russian / that a stranger / is murdering her with tears."

Of course, just as a perfect album is the rarest of musical achievements, the perfect collection of poetry is as seldom attained. *Alternatives to History* cannot claim such a victory. Although all poetry, upon being birthed, will find some soul to stir (even if it is only the author's restless spirit) there are poems that are not the stuff of positive obsession. Woven among the majestic works contained in *Alternatives to History*, there are a few poems which drag the reader to an uncomfortable and hazy place. A most glaring example is the second poem of the first section, "The Old God at the Urinal," which, somewhat dangerously, improperly introduces its compatriots and leaves a powerful scent that threatens to

overshadow them.

Still, all the poems that detract from this work are guilty for being in the wrong place at the wrong time than of actually being bad poetry. In a way, this makes their presence more upsetting; just like "The Old God at the Urinal," these misplaced poems endanger the mood of the rest of the collection.

However, these poems are not numerous enough nor do they have the power to erase the encompassing presence that emanates from the pillars of this work, including the first poem, "Rabbi José the Angel," the volume's namesake, "Alternatives to History" (found in the third section), and the fourth section entitled "The Situation." The first two poems will echo in the reader's psyche long after the book has been closed and will irrevocably transform anyone who allows poetry the clout it is meant to wield.

The final section of *Alternatives to History*, "The Situation," is a work that stands most boldly on its own, separate from the remaining body of this work. It is poetry most artfully disguised as political commentary. Ladin chose to devote this section to the pressing issue of the Middle-East conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians. At first glance, the

poetry's message is clear - the Israelis are not the pure victims and the Palestinians are not the pure villains. However, after immersing oneself in the duality inherent in the style, and especially after "Heaven's Gate," the obvious message is no longer obvious. That is the message buried in every line of this section; the answer is not clear and the emotional verdict is impossible to compose. "The Situation" beats out the call of the victim/villain, and tries to show both sides of the head in the same mirror.

Alternatives to History offers the reader a bevy of thought provoking imagery and words. Some are more mild and pleasant and some are more robust and painful, but none should be avoided. There are poems that may not belong but even they should be read once. It is not like the perfect album, but it is a collection of verse that could easily become the poetic equivalent to that album that every person turns to when the world is a whole lot less perfect, and one feels the call of the inner spirit to steal time from routine and lose oneself in the imperfection of a scattered, slightly more chaotic, assortment.

The Israeli Philharmonic Plays But Business is Not Usual

By Malka Zeiger-Simkovich

As I waited to hear the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (IPO) featuring violinist Itzhak Perlman perform on December 15, I watched two NYPD officers and members of the Shin Bet (Israel's top level security unit) suspiciously explore the room in hard helmets and chest protectors. This was an unusual scene for an evening concert at Carnegie Hall. The evening was thus established as tense and significant, complemented by the American and Israeli flags flanking both sides of the stage.

The orchestration of Hatikvah was stunning. At first, the melody was loud and bombast, with the horns and drums providing a majestic presence. When reaching the climactic *Od lo avdah tikvateinu*, however, the violin section alone played a somber, sweeping melody. Most moving was the echo of the words of Hatikvah being sung by these fur and tux-clad men and women.

Indian born Zubin Mehta, conductor of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra for over 30 years, brilliantly conducted



The Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra played at Carnegie hall on December 15th

Igor Stravinsky's Pulcinella and Max Bruch's Violin Concerto no. 1. Stravinsky, the famous early 20th century neo-classicist (and antithesis to Arnold Schoenberg, his avant-garde contemporary who developed the radically different sounding 12-tone system that heralded the age of New Music), wrote the ballet Pulcinella based on the music of Giambattista Pergolesi, an early 18th century composer. The mostly melodically mellow piece has occasional very satisfying outbursts of sound, that hint either at Stravinsky's uncon-

scious absorption of modernism or purposeful contrast with classicism. The outrageous dissonances of the woodwinds in the vivo section, in addition to an unusual amount of pizzicato (string plucking), also indicate Stravinsky's historical musical context.

Bruch's first Violin Concerto was certainly an appropriate medium through which to demonstrate Perlman's remarkable mastery of his instrument. During his solos, the orchestra watched him attentively. Like Stravinsky, Bruch opens with a

somber and rhythmically tense melody, which explodes into a stormy, cascading development with a full orchestra. The huge string section dominates the orchestration and guides the audience through each movement until reaching its spirited, typically Romantic conclusion.

The night's outstanding music was overshadowed by the general event's significance. Throughout history, the quantity of cultural exchange between countries has reflected the nature of their political relationships.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the IPO was not invited to perform in the Soviet Union, and made history when they visited Moscow and Leningrad for the first time in April of 1990. (Incidentally, Perlman was also playing with the orchestra on their USSR tour). Israeli-Arab collaborations to create a youth orchestra also reflect the medium of art used to achieve or solidify a desired political relationship. Clearly, the hundreds of voices singing Hatikvah in Carnegie Hall reflected an act of mutual Jewish identification. If only it were always this easy to create an environment of solidarity.

The Arts and Culture Staff at The Observer would like to wish a Happy Hanukkah to all.

Being Human: Cat on a Hot Tin Roof

By Sarah Rinder

As one of the great American playwrights, Tennessee Williams' plays are bound to be a little painful. Williams's characters are complex, their motives ambiguous and he always leaves something to our imagination. Any performance will naturally fill in some of those blanks left open to interpretation by the playwright. Williams knew what he was getting into when he chose to write plays instead of novels, but I can't help wondering if he would have winced as much as I did during the Music Box Theater's new revival of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof treads the thin line between tragedy and comedy. On one hand, its characters are caught in a decidedly tragic set of circumstances. Maggie, after growing up in poverty and shame, has married Brick for the life she thought he could give her and because she's crazy about him. Brick, on the other hand, doesn't love her. In fact, he can't stand her. Because he won't sleep with her, Maggie cannot have the child, and the life, that she so fiercely longs for.

However, we can't hate Brick for doing this to her because he too is trapped. He once loved someone who died, and now Brick is caught up in a net of shame over his contribution to this death, and the fact that it was a man. He can't even begin to satisfy Maggie because he can barely shake himself from his own drunken misery. Maggie doesn't get Brick and Brick does-

n't get Maggie, and this bothers us because we feel like we get both of them. One of the main problems that the play addresses is that painful difficulty of communication: "Why is it so damn hard for people to talk?" This question is posed throughout the play, through jokes that stem from denial and comedy that is rooted in misunderstanding. This is supposed to make us laugh and it does, except when it makes us cry.

Maintaining the tenuous balance between comedy and tragedy presents a particular challenge to the actor. I found that in this production, the laughs were sometimes gotten at the expense of a sympathetic reaction.

Maggie, for example, as played by the glamorous Ashley Judd, jumps into her lines with anger and ferocity; a tactic that elicits laughter before it does sympathy. And the audience responded accordingly. Judd captures Maggie's sultry looks and steely southern drawl impeccably. However, there is more to Maggie than her hard shell, and I expected Judd to let Maggie's vulnerability shine through a little more.

Jason Patric, most famous for his performance in the 1998 movie *Your Friends and Neighbors*, takes Brick's diffidence to another frustrating extreme. His stiff demeanor is at times reminiscent of old Hollywood rebels like Marlon Brando or Paul Newman and seems to primarily be taking his cues from Brick's concrete namesake. Patric is trying to play up Brick's tragic paralysis, but



Ashley Judd, left, and Jason Patric, right, star in the Broadway revival of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*

exaggeration in this form often achieves the opposite of what is intended.

However, most of the acting is quite good, and the audience seemed to love the play. Although the giddy energy of it all detracts from the sense of tragedy, it makes for a more accessible play, and in some ways, a situation that is more reflective of our own lives.

I imagine that reading *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* the afternoon before seeing the play amplified my expectations significantly. It included some of the most verbose stage directions I have ever seen. Williams writes things like, "I'm trying to catch the true quality of experience in a group of people, that cloudy, flickering, evanescent—fiercely charged!—interplay of live human beings in the thundercloud of a common crisis." However, there are live human beings playing these "live human beings," and they don't quite capture the complexity of Williams's vision. I'm not sure if anyone could.

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof By Tennessee Williams; Directed by Anthony Page. At the Music Box Theater, 239 West 45th Street, Manhattan.

Mona Lisa Almost Smiles

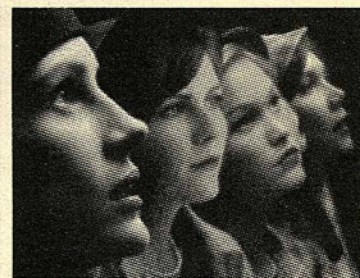
By Lea Almo

"Girls, your sole responsibility will be taking care of your husband and children." These words sum up *Mona Lisa Smile*. *Mona Lisa Smile*, directed by Mike Newell, starring Julia Roberts, Kirsten Dunst, Julia Stiles and Maggie Gyllenhaal tries very, very hard to prove that women can do more than make meatloaf and change diapers.

The film takes place in 1953 at Wellesley College, a preparatory school for young women where they learn art, literature, etiquette and most importantly, how to be a good wife. (An all girls school where they are obsessed with marriage? I sure wonder what that's like!) Katherine Watson (Julia Roberts) is the inspirational art history professor who tries to make a difference with her unconventional teaching methods and her liberal approach to marriage.

According to William Goldman, a renowned screenwriter and director (*Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *Princess Bride*) there are two parts to creating a successful movie. One revolves around the actual making of a movie. The second is marketing the product. *Mona Lisa Smile* gets an A+ for marketing efforts. In every clip of the preview, Julia Roberts flashes her mega watt smile and a little slice of Americana circa 1950s is revealed. Voila! The entire Brookdale TV lounge approves. The movie opens to a packed house, a producer's dream. The only problem is the audience was a lot happier before the film began.

The film does, however, show considerable effort. The cast has superior chemistry, making one want to jump on the



Mona Lisa Smile stars (from left to right) Julia Roberts, Kirsten Dunst, Julia Stiles and Maggie Gyllenhaal

set because it looks like so much fun. Julia Roberts gives the classic "Julia" performance. Although the script does not allow her to transcend to an *Erin Brockovich* level, she is undoubtedly entertaining. Julia Stiles, Kirsten Dunst and Maggie Gyllenhaal are all well cast and handle their roles with poise and believability.

The problem here is not the actors. It's the script. Essentially, the film has a single theme story line which could have been a strong subplot but needs more substance to make it well worth 117 minutes of moviegoer's time. The characters need refining. Some characters, such as Katherine's love interest, are clearly not as developed as we would like to see while other characters, such as Betty's high society mother, appear one-dimensional. *Mona Lisa Smile* is like a portrait that makes us want to see beyond the borders of the canvas. We crave more depth.

Overall, the movie takes itself a little too seriously. It tries so hard to be "Best Picture" that it actually misses out on being, well, a best picture. Still, if you want an entertaining movie to see with the girls one Thursday night where you can poke fun of all the marriage talk and relate it to Stern, then buy a bag of popcorn and enjoy.

Final Grade: B.

STYLIN' IN THE CITY "COOL TO BE WARM"

By Lauren Weltz

I have been pretending for long enough that winter isn't on its way. The knee socks, the bronzer: is anyone noticing a pattern? I am not a fan of the cold weather. With my teeth chattering and my fingertips icy, I tend to peer out the window for some advice on what to wear. I feel utterly deceived when after looking outside and seeing the sunshine, I reach for lighter gear. As I take the stairs to exit the building, I feel the rush of cold air begin to chill my bones. Apparently, my window was lying. Sunshine clearly does not mean warmth.

This scenario poses a continuous problem of what to wear when winter is approaching. The temperature inside the SCW

dorms (95 degrees) and the temperature outside (30 degrees) confuse my senses enough to nearly make me run outside in a long sleeve T-shirt, linen skirt and snow boots with no socks. I have now come to the conclusion that proper winter accessories can solve this problem.

Granted, there are seasons in which certain fabrics are not permitted, like wool in the summer or linen in the winter. But within boundaries of lighter and heavier winter fabrics, a great coat, boots, or other winter accessories can fill in the blanks.

Although many coats look great on the hanger, and even look fairly well on other people, not every coat is for every person.

When looking for a coat, keep in mind the proper length for you. If you are wearing a longer skirt, you might want to

reach for a waist length coat. This can make you look taller and save you from looking sloppy. When wearing a slightly below the knee length skirt, a coat that falls the same length (or slightly longer) than your skirt would look best. If you happen to be wearing pants, you can get away with most coat lengths since the geometry factor doesn't apply. By the geometry factor, I mean that many different lengths can throw your entire outfit off. Imagine working so hard on looking cute, to simply throw it all away with an out of place coat. That does not sound fabulous to me.

Even though a coat length is important, you need not be overly strict, being that your coat is essentially there just to keep you warm. Oh, and speaking of keeping you warm, the obvious choice in that department are down coats, otherwise known as "puffy" coats. Great places to find puffy coats are chain stores like Zara, H&M and even the Gap. Now is also the time to find these coats for great holiday season sale prices. However, wait any longer, and they may not have your size.

Another winter staple this season are the winter boots that I haven't seen on anyone my age since I was 5 years old and forcefully garbed in a full body snow

suit the instant the temperature dropped below 50 degrees. One may know them as Uggs, or by any brand that has since copied this Australian original boot that, which by mere virtue of its name (as noted on Fox news, stems from the word "ugly"), knocks out all hope of being cool, making them so coveted and this season's defining "in" trend. They are so sought after in fact, that they are backordered until April 2004 forcing those of you with cold toes to settle for their knockoffs (which are by no means, better or worse, just not the original).

With all that said one thing is for sure: don't find yourself with the shivers this season. The thicker and more insulated an item, the better! Warm is back women, so bundle up!



The name Uggs derives from the word ugly, a often used description of the boot

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2003 Hanukkah Winter Spectacular
Yeshiva University Museum
December 25
15 West 16th Street
Website: www.yumuseum.org

Sonic Vision
American Museum of Natural History, Hayden Planetarium
Central Park West and 79th Street
Showtime: Friday and Saturday 7:30, 8:30, 9:30, 10:30 pm
Ticket Price: \$15.00 (members - \$12.00)
Website: www.amnh.org

Francine and Abdallah Simon: State of World Jewry Lecture
Speaker: Minister Natan Sharansky
92nd Street Y
January 14
92nd Street at Lexington Avenue
Showtime: 8:00pm
Ticket Price: \$25.00
Website: www.92y.org

Moses und Aron
The Metropolitan Opera
December 16, 20 (matinee), 23
Lincoln Centre
Ticket prices range from \$25.00 to \$205.00
Website: www.metopera.org

Makor New Year's Eve Blow-out Party
92nd Street Y, Steinhardt Building
December 31
35 West 67th Street
Showtime: 9:00pm
Ticket Price: \$35.00
Website: www.92y.org

How to Go on a Cheap Date in the City: An Expose

By Devorah Heching

We all feel that initial anticipation before going on a date. What will I wear? Do I have to shower or will deodorant suffice? I wonder where I am going?

While the female is generally in total command of wardrobe and hygiene decisions, the final destination of the date is most often subject to the whims and fancies of the other party i.e. the male. Perchance she will hop on the subway only to discover that her final destination is prime seating at a sporting event or a Broadway show. Then again, perhaps the subway ride is the final destination. The subway ride date is a prime example of a cheap outing. Some may argue that with the recent inflation of the subway fare from a dollar-fifty to two dollars this date can actually be re-classified as an expensive one. Unfortunately, they would be wrong.

Another prime example of a cheap date can be seen in the food choices made by the male, and by this I mean Cafeteria food. There is a fine line between inexpensive food and really cheap food. For example, Kosher Delight is inexpensive food but, hey, it's good eating. On the other hand, caf food is also inexpensive but good eating it is not. An additional factor to be aware of is the fact that students at YC and SCW receive the same meals in their respective cafeterias. If a male attempts to bring cafeteria food along on the date for a "picnic" and then pass it off as take-out from a nearby restaurant, the female will probably not be fooled.

Sometimes the inexpensive nature of the date manifests itself in the location where the outing occurs. For example, a popular dating pastime, once winter arrives, is a trip to the ice skating rink. The male and female don their respective skates and stumble their way around the rink a good two feet apart from each other lest one should fall, and they accidentally brush hands. Most people have heard of the rink at Rockefeller Center, but how many have heard of the rink out in Harlem? That's right, there's an ice skating rink on 125th Street to provide ice skating opportunities for inner city children who are low on funds. If a female finds herself at this rink she can be assured that she is currently in the throes of a cheap date. If the male on this particular date trips on the ice and experiences a bad fall the female would more than justify in crossing her arms and apologetically murmuring, "So sorry, Shomer Negiah."

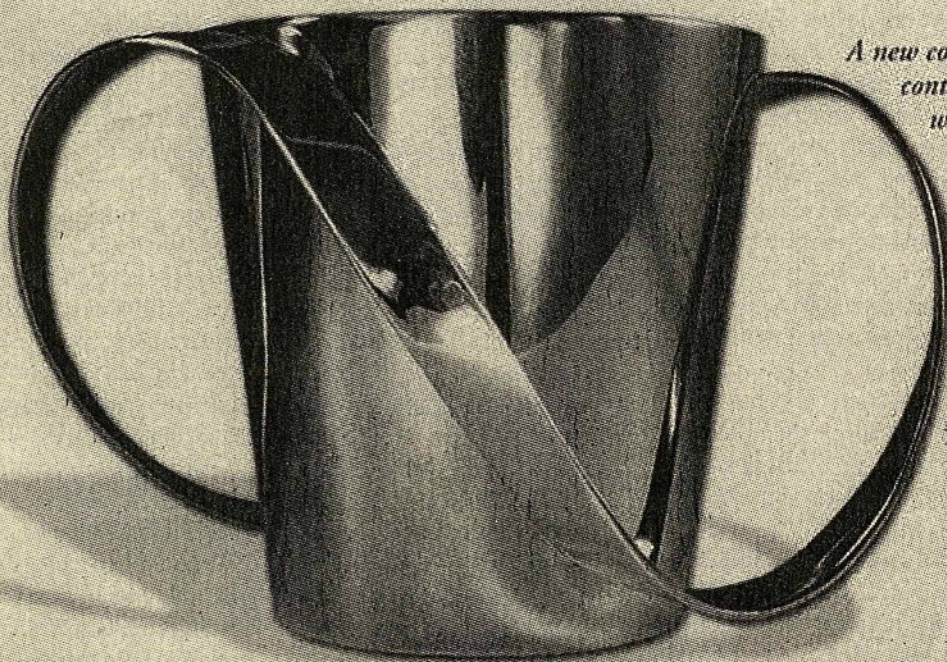
Another popular date destination is an outing to a museum. There are a multitude of interesting museums to visit in New York City, but two words at the entrance of one particular museum classifies it as cheaper than all the rest. At the entrance to the Metropolitan Museum two inconspicuous words are displayed and they are "Donations Accepted". While completely ignoring this sign is often impossible, the amount that is actually donated can vary wildly between three pennies and ten dollars. A particularly effective way in determining how much the male has actually donated can be accomplished by listening care-

fully to the sound the money makes when it hits the inside of the donations box. Dollars bills tend not to "clink."

A more controversial example of a cheap date is the hotel lobby destination. There have been many a heated debate revolving around the concept of a lounge date. Some feel it has all the elements a good date requires - chairs and a watery soda - while others feel that they would rather be bound and gagged in a closet than on an outing of this nature. This debate aside, one particularly inexpensive lounge date can be found at the well-known Marriott Hotel in Times Square. Many have heard of the revolving floor located on the 49th floor of this hotel which requires an entrance fee and the purchase of beverages, but how many have heard of the 8th floor? The 8th floor has no entrance fee requirements whatsoever. The heinous nature of this particular date is compounded when there is no purchase of a watery soda. For example, as the date is winding up there is the belated exclamation, "Oh I completely forgot to offer you a drink - do you by any chance want one for the road?" No punk.

While there are many more examples of cheap dates such as the lunch special at Pizza Cave or a trip to the airport, this list was meant to point out a few glaring instances to serve as a guideline of sorts. Some may have read the list with a feeling of growing horror at the shocking nature of these dates and others may have been taking notes. That is your business.

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Security Creates Emergency Response Unit

By Arie Staller

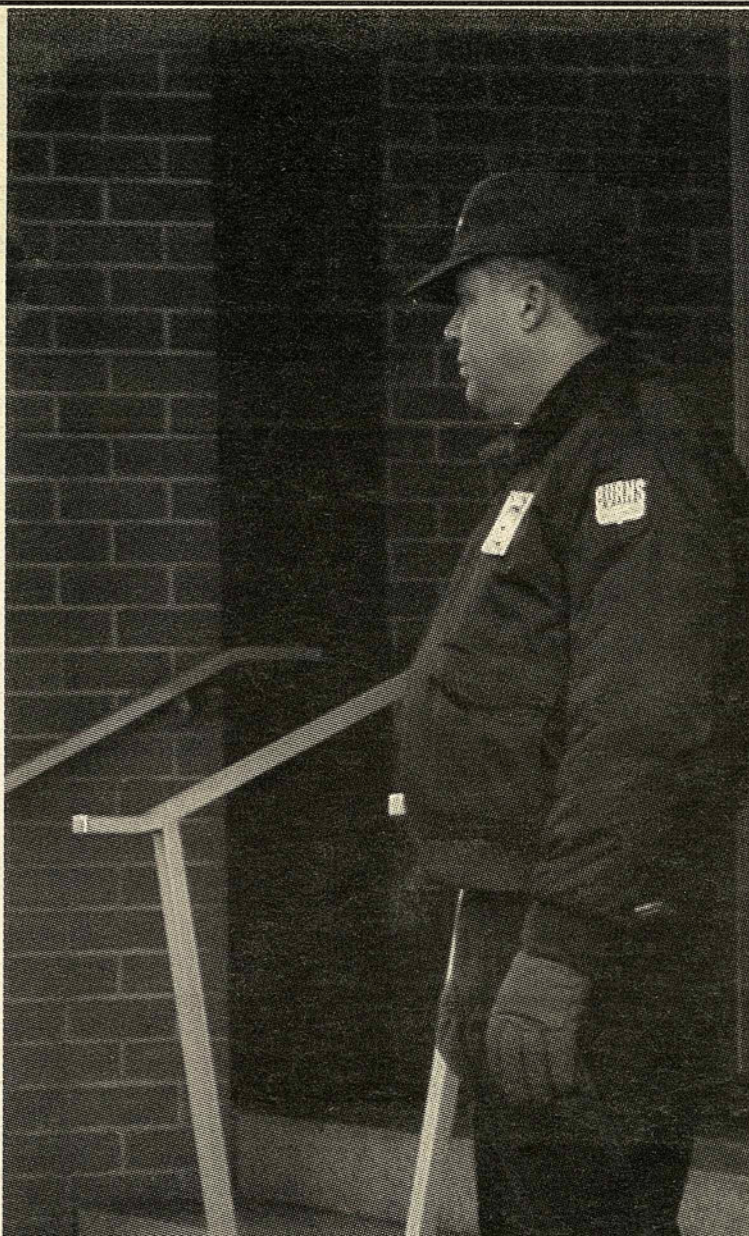
Security has begun a new Emergency Response Unit which is in effect on the Wilf and Beren campuses. Created by Ernest J. McNamee, Yeshiva's emergency incident commander, the response unit is made up of Yeshiva security guards that have been specially trained to handle any emergency that may arise.

"We had to start a program to train people to handle emergencies," said McNamee. "There are times when the fire department and police could be tied down."

The response units, hand picked by McNamee, consist of experienced security guards in two-person teams. "We're specially picked because we know all the buildings," said one guard.

Each responder is required to view 25 hours worth of video tapes depicting different emer-

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Burns Security guards have been undergoing new emergency training courses

President's Circle Hosts Meeting With Student Leaders on Beren Campus

By Miriam Shapiro and Aviva Balk

Yeshiva University's President's Circle held its first meeting of the year on December 9th, with 40 YC and SCW undergraduates present to participate in a session designed to determine the future of the committee's investments in specific student enterprises.

The Circle had been relatively quiet over the past year due to lack of proper leadership and speculation over how the new university president would want the organization to run. According to Robert Saltzman, director of alumni affairs, President Richard Joel wanted more student interaction and suggested having the session to hear their general issues.

"It is difficult to get our hands on what the students' needs are," said Louis Tuchman, former chairperson of the com-

mittee. "We want our new leadership to have a clear understanding of the needs so that we can fill in the gaps in student life on campus."

Tuchman also mentioned the committee's goal to increase publicity so that they can receive proposals and recruit alumni.

"We want to spread the word to all our alumni," said Saltzman. "Let me stress that the President's Circle is the only donor-directed program in the YU system."

The meeting, moderated by Tuchman, was attended by members of student councils, representatives from organized student clubs and distinguished members of Yeshiva University administration, including YC Dean of Students David Hember, Senior University Dean of Students, Dr. Efreim Nulman, and SCW Dean of Students Zelda Braun. The publicity for the meeting was privately conduct-

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SCW Human Rights Club Hosts First Event With Former Sudanese Slave

By Rebecca Rosenberg

Former Sudanese slave, Francis Bok, spoke December 17th in the 215 Lexington building's Norman F. Levy Lounge about his response to U.S. efforts to end slavery, and his personal struggles and experiences.

Though he supports the Sudan Peace Act, a bill passed October 21st of 2002 by President George Bush in an attempt to mediate peace negotiations between the Christian South and the Muslim North and end slavery, he feels much more can be done. "The Sudan Peace Act has had a lot of impact and gives my people a little hope that slavery might end," Bok said. "However, it's just a beginning process. We still need to put a lot of pressure on this government to give everyone freedom."

Bok explained to the approximately 50 guests that the government which is Islamic continues to deny the presence of slavery in Sudan, which he contends, is a serious impediment to any resolution.

Shortly after the 24-year-old Bok escaped Sudan and came to the United States, he started working for The American Anti-Slavery Group, which is dedicated to abolishing slavery worldwide. He has spoken throughout the country about his experiences as a slave and interacted with many high profile politicians. He described a private meeting he had with Senator

Jesse Helms.

"He cried when I told him what was happening to my people," Bok said. "I said you're very powerful and strong, why don't you do something to help my people or push Clinton to help?" He said he would but never did anything."

Later Bok met Secretary of State Madeline Albright at the White House, and he also pleaded with her to help his country. "She said this is not an American issue, and we can't do anything about it right now," paraphrased Bok. He said that he felt disillusioned by the lack of action from many politicians he met.

However, he had a more positive experience with President Bush. "When Bush came in I spoke to him, and he did a lot of work for us," Bok said. "He didn't wait to respond, and I really respect that."

At the beginning of the lecture, Bok spoke about how he became a slave and what that experience was like. He lived in a small village in Southern Sudan when his mother sent him to the market at seven years old. He heard gun shots from the direction of his village and saw smoke and shortly thereafter militia men stormed the market place.

"They had guns and I thought what's going on, who are these people?" he said. "Then they started shooting people, women and kids." A militia man grabbed him by the arm and started shouting in Arabic, but Bok could not understand this

foreign language since his native tongue was Dinka. After his capture, he walked for many days with many women and children to the north of the country.

On the way a young girl screamed and cried because she had seen her entire family murdered. A militia man warned her to stop, but she did not. "A militia man took her out of the line and shot her in the head," Bok said. "This is how I learned to be quiet."

After they arrived at a northern city, Bok was sold as a slave to a Muslim family. He was isolated from any other slaves and gradually started to learn Arabic. However, the family that bought him treated him cruelly. "When I first met their three children, they beat me with sticks," he said. "Then his wife told me that if her husband would allow it, she'd shoot me."

Bok was forced to sleep and eat his meals in a shed with animals. When he learned enough Arabic he asked his master, "Why do you force me to sleep with the animals?" His master responded, "because you are an animal."

He was given the difficult job of caring for over a hundred goats at eight, a job that no one under 14 was expected to do in his village. One day he returned home having lost one of the goats because the grass was too tall to keep track of them all.

His master beat him and told him that if he did it again he

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Office for Student Affairs Undergoes Series of Promotions

By Shifra Landowne

Last week, Dr. Efreim Nulman, senior university dean of students, announced new promotions in the student services department at SCW.

Zelda Braun, former assistant dean of students, was appointed to associate dean of students. In her place, Beth Hait was promoted from coordinator of student services to assistant dean of students. Additionally, Rachel Kraut, former residence supervisor, was named director of residence life.

According to Nulman, while these promotions are only "in terms of title," and don't affect the nature of the positions, "we wanted to recognize the contribution that we feel these three people have been making for a long time now, and we wanted to upgrade their titles."

"This has been a long time coming," he said. Dr. Hillel Davis, vice president for university life, was happy to comply with Nulman's request. "Dean Nulman made recommendations that were well thought out and reflective. My review of the proposal was that the nature of these roles merited and deserved the promotion and I was able to sign off on them and happy to be supportive."

Braun, who graduated from SCW in 1968, oversees student government, residence life and professional counseling services. She insists that while her duties remain the same, her responsibil-

ities have been growing and will now continue to grow in her new title. According to Braun, the new titles enable the deans to broaden their university involvement.

Beth Hait has been at SCW for nine years this December, and is looking forward to her new position. "I am thrilled about the change in title," said Hait. "I appreciate the recognition."

Hait's responsibilities include overseeing new students, coordinating Shabbat programming, Metropolitan Experience, involvement in student activities and student government as well as professional counseling for time and stress management.

"I am pleased that the University is recognizing Beth's contributions to the students and the University," said Braun. "By promoting her to Assistant Dean they are showing their recognition for all that she does."

Rachel Kraut is also looking forward to her new title, although her job will not be undergoing any changes. "The main difference is that this title is more encompassing," Kraut said. "Now it really includes all five buildings instead of just one - we have been trying to work on building a sense of community - one housing unit in five separate buildings, and this title promotes that idea."

The sense of community that Kraut refers to is an effort that has been palpable since the installment of the Joel administration, one that might be linked

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