

The Yeshiva University OBSERVER



ISSUE 65 VOLUME VII

MARCH 2022

ADAR BET 5782

YU LAUNCHES MISSION TO AID UKRAINIAN REFUGEES AMID RUSSIAN INVASION

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY HUMANITARIAN MISSION TO AID UKRAINIAN REFUGEES IN VIENNA MARCH 13-20, 2022

Led by **Dr. Erica Brown**, Vice Provost, Director of the Sacks-Herenstein Center and **Rabbi Josh Blass**, Mashgiach Ruchani, students will provide aid to the hundreds of Ukrainian refugees who have found shelter within the borders of Austria.

The dates for the mission are **Sunday, March 13th through Sunday, March 20th**, including travel days.

Spaces are limited. **Application deadline is Wednesday, 3/9, at 10pm.** Once accepted, on **Thursday, 3/10** participants will have until **5pm to make payment and secure their spot.** There will be a **MANDATORY orientation Thursday night at 9pm** on the Wilf campus.

Cost: \$500. Limited partial scholarships are available.

Want to help?

CLICK ON THE APPLICATION LINK BELOW



NEWS

BY AARON SHAYKEVICH,
OPINIONS EDITOR

In an email sent to undergraduate students on March 9, 2022 to both the Beren and Wilf campuses, Rabbi Joshua Weisberg informed students of a new Ukrainian refugee relief mission. This mission will give YU undergraduate students the opportunity to travel to Vienna, Austria and help refugees in need.

While the initial email stated that the mission would be from March 13 to 20, 2022, further information was not shared, such as housing and scheduling. A Zoom information session was held at noon on March 9 for interested students. More information was given in this meeting, including obligations, accommodations, and requirements. Students

interested will have to apply by 10 PM on March 9th, meaning there is only a one-day window to apply. Accepted volunteers will have until March 10th at 5 PM to secure their spot. Furthermore, if a student is accepted, there is a \$500 cost with limited partial scholarships available.

Led by Dr. Erica Brown, Vice Provost and Director of the Saks-Herenstein Center, and Rabbi Josh Blass, Mashgiach Ruchani, this mission will be hosted by the Office of Student Life and the Sacks-Herenstein Center. The latter was only recently founded in November 2021, in the memory of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks with the goal of “teach[ing] Torah values and applying Jewish wisdom in addressing the challenges of our era.”

Dr. Erica Brown shared more information with the YU Observer. Brown explained that YU students will assist with helping “refugees fill forms, watch and entertain their children, run errands for those manning this shelter, and sort through the overwhelming number of donations they continue to receive.” Since this mission will overlap with the Purim holiday, students will also “join in the community celebrations for Purim.”

Dr. Brown shared her experience in leading humanitarian missions, including in Cuba, Ethiopia, Moscow, Kiev, and Belarus. In her opinion, Brown expressed that though there may be language barriers, saying, “[Volunteers] show up to let people who are strangers know that they

matter, that all the way across a vast ocean, we are united by the bonds of peoplehood and responsibility. But on the deepest level, the greatest transformation is the self. These trips have each changed me, and I hope they will change every student who comes with us.”

This is not YU’s first attempt at speaking out regarding the current situation in Ukraine. Over the coming weeks, YU will be hosting a “series of panel discussions on Ukraine” from different outlooks. On February 28, 2022, YU hosted a discussion panel featuring history and political science professors. President Berman also gave opening remarks and spoke out against the war Russia is generating. Another panel is being held at 9 PM

SEE UKRAINE MISSION
PAGE 5

INSIDE THIS EDITION



OPINIONS: RUSSIA’S PROPAGANDA
PAGE 6



FEATURES: ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB
PAGE 13

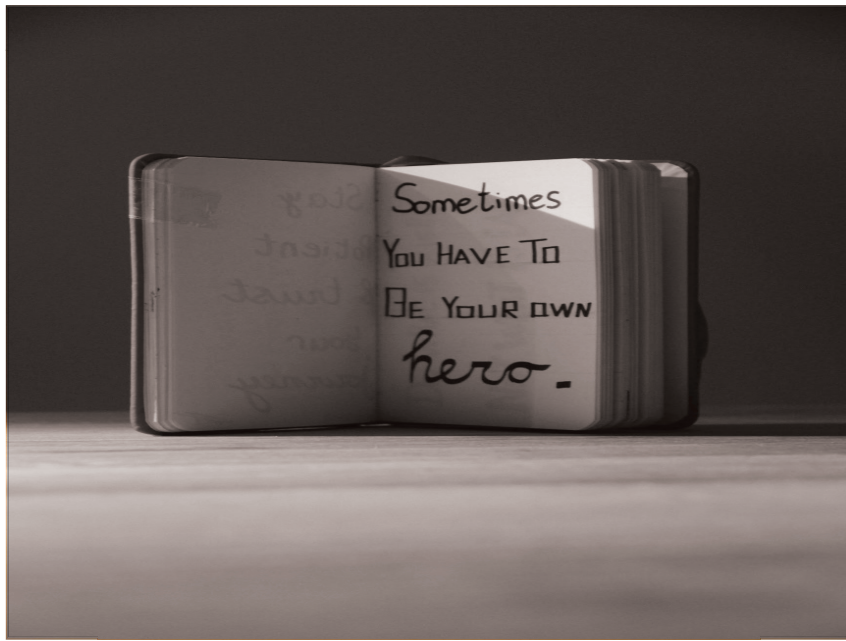


ARTS AND CULTURE: @SIDELINESUITS
PAGE 17



SCI-TECH: GENOTOXICITY OF DENTISTRY
PAGE 27

EDITORIAL



IF YOU WANTED TO, YOU WOULD

BY DANIELLE LANE,
MANAGING EDITOR

A few weeks ago I was struggling with my mental health in a deep and profound way. I was unable to go about my daily routine in my typical manner as a result of the unbearable weight resting on my shoulders. After a few days of self-care, sleeping in, and being wholly unproductive, a friend sent me a text that said "nobody is coming to save you. Get up. Be your own hero." Once the initial shock of getting such a blunt text wore off, I spent time thinking about their message and realized how right they were. No one was coming to save me. No one was going to make me get up, get dressed, and do what needed to be done. In those moments I had to save myself and be my own hero.

Since that experience, I have been thinking almost non-stop about the phrase "if you wanted to, you would." In the days after receiving that text I repeatedly reminded myself that if I really wanted to do something, I would do it. Whether it was getting out of bed and washing my face, or sending a difficult message to set a necessary boundary with someone who threatened my inner peace. I have come to realize that in our hands, we hold the power to change our reality. And if we choose to use that power, we can do great things.

I wish the solution to changing one's mindset was as easy as getting a blunt text or making a conscious decision to think differently. I wish the cure for all mental health ailments was consciously repeating the same affirmation until the light at the end of the tunnel becomes

visible. It would be irresponsible to imply that it is easy or simple to pull yourself out of a dark place. As much as I wish it were, it's incredibly difficult to heal and protect your peace. Regardless of how difficult it is, I truly believe that if you wanted to, you would.

My proof comes from the commandment of "mishenichnas Adar, marbim b'simcha" [when Adar arrives, we should increase our happiness]. During the month of Adar, we have an inherent commandment to increase our happiness. We are told that during this one month, or two month (depending on the year), period we are meant to elevate our baseline level of happiness and be MORE happy. How is that possible? How is that a reasonable request? Every year we are told to put whatever other emotions we are feeling on hold in order to increase our happiness. We make a conscious choice to choose happiness through meals with friends, gift-giving, and charity. This is because Hashem knows that we have the tools necessary to change if we really try. If Hashem has the faith in us that we can make the decision to choose to change our mentality, then why don't we have the same faith in ourselves? Hashem recognizes our ability to break from our typical way and change.

This idea of making a pointed effort to change does not just apply to mental health. There is almost no area of our lives that we could not change if we really wanted. The real struggle is having the integrity to take responsibility for creating the change you want to see. Whether it's waking up and choosing happiness, communicating in a relationship when it's difficult, or going to the gym after a long day. We must take responsibility for our lives and recognize that we are au-

tonomous individuals who have agency over our trajectory.

It is hard to admit that if we really wanted to change our situation, we could. It is easier to pass blame to everyone and everything around us. It is easy to say I can't commit to a relationship because I have too much other stuff going on in my life or I can't eat healthy because I don't know how to cook or I can't daven today because I can't wake up that early is easier than facing the reality that you are too weak-minded to put in effort when it counts. The reality is if you wanted to, you would. It's hard to confront the fact that you have the power to change, it's easier to pass blame.

During this time of year, there is no room to pass blame. We are tasked with the seemingly impossible requirement of choosing happiness. During a time of year when it is cold and rainy, midterms are breathing down our necks, and there is nothing exciting on the horizon, we must choose to wake up and make the decision to go after what we want. It is never too late to start choosing ourselves. We must choose ourselves because no one is coming to save us. So get up and be your own hero.



EDITORIAL TEAM

2021-2022

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Shoshanah Marcus
MANAGING EDITOR

Danielle Lane

NEWS EDITORS

Marcela Homsany

Rebecca Aduculesi

Rina Shamilov

Bluma Gross

OPINIONS EDITORS

Eli Saperstein

Aaron Shaykevich

Atara Bachrach

FEATURES EDITORS

Raquel Leifer

Ru Benhamou

Yael Spodek

SCI-TECH EDITOR

Leia Rubenstein

Yosef Scher

Nicole Abittan

LAYOUT EDITORS

Belina Milhem Jena

Sammy Friedman

Racheli Jian

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGERS

Rachel Gilinski

Erica Sultan

BUSINESS EDITORS

Jake Sheckter

Amalya Teitelbaum

Eli Levi

ARTS & CULTURE EDITORS

Elisheva Hirsch

Benjamin Gottestman

Cayla Muschel

BUSINESS MANAGERS

Ezra Jacobs

Amalya Teitelbaum

WEBSITE MANAGERS

Adi Benhanan

Atara Bachrach

Max Friedman

Founded by the women of Yeshiva University's Stern College in 1958, *The YU Observer* is the independent newspaper of Stern College for Women, Sy Syms School of Business, and Yeshiva University.

The YU Observer is an independent student publication, self-funded and published on a monthly basis throughout the academic year. Views expressed in *The YU Observer* are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial board or the student body, faculty, and administration of Yeshiva University. All *The YU Observer* content is copyrighted and may not be reprinted without permission.

Please visit us at www.yuobserver.org.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE MASK MANDATE LIFTED



BY SHOSHANAH MARCUS,
EDITOR IN CHIEF

In an email to undergraduate students on February 24, 2022, the COVID Monitoring Team notified students that the university-wide mask mandate would be lifted “in most indoor locations on the Beren and Wilf Campuses.” This policy change will be in effect beginning on Monday, February 28, 2022. The “temporary” mask mandate has been in effect since August 2021.

This announcement comes as a response to the “dramatically declining both on local and national levels,” rising rates of vaccination, and “steady decrease of positive cases among our campus community.” In addition,

the easing of the mask mandate is also in response to the “latest state health recommendations... which removed the indoor mask mandate statewide on February 10 based on state health expert recommendations.”

Notably, this change is not in effect for all locations on the Wilf and Beren campuses. While it is in effect “in most indoor locations on the Beren and Wilf Campuses,” students will still be required to wear a mask in classrooms and on the intercampus shuttle.

The email noted that the mandate would continue for the Cardozo and Ferkauf/Einstein campuses as well as for “those individuals who have a vaccine or booster exemption are still required to wear

masks.”

Many students have shared their excitement and relief about this rule change. One student (SCW '23) excitedly stated, “My skin, my smile, and my asthma couldn’t be more thankful.”

Some students conveyed their frustrations about this easing of restrictions in only certain locations on campus. Rina Shamilov (SCW '24) shared with the YU Observer saying, “I think this idea is ineffective because it doesn’t actually provide change. Why draw arbitrary lines regarding mandatory mask-wearing? If the mandate isn’t lifted everywhere, then why lift the mandate at all?”

Others expressed their anxiety regarding this change. A student

who wishes to remain anonymous (SCW '24) stated, “I’m excited about the mask lift because it means we’re progressing and COVID no longer poses as much of a threat, but I’m still a bit anxious about a potential outbreak.”

Despite mask-wearing not being mandatory in most locations on campus, the COVID Monitoring Team still encouraged those who want to continue wearing masks to do so. The email included, “We ask that the entire campus community respect and support all those who continue to wear masks going forward.”

WANT TO SHARE YOUR OPINION?

WRITE FOR THE YU OBSERVER!

EMAIL THEYUOBSERVER@GMAIL.COM

NEWS

ANN TODD WELCOMED AS NEW DEPUTY TITLE IX COORDINATOR



BLUMA GROSS,
NEWS EDITOR

Vice Provost Chaim Nissel announced in an email to the YU community on March 10, 2022 that Ann Todd, Esq. would be added to the University's Title IX department as the new Deputy Title IX Coordinator.

Todd's commission to the Title IX department is a part of a special effort to improve the Title IX office after student outrage following a rape allegation last year that students claim the department mishandled. The committee, led by Dean Karen Bacon, is following recommendations to restructure the university's Title IX department. In communication with the YU Observer, Dean Bacon remarked, "As the Chair of the Committee that reviewed our Title IX policies and procedures, I am grateful to the University for adopting our recommendations and grateful, as well, to Dean Nissel for taking the leadership in implementing those recommendations. The expansion of the Title IX Office is the first step, very welcome step. In the coming months I look forward to hearing further updates that will benefit the students in particular and the entire YU community generally."

As stated by Yeshiva University's Non Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedures, which

includes allegations of sexual assault, the Title IX department is composed of Title IX Coordinator Dr. Chaim Nissel, Human Resources Title IX Coordinator Renee Coker, the Athletics Title IX Coordinator Joe Bednarsh, and Cardozo's Deputy Title IX Coordinator Jenn Kim. It is unclear whether Ms. Todd will be an addition to—or a replacement—of any of the current administration in the Title IX department.

According to Vice Provost Nissel's email, Todd has extensive experience as a Title IX coordinator. Graduating from Davidson College with a degree in Psychology, she went on to get a Juris Doctorate from the University of Nebraska, and then returned to work at Davidson College as the Deputy Title IX Coordinator for eight years. Todd is also affiliated with a Title IX service firm and has conducted several hundred investigations representing universities into student allegations of sex discrimination, sexual assault, and other civil rights violations.

In response to an Observer staff inquiry about developments in last year's rape case and other on-campus Title IX developments, Ann Todd told the YU Observer that "I cannot speak directly about any ongoing cases or past cases for which I was not involved. But

your timing around the website is excellent. Today is my first day and I already have time set up next week to review the progress on the website. I look forward to helping YU identify the content that is most beneficial to students and others looking for information and support around these issues."

In response to the rape allegation case, the formation of Students Against Sexual Assault, SASA has educated students on issues like dating violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and hosted events ranging from a Title IX educational event to a relationship advice program. On Ms. Todd's appointment to Yeshiva's Title IX department, SASA co-President Cayla Muschel (SCW '23) told the Observer, "Having an experienced coordinator whose primary focus is Title IX has been in the works for a while. This is excellent news. Next step is following through on the other parts of the letter. Reformed harassment training and widespread access to resources, information, and SHARE counselors."

When reached for a comment on her thoughts on Todd's appointment, the alleged rape victim told the YU Observer, "I think it's a step in the right direction...I [want to] see a total change in the way sexual assault is treated, it shouldn't be

taboo and I think if we as a Jewish institution handle it in a better way and talk about it maybe as a whole in the Orthodox World it will be treated better, so that's really what I hope comes from their changes, [be]cause they can change people but the people can still be the same if they have the same agenda as before."

UKRAINE MISSION

FROM PAGE 1

on March 9, 2022, focusing on “the legal, cyber, and economic fronts in the war.”

Many students at YU have expressed their gratitude to YU for offering such an opportunity. Amalya Teitlebaum (SSSB '24) emphasized how glad she is that “Yeshiva University not only recognizes the importance of educating the students on the current war” but also is “creating opportunities for us to provide assistance to those affected by it.” With similar sentiments, Eliezer Saperstein (SSSB '23) told the YU Observer how “it is incredible that YU has created this initiative on such a short notice... seeing how so many

of my friends are excited and extremely motivated to be a part of this amazing program to me really shows how YU is in fact looking outside...the Beis Medrash to help the world and those who need it.”

Applicants also shared their excitement with the YU Observer. “This initiative is one of a kind,” states applicant Vered Kaplan (SCW '23). “To get the chance to really make an impact on people who need it most. To help bring light into the world. That means the world to me. To be given the chance to make a difference.”

Others have questions regarding the mission, considering

how little information was given in the initial email. Elizabeth Kershteyn (SCW '22), who recently expressed her concerns for Ukrainians, shared that “I’m proud to see my university taking such a bold and righteous step in aiding those in need. While I’m not sure why Vienna was chosen as a destination as opposed to countries directly bordering Ukraine – Poland, Slovakia, and Moldova – I’m sure we will soon hear of their great deeds abroad.” Dr. Brown addressed this concern when inquired and stated that YU “selected a location that was close enough to receive many refugees but not so close to the Ukrainian border to pose a danger.”

In her statement to the YU Ob-

server, Dr. Brown concluded by sharing YU’s responsibility to get involved in such an initiative. Brown stated that YU “believe[s] primarily in [the] excellence of character and that means meeting [the] needs of others on their terms.” She emphasized the “call of community” and that Jews “have always answered with hineini (I am here). To paraphrase from the Megillah, maybe we are here, alive at this very moment, to do this very thing. That’s leadership.”

For more information, please contact Rabbi Josh Weisberg at josh.weisberg@yu.edu.

Photo Credit: Yeshiva University

OPINIONS



IS YUNMUN SUCCESSFUL?

BY AARON SHAYEKOVICH,
NEWS EDITOR

In 10th grade, I applied to join my high school’s Model United Nations (UN) team. Equipped with decent public speaking skills and some knowledge of international affairs, I was accepted to the team. That year, I was fortunate enough to be a part of CSW, the Commission on the Status of Women, chaired by a now former Editor in Chief of the YU Observer, Kira Paley. For me, there was no other thrill like YUNMUN (Yeshiva University National Model United Nations). The experience of debating over serious issues that are in our world today, speaking up for what the country I represented believed in, and working together with others was transformational to me. We came to resolutions through debate and discussion, with many diverse countries involved. My favorite memory was right before we planned to take a break for lunch; the staff gave us paper

and craft sticks, with which we created signs to march around the hotel chanting slogans such as “my body my choice.” While parading around the halls of the hotel, chanting for women’s rights, I realized model UN is not just about working towards winning an award. It is about working with others to inspire change.

On March 13, 2022, I will be going to Connecticut for YUNMUN XXXII. This year, however, it will not be as a student delegate but as an administrative assistant in the Security Council. My focus has now shifted from making change to being the one inspiring others to make that change. By assisting my chair in organizing the committee, fact-checking, and creating a good environment, I will be assisting in creating an environment of professionalism as well as expertise. While I don’t know exactly how it will play out, my hope is to convert our students’ knowledge of the

topics at hand into something more tangible. For example, while many of us sit comfortably in the U.S. and listen to the news of Russia’s terrorism and war crimes against Ukraine, there are millions of people fearful for their lives. Making international issues, such as this one, more tangible and something that students can comprehend not just from watching the news is my goal for this YUNMUN.

There’s more to it than that, though. YU admissions sponsor it, and about half of the YUNMUN staff are part of the “media center.” Furthermore, all the staff in YUNMUN were trained this year in how to respond to certain questions regarding Yeshiva University. I am happy that we have this advertising component, where students are informed about parts of YU. Only about 50 colleges host Model UN events, and YU is the only Jewish college to do so. From an admissions standpoint, I think YUNMUN is just bringing to light

the fact that YU cares about international issues, offers academic extracurriculars, and is also the only school to do so with a Jewish environment. YUNMUN, an event bringing Jewish students together to discuss international issues, seems to be the inevitable creation of a school like YU.

While some believe that “YU should reconsider YUNMUN,” there certainly is merit to maintaining it. From both an academic and an admissions standpoint, it’s a win-win. Students learn more and are introduced to a college that may fit their hashkafa [ideology] more than they thought. The only downside of YUNMUN, in my opinion, is that it’s only 2 days.

Photo Credit: Yeshiva University war activities against Russia.”

war activities against Russia.”

RUSSIA'S PROPAGANDA AND TERRORISM WAGES WAR AGAINST UKRAINE

BY ELIZABETH KERSHTEYN

On February 24, 2022 at approximately 6 a.m., the people of Ukraine woke up to the sounds and blasts of bombs falling from the sky. At the same time, Vladimir Putin officially declared a "special military operation." This happened just days after Putin recognized two separatist regions of Donetsk and Luhansk, commonly known as the Donbas region, as independent from Ukraine. Ukraine has since been devastated with airstrikes and a full-scale invasion from three different fronts: North (Belarus), East (Donbas), and South (Crimea). This invasion is happening after months of denials by the Russian government, who claimed that they would not proceed with an attack. The entire world is now witnessing the result of the Kremlin's lies: Kherson has been occupied, while Kyiv and Kharkiv, the two largest Ukrainian cities, are stalling the Russian invasion. As the airstrikes continue, people in Ukraine are seeking shelter in subway stations, basements, and makeshift bomb shelters. The President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, declared martial law across Ukraine and general mobilization.

A terrible war has unfolded in Europe the likes of which has not been seen since World War II. Major peaceful protests are happening around the world in support of Ukraine, but most importantly they are happening in Russia. This began after Zelensky made a powerful speech asking Russian citizens to come out and protest the war. Thousands of people in Russia gathered across the country despite the Kremlin's propaganda claiming that the Ukrainian government is run by neo-Nazis and that Russian troops are there to save the people of Ukraine and restore their independence. According to OVD-info (an independent human rights media project aimed at combating political persecution in Russia), over 8000 Russians have already been arrested by the authorities. Those who have come out to protest the war are without a doubt, worthy of praise of the highest order.

The entire world is watching the suffering of Ukrainians. However, the war is not only happening on the ground, but on the long foreseen battlefield of the 21st century: the Internet. Russia is determined to spread its propaganda and misinformation with hopes to prevent Ukrainian sympathy from setting down roots

in the western world. Do not let yourself be confused. It most definitely is not a "special military operation" as Putin claims it to be.

IT IS A WAR.

Russian media, controlled by the government, is indeed trying to convince the entire world of its lies. Specifically, however, they want to convince their own citizens that this is merely a peacekeeping operation, intended to liberate Ukraine from their toxic western influences. They are trying to convince everyone that they are there to save Ukrainians from their Nazi government. Maksim Katz, an independent Russian political and public figure comments on this: "I want to reiterate a few things that we all need to remember and repeat. This war was started by us, by Russia, for no reason at all, we simply invaded the territory of a neighboring country. We are not saving anyone from fascists, there are no fascists in power there. They have a popularly elected Jewish president who was a famous Russian-speaking actor before he was elected, he can't be a Nazi, and neither can his entourage. Ukrainians are fighting for their freedom. No one there welcomes our troops with flowers, they are considered occupiers... Right now, Russian weapons are killing Ukrainians and Russians, Russian-speaking civilians, Ukrainian and Russian soldiers, and both countries are suffering enormous damage. There is only one way to stop this: to immediately withdraw troops from Ukraine and to prosecute those who unleashed this war."

Russia claims that they are not targeting civilians. That is yet another outright lie. Russia is targeting residential areas which is a severe war crime. Vladimir Zelensky reported major damage and casualties in places with no military infrastructure. Disturbing videos are surfacing on the internet with tanks having been caught on camera changing course in order to run over civilian cars and bombs recorded striking civilian homes. The video reports and pictures coming in from Ukraine are truly horrifying and, unfortunately, there is no definite way to figure out the truth from fake news. However, with such overwhelming evidence of Russian artillery strikes hitting non-military areas and buildings, it is impossible to deny Russia's incentives, which appear to have a terroristic nature and are aimed at the people of Ukraine and not just the government or the armed forces. Yet Russia still claims

that they are only targeting military objects. These are nothing but lies propagated by the Kremlin. It is clear that Putin will stop at nothing as he orders nuclear weapons on high alert.

Russian propaganda claims that the Ukrainian military is surrendering en masse. Nothing could be further from the truth. Zelensky and other government officials are taking up arms and defending their country against the Russian invaders. He even rejected an offer from the U.S. to be evacuated, saying words that echoed around the world: "I need ammunition, not a ride."

This attitude of defending Ukraine against all odds is not unique to Zelensky. The mayor of Kyiv, Vitali Klitschko, is staying in Kyiv to defend his countrymen against the invaders. In addition, Former Ukrainian president, Petro Poroshenko, is also staying to defend his nation and announced a powerful message to Putin: "This is our soil. This is our country. This is our people! And Putin has nothing to do here. Get out from Ukraine, Mr. Putin!"

I grew up in Eastern Europe in Lithuania. My country knows the horrors of what Russian occupation entails. Lithuania's people stood against Soviet tanks in defense of their independence on January 13, 1991. I speak Russian, I understand Ukrainian, I hear the people of Ukraine cursing the Russian army as they are filming the atrocities that are happening. I hear them vowing to avenge for the destruction of their homeland and the murder of their people. I can't describe to you the utter horror I felt when I woke up on a Thursday morning to find out that my beloved Ukraine is being bombed. To see the streets of Kyiv that I walked down as a child, turned into a battlefield. I can't possibly imagine the utter hell that Ukrainians are going through right now, but I see how they are fighting. Ukrainians have demonstrated tremendous bravery and self-sacrifice inflicting devastating losses on the Russian armies. Men and women are enlisting as volunteers to fight off the aggressors. Ukrainians are prepared to defend their home at all costs. They are assembling into groups to gather much-needed supplies, making Molotov cocktails, and standing up against Russian tanks and soldiers. They are fighting for every street, every corner, and every centimeter of land. Zelensky appeared virtually in front of the EU parliament, after signing an application for Ukraine to join the European Union, and made a promise to win this war



and made his goal very clear: "We have a desire to see our children alive. I think it's a fair one."

Examples of Ukrainian bravery are endless. I could not possibly name every one of them. But I do know that they need our help. Fight the Russian propaganda online. Donate to verified sources. Let Ukrainians know that you support them. This is not a war somewhere far away. Ukraine is fighting for all of us. Ukraine is fighting for democracy worldwide. Ukraine is fighting to maintain the barricade against Russian expansionism for generations to come. The world will never be the same again. It's up to us to determine what kind of world it will be. Together we can stop Russian aggression.

Ukraine will prevail. Glory to Ukraine! Glory to Heroes!

How can you help Ukraine:

Razom for Ukraine <https://razomforukraine.org/>
 DONATE: Support Ukrainian Armed Forces <https://www.blue-yellow.lt/en/>
 Sign the petition to urge NATO to close Ukrainian airspace <https://www.openpetition.eu/petition/online/people-around-the-world-ask-nato-to-close-the-airspace-over-ukraine>
 Rallies in support of Ukraine https://www.stopputin.net/?fbclid=IwAR-3lh67BCxBHcFhM_cNAHKnp-K4pjYq-bn7eO9f1cXTbID4WHap-do5WMFc8
 Write and Call your Elected Officials – Instructions https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s2RfC2nHgTG-bI5-Aq8mhesEi_h3xsMWpyeSwXjb-JVU/edit
 DONATE: Humanitarian Aid to Ukraine <https://www.facebook.com/donate/1137971146948461/>
 DONATE: Come back Alive <https://savelife.in.ua/en/donate/>
 DONATE: Support hospitals in Ukraine https://4agc.com/fundraiser_pages/e9aca7e4-13d5-4e67-b6bd-548f94822793#.YhupDhOZNfS
 Click the link for more resources: <https://linktr.ee/RazomForUkraine>

THE IMPORTANCE OF INDEPENDENT PHARMACIES



BY DANIELLE LANE,
MANAGING EDITOR

My earliest memories are of sitting around my grandmother's dining room table and listening to my uncles talk about work. Hearing them speak lovingly about their customers and laugh until they cried about the ridiculousness of business gave me a deep insight and appreciation for not only the type of men that my uncles are but also for the absolutely crucial role their business plays in serving the community. My uncles run an independent pharmacy in Canton, Ohio. For almost 60 years, Davies Pharmacy has stood as the core pillar of my family and the community it serves.

Growing up, I took for granted the care my grandfather and my uncles gave to their work. I assumed all businesses, especially pharmacies, were essentially run the same and that all families must be having similar dinner time conversations as my own family had. I have come to realize that that is not the case. There's a certain love and devotion that independent, family-run pharmacies provide

for their community that a big chain corporation simply does not.

Pharmacists know the intimate details of individuals they serve. They know their health needs and medical conditions of their family and community. They take a genuine personal interest in the well being of their customers and routinely go out of their way to ensure the best possible care for everyone who walks into their store. When an individual is visiting their local pharmacy it is typically due to the fact that they are in a vulnerable position. Whether they are picking up a routine prescription for an ongoing health issue that they are in the midst of dealing with or when they have recently started feeling unwell and require immediate care to alleviate their symptoms, individuals visiting a pharmacy require a level of compassion that only independent pharmacies can provide.

On many occasions, I have been loitering around my family's pharmacy and have

seen the way my uncles and cousin, who now works alongside his dad and uncle as the third generation to work in the store, engage with customers, new and old, as if they are members of the family. There is a profound love between my family and the customers who walk in, a deep profound desire to serve and heal in any possible way. Everyone who walks through the door of the pharmacy is greeted by name and cared for with respect and dignity, regardless of whether they are picking up Tylenol for a headache or pain medication to treat the effects of chemotherapy. Watching my family treat customers with boundless respect has taught me the crucial lesson of in a world where you can be anything, be kind. My family's independent pharmacy provides a level of compassion that is lacking in big chain pharmacies.

If personalized care isn't enough of a reason to convince you to switch to an independent pharmacy, then maybe saving money on your prescriptions will. When you engage with an independent pharmacy, the pharmacist will take the time to work with you to lower the cost of your medication by working with

your doctor and insurance as well helping you find coupons that will bring down the cost of your medication. Large national chain pharmacies order their medications in bulk and charge a premium price whereas independent pharmacies work hard to keep their prices as low as possible due to the fact that their loyalty lies with the customer rather than the medication manufacturers.

Independent pharmacies focus on individualized patient care which leads to better-informed patients, a stronger sense of community, and better service when you need it most. Our independent pharmacies need our support, but our communities need the support of independent pharmacies as well.

I hope the next time you need a prescription filled, you will consider sending it to your local independent pharmacy; I promise you won't regret it. And if you're ever in Canton, Ohio, stop in my favorite pharmacy and say hi!

CYBERSECURITY BATTLE: RUSSIA VS. UKRAINE

BY JAKE SHECKTER,
BUSINESS EDITOR

Most are, unfortunately, all too aware of the battle being fought between the people of Ukraine and the invading Russian forces. But there is another fight with its own destructive power and potential for chaos already underway that most of us know nothing about. Another battle is being fought in Ukraine, invisible to most people, yet absolutely critical to the eventual outcome of the war. As likely or unlikely the threat of nuclear war is, it has still been a concept floating around many of our minds. But what we don't realize is that there are other, much more subtle ways to knock out the looming threats. "Cyber attacks" are now on the

forefront of high-tech weaponry used in the current Russia/Ukraine conflict.

Many experts predicted that Russia would launch significant cyber attacks on Ukraine, such as targeting and shutting down the country's electrical grid or launching an attack on the country's water systems. Generally, large-scale attacks have not been reported, but the rumblings of smaller assaults are already beginning to emerge. On Monday, March 7, 2022, Google said it had uncovered widespread phishing attacks targeting Ukrainian officials and the Polish military. Investopedia defines phishing as "a method of iden-

tity theft that relies on individuals unwittingly volunteering personal details or information that can then be used for nefarious purposes. It is often carried out through the creation of a fraudulent website, email, or text appearing to represent a legitimate firm." Although digital and hard to isolate, cyber attacks are having a serious effect. After fleeing Kyiv earlier this week, one cybersecurity professional stated that Wi-Fi was down where he'd moved as Ukrainian forces had been required to blow up bridges, taking down internet cables as collateral damage. In this exchange of cyberattacks, hoards of phishing emails struck Ukraine's military personnel, supposedly originating from a Belarussian hacking crew.

Ukraine and Russia will both be playing offense and defense, attempting to preserve and defend resources while simultaneously breaking into Russian systems. Information-wiping malware is beginning to spread across the Ukrainian nation, capable of erasing a computer or server's memory in seconds. Some reports citing a U.S. official have even indicated that power plants have been under attack, though little to no details were provided. Even cybercriminals—the Conti ransomware crew, namely—have threatened to attack critical infrastructure in retaliation to "any

SEE RUSSIA VS
UKRAINE,
PAGE 9

SURPRISE ENGAGEMENT: HOW AN EMBARRASSING MISTAKE TAUGHT ME THE POWER OF CLICKBAIT

BY SOPHIE
FRANKENTHAL

I realized the danger of the “delete for me” option on Whatsapp on the day I sent a picture of an engagement ring to the SCW Juniors Class Chat. Spoiler Alert: It was an accident. Now, you might be wondering why that’s such a big deal (it wasn’t an explicit image, G-d forbid). The thing is though, amongst young Jewish women (especially SCW students), any reference to engagement or marriage is equally dramatic. I happened to be dating someone pretty seriously at the time but wouldn’t be getting engaged for another month. Still, I guess you could say rings were on my mind. So you can probably understand the dread I experienced upon discovering that the engagement ring inspiration, which I meant to send to my mother, ended up on the Juniors chat instead.

But it gets worse. Once my friends pointed out my mistake, I dashed for the “delete for everyone” button in a desperate attempt to salvage my dignity. It turns out I pressed “delete for me” instead—oops. As if it isn’t bad enough to mistakenly send something personal to a group chat full of strangers, what’s even worse is knowing that it will remain forever accessible to everyone but yourself. In the moments after clicking the wrong button, I needed a fix, and I

needed it fast.

As you may have noticed, YU Whatsapp chats are pretty much a dumping ground for class project surveys. A brilliant friend of mine recognized this phenomenon and encouraged me to take advantage of it by sending a survey of my own as a coverup. The suggestion happened to come at the perfect time, as I had a statistics assignment due the following week, and therefore had a believable excuse. No one had to know that I was already halfway through with data collection from an online source, and that I would disregard the data collected from this survey. And so, after 4 minutes of awkward silence, and a few meek attempts at alleviating the palpable discomfort with one of those notorious “imyH [if it’s G-d will] soon by you”s, I sent out a survey. The survey contained a mere three questions, the first of which asked students to rate the engagement ring they had just seen on the chat. I apologized for the suspense I had caused and asked that students channel their curiosity, anticipation, and attention into filling out my survey for a statistics project.

The response I received was extremely positive and almost instantly alleviated the anxiety I was feeling over my misstep. My classmates were blown away by my tactic for calling attention to my survey in a

way that would motivate them to fill it out. In fact, I collected 90 survey responses within 5 minutes of sending out that fake survey, which was shocking. Even more astonishing, was the fact that over 38% of the students who had viewed the survey responded to it within a minute of seeing it. This got me thinking: would the same thing have happened had the survey I sent out not been preceded by the photo of the engagement ring? And so, with my statistics project in mind, I set out to put this question to the test.

I had a friend send out a second, similarly-structured google form to the Juniors chat the following evening. This time however, the survey was not preempted by any image. Rather, it was sent only with a simple request for students to aid me in my statistical research by filling it out. Incredibly, the response rate for this survey was significantly lower than the first one. Only 22% of the students who noticed the survey took the time to fill it out, leaving me with 29 responses total (a whopping 67% decrease from the survey with the ring)! Using this newly gained information, I focused my statistical analysis on the effectiveness of clickbait.

Clickbait is an attention-grabbing headline or media file intended to entice individuals to “click on” or access content in which they wouldn’t have otherwise been interested. The reason clickbait works is because it leaves something to be desired. Good clickbait reveals just enough information to pique one’s curiosity, yet in-

tentionally leaves out the most crucial information so that such an individual will feel that he is missing out on something sensational. Typically, the concept of clickbait carries a negative connotation, as it is a misleading, sly, and even somewhat unethical tactic of luring individuals into engaging with content, solely for the benefit of that content’s creator. However, my WhatsApp mishap, the response it received, and the insightful results it produced provided me with a different perspective on the concept of clickbait and its immense power as an effective marketing strategy.

Surveys are a popular tool amongst Stern students for the quick and easy collection of data for school research projects. It is especially useful within specific majors such as Psychology and Sociology, given that research is often a required component of the curriculum. However, the extreme difficulty in achieving a significant amount of responses is a shared frustration amongst most. Even 30 responses to a single survey is viewed as an impressive accomplishment. It is no wonder why this is the case. Watching one google form link after another appear on a chat becomes somewhat annoying. Most students are unmotivated to contribute their time or effort to a cause that is completely unrelated to themselves, unless perhaps the survey belongs to a good friend. This leads to incredibly biased and unreliable survey results, and the fact that no one is bothered by that is an entirely separate issue. Perhaps though, my findings on the effective nature of clickbait provide an insight into how to increase participation in



THE PRICE OF OUR PRIORITIES: PUTTING PURIM INTO PERSPECTIVE

BY ATARA BACHRACH
OPINIONS EDITOR AND
WEBSITE MANAGER

With Purim just around the corner, members of the Jewish Orthodox community everywhere are scurrying around, making last-minute preparations for what many consider to be the most festive holiday of the year. I mean, with all the wine, fancy parties, and outrageous costuming, it's kind of impossible to see the day as anything else. But just what about this holiday makes it so special? In order to answer that question, I'd say it depends on who you ask. One might tell you they want to "make the best costume and Mishloach Manot theme ever, duh," while someone else (over the age of 21) might mention that their goal is to get as drunk as possible. But it wasn't always this way.

Let's start at the beginning. As you might recall, the holiday of Purim was established as a result of a long course of events, taking place in Ancient Persia, that was recorded in Megillat Esther. The miracle that ultimately led to today's celebration emerged as a result of Haman's, King Achashveirosh's evil chief advisor, attempt to carry out the genocide of the entire Jewish nation. Esther, a Jewish woman, had been brought to the palace and married to King Achashveirosh against her will years prior, but Haman's rise to power revealed that Esther's journey had been divine intervention. When the king learned of Haman's true intentions from Esther, he was infuriated. However, since the decree had already been officialized with the king's insignia, the only way to ensure that the Jews had a fighting chance was to

proclaim that the Jews should do everything within their ability to stand up for themselves together and fight back. As a result of our resilience and ultimate victory from this awful attempt at the wipe-out of our nation, a rabbinical commandment was made to listen to every word of Megillat Esther twice, and it has become common practice in many shuls for the listeners to make noise when Haman's name is read, as a motion of disrespect and erasure.

In addition to celebrating G-d's hand in Megillat Esther, this is a holiday dedicated to our nation banding together as *Ish Echad, B'Lev Echad*—one person with one heart. And yet, somehow, Purim has become convoluted by many who celebrate it. The focus, which should be about creating unity—caring not just about the protection of our culture, but the unification of it—has shifted in a large way to more materialistic focuses. Rather than opening our wallets to the poor, we spend huge sums of money on making our costumes extravagant, and on giving and getting the most or best Mishloach Manot. So much has become a societal obligation and even a tool used by many to measure the importance and intensity of our relationships. This can also add extra stress, which takes away from the beauty and the true importance of the day.

But is that what it's really meant to be about? The clothes? The wine? The cookies?

All the mitzvot connected to Purim are a part of actualizing the goal of unity. Mishloach Manot, for example, the mitzvah of giving prepared food to a friend or peer, helps create positive connections amongst ourselves. Many commentaries agree that one should actually give to a mere acquaintance before giving to a close friend, in order to

increase the positivity and simcha since giving to a friend can be much easier than giving to someone you barely know. The Purim *seudah* [festive meal], a time for festivity, laughter, gathering together, and sharing in our simcha [happiness], is intended to increase the aforementioned closeness amongst our nation. And of course, the Megillah reading, the commandment to actively hear every word of the story of Esther, helps accomplish this goal; listening to the story of how our nation faced complete obliteration but lived, and understanding how it was only as a unit that they managed to survive.

It's true that Purim is meant to be a day of celebration, but it is so important to remember its roots. The whole point of celebrating is to recognize that we survived an attempt towards our nation's demise on a larger scale—an attempt at mass genocide—and we did it together. Because as important as it is that we are happy, it is also important that we remember what almost was, what could have been, and how it was that our nation came to survive.

While it is true that Purim is intended to be the happiest of holidays, this is only the case because we are celebrating our nation's ability to stand together as a united community, especially in the face of danger. And what's a danger to our nation if not our ability to overlook the importance of others and of treating each other with the utmost kindness and respect?

Purim is the day of our nation celebrating our survival. But what it is not, is a day for us to go against more mitzvot, like those of *dan likaf zechut* [giving others the benefit of the doubt] and *bein adam lechaveiro* [treating your peers kindly] by pitting us against each other, either in avoiding coming to each other's aid or competing with our costumes, food, and parties, or even in whom we give Mishloach Manot. If there is one thing that has

the power to hurt the Jews more than our enemies, it is *Sinat Chinam* [baseless hatred], the very sin which so horribly led to the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash.

In fact, several commentaries express that it is important to give *Matanot Laevyonim*, gifts to the poor, not only to the poor, but to anyone who puts out their hand in request of funds, regardless of if you know them or have suspicions about how they will use that money. The meaning behind this concept aims towards the national unity which is imperative to Purim, teaching us that today, we have no choice but to remove the judgment barriers that tend to get in the way of our helping each other out, often assuming the worst of each other based on appearances or reputation, further demonstrating that Purim is a day designated and meant to put all of that aside.

Of course, it is to each his own. And if you want to spend this Purim night racking up the "L'Chayim"s, go for it—I certainly won't stop you. But, ultimately, I feel that the most important thing to realize about this time is that Amalek isn't the only evil we Jews face: sometimes, we can act as our own enemy, and Purim, a day on which we are meant to achieve the highest level of simcha by attaining the closest level of connection to our fellow Jews as possible, is the last



UKRAINE VS RUSSIA

FROM PAGE 7

war activities against Russia.”

Security firm Resecurity Inc. also shared evidence of a coordinated hacking program targeting US firms supplying natural gas (a commodity that has become volatile and rising as a result of sanctions against Russia). The attacks on gas firms began roughly two weeks before the invasion of Ukraine, and many believe

that securing a foothold (a position of power or influence) in U.S. gas suppliers could potentially offer opportunities for geopolitical leverage. As European nations try to solve the issues that come along with having been so heavily reliant on Russian natural gas as part of economic sanctions, energy firms in the United States have been hiking up their supply, making the US the world's top provider of liquefied natural gas

or LNG. Europe's previous dependency on Russia for oil and gas as well as its increasing production capacity all played a contributing role in making the U.S. the world's top LNG supplier for the past three months. Out of about 60 U.S. natural gas cargoes currently being shipped out, nearly two-thirds are headed towards Europe. Ultimately, as a result of the numerous consequences imposed by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, officials are encouraging that everyone make an active effort

in being more "cyber conscious" and wary of potential attacks or phishing schemes in an attempt to reduce the possibility of further escalating this dangerous, invisible warfare.



SASA HOSTS EVENT ON “HOW TO HAVE A HEALTHY AND STABLE RELATIONSHIP”



BY MIRA POSTELNEK

Whether you are currently dating, single or in a relationship, everyone can benefit from understanding what it means to have a healthy relationship. On Thursday night, March 3, 2022, the Students Against Sexual Assault Club (SASA) held an event at which Lisa Twerski, LCSW spoke to Yeshiva University students about how to have a healthy and stable relationship. Twerski explained that first and foremost, “the place to start is knowing who you are and what you need in a relationship.” Throughout the presentation she shared the importance of knowing yourself and how a deeper understanding of your personal conflict-resolution style can facilitate a more stable relationship.

The presentation began with describing the main underrated

components of happy/successful relationships as opposed to unhappy/unsuccessful relationships. Twerski explained how research showed that the core issues that are often overlooked include conflict styles and how couples relate to feelings. When there is a conflict, unhappy couples are unable to negotiate and move forward; instead of utilizing predictive communication, such couples use contempt, criticism, stonewalling and resentment. The greater the negativity quotient present in their relationship, the greater the gridlock. Happy couples know how to speak with each other, use gentle startup (address issues calmly and respectfully), take responsibility, and appreciate each other. These skills allow couples to resolve conflict after a fight in a meaningful and sustainable

way.

Although it is certainly possible, learning to adapt your conflict style is extremely difficult and can be a speed bump to any stable relationship. Twerski continued to explain how emotional compatibility is key in the context of dating. Twerski explained that often-times, emotional compatibility is overlooked since “emotional compatibility is less tangible and more difficult to conceptualize.” However, Twerski continued to say that emotional compatibility is a vital criteria in any stable relationship. To begin assessing emotional compatibility, you must first know YOU. Twerski gave a list of questions one can ask to better understand themselves, such as: am I more high strung or laid back? Happy go lucky

or thoughtful and introspective? Expressive or more reserved? What makes me upset or angry and how do I handle anger or distress? Who do you go to for advice? What kind of people make you happy or calm? How do you handle conflict?

These are only a few suggestions from a whole list of questions one should be asking themselves. These are questions to ask and answer for yourself and then receive feedback from someone you trust. With these tools you can begin to build a complete picture answering: “What do I like and what do I need?”

Next, Twerski asked the audi-

SEE SASA,
PAGE 13

STAFF WRITER PROFILE: RONI LEIDER

BY RU BENHAMOU,
FEATURES EDITOR, ON
BEHALF OF THE *YU OBSERVER*

Each month, the *YU Observer* aims to highlight some of the YU undergraduate students who have written articles for us over the course of the semester. For the March 2022 edition, the *YU Observer* is highlighting Roni Leider.

Name: Roni Leider
College: Stern College for Women

Major: Political Science
Year: First Year

Favorite part of being on (or back on) campus? I love the social factor of being on campus!

What do you miss most about Zoom school? I miss not

having to get ready in the morning.

Currently Reading: *Snow* by Orhan Pamuk

Currently watching: *How to Get Away with Murder*

Coke or Pepsi? Apple Android or Apple? Apple
What’s a quote/thought/or piece of advice you have for your fellow students? “You miss 100% of shots you don’t take.” -Wayne Gretsky

See some of Roni’s past articles here:

<https://yuobserver.org/2022/02/the-removal-of-the-theodore-roosevelt-monument/>

<https://yuobserver.org/2021/12/things-to-do-in-nyc-one-world-observatory-central-park-high-line-and-more/>

<https://yuobserver.org/2021/11/elon-musk-and-solving-world-hunger/>

Photo Credit: Roni Leider



CLUB PROFILE: ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB

BY AARON SHAYKEVICH,
OPINIONS EDITOR

Each month, the *YU Observer* aims to highlight one club available to the YU undergraduate community. For the March 2022 edition, the *YU Observer* is highlighting the YU Environmental Club.

Club Name: YU Environmental Club

Head(s): Yaacov Strickon, President and Founder

Relevant Campus(es): Wilf and Beren

What is your club's mission statement?

Our mission is to educate YU students about their impact on the environment and how they can foster change. We believe in teaching a richer understanding of the Torah's outlook on environmentalism. We, as YU students, can promote sustainability, educate our peers, and call for action.

Why is this club important?

Climate change is something that is happening now. There is no one in this world that won't be affected by it. We have a window to act, to be a part of the change we need. As a club, we can do more than if we work separately. As a part of YU and the message of Torah U'maddah that comes with it, we want to teach about the Torah's emphasis on the environment. We also hope to foster a change within YU: to have classes educating students on the environment and to have a

more environmentally conscious university.

What was your pull to get involved in/start the club?

The environment is something I have always been passionate about. I have always been drawn to nature and would spend my free time learning more about the environment and sustainability. So when I came to YU and realized there was no environmental club, I was surprised because it's so important! As Jews, we should be advocating for the environment. I was bothered by this and decided that since nobody at YU started this club, I should do something about it.

What are some things your club has done in the past?

We just started up this semester and haven't had the chance to host an event yet.

What are some plans you have for this semester/future semesters?

We plan on hosting lots of interesting and educational events. We intend to plan hikes, volunteering events, and educational seminars. We also hope to work with YU on how it approaches climate change.

What is your advice to someone looking to get involved on campus?

If you have a passion and want to start a club, just go for it! Start the application process, and if you manage to get the 25 signatures necessary then there are probably even more students interested. The application may look daunting but starting a club is not so hard.

Anything else to say about your club:

Join our Whatsapp group: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/LWbmoj1sd9U7kUhpV5YczW>

Are you a YU undergraduate club head interested in seeing your club featured in a future edition? Email us at theyuobserver@gmail.com with your club name and the names of the club heads!

Photo Credit: YU Environmental Club



SASA

FROM PAGE 10

ence to imagine our wedding dress or perfect wedding suit. She explained how when thinking about buying the dress or suit you don't take one glance, decide it's "the one," and wait until the wedding day to try it on. To truly understand if it will fit the way you like and feel the way you expect, you need to try this dress/suit on. Relationships are the same way. You can't expect to understand how you feel about your relationship if you don't put it on. In a relationship you need to ask those hard questions and engage in deep conversations. One engaging in healthy relationship tactics knows how to address hard questions or concerns and rec-

ognize that avoiding such conversations due to fear of hurting the relationship is the true danger. SASA co-President Cayla Muschel shared with the *YU Observer*, "Twerski gave a meaningful and educational presentation on healthy relationships. I especially appreciated her multidimensional approach—she spoke about issues of practical compatibility, rather than binary good versus bad." Twerski explained a healthy approach in how to confront concerns without putting the other person on the spot and without emphasizing your partner's faults creates an equally-balanced relationship.

The last point Twerski brought in was a key component of healthy

communication; listening to what the other person says and verbalizing what you need. She expressed, "There isn't a responsibility for them to know, it's a responsibility for them to listen when you communicate." Once you have expressed your thoughts, needs, and feelings, the responsibility lies on your partner to continue these lines of communication.

Those in the audience of the event expressed that they felt Twerski was a skilled and engaging speaker. One SCW Junior commented, "Not only was Mrs. Twerski informative, but she was also a captivating speaker. Her delivery was great and her content was even

better." Many students felt her explanation of not only what a healthy relationship is, but how to properly form one was a necessary lesson. Twerski's explanation on the foundational steps that build a healthy and stable relationship was a necessary and edifying presentation that many students benefited from.

YU FACULTY PROFILE: DR. GABRIELA COICULESCU

BY RAQUEL LEIFER,
FEATURES EDITOR, ON
BEHALF OF THE
YU OBSERVER

Each month, the *YU Observer* aims to highlight a YU faculty member. For the March 2022 edition, the *YU Observer* is highlighting Dr. Gabriela Coiculescu, PhD.

Raquel Leifer (RL): Hello. Please introduce yourself.

Dr. Gabriela Coiculescu (GC): Hi! I am an Assistant Professor of Finance at Sy Syms School of Business. I am Romanian- I was born, grew up, and went to college in Romania. My educational background includes my PhD from New York University, Leonard N. Stern School of Business in 2014, my MSc from BI Norwegian School of Management in 2007, and my BBA from Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies in 2005.

RL: How long have you worked at YU?

GC: I started at YU in 2013 as a visiting assistant professor of finance. At the time, I was still working on my dissertation, which I defended one year later, in 2014. So I have been at YU for almost nine years. I can't believe that so many years have passed since I joined YU because I have had such a great experience here.

RL: What do you like most about working at YU?

GC: I really like my students and my colleagues. When I teach, I feel that I am providing service. It's more than the factual knowledge I convey. Teaching and interacting with students is very rewarding for me. My colleagues and I are really like a family in Sy Syms. We are a small business school compared to other business schools, and we are very collegial; we get along very well.

RL: What made you passionate about your field?

GC: The passion itself is more about learning. I grew up in Romania. I was very passionate about literature and foreign languages in high school, which seems to be completely different from what I do right now. (As a child, I also liked to watch soccer, so my parents thought I would become a sports commen-

tator!). When I went to college, I decided to study something more practical, and I went to business school for my undergraduate degree. But I also wanted to pursue my passion for languages, so I chose to study business administration in French. I liked learning, and I continued learning business and finance. I realized that I could also convey the knowledge I have learned to my students.

RL: Do you have any advice for students interested in a career in your field?

GC: If a student thinks that they might be interested in finance, my advice is to take one or two finance courses and to do an internship before deciding whether to continue in finance. We have a career center that provides support for students looking for jobs and internships. Every student has their path, so a career in finance is not necessarily the right path for everyone. At Sy Syms, students are required to take introductory courses in all fields of business, and they can then decide which field or fields they want to major in. In addition, combining a finance major or minor with a major or minor in another area, such as Mathematics, Economics, Accounting, Computer Science, or Business Intelligence and Marketing Analytics, can open up more career opportunities for students interested in finance.

My advice for all students is to have courage and to be open-minded. Some students want to go into Investment Banking, for example, and they think that it's a failure if they don't get into Investment Banking. There is a path for everyone. Don't be discouraged when you get rejected. You have to be persistent. Finance is not a field for a small elite group of people. Everyone can learn finance, and everyone can succeed in their own way.

And, last but not least, whether or not one decides to pursue a career in finance, I believe that what really matters is not so much what field we are in or what we do, but how we approach what we do. In any profession, one can do good because every field, finance included, is designed to fulfill a

positive role in society. The flip side is that in every profession, one faces the risk of deviating, intentionally or unintentionally, from the goal of doing good. Going into finance to make a lot of money is not the best mindset for the long run, but choosing the career in which we feel that we can contribute the most will make it easier to overcome obstacles later on and lead to more success.

RL: What makes your field special?

GC: Finance is, in fact, a field of Economics. Economics studies how people use scarce resources at both individual and societal levels. Because the resources are scarce, people face tradeoffs, and Economics is, in some sense, the study of these tradeoffs. As an applied field, finance focuses on the management of money, and it deals with tradeoffs such as the tradeoff between money today and money in the future or the tradeoff between risk and return. The financial market allows people to transfer money across time by borrowing and saving and to manage risk. In principle, this process ensures that capital is allocated to its best use. As an academic field, finance is relatively young; the theories we teach were developed in the last 60-70 years. In addition, although finance sometimes uses the language of mathematics, especially at the graduate level, it is not an exact science. In finance, we teach stylized models about the real world, but so many factors determine the outcomes. Many unknowns may not be apparent in good times but can become important, especially during financial crises. Finance, and economics in general, is a social science because financial outcomes ultimately depend on



human behavior - and human behavior is not always rational. In finance courses, students learn essential principles and a set of practical tools that they can use to apply these principles in real life, both in their personal lives and in Business. But we must be aware that financial theories are subject to limitations; they often rely on assumptions that may not hold all the time in real life.

RL: If you could bring in any guest lecturer, alive or deceased, who would it be, and what would he/she speak about?

GC: Since finance is a relatively young academic discipline, many of the scholars who developed the theories I teach in my courses are still active, or their lectures are available online. Instead of choosing a finance scholar, I would like to use your question as an opportunity to introduce to our readers a few persons whom I would have liked to meet, although they are not in finance. One of them is Mother Gavrilia Papayannis- she was a nun who devoted her life to helping the poor and the sick in India, Africa, and other places, much like Mother Teresa (I would have loved to meet Mother Teresa too, but she is already very well known worldwide). Mother Ga-

THE BEREN BEKIUS PROGRAM OFFERS TORAH LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

BY RAQUEL LEIFER,
FEATURES EDITOR

Shammai says, "Make your Torah fixed" (Pirkei Avos 1:15)

The Beren Bekius Program (BBP) is an incredible learning opportunity offered at Stern College for Women. Through the joint efforts of the Torah Activities Council (TAC), the Office of Student Life (OSL), and the Dean's Office, the program began in 2018 and has been running for four years. The program incentivizes students to take on a particular sefer [Jewish religious text] or multiple seforim, working towards completing as much material as possible over a semester in a scheduled manner, either independently or with a chavrusa [Torah studies learning partner]. After completing the assigned learning, participants are required to take a test every few weeks to ensure they have retained the information learned. Students who display a grasp

of the material learned can earn a gift card to the YU Seforim Sale.

This semester, there were four tracks offered and participants signed up for one or multiple tracks. Even if one did not participate in the previous semester of learning, they could still sign up for the following semester of learning. The tracks offered include: Tanach, Halacha [Jewish law], Mishna, and Mussar [Ethics].

This semester, the Tanach track

completed Sefer Devarim [Deuteronomy] and picked up with Sefer Yirmiyahu [Jeremiah]. The Halacha track continued with learning Peninei Halacha—Laws of Women's Prayers by Rabbi Eliezer Melamed. The Mishnah track continued with Seder Moed (specifically Mishnayos Pesachim, Shekalim, and Yoma). Finally, the Mussar track focused on learning Mishlei. Each track had its own schedule dictating which chapters to learn and when to take the corresponding test.

In previous years, participating

BBP students have learned Seder Nashim [women], Daniel, Divrei Hayamim I and II [Chronicles], Masechet Makkot [lashes], and Peninei Halacha—Zemanim by Rabbi Eliezer Melamed.

BBP participant, Yona Berzon (SCW '23), remarked, "My favorite part about the program is the structured learning. I also like how the exams hold you accountable. It's like mitzvah goreres mitzvah [one mitzvah leads to another]. By learning with the BBP program, I am able to buy more seforim at the Seforim Sale which leads to even more learning!" Ilana Rouhani (SCW '23) also expressed, "I love BBP because I can learn at a pace that works for me and my schedule."

Although the deadline to sign up for the Spring 2022 semester has closed, students can look forward to signing up for the program next year!

Photo Credit: Beren Bekius Program



NORMALIZING MENTAL HEALTH: STOMP OUT THE STIGMA 2022

BY MEIRA (RACHEL) ENTIN

On Tuesday, March 1, 2022, Stomp Out the Stigma, one of Yeshiva University's largest events with 500 registered to attend, took place in Lamport Auditorium on the Wilf campus. Gathering students, alumni, faculty, and heads of school such as President Berman, Deans Nissel, Asher, Bacon, Bednarsh, Pine, and Halpern, Stomp Out the Stigma gives a small group of Yeshiva University students the chance to share their mental health experiences with the audience.

Stomp Out the Stigma is run by Active Minds, an official Yeshiva University club and branch of the Active Minds organization, which

works to destigmatize and normalize mental health and illness. Dean Nissel, who first initiated this event a few years after the Yeshiva University Active Minds chapter was founded in 2007, told the YU Observer that it "started as a much smaller program, with perhaps 50 students and quickly grew to hundreds of students." Active Mind's co-presidents, Sarina Hilowitz (SCW '22), Shay Fishman (YC '23), and Yael Berger (SCW '23), worked tirelessly to bring Stomp Out the Stigma 2022 to life, along with other members of the club, student liaisons, and members of Yeshiva Universities Counseling

Center, notably Dr. Debra Alper.

After a brief introduction, President Ari Berman began by speaking about empathy, the pain of watching people we love struggle with mental illness, and the value of sharing. While, as President Berman noted, we are unable to ever fully understand another's experience, we had gathered as a community to further understand and honor the particular pain and struggle of the individuals who would soon share their stories. Following this reiteration of Yeshiva University's deep commitment to

and care for its students, Sarina Hilowitz (SCW '22), senior co-president of Active Minds briefly introduced the program. Sarina began by framing coming together in solidarity for Stomp Out the Stigma as an expression of the value of imitatio dei—following in G-d's path of kindness.

Eli Sandhaus (YC '24), Gabe Gross (YC '24), and Shay Fishman (YC '23, co-president Active Minds) then individual-

STOMP OUT

FROM PAGE 13

ly addressed the large, yet notably silent crowd. Each speaker was introduced by the student liaison who had worked with him in developing his speech and then took to the stage to speak about his mental health journey in his own unique way. While one speaker debuted with the rap “Leave Me Alone” by NF, which expresses the experience of struggling with mental illness blasting throughout the otherwise silent room while he faced the crowd, another began by quoting Rav Soloveitchik on loneliness. Sharing with remarkable clarity of voice and narrative, the speakers spoke about their mental illnesses and their development, what growing up with these mental illnesses was like, and some events that have greatly affected them. Addressing the duality of mental illness and their experiences as being major facets of their lives, and yet not constituting their whole selves, the audience was left relating to the speakers primarily as friends— friends who had encountered great pain and struggle. The speakers touched on themes of responsibility, expressing that they were picking up the mic and telling their personal story, epitomizing vulnerability, to help others. These three speakers, in their commitment to sharing and strength in doing so, have given the attendees a window to look into and to, this time, feel less alone.

Reflecting on the event, one student who chose to remain anonymous (SCW ‘25) expressed to the Observer that while one of the speakers was speaking about traumatic events that he had endured she “had the merit to almost tangibly feel the Shechina [divine presence] even though I’m not naturally sensitive to spirituality at all...I had learned, especially from the Aish Kodesh

Hy”d, that Hashem [G-d] is with us in the darkest places; in the most excruciating pains, there He is. And perhaps, while [one of the speakers] spoke, and the collective Jewish soul re-experienced his true nightmare, the Shechina came to give us company. ‘Imo anochi b’tzara’ [I will be with you in distress (Psalms 91:15)].”

Regardless of spiritual inclination, Stomp Out the Stigma reminded us of the cyclical nature of support. The speakers expressed their motivation to show others who struggle that they are not alone, and as one speaker shared at the end of his speech, in doing so he felt newly supported. As the crowd stood up in respect to applaud each speaker, they conveyed this message of support and recognition to every individual in the crowd. And perhaps, most importantly, someone in the crowd was able to finally applaud their own struggle and strength.

Dr. Yael Muskat, director of Yeshiva Universities Counseling Center, delivered the evening’s closing remarks. Emphasizing that while not everyone has a mental illness, everyone has mental health and will struggle with it at some point. She stressed the importance of not thinking in a “them and us” mindset when it comes to matters of the mind and reminded the audience of the mental health support available to all students at Yeshiva University. While it is easy to assess the need for support in the black and white way that Dr. Muskat warned against, it nevertheless is disingenuous to reality. Hannah Pollak (SCW ‘25) shared that “the challenges shared that night were ‘objectively’ more ‘extreme’ than mine... However, once I’m able to understand that my personal journey is not supposed to be measured according to his or her journey, I’m able to validate what I’m going through and appreciate

the heroism of my story; despite the ‘size’ of my issue relative to yours.”

In addition to raising awareness and opening up the conversation amongst the student body, Dr. Shaina Trapedo (Straus Center Scholar in Residence, SCW Professor) remarked that this “powerful and empowering” event “furthered the important task of better understanding who’s in the classrooms.” In reflecting on Active Mind’s hopes for Yeshiva University moving forward co-president Sarina Hillowitz (SCW’22) shared with the YU Observer that “the turnout [to Stomp Out the Stigma] alone shows that de-stigmatization is being implemented and that people are being there for their fellow students” and that she “hopes that this will be increased even more.” Dean Nissel, in correspondence with the Observer, said, “The student speakers benefit from the support they receive, and the community benefits from greater awareness and

‘normalization’ of mental illness. I have tremendous respect and admiration for each and every one of the student speakers over the years.”

If you are in need of assistance please contact 911 or:
National Hatzalah Volunteer Corps: (212) 230-1000
Beren Campus Security: (212) 340-7709
Wilf Campus Security: (212) 960-5200
Cardozo Campus Security: (212) 790-0303
National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255

To learn more about YU’s Counseling Center and schedule an appointment visit: <https://www.yu.edu/student-life/counseling>
To find a mental health professional visit:
<https://www.okclarity.com/directory/>
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists>

To get a referral for a mental health professional visit:
<https://www.reliefhelp.org/>



DR. GABRIELA COICULESCU

FROM PAGE 12

briela lived through almost the entire 20th century and passed away in 1992. Another remarkable personality that I would have liked to meet is Mother Maria Skobtsova, who also happened to be a nun. She is known as the “saint of the open door” or the “trash can saint” and did most of her work in Paris in the first half of the 20th century. However, it is not necessary to go far away, in place or time, to

find role models because there is so much we can learn on a daily basis from the people around us. For example, professor Joshua Krausz, one of my colleagues at Sy Syms, recently told me about Rabbi Gershon Yankelewitz, a Rabbi who taught at YU until he was 104! When Rabbi Yankelewitz was 99, he was still taking the bus from the Bronx to YU every day (until President Joel found out about this and arranged for a

taxi to always drive him to and from school, without the Rabbi asking for it, of course). I think that Rabbi Yankelewitz’s dedication is an inspiration for all of us; students and faculty alike.

RL: What is one thing you want students to know about you?

GC: I would like the students to know that they can always

reach out to me, the other faculty members, or the academic advisors if they need help. Even if we don’t have the answers to all questions, and solutions to all problems, we are here for them. So if I forget to answer an email, don’t give up, email me again, or just drop by! :)

@SIDELINESUITS' FAVORITE SUITS



BY SJ TANNENBAUM

For the past year or so, I've had the amazing opportunity to be the sideline reporter for the Yeshiva University men's basketball team. This position has allowed me to witness and report on amazing games such as Ryan Turell's 51-point game, the Skyline Conference Championship game, and the first round of the 2022 NCAA tournament against Johns Hopkins at Stockton University, among others. I've witnessed blowouts, milestones, and records being shattered. The opportunity also provides me with around 1-3 minutes of air-time per game during which I can report to thousands of viewers. I'm grateful for this opportunity to be able to wear some of my favorite suits on the air while reporting in order to add my personal touch to the role as I'm passionate about menswear and style.

In this article, I'd like to share with you just some of my favorite suits I've worn during my time as the sideline reporter for

MacsLive. I'll also add the links where you can buy them if they're still on the market.

(None of the companies listed are being compensated for their being mentioned in this article)

GAME: 2022 SKYLINE CONFERENCE QUARTERFINALS VS. PURCHASE COLLEGE | 2/22/22
SUIT: ALAIN DUPETIT ROYAL & SLATE BLUE LARGE HOUNDSTOOTH DOUBLE-BREADED WIDE LAPEL SUIT

GAME: 2022 SKYLINE CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS VS. COLLEGE OF MOUNT SAINT VINCENT | 2/24/22
SUIT: ALAIN DUPETIT TWO-BUTTON SUIT (BURGUNDY)

GAME: YU Macs vs. St. Joseph's Long island | 2/12/22
SUIT: SENE SOHO FLEXTech SUIT IN BLACK

LINK: <https://senestudio.com/products/soho-flextech-suit?variant=15996341452872>

GAME: YU Macs vs. Purchase College | 11/23/21
SUIT: SENE SOHO FLEXTech SUIT IN NAUTICAL BLUE

LINK: <https://senestudio.com/products/soho-flextech-suit?variant=15996350431304>

GAME: YU Macs vs. College of Mount Saint Vincent | 11/16/21

SUIT: STATE OF MATTER TRITON SUIT IN BLUE JACKET LINK: <https://stateofmatterapparel.com/products/mens-tech-performance-triton-suit-jacket-blue?variant=34484972224645>

PANTS LINK: <https://stateofmatterapparel.com/products/mens-tech-pants-blue?variant=39599562162309>

This past season was amazing to witness and I look forward to reporting at Sarachek 2022 as well as the 2022-2023 Macs season. You can find all my game suits as well as recaps, interviews, and recommendations at my Instagram account, @sidelinesuits.

Join the YU Menswear Club to get more tips about great suits, clothes, deals, and upcoming club events: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/GoLoK9Mikai-6ybUsYsIDqO>

Thank you for reading and feel free to contact me with any questions regarding menswear, style, or clothing advice at jtannen3@mail.yu.edu or DM me via my Instagram account @sidelinesuits.

YU OBSERVER STAFF PICKS: FAVORITE CAF FOODS

BY YU OBSERVER
EDITORIAL BOARD

To highlight the personalities of our talented staff, the *YU Observer* chooses to share one of the staff's favorite picks. This month, the *YU Observer* has decided to ask the *YU Observer* staff for their favorite cafeteria, or caf, foods at the moment.

Shoshanah Marcus, Editor in Chief: pasta with both sauces, cheese, spinach, and tomatoes
Danielle Lane, Managing Editor: spicy salmon, cucumber, avocado sushi roll
Rebecca Aduculesi, News Editor:
Bluma Gross, News Editor: purple rice veggie roll
Marcela Homsany, News Editor: Hal's seltzer
Rina Shamilov, News Editor: salmon teriyaki
Atara Bachrach, Opinions Editor & Website Manager: French Fries!! Oh, and a giant cup of soda with ice
Eli Saperstein, Opinions Editor: poke bowl with all the fishes, seaweed, sweet potato and extra rice on the side (Lots of sweet sauce and spicy mayo on the side. Good for three meals.)
Aaron Shaykevich, Opinions

Editor: Coca-Cola coffee
Ru Benhamou, Features Editor: Dunkin hot chocolate
Raquel Leifer, Features Editor: potato wedges
Yael Spodek, Features Editor: french fries or tater tots
Nicole Abittan, Science & Technology Editor: salad bar
Leia Rubinstein, Science & Technology Editor: salad bar
Yosef Scher, Science & Technology Editor: cheese pretzel
Eli Levi, Business Editor: salad bar
Jake Sheckter, Business Editor: Chex Mix and Popcorners
Amalya Teitelbaum, Business

Editor & Manager: oreo dunkin hot chocolate
Benjamin Gottesman, Arts & Culture Editor: Chop Chop?
Elisheva Hirsch, Arts & Culture Editor: Thursday morning egg and cheese bagels
Cayla Muschel, Arts & Culture Editor: cookie dough Chobani yogurt
Adi Benhanan, Website Manager: mocha cappuccino with an extra shot of espresso from the 245 caf on the machine that never works
Max Friedman, Website Manager: salad bar
Ezra Jacobs, Business Man-

ager: Does none of them count? Otherwise gonna have to go with Grandma's
Rachel Gilinski, Social Media Manager: Those really gross pizza snaps. I'm obsessed.
Erica Sultan, Social Media Manager: potato cigars in 215!
Sammy Friedman, Layout Editor: peanutbutter
Racheli Jian, Layout Editor: sweet chili schnitzel
Belina Milhem Jena, Layout Editor: potato wedges



THINGS TO DO IN NYC: RUMBLE BOXING, GO-KARTING ON ICE, AND METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

BY HANNAH POUPKO

New York City, known as the cultural "melting pot" of the world, offers an array of attractions to see and a range of activities unique to the city scene. Below is just a view of the main attraction New York City has to offer.

Rumble Boxing
What: Rumble Boxing offers a great way to get in shape while still having a fun time. The classes combine boxing drills and strength training exercises to guarantee a great workout.



Where: Rumble Boxing - Flatiron/Chelsea, 146 W 23rd St, New York, NY 10011, United States

Price: \$34 dollars for an individual class

To find out more: <http://www.rumbleboxinggym.com/>

Go-Karting on Ice
What: Go-Karting on ice is

SCDS MONOLOGUE COMPETITION TAKES THEATER OFF THE STAGE



BY CAYLA MUSCHEL,
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

The Stern College Dramatics Society (SCDS), a student organization dedicated to the theatrical arts, made headlines last semester with their incredible performance of Radium Girls. Not only do they produce plays, but they also host cultural events on campus such as this semester's Monologue Competition, which was co-sponsored by the Yeshiva College Dramatics Society. Students gathered in Yagoda Commons and performed dramatic monologues from various plays and movies. As with every great event, pizza

and drinks were served.

The Monologue Competition (and other SCDS-sponsored events) are a chance for students to shine in a less formal setting than the Schottenstein stage. That night, students who have never before participated in college theatrics produced performances from the depths of their souls, affording students the chance to engage with new sides of friends and strangers alike.

The lineup included both familiar childhood characters

and novel performances. Leah Goykadosh (SCW '23), of Radium Girls fame, brought Captain Hook to life in a skin-crawling, villainous musing on his hook, Peter Pan, and the crocodile who ate his hand. Sari Moskowitz (SCW '23) briefly embodied an eleven year old, eager know-it-all Hemione Granger as audiences first met her in 1991. Gillian Herszage (SSSB '24) performed a moving, desperate monologue as Luisa from the Fantasticks, who pleads with God to "not let her be nor-

mal." One student, Yitzhak Graff (YC '24), even produced a love-struck, longing speech entirely in Yiddish called "Khonon's Monologue," from the play Der Dybbuk. At the end of the night, Herszage and Moskowitz brought home the trophies.

Don't miss SCDS's next event: a women-only musical showcase on April 5, 2022 where students will be directing and performing musical theater numbers.

NYC EATS: ABAITA

BY ELISHEVA HIRSCH, ARTS
AND CULTURE EDITOR

Nestled away in the Upper East side, just a few blocks from Rockefeller Center, lies a cozy yet chic kosher Italian restaurant. Abaita is a reservation-only higher end dairy kitchen known for its fresh ingredients and authentic Italian flavors. Its minimal menu offers homemade pastas, wood-fired pizzas, and delicious fish.

Abaita's small dining room with limited tables and an open kitchen design lend it an exclusive air; the modern artwork and blue toned decor give a fresh and bright energy that matches the food. Specialty sharp cheeses and herbs are prominent flavors in many of the dishes, as is a homemade tomato sauce blend. The cream of sunchoke soup is a well

loved starter among Abaita fans, as is the Tajarin truffle pasta. Although Abaita doesn't offer much in terms of dessert, they do have a large drink menu including various coffees and interesting tea blends.

I went to Abaita with a few friends for Friendsgiving this year, and we had a lot of fun each ordering a different dish so we could sample as many as possible. While foodies will have an especially great time at this upscale

Italian spot, everyone will appreciate the fresh flavors and bright ambiance that make Abaita unique.

Abaita is located at 145 E 49th St, New York, NY 10017.



**WANT TO SHARE
YOUR OPINION?**

**WRITE FOR THE YU
OBSERVER!**

EMAIL THEYUOB-
SERVER@GMAIL.
COM

The Yeshiva University Center for Israel Studies
YU Israelite Samaritans Project



A Special First Viewing of our Documentary Film!

**Filmmaker Moshe Alafi and Prof. Steven Fine
in Conversation with Prof. Erica Brown**

Celebration of: *The Samaritans: A Biblical People* (Brill and YU Press, 2022)
The Samaritan Cookbook (Wipf and Stock, 2021)

View *Jewish Artists Encounter Samaritan Culture*, a joint project with the Jewish Art Salon

Sunday, March 27, 2-6 p.m.

YU Museum at the Center for Jewish History | 15 West 16th Street, New York, NY 10011

Reservations: \$10.00, Students and Faculty: \$5.00
Register at: yu.edu/samaritans



Soup, Salads

Sushi, Salmon

Lots of Space

Jerusalem Café

36th St. between 5th & 6th Ave



REVIEW OF THE BATMAN: THE DARK SIDE OF THE CLASSIC HERO



BY ANDREW WARREN

Matt Reeves's *The Batman*, starring Robert Pattinson in the titular role, is the newest on-screen version of the classic DC character. In this version, a string of murders perpetrated by the Riddler, played by Paul Dano, plagues Gotham and necessitates Batman to enlist the help of Jeffrey Wright's Police Chief Jim Gordon, and Zoë Kravitz's Catwoman.

We've seen Batman on screens a number of times. Christian Bale played the character in the acclaimed Nolan trilogy while Ben Affleck played an older, more experienced version in the newer DC Extended Universe take. We even got a tax-evading Lego version back in 2017. One thing all those previous portrayals have in common is that Batman is painted as the hero. In those renditions, the audience never fears Batman because they just see him as a classic comic-book good guy. In this movie, Batman is filmed from the perspective of the criminals he attacks and their fear is palpable, spreading to the

innocent civilians he strives to defend. It's a novel and authentic portrayal of a superhero appreciated in a setting in which every superhero movie feels familiar.

In my opinion, the supporting cast truly contributes to the success of the movie. Dano is terrifying as the Riddler and is always on the verge of an emotional breakdown yet never without a trick up his sleeve. He's a thoroughly entertaining villain. Colin Farrel is unrecognizable as the Penguin. He's not in the movie for long, but his scenes are memorable. Luckily for us, HBO plans on giving the character a mini series ala *Peacemaker*. No release date has been announced. Gordon has a lot more to do in this movie than he did in the Nolan ones. He acts as Batman's detective partner and watching the duo solve the riddles was one of my favorite aspects in the movie.

Zoë Kravitz as Catwoman is the most interesting character in the movie primarily because she has her own story while every other character exists to serve Batman's story. Gordon is the partner help-

ing him investigate. Riddler is the villain. Penguin is there to interrogate. But Catwoman has her own motivations. Sometimes they align with Batman and the two team up. At other points her methods conflict with his own. Her role in the story is ever changing and consistently entertaining. Hans Zimmer did great score work in previous Batman movies and Michael Giacchino is a worthy successor. Batman's theme is ominous and foreboding, evoking the darkness inherent to his character whenever the melody plays. The non-musical sound work also deserves praise. The sound of Batman's boots walking down an alley, the Batmobile revving up, and Riddler unrolling masking tape all contribute to the overall aesthetic. Please see this movie in the loudest theater you can. If there's one complaint I have about the movie, it's that, short of one car chase sequence, no one set piece stands out as

particularly memorable. At its heart, this movie is noir. Each clue uncovers another piece of a large criminal conspiracy. Batman goes from one victim to the next, solving riddles and learning more information. There's a lot of hand-to-hand combat but nothing as iconic as the Joker's bank robbery in *Dark Knight*. If the movie was shorter, I wouldn't have minded, but at over 150 minutes long, it does begin to feel tedious. This is a very impressive film. It's a mature movie that doesn't feel like a classic superhero flick. It's violent, engaging, and takes a critical look at the effects that Batman has had on the city. Its themes of corruption and vengeance never feel heavy-handed while the lighting and camera-work subtly convey the hellish nature of Gotham. It's better than anything Marvel has done since *Endgame*, and it is at the very least a top-three Batman film.

Rating: 9/10

THINGS TO DO

FROM PAGE 16

a unique experience that allows participants to enjoy a thrilling go-kart ride on an ice rink. Go with family or friends and enjoy an experience like none other.

Where: Staten Island Skating Pavilion, 3080 Arthur Kill Rd

Staten Island, NY 10309

Price: \$65 per person

To find out more: <https://bucketlisters.com/event/go-karting-on-ice-new-york>

Metropolitan Museum of Art
What: The Metropolitan Mu-

seum of Art greatly contributes to New York City's reputation as a renowned destination for art. Browse the various galleries dating all the way back to Egyptian art and covering continents all over the globe.

Where: 1000 5th Ave, New York, NY 10028

Price: Free for New York State residents and NY, NJ, and CT students. Be sure to bring along your student ID!

To find out more: <https://www.metmuseum.org/>

BUSINESS

THE EFFECT OF THE BLOCKCHAIN AND CONSTITUTIONDAOs

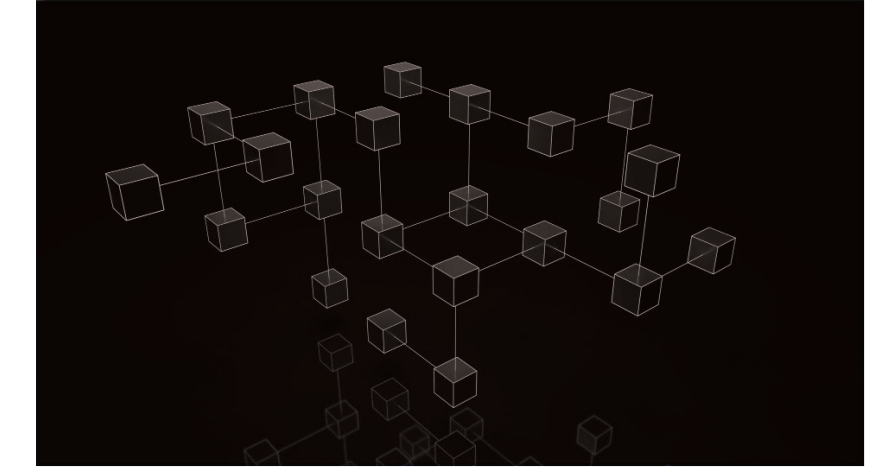
BY ELI LEVI,
BUSINESS EDITOR

One of the most efficient ways to highlight the effects of the blockchain is with the case of the ConstitutionDAO. In the case of DAOs, or decentralized autonomous organizations, decentralized means that there is no central body controlling the decisions (like the CEO and management team of a company), and instead, all of the stakeholders of the DAO decide the DAO's path. DAOs are built on a blockchain, which lends it all of the immutability and trustlessness of every blockchain. Instead of having to trust what the company says, the limits on the creator of the DAOs power are written clearly in code for anyone to see.

A recent example of a DAO in action was the ConstitutionDAO. This was a single-purpose DAO that was formed solely to purchase the original United States Constitution that was being auctioned off at Sotheby's. The founders of the

ConstitutionDAO's mission was to "put the Constitution in the hands of the people." Anyone who wanted to join this DAO could do so. When it comes to blockchains and DAOs, once the code for a project has been written, it cannot be changed unless a large percentage of the participants agree (usually between 30% - 51%). In the case of the ConstitutionDAO, the purpose was to buy the Constitution, so if purchased, the stakeholders would have the ability to determine how and where the document would be displayed as well as the ongoing mission of the DAO.

Prior to the auction, the Constitution was assumed to go for around \$20 million. The ConstitutionDAO managed to raise \$40 million+ but in the end, was outbid by Kenneth Griffin, the CEO of Citadel. After losing the auction, the ConstitutionDAO's stakeholders voted to refund the money raised and their website now states, "The community has taken all actions that it was organized to accomplish: we raised capital, we bid at Sotheby's,



and upon losing, we made full refunds available to the community as promised."

There are many beneficial uses for DAOs. TechCrunch reflected on the usefulness of DAOs, explaining, "DAOs help large groups of people work together from all over the world. Companies can do that, but they tend to take a long time to get set up and it can be difficult to pay people across borders," he said. "With DAOs, it's easy to create a worldwide organization." One potential drawback is that there is no room in DAOs

for niche markets: the more complicated the endeavor, the smaller the number of people that will understand the project, which would translate into fewer people being involved. Based on my understanding of DAOs, I see their greatest utility being when members are aligned on a single goal, like in the case of the ConstitutionDAO.

BUSINESS BASICS: HOW TO GET HIRED

BY AMALYA TEITELBAUM,
BUSINESS EDITOR &
MANAGER

In business, there is a single million dollar question: what should I do so businesses will hire me? Well, there are several key steps to take so the hiring department will put a checkmark next to your name. While there are several ways to do this, the clearest path is twofold: presenting yourself in the best way and explaining why you are the best candidate for the position.

The presentation of who you are as a person and who you have the potential to be as an employee involves several skills. Physical presentation will be what hiring managers or departments first notice, and arguably, therefore is most important. A large part of the physical presentation is flexible considering that the best way to present yourself can depend on the position and field you are applying for. You can dress in flamboyant colors and patterns in your outfit to portray the qualities



of a kindergarten teacher. However, when applying for an attorney position at an exclusive law firm, for instance, anything but a suit would be nearly unquestionable. There is an undeniable link between your physical presentation, and how the hiring manager perceives your ability to excel at the open position.

While one's dress is certainly a major factor in physical presentation, another important piece is your facial expressions. A hiring manager is not making a decision

simply based on your resume or years of work experience. They are relying on your facial expressions to tell them the rest of your story. You should walk in with an inviting expression and should be engaged while the hiring manager is speaking.

Part of one's presentation also involves verbal ability and body language. A candidate must have an adequate professional vocabulary and speak clearly, slowly, and confidently. They must make appropriate eye contact while

retaining a professional yet relaxed posture. Avoid being jittery and shaky, and keep your feet firmly planted on the ground. To reduce nerves, you can prepare answers for typical interview questions and practice correcting one's posture. Perhaps practice interviewing with other friends, family members, or others within your preferred field and gauge your skill set based on your verbal ability and body language. A candidate wants to ensure that their body language tells the same story as their resume.

Once one nails the physical presentation interview aspect, it is time to move on to the most important information in the hiring manager's eyes: why in the world should they hire you? The most obvious way to explain why is by having a fantastically detailed resume that is appropri-

SEE HOW TO GET HIRED
PAGE 21

HOW TO GET HIRED

FROM PAGE 20

ately geared to fit the skills of the particular job. The hiring department is not looking to hire a piece of paper, but they are looking to hire a qualified well-rounded candidate. An excellent way to prove your qualifications is by bringing real-world examples that show your skillset, such as times

when you have failed and overcome said failure or have taken leadership positions in group settings. One's resume is merely an outline, the interview is the place to elaborate and prove the credibility of that outline.

Also, do your research. One of the best things a candidate can do is show that they have gathered information on the company and position. Does the company have a list of values? Does the company have a detailed list of the responsibilities of the

position, or is that something a candidate should be asking about at the conclusion of the interview? Take a glance at the company's website, take a look at how they function, speak to others who have worked in that position or company. And most importantly have questions to ask at the conclusion of the interview, especially ones that build on what the hiring manager stated during the interview process.

The million-dollar question at

first glance seems to require a million-step answer. By following this twofold path, however, anyone can gain the ability to prove their qualifications and ultimately get a job.

THE STORY OF NOLAN BUSHNELL & ATARI

BY ELI LEVI,
BUSINESS EDITOR

The founder and original CEO of the gaming company Atari, Nolan Bushnell, was born in 1943 in Clearfield, Ohio. Even as a child, Bushnell had an entrepreneurial spirit, reselling strawberries from the store and teaching himself how to repair televisions. Throughout college, Bushnell had created many sources of income for himself, one of which was working for a carnival. Bushnell was so successful working at the carnival that he was offered quite a few different well-paying positions to stay in the carnival business. Ultimately, Bushnell turned down all the offers to be an associate engineer. During and after college, Bushnell had many different jobs and was exposed to numerous aspects of the new age of computers, such as graphics, video editing, and even the first-ever video game. Bushnell was one of the first of the new age of young, scrappy entrepreneurs. Most of the entrepreneurs in Bushnell's days were older scientists and often worked in applied engineering. In 1969, Bushnell formed his first company, "Syzygy," with his friend Ted Dabney. Syzygy partnered with a manufacturing company named "Nutting Associates" to produce their first game. After only a short while, Bushnell realized Nutting was a terribly-run company. For instance, they fired the head of sales for making too much on commission. In the end, Ted and Bushnell's first game was a failure. Afterward, Bushnell and Ted founded a new company, Atari, and created the game "Pong," which was wildly successful.

As Atari grew, all of the distributors who were not already partnered with Atari were looking for its competition to side with. Instead of waiting for distributors to find competition, Bushnell decided to create his own. Bushnell took some people from Atari and had them set up shop across the street posing as a new rival company. Bushnell gave the "new" company the game Atari was working on before they released the game to



Atari's distributors. The distributors that were partnered with the "new" company thought they were getting the scoop on Atari when in reality Atari was now partnered with all of the different distributors. Bushnell realized he could not keep this hidden forever, so he floated the secret that the "new" company had stolen trade secrets from Atari. After a few more months passed, Bushnell floated another secret that the "new" company had settled with Atari and gave up some ownership. Eventually, the two companies decided to merge. In reality, Bushnell was only bringing his two compa-

nies back together. By 1975, Atari had captured 80% of the gaming market.

Don Valentine, the founder of Sequoia Capital, approached Bushnell looking to invest in Atari and asked Bushnell for his business plan. Bushnell did not have any plans; he had been running the company himself for the past five years as he saw fit. Valentine set Bushnell up with someone to help him develop his business plan and

then Valentine would be willing to invest. At the time Valentine was looking to make his investment, Atari was in some trouble and desperately needed Valentine's capital. Through a deal with Advanced Micro Devices (AMD), Atari was able to fix most of the issues that were plaguing them, relieving them of their immediate, financial danger. The night before Bushnell was supposed to close the deal with Valentine, he told Valentine he was doubling the price. Bushnell no longer needed Valentine's money to sustain Atari. Valentine was understandably ticked off, but came back two days later and made the investment at the new

price anyway.

Atari had created for themselves a great company culture, which was rooted in their manifesto stating equal work for equal pay. Many women in the company praised Bushnell for his forward-thinking. Partly because of this same culture, Steve Jobs walked into Atari and asked for a job. Bushnell hired Jobs and put him on the night shift because he knew that Steve Wozniak worked during the day and would hang out with Jobs at night. Wozniak would come to hang out with Jobs every night when he was working and help him with whatever he was working on. Bushnell called it "getting two Steve's for the price of one." One instance of Wozniak's genius was him pulling two all-nighters in a row and figuring out how to get the Apple 2 to interface with a floppy disk; this same challenge took Atari seven months to resolve.

In 1976, Atari needed more capital. Valentine arranged for Atari to meet with Warner Communications. Warner sent the corporate jet and picked up Clint Eastwood along the way. After the jet dropped them off, a limo drove them to the side entrance to the Waldorf Astoria, where the VIPs would enter. Bushnell realized they were being buttered up, but it was nice, and he enjoyed it regardless. Ultimately, Bushnell agreed to sell Atari to Warner Communications for \$28 million, marking the end of one era for Atari, and the beginning of another.

3 STOCK HIGHLIGHT: MARCH 2022 EDITION

BY JAKE SHECKTER,
BUSINESS EDITOR

Each month's edition of the YU Observer will include a "3-Stock Highlight" on a few stocks that have been in the news lately, have fascinating stories, or provide for an interesting read. On behalf of the YU Observer, we'd like to remind everyone that these stock picks are for educational purposes only and are not to be taken as financial advice or used for investing any real cash. This month, we will be highlighting Amazon.com Inc. (AMZN), Exxon Mobil Corp. (XOM), and CrowdStrike Holdings Inc. (CRWD).

Amazon.com Inc. (AMZN)

Finally, we get to who is arguably the king of the (business) world right now: Amazon. The corporate titan has become more than just a household name for much of the world as purchasing from the site has become a daily/weekly routine for many of us. Shares of Amazon stock rose roughly 7% to \$2,969 in after-hours trading on March 9, 2022. This follows Amazon's board approving a 20-for-1 stock split and authorizing the e-commerce giant to repurchase up to \$10 billion of its common stock.

According to Investopedia, "A stock split is when a company increases the number of its outstanding shares to boost the stock's liquidity. Most investors are more comfortable purchasing, 100 shares of a \$10 stock as opposed to 1 share of a \$1,000 stock. So when the share price has risen substantially, many public companies end up declaring a stock split to reduce it. Although the number of shares outstanding increases in a stock split, the total dollar value of the shares remains the same compared with pre-split amounts, because the split does not make the company more valuable."

The stock split and share repurchase still depend on shareholder approval at Amazon's annual shareholder meeting, scheduled for May 25, 2022. All of Amazon's current shareholders (as of May 27, 2022) would have 19 additional shares for every one share they owned in June. Trading is expected to be adjusted for the split on June 6, 2022. Amazon's stock closed on March 9 at \$2,785, which

was up 2.4% for the day. Through the end of Wednesday, however, shares were down 9% over the last year.

This also isn't Amazon's first split, but it is the first in many of our lives. This Amazon stock split is the fourth in its history, but the last split came in September 1999. While Amazon's stock split technically doesn't change the fundamentals of the company, it could provide



younger, amateur, and more unsure investors with an opportunity to get involved at a much lower price, and therefore, with much less risk.

The e-commerce giant represents a large part of the Nasdaq, and this recent announcement may suggest that the company might be making a move to try and persuade the managers at S&P Dow Jones Indices to include Amazon in the 30 stocks that make up the Dow Jones Industrial Average. To make room for Amazon, the Dow would need to remove one of its current components. With relatively lower prices, there is speculation that Intel (INTC) and Cisco Systems (CSCO) could be possible candidates in the tech world. On the other hand, given the fact that Amazon occupies space in both the internet-retail and the communications-infrastructure industries, replacing a few Dow participants like Verizon Communications (VZ) or Walgreens Boots Alliance (WBA) might be potential options worth looking at as well.

Exxon Mobil Corp. (XOM)

If you own a car or have spoken to someone who owns one in the last two weeks, you'll know what's driving everyone crazy: gas prices. Regular-grade gas prices reached a record high of \$4.17 on Tuesday, March 8, 2022, which adds up to a 55 cent increase from a week ago, according to the American Au-

tomobile Association. The average retail gas prices are currently over \$4.346 in over 10 states, including California, which maintains a sad average of \$5.44 at the pump. On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that while gas prices are steadily climbing, these figures do not account for inflation. With regards to the actual cost to us, the daily consumers, current prices are pretty similar to what they were

in the 2010s (when gas prices last reached \$4 per gallon). This also doesn't mention the fact that fuel efficiency for passenger vehicles has also increased by a few miles per gallon over the years, which also might help to mitigate part of the cost. The U.S. imports 8% of its oil from Russia, and when compared to the European Union (EU), which imports 27% of its crude oil from Russia, the U.S. is significantly less dependent on Russian oil.

On Tuesday, March 8, 2022, President Biden announced that the U.S. will target "the main artery of Russia's economy" by banning the import of Russian energy products. "We're banning all imports of Russian oil and gas and energy," Biden said in remarks from the White House. "That means Russian oil will no longer be acceptable at U.S. ports and the American people will deal another powerful blow to Putin's war machine." The president did warn that the move would most likely continue to pump up gas prices in the U.S. but still remained steadfast in his stance that the U.S. must continue to add sanction pressure on Russia's economy.

Exxon Mobil's stock has seen a boost in the price of its shares, which is most likely as a direct result of the gas and oil shortage we are experiencing in the immediate short run. Towards the end of February 2022, Exxon's stock price sat at around \$75 before soaring

up to \$90 a week and a half later (a week into March 2022), and finally settling down to its current price of \$85 a share. Overall, the S&P 500 index is down over 13% this year, having every single sector in the red- except energy, which is currently up 40% over the year as a result of rising oil and gas prices. As scary and horrid as the gas prices are currently, we are unfortunately not near the top yet and will likely continue to see the tragic increase in price until an equilibrium can be established. You win this time, electric car owners.

CrowdStrike Holdings Inc. (CRWD)

As for another stock in the spotlight due to the Russia/Ukraine conflict; introducing CrowdStrike. A growing concern currently arising from the conflict in Ukraine is cybersecurity. As the turmoil continues and begins to change and adapt, there are rumors whispering that Russia may try to strong-arm the U.S. into easing sanctions by potentially disrupting or damaging key technology infrastructures such as financial system networks and emergency-medical networks through cyberattacks. CrowdStrike states that they provide "cloud-delivery endpoint protection for its customers, shielding them against cyberattacks on or off the network. CRWD is responsible for creating the first multi-tenant, cloud-native, intelligent security solution capable of protecting workloads across all areas."

Now, let's talk about stock price news. The price of shares of CrowdStrike's stock has decreased 6% year-to-date, but CRWD surged 12.5% Thursday, March 10, 2022 following the release of their 4th quarter earnings, with the stock reaching close to \$200 (Wednesday's closing price for the stock was \$170). Annual recurring revenue (or ARR), a very sticky part of CrowdStrike's business, remains one of its most crucial strengths. ARR for the firm grew 65% year over year to \$1.7 billion, with \$431 million in quarterly sales topping the estimate of \$412 million by 4.5%. The company attributes its record-breaking sales numbers to the recent expansion of its cloud and identity protection services. CrowdStrike beat earnings estimates in each of its last four quarters. The company earned \$0.30 a share (beating the \$0.20 estimate) in their 4th quarter report.

SCI-TECH

THE FUTURE OF ORGAN TRANSPLANTS: FIRST PIG HEART TRANSPLANT

BY NAOMI FRIED

57-year-old David Bennett had been on cardiac support for almost two months and couldn't receive a mechanical heart pump because of an irregular heart beat. Neither could he receive a human transplant because he had a history of not complying with doctors' treatment instructions. Given that he otherwise faced certain death, the researchers got permission from the FDA to give Bennett a pig heart. A pig heart?? Yes! After much research and work, a surgeon's team at University of Maryland School of Medicine performed the first Pig to Human heart transplant. Organ transplantation is not novel but this type is a first of its kind. The first kidney transplant was successfully performed in 1954. This transplant belongs to a category labeled homograft, meaning a transplant from the same species such as from human to human. Following this, transplants were done with other organs as well. The ability to transplant organs has saved many people's lives, but unfortunately, many who need transplants don't live to receive them while on the waiting list. Additionally, some organs are easier to receive than others; for instance, a liver can be donated by someone who is alive and healthy. A small portion of one's liver is cut out and transplanted into another and the donor will grow back the missing part of the liver. The same goes for kidneys: people can live normally with just one, and thus it is easier to get donations. With a heart transplant, however, this is not the case because unless the donor dies, there is no way for the donor and the recipient to stay alive. According to Gift of Life, the nation's leading organ procurement organization, 17 people die each day waiting for an organ transplant. To combat this problem, scientists have been looking into alternatives. One alternative is xenotransplantation. This

type of transplantation involves transplanting animal organs into humans. The first pig to human heart transplant occurred this past January and was a success. A long road lies ahead, but we are beginning to see the next



step in transplantation. Prior to this surgery the only successful xenotransplantation was when surgeons at New York University Langone Health used kidneys from the same set of GM (genetically modified) pigs in two legally dead people. The organs were not rejected, and functioned normally while the deceased recipients were sustained on ventilators.

Animals must be genetically modified since otherwise, the human immune system would reject these organs. CRISPR-Cas9 genome editing was performed on the pigs and this made it easier to create pig organs that are less likely to be attacked by human immune systems. The latest transplant, performed at the University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC), used organs from pigs with ten genetic modifications. Although the technology is promising there is still much work that has to be done to receive the perfect genetic modification. There is also an ethical question that must be reviewed and policies that have to be made. Although there is a very good cause at hand, policies concerning animal cruelty must be reviewed.

This technology is not the only one in the works to make organs accessible. Three-dimensional printing of organs is also in the works. In this case, since it is created from the patient's

own cells, the problem of immunological rejection may be circumvented. As of mid-April 2019, an Israeli Scientist, Dr. Tal Dvir, has printed an entire heart including cells, blood vessels, ventricles and chambers. Al-

though this grape-sized heart does not work yet, it is the early stages of this promising technology. Researchers also need to find a way in which they can create bigger cells that compare to those of humans and produce a large enough quantity of them that equals the number of cells in an adult human heart. Following this, clinical trials have to be run, first on animals and then on humans. Although this is far from actualization, here too, there will be ethical questions at hand primarily regarding socioeconomic classes and who will be able to afford to save their lives with that technology.

The first pig-to-human heart transplant was an event that will go down in history; many were very curious to see if the heart will be accepted by the human body. This has been tried many times before but has never been successful until now. The first heart transplant in a human ever performed was by Hardy in 1964, using a chimpanzee heart, but the patient died within 2 hours. Starzl carried out the first chimpanzee-to-human liver transplantation in 1966; in 1992, he obtained patient survival for 70 days following a baboon liver transplant. Many hoped that this transplant would not end similarly. As of now, David Bennet is doing well. "The heart is doing great. We have several cardiologists trying to find any fault in it

but they have not been able to do it," said lead surgeon Dr. Muhammad M. Mohiuddin, Professor of Surgery and Director of the Cardiac Xenotransplantation Program at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. "The heart is contracting vigorously as it should. It has shown no signs of rejection."

Update: Unfortunately, the patient died on March 9, 2022, and although this is discouraging, the case still taught the scientific community a lot.

*** **

Sources:

Get the Facts on Organ Donation | Gift of Life Donor Program (donors1.org)

org)

Pig heart transplant patient David Bennett takes in Super Bowl LVI (floridatoday.com)

First pig-to-human heart transplant: what can scientists learn? (nature.com)

CRISPR/Cas9 | CRISPR (crisprtx.com)

Get the Facts on Organ Donation | Gift of Life Donor Program (donors1.org)

Pig heart transplant patient David Bennett takes in Super Bowl LVI (floridatoday.com)

A brief history of cross-species organ transplantation (nih.gov)
Ethical and Societal Issues Occasioned by Xenotransplantation (nih.gov)

FORGOTTEN FEMALE SCIENTIST: ADA LOVELACE

BY DINA ABRAHIM

Many computer programmers may not know about Ada Lovelace's contribution to computer programming. However, after researching parts of her life and the advancements she contributed to computer science, it becomes quite clear why many would consider Ada Lovelace to be a pioneer in this field. Ada Lovelace was a brilliant British mathematician who is considered to be the first computer programmer.

Ada Lovelace was born on December 10, 1815 to the poet Lord Byron and Annabella Milbanke Byron in London, England. Two months after she was born, her parents got divorced. After the divorce, her father abandoned Lovelace and her mother, never returning to England. As a result, Lovelace did not know her father, and he died in Greece when she was eight. With her father out of the picture, Lovelace's mother supervised her education, hiring tutors to teach Lovelace mathematics and science. From a



young age, Lovelace showed a natural affinity towards numbers.

When Lovelace was 17, she was introduced to Charles Babbage, an English mathematician who invented the difference engine, a machine that performed and calculated mathematical calculations. With Babbage's help, Lovelace was able to study advanced mathematics at the University of London under the auspices of professor Augustus de Morgan. Lovelace was asked to translate an article on a different machine that Babbage was working on. This machine was called the analytical engine and was intended to solve more complex calculations than

the difference engine. Lovelace translated the article from French into English and added her own notes about the machine. In 1843, her article was published in an English journal called Richard Taylor's Scientific Memoirs. In her notes, she wrote down different ideas she had about what the machine could do. One of her ideas was that the engine would be able to repeat a series of instructions, which is what modern-day computer scientists refer to as "looping."

On November 27, 1852, Lovelace died from uterine cancer at the age of 36. At the time of her death, people did not appreciate Lovelace for her advancements

in computer science; however, today, we notably recognize her contributions as forming the foundation for computer programming. In 1980, the U.S. Department of Defense named the computer language "Ada" after her, and honored Lovelace by designating the second Tuesday in October as "Ada Lovelace Day."

*** **

Sources:

<https://www.biography.com/scholar/ada-lovelace>

<https://www.yorku.ca/christo/papers/Babbage-CogSci.htm>

<https://codedocs.org/what-is/ada-programming-language>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charles-Babbage>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ada-Lovelace>

THE THREAT OF DISPOSABLE MASKS

BY RONI LEIDER

As a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, masks have been used worldwide to prevent the virus's spread further. Consequently, there has been a drastic increase in overall plastic pollution since the beginning of the pandemic. Researchers have concluded that masks have introduced harmful toxins into the environment, and the ramifications will only escalate.

The increase in plastic pollution that has occurred due to the surge in mask usage could have serious adverse effects. There is evidence that many of these toxic pollutants are released when exposed to water. Masks are composed of various plastic and by-products of plastic material, containing an immense amount of pollutants, including lead, antimony, and copper.

When in the presence of ultraviolet radiation, the majority of

plastic particles are photo-oxidized, meaning that they decompose into microplastic. Due to the cold and frigid temperature of the ocean, the deterioration process of these materials is relatively slow. It can even take more than 450 years, which is notable considering disposable masks are a "single-use" item. For something that is meant to be used once, it is ironic how long the item takes to decompose.

There are numerous negative impacts associated with the use of disposable masks. Scientific researchers have stated that alongside the negative environmental implications concurrent with mask pollution, public health may be at risk. This is because the substances found within the disposable masks have been associated with cell death, genotoxicity, and cancer formation. In other words, recurrent exposure to people can be harmful. These environmental threats will only intensify with time.

Furthermore, the adverse effects

of plastic pollution caused by disposable masks also have a devastating impact on ocean life. According to Gary Stokes, Operations Director of Ocean Asia, "[p]lastic pollution kills an estimated 100,000 marine mammals and turtles, over a million seabirds, and even greater numbers of fish, invertebrates and other animals each year." With all this in mind, it is unquestionable why direct or indirect mask ingestion causes respiratory and gastrointestinal problems for wildlife as well as death.

Many scientists believe that although masks are essential in slowing the spread of COVID-19, there needs to be more regulation and research on the production of masks. Some experts have even questioned whether or not disposable masks are safe, and some question whether masks should be continued to be used on a daily basis.



*** **

Sources:

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/05/210504112637.htm>

<https://iwa-network.org/are-face-masks-a-threat-to-oceans/>

<https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2111530118>

<https://fox5sandiego.com/news/health/toxins-found-in-disposable-plastic-face-masks-may-harm-humans-and-the-environment/>

<https://oceansasia.org/covid-19-face-masks/>

THE DANGERS OF BEING A STERN COLLEGE FOR WOMEN STUDENT

BY SHAYNA DESSAU

The life of a student at Stern College for Women (SCW) can be exciting and adventurous. Various possible encounters with genotoxic elements, however, come along with such freedoms. Potential daily encounters include, but are not limited to, exposure to cell phone radiation, Ethidium Bromide in the labs, NYC's air pollution, and the traditional mass menorah lighting during Chanukah in Brookdale Residence Hall. By analyzing the possible elements that can alter the genome of a SCW student, one can become aware of their hazardous surroundings and discover ways to limit exposure, ultimately advocating for change.

While SCW students love to stay connected with their peers, cellular devices can pose toxic risks. For cellular devices to communicate with one another, they send out energy waves in Radiofrequency (RF) radiation. A buccal micronucleus assay, which surveys cells to identify micronuclei resulting from DNA damage, observed the genotoxic effects of RF radiation emitted from smartphones. This study found that the hand, head, and neck absorb about 40% of the radiation emitted from cellular devices. Additionally, significantly more micronuclei were observed in high mobile phone users (>10 hours a week for five years) in comparison to low mobile phone users (<3 hours a week for five years), proving DNA damage. It is not surprising that, according to a recent survey conducted by Pew Research Center in 2021, 97% of Americans own cellular devices. Additionally, smartphones were identified as the most commonly used communication device in the United States. Given this statistic, it is likely that almost all SCW students possess a mobile device. On average, students use their phones for about 25 - 30 hours a week, which, according to the 2016 study, puts them at high risk for DNA damage due to RF radiation. While this topic of RF radiation is controversial and is still being tested, it is crucial for students to be aware of the possibilities of genotoxicity, and they should take proper precautions such as limiting usage and using headphones when possible to limit direct phone-to-skin contact.

The science labs at SCW are



equipped with useful scientific materials to conduct experiments; however, some of these materials, such as InstaStain cards containing the chemical Ethidium Bromide (EtBr), can present considerable risks. EtBr is a nucleic acid stain often used in DNA gel electrophoresis due to its intercalating and fluorescent agents. An intercalating agent is a property of a compound that breaks DNA bonds and inserts itself into the planer bases of the DNA. EtBr breaks these bonds and attaches its fluorescent compound to the DNA, allowing for visualization under ultraviolet lights. Due to the intercalating agent, this compound is designated as a mutagen, as it can break double bonds and alter DNA if inhaled or comes in contact with skin. An in vivo comet assay study (a test for DNA damage) performed in 2021 studied the effects of EtBr on rabbit corneal epithelial cells. The study showed an increased comet tail length of cells exposed to EtBr, as opposed to the control group, proving DNA damage. While scientists are still conducting experiments to ascertain the degree of risk of EtBr, students need to take proper precautions such as wearing masks and gloves and using the compound in well-ventilated areas.

While SCW prides itself on its prime college location in Midtown Manhattan, this location tends to have high levels of pollution and poor air quality, which can contribute to genotoxic effects. Due to the concentrated amount of inhabitants and dense vehicle emissions, NYC has high levels of Particulate Matter in the air. Particulate Matter at 2.5 micrometers (PM2.5) is any small particle in the atmosphere that can be inhaled and penetrate deep lung tissue. PM2.5 can cause genotoxic effects that may lead to cancer and heart disease. A 2011

human lung bronchial epithelial comet assay study observed an increase in comet tail length in cells exposed to PM2.5, proving DNA damage. A 2020 study confirmed that bronchial epithelial cells exposed to varying levels of PM2.5, containing free radicals, organic chemicals, and transition metals, can increase reactive oxygen species (ROS) in the blood. Increased ROS levels can cause oxidative stress, inflammatory response, and genotoxicity. SCW students inevitably are exposed to the NYC air, which contains high levels of PM2.5, a possible genotoxic element. Therefore, while students of SCW enjoy their time in NYC, they should be aware of the risks of NYC air pollution and take necessary precautions.

The holiday of Chanukah in early December gathers many SCW students to light the menorah in the designated front lounge of the Brookdale Residence building. This year, there were over 100 menorahs in this room, with nine candles each (on the eighth night of Chanukah) being lit simultaneously throughout the night. Many students light Chanukah candles made from paraffin wax and sit in the unventilated room for hours at a time where pollutants can accumulate. Paraffin wax is made from petroleum and is composed of hydrocarbon molecules. When the wax is burned, the candle releases various potentially toxic elements into the air, including smoke, PM2.5, volatile organic compounds, formaldehyde, toluene, benzene, and soot. Each candle contributes to the atmospheric conditions in the room. A comparative study done in 2013 found that the toluene and benzene emissions from burning paraffin wax candles can increase to about the same level as vehicle emissions. Toluene and benzene have known carcinogenic effects, specifically leukemia and thyroid cancer. An early in vivo lymphocyte study

proved that lymphocytes have a difficult time metabolizing benzene, and therefore, genotoxicity such as sister chromatid exchange, micronuclei, and DNA double-strand breaks can occur. In most environmental conditions, these elements are so minute in volume that it is infrequent to cause genotoxicity; however, in the Brookdale front lounge on Chanukah, there is limited ventilation in the room filled with hundreds of candles that can put students at a higher risk. While more studies are being conducted, students should take precautions, such as reducing the use of paraffin wax candles, and the school should provide better ventilation in a larger location to lower the risk of exposure.

Stern College for Women students are exposed to various genotoxic elements throughout their day. Cell phone radiation, air pollution, ethidium bromide, and menorah lighting are just a few of the risks in our environment. Students should be aware of the risks they face every day and take necessary precautions. It is imperative that while enjoying their time in Stern, students must be mindful of the hazards, develop solutions to these concerns, and make the necessary changes.

*** **

Sources:

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00128-013-1104-6>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3447593/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33395946/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3271273/>

<https://genesenvironment.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s41021-021-00184-4>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21524716/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4843394/>

<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/mobile/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4843394/>

GENOTOXICITY OF DENTISTRY



BY ALIA HAKAKIAN

There are many genotoxic effects associated with dentistry, both for the dentist and their patients. Fully understanding the risks associated with dentistry allows us to better prepare and find a way to continue dentistry in the safest way possible. Although the risks may seem daunting, understanding them allows us to better deal with them.

One source of risk in this field is with the X-rays that dentists routinely perform. These images show the interior of one's teeth and gums, allowing the dentist to evaluate one's oral health. A dental X-ray can show things like cavities, impacted teeth, and tooth decay. DNA and DNA crosslinks can be damaged by the Ionizing Radiation that X-rays use. Additionally, X-rays have been found to cause genotoxic damage, such as single and double DNA strand breaks, cell death, and micronuclei. One study tested the exfoliated oral cells of 29 adults before and 10 days after exposure to partial and total cone-beam CT radiographs. This type of radiograph diverges the X-rays into a cone shape, and is often used in the diagnosis of dental diseases and planning of different treatments. The study found a statistically significant difference in the number of micronucleated cells before and after the CBCT treatment, both for partial

and total. Additionally, there was also a statistically significant difference in the frequency of other nuclear alterations both for partial and total CBCT. These nuclear alterations include chromatin condensation, nuclear dissolution, nuclear fragmentation, buds, and broken eggs. This study shows that exposure to dental radiographs leads to several different types of genotoxic damage.

This is not the only study that has found adverse genotoxic effects of dental X-rays. Another study was done in order to determine the genotoxic effects of X-rays on children after dental radiographs. The exfoliated buccal mucosa cells of 40 children were taken and studied immediately before and around 10 days after exposure to dental radiographs. Half of the group was exposed to bitewing radiographs, which are used to determine if there is tooth decay in the back teeth or cavities in between teeth, where they are not visible. The other half was exposed to digital dental panoramic radiographs. Their cells were then studied using the buccal micronucleus cytome assay, which is a minimally invasive way to study DNA damage, chromosomal instability, cell death, and the potential for buccal mucosa tissue to regenerate. The study found

that there was an increase in the number of micronuclei in the cells collected after exposure to both radiographs. Furthermore, the frequency of micronuclei was higher after exposure to bitewing, than after exposure to digital dental panoramic radiographs. Both of these radiographs caused genotoxic damage to the buccal mucosa cells of these children after a single exposure. These findings of genotoxic damage due to panoramic radiographs are supported by another study, which found that panoramic dental radiographs increase the frequency of chromosomal damage and nuclear alterations in epithelial gingival cells.

Both of these studies have shown genotoxic effects in the cells of individuals after one exposure to different types of dental radiographs. This is concerning not only for the patients who are exposed to these X-rays, but also for the dentists who are performing them. While patients undergo these X-rays about twice a year, dentists are administering them multiple times a day, and are therefore exposed to much more radiation. Dentists must take steps to protect themselves

SEE GENOTOXICITY
PAGE 27

GENOTOXICITY

FROM PAGE 26

from too much exposure to X-ray radiation. One way to limit the exposure to radiation is for both the dentists administering the X-ray and the patient receiving it to wear lead aprons. These aprons shield the body from unnecessary radiation exposure. It is also beneficial for the dentist administering the X-ray to leave the room after setting up the camera, before the X-ray actually begins. This way they are not in the room, being exposed to the radiation while it is at its peak.

Many dental materials have also shown significant genotoxic risk. One such material is the resin monomers of acrylic Andresen activator. An Andresen activator is an orthodontic appliance used to correct malocclusion, meaning it corrects the bite of jaws that don't close down correctly. An in vivo experiment was conducted in which 26 test subjects were treated with Andresen activators and compared to 16 test subjects who had never undergone orthodontic work. This is important because it ensures that the test subjects had not been previously exposed to the resin monomers of this appliance. Buccal mucosa cells were collected before the exposure and 7, 15, 30, 60, and 90 days after it. The cells were analyzed using the micronucleus assay as well as the comet assay. These tests saw a difference between the control and test group in tail moment, tail intensity, micronuclei, binuclear cells, and bud cells. There was no difference found in the cellular viability and tail length. These results show that exposure to the resin monomers of the Andresen activator does not necessarily cause cytotoxic effects, but definitely does cause genotoxic effects.

Another dental material that has been shown to cause genotoxic damage is the materials used in restorative dental fillings. Both the amalgams and the methacrylates resin-based materials have been found to be released into the buccal cavity and be systematically spread. The comet assay, micronucleus test, and monitoring of cell death markers were used to study the oral mucosa cells of 63 subjects. It was found that lifestyle variables such as smoking and alcohol intake did not affect the genotoxic response and are therefore not counted as confounding

factors, since they did not influence the results. The results showed unequivocal evidence that exposure to dental fillings made of both of these materials causes genotoxic damage. These findings are very important because after a patient receives a filling with these materials, they are constantly being exposed to the filling's materials for a long period of time and this can cause severe genotoxic effects.

When receiving fillings, it is important to make sure that one has the potential genotoxic risks in mind, in addition to solving the problem of a cavity or tooth decay. According to the FDA, the use of amalgams is declining, while silorane resin composites and glass ionomers or porcelain fillings are being used more. These composite fillings are more aesthetic than amalgam fillings, as their color matches the natural color of the tooth, instead of a silver color that is highly visible. These materials do not have the same level of genotoxic risk that amalgam fillings have, and are therefore safer to use. However, many people still opt to have amalgam fillings, as they are stronger and last longer than fillings made from other materials. At this time, the FDA has not put a ban on the use of amalgam fillings, but has advised that certain high-risk groups avoid using them.

These findings should not scare us and stop us from going to the dentist. The fact that we know this information allows us to be better informed and prepared to perform the necessary procedures in the safest way possible.

*** **

Sources:

<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/dental-amalgam-fillings/dental-amalgam-fillings-recommendations-graphics>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18812602/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30908883/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29091472/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29410514/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29607062/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22378751/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28739683/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21057932/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22872142/>



CLASS OF 2022

UNDERGRADUATE COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY CHECKLIST

Graduating This Year? Mazel Tov!

Be sure to complete all the items below to participate in your Commencement Ceremony.

STEP 1

Consult with your academic advisor or program director to be sure that all of your graduation requirements have been met.

Visit yu.edu/academic-advising to schedule.

STEP 2

Degrees are awarded in September, January and May. Contact your campus Registrar to determine if you are eligible to attend Commencement.

Visit yu.edu/registrar/graduation for additional information.

STEP 3

Apply for Graduation by your degree's deadline:

February 15th
(May Degrees)

March 1st
(September Degrees)

The Application for Graduation—Undergraduate Degree can be found here: yu.edu/registrar/forms

NOTE: If you miss this deadline your name will not be included in the Commencement Program.

Be sure to RSVP on the application to Commencement and give your accurate height and weight so your gown fits just right!

STEP 4

Pay your graduation/diploma fee of \$150 to the Office of Student Finance.

STEP 5

Cap and Gown Distribution Events will be held on each campus in early May.

Come with friends; have your picture taken in the photo booth to be featured at Commencement!

If you cannot pick up your attire at a distribution event you may pick it up from the Office of Student Life starting the day after the event.

No attire will be distributed at Commencement.

STEP 6

Each graduate will receive **6 guest tickets** when picking up their cap and gown.

If you would like to request additional tickets, please fill out the request form by visiting yu.edu/commencement

QUESTIONS?

Visit yu.edu/commencement for updates closer to the ceremony, or email commencement@yu.edu

**WE ARE EXCITED
TO CELEBRATE
WITH YOU!**

[YU.EDU/COMMENCEMENT](https://yu.edu/commencement)