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MY FEMINIST LEGACY

EDITORIAL

BY SHOSHANAH MARCUS,
EDITOR IN CHIEF

“God, she’s such a feminist” is a statement I have been hearing my entire life from family, peers, and even friends. Though these people intended on using this remark as an insult, I always found it extraordinarily empowering.

One of my favorite assignments during my time at Yeshiva University was in Dr. Nachumi’s “Introduction to Women’s Studies” course in which students were tasked with defining feminism and then choosing if they aligned with this movement. My definition, after intensely studying the history and the culture behind it, was quoting bell hooks’ “Feminist Politics” which explained, “Simply put, feminism is a movement to end sexism.”

As a woman working in the science and medical field, I have been looked down upon by male counterparts, been called a nurse in a demeaning tone (nurses are essential members of any medical team and therefore I am not even sure why that should be an insult), and even have been questioned by my family if I could be a good mother and wife while pursuing such a demanding career.

Coming from a co-ed high school, I was saturated with the notion that I needed to work harder than my male peers to prove my worth. My time at Stern, however, has allowed me to appreciate the female experience. Being in all-women classes

has been incredibly empowering because there was no need to prove ourselves to anyone other than ourselves. Taking advantage of every opportunity, I was able to rise into a position of leadership and responsibility as Editor in Chief of the YU Observer. I have borne witness to eye-opening stories from my peers, including the experience in aiding Ukrainian refugees, calls to change the pre-med culture, stories from an IDF veteran, how weight is the least interesting thing about us, neurodiversity representation, and so much more. Personally, I have had the opportunity to reflect on important topics, such as sparking much-needed conversations at YU, mental health for front line health workers, and the importance of losing and leaning into the unknown.

If we are truly to eliminate sexism, as feminism strives to do, it is equally important that gender not be taken into account when assigning a position, an aspiration which I carefully and consciously aspired to maintain throughout my decision in appointing the Observer’s first ever male Editor in Chief. Each application I reviewed was examined with the same level of scrutiny as the others, judged by the quality and promise of its content alone, entirely irrespective of the applicant’s gender. This year, it just so happened that the application deemed most qualified for the role was held by a man. Upholding my feminist beliefs, this made no impact on my decision to appoint him. Yes, women are faced with unique obstacles solely because

of their gender that must be addressed. But, I would argue that in a paper founded by women and, until now, only run by women, it takes a true feminist to rise up to be the one who can put both genders on an equal playing field.

Making an active decision at the start of the COVID pandemic to embrace every opportunity that came my way led me to undertaking one of the most impactful roles in my life: Editor in Chief of the Observer. I desired to break free from the voices that held me back from achieving any greater version of myself. I would like to take this opportunity to extend thanks to all those who allowed me to pursue this incredible endeavor.

First and foremost, I must thank the most incredible Managing Editor, Danielle Lane. My only condition for undertaking this role was to have a decent Managing Editor, and you far exceeded any expectations I may have had. Your willingness to go above and beyond in every aspect of this paper is remarkable. I admire you as a colleague and as a friend. I know you will go on to significantly impact the world.

It goes without saying that this paper has the most energetic, outspoken, and talented staff—from our news, features, opinions, science & technology, arts & culture, and business editors to our layout, website, business, and social media managers. I cannot thank each of you enough for all you have invested into this paper.



I have tremendous gratitude for my family and friends for their continued support. My amazing husband, Daniel, has been my backbone since I met him but especially in the past year as I, as he puts it, “was the chief of the paper.” He can certainly attest to the level of commitment I experienced in leading the paper; from countless dinner interruptions to “I promise I will be done editing in 5 minutes,” his unwavering patience and support has allowed me to achieve more than I can ever have hoped. My parents have been a source of inspiration and encouragement in all my endeavors, especially the ones that convince them to replace hundreds of plastic containers and bottles with reusable ones.

Finally, I want to extend tremendous thanks to God for giving me the inspiration to begin and the strength to carry on.

Looking to the future for the Observer, I am optimistic. I hope that you, the readers of this tremendous publication, feel inspired to read the stories that you would have never expected and look forward to the stories that have yet to be told.

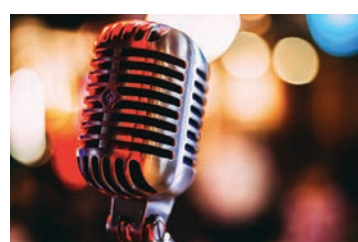
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NEWS



NEWS RECAP: MAY 2022 EDITION

BY YU OBSERVER
EDITORIAL BOARD

YU NEWS

- TEDx returned to YU on Tuesday, April 26, 2022 featuring 'Jewish Values in Action' with speeches by Sruli Fruchter (YC '22), David Siegel, Prof. Mark Finkel, Rabbi Dovid Bashevkin, Shoshi Tuchman (SSSB '22), and Adam Neumann (YC '13).

- Yeshiva University's first-ever STEM Exposition took place on Tuesday, April 26, 2022, allowing students to express their passion for science, technology, engineering, and math while connecting with peers and faculty.

- YU held annual event commemorating Yom HaShoah on April 27, 2022, international Holocaust remembrance day. The event featured speakers Shmuel Horowitz, co-president of the Student Holocaust Education Movement, as well as memorial songs, readings, and a reenactment of Peter Weiss's play, *The Investigation*, a retelling of the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trials. The evening concluded with words from child survivor, Anna Waller.

- On Monday, May 2, 2022, the Sy Syms School of Business held its annual Gala Awards Dinner, where several accomplished students were recognized for their outstanding achievements. The Dean Harold Nierenberg Valedictorian Award was awarded to Jonah Loskove (SSSB '22) and Shoshi Tuchman (SSSB '22). Professor Of The Year was awarded to Professor Gabriela Coiculescu and Adjunct Professor Of The Year was awarded to Professor Steven Mayer.

- The YU honors programs

have changed their merit-based scholarships to be a fixed scholarship instead of the currently tiered scholarships. Honors students who are awarded these scholarships will receive \$25,000 for early decision and \$20,000 for regular decision.

- Ariel Kahan (YC '24) was announced as the incoming Editor in Chief of *The Commentator* for the upcoming year with Seffi Jonas (YC '23) holding the title of Managing Editor.

- YU announced via Facebook that it would be renovating Weissberg commons. The school is seeking to transform the space into a space where community and academic programming can be held.

- Wilf campus held student elections for the 2022-2023 school year on May 6, 2022. Results can be found here. Beren campus held student elections for the 2022-2023 school year on May 12, 2022. Results can be found here.

- On May 11, 2022, Yeshiva University emailed its undergraduate students to inform them that they will not be required to test weekly for Covid-19 for the remainder of the semester.

WORLD NEWS

- On May 3, 2022, Politico released an early draft majority opinion of the Supreme Court to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. If this is the case, many states will implement early bans on abortion. Johnny Depp has sued Amber Heard for defamation following an op-ed she wrote for *The Washington Post* in 2018. Allegedly, Depp has lost many opportunities because of Heard's article, most notably the role of Captain Jack Sparrow in *Pirates of the Caribbean*. The trial is ongoing and is being covered live by media outlets.

- Russia and Ukraine entered their third month of conflict with Russian troops continuing their military siege on Ukraine.

- Apple announced this month that it would be discontinuing the iPod after 21 years of production. The iPod revolutionized the way people consumed music but has become more and more obsolete with the rise in smartphone users.

- NASA's James Webb Space Telescope captured the first clear images of a nearby galaxy. These images signify a large advancement for outer space technology and imaging abilities.

- On April 18, a federal judge ruled that masks cannot be federally mandated on public transport. Private companies can still require masks if they choose.

- Israel has seen an increase in terrorist related activities. This comes after tensions grew during the Muslim month of Ramadan during which Passover and Easter fell. It is estimated that 11 Jewish Israelis have been killed in recent months.

- China has placed almost 400 million residents under COVID related lockdowns this past month in attempts to completely eradicate the virus from the country. Residents in Shanghai are not permitted to leave their homes except for necessary outings. This has caused massive factory employee shortages and supply chain issues in the country but China insists that these measures are a necessary part of their zero COVID policy.



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WHAT WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT ELON MUSK

BY DANIELLE LANE,
MANAGING EDITOR

Unless you've been living under a rock for the last few months, you've probably heard that multibillionaire Elon Musk has recently purchased the social media platform, Twitter, for almost \$45 billion. There have been thousands of "hot takes" on social media from Elon Musk himself to political pundits and random trolls on the internet trying to put in their two-cents. It seems everyone has an opinion on this monumental and historic move. Except for me. While I wish Musk would use his money to fight poverty or build the world's biggest bounce house for me and my friends, I genuinely do not care that he has purchased Twitter. If the last two years have taught me anything, it's that we really can't predict what is going to happen. So rather than losing sleep over whether or not this is the end of society as we know it, I have chosen to lose sleep over Rex Orange Counties new fantastic album.

While I genuinely do not have an opinion on Musk's purchase of Twitter, I do have an opinion on the way we speak about Musk and his autism. On May 8, 2021, Elon Musk hosted Saturday Night Live, during

his opening monologue he revealed that he has autism spectrum disorder (ASD)*. If you have followed Musk for a long time, this probably didn't come as a surprise. Musk famously hyper-fixates on projects, has little to no tonal intonation when he speaks, and often seems uncomfortable or out of place in large social gatherings. All three of these characteristics are incredibly common attributes among individuals with ASD. One characteristic that is not attributed to ASD, however, is a low IQ.

According to a 2011 study by T. Charman, ASD is not strongly linked to intellectual disabilities, with some participants in the study even having above average IQs. I believe that this is the case for Elon Musk. A friend recently told me jokingly that whether you "hate the guy or love the guy, you can't deny he's a genius – one day we'll look back and say he was the da Vinci of our time." While I do love being stubborn, I couldn't help but agree. From PayPal to Tesla to SpaceX, Musk clearly has intelligence and intellect that is changing the world.

That's why I was stunned when, recently, I heard an episode of Pod Save America where the hosts bashed Musk for being a weird guy and socially atypical.

They gave examples of him being obviously uncomfortable at White House parties and talked about how he once wouldn't start a meeting until he cleared out his email inbox. Don't we, in the year 2022, know better? How is it acceptable to weaponize someone's ASD diagnosis in an attack against them? Hasn't his brilliance and savvy proven that, while he may not thrive or feel comfortable in the same social settings as a neurotypical individual, he is still one of the brightest entrepreneurs of our time?

In the coming months and years, we are going to be speaking about Elon Musk a lot. Buying Twitter and sending civilians to outer space are not going to be the last unconventional moves Musk makes. And as he progressively takes up more space in our cyber environment, an increasing amount of valid criticisms will be launched at him. I agree that as Musk grows his power we must stay vigilant, ready to check him as he makes large-scale decisions which will inevitably have a ripple effect on our everyday lives. But taking shots at his autism will never be acceptable. To critique or criticize him for behaviors out of his control and criticize features that are innate to his being and



entirely unrelated to his business decisions, is not only wrong, but it is cruel. Making fun of his Autism only serves to stigmatize and belittle his diagnosis.

Not despite but rather because of his diagnosis, Musk is going to continue to dominate the tech world for the foreseeable future so please be mindful with the way you speak about him and the criticism you glibly put online. I promise you that Elon Musk will not see your hurtful comments about his Autism, but someone you love who is autistic will.

* Musk referred to his diagnosis as Asperger's Syndrome but as of 2013 the DSM no longer identifies Aspergers as a diagnosis, rather adding it to the spectrum of Autism, therefore for the purposes of this article I will refer to his diagnosis as ASD.

ECONOMICS OF ABORTION

BY AARON SHAYKEVICH,
OPINIONS EDITOR

The right to have an abortion has been under fire recently in the wake of a leaked memo suggesting that the United States Supreme Court will repeal Roe v. Wade. According to a recent study, about 28% of Americans support repealing Roe. Many of those in favor of overturning Roe may be so inclined as they believe abortion to be equivalent to murder. One poll found that 31% of Americans strongly agree with the statement that "abortion is the same as murdering a child." As with many polarizing debates, it is highly unlikely one will be able to have a productive conversation or persuade somebody who feels this way to believe otherwise. However, as someone majoring in the econom-

ics of health and science, it feels imperative to me that we look at the right to abortion from a different angle. Putting the question of life aside, there is still a necessary conversation about the economic impact of abortion access for those on the fence about the merits of Roe.

Access to abortion is proven to have a direct positive benefit for young pregnant women. For women who had a pregnancy between the ages of fifteen and twenty-three, access to abortion increased years of education by 6% compared to those without access. For women who had a pregnancy between the ages of fifteen and nineteen, it has been found that later in life those who had access to an abortion are 38% more likely to be a part of the workforce. Women who were pregnant in that age group

and had access to an abortion have also been found to have a 37% increase in pay later in life compared to those without access.

One could argue that if a child is born instead of aborted, it can add economic value to society in the long run when it joins the labor force. This is supported by the findings of the United States Social Security Office which has found that "declining fertility rates and increasing life expectancies are causing the U.S. population to age," which will inevitably lead to a "declining worker-to-beneficiary ratio." Therefore, by limiting or restricting abortions, more people can carry the burden of caring for the increasing elderly population.

However, a study comparing

children born before and after Roe found that people born after Roe were more likely to go to college and less likely to be on welfare. The study reasons that this is because more children will grow up in an environment in which they are wanted. This shows that in locations where abortion is accessible, and women can have children when they feel they are ready, their child(ren) will be likely to have more knowledge, thus increasing their human capital. In fact, another study, comparing children born due to a denied abortion and children born subsequent to their mother having an abortion, found that children of denied abortions have worse maternal bonding and are more likely to live in poverty.

SEE **ECONOMICS OF ABORTION**,
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THE PRAYER OF AN INCOMING EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

BY BENJAMIN GOTTESMAN,
ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

Five hundred men sat in the sweltering Athenian city center as a wizened, old man argued the question of his survival. Several hours later they would sentence him to death, cementing themselves into the annals of infamy as the jury who condemned Socrates. The Athenian public indicted the philosopher for “corrupting the youth” with his in-your-face and unrelenting pursuit of knowledge. Ironically, the trial they convened to convict him ended up serving as the platform for one of his most renowned teachings. During his lengthy defense, Socrates remarked that his legendary wisdom was not a product of prodigious knowledge but a unique awareness of his natural ignorance. This teaching, now known as the Socratic Paradox, is immortalized in Plato’s words: “I know that I know nothing.” Apparently, this argument did little to dissuade the jurors, and Socrates carried out his own death sentence soon after.

The next time the YU Observer is published, I will be its Editor-in-Chief. There are no words to describe how excited I am to oversee a publication that has voiced passionate opinions and fostered the writings of creative spirits for over sixty-five years. It is an honor and a privilege to be able to leave my mark on the rich legacy of student contributors and leaders at Yeshiva

University. The only feeling that trumps the enthusiasm I have for this position is the daunting fear that has dogged me ever since I accepted it.

My trepidation can be neatly summarized in the exasperated questions that have echoed about my consciousness during the past few weeks: Who am I to pen an editorial? What gives me the right to play gatekeeper, deciding what is and is not fit to print? Socrates’ statement of proud ignorance may have seemed right to him, but I imagine he wished he chose a different line of defense, seeing as he was executed because people did not like what he had to say!

While I doubt that a begrudged reader of this paper will take as drastic steps as Socrates’s compatriots, it still requires a healthy dose of gumption (a kind word for naivete) to unabashedly share what you think in an open forum. This is especially true when you are so painfully aware of how unaware you truly are. I am no great philosopher or ethicist. I am not a mystic or a monk, nor a great scholar of Torah or any other school of thought for that matter.

Despite the unfortunate ending to the Socratic saga, I still find comfort in his last remarks, much in part because of a similar, and significantly more uplifting, teaching of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov zy”a. In Sichos HaRan (#3), Rebbe Nachman is quoted as teaching: “It is said that the goal of all knowledge is

to realize that one knows nothing.” It is related (Shivchei HaRan #33) that a variation of this teaching came on the heels of some of Rebbe Nachman’s most poignant insights in which he revealed the staggering breadth of his knowledge. It was only in these moments of complete mastery of the known that Rebbe Nachman interfaced with the vastness of what is unknown. L’havdil (interj.), yet similarly, Socrates could only invariably conclude that he knew nothing at all after decades of toil in the study of reason and logic.

It is my understanding that the purpose of our paper is the pursuit of truth. It is my hope that we will strive to engage in this noble endeavor as best as we possibly can. Let me make it abundantly clear from the very outset that truth, in its undiluted totality, is unknowable, save from the mind of He who created it. As the wise man of the Kuzari remarks: “If I had known God, I would be God.” All we can do, as men and women, is reflect upon our limited understanding of the world we encounter and opine as to our best path forward based on our finite insight. The more we engage with those who are different from ourselves, the more we will realize how very little we know. This, says Rebbe Nachman, is the closest we will ever get to truth itself.

Based on this, I would like to begin my term as Editor-in-Chief with an invitation. I am just one man and I have but one



mind. If I am to succeed in creating content worthy of your consideration I cannot do it alone. So please, come over. Reach out. Share with me your thoughts and experiences. If I publish something you like, let me know! If I publish something you hate, even more so let me know! If you have something to say, find the nearest laptop and start writing. The only way we’ll go anywhere as a YU community is if we’re loud about the little bit we do know and acknowledge the enormity of what we don’t.

As promised in the title, I will conclude with a prayer. Knowledge of all is God’s alone. Every time we think we approach an understanding of Him and His world, we realize just how far we actually are. This give-and-take is our earthly mission: continuous efforts toward growth in a never-ending path of sacred trying. We will never truly know. We will never find all the answers we are looking for. I pray that through working together we will find the answers we need to get where we need to go.

I look forward to working with you all.

ECONOMICS OF ABORTION FROM PAGE 3

Many in the U.S. argue against the usage of federal or state funds for abortion access. In fact, the U.S. has had a clause in spending bills since the 1980s called the Hyde amendment, which has prohibited federal funding of abortion unless the life of the pregnant mother is at risk or in a case of rape or incest.

This approach shifts the cost of the abortion to the mother as many insurances do not cover abortions. Only around 23% of women in the U.S. did not pay out of pocket for their

abortions. The average cost for women who had paid was \$485, not including loss of work which can add another couple hundred dollars depending on their employment status. Seeing that almost 50% of abortion patients have a family income below the poverty level, and since the decision to have an abortion is elastic to price, the high cost is likely to deter many from getting a safe abortion. A high cost of abortion can be just as harmful as restrictive laws on abortion.

It is clear that due to preventative laws on abortion many will choose to have unsafe abortions. In developing countries with strict abortion laws, a large part of the obstetrics and

gynecology budget is spent on post-abortion care due to complications. If states in the United States choose to ban abortions, the inevitable increase in unsafe abortions and the need for post-abortion care will create a cost that could have entirely been avoided.

The risks of unsafe abortions as well as the economic and health burden they impose will be drastic. There are states that will likely always provide access to abortion, and they will inevitably carry the expense of providing for women in states that will ban abortion. Unfortunately, young women whose parents do not support abortion will not be able to exercise this option.

With the possibility of Roe v. Wade being overturned, the lives and welfare of many will now be put at risk due to those that consider themselves pro-life. The clear benefits of abortion access, coupled with the horrifying risks of unsafe abortion, should inspire people to think of abortion access as a clear public health necessity.



OPINIONS

REVISITING ROE V. WADES: WEIGHING IDEOLOGY AND SCIENCE

BY MIRA POSTELNECK AND
ATARA BACHRACH,
OPINIONS EDITOR

The discussion surrounding abortion is a heated one, especially in light of recent events. This is especially relevant due to speculations that the Supreme Court decision of *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized abortion in the 1970s, may be overturned. There are many different aspects and nuances to each side of this debate, both with strong claims and opinions. In order for someone to form a truly enlightened opinion, however, it is our strong belief that an informed review of the history of abortion and its opposing positions is not only important, but imperative for one to undertake when contemplating this issue. This includes examining its legality in the past, current laws, potential changes to come and the ideology that accompanies this.

The controversy is primarily based on an age-old moral dispute: does ideology take precedence over science, or is it the other way around? In oversimplified terms, the pro-choice perspective is one which believes that, prior to fetal viability at twenty-three weeks, it is a woman's right to have an abortion. Pro-life supporters, on the other hand, take a different stance, with the strictest of the movement holding that life begins at conception, and so abortion at any stage of fetus development is murder. This view correspondingly maintains that governments should not only have the right to ban abortion, but have a moral and legal obligation to do so, as it is viewed as an extension of murder.

Now, seemingly, this could be simple: why not just play it safe? If we just legalize abortion, we might avoid the whole controversy altogether, and no one gets hurt. But, unfortunately, it's significantly more complicated than that, for a copious amount of reasons. So why don't we start with what we know? Let's take a look at the facts.

Until the early 1970s, all of the United States were to address abortion "in accordance with the views of its citizens," meaning that rulings

would fall to the legislation of each individual state. In 1969, *Roe v. Wade* was brought to the Supreme Court, at a time when abortions in Texas were specifically prohibited excluding cases of rape and incest. In 1973, the Court concluded *Roe vs. Wade*, officially ruling that women have a fundamental "right to privacy," and therefore, a pregnant woman has the liberty to choose if they have an abortion.

For a long time after *Roe v. Wade*, the matter seemed untouchable. At least, that is, until 4 years ago, when Mississippi changed its abortion laws, making most abortions illegal after only 15 weeks of pregnancy—around two months sooner than cases like *Roe* sanction. Despite its enactment in 2018, this law never actually went into effect, as a legal challenge ensued immediately, ultimately leading to the case going all the way to the Supreme court, where Mississippi asked the Court to overrule the verdicts of *Roe vs. Wade* and other similar cases which stated that US states can not impose "undue burden" on the right to abort prior to fetus viability.

Which brings us here, to May 2022, after the contentious draft opinion of Supreme Court Justice Alito was leaked to the public, an event which sparked a newly heated revival of the debate on abortion. The document discusses in great detail the pending overturn of *Roe vs. Wade*, as well as its rulings and bases, including any constitutional disparities with the law. It also contains potential rights that U.S. state legislations may gain should the case be overturned, such as the right to not only legalize abortion, but criminalize it, the realities of which may vary depending on the state. This means that, in some states, any person caught performing an abortion could face up to a \$1,000 fine and an entire year in county jail, while some states have even prepared trigger bans that threaten anyone who even attempts to perform an abortion with a \$10,000 fine and a lifetime sentence in prison. These would be, and are, some of the most extreme abortion laws to be legislated in the past 70 years.

Justice Alito writes in the draft that "the Constitution makes no reference to abortion, and no such right is implicitly protected

by any constitutional provision, including the one on which the defenders of *Roe* and *Casey* now chiefly rely." This demonstrably contradicts the verdicts of *Roe vs. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood vs. Casey*, which were established on the premise that U.S. citizens do have an inherent right to privacy and autonomy, as inferred by the courts from the 14th amendment of the constitution. While earlier verdicts like *Roe's* were among the first to expand this supposed right to privacy, many of the Justices understand these as critical misinterpretations of the 14th Amendment, one that should never have passed legislation to begin with.

In the interest of playing devil's advocate, let's run for a moment with the idea that autonomy and privacy are not understood as inherent rights (we don't necessarily agree with this, just, bear with us). And, for argument's sake, let's just say that *Roe v. Wade* does get overturned (G-d forbid), a scenario in which abortion would essentially become a matter of state legislation, and nothing else. Even if all of this were to happen, the debate would not suddenly become irrelevant or moot. Perhaps, at this point, our concern should shift focus to the clash between ideology and science—two seemingly contradictory foundational values, whose significance may be key to unraveling this heated controversy.

The way we see it, the two don't have to be mutually exclusive. Science can work to contribute to ideology, sometimes even aiding to explain it. While ideology, too, makes way for science. Ultimately, the point is, that even when something seems so apparently black and white, so objectively simple, if both parties are able to zoom out and

take a look at the bigger picture, we may come to realize that the fundamentals of our beliefs don't have to contradict each other.

What if there were a way to take a step back, and include science in our ideology? Maybe in viewing it from a more analytical standpoint, we may, and perhaps should, learn that our beliefs can be reconsidered with the incoming of new information. This does not mean throwing away your values at the prospect of something seemingly "easier" or "simpler." It means recognizing the nuance and multifaceted nature of a complex topic such as this, and including parts of each viewpoint in our analysis when forming an opinion and using caution and diligence in our perspective.

Because, after all, it was the scientific understanding that fetus viability outside the womb begins at 24 weeks of gestation which led to our personal belief that the right for a woman to choose to have an abortion is necessary, although some may not approve. And this was not an opinion formed lightly; it was developed with a heavy combination of both science and ideology, specifically religion. These also aided into our personal belief that, even if the 14th amendment doesn't provide us with the right to autonomy and privacy, something absolutely should. Autonomy and privacy are not privileges to be afforded; rather, they are essential human needs, things which should be our undeniable right as citizens. And after thorough research on all accounts we strongly assert that should *Roe vs. Wade* be overturned, the repercussions would be devastating. This would be an immense setback to our growth as a society and is a cause worth fighting for.



OPINIONS

MATAN TORAH AND YU'S THEORETICAL DRESS CODE

BY HANNAH POLLAK

One would never expect to see an Opinion's piece in a YU newspaper discussing whether or not the University should have an academic integrity policy. In the same way, no one would ever question YU's zero tolerance towards bullying, abuse, or other more trivial or severe infractions. Different, however, is the heated issue of a dress code, a debate that doesn't seem to have the same degree of consensus. I'd assume that few would argue that YU should enforce strict rules of how exactly students ought to dress. However, there are many who do believe that there should be natural, almost intuitive, standard and sensitivity met when it comes to a student's personal presentation on campus. While others passionately disagree. Some might say that even if a dress code is not enforced and is merely expected, YU would be undermining the foundational values of a liberal society turning the school into a place of religious elitism instead of beautiful diversity and Jewish inclusion.

While I cautiously subscribe to some liberal values, and deeply believe that YU is a beautiful place of diversity and Jewish inclusion, I still think that some level of a dress code would be justified. No matter how you like to understand the meaning and implications of "Torah U'Madda," and regardless of your opinion about the Five Torot, it's important to recognize that YU adheres to the values and beliefs of age-old, authentic Judaism. We have a policy of academic integrity because the Torah commands us to be honest. There is zero tolerance toward abuse because injustice and assault are unacceptable in the Jewish tradition. We relentlessly fight bullying because of our axiomatic belief that every human was created b'tzelem Elokim [in G-d's image]. We are an inclusive school because of our central value of *veahavta l'reacha kamocho*- loving our peers as we love ourselves. And while many would not place integrity, protection of the vulnerable, and love for our fellow Jews in the same category as a dress code, allow me to suggest that dress code in a yeshiva is in fact,

an issue of values.

In my personal opinion, Yeshiva University is primarily a yeshiva, a place where Torah is learned and lived. YU is a Makom Torah. It is a place where students come to get an education and earn a degree but, more importantly, do so in an atmosphere of constant growth and learning. Working upon the premise that YU is fundamentally a place of Torah learning, it would be reasonable to believe that in order to show reverence to the teachers, the students, the Torah, and to G-d Himself, a respectable dress code would not be an outdated, derogatory, anti-liberal measure. It is true that we are not in elementary school anymore, but we are not in a secular college either. Just as no one would say that a strict student uniform would be appropriate, perhaps absolute freedom in regard to dress should be considered undesirable as well. While it is presumptuous to say that value "x" is more important in Torah than value "y," it has generally been accepted that loving our fellow Jew is a central pillar in halacha. In any case, that does not mean that we should dismiss other central values such as, in this particular case, *kavod haTorah* (honor for the Torah). Sometimes a tension is created between respect for other human beings and the respect for Torah. However, I personally think that it is possible for an individual and/or an institution to grapple with two seemingly exclusive values.

As the holiday of Shavuot, Zman Matan Torateinu [The time in which our Torah was given], approaches, I try to visualize what Ma'amad Har Sinai [The Sinaitic Revelation] might have looked and felt like. The Torah speaks about the Jewish People hearing the lightning and seeing the thunder- we saw G-d himself speaking through the cloud (whatever that means...). Everyone trembled, and tangibly felt the happiness and awe of the moment. The Torah prescribes to "let your children and the children of your children know the day you stood before your G-d in Horeb" (Devarim 4:9,10). Chazal learn (Moed Katan 15a) that this means that, just as the Torah was originally given with "reverence, fear and trembling," so too every single day throughout



history, as we re-experience the Sinai revelation, Torah should be learned with "reverence, fear and trembling" as well. While not the only way, intentionally dignified or proper dress is a valid way to display reverence towards Torah, and at the same time, help guide one towards developing an internal sensitivity to the true value of *kavod haTorah*.

Parenthetically, it is important to emphasize that it's unacceptable to judge any person whose dress does not explicitly reflect our perceptions of respect for Torah. Do not jump to the simplistic conclusion that since you dress one way and I dress in another, that you must have a higher level of appreciation for *Devar Hashem* (G-d's word) than I. Instead of questioning what others do, why not ask instead: how does our own *kavod haTorah* look, perhaps in more internal ways than dress code? How much do we respect Torah scholars, how much do we invest to apply what we learn, and- to be very honest- do we look as put together when we open a sefer in the comfort of our homes as we do when we learn in shul or the Beis? I personally know people who are way less particular about their dress code than I am (not to say that I am Miss Put Together at all), and at the same time probably have significantly more fear of Hashem and respect for Torah than I do. We all know that, sadly, the "yeshivish look" is not necessarily the main authentic staple used to identify a real ben Torah.

I want to restate my belief that a dress code for YU would be reasonable and religiously justified. Nonetheless, this belief is only theoretical. I'm not as simplistic as to believe that actually enforcing a dress code would be healthy

or even constructive. I'm not as naïve as to think that YU even has the authority to make dress code an issue of policy. However, it is the responsibility of the students to create an ambiance that resembles the Matan Torah experience. The challenge of dress code might be analogous to the challenge of *lashon hara* [gossip]. It's practically impossible for YU's administration to create a *lashon hara*-free school. They can educate us and create awareness, but at the end of the day, it's up to the students to guard their mouths and be sensitive not to speak poorly of another person. The same comes to mind about the challenge of creating a Shabbos atmosphere on campus. Our dedicated staff could organize the most exciting and inspiring Shabbos programming, but ultimately, it's the students' responsibility to allow that Shabbos aura to be felt.

So, should YU have a dress code? That's an interesting theoretical question. However, considering that the question will probably never be practical, if we sincerely believe that out of respect for Torah v'lomdeiah [Torah and her scholars] some standards and sensitivities ought to be upheld, why not start with fully committing ourselves to the values we want the world to embrace? It is easy to say that the world should change out of a feeling of contempt or entitlement. On a less universal level, it is also easy to have an opinion about the many changes YU should implement. However, the challenge is to be the change. To be introspective and to take responsibility; to be consistent with what we believe in our personal lives. After writing this article, I say to myself: "Stop preaching and start doing."

WILL YOU BE MY CAF DADDY?

BY ELI SAPERSTEIN,
OPINIONS EDITOR

Spring has sprung and it's the time of year when YU students begin searching for the most elusive of students and no, I'm not talking about male psych majors. I'm talking about caf Daddies. However, this year it seems that they are few and far in between. Where did all the caf Daddies go?

Reasons for this abound, but the prevailing explanation is due to the increase in caf prices. Many, like myself, have been extremely frugal, and have tried to spend as little as possible in order to try to make our caf dollars stretch until the very last day of the semester. Recently, it seems that every conversation in the caf, eventually leads to "so how much do you have left." However, since Pesach break, "Caf Daddies" (students who as the spring semester comes to a close and the deadline to spend caf dollars or lose them, offer to pay for meals for their friends who have run out of their caf dollars) have begun coming out of hibernation in anticipation of the semester ending and all their nonrefundable caf money being taken by YU. This, of course, has prompted some new practices in the caf. For example, instead of simply tapping your ID, one is now required to take it out and show the cashier, confirming one's identity and only subsequently being able to purchase food. However, much of this is for naught as caf daddies appear to be much less prevalent than in years past due to the aforementioned price increase.

An anonymous student (YC '24) shared, "I purchased the standard plan for this semester since I had roughly \$200 left-over from the previous semester where I had the high plan which also had lower prices."

While this year is not particularly unique, as every year students seem to get upset over the caf (even without an unforeseen price increase) this is a time when students are upset and feel unheard when it comes to the caf. There have been pushes in the student body towards organizing and creating chats that are provocative such as "YU Caf Boycott" where there has been a petition made with hundreds of signatures expressing the student body's disappointment in the caf to chats about free pizza and leftover food as students realize that they simply cannot afford to live off the caf. No student is thrilled with the rules that are finally being enforced which, according to YU, have been put in place to abide by laws regarding the tax exemption status of the system, as well as the inventory controls YU has put in place in order to ensure proper service. Yet, I believe it is well overdue to analyze whether that 9% discount that this entire hassle is over is actually worth it.

"At the end of the semester, I am already low on funds even though I frequently skip meals, opting to go to events where they sponsor free food," the anonymous student continued. "This shouldn't make sense since the standard plan is implied to be able to provide three meals a day for the entire semester."

There are signs that have been put out by the cashier stations saying that students cannot pay for other students as "Dining Club card funds are non-transferable and can only be used for purchases by and for the person whose name and picture are on the card." Another sign says that there is "a daily limit of \$100 on grocery purchases and 6 of the same item."

These are understandable rules.

What makes less sense is when grocery items cost significantly more in the caf stores than everywhere else, completely eating through any "savings" from the 9% discount.

I believe the distinction needs to be made in the cafeteria system between the food that is made in-house versus the other items made available, which are significantly more expensive. As of publication, buying a lunch with two sides is \$12.75, whereas a single packet of beef jerky is \$9.99. The same item can be bought and delivered from Amazon for \$5.99. This is not a unique example. It is harder to find an item not part of the actual "meal" that is at market price than isn't. YU Dining Services appears to subsidize the actual meals that are bought, thus keeping the actual meal price itself low, relative to the recently raised restaurant prices, all the while, simultaneously increasing the prices of grocery or other food items that can be bought via the caf card. This appears to be consistent with the approach that YU has, where they kept the Shabbos meal prices at \$15 while raising the prices of every single sushi item by approximately a dollar, making it more expensive than Chop Chop, even though YU Dining Services is supposed to be working for the students of YU with the purpose of keeping prices as low as possible. Sushi is not the only item that has suffered a price increase. Many, if not all, of the specialty items such as Chinese hotdogs and pizza snaps have been increased from approximately \$3.75 to \$4.75. That seems to have been the standard procedure throughout the caf, raising every item by a dollar.

YU requires the meal plan for those in the dorms, and first-year students are required to be in the dorms. While there are different options available, as YU offers three tiers, the lowest plan, called the "reduced plan," is \$1650. If something that is supposed to be a bargain needs to be enforced, it may be time to stop and rethink and allow students to begin to make their own choices. In addition, students who choose not to dorm are still required to participate in the meal plan.

While they are "only" required to put on \$500 per semester and this plan purely consists of "flex dollars," which are different from "caf dollars" as caf dollars are only able to be used in the YU cafeterias and YU stores. These "funds [that] may

[be] used on campus and at participating local vendors. These funds are tax free and expire at the end of the spring semester." In addition, on the YU Dining Services' website it is unclear as to what the formula is used to disperse flex dollars vs caf dollars with the "low plan" allotting 10% of funds towards flex dollars whereas the "regular plan" allots just over 14%. For context the "high plan" allots 17.5%. It begs the question as to what the logic behind all this is and how or even if these requirements are for the benefit of the students.

The whole point of the caf system, at least according to the student body, is to provide the students with regular, accessible, and kosher food at an affordable price. YU Dining Services views it differently. They say that "[t]he Yeshiva University Undergraduate Dining Club Card is designed to give people greater convenience, accessibility, and money management in the Dining Halls, Facilities, and Convenience Stores located on the Wilf and Beren Campuses." On the YU website, they mention that "One of the important benefits of enrolling in the YU meal plan is that purchases of food and/or beverages by YU undergraduate and graduate students are exempt from the NY sales tax, thereby providing an almost 9% discount or benefit on each qualifying purchase." While the convenience of having kosher food available needs to be talked about, the question is at what cost? Being able to buy Dipsy Doodles for 1.50 in the YU vending machine at 2 AM is a wonderful service that is provided for the students. However, I know that I would rather not have to resort to wasting caf dollars in order to spend them all before I lose it.

Another important issue is that so many students still run out of caf dollars well before the semester ends. Others, who throughout the year were wary of this exact situation, forced themselves to carefully crimp and save for fear of spending too much only to be left with hundreds of dollars on their account and unable to spend it on anything besides the ridiculously overpriced items in the YU caf. It may well be time to begin to question whether this system is working for everyone.

Thankfully, in an email sent out to the student body, YU is address-



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ing this issue. YU has created and instituted a plan and emailed it out under the name “YUCares.” This appears to be exactly what students want, except that they aren’t able to give it to their friends. This wonderful plan is designed for someone with a lot of caf dollars to help a fellow student out with less - but up to \$75. The YU Cares program was advertised to the YU student body in an email sent out on May 6th “Building on previous years’ success with the YU Cares program, we are pleased to announce the Spring 2021 YU Cares program.

Students may designate a one-time payment of up to \$75 to a special fund that will be made available to students in need, for use in YU’s cafeterias.”

While this may seem like “caf daddying” with extra steps, it is frustrating for students who want to help their friends or siblings that they cannot directly transfer or benefit them. Instead, they are being forced to trust the YU Dining Services. Students do not trust YU Dining Services and it is hard to blame them. YU Dining Services is a system that they are forced to cooperate with, a system that they have no say in, and a system that is not transparent, all the while raising the prices

while not increasing the quality of service in any impactful way.

I do not want to appear to be angry or unreasonable, I am merely trying to express the frustration that is being felt by the entire student body. I would welcome a response from the YU Dining Services or anyone who is able to share what is going on behind closed doors with the student body. I, like all the rest of the student body, want things to be fixed and wish for the caf system to be more transparent and be better at communicating to the students. Of course, we would also appreciate it if the Häagen-Dazs were less than \$7.59 (for comparison you can buy Häagen-Dazs or even Ben & Jerry’s at Key Foods for less than \$6). This is a difficult time worldwide and the supply chain crisis is of course af-

fecting us like everyone else. But that doesn’t mean there aren’t other ways to work things out to make these issues easier for the students.

What I am sure would be appreciated by the entire student body would be to lower the minimum payments in order to join the plan as well as not requiring it for students in the first place, especially for students who do not live on campus. Converting more, if not all caf funds to flex dollars while seemingly unreasonable and unrealizable should be a starting point for conversations and discussions going forward. If you have to require something that is beneficial (unless it’s a vaccine of course) there’s generally something wrong with what is being required.

DOULAS FOR DISPARITY: HOW A NEW TRI-FACETED MODEL FOR INDIVIDUALIZED CARE WILL SAVE LIVES

BY SOPHIE FRANKENTHAL,
STAFF WRITER

One of the most tragic realities is the loss of life at the exact moment in which a new life is expected to enter the world. Thanks to medical and technological advancements, infant and maternal mortality, which plagued humanity for centuries, has been significantly reduced. We tend to take for granted the level of miracle that is involved every time both mother and infant survive pregnancy and delivery. However, it is frightening that there exists significant disparity in the experience and outcome of childbirth, depending largely on one’s race. With this in mind, I believe that in order to truly address the issue of maternal-infant mortality, we must prioritize the delivery of individualized, patient-centered care, which is why one recently implemented NYC Initiative stands out as one of tremendous potential.

The CDC reports that pregnancy-related deaths are three times more common amongst black women than white women. The majority of these deaths are completely preventable, as most of them can be attributed to structural racism and lack of quality healthcare, whereas only a few are the result of underlying medical conditions.

In New York City, the statistics are even more shocking. According to the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), the rate of pregnancy-related deaths in NYC is nine times higher for black women than for white women and the infant mortality rate is upwards of

three times higher. It is for this reason that on March 23, 2022, NYC Mayor Eric Adams announced a city-wide expansion of three initiatives specifically designed to combat maternal and infant health inequities in NYC.

The first of these initiatives is the Citywide Doula Initiative, which aims to increase the number of practicing doulas (individuals who are trained to provide physical and emotional support during both pregnancy and childbirth) throughout NYC, as well as to provide doula services to eligible families, free of charge. These services include prenatal consultations, active assistance throughout labor and delivery (whether in the clinic or at home), and postpartum care. The second initiative, termed the Midwifery Initiative, seeks to research and integrate current midwifery care models with the goal of improving prenatal care and delivery outcomes in both clinical and home-based environments. The final initiative, the Maternity Hospital Quality Improvement Network (MHQIN), focuses on developing strategies to monitor and resolve racial inequities in the clinical setting, primarily by means of expanded staff training in areas such as racial equality, unconscious bias, and patient-centered care (an approach to care that is informed by the needs, preferences, and values expressed by the patient).

What is both unique and encouraging about the expansion of these initiatives is the emphasis it places on systemic causes of racial discrepancies in health-

care. Much of the discussion regarding health disparity is focused on the lack of affordability and accessibility to healthcare for individuals of a lower socioeconomic status. While this is undeniably a troubling aspect of the American healthcare system, it is not necessarily something that can be addressed on a state-based level. Additionally, when it comes to racial disparities in particular, it is a difference in treatment quality that creates the biggest rift, rather than lack of affordability. The American Heart Association explains that black women often experience bias and stereotyping within the healthcare setting— even if they are wealthy and successful. Systemic racial bias within healthcare is often implicit, and it mainly manifests in the undervaluing and dismissal of expressed patient worries and needs. According to both the AHA and the CDC, the fact that the concerns and symptoms of black mothers are taken less seriously than those of white mothers results in a lower level of care, and is one of the primary reasons that black women are more likely to die of a preventable pregnancy-related cause.

Mayor Adams’s recognition of systemic bias as the root cause of the disparity in maternal healthcare is what makes this initiative so exceptional. The expansion functions as a tri-faceted model, with each component combating the issue from a slightly different angle.

The main objective of the

Citywide Doula Initiative is to provide pregnant women with personalized attention and care through an individual who is specifically trained to be attentive to the emotional and psychological needs of the mother. Collaboration between midwives and physicians, as prescribed by the Midwifery Initiative, is expected to add an element of individualization and compassion to the typically sterile healthcare provided clinically. Lastly, the MHQIN seeks to address the crux of race-related health disparities, by implementing sensitivity training across various levels of the healthcare system in the hopes that implicit prejudice can ultimately be eradicated. Mayor Adams has introduced an extraordinary program, with the potential to ensure that no woman loses her own life or the life of her infant solely because she didn’t receive the highest possible level of care. Perhaps even more promising is the fact that, on a broader scale, action is now being taken to ensure that every woman feels comfortable, safe, and— most importantly— heard, regardless of her race or ethnicity. At the end of the day, it is crucial that we strive for every infant not only to survive, but to live and thrive in a world in which they, their voices, and their needs will be attributed infinite worth, without exception.



TWO NEW RABBINIC COUPLES JOINING THE BEREN CAMPUS

BY RAQUEL LEIFER,
FEATURES EDITOR

After serving the Stern community for four years, Rabbi Jacob and Rebbetzin Penina Bernstein will be leaving the Beren campus to make aliyah [move to Israel]. Dean Shoshana Schechter shared that “under their leadership, the community has grown and the Torah programming has strengthened exponentially.” Rabbi and Rebbetzin Bernstein have made a tremendous impact on religious life at Stern and have helped to cultivate a vibrant Torah learning environment. They will be dearly missed.

The Stern community is excited to welcome two new Rabbinic couples who will be joining the Beren Campus this upcoming semester. Rabbi Azriel (Azi) and Rebbetzin Ellie Fine are taking on the role of campus Rabbi and Rebbetzin. Rabbi Avrumi and Rebbetzin Michal Schonbrun, who were a Rabbinic intern couple this past year, will be joining as the new Scholars in Residence. Dean Schechter also expressed, “We are thrilled to be welcoming the Fines and the Schonbruns to continue building and strengthening what the Bernsteins have built while adding their own kochot [strengths] and their own talents and personalities to our incredible community.”

Rabbi Azriel (Azi) Fine is originally from Riverdale, New York and is currently living in Bayit Vagan on the YU Israel campus learning in the Gruss Kollel. Rabbi Fine attended Yeshivat Shaalvim (2015-2016), and then continued on at Yeshiva University in Rabbi Michael Rosensweig’s shiur. Rabbi Fine majored in Biology and minored in Psychology (2016-2019). He is currently in the RIETS Semicha Program while pursuing a Masters in Azrieli Graduate School of Education, and the RIETS Ferkauf certificate program in Mental Health Counseling. Rabbi Fine is currently a Rabbinic Intern at Congregation Ohel Ari in Raanana, Israel. Rebbetzin Ellie Fine is originally from the Upper West Side. She attended MMY for Shana Aleph and Bet (2016-2017), and then went to Stern where she majored in Biology and minored in Psychology (2018-2020). During that time, she was a counselor on Yad B’Yad for two summers and is looking forward to reuniting with all of her campers at Stern! Rebbetzin Fine is currently a Fellow, learning in Matan Eshkolot and Lapidot Learning programs (Tanach and Halacha Education programs) in Yerushalayim and serving as a Rakezet [young relatable teacher] at MMY. Rebbetzin Fine

plans on pursuing a degree in Clinical Social Work and to practice as a therapist.

Rabbi Avrumi Schonbrun is originally from Cedarhurst, New York. After High School, he learned in Yeshivat Shaalvim in Israel for two years. Following Yeshiva, he attended YU where he majored in Math. At YU, and while in semicha [Rabbinical education] at RIETS, Rabbi Schonbrun was privileged to learn under Rav Rosensweig shlit”a. This past year he completed semicha and next year plans to continue his learning in the Yeshiva’s Kollel Elyon. Rebbetzin Michal Schonbrun grew up in West Orange, New Jersey. She went to Maayanot in Teaneck for High School and MMY for seminary. After seminary, she stayed in Israel and did a year of sherut leumi [national service] at Chorev Elementary School in Katamon. After sherut, she came back to Stern and majored in Sociology and Judaic Studies. She then taught 3rd grade Judaic Studies at Yeshivat Noam, before returning to the Beren Campus to learn under the incredible Rebbeim at GPATS, where she has been for the last two years and where she hopes to continue learning next year. She also just recently finished

Azrieli (Jewish Education).

The YU Observer interviewed both Rabbi and Rebbetzin Fine and Rabbi and Rebbetzin Schonbrun to discuss some of their thoughts as they integrate into their new roles.

Raquel Leifer (RL): What inspired you to pursue a career in Jewish education?

Rabbi Fine (RF; Campus Rabbi): A lot of it was my own Rebbeim, teachers, and my parents. They all really did an amazing job at creating openings for me and really connecting me to Torah, mitzvos, and Avodas HaShem [serving HaShem]. The impact that it had showed me the importance of having figures like that, and it inspired me to want to be that figure for others as well.

Ellie Fine (EF; Campus Rebbetzin): I come from a family that is very involved in Jewish communal work. My father is a Rabbi, who has been a school principal, and is consistently involved in Torah education. My mom is a clinical therapist who specializes in helping the Jewish community. They are both tremendous role models, and

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STAFF WRITER PROFILE: SOPHIE FRANKENTHAL

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 May 2022 edition, the *YU Observer* is highlighting Sophie Frankenthal

Name: Sophie Frankenthal
College: Stern College for Women
Major: Sociology Major and Biology Minor
Year: Third
Favorite part of being on (or back on) campus? The social aspect of campus, as well as the ability to take part in campus events and opportunities.

Broadway’s also a pretty cool perk. :)

What do you miss most about Zoom school? The flexibility to participate in class from anywhere in the world- and of course the ability to spend more time with my family (I live in Chicago).

Currently Reading: *The Ghost Writer* by Philip Roth
Currently watching: A variety of different murder and cult documentaries.

Coke or Pepsi? Not such a soda fan...

Android or Apple? Android
What’s a quote/thought/or piece of advice you have for your fellow students? “We spend so much of life forcing ourselves to walk in high

heels, but at the end of the day- we’d all be a lot happier in slippers.”

See some of Sophie’s past articles here:

- <https://yuobserver.org/2022/03/surprise-engagement-how-an-embarrassing-mistake-taught-me-the-power-of-clickbait/>
- <https://yuobserver.org/2022/02/biohazard-the-toxic-pre-med-culture-at-scw/>
- <https://yuobserver.org/2021/08/my-summer-in-ghana/>

Photo Credit: Sophie Frankenthal



CLUB PROFILE: YU JOURNAL OF MEDICINE AND DENTISTRY

BY AARON SHAYKEVICH,
OPINIONS EDITOR

Each month, the *YU Observer* aims to highlight one club available to the YU undergraduate community. For the May 2022 edition, the *YU Observer* is highlighting YU Journal of Medicine and Dentistry.

Disclaimer: The author of this article is a member of the editorial board for this journal.

Club Name: YU Journal of Medicine and Dentistry

Heads: Co-Editors in Chief:
Isaac Silverman & Naomi Fried

Relevant Campus(es): Wilf and Beren

What is your club's mission statement?

The YU Journal of Medicine and Dentistry aims to foster a greater interest in and appreciation for the medical and dental sciences at Yeshiva University. Our goal is to be a part of Yeshiva University's mission to serve as a "wellspring of wisdom."

Why is this club important?

This club will educate readers on various health-related issues. The health-related topics covered can be both understood and internalized by the reader. We hope to be an educational journal that can also serve as a guide for practical applications in certain areas. The main purpose is to serve as an outlet for students who want to write about the research they have done and an opportunity for them to get published.

What was your pull to get in-

involved in/start the club?

We saw the great need for a club like this at YU. Many students pursuing pre-health related majors conduct some form of research over the course of their undergraduate years. This journal would serve as an outlet for their work. Additionally, while Biology is one of the most popular majors, there is no proper place for students to share what they are learning or to demonstrate the skills that they are gaining. After noticing that YU has professional publications for several other major fields like political science and history, we knew that it was imperative for a pre-health devoted journal to be created. We are extremely grateful to Professor Radhashree Maitra for being the faculty advisor for the journal. It is thanks to her that all of the articles submitted are carefully reviewed and accurate. She always tells us that if we are doing something, we should do it the best way possible, and we could not agree more.

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

We hope to publish an issue of the journal every Fall and Spring

semester going forward. Additionally, we would like to host an event for the contributing writers and editors where they will be able to present their research to a larger audience at YU. Our goal for future issues is to assemble a team of medical and dental professionals in various fields to peer review the journal. Future events will also hopefully include the ability to meet and hear from those professionals.

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

Don't wait, reach out to people in your major, students in higher class years, and student council members. Actively research what your first steps should be. This club was opened because two students were passionate about something, and spoke to the right people to turn this into reality.

Anything else to say about your club:

We are always looking for writers. If you are conducting any medical or dental-related research, this is a great opportunity for you! We have the right resources and editors

to help you ensure that you will **publish a quality piece** that you will be proud of and can share with friends, family, and graduate schools. You can email us at YUmeddentjournal@gmail.com and join our writer's chat at <https://chat.whatsapp.com/Czk-PnQmuvJLAHIOAobRvMR>.

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!



BY MICHAELA FIEDERER

MENDING HEARTS WITH PUPPETS

The Save a Child's Heart Club (SACH) seeks to raise awareness for the Israel-based international nonprofit organization, Save a Child's Heart. The group provides life-saving cardiac care to children across the globe. This year, the SACH club focused largely on fundraising, successfully raising over \$2,000 in under 2 semesters. While fundraising is certainly a large priority for the SACH chapter at Stern, another goal is for students to feel connected to the hundreds of children who receive medical care from SACH each year.

This year's final event was a creative, hands-on arts and crafts activity that took place on May 2, 2022 on the Beren campus. Students each got to make their own unique puppets, transform-

ing ordinary socks into life-like creatures. Fun embellishments, such as ping-pong ball eyes, felt eyelids, and yarn hair, turned the simple socks into "Muppet-like" hand puppets.

The event had a great turnout and students were eager to channel their creativity in all sorts of ways. Elisheva Hirsch (SCW '23) expressed, "It is so amazing to have these opportunities to use your creativity and have fun while making something to help brighten a child's day." The event touched the hearts of so many students, and created a sense of personal connection between each member of the SACH chapter and the children of Save a Child's Heart. Rivka Shavelson (SCW '23) describes her experience at the closing event and

recalls, "the room was full of college students laughing and playing with puppets, and it was so easy to picture a smile on a young child's face when he would receive his new toy." It is the hope of the SACH chapter at Stern College that these puppets, which will be sent to Israel this summer, will help spread joy to children who are facing the most difficult trials of their lives. The aim of our SACH chapter was to make a substantial donation to the Save a Child's Heart organization in Israel, and to facilitate a desire to help the children and families who benefit from SACH's tremendous services. As co-president of the SACH club, Shayna Vadnai (SCW '23)

explains, "SACH is an incredible organization, and we're privileged to be able to both fundraise and directly impact the children." Through our many events, we successfully reached our goal!



FACULTY PROFILE: DR. ATHULAPRABHA MURTHI

BY AARON SHAYKEVICH,
OPINIONS EDITOR, ON
BEHALF OF THE
YU OBSERVER

Aaron Shaykevich (AS): Hello. Please introduce yourself.

Dr. Athulaprabha Murthi (AM): Hello, I am Athulaprabha Murthi, a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Biology Department at Yeshiva College. My educational background includes a Ph.D. in Molecular Biology and Biochemistry from Penn State University. I also did a postdoctoral at the National Institutes of Health in infectious diseases.

AS: How long have you worked at YU?

AM: I have been at YU for four years now.

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

AM: One of the things I enjoy the most at YU is working with the students. I have taught at other colleges, but the unique thing about YU is that every student is driven to achieve as much as they can. The commitment shown by the students is admirable, both in terms of learning and in terms of arguing for that 0.2 or 0.5 points on a quiz or exam. As I often joke with my students, these interactions have really

honed my negotiation skills, but it is a work in progress.

AS: What made you passionate about your field?

AM: I cannot point to a single thing that made me passionate about microbiology. There were many small incidents and circumstances. Over time, I began to enjoy the complexity within the simplicity of microbes, and how easy they were to manage and work with. Also, microbes are everywhere, and although they are extremely important to us, some are just as harmful as others are beneficial. I guess I find that very exciting. The complexities of biological processes are mind-boggling. Every time we think we know everything about bacteria, something new and more amazing is discovered.

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

AM: I would encourage students to enjoy their college experience. Enjoy learning and imbibing the knowledge in any course or field you choose to pursue. Do not get hung up on getting an 'A' in every single course. And do not get side-tracked or overly disappointed about some obstacles in your path. As long as you do not give

up, you will eventually find your calling - something you enjoy and have fun doing.

AS: What makes your field special?

AM: This is a very exciting time for microbiology. We are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of microbes in every aspect of our lives. New technological advances are making it possible for large-scale studies that were unthinkable a decade before. The pandemic has also increased the public awareness of how microbes affect us, so overall it is a very interesting and exciting time for the field.

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

AM: I would be curious to hear what Rosalind Franklin would say about the role and achievements of women in science in the present day. Her X-ray diffraction experiments were the key to the discovery of DNA structure by Francis and Crick but were something she was never acknowledged for. She was a trail-blazing scientist

at a time when discrimination against women was commonplace. She managed to achieve tremendous success despite that. While women have achieved a lot since then, there is still that struggle, and it would be interesting to get the perspective of someone like Rosalind Franklin.

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

AM: While I push my students to always do well academically, I also want them to know I am here to support them in any way possible. Ultimately, my goal is to help them achieve the most out of college.



MoDate: THE MUTUAL FRIEND YOU WISH YOU HAD

BY RAQUEL LEIFER,
FEATURES EDITOR

MoDate is an exciting new dating platform geared toward the Modern Orthodox community. Evan Harris (CEO), who was sparked by his own personal relationship quest, and Menachem Losev (CTO), developed their very own dating software designed to make dating more meaningful and accessible.

MoDate functions as a framework for connectors to help their friends find a potential partner. Anyone can become a connector by simply signing up at Modate.org. MoDate's approach involves

a connector initiating matches for their friends using a specially designed questionnaire geared towards discovering what an individual is searching for in a relationship; both personally and religiously. Once that data has been entered, a specially formulated algorithm attempts to match people based on their responses to the form.

Connectors are presented with detailed matches for their friends (MoDaters) and must rank the matches on a scale of 1 to 5 depending on how good of a fit they believe the match to be. However, connectors as a default, are unable to see the names

and pictures of the potential matches in order to maintain a level of anonymity for the MoDaters. If the match passes the connector threshold and moves onto the MoDater stage, then both MoDaters are able to see each other's entire profiles and choose whether or not to go on a date.

Evan is confident that MoDate's use of mutual friends as connectors will expand the likelihood of both successful potential partnerships as well as increase the comfort level of users.

Awareness of the app is growing through what Harris refers to as the "MoVerse," which includes MoDate's Instagram page @MoDate613, MoDate's very own podcast dubbed "The MoPod," and brand ambassadors in Universities through-

out the globe who promote the platform.

Current Stern MoDate Ambassador Talia Leitner (SCW '22) remarked, "What I love about being a MoDate Ambassador is that I get to help others through the dating process. We're looking for more ambassadors at YU so sign up!"

This innovative approach removes the stigma from typical online dating apps and empowers individuals and their connectors through its hands on, user friendly method.

For more information, check out MoDate at <https://www.modate.org>.

Photo Credit: MoDate



NEW RABBINIC COUPLES

FROM PAGE 10

people and I am really excited to follow their lead, starting with our position at Stern!

Rabbi Schonbrun and Rebbetzin Michal Schonbrun (RRS; Scholar in Residence): Our families, teachers, and Rebbeim, instilled within us a love and passion for the world of yahadus [Judaism] and Torah learning, as well as a strong desire to give and be involved in the Jewish community. We also love connecting to and learning from other people, and really value building relationships.

RL: What are your goals as the new campus Rabbi and Rebbetzin/Scholars in Residence?

RF: We feel extremely fortunate to be coming in after the Bernsteins, given how much they have contributed to the campus and how much they have built up the Torah learning and the community in Stern. We will be working with the Schonbruns, as well as Dean Shoshana Schechter and the office of spiritual life. We are excited to work together as a team!

One of the things we want to focus on is continuing to build the feeling of community at Stern. Two of the ways in which we want to highlight this, is through our weekend and Shabbos programming, as well as continuing to create a culture centered around and in the Beis Medrash. Regarding Shabbos, we feel that the opportunity to engage in community, Torah, and Tefillah [prayer], outside of the context of the busy schedule of the week, and specifically within the context of the Kedusha [holiness] of Shabbos, adds a crucial element to one's experience and

Avodas HaShem in college; and can even impact one's experience in Stern for the rest of the week!

We are looking forward to continuing to think about how to take advantage of the amazing potential that the Shabbos experience at Stern has through continuing the amazing programming that exists, along with new ideas of how to make it even better (please let us know if you have any ideas)! We are looking forward to spending every Shabbos on campus as part of this community.

Segueing to our second focus regarding the community, we want to continue to build the culture that the Stern Beit Midrash is not only a place where one comes to hear a shiur, but that it is the central location of the communities growth in their Avodas HaShem, Talmud Torah [studying Torah], and Tefillah. We are excited to introduce programs that will encourage a constant Kol Torah [Torah environment/sound of Torah learning], feelings of growth, and a community environment.

Our third focus is trying to reach as many students as possible on an individual level. Besides being around to give shiurim, we will be living on campus and have time built into the day to set up times to have individual meetings, chavrusas [one on one Torah learning], and small chaburahs [Torah learning in a small group setting]. College is such an important time to have someone who really knows you and can be there for you on both a spiritual and personal level and we are excited to be able to serve that function (disclaimer Ellie is the expert in this area!). We are excited to continue the opportunities that are offered to hear

from our Roshei Yeshiva, renowned teachers and speakers, as well as the range of topics that are provided to learn about. From both mine and Ellie's perspective, we felt like a tremendous part of our religious growth was in our time in YU/Stern, and are looking forward to building that experience together with the students.

RRS: We hope to continue the incredible work the Bernsteins did, and build on the strong foundations they built. As the Rabbinic intern couple this past year, we have loved being involved and seeing how motivated the students are on so many fronts. We're excited to feed off of that energy and expand on the amazing existing opportunities now that we will be filling a larger role. We intend to create opportunities for the spiritual growth of every student on campus; through the means of meaningful Torah content and skill building relationships, and informal more experiential avenues for connection.

RL: What are you most looking forward to?

RF: I'm most looking forward to joining the really special and unique Stern Community, which has so many different types of students from many different backgrounds who come together from a desire for religious growth and Avodas Hashem. We are excited to both join and continue to build this community, and look forward to living on campus, and spending our Shabbatot (every week!) together with

you. Additionally, being able to be a part of the incredible Makom Torah [atmosphere of Torah learning], the Stern Beit Midrash, is something that we are really looking forward to.

EF: I had such an incredible experience at Stern myself academically, socially, and religiously and grew tremendously from all the opportunities provided on campus. There is so much offered, whether it's the plethora of clubs to join, fun chessed events at night, or stimulating shiurim to go to, and I cannot imagine who I would be without my Stern experience! I am really looking forward to being back on campus and being able to set up chavrusas, one-on-one meetings, be in Stern on Shabbos, and (hopefully) give back to a place that shaped me in so many ways.

RRS: We are looking forward to working side by side with the Fines, a true power couple, to provide opportunities for meaningful connections with peers, mentors, Judaism, and of course, with the Ribono Shel Olam [Master of the Universe]. We are also excited to continue investing in relationships; getting to know so many different types of students this past year and building relationships with them was a real highlight for us. Additionally, we're looking forward to building a real Torah culture on the Beren Campus!

Photo Credit: Rabbi Azriel (Azi) & Rebbetzin Ellie Fine (left) and Rabbi Avrumi & Rebbetzin Michal Schonbrun (right)



ARTS & CULTURE

THINGS TO DO IN NYC: STERN STARTER PACK EDITION

BY CHEVI CHARLAP

New York is a big city, with lots of places to go and many things to see. But how do you know where these fun events are taking place? Or when they're happening? Or which ones are the best? Whether you need a place to study, hang out with friends, or anything in between, the following are some of the top best activities to be found in NYC.

1. New Amsterdam Burger and Bar

New Amsterdam Burger and Bar (NABB) is a delicious, kosher restaurant located on the Upper West Side. The burgers are their specialty, but they also have an incredible selection of appetizers and drinks. They also have a sushi menu provided by Sushi Skooba, which specializes in kosher, authentic Japanese cuisine. For an awesome night out with friends, NABB is definitely the place to go.

2. Citrovia

If you're looking for an activity that won't break the bank, Citrovia is a great place to go with friends. The interactive, lemon themed art exhibit is totally free and conveniently located on 9th Ave and 33rd St. If you're

looking for a new profile picture, a unique experience, or just want somewhere fun to hang out with friends, Citrovia is the place to go.

3. Starbucks Reserve Roastery

For all those coffee addicts out there, the Starbucks Reserve in Chelsea is an absolute must! The entire place smells like freshly brewed coffee, and the drinks themselves are delicious. With finals week coming up, the comfy leather couches, wood-polished tables, and various lounge areas make it a great place to study, get work done, or even take a much-needed study break. While the drinks may cost a little more than your average Starbucks, the occasional treat of a five-star cup of coffee is the perfect way to reward yourself for a semester well done. The Roastery is open everyday from 7am-10pm.

4. Thrift Shopping

While shopping in NYC is an activity beloved by many, it can often be an expensive one, but it doesn't have to be! New York is also home to some amazing thrift stores, the perfect place to score a good deal and find unique, one-of-a-kind pieces. Unique Boutique on 3rd Ave has that old-school charm that makes thrifting the awesome adventure that it is. Additionally, The Vintage Thrift Shop is a thrift

store that doubles as a nonprofit and benefits the United Jewish Council of the East Side. For anyone looking to upgrade their wardrobe while protecting their wallet, thrifting is the best way to go.

5. Boat ride in Central Park

For a fresh perspective of NYC, take a scenic boat ride in Central Park. In the heart of Central Park is a gorgeous lake surrounded by beautiful trees and a stunning view of NYC. As you gently row your way through the calm, clear waters, you'll get to see turtles, ducks, birds, and other wildlife. For just \$20 an hour, you and your friends can enjoy a beautiful day on the water without even leaving the city.

6. Hex & Co.

Calling all board game addicts! Hex & Co. is the place for you! With locations on 1st Ave and Broadway, this board game cafe is one of the coolest places in the city. They have shelves packed with

almost every board and card game imaginable, and they even offer a student discount. While the food may not be kosher, they have a wide variety of drinks to choose off the menu. The perfect place for birthdays and awkward shidduch dates, Hex & Co. is an absolute must.

7. Patis at the Arthouse Hotel

Another great study spot is the Arthouse Hotel on the Upper West Side. In the lobby of the hotel you will find conference tables, leather couches, good vibes, and a deliciously kosher cafe! Patis is a reliably kosher cafe with some of the most delicious pastries ever! Their strawberry croissant is filled with delicious strawberry cream and pairs perfectly with their in-house brewed coffee. They also have a wide variety of sandwiches, focaccia breads, and teas. For more awkward shidduch dates and delicious desserts, Patis is the place to go.

YU OBSERVER STAFF PICKS: FAVORITE YU COURSES

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, as we reflect on our academic year, the YU Observer has decided to ask the YU Observer staff to share their favorite courses at YU.

Shoshanah Marcus, Editor in Chief: Microbiology with Dr. Schuck (or Intro to Women's Studies with Dr. Nachumi, I can't decide)
Danielle Lane, Managing Editor: Voting and Elections with Matthew Incantalupo or Epidemiology with Daniel Kimmel

Bluma Gross, News Editor: Money and Power with Professor Shvetsov
Marcela Homsany, News Editor: Populism with Professor Panzarelli
Rina Shamilov, News Editor: Reading/ Writing Poetry with Professor Miller
Atara Bachrach, Opinions Editor

& Website Manager: Club Hour, obviously
Eli Saperstein, Opinions Editor: Independent study with Rabbi Rofeh, obviously
Aaron Shaykevich, Opinions Editor: Health Economics with Professor Grivoyannis

Ru Benhamou, Features Editor: Religion and Philosophy with Professor Shatz
Raquel Leifer, Features Editor: Bereishis with Dean Shoshana Schechter
Yael Spodek, Features Editor: Reading/Writing Poetry with Professor Miller
Nicole Abittan, Science & Technology Editor: Medical Ethics with Rabbi Laufer
Leia Rubinstein, Science & Technology Editor: Microbiology
Yosef Scher, Science & Technology Editor: Epidemiology with Professor Purcell

SEE **STAFF PICKS,**
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STAFF PICKS

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Eli Levi, Business Editor: Parisian Views with Rachel Mesch (all day every day)

Jake Sheckter, Business Editor: Venture Capital & Angel Investing (Professors Bellows and Taragin) or Entrepreneurial Leadership (Professor Kornwasser)

Amalya Teitelbaum, Business Editor & Manager: Classical Po-

litical Philosophy

Benjamin Gottesman, Arts & Culture Editor: Night Seder
Elisheva Hirsch, Arts & Culture Editor: Principles of Strategy with Professor Poczter

Cayla Muschel, Arts & Culture Editor: Creative Writing with Dr. Peters

Adi Benhanan, Website Manager: Shmuel I with Smadar

Rosensweig or Color Theory with Prof. Mary Creede

Max Friedman, Website Manager: Intro to Algorithms

Ezra Jacobs, Business Manager: First Year Writing with Professor Trimboli

Rachel Gilinski, Social Media Manager: Principles of Strategy with Professor Finkel

Erica Sultan, Social Media

Manager: Classical Jewish Archaeology with Jill Katz
Racheli Jian, Layout Editor:

Education of Exceptional Children with Rachel Ginsberg

Belina Milhem Jena, Layout Editor: Language Development with Professor Paulino

DR. STRANGE AND THE MULTIVERSE OF MADNESS: THE SECOND BEST MULTIVERSE MOVIE OF THE YEAR

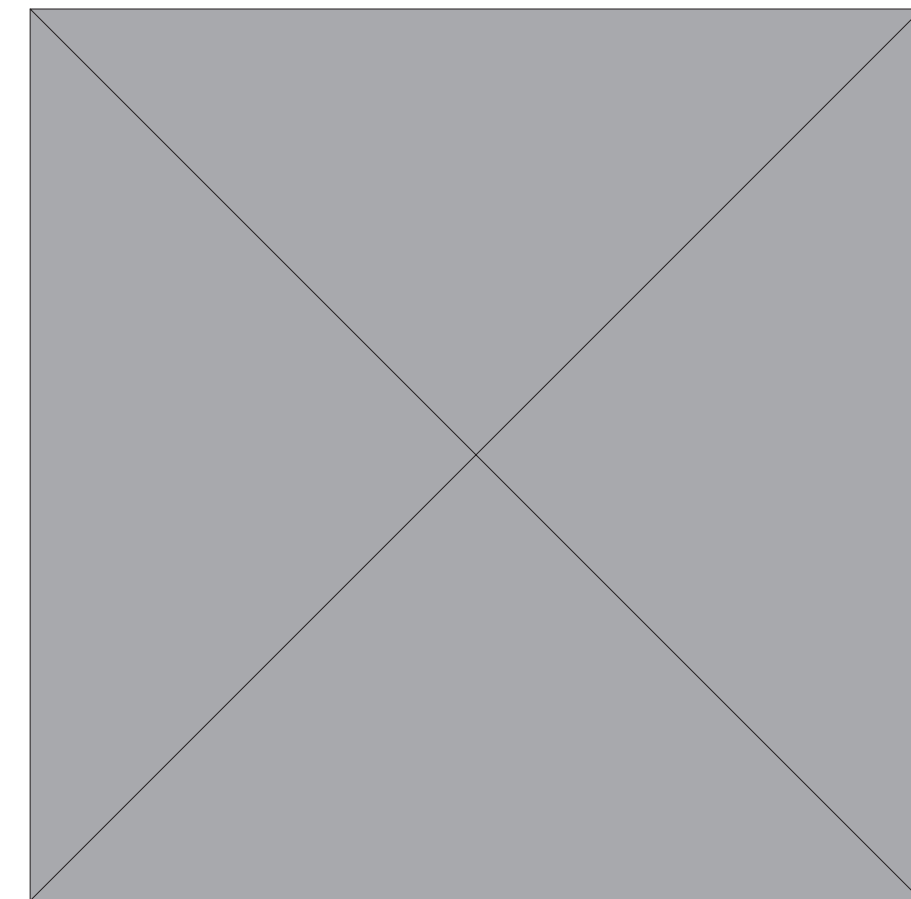
BY ANDREW WARREN

Sam Raimi's Dr. Strange and the Multiverse Of Madness is the latest edition to the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU). Dr. Strange returns to protect America Gomez, a young girl who has the ability to travel the multiverse, as she is hunted by evil beings bent on stealing her powers. Strange goes to Wanda Maximoff, the Scarlet Witch, to ask for her help. Knowing how sensitive MCU fans are to spoilers, that is all of the plot I am going to reveal.

At this stage in the MCU, every movie has two jobs. The first is to tell an emotionally satisfying and exciting story with resonant character arcs. The second job is to further the plot of the MCU. In the case of Captain America: Civil War or Spider-man: No Way Home, they did both. Unfortunately, the second installment of Dr. Strange only checks the second box.

It's no secret to Marvel fans that Phase 4 of the MCU is about the multiverse. Spider-man: No Way Home and Loki have already set that up. This movie exists purely to explain the rules of the multiverse. There's a lot of very important exposition in this movie. The same cannot be said for a great storyline.

The internal conflict of the movie revolves around Strange's relationships. In the very beginning, his ex-girlfriend Christine tells him she could never live with him because he always had to be the one "holding the knife." I don't think this is a bad



direction for the character, but it is handled awfully. There are scenes where Strange will be in the middle of saving someone's life, and that person will complain that he's being too controlling. Benedict Cumberbatch is wasted in this movie. If he's not in a fight scene, he's not doing anything entertaining. His arc is nowhere near as powerful as it was in the first film.

Wanda, on the other hand, is utilized very well. Her storyline is a straight continuation from Wandavision so make sure you're familiar with that plot. Her emotional scenes land and her magic scenes are the highlight of the film. Elizabeth Olson does some of her best work in the MCU in this movie.

The supporting cast is negligible. Rachel McAdams returns as

Christine, the aforementioned love interest. I don't know how Marvel made Rachel McAdams irritating, but her constant criticisms of Strange, especially during stressful situations, got frustrating. Benedict Wong's Wong is still very funny. He's now the sorcerer supreme, but he doesn't have huge moments. Xochitl Gomez plays America, and she's ok. America is more of a plot device than a person. She spends most of the movie running from antagonists.

The most disappointing part of the whole film is the wasted potential of the multiverse. They had infinite realities at their disposal, and the writers made dismal choices. They only visit a few alternate universes, and the ones they do visit aren't that interesting. There is no reason for Spider-man to have more

fun with the multiverse than Dr. Strange.

Thankfully, Sam Raimi is this movie's saving grace. In the past, Raimi directed the original Spider-man trilogy and the Evil Dead horror franchise. He really tries to put his own stamp on this movie. There are moments when the antagonist is going on a rampage and it feels straight out of a horror movie. This is hands down the most violent and gory Marvel has ever gotten. It's also at those moments when the movie is at its most fun. It's a shame they don't make up most of the movie.

Marvel fans are going to see this movie no matter what, but I recommend they don't. Wait for it to come on Disney plus in a month or two. Spend your money on the other multiverse movie that just came out, Everything Everywhere All At Once. It's a wild, crazy, sci-fi, martial art, comedy, drama, genre mishmash of a masterpiece. You will feel every emotion known to man.

Dr. Strange 5/10
Everything Everywhere All At Once 9/10

SEFIRA TUNES!

BY EZRA EMERSON

It's that time of year again. After our lovely Pesach break, we entered the period known as sefira, which is the 7 weeks between Pesach and Shavuot. We are meant to use this time getting ready to reaccept the Torah upon ourselves. One feature of the sefirah period is that we don't listen to music made with instruments but can listen to music with noises made by people, known also as acapella. If you're a music lover like me, this can be a rather difficult restriction to adhere to. However, thanks to Spotify, I was able to find some pretty cool acapella groups, which I will share with you in this piece! Below are nine of my favorite groups, including secular and Jewish artists. Let's turn up the music!

Secular Acapella

Pentatonix

Pentatonix (PTX) is just flat-out amazing. They started back in the early 2010s and instantly became a big favorite of mine. They cover throwbacks like "Starships" by Nicki Minaj, "Problem" by Ariana Grande, and "Can't Hold Us" by Macklemore and Ryan Lewis, which I personally think are even better than the originals. PTX has even collaborated with some pretty well-known artists, like Kelly Clarkson and Maren Morris among others. They also have two number-one albums on the Billboard top 200 chart, which is pretty cool for an acapella group.

Home Free

I LOVE COUNTRY. I don't think there has been a day that has gone by without me either singing or listening to country music. I can go on and on about how good Eric Church, Luke Combs, Blake Shelton, and Morgan Wallen are. To be honest, I didn't expect country acapella to be that good, but Home Free has truly knocked it out of the park. The way they use their voices to recreate the country feel of songs truly amazes me.

Voiceplay

Voiceplay has great beats and rhythms in all of their songs. They sing songs from Broadway shows, movies, and other famous artists. Their 2013 Sing-Off win gained them a lot of popularity, and to this day they are one of the best groups in the acapella world.

Tufts Beelzebubs

Many colleges have their own acapella groups that are often quite good. The Tufts Beelzebubs have been around since the 1960s and have had over 300 members over the years. In my opinion, they are one of the best college acapella groups. They won second place on the NBC show Sing-Off back in 2009 and have done background vocals for various songs on Glee. They were also the inspiration for the Barden University Treblemakers in the popular movie series Pitch Perfect.

BYU Vocal Point

We have all heard the jokes about BYU and YU being the same.

While it's a funny joke, we are actually quite different. Besides being part of different religions, YU no longer has an official school acapella group, while BYU has had one since 1991. BYU Vocal Point is one of the best acapella groups in the collegiate setting that I have ever heard. They also are one of the best-dressed groups, with their very eye-catching blue suits and matching converse all-stars.

DCappella

DCappella is amazing. I have loved Disney for my entire life, from the movies and shows to their incredible Parks.. This acapella group solely dedicated to Disney music means we can still blast "Circle of Life" from The Lion King, "Love is an Open Door" from Frozen, and "How Far I'll Go" from Moana during the sefira weeks.

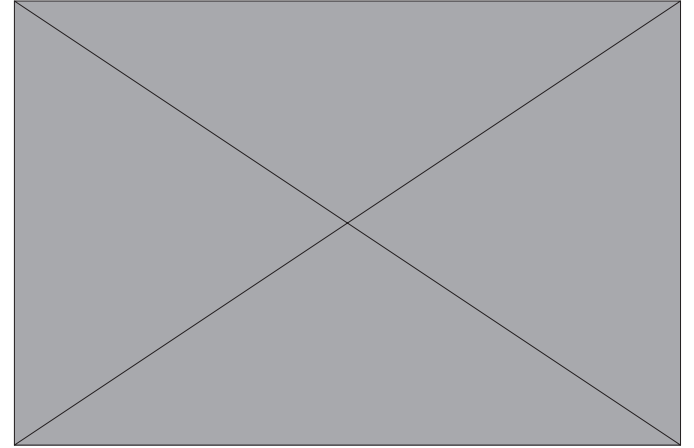
Jewish Acapella

Soulful Acappella

Soulful Acapella are known for their excellent series called Kumzitz in the Rain. I love their harmonies and voices, and it's cool to listen to some famous niggunim sung by professionals without the use of instruments.

Maccabeats

Who doesn't know about YU's once proudly associated acapella



group? They blew up the internet with "Miracles" back in 2011, and each year they create new Jewish lyrics to popular songs. Fun fact: they were once more popular than the YU Basketball team.

Y-Studs A Cappella

Since we are on the subject of once associated acapella groups with YU, it's only fair to bring up the Maccabeats replacements. The Y-Studs added their own style and lyrics to popular songs, and are always a great listen to. They are not part of a YU anymore, however, so it should be only a matter of time till a new group comes along.

Below, I have included a playlist of my favorite songs from the various groups I mentioned in this article. I hope you enjoy it! At this time, I would also like to encourage the return of both the YU and Stern acapella groups. For reference of the past Stern acapella group, here is a Facebook link to The LexSingtons and here is the Spotify Playlist Link.

HOW WEEZER MADE BEING UNCOOL...COOL

BY SOL SUSSMAN

Our story begins in Los Angeles, 1989. A young, Connecticut native named Rivers Cuomo (Vocals/Guitar) had recently moved to the west coast with the members of his band, Zoom.

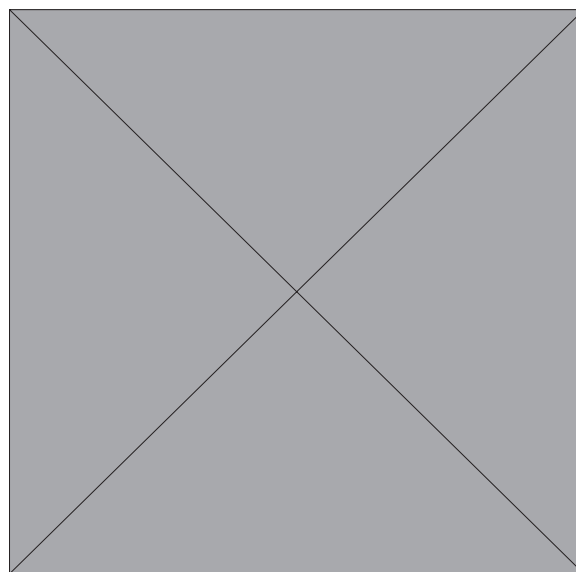
Soon after their arrival, the band broke up, leaving Rivers on his own. Soon after, he met Patrick Wilson (Drums) and Matt Sharp (Bass), and the three started living and playing together. Eventually the band settled on a fourth member, Jason Cropper (Guitar), and a name, Weezer.

The name was based on a nickname Rivers' father gave him after River developed asthma, their first gig under the new name was in March of 1992.

Rivers was offered a scholarship to UC Berkeley, and gave Matt, who had effectively become the band's manager, an offer: either he gets Weezer

a record deal within the next year or Rivers quits and goes to Berkeley.

In November of 1992, the band released "The Kitchen Tape," their first proper demo, featuring tracks that would end up on



future records. The tape made its way to Todd Sullivan of Geffen Records, who took a liking to the band. The Band signed to Geffen Records,

and Rivers dodged the bullet of higher education.

Weezer set up shop at Electric Lady Studios in New York City and began working on their debut record. While they initially wanted to produce the album

themselves, they were convinced by Geffen to bring on Ric Ocasek to produce. (Some might recognize Ric from his role as front-man for the popular rock band The Cars.)

The process, from there, saw Weezer learn to play as a singular unit, whether it was studying barbershop quartets for vocal harmony inspiration, mixing guitars to be as loud as Radiohead's "Creep," or even banning reverb effects from their instruments.

Unfortunately, the sessions weren't a total breeze. Jason Cropper was fired from the

WEEZER

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band right after recording, due to Jason bringing his girlfriend to sessions despite the band agreeing not to invite their partners. Rivers would end up re-recording all of his parts. As a quick replacement the group brought in Brian Bell on guitar, and in May of 1994, Weezer released their first self-titled album, colloquially known as “The Blue Album”.

The primary aspect that Weezer exemplified on this record is its nerdiness. Tracks like “In the Garage” describe being on your own and enjoying the dorky things that make you happy. “Surf Wax America” is an open love letter to

the Beach Boys and the surfer creed. “Only in Dreams” makes asking a girl to dance sound like the most epic thing you can do. “Undone – The Sweater Song” uses the metaphor of an unraveling sweater nestled between spoken-word bits of California parties.

This album is genuinely, unabashedly uncool. That’s what makes it so cool. During a time in which bands like Pearl Jam, Nirvana, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers practically developed the sound of the 90’s, Weezer struck gold with a mix of unfeigned emotion, nerdy subject matter, and hooks worthy of a god.

Of course, that’s not to say that the whole record is light-hearted. When a song is called “The World Has Turned & Left Me Here,” it’s bound to be a little bit sad. And of course, I can’t forget to mention Rivers’ heart-wrenching ballad about alcoholism, “Say It Ain’t So”. It’s an incredibly emotional song about the battles with alcohol that both Rivers’ father and stepfather fought and how that ate away at his young self.

This was easily the emotional high point for me. On a personal note, my own father battled with alcoholism for a decent

amount of my younger years, and it’s for that reason that the song hits very close to home for me.

The beauty of “The Blue Album” lies in its simplicity. It doesn’t have any lofty ambitions or any larger statements on society. It’s just cool dudes writing sick tunes. It’s an album with memorable hooks and the emotional weight to back them up.

BUSINESS

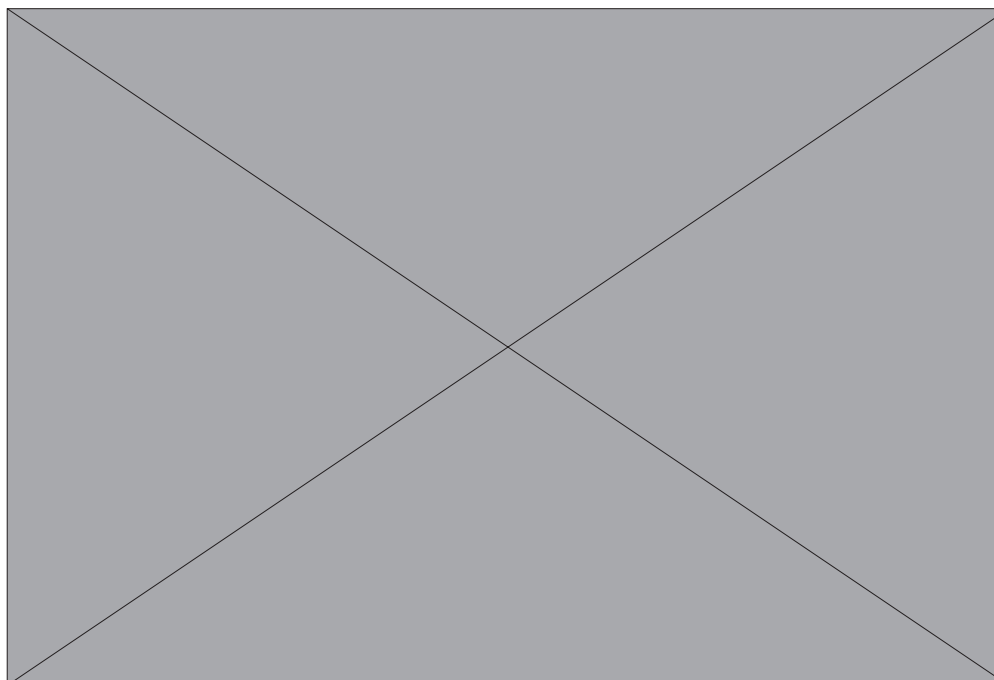
WILL CRYPTO BE NEW TAX HAVEN?

BY BLUMA GROSS,
NEWS EDITOR

The rise of cryptocurrency revolutionized global economic processes since its inception in 2008. Cryptocurrencies’ novel characteristics, such as decentralization and semi-anonymity, makes the digital currency an extremely appealing platform for cyber exchanges. However, while crypto has had several positive aspects, such as lowering transaction costs, eliminating borders, and ensuring secure and private exchanges, cryptocurrencies may also present a new way to conduct shady transactions. As war in Ukraine becomes more unpredictable by the day and an increasing amount of sanctions mount on Russian oligarchs by Western powers, it seems that cryptocurrencies may be an alternative for Russian oligarchs to evade these sanctions.

Cryptocurrencies operate through blockchain technology. Blockchains are secure digital ledgers accounting for all crypto-transactions. These ledgers can be private or public and may be a tool for governments to track said transactions. Yet, due to cryptocurrency’s decentralized nature and global scope, it may be quite the challenge for governments to coordinate and fight against tax fraud and other financial crimes facilitated by blockchain.

Some positive aspects of digital



currencies are that they allow users in economically unstable areas to trade and invest in places with more stability, somewhat leveling the international financial playing field. The anonymity of digital currencies also allows secure and private transactions, providing a degree of privacy that cannot be ensured by intermediaries like banks and other financial institutions.

The crackdown on international tax havens with the release of the Panama and Pandora Papers has exposed massive corporate, public and political official’s tax evasion and fraud. Some people who were exposed for sketchy offshore accounts include the Crown Prince of Jordan, Vladimir Putin, and Tony Blair.

In the United States, Congress passed the Corporate Transparency Act to combat money laundering and to “increase information sharing between law enforcement, financial

institutions, and financial regulators.” However, the lack of international regulatory legislation makes it difficult to combat money laundering, tax evasion, and corruption on the same scale in which the fraud occurred, posing current and future risks to economic stability and oversight.

According to Omri Marian, an expert in international tax law and comparative taxation, cryptocurrencies may be the new “super tax havens.” Marian contends that crypto currencies have two of the most significant features of traditional tax havens: they are foundationally anonymous and decentralized. These elements render cryptocurrencies as the ultimate mechanism to commit tax evasion and tax fraud.

In the United States, cryptocurrencies are treated as property for federal tax purposes. United States crypto policy greatly con-

trasts to places like Portugal, where there are no taxes on crypto currency gains, and have become a crypto “tax haven”.

However, EU policymakers recently proposed a law to combat shady transactions to the European Commission. The proposal suggested prohibiting anonymous crypto-asset wallets and ensuring that crypto-assets are fully traceable, stripping the digital currency of its defining characteristic.

Sanctions on Russian oligarchs have not stopped or slowed down Putin’s military campaign in Ukraine. Though the United States and United Kingdom have sanctioned Russian oligarchs who amassed wealth at the expense of the Russian masses. Though countries like the US and UK have frozen assets of the oligarchs, many cryptocurrencies still use private blockchains and do not require identity verification, it may still be possible for Russian oligarchs to transfer their liquid funds to crypto.

Given the mixed response from global actors, it seems unlikely that there will be any international laws or organized coordination between economic and financial institutions to seriously combat tax crimes and corruption.

BUSINESS BASICS: LINKEDIN

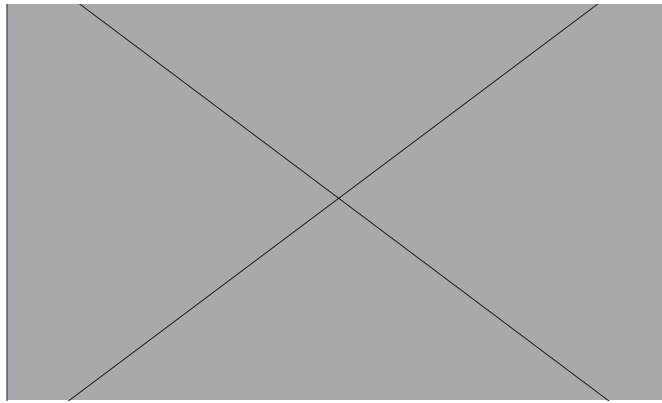
BY AMALYA TEITELBAUM,
BUSINESS EDITOR &
MANAGER

LinkedIn is the social media of the business world. It is the world's largest professional network on the internet. One can use LinkedIn to find the right job or internship, connect and strengthen professional relationships, and learn the necessary skills to succeed in any career. As it is such a useful tool, it is essential to learn how to best navigate and utilize it.

The first step is to create a profile and get your name out there. There are a few steps to creating one's profile. To begin, you upload a professional-looking photo of yourself with a brief description, 2,600 characters, about yourself. Basic information like your current university, program, or career would be perfect to insert there. One may also want to consider including what position or field they're seeking to be brought into

for the sake of recruiters. The next step is to insert your education. Depending on your level of education you'll include some combination of high school, undergraduate school, graduate school, and any further degree programs.

Arguably, one now has a LinkedIn presence. However, in order to really take your profile to the next level, you need to include your experiences. This part of your LinkedIn is similar to what you have on your resume. It is a place to include an individual's past experience in school activities and clubs, community work/service, jobs, and internships. It is essential to really flesh out your successes by demonstrating problems you have solved or positions



you've acquired as it will draw more recruiters to your profile.

Another way to boost your profile is to include your interests. This can include any hobbies you enjoy, skills you have acquired, or fields you're interested in. These interests don't necessarily have to be hobbies/skills in direct relation to the field or position you are interested in. This boosts your profile as a common interest and can often lead to a stronger connection with those in your desired field.

Now that your profile is com-

plete, and you have a presence on LinkedIn, the next step is to start forming connections. Connect first with those in your schools and programs in order to build up your profile. Then attempt to connect with those who share the same interests and wish to go into the same fields as you. Not only will this help you establish connections in your field of interest, but it will also provide more clarity for recruiters on the exact field you wish to penetrate. This opens opportunities for connecting directly with employees in a company you wish to work for. You may even want to reach out to these specific companies and employees on LinkedIn to establish a connection for a potential job in the future.

If you have not yet established a presence on LinkedIn, strongly consider doing so. From creating connections to allowing individuals to receive their dream job, LinkedIn is the place to be to achieve success in any field.

ELON MUSK BUYS TWITTER

BY DINA ABRAHIM

On April 4, 2022, Elon Musk, the billionaire entrepreneur, continued his empire's growth with a \$44 billion acquisition of Twitter. Musk is the wealthiest person in the world with a net worth of 255.2 billion and is the founder, CEO, and Chief Engineer at SpaceX, angel investor, CEO, and Product Architect of Tesla, founder of The Boring Company, co-founder of Neuralink and OpenAI, and is now the owner of Twitter.

With over 91.8 million followers and over 17.7 thousand tweets, Musk is extremely active on Twitter. He has not been silent with his criticisms of Twitter in the past, and has condemned Twitter's permanent ban of former President Donald Trump. Trump was banned from Twitter due to the risk of further instigation of violence following the attack on the Capitol Building on January 6, 2021. Musk considers the banning of Trump to be an attack on free speech and believes that the company should not have censored a sitting president. Musk has said that once the deal to buy Twitter goes through, he plans to

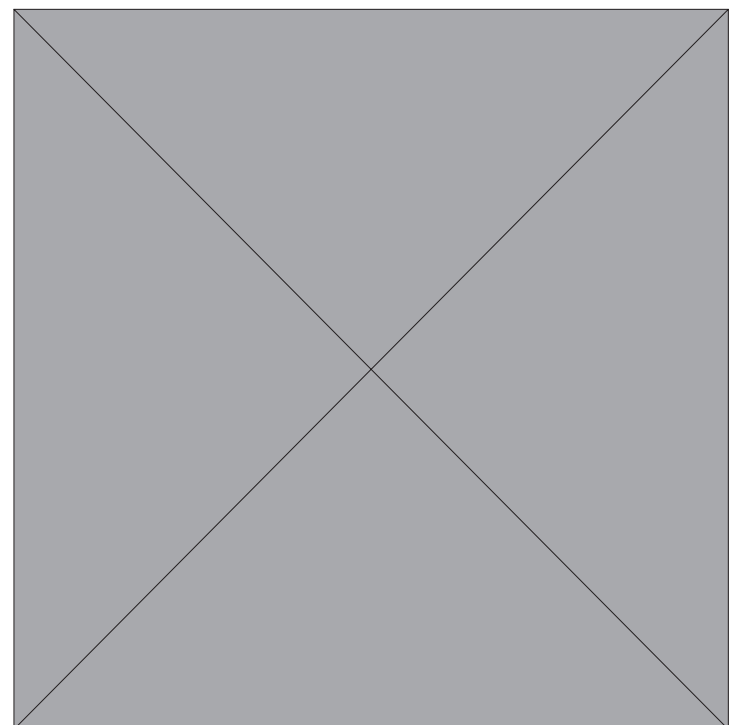
allow Trump to return to Twitter. Another change Musk plans to make is banning Twitter's spam bots. In a tweet Musk declared, "If our twitter bid succeeds, we will defeat the spam bots or die trying!" He has also questioned the relevance of Twitter today, saying in a tweet, "Most of these 'top' accounts tweet rarely and post very little content. Is Twitter dying?"

Musk claims that one of the main reasons he bought Twitter is to protect free speech. In a statement he said, "Free speech is the bedrock of a functioning democracy, and Twitter is the digital town square where matters vital to the future of humanity are debated. Twitter has tremendous potential-I look forward to working with the company and the community of users to unlock it."

Musk plans to focus on four key areas: "hardcore software engineering, design, infosec (information security), and server hardware." Another way he plans to improve Twitter is by making managerial changes. In a threaded tweet he said, "I strongly believe that all managers in a technical area must be technically excellent. Managers in software

must write great software or it's like being a cavalry captain who can't ride a horse!" In addition, Musk intends to take over as Twitter's interim CEO.

Many people, especially those with left-leaning political stances, oppose Elon Musk buying Twitter because they believe he may plan to make changes to the platform that they disagree with. They are afraid that his "more lenient" policy on free speech will allow for the spread of more misinformation on Twitter, which they believe is proliferated by far-right groups. Elizabeth Warren said in a tweet, "One billionaire-whose estimated net worth has gotten about 10 times larger since the start of the pandemic-is about to have the power to decide how millions of people can communicate with each other. It's dangerous for our democ-



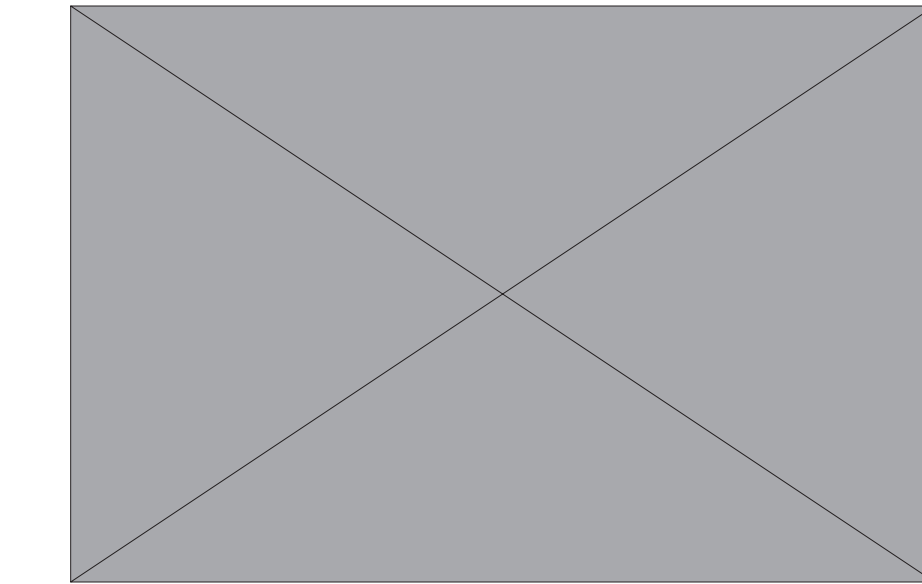
racy to have so much power in so few hands." Musk also plans to verify that all users on Twitter are human, as opposed to spam bots, which some are viewing as a possible invasion of privacy. While answers vary, researchers say that 10% of Twitter accounts are fake, while Twitter says that only 5% of accounts are fake.

WHAT IS WEB3?

BY ELI LEVI,
BUSINESS EDITOR

In order to understand Web3, it is helpful to understand the full evolution of the Web, beginning with Web 1.0 in the 1990s and 2000s. It was a world of static web pages and only the beginning of interactive content. This was the era of Netscape and the first time people had access to real-time news content.

Web 2.0, following the post Web 1.0 bubble around 2001 to 2003, was a paradigm shift in the way the internet was used; it became a place for interactive content. Think of social media and the great impact that it has had on our lives. Additionally, the sleekness and ubiquity of smartphones are both components of Web 2.0. The core belief that given infinite compute power (a key capability that gave way for 2.0) powered Andreessen Horowitz, one of the leading venture capital firms, and en-



abled them to explode onto the venture scene at an unprecedented rate. We have seen this vision come true as more and more of our lives go digital. Web 3.0 is only beginning; the concepts that shape Web3 have room to grow and change. Yet there are already some concrete changes that have occurred. Covid has accelerated many trends, several of which are digital shifting. The growing

number of VR/AR headsets, along with the massive deal-flow in that space is leading many to think that the metaverse will consist of people interacting in some life-like avatar form. Some are skeptical of a fully digital universe. They think of the metaverse as a fully interactive online experience, in which all apps are integrated into one seamless user experience with

an enhanced ability to readily interact with anyone. One contemporary example of this is Discord. Discord does everything WhatsApp does while also maintaining many additional features, such as meeting rooms where anyone can hop in or hop out. These meeting rooms are extremely useful for on-the-fly meetings. Many crypto, Web 3.0, and blockchain startups, including the company I interned for, use Discord as their primary place of business.

Decentralization, trustlessness, and even greater user utility are all components of Web 3.0. The blockchain's trustless nature allows for greater use of open-source code which could be the greatest contributing factor to this paradigm shift.

POWER DOWN: TESLA STOCK TANKS

BY MEIRAV JANUS

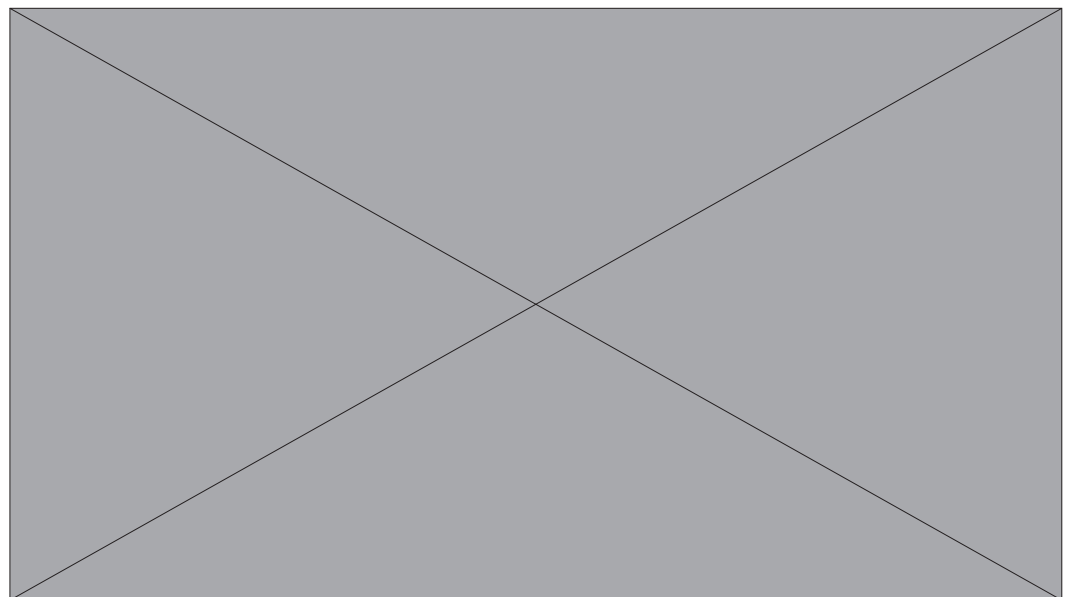
On Friday, March 11, 2022, Tesla's shares dropped by 9.07%. Elon Musk, the founder of Tesla as well as his private space company, SpaceX tweeted that Tesla was seeing "significant recent inflation pressure in raw materials and logistics," adding later "and we are not alone." The tweet from Musk-led investors to contemplate potential 2022 profit margins, due to fear of Musk's time being split between Twitter and Tesla. Prior to the drop, the company's shares rose nearly 2%- this had to do largely with rumors of a production ramp-up.

Earlier last week it was revealed that Elon Musk finally acquired Twitter after a weeklong saga during which he first became the company's largest shareholder, then offered to buy it outright.. Musk stated, "The Tesla autopilot team and AI team has done an incredible job building real-work AI, and were able to go to the wide beta for all self-driving customers in North America this year." Additionally, Musk promised a "dedicated robotaxi." According to the Washington

Post, Musk ignored a legal requirement that he file a disclosure with the Securities and Exchange Commission after exceeding 5% ownership of Twitter.

An article posted by the Washington Post, claims that Musk's purchase of Twitter is what led to the more than \$100 billion drop in Tesla's stock Tuesday. Post the purchase, the company's stock dropped more than 12% which brought its capitalization down to \$906 billion; it had previously been \$1 trillion. This all came the day after Musk and Twitter settled on an agreement for Musk to take partial ownership of Twitter. Analysts in the Washington Post said Musk's net worth will be affected due to his new commitment to the Twitter purchase and fear he will become distracted from his role as Tesla CEO. Last week Musk's net worth reached \$270 billion but was down to \$240 billion on Tuesday.

On Tuesday, May 10, The Eco-

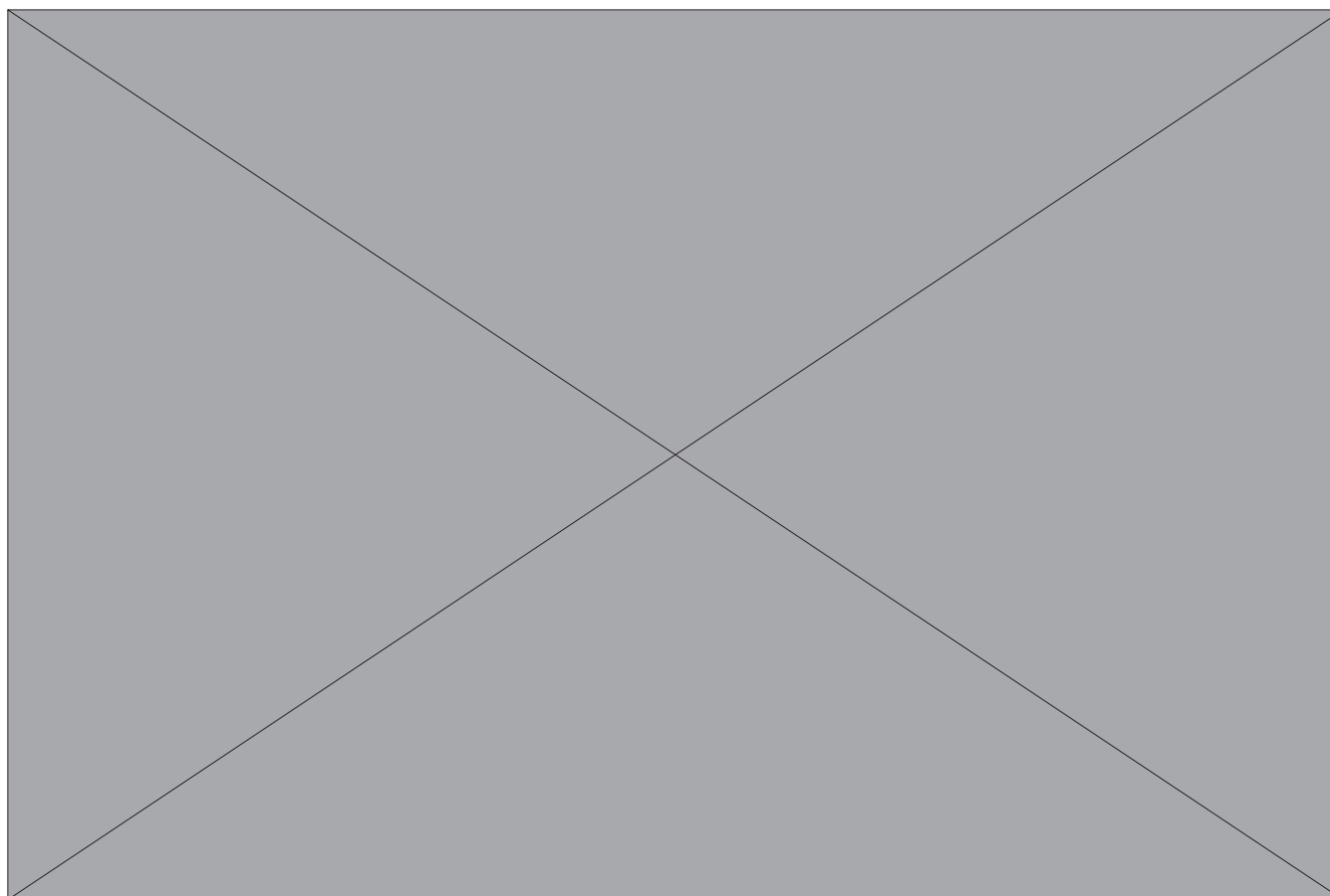


omic Times reported Tesla's stock dropped 31%, marking an even bigger loss. A potential reason for all these losses is the opinion of Musk's investors who believe that Musk's involvement with Twitter could be a distraction to Tesla. Musk as well recently completed an \$8 billion Tesla stock sale, which is rumored to be connected to the Twitter transaction.

On Monday there was a wider tech meltdown as investors sold shares in global tech firms. This sent Nasdaq down almost 5%, as fear of inflation rises. This contributed to Tesla's major stock

drop. According to Barrons, many automobile stocks dropped because of the increased price of lithium. By 2025 it is said that the annual demand for lithium will rise to 1.5 million metric tons of lithium carbonate equivalent. That is up to about 500,000 metric tons used in 2021.

THE MAKING OF SPOTIFY



BY ELI LEVI,
BUSINESS EDITOR

Spotify is the largest music streaming platform with 365 million users globally. Many do not know, however, the origins of this platform. Before Spotify became the number one streaming platform, Napster had owned the online music market. Only after Napster failed was Spotify able to take its place with a new model allowing it to be where it is today.

Spotify in many ways is a byproduct of Napster, the original place to listen to music for free. After Napster failed there was a spot in the market for Spotify. After being involved in many startups and various projects some of which were in the music industry, Daniel Ek decided to found Spotify in Sweden with his friend Martin Lorentzon in 2006. At first, Spotify was launched only in Sweden as per the deal with the record labels. After success in Sweden, they rolled out to the United Kingdom and then slowly to the rest of Europe. Spotify was then able to raise a \$50 million round from Wellington Partners and billion-

aire Hong Kong investor Li Ka-Shing.

Meanwhile, Facebook was looking to partner with a company in the music industry. This had been a lengthy process as Sean Parker, the founder of Napster, who was involved with Mark Zuckerberg and Facebook, continuously denied possible partnership opportunities that were presented. Parker became infatuated with Spotify and thought it was the future of the music industry and a perfect fit for Facebook.

Gone were the days of organizing and downloading music, everything was completely streamlined and streamed. Parker sent an email to Ek praising Spotify and asking to be involved with the company and possibly integrate Spotify into the Facebook experience. Even though the Series B round, a stage of investment, was already closed at this point Ek reopened it and allowed the Founder's Fund and Parker to be investors. This relationship with Facebook turned out to be very fruitful as Spotify was able to leverage it to expand its success and increase its virality. After

a long wait the record labels finally agreed in 2011 to allow Spotify to expand into the U.S. By the end of September that year, Spotify had six million users of which over two million were paying subscribers. After their success, Spotify continued to raise many more investment rounds amounting to about 2.5 billion in raised capital.

Spotify then began to customize the in-app experience. Spotify started with a discover weekly playlist which was a way to discover new artists based on their listening habits. Release radar was the next personalized playlist released, intended for helping to track new releases from artists that the listener liked. The next step of personalization was a playlist based on all the data Spotify collected called the daily mix. Finally, one of the newer features is the yearly wrap up. This is when Spotify supplies the listener with all sorts of interesting stats about what they listened to over the past year, such as how many new artists they discovered, how many genres they listened to along with several top fives: their five most played songs,

their top podcasts, and their top artists. All of these features, specifically the playlists, were major factors in keeping users engaged. Spotify hired Barry McCarthy, the former CFO of Netflix, to be their CFO. Barry spearheaded the idea of Spotify doing a direct listing (DPO) instead of a traditional IPO, when a company goes public, allowing current shareholders to have some liquidity in the company if they wish. With a DPO no one is required to sell any shares, rather it gives the shareholders the option to sell should they choose to exercise it. When the DPO happened Ek still owned about 25% and Lorentzon 13%, which was a large portion of the company to own so late in the game especially after raising so much capital. Spotify has changed the music industry forever. They were the first legitimate music streaming company to build a business model that succeeded for streaming music. They have continued to innovate and capture more and more of the streaming market and have become the largest streaming platform today.

3 STOCK HIGHLIGHT: MAY 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, for our final edition of the 2021-2022 academic year, we will be highlighting Tesla Inc. (TSLA), Shopify Inc. (SHOP), and Beyond Meat Inc. (BYND).

Tesla Inc. (TSLA)

When Elon Musk said he would reverse Twitter's ban on Donald Trump, the Financial Times used that as their central headline of his interview at the Future of the Car conference on May 10, 2022, but, as per usual, Tesla's progress was the main topic of discussion. Tesla currently places its sights on selling 20 million electric vehicles a year by 2030, which is immensely higher than the expected 1.5 million this year. One of the largest uncertainties Tesla faces, according to Musk, with regards to actually reaching those milestones was problems in lithium production in a few years, due to a shortage of the equipment needed to convert lithium into factory-grade materials. But many investors are rightfully concerned that randomly buying Twitter for over \$40 billion and leveraging Tesla's stock doesn't get us to that goal any quicker. It is surprising to some that I waited until the very last edition to highlight Tesla, but I was actually trying to wait as long as I could so that I would be able to highlight Tesla after it was struck down by the correction it deserved. Did Tesla get hit as hard as it should have (to let off some steam and adjust to a more accurate valuation)? Who knows, but it is currently down about 25% over the last month, yes, a quarter of the company's value in 30 days. But Tesla isn't alone in this peril as Airbnb (ABNB), PayPal (PYPL), Block Inc. (SQ), and Spotify (SPOT) are all down over 30% in the last 30 days. In fact, the NASDAQ is even down 15% over the month.

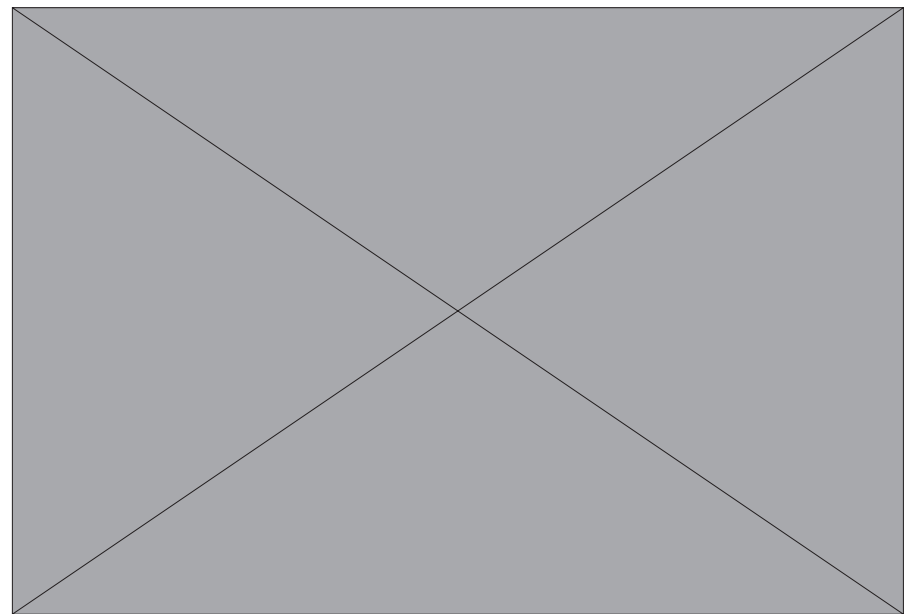
Going forward, Tesla's batteries will continue to use lithium as a key element, and the US plans to increase the mining of this pre-

cious metal, the projections of which show demand eventually dwarfing supply. The vast majority of lithium also comes from only three or four countries. Chile has the largest known lithium reserves in the world with 8 million tons. Coming far behind, in second place is Australia with 2.7 million tons, followed by Argentina at 2 million, and lastly China with 1 million. Musk also stated that the possibility of Tesla acquiring its own mining company at some point wasn't "out of the question."

Tesla production in Shanghai throughout April 2022 also dropped 98% from March 2022, according to the China Passenger Car Association. This comes as a result of the EV maker grappling with China's severe lockdown due to rising Covid infection rates.

Shopify Inc. (SHOP)

Speaking of stocks taking devastating hits, here's Shopify. Being one of the e-commerce leaders in the world, Shopify losing most of its value in less than 6 months is astounding, and hungry investors waiting to 'buy the dip' smell blood in the water. The stock is down 75% year to date (YTD). On a more positive note, however, Shopify announced the acquisition of Deliverr, a US-based e-commerce fulfillment company, for \$2.1 billion. Shopify recently reported earnings per share (EPS) of \$0.25, majorly missing expectations of \$0.87, and revenue of \$1.2 billion, missing expectations of \$1.24 billion. In 2022, growth has been slowing, and they are currently increasing investments to further grow their fulfillment network. This missed earnings is even more drastic when compared to 2021's proud 57% and 61% increase in sales and earnings, respectively. It is possible that because of the contrast to last year's stellar performance, the stock is being punished too severely, hinting at potential success in the longer run. In this dark moment, we must remember not to lose sight of the grand scheme of things. Shopify dominates nearly a third of the e-commerce platform market in the US, with their competition WooCommerce Checkout and Wix.com following distantly behind. The company is a pioneer in an industry with over \$160 billion in market potential, and Shopify has only captured 3% of the revenue opportunity. All of this short-term drama surrounding Shopify's stock may influence its share price



for the foreseeable future, but it is no question that the company is positioned for enormous growth over the long run.

As an added plus (for Shopify), their major competitor, Amazon, reported a \$7.6 billion loss from its investment in Rivian Automotive. Ouch.

Beyond Meat Inc. (BYND)

Last but not least—actually their stock has lost over 40% of its value in the last 30 days, and they have the lowest market capitalization of this month's stock highlight—is Beyond Meat. While I didn't give the plant-based industry leader a great introduction, they still are the industry leader for a reason: they continue to innovate. Beyond Meat has partnered with McDonalds to add the 'McPlant,' their plant-based burger, to the McDonalds menu and therefore open up a channel for Beyond Meat to reach billions. Their most recent earnings reported a net loss of \$100.5 million, or \$1.58 a share, compared to the net loss of \$27.3 million, or 43 cents a share, in the same quarter a year ago. Net revenue, at \$109.5 million, barely crawled up 1% from \$108.2 million last year. Saddest of all, Beyond Meat briefly dipped under \$25 on May 11th, falling below the company's IPO (initial public offering) for the first time since the company went public about 3 years ago.

"Though we recognize that the decisions we are making today in support of our long-run ambition have contributed to challenging near-term results, including a sizable though temporary reduction in gross margin as we took cost-intensive measures to support important strategic launches, we are confident in the future we are building while advancing our mission," Beyond Meat Chief Executive Ethan Brown stated regarding the re-

sults. Beyond executives were still concerned, however, mentioning "near-term uncertainty related to macroeconomic issues, including inflation and rising interest rates, COVID-19 and its potential impact on consumer behavior and demand levels, labor availability and supply chain disruptions, partially attributable to recent geopolitical tensions." All uncertainty of the near-future aside, the market for meat alternatives is growing faster than we can imagine.

Note from the author:

To be writing this stock article throughout a global pandemic, after 2 years of absolute market volatility, in the wake of 40-year-high inflation levels, plans for a series of interest rate hikes by the Federal Reserve, and the global economic impacts of Russia's war against Ukraine, has definitely makes for an interesting conclusion to the 3 stock highlight series. As a result of this cacophony of disrupting factors, shares of many of the world's most innovative companies in some of the fastest-growing industries have been shot sky-high, demolished, boosted again, and now sit in a bloodbath. The market is moving on sentiment, has been for nearly 2 years, and heeds by no fundamentals. Wall Street and Main Street aren't connected anymore. With the current corrections underway, many hope for more realistic company valuations as a result. As with entrepreneurs, the real talent for investors lies within seeing opportunity in chaos. By educating ourselves and those around us, we can take advantage of the current situation and look into financially sound companies (and those we love fundamentally) that will now carry attractively low valuations.

It has been an honor and a pleasure to write for you all, and I wish you all nothing but green markets and plentiful dividends. Cheers.

SCI-TECH

STUDENT RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT: CHANA LIBEROW

BY LEIA RUBINSTEIN,
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
EDITOR

I had the opportunity to ask Chana Liberow (SCW '22) some questions about her research.

Leia Rubinstein (LR): Hi Chana, tell me a little bit about yourself.

Chana Liberow (CL): Hi! I'm a graduating senior, majoring in biochemistry. After high school, I spent two years learning in Israel, and I've always loved learning!

LR: How did you get involved in this research?

CL: I knew that I wanted to be involved in a hands-on lab, meaning you work on experiments and are not just analyzing data. I had a professor at Stern who was actually finishing up her Ph.D., and I learned a lot about research from her and ended up connecting with the lab that she did her work in during Covid.

LR: Who's lab do you work in, and what do you study?

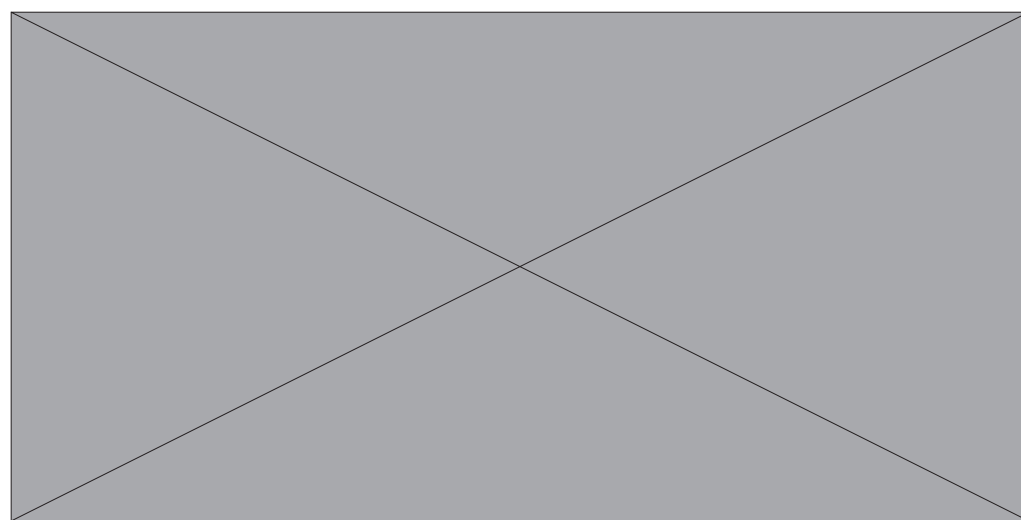
CL: It's a lab at NYU called Ringstad Lab, a neurodevelopment lab. We work with worms and study the development of chemosensory neurons.

LR: What did you hope to gain

from this research experience?

CL: I hoped to gain hands-on skills and overall what it means to be in a research environment. I ended up really loving my experience, and it has led me to want to continue doing lab work when I graduate from Stern.

LR: Are there any real-world applications of this research?



CL: This lab is in the basic sciences, which means you are quite a few steps removed from seeing it on the shelves in CVS. But the real-world application is that the worms have the same neurons as humans, so anything we see that happens with the worms will also occur to humans.

LR: What role do you play in this lab?

CL: I was given my own research project, which has been a great opportunity. I've done all sorts of experiments and worked with different students and different mentors.

LR: Is there anything you en-

countered that was especially difficult during the research?

CL: Sometimes it's really hard when you don't get the results you want, or you're just stagnant, and you have to keep repeating an experiment over and over again. This whole process really tests your patience. I was doing the same experiment for the past

6 months, and only by the last month did I start getting frustrated that it wasn't moving, but ultimately we got results.

LR: Do you have any advice for students who are interested in lab positions?

CL: The most important thing is not to give up. Before I got this lab position, I emailed so many other labs. Most of them ignored me, but some of them didn't. The key is not to be afraid of not getting a response but reaching out and emailing people. Find a lab that you would be interested in working in, introduce yourself, say that you read about their research, show you care, and explain why you think you will be a valuable asset to the lab. Just keep pushing, and eventually, you will get something!

LR: Thank you so much, Chana! This was all so interesting.

CL: Awesome, happy to hear.

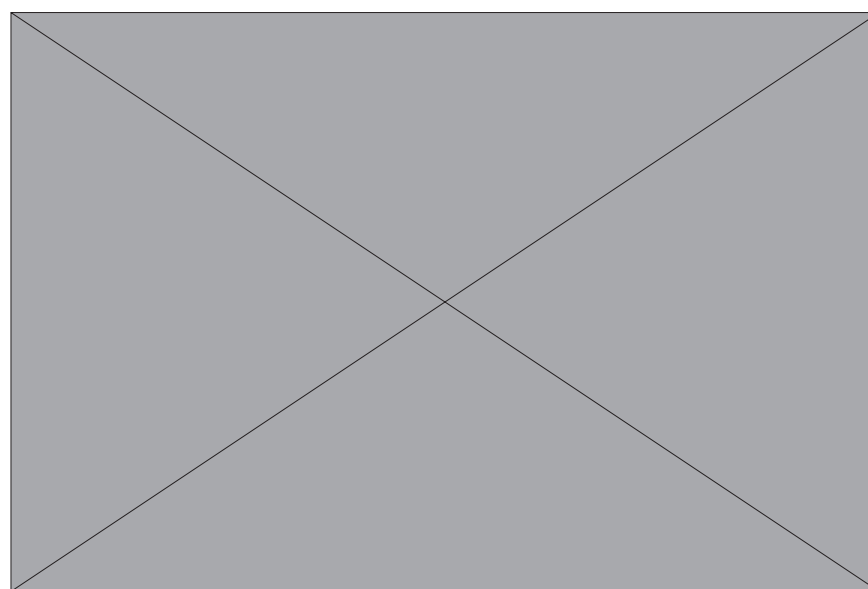
DISCOVERY SHEDS LIGHT ON CATERPILLAR CATASTROPHE

BY YOSEF SCHER, SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY EDITOR

For quite some time, scientists have known about the infamous Nuclear Polyhedrosis Virus and its effects on caterpillars, such as forcing the caterpillar to climb to increasingly higher heights where it will be positioned until the virus liquifies the caterpillar. It wasn't until only recently, however, thanks to Xiaoxia Liu and her colleagues at the China Agricultural University in Beijing, that it was discovered how the virus works so efficiently and effectively.

The Nuclear Polyhedrosis Virus employs a calculated and strategic plan in its hosts that allow it for maximal dissemination of the virus. Once infected, a caterpillar will crawl to the top of a plant and "hang in an inverted V from its middle legs or in a straight line from its anal prolegs." After three days of hopelessly hanging

on the plant, the caterpillar dies and turns into a dark brown or black-colored liquid. According to the International Butterfly Breeders Association, the Nuclear



Polyhedrosis Virus "attacks the very cell structure of the caterpillar, rearranging it at the atomic level, forming 'crystals' which are, basically, inanimate and incapa-

ble of maintaining life." The virus produces a foul smell which attracts many different insects to the deformed caterpillar. Additionally, birds and other wildlife that

enjoy caterpillars will eat them, "carrying the infection over long distances."

Once in contact with the caterpil-

lar, the insects disperse the virus wherever they go. After having been entirely liquified, the residual elements of the caterpillar drip to the leaves lower down on the plant. The virus is further spread by rain, which washes more of the virus particles to the lowest leaves on the plant and other surrounding areas. Butterflies that land on leaves infected with the virus pick up the virus particles and spread the virus to other nectar plants. When the butterfly lays its eggs on the infected plant that it touched, "the hatchling caterpillars eat the leaves and immediately are infected with the virus," causing the cycle to restart.

In order to understand how the Nuclear Polyhedrosis Virus caused the caterpillar to behave in such a bizarre fashion, Xiaoxia Liu and

SEE CATERPILLAR,
PAGE 22

CATERPILLAR

FROM PAGE 21

her colleagues conducted an experiment that revealed that the virus “[cranked] up the expression of genes involved in the larvae’s visual system—specifically, ones involved in perceiving light.” Liu’s team started their investigation into the caterpillar’s uncanny behavior by identifying the genes responsible for opsins, “light-sensitive proteins key to vision.” Although those findings were significant, the researchers’ critical discovery came when they found a third overactive gene, TRPL, in the infected caterpillars, which was not nearly as active in uninfected caterpillars. A normal TRPL gene assists cell membranes in converting light into electrical signals. However, when there is an unusual amount of activity with the TRPL gene, an organism

begins to “crave more light than usual.” Using CRISPR technology, a gene-editing tool, Liu and her team temporarily shut off the opsin genes and TRPL gene in the infected caterpillars to determine how this would affect them. They found that these caterpillars were less attracted to the light, and the “number of insects that [even] moved towards the light in the box fell by roughly half.” As a result of the experiment, Liu’s team proved that the Nuclear Polyhedrosis Virus seems to “hijack the genes related to caterpillar vision,” which ultimately begins the caterpillar’s demise.

Although this virus seems to be a terrible thing plaguing caterpillars, some organizations, like the United States Government, are glad that it is around. In the United States, an invasive caterpillar species called the Gypsy Moth Caterpillar damages “roughly a million acres of forest ... each

year by devouring tree leaves.” Scientists believe that a lot more damage could have been done to the forests without the virus controlling the number of Gypsy Moth Caterpillars. According to Jon Hamilton, a correspondent for NPR’s Science Desk, “[t]he virus is so effective that the government actually sprays it on trees to help control gypsy moth outbreaks.”

While Liu and her colleagues certainly made an incredible breakthrough in discovering how the virus manipulates the caterpillar’s genes to change its behavior, there is still a lot more for scientists to uncover.

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TREATING DEPRESSION FROM THE INSIDE OUT

BY MIRA POSTELNEK,
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Although depression affects more than 264 million people and leads to thousands of annual deaths nationwide, little is known about this onerous mental illness.

Scientists believe that depression is influenced by many factors, including chemical imbalances in the brain, personality changes, environmental factors, and a person’s genetics. There are multiple treatment options, such as medication or therapy, but for patients with no other treatment option that worked, they can try a treatment known as electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). ETC is utilized for severe depression cases and is an adaptive version of shock therapy. According to Mayo Clinic, while a person is under general anesthesia, electrical currents are sent through parts of the brain to trigger a seizure and alter brain chemistry. While this type of treatment may seem barbaric, it can have positive effects on the most severe depression cases. Unfortunately, there is a stigma surrounding ETC therapy that stems from the possible undesirable side effects that many patients experience. Furthermore, doctors question the benefit of ETC therapy since one in every ten ETC patients will experience little to no benefit from ETC.

There is, however, a new treatment option on the horizon: brain implants to treat severe cases of depression. This treatment is modeled similarly to ETC in the sense that it utilizes a form of neuromodulation targeting that is tailored specifically to a patient’s

mapped the effects of stimulation in the amygdala on mood-related brain sites in a patient with severe treatment-resistant depression.

A paper published by Nature Medicine explains the research conducted by Scangos and her

when they notice changes in the patient’s amygdala.

In early research done on NeuroPace RNS, researchers studied the patient’s brain through a minimally invasive approach called stereo-EEG before implanting the device. Researchers placed ten intracranial electrode leads into the brain of the patient, who then spent ten days engaged in “stimulus-response mapping,” which is essentially the researchers stimulating various parts of the brain and monitoring the effects on the patient. The researchers discovered that the patients felt joy and happiness when they activated the ventral striatum. This stimulation seemed to best address this particular patient’s primary symptoms of low energy and loss of pleasure in everyday activities. The patient stated she began to enjoy treatments because she hadn’t felt such a sense of joy in years. In the words of the patient, “[i]t struck me so clearly in that moment that my depression wasn’t something I was doing wrong or just needed to try harder to snap out of – it really was a problem in my brain that this stimulation was able to fix.”

After making this discovery, the

symptoms. According to Katherine Scangos, M.D., Ph.D., an assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, “[t]he brain, like the heart, is an electrical organ, and there is a growing acceptance in the field that the faulty brain networks that cause depression – just like epilepsy or Parkinson’s disease – could be shifted into a healthier state by targeted stimulation.” Soon after remarking this, Dr. Scangos and colleagues

colleagues, which uses stimulation to treat resistant depression through a new device called NeuroPace RNS. This method, which was initially a treatment for epilepsy, is now being studied as a potential treatment for severe depression. NeuroPace RNS works by implanting the device in the right hemisphere of the patient’s brain and monitoring the patient’s amygdala for signs of depression. Then, doctors can supply electrical stimulation

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researchers had to determine the opportune time to activate this area in the brain. They continued their study by mapping the patient's brain and found gamma oscillations in the amygdala. According to the research, the study found it was a reliable indicator of when the patient's depression symptoms would spike.

Based on this information, the patient had a wire placed in her amygdala that was coded to know when to administer the shock treatment. Stimulation was initiated in six-second bursts in the ventral striatum, increasing the patient's feeling of happiness until the gamma oscillations

decreased. The treatment was then deemed effective, and the implant was dormant until the gamma oscillations triggered another wave of six-second bursts. The patient was provided with gentle stimulation throughout the day as necessary. According to the University of San Francisco study, the patient's depressive symptoms virtually disappeared during the months of treatment with this implant. The patient reported that her symptoms, which she has struggled with for the past seven years, have almost completely vanished, despite significant stressors present in her current life.

This was stage one utilizing NeuroPace RNS, and it was only performed on one patient. The following stages of research will have the patient spend six weeks off the device and then six weeks with the device turned on; this will evaluate whether the treatment is effective or a result of the placebo effect. There is a lot of research and tests to conduct before NeuroPace RNS can be utilized for broader use. However, NeuroPace RNS is an interesting new treatment that has the potential to help patients with debilitating depression who have been unable to find relief and are at high risk of suicide.

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