



The Yeshiva University

OBSERVER

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Jewish Community Mourns Pope John Paul II



By Ilana Levin

Residents of 34th Street who consistently take note of the various colors that light up the Empire State Building nightly, and who understand the symbolism each color carries, surely noticed the darkness on Thursday night, April 7. The funeral of Pope John Paul II was the exceptional circumstance that warranted the break from

the building's usual illumination. As a pope who sought to improve interfaith relations and relieve tensions between Jews and Catholics, he was viewed as an exception to the history of the Vatican City; however, many Jews still remember the pope with mixed feelings.

The 84-year-old pope died the night of April 2 after a 26-year reign of the Catholic Church and a decade-long struggle with Parkinson's disease. Over one bil-

lion Roman Catholics are mourning the death of their religious leader, and many non-Catholics and non-Christians have joined in memorializing this world figure.

Pope John Paul II was the first Polish pope in history, and the first non-Italian pope to be elected in over 450 years. John Paul II, originally named Karol Wojtyla, used an increasingly technological world to expand the reach of the Church and to spread his central message of the value of human rights. Accordingly, he was also the most-traveled pope, visiting 129 countries over the course of 104 trips. In many ways he succeeded in sharing his message, evidenced by the growth of the Catholic population in Latin America and Africa, and by the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, which world leaders attribute in part to

continued on page 6

Poor Attendance Plagues Arts Festival

By Shifra Bronstein

Despite the annual Arts Festival's wide range of educational and entertaining opportunities, it suffered this year from poor student attendance and a lack of commitment from the administration. Many of the Festival's organizers were frustrated by the dearth of student participation, including SCW junior and Arts Festival organizer, Yael Dubrovsky. "Attendance was absolutely miserable," she stated. "I realize that the Arts Festival has never been a priority, but it was a shame since we were so ambitious this year."

A two-week long event, the Festival presumes to encourage student celebration of the performing arts, including painting, literature and drama. Dean Norman Adler initiated the pro-

gram six years ago in an effort to educate Yeshiva students from both the Wilf and Beren campuses about diverse art forms, and to allow students the opportunity to create and display their own art. The Arts Festival agenda included a broad range of activities, like a field trip to Brooklyn's Urban School of Glass, a live concert featuring Midnight Remedy and a Shabbaton with Jewish artists. The unique programming, however, still did not succeed in drawing crowds from SCW or YC campuses.

The lack of attendance at some of these events can not be attributed to a scarcity of advertising. Any SCW or YC student would have noticed the many fliers, e-mails and posters containing information about the Festival that urged student submissions. Aaron Roller, a senior

continued on page 7

SSSB Hosts Fundraiser

By Alana Rubenstein and Sara Levit

On April 6, Sy Syms School of Business hosted a Fashion Show in the Schottenstein Cultural Center featuring Teri Jon fashions, Kaituz Bridal & Cosmetics makeup and Rina Limor Designs Jewelry. The SSSB-sponsored event was a fundraiser for future Sy Syms Student Council events. All three designers volunteered to donate a portions of their sales to this cause. Each of the featured collections offered their products free of charge or for a fair price to maximize fundraising.

The fashion show was organized and managed by Jamie Chubak, SSSB student, and Bayla Rabin, a SCW junior. Chubak, a management major who has worked in fashion for five years, accepted the position as a coordinator to allow her to gain an "inside" look at fundraising and fashion organization.

Each collection tailored its presentation to an Orthodox female audience to maximize sales and the resulting income for the Sy Syms fund. Kaituz Bridal & Cosmetics—a line known for its Shabbat, Yom Tov and Kosher for Pesach makeup—jump-started the show with a demonstration of "methodologies in makeup application." Teri Jon Fashion, by Rickie Freedman, a Yeshiva University parent, brought her spring collection to the show. The collection, which featured natural fibers like silks, cottons and lightweight tweeds, targeted an audience of all ages. "It's not about size—it's about attitude," remarked Freedman. "I have a sixteen year-old that wears my line, a twenty-seven-year-old, and I wear it myself." This feminine and flirty line is an item-driven collection that is meant to be mixed with an existing wardrobe.

The fundraiser encouraged SCW student involvement as

continued on page 23

Dunkin' Donuts: A Question of Kashrut

By Shoshana Fruchter

Much to the delight of the Orthodox community of Midtown Manhattan, primarily composed of women from Stern College, a new eatery has opened on 34th Street between Park and Madison Avenues. Stationed directly across the street from Brookdale Residence Hall, this 24-hour Dunkin' Donuts Baskin Robbins achieved immediate popularity.

"It's so hard to be *frum* here," complained one YC student to his friend, a Stern student, as he searched for a place in the Dunkin' Donuts to wash his hands before eating his newly-purchased bagel. His sentiment about the conflict between the store's configuration and his religious observance struck a familiar chord—but his problem was quickly resolved by a helpful employee who handed him a cup



Dunkin' Donuts opens across from Brookdale Hall

of water.

The store's front window bears a certificate from Ner Tamid K, a private *kashrut* organization, which testifies "we have inspected the ingredients and production facilities of Dunkin' Donuts at the above address (51 East 34th) and only the following are Kosher under our Orthodox supervision." The list specifies that all doughnuts, English muffins, croissants, French rolls, bagels, ice creams

and beverages are kosher. At the bottom of the printed document, under the signature of the mashgiach, an attempt to support and contextualize the approval is scribbled in pen: "Smicha- Rav Moshe Feinstein z"l, Member-Rabbinical Alliance of America."

Baskin Robbins ice cream is nationally certified kosher by the Vaad Hakashrut of Massachusetts, save a number of specific, mostly marshmallow-

continued on page 9

I N S I D E



Macy's Blooms with Annual Flower Show
Page 14



Yeshiva Hosts Sarachek Tournament
Page 13

SCW Happenings

Page 10-11



Aqueduct Strikes a Chord with "I Sold Gold"
Page 15



SCW to Renovate Brookdale Lounge
Page 10



Esther Flaschner-Berko
Editor-in-Chief

Recently, the students of Stern College were privileged to host a visit from Harav Aharon Lichtenstein, shlita. Rav Lichtenstein, one of our generation's most prominent rabbinical figures, delivered a shiur to students in an overflowing Koch auditorium. Afterwards, Rav Lichtenstein gave an advanced Gemarah shiur to Stern's Graduate Program in Advanced Talmudic Studies.

Rav Lichtenstein's visit, and particularly his continuing readiness to teach advanced Talmud to women, sends a strong message about the value of women's Judaic studies. Rav Lichtenstein sent a compilation of sources for the women to prepare ahead of his arrival, sources that demanded hours of analysis and explication. For a rabbi of Rav Lichtenstein's status to so matter-of-factly engage female Talmudic scholars is unfortunately not to be taken for granted. His arrival was clearly an exhilarating event in Stern College, and a great boost to our continued Torah learning.

Regrettably, this wonderful appreciation for women's Torah seems sorely lacking in SCW's very own Beit Midrash. In a small corner of the sixth floor in 245 Lexington, the Beit Midrash holds just 12 tables, and a total of 48 seats. Clearly not meant to accommodate SCW's population of over 1000 students, such a paltry offering is embarrassing and downright insulting. Do administrators expect that only 48 of us, including the graduate Talmud students, would like to learn Torah?

To be fair, the Beren Campus is severely limited in space due to the high price of real estate in the area. But one would hope that a university that emblazons "Torah

Umadda" would consider the "Torah" a priority. (After all, we do have a 2 million-dollar cafeteria.) Specifically, students have suggested the ingenious solution of turning the now-empty Koch auditorium into a beautiful new Beit Midrash.

SCW is to be commended for converting rooms in Schottenstein and Brookdale residence halls to Batei Midrash, offering students the opportunity to learn in an intimate environment in the comfort of their dorms. While such options are convenient and appreciated, they cannot replace a central, lively, bustling Beit Midrash.

A main Beit Midrash becomes more than just tables, chairs and books. It morphs into an independent entity that transforms those who enter the room. It is a central force in the school that carries a weight greater than the area demarcated by its four walls. In a real Beit Midrash, students who frequent the place have a "makom kavuah," a permanent seat, where they keep their personal seforim and study regularly. They "own" a piece of the Beit Midrash, helping to build, shape, and contribute to the experience as part of a collective body of Torah students. I know men uptown who have this experience daily, and quite frankly, I don't understand why I'm deprived of it.

Even though SCW does not offer the same framework of Torah classes available uptown (the ability to take a full morning shiur for no credit), our Judaic studies classes require the same intense preparation. Whether or not one argues that SCW should switch to the sort of Judaic studies program uptown, which I personally favor, one can certainly not deny that the women of Yeshiva University are deserving of the same Judaic resources available to their male counterparts.

Our Beit Midrash is cramped, stuffy and overpopulated. There are numerous times in a typical day when the room is filled to capacity, with not one seat remaining. I've actually seen students sitting on the floor. Imagine how many more students a thriving, welcoming hall of study would attract.



Rebecca Rosenberg
Editor-in-Chief

In the Observer's lead article about the Arts Festival, the organizers said that many SCW students are apathetic toward the arts. And some students and faculty have suggested this apathy is an epidemic, not just seen in the arts arena, but also in a lack of participation in campus life. Personally, I think a large part of the problem with attendance problems at the Arts Festival events had more to do with scheduling. Just this past Wednesday, April 12th, three events were scheduled on the same night: a choral ensemble, a Holocaust lecturer and an Arts Festival Poetry and Prose night. Naturally, this makes it difficult for each event to draw significant crowds. In fact, I would argue that the presence of so many events suggests that not only are students *not* apathetic, but they are actually extremely involved.

SCWSC President Molly Fink believes the dearth of students has more to do with a lack of communication and poor organization on a scheduling level. "Thank G-d we have so many events at Stern this year," she said. "But they need to be better organized with each other so as not to overlap so much on both campuses. The problem with attendance often has to do with other events scheduled the same night. Sometimes there are as many as four or five."

Molly raised another issue that compounds the difficulty of scheduling events. We only have class Monday through Friday and largely due to the mass Shabbat exodus, Thursday night is considered an undesirable time slot for events. Mondays also tend to have poor student participation. This leaves event coordinators concentrating programs on Tuesday and Wednesday,

Are SCW Students Really Apathetic?

which results in fewer students at each event.

The creation of a readily accessible calendar for both campuses could help alleviate this problem. Event coordinators could consult the calendar to avoid scheduling their programs on nights densely reserved. It could also be helpful if the number of events per night were limited, leaving more of the student population available to attend.

I remember my first year at Stern when there were vastly fewer events and student leaders. This year, SCW even has an Animal Rights Club and an environmental club. In addition, many of the student leaders aren't only committed to their field interest, but have been active in other on-campus causes. For instance, Fink and Israel Club President Hindy Poupko have united with other student leaders to coordinate a major rally protesting genocide in Sudan. Not only does it encourage SCW participation but also students of other universities.

This concern about poor attendance is not unique to SCW. President Richard Joel has mentioned in several of his speeches that apathy was the most common complaint he heard while visiting college campuses as former Hillel president. Though poor attendance at events is troubling, it is not necessarily a symptom of student apathy.

Personally, I'm extremely proud of the dedication and commitment of SCW's student body leadership which is a reflection of the student body itself.

The Yeshiva University

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The Observer wishes a hearty
Mazal tov to Aviva and Arujeh
Needle on their marriage

A Message From Your Presidents



Aliza Abrams
TAC President

Hello Everyone,

What an exciting last few weeks we have had at Stern College. The Yachad Shabbaton a few weeks ago, which actually seems like a year ago, was an amazing success. With over 200 people, and an amazing Blue Fringe concert on Saturday night, I was on a high for weeks. Or at least until Purim which was equally as amazing but in a different way, as I stood in Weisburg Commons amongst women from all over the place, and I was floored. I was overcome by the scene, I really saw that night that Yeshiva University is a universal place for women from all over and of all ages to gather on Purim. It really is a special thing because there are not usually so many "kosher" places for people to hang out on Purim, but TAC supplied that environment... what a fiesta it

was. I would like to give a shout out to TAC for all of their hard work- Riva Preil, Chavie Shwartzbard and Jen Shulman thanks so much. I would also like to thank all of the volunteers who came and helped out- Chanie Brandsdorfer, Yafit Vaanunu, Malka Sadoff, Joe, and Sammy- we couldn't have done it without you guys. Lastly, I would like to thank SOY for all of their help- Shmulik, Netanel, and Yoel, (Jona got married that week) you guys were great. The most recent extremely exciting event we had was having HaRav Aharon Lichtenstein speak last week. I really hope everyone enjoyed and recognized the zechut it was to hear the Torah of such a Gadol right here in Stern.

Now I would like to switch gears and discuss something that has been bothering me for the last few days. The elections. Why is it that aside from a handful of positions, everyone ran unopposed? Why weren't any of the Presidents opposed? Don't people care about what goes on in Stern College? Now not everyone in the school needs to run for a position, and not everyone should feel like they have to run, but there should have been a little more interest. Many times people come to me with their thoughts and ideas, not to mention complaints. I am no different than any of you, but I manage to

usually fulfill your requests or point you in the right direction. So many of you who come to me would make amazing board members- so why don't you run? Don't just complain, get active, make a difference! This is our school, and we have the ability to do whatever we want (within reason obviously).

At the beginning of the school year, the office of the Dean put up a sign asking for students to get involved. It asked students just to give in suggestions of how to better the academic aspects of school. How many of you have issues with certain classes? How many of you want to change certain requirements? How many of you responded to that sign? Ok, academics, the Deans office, that can be intimidating. Perhaps I should give a less intimidating example. I can't even begin to tell you how many times I have had the following conversation: "Are you Aliza Abrams- TAC President?" To which I reply "Yes" excitedly expecting this person to express their interest in getting involved. But to my dismay they proceed to complain about the food in the cafeteria. Now to begin with there is a food committee somewhere in this school. Secondly Mr. Singer who is a very nice man is the manager of Food Services. Talk to him this is his job, he always listens to me and tries his best to accommo-

date my requests. It is just as easy for you to go to him as it is for me. This is just a small way to take control of your Stern College experience.

As I mentioned before not everyone should be running for a position on a board in order to get active. There are many other ways to get involved. There are committees for everything, ranging from Animal Rights to the Metropolitan Experience. Even just attending programs and activities is a form of involvement. Don't automatically delete emails that come through your Ymail, open them you never know what you might read about.

I am available to talk to anyone who is interested in taking an active role in Stern but is not sure how. I would like to congratulate all of the new board members and wish you all much Hatzlacha in your new positions. As the President of TAC as well as someone who is a student just like all of you, I ask you not to simply experience college, but create your college experience. Lastly I would like to wish everyone a Chag Kosher Visameach,

Aliza



Molly Fink
SCWSC President

Mazal to Deena Hassan and the all the student council presidents and their boards.

Have a healthy
and happy
Pesach!

POINT-COUNTERPOINT

By Shoshana Fruchter and Esther Genuth

Cruising Through Passover

Is going on a cruise a way to celebrate Pesach?

Pesach vacation, as its name indicates, should be a vacation. The holiday, with its strict *halakhic* dietary guidelines, yields eight long days of closed schools for children and often no work for parents. Since many families are rarely able to spend quality time together, Pesach is recognized as a unique opportunity to do so. A significant number of parents have rightfully reasoned that a family "getaway" is a perfect way to celebrate the Pesach holiday.

Pesach "Kosher Tours" range in theme from, "A Magical Passover" at the Walt Disney World Resort to "Kosherica Cruises" starring such Jewish musical celebrities as Mordechai Ben David and Cantor Benzion Miller. With a slew of facilities from golf courses to Israeli dance classes and religious activities, including *minyanim* (prayer services) and daily *shiurim* (Torah lectures), Pesach at a resort offers a much-needed breath of fresh air to the entire family, which enhances the holiday.

Some families travel yet further, leaving America's East Coast for a brief visit to various European countries. Trips to Europe afford travelers the great opportunity of bringing the past to life, by site-seeing and studying ancient Jewish landmarks in person, rather than merely acknowledging their former existence by reading about them.

Pesach traveling, however, transcends even the virtue of studying the past by creating a meaningful present. Exposing oneself to different peoples, traditions and cultures is an important part of personal growth, and families who are able to take advantage of this enlightening experience are extremely fortunate. "I went to Spain one year and it was really refreshing to see Jews in such a different way; Jews from all over Europe: Switzerland, Belgium, France..." reflected one SCW junior. What better way to celebrate the creation of a Jewish nation than by uniting with Jews of other countries and sharing that celebration?

In addition to the educational experiences, traveling for the entire Pesach holiday affords a family the luxury of not having to clean so strenuously before leaving - a welcome relief to any parent of multiple children. Additionally, whoever prepares the food for the holiday now has the opportunity to relax since food is part and parcel of the trip's price. Going away for Pesach is clearly a wonderful option for the entire family.

As we commemorate the exodus from Egypt each year there is a simultaneous exodus from Jewish communities at large. This trend of spending the Pesach holiday on a luxury cruise or hotel, though seemingly enjoyable, weakens the ambiance and purpose of the holiday. The Jews' first breath of freedom was anything but a tropical drink beside a swimming pool.

While many appreciate the luxuries of gourmet meals, the extravagant nature of Pesach on a cruise is not in the spirit of the holiday. These Pesach getaways are more often social events in which principal parts of the Pesach holiday become secondary. Seders are often conducted in large dining rooms in which it is difficult to hear the words of one's seder participants. In these situations it is especially easy for children, central members of the seder, to lose both focus and concentration.

Furthermore, there exists among the hotel and cruise "scene" an additional pressure to outwardly display wealth and status. "I haven't even started to buy clothes yet; I go to a hotel, and everybody changes constantly," commented one SCW student regarding the common Pesach custom of changing outfits throughout the day. It's somewhat ironic that our celebration of freedom from tyranny has morphed into an enslavement to the latest fashion trends.

A few SCW students made a distinction regarding the location of the hotel or vacation site. "I understand going to Israel for Pesach because there is an inherent connection between Israel and Pesach, but I don't understand what the connection is to the Caribbean or any other exotic country," stated Aviva Horowitz, SCW junior. "Wouldn't it be better to be home with the family?"

Pesach is a holiday about freedom and identity, about nationhood and exodus. These concepts demand serious thought and careful preparation, and Pesach serves as a vehicle for such learning and introspection. There is simply a skewed perspective of the Pesach holiday when "inspiring lectures" are advertised right beside "tropical gardens nestled between fish-filled ponds and filled with rare peacocks."

EDITORIALS
AND
OPINIONS

Letter to the Editors

The collective SCW reaction following the article published in the March edition of The Commentator can be categorized only as outrage. This fabricated opinion piece was inconsistent with a newspaper that claims journalistic integrity. Zev Nagel, the Editor-in-Chief of The Commentator published a short defense of The Commentator in the April edition of the paper. The response reads as follows:

Over the past three weeks, we've received a great deal of feedback responding to the column under discussion. It's important for us, however, to underscore a crucial distinction that many of our readers have failed to comprehend. Personal columns do not represent the institutional policy of The Commentator; all opinions, except for the staff editorials, are expressed opinion of the writer, and do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial board, the student body, faculty, or administration of Yeshiva University. Nevertheless, we realize that the said column may have been unnecessarily offensive. We will strive to be more sensitive in the future.

The above comment is not an apology, nor does it assure the future integrity of The Commentator. In an e-mail sent to SCW administration including Dean Karen Bacon, President Richard Joel, and Dr. Morton Lowengrub, Vice President for

Academic Affairs, as well as the Observer editors-in-chief, Nagel more clearly expressed his regret at his lack of editorial judgment. His words, written prior to the published apology in The Commentator, follow:

—Original Message—

From: Zev Nagel <znagel@yu.edu>
To: kbacon@yu.edu
Cc: rjoel@yu.edu; lowengrub@yu.edu; Nams182@aol.com; eflaschn@yu.edu
Sent: Fri, 11 Mar 2005 00:14:17 -0500
Subject: from the commentator

...I apologize to the students, faculty, and administration of Stern College for Women for printing an opinion piece that denigrated and insulted them. I apologize for not having better judgment in overseeing publication of the newspaper. And I apologize for allowing into my newspaper an article that alienated and offended an entire demographic of the Yeshiva family.

... The "Editor's Response" will basically include the above explanation, that this was not an opinion endorsed by The Commentator, but will also contain my personal apology for allowing such an immature and unproductive opinion article into our publication...

To the editor:

My compliments to Rebecca Rosenberg for her informative and balanced news article on SCW's decision to mandate school wide use of Turnitin, a program designed to detect plagiarisms. I commend as well Ms. Rosenberg's thoughtful editor's column on this issue.

One part of the record needs correction, however. The news article states: "The system is not a cure to the problem according to many faculty members such as philosophy professor David Shatz." It then quotes me as saying (paraphrasing a colleague's

remarks) that adoption of the program might send the message "that our interest is in catching students rather than in getting them to see the Halakhic and ethical offensiveness of what they are doing."

The quotation is accurate, but the context in which it is placed might give the impression that not only do I think that Turnitin "is not a cure," but I oppose its adoption. In point of fact, the quotation was offered in response to an emailed question asking me to identify both advantages and disadvantages of instituting the Turnitin system. After articulating its advantages,

I mentioned the possibility of sending the wrong message as a potential disadvantage. But in my opinion this disadvantage is far outweighed by the advantages, as my emailed response made clear. Indeed, I was one of the faculty members who urged the administration to explore the adoption of Turnitin and who spoke at the faculty meeting in favor of mandating its use.

(Dr.) David Shatz
Professor of Philosophy



Torah U'Madda Corner

By Chani Ozarowski

"She dwells with Beauty – Beauty that must die/ And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips/Bidding adieu, and aching Pleasure nigh... Veil'd Melancholy has her Sovran shrine" writes the great writer, John Keats, in his poem, "Ode to Melancholy." One of the concepts Keats explores here is that one must first experience real joy ("Beauty"), in order to appreciate melancholy. Though not an identical concept, this thought brings to mind a story in the book of Ezra. The Zekainim (Elders) who had seen the first Beit Hamikdash in its glory experienced greater sadness at the sight of the second Bayit – a structure not as splendid as the first – than those who had never seen the first Mikdash. It is interesting when secular writers touch upon Jewish themes such as this, since it is one of the many forms in which "Torah U Madda" can be discovered.

But is there merit to the idea that Jews can learn Torah concepts from non-Torah, and even

non-Jewish, sources? Shouldn't our source of God's words be the actual record of those words themselves? The answer may be found in the first record of someone accepting Torah upon himself. It is not Maamad Har Sinai (accepting the Torah at Mount Sinai) to which I refer, but to Avraham Avinu. The Rambam, in Hilchot Akum (laws regarding non-Jews) 1:1-2, discusses how after the development of idolatry in the world, Avraham began thinking about his present spiritual situation. In his words, Avraham began "l'shotet b'daato," which the Rambam L'am edition of "Mishne Torah" explains as "to search in his spirit, investigate, and introspect." Another way to clarify these words could be "to philosophize." Avraham 'discovered' God from this process, says the Rambam, quoting "Breishit Rabba" (61). He found the "derech HaEmet" (the True Path), and the Torah itself. The Midrash (ibid.) quotes Rabbi Shimon who notes that Avraham had no teacher, but rather God presented him with two 'kidneys' (a classic Biblical metaphor for intellect) to be his

two rabbis, and they flowed with the understanding of Torah and wisdom.

Is it possible to conclude that any person, including one who is not part of the Jewish nation and tradition, can philosophize and reach Torah truths? Is it possible that non-Jews could learn secular subjects and find some of the very same concepts that are taught by our Torah? Let us look at another example. John Locke concludes, based on his empiricist philosophy, that it is possible to come to belief in a God by observing nature and the world. Sound familiar? Locke's thought process sounds distinctly like the Midrash's account of Avraham Avinu's journey to discover God. In fact, the Rambam even included another element that may remind us of other secular philosophers: how Avraham publicized monotheism to the people around him – a somewhat Socratic notion of spreading 'true knowledge' to those who are ignorant of it. Perhaps it is reasonable that anyone could obtain the Torah truth by using individual searching and think-

ing. On the other hand, there is a well-known Talmudic passage which informs Jews that one may believe that there is wisdom among the other nations of the world but not that they possess Torah. Additionally, "Michtav MeElyahu" (written by Rav Elyahu Dessler) claims that the Torah was once 'in shamayim' (heaven) and was impossible to grasp unless one traveled through all the levels of [self] development in order to gain such lofty knowledge. Rav Dessler actually quotes the Midrash mentioned above, implying that philosophizing as Avraham did would potentially lead anyone to true Torah beliefs. However, he explains that since Maamad Har Sinai, the Torah was "lowered" so that all Jews, even less educated ones, could learn and observe the Torah.

Does this mean that even people who did not receive the Torah at Har Sinai can discover Torah concepts? Not necessarily. Michtav notes that a non-Jew does not fulfill the seven Noahide laws unless he does them as a commandment. This

points out that even if a non-Jew accepts or realizes an idea that is true according to the Torah, it is not considered doing a mitzvah on the same level unless he accepts it in the "Har Sinai" sense of mitzvot. This is again reminiscent of the Talmud that it is certainly possible for the nations of the world to have wisdom, but Torah was a specific gift given at Har Sinai.

In summation, there are many important lessons that Jews can learn from the secular subjects, and some of it may actually reflect sentiments that the Torah itself states. However, Jews must not view secular studies as a source upon which to base our moral judgments; that is within the realm of Torah, and nothing can replace that. Yet it is possible to take an optimistic perspective on our various studies and keep our eyes open for wisdom – there is something to learn from everyone and everything! If one views secular knowledge through a Torah lens, there is certainly much to gain from the wisdom of writers and philosophers in many non-Torah sources.

A Background Check Before You Check

By Rachel Adina Borg, assisted by Devora Khayyat and Rabbi Shlomo Hochberg

Note: The opinions presented here are intended as background information. If a question arises, please contact a competent halachik authority. Unless otherwise noted, all halachik principles are from the Tur, Shulchan Aruch and Mishna Brura, in Hilchot Pesach.

Although spring cleaning would certainly benefit most dorm rooms around Stern, Pesach ushers in a season of cleaning that is more thorough and satisfying than simply pushing an overflowing garbage into the kitchen.

The Torah commands us to nullify chametz from our minds, known in Hebrew as *bitul chametz*. According to the Torah, this can be done merely by thinking that the chametz no longer exists. If only it were that simple!

To enable the divine commandment of *bitul*, Chazal have instituted *bedika*, an official search for chametz, and *biur*, destruction of the chametz. *Bedika* enables the next step of *biur*, traditionally accomplished by burning the chametz. It is impossible to ensure that every person will nullify chametz in their minds in the same manner as their fellow Jew. Therefore, actively destroying the chametz enables a communal standard of nullification.

Bedikat Chametz is accomplished on the night preceding Erev Pesach, the night of the 14th of Nissan using a candle or flashlight. Before beginning the search, a blessing is made on *biur*, not on *bedika*, because the *bedika* itself is only to enable the destruction of the chametz, connecting it to the rituals of the following day.

The idea that *bedikat chametz* is done at night is suggested by a verse from Zephaniah 1.12, "I will search Jerusalem with candles," suggesting that we too should perform our search with a candle. Because a candle would only be effective at night, Chazal have arrived at the custom of searching for chametz at night.

Traditionally, pieces of bread are placed around the area before beginning the search to ensure that the *bedika* yields results and that the blessing is not said in vain. Afterwards, "Kol Chamira" is recited, verbalizing the mental nullification of chametz.

This recitation of "Kol Chamira" at night nullifies all chametz that was not found during the search. This allows us to continue eating chametz until *biur*. The next morning, the 14th Day of Nissan and Erev Pesach, we burn the chametz before noon and then recite "Kol Chamira" again, changing the language

slightly to annul all leftover chametz.

The Tur and Shulchan Aruch present a situation in which a traveler who leaves home within 30 days of the holiday intends to return after Pesach. The traveler is obligated to perform a *bedika* the night before his departure, and must remove, but not necessarily destroy, all chametz from the premises. A traveler does not recite the *bracha* before his *bedika*, because his search has no connection with any *biur*. The following day is not Erev Pesach for this traveler, it is merely another day, and he can still use the chametz he removed from his home until Erev Pesach arrives. In his new destination, on Erev Pesach, he recites the "Kol Chamira" on all chametz, known and unknown, with his home in mind.

This year, the dorms will close on Friday April 22, 2:30 p.m., for the duration of the holiday. Classes finish early on Wednesday to allow for travel time. Students who leave before the proper time of *bedikat chametz* fall into the category of the Tur's traveler and have the same obligations.

Students leaving early should perform *bedika* the night before departure. As there is no *bracha* said, there is no need to put out pieces of bread. Any chametz that is found can either be set aside in a special cabinet to be sold or must be removed. Later, on Erev Pesach, "Kol Chamira" is recited, completely nullifying any chametz that might still be left in the dorm.

This year is exceptional because Erev Pesach falls on a Shabbat. The night before Erev Pesach is Friday night, so *bedikat chametz* is moved to Thursday night. On Friday before noon the chametz is burned, but the "Kol Chamira" nullifying known chametz is not recited until Shabbat morning, because we still need to eat bread for the *seudot*.

Only students who leave the dorms before Thursday evening are categorized with the laws of a traveler. Rabbi Shlomo Hochberg maintains students who remain in the dorms on Thursday night are obligated to say the *bracha* before *bedika*, putting out pieces of chametz prior to searching, and arranging for their chametz to be burned Friday before noon.

This year's situation certainly might create confusion among roommates, so it is important to note that, if possible, it is preferable to appoint a *shaliach* (messenger) to do *bedika* at the proper time. The *shaliach* must be explicitly appointed, and both the *shaliach* and the owner of the chametz must nullify the chametz.

Chag Kasher V'Sameach.

ACADEMIC ADVISMENT CORNER

ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT SOLVES ACADEMIC BLUES

In keeping with our ongoing commitment to help students maximize their success, the Academic Advisement Center will be writing an ongoing column in the Observer. We hope to tailor the column to serve the needs of all students. Feel free to submit topics or questions that you would like addressed.

TEST INSURANCE

"I really studied for this test and was stumped by half the questions. I can't believe what the teacher asked. I don't remember the material being covered in class. What was she thinking?"

Sound familiar?

You spend hours preparing, believe you know the material and then are surprised by the test questions.

What has gone wrong? Who is to blame?

Disappointed, we tend to

fault the teacher or the exam. This is a natural first reaction. No one enjoys receiving a poor grade. It simply makes us feel disappointed and breaks our confidence.

But in reality placing blame gives a student short-lived comfort and no control over the circumstances. Even when an exam is poorly designed and a teacher poses ambiguous questions there is little a student can do to remedy the situation. Sometimes a teacher may correct for the mistake if enough students answer incorrectly, but more often the responsibility for improvement rests with the student.

What's a student to do?

You could stay angry, give up or even drop the course. Or you could develop a study regime that protects you. Call it test insurance. Test insurance prevents you from falling into loop holes during the studying process. This proactive strategy helps you to anticipate the unex-

pected and gets you to think like the teacher.

Here's part one of the plan:

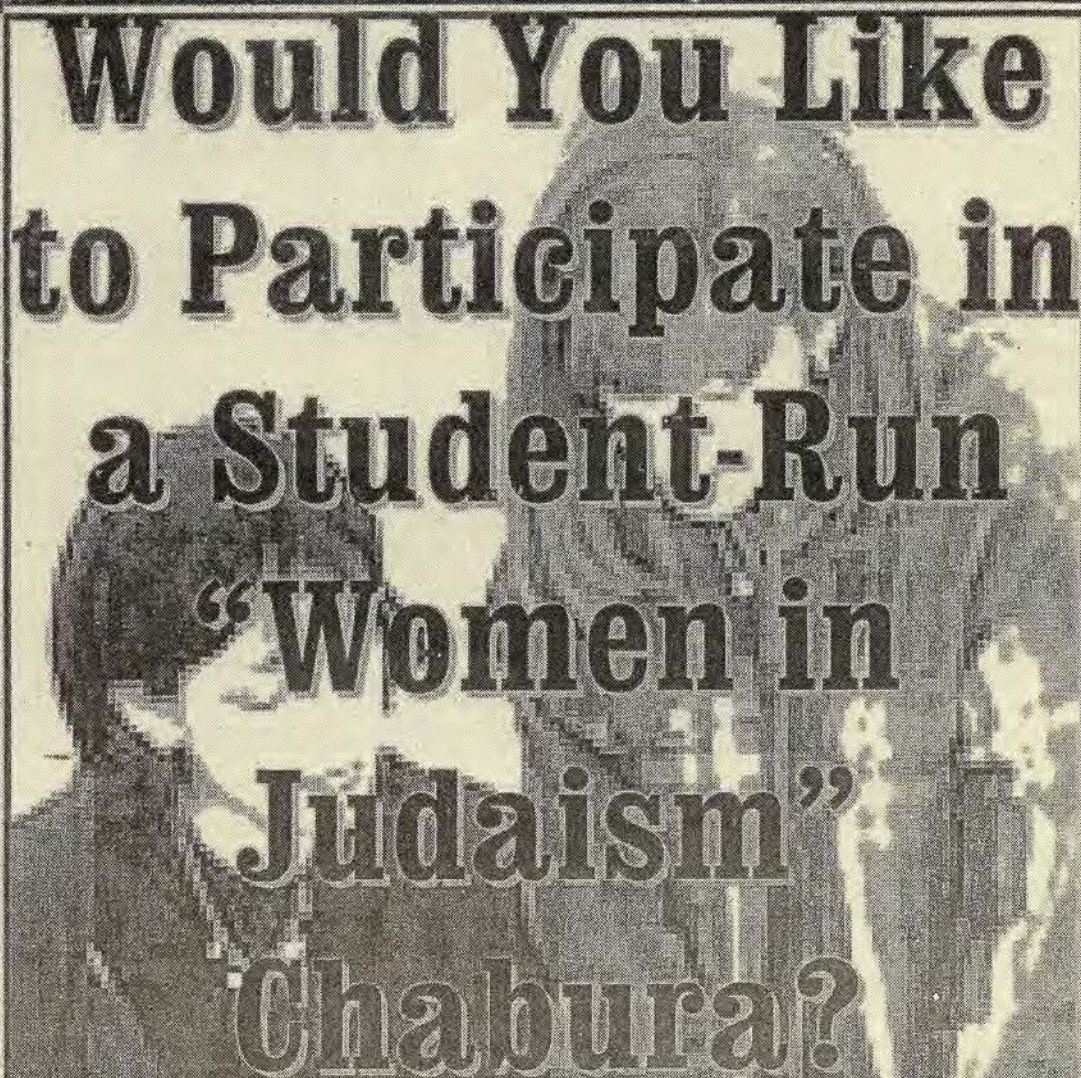
Become an active reader. Active readers think about what they are reading in order to absorb the ideas behind the words. The proof of your ability to actively read lies in the skill with which you can explain what a writer has said.

Below is a short activity to test your active reading skill. Limit yourself to one sentence in explaining the following proverb.

"Some people go through a forest and see no firewood."

You can submit your answers to scwadvisement@yu.edu.

In the next issue of the Observer we will include the remaining parts of the test insurance plan. Watch for it.



Would You Like
to Participate in
a Student-Run
"Women in
Judaism"
Chabura?

If You would, Please Contact:

Tikva Hecht at [347 452 2088](tel:3474522088) or
thecht@hotmail.com

Jews Remember Pope John Paul II's Good Deeds

continued from front page
the pope's actions.

Through his strong and influential personality, John Paul II centralized Catholic authority in the papacy, clearly defining and reinforcing the Church's positions on many social issues that are frequently attacked by modernity, at the expense of each diocese's autonomy. His unequivocal opposition to abortion, euthanasia, birth control, gay marriage, priestly marriage, ordination of women and divorce, calling the latter two as "crimes which no human law can claim to legitimize," effectively removed these issues from debate for the Church's adherents. Even as he closed discussion on these issues, the pope was anything but conservative as he opened an unprecedented conversation with the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

The Vatican's relationship with the local Jewish community in Rome improved significantly under John Paul II's guard. His noted visit to the city's Central Synagogue in 1986 was memorable not only for its real symbolism of interfaith recognition but also for his words, in which he redirected two millennia of Christian theology. He said: "You are our dearly beloved brothers; in a certain way, indeed, it could be said that you are our elder brothers"—using the description in a positive sense instead of the traditional denigration of Jews as the displaced Chosen People.

Reciprocating the respect that the pope accorded to the Jewish community of Rome and the world, Italian Chief Rabbi Riccardo Di Segni led a Jewish delegation in a public recitation of *tehillim* (psalms) as the pope's condition worsened. In a press conference, Di Segni praised John Paul II for "creating a greatly improved atmosphere of dialogue, even if our theological positions retain their differences, albeit with mutual respect."

On an international scale, and in a move that affected the Jewish people as a nation, the Vatican formally recognized the State of Israel in 1993 by signing the Fundamental Agreement between the Holy See and the State of Israel. Subsequently, diplomatic ties were established with the exchange of Vatican and Israeli ambassadors. The text of the document, citing an awareness of "the historic process of reconciliation and growth in mutual understanding and friendship between Catholics

and Jews," states, among the many obligations that each party took upon itself, that "the Holy See takes this occasion to reiterate its condemnation of hatred, persecution and all other manifestations of anti-Semitism directed against the Jewish people and individual Jews anywhere, at any time and by anyone."

In a trip that confirmed the Vatican's recognition of Israel, John Paul II's six-day tour in the Middle East in March of 2000 was the first official papal visit to Israel and the disputed territories. The pope expressed his goals for the trip when he first arrived, saying "I pray that my

the pope's lack of sincerity in improving the Vatican's relationship with the Jews.

The pope also reached out to the Jewish people through his actions during the Holocaust and statements following the Holocaust. There are famous stories of the young priest rescuing individual Jews during the Holocaust, and of his refusal to baptize Jewish children who were saved by Christians from the Nazis. Such personal anecdotes are in stark contrast to the Church's inaction throughout the war's atrocities.

In a document released in 1998 entitled, "We Remember: A Reflection on the

breaking nature of what had been achieved," wrote David Berger, professor of history at Brooklyn College, in the *Jerusalem Post*. That the Church is in the process of canonizing the previous pope "complicates efforts to reach closure with respect to this facet of Catholic-Jewish relations," Berger stated.

In another notable memorial of the victims of the Holocaust, John Paul II visited Auschwitz in June of 1999, where he continued to denounce "anti-Semitism as a sin against God and against man." In a later controversy involving a convent constructed at the death camp, the pope had the convent removed by papal order.

contribution to rapprochement and unity between peoples, understanding and tolerance will be with us for many years."

As the world mourns the death of John Paul II, the future of the Catholic Church and the nature of its relationship with the Jews and Israel are uncertain. Because of the pope's strong hold on the Church throughout his papacy, which limited the extent to which cardinals could gain prominence, there is no obvious successor. But given the fact that John Paul II appointed 114 of the 117 cardinals who will vote in the Sistine Chapel during the conclave, the successor will most likely hold similar conservative views on social issues. Less certain, however, is the future pope's policy toward the

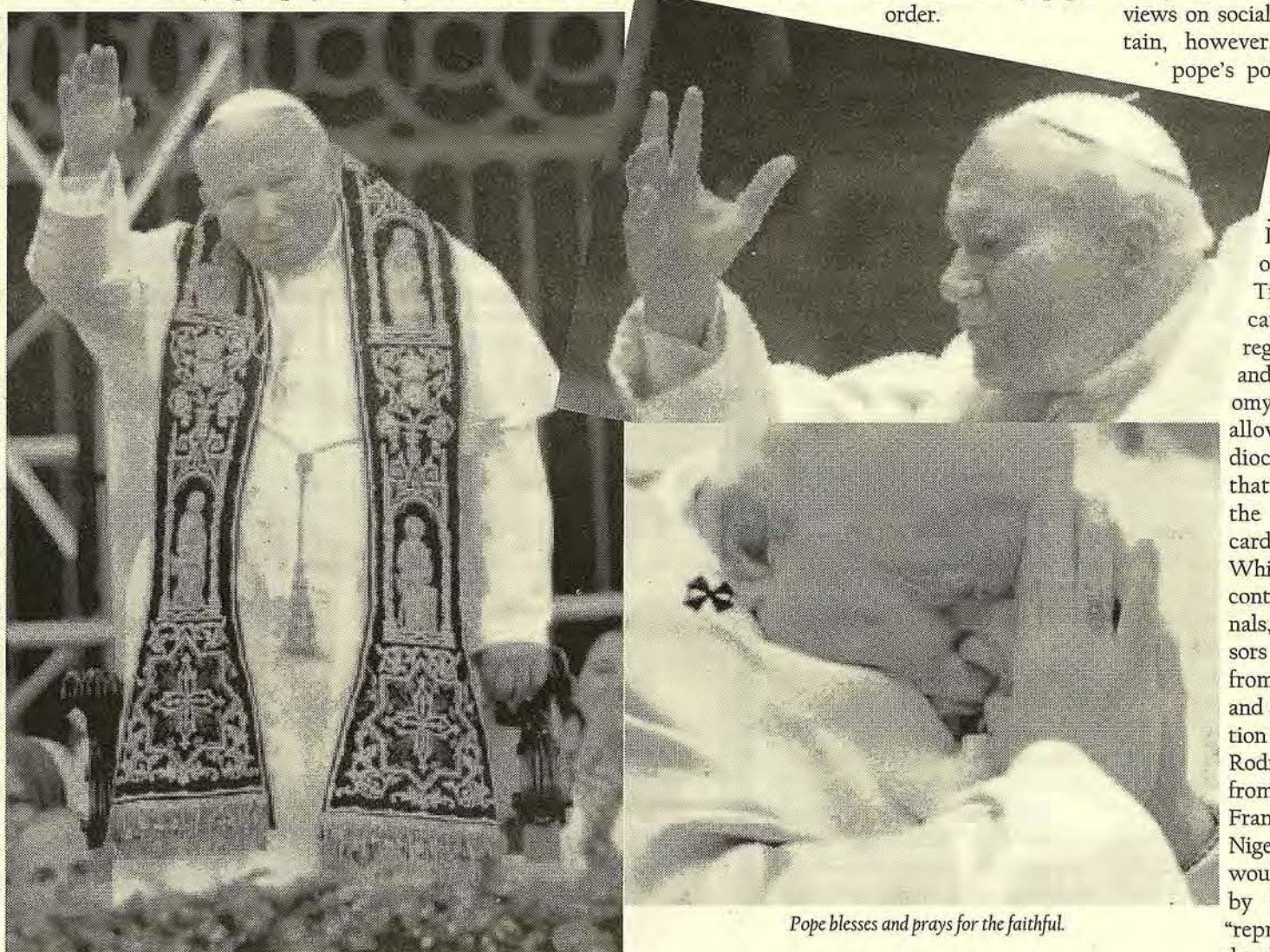
Jews and Israel.

In speculating on who will succeed John Paul II, Laurie Goodstein of the *New York Times* cites the candidates' ages, regions of origin, and degree of autonomy each would allow in individual dioceses as factors that will determine the outcome of the cardinals' voting. While the "short list" contains Italian cardinals, possible successors include cardinals from Latin America and Africa. The election of Oscar Andres Rodriguez Maradiaga from Honduras, or Francis Arinze from Nigeria, for example, would be an attempt by the Church at "representing the developing world,"

asserts Goodstein, but ultimately the outcome is "completely unpredictable."

"It is highly unlikely that a shift to the Third World will mean greater sensitivity towards Jews," observes Robert Wistrich, a professor of Modern European History at Hebrew University. "The whole historical relationship between Christians and Jews [in Europe] is lacking. It is difficult, therefore, to imagine a successor being as sympathetic [to the Jews] as John Paul II."

Despite the criticism expressed by parts of the Jewish community throughout his papacy, John Paul II was ultimately a pope who approached the Jewish-Catholic relationship without the historical prejudices of the Vatican, in fact apologizing for the Church's earlier actions. The Jewish community can only hope that the pope's successor will continue to preach John Paul II's messages of tolerance and peace.



Pope blesses and prays for the faithful.

visit will serve to encourage an increase of inter-religious dialogue." Throughout his stay, the pope continually repeated his desire for peace in the Middle East. His visits to Yad Vashem (a Holocaust museum) where he once again condemned anti-Semitism and its extreme demonstration of it in the Holocaust, and the *Kotel*, where the note he placed in its cracks asked for divine forgiveness, were more than simple symbolic gestures to the Jewish community.

Much of the Jewish community, however, was dismayed that John Paul II also visited Yasir Arafat in Bethlehem during the same trip to the Middle East, and invited him to the Vatican for subsequent visits. Additionally, the pope spoke of the Palestinians' right to their own state and never officially recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Some Jewish leaders claimed that such actions demonstrated

Shoah," the Vatican discussed a painfully honest history of Christian persecution of Jews, and of Christian silence during the Holocaust. The document, however, carefully dissociated official Church doctrine from the actions of individual Christians, concluding that "We deeply regret the errors and failures of those sons and daughters of the Church." The possible connection between Christian anti-Semitism and Nazi anti-Semitism was examined and ultimately rejected in describing the Holocaust as "the work of a thoroughly modern neo-pagan regime" whose "anti-Semitism had its roots outside of Christianity."

Many Jews believed that the statement did not adequately apologize for the Church's actions or inactions during the Holocaust. They demanded a condemnation of Pope Pius XII, "while others, taking a longer view, recognized the ground-

Many of the pope's interactions with the Jews and Israel were met with both praise and criticism. Nevertheless, when viewed within the context of the history of the Catholic Church's attitude toward Judaism, John Paul II may indeed have merited such descriptions by the *Jerusalem Post* as the "Tikkun Olam Pope" and the "Best Pope the Jews Ever Had." There were also memorials eulogizing the quiet, elderly pope, written by organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Congress and the American Jewish Committee.

In addition to his apologies and statements, which Robert McFadden of the *New York Times* describes as an "effort to cleanse his Church's conscience," the pope offered what Berger calls "extraordinary attention to Jewish affairs, generally in strikingly positive terms." Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon claimed that the pope's "great

Arts Festival Attracts Limited Crowds

continued from front page
at YC and co-head of the Arts Festival, asserted that "though [he] does not point fingers at anyone at YU" the issue of poor attendance is part of a larger problem concerning the Yeshiva's attitude toward the arts in general: "The uptown campus does not have an Art major at all, and upon entering YU, a student would have to choose between his creative abilities in the arts and a Jewish education." Roller said that Yeshiva University does not place enough emphasis on the arts during the year, and thus it is unfair to expect students to suddenly take an interest for a two-week interval.

"The Arts Festival," Roller explained, "Should be a high point [of art in Yeshiva] and not the only point." Roller also suggested that in general there is a certain "apathy towards the arts" and that the YU culture does not "create a momentum to attend [for instance] public readings."

Even programs that catered to college culture, like the April 7th concert held at the Schottenstein Cultural Center on the Beren Campus, were poorly attended. Those students who did attend the April 7th concert found it to be a great event. "I thought the concert was terrific—smooth and professional but also casual and fun," said SCW junior Sarah Rindner. "Unfortunately, the audience was not too large, but the bands seemed to be enjoying themselves anyway, and the environment was kind of intimate and nice...all in all I wish we had more events like this at YU."

Roller also cited the concert as one example of inadequate attendance. "This was the best free rock concert with very talented people, and only 100 people showed up from a campus of 2,000. YU students are apathetic [as demonstrated by their] not

making the effort to come down for a free concert," remarked Roller.

Dubrovsky offered her own reason for the lack of attendance at the Festival. "It could be that it's an Orthodox fear of exploration," she said. "The system can be rigid, and this sets up barriers for the expression of art."

In addition to the problem of poor student attendance, Dubrovsky cited difficulty with the administration in issues regarding the Arts Festival. For instance, the administration and Arts Festival directors agreed upon a budget, but "at the last minute," Dubrovsky recounted, "Dean Sugarman apologized, but told us we had to cut our budget. As a result, we had to cut a few events, such as our boat ride." Dubrovsky was also upset that few administrators participated in the events. "We really could have used the administration to promote the Arts Festival, and set an example by attending the events themselves," Dubrovsky related that she tried to encourage faculty participation and assistance, but was generally met with apathy. "Besides for Dr. Glaser, Dr. Young and Dr. Schram, who were very helpful, none of the other professors were interested in cooperating," stated Dubrovsky. The lack of faculty support is seen by some as a statement that YU as a community is indifferent toward the arts.

Dubrovsky explained that this year's Arts Festival was different from past Festivals in that it revolved around a central theme of 'process and product,' since the coordinators wanted to show the development of an art form from the rudimentary stages to its completion. Consequently, many events investigated the process involved in creating a work of art, while others displayed the finished product. With this approach, art was revealed in a

non-elitist and accessible manner. However, even this novel methodology was evidently not appealing enough to many students.

The organizers of the Arts Festival had many other innovative ideas for this year. They hired artists, professional students and professors to participate in the projects. Additionally, the events spanned both campuses and included New York City landmarks. "Usually we are just in one place," explained Dubrovsky, "but we wanted to appreciate what the city has to offer."

Students who took advantage of the Arts Festival had enjoyable and meaningful experiences. For instance, an estimated 25 Yeshiva and Stern students attended Monday night's Poetry and Prose Reading in the 36th Street dorm's back garden. The ambience was quaint and appropriate with its dim lighting and lovely, relaxing environment. Students were encouraged to read or recite their own literary work that included poetry, prose or short stories. The topics, sometimes quite personal, had a broad scope; they included subjects like the politics of being a woman in a Talmud program, and the emotional experience of becoming a *baalat teshuva* (returnee to Judaism).

Malka Sadoff, a SCW senior who read her own poetry, commented, "Even though my last poem was a work in progress, people told me afterward that it really moved them...and this was very touching for me." Judging from the enthusiastic applause that followed each reading, the participating students felt they were individually enriched by listening to their peers.

"It's important for people to celebrate the way they express themselves," said Sadoff. "This event is great because this aspect [of free expression] is often overlooked."

Aliyah Fair Is a Great Success

continued from back page
a casual environment," noted Jacobson, who was very impressed by the turn-out. "People were walking in long after doors opened at six-thirty." Students were attracted to the various stations that were set up, each providing useful information pertaining to a practical aspect of living in Israel. One table discussed different university opportunities; another was there to promote IDF awareness. Representatives from various organizations, including Nefesh b'Nefesh, the Jewish Agency, B'nei Akiva and Hagshama were available to answer questions and discuss what they had to

offer. Of particular interest to many students was a table where "career representatives" were seated. These individuals were Israelis who were willing to discuss their various fields and professions with students who were thinking of similar career paths.

The fair was very successful, drawing students from YU as well as other colleges including Columbia and Queens College. Hindy Poupko, co-President of the YU Israel Club, was "impressed by the large number of students who attended. It's uplifting to see how many students are interested in Israel on both an ideological as well as on a practical level." Jacobson was

similarly impressed and mentioned that "this fair is a big step for the YU community" seeing as it is the first YU event to grant students access to practical aliya information in such a direct manner. As each student entered, they were prompted to fill out a form that would allow Nefesh b'Nefesh to send them information according to their areas of interest. "This will allow the organization to better respond to the needs of college students," explained Jacobson. Hopefully, the information students acquired at the event will promptly ease the aliya process and make it a smoother transition.

Cardozo Flounders in 2006 Rankings

By Adinah Wieder

Cardozo Law School, previously ranked at 53, fell to 58 alongside Arizona State University and Brooklyn Law School in the US News and World Report law school rankings released in the April 11, 2005 issue. Within the last few years Cardozo's ranking has fluctuated, usually moving up a position or two, but never before has it dropped five places. This news comes despite Cardozo Law School's significant efforts this past year to improve its reputation and ranking.

There have been a variety of student responses to this news. "To me it does not really matter, I am here and I worked hard to get here and I am proud of it, there is no looking back now," remarked one student currently at Cardozo.

For many undergraduate students, Cardozo's slip in the rankings has influenced their decision of which law school to attend. "With the competition for jobs at this time the fact that Cardozo just fell is definitely playing a role in my decision," said a SCW student. "Why would I go to a school that is ranked 58 if I got into schools ranked in the 30s?"

According to US News and World Report there are 179 law schools accredited by the American Bar Association. Rankings are determined by taking the weighted average of the quality of 12 different areas and quality assessment is graded out of .40. The first part is the peer assessment that accounts for .25 of the score. Law school deans and recently tenured faculty members are assigned to this task. If an individual feels they do not adequately understand enough about a certain school to rank it, it is marked as "don't know." This does not affect the ranking of the school. Individuals who judge, grade the school anywhere from a one, being the least a school can earn to a five, which is considered excellent. Professionals in the field such as state attorney generals, federal and state judges and hiring partners of law firms complete the next assessment. This accounts for the remainder of the peer assessment.

Selectivity accounts for .25 of the overall score. The median LSAT score of the fall 2004 entering class is worth .125. The median of the undergraduate GPA of the fall 2004 entering class is .10 and the acceptance rate accounts for .025.

Placement success accounts for .20 of the total. Employment rates for graduates of the 2003 class are measured at .18 and bar passage rate accounts for .02 of the total. The number of .20 is allotted for faculty resources, which includes library resources, financial aid and student/faculty ratio. This brings the total to a

1.0. Additionally, there is the overall rank and the specialty rankings. The overall rank includes the standardized data, weighted and totaled scores. The scores were rescaled so that the top school receives a rank of 100. Specialty rankings are based on nominations from legal educators.

Currently Cardozo's acceptance rate is 22%. The LSAT range is from 161-166. Cardozo received 5,014 applications for the year 2004 and 648 students enrolled. Over 50 percent of the students receive merit or need-based scholarships. They publish over ten journals including Cardozo Law Review, Cardozo Women's Law Journal and Moot Court Honor Society. The degrees offered include the Juris Doctor (J.D.) and the Master of Laws (LL.M.). They have a full-time faculty of 50 members. It's adjunct faculty consists of practicing lawyers who provide realistic experiences into the classroom.

Once again, Yale, Harvard, Stanford, Columbia and NYU are the top five law schools in the country. University of Chicago, Michigan and Pennsylvania are tied for spot number seven.

Many people argue with the ranking system. The literature describing the ranking system states that many individuals feel that it is a system that is based on a good reputation. Upon viewing the top five schools and their consistent excellent ranking, one can understand how reputation plays a role in the ranking.

However, students from these schools often receive the best job offers in the country, and job offers do play a role in the ranking system. Joanna Grossman of Hofstra University explains why many share a repugnant outlook toward the US News and World Report Rankings. It places too much emphasis on the LSAT scores of incoming students. LSAT scores of incoming students have no bearing on the school. They are merely a reflection of what the school perceives as a solid score, she argued. Furthermore, those ranking competitor schools are liable to manipulate the scores in such a way that they give their competitors lower scores in the hopes of lowering the average of the competitor. This results in an unfair grade averaged into the total grade of the law school. If this occurs a few times, then it can significantly affect the ranking of a school.

With this insight into the ranking system, it is important that students see that rankings are not always an accurate reflection of reality. Despite the drop in Cardozo's ranking, students should realize that it is still an upper-tiered school. Students must remember that very often, hard work and determination can carry a student farther than any ranking.

Political Science Department Awards Fellowships

By Adinah Wieder

In an effort to increase participation in public affairs, Stern College is, for the second consecutive academic year, sponsoring grants of up to \$2,000 for students with internships in the public and international affairs fields. Many students rely on summer jobs to earn money for the upcoming school year, which can make it difficult to intern in fields of interest where no stipend is offered. This is especially true in the arena of public and international affairs. Upon

realizing the problem, Dr. Joseph Luders, assistant professor in the Political Science department, proposed a grant that would enable students to intern while receiving a stipend from Stern College.

"These fellowships would furnish students with small sums to defray the costs of getting more involved in American democracy and to entice others who might not independently seek to develop their political capacities," explained Luders. Two fellowships were awarded last year and each fellow received \$2,000 but this year,

already said there will be up to \$4,000 awarded. Currently, SCW funds these fellowships but sponsors are needed to ensure its continuation.

All full-time students, except graduating seniors, are eligible for the award. Students must submit an essay along with the application, which should reflect their commitment to public affairs. Personal statements are therefore, an important element in the selection process. Students who have already obtained an internship are preferred over students who are still awaiting responses, and

the internship must be in the field of public affairs rather than community service. Some of the many areas considered in the application are American politics, legal affairs, foreign policy, economic policy, gender and politics, law enforcement, and journalism. Additionally, Social Science majors and minors are preferred.

"The strength of American democracy rests upon the political engagement of each subsequent generation," Luders said. "Unfortunately, young people are increasingly disengaged and turning away from politics and

public service. Despite the attacks on 9/11 and the broader war on terror, young Americans are dropping out of the political process." In addition, he mentioned that voting rates have decreased and people do not follow political news as closely.

These fellowships are demonstrative of Stern College's efforts to encourage student commitment to public causes. They are attempting to support student involvement on a variety of fronts, and this is a significant example of the progress that is being made for student involvement in the public sector.

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who did not receive a good Jewish education
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Even if you can not come on a consistent basis,
it's still helpful to have you come occasionally.

Please call 646-266-4054 or
e-mail tahalich@hotmail.com ASAP!!

Thanks and tizku lmitvos!!

Controversy Arises Over Dunkin' Donuts Hashgacha

continued from front page
 containing, flavors. To date, a small sign delineating these non-kosher flavors hangs on the glass frame of the ice cream counter. Provided that the ice cream scooper is rinsed by an employee prior to its use — an action meant to ensure that no marshmallow residue seeps into a kosher ice cream flavor — and the ice cream being served is indeed from Baskin Robbins, its *kashrut* is legitimate.

The Dunkin' Donuts' side of the store is a bit more complicated.

Rabbi Dov Hazdan, president of the Ner Tamid K, who has been working in the *kashrut* field for thirty years, explained the "kosher status" his company granted to the specific items listed above. All donuts produced in Dunkin' Donuts stores even those operated by private franchises, are baked from the company's powdered mix. The Chof-K, Rabbi Hazdan explained, certifies that the ingredients of this mix are kosher, and oversees the production in the main plant. Since the powdered mix is kosher, the Ner Tamid K, run by Rabbi Hazdan with colleague Rabbi Josephi, plans to spot

check the store for assured cooperation, and despite the fact that bacon is sold at the same counter, granted its approval of the baked goods sold at the store. Employees are trusted to keep the non-kosher meat far away from the baked goods and wear a new pair of gloves for each customer as another measure of separation. Rabbi Hazdan reported that he always makes it clear to his clients that "If I catch them one time — they lose their *hashgacha* (Rabbinic observance)," that "the people [running the new Dunkin' Donuts] are very cooperative" with Ner Tamid K's rules, and that thankfully, "I've never had a problem with any of my customers."

Rabbi Hazdan explained the incentive which drives a non-Jewish owned store to attain a *kashrut* certificate and why their consent is reliable: "Owners know that frum people will not come in there unless they have a *hashgacha* in the window." Rabbi Hazdan stressed that the owners recognize their obligation to follow guidelines set forth by the *kashrut* organization, considering New York's Department of Agriculture and Marketing's Kosher Protection Law.

Others argue that assurances of cooperation by the store owners, despite the Kosher Protection Laws, are not a sufficient guarantee for *kashrut* observance. Larger *kashrut* corporations, such as many localized councils (*Vaadim*), the Orthodox Union and the OK, do not award *kashrut* certifications to stores which sell non-kosher meat, as a matter of policy. Many of the larger *kashrut* groups hold that trusting employees who are not sensitive to the stringent laws of *kashrut*, such as ensuring that there is no contact between the kosher and non-kosher products, is simply not a viable option.

The OU's *kashrut* website, www.oukasher.org, in describing the certification process, states, "A qualified Rabbinic field representative (RFR) will visit your plant to observe your operation and the feasibility of certifying your products." If during that visit the RFR observes any non-kosher meat, the store's *kashrut* certification is automatically revoked. Even regarding the separation of fish and meats — while both are kosher — the Vaad of Queens, (www.queensvaad.org) mandates that "care must be taken to

arrange the various foods within the display case in a manner that will minimize the possibility of fish dripping into meat or vice versa."

In light of the many uncertainties that are relied upon to assume the baked goods' protection from non-kosher influence at this new Dunkin' Donuts, Yeshiva University's administration advised against buying those products. Signs hanging in the lobby of Stern College read, "Stores which sell non-prepackaged kosher and non-kosher products, such as the new Dunkin' Donuts/Baskin Robbins store on 34th Street, present substantial supervision difficulties and therefore are not recommended." Cooked and baked products sold by non-certified stores, or by stores run by the non-observant, are therefore only reliably kosher when sealed with a *kashrut* label.

The possible danger of non-kosher meat contamination at the Dunkin' Donuts is slightly minimized by the fact that the store's owners are vegetarians. "We are in the process of getting rid of all the meat and pork," explained one of the owners, Shyam Patel. "In order to do that

we have to go through all the franchises...we need a hundred million approvals," he exaggeratedly explained, "It is not an overnight process." Even in the case of a vegetarian Dunkin' Donuts, unpackaged food would still need to be considered differently than packaged items, according to the signs administered by Yeshiva. The OU's website warns, "It is often assumed that vegetarian food prepared in a non-Jewish establishment is kosher. However, this notion is based on misinterpretation of the term 'vegetarian' since the foods may still be considered non-kosher due to certain cheeses and oils that may be used in preparing them."

When questioned about the store's choice of *kashrut* organization, Mr. Patel explained, "My broker is a Jew, and she got this spot for us. She knew this Rabbi [of the Ner Tamid K], and he's also the Rabbi for other Dunkin' Donuts." Because many are unaware of the complicated laws and policies that surround this issue, many assume that all Orthodox *kashrut* certificates are considered equal. In reality, however, it is best to be cautious.



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**Stern College for Women
Yeshiva University**

Dr. Marcia Robbins-Wilf Scholar-in-Residence Program
in conjunction with
Wurzweiler School of Social Work
presents

Righteous Protectors

Simone Weil Lipman

Former member of the French underground who organized a network to smuggle children out of internment camps

Carl Wilkens

Chaplain; former director, Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Rwanda, who stayed in Rwanda during the genocide, bringing food, water, and medicine to orphans

Part of a lecture series on human rights and sovereignty commemorating the 60th anniversary of the end of the Holocaust

Monday, April 18, 2005 • 7:30 pm

Schottenstein Cultural Center

239 E. 34th Street (between 2nd and 3rd Avenues)

New Waiting List Option for Fall Registration

The administration has instituted an online waiting list for students who have been closed out of courses. Students can place themselves on this list, and in the event that a spot in the class becomes available, an administrator might contact them. Even students at the top of the list are not guaranteed available spots; the system simply means that at some point students might receive a phone call telling them that there is a vacant spot and to try to register. Therefore, it is in the students' best interest to check the status of the course frequently to try to secure vacant slots first.

The objective of this new system is to encourage students to rely on the list and a phone call rather than to flood into the dean's office when closed out of a course.

When a spot becomes available, the deans will review the waiting list, taking into account the student's class standing and major in addition to her numerical placement on the list.

The deans advise students on the waiting list to register for a full course load while leaving open the time slot of the course for which they're waiting.

Panel Responds to Genocide

On April 7th, the Beren Campus hosted a panel of experts on the topic of genocide. According to the panel, war crimes, tribunals, truth commissions and establishing rule of law are all necessary components to prosecuting human rights abuses and atrocities.

The lecture, "Seeking Justice after Major Human Rights Abuses and Atrocities," was part of Stern College's Human Rights and Sovereignty lecture series commemorating the 60th anniversary of the end of the Holocaust, and was sponsored by the Dr. Marcia Robbins-Wilf Scholar-in-Residence Program.

Gary Bass, associate professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University, stated that war crime tribunals pose three risks: too much vengeance, too much law, and too much selfishness. "War tribunals make it difficult to punish perpetrators because we insist on due process and procedure, and lack of evidence is a real risk in prosecution," he asserted.

Priscilla Hayner, co-founder of the International Center for Transitional Justice, assented that establishing truth commissions (formal governmental investigations) to combat human rights abuses - such as the 1984 commission on Argentina's "Dirty War" and the South African commission on apartheid - compliments the judicial response to punishing perpetrators. "There is recognition that not just a judicial response is needed because even if you are successful, it's virtually impossible to prosecute more than just a few," Hayner claimed. "Other policy options, such as truth commissions, reparations, and institutional reforms are also necessary."

The final lecture in the series will take place on April 18th at 7:30 pm at the Geraldine Schottenstein Cultural Center on the Beren Campus. "Righteous Protectors Defying Genocide" features journalist Ann Cooper and Carl Wilkens and Simone Weil Lipman, two individuals who personally assisted victims of human rights abuses.

Students Get Excited About Stock Market at Sy Sym's Contest



The first annual Sy Syms School of Business Stock Market Trivia Contest took place on April 13 in Belfer Hall. The event included students and teachers from 12 Jewish high schools in the area. Teachers testified that the students had looked forward to the competition for days. The Trivia contest was not an intense, competitive sport but was rather a fun-loving, playful challenge between friends. During a contest between Frish and MTA, for example, correct answers by each team were met with applause, laughter, and high-fives. It is significant to note that the only all-female team competing was from YU's own girls high school. They lost their round to an all-boys team, which emerged victorious by a correct answer on the final question of their contest.

The 12 teams competed for three prizes. Each contest pitted two teams- four students on each side- against one another. Each group of two was asked the same set of about 40 questions relating to Wall Street and the stock market. Each participant would press a buzzer when he or she had the right answer. The teams that continued to the championship were those who had answered the most questions correctly. The Moshe Aaron Yeshiva High School of South River, NJ, won the overall championship, beating out Rav Teitz Mesitva Academy of Elizabeth, NJ. The Frisch School captured third place. First place team members will share \$750. Second place shares \$500, and third shares \$250. All three teams received a trophy.

The participants and their faculty advisors joined a group of Sy Syms students, professors, and administrators gathered for lunch in Weisberg Commons. The audience was privileged to hear Peter M. Kash, chairman of Two River Group Holdings and author of "Success Through Failure," who left the students with the important message of: "Do not fear failure." Kash, to illustrate his point, enumerated several well-known people who had experienced failure before finally succeeding. The list included Abraham Lincoln, Michael Jordan, JK Rowling, and even Fred Smith, the founder of Federal Express.

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Research Fellowship Presented to SCW Professor

Dr. Jay Ladin, David and Ruth Gottesman Assistant Professor of English at Stern College for Women, received a research fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies. His research will focus on American poetry, specifically the history of American poetry from 1850 to 1920 and the origins of modernist poetry.

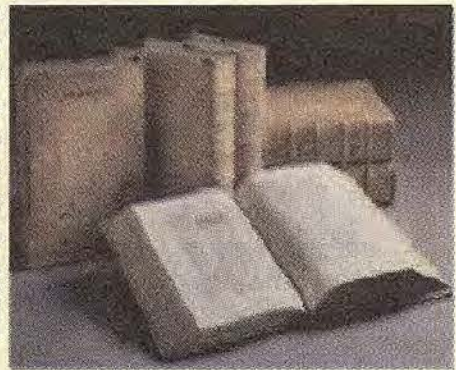
Dr. Ladin's interest in poetry stems from his doctoral dissertation comparing the authoritative language in the 19th century poetry of Emily Dickinson with that of 20th century modernist poetry. In both, he found that absolute statements - such as those on love or death - were combined with nonsense, or literally, language whose sense cannot be determined. "Oddly enough, the nonsense strengthens their authority because it provokes readers to imagine out what they mean," Ladin suggests. His current research views this phenomenon as a symptom of the widespread effects of American democracy on language and authority in public discourse.

Dr. Ladin, who also directs the Writing Center at Stern College, received a BA from Sarah Lawrence College, an MFA from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and a PhD from Princeton.

"The fellowship awarded to Professor Ladin is a concrete indication of the importance of scholarly work to the advancement of knowledge," asserts Dean Karen Bacon. "I am truly delighted by the public recognition he is receiving."

Printing the Talmud: From Bomberg to Schottenstein

Printing the Talmud: From Bomberg to Schottenstein is a new exhibit in the Yeshiva University museum which opened on April 12. This remarkable exhibit spans five centuries of Jewish history and assembles an unmatched selection of Talmud texts published throughout the world.



In conjunction with the exhibit, a special symposium, "The Vital Talmud: The World That Made It and the World It Made" took place on April 11 at YUM at 6:15 pm. The lecture was held in the Leo and Julia Forchheimer Auditorium at Yeshiva University Museum, 15 West 16th Street. A reception and tour of the exhibit preceded the lectures. "The exhibit is one of the most important exhibits we have ever done because it expresses the whole world of the Talmud, the preeminent text that is studied," stated Sylvia Herskowitz, director of YUM.

Norman Adler, PhD, dean of Yeshiva College, introduced the symposium and Rabbi Jonathan Rosenblatt of the Riverdale Jewish Center acted as its moderator.

Panelists included Yaakov Elman, associate professor of Jewish studies at Yeshiva University whose topic was "The Cosmopolitan Babylonian Talmud"; Steven Fine, Jewish Foundation Professor of Judaic Studies at the University of Cincinnati who discussed "The Talmud before the Talmud: Archaeological Evidence for the Oral Torah from the Greco-Roman Period"; and Jennie Rosenfeld, Wexner Graduate Fellow in English at The Graduate Center, CUNY, and graduate of YU's Graduate Program in Advanced Talmudic Studies, presented "Swimming in the Yam HaTalmud: One Woman's Journey."

The purpose of the exhibit was to illustrate how technological advances over time have transformed the ancient discipline of Talmudic study from a limited circle of scholarly sages into a pursuit available to all sectors of the Jewish population. As the framework for the entire body of Jewish observance, the Talmud, (from the Hebrew term for "study" or "learning"), compiled between the 3rd to 5th centuries, has long been at the center of Jewish learning, and it continues to play a vital role in Jewish life.

Israel Degree Controversy Nearing Resolution

President Joel received a letter from the Israeli Minister of Education, Limor Livnat, which indicated that the process of rectifying the issue about accepting Yeshiva University degrees with the Ministry of Education in Israel is well underway. In the letter Limor Livnat writes: "With immediate effect, the relevant department at the Ministry will recognize the degrees awarded by Yeshiva University to the few graduates who thus far have had difficulty having their degrees officially certified for salary purposes. They will receive confirmation of this certification of their degrees from the relevant department in the immediate future." This letter arrived after a report that new immigrants with degrees from institutions that gave credit for a year of study in Israel were not being paid by the government in accordance with their level of education.

Over the last few months, this issue has caused much confusion and apprehension. However, Joel states, "we have been working with her [Limor Livnat's] office in seeing to it that this issue is satisfactorily resolved. While not yet completely resolved, I continue to be confident that we will have closure shortly."



On Our Campus:

Despite New Cafeteria, Students Complain

By Laya Pelzner

At the most recent Town Hall meeting on Beren campus, on February 23 in the Levy Lobby, students voiced concern over the severely limited weekend cafeteria hours. President Richard Joel stated that he would look into the issue. It should be noted that Stern students already run a Food Services Committee, which seeks to address all food-related issues, including availability, options, and cafeteria hours.

The Food Service Committee on the Beren Campus, currently headed by Stern students Elisheva Roszler, Lisa Feuer and Alison Brokowsky, was created to enable student feedback on the cafeteria food: "We meet with Mr. Singer, usually about once a month," said Roszler, "and we give our input about what changes should be made." The committee typically has a list of approximately thirty suggestions, which are individually evaluated. The cafeteria administration, according to Roszler, "is very good and quick about putting it [suggestions] into effect."

The current complaint among SCW students is the dearth of weekend cafeteria hours. Not all students are a part of the mass exodus of students who leave Stern on Thursday night and therefore rely on only a few hours to obtain their food over the weekend. "The caf hours are really inconvenient," remarked SCW senior Michelle Faber. Faber does not end class until 7:15 pm on Thursday night, while the cafeteria closes at 7:00 pm. Conveniently, Stern is in close proximity to various restaurants such as Mendy's, Viva, Circa, etc., so that there other options available when the cafeteria is closed, but these alternatives are not financially covered by the Stern cafeteria cards. At the Town Hall meeting, President Joel explained that cafeteria facilities would be open for longer hours if an increased amount of people would

take advantage of the extended hours.

During the week, Le Bistro is open later than the Stern cafeteria, and is also a well-situated eating alternative for students taking classes in the 215 Lexington building. "The hours there are really convenient," stated Faber. Sophomore Aviva Horowitz enjoys Le Bistro because "it is definitely roomier than the other caf."

Joel also noted that Milners and the C-store at Schottenstein, the off-campus convenience store, are

Stern students are fortunate to have access to two strictly kosher cafeterias, plus the dorm mini-markets of Milners and the Schottenstein C-Store. Yet, students are often heard complaining about the food served here. Ask fellow students the reason for these complaints, and chances are they will respond that they find the meal choices become repetitious.

"the food] went down," said Faber. "It could just be because I've eaten it for so long." On the one hand, Faber feels that school has stopped serving her favorite meals, like chicken stuffed with rice and mushrooms. Yet, she admitted, "In a sense, really I don't think it's the school's fault...it doesn't really seem like there's anything the school can do."

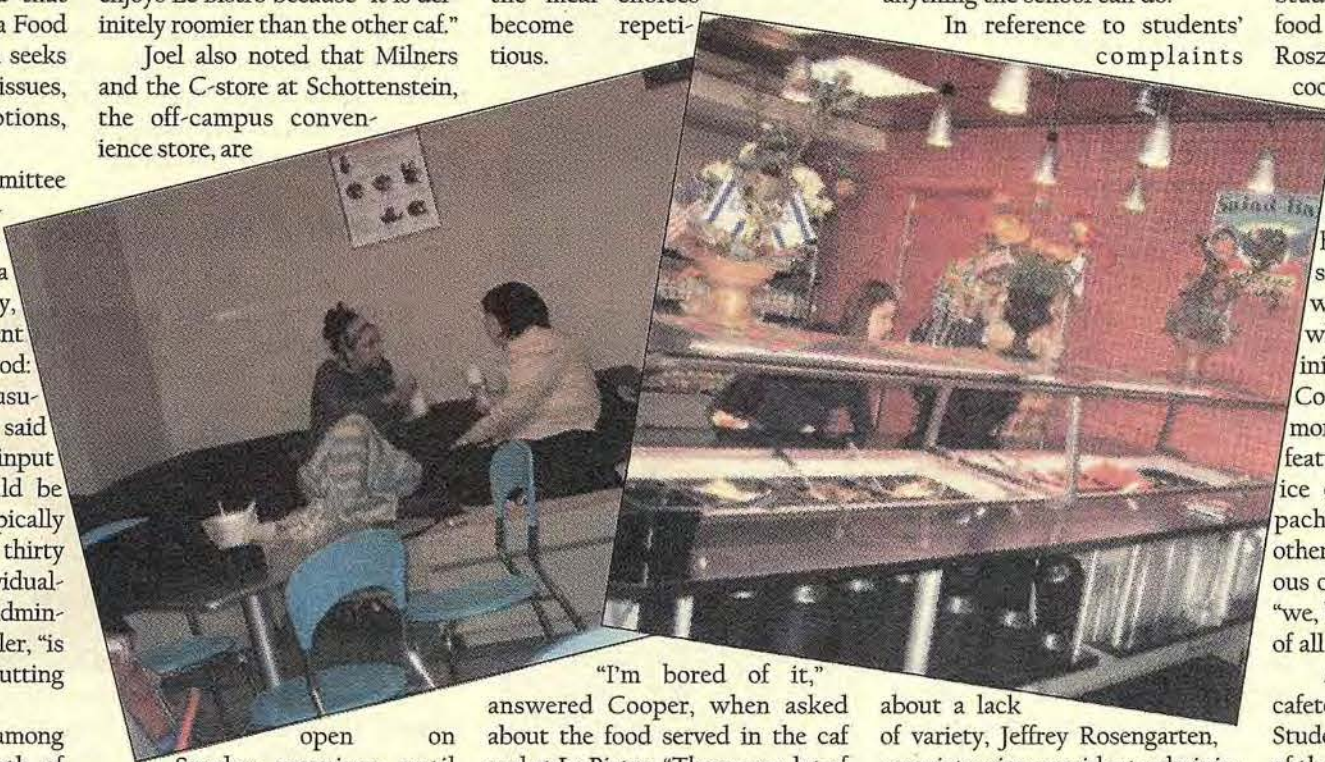
In reference to students' complaints

tions are made based on this input," explained Rosengarten. This administrative committee meets with a large range of students to investigate how they feel about the food. "We take suggestions, and we put them into action," explained Roszler. Most of the complaints the committee receives are about healthy eating. Students complain that the hot food is oily, which, according to Roszler, is inevitable when food is cooked in bulk.

"With the new caf, there are a lot of healthy new options," continued Roszler. Included in the healthy meal options are scoops of tuna, tofu, vitamin water and loaves of whole wheat bread in Le Bistro, all initiated by the Food Service Committee. Le Bistro is open more hours than the caf, and it features new food items, such as ice cream and Starbucks frappachinos. Roszler has visited other kosher dining halls at various other colleges, and notes that "we, by far, have the best food out of all of them," she concluded.

Another criticism of the Stern cafeteria is the rise of food prices. Students complain that the price of the food has increased while its quality has not. The reason for the higher prices is simple economics. "As the cost of food products, and of associated labor rise," explained Rosengarten, "so too does the cost of the food we serve."

No two people have the same tastes, and it is almost impossible to create a menu that would please everyone. Even in the desert, God fed the Jewish people with manna, which the *Midrash* explains tasted like whatever food the person desired. Short of the miracle of the manna, there will always be people who are not fully satisfied with the food. Yet, the surest way to express opinions about the food here is to speak to the Food Service Committee, because the administration is generally receptive to their feedback. No pun intended.



"I'm bored of it,"

answered Cooper, when asked about the food served in the caf and at Le Bistro. "There are a lot of options, but it's just the same thing everyday." After three semesters at Stern, Cooper feels that the food tends to get repetitive.

To an outsider touring the caf or Le Bistro, there appears to be a wide range of food choices. During a typical lunch in the main caf, students can choose between selections from a salad bar, several hot entrees (usually consisting of pasta, fish, potatoes, hot vegetables and soup), yogurts, bagels and more. If one travels a mere block, her options are expanded even more by the pizzas, sushi and muffins served at Le Bistro. Where, then, does the lack of variety enter the situation?

Faber explained that after four years at Stern, the food tends to become repetitive. "It's hard to tell whether or not the quality [of

about a lack of variety, Jeffrey Rosengarten, associate vice president administrative services at Yeshiva University, explained that Le Bistro "was opened in part to add more variety and choices to the dining experience."

According to Rosengarten, "Opinions regarding food and selection have always been rather diverse." "Typically on a college campus, when students are asked about quality of food they will complain, and I would guess that our students are not that different in this regard, although I have personally heard many compliments from students especially regarding the new 215 Bistro."

According to Rosengarten, the school listens to suggestions from students regarding the food. "We have always met [with], and listened to, suggestions from food service committee members, and many menu additions and dele-

open on Sunday mornings until 1:00 pm, which provides a breakfast and lunch option for students who are in the dormitories for the weekend. Faber, who has lived in Brookdale for the last four years, feels that Milners provides less of a selection of food and snacks than in the past, but she added that the popular option of Chinese food did not exist when she first came to Stern.

Horowitz, also a Brookdale resident, said, "They don't have enough junk food in Milners." Shifra Cooper, a SCW junior and Schottenstein resident, commented on the larger variety of foods available at the Schottenstein store. "Their frozen dinners are pretty good," she explained. Many students take advantage of the food choices at the Schottenstein C-store when they are in the mood for a meal outside of the caf.

Plans to Improve Brookdale and Schottenstein Residence Halls

By Esther Genuth and Yael Schiller

In an effort to beautify and improve the environment of Stern College's residence halls, renovations will be completed this summer in both the Brookdale and Schottenstein dormitories. The project, currently in development, includes plans to revamp the lobby and first floor lounge of Brookdale Residence Hall as well as the Diener dining room of Schottenstein Residence Hall.

"The aim is to both improve the overall ambiance and to create

a more grand entrance to the building that houses the majority of Beren campus residents," states Jeffery Rosengarten, the associate vice president of administrative services. "This will also aid in traffic flow and create an improved quality of life for those who reside there."

Student life committees and members of the board and administration, including President Richard Joel, Dean Karen Bacon and Associate Dean of Students Zelda Braun all promote the project. To ensure maximum student satisfaction, members of the Beren Campus student body will

also be able to their voice opinions on the matter.

Currently the Brookdale's lobby is mediocre in comparison to the other dormitory lobbies. Whereas the 36th street dormitory's back lounge is furnished with plush couches, the Brookdale Lobby contains a few old stained seats. In fact, part of the effort to redecorate the entrance to Brookdale lobby is to cast a better image of Stern College on its many visitors. "Thursday nights would be much more enjoyable with a tastefully decorated lobby" remarks SCW sophomore Daniella Lieberman. "I want to be

proud of where I live."

The renovation of the Schottenstein Residence Hall's Diener Dining Room is in the process of development as well. The dining room, which currently serves as the guest lounge, will be renovated to facilitate the use of both areas. "The aim is to better accommodate students who utilize the room to meet and greet their guests, and at the same time to improve its utility as a dining and special events space," explains Rosengarten.

Students are not the only ones who await the changes; security personnel are looking

forward as well. "It gets crowded in the lobby. Especially for the candle lighting ceremonies," says Chris, a security guard who prefers to only give his first name, referring to the Chanukah lighting in the Brookdale lobby. "Hopefully it will be easier to navigate in case of a fire."

As of now the renovation projects are underway. Details will become available to the student body later in the semester as plans move forward.

SCW Happenings



The Private World of Tenure Deliberations

By Orlee Levin

Disappointment often pervades the atmosphere at Stern College for Women when students learn that a favorite faculty member will not be returning the following semester. The reason: the faculty member's request for tenure was denied. A denial of tenure means that a teacher completes the academic year but his or her contract is not renewed. Often when tenure is denied, there are student cries of "Unfair!" Many believe that there is some rigged system that has prevented a favorite professor from being granted tenure.

The tenure process, contrary to popular student belief, is a long, proscribed process. Each candidate must pass through several levels of review and evaluation to ensure that the candidate is granted an equal opportunity to receive a prestigious appointment like tenure.

The Process

Consideration for tenure candidacy begins in the spring of a faculty member's fifth year. "In order to be a candidate for tenure a faculty member must be a full time member of the staff,"

explains Stern College for Women Dean Karen Bacon. The appointment as a full-time faculty member is explicitly described in a letter stating that a particular member of faculty has become a full-time member. "Generally, being a full time member translates into teaching three or four courses a semester, though allowances for administrative work and research are made depending on the dean and academic appointment" says Bacon.

The first step in the tenure evaluation process is conducted by the divisional committee, based on the particular department with which a faculty member is affiliated. There are four divisional committees: Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Humanities, Social Sciences and Judaic Studies. The specific committee evaluates a particular faculty member based on teaching skills, scholarly research, and achievements. Innovations and peer evaluations as well as student evaluations are taken into account. The committee then sends its decision to the executive committee of the division. The committee also asks for six outside letters of scholarly activity. The executive committee's decision is passed to Dr. Morton

Lowengrub, vice president for academic affairs.

Lowengrub then convenes a committee for undergraduate cases and the dean of the school may be present and give personal opinion and advice. "I read everything and make an independent judgment," explains Lowengrub. He further states, "I take their recommendation to the President. The decision is discussed and together the President and I make the recommendation to the Board of Trustees." The faculty member's portfolio is passed to the Board of Trustees for Academic Affairs for further evaluation. At the meeting with the Board of Trustees, President Richard Joel and three respected academics from outside the university are present for deliberations.

The decision the Board of Trustees makes is the final word on the matter. According to Lowengrub "the Board is generally in concurrence about whether or not to grant tenure."

The application process for tenure ends during the spring semester of a faculty member's sixth year. The tenured appointment begins in the fall of the faculty's seventh year with the university. Currently 45 percent of SCW faculty has tenure.

The Perks of Tenure

Once a faculty member is granted tenure, he or she is guaranteed lifetime employment with the university. The faculty handbook from 1993, currently under revision, explains that "a tenured faculty member shall not be removed except upon written charges for cause. Dismissal for cause shall include incompetence, immoral character or conduct unbecoming a teacher, inefficiency, physical or mental disability or neglect of duty, and personal conduct which impairs the individual's fulfillment of his institutional responsibilities. The burden of proof in establishing cause for dismissal rests upon the University."

A tenured faculty member may also be dismissed for financial exigency. The faculty handbook explains that when "the President determines that such action may need to be taken he must confer with the Dean and such faculty as he deems appropriate, or an appropriate faculty committee, of the school involved concerning the policy to be followed in the reduction of staff before such action is taken."

The handbook states "in the event of department or program reorganization permanently elimi-

nating the position held by the faculty member, the following procedures shall apply: non-tenured personnel of such department shall be separated from the University before any tenured position shall be affected; tenured faculty shall be separated in inverse order of their rank. In the event of such departmental reorganization, a tenured faculty member shall be first reassigned to new duties if practicable, in the opinion of the President."

Does YU Measure Up?

The process of gaining tenure is a lengthy, complicated one. Most universities have similar methods by which they determine whether they will grant their faculty members tenure. Most universities start evaluation in the spring of a faculty member's fifth or sixth year. They often request outside letters of scholarly work as well.

Tenure is a tedious process, and unfortunately not one that is open to dispute or appeal. Since the process is conducted behind closed doors, it is difficult to know enough about the workings of a particular tenure evaluation to effect meaningful change.

Alumnus in Focus: Former Observer Editor Pursues Journalism

By Chaya Sara Soloveichik

Susan Jacobs has resided in areas from Charleston, West Virginia to New York City and on to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, but one aspect never changed: "I always knew that I wanted to be a writer," Jacobs said.

Growing up in West Virginia, Jacobs had never experienced the raucous New York subway system. Her visits to New York numbered a mere total of two, and the city itself was "a big culture shock." Nevertheless, she considered attending Stern College after hearing about it from her NCSY advisors, particularly Dean Zelda Braun's daughter.

Jacobs eventually opted to attend Stern College primarily for its Judaic Studies department. Beforehand, Jacobs attended Capital High School, a public school of approximately 1,200 students, only six of them Jewish. Judaic classes at Stern were a novelty for Jacobs. "In high school, I also gradually became observant, and so, was unable to take part in school activities," she commented. "In Stern, the opportunities were endless."

From 1995 to 1999 at Stern, Jacobs attended various *chagigot*, benefited from the lectures of assorted speakers and joined the Environmental Club. Jacobs also co-chaired the Adopt-a-Bubby

Club, whose members conducted weekly visits to a nearby senior center and organized what Jacobs humorously recounted as "a little party with the old people" on Chanukah and Purim.

It was by way of writing, however, that she really made her mark. Majoring in both Judaic Studies and Journalism, Jacobs wrote for the Observer throughout her four years at Stern. As executive editor of the Observer during her junior year, Jacobs observed the way a newspaper proceeds through all stages of production, and she utilized this understanding as editor-in-chief in her senior year. She monitored the many minute elements involved in writing a newspaper, thereby improving the newspaper as a whole.

Unusual experiences abound in newspaper production, and the Observer is no exception. During Jacobs' senior year, The Commentator printed an article attacking Stern College, prompting an eventual response from Jacobs. One of the co-editors of The Commentator countered her statements in the regular edition, while the Purim edition asserted "The Commentator co-editor's engagement to Jacobs, complete with an accompanying picture of the two together. 'I learned to have a good sense of humor,' Jacobs remarked.

Jacobs graduated Stern College and completed a one-

year master's degree program at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. She then worked for two years as an associate for the Pittsburgh Post Gazette. Taking a short hiatus from journalism, Jacobs subsequently worked in the public relations department for the Jewish Association on Aging in Pittsburgh.

This past September, Jacobs began working as associate editor of the Jewish Chronicles in Pittsburgh. She recently authored an article pertaining to excessive drinking on Purim, a topic never fully covered by the paper, since most employees are not observant and simply did not regard Purim drinking as an important issue. "It's similar in some ways to the Observer," noted Jacobs as she described her job, "It's a Jewish newspaper that involves writing about Jewish issues and dealing with Jewish communities."

Working for the Observer clearly provided Jacobs with valuable experience. "A lot of people go to Stern and have the attitude that it's not really a real college," Jacobs concluded. "I had a wonderful experience. In terms of education, it's really what you make it to be. There are a lot of wonderful people and opportunities at Stern." This is a statement worthy of the nickname accorded to her by fellow college friends - Ms. Stern.



SCW Student Appointed WYUR Manager

By Frieda Kahn

Rachel Levinson, SCW '07, is breaking new ground as the first Stern student to be appointed station manager of the YU radio station, WYUR. Levinson is currently the production director of WYUR, vice president of the Joseph Dunner Political Science Society, and the assistant chairperson of the Canvassing Committee. "I'm honored and excited to forge the way for women to take leading roles in joint campus activities," she said of her appointment.

The role of station manager encompasses a variety of responsibilities. "I will be the filter through which all decisions are made," described Levinson, "my name will be the name on the checks, and I will also be working more with the technical crew. Basically, I will be responsible to ensure that everything in the station works smoothly." Upon hearing the news of Levinson's appointment, Julie Avner, a SCW junior remarked, "As an avid listener, I'm really excited that Stern

College will now have more of a presence in the running of the radio station."

Though WYUR has been on the air for over 50 years, it only started offering Internet broadcasts in November 2003. Originally, the shows were only available from the dormitories, but due to changes made by the FCC (Federal Communications Committee), it became very expensive for independent radio stations to stay on the air. The switch to Internet radio allows YU to have a radio station that is both affordable and easily accessible to any student with an Internet connection.

The shows broadcasted from WYUR are as diverse as its student body. From jazz music, to political talk shows, to sports and comedy, even the name of each show reflects its distinctness and appeal. There are over 25 different radio shows airing every week, and with over 100 students actively involved, the station is always dynamic and lively.

"The purpose of WYUR," according to Levinson, "is for

continued on page 21

OPINION

Our Competing Chromosomes: A Scientific Defense of Women's Genius

By Karyn Winkler

Recent events and statements made in the last couple of weeks regarding women's alleged "finite" capabilities have caused outrage and anger throughout all spectrums of society. Preceding the unfounded and false statements asserted by a recent article in the Commentator, the president of Harvard University, Lawrence H. Summers, contemptuously expressed his views on a woman's place in society at the NBER Conference on Diversifying the Science & Engineering Workforce. He captured his core argument when asking, "What fraction of young women in their mid-twenties make a decision that they don't want to have a job that they think about eighty hours a week?" Summers' controversial remarks mainly state that "intrinsic differences" in ability partly explain why there are fewer women in the pool of applicants for top science jobs. In a shocking but meaningful reprimand, Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences passed a motion recently saying it lacked confidence in President Lawrence Summers - the first such action in the nearly 400-year history of the university. Along with the board at Harvard University, many have chosen to respond to the overwhelming and spreading sentiment that women are somehow inferior to men in most intellectual faculties, specifically science and math. Since these are the exact intellectual qualities in question, there is no better way to defend women's academic equality and leverage through any other means besides pure and simple scientific facts.

In "X-celling Over Men," an op-ed recently written for The New York Times by Maureen Dowd, the basic genetic design behind women's intellectual substance is outlined through concrete scientific facts, along with



the help of some obvious and apparent comical evidence regarding the weaknesses and limitations of men. Dowd, referring to a study recently published in the journal Nature, reveals that "women are genetically more complex than scientists ever imagined, while men remain the simple creatures they appear." One of the authors of the study, the renowned genome expert Huntington Willard from Duke University, states that "genetically speaking, if you've met one man, you've met them all," referring to all men's virtually inactive Y-chromosome.

Elementary knowledge of genetics dictates that both men and women have 46 chromosomes each. However, what varies between the sexes is operative capacity and efficiency of the final 46th chromosome. In men, 45 chromosomes work to their full potential, while the 46th is "the pathetic Y that has only a few genes which operate below the waist and above the knees." In women, however, Willard observed that females benefit from all 46 chromosomes

working to their maximum potential. This particular study mainly dealt with the newfound evidence that this 46th chromosome is actually women's second X chromosome, and that it is working at magnitudes greater than ever known. The researchers discovered that a massive 15 percent of the genes on the second X chromosome in women, thought to be non-functional and inactive, are actually operating, giving women a considerable advantage in gene expression over men.

Dr. David Page, a molecular biologist and expert on sex evolution, also known as "the defender of the rotting Y chromosome," refers to the studies that prove that the men's Y chromosome had been losing genes for millions of years, and is now reduced to a diminutive fraction of the size of the X chromosome. "The Y married up," he comically explains. "The X married down." Some scientists have even theorized that in less than 10 million years, men as a species could disappear altogether. To sum up the gene capacity of the Y chromosome, Dowd cleverly concludes that it encompasses "the belching gene, the inability-to-remember-birthdays-and-anniversaries gene, the fascination-with-spiders-and-reptiles gene, the selective-hearing-loss-"Huh"-gene, and the inability-to-express-affection-on-the-phone gene." In addition, she points out that maybe men have a hard time expressing themselves because their genes do as well. Clearly, when the President of Harvard as well as the author of the aforementioned article in the Commentator doubted and debased women's intellectual abilities, they experienced a chromosomal malfunction on their ever-present, dysfunctional Y chromosome. From where we sit, as women and intellectuals, this problem can only be corrected by a very large dose of intellectual viagra.

FEIG'S FAST FACTS

A Talk About Salk

By Jessica Feig

The development of the polio vaccine was a scientific breakthrough that garnered significant attention at a time when parents were haunted by images of children on crutches, in wheelchairs or in "iron lungs" to help them breathe. In the early twentieth century, approximately 50,000 Americans were affected by polio each year, a disease that caused great suffering, disability and premature death. The most severe polio epidemic year on record occurred in 1952. During that year, more than 57,800 people were stricken with the disease.

Dr. Jonas Salk, the son of Russian-Jewish immigrants, who spearheaded the intensive search for a polio vaccine, was born in New York City on October 28, 1914. In 1934, he graduated from the City College of New York with an undergraduate Bachelor of Science degree. Salk obtained his medical degree in 1939 from New York University School of Medicine, and he became the head of the Virus Research Lab at the University of Pittsburgh Medical School. In 1947, at the University of Pittsburgh, Salk began conducting research on the polio virus.

March of Dimes, formerly known as The National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, funded Salk's groundbreaking work toward finding a cure for polio. The National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis had been founded in 1938 by Franklin D. Roosevelt, one of the most famous polio victims. Salk's many years of research at the University of Pittsburgh Medical School finally came to fruition on April 12, 1955. Remarkably, this date also marked the 10th anniversary of the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Intensive and widespread research efforts had been launched to test the effectiveness and safety of the vaccine. Throughout the previous year, 1.8 million school-age children from across the United States participated in the clinical field trials. These children were affectionately identified as America's "Polio Pioneers." This was the largest field trial in medical history, and Salk's two sons were the first "Polio Pioneers" to test the polio vaccine. Thousands of volunteers and healthcare workers assisted in administering the trials. In the days preceding the vaccine's approval, the results of the field trials were collected and analyzed by researchers to ascertain the safety, effectiveness and potency of the vaccine.

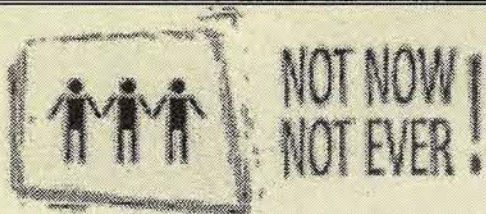
The vaccine itself was composed of a "killed" polio virus which retained its ability to immunize without risk of infecting the patient with polio. Finally, after years of research, on April 12, 1955 it was announced that the Salk polio vaccine was a safe, successful way to prevent polio.

April 12, 2005 marks the 50th Anniversary of the approval of the Salk polio vaccine that virtually eliminated polio from North America. Salk dedicated his life to performing biomedical research for the benefit of mankind, and his discovery of the polio vaccine proved the power of scientific research to the world. His last years were spent searching for a vaccine against AIDS. He died on June 23, 1995 at the age of eighty, a highly accomplished researcher and one of the most memorable scientists of our time.



Dr. Jonas Salk

THE OBSERVER WISHES THE
ENTIRE YESHIVA COMMUNITY A
CHAG KASHER V'SAMEACH



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Yeshiva University Students, in reaction to the ongoing genocidal situation in the Sudan, have banded together to create NOT NOW NOT EVER. Among other things, this humanitarian organization is organizing a rally of massive proportions on May 8th at 4:30pm in Central Park.

Yeshiva University, with generous help from Dr. Marcia Robbins-Wilf, hosted for the first time, this fall, a lecture series commemorating the 60th anniversary of the end of the Holocaust. In attending these lectures, the organizing students of NOT NOW NOT EVER came together to actualize what so eloquently being spoken about.

"If [we] do not lead the cause of freedom, it will not be led," President Bush during his second Inaugural speech.

"Yeshiva should be at the forefront of this movement," Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamn, Chancellor and Rosh Hayeshiva of Yeshiva University.

"We sit up here often forgetting that there is a University below us. The passion you show makes us remember the reasons we are here." Senior Administrator at YU.

"The perils of indifference enable killers to kill and tormentors to torment...we cannot stand idly by [the crimes against humanity being committed in Sudan] or all our endeavors will be unworthy...We must act." Elie Wiesel, at the Darfur Emergency Summit which was run by the Anti Defamation League (ADL).

We have the Knowledge. Knowledge of human rights, their history, philosophy and application. Yet, we also have the knowledge that thousands are dieing right now.
 We have the Ability. Students plan countless activities throughout the year to excite and entertain us. Yet, this time we must take our skills to create something bigger than one individual, bigger than one school, bigger than one race.
 We have the Passion. So many of us sit idly by, unmoved to learn anything outside the class requirements; unphased by the images of hate, death, and destruction we see on TV and in newspapers everyday. Yet, once our inner spark is lit, worlds can be moved.
 Students from Yeshiva have done amazing things in record time before:
 Torah Shield I, II, & III. Three timely Solidarity Missions to Israel.
 Washington Israel Rally. Yeshiva sent 40 buses, and not counting those who went on their own, over 1500 of our students made an impact.
 Mission to The Hague. 100 Yeshiva students spent 30 hours in Holland to protest Israel's right to protect herself.

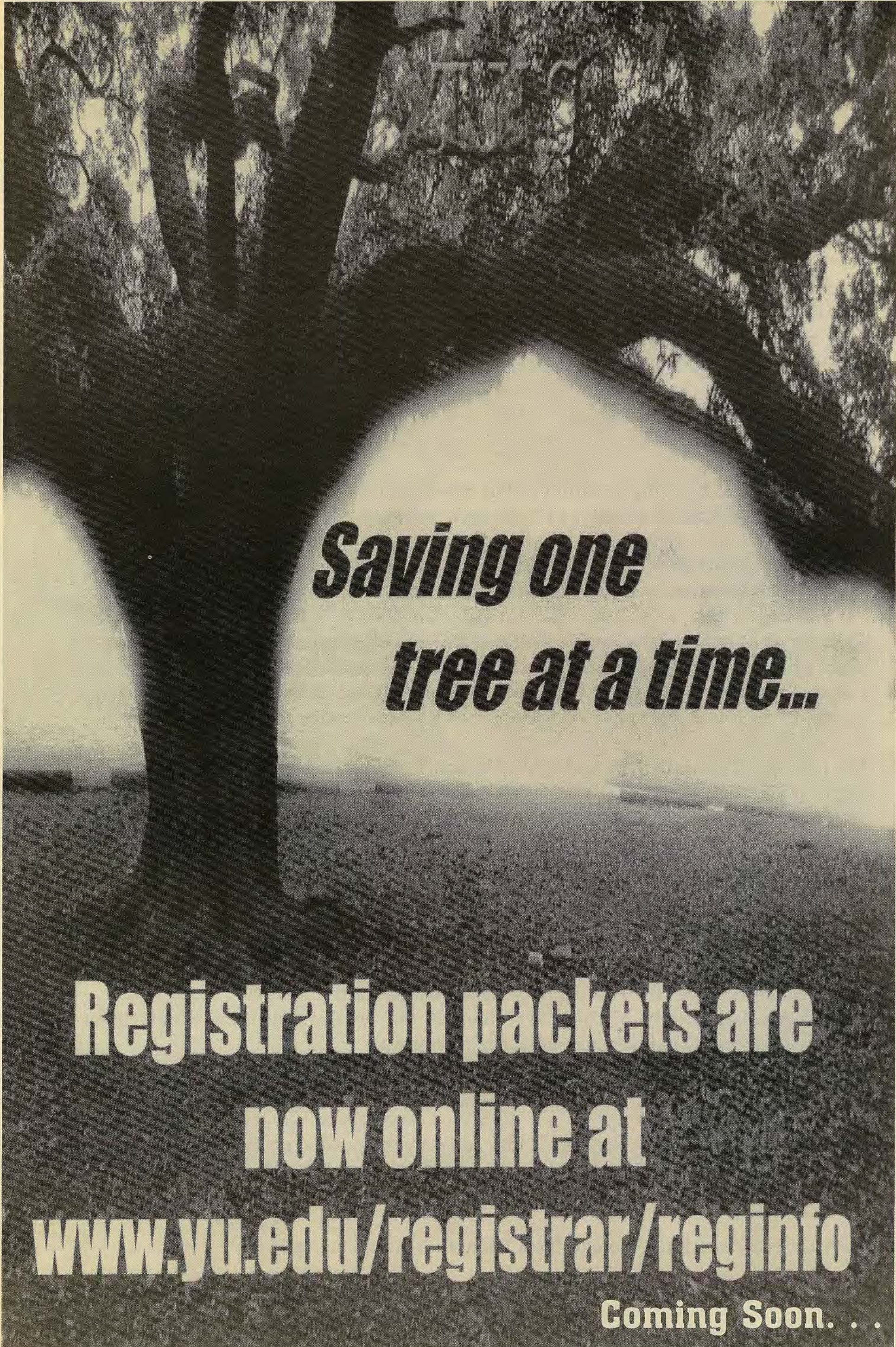
This time, don't be left behind. This time, prove you have the passion too.

End the Genocide in Darfur.

Join Thousands to Rally Here to Stop Thousands from Dieing There

2525 Amsterdam Avenue, Suite 222, New York, NY 10033

www.notnownotever.org



***Saving one
tree at a time...***

**Registration packets are
now online at
www.yu.edu/registrar/reginfo**

Coming Soon. . .

YU Hosts Sarachek Tournament

By Judy Alkoby

"March Madness" was not just limited to the NCAA; "basketball fever" was spread all over the YU campuses as the Sarachek basketball tournament began. The 14th annual Red Sarachek high school basketball tournament was held from March 31st to April 4th. Most of the games were hosted in Yeshiva University's Max Stern Athletic Center, while the rest were held at various schools in New Jersey. Twenty yeshiva high school teams from all over the United States and Canada rigorously competed for the championship trophy. Many supporters of the teams flew in to cheer their schools to victory. In addition, countless Yeshiva University students were conspicuously absent from classes, having been lured to the gym with high hopes that their alma matter would triumph.

The Young Israel of Century City Panthers took home the championship trophy after competing against the Frisch Cougars in the championship game. The resulting score of the tense, enthusiastic game was 53-

36. YICC fans were so overwhelmed with pride that they stormed the court at the sound of the final buzzer. "It was a great game," said Chicago visitor Leah Alkoby. "Both teams played their best, but the Panthers really dominated the court." This was YICC's 5th Sarachek victory, which will definitely be a reason to celebrate long after the tournament. With all eyes on the court, many athletes were able to demonstrate their talent. Senior Josh Mazalian awed the crowd with his unstoppable three-pointers, while David Gilboa put up a great defensive front.

However the Sarachek Tournament was not just a competition of better shooting or dribbling skills. Rather, the tournament was an embodiment of Torah *Im Derech Eretz*, and was an opportune time to develop *achdut* (unity). While it is true that in every tournament there is a level of healthy competition, many of the participants formed new friendships and caught up on old ones. The tournament is a wonderful experience for high school athletes to meet with a common hobby and have a great time, all within a Jewish framework.

Yeshiva University is proud to promote these ideals, and will continue to encourage Jewish youth to cultivate their talents.

- 1) Ramaz Rams, NY, NY
- 2) Marsha Stern Talmudical Academy Lions, NY, NY
- 3) Young Israel of Century City Panther, L.A., CA
- 4) Frisch Cougars, Teaneck, NJ
- 5) Yeshivat Rambam Red Storm, Baltimore, MD
- 6) Melvin J. Berman Hebrew Academy Cougars, Rockville, MD
- 7) Valley - Sharrey Zedek Wolfpack, North Hollywood, CA
- 8) Hyman Brand Hebrew Academy Rams, overland park, KS
- 9) Rabbi Alexander Gross Hebrew Academy Warriors, Miami, FL
- 10) Ida crown Jewish Academy Aces, Chicago, IL
- 11) Weinbaum Yeshiva High School Storm, Boca Ratone, FL
- 12) Hebrew Academy of Montreal Heat, Montreal, Canada
- 13) Bnei Akiva Ohr Chaim Knights, Toronto, Ontario
- 14) Yavneh Academy Bulldogs, Dallas, TX



- 15) Maimonidies M-Cats, Brookline, MA
- 16) Fuchs Bet Sefer Mizrahi Mayhem, Cleveland, OH
- 17) Robert Beren Hebrew Academy Stars, Houston, TX
- 18) Yeshiva High School of Atlanta Lions, Atlanta, GA
- 19) Cooper Yeshiva High School

- Maccabees, Memphis, TX
- 20) Columbus Torah Academy Lions, Columbus, OH

For many parents and friends who could not attend the tournament, live updates and photos could be seen on www.macslive.com.

Better Luck Next Year

By Sari Nossbaum

While the regular season games are important, playoffs are a whole different ball game. All the grueling hours of team practices, individual conditioning, and hard work both on and off the court come down to the playoffs; it is the climax of the season. Any team can win on any given night as the tension ratchets up several notches.

The Lady Macs finished the regular season with a 10-11 record (3-4 in the HVWAC Conference), placing the team in fourth place heading into the playoffs. Consequently, we drew the defending champions, The Purchase Cougars, in the first round of the playoffs. Due to our superior regular season record, we obtained home-court advantage for the big game.

There was great excitement in the air as The Lady Macs' team bus arrived at Yeshiva University High School for Girls, commonly known as Central. The team was literally bombarded with paparazzi from both the Observer and Commentator newspapers. The stands were packed with screaming fans, and there was not a seat to be had in the sold-out gym.

As the team warmed up, one could sense the focus the players had, with all of them determined to win the game. For the five seniors on the team, this could possibly be their last college basketball game. This was a defining moment in the career of each of these players. These were players who had given their hearts and souls to the success of the

Lady Macs. Unfortunately, one of the seniors and captains, Jessica Epstein, was forced to watch the game from the sidelines due to a torn ACL in her knee. As one of the tallest players, Jessica's skill was sorely missed on the court.

Luckily, the Purchase Cougars were not a tall team, but they were very tough and aggressive. It could be said with certainty that they put their most forceful foot forward that night. In a high scoring, highly entertaining game, The Lady Macs took the game to another level, with all players contributing on both ends of the court. But the Cougars were also playing hard, and at half time, the Lady Macs held a six-point lead.

The Cougars stayed close the entire game and would not be easily defeated. The game went down to the wire, with the Cougars hitting a two point shot on the buzzer closing out the period. Determined, the Lady Macs held strong and won the game by two points, 89-87.

As the buzzer sounded, cries of exhilaration were heard throughout the gym and across the street (although, we discovered later, this was due to the looting of the nearby bodega). With the adrenaline still pumping, the Lady Macs huddled in the center of the court - elated, proud and relieved to be the winners! After the game, the locker room contained a lively celebration as Coach Karen Green expressed her delight in the team's performance, and prepared them for the next opponent in the semi-finals, St. Joseph's.

The game against St. Joseph's was held on a Saturday night at the Pratt Institute, a neutral location, which offered neither team an advantage and the safety precaution of a low profile after the stalker incident last year. The Lady Macs kept the game close in the first half, closing to within five points at the half, 22-27. In a defensive second half, baskets were tough to score. In fact, St. Joseph's kept Stern scoreless for five minutes at the eight minute mark as they achieved a fourteen point lead. From that point on, the valiant Lady Macs were unable to match the score and subsequently lost the game, 44-61.

In an emotional end to the season, Coach Green stated that she was proud of the way the team had played, and expressed with assurance that "we were not outplayed. It was simply a matter of a lot of our shots not falling tonight." Despite these words, the loss was still tough to swallow. For some of the team, including myself, this signified an end to our college basketball careers.

While there were many tears that night, it was also a night of festivity - as we went out on the town as a team to celebrate a fantastic season (from which I am still recovering!). Looking back on the season, I have many fond memories that I will treasure forever. I will never forget the incredible experience that I, as a member of the Lady Macs, shared with my teammates. Thanks for a great three years, and better luck next year!

COMMENCEMENT
2005



Thursday May 26

5:00 PM
The Theater
Madison Square Garden

IN ORDER TO RECEIVE YOUR TICKETS AND CAP AND GOWN WE WOULD APPRECIATE IF YOU WOULD FILE FOR GRADUATION WITH THE REGISTRAR ON YOUR CAMPUS. PLEASE FOLLOW UP ON THIS ASAP SO THAT YOU CAN BE ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND AND MARCH IN YOUR GRADUATION CEREMONY.

Macy's at Herald Square, Spring has Finally Sprung

By Talya Berger

New Yorkers have been hoping for the day when it would be safe to ask: Is it spring yet? At Macy's at Herald Square, the answer is a resounding "Yes!" This year's Macy's Flower Show is called "Gardens of Fantasy," and could not be more aptly named. Beginning with the display windows outside the building, and continuing through the entire ground floor of Macy's, shoppers are transported into a blossoming indoor paradise.

Macy's display windows along 34th Street are famed for their Christmas scenes, but they should be recognized for their artistic contribution at this time of the year as well. In the smaller windows, handbags, shoes and delicate pieces of jewelry are nestled in the petals of oversized daffodils. In the large windows, mannequins in whimsical spring dresses pose amidst human-sized poppies and squares of lush green grass. On 35th Street, the displays recognize one of the financial backers of the Flower Show, the movie "The Muppets Wizard of Oz." Kermit the Frog relaxes on a bench surrounded by a vivid carpet of flowers and plants while Miss Piggy appears in full good-witch regalia, peering from a multi-hued garden. The Tin Man, Lion, and Scarecrow appear in a series of windows that show them

trekking through foliage and flowers towards the great golden gates of Oz.

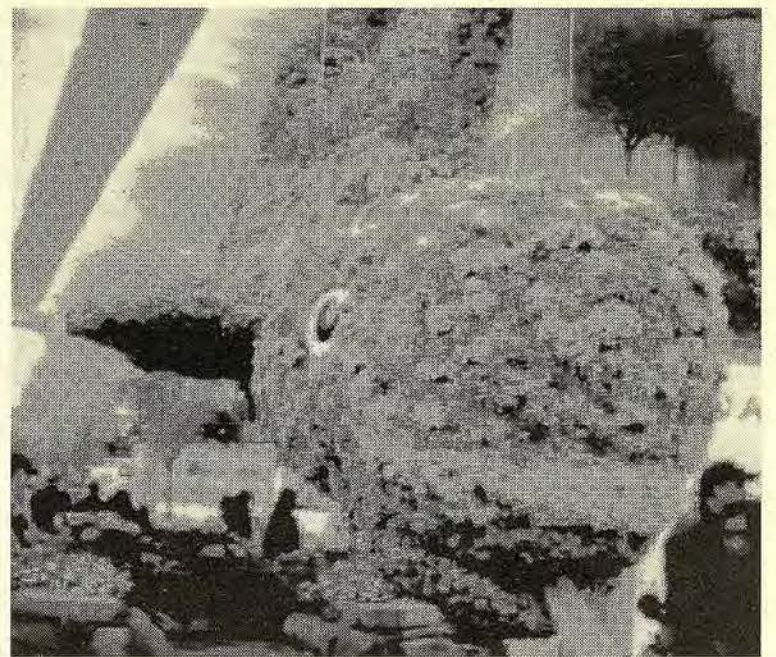
The windows are only a taste of what is to come inside Macy's. Within the entrance atrium, there is a grinning whale- created from small red, green, and yellow flowers- suspended over a large koi pond, spouting a continuous stream of water. This is only the beginning of the transformation from the normally boring department-store atmosphere of Macy's. The entire interior is a spring paradise, complete with classical music tracks such as Vivaldi's "Spring" of The Four Seasons piece playing overhead. Every flat space not covered with merchandise is blanketed with vast arrays of flowers. Each of the columns are even capped by a platform covered with flora. The center aisle is lined with pedestals containing 14-foot tall Japanese cherry blossom trees surrounded by cheerful daffodils. Also in the center aisle is a large Waterford vase filled with flowers which was created specially for the occasion, and is valued at \$75,000. When the flower show ends, the vase will be auctioned at Christie's, and its proceeds will provide support for the Tsunami Aid Fund.

There are tours offered several times daily, and in the Visitors Center on Floor 1-1/2 (yes, there is such a floor) there are 2 pamphlets, one an Events Guide and the other a floor plan

and description of the Flower Show itself. It is worth being aware of when the different events are taking place, because it would be a shame to go and miss out on some of the great opportunities to learn some cool tips, from home decorating to cake decorating to flower arranging.

A true appreciation of the vast array of flowers and plants that are displayed can only be gained by taking a tour. Not only will you learn about the displays but you may also pick up some funky tips for your own garden! For example, who knew that one can control the color of hydrangeas by changing the acidity of the soil in which the hydrangeas grow? (To grow pink azaleas, the soil must be slightly alkaline, which can be achieved by mixing in some lime juice. To grow blue ones, add some used coffee grounds.)

Among the 17 specialty gardens were several that are of particular note. The Topiary Garden is a fascinating example of what human intervention in nature may achieve. Trees and shrubs can be trained into unnatural shapes by using wire to coax certain forms while the plants are growing, or by pruning the leaves and branches carefully. The Royal Garden is modeled after a classic English garden with mostly sedate, pastel colors arranged precisely. The Mediterranean Garden pays



A flowering whale sculpture greets Macy's Guests

homage to Ancient Greek civilization with several small crumbling columns and the laurel that once functioned to create wreaths for Olympic champions. Miniature date palms, rosemary, and other herbs evoke images of the Middle East. In the Orchid Arcade, orchids droop gracefully on their long delicate stems. Some have pure white leaves with magenta hearts, while others are a lively yellow with purple centers. By contrast, the Cactus Garden consists mainly of greens and yellows. There are, however, a great variety of textures and shapes, from hairy to spiky and lethal-looking. Here you can find cacti-like aloe vera and pony-tail palms. There is also

a citrus garden, which contains a small Seville orange tree and even two grapefruit trees! I must admit that it is a strange dichotomy to see such vibrant outdoor vegetation above a jewelry counter.

The entire experience was a contrast of nature and metropolitan living, with exotic birds-of-paradise standing alongside perfume bottles and handbags. It is always a pleasure to see plants and flowers in a city where a single tree is considered to be a sign of nature. This tour is a wonderful way to welcome the spring- so put away your parkas and snow boots until next year, and enjoy Macy's Flower Show!

Clorox, Ammonia, and Coffee: A Movie Review

By Tikva Hecht

"Clorox, Ammonia, and Coffee," a new film by Norwegian writer-director Mona J. Hoel, has a quality to it that is difficult to specify. It gives, in Hollywood-worthy attempt, a full dose of power-of-love and overcoming-odds goodness, but "Clorox, Ammonia, and Coffee" is not modeled as a fairytale escape from reality. The movie utilizes punk music, speedy camera work and extraordinary images to produce a drug-like effect for the audience. Despite this impression, "Clorox, Ammonia, and Coffee" is not a trip that is designed to break from the truth of real life. The film is a mature work of art. It understands its purpose- to serve reality- but it does not allow itself be tricked into accepting the boundaries of reality.

The film spins together a number of different lives to describe time and place. A hodge-podge of characters includes a loving young mother and her unfaithful husband, a morally questionable and sadly empty old woman, and a trampoline-loving policeman and his liberal minded but trampoline-fearing brother, all of whom contribute to the plot. These and other characters

provide color in a Western society that is bereft of any innocence of the past, and that does not recognize any of its flaws. The film is mainly a social commentary on gender roles, but also portrays a much larger mosaic of human depth, ugliness, honor, redemption and, above all, communication.

I cannot say "Clorox" adds anything new to the discussion of these timeworn topics. It was sometimes difficult to determine whether its "this-is-the-way-life-is" attitude was just an excuse to play with clichés. What it was able to do, and what gives the film maturity, however, is its ability to maintain a clear distinction between the heroes and villains. This should be considered a feat in a movie that manages a mismatched group of characters who are individually both superficial yet deep, simple yet complex, and admirable yet repellent.

The credit for the well-controlled tensions in the movie can be attributed to the director, Mona J. Hoel. Her skills as a director encourage audience interaction with the storyline. At times, she opts to keep the audience distant from the story itself. It is at these times that the humor of life is displayed, and we are forced to recognize the

ridiculous actions we take to ensure our survival and success. Hoel also knows how to bring the audience into close emotional proximity to the characters. This element is essential to the film, because it allows the audience to connect closely with the characters' experiences and reactions. It is at these intimate moments in the film that the audience realizes one of the tragedies of humankind: people will do anything and everything, except that one essential action, to survive. While some directors' talents lie only in artistic presentation or in methodical, steady story-telling, Hoel has the rare ability and artistic sense to utilize story-telling that changes from moment to moment and keeps the attention of the audience.

Jesus, one of the characters, who owns a fruit store, states: "life is not made of the days that passed, but the ones we remember." Art is very similar. "Clorox, Ammonia, and Coffee" could be a classic if you could break a classic down, and compile a check list of necessities. In such an examination, "Clorox" would have no reason to be anxious about its score. "Clorox, Ammonia, and Coffee" is a very well-executed portrayal of the shallowness that persuades our society to lose itself in labor and



A scene from "Clorox, Ammonia, and Coffee"

luxury. Despite its objective creativity and beauty as a film, it has for the most part been done before. Perhaps, however, "Clorox" does it a little bit better than the others. And doing something just a little bit better is what the film is all about.

"Clorox, Ammonia, and Coffee" was shown as part of the NEW DIRECTORS/NEW FILMS film festival presented by The Department of Film and Media, The Museum of Modern Art, and The Film Society of Lincoln Center.

Dancing About Architecture: "Rays of Gold"

"Writing about music is like dancing about architecture - it's a really stupid thing to want to do."

-Elvis Costello

By Esther Lam

Artist: Aqueduct
Album: *I Sold Gold*
Release Date: January 25th
Notable Tracks: "Growing Up With GNR," "Heart Design," "Five Star Day," "Tension," "The Tulsa Trap"
Show: Pianos, March 28th



Singer/songwriter David Terry

Amidst what seemed like a 24-hour downpour, a series of small obscure bands lugged their instruments, equipment and talents to Pianos, a well-known downtown venue that regularly hosts up-and-comers. Each of the fearless bands gave an enthusiastic performance on the cramped stage, ignoring the likely contact of their soaked Converse sneakers with the web of amplifier cables that surrounded them.

The things that people will do for music.

The standout act of the evening, the shining star, the sunshine among the clouds of that March 28th rainstorm, was the fun-loving Indie pop act, Aqueduct. Their set featured various songs from their first full-length album, *"I Sold Gold,"* as well as some old-school rap hits that had the amused crowd singing and dancing.

Adding itself to the likes of The Flaming Lips and The Postal Service, Aqueduct combines two styles that were once thought to be incompatible. Nineties grunge rockers would have pulled out their long greasy hair after hearing this marriage of authentic rock and the electronic reverberations of drum machines and synthesizers. But I, I frolic in the fields of this sound revolution, and bless the muses of music for gracing us with such a likable, inventive musical achievement.

Aqueduct manages to present this "odd couple" while maintaining a lo-fi quality that is reminiscent of the sounds of your teenage next-door neighbor's garage band. It's a *shidduch* (match) that not only works terrifically, but Aqueduct's engaging rhythms should resonate with almost every contemporary music lover, even if some of those beats are produced with a touch of a button.

Above my bed hangs an Aqueduct *"I Sold Gold"* poster that I removed carefully from the door of Pianos. In addition to representing my love for the record, the poster stands as a tribute to singer/songwriter David Terry's creation of Aqueduct's music, a process, he says, that took place in his bedroom. In 2004, the Tulsa native emerged from that bedroom to bring the world "Pistols of

Dawn," an EP that had the critics talking, and was followed by a slew of opening gigs on The Flaming Lips and Modest Mouse tours.

"*I Sold Gold*" brings fun and humor to an indie scene that is all too often viewed as dark and rigid. "For everyone who loves this song/ There's probably ten who hate it," Terry sings in "Laundry Baskets." Aqueduct's songs, every single one of them, are just delightful. They're just so darn hard to resist. If it's not for the band's stellar riffs themselves, then it's the wit and playfulness that seeps from each track.

Terry's simplistic piano hooks and romantic lyrics add another dimension to *"I Sold Gold."* And, much like the keyboard that looks as though it is about to collapse due to Terry's cheerful jumping, these emotion-stricken lyrics are hardly your typical Celine Dion ballad or even a Dashboard Confessional emotionally-complicated tearjerker. "I don't believe in astrology/ But you can read me my horoscope/ I love to hear your voice," Terry swoons in "Five Star Day."

If I haven't given you substantial proof that *"I Sold Gold"* is worthy of a listen, there's only one place to turn. That's right, our generation's seal of approval has already been bestowed on Aqueduct. While Seth babbled about his dramatic love life, Marissa rebelled against her mother, Ryan made his way down the path of righteousness (with some bad-boy speed bumps along the way) and ditziness continued to be Summer's pastime, the band's "Hardcore Days & Softcore Nights" played as background.

Aqueduct's album and performance put a beaming smile on my face and on the faces of all those around me. Ignoring this invitation to join all of this makes me wonder if you'd prefer a life of sadness filled with static approaches to music and other artistic processes.

Okay, maybe comparing a refusal to purchase *"I Sold Gold"* to the rejection of happiness altogether is a bit of a stretch, but why wouldn't you want to bask in some of this golden sunshine?

Riverdance: An Expression of Culture in Movement

By Shifra Bronstein

If I could name one of the best performances that I have ever seen while writing for The Observer Arts and Culture section, it would be this spectacular show, "Riverdance: A Journey." Riverdance's "journey" essentially began with traditional Irish dancing, which became popular in the mid-1990's with Michael Flatley's show, "Lord of the Dance." Afterwards, as The New York Times states, he was "credited with most of [the] step-dancing choreography" of "Riverdance." "Riverdance" is different than "Lord of the Dance" since it does not contain a "plot" as Lord of the Dance does, but is instead a sequential series of short performances built upon two basic themes. The individual performances represent different aspects of Irish myth, history and Irish influence in other countries.

What is Irish dancing? A look at some of the main sequences of "Riverdance" would give you the answer. In this particular dancing style, the dancer maintains a rigid torso with his arms held stiffly at his side or on his hips. The dancer's legs and feet move almost continuously in a toe-heel manner, step-behind, or rapid tap-dancing while either remaining in one place or changing formation. The performers may move their arms in a more limited way, for instance, to form group circles, whereas the lead male dancer generally ends a dancing sequence with a dramatic arm pose. Anyone familiar with Michael Flatley's one arm straight and forward, and the other drawn back as though about to strike, would recognize the unusual positions of the lead dancer.

"Riverdance" is currently celebrating its 10th anniversary and has been touring in Europe and the US. The performance I attended was one of 10 shows that were playing in Radio City Music Hall, the last of which ended on St. Patrick's Day. The director of the show soon entered the spotlight after I took my seat and announced, "it is an honor to be here" and officially welcomed the Prime Minister of Ireland, Bertie Ahern, and his wife, who were both in attendance. He also mentioned that former president Bill Clinton had intended on

being present, but was unfortunately in the hospital for an unexpected surgery. The director closed with a message for our present audience as well as all the former ones: "Thank you for 10 wonderful years."

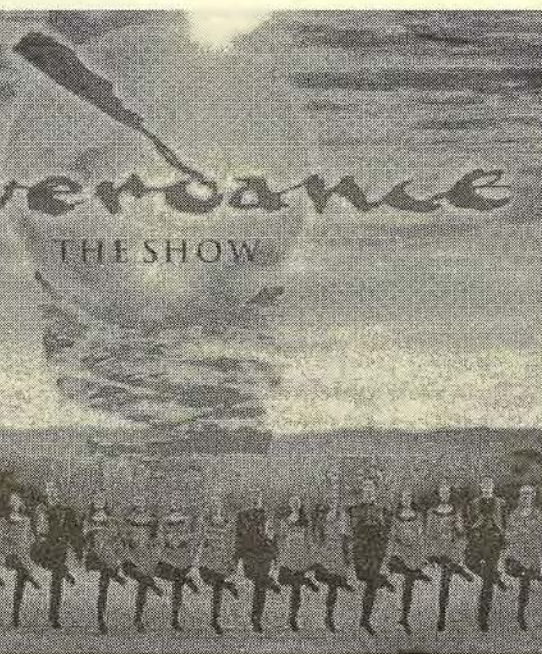
The first act of "Riverdance" demonstrated the nature of the ancient, original people of Ireland, the Celts. As the accompanying narration described, "The first peoples knew the

dance sequences was the "Thunderstorm" scene, which opened with strobe lights generating a lightning-effect. Male dancers, all dressed in black, took the stage, and pounded out a powerful step-dance. Their steps hit the floor with such strength, they produced the thunder's sound with their dancing. This scene signified how the early Irish felt about a thunderstorm: powerful, potent and beyond human control.

The second act focused mainly on Irish music and dance in other countries. The one which most Americans are familiar, the square dance, descends from formal Irish dances performed to traditional Irish music. The Riverdance company performed the square dance dressed in turn-of-the-century garb. This traditional Irish music was brought to the

United States by thousands of Irish immigrants, heading for a new and better life, many escaping the tragic Potato Famine that struck Ireland in the late 19th Century. One of the most enjoyable, and definitely one of the most amusing scenes, "Trading Taps," took place in the mid-20th century. One man, playing "the blues" entered the stage, and three other American men took the stage, from Latino and African American cultures. Next, three Irish men appeared, and each group showed off their best dance moves for the other, in this unspoken competition. It was funny because each group poked fun at the others' dances, as when the American group performed the Irish dancing with very rigid expressions, and dainty tap-dancing. The audience was roaring with laughter, and this act produced more applause than any other.

There were many amazing acts, but too numerous to recount. During the finale, each act performed a small piece from their performance and then all danced and sang at once, signifying their unity which spans culture and time. Even though this incredible show is no longer playing in New York, it is still playing elsewhere in the U.S. For the tour schedule, visit Riverdance.com for complete information. If you can't attend in person, I would try to get the video- I've heard that it is quite enjoyable as well.



world as a place of power. Their songs and dances and stories are negotiations with elemental powers." Some of the themes include "Thunderstorm," "Firedance" and "The Harvest." The music and dances therefore represent the early observing their natural world, and working with it to ensure a permanent place for their people.

The opening scene commenced with a solo flutist playing the main score of the show while wispy smoke swept onto the stage, establishing a mysterious atmosphere. The background for this scene, and the rest of the scenes, changed to correspond with its unique theme, which was created on a large movie-sized screen. This scene, entitled, "Reel Around the Sun," portrayed a golden light radiating from the screen. Male and female dancers emerged and began to dance, very slowly, to the Irish music. The music emanated from an orchestra in a pit, as well as an entirely separate one that was on the stage itself. The music played quicker and each slow step was danced faster and faster. It was incredible to see how the dancers tapped and stepped in full unison, never missing a beat. The steps appeared simple, but their order, discipline and grace render them impossible to regular people. Toward the end of the scene, the lead female dancer entered, and delivered a singular performance, sometimes kicking such high and light steps that she appeared to be suspended in mid-air.

One of the most powerful

An Opera Analysis

Madame Butterfly: Modern Day American Imperialism

By Shifra Bronstein

"Madame Butterfly" is not only a story about a specific group of individuals, but is also symbolic of the larger cultural conflicts between Americans and other nations. In this opera, a naval officer, B.F. Pinkerton, is stationed in a rural Japanese area around the turn of the 20th century, about to marry his young, 15-year old fiancée, Butterfly. The supposedly gallant Pinkerton, however, makes it clear to his friend, the American councilman, that though he is presently infatuated with Butterfly, he has no intentions of staying with her. He then drinks to the day when he will have "a true wedding with an American bride." The councilman disapproves of Pinkerton's plans, warning him that his uninhibited love life, "makes life amusing, but withers the heart." Despite this criticism, Pinkerton cannot be swayed.

Soon, Butterfly and her friends and family arrive for the wedding. Butterfly is obviously thrilled with Pinkerton, and believes that he will always remain her faithful husband. The councilman cringes at her naiveté, but cannot bring himself to tell her the truth. Before the wedding, Butterfly confides to Pinkerton that she has broken with her Japanese faith, and has resolved to be a good Christian woman. After the wedding, Butterfly's family and friends abandon her after they learn of her new religion. Butterfly, now completely bereft of any old ties aside from her loyal maid, believes that her husband will

compensate for the loss of her relatives and friends.

After a short time, however, Pinkerton is called to naval duty and leaves his Japanese home. Butterfly faithfully waits three years for him to return, and creates excuse after excuse for his long absence. Finally, the American councilman visits her and learns that she has had a son. The councilman informs Pinkerton, who soon arrives, now accompanied by his American bride. Both Pinkerton and Kate, Pinkerton's new bride, want to take Butterfly's child back to America so that the child can be provided with a better life. Butterfly, seeing Kate, understands the situation, her husband's betrayal, and is completely heartbroken. Privately, she vows she will commit suicide since she cannot bear to live without Pinkerton or the loss of her son. The maid understands what Butterfly will do, and sends Butterfly's son into the room, knowing that Butterfly will not kill herself in his presence. Butterfly, however, blindfolds her son and thrusts a knife into herself. At that moment, Pinkerton arrives at the door, and witnesses the horror he has brought upon Butterfly. He holds out his arms to Butterfly's son, and the curtain falls at this tragic conclusion.

The play contains several sociological commentaries. One interpretation of the opera is to dispel the myth of the great promise of American life for the poor foreign person. This myth is often completely shattered when it is revealed to be an illusion. How many countless immigrants were lured by the American Dream, only to set foot on American shores and be packed

into tenement houses, forever separated from their former homes and families? On a microcosmic level, Butterfly suffers the same fate. She is lured by the illusions that she has imposed upon Pinkerton - that she will be wealthy and freed from her low social class. Similarly, Butterfly is severed from her familiar relations by renouncing her old faith and adopting Pinkerton's, and she never rises from her foreigner social status. The American promise of "streets paved with gold" proves false, though Butterfly has never literally stepped on American soil.

Pinkerton is unfaithful, just as the American government failed to care for the immigrants. Forced into low-paying jobs without social or job security, many immigrants rarely saw the fruits of their labor, laying waste to the myth of the American Dream.

There were many other symbolic references to the immigrant's belief in the American Dream. When Butterfly's wedding procession began, it was humorous to see that Butterfly's hair was dressed in a traditional Japanese manner, but that she also had long ribbons of the American flag hanging nearly to her knees. The other women waved small American flags and had smaller flags in their hair as well. They all had great faith that opening their minds to the American way of life would bring nothing but goodness.

These symbols, as well as others, foreshadowed the falseness of the American Dream. After Pinkerton confides in the American councilman that he plans on abandoning Butterfly, he sings the first line of "G-d Bless America." At that moment, the audience is repulsed by the damage that America caused other nations. This is also illustrated in the first act, where there was an ever-present miniaturized version of an American fleet suspended from the ceiling beams. This American symbol,

looming over the marriage procession and initial love of Pinkerton and Butterfly, was representative of the fact that Pinkerton would soon board one of these ships and desert Butterfly.

Additionally, since the ships were warships, they foretold a price of death for those who had faith in such an American symbol, as Butterfly did. Even Butterfly's little boy, also indoctrinated with the greatness of America by his mother, plays with a toy American warship - signifying that he would be taken away from his mother in such a ship. It is also symbolic of the destructiveness of American influence, represented in the warship, which would claim the life of his mother. The little boy's separation from his mother and Japan also indicates how many immigrant children would turn from their ancestor's beliefs and embrace the American way of life, assimilating into American culture.

The symbols of American domination over other weaker countries, and the symbols implying the deceit of the American Dream for many immigrants are carried throughout the play. All American-influenced events in this story ends in tragedy, implying that the United States does not necessarily represent fairness and equality. It is a cautionary tale for those who believe in the all-encompassing superiority and power of America, a message for both U.S. citizens as well as starry-eyed immigrants aiming to create successful lives in the Land of Opportunity.



Pinkerton embraces Butterfly in a scene from the opera

Bon Appetit: A Restaurant Review Featuring Café Classico

By Adinah Wieder

Nestled between two other restaurants, Café Classico is located on a second floor, just above its dairy counterpart The Great American Health Bar. Located in a hectic business district, the restaurant sees its fair share of business lunches and lunch break crowds. Café Classico can be reached via staircase, and overlooks 57th street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. For convenience, there is a complete menu posted on a wall outside the restaurant.

Immediately upon entry, a waiter appeared, offering to seat us. The restaurant has many different seating venues, all of which foster different dining experiences. There are three different kinds of tables all to suite different personalities. After all, dining is not just about the cuisine, it is about the ambiance. Finding the perfect table to fit

your particular mood is very important. For those who need to see everyone who walks into the restaurant (we all know the type!), there are tables that are directly across from the main entrance. There are also a few spectacular tables by the window. These tables allow an excellent view of 57th street. For those guests who do not enjoy dining by a window or sitting in the thick of things, there is yet another table location. Tables are set up along the wall of the restaurant, and provide privacy, minus the window for those that do not enjoy the view.

Within seconds after being seated at the perfect table near the window, we received our menus. The waiter appeared every five seconds and asked in his accented English, "You ready to order?" However, I concluded that this was better than having to hunt the waiter down. My friend ordered a burger (thrilling, I know) and I ordered a slightly

more interesting Chicken Marsala served with mushrooms in wine sauce. The prices were definitely average for a meat restaurant. The burger was \$13.95 and the chicken was \$18.95. The menu did have a variety, but it was limited. There were fresh deli sandwiches, burgers, fish, pasta, chicken and of course a selection of victuals from the grill. The grill options included meat and chicken shish kabobs and various kinds of grilled chicken and veggies. The most expensive dish was ribs, priced at \$27.95. Considering the price of ribs at other restaurants, Café Classico is priced reasonably.

While I waited for my entrée to arrive, I conducted a little investigation. The restaurant does not require reservations for parties dining in small numbers. However, things did get a little hectic around dinnertime when many people began to arrive. There were only two waiters to

service all the guests. Despite the lack of staff, whatever staff they did have was very efficient. The decibel level in the restaurant never rose above a whisper. This was nice because I was able to conduct meaningful conversations. Yet, if you are one of those with a loud laugh, like me, you will be heard "like the shot heard around the world." Other diners were all very pleasant. It is much more of a laid-back kind of place. There was classical music playing ever so softly in the background, further enhancing the relaxed tone of the restaurant.

Now, let's get down to business: the entrees. They arrived within 25 minutes, which is average in terms of meat restaurants. The burger arrived with a huge side of fries (big shock there). The Chicken Marsala came with side dishes of flavored rice, rosemary potatoes, and the wine-sauce mushrooms. My friend said that the burger was delicious. However, I do feel that it

takes extreme talent to mess up a burger. As far as their fries go, they were super. Their light seasoning and crispy texture will please even the most discerning connoisseur of French fries. However, the chicken in my dish was slightly chewy, though the mushrooms in wine sauce and flavored rice were delicious. Being that the portions were quite large, I was sufficiently full upon completion of the meal. Unlike the Stern cafeteria, there was definitely no portion control here. It is a good thing that their entrees are filling because their dessert menu is sorely lacking. Three desserts, no matter how good they are, do not constitute a dessert menu.

If you would like to go out just to have a good meat meal, then this is the place to go. The food is very tasty and definitely satiates. I give this restaurant three stars (out of five). Stay tuned for next issue's Bon Appetit: A Restaurant Review.

UP AND COMING IN THE BIG APPLE

Tosca

March - April
Lincoln Center
The Metropolitan Opera
62nd and Columbus Ave.

An Evening of Romance with Jim Brickman

May 6, 8:00 PM
Carnegie Hall
Isaac Stern Auditorium
57th and 7th Ave

Diane Arbus Revelations

May 8th - May 30
Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 5th Ave. at 82nd St.

A Work in Progress: An Evening with Marc Forster

April 12th
MoMA: The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.

Our Great Garden: Nurturing Planet Earth

Sept. 26 - June 18th
The Jewish Museum
1109 5th Ave. at 92nd St.

Widespread Panic

April 14 - 16
Radio City Music Hall
50th and 6th Ave.

WYUR Appoints First Woman Manager

continued from page 13

there to be a place where students can go to have fun, and feel connected too. We're not in it for the ratings; we want the station to be a place where everyone can feel comfortable about expressing their opinions. We like to work with people to help them develop their talents and skills." In addition to being a place for all students to enjoy themselves, the WYUR staff prides itself on its teamwork and professional environment.

Tiffany Khalil, a DJ at WYUR, said that she enjoys working on the radio station, "because it is an outlet to express your feelings about life, and it is spontaneous because you never know what is going to happen on the air or who you are going to meet or who you're going to have the best conversation with." From exciting events like *shabbatonim* and on-the-air award shows, to music marathons and Thursday night *cholent* dinners, the WYUR team makes the station a fun and entertaining place.

Beginning next semester,

the WYUR staff plans to develop a larger and stronger PR team to focus on advertising for both the station and the individual shows. "Our ratings prove that it makes all the difference when you have a lot of advertising for your show," Levinson said.

The station's governing board is actively trying to balance the slightly disproportionate ratio of YC students to SCW students on staff. Currently 60 percent of student involvement comes from YC compared to 40 percent from Stern. "It is really for everyone," noted Levinson, "and believe me, you have something to say, it is like a bug, you get there and you're working off the air when all of a sudden you find yourself having a lot to say and starting your own talk show. Everyone sooner or later gets into the whole show thing."

All of those who are interested in additional information about the WYUR, please contact Rachel at rplevinson@gmail.com or visit WYUR's website at www.WYUR.org.



Singapore Symphony Orchestra Plays at Lincoln Center

Presenting Musical Stars Yo-Yo Ma
and Gil Shaham

By Shifra Bronstein

I had the opportunity to attend a wonderful performance at Lincoln Center featuring two celebrities of the classical music world: Yo-Yo Ma, a cellist, and Gil Shaham, an Israeli violinist. The Singapore Symphony Orchestra was one of the largest ones I've ever seen - made up of about 100 members - although not every musician played for each piece presented. The performance took place in the Avery Fisher Hall, a beautiful, if tightly packed theater. Indeed, the orchestra played to a full house and the theater was quite crowded. I saw very few empty seats in the balconies, and even fewer in the orchestra section. The evening's themes were both European and Asian, since the orchestra played Strauss, a German composer, as well as other Asian composers, such as Chen Yi and Chen Gang.

The first piece, "Don Juan," Op 20, was simply magnificent, even though I was craning my neck for the entire opening segment to see if Ma was amongst the performers. It turned out that he would not be present until the second piece, but I still thoroughly enjoyed the dramatic selection from Don Juan.

Even after the audience finished applauding for Don Juan, we all gave a standing ovation for Ma who had just walked onto the stage. For those of you who are not familiar with his life, Ma is a cellist who graduated from Harvard and has received multiple awards and recognitions for his popular music, including many Grammy Awards as well as the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize. More recently, you may have seen him play the cello at the Academy Awards on February 27th.

Besides for the piece that the orchestra played, Ma's presence in the center of the stage was a show unto itself. It was interesting to see how connected he felt with the piece of music the

orchestra was playing. Sometimes he would lean closely towards his instrument, his face intent on the music, and other times he smiled broadly, and swayed with the rhythm of the beat. Every so often when he was finished playing for a particular segment, Ma would finish his part by closing his eyes and drawing his cello's bow in a slow arc over his head, and leaning back in his seat with a look of pure exaltation on his face.

The piece itself, "Ballad, Dance, and Fantasy," was a combination of both Western and Asian music, characteristic of composer Chen Yi's style. This performance was an important night for this particular piece since the evening was its official New York premiere. This relatively new piece was first performed, led also by Yo-Yo Ma on the cello, just last year in March of 2004. Thus, it was fitting that Yo-Yo Ma played the cello again for this first NY performance. There were the three movements to the piece, all corresponding to themes of nature and the traditional Chinese village. The flute solos were some of my favorite moments - high pitched and pleasant with a particularly Chinese melody. Composer Yi describes "Dance on the Silk Road," the second movement, as, "The cello solo plays a virtuoso part representing the major dance role. The music continues on the solo cello part without a pause into the third movement, which is entitled, 'Fantasy for the Global Village.' The music is expressive and impassioned, and the spirit is high and encouraging."

At the end of the piece, the audience gave a prolonged applause where Ma embraced the conductor and the lead violinists. To complete the picture, Chin Yi, who was in the audience, came forward to shake hands with Ma and the conductor. The applause continued until Ma and the conductor were granted multiple curtain calls. Everyone could see that this

piece was given a triumphant reception in New York, and will probably continue to be received in such a manner for years to come.

The next piece, *The Butterfly Lovers*, by Chen Gang and He Zhanhao tells the traditional story of a young Chinese woman, Zhu Yingtai, who dresses like a boy to attend school. She becomes friendly with a young man, Liang Shanbo, and they enjoy each other's company, but Zhu never reveals her true identity to him. Zhu returns home to her father's summons to marry, and though quite feminist for her age, she still eventually agrees to marry the man her father chooses. Liang is so startled by the news of Zhu's true self and her engagement that he commits suicide, since he realizes that he loves her. Zhu sees Liang's grave on the day of her marriage and reaches for it, resolving not to marry for her entire life. At that moment, a miracle occurs, and Liang and Zhu become butterflies, free to be together for the rest of their days.

The music, and particularly that of the lead violinist, Shaham, who took standing role, reflected the themes of the story. The music was light and merry when describing Zhu and Liang's happy school days, but dark and ominous when Zhu is forced into an engagement. The music returned to its joyfulness when Zhu and Liang were joined as butterflies. This piece was especially interesting because of the story behind it - one could easily follow the story by listening to such expressive music.

The audience was so enraptured with the orchestra that the conductor, who was also affected by the charged atmosphere, presented two additional new encore pieces. This was something that I had never seen in all my other trips to Lincoln Center. It just goes to show that classical music can totally rock!

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FASHION

Israeli Designers Take the Stage for Charity

By Julie Ast

The Israel Humanitarian Foundation (IHF) hosted its first annual Fashion Gala on Wednesday, March 30 to raise money for underprivileged children and the elderly living in Israel. As one of Israel's top philanthropic supporters, IHF is involved in 130 projects in areas such as humanitarian aid, education, medical care/research, youth in need and the elderly.

Ironically, the event took place at Avalon at 47 west 20th street and 6th Ave, a church converted into a club. Prime Grill and Le Marais catered the kosher hors d'oeuvres.

The gala featured a runway show displaying collections by Israeli and Jewish designers. A majority of the makeup and hair crew was Israeli but most of the models were of other nationalities. Miri Zafrani modeled for three designers. Zafrani is originally from Tel Aviv but considers herself a native New Yorker.

Linda Shmidt, a reporter for the Fox Five News Channel, was Master of Ceremonies at the event. Ambassador Arye Mekel, Consul General of Israel, spoke as well, praising Israel's progress in military and technological



Miri Zafrani, above, doing her make-up before the show

advancements, and then added that Israel is a relatively young country and still needs help developing. "Israel is only as strong as you are," he remarked. "We need your help."

Designers included Isaac Mizrahi, Kaufman Franco, Randi Rahm, Velasco Couture, Galit Couture, Joseph Statkus, Irit Baniel, Hana K and Gottex. Issac Mizrahi was clearly the most well-known of the designers. After years in the fashion industry, Mizrahi entered a partnership with Target in 2003. In 2004, Bergdorf Goodman decided to sell Mizrahi's label in its American Couture Collection. Mizrahi grew up in Ocean Parkway, New Jersey where he attended a Jewish day school,

and as legend has it, fell into trouble for decorating his bible with fashion motifs.

Joseph Statkus is also a popular designer. In the past three months, Vogue, Elle and Bazaar have written profile stories on his clothes. His crochet dresses are feminine and comfortable to wear, and he has shown his products twice in the Paris Haute Couture.

The remainder of the designers were not as famous, but still quite impressive. Hana Lang and her husband Pierre created Hana K. Lang came to the U.S. after serving in the Israeli military and started her own outerwear collection. Randi Rahm is mostly known for her hand beaded and jewel creations, and Joan Rivers

wore one of her dresses to the Academy Awards this year.

Ken Kaufman and Issac Franco created Kaufman Franco. Many fashion writers describe their clothing as sophisticated and glamorous. Galit couture stood out amongst other designers because she displayed opulent dresses. While most designers featured eveningwear, Galit Galik, designer of Galit Couture, presented her bridal wear collection. Velasco Couture, also a bridal line, is exclusive to Barney's New York.

Another designer at the show was Gottex, a swim and beachwear company from Israel. Designer Gideon Oberson held a show at Olympus Fashion Week in February where he featured

his spring collection.

"We wanted to attract young people with something cool like a fashion show," said Regina Gottfried, the national executive director of IHF. "One of our main goal is to establish a young committee."

Gottfried could not estimate the amount of money the event generated, but a silent auction held before the runway show supplemented ticket sales, which ranged from \$100-\$405 per person. A hand-embroidered dress by Lourdes A. Libman, who designed Miss Universe contestants' gowns, had a starting bid of \$900. A Ralph Lauren shirt and sweater set had a starting bid of \$180.

The fashion show was IHF's first event. Many events will soon follow. On Thursday May 19, they are also hosting a food and wine tasting at Light located on 125 East 54th Street.

IHF has a Young Leadership Event Committee. The Committee consists of professionals between their 20's and 40's. They plan events year round. To join, call Danielle Scherman, director of special events or call 212- 683-5676.

SSSB Fashion Show Succeeds

continued from front page

well. Ten student models, who strolled down the runway to Jamaican music, used the fashion show as a unique opportunity to give back to the school. First-time model, Adina Orenstein, a SCW sophomore, described this experience as "very revolutionary for [her]. I am not a heels and makeup type of person so I enjoyed being dolled up. I felt very glamorous, like a super star." Orenstein found the clothing to be of excellent quality and great comfort, and was confident that the line would be popular with the paying audience.

The show, which ran for approximately an hour, featured both day and eveningwear including fabrics and styles as varied as knit jerseys and flounced skirts, floral, tweed suits, bright colors and lace. Rina Limor Designs supplied the jew-

elry to accompany the outfits. Rina Uziel, head designer of J.R. Gold Designs, is the artistic presence behind the Rina Limor line, which consists of bracelets, necklaces, earrings, pins and rings priced from 20 to 50 thousand dollars. Uziel describes her pieces as "funky as well as fashion forward." Uziel's interest in jewelry design took her to Italy, the geographical forefront of the fine jewelry market and the latest trends in fine jewelry. Her love of beads and pearls is apparent in her Italian-inspired designs aimed at "today's woman who desires a look with versatility, style and class."

The evening fundraiser concluded with refreshments and a raffle of two Teri Jon suits and a remarkable piece of Rina Limor jewelry. All the featured makeup, jewelry and clothing were also on sale to the interested audience. Chubak was happy with the

event and believed it to be a success despite small turnout. "I was hoping for more people, but it was nice," she commented. "Everyone seemed to have a good time, which is what matters and hopefully, we raised a lot of money for Sy Syms."

For more information, please contact:

Teri Jon Showroom
241 West 37th Street
2nd floor
New York, NY 10018
Tel: 212.389.0480
Fax: 212.3022726
The line is sold at Saks Fifth Avenue, Neiman Marcus, Bloomingdale's and specialty boutiques.

Rina Limor
www.rinalimor.com

Kaituz Bridal and Cosmetics
By appointment only:
718.544.8632



Left to right: Pink and Yellow tweed blazer and knit jersey skirt; white cotton suit with toule trim and floral applique; pink silk skirt with bow waisted lace blazer

Flea Markets in The City

With the summer season approaching, outdoor flea markets are an enjoyable way to uncover original, one-of-a-kind pieces with a vintage feel.

1. Flea Market, 374 Canal St., NYC, 10013, (212) 966-1772

2. SoHo Antique Fair & Collectibles Market

Broadway & Grand St., NYC, 10013, (212) 682-2000

3. St. Anthony's Flea Market, W. Houston St., NYC, 10012 (212) 722-4068

4. Little Red Schoolhouse Flea Market

6th Ave & Bleecker St., NYC, 10012, (212) 633-9868

5. P.S. 41 Flea Market, Greenwich Ave., NYC, (212) 722-4068

6. Antiques Market, 137 Ludlow St., NYC, 10002, (212) 475-5496

7. The Garage, 112 W. 25th St., NYC, 10001, (212) 243-5343

8. The New 26th St. Indoor

Antiques Fair, 122 W. 26th St. NYC, 10001, (212) 633-6010

9. The Annex Antiques Fair & Flea Market, W. 6th Ave. NYC, 10001, (212) 243-5343

10. I.S. 44 Indoor/Outdoor Flea Market, Columbus Ave. NYC, (212) 721-0900

11. Antiques, Flea, & Farmer's Markets at P.S. 183 E. 67th St., NYC, 10021, (212) 897-5992

12. Jan Hus Flea Market, 351 E. 74th St., NYC, 10021 (212) 535-5235

(taken from allny.com)

High Court Rules on Non-Orthodox Conversions—Again

By Sarah Matarasso

On Thursday, March 21st, Israel's High Court of Justice ruled that Conservative and Reform religious courts overseas could convert non-Jews living in Israel, who then could receive Israeli citizenship under the Law of Return* immediately following *aliya*. While *Haredi* (Ultra-Orthodox) parties are developing a strategy to pressure the court to nullify its decision, a Reform Movement official said his organization would present the High Court with a petition to pressure a ruling on whether non-Orthodox rabbis may convert non-Jews living legally in Israel. This would enable Reform converts to obtain Israeli citizenship based on the Law of Return as well. Perhaps more importantly, such a ruling would decide whether Israel considers Conservative and Reform conversions equal to Orthodox ones.

The court's decision primarily affects non-Jews living abroad who have undergone non-Orthodox conversions and are seeking to move to Israel immediately. Until now, Israel's policy was that such converts had to live in the community where they underwent the conversion for a year before they could move to Israel and obtain citizenship under the Law of Return.

The most recent ruling occurred about after 15 non-Jews applied to the Interior Ministry for citizenship under the Law of Return. They had been living in Israel legally and studying Judaism for a year in Conservative or Reform classes, and had subsequently undergone conversions abroad. However, the ministry denied their requests and these individuals decided to petition the High Court under the sponsorship of the Israel Religious Action Center and the World Union for Progressive Judaism.

The court has been dealing with such conversion decisions since 1989, when the court allowed non-Jews who had converted according to Conservative or Reform standards to immigrate to Israel under the Law of Return. In this latest ruling, the court

upheld the petition in a 7-4 vote which required the Interior Ministry to register the petitioners as Israeli citizens. The State's representative attorney, Yochi Gnessin, explained the guidelines pertaining to the ruling. "The State of Israel recognizes on an equal basis conversions conducted abroad by all streams recognized by Judaism, on condition that the conversion be conducted in a recognized Jewish community, by the religious body authorized to do so, and in accordance with accepted procedures and rules meant to guarantee the sincerity of the conversion."

The ruling has clearly angered Orthodox rabbis and leaders throughout the country. *Shas* party leader Eli Yishai described the decision as an "explosives belt that has blown up, causing an identity terrorist attack against the Jewish people." The main concern is obviously the *halakhic* issues and violations involved, as only Orthodox conversions are considered valid by Orthodox standards. Potential unions of Conservative converts with Israelis could yield problematic religious status for their children in Jewish law. Some people have expressed concern that many individuals seeking conversion are doing so only to receive absorption benefits as new immigrants to Israel.

This ruling is only a step in a process that began over 20 years ago. The Conservative and Reform movements will continue petitioning with the hopes that their conversions will eventually be recognized even if performed in Israel. However, the petitioning will not end with the issue of conversions. Eventually Conservative and Reform officials plan on beginning a new campaign demanding that marriages conducted by their rabbis—and not only those performed by ordained Orthodox officials—be recognized by the State of Israel.

* In general terms, the Law of Return refers to a law established on July 5, 1950 stating that every Jew has the right to come to Israel as an *oleh*; an *oleh's* visa will be granted to every Jew who wants to live in Israel.

Teach for Israel in Action

By Sarah Matarasso

As winter comes to a close, so too does the two-month training program for the twenty Teach for Israel fellows. After months of lectures and group meetings, the preparation and planning will now be implemented in various high schools across the country.

"It is one thing to sit around with a bunch of motivated and informed college students who are excited to plan these things; it is another thing to try and have the programs you spend hours working on play out the way you imagined they would," commented SCW sophomore and Teach for Israel Fellow Deborah Anstandig. Although she has participated in only two of the high school sessions so far, she is extremely pleased with the results as well as with the feedback she has received upon speaking with involved teenagers.

At a recent EIMATAI shabbaton run by the Max Stern Division for Communal Services (MSDCS), Anstandig was surprised to hear one of the high school participants mention that "she really wanted to be able to participate in Teach for Israel when she got to SCW." The source of the comment was a student who had not even participated in any of the Teach for Israel sessions. "I couldn't believe that Teach for Israel had become such a buzz in the community," said Anstandig.

For those who are not familiar with Teach for Israel, Menachem Menchel and Hindy Poupko, co-directors of Teach for Israel, stated that the program evolved from discussions with YU President Richard Joel about the need for high school education on issues affecting Israel. Its basic goal is to teach high school students about Israel through informal education and programming. Groups of five fellows are sent to each high school to pres-



ent the sessions, which the fellows develop themselves. This is a project of many organizations, including the YU Israel Club, MSDCS, the Board of Jewish Education and Yavneh Olami.

According to one Teach for Israel fellow who would prefer to remain anonymous, "the problem with Teach for Israel this year is that this is the first time the program has been run, and it has been hard to establish exactly what direction it should take." With twenty fellows and two coordinators, "it is only natural that every person has their own vision of where things should be going and what should be done. As far as next year goes, I would recommend that a more concrete plan be laid out in terms of what is to be accomplished."

Anstandig, on the other hand, believes that giving the fellows free reign and not pushing them in a specific direction was extremely important in this first year, especially when ideas needed to be tested. However, both participants believe that the program has great potential, which was proven by the success of the final product.

As of now, Frisch, HAFTR, Westchester, JEC, the Berman Hebrew Academy of Silver Spring and Stern Hebrew High School of Philadelphia have benefited from the Teach for Israel programming. Aaron Steinberg, YC junior class president and Teach for Israel fellow, was fascinated by the range of basic Israel knowledge of the high school

students who attended the sessions. "We walked into one school with a blank map of Israel," he said. "When asked to identify certain cities and regions, the 10th through 12th graders we worked with could name only a few of the major cities; they had no idea where the West Bank and Gaza were located." However, other students with whom he worked were knowledgeable when it came to countering the advanced pro-Palestinian arguments the fellows threw at them. "Not only were the kids passionate about what they were saying, but the arguments they made were correct and well-informed."

Anstandig was impressed by the fact that the students were willing and eager to sit through what could be considered tedious lecturing. She believes this because "they respect the fact that the information is coming from us. It is much easier for them to relate to us since we are only a few years older than them. They aren't always able to take their teachers as seriously."

With Houston, Atlantic City and Iowa yet to be visited, as well as some of the other high schools in the New York/New Jersey area, the fellows have much more work to do. The success of the program so far is the best indicator of its possibilities. It has certainly been a very positive start for a program with great potential to affect the lives of many Jewish students and future Israel advocates.

First-Ever Aliya Fair

By Sarah Matarasso

Some showed up for the free shwarma, but most students attending the first-ever YU Aliya Fair were there because they were interested. As YC sophomore David Wermuth commented, "It's a great way to get in touch with organizations that will facilitate the fulfillment of your dreams and to meet people with similar aspirations." The aliya fair, which took place on Tuesday evening, April 12th in Belfer Hall, was organized primarily by SCW junior Rachie

Jacobson who was chosen to serve as YU's "aliya ambassador."

This aliya ambassadorship initiative began this year and is headed by two organizations, namely Nefesh b'Nefesh and Yavneh Olami. Various college students from different universities including Columbia, Harvard, Brandeis, Penn and YU were selected as "ambassadors." They spent four days in late December participating in an intense training program in Israel, traveling on a chartered Nefesh b'Nefesh flight. The different ambassadors have returned to their various cam-

pus with the necessary tools that will enable them to run programming such as the Israel fair, which was the first large event resulting from this ambassadorship initiative. However, Dyonna Ginsburg, director of Yavneh Olami, did speak at SCW prior to this event.

Jacobson, who worked in close contact with Aharon Horowitz while organizing the event, mentioned that the fair was really put together by about ten people. "The idea is to provide resources and information for students interested in aliya in

continued on page 7