

The Yeshiva University OBSERVER

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Review of Liberal Arts Requirements Calls for Curriculum Changes

BY ESTHER BARUH

The Stern College for Women (SCW) Curriculum Review Committee is slated to resume discussions about prospective changes in the current general studies requirements of all SCW students after the Pesach break. The committee, currently on hiatus, is working on redesigning the structure of the graduate requirements so that the SCW model will be in sync with contemporary ideas of what a liberal arts education means. The intent of the committee is to "define the curriculum in such a way that it is goal-directed," explained Dean Karen Bacon, the Monique C. Katz Dean. These goals include improving writing skills, introducing current scientific concepts and increasing the

number of electives available. "This is happening in a lot of schools," pointed out Associate Dean Ethel Orlian. "The feeling is that in many cases the curriculum . . . in place has been in place for a while."

In order to better understand what a liberal arts education should accomplish, "we read a lot of articles on curriculum revision from schools across the nation," disclosed Dean Orlian. In addition, questionnaires about the strengths and weaknesses of the current curriculum were circulated to both the faculty and the student body in September 2005 and January 2006 respectively. Former Presidential Fellow, Aviva Needle collected the responses and tabulated the results.

This curriculum review is

part of Yeshiva University President Richard Joel's strategic planning process, which entails evaluating different aspects of the university, including facilities, faculty and the sizes of the undergraduate schools.

Dean Bacon described the eventual new structure of the curriculum as "more along [the lines of] themes." These themes include: encountering the international world, looking at the past, present and future, contemporary perspectives and problem solving. Restructuring the courses along these lines will help students understand the value in taking certain courses aside from just needing them to graduate. "We believe strongly that there is no such thing as a wasted course," stressed Dean Orlian. "Everything you learn goes into a

bank of knowledge."

The dual thrust of the committee is to give students more elective choices and more clarification of the purpose of a rounded liberal arts education. "The committee's emphasis is on the skills and knowledge that [graduating students] will need," explained Dean Orlian. One of the major motivations behind the restructuring is to improve writing skills which is an invaluable skill to possess for any career field.

To that end, one of the recommendations of the committee was to hire a faculty member who would serve as a Writing Across the Curriculum director. This person would be responsible for working with faculty members of every discipline to develop assignments that would improve

the writing and analytical skills of the student body. A search was conducted for this new hire, but the administration has not hired anybody yet.

"Another recommendation of the committee was to see if we can create for non-science majors a science course that's different from what we currently offer," said Dean Bacon. Rather than selecting only between biology, chemistry or physics, an interdisciplinary course that focused on current scientific issues, such as energy use, genetics and global warming would also be an option for students. The purpose of such a course is to "make students scientifically sophisticated about issues that are important for them as citizens," explained Dean

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Stern Hosts Student Council Elections

BY DEBORAH ANSTANDIG

Three hundred and seventy students came out to vote in the Student Council Elections held on Wednesday March 22, 2007. The student body voted for the officers of the Stern College for Women Student Council (SCWSC), Sy Syms School of Business Student Council (SSSBSC), the Torah Activities Council (TAC), and the class councils for the sophomore, junior, and senior classes. The newly elected student leaders for the 2007-2008 school year include Rena Wiesen (SCW '08), who ran unopposed, Michelle Laufer (SSSB '08), SSSBSC president, and Laura Shuman (SCW '08), TAC president. The student council

boards include a total of 26 positions. While 12 positions were competed for with at least one opponent, 14 positions were filled by students who ran unopposed.

This year's election was coordinated by Nava Billet (SCW '09), who helped orchestrate student volunteers to work at the voting table, prepared the chart of the candidates' biographies, and led the vote tabulating process. Unlike last year, elections were conducted by hand rather than by computer. To accommodate the greatest number of students while maintaining the integrity of the voting process, elections were held in 245 Lexington Avenue during the morning hours and in 215

Lexington in the afternoon. Billet hopes that next year there will be a greater number of students facilitating the voting process, from answering questions to giving instructions and identifying the voters on the class lists.

Billet, who worked at the tables for over six hours on Wednesday, said she was impressed with the number of people who came out to vote. "Many people took the voting process seriously, looking at the bios in order to learn more about the candidates," she observed. "Some did not choose to vote for every office," she said, "but came out only to support their friends."

University Dean of Students

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RCA and YU Join Forces to Discuss Intimacy

BY CHAYA CITRIN

Over 100 rabbis met together at Yeshiva University (YU) to attend a *yom ivun* (day of learning) entitled "Talking About Intimacy: The Rabbi's Role." Tzelem, an organization devoted to dealing with issues of sexuality in the Orthodox Jewish community, hosted the conference, which is the first of its kind. YU's Center for the Jewish Future (CJF) and the Rabbinical Council of America (RCA) cosponsored the event.

The conference provided rabbis with basic information about mental health and halakhic issues that concern intimacy. Dr. David Ribner, an expert sex therapist and member of Tzelem's

advisory board, spoke with the attending rabbis about their role in "Counseling Married Couples Regarding Issues of Intimacy." Noted *poskim* (halakhic authorities) and Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary Roshei Yeshiva Rabbi Yaacov Neuberger and Rabbi Mordechai Willig discussed the halakhic point of view regarding intimacy issues in marriage.

Tzelem was founded a year and a half ago by YU alumni Jennie Rosenfeld and Koby Frances. The pair submitted their idea for an organization with a mission of providing educational programming about intimacy and sexuality to Orthodox communities to a contest created by first

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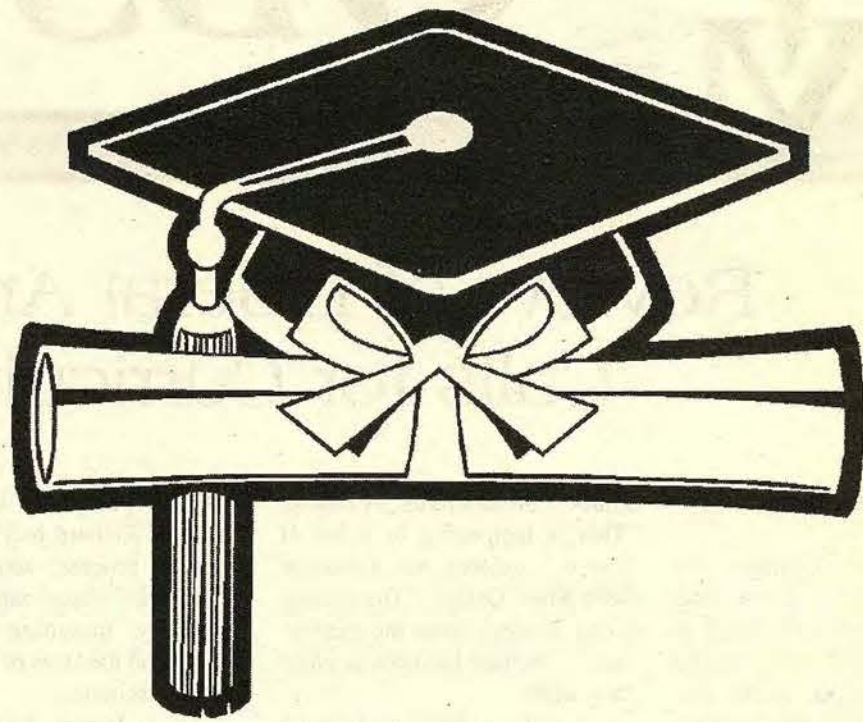
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COMMENCEMENT 2007

THURSDAY, MAY 17 • 11AM
RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL

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 FILE ASAP SO THAT YOU ARE ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND AND MARCH IN YOUR GRADUATION CEREMONY.



BY ADINAH WIEDER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

My Torah u-Madda search began at some point during high school. Coupled with my quest for Torah u-Madda was my desire to strengthen my personal connection with G-d and my need to find a religious niche for myself. I decided to attend Stern College for Women (SCW) because I thought that it would be a place conducive to finding that niche. Since I entered SCW, four years ago, my thoughts have matured as I realized that living a life of Torah u-Madda would never be one of those experiences where one has an epiphany and is then set for life. I would never have a strict set of rules with which I could measure every opportunity and decide to pursue it because it clearly matched with the concept of Torah u-Madda that I possess. I realized that living a life of Torah u-Madda is an ongoing pursuit because it is imperative that one constantly evaluate their courses of action and ensure that their behavior is synchronous to the lifestyle that they wish to be leading. I realized that just because there wasn't a niche that already existed did not mean that I could not create one. For the last few years myself, along with a number of women here, have been trying to create a forum for women to be able to learn, cultivate, and strengthen their personal relationship with G-d while at the same time attempting to create a niche for religious expression. During the last few weeks much has happened and I would like to share with the readership some of what has transpired on an institutional level as well as personally.

Recently, here was much discourse on creating an all women's *megilla* reading on campus as well as numerous discussions about various plans for the new *beit midrash*. This semester I also had the opportunity to take part in the Center for the Jewish Future's Women's Leadership Fellowship created by Jordanna Schoor. Numerous times after the lecturers left I would sit and discuss the future of women, specifically in the context of religious expression, with a friend of mind who also participated in the fellowship.

One of the resonating themes amidst these conversations was that there was a fear of appearing too much to the "left" and that this may impact enrollment and the general view that people have toward Yeshiva University. This approach greatly saddened me because instead of the requests for change being viewed as coming from a group of women desiring to create a religious niche that appears to be lacking on the Beren Campus, the requests were viewed as coming from a group of *avant-gardes*, who had no other purpose but to push their own agenda.

The dialogue reminded me of an aphorism that Nietzsche is renown for. Nietzsche says "God is dead." Many who misunderstand Nietzsche view this as ultimate sacrilege, which it

would be, except that is not what he meant. In Nietzsche's works it is clear that he struggles with mediocrity; he criticizes people for allowing themselves to stagnate as opposed to pushing boundaries to develop into the *ubermensch*, the super human. Commentaries on Nietzsche discuss that God is synonymous with religion and what Nietzsche means by God is dead is to throw away the fences that we create in the name of sanctifying G-d but have nothing what to do with G-d or religion they just prevent us from becoming *ubermenschen*.

This concept shocked me because I realized that it is, unfortunately, so very prevalent in the Jewish world. I am not saying that *yiddishkeit* and Torah should not dominate our lives because we all know that without it everything that we have means nothing and that we as human being are nothing. However, when I read Nietzsche I thought that we as Jews have the responsibility to become *ubermenschen*. It is incumbent upon us to strive to reach new heights because stagnation will only lead to our demise. *Yiddishkeit* should act as our guiding force in life; it should always be used as a compass to lead us in the right direction. Many a time we as Jews create barriers and don't accept opportunities which could enhance our *yiddishkeit* for fear that accepting these opportunities will harm our connection to G-d instead of bring us closer. Very often these fears have no basis and serve to create disunity.

It is with Nietzsche ringing in my ears that I sit and contemplate the current situation here at SCW. We are an institution with tremendous potential to foster numerous niches and to be the home for many different types of Jewish women. The task at hand is awesome and requires tremendous Divine Providence. Let us hope that in the years to come SCW will continue to strive to service all of the students that are in attendance and that with the help of G-d we succeed in creating an atmosphere that promotes dialogue and new ideas because without such an environment stagnation is imminent.



BY ALANA RUBENSTEIN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

I recently gave a speech in my Speech Communications class that touched upon issues of morality. In an attempt to keep the audience interested I interspersed my presentation with questions. I asked my fellow students, "Would anyone say that cheating is moral?" As expected, not one of the women in the class raised her hand.

The group of women I take speech with are diverse; we come from different countries, have different interests, and have different beliefs. Yet, we were all able to agree that cheating is immoral. Why were we able to find common ground on this issue? Because cheating IS immoral. It is not a matter of opinion, but a fact. Whether it be adultery, tax evasion, plagiarism or just a small peak at a friend's paper it is wrong.

As Jews living in America, we have an even greater obligation to refrain from cheating. The Torah explicitly tells us this is *assur* (not allowed) numerous times and in a number of places. We are told to not commit adultery, not to cheat with measurements, and not steal each others knowledge. We have all seen the signs around school - "In Hebrew it's called *genevat da'at* (stealing knowledge); in any language its wrong."

So why, at Stern College for Women (SCW), the premiere Modern Orthodox institution for Jewish women, is cheating as common an occurrence as getting engaged? I would even argue that people cheat as much as they get frozen yogurt for lunch. While I might be exaggerating a little, my analogies are not as far off as they should be; not by a long shot.

Students know which other students cheat. They make sure to get to class early and pick a seat in another area of the room to prevent being forced to share their knowledge. But why should this be necessary? How could one possibly justify using note cards, text messages and their peers to get ahead? Are we really that desperate for an A? Can we honestly say we don't know better?

The answer is no. I am confident in saying that every student at SCW knows cheating is wrong. Yet, we do it anyway. Why? Because we can. Because we have been doing it since stepping foot on the Beren Campus and no teacher or peer has ever gotten in our way of doing so. While I am not in any way excusing a cheater for doing something morally reprehensible within the Jewish community and society at large, the system is just as much at fault because the system currently in place on the Beren Campus is failing.

It is failing in part because it is non-existent. When students see other students cheating, there is little they can do but pretend they didn't see it or fume quietly to themselves, realizing that after studying for hours upon hours a classmate who did nothing else but divert her eyes to the right of her during the exam will get a similar grade. The only option is to keep what they saw to themselves.

Why don't they tell the professor? Because unfortunately, many of the professors at SCW are to blame; they are coconspirators in the cheating plots of their students, allowing them to get away with being dishonest and deceitful.

How so? Simple. Many professors within the university know when their

students are cheating. A friend of mine once told me how she was taking a final while the woman next to her was attempting to take the same final but with note cards on her lap. The teacher came over, told the student to put the cards away and proceeded to allow her to take the exam instead of taking the test away and failing the student. If students see their professors allowing students to get away with cheating why would they say something? If the teacher doesn't seem to care that students are dishonest why should the innocent bystander?

In most cases though, the teachers do not let the students cheat this blatantly. Rather, they just facilitate cheating in a number of ways. Many professors let students get out of exams too easily. In one science class the professor let half the class take the exam a week late because they weren't in the mood to take the test on the proscribed day. In addition, the teacher did not change the exam, putting those who took the test on time at a disadvantage. I know of students who were excused from finals because a bad breakup with their boyfriend left them too upset to study. They took the test a month later, giving them four more week of study time.

Even more common is when professors leave the room during exams. Another frequent event at SCW is when professors let their students bully them into extra points and answers. I have had classmates prod professors for answers and points, and after hearing question after question the professor gave them the answers or the points simply because their patience had run dry.

Cheating is wrong. If you didn't know before- now you do. It is wrong in any form, on so many levels. Yet, it goes on too frequently here at SCW. While I am not diminishing the immorality in this act, I can somewhat understand why some students at SCW engage in cheating. They do it because while the university plays lip service to cheating being wrong, they do nothing to enforce the rule. Students cheat and take advantage of their professors because why should they cheat themselves out of a few points or an extension when the rest of the class is getting them out of the professor. Why should someone put themselves at a disadvantage because they "feel bad" begging the professor for help or because they feel like a copout taking the test at a later date when they know their friend in the class would have no problem divulging the problems.

If SCW wants to be viewed as a serious academic institution both by its students and the outside world, they must begin by behaving like one. Standards need to be set. This problem needs to be nipped at the bud and demolished. Those students who witness cheating should have a place to report it and professors should be role models of morality and demand honesty and hard work from their students because if students know they can get away with passing off someone else's information on their own, they will.

The old adage goes: "Cheaters Never Prosper." Let's fight to leave "Except at SCW" out of the end of that sentence.

A Message From Our Presidents



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Amidst all the excitement of the new influx of student leaders and the ever-growing population of students yearning to get involved in campus activities, I encountered something different.

I recently discovered that not all students have the same desire and notion to get involved as others do. While I was thrilled by the great number of students running for board positions on the various student council boards, including the class boards, I recognized that some students just didn't care.

Recently in an elevator ride I shared with only two other students, something close to a miracle in Stern College for Women (SCW), I turned around to admire the abundant number of fliers in the elevator. I began to slowly walk around the elevator to read each flier in order to

I used to wonder why it is that people are so inspired by sites of sunsets and mountains and less so by people. Are not people the most complicated, complex beings? Is it not unbelievable that G-d packaged so many blood vessels, neurotransmitters, and organs so neatly and seamlessly to construct the human being? More than this, how are inanimate objects possibly more inspiring than people, who are not just complex physically but mentally, emotionally and spiritually as well?

I remember that one time in high school I felt inspired by the site of many people at *tefillah* (prayers). It was during the *amidah* (silent prayer). The crowd was serious and attentive and I remember feeling that same sunset feeling just because of the people's presence. I find this special feeling at *mincha* each week at Stern College for Women (SCW).

TAC's weekly *mincha* is an exciting new addition to religious life here on the Beren Campus. Organized by freshman Fran Tanner, the *minyan* is made by every man on campus who is available, from professors like Dr. Chris Buchenholz and Rabbi Moshe Kahn to adminis-

With *Pesach* quickly approaching and the academic year wrapping up, we are all able to reflect on a really busy and successful year at Sy Syms School of Business (SSSB). Although the end is near, I can promise you this year will not come to a close quietly. In the next couple of weeks please be on the lookout for information on the many upcoming events and speakers.

One of the most exciting things coming up soon is the SSSB dinner. If you haven't heard about this yet, keep reading because there is a lot of excitement about this upcoming event in the air. The Sy Syms School of Business Student Councils have joined together with SSSB alumni to create a dinner celebrating the 20th anniversary of SSSB.

obtain a glimpse of who the woman running was. As I stared at each woman's campaign ad I noticed one of the women in the elevator was also glancing at the fliers. To no one in particular she said, "I don't know why anyone would want to run for any one. Who cares?" I turned to the other woman in the elevator, who only glanced back at me, and then I thought about it. I may not know why every student has the desire to run, but I know why I wanted to run. I told her that some students want to get involved, have a desire to make a difference, and care to give back. And then the elevator stopped and she got out, leaving me to keep thinking.

Without student council, without class boards, and without clubs, what would SCW be? What would it be like to attend a college with no intellectual

trators like Mr. Sam Gayer. Originally an independent project each week with the need to ensure that 10 men would show to create the *minyan*, it has become a consistent and self-sufficient part of the weekly activities.

Mincha allows for these professors to really meet each other. It is such a pleasure seeing different scholars from different fields come together with the common goal of creating a prayer service for themselves and for us, the students.

Most amazing I think is to look around the room while waiting for the *sheliach tzibbur* (the one who leads the services) who will soon read his repetition of the *amidah*. Sometimes in *shul* that time is empty and lost. During our weekly *mincha minyanim* I have noticed many women looking around at each other happily and excitedly, beaming to be part of this community. We're all happy to see each other at *mincha* because the same 50-60 women come each week to pray together. "The same" "very different" women. There are the women that wake up an hour or two earlier each morning to attend *shachrit* services at Congregation Adereth El, women

The student awards ceremony, honoring the 2007 student award recipients, will take place at the beginning of the dinner. The dinner will be honoring the schools founding leaders including Sy Syms, Marcy Syms, and the Syms family, as well as Hal H. Beretz, Michael Schiff, and the founding faculty members of the school. It will also honor two members of the original graduating class, Roanna (Bienstock) Pascher and Jonathan Nierenberg.

We are also excited to announce that the special guest speaker will be Mitt Romney, the former governor of the state of Massachusetts, a 2008 presidential candidate, and the founder of Bain Capital.

Along with the students, there will be many alumni and

speeches given, without off campus events and without any programs for which there was ever a sign hung?

To those students who have no desire to get involved in anything not related to their academics, I ask you to think a minute. It is virtually impossible to spend four years in college not participating in any event or activity orchestrated by a council, club, or board. Although you may not have an interest in being the one to plan and coordinate these wonderful events, you do participate in them and they do affect you and your college experience. You may not know why these selected students choose to get involved, but each and every one of them has a different reason and we should all be thankful for any and all student involvement.

who are excited to have a structured prayer service, even if just once a week, and women who would not pray the afternoon services if the *mincha minyan* weren't available. She used to pray all the time in high school, she told me, since there was a *minyan* that was easy to join; without a *mincha minyan* at SCW she hadn't gotten into the habit of praying *mincha*. So many different women come to *minyan*: the GPATS student, the administrators, the students from different majors and countries, so many women who are all really the same in so many ways. So many special people gathering together to pray to G-d just for these 10 minutes once a week at the TAC *mincha minyan*; that's inspiring.

Many many thanks to Fran, the faculty members, administrators and to the students for forming and participating in the *minyan* weekly. If you're interested in making sure this *mincha minyan* stays up for next year, please email me, and we'll work together with Fran to plan for next year and maybe even expand *mincha*!

business leaders in attendance. This dinner will provide tremendous networking opportunities for all those who attend. It will be a chance to celebrate the past, present, and future of our school. This dinner is coming after a full year of exciting SSSB events, and promises to be the biggest and most thrilling affair yet.

We are excitedly looking forward to this dinner. It will take place on April 26th at Gotham Hall. Don't miss the chance to join together with us to celebrate all the exciting components of our school. Check your mailboxes for the forthcoming invitation. Don't forget to RSVP because space is limited and I promise that you do not want to miss out on this experience.

OPINIONS

The Yeshiva University

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Religious Disservice

BY AVIVA STERN

Over the past few months at Stern College for Women (SCW), my religious needs have been met with great disappointment. In some ways, these needs were better met at Brandeis University, where I began my college education, than they are here. The serious problem of alienating both current and prospective SCW students by not meeting their religious needs and expectations must be addressed. On an institutional level, estranging students and prospective students is internally harmful. On a personal level, I am deeply hurt and disappointed that my school, which does many things to make me proud, has failed me in this respect.

My Jewish (Orthodox) experience at Brandeis was extremely positive. The structure which the Brandeis Orthodox Organization (the Orthodox group within Hillel) provided for a committed Modern Orthodox young woman returning from an intense year of Torah study in Israel was very strong, and it provided me with a very positive experience. Granted, there are many ritualistic advantages Brandeis has over SCW due to it being a coed environment. *Minyanim* are built in,

and though I hate to say this, there is a different feel to a *beit midrash* (partially) occupied by men. SCW has certainly provided me with things which Brandeis did not, such as the intense daily *gemara shiur*, but it can't stop there. Circumstance does not excuse SCW from making every possible attempt to meet all the religious needs of its diverse student body. SCW still falls short of where it could be, and where it needs to be.

Yeshiva University (YU) President Richard Joel speaks of a thousand more YU undergraduates in the coming years. If SCW hopes to attract these large quantities of students, it must be willing to cater to everyone. Why was SCW never suggested to me as a viable option by my college advisor at Ramaz? Why did less than half of my class at Midreshet Lindenbaum choose SCW, and that same number of women choose Barnard College instead? Why were there about 20 women in my freshman class at Brandeis who had spent the previous year in Israel? Why were they not at SCW? The answer is simple: SCW does not offer the type of religious experience that these women received in high school, Israel, and wish to continue in

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To Be a Leader

BY JAIMIE FOGEL

Since the dust has settled over elections week and the new leaders for the upcoming school year have been chosen, I have been thinking about the concept of Jewish leadership. Not just Jewish leadership in the usual sense of community rabbis and the (often) male presidents of organizations, but about female leaders. The concept of having women in the spotlight has been an issue since the Torah was wise enough to come up with the concept of *tzniut* (modesty) and the idea of "*kol kevudah bat melech penimah*," - that all the honor of a daughter of the King (i.e. Hashem) is within. This quote from Psalms 45:14 has often been misused as a mantra of modest, female behavior since the moment it left David's lips. People often believe it suggests that a woman should remain inside and shy away from public roles, interpreting the term "*penimah*" in the physical sense. But when looked at more deeply, it is clear that the phrase has much grander spiritual implications. It teaches us that a woman, who has the prominent title of being the daughter of the King, is supposed to be valued for what she possesses inside. It is her essence and inner strengths, not her physical

appeal and beauty, which enable her to impact the world. When the statement is then reexamined, it no longer seems to discuss a woman's physical presence in the public realm. Rather, it demands that a woman value herself for the potential she possesses and that she use those strengths, wherever they might be needed, in the most effective and of course, modest way possible.

The issues I wish to raise in the ensuing lines are in no way meant as a galvanizing tirade for a new resurgence of female rabbis, or a call for a rise in the percentage of female synagogue directors and presidents. Not in the least bit. I'm a big fan of tradition, high *mechitzot* (physical partitions separating men and women) and normative halakha. But I do believe that we have entered an age where *women leading women* has become a fundamental role which is not being adequately filled. Stern College for Women (SCW) is the radiating center of the Orthodox Woman's future. Everyday women are being educated as never before and learning about themselves both inside the classroom and particularly outside of it; programs are created to encourage participation in com-

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The Complexity of the Jewish Women's Community at SCW

BY DEBORAH ANSTANDIG

Who am I? I am a 22-year-old Jewish woman; an outgoing senior headed to Israel to pursue a master's degree. Flashback four years ago: I was studying at Michlelet Mevaseret Yerushalayim unsure of where to attend college. University of Michigan, a school close to home, was certainly a viable option. It has a thriving Jewish community—not quite like New York, but the campus offers a daily Orthodox *minyan*, a full kosher meal plan, and multiple options for religious learning and expression.

I recall my initial hesitation in making the decision to attend Stern College for Women (SCW). Enough people asked me whether I was planning on acquiring an "MRS" degree while in attendance. I remember being offended at their suggestion that SCW was a waiting pad for marriage;

the insinuation that students at SCW do not embark upon the process of academic pursuit, but rather that they are famous for the pursuit of a husband disturbed me.

Despite these comments, I chose SCW out of idealism. I wanted to be a part of an observant Jewish community. I craved the opportunity to continue a serious Judaic studies education while discovering liberal arts in the social framework of a halakhic community of passionate and contemplative people. I believed that attending the premier Jewish women's college would offer me that opportunity.

As I complete my final semester, I look back at my experiences in building a community. I believe that we, the women of SCW, must consider what we stand for as the embodiment of this college and where we are going. What is the nature of our community at SCW? What

should it be?

We are a community of *learners*. We form units through the shared experiences of pig dissections, speech presentations, *chavrutot* (learning partners), and essay writing. We are a community of *doers*. We protest at the United Nations, participate in *chesed* activities throughout New York, and engage in programs to touch the lives of high school students, fellow Jews, and people across the globe. We are a community of *celebrators*. *Chanukah* and *Purim chagigot* bring us together in food, dance, and song. At times, we are a community of *holiday observers*. Who can forget the experience of sitting in the sweltering front lounge of Brookdale Residence Hall trying to identify her own glowing candles amidst the hundreds of lights?

Creating a community of women between the ages of 18 and 22 is challenging. Creating

one whose foundation is Torah is even more challenging. One particular question relates to our ability to define ourselves as women who come together in prayer and religious rituals. Recently, two opportunities have sparked much discussion about these issues. They include the weekly Wednesday Mincha *Minyan* on campus, and the discussion about a women's *megillah* reading which was ultimately sponsored by the Torah Activities Council (TAC) but took place off campus.

I recall my friend, Shoshana Fruchter (SCW '07), attempting to organize a *minyan* our first year at SCW. She approached Rabbi Kanarfogel, who explained that she was not the first student to offer this suggestion. It was not until this year, however, when Fruchter became TAC President, that the push for a *minyan*

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Staff Editorial

Poor Voter Turnout and Lack of Candidate Competition Has Serious Implications

This past week, the undergraduate women on the Beren Campus elected their student leaders for the 2007-2008 academic year. We were disappointed by both the meager voter turnout as well as by the limited roster of candidates. Only a third of undergraduates cast their votes in the student council elections, while 14 of the 26 races for positions on Stern College for Women Student Council (SCWSC), Torah Activities Council, Sy Syms School of Business Student Council, and the individual class boards were uncontested. Though the dearth of contenders does not in any way implicate the victors, it should perturb each and every student that only one woman ran for SCWSC president. The election turnout and results once again highlights the disturbing sense of apathy that pervades our campus.

Elections of any democratic society serve as a mechanism for individuals to effect change. It is no different at the

collegiate level. Student leadership, though a tremendous responsibility, is also a valuable privilege, allowing the undergraduate women to articulate their visions for the future course of Stern College for Women (SCW) and implement them accordingly. Even if students do not take initiative in running for actual positions, they should at least demonstrate some interest in selecting those who do.

We need to have a stake in the goings-on of our institution and to seeing our school improve and progress. When we fail to vote in council elections, we are sending a message to both our own student leaders and university administration; namely, that we just do not care. With such apathy, how can anyone expect to see advancements on the Beren Campus? Virtually no pressure is placed on those with decision-making authority to work harder for the betterment of SCW, which is a course we must always pursue, no matter how many dormitory lobbies we reno-

vate.

All of us have issues which we are passionate about. Let the welfare of our own campus be one of them. A small women's liberal arts college like SCW has no shortage of opportunities for expression and involvement. It is a horrible shame when we fail to maximize those opportunities and it is we who will lose out in the long run from such apathy. If we want this university to address our concerns seriously, we must do our share to show that we care about those very concerns. At the bare minimum, it requires each of us to cast a ballot in an annual student council election.

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POINT-COUNTERPOINT

Midtown or Beyond:
Where's the Best Place for the Beren Campus

BY SHOSHANA FRUCHTER
AND
ESTHER GENUTH

Take a walk down 34th Street and gaze up at the looming tip of the Empire State Building. Better yet, stroll northwards to Bryant Park and enjoy an open grassy space in the crowded metropolis of Manhattan. A midtown campus is preferential in that whichever direction one walks they are guaranteed to find a historical, cultural or exciting new venture.

While there are disadvantages to living on urban campuses, the benefits of living in an exciting, diverse, and busy area outweigh potential negatives. Living in midtown Manhattan provides a student with unlimited academic learning experiences as they are moments away from some of the most impressive and renowned museums and libraries in the world.

Manhattan also affords students with the ability to easily experience learning outside the traditional classroom setting. Stern College for Women (SCW), for example, offers an architecture class in which almost every Friday is spent at a different location admiring and learning about skyscrapers and urban designs.

Midtown Manhattan also provides the perfect location for obtaining an internship in various disciplines. Large and prestigious firms,

companies, and hospitals are located blocks away from the SCW campus, providing a convenient location with little travel for students with busy schedules. There are also a host of cultural events and opportunities every day at various surrounding museums and art galleries.

Whether one wishes to be a part of the constant energy and beat of Manhattan or take advantage of the academic and cultural opportunities, midtown is a perfect location in which to spend one's college years.

Stern College for Women (SCW) should move out of Midtown.

SCW offers observant Jewish women a unique learning environment for both secular and Judaic studies. It strives to cultivate an atmosphere of learning, dialogue, and growth. Living in midtown Manhattan is not relevant to this goal, is extremely expensive, and highly impractical. It does not cultivate stronger academics at SCW and SCW should consider moving out.

If you're reading this and thinking this writer is naïve and ignorant to the hundreds of jobs and internships available within walking distance, the amazing shopping just down the block and the great parties which take place nightly even closer, think about that for a minute. What is the goal of this undergraduate school for women? It is not, I hope, to distract students from their studies as much as possible. Regarding the shopping and drinking, even if that is the thought of many SCW students, is that the culture the Yeshiva University (YU) administration is sustaining? Encouraging?

While jobs and internships are valuable opportunities for college students to have, they would be just as valuable if students traveled 20 minutes to get to them and they're not worth all the money it costs SCW to live in midtown.

Not only is the property value so high here in Murray Hill that it'd probably be more equitable for SCW to rent its buildings out and move to say Washington Heights, Teaneck or Riverdale, SCW's location also inhibits it from developing into the vibrant academic institution

it should be. Yes, we have classrooms and libraries (though these are not much to brag about), but to be a great place of learning SCW needs a space for learning.

An academic institution which has space for learning would quickly develop and naturally extend into a dynamic community. If SCW relocated to an affordable neighborhood recent graduates wishing to stay connected to their alma mater would live near the college. Professors would join. A dynamic group of people who feel connected to an academic center would create a strong community. Sound familiar? The reason the Wilf Campus practically includes most of Washington Heights, from Lake Como Pizza to Mt. Sinai Jewish Center of Washington Heights, is not a mystery. SCW's position in the observant community of the greater New York area is a very powerful one. The fact that it is located in midtown disables it from growing into the strong and beautiful institution it can be. It's time to move.

While the idea of an urban campus is a lofty one, it can be achieved, but not in midtown. Though construction is underway on the Beren Campus, I can't help but think that having aesthetically pleasing, state-of-the-art buildings in one of the most posh neighborhoods in the world serve as a centerpiece for YU is a nice idea, but not at the expense of the SCW community.

YU vs. NYU: Midtown Education Trumps the Village

BY REBECCA MARMOR

Ever since I arrived at Stern College for Women (SCW) last spring, I've gotten the same question from my fellow students: How does SCW compare to New York University (NYU)? I usually laugh and respond, "You don't know how good you've got it." But then, people always press for a more direct answer. My answer is always the same: SCW is unique amongst academic institutions in that it is a place that sincerely cares for its students. Although the traditional purpose of a college newspaper is to provide a forum for students to voice their malcontent and displeasure with their school, if you'll allow me to deviate from that purpose for a moment, I'll try to provide you with my answer to the question of why I know that SCW is the best place to be a student.

The small size of SCW is an incredible asset to students. Freshman biology at NYU has no fewer than 500 students. Going to a lecture, I'm told by friends, is the equivalent of watching TV. There is no back-and-forth between professors and students. When I first arrived at SCW, I was shocked at the amount of active participation that occurs during lectures. Students here are not afraid to ask questions, and push until they get answers. This benefits everyone; professors know when they're not being clear, students who ask practice articulating themselves, and other students get something clarified they probably also hadn't understood completely.

I was recently reminded of this during an MCAT preparation class. The teacher was talking about something which was unclear to me. Unashamed (thanks to my time here), I raised my hand and asked my question. During break, a fellow student came up to me and thanked me for asking a question which she also had, but was too intimidated to ask. SCW is a place where young women are encouraged to develop their critical thinking skills and demonstrate them not just on papers and exams, but during every class meeting.

The professors at SCW are the ones who set the tone for interactive learning. Our professors push us to come to recitation sessions prepared with questions, work on our own in laboratories and email them with questions at any hour of the day (or night). Professors at SCW are much more than teachers in the traditional sense. True, they are skilled at presenting subject matter clearly and have undying passions for their disciplines. But they also teach in a much more subtle way. They are role models for their students, in both an academic and personal sense. The faculty here is incredibly gener-

ous; throughout my time here I have had no fewer than four professors make general announcements at the end of the term telling students it would be their privilege to write letters of recommendation.

Science professors are receptive to students' offers to assist with research; often this means the professor's work progresses at a slower pace. Unlike in many laboratories where students will be trained in one technique and become highly proficient in that technique, professors here strive to introduce students to all aspects of their research. This makes students more "marketable" when they graduate and makes them feel like they are really contributing to the professor's work. Professors push students here, accepting nothing less than their best work. They take the time to learn about the unique strengths of each student.

There are two other aspects to the SCW experience that I'd like to address briefly. SCW is a community of religious young women, each one facing similar concerns in the consideration of academic and professional paths. Although it is very reassuring to be in an institution that is aware of many of these concerns (here, you'll never have to explain to your advisor why applying to a "safety" graduate program in Wisconsin is just not an option), the real reassurance comes from being part of an inspiring group where everyone is facing similar issues. There is a collaborative spirit which pervades this college.

Finally, but perhaps most importantly, is the constant awareness of SCW's place as a religious institution. *Torah u-Madda* is not some phrase written in stone on an old building uptown. Rather, it's a way of life. My studies here were not compartmentalized; biology professors speak of the Tanach and rebbeim speak of biology. To have the opportunity to spend three years in such an environment is amazing. SCW is the best place to be a student. With our peers, faculty, and dual curriculum education supporting us there is nothing we cannot accomplish. I will be forever grateful that I've had the opportunity to study here.

BY GILA KLETENIK

It seems like everyone is running for president these days. For those of us who have yet to declare our candidacy, we make due by simply talking about the candidates — the more we talk about them the more we can compensate for not running ourselves. We think that it's our civic duty to find out everything about all the candidates, be it their grades in elementary school or colorful tales of their failed marriages. This is what it means to live in a democracy. The minute the politician delivers his or her expertly crafted declaration of candidacy the pollsters are ready with a fresh script of questions to get a sense of where the electorate stands on this new candidate. With each new candidate comes a specially crafted question that will assign them a single defining characteristic which will stick with them throughout the election — the woman, the African American or the man over 72.

A recent USA Today Gallup Poll is the perfect example of how pollsters and the media pin candidates down to a single defining characteristic. Respondents were asked how willing they would be to vote for a generally well qualified presidential candidate with one of the following characteristics: 94% of respondents were willing to vote for a black (Barack Obama), 88% were willing to vote for a woman (Hillary Clinton) and only 72% willing to vote for a Mormon (Mitt Romney).

While this poll is revealing on many fronts, what is most surprising is Romney. The

Republican governor of Massachusetts who seems to be unable to get elected due to his religion ought to raise more than one eyebrow. Why are people so uneasy about Mormonism? Technically known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Mormonism not only has a reputation for secrecy, but it also has some uncomfortable practices such as polygamy and zealous evangelism. Not to mention a traditionally racist set of policies, barring non whites from the priesthood until 1978. And yet, that a Mormon, Harry Reid, is the Senate Majority Leader does prove that Mormons do stand a chance in terms of national leadership. Still, while this poll does tell us something about the way that Americans feel about Mormonism, it tells us more about the way they feel about religion and its role in government. While a candidate's preferred toothpaste may not be of particular relevancy to the presidency, is religion relevant, and if so, how relevant?

From a constitutional standpoint it seems that religion should be of no relevance whatsoever. Article VI Section 3 of the United States Constitution states that "no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States." Not only should religion not be a consideration for office, but politicians' strong religious preferences might in fact lead them to enact policies congruent with their own beliefs, thereby threatening the hallowed separation of religion and state. A recent war motivated by convictions of carrying out God's will

comes to mind. Not to mention concerted efforts to ban abortion, gay marriage and stem cell research.

History sufficiently evidences the dangers in a union between religion and state and the Constitution stands emphatically against it. Nevertheless, the American people haven't gotten the message. Instead, they want a president just like them. They want someone who will sit down and have a beer with them. But, they won't have a beer with someone whose skin isn't as light as theirs, they won't have a beer with someone whose testosterone count is lower than theirs and they certainly won't have a beer with someone whose conception of the Trinity isn't quite like theirs. Suddenly, our Founding Fathers are looking increasingly more progressive than their 21st century descendants.

When will we realize that candidates' personal beliefs in God are far less relevant to the job than say their voting record? It's about time we prioritize on the issues we judge candidates on. We have to push the candidates to spell out their real positions on issues and their proposed solutions to them. The more we focus on the irrelevant, the more we encourage candidates to shy away from showing their true colors. Unless we are ready to endure another term of reckless behavior, its time we demand debate on issues of consequence. Its time we poll the public on whether they would vote for candidates because of a specific policy they embrace and not because of the perception of God that they hold.

In God We Trust But Separation is a Must

What Gets Single People Out of Bed in the Morning?

Due to the personal nature of this article, the writer, a SCW alumna, wishes to remain anonymous.

Having accumulated my fare share of frequent flier miles along the circuitous route of *shidduch*-dating, I feel as though I've morphed into a Jewish version of Carrie Bradshaw. After all the Saturday nights at the Marriott, the Sunday afternoons traipsing through Bryant Park and the weeknights of waiting on the corner of 33rd Street and Park Avenue, I can't help but feel a little worse for the wear. Philosophizing about the meaning of life and love seems the most comfortable place to wallow.

But let's face it- I'm not Carrie Bradshaw; I'm not blonde or addicted to Cosmopolitans, and my ruminations about dating do not revolve around sex

(although in some cases they do concern the tension induced by the lack-of-sex in the Orthodox Jewish community). But I sense a sort of kindred spirit in that overly reflective, self-indulgent manner that engulfs single women, regardless of religion, age, or hair color. We've all been there, or are still there- except for that minority that has found their *bashert* on their first date and lives happily ever after.

To us still in the singles pool (seems slightly polluted, doesn't it?), that minority can seem like an overwhelming majority. But good Jewish girls and boys don't get jealous when a close friend gets engaged; we get impossibly ecstatic at the prospect of another *BNB* "Y and we abuse the function of exclamation points on OnlySimchas-!!!

But come on. Behind the mask of a punctuation nightmare remains that little voice inside

our heads, that nagging, haunting voice that asks- when is it my turn?

Judaism has an answer to this question, to this merciless, hammering mantra of doubt. The answer is what you would typically expect: belief. Not only belief in G-d, but in Love. In Judaism, we are indoctrinated in the belief in Love from youth. When I was in fourth grade my teacher taught (in that infuriatingly simplistic way that elementary school teachers have of reciting profound homiletic literature) that 40 days before a fetus is born, a booming voice announces in heaven, "The daughter of so-and-so will marry the son of so-and-so."

In fourth grade, it's a nice story. Nice, but meaningless. Its significance only becomes apparent as you get older, as you return

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NEWS

Academic Advisement
Upgrades to the Web

BY YAFFI SPODEK

Anyone who has been to the Department of Academic Advisement this year will definitely have noticed the physical enhancements it has undergone. With brand new offices on the 14th floor of 205 Lexington Avenue, the department now has a larger and more comfortable office space in which to meet with students. To complement these physical improvements, the Department of Academic Advisement has also been working diligently to upgrade their level of service to the students of Stern College for Women (SCW).

"We are a department with a strong commitment to providing the best advisement to students, and we are constantly thinking of new ways in which to serve the students," said Ms. Miriam Schechter, director of the Department of Academic Advisement. The academic advising staff has steadily been growing, and it now includes three full-time advisors, while in previous years there were less people working in full time positions. In addition to Schechter, the department also employs Ms. Rochelle Mogilner who joined

the staff in 2000, and Dr. Gail Gumora, who was hired in 2004.

Recently, they attended a conference sponsored by the National Association of Academic Advising, where educators and advisors from all over the country convened to discuss different topics pertaining to academic advising. "It was a great opportunity to network with other academic advisors," said Schechter. "When we speak with the advisors from other universities, we learn tips on how to improve our current system of advising and new approaches to take when working with students."

"We have come to view the relationship between ourselves and the students as that of a teacher to a student," she explained. "The students are the learners and we as the academic advisors are their teachers. We want to help students to become good learners who learn from their academic experiences."

To ensure that their goals become a reality, the advisors have been meeting frequently to discuss the best ways to "adopt and adapt different ideas" on how to progress, said Schechter. One new program that was recently

introduced has been the study clinic. Run by Dr. Gumora, the purpose of the clinic she said is "to help students maximize their learning and studying strategies in a particular course...by giving them strategies on how to read more efficiently and take better notes."

"The study clinic is a place where any student, not just those that are struggling, can come to tweak their studying and note-taking habits," added Schechter.

"We want to help students become efficient learners," explained Dr. Gumora. "By addressing key issues such as study strategies, motivation, and text anxiety, we help students succeed in their classes." In addition to having personal one-on-one meetings with Dr. Gumora, students can also contact her at any time via the online forum that is set up on the SCW website.

By employing several more people to join the academic advising staff, the department is working on providing more specialized advisement for students interested in a specific field of study. "We are hiring someone for next year specifically to do pre-law advising," confirmed

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CJf Creates All
Women's Kollel

BY CHANIE DINERMAN

The Center for the Jewish Future (CJF) is launching its first all women's kollel in Teaneck, New Jersey this upcoming summer. The program was created as a part of the larger CJF kollel initiative which runs programs in communities and day schools throughout North America during the school year and the summer months. The

"community kollels" are designed to allow members of the kollels to engage in a "real give and take with the community," Aliza Abrams, CJF

coordinator, explained. "It's not just the Yeshiva University (YU) kollel in middle of lets say, Atlanta, Georgia but it's a community where people can come in and feel like its really part of their community."

The all women's kollel was initiated as a result of the joint interest of the CJF, the Teaneck community and the Graduate Program for Advanced Talmudic Studies under the direction of

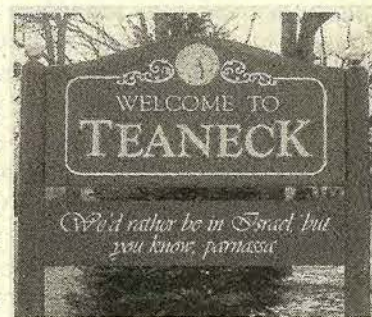
Rabbi Shmuel Hain. Participants will be responsible for their own housing and transportation to and from the *beit midrash*. There will be two programs conducted daily. The morning program will run from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Women will have the option of choosing a class in Talmud taught by Rabbi Hain or a course in halakha taught by Elana Stein. The afternoon is designed for

extensive Tanakh study. In the later afternoon, the kollel members will be available to set up additional *chavrutas* with members of the

community and run special programming for the youth and older residents of the Teaneck area.

For many who have busy schedules throughout the year, the summer is a great time to focus on learning and exploring Jewish texts in a more serious manner. The kollels provide a friendly place within the community synagogue where people feel comfortable to go and learn

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Yeshiva University Administration
Considers the Addition of a 35th
Street Dormitory

BY SHAYNA HOENIG

As per Yeshiva University (YU) President Richard Joel's remark at the joint Senior Class Shabbaton, YU administrators have been recently deliberating over adding an additional dormitory for undergraduate housing on Stern College for Women's (SCW) Beren Campus. Jeffrey Rosengarten, the associate vice president of administrative services, and others involved in administrative services have been working to make this new potential housing possibility into a reality. The building up for consideration, located at 150 E. 35th Street, was actually purchased by YU a number of years ago due to its close proximity to the 245 Lexington school building.

At the time of purchase, it seemed that the monetary investment needed to remodel the building was too great for the university to incur. Since there was little need for an additional dormitory at the time, it was determined that it was not a financially worthwhile pursuit.

Therefore, YU decided to net-lease the building for a period of 25 years four years ago. During the four years that elapsed, the leasers transformed the internally demolished building into a building of small but elegant apartments.



When YU recently determined that they needed to create more housing options in order to accommodate the growing undergraduate population, it became clear according to Rosengarten that 150 E. 35th Street was the best bet on both a financial and practical level. Rosengarten presented this possibility at a board meeting and discussions ensued thereafter regarding whether or not it would be a good business deal and if the apartment building could practically be used as a

dormitory. It was ultimately determined that this was a financially sound plan and permission was granted to go ahead and buy back the lease.

What still remains to be finalized are the legal aspects involved in this project. Rosengarten and his committee are unsure from both a legal and practical standpoint that this apartment building can be used as a dormitory. It should be noted, as Rosengarten pointed out, that the Brookdale Residence Hall was initially built as a hotel and both the Schottenstein and 36th Street Residence Halls were built as apartment buildings. Thus the practical issue of making livable dorm spaces from a floor-plan designed for apartments is not a serious concern. However, the legal issues of rezoning an apartment building into a dormitory to fulfill municipal building code demands, although theoretically feasible, may slow the progress of the project.

Rosengarten nevertheless

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Rabbi Berman
Named Professor of
the Year

BY ALANA RUBENSTEIN

The results are in and the Lillian F. and William L. Silber Professor of the Year Award has been bestowed upon Rabbi Saul Berman, Judaic Studies professor at Stern College for Women (SCW). The

award is voted on by the students and given to one outstanding faculty member each year. This year's other nominees were Dr. Robin Freyberg, professor of psychology, Dr. Jay Ladin, professor of English, and Ms. Traci Tullius, professor of art.

"I was deeply gratified at the sense of student appreciation of my teaching," Rabbi Berman said of his nomination, adding that he was "pleasantly surprised," when he learned of his victory. "My

wife was in my Stern College office with me when I received your e-mail informing me of my being honored. She was certain that the honor was well deserved and came as the product of hard work. On the latter part she was certainly correct."

Including this semester, Rabbi Berman has been on staff at SCW for the last 36 years. "I have attempted through all of these years to expose students to the primary sources of Jewish law in a way that would expand their own mastery of texts while

deepening their appreciation of the beauty and grandeur of Torah in their lives," he said. "I often have students in my class in their first year at Stern, and then again in later years, and have the

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Rabbi Saul Berman

SLC Improves Campus Life

BY CHANI KOVACS

The Student Life Committee (SLC) is making headway on improving the Beren Campus. Recent developments, as a result of multiple meetings with faculty and administrators, include the approval of an extension for the new *beit midrash* that will be located on the 7th floor of 245 Lexington. A group of students along with the SLC had long been advocating for the new *beit midrash* to be expanded to the maximum size possible, and worked with the architects and staff to do this. The plan was originally turned down because of issues with zoning, but ultimately received approval. The *beit midrash* will accommodate triple the amount of students that the current *beit midrash* does and will include a terrace. Tiffy Unterman (SCW '07), president of the SLC, expressed her enthusiasm about this project and the approval for the extension. "This is encouraging news," she exclaimed. She also conveyed her gratitude to the administration for being so helpful and motivated.

The extension will significantly increase the size of the *beit midrash*. "The new *beit midrash* is a total of 2,700 square feet. The terrace is 900 square feet of that, which coincidentally, is the size of the current *beit midrash*," explained Jeffrey Rosengarten, the associate vice president of administrative services and head of the project. There will be ample space for learning, as well as an area for praying "without moving things around." It will also include a *mechitza* to separate men and women during *tefillah*.

Mr. Rosengarten stressed that the extension will enhance the aesthetic dimension of the room as well. Three of the four walls will be made of glass and will be visible from the street level on Lexington Avenue. "It adds a whole look and feel to make it a spectacular room," he said. "That's why we were so anxious to get it approved. With this addition, you have light coming in from outside, and brings light from inside out[ward]." He expressed that the light in the

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YU Offers Unique Summer Opportunity in Israel

BY HILLY KRIEGER

This upcoming summer is bound to be an exciting one for all of the participants on the Yeshiva University Israel (YU) Summer Experience program. The program, organized by Dean Ira Jaskoll of the Sy Syms School of Business (SSSB) and Dr. Steven Fine, professor of Jewish History at Yeshiva College, consists of four different options for the undergraduates to choose from which include both hands-on and classroom experiences.

The program is based in the Bayit Vegan neighborhood of Jerusalem; the men will be housed at Yeshivat Machon Lev and the women on the Gruss Kollel Campus.

Students can choose to take a three credit course in archeology, Classical Jewish History of the Greek and Roman Period, or Israeli business. According to Fine, the goal for the summer is to bring the students to Israel, not as "Jewish Zionist Americans who know where their yeshiva is and where the best place is to get

a falafel. Rather, we want the students to go as foreigners to Israel, to see what the country has to say for itself and take a step back from the Israel they know. These students don't know Israel from a learning perspective and historical perspective. We want to teach them about Israel as if they're doing an overseas program in Italy or France, to get to know it better." There will be two trips for all the students on the pro-



gram. One will be to Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley and the other to the Golan. "For the Golan trip at the end of the four weeks, the students will be giving the tour to their peers," explained Fine. "Instead of me giving over the history as I will be doing for the first three weeks, for this trip, the students will be guiding the tour." He underscored the importance of curiosity, motivation, and interaction in learning. "Every student will receive a bus pass and occasionally be told to just explore the

city and get out there to learn about Jerusalem. We want to build their curiosity in things they aren't curious about yet."

Those students who choose the archeology option take part in an archeological dig at Tel es-Safi in the Judean desert and are housed on the premises of Kibbutz Revadim. This is the biblical site of the ancient city of Gat and this option is offered in conjunction with Bar Ilan

University, who is overseeing the project. Dr. Jill Katz,

who teaches both at Stern College for Women and Yeshiva College, will be teaching the academic archeology course and guiding the students as they sift through the finds at the dig site.

The students who opt for the Jewish History course will not merely hear about the events that took place in Judea during the Greek and Roman eras. "Since it is summer school, we want to make it fun for the participants and therefore we are integrating a

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Contributors:

Michal Golan

Esther Baruh

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Look Who's Talking

On March 6, 2007 Steve Sheinberg, associate director of legal affairs at the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), addressed a group of students from Stern College for Women and Yeshiva College on the topic "Free Speech versus Hate



Steve Sheinberg, Associate Director of Legal Affairs at the ADL

Speech: What's the Difference?" The lecture was presented by the Yeshiva University Public Action Committee as part of its mission to further student involvement in and understanding of public policy, and was sponsored by Yeshiva College Student Association, Stern College for Women Student Council, the ADL and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Mr. Sheinberg told the students present he would "give you an understanding of what's constitutionally protected as free speech." He explained that hate speech is very extensively defined, and the more important thing to know is what type of speech is constitutionally protected and what isn't.

"The Constitution and the First Amendment broadly protect free speech," Mr. Sheinberg pointed out. He explained that the

government can only ban what someone says if there is a "compelling government interest" to stop what is being said. In addition, the government can regulate speech that is considered to be an incitement to violence and lawlessness. For speech to fall into that category, "there's got to be both the content that brings someone towards lawlessness, and there needs to be a reasonable expectation that what you say is going to have an effect," Mr. Sheinberg said.

The ADL representative informed the audience that the government grants permission to hold a lecture or protest in certain locations. He cautioned college activists to remember that protests are only appropriate in some places, such as open forums, but that a classroom would not be the correct setting in which to stage a protest. Mr. Sheinberg encouraged the students to study their college handbook to understand the university's rules regarding such activities.

To conclude, Mr. Sheinberg delineated the difference between criticism and censorship of free speech. With criticism, he said, you're not stifling speech, just pointing out that what someone said is either inaccurate or inflammatory. "You're engaging them on the same level that they're engaging you," Mr. Sheinberg observed. "You can speak out and respond to what you see as hate speech."

On March 7, 2007, Dr. Donny George Youkhanna, former director of the Iraqi National Museum and current visiting professor at SUNY Stony Brook in Long Island, addressed the students of Yeshiva University. His lecture, entitled "Museums and



Dr. Donny George Youkhanna, Former Director of the Iraqi National Museum

Archaeological Sites in Iraq Since 2003" was cosponsored by the Rabbi Arthur Schneier Center for International Affairs and the Office of the Dean at Yeshiva College.

When the United States invaded Baghdad, Dr. Youkhanna's hometown, in April 2005, he fled to the museum which is currently sealed. He went there to guard the museum's artifacts and antiques which he believes, "represents the cultural heritage of mankind" and "does not belong just to Iraqis."

But Dr. Youkhanna could only protect the pieces for so long; he was ordered to leave the museum when it got caught in the crossfire and looters wasted no time moving in. Fifteen thousand items were stolen and many more

were destroyed. "The looters left glasscutters behind and didn't touch many replicas, which leads us to believe that they came prepared and knew what they were doing," he said. Although Youkhanna asked the U.S. army to intervene when he heard about the looting, the damage was already done.

At this time, only 3,709 items have been returned. The remaining objects are being sold illegally around the world. Yet, Youkhanna has not stopped trying to both protect other museums from suffering a similar fate and track down the remaining artifacts from his former museum. "The protection of antiquities should be regarded as a human rights issue and should be brought before the United Nations Security Council," he said. "And museums should be built in such a way that they can defend themselves because there will be no one guarding them in times of war. My pain is like a line of blood drawn in the sand from Baghdad to Damascus—and now to New York."

On Monday February 26, 2007, the Dr. Marcia Robbins-Wilf Scholar-in-Residence Program sponsored a discussion entitled "Does the Road to Peace in Iraq Go Through Jerusalem?" in the Schottenstein Cultural Center. The featured guests of the



David Makovsky, Senior Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy

evening were Raghida Dergham, the senior diplomatic correspondent for the London based newspaper Al Hayat, and David Makovsky, a senior fellow and director of the project on the Middle East Peace Process at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Professor Bryan Daves of the political science department served as moderator for the event. According to Dergham, peace in the Middle East would have a strong influence on the outcome of the war in Iraq. Makovsky disagreed and argued that the situation in the Middle East had no impact on Iraq's condition. Among other topics discussed were Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his country, the Baker-Hamilton Commission, and various leaders of the Arab world.

FEATURES

More to the Heights Than Meets the Eye

BY BATSHEVA LIPSCHITZ

What comes to mind when you think of Washington Heights? For most people the answer is Yeshiva University (YU). Yet, former Stern College for Women (SCW) alumna Sarah Rindner (SCW '06) thinks there's more to "the Heights" than that. After living there for the past six months, Rindner now associates the community with a much broader group of people.

In the spring of 2006, Rindner co-created a blog about what she calls the "young, interesting, artistic, religiously concerned people who live in the Washington Heights area who do not really affiliate with any of the institutions there." The title of her blog, *Underground Heights* (UH), originally named by UH co-founder Elyakim Deutsch (YC '05), is meant to be ironic and to create awareness about communities in the Heights, other than the YU community. "Their presence goes somewhat unnoticed,"

observed Rindner. "The idea behind 'Underground Heights,' would be to bring some of those 'underground' elements out to the surface, and see what kind of community could emerge."

Rindner is proud to say that some of her original goals for the blog have manifested themselves



with the creation of a progressive new *minyan* (prayer group), Migdal Or. What differentiates Migdal Or from most other Orthodox *minyanim* is that a woman leads part of the Friday night services. Rindner compares Migdal Or to Congregation Darchei Noam in New York City, and Shira Chadasha in Jerusalem, Israel.

In a posting titled "Balcony Blues," Rindner expressed her feelings about synagogue *mechitzas* (physical partitions between males and females) and the separate role that women play in synagogue in general. When she attended Kehillat Hadar, a *mechitza-free minyan* on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, the open-minded Rindner said that instead of viewing *tefilla* (prayer) as a spectator-sport, she felt a sense of belonging. Her comment sparked further conversation on the topic, with many women admitting they felt the same way. This was perhaps the first time people of the Heights community discussed this issue publicly.

"I've never seen another blog that is both geographically, [and] community centered as ours is," commented Rindner, "as well as concerned with inner thoughts and struggles to the extent that we are. Because of that, it's kind of hard to categorize what UH is

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YU Students Take On Capitol Hill

BY JUDITH LUGER

Elie Wiesel emphasizes throughout his books and sermons that the only thing worse than hate is indifference, which he defines as the root of evil in the world. The philosophy that drove him to dedicate his life to telling his story and speaking about anti-Semitism is that, "not to transmit an experience is to betray it." Communities around the world in France, England, Israel, and America are seeing and experiencing a resurfacing of anti-Semitism. Consequently, it is crucial for Holocaust education to be a priority presented to the American government.

A few years ago, Carolyn Maloney, a member of the New York City delegation of the House of Representatives, attempted to submit a bill, which is now called the Simon Wiesenthal Holocaust Education Assistance Act. If the bill is passed, it will provide \$2 million per year to non-profit, education-

al organizations for classes, conferences, educational materials, and teacher training to educate about the Holocaust. Unfortunately, thus far, the bill has not been passed, so students of Yeshiva University (YU) have decided to encourage fellow students to do their best to support the bill. The passing of the bill has been integrated into Professor Joseph Luders's Introduction to American Politics course as a crucial part of the course curriculum. It is a unique experience for students in the course to be involved in this project.

"Yeshiva University is a school that ennobles and enables," said Luders, quoting YU President Richard Joel. Luders believes in the importance of "cultivating a new generation of passionate leaders... to encourage individual leadership skills so that students will become active as opposed to passive bystanders." Since his

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Past and Present Merge in New York's Oldest Synagogue

BY JACKIE FAST

In 1654, 23 Jewish individuals fled from Recife, Brazil when it was taken over by the Dutch, and decided to settle in New Amsterdam after mistakenly finding themselves in North America. The congregation that they founded, Shearith Israel, was the first Jewish congregation in America. Its numbers remained very small throughout the colonial period, but they were nonetheless very involved in greater society. Many congregants actively participated in the Sons of Liberty movement during the American Revolution. "Since the congregation's founding over 350 years ago, services have continuously been held," said the congregation's rabbi, Rabbi Hayim Angel. However, the congregation remained very small for centuries and it was the only synagogue in New York for over 170 years.

Shearith Israel is a Spanish-Portuguese congregation, which refers to a heritage that is something more specific than merely Sephardic. Although all Sephardim trace their ancestry to the Jews who lived on the Iberian peninsula prior to the Spanish Inquisition and Expulsion of 1492, many Sephardic communities today have been culturally shaped by the new countries in which they have lived for the past

500 years. Many Sephardim today feature Middle Eastern elements in their format of prayer and cultural patterns. But in 1654, when Shearith Israel was founded, the expulsion from Spain was still a recent communal memory and the Jews who came were the great-grandchildren of those who had been expelled from Spain. Some of their families remained in Spain during the intervening years as converts, and therefore, they were even more directly linked with their Iberian heritage.



Shearith Israel

Others had lived in Amsterdam or Holland before moving to Recife and subsequently to New York. They retained their Western European cultural practices in the intervening years from leaving Spain until founding Shearith Israel. Western European influences are readily apparent in the synagogue's flavor; its liturgy follows something of a Western European Jewish liturgical tradition that sounds different from what might be considered Sephardic today.

"In our congregation the music of the prayers is very Western European," explained Rabbi Angel. "The services are very formal, the way in which things were done in Spain. In parts of the Middle East, where other Sephardic communities settled, services lacked that same ceremonial aspect that existed in areas under Christian Europe."

One striking element of the prayer service in the synagogue is its full choir every Shabbat. According to Rabbi Angel, the choir is not an element of the traditional Spanish service, but was instead an innovation of the 1880s to appeal to the popular pressure to reform. In the 19th century, Reform Judaism was a growing movement which pressured other Jews to adopt their ideas. Although Shearith Israel was always an Orthodox congregation that was Torah observant, its congregants demanded changes as cultural trends pushed them to assimilate. Even those who were dedicated to staying with the synagogue wished for it to look more like a Reform temple. After a controversy in which a popular appeal for the installation of an organ was turned down, the leadership compromised with the congregants by allowing for the formation of a Shabbat choir. Later, around the

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Got Plans?

BY ALANA RUBENSTEIN

Got Plans? is not just a clever slogan mimicking the famous "Got Milk?" advertising campaign. It is also the name of a new program at Stern College for Women (SCW) which sets up students with different families to give them a fun Shabbat experience. The program is the brainchild of Michal Bensoussan (SCW '06) and Lily Lovovsky (SCW '07), and began operating two weeks ago.

"Michal and I were both out of towners," said Lovovsky, a Jacksonville Florida native who came to SCW as a freshman, and "when I came to New York...I was missing the sense of community I had at home." When she went to seminary in Israel the following year, she was impressed by what she described as the "really open, chilled out atmosphere" of people willing to host strangers for Shabbat, and decided to implement a similar system when she returned.

But unlike in Israel, where students tend to travel anywhere with little prior knowledge of where they are going and what they will encounter when they get there, Got Plans? does not want to just place people anywhere.

"We don't want to just take women and send them wherever," said Lovovsky. "We want to know where we're sending

women." Therefore, Lovovsky and Bensoussan spent a lot of time compiling a solid network of families composed of Yeshiva University (YU) alumni, friends of faculty members and other families the program's founders know. Each family in the program's data base (there are currently more than 50 families on file) was referred to by someone the women personally know. In addition, Lovovsky and Bensoussan interviewed every family and spoke with them extensively in order to get a better idea of what the potential hosts are like and how a Shabbat in their home would be spent. They asked questions about how involved the individuals are in their communities, how many children they have, what type of synagogue they go to etc. In addition, Lovovsky would love to expand the program to include current SCW students and their families who are willing to host fellow students looking for a place to spend the weekend.

"Our goal was to get as diverse a range as possible and set up any kind of woman who contacts us," said Lovovsky. The families are literally from all over and from all different backgrounds. The communities on the system include the Upper West Side, Riverdale, Teaneck, Lakewood, Brooklyn, Queens,

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Beyond 34th Street

BY JACKIE FAST

With *Pesach* on the horizon, spring is in the air. That's right, the weather is getting warmer and the best way to enjoy those quality vitamin-D filled rays of sun is to experience the great outdoors New York City style. There's no better place to get pleasure from the season or spend an afternoon than in Central Park, the city's great backyard.

Perhaps the finest way to enjoy Central Park is by gathering up some friends, taking a picnic blanket and lunch, finding a nice spot of green grass in the sun, and camping there for hours, enjoying the great circus of people passing by. However, there's more to Central Park than such a limited visit would leave one believing. The 846 acres of urban playground contain a tremendously diverse collection of different landscapes and landmarks. If one wishes to see it all and truly experience Central Park, one should take a look at a map of the park found at any of its major entrances and together with this column, try to find everything!

Here are some of my favorite places in Central Park. I've ordered them such that you could enter the park at 5th Avenue and 86th Street, walk in a fairly direct path to see all of the highlights, and exit the park at 66th Street. To see everything on this list at a leisurely and recreational pace would take the better part of an afternoon. However, if you manage to finish this walk, you could boast that you know Central Park like a true native.

To get to the park, take the 6 uptown to 86th Street and walk cross-town three blocks. You'll enter the park at 5th Avenue, with the Reservoir in clear sight.

1. Reservoir—Thousands of joggers and walkers circle this man-made lake each day, in a counter-clockwise direction. Constructed around 1860, the reservoir path is more than a mile-and-a-half long. A temperature cooling effect can be observed along the reservoir's shores on hot days when the surface water evaporates and cools the air as it rises. Walk along the reservoir; enjoy the view of the water, the skyline, and the seasonal migrating birds. When you finish, head south (left of the direction you were facing when you entered the park) to catch the rest of the park's main attractions.



2. The Great Lawn and Cleopatra's Needle—Once you've walked fully south of the

Reservoir, cross over the 85th Street car transverse to find the Great Lawn before you. (If you see the Metropolitan Museum of Art, then the Lawn is to your right.) The Lawn opens every April, and it is the ideal site for a picnic and a game of catch. Additionally, if you chose not to walk around the reservoir, you can follow numerous school track teams walking or jogging around the Lawn. As you approach the southeast corner of the Lawn, veer along a path to your left to find Cleopatra's Needle, the oldest sculpture in



the park. Created in 1475 BCE, this stone Obelisk was a gift from the Khedive Ismail Pasha of Egypt to the United States in 1879. Check out its ancient hieroglyphic inscriptions.

3. Belvedere Castle and Turtle Pond—Perhaps my personal favorite place in Central Park is Belvedere Castle and the Turtle Pond that rests beneath it. Located just south of the Great Lawn (take a right from Cleopatra's Needle) the castle was built on the second-highest natural rock outcropping in the park. To this day, meteorological measurements of temperature and precipitation are measured from the here. The architects of Central Park wanted to create a miniature gothic castle amidst otherwise natural-looking surroundings to give the park a somewhat surrealistic quality. You can enter the castle, whose name is Italian for "scenic view," and experience the sweeping views from its tower. The first floor of Belvedere Castle functions as a children's ecological education center today.

4. Shakespeare Garden—You can find the Shakespeare Garden by taking a right as you exit Belvedere Castle and proceeding downhill. The garden is located directly next to the Delacorte Theater, which is open all summer long and sometimes features Shakespearean plays. The garden is landscaped in an authentically British style with narrow cobbled paths and rustic park benches. I recommend visiting the garden in April or May, when the best of the bulb flowers are in bloom.

5. The Ramble—Crossing the 79th Street transverse is a section of the park that its architects named The Ramble. This area was planted to look like a natural forest, heavily wooded and laced with paths that resemble hiking paths in large forests. Although it's far too small to ever feel like the back woods, The Ramble feels less like a park within the

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B.L.U.E. Program Deemed a Success

BY RENA WIESEN

New students on campus are being wine and dined by the Office of Student Affairs. The B.L.U.E. Program, which stands for Beginning Life in the University Environment, runs special activities for FTOC's, First Time On Campus students. "We always ran programs for the new students, but we were thinking of a way to invite them to the Yeshiva University community," explained B.L.U.E. co-coordinator Rachel Shtern. "Every new student is automatically a member and part of the community. We run fun stuff that creates groups of people that meet each other through the program, and they find things in common."

Projects and activities run by B.L.U.E. are initiated by a group of seven or eight students, nicknamed "The Freshman Va'ad," who meet every week with Shtern, who coordinates the larger-scale events, and Tiffany Khalil, who organizes the weekly activities in Brookdale FTOC lounge, room 19C, to brainstorm for event ideas. Together with Dean of Students Zelda Braun, the group turns these ideas into realities, which so far have been incredibly successful.

"One of our most successful events was the double-decker tour bus and dinner at Mr. Broadway event," said Shtern. "We hired two double-decker buses that went and took the students downtown and looped back up. Over 100 students came. We also invited two of the academic advisors, Mrs. [Miriam] Schechter and Mrs. [Rochelle] Mogilner, to join. It was a freezing cold night and everyone sat on top of the double-decker bus—it was great. Even the academic advisors had a fantastic time."

"It's one of those touristy things that you always see but you never do yourself, so it was

really exciting to get a double-decker bus ride planned for us as if we were tourists, even though so many of us are from the tri-state area," said FTOC student Rachel Glaser (SCW '09) from Edison, NJ.

"We're at school in the city, but we're so busy during our school routines that we never do these fun activities on our own," added Talia Reiner (SCW '09), an FTOC from Englewood, NJ. B.L.U.E. provides students who are new to New York, and even those who are not, with fun ways to experience both Stern College for Women and New York City.

Another B.L.U.E. hit was the "Henna and Indian Food" night, organized by Khalil, for which B.L.U.E. brought in Henna tattoo artists to design funky tattoos for students. Over 75 students came, and everyone loved it, because it was "different and fun," she said. "We recognize that not each program appeals to every student," reiterated Shtern, "so we do different things."

B.L.U.E. runs unique events; often ones that are a little off the beaten track such as "Knit Night," where students learned how to knit. Dean Braun, a professional knitter and member of the Yarn Council of America, contacted the Yarn Council, who provided the materials for the night's project called "Warm Up America." The goal was for each student to knit a patch to be sewn together with the other patches to make a quilt that will be given to a homeless person. Everyone at the event, under the guidance of Dean Braun, knitted at least one seven-by-nine inch patch for this purpose. It was so successful that students requested to have a weekly "Knit Night" to continue this amazing project.

"We thought maybe three students would show up, but it was packed, and even though it started at 7:30 p.m., people

stayed and knit until 11:30 p.m., including Dean Braun," said Khalil. "And that was even after we had run three events that week! We really got a great group of people participating."

Shtern points to the B.L.U.E. calendar, on which are scheduled not only B.L.U.E. events, but activities of Stern College for Women Student Council, Torah Activities Council, and other happenings around campus. "B.L.U.E. isn't just about our own fun events; it's also a resource for students," said Shtern. Students can look at the B.L.U.E. calendar and find out what is going on everywhere on campus.

Khalil and Shtern put lots of time and effort into planning these events. Between the dormitory activities in 19C and the off-campus ones, like this week's "Midnight Swim" which was a pool party for the students at twelve o'clock in the morning, there is a lot of work to be done. But they both agree that it is worth it.

"I remember [when I was a freshman] I felt like I was in a foreign country and couldn't speak the language," recalled Khalil. "B.L.U.E. gives the freshmen the sense that we're there for them. We're dedicated just to them. It also gives them a break from the work and overwhelming feeling. They can meet other students like them and know that other people are in the same situation."

The Observer Would Like to Congratulate

Jackie Saxe (SCW '08),
Maytal Fligelman (SCW '08),
Avi Posnick (YC '07),
Shira Orbach (SCW '07),
Shira Lankin (SCW '09)
and
Alex Boris (YC '09)

on Receiving AIPAC's Activist of the Year Award

THE ISRAEL SECTION

Sudanese Refugees Wrongfully Denied Entrance into Israel

BY JENN SHULDINER

Over 330 refugees from Sudan have come to Israel seeking asylum in the past two years. They are victims from the genocide currently transpiring in Sudan. Forced to leave their homes they sought refuge in Egypt, but due to deplorable living conditions many of them are crossing the border into Israel. Upon entrance to Israel, many of them wait by the road to be picked up by the police. The refugees are then put into prison without any rights for an unspecified amount of time. Their impoundment is attributed to the fact that they are in violation of the Infiltration Prevention Law of 1954, a law which allows for the indefinite detention of citizens who infiltrate Israel from "enemy states" without judicial review. Because of Israel's law of "enemy infiltration," she cannot offer asylum to any person coming from an enemy state that does not recognize the State of Israel. Sudan is an example of such a state. It harbors terrorists including members of Al Qaeda and other Palestinian terrorist groups.

Human rights groups, Holocaust experts and lawyers have criticized Israel for its treatment of these refugees. A state born out of the ashes of the Holocaust should not be turning its back on those suffering a similar fate. The conflict in Sudan has already claimed the lives of over 200,000 people and has displaced over two million.

Avner Shalev, the chairman of Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust museum, strongly believes in Israel's responsibility towards the refugees from Sudan. "The memory of the past, and the Jewish values that underpin our existence, require us to show humanitarian solidarity with the persecuted," he said. In a letter to Ehud Olmert, the prime minister of Israel, Shalev wrote: "As members of the Jewish people, for whom the memory of the

Holocaust burns, we cannot stand by as refugees from the genocide in Darfur hammer on our doors."

Shalev addressed a group of 12 refugees from Sudan after their visit to Yad Vashem. They had heard of the Holocaust after arriving in Israel and wanted to gain a deeper understanding of the events that occurred. After seeing the museum one of the refugees said, "I have heard of the Holocaust, but I never thought it so horrible." "I am so sad about what happened to the Jewish community at that time," said another Sudanese refugee. "In Darfur, at least there is the UN and America trying to stop the genocide. In Europe and Germany at that time, no one tried to help the Jews. It's so hard to view this." "I am really moved by your decision to come and visit Yad Vashem," said Shalev in an address to the visiting



Sudanese refugees. "This place symbolizes not only the tragedy that happened to the Jewish people, but suffering and mass killings inflicted on human beings by other human beings. We have a lot of empathy with your situation."

There are many people fighting for the release of the Sudanese refugees. "The incarceration is illegal and we have said these people are survivors of genocide and should be treated as refugees," Refugee Rights Clinic lawyer Anat Ben-Dor said. Lawyers for the Tel Aviv University's Refugee Rights Clinic have petitioned Israel's high court regarding the imprisonment of refugees from Sudan.

Yet, there are those that

believe that if Israel grants all those seeking asylum citizenship, the results would be disastrous, and possibly suicidal, for the State of Israel. "If they know everyone who pays \$50 can come to a modern, democratic state and live happily ever after - why not come to Israel?" Yochie Gessin, an Israeli government lawyer, said last week. "We can't accept this. There are some 40 million Sudanese."

But, despite opinions like the one above, the hard work of human rights organizations is beginning to pay off. After many rounds of Supreme Court appeals some of the detained Sudanese are beginning to be released. Without citizenship they still have an unknown status and are forced to live in limbo until a country that can grant them asylum is found. 190 still remain imprisoned.

Sanka, a 29-year-old Muslim from Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, is one of 100 refugees who has been released from prison and been placed on a *kibbutz* after a long stay at a detention center. After spending a year incarcerated by Israel he has been released on "house arrest" to a *kibbutz* on the shores of the Dead Sea until his trial is over. Sanka has attracted attention due to his reformist views and was afraid that he would "disappear" like some of his friends have. His time in jail has not tainted his view of Israel. "The Jewish people I've met here understand my plight," he said. "For the first time in my life I feel free. I know that sounds funny but I do. I feel freer here than I ever did in Sudan."

A Message From the President

BY RACHEL GOLDSTEIN

Over the past month, the Israel Club has been able to run many events, some of which will be ongoing for the rest of the semester. On the Shabbat *Parshat Terumah* (February 23-24), the Israel Club held its annual joint campus shabbaton. We heard from Shuki Taylor, Center for the Jewish Future employee in Yeshiva University (YU) Israel, who spoke about the shifts in Zionism over time and why there is such a split now between the Post-Zionist/left-wing movement and the Religious Zionist/right-wing movement. We also heard from Rabbi Sharon Shalom, the first Ethiopian rabbi in Israel, who spoke about his personal aliyah and the general Ethiopian community in Israel. On Shabbat afternoon we held discussion groups that tied together all the ideas from the speakers and gave students the opportunity to hear each others opinions on the various topics discussed over the weekend.

This past month we also held the first part of a two part panel on aliyah and American Orthodox education. The panel consisted of Rabbi Steven Pruzansky, Rabbi Mark Gottlieb, and Rabbi Yehuda Sarna. The Israel Club also started the ongoing Shulchan Ivrit and the Israel Book Club, both of which have already met twice. The Shulchan Ivrit is a small group of people creating a comfortable and warm environment in which one can converse in Hebrew and try to improve Hebrew skills. This is for women only and usually takes place on Sunday nights. The members of the Book Club are reading short stories from Savyon Liebrecht's "Apples from the Dessert." These short stories discuss various issues in Israeli society, such as religious people becoming secular and having outside influences in society and many other topics. If you are interested in joining, pick up your free copy by contacting Deborah at (248) 568-5489. You can also contact Deborah for more information about Shulchan Ivrit or the book club by emailing anstandi@yu.edu.

Our biggest event this past month was the hosting of Sderot Mayor Eli Mayol. In front of a packed Weissberg Commons, Mayor Mayol spoke about "Facing the Challenge: How We Cope." Since the city of Sderot has been bombarded with Kassam rockets fired from Gaza, Mayor Mayol spoke about the hardships his city has faced the past few years, as well as the changes that need to be made in order to stop the firing of rockets

into Sderot and other cities in Israel. After the Mayor spoke, the Israel Club, thanks to the hard work of Aharon Arazi, president of the Israel Club on the Wilf Campus, presented a 'chizuk' (strength) video for the people of Sderot to Mayor Mayol. The video interviewed various YU rebbeim, faculty members, and students. The purpose of the video was to relay to the people of Sderot how much we are thinking of them, how much we care about them, and that we are trying our best as part of YU to help in any way we can. Even for the students present, it was great to see how much YU cares about Israel and specifically the situation in Sderot right now.

Upcoming Israel Club Events:

1. The second panel on aliyah and American Orthodox education will iy'H take place at the end of April.
2. Shulchan Ivrit and the Book Club are hoping to meet a couple more times each, so look out for further information.
3. There is a weekly Israel Information table in the lobby of 245 Lexington every Wednesday during Club Hour (2:45-3:30). Come see what you can do to help the situation in Israel!
4. Every Thursday there is a devoted group of students who meet and go hand out Pro-Israel facts/flyers in Washington Square near New York University to counter an anti-Israel group that meets there. It is so important to make sure people know both sides of the story! If you are interested in handing out flyers/facts, email Jenn Shuldiner at JennShuldiner@gmail.com or call (917)903-3368.
5. Yom Hazikaron and Yom Haatzmaut are coming up! There will be a small *tekes* (ceremony) for Yom Hazikaron on Sunday night April 22, and small bios of the different soldiers killed over the course of Israel's history will be given out as well. Then, on Monday night April 23, we will be holding our annual joint student council Yom Hazikaron/Yom Haatzmaut *tekes*, followed by a *chagigah* celebrating Yom Haatzmaut.

Want to get involved? Have ideas to improve the Israel Club? Email Rose018@aol.com. Hope to see you at these events!

The Observer Staff
wishes all of Stern
College for Women a
Chag Kasher
v'Sameach

Religious Zionism Panel Draws Crowd

BY DEBORAH ANSTANDIG

The Torah Activities Council, Student Organization of Yeshiva, and the Israel Club hosted a panel, "Zionism for our Time: Aliyah and American Orthodox Education—Balancing Responsibility to American Judaism and Religious Zionism." The event featured Rabbi Steven Pruzansky of Congregation B'nai Yeshurun in Teaneck, Rabbi Mark Gottlieb, the principal of the Marsha Stern Talmudic Academy (MTA), and Rabbi Yehuda Sarna, manager of religious life at New York University. Noah Chesis (YC '09), conceived of the idea of this panel as a result of his experience on the Israel Club's Lmaan Achai Leadership Experience trip to Israel over the January break. He wanted to "share and spread the enthusiasm, responsibility, and tension between American Orthodoxy and Religious Zionism," he said.

Approximately 80 students were in attendance as Josh Weinberg, moderator of the panel, posed many questions to each member of panel, asking them to define Zionism, express their feelings about aliyah to the secular state of Israel, and also explain their feelings about the imperative to live in Israel in general.

Each panelist presented a personal context for his thoughts through offering his definition of Zionism. Rabbi Pruzansky expressed how aliyah is a "generational imperative—the question falls on individuals." He commented how people may look at our generation as the Jews of Babylonia who chose not to return to Israel. He explained that he tried to make aliyah twice, but the financial situation would not afford him the ability to feasibly take care of his family. For Rabbi Gottlieb, Zionism is "the modern incarnation of political theology of the Jewish people." He explained how the State of Israel affords the Jewish people the ability to learn how to live as a *tzibbur* (congregation) of Jewish people in our ancestral homeland. He also mentioned that he was awakened to the idea of aliyah through reading Yoram Hazoni's book, "The Dawn."

Rabbi Sarna defined Zionism as "a positive attitude toward Israel." He related the power of his first memory of seeing the Kotel as a high school student on Bnei Akiva's Mach Hach Ba'aretz trip. Rabbi Sarna is driven by his work at Hillel, where he has been for the past five years, and is still actively planning the eventual aliyah of his family.

The panel engaged in the most significant debate over the question about the imperative to make aliyah to the secular State of Israel. Rabbi Sarna stated that he hoped the state would remain

secular in order to keep people attracted to Judaism, rather than to feel coerced into any religious practice.

On the other hand, Rabbi Gottlieb questioned the presumption that Israel should be classified as a secular state. He cited the Derashot HaRan, explaining how this secular government can operate as a means towards a religious state. He explained that historically there was a king and the rabbinic authorities, and that the secular state is both a means and an end to our ultimate goal.

Lastly, Rabbi Pruzansky explained how the secular state serves only as a means for the Jewish people to fulfill the commandments of *yishuv Eretz Yisrael* (settling the land of Israel). In a moment of enthusiasm, he exclaimed, "as far as I know, the *tochacha* (rebuke) was not repealed! Why should we think the rules of history don't apply to us?"

Another intriguing topic of conversation was the question of how to develop an educational philosophy that teaches the values of religious Zionism. As principal of a high school, Rabbi Gottlieb expressed that he thinks day school students are beginning to gain awareness about the significance of Israel, but that there is more to go. "Israel needs to become an orienting mitzvah for all of religious life—it has the potential to move us from the periphery to the center of Jewish history," he said.

Rabbi Sarna expressed the power of youth groups like Bnei Akiva as significant instruments in the development of students' ideologies. He expressed the challenges schools face because they must take into account the desires both of diverse families and faculty members. Rabbi Pruzansky echoed the challenge of teaching religious Zionism so that neither the children nor the parents feel guilty about their choices. He also explained the conundrum of being a congregational rabbi where he has the power to teach about religious ideals, like aliyah, while understanding that everyone in the audience knows he has not made aliyah himself.

After students heard from the panel, the speakers answered questions from the audience.

Music Makes the People Come Together

BY TALIA KAPLAN

They say that music is the language of the soul. If this is in fact true, the soul of the State of Israel is multifaceted, complex, original and imitating, deep and fun. The plethora of Israeli music that exists today reflects both the difficult aspects of living in the land of Israel as well as the hope that each person carries with them for the future. Included in the various independent artists, there have also been a number of different projects created to combine the musical sounds of the country in an effort to show a united front.



Hadag Nachash (Snakefish) – Shirat Hastikirim (The Bumper Sticker Song)

Hadag Nachash is a young Israeli rap group that raises different domestic issues which need to be discussed throughout Israel. Their most famous song to date is called "Shirat Hastikirim." In this song, the group raps about the different bumper stickers that are found throughout the country.

It is meant to be a satire on the different arguing factions coinciding in the country, all plastering their cars with bumper stickers that express their political, social, and religious beliefs. The song also provides outsiders of Israeli culture with an inside look.



The Idan Raichel Project

The concept behind the Idan Raichel Project is to combine the different sounds of Israel. Israel has experienced an influx of immigration from Ethiopia, Russia, and many other countries. In order to make the differing cultures get along and relate to one another, Idan Raichel combined Ethiopian and Middle Eastern sounds together to create beautiful music with strong meaning. This pianist invites other musicians to assist him in this project. Some songs from this project include "Mimamakim," and "Milim Yafot Me'eleh."



Subliminal

Subliminal and the other artists on his label are the top selling Israeli musical artists. Subliminal is an Israeli rapper who after the second Intifada decided to begin writing patriotic songs. While the songs are pro-Israel, they do not tend to be militant. Subliminal has collaborated with other rap artists including Wyclef Jean.

The music in Israel is as varied as the people. However, by combining forces to create wonderful music together, initial boundaries may be worn down. The country of Israel tends to be divided amongst many different subdivisions but the music of its people has the ability to join everyone together.

What's New In Israel

The Second Lebanon War

The war that took place this past summer with Lebanon has been officially renamed the "Second Lebanon War."

Coming to America for Free

Two bills are being presented to the United States Congress which would allow for a Visa waiver for Israeli's entering the United States. Britain, France, and Australia currently have this program in place. The Visa waiver would allow travelers to enter the US without having to interview at American consulates or pay for entrance permits.

Family Reunification Law Extended

The law that disallows for people from enemy countries to become citizens of Israel by virtue of marrying Israeli's has been extended.

25th Yahrzeit of Rav Zvi Yehuda Kook zt'l

Yeshivah students and Rabbis gathered in Beit El to commemorate the *yahrzeit* of Rav Zvi Yehuda Kook zt'l, the rosh yeshiva of Merkaz Harav and son of Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Kook zt'l.

Leonardo DiCaprio Meets Shimon Peres

While on his recent trip to Israel, Leonardo DiCaprio secretly met with Shimon Peres upon the Israeli Vice Premier's request. Peres asked DiCaprio to help advance the currently delayed peace process and to campaign for global environmental protection.

Old City Residents Bothered by Generator

The television generator near the Kotel has caused the residents of the Old City of Jerusalem to complain about potential health risks.

Arts and Culture

Female Presence Noticeably Missing From First CJF Film Festival

BY YAEL WOLYNETZ

Students of Yeshiva University (YU) gathered en masse on March 21, 2007 at the Schottenstein Cultural Center to view the films of students who participated in the first YU film competition. In a program sponsored by the Center for the Jewish Future (CJF), students were asked to compose a five minute presentation of their favorite Jewish hero. Personally chosen by the director of each film, the selected heroes were diverse, ranging from Jewish educators, to a child who struggles with cerebral palsy.

"The films all had personality," said film director Ari Pinchott, who worked on the project as a consultant for the Center for the Jewish Future (CJF). "The passion is much more important than the technicalities of film making, as long as people express themselves." Pinchott was pleased with the success of the competition. His goal was simply to show students "that they can make films and have them seen by a lot of people."

Rabbi Moshe Bellows, director of Social Organizational Leadership Training for the CJF was thrilled with the student turnout. "I love the excitement, it's electric in here," he exclaimed when describing the crowd. With a background in the film industry himself, Rabbi Bellows hopes the film competition will become an annual event for YU. "I look forward to students making their own films," he said. "There is a whole world of media which should be open to YU students to express themselves in the most powerful medium."

After all eight of the films had been viewed, audience members voted on their favorite. After the votes were counted, the top five nominees were announced. Each of the five films represented a different type of Jewish heroes.

Ariel Sadian (YC '10), who produced the film entitled "The Patriarch," made a tribute to his grandfather and his efforts to save the Jewish community in Iran. When Sadian saw the advertisements for the film competition, he knew immediately that

he wanted to dramatize his grandfather's story.

Touching on a different aspect of heroism, Uri Weistrich's (YC '08) movie, "Lchol Ish Yesh Shem (Every Person Has a Name)," tells the story of his close friend, Itai Baniel, who was the commander of a tank unit in the Israeli Defense Force during this past summer's war against Lebanon. Using live footage from his own army experiences, Weistrich's film was a real tear-jerker.

Jonah Raskas (YC '07), president of Yeshiva College Student Association, dedicated his film to showing the extraordinary qualities of Richard Joel, president of YU. In his film "A Man of Ideals: The Story of Richard Joel," Raskas attempted to shed light on President Joel's accomplishments through a compilation of interviews with various work associates and his own son Noam Joel (YC '07).

Raskas was not the only producer to draw inspiration from a YU leader. Chai Hecht (YC '07) and Shealitel Weinberg (YC

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YU's Wilf Campus Hosts the Annual Arts Festival

BY BATYA CARL

The Yeshiva University (YU) Arts Festival boasts works of art from both Stern College for Women (SCW) and Yeshiva College (YC). The pieces were displayed in the Pollack Library on the Wilf Campus, through a winding hallway whose walls were lined with countless pieces of artwork in mediums ranging from sculpture to oil paint, block prints to digital photography and beyond.

Organizers of the event from both campuses set the various works against dim lighting with individual lamps highlighting the pieces to create an authentic art gallery atmosphere. Paintings were hung on the walls or propped up on easels. Some were more muted, toned down grays to a psychedelic 70s themed painting.

The ambiance elicited the type of behavior found in most art galleries. Hushed murmurs and slanted heads sprinkled the path throughout the long corridor. Those in attendance feasted their eyes on works composed of a range of subjects including

ghostly figures, self portraits, fairies dancing on piano keys, a ghostly hand emerging from a burial plot, and more contemporary commercial images such as Darth Vader and The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. "I never knew that Stern students had so much talent!" exclaimed Tova Muller (SCW '08).

The exhibit itself was an exhibition, leading through a long hall, down steps into an open area, and up stairs to the photography. Photographs of architecture, people, and nature captured those in attendance. Another notable part of the exhibit was a table full of hats. The hats were designed by a SCW student currently taking courses at the Fashion Institute of Technology.

The exhibit is a celebration of self expression and gives students a chance to display their hard work. Many who have gone through the SCW art curriculum will be able to point out which works were assigned to them when they were taking art courses, as many of the works are the

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It's All Rather Complicated with Made Up

BY YAEL ZWANZIGER

"Made Up", an original play written by Chai Hecht (YC '07), and directed by accomplished actor and comedian Reuven Russel, was recently produced by the Stern College Drama Society. While it was prideful that the dramatic society had taken a gamble on a student written screenplay rather than sticking to a classic play, the plot and writing of the play was lacking in complexity. But, strong acting and on target set design were in full compensation for the frequent confusion over the plot.

The plot was complicated and convoluted to the point that it is difficult to even summarize. It revolves around a makeup artist who works for a talk show called "The Three Talking Heads." There is a murder and a weird cult and a whole issue with the makeup artist becoming Messiah. The plot became increasingly bizarre, with the Messiah breaking out in monologues and having strange visions including a reoccurring memory of a trivia question on a radio show. The plot culminated with the makeup artist turned Messiah returning to the "Three Talking Heads"—now the "Two Talking Heads" as one of the heads were

killed—and tried to prove that she was not the Messiah by shooting the future Messiah. Confused? The multiple themes had to do with leadership, following false messiahs, superficiality, and, according to the playbill, facing one's biggest fears.

The script had so many revolving themes that Hecht wanted to portray, that many important themes were buried under each other. The best stories have simple storylines that convey true meaning and reflect reality. The plot did not have to be complex and absurd in order to tackle tough issues. It could have been written in a simpler manner, because often in life the simplest things have the most depth. Instead, the show was in a continuous state of evolution. As a result, the play felt forcibly deep as though it was trying very hard to convey a deep message.

Plot aside, the cast was excellent to say the least. Strong, cohesive, and chemistry rich performances were true for all eight women who graced the stage. Sarah Medved (SCW '08), playing the lead as Nattie the makeup artist, was sweet and believable. Letting herself go, Medved let her character mature and develop as the plot progressed, leading the audience to a greater appreci-

ation for her acting abilities. Adina Schwartz (SCW '08) who played Bella, one of the Talking Heads, successfully depicted the epitome of superficiality and fakeness. She conveyed the character through both her words and actions. Rounding out the dramatic aspect and sprinkling in a dose of comedic sarcasm was Deanna Frazin (SCW '08) in the role of the stage manager. Olivia Wiznitzer (SCW '10) was also notable and gave her part a lot of spunk and humor with her flipped hair and authentic show host capabilities. Gila Kanal (SCW '07), who first appeared in what looked like five inch platform boots, gave a powerful and memorable performance as Melanie, the advisor to Medved's character.

The set design was also clever. The first scene included a mirrored makeup room conducive to Medved's monologue, and the second scene was made up of a dressing room with a couch, mirror, and a makeup table conducive for multiple aspects of the show.

While talking to a few members of the audience, many people agreed that the script was way too ambitious. Perhaps it

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Sitting Down Chai Hecht

BY OBSERVER STAFF

This semester the Stern College Dramatic Society (SCDS) performed the original play "Made Up" by Chai Hecht (YC '07). This is the second play the Yeshiva College senior has written for the Yeshiva University (YU) stage; the first was last semester's Yeshiva College Dramatic Society (YCDS) production "Buy the Book." The Observer had the chance to talk with Hecht about writing scripts, girls vs. boys-women and men, and religion.

The Observer: This is the second play you've written for the YU stage, the first was last semester's "Buy the Book" produced by YCDS. How have you and your writing developed since then?

Hecht: I'm more comfortable writing for the stage now. That's the biggest difference. Writing a play involves, most importantly, a sense of real-time expression, since your writing will be said, not read. Also, in theater, unlike in prose, since the entire experience lasts, on average, two hours, you have to be extremely sensitive to the memory of the audience, not to overload them with unnecessary

information and not to expect them to forgive inaccuracies or beginnings without ends which is stuff you can sometimes get away with if it's subtle enough.

O: What was it like working with SCDS?

H: Working with SCDS was great. I felt very welcomed right away. They're in a transitional period right now, with a new artistic director in Reuven Russell. I was constantly impressed by their professionalism and ingenuity, originating from the untiring dedication of President Elana Syrtash (SCW '08) and Stage Manager/Technical Director Caitlin Shapiro (SCW '07).

As a writer, the greatest insecurity is felt working with the actors who are entrusted to house and represent your work. But I felt very confident leaving my words in the hands of the actresses of SCDS. The main character, Nattie, especially, was a complex character with many levels, and she was someone who I watched grow inside my head for a long time before I was able to put her on paper. Sarah [Medved (SCW '07), who played Nattie] took great care of her and really helped develop Nattie into a three

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Bon Appetite: A Restaurant Review

Solo, you might want to experience it alone...

BY SARAH GUIGUI

Lodged in the Sony Plaza Atrium, on 55th Street and Madison Avenue, the Solo restaurant welcomes you with a soft background of *bossa nova* in a dark, chic atmosphere. The manager comes over to you, and offers to take your coat before guiding you to your table. Once you are finally seated, after having let your eyes spy out this singularly classy restaurant, an army of waiters will run to you and begin asking you questions. What would you like to drink? Are you ready to order? What can I recommend you? Though helpful, this immediacy might cause you to feel pressured but overall, waiters running at you and accelerating the service is not such a bad thing after all.

But one thing you might find exasperating is that the entire menu is in French, and the waiters do not understand a single word unless you say to them that you will have a *Farci de Poulet* with the proper accent at least three times.

While frustrating and a bit comical, the lack of language skills of the restaurants staff is compensated by Solo's Asian infused Mediterranean cuisine, and the overall ambiance and

warmth of the high class restaurant which boasts private sitting spaces separated by modular colorful partitioning of the room.

The cuts for the meat are very well chosen, with a broad choice of entrees such as marinated lamb cobb salad, aromatic glazed duck breast, and grilled Nova Scotia halibut. The meat dish *Steak Surprise*, was made of the tenderest meat I have ever tasted. The friend who dined with me had the delightful *Farci de Poulet*, a piece of chicken stuffed with spicy minced meat, and vegetables on the side.

The food at Solo is an "experience for the *papillae*," with every flavor specifically chosen to add unique zest to the overall dish. Thin slivers of green apple scattered in the salad, whose taste was at first surprising, turns into a welcome addition. Needless to say, the presentation of the plate was so aesthetically pleasing that you would catch yourself contemplating this work of art for about two minutes before realizing that the carefully drizzled sauce, geometrically shaped meats, and aerodynamic looking vegetables were made to be eaten.

The Jack Daniel's mousse was exquisite, upholding the perfect balance between chocolate

and alcohol. I am not a fan of alcohol, but as the mouse went down a slight burst of whisky warmed my insides making for a delicious combination.

Prices at Solo are in no way minimal. If, by chance, you happen to be a vague descendant of French aristocracy, Solo is the right place for you. However, if like me, you are a little preoccupied by your finances, don't rush to this restaurant! The cheapest main dish at Solo costs a whopping \$32, culminating in a total of approximately \$60-70 per person. Of course, to ask for flat water means that the waiters will automatically serve you Fiji water, the most expensive one, instead. So if like me, you feel guilty by nature, then you might have a hard time digesting your meal, despite the excellent taste. My advice to you: if you choose to go, go solo!

Solo is located at 550 Madison Avenue. It is open Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. for lunch, Sunday through Thursday from 5 p.m.-11 p.m. for dinner, and 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for Sunday brunch. To become a member or make a reservation, call 212-833-7800, or visit their website at www.solomc.com.

Crazy For These Boys

BY ALANA RUBENSTEIN AND LAURA SHUMAN

Everyone wishes they were that girl brothers Evan and Jaron Lowenstein were crazy for back in 2000. And while many have probably changed their minds about being in love with the twin singers (especially since Evan, 33, is happily married), the love of their music has not gone away. This was never more evident than on Thursday night March 22, 2007, when the brothers played to a sold out crowd at the Shottenstein Cultural Center on the Beren Campus.

The concert, which attracted students from all over the tri-state area and from a number of different colleges, was attended by 360 people and sold out within 48 hours. The concert was organized by Jonah Raskas (YC '07), president of the Yeshiva College Student Association and Alan Kleinerman (YC '07), president of the Yeshiva Student Union. "We're just trying to have fun with the student body," said Raskas of why Evan and Jaron were brought to Yeshiva University (YU). "It is so nice to see students coming from other universities and seeing what

Yeshiva University has to offer," added Kleinerman. "Students can see that the students of YU can have fun while still operating within a dual curriculum."

And fun was definitely had. The opening act was a band called "Reality Addiction." The band, which described its sound as a mix of rock, pop and acoustic music, features two



Yeshiva College students, Noam Green and Dustin Widofsky (YC '09).

The two brothers from Atlanta took the stage next and played an acoustic set for over an hour. Though they were dressed alike, in complementary preppy outfits and baseball caps (Jaron's was facing forward and Evan's was backwards), the similarities may end after their look and sound. Although they appeared as a unit on stage, the Lowenstein brothers are personally in very different places.

The two brothers got

their musical start in Camp Morasha where, according to their father, they began singing and hanging out with boys who were part of the Miami Boys Choir. Yet, because the Lowenstein family, who became *ba'alei teshuva's* (came back to religion) when the boys were nine, lived in Atlanta, Evan and Jaron could not join the famous singing troupe. And though they were always musical, the men didn't imagine having musical careers until they went to Nevei Tzion, a yeshiva in Jerusalem. Before leaving, their father bought them musical instruments and they began composing songs, never looking back as they began their careers in music.

But despite being known as the "frum" singers from Georgia, it is Evan who is currently the more religious of the two. "God bless him," said Evan of his brother, "but we have parted ways [religiously]. I have kids now." He married a woman who he described as "an *aishet chayil*, has two small children who he takes on the road with him. In addition to spending time with his children Evan also makes it a priority to learn for approximately an hour and a half

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Mary Poppins the Musical: Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious...to Say the Least

BY LAURA SHUMAN

The "Mary Poppins" of yesterday is largely a blur full of English accents, the sounds of Julie Andrews, real people in animated settings, and a "spoonful of sugar."

Intermittent in the 1964 Disney film was a mix of reality and animated based characters. Few have ever read the original works of P.L. Travers (Helen Lyndon Goff), who over 70 years ago wrote her first of eight books about a magical English nanny named Mary Poppins on which the film was based.

One need to fast forward only 40 years to discover a relatively new Disney and Cameron Mackintosh musical named "Mary Poppins" which triumphantly fuses character and magic through dance, unlikely characters, and new music, all the while keeping to the spirit of the original screenplay and stories.

A five-year-old child with his grandmother would be the usual suspects at a Disney show, but this musical, which has been playing in Broadway's New Amsterdam Theatre since its New York premiere in November of 2006, is host to anyone and everyone in between. Perhaps it is because if anything could be dubbed "the musical's musical" it would be "Mary Poppins." It is one overflowing with bold colors, a technologically advanced set, unyielding actors, and memorable songs.

"Mary Poppins" comes to the rescue through the chimney after two naughty siblings write an advertisement for a nanny. The show follows through the family dynamics of a high strung father going through a midlife crisis, a pensive mother unsure of her role as a wife, and various other characters both living and dead as the children learn to behave and relationships within the family are mended.

"Mary Poppins," played by Broadway's former "Beauty and the Beast" star Ashley Brown, is an ode to Julie Andrews with a flawless voice of classical training, never losing character even in the oddest of choreographies. Alongside Mary Poppins is Bert, played by the original London

actor Gavin Lee. With effortless precision reminiscent of Fred Astaire, Lee managed to tap dance upside down on the ceiling (attached to a chord of course) just as easily as he slid down the chimney, and just as smoothly as his chim-chimney voice.

The show would not be complete without its experimental and highly unconventional choreography for its famed song "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious." A stomp dance without the stomp, every letter of the word was acted out in some way. Famous choreographer Agnes de Mille would have been impressed with the lush ballet scenes involving silver painted statues coming to life and dancing with the children.

While every good Disney story needs its own Cruella Devil, it is debatable whether dolls coming to life, simulating a court for the naughty children and threatening them to death if they don't behave, is the best way to avoid nightmares. Aside from this slightly evil magic, the magic of "Mary Poppins" kept the audience as wide eyed as the children characters with a bottomless bag of goodies and, best of all, the ability to fly.

If anything, the show was a balance in every respect. Both familiar and surprising, writers juggled between comic panache and sobering songs. Even the set, unlike the bright set in the film, upheld London's reputation for famously grey skies and protruding black chimneys. In contrast to the dull set were the bright colors

of springtime which permeated the stage during the illusion like dancing scenes of statues come to life, Queen Elizabeth, and kite's flying in the air. In the spirit of the words of Mary Poppins, a spoonful of everything

helps this musical go up. *Disney and Cameron Mackintosh's Mary Poppins is currently playing at the New Amsterdam Theatre. Tickets can be purchased at the New Amsterdam Theatre Box Office, 214 West 42nd Street (between Broadway & 8th Avenue) or by calling the Disney on Broadway Hotline at (212) 307-4747.*



Julie Andrews

The Enigma of a Women's Community

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became a reality. Through her orchestrations, she and SCW student Fran Tanner went through significant logistical planning inaugurating the first weekly *mincha minyan* on February 21, 2007 during Club Hour.

While there is something powerful about this prayer experience, I cannot articulately define exactly what makes it feel bizarre to me all the while. As much as this *minyan* affords me a convenient opportunity for *tefillah betzibbur* (communal prayer), it feels somewhat artificial, like we have transplanted a *minyan* in order to have this prayer experience. When praying in that *minyan*, I questioned what it was doing here on our campus. While we obviously have male professors who have the obligation to *daven* in a *minyan*, something felt strange to me about the fact that we had worked so hard to come together with 10 men when we already have a significant community of women here.

The *minyan* raises a variety of questions. Should SCW be a place of communal *tefillah*? We have Aderet El Synagogue at 29th Street, practically on our campus so do we really need to create a *minyan* here? I also wonder whose responsibility it is to create a *minyan*. If students

have been asking the administration for one for years, why did it not become a reality until this semester? Is it because, as a community of women, the concept of creating a *minyan* is not a priority?

According to University Dean of Students Zeldia Braun, SCW students used to gather for communal *tefillah* without a *minyan*. She recalls how from the 1970s through the 1990s, pockets of students gathered in the Brookdale *beit midrash* regularly for *shacharit* and *mincha*. Why did these groups dissolve?

Our community has recently begun to recognize the power of women coming together for *tefillah*. Last year, TAC President Hillary Lewin (SCW '06), current TAC treasurer Atara Lindenbaum (SCW '07), and Nina Bursky-Tammam (SCW '07) initiated women's *slichot* on campus during the *Aseret Yemei Teshuva*, and organized a communal *hallel* on *Rosh Chodesh*. Both of these programs continued this year under the auspices of TAC. Evidently, a body of students recognizes that communal *tefillah* is a both a positive and powerful experience. We should consider reinstating communal prayer on a regular basis on this campus. While *davening* with a *minyan* is nice on Wednesdays, why not come together as the

women of SCW on a more regular basis? The model of community *tefillah* need not be predicated on the presence of 10 men. We can foster a similar experience on our own. Or at least, we should create that as an option.

The second issue that highlights the question of how our community relates to community is the question of a women's *megillah* reading on our campus. For the past two years, student leaders have attempted to facilitate a reading on this campus, and were unsuccessful both times. Although I do not know the details of the entire decision making process, I understand that this year it was Dean Karen Bacon who ultimately made the decision to disallow the reading on campus. Her reason to disallow the reading was not halakhic, but social; it was too liberal a move for a mainstream institution of Jewish learning to facilitate this opportunity officially on campus. SCW's image was at stake.

The dilemma is this: SCW has students from a variety of religious backgrounds, multiple *hashkafot* (views), and varying family practices. As in any situation where there is diversity, there is the challenge of both accommodating people while maintaining a level of comfort for others around them. Nobody was forcing the student body to attend

this *megillah* reading; it was meant to be an option for those students who wished to participate. There was always going to be a traditional reading by a male on campus. Was it right for SCW to disallow an official reading on this campus and thereby not accommodate a segment of the population? I don't think so.

How are *mincha* and *megillah* reading connected? To be honest, I have not yet reached my conclusion. But they both represent the challenges and the opportunities that we face as the students of SCW. They represent questions related to our religious identities as Jewish women, and how they impact on our community. *Mincha* challenges us with questions about communal prayer. Have we developed enough options for prayer on this campus? Perhaps there are students who desire to *daven* with a *minyan* on campus on a regular basis. Others may accept an opportunity for daily *tefillah betzibbur*. *Megillah* reading raises similar questions as they relate to our community. Some students may gravitate to the traditional readings uptown. Others may attend the reading, by a male student, on our campus. Women ought to have the opportunity to read for themselves should they want it. We must celebrate our dynamic community, continue to

develop it, assess it, and nurture it.

I recognize that while we straddle the balance of maintaining traditional Jewish roles, we simultaneously attempt to develop ourselves beyond the ways of the women of our past while maintaining the integrity of the halakhic system. We may not realize it, but our generation offers us the opportunity to be the most educated Jewish women that have ever lived. With the proliferation of women's education, both in secular and Judaic studies, our potential to learn and to achieve is astounding. One need not look further than the women of this institution, engaging in both advanced sciences and advanced Talmudic studies as our models.

We are in the midst of a transformation, and as a woman in this premier Jewish women's college, we set the tone for Jewish women across America. My intention is not to criticize but to raise questions for introspection and discussion. I urge each of us to contemplate these issues and to engage in dialogue about them.

Religious Needs Insufficiently Met

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college.

Secular colleges like Barnard and Brandeis are competition for some of the best and brightest students that SCW should be looking to attract. It should be obvious to SCW that it needs to cater to this vital contingency, to the Ramaz and Midreshet Lindenbaum students, and not only to the more right wing high schools and seminaries. There is no reason to choose between students, be they prospective or current. Why is "Who do we cater to?" even a question? Why can't we cater to everyone?

I understand the concern: they don't want to wear an unbecoming label, and then have the anxiety of how others will react to it. I even understand the reluctance towards pushing the envelope. The solution, however, is not to alienate current and potential students. YU should be confident in its position of the premiere Modern Orthodox institution. It should not constantly be looking over its shoulder because it does not need to. SCW should be setting the standards for Modern Orthodox Jewish women, and should be seizing the opportunity to promote dif-

ferent approaches and *hashkafot* (views) within the wide spectrum of Modern Orthodoxy. No student is forced to do anything that makes her uncomfortable; the options do all need to be there.

The SCW administration needs to set aside its reluctances, stop looking over its shoulder, and start catering to all of its students. The Wednesday *mincha minyan* is a start, but why not have *mincha* every day? If 10 male professors teach 9:00 a.m. classes, why not ask them to make an 8:15 a.m. *shacharit minyan*? (They'll probably hit less traffic). Why not have *ma'ariv* in the winter? Why not have a women's *megilla* reading? I'm not talking about pushing a feminist agenda, but about incorporating within our religious environment practices which are widely accepted within many Modern Orthodox circles. Certainly this is not something that SCW needs to be afraid of.

I am hurt that my needs are being neglected in favor of someone else's. Why is any other student and her seminary better than me and mine? It is offensive to have administrators tell you that their school's image comes at the expense of your religious expression. An administration with this

philosophy is not properly catering to its students, and this makes such a philosophy unacceptable. If SCW wants to be a comfortable place for its students and a welcoming place for its prospective students, the issues of religious expression need to be seriously reexamined and reevaluated.

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Arts Festival

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fruits of projects that took an entire semester to complete. Art, though considered both a liberal art and an intellectual discipline, is something which requires not only the technical ability to mimic an image onto paper, but the ability to create a fine work warranting appreciation, observation, examination and explication.

The painstaking labor spent in the art studio, the hours put into every brushstroke, stitch, click of the mouse, and pen mark were rewarded by this program. It gave long overdue recognition to the talent which is contained

within the confines of the art studio and shows the world what talent these people have.

One student reflected on the significance of displaying ones art properly and professionally. "We like to bring people up to the studio at school, but it is also important to mount things and make them look professional, especially for the artists," said Racheli Davies (SCW '07) adding that the importance stems from "making them (the artists) feel good about themselves and their work."

Evan and Jaron

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a day and has been doing *daf yomi* for the last three and a half years.

"I think that I've grown in observance since I got in the music business," he said, despite also saying that "the music business has never been worse." Yet, Evan was quick to differentiate between the actual music and the business, saying "music has never been better."

And Evan and Jaron's music is no exception. The crowd was not disappointed. As the guys from Reality Addiction wrote on their myspace page after the concert: "Great guys and great talent- it was an honor to play with them and crazy for this girl is actually not their only good song."

Evaluation of Curriculum Underway

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Bacon.

Once the committee makes recommendations, "we bring it to the student body to get some reactions," said Dean Bacon. The students don't make any final decisions but their input is considered. The ideas are then presented to the full faculty. Any curricular changes implemented will not affect students operating under the old system, but students will be given the option to switch over to the newer requirements.

"It's a very open committee," enthused Dean Orlian. "A lot of ideas are brought forth. We discuss both the concepts and the language that should be used [to describe the new curriculum]."

Hopefully "the committee will make more rapid progress once we reconvene after Pesach," Dean Bacon anticipated. "We're still trying to articulate our goals," admitted Dean Orlian. After the establishment

of a new curricular direction, "we will zero in on specific disciplines and how they relate or help us achieve the goals that are desirable," she outlined.

The inter-disciplinary committee is comprised of both senior and junior faculty, including Dr. Harvey Babich, professor of biology, Dr. Terry DiLorenzo, professor of psychology, Dr. Anatoly Frenkel, professor of physics, Dr. Ephraim Kanarfogel, chairman of the Rebecca Ivry Department of Jewish Studies, Dr. Elizabeth Lazaroff, professor of education, Dr. Joseph Luders, professor of political science, Dr. David Shatz, professor of philosophy, and Dr. Cynthia Wachtell, director of the S. Daniel Abraham Honors Program.

CJF Film Festival Lacks Women

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'07) produced their movie, "Embracing the Dichotomy," based on a conversation with Dr. Normann Lamm, chancellor of YU. The film touched on Dr. Lamm's past accomplishments at YU, as well as his visions for its future.

Perhaps the most unique of all the films was the film "Chazak" (pronounced Chazack), the inspirational story of Zack Pollack, a 13 year-old who suffers from cerebral palsy. Produced by Richard Lewis (SSSB '07), Josh Graber (YC '08), and Matthew Cherny (YC '08), the movie was narrated by singer Avraham Fried, who also attended the film's screening.

For Graber, the decision to make the film about his Zack, his camper, was an easy one. "I consider him a close friend, not a just a camper," Graber said of his 2-year relationship with Zack. "He is one of the most amazing people I have ever met. Even though he is in a wheelchair, he

is just as normal as any other 13-year-old kid. Watching him overcome the obstacles in his way inspires me on a daily basis."

Zack, along with his parents and younger sister, were eager to attend the screening of the film. "It was a beautiful movie, very well made," commented Zack's father. "I was very impressed technically. What a good job they did."

Rabbi Kenneth Brander, dean of the CJF saw the film competition as another leadership opportunity for YU students. He described the film competition as "a cutting edge program which is appropriate for this generation."

"The CJF works to create leadership opportunities for students in order to gain the capacity to be future leaders," he explained. "For students to work on films and develop, in a sense is what CJF is all about." Elaborating on the importance of diverse opportunities, Rabbi Brander proudly asserted, "at the same time we (CJF) are running

kollelim and teaching semikha students, we are also using the most creative mediums to express our Judaism. These films represent those ideals."

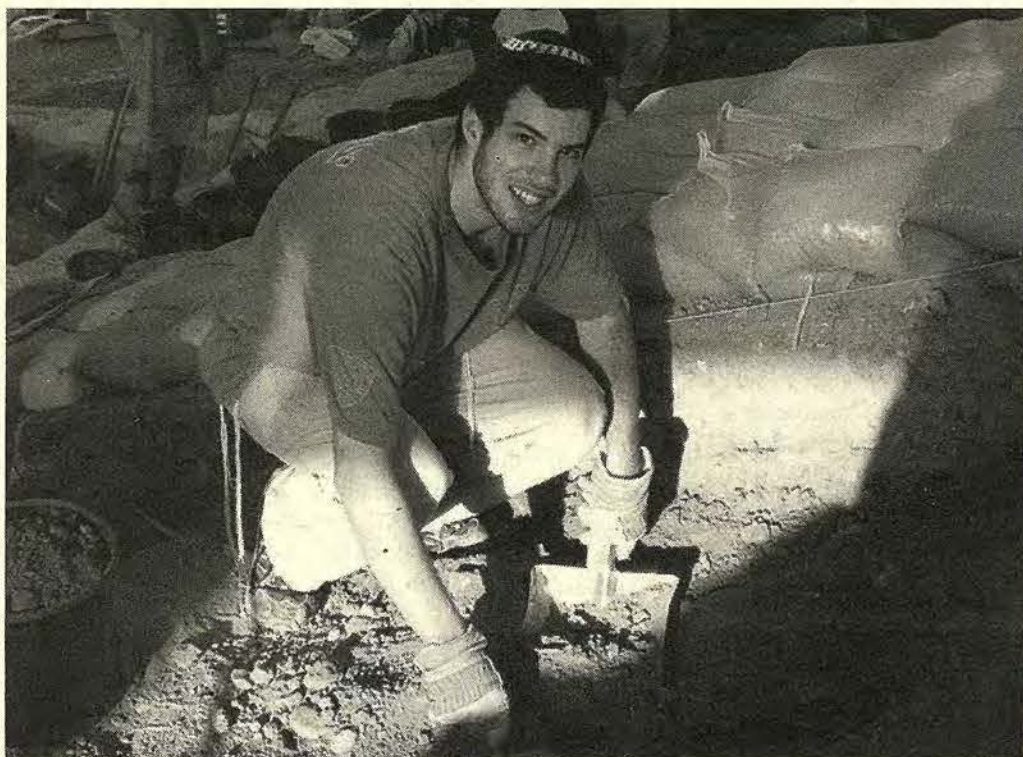
Jordana Schoor, director of Special Projects for the CJF, highlighted the uniqueness of the film competition. "A lot of our programs focus on leadership in an academic sense," she said. "The film competition aims to embrace the more creative, artistic sides of students."

While the overall feeling amongst the students was positive, one female who wished to remain anonymous voiced her concerns. "I was disappointed at the lack of female participation in the festival," she noted. "All the movies were made by YC students, and all about male heroes. The festival inspired me to make a movie next year about a Jewish heroine."

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YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

SCDC Performs Made Up

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was the audience who could not keep up with Hecht's short sentences and building plots. Hecht has a raw talent for writing, but he has overestimated the audience's ability to concretize information. He just needed to slow down.

The audience also admitted that it was fun to have an original play written by a cur-

rent student at Yeshiva College. "I think it is fantastic that YU places such an emphasis on the importance of the arts," remarked Shulamit Cohen (SCW '09), adding that "it is great that the dramatic society encouraged a student to write an original play, and that we have the opportunity to have cultural events while we are students at YU."

Single Life in Washington Heights

continued from page 7

from seminary and graduate college and move to Washington Heights- and remain single!

Without the belief that you will one day find your One and Only, what gets you out of bed in the morning? Way back when, Folger's had a sing-song slogan that addressed this issue: "The best part of waking up is Folger's in your cup!" And as Rabbi Dovid Orlofsky once commented, "If the best part of waking up in the morning is your cup of coffee, boy do you have a problem!"

He's right. But so were the advertising execs who masterminded the Folger's coffee enterprise. We all need a reason to get up in the morning. Of course, we hope that that reason is a boyfriend, a husband, a True Love- not a cup of Folger's coffee, or even a Starbucks' cinnamon dolce latte.

The rabbis of the Talmud

knew this. Long before Charles Darwin was a speck in the primordial soup, those rabbis figured out that the success of the homo sapien lay not in survival of the fittest, but in belief, faith and the hope of a better tomorrow.

So is there really a heavenly voice that predetermines your soul mate from your time within the womb? Maybe. Maybe not. The veracity of the Talmud's story is irrelevant in practicality. What matters is the message behind the story; that is the message that the rabbis wanted us to live with, the message that keeps us going when we see our friends getting married and wonder when it is my turn? Belief in Love, and hope for a better tomorrow. That's what is going to get us out of bed in the morning.

Agree? Disagree? Log onto <http://thesickcycle.blogspot.com/> and share your thoughts.

SCIENCE AND HEALTH

Powerful Poison in a Beautiful Bouquet

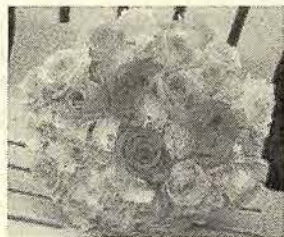
BY RACHEL-ALI ELBAZ

The sight and scent of a richly colored floral bouquet evokes sweetness and love. Flowers can bring joy to the sick, peace to an argument, and color to a cold winter day. While the beauty of a flower is often breathtaking, the reality is not in any way romantic. The truth is that in cut flowers there is a dichotomy between beauty and danger.

The last thing one probably considers when receiving a gift of flowers is the pesticides they have most likely been treated with. The reality of it is that by the time they have been delivered they have most likely been sprayed, rinsed, and coated in an array of potentially lethal chemicals. The toxic application has perhaps occurred in the lush savannah surrounding Bogota, the capital of Columbia. Many of the chemicals used are probable human carcinogens, highly toxic to fish, and known to contaminate groundwater. It is from here that 62% of the cut flowers in the United States originate.

While the cut flower industry provides an alternative to growing coca and is a viable alterna-

tive to working in Columbia's most famous illegal export of cocaine, it puts more than 100,000 employees at risk. Most of these individuals are single mothers who have no power and no choice. They must earn a living. Another victim at risk is the environment of Columbia.



In response to this serious problem, the flower exporters association of Columbia has launched Floverde. The purpose of this group is to ensure that the cut flower industry encourages health, social, and environmental conditions that will encourage the international market to place their trust and loyalty in them as a supplier. The value of reducing or shifting the heavy use of toxic chemicals to less toxic alternatives lies in their inherent risk to workers, nearby residents, and the ecosystem. Floverde has successfully reduced pesticides by

38% since 1998. This means that today there are still an average of 97 kilograms of active ingredient for every hectare of land per year used to grow and treat the flowers.

Unfortunately, 36% of the toxic chemicals applied in 2005 were still listed as extremely or highly toxic by the World Health Organization. Columbia has absolutely no regulations with regard to pesticide use inside greenhouses. Naturally, toxicity levels tend to rise within the greenhouse setting.

Even with the great strides Floverde has made, accidents continue to happen. Recently, two hundred flower workers were taken to the hospital after fainting and developing sores inside their mouths. This mass-poisoning was caused by pesticides. The company responsible was only fined \$5,770.

Causal links between chemicals used in this industry and individual illnesses are difficult to prove due to the fact that chronic pesticide use has not been studied sufficiently. Harvard School of Public Health has

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The Bare Bones of Osteoporosis

BY RENA KUKIN

As the world embraces its new health craze, masses of people are becoming increasingly aware of ways to stay healthy, as well as steps they can take to prevent certain diseases. It seems evident that certain individuals are more prone to specific diseases than others; one of which is osteoporosis. It significantly affects one group more than another based on gender, and is common in America. More than half of the 10 million people who suffer from this disease are women.

As the name suggests, osteoporosis means porous bones. As a result of these holes, bones become fragile and often break. This is dangerous because patients may not be aware of their osteoporosis until they suffer an excruciating fracture. This often occurs since the disease begins silently and can develop for years until there is considerable damage, whether it is a bone collapsing or cracking.

While any part of the body can be affected, fractures are typically in the wrist, hip, and spine. Each fracture is difficult and requires serious surgery and often therapy. Besides severe pain, injuries can have significant effects on one's future as they can cause irreversible physical disabilities.



Osteoporosis causes bones to become fragile and break.

There are a variety of factors which cause people to be more susceptible to osteoporosis. They include being female, being Caucasian, having a small frame, family history, cigarette smoking,

alcohol consumption, minimal exercise, lack of calcium, and certain medications. While some of these factors are beyond ones control, there are many things that can be done to decrease the risk of this disease. It is imperative that people take care of themselves.

Some of these steps include monitoring one's diet to ensure that adequate amounts of nutri-

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Asteroid Armageddon

BY YUDITT DAVIDOVITTS

Ben Affleck and Liv Tyler may reunite to make a sequel to their 1998 hit movie "Armageddon." The sequel would take place in 2036 and be called "Apophis," after the asteroid that is set to approach earth twice, once in 2029 and then again in 2036. Asteroids are a class of astronomical objects that drift in the solar system and orbit around the sun.

Asteroid discovery has developed drastically over the past 200 years. Until 1998, they were observed through a four step process. First, the sky would be photographed repeatedly over several days. Then, the same region of the sky would be studied for any body in orbit around the sun. Once a moving body was identified its location would be measured. Finally, the locations and times of observations would be computed in order to identify the orbit.

Interest in identifying asteroids has increased because of the realization that asteroids can collide with Earth. That, and the observation in 1994 of a comet crashing into Jupiter, helped launch efficient systems that consist of cameras and computers

connected to telescopes. These kinds of automated systems have been responsible for discovering the majority of asteroids since 1998.

In order to understand the hazards of near earth objects, the object is rated according to the Torino Scale. This scale uses a color code to rate the object. White is used to identify objects with zero likelihood of colliding with earth, small objects that burn up in the atmosphere, and infrequent meteors that rarely cause damage. Green represents objects that are unlikely to cause collisions, and which, with con-



tinued observation, will eventually lead to a reassigned level zero. Yellow represents objects with a 1% or greater chance of causing collisions and possible destruction. Orange represents threatening objects that may or may not lead to global catastrophe. The most serious rating on the Torino



"Armageddon"

scale is red, which represents a certain collision causing localized or global catastrophe.

99942 Apophis holds the record for the highest Torino rating. It was the first object to reach level 2 (lower yellow level) and was later upgraded to level 4 (higher yellow level). Apophis was discovered on June 19, 2004 in Arizona, and was later rediscovered on December 18, 2004 in Australia. The number 99942 was given after its orbit was calculated and the name Apophis was given soon after. Further inspection indicates that it is expected to pass Earth on April 13, 2029 with no possibility of impact. On that date, it will be bright enough to be seen by the naked eye from rural areas, and visible with binoculars from most other locations.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration initially estimated that Apophis would release the equivalent of 1480 megatons of TNT if it impacted earth. Such a collision would be detrimental to thousands of square kilometers of Earth but is unlikely to sustain long lasting global effects.

Yet, there remains uncertainty about its orbit because of a gravitational deflection that may occur during its 2029 encounter. Because of this uncertainty, Apophis retained a Torino rating of 1 (green level) until August 2006, at which point it was downgraded to level 0 (white



level). The probability of an April 13, 2036 impact is estimated at 1 in 45,000. Another possible impact date has been determined for 2037, but its probability is 1 in 12.3 million.

Despite the small chance of impact, a \$50,000 prize for best plan to track the asteroid has been

offered. Deflection strategies are being developed in case the asteroid changes from its current course in which it will pass Earth to a trajectory that will have it directed toward Earth. The most common suggestion is to fire nuclear missiles at the asteroid to vaporize it. This idea was rejected in the 1998 movie. The major problem with this idea is that a fragment from the asteroid itself could impact Earth. Another suggestion is to detonate nuclear devices along the asteroid, altering its path to avoid impact. The asteroid could also be deflected by sending a spaceship to collide with it. A spaceship could also be used to deflect the asteroid by hovering over it, pulling the asteroid towards it and into a non threatening orbit thus sparing Earth from enduring Armageddon.

Colony Collapse Disorder

BY RACHEL-ALI ELBAZ

Honeybee colonies all across the United States are dying. This is threatening the honey supply, the livelihood of beekeepers, and crops that rely on bees for pollination. This serious ailment has recently been named Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD).

Colony deaths have been reported in at least 22 States. Most colonies are comprised of about 20,000 bees in the winter and 60,000 in the summer. As problematic as CCD is to the business and financial viability of the beekeeper, the greatest problem lies in the threat to fruit-bearing trees. Flowering plants, which account for more than three quarters of the world's food crop, rely on pollinators. Bees are major pollinators so the decimation of great numbers of them must be taken very seriously.

A collapsed colony has a complete absence of adult bees. There is little or no build up of dead bees in the colonies or in front of the colonies. But, there is capped brood in the colonies which serves as good stores of both honey and bee bread. The

food stores are not immediately robbed by other bees as would happen in the normal death of a colony. Additionally, hive pests such as the wax moth and small hive beetle delay their attack noticeably. When the colony is in the process of collapsing there is an insufficient workforce to maintain the brood. The cluster is reluctant to consume feed like sugar syrup and protein supplements.



Researchers and scientists are working tirelessly to find a solution to this crisis. Included in this group are individuals from Pennsylvania State University (Penn State), the University of Montana, and the Federal Department of Agriculture. Their research has made some of the stranger aspects of this disorder apparent. For example, the bodies of affected bees lie a great distance from the hive. Worker bees have sometimes been observed carrying the bodies out of the hive. Since no decaying remains are found close to colonies affected by CCD, it is believed that most bees departed from the hive prior to death.

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Get That Shaker Off the Table!

BY GRACE CHARLES

The American Medical Association (AMA) recently released some recommendations concerning a common ingredient in the American diet. You are probably guessing that the AMA would be alarmed over an artificial sweetener or preservative, or some other relatively new and oddly-named compound that we humans have recently added to our items of consumption. That would make sense. However, the AMA is surprisingly making its efforts against a very well known and popular ingredient: sodium.

The main goal of the AMA is to reduce the prevalence of cardiovascular disease in the United States. The disease is the number one killer of Americans. Research has shown that the majority of Americans consume two to three times the healthy amount of sodium. Excess sodium in your diet greatly increases your chance of developing hypertension (high blood pressure), heart disease, and stroke.

About 75%- 80% of daily sodium intake comes from processed and restaurant foods. Next time you're at the supermarket, check the nutrition facts on that can of matzo ball soup before adding it to your cart. One serving usually contains about half of

your daily recommended sodium allowance. And we all know that no one has only one "serving," that is, 1/2 cup, of matzo ball soup! Reduced sodium varieties are available, but be aware that even they can have rather high sodium content.



It may be difficult for you to find a truly low sodium alternative for many products, including that matzo ball soup. Practicing cardiologist and AMA Board Member J. James Rohack, MD, said, "We hope these recommendations will encourage food manufacturers and restaurants to modify their current practices of adding unhealthy amounts of sodium to their products." Dr. Rohack also stressed that restaurants are great offenders in the overuse of salt. Salt makes food tastier, and you generally go to a restaurant that has tasty food. It's clearly in the restaurant's best interest to have high sodium levels in its dishes, but it's not in your interest. If the next time you go out you tell your waiter that

you want no salt in your dish, you will taste a noticeable difference.

The AMA gave several important recommendations. One of the most alarming on the list is the association's request for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to revoke the "generally recognized as safe" (GRAS) status of salt. This would mean the FDA would need to develop regulatory measures to limit sodium in processed and restaurant foods. The AMA also called for a minimum 50% reduction in the amount of sodium in processed foods, fast food products, and restaurant meals to be achieved over the next decade. The association would also like to initiate a campaign to educate consumers about the benefits of long-term, moderate reductions in sodium intake. The AMA also hopes to discuss with the FDA ways to improve labeling to assist consumers in understanding the amount of sodium contained in processed food products. Foods high in sodium would be marked with warnings.

The AMA's recommendations will ideally bring about better informed consumers, an overall reduction of sodium intake in the American diet, and, ultimately, lower the incidence of hypertension and cardiovascular disease in this country.

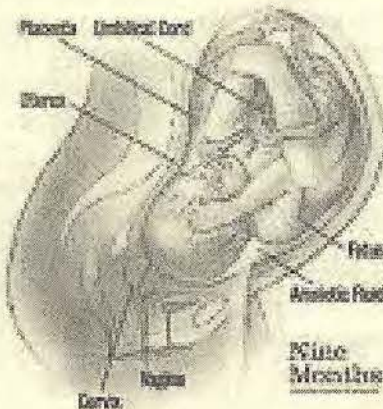
Ectopic Pregnancy Endangers Fetus

BY CHANIE LADAEW

The meaning of ectopic is "out of place." In reference to pregnancy, it occurs when an egg is implanted outside of the uterus. Normally, the egg passes through the fallopian tubes into the uterus and implants in the uterine wall. However, when there is a blockage due to an infection or inflammation, the egg remains in the fallopian tube. The egg can also implant in the ovary, abdomen, or the cervix. Unlike the uterus, these areas do not have enough space and nurturing tissue for a pregnancy to develop.

Ectopic pregnancies, also known as tubal pregnancies, can never result in birth. Incidence of ectopic pregnancy is highest for women who are between 35 and 44 years of age. A history of Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID), a previous ectopic pregnancy, surgery on a fallopian tube, infertility problems or medication to stimulate ovulation also increase a woman's chances of having an ectopic pregnancy. It is difficult to diagnose an

ectopic pregnancy because the symptoms often resemble those of a normal early pregnancy. It includes missed periods, breast tenderness, nausea, vomiting, or frequent urination. The only difference is that one might feel pain in their pelvis, abdomen, or, in extreme cases, the shoulder or neck. Additionally, symptoms such as vaginal spotting or bleeding, dizziness or fainting and low blood pressure are signs of an ectopic pregnancy.



Human chorionic gonadotropin (HCG) is a hormone that is produced by the placenta. HCG appears in the blood and urine of a woman as early as 10 days after conception and its levels double every two days for the first 10 weeks of pregnancy. If HCG levels are lower than expected for your stage of pregnancy, a pelvic exam will be given to locate the areas causing pain, to check for an enlarged pregnant uterus, or to find any masses in the abdomen. Furthermore, an ultrasound examination, which shows

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Uncovering The Mystery of Twinning

BY OLIVIA MATHIAS

There is a certain wonder surrounding the magical world of twinning. How does it happen and to whom? Although it may seem like a miracle, it is not by mere chance that a woman ends up with two eggs. The veil of mystery has recently been lifted by Dr. Gary Steinman, a local



Tiki and Rondell Barber

Jewish OBGYN from Queens. Dr. Steinman has done research to prove that the likelihood of twins is affected by a woman's height and even diet. There are outside elements that can effect which women are more likely to bear twins (and even higher multiples). Both nature and nurture play a role in the twinning process.

Over the last thirty years, the number of twin births has nearly tripled. The rise seems to have come with the trend of women wanting to have kids later in life and the introduction of in vitro fertilization (IVF). Even after doctors began limiting the number of embryos transferred in the course of IVF, the twin birthrate

continued to rise.

Observations dating as far back as 1877 show that taller women are more likely to twin. The national average for a woman's height is just less than 5-foot-four. The majority of women with twins are five-foot-five and taller. This is not to say that women who are shorter cannot have twins, but the probability is greater in tall women. The reason for this is that their insulin-like growth factor (IGF) is higher. IGF is a protein mainly secreted by the liver as a result of stimulation by growth hormone. This protein stimulates the ovaries to produce more eggs. This study however, only pertains to fraternal twins, two embryos that come from different sperm and egg.

There is also a non-hereditary propagation of IGF: eating dairy products. Women who con-



Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen

sume large amounts of dairy products are more likely to give birth to twins than women who consume little or no dairy products. This is due to the bovine

growth hormone that is injected into a cow to increase her milk production artificially. It persists in a woman's body, by way of digested food (particularly milk) and stimulates the liver to produce more IGF. The high levels of this protein come naturally for tall women, but women of average height can eat more dairy products in order to produce IGF.



Tia and Tamara Mowry

There is a 10% increase in the IGF level of women who drink a glass of milk daily for twelve weeks. Who would have thought that drinking a glass of milk every day would keep you healthy and increase your chances of having twins? Researchers found that the omnivores and vegetarians were five times more likely to have fraternal twins than the vegans.

Doctors are anticipating that it will be possible for a woman to go to her doctor to find out her chances of twinning by testing her IGF level. As research continues to develop it is expected that much of the enigma revolving giving birth to twins will be revealed.

New York's Oldest Synagogue

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turn of the 20th century, the congregants battled for mixed seating. "It was a prominent congregant, Supreme Court justice-to-be Benjamin Lopez Cardozo, who argued to keep the seating separate because he believed that there was a tremendous value in holding on to traditions as they have always been kept in places of worship," noted Rabbi Angel. With Cardozo's appeal, the controversy died down and the seating in the synagogue remained separate.

The identity of the community has certainly evolved over the years. The synagogue has grown tremendously in the past century, and it now has somewhere between 500 and 600 member families, in addition to over 700 "Friends of Shearith Israel." "In some ways, due to our history we are not a regular congregation today," said Rabbi Angel. "For one thing, we're 50% Sephardic and 50% Ashkenazic. Some of our congregants are Orthodox, as we are an Orthodox community, while some are more Sephardic than Orthodox and just like to come. Some people live in the neighborhood; some drive in from the suburbs. Some people just think that the services are

pretty and the history is interesting." The congregation serves a different purpose and has a different identity in the eyes of its various members. This makes the rabbi's responsibilities span a much broader range than the typical pulpit rabbi's job entails.



Rabbi Hayim Angel

"We have a strong standard that we're Orthodox, but at the same time the rabbi has to be extremely flexible in dealing with congregants, recognizing that some of them are on a path and are slowly moving towards the whole package of being religious, while others may never want to accept the whole package," explained Rabbi Angel. "The rabbi of a congregation as diverse as ours can't be judgmental and just has to be welcoming to everyone, although in terms of our services and religious stance from the top, it's clear that we

have a standard of keeping mitzvot and halakha."

The present community is very strongly linked to its past. There's a high degree of continuity and historical pride. Although there is currently no museum on site (the archives from the past 350 years are boxed in New Jersey), there is much discussion on how to present the vibrant history of the community to the greater public. Documents in the archives range from the minutes of the 18th century board meetings to the monthly newsletters from the 19th century. Although a museum may not exist, the community's history is well-preserved in its continuity with the present. "Our centuries-old *sifrei Torah* are still kosher, and we still use them in our services," said Rabbi Angel. "We're proud of that. We don't want them to be sitting behind glass on display. We cherish that our historical heritage is still very much alive."

Students can visit Congregation Shearith Israel, located at 8 W. 70th St and Central Park West, for weekly Shabbat services at 8:15 a.m. Additionally, tours of the synagogue are available and may be scheduled by calling the office at (212) 873-0300.

Underground Heights

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all about. Is it about community? Religious truth? Finding meaning in life? Finding love? Having fun with friends? I think for many of us, those things do work together, and the question is whether they can work together successfully in a public forum."

For the most part, UH, with a total of about 13,000 hits, has been successful in many ways. The creator of the blog asserts that UH has affected her personal relationships. She recalls that she found her roommate of half a year on the blog site. She also enjoys when people approach her about things they've read on the blog. But, Rindner explained, "perhaps even more meaningful has been the depth it's added to relationships I already have. Some of the most interesting conversations sparked by the blog have taken place over e-mail and in person long afterwards."

The former Monsey resident states that she usually checks UH about twice daily and looks forward to reading new comments. However, there are occasionally comments posted that Rindner does not appreciate. Some of the undesirable posts are those written by people who log on under fictitious names to comment in

response to Migdal Or. According to Rindner, they say obnoxious things that they wouldn't dare say in public.

Despite these rude remarks, Rachel Berger, one of three roommates to host the first Migdal Or *minyan* a few weeks ago, credits UH with building "a sense of community here in Washington Heights for an artsy, thoughtful bunch of post YU grads."

Rindner states that she and Deutsch started UH "because [they] thought it would be fun to start a community blog." UH describes itself on the web as "an ironically named blog about some relatively interesting people in and around Washington Heights, and, to be fair, well beyond that area."

Now a resident of the Upper West Side, Rindner falls into the "well beyond that area" category. She asserts that it's worthwhile to run the UH blog and also finds it a constructive way to keep in touch with friends. "It's really exciting to think what kind of ripple effect even a teeny dip into the public sphere can have," she observed.

YU Students Fight to Enact Holocaust Bill

continued from page 10

course is not just a lecture on American Politics, he is not only teaching principles, but also synthesizing political theory with practice. Students will be able to look back on the course, and view it as a memorable, empowering experience, as opposed to an average introductory class.

Students of YU are lobbying specific congressional districts, namely those focused on Jewish, education and human rights, in order to obtain more support for the bill. Letters are being written to representatives around the country; students have started groups on Facebook, and petitions have been circulated to raise awareness about the bill. "It is amazing to see how students have really risen to the challenge," commented Luders.

At this point, the bill has been passed through the House, but lobbyists are still waiting for an update from the Senate. For now, YU students are trying to mobilize more people to write to members of subcommittees of their districts, such as their local schools and synagogues, as well as non-Jewish organizations that would have an interest in the bill, such as the Anti-Defamation League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The purpose

of the petitions, postcards and communication is to urge our representatives to support the bill in Congress.

"The Holocaust is something that is close to nearly every individual's heart who attends Yeshiva University," said Amber Sved (SCW '09), a student in Luders's class. "Each person feels a strong connection to the event, which is why there is a lot of student activism and passion in this project. We are looking to promote tolerance in the United States amongst this next generation of youth, and remind them of the importance of telling our grandparents' stories."

As Jews, we have an obligation to "never forget," explained Eliana Gordon (SSSB '09). "We must also never forget that those who do not learn from history are bound to repeat it. We cannot be hypocritical. We need to contribute to the global community, and not be near-sighted; as Jews, we need to take the lessons learned from our painful history, and use them as empowering vehicles for change in the world."

Supporters of Holocaust denial in the United States as well as around the world have appallingly increased in number; in the United States, the movement has been publicized in recent years primarily through the publication of editorial-style

advertisements in college campus newspapers. They call for "open debate on the Holocaust," not to question the fact of Nazi anti-Semitism, but to question whether this hatred resulted in an organized killing program. A more recent ad has even questioned the authenticity of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC. While this may seem completely nonsensical to students of YU, who carry the indelible memories and truths of the Holocaust, these ads have been published in several dozen student newspapers on campuses across the country. As many are aware, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, president of Iran, hosted a conference on Holocaust denial and called for the State of Israel to be "wiped off the map." It is therefore imperative to support Holocaust education before these dreadful notions become accepted truths. Moral citizens and Jews have an obligation to spread the message and not let the souls who perished be forgotten.

To express your support for the bill, call (202) 225-5161.

Write a brief message to your representative in the House or to your senator, urging to bring H.R. 1092: Simon Wiesenthal Holocaust Education Assistance Act up for a vote.

Women's Kollel in Teaneck

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Torah during the summer.

Chavie Shwarzbard (SCW '05) has been a member of the Atlanta Community Kollel for the past three summers. She described how many participants really felt part of many of the community's families. They maintain the close connection throughout the year and are frequently invited to many of the community's *smachot*. "We learned in their shul and ate in their homes," she explained. "It's really a community oriented kollel, they support it both financially and socially." Schwarzbard described that a normal day started off with *minyan* in the morning followed by breakfast, *chavruta*, and *shiurim* throughout the day. During the evening they ran programming for the members of the shul. The women coordinated many *shiurim* and study programs focused specifically on women's interests.

The mission statement of the CJF dictates that "its mission is to convene the vast intellectual resources of YU, enabling to shape enrich and inspire the contemporary Jewish community." Rabbi Kenneth Brander, dean of the CJF believes that "the winter and summer kollelim are smaller ways to achieve those goals."

Over 40 communities have requested full time kollelim from the CJF in the past six months. It is a testimony to how successful the YU kollelim have been in reaching out to and invigorating communities across America.

In addition, the kollel programs give the students the opportunity to realize their responsibilities to the Jewish community and simultaneously build and infuse Jewish communities with the resources of Torah and leadership that YU has to offer. Rabbi Brander explained that within the context of those broader goals it is "very appropriate to give women an opportunity to grow in their learning and celebrate the values of Torah."

The program has clearly been successful thus far, as both the participants in the kollel program and the community members are expressing how much they appreciate the opportunity. "The best thing about the kollel is the opportunity to sit immersed in Torah for six weeks of our summer," explained Shwarzbard. "We really feel like a part of the Atlanta community while we are there and even after we leave. That's why we keep going back!"

Academic Advisement Upgrades

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Schechter. "This year, we have already hired people for pre-nursing advisement and for general pre-med advisement as well."

Although the academic advisors strongly encourage students to come see them in person, many students postpone going until they realize they are required to have a junior or senior check, resulting in an overload of appointments only during peak times of the semester. To guarantee that every student will be taking the necessary classes in a timely fashion, the advisors have decided to add additional services to their website. The goal of the additional features of the website is to give students a better understanding of the requirements for each major as well as exit requirements for graduation.

Starting next year, there will be live web casts featuring one of the advisors explaining course requirements by using a power point demonstration. Also available online will be forms based on a student's personal transcript,

where students will be able to clearly see which courses they still need to complete. "There will also be semester planning forms which map out the semesters and coursework based on the student's major," Schechter explained. In addition, if a student needs to speak with an advisor at a time when all the appointments are booked, there will be certain hours during the day where students can send an IM (instant message) to advisors to get immediate answers to their questions.

"We don't want students to come to us only when they have a problem," said Schechter. "By adding these new programs and by upgrading our current system, we hope to encourage even more people to utilize our services."

feels that "we're very close to the end. We're working with the city to do it." Though it does seem promising, Rosengarten did emphasize that this project is still in the planning stages and is definitively not a done deal.

In that spirit, Rosengarten was reluctant to disclose information about the layout of the 35th Street dormitory. He informed The Observer that any decision about layout is still tentative. "We will come up with something that makes sense," Rosengarten retorted. "And it may even end up that we don't purchase the building back because it won't work. We will try our best though to work within the confines of the building to do the best job we can."

Though Rosengarten similarly did not want to divulge any final decisions regarding what types of specialty stores, such as a food store, *beit midrash*, or work-out room, if any, would be built into layout of the 35th Street dormitory, he did inform The

Observer that this dorm would be the smallest of all the dormitories. Therefore, there would probably not be very many specialized rooms. Nevertheless, Rosengarten assured that they would try their best, within the legal confines that the city determines must be followed, to make sure 35th Street would have some amenities.

The advantages to a new housing addition are clear. But the question must be asked: could a new 35th Street dormitory affect the current housing situation negatively? In particular, how will this impact the Independent Housing Program (IHP)? When President Joel initially announced the prospect of a new dormitory, he mentioned in almost the same breath that the university is not thrilled about women living separate from the SCW community without sufficient supervision, as they feel the women living in IHP apartments are. It thus seems that the 35th Street dorm option would be created not only to create more livable space for undergraduate

women, but also to a foster greater unity that they feel is being inhibited by the IHP program. "There is a good chance that it will replace some of the Independent Housing apartments," said Rosengarten. "It will help consolidate, but I don't think it will eliminate them altogether." Rachel Kraut, director of Residence Life, likewise commented that though they don't know for sure what they'll be getting rid of and what they will keep, she "believes in Residence Life building a community." Until everything is set in stone though, "there is nothing to say," Kraut remarked.

With the housing applications already distributed and application deadlines around the corner, it seems unlikely that the 35th Street dormitory will be a viable option for next year's fall semester housing program. However, it is still an exciting prospect and "answers will come soon," assured Rosengarten. "It has been my feeling from the beginning that this could work out and be really helpful."

Possible Addition of a 35th Street Dormitory

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Beyond 34th Street

continued from page 11

city than any other place in Central Park. It's a little bit less crowded, and if no other section of the park offers respite from urban masses and the urban skyline, The Ramble does. Allow yourself to wander through, as none of the paths here wend in straight lines, and find your way across until you hit the lake.

6. Boathouse or Bow Bridge on the Lake— If you feel like spending some money and getting on the water, you can rent a rowboat or kayak from the Loeb Boathouse located on the far east side of the lake. If you choose to remain on land, you can walk around the lake and admire the boats from a distance. Look for the very scenic Bow Bridge, and as you leave the lake, turn to your left to find the Alice sculpture.



7. Alice Sculpture- After touring the lake, cross East Drive and walk straight to find the first sculpture placed inside the park. This bronze tribute to childhood depicts many of the famous characters from "Alice's Adventures

in Wonderland" in larger-than-life detail. You too can pretend to be a child and climb onto the mushroom and into Alice's lap. Or instead, you could stand from the side and watch dozens of children having a marvelous time.

8. Model Boat Pond— Directly past the Alice sculpture is a small pool of conservatory water, which is populated by numerous ducks and seagulls, as well as a fleet of remote-controlled sailboats that you can rent for a small fee.

9. Bethesda Fountain, Terrace and the Mall— The only section in the park which was designated as a formal space for carriages, processions and socializing was the area of the Mall. If you take a right from the Model Boat Pond, you'll find the culmination of the Mall, the Bethesda Fountain, just as you approach the bottom shore of the lake. Surrounding the fountain and the terrace you are likely to find some of the park's finest street entertainment. Dancers, musicians, and skaters all tend to congregate here, generating a festival-like ambience. If you proceed past the collection of park benches, you'll find the tree-lined Mall. Modeled off of the parks of Paris, this grand promenade features towering elm trees amid sculptures of many esteemed literary giants. The elm trees are some of very few remaining healthy elm trees on the East Coast.

10. Dairy and Gift Shop— If

you cross the East Drive from the end of the Mall, proceed downhill and to the right to find a charming little building known as the Dairy. During the Great Depression, this building actually housed cows and dairymaids, and the park offered free milk to hun-



gry children from here. Today, the Dairy is Central Park's gift shop. You can pretend you're a tourist and buy as much paraphernalia as your heart desires.

Then, you can go home. To exit the park, follow the 65th Street transverse to 5th Avenue. From there, walk cross-town three blocks to Lexington Avenue, and pick up the downtown 6 from the 66th Street station.

Professor of the Year

continued from page 8

opportunity to see the ways in which they have matured in their text skills, in their analytic abilities, in their ethical awareness and in their religious sensitivities. The sense that I have made some small contribution to their growth is a source of great meaning to me in my life."

He generally teaches courses in halakha focusing on the "intersection between Torah and general social, political and ethical issues," he explained. "I believe that these areas of study help students achieve a sense of the capacity of the *devar Hashem*, of the wisdom of Torah to guide them in all aspects of their lives in the real world. As I follow the lives and careers of former students, and meet them in my travels, I am reinforced in the belief that Stern College achieves in grand measure the vision of shaping the spiritual quality and the religious conscience of the next generation of Jewish life."

Rabbi Berman is extremely deserving of this award, having taught numerous students throughout his years at SCW. "I now frequently have students in my classes who are the daughters of prior students," he informed. This semester alone, he is teaching four courses: Medical Ethics, Women in Jewish Law II, Liturgy: Weekday Service and The Individual in Society. "Rabbi

Berman is a great teacher," said Tali Langer (SCW '07), a student in Rabbi Berman's Women and Jewish Law II class who has taken another of his classes as well. "You can tell from sitting in his classes that he is extremely knowledgeable. He teaches in an organized and logical manner that allows students at all levels to understand the material."

Rabbi Berman received his B.A., M.H.L. and smikha (ordination) from Yeshiva University. He also received a J.D. from New York University and an M.A. in political science from University of California at Berkeley.

The Lillian F. and William L. Silber Professor of the Year Award has been in existence since 2000. Aside from special recognition, the selected faculty member also receives a monetary reward of \$1800.

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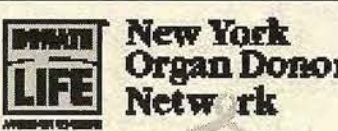
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F A S H I O N

SSSB Fashion Show Raises Money for Charity

BY RACHEL SHPAYHER

New York Fashion Week at Bryant Park is always a glamorous event. For a whole week one can see brand-new styles hit the catwalks, "star" gaze at every celebrity and socialite that attends the shows to see and be seen, and be blinded by the bulbs

(SSSB '07), Lauren Elefant (SSSB '07), and Chana Filler (SSSB '08), decided the show would not just be a glamorous evening that SSSB could call their own, but an event that would also benefit others. The leaders of the club teamed up with Sharsheret, an organization which supports Jewish women

chalant, breezy and easy," said Gueron of her inspiration for the collection. "She's at the beach. We kind of were inspired by this type of girl. She's athletic, she likes to relax, but she wears a fancy dress when she needs to and she's not broke which helps. She likes to be comfortable; therefore the Birkenstocks were

model]," said Michelle Laufer (SSSB '08). Though this was her second time modeling, "this one was more fun," she declared. "It was more satisfying because I was able to be part of a fundraiser for Sharsheret."

The event not only boasted a lauded designer, but a jewelry designer who was willing to have her diamond creations adorn the

which the entire event was to take place. On both sides of the runway were rows of chairs that were filled to capacity by designer Sari Gueron, jewelry designer Jane Trau, founder of Sharshert Rochelle Shoretz, and dozens of students from both SCW and SSSB.

"I was pleasantly surprised to see how professional and well



The Sari Gueron Collection

as they constantly flash at the models strutting up and down the runways. But the show that took place on Wednesday, March 14, 2007 was not at Bryant Park. Rather, it was held in the Koch Auditorium on Stern College for Women's (SCW) Beren Campus and was produced by The Fashion Marketing Club of the Sy Syms School of Business (SSSB).

The Fashion Marketing Club, headed by Chani Kirschenbaum

through their fight against breast cancer, and donated all of event's proceeds to the cause. Once Sharsheret committed to the project, the next step was finding a designer willing to lend her collection to the event entitled "Fashion for a Cause."

Israeli designer Sari Gueron agreed to generously lend several pieces from her 2007 spring collection, along with some pieces from previous collections. "The spring collection was very non-

brought in."

Every look was worn by students who left their books and studying behind to pose as models for the evening, a task they accomplished with effortless ease and beauty. The models far surpassed anyone's expectations with all 20 pieces that they wore, which were further enhanced with their flawless struts.

"I was very excited [to

necks and wrists of the models. Jade Trou, and her assistant designer, SCW student Talia Volk (SCW '07), brought several of their beautiful pieces to the successful event.

Every guest who attended the event could have been fooled into thinking that they were actually viewing a show at Bryant Park, for every detail was so professionally executed. A long runway was placed in the center of the room, serving as the stage upon

done it was," said Tali Langer (SCW '07). "I felt like I was at a real fashion show."

It was not only the students that were impressed with how the event turned out; designer Sari Gueron also truly enjoyed the show. "This was really fun because I never get to see my collections on the runway," she said. "I am always backstage." With a seal of approval from the designer herself, it is safe to say the event was truly a success.

The Set Dazzles for "Made Up"

BY SARA LEVIT

If you missed "Made Up," the Stern College for Women (SCW) play written by Chai Hecht and directed by Reuven Russell, you missed more than cult leaders and Messianic pursuits. You missed the blowout stage styling of shaped architecture major, Aviva Novick, the spunky SCW senior. When asked to engage us with the tale of her dazzling set design debut, Novick spoke of reflections, ambiguities and the little voices inside someone's head.

The Observer: What made you decide to take on the set design for the show?

Novick: I thought that designing the set would help me in my pursuit of architecture. It's about creating a space that people can react to and in return the space reacts to the people. For instance, the audience is able to see themselves reflected in huge mirrors and they get pulled into the set, having experiences

alongside the characters.

O: How does designing a set differ from designing an actual interior space?

N: You try to simulate an interior space but in theater the details that matter are very different from what would matter in reality. In an actual interior space I probably would never use staple



The Hotel Room

guns. Things are being looked at from a larger distance. They have to be bigger and more dramatic to convey something to the audience.

O: You intern with Vito Acconci, the architect and installation artist. What have you

learned from this experience that helped you in your undertaking?

N: I've seen all the different stages of the design process, from brainstorming to creating the models for the projects. You have to figure out if and how an idea can be translated into reality. For the set I had an idea and it was cool to see it follow through. It was a really good learning experience. You have to constantly reevaluate when new issues come along and figure out how to make the set work with the script.

O: In what way did you keep the sets consistent

with the theme of the play?

N: Reflections and mirrors are a running theme in the play. The first act takes place in the makeup room of a talk show. The makeup artist, Natty, is insecure and she talks to herself. There are a lot of mirrors to highlight the

characters' concern with their appearances. The second act deals with a lot of darkness brewing just below the surface. You have this perfect façade which we represented in a lavish hotel room with dramatic colors. The richness and modernity is there to offset the darkness that's brewing and Natty's insecurities as a cult



The Makeup Room

leader. We still have mirrors in the second act though, because she still has a lot of inner dialogue. There's an ambiguity where supposed perfection contrasts with inner chaos. Time has passed and people have changed, yet the theme still follows

through. There are still the same insecurities.

O: What sort of moods were you hoping to establish with the sets?

N: The sets have gone through a lot of metamorphosis. Initially, the first scene was going to be minimalist and toned down and the hotel very lavish, but then I got the idea of a toned down hotel room with everything set in place. There's a delicate balance of solid colors and mirrors to counteract the dark dramatic undertones. The satiny reflective materials reinforce the reflective mirrors. I also decided to play up the chaos in the make up room. The walls are set at an angle to close

the room off.

O: When all was said and done did you get a pizza party?

N: No.

O: Shame.

Ectopic Pregnancy

continued from page 19

whether the uterus contains a developing fetus or if masses are present elsewhere in the abdominal area, will be examined.

Both its size and location, as well as whether one wants to conceive again, influence the choice of the treatment. An early ectopic pregnancy can sometimes be treated with an injection of methotrexate, which dissolves the fertilized egg and allows the body to reabsorb it. This non-surgical approach minimizes scarring of pelvic organs. On the other hand, surgery will have to be done to remove the abnormal pregnancy. However, the pregnancy may sometimes be removed using laparoscopy, a less invasive surgical procedure. The surgeon makes a small incision in the lower abdomen and then inserts a laparoscope. This

long, hollow tube with a lighted end allows the doctor to view internal organs and insert other instruments as needed. The ectopic pregnancy is then surgically removed and any damaged organs are repaired or removed.



General or regional anesthesia may be used.

It may take up to 12 weeks for the HCG levels to return to zero. An elevated HCG could mean that some ectopic tissue was missed.

This tissue may have to be removed using methotrexate or additional surgery. Some birth control methods can also increase the risk of ectopic pregnancies. If pregnancy occurs while using progesterone-only oral contraceptives, progesterone intrauterine devices, or the morning-after pill, the likelihood of ectopic pregnancy increases.

Got Plans? A Shabbat Alternative

continued from page 10

Monsey, and Long Island. Many of the families speak languages other than English. Some of the families are more *yeshivish* and others classify themselves as Modern Orthodox. Most of the families are willing to host anywhere between two and four women, so students can and are encouraged to travel in small groups.

So far, around 30 women have taken advantage of this unique opportunity, including women from the tri-state area. Once getting in contact with Got Plans? Lovovsky and her team ask questions to guarantee that the women will have the Shabbat experience they want. These questions include: What type of community are you looking for? Would you rather go to a home with children or not? Do you want a loud and lively Shabbat or a peaceful one full of rest and relaxation? How far are

you willing to travel?

And though the program is still in its inaugural weeks, the women who have dared to use it

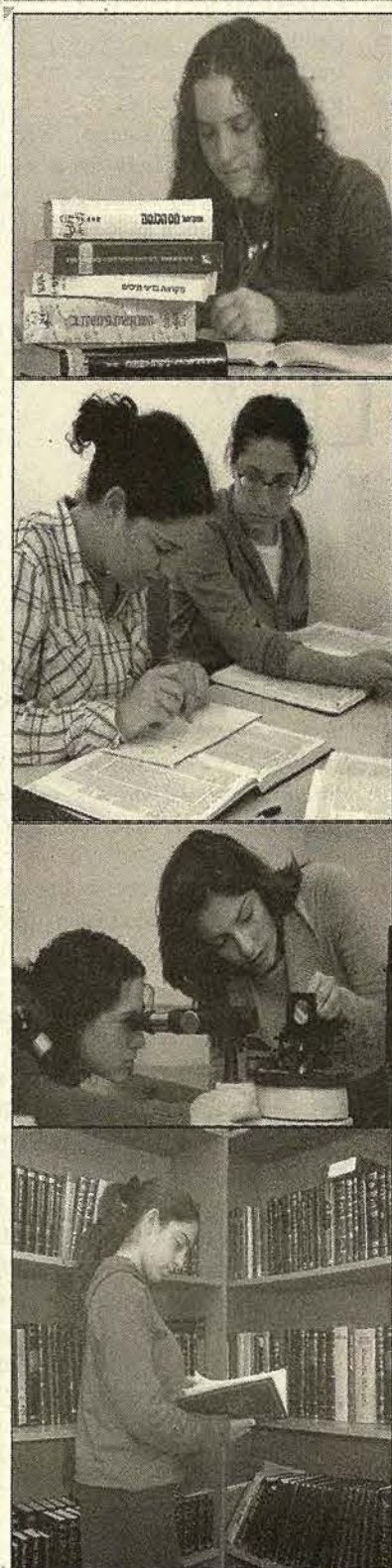


have not been disappointed. "They really do set you up where you want to go and they set you up with a really nice family," said Sarah Melnick (SCW '07). Melnick, who is from Miami, decided to try the program at the bequest of a friend and ended up having an amazing *Shabbat* in Bergenfield, NJ. "They gave us a really awesome family," she said of Got Plans? "We felt like part of

the family. We weren't just guests." When asked if she was satisfied Melnick said, "100%," adding that she would definitely call Got Plans? again.

With references like these, Got Plans? is not only a great place to meet new people and be exposed to new communities but a nice change in scenery from midtown Manhattan as well.

If you are interested in being set up for Shabbat or in being a host family call the team at 904.254.6691.



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Women's Leadership

continued from page 5

munity events with an emphasis on impacting the larger Jewish community. But why is it, with all of the potential we have brimming in our hallways, do we not have more women, both adults and students, to whom we look up to? Why does there not exist a female *mashgiach ruchani* to whom we can talk, schmooze with and relate to? The streets of Washington Heights are swarming with leading male figures hired purely to create connections with the student body, offering guidance, an open office and someone to admire. Why is it that only at the Yeshiva College Purim *chagigah*, when the *roshei yeshiva* enter the room do all of the men rush towards them in a sea of excitement and immediately form energized circles around their coveted rabbis? Why don't the women have such figures that we admire and see as those kinds of role models?

One might argue that the *Rav/Talmid* relationship is very different for men and women and this is true. A female professor can not spend hours of her day in school privately meeting with students in the way a male *rav* can. Women have more responsibilities and higher priorities to run home to. But with all that being said, I still believe more needs be done to create such a role for women. Why doesn't more of our beloved female faculty come to SCW events? Why is there not an attempt to create more personal relationships between the teachers and students? Very often when women go off to Israel to study in seminary for the year (or two), strong connections with female teachers are developed. These women become role models and sources of often needed advice whether for our spiritual needs or everyday practical wants. But why is it that we cannot find such figures here as well? Yes, we are in college and not spending all day in seminary learning Torah. But there shouldn't be this feeling that all of our emotional and spiritual guidance can only come through a telephone wire connecting us to a voice 6,000 miles away. I will admit that I am just as guilty as the next woman of this mindset and that I would never want to give up these relationships which I have spent the past two years developing. But it would be nice to feel that I have women of such high caliber in the States and especially in SCW who can offer an ear, an hour or their Saturday night to come dance with us at an incredibly lively, nostalgic *chagigah*.

It must be noted that I would never even bring up these questions if I did not wholeheartedly believe that these women do in fact exist in our midst. There are female teachers and administrators whom I believe are wonderful role models in SCW and in the local communities, but I only

wish there would be a greater effort on their part to have a larger impact on our lives.

There currently exists a female leadership initiative program which began this past semester on campus. The Woman's Leadership Fellowship is a weekly program which allows a unique group of 13 handpicked women to hear from female speakers and discuss issues pertaining to women's leadership. The goal of this new program is to foster and develop the ideas of women who have already shown leadership potential here at SCW. Each week they meet and hear from a speaker who has taken up some type of leadership role whether in her community, through her career or even as an essential asset and partner to a prominent spouse. The program wishes to ingrain in these young women that "a woman can be a leader in many types of ways and in a variety of roles," said one enthused participant. The group has heard from speakers across the spectrum such as a *toenet beit din*, women working for non-profit organizations and most recently, Esther Joel, the wife of our university's esteemed president. This program is a constructive step in the right direction. Women need to understand that there are many ways for them to create effective roles for themselves in our society; roles which will exceed the boundaries of a classroom and the theoretical realm of discussion. But the effort can not begin and end in the hallways of SCW.

Perhaps the departing and new student leaders should take these issues into consideration. For those leaving us, maybe with the basic training they received here on campus, they can begin to define a leadership role for themselves in whatever arena and environment they find themselves in. The incoming leaders can perhaps look at this lacking on campus and begin to fill these rolls and encourage faculty members to take stronger initiatives to create deeper niches for themselves within the SCW community. This is not an issue of *tzniut*. I am suggesting that we need women to begin leading women in a more powerful way; women who want to see their community as a whole strengthened and not just through offering *kallah* (bridal) classes and *challah* baking lessons, which are of course important and essential. As female leadership opportunities and long-term goals develop, so does the need for women to reach out to one another. It is time we realized that we have the potential in this all-women's environment to actualize the true meaning of "*kol kevudah bat melech penimah*"- that we can be both modest and change the world.

Roshei Yeshiva Discuss Issues of Intimacy

continued from front page

year YU Presidential Fellows, who were searching for a concept to be developed as an Incubator Project. Tzelem became the inaugural program of the Incubator Project in May 2005. Currently, the organization is under the auspices of the CJF's Department of Special Projects, a relationship that, as of now, is slated to last for three years. An advisory board composed of rabbis and mental health professionals oversees Tzelem.

Tzelem founder and director Jennie Rosenfeld described the reason that the conference was organized. "It's coming from an awareness that rabbis are the first address for problems in sexuality, just as they are for everything else," she said. "They are dealing with questions like these every day whether or not they're equipped to do so, so we're helping them. The purpose of the conference is to provide rabbis with basic information so that they know what is normal and what are red flags and so that they can deal with basic issues and then, if necessary, refer congregants to specialists."

The conference was not publicly advertised. Rather, Rabbi Ronald Schwarzbarg of the CJF's Department of Rabbinic Alumni sent out invitations to rabbis on the YU rabbinic alumni list. Additionally, Tzelem recruited the RCA as a cosponsor in order

to gain access to the rabbis affiliated with the organization and to invite them to the conference. Rabbi Schwarzbarg described the RCA's involvement in the recent conference as typical of the relationship that YU and the RCA share. "The RCA and rabbinic alumni have a very close and strategic relationship," he explained. "We do all the placement work for the RCA, and we often cooperate and plan programs together. The past *yom ivun* was planned mostly by us, and we invited the RCA to cosponsor it with us. The RCA recently held their executive board meeting on the Wilf Campus preceded by Rabbi [Norman] Lamm's annual Dr. [Samuel] Belkin memorial lecture. In the spring, the RCA will hold a *yom ivun* on campus as part of their annual convention, and our rabbinic students will be invited to participate."

Rabbi Dale Polakoff, president of the RCA and rabbi of the Great Neck Synagogue, attended the conference and reported that the RCA was glad to be able to cosponsor the event. The RCA, he explained, "believes that this continues to be an issue of great importance to rabbonim, especially in this sensitive area."

According to Rosenfeld, the program is only the beginning of efforts that are necessary to help rabbis become more comfortable with the issues that they are facing. Positive feedback from rab-

bis who participated in the event is encouraging, especially in light of the need for ongoing programming. "The evaluations by the participants were overwhelmingly positive," commented Schwarzbarg. "The topic resonated with the rabbis so much so that 100 rabbis braved an ice storm to attend. This suggests that the rabbinic community is faced with questions on the topic of intimacy and seeks to be better equipped in order to be more responsive to the needs of their congregants." Adding his own response, he remarked, "I think that in the future it would be interesting to have a therapist who could demonstrate some counseling techniques." Rabbi Polakoff of the RCA commented, "I think that it was an absolute success, and I would welcome future opportunities to work with Tzelem."

The recent conference for rabbis is typical of Tzelem's approach in reaching out to the community by employing a "train the trainer model." "Due to starting with limited resources," explained Rosenfeld, "we've been training trainers. We haven't trained 'real people' yet. We've taught rabbis, *kallah* teachers (women that teach brides the laws of family purity), and therapists and have trained school-teachers to implement curricula on the topic of sexuality. Next year, we hope to educate individuals directly."

Colony Collapse Disorder

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Interestingly, from the outside, a colony in the process of collapse is not apparent. Instead everything appears normal. Bees exit and enter in a regular pattern. But, when the beekeepers peer inside the hive, they see a minimum number of mature bees caring for younger, developing ones. Normally, a weakened bee colony would find itself immediately overrun by other bee colonies or pests eager to gain nourishment from the honey. Strangely, this is not the case in colonies in collapse. Often, colonies in collapse are not touched for two or more weeks. Diana Cox-Foster, a professor of entomology at Penn State, noticed that the dissected bees have a very high number of foreign fungi, bacteria, and other organisms. Most likely this is due to weak and inefficient immune systems.

The use of pesticides and the effect they may be having on bees is a prime focus of the researchers. Additionally, questions are being raised with regard to other bee deaths over the last several years. While these deaths were blamed on mites and poor hive management, they may actually have resulted from CCD.

Penn State conducted a survey of beekeepers and found that most of the afflicted colonies had been moved at least two times in the year of the collapse. The implication here is that moving bee hives is stressful on the bees. Perhaps this is due to confinement, changes in temperature, or possibly the bees failed to lay eggs either during or after the move. Also, moving probably increased and accelerated disease transmission. Another possible factor could be exposure of the bees to new pathogens. Another problem highlighted in this study was found with the recycling of equipment with no sterilization process. This could have transferred and amplified the disease. Another consistent factor reported by all beekeepers was that prior to the affliction there was a form of extraordinary stress in the hive. This implies that stress compromises the immune system of bees, making them more susceptible to infection by microbes. It is important to note that some of the bees were raised for the production of honey, while others were raised for the purpose of fulfilling pollination contracts.

Recently, the National Honey Board has approved \$13,000 to support research into these bee

losses. The purpose of these funds is to conclusively identify the cause of the affliction. The research group working on this identifies itself as 'Colony Collapse Disorder workgroup.' The group is made up of university faculty researchers, state regulatory officials, educators, and a cross section of industry representatives. Perhaps most important is the assistance and cooperation of beekeepers' in reporting the disorder and controlling the management practices and environmental factors that are thought to have contributed to this problem.

The survival of the bee hive industry is dependent on the solution of CCD. Today in Pennsylvania, the number of colonies is half of what it was 25 years ago. This is a serious problem and there is great concern that there may not be enough bees to rebuild colonies in order to provide sufficient honey for consumers. Moreover, it may soon become difficult to provide for the required pollination of fruit trees. Beekeeping is a necessity, but must also remain economically viable. Those of us who enjoy apples and honey are counting on it.

Student Council Results In: And the Winner Is...

continued from front page

Zelda Braun praised the students who "put forth the initiative to run for office, for choosing to be involved in the student life on campus in a formal way." She also expressed that competition for student offices is always a positive thing, and that the more students who take active roles to get involved, the better.

But, despite the fact that not many people chose to run, those who chose to run and consequently won, are excited about taking office and serving the Stern College for Women (SCW) community. Wiesen, who is currently the SCWSC recording secretary, looks forward to strengthening SCW's presence on campus. Wiesen has nothing but praise for outgoing president Liz Shelton (SCW '07) and for the programs she and the SCWSC implemented this year. Wiesen also hopes to create more programming like the Bingo Night the council ran this year, programming "where students have the opportunity to unwind, have social time with friends, amidst busy schedules and schoolwork," she said.

Incoming TAC President Laura Shuman, views her task for next year as one of "maintaining and helping TAC grow on campus even beyond where it is this

year. It is nothing new that we want to build community here through Torah and *chesed*," she said with a smile. "The question is whether we can maintain the great programs that have been implemented this year." Shuman also wants to create a think tank that "embraces the diversity of the student body and allows people to share their thoughts about building our Stern community," she explained.

Laufer is similarly excited for next year. "As SSSBSC Vice President I've been part of a great team that I'm proud of," she said. "I want to continue developing programs we've been working on this year, most notably the Sy Syms dinner and our many clubs. I plan to increase networking opportunities, strengthen alumni relations, improve faculty-student communication, & most importantly get the student body active on campus. I'm looking forwards to a productive and enjoyable year."

The presidents for the 2007-2008 academic year are:

SCWSC: *President:* Rena Weisen, *Vice President:* Alanna Apfel, *Treasurer:* Jackie Shapiro, *Recording Secretary:* Rebecca Abramowitz, *Corresponding Secretary:* Alanna Ebin

TAC: *President:* Laura Shuman, *Vice President:* Jaimie Fogel and Arielle Frankston-Morris, *Treasurer:* Reena Ribalt, *Secretary:* Chanie Dinerman

SSSBSC: *President:* Michelle Laufer, *Vice President:* Bracha Kahn, *Treasurer:* Elana Friedenber, *Secretary:* Penny Pazornick

Senior Board: *President:* Shani Chesir, *Vice President:* Ayelet Mael, *Treasurer:* Zahava Nilly Brodt, *Secretary:* Arly Avner

Junior Board: *President:* Marisa Galbut, *Vice President:* Dana Faleck, *Treasurer:* Stefanie Zisholtz, *Secretary:* Naomi Sharon

Sophomore Class Board: *President:* Stacy Gotlieb, *Vice President:* Miryam Knafo, *Treasurer:* Michelle Grundman, *Secretary:* Rebecca Palgon

Flowers Harmful to Health

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released some disturbing data with regard to a study conducted on 72 children between the ages of seven and eight. These children live in the flower-growing region and were born to mothers who were exposed to pesticides during pregnancy. Most of them demonstrate developmental delays averaging four years.

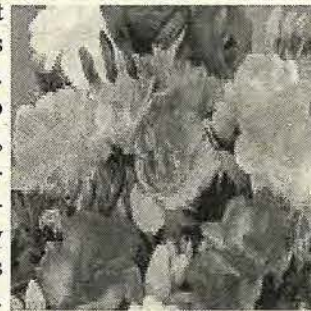
Worker exposure to chemicals used in the cut flower industry is of concern as well. Workers who transplant, prune, cut, or pack flowers without protective clothing may absorb chemicals through their skin.

Dusting and spraying within greenhouses creates an environment in which workers can readily inhale pesticide vapors. Many of the pesticides used can cause cancer, birth defects, and other reproductive illnesses, as well as neurological disease in humans. These pesticides are being continuously revealed as more and more dangerous. Also, they are toxic at lower levels than previously thought.

Sadly, the employees have few alternatives to this toxic exposure. High unemployment and staggering poverty are facts

of life in Columbia. Assessing the risks posed by the international cut flower industry is complicated due to the intersecting value of improved social conditions against the risks to worker and environmental health. One solution, and perhaps the only long term solution, is to support organizations and sustainable agriculture members that are promoting responsibility and protection.

Change to alternative methods of agriculture takes time. Consumers can help by requesting flowers that are organically grown. Only when workers, consumers, and nature are adequately protected can we ultimately enjoy the romance of cut flowers.



An Interview With the Director of Made Up

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dimensional person. Nattie is as much Sarah's child now as mine. I guess we'll have to discuss custody at some point. (Sarah, you can have weekends if I can have holidays.) But really it's true of every character on varying levels. The beauty of the collaborative nature of theater means that no one person ever has to take responsibility for his/her mistakes. (Laughs)

O: How is working with SCDS different than working with YCDS?

H: Right. Well, the main difference is that YCDS already has a set tradition. We know we have the receptions on Saturday and Sunday after the shows. We know we have the cast party with Chinese food and cast gifts Thursday nights. We know what kind of obstacles we're regularly going to run into, what kind of problems we try to prevent. So working with YCDS as a writer meant working around a well-developed system. In SCDS, that system is just forming. Also, I knew almost everyone I was working with in YCDS because I'd worked with them before on

other shows. I didn't really know anyone in SCDS coming in.

On a more general level, YCDS is a class. You can get two credits for being part of it. SCDS really should be a class. The effort is there, the educational value, the artistic standards. It's really embarrassing that it's not accredited because the only logical difference between the two programs is that YCDS is men and SCDS is women. I'm not saying SCDS has achieved the same level of theatrical validity as YCDS—it's taken YCDS a long time to establish itself as a quality college theater program that is taken seriously in the university art world—but SCDS is well on its way. And this current group of very talented women behind the scenes—Elana, Caitlin, DeeDee, Aviva, Rachel among others—seems poised to lead SCDS into an impressive new era. I hope YCDS and SCDS will work together to form a strong dramatic unit at Yeshiva University.

O: What is the concept behind "Made Up?" What message, if any, do you hope the audience received?

H: As always, my main hope is that they enjoyed the show. The play itself deals with the dichotomy of being human, especially human and religious. The fact that the only eyes you will ever see out of are your own. This means that your perception of your perception is elevated because it's the only perception that you know. But, at the same time, you have to realize that everybody is seeing out of their own eyes. And as a religious individual, someone who is waiting for a Messiah, how is your perception of this savior colored by your own views? Are you preparing adequately for his arrival? And could you be the savior of your people? If you say yes, you're crazy. But if you say no, you're excusing yourself from that level of responsibility.

O: Both "Buy the Book" and "Made Up" were plays that dealt with issues of faith and religion. Why is this such a compelling topic for you?

H: We can compare one good to another on a two dimensional graph. We can compare three goods on a three dimensional graph. But there's no graphical

way to illustrate the decision-making process involved in four dimensions. We make millions of multi-dimensional decisions a day, many that we may not even be conscious of. Our brains don't seem capable of the extensive process of choosing each time a choice is presented to us. So we set ourselves on an automatic course as often as possible. In a religious university, where religion is the default, and in a world in which belief for its own sake seems to be increasingly popular, the decision to act faithfully to G-d has, for many people I know, become one of the automatic courses of our day-to-day life. And the irony is that most of these people spend the greater part of their day ensconced in Torah study. But the details can be, and often are, a distraction from the essence. I don't in any way hope to undermine the details. I believe that philosophy can just as easily be an excuse to escape the details. Judaism is a religion of detail. But, at the same time, the choice each morning to wash your hands when you wake up, the choice to say this before you eat or wear that skirt instead

of this skirt—the more automatic these decisions become, the weaker becomes our religion. Gila [Kanal, who played Melanie] was excellent at bringing this state of existence to light. She was so convincing as the person in charge saying, 'Face reality. Make a choice.' It's easy to get lost in the modern obsession with practical conformism, especially when dealing with religion, since there's no absolute proof one way or the other.

SLC Update

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room is symbolic of a Jew's relationship with G-d. The sun, from G-d, will shine in the room and there will be light shining outward from the Torah learning.

The construction will start after school lets out, and will tentatively be completed sometime early next semester. Mr. Rosengarten commented on the work of the administration and SLC, saying that "we're pleased...this process has been a good one. It's teamwork [for] both students and faculty. I feel good about it. I believed that something special could be built on this space. We have input from a lot of people to make sure it is something right."

The SLC also arranged for a shuttle to run on Tuesday afternoons to take Stern College for Women students to LSAT classes on the Wilf Campus. The SLC worked closely with Mr. John Gorman, assistant chief of security, to obtain the shuttle. "Mr. Gorman tries to accommodate all of our requests," said Unterman. "He makes it a lot easier to respond to all of our needs. If he can do it, he'll do it." Additionally, the SLC also hopes to revamp the local shuttle schedule on the Beren Campus. "People have suggested that the local shuttle 'run' should be changed," stated Unterman. Many students complained that they are forced to wait for the shuttle to arrive and that the ride

to their destination is too long. There will be a subcommittee created to address issues with security and transportation, although it might not be formed this semester. "I don't think we will be doing that anytime soon," Unterman explained, "because there are other student life issues that need to be taken care of."

Additionally, the SLC hopes to further their agenda with the Food Services department. Currently, the Le Bistro Café closes at 8:30 p.m., excluding Thursdays when it closes at 3 p.m. The Kusher Dining Hall does not open until 5 p.m., which creates a gap of time that students cannot purchase food. "We are working to expand the Le Bistro caf hours until Kushner reopens...so there will always be a caf open on Thursday," Unterman reported. "We are trying to get this done without putting too much strain on the system." Shoshana Fruchter (SCW '07), Torah Activities Council president and member of the SLC, commented.

"The SLC is amazing," added Fruchter. "Every complaint and grumble for things that don't seem to be right on campus can be taken of, if you know the address. Tiffany's expansion of the SLC has ensured that the students know that address."

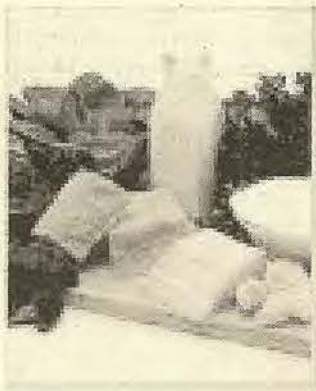
The SLC welcomes requests and ideas at scwstudentlife@gmail.com.

The Truth About Osteoporosis

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elements such as calcium are consumed. Calcium strengthens bones, helps increase bone density, and is crucial in many functions of muscles and nerves.

Unfortunately, studies have shown that an average woman in the US consumes less than 500 milligrams of calcium per day which is less than half the suggested amount. By drinking milk, eating more dairy products, or by taking supplements one is able to receive additional calcium.



Dairy products provide calcium to strengthen bones

In order for the body to be able to actually absorb calcium it also needs Vitamin D, otherwise your body could start taking calcium away from your bones. This vitamin can either be obtained by the foods we eat or by sunlight through the skin. Additionally, exercise is also essential in order to achieve primary bone health. People who exercise regularly throughout their lives maximize

their bone density more than people who are inactive. Exercise improves balance and increases muscle strength which strengthens bones and decreases the risk of falls. Some great and helpful weight bearing exercises are running, biking, and dancing.

Throughout development, bone density builds up and will reach its final stages at around age 24. Thus, it is important for young adults to take good care of the body through good habits and an active lifestyle. This will maximize the quality and strength of the bones which are the foundation and frame of the human body.

YU Summer Courses in Israel

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travel element into this class," said Aliza Hughes, a presidential fellow and the program coordinator. Students, along with Professor Fine will travel throughout Jerusalem and the surrounding area to see the locations of the events they will be studying first-hand. "We're trying to make the program very interactive since the students are in Israel and are able to really experience history as they're learning it," said Hughes.

Students can also opt to take an Israeli business and finance course, which will also have an interactive element. Students and professors will visit various financial and business centers to meet with executives and learn about the inner workings of Israeli business and how it differs from business in the United States. This enables the students to gain the skills and knowledge necessary for them to engage in international trade and commerce with Israeli's and perhaps prepare them for *aliyah*, although *aliyah* is not a goal of the program. "These students represent Yeshiva University and we do support *aliyah*, but the goal of the

program is to enlighten the business students in terms of Israeli business," said Hughes. "Many of the participants do see themselves making *aliyah* in the future and therefore this program is an excellent option for them."

The fourth and final option for participants to choose from is the internship option. Students may select an internship in their field of interest and, under the auspices of Yavneh Olami, will be placed in the appropriate field. Though the program is different from the Yavneh Olami internship program, the organization will be placing the YU program interns due to the extensive networking relationship that Yavneh Olami holds with various institutions. "We've had some really varied requests for internships from this summer's participants," Hughes said, including "art therapy, marketing, accounting, international business, law, finance, medicine and bio-medical engineering are just a few of the requests we received."

Fine emphasized the *beit midrash* learning aspect of the program and how the learning done in the *beit midrash* will be integrated into what the students

learn in the classroom. He also mentioned the variety of students that have applied for the trip. "We've received applications from students from many universities as well as from people who are *chozrim b'reshuvah* (returning to religion) who have seen our advertisements. We want to give the impression that if you're *frum* and excited, the place to be is Yeshiva University." The university is so enthusiastic about this upcoming summer's program that there are many scholarships that students can apply for as well as financial assistance. "When planning this program," said Fine, YU asked itself "what special thing can we give our students?"

Zehava Bloomberg (SCW '08), an early childhood education major, shared her thoughts on her acceptance into the archeology option for this summer. "I wanted to do a program in Israel and the archeology option is an experience I've never had nor will I have the opportunity to do again," she said. "I really hope to gain an appreciation for the field of archeology and I'm really excited to be going to Israel and excavating an ancient city."

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