



The Yeshiva University OBSERVER

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New facade of 245 Lexington Avenue nears completion.

Dating Service Debuts at YU

By Esther Baruh

The Center for the Jewish Future (CJF) is spearheading a new dating service aimed at assisting both current YU students and alumni in their search for prospective spouses. The service, dubbed "YU Connect-2," comes after university administrators convened to discuss how YU could become properly engaged in addressing the problem of

singles in the Jewish community. The program will be officially launched in October, after the Sukkot holiday.

"A few of us, including myself, Rabbi Yosef Kalinsky, Dr. David Pelcovitz, Rabbi Josh Joseph, Dr. Efrat Sobolofsky, and President Richard Joel have had this conversation about... what's appropriate for a university and a Torah institution to do on the problem of singles," disclosed

Rabbi Kenneth Brander, dean of the CJF. "It became pretty clear to us that... it's become difficult for both Stern and YC graduates—and alumni from our other schools—to find comfortable, healthy ways to meet each other. We don't think we can solve this problem with one paradigm... but we can try."

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Largest Class in SCW History Arrives at Beren

By Hilly Krieger

This fall, Stern College for Women (SCW) is welcoming the largest incoming class in the school's history since 1959. Although the numbers cannot be completely verified until the new semester begins, this year's undergraduate enrollment is expected to exceed the 1,046 students who were enrolled for the fall 2006 semester.

According to Dr. John Fisher, director of Enrollment, "it is impossible to know whether this increased enrollment is a blip or a trend." He could not pinpoint any specific factors that contributed to the increase, adding that there are always trends which fluctuate every few years.

Fisher noted that 80 percent of first-time-on-campus students arriving in the fall are Israel returnees entering as sophomores. The remaining 20 percent is comprised of freshmen who do not

study abroad and upperclassmen transferring from other universities.

"As of right now, the numbers are still fluid," said Fisher. "We never really know our exact numbers until the first day of classes. Especially students coming back from Israel, there are sometimes discussions over the summer and families change their minds."

In a letter to students distributed over the summer as part of SCW's orientation materials, Dean Bacon described the fall 2007 entering class as the "largest and most qualified in our history." "My statement about quality reflected in part the large number of students who applied and were accepted into the S. Daniel Abraham Honors Program," explained Dean Bacon, when later asked to elaborate on her characterization.

There has also been a reported boost in enrollment at the Sy Syms School of Business, with the size gap between male and female undergraduates becoming increasingly narrower. The surge has been attributed to a growing interest among women in pursuing business-related professions, such as accounting, marketing, and public relations, as well as to academic advancements instituted in recent years.

The growth on the Beren campus comes despite a rise in tuition, which has increased from the previous year by \$1,860. According to the university's admin-

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Seminary Blacklisting Policy Comes Under Scrutiny

By Yaffi Spodek

After spending a year or two immersed in the study of Torah in Israel, most women eagerly anticipate their arrival at Stern, excited to encounter new teachers and classes and ready to explore the myriad of opportunities available to them in the realm of Judaic studies. But others come here burdened by preconceived notions and false conceptions of certain professors and courses, stereotyped beliefs which have been predicated by some of the teachers in their seminaries.

One seminary in particular which has been implicated in this issue is Michlalah Jerusalem College, which houses the Machal program of the Linda Pinsky School for Overseas Students, and is one of Stern's larg-

est feeder schools for post-Israel enrollment.

"About 60 to 65 women go to Stern each year," confirmed Rabbi Dr. Chaim Pollock, director of the Machal program.

The general administration of Michlalah, including Dean Devorah Rosenwasser, who earned a doctorate from YU's Azrieli School of Jewish Education and Administration, encourages students to attend Stern and advocates in favor of the college. However, there are specific teachers who routinely address students at the close of the year, cautioning them against certain SCW classes and instructors while recommending others they deem more worthwhile, a policy which has been

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New Eruv Constructed in Midtown

By Hilly Krieger

The Beren campus has been included within the boundaries of a new eruv erected in Manhattan earlier this summer, an endeavor involving a host of Yeshiva University administrators and rabbis.

The project, which was largely funded by SCW's Office of the Dean, required much complicated construction and was closely monitored to ensure that it was built according to the highest standards of halakha. The initiative is expected to drastically improve the quality of Shabbatot on campus, as carrying will now be permitted in the vicinity.

Efforts to erect the eruv were initiated two years ago by Rabbi Yaakov Kermaier of the Fifth Avenue Synagogue, in conjunction with Maehon L'hoyroa, led by Rabbi Shraga Klein of Monsey, who will inspect it on a



Boundaries of Manhattan Eruv

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STAFF EDITORIALS

Making the Grade

After viewing the most recent edition of the U.S. News and World Report rankings, we were alarmed by the university's sudden descent to number 52, a drop of eight spots from the previous year. Though a host of prominent colleges have recently called the ratings' accuracy and overall relevance into question, YU's falling behind the "top 50" mark should elicit concerns regarding the university's academic performance and its standing in the eyes of other institutions.

When submitting forms for evaluation, all university presidents are asked to assess the reputation of other schools. The grades awarded are more influential than any other component of the U.S. News survey in determining an institution's ranking. President Joel has acknowledged that one of the factors contributing to YU's decline was in fact a weaker peer assessment score than in years past. With the university's unprecedentedly prodigious endowment, reinvigorated

Department of Communications, upsurge in student enrollment, and high-caliber faculty recruitment, such findings are indeed surprising.

As such, an inquiry is more than warranted. Are we failing to advertise our strengths to the best of our ability? How exactly is YU perceived by its counterparts?

Perhaps a ratings drop is not such a bad thing, after all. There is nothing that shatters complacency more than a medi-

ocre progress report. The opportunity to introspect has presented itself most conspicuously, and has further confirmed the need for the ongoing university-wide strategic plan, recently embarked upon for the first time in decades. When the results of the comprehensive study are published later this year, we may find the key to not only improved periodical rankings, but also to academic growth and success in the long term.

The Caveman Emerges

Yeshiva University is making a full-scale effort to advance to the twenty-first century. Gone are the archaic methods of documentation, all those that do not make use of that wonderful invention, the Internet. Paper is obsolete; the digital era has commenced. The caveman has emerged and blinks his eyes in the light of the bright sun, for it appears that now in this most glorious year of 2007, we are finally catching up to the other structures of pride, chrome and steel alongside us, the modern universities that we have envied for so long.

And why have we envied them? Because they are efficient! They take the poor students' plights into account; they

consider the fact that parents enjoy having information at their fingertips. Yeshiva University has finally decided to take pity upon its constituents and is hereby unveiling its new and exciting upgrades, be they technological or physical. From new computer programming to fantastic architectural redesign, YU is becoming aesthetically prettier...and hopefully, more internally well-organized.

First and foremost, YU has created the new Office of Institutional Research. The idea is to provide information to the public, including enrollment data, so that these numbers are no longer dark hidden secrets for which we must scavenge hopelessly. Similarly, student finances will be

handled more easily with the addition of E-billing online, a section which enables the students to pay their tuition with one click of the mouse. Even matters such as YU endowments will be accessible to the public. This is, of course, to accommodate all our suspicious tendencies and allow us to peer more nosily into this formerly concealed world. Who gives YU money? What do they do with it? Now we shall know; the mystery is unveiled.

Even recent school publications have been enhanced, sporting a fancier typeface and prettier headlines. YU is learning the art of presentation, and we are pleased.

On the local level, here at Stern College for Women, the

construction that has so endlessly haunted us is coming to a close. Although not quite concluded, the construction has had the positive effect of making the college more presentable; these buildings now look modern and up-to-date, sleek and slim with lovely glass windowpanes and beautiful, spacious lobbies. Stern is not only remodeling its physical exterior but also its public image; with this modern, sleek look comes an institution that further empowers the women it serves, allowing them entrance to the modern world of possibilities.

There is nothing that could please us members of the Observer staff more.

Creating a Full-Time Community

The arrival of a "campus couple" marks a promising step towards enhancing the wanting sense of community, a long-standing grievance articulated by many of the female undergraduates.

Though Shabbat attendance has improved drastically in recent years, the benchmark of a vibrant atmosphere characteristic of other college Hillels has yet to be met. The Office of Student Affairs, to its credit, has certainly been proactive in arranging dynamic programming,

but the students have still not adequately responded in turn.

What's more unsettling is the erosion of permanence even during the school-week, largely due to the commuter-mindset of numerous women.

By providing for the full-time presence of an on-campus couple during both the regular week and Shabbat, OSA has wisely and rightfully concluded that a college community is not limited to just a weekend. Relationships developed over the course of Shabbat not only

complement, but actually depend upon those created during the remainder of the week. Situated in Midtown all seven days, the new couple will be better equipped to strengthen the Shabbat atmosphere through its interactions with students Monday through Thursday.

The university has invested both energy and funds in its attempt to create a community on this campus. Aside from welcoming the new couple, the Dean's Office at SCW has heavily financed the construction of

the new Manhattan eruv so as to provide for a more comfortable Shabbat experience for students, as well as to attract a greater number of speakers to ensure the best possible programming.

We are all members of the SCW community. The least we can do is to try out a Shabbat before packing out on Thursday afternoon.

The Yeshiva University
OBSERVER
245 Lexington Avenue New York, NY 10016
scwobserver@gmail.com yuobserver.com

Sara Lefkovitz
Yaffi Spodek
Editors-in-Chief

Shayna Hoenig
Managing Editor

Sarah Medved
Copy Editor

Racheli Davies
Ariana Denenberg
Layout Editors

Yael Wolynetz
News Editor

Nava Billet
Israel Editor

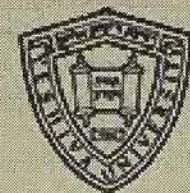
Olivia Wiznitzer
Arts & Culture Editor

Nili Seleski
Science & Health Editor

Chana Filler
Fashion Editor

Jordana Mainzer
Business Manager

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All letters to the editors should be sent to scwobserver@gmail.com

In Memoriam



Dr. Lana Schwebel z"l

Remembering Dr. Lana Schwebel

By Shira Margulies

I'm sure that most of you are familiar with "The Magic School Bus," the children's book series and TV show about a teacher named Miss Frizzle who uses her magical school bus to take her students on the most unusual class trips, from a ride through the blood stream in the human body, to a flight through the stars into outer space.

Dr. Schwebel was my Miss Frizzle. That is honestly the only way I can possibly try to explain the kind of teacher that she was for me. She didn't just teach—she drew us all into the world of whatever we were learning, whether it was Hrothgar's meadhall in "Beowulf" or the road to Canterbury in "The Canterbury Tales." Even Piers Plowman was animated and alive in Dr. Schwebel's class. She brought extraordinary meaning to the difficult poetry of Shakespeare, Herbert, and Donne. She infused new life into the works of writers that have long been dead.

But I am not writing this to list everything Dr. Schwebel taught me. I am writing this to try, to the best of my ability, to express and to preserve the incredible impact that Dr. Schwebel had on my life and on the lives of all her students.

Last year I had the privilege of having a private class in Latin with Dr. Schwebel for both semesters. This was an unusual experience for me. I am not generally one to seek out meetings with teachers or special attention from them. I am usually too shy, too nervous. After about two or three weeks into Latin, when the other three girls originally in the class had dropped for various reasons, I had to make a choice. To stay or not to stay? That was the question.

Dr. Schwebel had given me the option of dropping, of course, understanding the difficulties of being the only student in a class, but I could see that she really wanted to continue teaching me. She was a person who yearned to teach. I believe she truly loved having students. She always spoke on our level, as though she was a friend who just happened to know a lot more than we did and therefore wanted to share that knowledge. So when I had to make the choice of either staying in Latin class as the only student or dropping it and putting it behind me forever, I knew I had to stay. I understood that I might never have this opportunity again, and I discovered that I didn't feel

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Noah Feldman: A Lost Battle

By Jaimie Fogel

While we were all enjoying our summer breaks, hopefully making a good name for the Jewish people in our excursions off the Stern campus, a fellow Jew chose to do the exact opposite. Noah Feldman chose to spend his summer making not only a bad name for the Jewish people and our practices, not only chose to air the Jewish people's dirty laundry out for the whole world to see and criticize, but even worse: Noah Feldman's article, "Orthodox Paradox," printed in The New York Times Magazine on Sunday July 22, 2007, demonstrated some of the greatest faults of the Modern Orthodox movement. Noah Feldman, taken as the prototypical graduate of a Modern Orthodox yeshiva high school, demonstrated that in the battle between the "modern" and the "orthodox," the "orthodox" is losing badly.

Feldman's article explores the points of contradiction between leading an Orthodox lifestyle and one governed by modern, democratic values. In the article, he asserts that he and his non-Jewish, Korean-American girlfriend were purposefully cropped out of an alumni photograph taken at a 1998 Maimonides School class reunion, a claim that later proved to be false. However, he does correctly report on the alumni newsletter's purposeful exclusion of his family updates

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Valediction: Mourning

By Adina Schwartz

She bounded into the classroom, her hair swept high into a multi-bobby pinned ponytail, a smile on her face, and glasses perched on the tip of her nose. She held in her hands a pile of papers, which she termed "dead trees." Professor Lana Schwebel came to teach English. I learned about life.

The material we read in British Lit I cannot be termed "thrilling," but Dr. Schwebel always found ways to make it interesting for us. For example, we listened to contemporary love songs to learn about satire, metaphors, and conceits in sonnets. But what really made the class so exciting was the professor herself. Dr. Schwebel did not walk—she bounced, exuding energy with every step in her high-heeled pumps. She smiled and laughed, and called famous authors "dudes," occasionally describing them as "goofy" and their writings as "weird." She referenced movies with recognizable quotes, like "The Princess Bride" or "Monty Python and the Holy Grail," which I found particularly entertaining. She also liked to make fun of the jumbo cookie I ate everyday in class, pointing out that the cookie was actually bigger than I was.

However, Dr. Schwebel's class was not all fun and games. She challenged my fellow classmates and me. For the first time, I, the proud English Lit major, was receiving B's (or lower) on my essays. She knew that many of us had become complacent in our writing style. Over the years, my cocky self-assurance in my ability to churn out A-worthy papers had grown. Dr. Schwebel questioned my concise and structured writing technique. However, she did not

leave me stranded on the island of my mediocre writing, besieged by low grades. Instead, she arranged meetings with me so that we could work together on my essay writing, thereby rowing me to the safe shores of proper prose.

In my meetings with her, Dr. Schwebel taught me to step outside the box. A full, thought-out paper must be messy and complex before it can be organized properly. Sitting with her behind her desk at our first session, poring over my worthless Beowulf essay, I realized for the first time how much there is to learn about writing.

Dr. Schwebel did not only assist me; with her caring and considerate personality, she made time for all of her students. It was part of her very nature to help and to counsel. She would calm our anxieties about getting into graduate schools. During finals, she would warn us to keep our priorities straight and not panic about grades. When the weather was nice, she recommended that we ask the deans for a quad so we could lounge outside. She even brought food to exams and demanded that we enjoy the Entenmanns and Oreos she offered. Dr. Schwebel's unforgettable professional advice was, "everyone should find a job that speaks to their inner geekiness."

After her class's final, my last one, with the stretch of summer vacation before me, I accompanied Dr. Schwebel to her office. We sat there in her office, as we had done so many times that semester, and we talked about all sorts of things—the class, her past, and my future. There was no feeling of discomfort or awkward-

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Do You Know Where Your Horns Are?

By Perel Skier

I assumed that at some time or other it happened to everyone.

I live in a decent but unremarkably sized city in the Midwest, where the winters are cold and the cow-to-person ratio runs high. Our Jewish community, in the heart of a crime-addled neighborhood, grows a little each year; we built a new day school building recently, and the high school I graduated from has at long last moved out of the dentist's basement. But it's still the kind of place where a yarmulke will earn you a double-take from anyone: from the gentiles, who likely have no idea what it is, and from the Jews, who are thrilled but shocked to find someone else like them among the homogenous expanses of middle-class America.

This is where I come from, and there are few of us there who haven't learned what it means to 'live in the real world,' as the argument goes.

I grew up in that sweet but small Midwest community, so technically I knew what to expect when I signed up for a course at a local university this summer. I'd gone to Jewish day schools all my life, but even just living in my city, you spend a lot of time working, learning, and existing in a secular environment—"the real world", if you will.

When I was a kid, my brothers and I attended an enrichment school in the summer; there were other Jews there, but we were the only ones who looked it, and at nine and ten we met with the occasional request to see our horns. Which is not to say that everyone thought horns

were a bad thing. I made a friend in drama class once after a girl asked me why I always wore long sleeves and skirts.

"I'm an Orthodox Jew," I told her. "That's so awesome!" she cried. "I've always wanted to be a witch!"

I learned not to bring it up, not to call attention to my religious practices or dress when I was at work or other destinations in 'the real world'—not because I am in any way ashamed of who I am, but because we are, as they say, guests in this country, and it seemed unnecessary and foolhardy to expect them to understand. For your average Midwesterner, Jews are artifacts of another era, and the last time we made headlines was when we killed their

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The Importance of Human Dignity: Am I in place of God?

By Olivia Witztzer

"I am not an animal...I am a human being...I am a man!"

These are the shocking lines voiced in the 1980 classic, "The Elephant Man." "The Elephant Man" tells the story of the horribly deformed Joseph Merrick, a man with protuberant growths emerging from his head: a spindly neck, a distorted and twisted back. He was a man who lived through pain and suffering and was ridiculed by all. People could not like what they did not understand; they could not feel for this freakish creature who bore little resemblance to a human being.

Their response was to lash out, to hurt and to wound, but he responded with gentleness, with pity and understanding. He responded by affirming the worth and dignity of the human being, asserting that he too was a man.

In a society that thrives on diversity and focuses upon the individual, we are not kind to those who differ for the wrong reasons. We appreciate those who succeed, who stand out due to

their intelligence, celebrity status, and the glamour behind their exciting lives. We do not like to think about those who are deformed or ill or otherwise disturbing; we prefer to thrust these people from our well-ordered lives. We may not actively hurt them but we often do not remember them; we find it easier to forget and pretend they do not exist.

This is particularly a problem within the greater Jewish community. In Judaism, so much of our law is based on categorizations, on assigning people into sections within the codex of halakha. Does this person fulfill the requirements to be a *kohen* (priest)? Is she an *agunah* ("chained" woman)? These are all terms that encompass greater wholes. We find it easy to label people and place them in their respective categories, even when we are advancing solutions that are meant to help them, such as *agunot*. But do we think about the individual woman caught in this untenable situation? Does the layperson consider each individual's

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An Uncertain Future

By Adina Schwartz

Generation Y: an invasion of upper-middle class youth who believe they have a right to everything. These youngsters attach their ears to iPods and cell phones and glue their eyes to the television screen. They have grown accustomed to getting what they want without exerting any effort. Their world revolves around themselves and they do not have the time or interest to care about anyone else. This is a generation of receivers.

The affluent Modern Orthodox Jewish community, as a microcosm of Western society at large, also faces a burgeoning race of obnoxious youth. Many adults find it easier to merely give in to their children's spoiled behavior, or to just ignore it. However, if this problem is not exposed and treated, it will have serious ramifications for the Jewish people.

This issue of apathetic and self-centered youth recently came to my attention at a popular Jewish summer program for teenagers. The teens I was a counselor for exhibited a sense of egotism, spending their parents' hard-earned money on themselves whenever they could, without ever saying "thank you" to their

mother and father.

In addition to this attitude of entitlement, a sense of spiritual complacency prevailed. During davening, they talked constantly and the boys declined to take part in services, even when called upon directly. During informal education or short Jewish classes, these teens tuned out anything of religious significance. Spiritual growth was not desired or necessary. While passion and drive were essentially absent in all areas, religion was a particularly poor and barren part of their lives.

The hardest thing for me to witness was the last day of the program. My campers were supposed to help pick vegetables that would be going to feed the poor. Quite a few campers refused to participate. I laughed when one camper suggested that we send a check instead. But that young boy then proceeded to help in the harvest, while other teens, who knew we were going to be in the vegetable patch, regardless, for two hours, failed to make the most of their time. This disgusted me.

What should worry us, the older generations, is not only the lack of empathy these young people display, but also the lack of leadership. Our youth are essential to the continuation of the Jewish

people. How can we expect these teens to continue on the path of their forefathers if they are not receptive to religious thought or interested in taking initiative? It was disheartening for me to watch my campers shrink from leadership roles. Many of the boys, in particular, were wary of shouldering responsibility and taking control, preferring to sit in the back making sarcastic remarks to everyone around them. How will these youngsters overcome the temptations of this world and stay true to their heritage when they cannot even handle leading their peers?

With growing programs like NCSY, Bnei Akiva, and the CJF, it is surprising that this problem persists among teenagers. After all, these leadership-focused youth groups were created to combat religious apathy. Why, then, do these children, on the cusp of adulthood, have such difficulty taking on the responsibility of the Jewish future?

I blame parents. Many parents who originally came from poorer backgrounds wish to give their children every opportunity that they personally never experienced. Though they mean

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Dear Beren Campus Students :
Welcome to the start of a great year on campus.

Best wishes for a Shana Tova.

The Office of Student Affairs
Yeshiva University

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENTS

S t e r n C o l l e g e f o r W o m e n S t u d e n t C o u n c i l



Rena Wiesen

The old cliché about New York is that it's a tossed salad (for those of you who didn't know, they got rid of the melting pot to preserve cultural integrity). I always thought it sounded so unimpressive. Who honestly cares about a plain old tossed salad? That's so boring! They couldn't pick something like a gumball machine? Something with a little more pizzazz?

Then I came to Stern College, and went out with my

friends to Circa. For those of you who have not yet had a salad there—I say “not yet” because by the time you graduate, you will have had one—the way it works is that you get a bowl with lettuce, and then you can pick any ingredients you want to add.

The options range from regular vegetables, such as cucumbers and tomatoes, to the most outrageous things like craisins, chick peas, and egg whites—things I would never have thought to put in a salad had I been making one at home. I ordered my salad, randomly choosing different toppings and a dressing to top it off. And then I understood the cliché. Lots of towns and universities have regular vegetable salad ingredients. The tomatoes and cucumbers are the basic foundations. But New York, and more specifically in our case, Stern

College and the Sy Syms School of Business, have all kinds of crazy toppings that you can mix in, and which surprisingly make the salad delicious, though you never would have dreamed that they could blend together harmoniously. All together they make one amazingly tasty salad.

Women of Stern College and SSSB, take a look around you! There are so many incredible and unique women on campus—the international student you saw in the Brookdale elevator rapidly chatting in another language, that funny person you sat next to in class, and that funky dresser you passed on Lexington Avenue in between buildings. Don't just pass them by!

Of course, putting yourself out there can be difficult, and it is so much easier and more comfortable to stick with the friends

you knew before you came to college. But the student body here is so unique and diverse, and has so much to offer. Everyone has such an interesting background, which you would discover if you would just ask. I personally met an incredibly fun student from Colombia, South America in a class last semester, who I never would have met had we not been paired up to interview each other. As we spoke, I kept thinking: “Why didn't I introduce myself earlier? She's so cool!”

Smiling at people is a great start, but it's not enough. In order to strengthen the amazing community at Stern, we need to reach beyond our existing circles and make an effort to meet new people. If you live locally, invite new acquaintances to your houses for Shabbat. Stay in for Shabbat and meet new people. Sit with

people you don't know in the cafeteria at dinner. Or just say “hi” and introduce yourself to someone you don't know in the elevator. We should not be afraid to step outside of our familiar circle of friends with whom we went to high school.

Let's all work together, by taking small steps like these, to unite our campus. Only by moving outside of our small personal spaces can we make the Stern and SSSB community stronger than it has ever been. Together, we can create a real feeling of community and of Ahavat Yisrael, love for our fellow Jew, which is fundamental to our lives as Jewish women.

T o r a h A c t i v i t i e s C o u n c i l



Laura Shuman

Here we go with a brand new school year at Stern College for Women. It is the first week of classes, and the Beren campus is bursting with vigor. For those of

you who are new, welcome, and to the many of you who are returning, welcome back! Having bumped into many of my fellow students during the summer, regardless of what they were doing, I sensed a tremendous amount of energy in the air. So much energy has been exhausted and also created during our break, whose potential can be realized by simply channeling it right back here, together with our peers.

As I mentioned right before we left for the summer, the paradigm of TAC is to facilitate Torah, Chesed, and religious activity on the individual and communal level. Many of us have experienced first-hand the amazing feeling of being part of a commu-

nity, whether it is while learning in a Beit Midrash, davening in shul, or gathering together in a camp setting. It is this feeling of connection to Klal Yisrael which brings warmth and higher meaning to a place.

This year, we have the privilege of being the first to utilize our brand new Beit Midrash which was recently completed over the summer. Seating over 150 women, it will be the largest all-women's Beit Midrash outside of Israel. This will be the perfect place on campus to water the seeds of energy that have been planted over the summer, while strengthening our community and moving forward. This multi-purpose Beit Midrash will also serve

as a shul for our continuously growing davening needs, such as our weekly Mincha minyan, and Hatarat Nedarim. Also, get ready for continued shiurim and Chesed opportunities.

In addition to our daily activities, there has also been a growing desire for a simply gevaldike Shabbos. With all the fantastic ingredients for a beautiful Shabbos including shiurim, chaburas, a tisch, and of course ruach-filled davening, we at TAC look forward to seeing you at this year's TAC and SOY Shabbaton, on September 7th (just one Shabbos away!).

Our student body is but a tiny piece of the Jewish world, but it is a great and strong piece

indeed. With involvement in activities, whether it is arranging a Tehillim group, organizing a shiur in French, or even putting up a flyer, there is a greater realization that this small act is helping to bring together Klal Yisrael. In his Mishnah Torah, the Rambam states that a person should always look at themselves as equally balanced, and the world as equally balanced, and that with one positive act, he could tip the scales towards the Geulah. Every single action done makes our community that much richer. Every single action tips the scale.

We have an exciting year ahead of us, and I am looking forward to experiencing it together with all of you! Kol Tuv.

S y S y m s S c h o o l o f B u s i n e s s



Michelle Laufer

As President of the Sy Syms School of Business Student Council, I am proud to welcome all incoming and returning stu-

dents to the most exciting place in Midtown Manhattan: the Beren campus!

The beginning of fall semester is always a busy time: settling into a new room, figuring out last-minute schedule changes, and reuniting with friends and classmates after a long summer break. I myself have experienced this ritual for the past three years and will go through this transition for the final time this coming semester. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Michelle Laufer and I am currently a senior entering my seventh semester on campus as an accounting major. Over these past six semesters I have created milestones, increased my knowledge, formed many friendships, and most of all, have made wonderful memories. Looking

back, I realize that I have met a number of my closest friends and have accomplished some of my greatest personal achievements through involvement in school related activities. My advice to any student, whether new on campus or returning once again, is to get involved in Sy Syms in any way you feel you can gain the most. SSSB is a dynamic place where all students may find a niche, or even better, create one of their own. SSSB students are fortunate to attend a school that delivers the finest education with a personal touch, thanks to its small classes and dedicated teachers.

For a guaranteed fun fresh start to school, I encourage all new students on campus to attend the orientation events. You will notice in your orienta-

tion brochures that the SSSB board will be hosting a “meet and greet” during orientation, and we would love to see you there. Please come with any questions you may have regarding scheduling, classes, and anything else we may be able to help you with. Orientation Shabbat is one of the nicest Shabbatot held on campus (aside from the SSSB Shabbaton, of course) and I hope to share that Shabbat with you—please cheer for me as I deliver the Dvar Torah at seudah shlishit!

Getting involved in SSSB is easy with our numerous clubs and planned events. Watch out around school for the announcement of the SSSB club fair, where you can sign up for clubs that interest you—such as marketing, accounting, manage-

ment, entrepreneur, cosmetics, fashion, and real estate.

This year I have the pleasure to work alongside an awesome board which includes my good friends Bracha Kahn, Elana Friedenberg, and Penny Pazornick. We have a great year in store for you, and have been hard at work planning events that we know you will enjoy. Look out on the third floor for news, updates, and announcements on our bulletin board.

Please feel free to contact me with any suggestions, ideas, or questions you may have. You can either find me hanging out in the SSSB building at 215 Lex or you can email me at michellelaufer@gmail.com. I hope that together we will have a productive and enjoyable year at SSSB.

NEWS

Sitting Down with New Syms Dean Michael Ginzberg

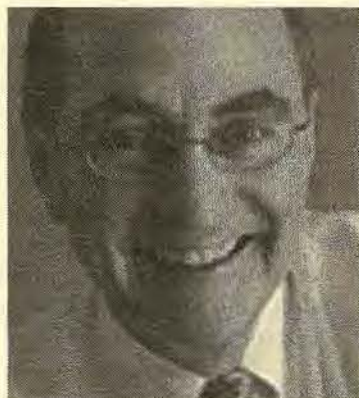
By Yael Wolynetz

What were some of the attractions in accepting this new position? Why did you choose YU of all schools?

First of all, I must say that I am very excited to be here. I was not looking for this type of institution specifically, but I have found that it is a great institution. I see real opportunity to develop, improve, and build the Sy Syms business school. With the support of President Joel and the Board of Trustees that I have had so far, I see this happening. I hope to see lots of change and improvement over the next couple of years.

What are some of the first things you plan to do as Dean?

The first thing I want to accomplish on the undergrad level is to complete the process so that Sy Syms will be AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) accredited. I have no doubt that this will happen and that Sy Syms will be recognized as a first rate business school. In the long run, we will establish a culture of continuous improvement, where various changes will take effect



periodically in order to enhance the reputation of Sy Syms.

All the best business schools in the country have recently updated their curriculums. I plan to implement more "experiential" learning where students will have the opportunities to work in a more hands-on environment. I hope to develop a trading lab where students will be able to experience the inner workings of the financial market.

Another part of accreditation involves building up the faculty. There needs to be an increased number of full-time faculty members.

Will there be different focuses for the Beren and Wilf campuses?

One of my first concerns is to work on the curriculum and see what can be done both uptown and downtown. For these purposes, I don't differentiate between the two schools because both campuses will be held up to the same standard.

Our recent history is that SSSB's women students have shown a greater interest in marketing as a major, while the men have been more interested in accounting and finance. There is no reason that this should be the case; there are great opportunities for women in accounting and finance—one of the women attending the MBA program at MIT when I was in graduate school, Judy Lewent, recently retired as CFO of one of the large pharmaceutical companies—and for men in marketing; think of Steve Jobs, for example.

What are your short-term and long-term visions for the busi-

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Donors Back New Beit Midrash

By Yael Wolynetz

Following an extended period of renovation, the newly designed Beit Midrash at Stern College for Women (SCW) has garnered the financial support of longtime YU benefactors, Leon and Lea Eisenberg, who have contributed a "leadership gift" towards the completion of the facility. The Beit Midrash construction ranks high on an extensive list of campus-wide building efforts which commenced in the summer of 2006.

"It seems that in a school like this, the Beit Midrash is at the heart of the school," explained Ms. Eisenberg. [It is] the place where all of the students are directed towards."

Upon viewing the former premises, the family decided that the "old quarters were not adequate," in terms of both the limited area and shelf space. "We feel that the young ladies will benefit from the new airy, more modern style design," Ms. Eisenberg said, noting that she was greatly im-

pressed by the architectural plans shown to her and her husband.

The Eisenbergs, who now live in Lawrence, New York, were founding members of the Board of Trustees of Stern College, and have been involved with the YU community for over thirty years, beginning with Leon's tenure as an undergraduate. Since then, virtually all of their children and grandchildren have passed through the doors of the university, at both the Wilf and Beren campuses.

"I have held virtually every office position on the Board, including Chairwoman," Ms. Eisenberg added.

Ms. Eisenberg elaborated further on the uniqueness of Stern College. "My husband and I aim to support Stern as much as possible. Through supporting Stern we are supporting the education of young Jewish women, which in itself is an important cause. I have spent a lot of time walking through the halls at Stern over the

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35th Street Residence Hall Opens Doors

By Shana Goldenberg

This past July, the 35th Street Residence Hall opened its doors as the sixth housing facility on the Beren Campus. An amalgam of university and independent housing, the new dormitory offers apartment-style accommodations accompanied by stricter enforcement of rules and security measures. Unlike the Lexington Plaza and Windsor Court apartments, the 35th Street Residence Hall is owned directly by YU.

"The new dorms are an exciting [development that] will enhance our residence life community," remarked Assistant Dean of Students Zeldia Braun. "We are thrilled to offer this opportunity to our students."

Similar to Brookdale Residence Hall, the 35th Street dorm has a co-ed front lounge as well as a women's-only basement TV lounge. Though Stern

will continue renting apartments in Windsor Court, and possibly Lexington Plaza, the university wants to offer students dorms that reflect the YU community atmosphere. "[It is important that] all residence life be within the university's span of ownership," added Dean Braun.

Preparing the new dorms for occupancy in time for the upcoming fall semester was not an easy feat to accomplish. "We were really nervous the dorms wouldn't be ready in time," admitted Rachel Kraut, director of Residence Life.

Fortunately, the dedicated construction crew completed the majority of the work, ensuring that at least the suites will be in order once the students arrive. The communal areas, such as the

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Rabbi Reiss Named Dean of RIETS Agunah Advocate to Expand Torah Education

By Sara Lefkowitz

Rabbi Yona Reiss, director of the Beth Din of America, has been selected for the position of dean of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS), as per last Wednesday's announcement by YU President Richard M. Joel.

Rabbi Reiss is slated to fill the vacancy left by his predecessor, Rabbi Zevulun Charlop, who will step down from his post in June 2008 following a lengthy tenure of over 35 years.

An alumnus of Yeshiva College, Rabbi Reiss proceeded to earn a law degree from Yale University as well as rabbinic ordination from RIETS. Both aspects of his education coalesced in his role as director of the Beth Din, in which Rabbi Reiss handled legal cases pertaining to Jewish divorce, mediation, and commercial arbitration.

Of particular note is the Beth Din Director's involvement in the long-standing quandary of *agunot*, "chained" women who are unable to obtain divorces

from their husbands, due to various halakhic obstacles.

"One of the missions of the Beth Din is to identify communal issues in order to provide intervention," Rabbi Reiss told *The Observer*. "One problem identified in recent years has been *agunot*. The Beth Din has worked hard over the last couple of years to resolve [this]."

Under Rabbi Reiss's leadership, the Beth Din has assumed a more proactive part in pursuing both halakhic and social mechanisms with the capacity of effecting change. Rabbi Reiss has personally advocated the signing of pre-nuptial agreements as a pre-emptive measure, while simultaneously issuing community-wide *seruvim* (public contempt orders) against derelict husbands. Additionally, the Beth Din has explored other methods of reaching favorable resolutions through in-house mediation services.

When asked whether he would integrate the plight of *agunot* into his agenda as dean of RIETS, Rabbi Reiss spoke of an overarching responsibility borne

by all segments of the Jewish community, including YU.

"Educational institutions in part can help train people to have proper orientations in this matter and to act upon those orientations," he explained. "That goes a long way to resolving those problems."

"The *agunah* issue is one I've spent considerable time on over the years," Rabbi Reiss continued. "I certainly won't be abandoning my concern over the issue."

The new dean of the seminary also elaborated upon the subject of women's learning. "Though my domain is RIETS, my mission of spreading Torah and Torah education includes all aspects of the university, including Stern," he said. "The education of women is extremely important to all of us, as individuals, as families, and as communities. It is something I care deeply about."

Thus, Rabbi Reiss insist-

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YU Embarks on Technological Ventures

Revamping Communications

By Yael Wolynetz

The Communications Department of Yeshiva University has made significant technological inroads over the last few months, as the university continues to modernize its systems of operation.

"The changes that are in effect are really a four-pronged effort," explained Georgia Pollak, vice president of Communications and Public Affairs.

Pollak's main focus has been the improvement of the university's website, the highly frequented yu.edu. Several up-

grades have already taken effect in the past six to eight months, while others will be implemented over the course of the upcoming academic year.

"The first step was the shifting of responsibility for the website direction and creation from MIS to the Communications Department," said Pollak. "We felt that not only did the website need a technological cleanup, but it also needed to be created and designed by people who were writers, designers, and marketers to give it a more marketing feel."

Understanding the significance of a website's appearance,

Pollak emphasized the need for a cutting edge design.

The second effort, which was also the most time-consuming task, was a major cleanup of the website. "We have been working this summer to clean up the content on the web, to make sure that there is less wrong information," Pollak elaborated. "This includes wrong numbers in the YU directory and updated faculty lists, as well as revising the content and words on the site."

Additionally, Pollak's team is focused on deleting outdated links. Pollak compared the current website to an "archaeological dig," in that there are hundreds of pages that are outdated. Her main concern is to make the website more user-friendly for visitors.

Pollak is excited about

the addition of new pages to the already existing website. "We have added a new student life page that will have information for students about upcoming activities, as well as a section specifically dedicated to parents with the answers to frequently asked questions," she reported.

As the university continues to add new programming, the website will expand accordingly to accommodate these increases. In the coming months, there will be a new site created for the CJF, as well as new pages for both the

Mechina and GPATS programs.

The last stage of the improvements is a complete redesign of the current website. "We have recently submitted a proposal to an outside firm for a complete redesign," Pollak revealed. Aside for re-organizing the website's navigation to increase efficiency, the outside firm will also help to enhance aesthetics.

"We are also looking for feedback from students," Pollak says. "Since they are the primary users of the site, we welcome their comments and feedback."

Office of Student Accounts Upgrades

By Yael Wolynetz

Submitting tuition payments has never been easier, thanks to a system upgrade of Yeshiva University's Office of Student Accounts. "Any student can see their [tuition] account any time of day, 24/7," declared Mr. Robert Friedman, director of Student Accounts.

"Tuition can already be paid online directly from a checking account or by credit card," Friedman explained, describing the current technology. The program, set up about a year ago, can be accessed through the university's website by selecting "My YU" and then the "Student Accounts" tab.

"Just like students frequently check their grades online, they can now check their tuition balance," Friedman said, adding that parents can also have access to a child's account by obtaining her student ID and pin number.

In addition to tuition balances and statements, the online account enables students to check if there is anything outstanding in their file, like a tax return or a promissory note. Students who receive financial aid have an additional Student Aid Account that informs them of loans or scholarships that were granted.

The final process of the technological upgrades will be the introduction of "e-billing." This process will send tuition invoices through email instead of the traditional postal service. Friedman thinks that this new feature, which he hopes will be introduced in the coming months, is both a "time and cost favor."

Not only can bills be paid with just the click of a button, but the new process limits the amount of paper bills that are circulated as well.

While Friedman believes that many parents will be receptive to the new "e-billing" policy, he is certain that some will still prefer the traditional paper bills. He also acknowledged the drawbacks of online payment. "There has been a lot of resistance by parents," he explained. "It's understandable because people don't want to put their information online, although all of the transactions that we process are secure."

Nonetheless, Friedman is confident that the online processing is a huge step forward for the university. Thousands of other universities in the country have similar services which operate under the Banner System. "We have to keep up," Friedman added. "Technology moves so quickly that soon the notion of e-billing will be outdated."

Friedman also acknowledged the arrival of Marc Milstein, the recently appointed vice president of Information and Technology Services, as a crucial influence in the establishment of the online process. "We have been waiting for him," Friedman says. "He knows a lot and will implement this knowledge for the benefit of the institution. His recent appointment is indicative that President Joel is committed to the quickest, most time efficient system for students."

CIO Position Created



By Yael Wolynetz

In an effort to advance technology on campus, YU has appointed Mr. Marc Milstein as Vice President of Information Technology and Chief Informa-

tion Officer (CIO).

Milstein will be responsible for both the Beren and Wilf campuses, as well as Cardozo School of Law and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He expressed the hope that "our planning will make the use of technology easier and more productive" on each campus.

"Our major task in Information Technology Services is the assistance of all members of the YU community in the use of computers and related technology throughout every phase of the academic endeavor: teaching and learning, student life, research, and administration," Milstein explained.

He initially seeks to improve the internal and external processes of YU, by way of "the deeper integration of information

technology into both the curriculum and into campus life, including ubiquitous wireless and web access to university services."

With an MBA in Systems Management from Baldwin-Wallace College in Cleveland, Ohio, Milstein comes to YU with several years of experience managing information technology in different academic communities.

One of the biggest changes implemented since Milstein assumed his position in May has been the "major reorganization of computing." The division that was formerly known as MIS (Management Information Systems) has now become Information Technology Services.

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Makeup

By Lizette

Lizette Green
Professional Makeup Artist
201-287-1440
201-927-8965
LizetteBeauty@gmail.com

FEATURES

Dean Bacon Debunks SCW Myths



By Yaffi Spodek

Many people believe that women primarily attend Stern in order to find a spouse and get their so-called "MRS" degree. Is there any truth behind this stereotype?

This is simply ridiculous. Marriage is not about women; it is about couples. It's all because of sexism. It's not just our institution, but it's the entire Jewish community that needs help and has a huge investment in students finding a life partner. That is the bedrock of the Jewish commu-

nity, which is based around family life.

Unfortunately, sexism is very much alive in the Jewish community. The invention of myths about the inferior status and perceived needs of women is not based on any real authority, nor is it justified. It is childish and immature to make it appear as if the women here are needy women only looking to get married. It's silly for people to keep repeating the idea that marriage is what defines the women of our university.

How can this view be discredited?

We need to change the conversation and the rhetoric. It's just damaging and silly. We need to speak like adults, because getting married is an adult thing to do. The only way to deal with this is for our students not to engage in these conversations. If they engage in these discussions, they are going to reinforce this puerile rhetoric. They have to just speak with dignity and self respect.

If everything that I say is true, but these women didn't have a commitment to a life plan, then we would be up the creek without a paddle. The fact that women are engaged in trying to find a partner and build a life together should be applauded instead of derided. The fact that our student body is committed to the Jewish ideals of the home and family is to be applauded.

The women of Stern are self-sufficient, independent, mature, and they decide when it's time to start thinking seriously about finding the right person to build a family with. These are mature women and when they are ready for a serious relationship, this university can only help them, and I only hope to G-d that they find mature men who are worthy of them.

Sometimes there are things that are so ridiculous that you really have to ignore them. To discuss them is to give them dignity, and it is an undignified thing to discuss marriage this way. Getting married and sharing

one's life with someone is so serious, and it's so compelling, that to talk about it in this childish way is ridiculous. It is demeaning to the institution of marriage, to Jewish families, and to our students.

The men on the Wilf campus enjoy better facilities, faculty, and resources than the women on the Beren campus. The university as a whole seems to espouse a chauvinistic view of the women. Why?

This is completely untrue. If you would do an in-depth investigation, and actually looked at things, you would see that our curriculum is richer. There is more of a variety of offerings. I think you'd find that the faculty are more engaged with the students, and do more research, if not more, then equal to the men, but it's not a competition.

It is true that the uptown campus has much more public relations than we do. The students [there] are self-promoters and our students are not. Our students sometimes are glib and they hear things uptown and say, 'they have it and we don't.' Also, the whole public relations machine of the university is housed uptown. It's visible and it's promoted. What goes on down here is largely invisible, but it shouldn't be invisible.

What can be done to rectify the situation?

A lot of it is pragmatic and has to do with space. A lot of the people up there would rather be down here, but we could not accommodate them here on the Beren campus. This year, the Communications Office uptown is planning to have a person stationed down here. They are actually interviewing people for that position right now...and this will be his or her beat. That will help things a lot.

What will also help is that students need to be better promoters of things going on. Every time something great or wonderful happens, they should talk it up amongst themselves, in the newspaper, and with the guys uptown. We should start hearing the guys say 'gee, how come we don't have that here?' For example, in the biology department and the English department, we have more variety in our courses compared to uptown.

We are catering to a broader range of students' interests, and we meet the needs of our students. I admit that they have more physics courses, but we just hired two new physics professors, and that is for the very small number of students who are interested in physics. There are majors here that don't exist uptown. We are responding to student interest. I'm very proud of our speech pathology department, our education courses, and our art major. These are absolutely fabulous departments.

I'm even very proud of what the women are doing here in athletics, even with the fact that there is no athletic facility here. The fact that they're expanding their interests, we now have soccer and volleyball teams that compete and sometimes win. We are working on finding an athletic facility for the women, but it is hard to find space to rent in the city that is appropriate, without any pillars, since most of the buildings in midtown have them.

The student body is plagued by student apathy and a lack of pride in the women's institution. Why are these feelings so prevalent and what can be done to correct them?

I couldn't possibly fathom why it is. I don't know why it is, so I'd rather focus on what we can do to change it. I can't relate to it. I have such enormous pride in this institution and the women. It's hard for me to understand where this sense of insecurity or lack of confidence or pride in their accomplishments comes from.

To combat it, we have to chip away at it piece by piece. The newspaper and the student leaders on campus can be major organs for reform, just to celebrate and publicize what the women are doing and accomplishing. The image that we have in the outside world, I have to tell you, is a lot better than the one we have internally. I go to conferences and speak to employers of Stern College graduates, and our name out there is very good. Without psycho-analyzing what's going on internally, we have to promote ourselves when it's correct. There is so much great stuff going on.

Teaneck Beit Midrash Advances Women's Learning

By Shayna Hoenig

The Center for the Jewish Future (CJF) expanded its targeted constituencies this summer with the creation of its first community-wide study program tailored specifically to women. The Teaneck Beit Midrash Summer Program, held in conjunction with the university's Graduate Program in Advanced Talmudic Studies (GPATS), afforded women access to higher level learning opportunities.

The program was held over the course of four weeks, from July 2 to July 26, and involved three components: a Fellows Program, a Community Program, and a Youth Program.

The Fellows Program, which counted sixteen participants, met daily from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Classes were taught by Rabbi Shmuel Hain, Rosh Beit Midrash of GPATS and Stern College faculty member, on the subject of "Jews and Gentiles" (Gemara Sanhedrin). Ms. Rachel Friedman, a teacher at the Drisha Institute, taught a second class on Sefer Yechezkel. Guest



shiurim were also given by Rabbi Kenneth Brander, dean of Yeshiva University's CJF, and Malka Adatto, GPATS senior fellow and Teaneck Beit Midrash Summer Program coordinator.

Hosting as many as sixty women, the Community Program, the second component, met on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. It featured classes by Mrs. Elana Stein Hain, graduate of the GPATS program, on the topic of "Legal Loopholes," Rebbetzin Smadar Rosensweig, Stern College faculty member, on "Haftar-

ot of Calamity and Consolation," and Rabbi Moshe Kahn, faculty member at Stern College and GPATS, who delivered evening shiurim on the topic of "Dina Demalchuta Dina."

The Youth Program, which met daily from 4 to 6 p.m., had four components: chavruta (partner-style) learning for elementary, middle school, and high school girls; Mishnah Madness for girls in grades 5-8; and the Mitzvah of the Week Workshop

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Introducing Tzedek Tzedek Social Justice Society Comes to the Fore

By Shlomit Cohen

The mission of Yeshiva University (YU) not only underscores the need for developing personal connections to Judaism, but also demands the transformation of those passions into tangible actions that impact the world around us.

It is in this spirit that a group of students from YU have united to form Tzedek Tzedek, the Society for Social Justice. As young Jewish leaders, we strongly believe that it is our responsibility to confront the challenges facing our contemporary society and become active and engaging members on our local campuses as well as in the broader Jewish and global communities.

At the core of our agenda is the belief that true change stems from thoughtful dialogue and debate. Recognizing that both social justice and Torah values have broad and varied applications, we intend to explore different ways of understanding what social justice means in the context of Torah and halakha. By nurturing a core group of committed student activists, we hope to pave the way for meaningful and sustainable social justice programming at YU.

We will also be initiating a range of other projects. The Tzedek Tzedek film series will explore current issues—from Darfur, to Ethiopian rights in Israel, to the plight of *agunot* (“chained” women). In order to better process the

film and learn more about ways to effect change, the film will be followed by a panel discussion from leading experts in each field. We will also introduce a campus-wide volunteer day with opportunities in all five boroughs, a diversity speaker series, and the continued opportunity to mentor students in Kappa Four high school.

The key factor that differentiates us from other groups on campus is our emphasis on tzedek as opposed to chesed. While tzedek and chesed are often used interchangeably, and while the philosophy of tzedek, or social justice, goes hand in hand with chesed, they are very different goals with very distinctive focuses. Social justice demands that we combat the root causes of injustice and work as partners with impoverished and disadvantaged groups to develop viable solutions. Tzedek is beyond the act of giving; it is an act of enabling.

It is especially timely as we enter the month of Elul and approach the *Yamim Noraim* (High Holy Days), that we collectively reflect on our obligation to those around us. We look forward to working with everyone who shares the vision of Tzedek Tzedek, and we invite participation at all levels.

For more information regarding any of the programs, please contact Shlomit Cohen at Srcohen1@yu.edu.

The Truth about Student Loans

By Sara Lefkowitz

While recent scandals have implicated the financial aid offices of several well-known universities, students at YU can rest assured that their money is in safe and proper hands.

In outlining YU's student loan practices, Director of Student Finance Robert Friedman contrasted the university's non-preferential policy with the “profit-sharing” approach adopted by certain administrators at other institutions, such as Columbia and Johns Hopkins University. Representatives at those schools, which have come under scrutiny for their morally equivocal methods, received kickbacks from private lenders asking to be advertised to students as “preferred,” regardless of whether their services actually merited the recommendation.

“It's not uncommon for people to say that if you're selling services, that's business,”

said Friedman. “There are people that say that profit-sharing is an accepted business practice.”

While profit-sharing cannot be prosecuted as an illegal business infraction, it can violate a state's consumer protection laws. The issue becomes even more ethically suspect when private lenders are given federal subsidies, paid for by taxpayer dollars.

Although the federal government offers low-interest student loans, it has failed to raise loan limits to keep pace with growing education costs. The most recent increase was approved by Congress in 2006, bringing the maximum amount students can borrow to a mere \$4,750 per year, hardly enough to foot the tuition bill at most schools in the country.

As such, explained Friedman, the private lender market has experienced a significant boom with its more flexible loan limits, inviting a greater number of companies into the competitive fray. Benefiting from lax federal

Summer High School Students Get a Taste of YU



By Aliza Vishniavsky

While most teenagers spend their summer days far away from school, 19 Jewish high school students chose to further their education in a simulated college setting at Yeshiva University.

Summer at YU, situated on the Beren Campus in Midtown Manhattan, was directed by Judith Isenberg of the YU admissions office. By splitting the day between shiur in the morning and secular classes in the afternoon, the program offered participants experiences in both secular and Judaic studies. The students, hailing from areas across the United States and Canada, were able to choose from three academic “majors”—studio art, business, and biology—to study in a hands-on settings with Yeshiva professors.

“These were highly motivated high school students who wanted to have a good time while also pursuing an academic summer experience,” explained Sharona Motkin (SSSB '08), who served as one of the six advisors for the program. “They were really in touch with what was going on in the world and were very thoughtful in terms of what they wanted to get out the summer. I was able to make real connections with them.”

“They were great kids, really smart, and committed to Torah u'Maddah,” added Ed Abramovitz (YC '09), another advisor. “They took their studies

seriously and were a ton of fun.”

oversight, many such companies have become enmeshed in scandals after brokering deals with college administrators to exclusively pitch their policies to students, in exchange for various forms of kickbacks.

At YU however, the Office of Student Aid refrains from advocating any single plan over another. “The question is to deliver the cheapest possible loans to students,” offered

seriously and were a ton of fun.”

Beyond the classroom, the students enjoyed various trips, some related to their studies and others for entertainment. Students in the business track visited the Dale and Thomas Popcorn Company to learn about their business model (and, of course, to enjoy some free samples). The biology group traveled up to the Bronx to the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. There, they were addressed by various deans, who spoke about medical ethics as it pertains to the everyday work of physicians, and about Einstein as a Jewish organization that also services the secular world. Visits to museums such as the MOMA were memorable highlights for the studio art students. For recreation, the entire group enjoyed a trip to Madame Tussaud's wax museum, a tour of New York on a double-decker bus, a Mets game, and white water rafting, among other events.

The students, mostly entering their senior year of high school, got a head start on their college careers. Not only did they have the opportunity to sit in real university classrooms with college professors, but they also engaged in periodic college prep workshops. The summer helped to teach them what to expect from college in general and from YU specifically.

Summer at YU additionally offered the high school students a stimulating Jewish experience. Classes in the morning

Friedman. “Our goal is to serve students and families and to be the conduit for getting students the money they need.” “YU pays my paycheck. That's my compensation,” he added.

Friedman pointed to an extensive brochure prepared by Student Aid, describing five private loan plans the university recommends to

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learning program were taught by Rabbi Asher Friedman, a rabbi at Yeshivat Lev Hatorah in Ramat Beit Shemesh, Avi Hochman, a semikha student at RIETS, and Rabbi Yissachar Krakowski, *sgan mashgiach* (spiritual advisor) at YU. They delivered classes on various topics, and alternated between shiur-style lectures and group discussions. Over the weekends, the group had shabbatons, replete with programming and learning in New Jersey, Washington DC, and on the Beren Campus. Also, one of their night activities featured an “ask-the-Rabbi” session with several YU rabbis.

The diverse group of students came from all types of Jewish backgrounds. “Some came of religious homes, some were not religious at all, and some were ba'alei teshuva,” observed Motkin. “For a number of them this Jewish experience was a first. We had a few kids who kept their first Shabbos on the program. They were open to new experiences and thrived when they found their place.”

Motkin recounted the experience of one girl who did not enjoy the more structured Judaic studies learning in the classroom, but flourished when she was given the opportunity to learn in *chavruta* (partner-style) with one of the advisors.

“These students got an in-depth look at Jewish life,” said Abramovitz. “They got all their questions answered in one shot, and came away with a good perspective of what it is to live as a ben Torah through YU.”

Deborah Anstandig (SCW '07), an alumni advisor, related that it was “incredible to work with these high school students because, being from a large community of Jews, it is always eye-opening to see high school students who don't have so much contact with such a community. They were encountering for the first time things that I encountered in YU for three years. It was a pleasure to expose them to YU, Torah learning, the college learning experience, and New York City in general.”

“Most importantly, we had a lot of fun with each other and made strong friendships,” she added. “Just take a look at their Facebook walls.”

As David Orner, a student participant from New York, put it, “The classes were good, the trips were good, the advisors were great. What's not to love?”

ISRAEL

President Adds YU to List of New Center for Israel Studies in Formative Stages Boycotted Institutions



By Chaya Citrin

When Great Britain's University and College Union (UCU) voted to boycott Israeli academic institutions, YU President Richard Joel responded by adding the university to the list of those indicted.

According to a New York Times story on May 31, the UCU, an organization that represents 120,000 British college professors, voted in favor of a boycott against Israeli academic institutions at the request of a Palestinian trade union. The New York Times reported that the group cited "complicity of Israeli academia" [sic] in occupation of Palestinian lands as justification for the boycott. According to the union's website, the boycott has not yet gone into effect, but UCU general secretary Sally Hunt has already contacted members to decide on its implementation. Israeli, Jewish, and other organizations and universities promptly criticized UCU's decision.

In a statement published on YU's website, President Joel condemned the boycott, calling it a "hypocritical act that defies the fundamental raison d'être of a university," explaining that "[t]his boycott erodes the sanctity of the academic sphere by introducing illegitimate political positions that amount to political blackmail. Moreover, it is irresponsible and detracts from the noble charge of the academy to enlighten and elevate intellectual discourse and advance humankind."

The president explained the university's position as extending not only from a commitment to education, but also from an obligation to "the timeless teachings of Torah and connections to Israel dating back to pre-statehood times." Citing the university's multi-faceted relationship with Israel, President

Joel reaffirmed the university's support for Israeli academic institutions. "We have invested in Israel through academic collaboration, post high school year-long Jewish studies programs, and 3,000 alumni who reside there," he said. "We support the miracle that is the State of Israel and salute Israeli scientists and scholars for their immeasurable contributions to the global community that have benefited so many."

Georgia Pollak, vice president for Communications and Public Affairs at YU, described the university's response to the boycott. "President Joel

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By Nava Billet

YU is currently establishing a new Israel studies department, an initiative spearheaded by Dr. Steven Fine, professor of Jewish history at Yeshiva College. Fine envisions the YU Center for Israel Studies (YUCIS) as a department comparable to other

"area-studies programs [that] are common at many colleges and universities."

YUCIS will draw from many disciplines, featuring courses in history, language, literature, politics and economics. The program is intended to reflect the university's broader efforts to bridge the gaps between its de-

partments through cross-program interaction.

Plans for YUCIS have been in formation throughout the past year. In his proposal for the program, Dr. Fine described the

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Counterpoint Impacts Israeli Society

By Laura Shuman

This summer, eight students from Stern and Yeshiva College took part in Counterpoint Israel, a program organized for the second year by the Center for the Jewish Future (CJF). Though the participants worked at a camp

for Israeli teenagers only during the month of July, the effects of the program promise to extend far beyond the summer.

One of the aspects of Counterpoint Israel that made it unique was the vast amount of time spent on preparation. "There was more beforehand, more af-

ter, and more during," explained past participant and current camp Director Zvi Friedman (YC '07) about the sometimes daunting workload. "A lot of the program had to do with planning, which

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דרשו ד' בהמצאו...

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RABBI ISAAC ELCHANAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
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RENUNCIATION, DIVORCE,
AND REHABILITATION:
REFLECTIONS ON FACETS OF TESHUVA
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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2007 • ת"ת תשס"ז
7:30 PM
40 CHUDOVANI STREET, BATIT VEGAN, JERUSALEM

TESHUVA AND ITS CONTEMPORARY
RESONANCE IN THE RAMBAM'S YAD HACHAZAKA
RABBI ZEVULUN CHARLOP
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8:00 PM

WEISSBERG COMMONS-BELFER HALL
WILF CAMPUS OF YESHIVA UNIVERSITY
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Lectures will be in English.
For more information, directions, and parking, please contact:
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Yeshiva University
 BEING WISDOM TO LIFE

ARTS & CULTURE

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: A Book Review

By Olivia Wznitzer

(Disclaimer: This article contains major spoilers. Please do not read it if you have not yet read the book.)

"Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows" suffers from an identity crisis, unable to decide between being a decisive and climactic ending to the series or a mad, frenzied dash through the first six books in an attempt to tie up loose ends. Readers may feel like they have been exposed to a hallucinogen, so sudden and divided are the images, so confusing the supposedly riveting ac-

tion, and so clunky the wonderful and glorious exposition.

The ill-natured Voldemort is at once cast as the most brilliant wizard in the world (save for the illustrious Dumbledore) and the most foolish man on the planet. Contradictions abound as this delightfully problematic book embarks upon the story of Harry's last and final quest—to destroy the Horcruxes, sundered pieces of Lord Voldemort's soul.

Harry is nothing if not his usual conflicted, angst-ridden self. Brooding and melancholy as per typical hero requirements, J.K. Rowling, in what she surely sees as a master stroke of literary

brilliance, makes sure his world comes crashing down on him. Even his hero is not left intact, for Harry must choose between his blissfully naïve understanding of Dumbledore and the darker, flawed version offered by newspaper reporter Rita Skeeter. Angry at being forced to choose, Harry vows that he desires the truth, that last and most elusive of man's desires.

Having been sworn to secrecy by the now late Professor Dumbledore, Harry and his friends wander through the woods in an attempt to secure the remaining Horcruxes and destroy them. Unfortunately, they have

no idea what they are doing and are aided only by the mysterious gifts left to them in Dumbledore's will. This leads to conflict and a tearfully important leave-taking by best friend and constant sidekick Ron Weasley.

Love interest Hermione Granger spends several nights sobbing as Harry continues being his moody and disinterested self. Happily, J.K. Rowling is able to work in the theme of constant

friendship by having Ron appear in the nick of time to save Harry's neck. This, in addition to various instances throughout the work where Hermione looks at Ron in great awe as he comes up with something rather clever, is a not-so-subtle attempt on Rowling's part to recreate Ron's image and make him worthier of Hermione's brilliance.

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Chana Rothman: Living in Six-Part Harmony



By Tikva Hecht

If Amanda Marshall, Lauren Hill, Bob Marley, and Shlomo Carlebach had reared a love child, they might have ended up with a nice Jewish girl by the name of Chana Rothman. "We Can Rise" is the latest CD from this up-and-coming singer and songwriter. Rothman's music is an amalgam of traditions—the self expression of folk music, the prayers of Judaism, and the classic energy of hip-hop—all brought together in one clear and encouraging voice.

Rothman's eclectic mu-

sical taste finds its roots in her equally diverse upbringing. She is classically trained, but her website attributes her source of inspiration to "living in the mountains, growing up outside the mainstream, and song-leading with lively kids from Kathmandu to the Lower East Side." Her music, rather than symbolizing a specific genre or community, is about representing herself.

She sings about her beliefs, her loves, and her desires, which are all influenced by the cultural wisdom and tools the world has provided for her. Although Rothman sings about herself, her music is for something much larger than herself.

"I think all Jews—but young Jews in particular, since I am also a teacher and youth worker—deserve fresh, original, thoughtful music that reflects our changing world. To use Jewish values, text, and concepts as a base for exploring the challenges

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"Triumph" for Owens is a Triumph for Schaap

By Avigail Soloveichik

The world is filled with sports fanatics and history enthusiasts. In the excitement of World Series games and record-breaking runs, one can easily forget that sport, like all things, is kin to history and inextricable from its lens.

An athlete is magnificent in comparison to those who precede him, and he remains an icon to those who follow him. Jeremy Schaap's work of nonfiction, "Triumph: The Untold Story of Jesse Owens and Hitler's Olympics," is part athletic novel and part historical tale. In it, Schaap describes Owens's achievements as sport and as an element of the domestic and international world in the mid 1930s.

Anyone with an affinity for running will be partial to the chapters that deal with Owens's training as a sprinter. Schaap re-

ports the races in detail—the injury that spurred Owens to run even faster, and the tenths of a second that made the difference between defeat and a world-record win. Newspapers loved Owens; reporters constantly searched for new words to describe the beauty of his running form. He was often compared to a horse, and later in life he even raced horses, spotting them several yards. Schaap's detailed account of Owens's competitive racing life is more than enough to keep a running fan happy.

Despite the running minutiae, the characters and personalities quickly develop: Owens, his coaches, his friends, his rivals, and the journalists who describe them. The reader senses the difference in the bearings and personalities of Eulace Peacock and Ralph Metcalfe, both African Americans like Owens; Marty Glickman, a Jew; and Luz Long,

a German broad-jumper—all opponents and friends of Jesse Owens.

When Schaap recounts descriptions written about these competitors and their Olympic exploits, he includes the faces behind the words: Al Laney of the Herald Tribune, Henry McLemore, Paul Gallico, and Gayle Talbot of the Associated Press, Westbrook Pegler and John Kieran of the New York Times, Grantland Rice, and others. Several of these journalists reappear throughout the novel, so instead of presenting words penned by nameless figures, the writers assume personalities of their own.

The reader gravitates toward one or another for his bravado or simplicity, and for his stance on political controversies of the time, such as whether to boycott

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Garbage Cans, Bamboo, Trailer Trucks, and Macbeth



By Olivia Wznitzer

I walk through a bower of light-studded greenery, passing through the shade to the open arena on the other side. On a large

slab of black concrete, actors declaim their lines, their movements passionate and masterful. Their set is extremely limited and lacks color; it is clear that the director prefers utility to vibrant hues.

A rough wooden set of stairs has been moved against one side of the stage, propped against a building that looks to be covered in bamboo-shaped pieces of black chrome. The backs of what seem to be three trailer trucks are visible, large rectangular areas of space covered in odd numbers and letters that suggest serial codes.

There are a group of rubber tire mats piled together in a kind of circle, leaving a space for what appears to be a small pool of water at their center. The black concrete is littered with twigs and assorted odds and ends; it is dusty in some places and dirty in others.

The actors' garb is not impressive. Their costumes are detailed but drab, the colors washed-out, subdued and calm. But it is obvious to all that their rendition of "Macbeth" is a masterpiece.

London's Regent's Park boasts the tremendously innovative and original Open-Air Theatre, home to productions that are staged entirely beneath the open sky. There is no protection or roof for the actors or the audience; instead, members commit to the production and its intrinsic beauty and determine that they will risk the possibility of inclement weather (in which case there

are no refunds, but only vouchers offered so that purchasers may attend another production at a later date) in order to see this particular play. Tonight is beautiful, however; the weather could not be more cooperative.

The last rays of the sun fade into dusk; the evening passes away and we are protected by a star-studded sky. But our attention is held by those who move about the stage, their strong and persuasive speeches, their immense and impossible agility. The actors seem a blend of human and fairy;

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SCIENCE & HEALTH

Med Students Merit Full Scholarships



By Miriam Merzel

This year, nine SCW alumnae will attend the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (AECOM) as Anne Scheiber Scholars, a number unprecedented during the six years the scholarship has been distributed.

Thanks to the generosity of Anne Scheiber, Stern alumnae continuing their graduate studies at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (AECOM) are afford-

ed the opportunity to attend the medical school virtually free of charge. Upon her death in 1995, Scheiber bequeathed \$22 million to the university, to be specifically allocated to a scholarship fund for women pursuing careers in science.

"I believe it is a reflection of the quality of our students and of the education they have

Continued on page 14

Interdisciplinary Studies Expanded

By Nili Seleski

A new Master's degree in Public Health (MPH) will soon be available on the graduate and post-graduate levels of Yeshiva University, and a center for public health, called the Institute for Public Health Sciences, is also being established.

Beginning in May 2008, the MPH program will be open for enrollment. For those interested in only obtaining the Master's degree exclusively, a two-year program is available. However, for those who want to earn their MPH while simultaneously finishing graduate studies in the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (AECOM), Ferkauf School of Psychology, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, or Wurzweiler School of Social Work, an adjunct to their regular studies will be established. Additionally, the program will also accommodate postgraduates working in any of the medical institutions affiliated with AECOM, such as Jacobi, Montefiore, and Beth Israel medical centers.

This multi-disciplinary program will train its students in specific techniques, such as epi-

demology, biostatistics, health services and administration, environmental sciences, and behavioral and social dimensions of public health. Additionally, it will provide them with valuable knowledge that allows them to integrate public health into their prospective careers and current training. The new program will help train better doctors, lawyers, psychologists, and social workers, in addition to a slew of professionals working to improve the health of the community at large.

"The institute will enable us to better resolve health care dilemmas at home and abroad," commented Dr. Sonia Suchday, co-director of the Institute and MPH program in "YU Today." The MPH program will also focus specifically on the management of chronic and life-threatening diseases within New York City and the Bronx, concentrating on illnesses such as heart disease, cancer, and multiple sclerosis.

Under the leadership of Suchday and Paul Marantz, MD, the Institute for Public Health Sciences will focus on fulfilling

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Losing Sleep Adds Pounds

By Chanie Ladaew

Sleep and sleep disruption influence our weight by affecting certain hormones. Production of both leptin and ghrelin, hormones that influence our appetites, may be affected by how much or how little we sleep we get each night.

Leptin and ghrelin control our feelings of hunger and satiety. Ghrelin, which is produced in the gastrointestinal tract, stimulates appetite. On the other hand,

leptin is produced in fat cells and signals the brain when you are satiated. When an individual does not get enough sleep, leptin levels are driven down, which means you do not feel full after you eat. Lack of sleep also causes ghrelin levels to rise, which means that you desire more food because your appetite is stimulated. These two combined effects set the stage for overeating, which leads to weight gain.

Both leptin and ghrelin hormones were recently studied

at the University of Chicago in Illinois. During the study, doctors measured levels of leptin and ghrelin in 12 healthy men. They also took note of their hunger and appetite levels. Soon after, the men were subjected to two days of sleep deprivation, followed by two days of extended sleep. During this time, doctors continued to monitor hormone levels, appetite, and activity. The research-

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Students Make Strides with AECOM Research

By Abby Atlas

Each summer, the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (AECOM) hosts the Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP), inviting 50 undergraduates from around the country to join the biomedical laboratories for nine weeks.

The program is designed to "generate excitement and enthusiasm both for Einstein and biomedical research careers," stated Barry Potvin, PhD, professor of biology at Yeshiva College (YC) and chairperson of the Roth Summer Research Fellowship Committee. The students of Stern College for Women (SCW) and YC are always strongly represented among the participants, and this year was no exception, as

12 YU students took part in this unique research experience.

Following a competitive application process and interview, five SCW students were accepted to the Roth Scholars Program, sponsored by the Ernst and Hedwig Roth Institute of Biomedical Sciences. Additionally, one woman was awarded the University

Undergraduate Research Scholarship, an internship initiated by Dr. Morton Lowengrub through the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Another student received funding from the Stern Einstein Research Connec-

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An Experiment in De-stressing

By Shana Maikhor

We are all constantly doing things to manage our stress. The "we" physicians refer to, are not those people who eat fruits and vegetables, exercise regularly, and log eight hours of sleep a night. They are talking about the 45 percent of Americans who, according to an American Psychological Association (APA) survey, deal with stress by retiring to the couch with a glass of wine, a bag of chips, and take-out food. We need to snap out of this. Stress is leaving us exhausted, tearful, and

nervous. It also makes us more likely to struggle with high blood pressure, depression, anxiety, and overeating. So what should we do? Here are some strategies that will help keep your stress at bay without tiring you out.

Old stress-buster: After a harried day at work or school, you come home and start eating French bread until you are in a carb-induced coma. We tend to crave foods rich in carbohydrates because they trigger the neurotransmitter serotonin. Serotonin is critical to many brain functions including the regulation of mood,

heart rate, sleep, relaxation of the body, appetite, and pain. As a result, it is extremely important that neurons release the proper amount of serotonin at the right time. Each neuron of serotonin has multiple axon terminals which release serotonin to the rest of the brain. The exchange of serotonin from cell to cell occurs in the gap between the axon terminal of the serotonin neuron and the dendrites. This region is called the synapse. After the serotonin is re-

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FASHION

Industry Insider

By Erin Delmoor

This summer I had the privilege of interning at a vintage fashion showroom. This isn't your typical showroom; it's a showroom for inspiration. The fashion industry is continuously changing and with an overload of competition, there is a lot of pressure to be creative and produce original designs. Oftentimes it can be an arduous task for a designer to conceive of an entire collection. Therefore, top designers come to our showroom to glean insight and garner ideas about how to enhance their own collections.

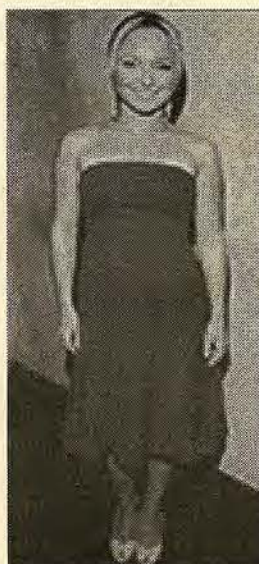
For example, let's say a company wants to create a Victorian, beaded, ethnic style, 1950's dress for an upcoming season. The designers would call in, relay their idea, and set up an appointment. Then, I would run around the showroom and rummage through all the clothes to find an assortment of pieces that fit with their theme. The designers came in, looked through each item carefully, and chose a few key pieces as the inspiration for their collections.

The showroom was extraordinary, replete with fashions from as early as the 1750's, including bathing suits and shoes, as well as vintage jewelry, beadings, sculptures, accessories, and magazines. The impressive inventory hails from all over the world, from markets in India, South America and Europe, to vintage stores, thrift shops and garage sales. Many pieces are one-of-a-kind and everything is in mint condition. My favorite pieces were the cocktail dresses from the 1940's and 1950's.

Since the showroom is constantly receiving new shipments, the excess pieces that are no longer needed are auctioned off. There is one woman at the showroom whose entire job is dedicated to selling (and sometimes buying) vintage pieces online. Before they are put up for sale, each item is photographed. Then their measurements are taken and a blurb describing the item is written. At times, I would assist with this process.

On the job, I learned to identify which era the garments were from, the varying fabrics,

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TRENDSPOTTER: Top Five Trends for Fall

By Efrat Okrent

Say Hello To YELLOW!

This season, the cheery hue is making its fashion debut. To get the look, super stylish fashionistas must remember to keep it simple, as too much yellow can come across as shocking. A daffodil colored clutch or sunny pair of shoes can be just the thing to brighten up your outfit. Bearing in mind that simplicity is key, refrain from pairing this shade with other primary colors. Celebrity Rachel Bilson has said of the color: "It's really cute worn with patterns with hints of yellow in it." It seems those subtle hints of yellow are just the touch you need to keep your fall get-up looking fresh, flirty, and fashion forward!

Cinched Waistlines.

We all wish we had Victoria Beckham's flawless body, but have no fear, wearing a high-waisted pencil skirt can create a super sleek and flattering look. When worn correctly, this cute number creates the illusion of fabulously long legs! Try a frilly blouse tucked into a high-waisted pencil skirt. A funky belt often adds a touch of edginess to this conservative look. With this outfit, you're bound to look sophisticated and chic.

Chunky Heels.

It's time to ditch those kitten heels, 'cause height is what it's all about this fall. With hemlines reaching new altitudes, it is only appropriate that heels follow suit. Inspired by British bombshells Kate Moss and Sienna Miller, you can achieve this gravity defying style by pairing the leggy look with cropped jackets and opaque tights. Remember, to look "London chic" there is no need to cross the pond. Keep it sleek and your chunky platforms are sure to bring some bounce into your step!

The 70's are back! With flowery frocks, that is.

After all the black that went down the runway last season, these playful patterns are refreshing bursts of color just in time for the start of the school year. Unlike the little black dress, the floral frock needs few, if any, accessories. The fun prints are accessories in their own right. To get the look, simply slap one on! The key here is balance. Try pairing the frock of your choice with heels or flats in a solid color. Black usually works, although a solid metallic color often complements and amplifies the brightly colored shades. A short shift dress with gold or copper flats is perfect for fall.

Hats, Hats, and More Hats

Hats should be a staple in any gal's wardrobe this season. In particular, Fedoras seem to be on everyone's mind—not to mention heads! To get the look, try a Fedora in a contrasting color, but with a coordinating trim or ribbon to pull your outfit together. The Fedora is classy with a hint of attitude so it's a great way to integrate the rock n' roll chic floating around the runway into your wardrobe. Mary-Kate Olsen is a particular fan of the style and is seen sporting Fedoras with almost all of her ensembles.

"You're Wearing That?" Musings on Fashion and Friendship

By Chana Filler

It was pouring rain and I found myself sopping wet. I sent a text message lamenting the demise of my favorite pair of Repetto flats to my most empathetic friend, who responded to the news with sheer indignation. It was then that it suddenly occurred to me that our mutual appreciation of footwear had in some strange way strengthened our relationship.

I am not presumptuous enough to think that musings on the topic of fashion are enough to sustain meaningful friendships. However, there is no doubt that fashion plays a role in our daily lives and thereby makes its way into our interactions. From the clothes we don in the morning taken from our roommate's closet, to the bouts of retail therapy shared with friends, fashion has found its place in our social realm.

Additionally, our social alliances can often be discerned by what we wear. Bohemian looks are characteristic of hippie types, while oxfords, pleats, and pearls are ubiquitous amongst prepsters. Yet attire should not serve as a mode of divisiveness. To the contrary—while we may be inclined to remain within a certain social group, we should be willing and eager to appreciate the flair in others.

While it is indeed reasonable to assume that the notion of "birds of a feather flock

together" relates to those of us with similar aesthetics, it would be a major faux pas to adhere entirely to this instinct. We need to spread our wings and see beyond the feathers, whatever color they may be. Whether you possess a penchant for pleats and pearls or prefer jeans and t-shirts, it's time to consider broadening the fabric of that social design.

Although it may be difficult for some to branch out from their conventional milieu, a shared affinity for fashion is something we can all discuss. Fashion is an art form and a unique mode of expression. It provides endless fodder for conversation, and despite its ostensible superficiality, it has the power to create a certain camaraderie and initial common ground.

It's time to open up, defy the labels, and sew a fresh pattern; diversify our fashion and friendship portfolios and try something new on for size. I challenge you to step outside your comfort zones for a New York minute and approach those who may inspire a new style within you.

Trends come and go but friendship transcends the ephemeral nature of fashion. To borrow a quote from Emerson, "The only way to have a friend is to be one." So compliment her shoes in the elevator or tell him that you like his tie; it may be the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

The Effects of Sleep Deprivation

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ers found that when sleep was restricted, leptin levels decreased, while ghrelin levels increased. Not surprisingly, the men's appetite also increased proportionally to the increase in ghrelin. Their desire for high carbohydrate, calorie-dense foods increased by a whopping 45 percent.

Furthermore, individuals who suffer from sleep apnea, a sleeping disorder in which an individual pauses in breathing during sleep, are more likely to be obese. However, studies show that apnea sufferers do not have the usual low leptin levels associated with being overweight. In fact, they have high levels of leptin. So why does low leptin seem to cause weight gain in

some individuals while allowing others to lose weight?

One theory suggests that it may not be the level of leptin that matters, as much as a person's individual response to it. In much the same way that obese people can become resistant to insulin, those with apnea may be resistant to the fullness signal that leptin sends to the brain. This means that their body tells them to stop eating, but their brain does not receive the information.

In addition, the overall response to leptin may be more individualized than we think. Experts theorize that our environment, dietary habits, exercise patterns, personal stress levels, and particularly our genetics, may all play a part in influencing the production of leptin and ghrelin, as well as our response to them.

Most experts agree that if you are dieting, logging in a few extra hours of sleep a week is not a bad idea, especially if you get under six hours of sleep a night. You may discover that you are not as hungry or that you have lessened your craving for sugary, calorie-dense foods. Once a person is not as tired, they do not depend on sweet foods and high-carbohydrate snacks to keep them awake, and that automatically translates into eating fewer calories a day.

Health Center Created

Continued from page 12

two goals. Firstly, the institute will gather researchers and educators from across the university. Faculty and staff will have the opportunity to examine areas of common interest and try to create collaborations of innovative research and educational programs, within the university community and outside as well.

The institute will also sponsor conferences and seminars about public health. The inaugural seminar will be launched on September 20 at the Schottenstein Cultural Center on the Beren Campus. Entitled "A Whirlwind Tour of Diversity and Disparity," it will address the realities of health problems related to diversity and also discuss whether disparity is an inevitable result of diversity. The conference will include speeches by experts in the

field who have spent their careers researching health issues among groups which differ in terms of their ethnic backgrounds, socioeconomic statuses, and geographic locations.

Lecturers will come from many different universities, as the seminar includes researchers from outside the YU community as well. Those taking part in the workshop will be able to interact with these experts and gain from their knowledge and experience.

The advent of the MPH program and the Institute for Public Health will present new research opportunities for undergraduates interested in public health or preventative medicine. However, students who are not pursuing health-related careers will still stand to benefit by attending institute-sponsored seminars publicizing the importance of public health awareness.

Scholarships Granted to Med Students

Continued from page 12

received at Stern College and of their drive to enter a profession that will engage both their minds and their hearts," said SCW Dean Karen Bacon, when asked to comment on this year's record statistic.

All SCW graduates accepted at Einstein are eligible to apply for the scholarship, which is awarded to students of outstanding character who demonstrate leadership potential, ingenuity, creativity, and a desire to help humanity. Funds are awarded in various amounts, extending even to the full cost of tuition, based on the financial needs of the student. Given the large size of the endowment and its resulting ability to subsidize all students who qualify, all SCW alumnae currently attending AECOM are recipients of the scholarship.

Current AECOM students reflected on the scholarship and on their experiences at the medical school itself.

"I'm getting a good education in a good environment," said Shani Snyder (SCW '06, AECOM '10). "It is an amazing place to be at school." She reported that most of her fellow students felt similarly. Among the benefits she enumerated were the school's accommodating nature and its abidance by a Jewish calendar.

Tova Fischer (SCW '04, AECOM '09) was first introduced to AECOM when she spent a summer there doing research as an undergraduate, an experience which influenced her decision to later attend the school. "The scholarship removes a big burden," she said. "It's a relief to be able to graduate medical school without a lot of debt."

But for many, the scholarship was not the primary reason for which they chose to attend the school. Numerous students have spent time at Einstein through summer research experiences and other venues, and the scholarship

only added to an already impressive package.

SCW alumnae at AECOM made headlines earlier this year when two current students, Meredith Weiss (SCW '03, AECOM '08) and Arielle Glueck (SCW '03, AECOM '08) initiated the Stern-Einstein Research Connection (SERC), a program providing funding for a freshman or sophomore to spend her summer researching in a lab at the medical school.

"We wanted to show our gratitude to Stern in a way that would help current Stern students," Glueck explained. "Getting your first job in a lab is difficult, a catch-22, because labs want someone with experience. Here we help find a lab, provide funding, and mentor the intern."

"We wanted to have a mechanism to show our *hakarat hatov* (gratitude)," added Weiss.

Wendy Hosinking (SCW '09) was privileged to participate

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Summer Research Opportunities

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tion (SERC), a new scholarship created by SCW alumnae now studying in AECOM. These three scholarships provided the YU SURP participants with stipends and on-campus housing.

Once accepted to SURP, each student was placed at a specific laboratory, depending on their area of interest. Under the guidance of a mentor, usually a post-doctoral or graduate student, he or she learned the fundamentals of hypothesis-driven research and the various techniques employed by that laboratory. The student was given a specific project designed for two months of research.

At the conclusion of the summer, the SURP students presented their research to an open audience. The presentation was valuable not only because it allowed the students to display their research to their peers but because, as one SCW senior poignantly stated, "presenting my re-

search allowed me to crystallize for myself the significance of my work and contextualize it within the laboratory's larger research initiatives."

Nilly Brodt (SCW '08), a Montreal native majoring in biology, was one of the seven Stern students in SURP this summer. Under the guidance of Tom Meier, PhD in the Department of Anatomy and Structural Biology, she, together with the other lab members, researched a mysterious organelle found only in the human uterine endometrial tissue, hypothesized to be linked to human fertility.

"Roth was such a great opportunity, and not only because of the research," Brodt remarked. "I loved meeting students from all over the world, and AECOM has a really warm and friendly atmosphere."

Another SCW senior, biochemistry major Chani Schonbrun (SCW '08), also enjoyed the research opportunity. "It was an eye opening experience which taught me a lot about the life of a research scientist," she noted. "Everyone had a lot to teach me and I appreciated having the chance to learn it."

"The students who ultimately go into MD/PhD or PhD programs and were in the Roth program are usually the ones that most impress everyone at Einstein," said Dr. Potvin. However, not only do the students from YC and SCW gain valuable research experience from the SURP program, but their contributions to their respective laboratories are valued as well. "I've received nothing but praise for the SCW and YC students involved in the program from both faculty and administrators at Einstein," Dr. Potvin added.

Nevertheless, many of the SURP participants are not headed toward a career in research; most of them hope to attend medical school. The program, however, hopes to expose these undergraduates to the world of graduate level research, encouraging them to consider pursuing either a PhD or a joint MD/PhD degree.

in SERC in its inaugural year. She worked in a lab researching cardiovascular disease, its prevalence and severity, and the proteins involved. "The people in the lab were welcoming, patient, understanding, and supportive," she said. "Einstein in general is a friendly and an open environment to be in. The Stern graduates served as great mentors, spending time with me, being available, and helping me prepare my poster and presentation. My first research experience was stimulating and rewarding and will be a great stepping stone." Hosinking, who plans to pursue a career in medicine, credited her summer experience with her desire to attend AECOM for graduate school.

Dean Bacon also revealed plans for a mentoring program aimed at fostering relationships between current SCW undergraduates and Anne Scheiber recipients.

Owens on Top

Continued from page 11

the Berlin Olympics and how to react to so many African Americans winning Olympic medals at a time when they were mistreated in the United States.

History aficionados will especially enjoy the chapters that discuss the dispute in America—and particularly in the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU)—over whether to boycott the Berlin games. Some people feared that Hitler would not give German Jews the opportunity they deserved to qualify for the Olympics. Indeed, the promises German authorities made to the contrary were meaningless. Journalists covering the Olympics noted the welcoming façade donned by the German establishment for the occasion. Some Americans also worried that the Germans would use the Olympics for political advantage, giving the impression that America—by sending its athletes to the Berlin games—supported the Third Reich.

People tried to engage Owens in the boycott controversy. However, at age 22, Owens declined political involvement as much as possible. “All I want is the chance to run,” he told his coach Larry Snyder. Running and politics—sport and history—might at first seem incongruous, but Schaap brings them together in a story that will attract anyone’s interest.

Jesse Owens, the master sprinter, won four gold medals in the 1936 Olympics. Adolf Hitler became a manic mass murderer who riled his country into a worldwide war that killed millions. Owens is a hero and a superman, not only because of his feats, but because he achieved them as a member of a mistreated minority, and because he achieved them right in front of Hitler’s eyes.

As Schaap describes Owens’s invalidation of Hitler’s belief in Aryan supremacy, he emphasizes all the right stories, reports, and rumors. He cites some accounts that Hitler waved at Owens and others that Hitler snubbed him. All the while, Schaap subtly reminds readers that these events occurred only a few years before the world exploded in war—a world war that some perhaps foresaw, but the extremity of which no one had imagined.

It is unnerving to read about Hitler in the world of sport and to study his pre-WWII disposition. Schaap gives readers glimpses of Hitler as der Führer and as a human, as a man. Hitler admits to the woman documenting the Berlin Olympics, “I have no family and I am lonely.” One wonders how this man, this human being, could go on to perpetrate unthinkable horrors only a few years later. The tone of the book’s latter chapters is ominous, as though readers can hear the whispers of cruelty that precede the storm

“Triumph” deals mostly with Jesse Owens at the peak of his success; the prologue and epilogue discuss his life after victory. His life following the Olympics was not as prosperous as he imagined it would be. Not long after the games, several hotels refused admittance to Owens and his wife because they were African Americans. Although Owens later became more successful, wistful sadness lingers with the reader—a feeling that Owens deserved much more for his effort and his triumph.

Neal Bascomb writes in his book “The Perfect Mile:” “Our sporting heroes often strike us as ageless. We remember them in their prime, their faces unblemished, their bodies taut with power.” This statement is true of Owens; he is forever pictured as a thoroughbred runner racing down the track and as a winner on the medal podium. This is the pedestal on which Owens stands in the world’s view of history.

Despite its technical details, “Triumph” reads very much like a story. It is humorous at times, unnerving at others, and on the whole, thought-provoking. Owens’s incredible speed was important for both its clocked times and its moral implications. Schaap writes: “Nothing Jesse Owens did at the Olympic stadium diminished the horrors to come. He saved no lives. However...while much of the rest of the world kowtowed to the Nazis, Owens stood up to them at their own Olympics.”

Harry Potter Reviewed

Continued from page 11

This touching reconciliation leads to a daring attempt to find and obliterate a Horcrux stashed in Gringotts. The Wizarding Bank seems a rather odd place for the most brilliant and powerful wizard in the world to store a piece of his soul, but we follow the trio as they make their dubiously grand entrance and succeed in demolishing the place (albeit unintentionally). Rowling once again allows her trio to escape unscathed and continue on their ambling way.

Having previously discovered the existence of the Deathly Hallows, magical objects that allow their true owner immortality, Harry now turns into a glazed-eyed devotee. Torn between following the orders left by Dumbledore, a man whom he finds increasingly less trustworthy, and following his own desire to become master of the Hallows,

Harry must engage in a deep internal struggle. Of course, as this is a Rowling book, he chooses the side of all that is light and good and determines that he must obey Dumbledore’s orders, even from beyond the grave.

But where to go next? Harry wishes to trust the eerie connection between his mind and Voldemort’s, but cautious Hermione urges him to leave that aside and follow in the pathways of Occlumency, thereby closing his mind. Speaking of Occlumency, one wonders where the villain of the hour, Professor Severus Snape, has disappeared to. Are we not anxious to discover his true loyalties? Is he dark and conflicted or good and kind? But Rowling hides him away and permits us very limited access to him. The only problem is her darkly sinister scenes which show him standing by as Voldemort kills others in front of him. These scenes veer so far to depict him as

a cruel murderer that we know he has to be good. Otherwise, what was the purpose of all this exposition?

Since everything would be less interesting if Harry were ever wrong (or so Rowling seems to think), his stubborn insistence upon leaving his mind wide open to the advances of Voldemort prove advantageous. He finds that he is correct and that the last and final stand against Voldemort will take place at Hogwarts. Voldemort is the most powerful and threatening wizard in the world at the moment, and yet Beauxbatons, Durmstrang and the other magical wizarding communities seem to have been completely forgotten. Rowling is far more occupied with tying up loose ends and killing off characters than concerning herself with the intricacies of world politics. Indeed, she never follows up on the spectacularly entertaining visit to the Prime Minister of Muggles that

Macbeth, Out in the Open

Continued from page 11

they are creatures of the night and we are caught, spellbound by their performance and the passion they bring to it.

Macbeth is an intensely conflicted man, a character who meets the Wyrd Sisters and knows them for their true selves. Observing that the prophecies they made about his companions came true, he obsesses over the prophecy made for him: that he shall become king. Corrupted by these thoughts, he begins a descent down a long and slippery slope during which he battles himself, his ambition, his desire for power, and his guilt. Mad visions, horrifying ghosts, and bloody blades all characterize this play, which could potentially descend into an ugly presentation of gory sensationalism and melodrama.

But the Open-Air Theatre crew is skillful and subtle; they develop their characters and bring them to life. The purposefully sparse nature of the set forces the actors to demonstrate their characters’ feelings rather than relying upon a gaudy and ornamental stage to tell their story. The same is true of their costumes. Though the costumes are detailed and of fine material, all the colors are subdued. There are lilacs and lavenders, pale greens

and dark blacks. This is entirely necessary, however, because of the key desire behind this rendition of “Macbeth”: the desire to shock. The desire to shock the audience into understanding; into feeling both disgust and pity, disgust for the ugliness of the crime and pity for the cruel man Macbeth has become.

This is accomplished by limiting the show to one vibrant and telling hue: red. Red occurs in this play for one of two reasons; it is there because a character has been killed and his murderer is most violently coated in

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Sounds of Harmony

Continued from page 11

in our lives can be very powerful. And if it’s done well, it can become universal,” she says. More than just a form of entertainment, she wants her music to be something which is relevant and meaningful to Jews and non-Jews alike.

The first two songs on her latest CD, the title track “We Can Rise” and “Ana,” highlight the best music this young artist has to offer. Her voice is powerful and full. Her excitement towards the words and their meaning complements the upbeat tempos and lively accompaniment by an acoustic guitar.

“Ana” is particularly effective as a modern day prayer for a contemporary woman. As Rothman’s voice rises and falls between the English stanzas and the Hebrew chorus, the song manages to display both the strength and the fragility of faith. Unfortunately, Rothman is unable to maintain this energy throughout the whole CD, and some of her songs totter dangerously on the border between inspirational and preachy. But on the whole, “We Can Rise” does manage to be both fun and compelling. It is infused with Rothman’s dynamic presence, one that shows both promise and determination.

Produced by C Lanzbom of “Soulfarm,” “We Can Rise” will be released on October 24 at the Oyho Music Festival. Rothman can also be seen at Jewzapalooza on September 9.

takes place in “Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince.” Though events are vaguely referenced, global politics seem quite unimportant when there are individuals upon whom to focus.

This is at once Rowling’s greatest flaw and greatest strength—her penchant for focusing upon her characters to the exclusion of all else, her desire to develop and create those characters in a meaningful and necessary context. While the major characters certainly develop throughout the book, the work does not succeed as the last in the line of an attempted epic fantasy. The individuals reach maturity and age convincingly; their choices are both powerful and moving.

But Rowling prefers to conclude her work with a satisfying bang rather than a more disturbing, subtle, “still small voice”

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Harry Potter Continued

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(Kings I 19:13). Of course, for those who prefer a more sophisticated style, this bang is hardly satisfying.

Where does this bang occur, this last grand stand? At Hogwarts, of course. The spectacle should be impressive but comes across as foolish. While Harry dashes around looking for a crown, the last Horcrux, and also finds time to poignantly save nemesis Malfoy's life out of pity, the teachers arm themselves and participate in a bizarre caricature of a war, complete with Professor McGonagall yelling "CHARGE!" and the destruction of priceless pieces of art. It is quite difficult to take this war seriously.

There are no last stands, no strong parting words, nothing that makes it seem real, that makes the deaths seem powerful. Instead, it is one long melee, complete with sound effects and a lot of shouting. This lessens the impact and makes the entire war seem rather ridiculous.

The ending, however, incorporates a mystical understanding of the power of self-sacrifice and love. Harry is required to sacrifice himself for the good of the whole; he must accept death and walk willingly into death, for he is the last and final Horcrux. He accepts his fate and walks to it in a chilling, beautiful scene, but the killing curse cast by Voldemort does not work.

Harry finds himself in limbo, in a place that is of his own imagination, and engages in a powerful conversation with Professor Dumbledore, his mentor. Dumbledore explains that he is flawed and Harry is granted his truth. Dumbledore is a far more beautiful character due to his admission that he craved power and that he denied himself this power because he knew that he would fail were he truly tempted.

Since Harry willingly accepts the prospect of his death, he does not die. Instead he returns and succeeds in killing the fearsome Voldemort, but not before cautioning him to try for some remorse, as that would reform his splintered soul.

Remorse is a powerful idea in Rowling's book; she hints that it is Snape's remorse for having been the spy whose actions indirectly caused the death of Lily Potter, love of his life, that enabled him to kill Dumb-

ledore upon Dumbledore's orders without severing or splintering his own soul. Snape, in the end, is a redeemed character, a hero through and through, a man who could not be called coward for a moment. Everything he did, he did for love, out of the love he felt for Lily Potter. We finally understand why Harry's eyes, so like his mother's, are so important.

Rowling's book is a success in that she beautifully elaborates upon the themes of love, sacrifice, acceptance, and death. She does this by focusing more upon the individual characters than the political structure of the world she has created, but this is understandable and even forgivable. Although the action is clunky and the references to former books overdone, the end result is quite lovely. While Harry may never equal the grand Frodo Baggins, the weary Taran Wanderer, or the compelling Will Parry, he is sure to dance across the minds of many and lead them to the grand and welcoming vistas of literature and fantasy.

Rowling has done a wondrous and magnificent thing in penning her series; her books have fascinated children all over the world and encouraged them to use their minds. She has helped to perpetuate a love of reading and the courageous advance into the realm of the imagination—and for that, if for no other reason, she can and should be respected.

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the resulting gore, or because it is a symbol of power, a red carpet rolled on the floor upon which the future King Macbeth treads. Red is dynamic, dramatic against the paleness of the purples and greens, the stark whites and blacks. Red stands out and tells a story; it is there in order to disturb.

The Open-Air Theatre Crew uses their environment to great effect. There is nothing more eerie than witnessing weird and shocking ceremonies and rites in the darkness beneath only the frightening expanse of the night sky. The audience is part of the darkness, also covered and trapped by the dark. We are caught in Macbeth's trap; we are one with him. We listen to the wind rushing through the trees, the sound it makes as it sweeps over the green. We hear that mournful wailing and shiver. We start in fright as witches appear out of nowhere, silent as death, hidden under cover of darkness. We jump up as two men dart out from behind the bushes, running forward to engage in pitched battle.

The rough and unfinished nature of the set adds to the mystery. This set is utterly ingenious because it can be and it is used and reused; large trash cans that are repositories of holy water in one scene suddenly become the three witches' cauldrons in the next scene. There, fire plays a major role as the witches, uttering shrieks that are terrible to hear, stir up a large and frightening cauldron of flames. Dressed in garb that one can only describe as appropriate for the more dis-

Macbeth

turbing characters of the "Pirates of the Caribbean" (a strange mix of rags, ruined finery, white painted faces and a look that must be copyrighted to the Tia Dalma), these women cavort about, shriek and wail, yet still retain the ability to be as silent as a mouse, creeping down the aisle and scaring audience members out of their wits. It is their sheer unpredictability that frightens, as in the desperate dance they do with Macbeth, who whirls in time to their spell without realizing that he is being compelled to do so.

The most powerful scenes of all are those that incorporate elements of sound, music, light, and the nature and opportunity afforded by an outdoor theater in addition to the natural strength of the actors. Such scenes are the highlights of the play; they include Banquo's return from the dead and Lady Macbeth's descent into madness. They are played in an honest and terrifying manner, and the subtle, understated special effects aid the main characters in making these scenes particularly special.

Perhaps the greatest tribute to the skill and power of the actors was the audience's response that night. The audience was completely and utterly still, a crowd of hundreds silenced. Not one cell phone rang (and the performance was two hours and forty-five minutes long!). Nobody spoke. A woman who sat in front of me was in tears by the end of the production. I was curious as to whether this was a British phenomenon (in contrast to American disregard for the re-

quest to turn off cell phones or to be silent), so I asked a member of the theater crew for his opinion. He informed me, "No. It's 'Macbeth.' If this were 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' the crowd would be laughing and frolicking and mostly drunk. If it were [and he named another play] the audience would be clapping and singing along. But this is 'Macbeth.' Also, it's being performed in a very original way, so there are many people in the audience tonight who are really here to see it; here because they really want to see this play."

By the time the play was over, I understood why.

Next time you're in London, be sure to check out the Open-Air Theatre at Regent's Park. It will be well worth your while.

The Open Air Theatre is, according to their website, "the oldest fully professional, permanent outdoor theatre in Britain, with one of the largest theatre auditoriums in London." It is located in London's spacious and beautiful Regent's Park, accessible by Tube, bus, car or coach. "Macbeth" ran from May 28, 2007 to its final performance on August 16, 2007.

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Israel Studies

Continued from page 10

main goal of YUCIS as “to develop an academic program that will nurture scholars and leaders who can provide insight into Israel’s history, its culture, and contemporary regional issues.”

The first official programs run under the auspices of YUCIS took place this summer in Israel, as part of the YU Israel Summer Experience. These included a field course in archaeology taught by Dr. Jill Katz and a Classical Jewish history course taught by Dr. Fine. Although the program will start off by offering only individual classes on Israel studies, the staff anticipates that the college will eventually incorporate it into the curriculum as a separate subject which students can major in.

The university also plans to hire additional staff to teach courses in various fields connected to Israel’s past, present, and future.

“Israel Studies will cover all facets of Jewish life in Israel, from Biblical times to the present, with a commitment to study Israel within the context

of the culture, religion, history, and politics of the Middle East, Europe, and North America,” Dr. Fine explained. “The Center will integrate traditional areas of the curriculum—the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities—with a focus on politics, history, anthropology, sociology, religion, arts, archaeology, economics, language, and literature.”

Dr. Morton Lowengrub, vice president for Academic Affairs, predicted that YUCIS will play a role in many of YU’s graduate schools, including Cardozo, Einstein, Wurzweiler, and Azrieli, in addition to the undergraduate programs. “[YUCIS will act as] a catalyst for providing courses about Israel in all colleges, grad and undergrad, and will be a catalyst for lectures as well,” he said optimistically.

In addition to extending the Israel Studies program to all branches internally, the university also plans to create relationships with Israeli institutions abroad. There is a possibility that joint programs with Hebrew University and Bar Ilan University may be

developed in the future. YU will also be inviting visiting scholars to spend a semester on campus.

But YUCIS does not wish to solely appeal to students currently enrolled in the university. “The program hopes to involve alumni and former students through academic lectures and other academic ventures,” commented Lowengrub. He stressed that even though Dr. Fine is located on the Wilf campus, he [Lowengrub] is committed to achieving full implementation of the program on the Beren Campus as well.

The upcoming spring semester at YU will be called “Israel Studies Semester” in honor of the 60th anniversary of Israel’s statehood. Dr. Fine disclosed that YUCIS will be running sessions in the spring with the hope that “our students will get involved in courses and programs that the Center will help to institute and promote.”

Counterpoint Israel

Continued from page 10

was a skill that we were trying to give over.”

The core of the program was the summer camp held in Yerucham, a small development town just south of Be’er Sheva. For two and a half weeks, participants ran a day camp for 35 Israeli teenagers. Every day was filled with an informal session which focused on different messages of self-empowerment, and a different participant was in charge of teaching specific subjects including body image, career goals, time management. Following these sessions, which incorporated innovative teaching media such as movies, art, and acting, campers chose from an array of activities such as drama, crafts, drawing, and sports. Events such as camel riding, hikes, and even airplane rides were also daily highlights for the campers.

Though “SummerCamp” lasted only for the duration of two and a half weeks, YU participants began preparing the sessions in late May, under the guidance of Shuki Taylor, the CJF’s representative on YU’s Israel campus. Before YU participants arrived in Israel, they underwent an intense training in New York, which in-

cluded studying an overview of the complexities of Israel-Diaspora relations, goal-setting, and most importantly, training for creating self-empowerment sessions using innovative and imaginative methods of informal education.

The camp was generously funded by the Zussman family and participants worked in partnership with the Municipality of Yerucham and with Meir Panim, a countrywide relief agency, to integrate people of different cultural, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds. The camp was conducted in English, which will help the children gain entry into a university, a benefit which was important to the parents of the campers.

The final element of the program was a two-day closing seminar. During the camp and the seminar, participants worked closely with Bema’aglei-Tzedek, an Israeli organization focused on mainstreaming social justice issues in the religious world, both through action and dialogue. The YU participants learned about the role of social justice in religious texts, and also worked on the development of follow-up programming to bring to the YU campus. As a result of these meetings, participants became more aware of pressing issues in Israeli society.

“I felt really integrated into Israeli life and not just a bystander,” remarked Victoria Stone (SCW ’08).

Additionally, students worked with successful young professionals currently making large strides in Israeli society through the Institute for Creative Zionism, an organization whose mission is to “seed ground-breaking initiatives that change the way the Jewish people live, think, and work.”

One of the main goals of Counterpoint Israel was to bridge gaps in the Israel-Diaspora relationship. The YU Counterpoint students welcomed the addition of three Israeli counselors, who worked alongside them in Summer Camp, forging connections between American and Israeli Jewry.

The Counterpoint Israel experience was unparalleled for the YU students. “This program really changed me,” commented Elisheva Rose (SCW ’09). “It opened my mind up, and it was so clear that we would continue what we started once we got back to America.”

The Science of Stress

Continued from page 12

leased into the synapse, it comes into contact with receptors on the dendrite of another neuron. When a molecule of serotonin attaches to one of these receptors, it sends a chemical signal to the cell body.

Based on information put together from all the receptors, the cell body decides whether or not to fire an electrical impulse down its own axon. If a certain amount of receptor binding occurs, the axon will fire, causing the release of neurotransmitters into the synapses between it and other cells. This is how brain cells communicate and regulate the amount of neurotransmitters present at any given time.

Research has shown that the amount of serotonin bound to receptors influences your mood. When more receptors are active, you are happier. However, after

a period of feeling happy and relaxed, the body starts to regulate itself again and you then feel calmer and more like your normal self. This is bad, because all the anxiety and stress comes back and you reach once more for those Oreos or that sandwich, starting another self-induced coma.

New solution: Instead of stuffing yourself with that loaf of bread, take a hot bath or shower to relax your muscles and your mind. Or, lie down and breathe deeply. If you do decide to eat, make that decision conscientiously.

Ask yourself: what are the consequences and benefits of this action? After answering this question, “eight out of 10 times you’ll skip the Oreos,” says University of Alabama psychology professor Beverly Thorn, PhD. We should remember the saying: “A moment on the lips, a lifetime on the hips.”

This is a much better solution because it lasts longer and you will finally feel truly relaxed. This is not mentioning the fact that it will prevent you from packing on a thousand pounds.

Old stress-buster: After a fight with your friend, roommate, or boyfriend, you turn on the TV or go on the computer and zone out. This relaxes you by putting you in a stupor. That TV trance is caused in part by your slowing metabolism. Studies have found that watching television is more effective at lowering your metabolism than sleeping is.

New solution: To release the emotional stress of a fight talk to a friend, write in a journal, take a brisk walk, or get some other kind of exercise. If a mental vacation is what you are after, pick up a book to escape. Once you have regrouped, then talk to the person you are in a fight with. These solutions will not only help you relax, but doing the exercise will also help you kick-start your metabolism and burn those extra calories!

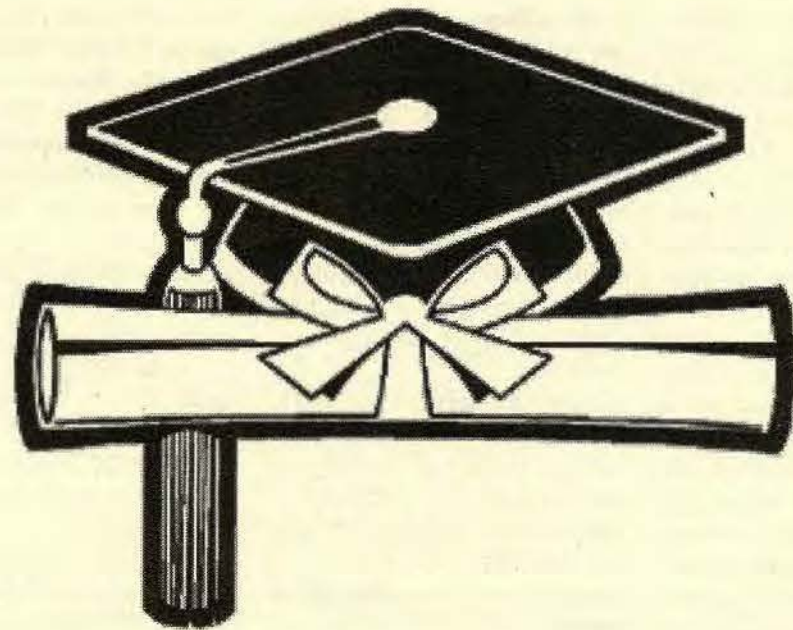
So, even though summer is over and school has started, do not let stress affect you. Try these suggestions and I guarantee that, you will feel like it is still summer!

Solidarity with Israel

Continued from page 10

signed the petition of the Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (SPME). More than 10,000 scholars from across the political spectrum from around the world have added their names to the statement expressing outrage at the British university and college vote to promote an academic boycott of Israel. The President sent a letter to all faculty, informing them of his action and encouraging them to consider signing the SPME petition. It is hoped that the huge response by the academic community will deter the proposed boycott and educate the world as to the inappropriateness of such a boycott.”

The SPME petition declared: “We are academics, scholars, researchers and professionals of differing religious and political perspectives. We all agree that singling out Israelis for an academic boycott is wrong. To show our solidarity with our Israeli academics in this matter, we, the undersigned, hereby declare ourselves to be Israeli academics for purposes of any academic boycott. We will regard ourselves as Israeli academics and decline to participate in any activity from which Israeli academics are excluded.” Over 100 Nobel Laureates and university presidents added their signatures to the petition, expressing their support for Israeli academia.



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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.

Beit Midrash Donors

Continued from page 6

years. I am always ecstatic to see the most accomplished, nicest, brightest, kindest, chesed-filled students. I get a thrill out of it and I feel privileged to support such a school. Everybody who loves YU and Stern the way we do wants the school to grow and flourish for the generations of women who want such an excellent education."

"The Eisenbergs are what we call a YU family, since three generations have been students at the various Yeshiva University institutions," said Dan Forman, executive vice president for Institutional Advancement. "This gift is an example of their special philanthropic connection to Stern College."

Forman explained that the Eisenbergs' gift will provide for the first of many changes that will continue to be implemented on the Beren campus. "This support is part of an overall strategic plan to advance the physical facilities, faculty enhancement, and student scholarship support that Dean Bacon has spearheaded with both other faculty members and the Board of Trustees."

Another initiative involving the new Beit Midrash has been launched by a group of Stern alumnae from the graduating classes of 1958 to 1973. Rachel Steinberg Balsam (SCW '58) and Judy Rosenberg Feder

Rackman (SCW '58) are leading a campaign to raise funds for a memorial paying tribute to their beloved teacher, Rabbi Chaim Levine, who died at the young age of 59.

During his time at the college, Rabbi Levine was celebrated as a premier educator, succeeding in improving the academic quality of the Jewish Studies department as well as in serving as a personal mentor to his students. As such, Balsam and Rackman felt it was most fitting to commemorate his influence in the SCW Beit Midrash, what is to become one of the largest centers for women's learning in the United States.

In a letter circulated among alumnae, Balsam explained her motives for the project. "His zeal, his vision, and his respect for women as students of Torah played an important part in making the college a leader in developing women with the knowledge and commitment to strengthen halakhic Judaism in the modern world, as well as assuming positions of leadership in Jewish communal life."

Balsam said she was overwhelmed by the amount of money pledged to date and anticipates that more funds will be donated as the letter continues to be disseminated. "He went beyond the classroom and offered us encouragement in every aspect of our lives," she recalled.

35th Street Dorm

Continued from page 6

first-floor lounges and fitness center, however, will still be undergoing some renovations during the school year.

At full capacity, the building holds 128 residents. Students placed at 35th Street will be divided into four or six person suites, each composed of two bedrooms, a bathroom, a full kitchen, and a small living area. From the marble floors in the bathrooms to the granite countertops in the kitchens, hardwood floors in the bedrooms, and the royal purple and green color schemes, the 35th Street dorm promises to be a landmark of magnificence. The building is also equipped with wireless internet connectivity. "They're really fabulous," Kraut enthused.

The new dorm was not listed as an option last May, when undergraduates registered for housing, due to the uncertainty surrounding the facility's completion date. However, once Residence Life realized that the lion's share

of construction would be completed by the fall, they reopened online applications for one week in July.

Students fortunate enough to have switched their housing preferences in time expressed their enthusiasm at taking up residence in a completely new dormitory. "I'm really excited about being the first to live there, as long as they actually live up to expectations," said Tamar Klein (SCW '09).

Klein's mix of eager anticipation and nervous concern was shared by fellow student Ronit Wilkof (SCW '09). "Well, no one's really seen [the dorms] but everyone says how pretty and big they are, so I'm excited," Wilkof said. "I also really like that they have a full kitchen because I'm not on the meal plan, so this will make things a lot easier." While she is happy about the upscale accommodations, Wilkof is "frustrated because they're still going to have security. I thought they were going to be more like Windsor with real apartments and more

Conversing with Dean Ginzberg

Continued from page 6

ness school in general?

I have two main agendas: developing the undergraduate program and an opportunity to establish graduate programs.

We are already in the works of establishing a fifth year accounting program in order to increase the numbers of hours in the classroom. Forty eight of 52 states are raising the number of hours of education that an accountant needs before they can be licensed. In New York State, this takes effect in two years. I believe the rule is that no one who has not completed 150 hours can take the CPA examination after August 2009.

Beyond that, I am looking to develop an executive MBA program that would differ from all other MBA programs in the country. Given the nature of Yeshiva University, we will find a way to create a unique program. On the most practical level, it would be different in that it will not meet on Saturday and instead will be coordinated to meet on Sunday. Of course this will fulfill a need in the Jewish community.

In addition, I am looking towards another type of program that we have been discussing with the CJF. The program is meant to help Rabbis develop the management skills and knowledge needed to successfully manage a shul. It will include issues of leadership,

strategic planning, developing effective relationships between clergy and lay leadership. We will see what develops.

What are the difficulties in adapting to the needs of an institution with a dual curriculum?

The difficulty of the dual curriculum is that there are only 168 hours in the week. This makes it difficult to pursue more than one rigorous business major. However, this is something we can work with. We will find a way that works to strengthen the business curriculum without harming the Judaic studies.

What kind of programs do you hope to implement to enhance a business student's education at Yeshiva?

Most students of Yeshiva University have spent time in Israel, which is a great opportunity in and of itself. But besides that, they do not have the opportunity to spend time in other parts of the world. I myself have just returned from my third visit to China in the last two years. Not understanding what is happening in China puts a business student at a significant disadvantage. I am convinced that we will be able to find kosher food there. It is a great educational experience and I hope to find a way to provide these types of opportunities for our students.

Did you know that the enrollment of business students on the Beren campus has increased in comparison with the enrollment of male students at SSSB?

I was not aware that enrollment at the Beren campus was increasing this fall, but that is great. The potential for women in the business world is nearly endless. Across the spectrum, women are playing key leadership roles—in accounting, marketing, information systems, etc. The Sy Syms School should be, and will be, contributing graduates to these leadership positions.

Have you made any arrangements to meet with Sy Syms students?

In my previous position at the University of Delaware, I met with the undergraduates as a whole about two or three times a year at an event where both students and faculty would get together to discuss possible changes and recommendations. I also met with the student advisory boards in more focused meetings. We will see what works at Yeshiva for both formal and informal student meetings.

I have offices at both campuses and I would love to hear from any students who have issues concerning their requirements. I want to know what is going on in their minds and they should feel free to get in touch with me.



privacy."

Next year, students will be able to render more educated decisions before selecting their

housing. Kraut however, predicts that "once people realize what a gem has become available to them, [admission into the 35th

Street dorm] will become much more competitive."

YU Connects Campus Singles

Continued from front page

The resulting solution was YU Connect-2, which will employ a two-pronged approach to enable interested singles to meet prospective spouses. Rabbi Yosef Kalinsky, graduate of the kollel elyon of RIETS, and social worker Dr. Efrat Sobolofsky will be at the helm of this venture.

The first venue for interaction will be a variety of singles events. "These are not just random singles events, but they're really going to be to reach out to all constituencies of the YU community," confirmed Rabbi Brander. The activities include more structured settings, such as shiurim given by YU Roshei Yeshiva, as well as more relaxed activities such as bowling or miniature golf. "There will be a plethora of different activities," Rabbi Brander added.

Additionally, the CJF has spent the past few months training approximately 30 dating mentors: young, married men and women who will organize programming and meet with singles one-on-one. The mentors worked with Sobolofsky and mental health professionals Rosie Einhorn, and Sherry Zimmerman, founders of the Sasson V'Simcha dating and marriage organization, to gain tools for teaching others how to build healthy relationships.

As part of YU Connect-2's effort to appeal to different facets of the greater YU population, the dating mentors were chosen from various neighborhoods in the NY region, including the Five Towns, the Upper West Side, and Queens. The goal is to have different types of mentors who will be best suited to meet the needs of the religiously diverse YU community.

Rabbi Brander termed the dating mentors "connectors," people who will meet with both current students and alumni, and due to their professional training, will be better equipped to facilitate successful meetings between singles. "[The mentors] have reached out to be involved in this," pointed out Rabbi Brander. Students and alumni will be able to approach dating mentors in various ways: going to their homes for Shabbat, meeting with them one-on-one in the CJF storefronts on the respective campuses, or logging into their profiles on a soon-to-be-launched website that only dating mentors of YU Connect-2 will be able to access.

Additionally, the CJF plans to have various evenings on each campus when students will be able to present their profiles to the mentors, who will "do an in-

take, size up the person, and then suggest which mentor to work with appropriately," explained Rabbi Brander.

Connect-2 has been heralded with considerable enthusiasm on the part of YU Roshei Yeshiva as well. Rabbi Brander named Rabbis Mordechai Wilig, Zvi Sobolofsky, Herschel Schachter, Yosef Blau, Michael Rosenszweig, Yaakov Neuberger, Elchanan Adler, and Zevulun Charlop, among others, as some who have already endorsed the project. "We won't have them

"Coupling the already charged co-ed events with another university-sponsored matchmaking service will be too 'too extreme,' said one student."

sign a *haskama*—I don't think we need that," Rabbi Brander commented.

Rabbi Brander also viewed Connect-2 in a broader context. "This is not a project of just Stern or YC," he emphasized. "This is a project of the Jewish future. It's being run through the CJF as part of celebrating the mission statement of the CJF." The CJF was created to enable YU students and alumni to shape, enrich, and inspire the Jewish community, through leadership training programs, building and cultivating community leaders, and creating a global movement to spread the ideals of YU. Ensuring a Jewish future by facilitating marriage seemed very relevant to the CJF as another project to initiate.

"As a person who is very much connected to both men at YC and women at Stern, I know not just from my students, but simply from my conversations, of people who feel very alone and want to find the opportunity to connect in a way that leads towards marriage, and can't find the vehicles to do so," Rabbi Brander recounted.

He related an anecdote about a lecture that he gave for the Medical Ethics Society. Upon seeing the easy camaraderie that was present at the pre-lecture dinner, Rabbi Brander decided to postpone his speech by another quarter hour to give the audience a chance to mingle a bit more. A number of months after the lecture, a young man approached Rabbi Brander to tell him that he had just become engaged to a woman whom he had met over dinner at that same lecture.

"It became obvious to

me that we need more stuff like this," Rabbi Brander said earnestly. "I can't think of something more important that the CJF should be involved in."

In order to test the viability of the program, the CJF held a "soft launch" of Connect-2 over the summer by hosting two different events. One event, held on May 31 at Mount Sinai Jewish Center of Washington Heights, was a lecture titled "The Building Blocks of Healthy Relationships," featuring Einhorn, Zimmerman, and Dr. David Pelcovitz, professor of education and psychology at the Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration.

The second event was a small get-together at someone's home. The organizers of the two programs found "a very positive interest," noted Rabbi Brander. He surmised that about 250 people attended the lecture in May, which was publicized through advertisements circulated around Washington Heights and through an email alert sent to recipients of the CJF's e-newsletter.

Neither CJF administrators nor university officials in the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) foresaw any conflict between YU Connect-2 and the standard co-ed activities sponsored by the respective student councils. "We don't work in silence at YU," said Rabbi Brander. "The OSA will be aware of all the pieces of this program."

There are two distinct differences between Connect-2 and student council activities. Firstly, Connect-2 is geared towards both current students and alumni, whereas OSA events are focused on current SCW and YC undergrads. Secondly, the overarching goal of Connect-2 is to facilitate marriage, whereas the OSA does not "run programming directly focused on dating or shidduchim or any such thing," observed University Dean of Students Dr. Victor Schwartz.

"I don't see there being any conflict," said Zeldi Braun, associate dean of students at Stern. "We're here as a team to make things work and work successfully. It's very valuable to have on campus all these different opportunities for socialization. Different initiatives on campus should be met with excitement and positivity . . . they interface to create community."

She vehemently disagreed with the suggestion that Connect-2 would religiously bifurcate the YU community by diverting marriage-minded undergraduates away from OSA events. Everything has the potential of enriching the campus," she coun-

tered. "The more choices students have, the better."

"I think the more different types of appropriate programs that the university community can offer, the better," said Dean Schwartz in agreement. "It makes for a broader range of options and opportunities."

Another concern has surfaced regarding the program's particular effect on the academic reputation of SCW. When asked whether she feared Connect-2's possible reinforcement of stereotypes relating to the marriage-minded mentality of the female undergraduates, Dean Bacon firmly answered in the negative.

"To even suggest that it has any relationship to people who say this is just outrageous. That's thinking out of the fifties, and we're living in the 21st century. That's like in the 1950's, with the little woman at home baking a pie for her husband. Women aren't living there anymore."

Students had mixed reactions to the establishment of this program. Revital Avisar (SCW '08) expressed her basic

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New Eruv Incorporates Stern

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weekly basis.

"This eruv is very significant because of its size and the tremendous areas that are included," explained Rabbi Gideon Shloush, leader of the neighboring Congregation Adereth El, a shul frequently attended by SCW students. "Our eruv is really an extension of the one that has been on the Upper West Side for over a decade."

According to Rabbi Shloush, the eruv crosses Central Park, encompassing both the Upper East and Upper West Sides, while stretching southwards, from 56th Street to Houston. In the lower regions, the eruv extends only eastward, from one side of 6th Avenue to the FDR Drive, with the exception of the United Nations complex. The Lower East Side was not included within the perimeters, out of deference to Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, a celebrated denizen of the area who had historically opposed the construction of an eruv in Manhattan.

Rabbi Yosef Blau, *mashgiach ruchani* (spiritual advisor) of Yeshiva College, clarified that

Surge in Enrollment

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istration, the tuition hike is necessary to help fund the ongoing construction on both undergraduate campuses. Additional monies have been allocated to the hiring of new faculty members.

Fisher accounted for the increased tuition's failure in deterring students from enrolling. "Despite the raise in tuition costs, we are also offering an increased amount of scholarship funds that will be allocated more generously given the price of attending Yeshiva University," he said.

In addition to its mounting numbers, the incoming class of women is unprecedented in its geographic diversity, continuing another trend of recent years. Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico, Argentina, France, Morocco, Canada, and Israel are among the international regions represented, as well as nearly every state from the U.S.

in supporting the eruv, YU was not overriding Rabbi Feinstein's position as articulated in his well-known *teshuva* (halakhic response).

Rabbi Blau explained that the *teshuva* was widely misunderstood, since Rabbi Feinstein was referring to the halakhic impossibility of building an eruv encompassing the entire island of Manhattan. He was of the opinion that because of all of the waterways, highways, bridges and tunnels that connect Manhattan with the surrounding areas, the island must always be considered *reshut harabim* (public domain), even if some sort of enclosure was created. Therefore, an effective eruv around the whole expanse could not exist. He added, however, that an eruv encircling an individual area is permitted, as evidenced by the presence of local eruvs around nearly every Jewish neighborhood in Manhattan.

Rabbi Blau also pointed out that it is a positive commandment to build an eruv. "The Gemara Yerushalmi states that [an]

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Stern Professors Blacklisted

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ministration of Michlalah, including Dean Devorah Rosenwasser, who earned a doctorate from YU's Azrieli School of Jewish Education and Administration, encourages students to attend Stern and advocates in favor of the college. However, there are specific teachers who routinely address students at the close of the year, cautioning them against certain SCW classes and instructors while recommending others they deem more worthwhile, a policy which has been ongoing for the last several years.

"Michlalah gives guidance to students who ask about all sorts of things," explained Rabbi Pollock. "Each student gets personal guidance depending on their needs. Everybody is an individual and there isn't a specific class which is good for everybody or bad for everybody."

"[The existence of a blacklist] is a rumor," insisted Rabbi Pollock. "We don't tell everyone to take or not to take classes."

"I don't speak in generalities," he continued. "I only give guidance on things that I am knowledgeable about. There are people [students] who have discussed Stern with me, and I give

guidance to them based on feedback that I get from former students."

But according to several Michlalah alumnae who are currently enrolled at Stern, one teacher does relay advice in a public forum in front of tens of students, discussing the relative merits and demerits of specific rabbis and professors at Stern. The teacher in question, Mrs. Rivka Sapirstein, an alumna of Stern herself, teaches Bible in the Machal program three mornings a week, and has been an educator at Michlalah for the past 13 years. During what one student referred to as "an optional information session," she proceeds to go through a list of teachers, naming ones who she either strongly encourages students to take or dissuades them from taking.

Sapirstein spoke openly about her influential role. "It's lots of teachers, not just me, who does it," she revealed to The Observer. "We know about the Stern classes and teachers, and we try to help our students figure out which classes they will enjoy."

Sapirstein does not view this as an obligation on the part of the school, but rather as a kind of service to her students. "If enough girls ask, then we do it," she explained. "There is a whole range

of students at Michlalah, and a whole range of teachers at Stern, with a difference in intellectual and spiritual styles and levels. We try to give them an idea of the different styles and they can choose for themselves."

Sapirstein makes her recommendations based on information that she receives from former students who are in touch with her from the U.S. She especially likes to suggest classes which she knows girls will gain from and enjoy. "There are some Stern classes that several students tell me are so amazing and remind them of Eretz Yisrael, so those I recommend." On the flip side, she also notifies students to be wary of certain classes and teachers, since there are specific courses taught by certain instructors which Michlalah girls tend to shy away from.

"Some girls took classes and they felt they had to leave after getting an eitzah (advice) from Rebbeim," remarked Sapirstein. "So we try to give students this information beforehand so they know what to expect. I think it's good to direct our students toward certain classes."

In terms of which courses and teachers are mentioned in the discussion, "it varies from year to year and is not a set list, and it really depends on the type of girl," commented Sapirstein.

She judges everything based on specific criteria, such as the style of teaching in the class, the level of learning, and the content of what is being taught.

"If a girl tells me she's achieved more from being in a certain class, I will be more likely to recommend that. I hear very much when students are flourishing, but I don't have girls calling to tell me exactly what happens in every class. But, I can say that that there are, Baruch Hashem, (thank G-d), a lot of classes where they are comfortable."

"Why should they go to a class that's not for them and be bothered to call a rabbi," she reasoned. "They hear something in a class and they have to consider if that's something they want to absorb. If a girl is constantly raising her eyebrows and questioning the sources of learning or the learning style, she should not be in that class."

Former Michlalah students remember their session with Mrs. Sapirstein well. "She was in charge, and spoke to people who were going to Stern, and told us which teachers have issues and problems," recounted Chana Posnick (Michlalah '05, SCW '08).

"We were also advised against taking other classes, like art history, where there is nudity. But that wasn't specifically for Stern; that was for all colleges in general. Also, we were told to stay away from science classes that teach evolution because it's problematic."

Posnick also recalled Mrs. Sapirstein labeling certain courses taught by individual teachers as "*apikorsus* (blasphemy)." Posnick understands why her alma mater does this, but she doesn't necessarily endorse the policy.

"There were probably some girls who resented it and didn't appreciate it; there are girls who wanted to figure it out for themselves," she admitted. "It's important and I understand why they do it, but I think maybe you should find out for yourself what's good and what's not."

Some classmates chose not to heed the advice they received and did register for and attend classes that were discouraged. One young woman found that she clashed with Mrs. Sapirstein's opinion of certain teachers. "She really believed that some of these classes were *kfira* (heresy), but I had taken those classes and did not agree with her," the student said, speaking on condition of anonymity. But she too can appreciate some of the motivation behind Sapirstein's words.

"If a teacher is really opposed to something and seriously thinks that a certain subject matter is *kfira*, then I guess she has an obligation to tell her students not to take that class," she conceded. "But, this should not be done in a group forum; she should meet with girls individually and address their personal needs."

It appears that the teachers at Michlalah are now beginning to possibly re-evaluate this controversial policy. "I actually don't think it's happening so much anymore, at least not in a group forum," disclosed Sapirstein. "We will probably do it more one-on-one, or with a few girls coming together to ask a specific teacher."

This change comes following a concerted effort on the part of the YU administration to reach out to specific seminaries such as Michlalah and Darchei Binah, whose graduates continue to attend Stern despite the fact that some find it difficult to adjust to the style of learning here. Rabbi Ephraim Kanarfogel, chairman of the Rebecca Ivry Department of Jewish studies at Stern, recognizes this fact and is aware of

the challenges that arise as a result. Together with Hillel Davis, vice president for University Life, he has been involved in meeting with all of the seminaries and yeshivas accredited on the S. Daniel Abraham Israel program to discuss these fundamental issues.

"The number of trips [to Israel] and conversations and meetings has increased dramatically," Rabbi Kanarfogel revealed. "Now we are having better discussions and the schools in Israel are responding well, and we are getting results from that communication."

He very much wants to preserve a positive relationship with all the schools on the Israel program and is particularly intent on doing so with Michlalah, due to his awareness of their current practices. He is optimistic that this goal can and will be accomplished.

"Michlalah has appreciated that we've been responsive and we listen," Rabbi Kanarfogel observed. "They are sensitive to the fact that we are talking to them and responding."

Sapirstein confirmed that this was the case. "I have spoken with Rabbi Kanarfogel, and he knows that there is a need to get more teachers that Michlalah and Darchei Binah girls are comfortable with," she said.

Darchei Binah's position regarding Stern has not garnered as much publicity as Michlalah's, largely because a significant number of their graduates opt not to go to Stern, and they are consequently one of Stern's smaller feeder schools.

"There is a variety of opinions at Darchei Binah vis-à-vis Stern, but wherever a girl does choose to go in the end, the staff recommends a variety of ways to stay strong," said one anonymous source.

But regardless of which school Israel returnees are coming from, Stern tries to accommodate all of them in the best way possible.

"We are always looking to see what we can do to make sure that all students from our constituent schools are comfortable," explained Rabbi Kanarfogel. "We certainly know that we have a large number of students who spend a year in Israel and come from a range of schools which emphasize different *hash-kafot* (outlooks)."

At the same time, he

YU Connect - 2

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disagreement with the goals of the program, but also her dislike of offering such a service under the auspices of Yeshiva University.

"YU in general is by definition Jewish Orthodox and obviously they base their curriculum and their overall activities on Jewish attributes and ideals," she said. "One of those ideals is starting a family. I think it's been implied and emphasized; it's already so overwhelming. The environment that we're in is already enough."

She did not anticipate partaking in Connect-2. Avisar described the co-ed OSA activities as a chance for "normal interaction" with students from the uptown campus. However, she pointed out the feeling shared by a number of students that even the regular co-ed activities carried too much of a marriage undertone. Coupling the already-charged co-ed events with another university-sponsored matchmaking service,

she felt, "will be too extreme."

"The whole concept of shidduch is related to a specific sort of sector," she said.

Sy Syms student Tova Muller (SSSB '08) disagreed. "To be quite honest, I think a lot of people choose to go to YU because they want to be in an atmosphere that is totally Jewish and to meet people," she posited. "So having a service like this which would really help connect people—I think it would really benefit a lot of people."

Not a regular attendee of co-ed OSA events, Muller said that she would test the waters of Connect-2's singles events before actually jumping in.

"I would have to see how it develops. If they attract good people, I would try out one. If it doesn't attract the type of people I would be interested in, then it would be a waste of my time," she reasoned. "I have not been to that many [co-ed OSA events]. I go if

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Blacklisting

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acknowledged that the transition from seminary to college can be difficult. Students are coming from smaller schools, where their classmates share their religious philosophies and there is a more focused approach towards a specific style of learning, while in college the population of students is much more heterogeneous, comprised of all different types of women with distinct goals and priorities.

"We are sensitive to the fact that not everyone learns everything in the same kind of way," Rabbi Kanarfogel continued. "We are not trying to dissuade people from learning the way they did in Israel, but at the same time we want our students to come and be able to see and experience different types and levels of learning."

He strongly believes that Stern does have classes in which students from all the feeder schools feel comfortable, and he emphasized the fact that the Jewish Studies department is constantly adding new faculty which he hopes will appeal to the diverse population of women that is being catered to.

"We specifically need to be able to have a range of different options and approaches that many students will be comfortable with," he elaborated. "We want to make sure that students coming from very good yeshivas in Israel find themselves comfortable in our school as well."

Rabbi Kanarfogel also appreciates the dilemma of schools like Michlalah who wish to advise their students accordingly. But, at the same time, he believes that it should only be done in a very specific type of forum.

"People are free to give advice, but it should be done in as pure a way as possible," he remarked. "Let people deal with subtleties on their own."

Many disapprove of Michlalah's policy and the actions of the teachers who take it upon themselves to advise the students heading to Stern. For Mrs. Shoshana Schechter, a Bible professor and head of the Basic Jewish Studies track at Stern, this issue hits particularly close to home, since she herself attended Michlalah several years ago.

"It's a poor judgment call on the part of those teachers," she asserted. "I don't think it's right to get up and make a blanket statement to an entire class of people, when you don't even know half of them. I think that is just irresponsible. It shouldn't be done that way, saying something across the board."

What troubles Schech-

ter is that the teachers often don't really know all the students that they are addressing, and what she finds even more problematic is that the teachers aren't even aware of exactly what goes on in the blacklisted classes.

"They are not in touch with the professors, and so they shouldn't be advising students about things that they don't know firsthand," she stressed. "I believe it's irresponsible to make statements about things you don't know about."

Another issue that bothered Schechter was that these teachers were using what she thought were unacceptable criteria to judge the different classes. "They don't always have good reasons for recommending certain classes or not," she continued. "I understand if there is a teacher doing something controversial, like a class on Biblical criticism, but many times the recommendations are not based on anything real."

As an example, she cited classes taught by people who are relatives of teachers at Michlalah or alumnae, saying that their relationship to the seminary may have influenced the decision to include them on the list of recommended professors.

Michlalah is not alone in taking the initiative to advise students in the pre-Stern stage of their education, but most other seminaries do not do so in an official and public manner, and prefer to conduct these meetings one-on-one in a private setting. Also, most seminaries that send significant numbers of students to Stern have a more favorable view of the school and often adopt a hands-off approach, unless students specifically come to ask them for advice.

Schechter does not object to a personal meeting between a student and teacher who have an established relationship, and she even encourages it. "If an individual student is close with a teacher, and she comes to ask advice, then that is fine," she clarified. "There is nothing wrong with a teacher giving advice to a student on a personal level, like Rabbi Katz from MMY who does that."

Racheli Davies (SCW '08), who attended MMY for a year and a half, corroborated this information. "The school never officially discussed Stern classes with us."

However, other women from MMY recall that students used to speak privately to teachers with whom they shared a close relationship.

Sha'alvim for Women

follows a similar course of action.

"There are no Stern speeches given here," declared Mrs. Nili Turetsky, current head of the Shana Bet (second-year) program. "We give guidance about college in general, telling our students to challenge themselves by taking the appropriate level classes, taking advantage of extra shiurim, and setting up chavrutas (times of study), so that they retain the growth they have achieved throughout the year."

"Sha'alvim really encourages their students to go to Stern," Turetsky continued. "We are officially a member of the YU Israel program and we take that role seriously."

Aliza Wolynetz (SCW '10), an alumna of Midreshet Lindenbaum (Brovender's), verified that the same view was espoused by the seminary she attended this past year.

"The administration thought it was important to go to Stern," she observed.

Although only about 10 out of 85 total girls from Brovender's come here, "many of the teachers in Brovender's went to Stern themselves," said Wolynetz, "and they encouraged students to take high-level classes there and to especially keep up their gemara skills."

YU CONNECT

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there's a group of friends going, but I never go with the intention of actually meeting someone."

Similarly, she felt that she would postpone using the dating mentors until after she graduates, if necessary. She cited her close connections with friends as a better conduit to dating.

"Right now, I'm in Stern and I have a network of friends, and I don't really feel like I need it," she said. "But in the future, when I'm in grad school or have a job, then I think I would probably use their services."

"Yeah, I think I'd use [Connect-2]," admitted Elana Goldberg (SCW '08). "We don't have a Hillel - there's no means of meeting boys. In other universities, that's how they do it. If we had a Hillel, we wouldn't need it."

Goldberg pointed out that people frequently assume

Eruv

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eruv is very positive. It gets people together and encourages *achdus* (unity) within our communities," he commented. "The Gemara Bavli states that we should follow the lenient opinions to build an eruv because of all the good as a result of it."

Hillel Davis, vice president of University Life, expressed his excitement regarding the new development. "Even from the one Shabbos I spent at Beren last year, there is no question in my mind that the opportunity to build community is much enhanced [through the eruv]," he said. He added that it will be useful for "things like carrying *seforim* (books) to learn or to read, and contact and interactions between women in different dorms."

In addition to the tremendous advantage it provides to the students, the eruv has also opened the door to improved Shabbat programming. In the past, guests and speakers who were invited to the Beren campus for Shabbat often could not attend because of their small children who required strollers.

"As far as future plans, I think the most exciting news is that the Office of Student Affairs, which has been looking for a Shabbat rabbi for Beren, has finally been successful," Davis pointed out, "partly because in speaking with people, accommodating a family with young children has been part of the issue."

SCW Dean Karen Bacon emphasized this point as

well. "Over the years I had become increasingly sensitive to the fact that without a local eruv, certain guests with young children felt unable to join us on campus for Shabbos. The undergraduate men of YU who came to Beren for Shabbos were unable to take things with them from building to building, and, of course, our own students were limited in the absence of a local eruv."

Zelda Braun, associate dean of Student Affairs, also related her enthusiasm regarding the eruv. "We have hired a Rabbi, who will be living here on campus full time with his young family and will be the Shabbat rabbi," she disclosed. "The eruv has really opened up new opportunities for us."

Dean Braun also described how the eruv will enhance the diversity of the Midtown Jewish community and Congregation Adereth-El on East 29th Street.

"This important addition will open up the community to young couples with children and have an effect on the Stern community as well," she explained. "Students will feel more comfortable remaining here for our extensive Shabbat programming."

One major improvement will be our students' ability to carry their keys and lock their dorm rooms, which had previously been one of the difficulties in remaining on campus for Shabbat."

Sobolofsky, who is connected to different parts of YU."

Rabbi Brander cautioned that Connect-2 is still in its inception. "We don't have all the answers yet," he said. "We want to be honest with everyone right away, because we will be able to achieve more."

that it's easy for women at SCW to meet men from YC, but that the distance between the campuses prevented co-ed socializing.

"I think the university should do something," she declared. "[People think] that at Stern, it's very common for people to meet people - but how do you meet people? They're totally separate. It's very, very difficult."

Goldberg does not attend co-ed OSA events, explaining that they "attract the type I don't want."

When asked if he felt that Connect-2 will appeal to a wide range of students and not just a specific sector of the YU community, Rabbi Brander responded: "The proof will be in the pudding. You'll see from the programs that there will be diversity—different programs will draw different parts of YU. That's why we're using people like Dr.

Farewell to a Beloved Teacher

Continued from page 3

ness when we discussed things and nothing was taboo. We spoke about Aliya, marriage, and a trip to Italy with my sister that I was planning. Dr. Schwebel, in her classic helpful manner, began printing off her computer lists of sights to see in Florence as she lectured me on money belts and gave me tips to prevent getting pick-pocketed in Rome.

I learned so much about Dr. Schwebel from that one conversation, and so much about life in general. At some point, I looked at my watch and realized I was late for a lunch date with a few friends. But I let the conversation continue a while longer. That was something I did at all our meetings during the semester, despite the fact that it meant coming late to my next class. Because the truth is, I loved talking with Dr. Schwebel and I think she enjoyed our chats, too. Looking back now, my heart fills with a bittersweet joy that I did not try to rush that conversation on May 16, 2007. That was the last time I ever spoke to her.

The pain I feel when I think about Dr. Schwebel's death is partially selfish. I will never be

able to talk to her again and benefit from her humor, altruism, and wisdom. She was supposed to be by my side during my senior year of college, guiding me in applying for graduate programs. She was supposed to mentor me and advise me the way she did this past spring semester. And she was supposed to meet my family at graduation, where my parents could join me in thanking my wonderful professor for her generosity of time and energy.

When thinking about my professor's passing, there is also an ache I feel for everyone else. I pity all the students of Stern College who were not privileged to have

had her for a teacher. I empathize with her friends and family who must be experiencing such dark hell right now with the passing of such a sunny individual from their lives. But what hurts me so much to face is the tragic irony, that the most lively and vibrant person I have ever met is dead. How can a woman so dynamic and animated be erased from this world? I suppose the answer is that as long as we remember her in word, deed, and print, Dr. Schwebel can never be erased. She will live on and continue to sparkle with her brilliant personality and concern for others.

HOLY SONNET X

John Donne

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so ;
For those, whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.

....

One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And Death shall be no more ; Death, thou shalt die.

Remembering Dr. Schwebel

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that uncomfortable at the thought of having a private lesson with Dr. Schwebel. She was so easygoing that I knew it could be nothing but an amazing experience.

And what an amazing experience it was. While Latin as a subject was difficult and time-consuming, Latin as a class was one that I eagerly got up for in the morning. I loved being Dr. Schwebel's only student; I thoroughly enjoyed having all her attention to myself for those few hours a week. We had some excellent discussions in the middle of learning declensions and often joked around while struggling with subjunctives. And in the midst of our fun, in both Latin and English Lit class, Dr. Schwebel shared with me—and with the other students in the English class—important life lessons. She sort of just slipped them in among other discussions. It was due to Dr. Schwebel that I truly learned to put grades in perspective. I

learned to appreciate really living life as opposed to rushing through it. I learned to take my time and notice things, to go places I hadn't gone before, and, most importantly, to ask questions when I didn't understand something. These might seem cliché and they might seem pretty obvious, but it is one thing to hear them spoken over and over and it is quite another to truly drink them in, incorporating them into your lifestyle. How many people actually take advice? How many people actually listen to their teachers—and I mean really listen? Dr. Schwebel wasn't just a teacher who taught—she was a teacher who lived what she taught. Everything that I learned from her, I learned from example. She would hand out lists of places to go in New York City and urge her students to take a break from studying during midterms and finals. She would speak about her own college experience in order to help me with mine. She was a natural mentor for any student who sought one.

After just one short year, I am definitely not finished learning from Dr. Schwebel. There are no words to truly express the kind of loss her students are feeling. Losing a valuable teacher is like losing a guide in the wilderness, and you suddenly find yourself floundering for something to grip onto so that all your plans and all your expectations can still exist in the future. But one thing I try to remember is that Dr. Schwebel always had a smile on her face. She was always happy and always animated, always walking with a bounce in her step. I doubt she'd want anyone to spend too much valuable time being depressed or forlorn when there are books to be read, languages to be studied, places to explore, and teachers to learn from.

As they say in Latin, *carpe diem*—seize the day. Dr. Schwebel truly lived by that motto, and it is one that I hope I learn to live by, too.

Conversations on Human Dignity

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tragedy and pain?

It is an impossibility to do so. The pain is so great that it is too much to bear; we could not dare to focus upon each individual. To spare ourselves this burden, we prefer to push it away from our minds, to look at people as parts of groups. We therefore understand them only technically, in terms of laws and text, and not as people with feelings, emotions, and individual stories. It is not that we do not care. It is that we care too much.

But now we approach a trickier topic. If we are religious and truly believe in our religion, and if we believe in God and his laws, how do we treat those who disobey those laws? What about people who we instantly condemn as sinners? What if their disobedience is not quiet or submissive, but flagrant?

The common approach is to delineate categories and label people accordingly. Effectively, we are stating that they are Other Than Us, and in this way, we are distancing ourselves from them. They are Homosexuals, Transsexuals, Transgendered, Lesbians or Gay People. They are Gentiles. They are Reform or Conservative or Modern Orthodox or Ultra-Orthodox. Whatever they are, they are not me. I am not them. We do not cross and do not mix; we assign you a type and you shall remain in the pretty little box in which I've placed you, where you can not harm me.

The problem is that this strips individuals of their dignity and humanity. We are creating this space because we are scared of the reality; there is no true difference between myself and this person I have placed below me, this person whom I secretly fear even though I claim to despise him. We wish to focus on people as groups instead of people as individuals, because the individual is frightening due to how much he reminds me of myself.

There is a major issue in the Orthodox Jewish community when it comes to their treatment of those in the GLBT community. Many people have never been exposed to a proper seminar or accurate literature explaining what sexual orientation or sexual identity even mean. They only know that according to halakhic Judaism, one is not allowed to sleep with another male. I have personally heard people at Stern and in the greater Jewish community mock and make fun of gay, lesbian and transsexual individu-

als, even those who are trying to maintain their religiosity in other matters. I believe that the reason this occurs, the reason these truly good and caring people are able to do this, is because we do not put a face on the issue.

We do not allow this category of people to become real; we do not allow the individual to speak. We do not care to listen. I know this personally, because not so long ago, I was one of them. I was a person who heard all gentiles described as promiscuous and otherwise bad people. I was told this by well-meaning people who wanted to ensure that I would never be lured away from Judaism by following the lures of the secular world. I do not say that I believed it. But I certainly did not understand. How could I if I had never met a gentile?

And perhaps what bothers me most is that there are those who feel they have the right to speak, and I was once one of them, without listening. There were those who felt they could categorize gentiles without ever having had any form of meaningful interaction with them, and can mock or revile those who are different without ever engaging with them. We all make generalizations, but these are the worst; they are hurtful and cruel and place distance between ourselves and our fellow man, our fellow Jew, because we are afraid of the truth.

The most important phrase I ever heard was told to me by a man who describes himself as a Jewish atheist. He is Jewish by birth but does not believe in God. And what he explained is that to understand is not to condone.

Understanding the way a person feels, understanding someone who differs from you, even in a matter of religion, understanding the gentile, the atheist, the homosexual, the man who does not keep kosher—does not mean that you condone his practices. It means that you have taken the time to listen, to truly see where he is coming from, and to try to place yourself within his viewpoint and his soul. It means that you are willing to give of yourself, to say that you can respect a person because he is a person, and grant him the dignity and understanding that must be given to all, and not condone his actions.

I was placed in a position where I was forced into this understanding. I attended a non-Jewish private school where I interacted with gentiles and non-

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Orthodox Paradox, a Response

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which he attributes to the school's unwillingness to announce the births of his non-Jewish children. What Feldman conveniently fails to mention is that if his wife had converted prior to their marriage, he would have found many more doors open to him within the Orthodox fold. But Feldman omits that point, allowing the entire non-Jewish and uneducated Jewish population to believe that Judaism, and in particular, Modern Orthodox Judaism, is an exclusive, hypocritical religion.

The approach I wish to take in response to Feldman's article is not one of attack. There have been many who have done so quite eloquently in the past month. In particular, I would recommend Dr. Lamm's response in *The Forward* in which he takes direct stabs at the misrepresentations and baseless leaps that Feldman utilizes in his article when discussing matters of halakha and Jewish history. Dr. Lamm offers his most profound sympathies, not for the immature tantrum displayed by Feldman through his complaints about his exclusion from the alumni newsletter and picture, but for the fact that Feldman apparently views intermarriage as a very light crime in Orthodox Judaism and is therefore surprised at the social ostracism he encounters (As Dr. Lamm eloquently chides, "you want to have your cake and eat it too"). But Dr. Lamm also expresses deep regret that not only does Feldman demonstrate an oppositional attitude towards Orthodoxy (and has a history of anti-Orthodox actions to his name) but he does it in public, providing enough anti-Semitic material to last Americans for many years to come.

No matter how many exposés are printed and no matter how many scathing responses are authored, it is too late. Feldman made his statement to the world and the world has already formed their impressions of the Modern Orthodox community based on his misleading words. I do not wish to denigrate Feldman, nor to explore his article's focal halakhic and moral issue of Jewish particularity—the belief that the Jewish people are a chosen nation while the rest of the world is not, an inherently anti-democratic value and therefore a point of contradiction between the 'orthodox' and the 'modern.' But it is this balance, or possible imbalance, between tradition and modernity that I wish to explore; a theme palpably relevant to us as Yeshiva University students.

In the co-existence of the "orthodox" and the "modern," does one triumph? Feldman calls the two words "hypocritical" and "contradictory." Our movement's great leaders call it a "dialectic." My own personal experiences have led me to the simple description of "confusing."

Noah Feldman is a man who attended one of the finest models of Modern Orthodox yeshiva high schools (started by YU's own Rav Soloveitchik). He himself explains that the goal of the school was, "to try to be at once a Lithuanian yeshiva and a New England prep school." And whether or not the administration of the school would agree with this exacting description is not the point. The impression that Feldman got and that I'm sure much of the student body received, was that the institution tried to blend the two worlds. So far, a tolerable thought, since this is what YU attempts to do as well.

In his article, Feldman expresses deep respect towards his teachers and friends who were able to successfully balance the two dissonant worlds but then begins his next section by saying the following: "For many of us, the consilience of faith and modernity that sometimes appears within the reach of Modern Orthodoxy is a tantalizing prospect. But it can be undermined by the fragile fault lines between the moral substructures of the two worldviews, which can widen into deep ruptures on important matters of life and love." It is clear that to Noah Feldman, and I wish to take him as a paradigm for many educated Jews in America, the "modern" has clearly triumphed over the "orthodox." For some, like Feldman, this triumph has resulted from a long and painstaking thought process. But for others, the "orthodox" becomes defeated by the "modern" because somewhere in their upbringing the emphasis was placed on the wrong word.

One obvious culprit of this misplaced emphasis, of this miseducation, stems from the attitudes of Jewish day schools all over the country. Trying to be "at once a Lithuanian yeshiva and a New England prep school" is impossible. Not only do I believe it to be halakhically impossible, a view I will not explore in these lines, but it creates an extremely difficult and problematic balance of values. Torah ends up being seen as equal, or even worse, subordinate to secular studies when both are placed side by side and are allotted equal time in a daily schedule. Feldman expresses his

view that he really felt his studies allowed him "to see the world and the Torah as profoundly connected," which seems ideal, although we see what he has since resulted. So much for a perfect blend.

To be honest, a great part of this imbalance is due to the student body's home life. One can't expect a school to be completely successful in instilling proper values if those values are not being reinforced at home. But many of us know from experience that in our high schools, Torah was the loser. Admittance to Ivy League colleges was the goal and very often, chumash, navi and gemara classes were a joke. They weren't as rigorous; they weren't treated as seriously by the staff and definitely not by the students, and time has told its own story: many of the alumni do not continue to lead *frum* (religious) lives. I recently had occasion to see many of my former classmates from high school. The emphasis was clear, or at least the emphasis had not changed. This attitude pervades the minds and lives of many graduates from such institutions and it will take much more than a year or two studying in Israel to correct the problem.

Modernity and Orthodoxy cannot coexist in the way Feldman wishes them to. I do not see them as impossible to coalesce, but I do take issue with the balance some have tried to offer. The issue of "contradiction" that Feldman raises is a fundamentally important one and even though I clearly disagree with Feldman's decision to let the "modern" triumph, I do agree with his conclusion that there are some rifts between the two words that cannot be mended. To think that one can go to shul (of what denomination, he does not specify) on Shabbat and holidays with his (non-Jewish) children, feeling a love and nostalgia for the sacred texts just won't cut it. "But he loves Judaism!" we want to scream; we want to give Feldman the credit he is so desperately searching for in his article. But no theories and intangible connections to Judaism are going to make his legacy continue on to the next generation. They have already ended with the births of his non-Jewish children.

I think even students at Stern suffer from a similar syndrome of misplaced emphases and warring between the "modern"

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Teens with an Attitude

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well, by indulging their children's whims, these overly magnanimous parents send a message that one need not strive in order to receive gratification. Additionally, the presents they shower their children with, such as iPods, video games, and DVDs, reinforce in children the need to be constantly entertained. If something is not as thrilling as, say, "Grand Auto Theft," then the child will not bother to tune in. What's more, these children do not learn to use their own imaginations or initiate their own amusement.

My campers would often see my fellow counselors and me laughing and joking together. They would actually marvel at our ability to entertain ourselves. Many times in the beginning of the summer, some of the more apathetic campers complained that we counselors did not do enough to "make them" have a good time. My co-counselors and I tried to amuse our campers with games, songs, and activities. However, they were not receptive to it. What they failed to realize was that their own personal negative attitudes and their inability

to entertain themselves were preventing them from having fun.

Of course, not all of the teenagers I worked with demonstrated indifferent and self-centered traits. Specifically, the girls on the program who came from backgrounds that were more religious, displayed leadership qualities and an interest in and adherence to Judaism, as well as a positive attitude. These girls offered to give *divrei Torah* on Shabbat, helped clean up after activities, and led the hikes with smiles on their faces. They impressed me with their strength of character. Thus, all hope is not lost—we as a people do have a future. However, we must address the problem of apathy among many Modern Orthodox Jewish teens today.

I am not a parent and therefore it must be with great humility that I give any sort of parenting advice. But I think my suggestions are logical: parents should learn to say "no" to their precious children and should try to impart to them the importance and value of Judaism. Neither of these suggestions is easy, but we must work hard to improve the situation that confronts us as Jews living in the modern world.

Encountering Anti-Semitism

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of your audience's sympathy, it isn't worth the risk.

It seems that I've grown a little spoiled, though, by living in New York and attending a Jewish college for the last two years. New York, with entire boroughs of Jews and untold numbers of kosher pizzerias and taxi drivers who know more about your religion than you do. And if you feel lonely there, you can always cross the river to Jersey, where there are, if possible, more Jews, more stores, more restaurants. You can pick up kosher Chinese at chain grocery stores. In Teaneck and Manhattan, being Jewish is more of a 'so-what.' So you're Jewish. Who isn't?

You know who isn't? The teacher of the lit course I took this summer. Or any of my classmates.

This was, I might add, at a second-tier university, and the professor had an exceptional knowledge of her field, an enthralling ability to communicate what she knew. She brought the literature to life for all of us in that

weekly four-hour night course. She had been teaching this exact class for decades, to people exactly like the ones sitting all around me. Apparently, never yet had any of them been Jews, nor did she ever expect one to wander into her classroom.

I haven't taken a Survey of English Lit course yet at Stern, so I don't know how we would have handled works like "Piers Plowman," which features a celebrated and vividly-imagined depiction of the Crucifixion by medieval poet William Langland. However, I imagine that the bottom of my seat wouldn't have had as many nail marks as mine did after that summer class. If you haven't read the work yet yourself, I advise you to take a look. There are some choice bits about the dirtiness, lowliness, and generally disgusting demeanor of Jews. But then you expect that from your medieval poets. I think what really unnerved me was the way that no one else in my classroom took any notice of it.

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Horns

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"This is brilliant," gushed a man on my left, a devout middle-aged father with a kind face. "It's like you're right there with the Christ as it's happening. This should be required reading in high school—the imagery really makes the morals come alive. If kids had to read this today, a lot of our problems would disappear."

Actually, I thought, if kids read this today, G-d forbid, pogroms would be fashionable again. I almost bit through my tongue.

Another student, an African-American woman with her own clear faith, praised the beautifully-portrayed contrast between the good, righteous Jesus and the people who betrayed him.

We went around the room, everyone analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the text. There was one man who didn't care much for the work because he thought Langland "too preachy," but everyone else was into it. They were genuinely involved in the class; as night-school students, they were all paying for their education themselves, and they wanted to get the most out of it. And this is what it was: this is what Survey of English Lit courses in your typical pretty-good university are like. It was assumed that everyone in the room was "one of us," who, looking at the story of Jesus and the Jews, would identify with the saintly one being praised rather than the grubby masses

condemned to die through generations and generations of loathing and bloodshed. It was assumed we students would see no slander, no incitement to murder, nothing but remarkable writing. Panicked, I pushed myself and pushed myself to see what they were seeing, to be objective, to judge the piece on a technical plane alone—but I could find nothing there. One of the most famous and cherished works of the English language seemed to me nothing more than an ugly document of hate and bitterness.

I was the last one to be called on, probably because my classmates had all volunteered themselves. I just wanted to go home and never come back. But this is not recommended for those seeking transfer credit, so when my professor asked, "What do you think makes this piece worthy of remembering?" I glued my eyes to my Norton Anthology and prayed for a safe answer.

"I don't know," I said finally. "I guess it preserves the religious attitudes of the time pretty well."

This puzzled my professor. "Well, yeah. But what about the writing? What does he do with language that's so interesting?"

What Langland did with language that is so interesting, I thought, was to create another batch of lies memorable and passionate enough to ensure people like me would be despised second-class citizens wherever they

went.

I couldn't say that, so I said nothing.

"You don't like it, do you?" my professor said.

I shook my head. "It just doesn't appeal to me."

"Why not? Show us what exactly you feel Langland doesn't do well."

I could have kicked myself. They were all looking at me now, mystified. The professor had said nothing to indicate that disliking Langland was a viable option.

"It's very anti-Semitic,"

**"If kids read this today,
G-d forbid,
pogroms would be
fashionable again."**

I said at last, looking her straight in the eye.

She looked frozen for a second, then plunged immediately into the next topic without a backwards glance. It happened so fast I don't think anyone else in the class understood, but you don't get to teach at a second-tier university by being dumb as a post; my professor knew who I was after that. She never looked at me the same way again, and though I passed the course, my papers encountered a sudden increase of friction along the way. I

would lose points vaguely attributed to 'style' or 'tone' that I had never lost before, and my grades never regained the level they had achieved before that night.

It was nothing terrible. I got my money's worth. I don't even believe that the professor was anti-Semitic—at least, not actively. I doubt she was thinking "Take that, Jew!" every time she reduced the percentage at the top of my paper. But like many seemingly normal, even friendly employers and colleagues you encounter out there in secular society, when she thinks of Jews at all, the images of Shakespeare's pound-of-flesh moneylenders or the church's god-killers pop up in her head. To her, biblical Jews are extinct and the modern variety are confined to headlines about Israel/Palestine, whichever side you prefer to believe; they are non-entities in the normal, day-to-day life of a pleasant Midwestern town.

And that's the real world. You'll encounter different strains wherever you go. In places in Europe, it may feel so palpable as to smother you; in Kew Gardens, you may not notice it at all. But I always believed that all Jews, at some point in their lives, received that gentle punch in the stomach which reminds us that we are a people in exile. That wherever we go, we will always be different; our opportunities to learn and grow among others like us scarce; our ability to live together openly as a community, particularly so large a community as you will find in a city like New York, a blessing, a gift to cherish and not abuse.

But I must be wrong. Recently, two days after finishing the course in question, I visited Israel for the first time—my family stayed in Ramat Beit Shemesh, which is mainly composed of religious American immigrants. I found that many of my young cousins who'd been raised there or my parents' friends could not conceive of my story. Even those who'd grown up outside of Israel were from New York or New Jersey, and they could not imagine someone who'd never met a Jew before, or who could openly say the kinds of things which were said in my classroom. Anti-Semitism they understood; living in Israel, surrounded by Arab countries and riddled by terrorism, virulent hatred was easy to comprehend. But being a small, unheard-of minority, so alone in the Heartland you can't even support a kosher

pizza place? It was a foreign concept to my Ramat Beit Shemesh hosts. New York, Israel—they'd always been surrounded by Jews. These were people who had never been innocently asked as children, "Where are your horns?"

It's beautiful to be so lucky, to always feel legitimate, a part of a great nation. But it is also rare.

So if this is your first year in YU, your first month on campus, I'd like to make a suggestion: zoom out and see where you are standing. Many of the heated debates which saturate *The Observer* and *The Commentator* have their legitimacy, but coming from the Midwest, coming from fistfuls of Jews scattered across the globe—and you will meet someone from every corner here—many of these arguments also feel surprisingly petty and near-sighted. Does YU offer the advanced sciences you could get at Harvard? Is the learning as intense as it was in Jerusalem with the rabbi of your choice? These questions are but footnotes and asterisks. The question that unsettles you as you read these articles, and which truly matters, is: did you make the right choice?

That question is for you to answer, in your own good time. But remember this: YU is an opportunity. You have the rest of your life to live in 'the real world', where you will experience differing levels of tolerance, suspicion, and ignorance. This is your chance to belong, to study and celebrate and form ideas about life with people who ultimately believe in the same things you believe in, whose history you are a part of. This is a place where Jews of all kinds can gather, sharing knowledge and skills, without fear. Where you can dance, everyone can dance on Rosh Chodesh or Yom Ha-Atzmaut and scream at the top of your lungs, 'Am Yisroel Chai!' and not beg professors for makeup labs because you couldn't come in on Yom Kippur. It's not a perfect place on any level; the details need work (that's another article). But if you step back and look at what the past 2,000 years have done to the Jewish people, what we have suffered in country after country, you will realize the unprecedented opportunity offered to you by this institution. Seize it while you can.

After all, as the Norton Anthology attests, Langland's not going anywhere.

Feldman

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and the "orthodox." How many students view their Judaic classes as subordinate to their secular ones? How many try to take the easiest Judaic courses available to lighten their workload? Burdened by so many psychology papers and science labs, taking a rigorous course in parshanut (exegesis) seems laughable. Of course there are many students who do not fall prey to this attitude and do choose to take the rigorous, enlightening Judaic courses offered to us. But we must be honest with ourselves. Even at Stern, Torah is sometimes the loser.

Feldman, albeit quite distastefully and inappropriately, brings some very important issues to the forefront of our Modern Orthodox

minds. He has reminded us what happens when we try to pretend that the modern world can mesh smoothly with Orthodoxy. His article forces us to take a look at the institutions which claim they can do so and to question such a confident statement. Feldman is just one of millions in this country who have given up on a life governed by halakha. But Feldman's particular case gives our community much to condemn ourselves for, if such a person could result from what we think is a prime Modern Orthodox education.

The word "modern" is often misused as a colloquial label. For example, my mother will frequently use it in a sentence like, "There was a very modern crowd at that wedding. Lots of skin was showing and there was no

mechitza (divider)." Now call me a stickler for semantics but my usual reply to such a statement is, "Mom, don't call them 'modern'. It gives a positive connotation to something that is blatantly prohibited. That awful word makes it sound like these people are doing the cool, hip, 'modern' thing. Call a spade a spade. They're just not frum."

Harsh? Maybe. Narrow-minded? Perhaps. But the emphasis is clear.

Dignity

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know these people personally. I love them, and I honor and respect them. There are those of them who I view as truly holy. They are so similar to me. They are human beings trying to muddle through life, just like all the rest of us.

At this non-Jewish high school, we had Diversity Day. It was the first time I had truly been

exposed to literature on the topics of racism, women's rights, discrimination in the media, and all matters having to deal with the GLBT community. At the time I laughed, since I thought this had no practical relevance to me.

Little did I know that I would soon come to meet a transsexual and a lesbian, who were

Orthodox Jews. These people were reviled by their community, a community that turned away in disgust and made them feel like they were less than human, and no longer treated them with dignity or compassion.

I do not say that every community responds in this manner. There are those who do not and we must be proud of them. I say that many of us do; many of us immediately react with "but that's against halakha" or "that's disgusting!" And we think we know. We think we can judge.

I watched the movie "Trembling before God" and was intensely moved by it. It was honest and raw and depicted the struggle of homosexuals within the Jewish community. There are those who try their hardest to overcome their desire for a mem-

ber of the same sex. And there are others who refuse to live a lie and act as they feel they must to be happy.

But this is a private matter. This is a matter between man and God. These people are not killing other people, or stealing from them. They are not engaging in or perpetuating social ills. They have not hurt me. They have not hurt any human being!

Yet for this, they are shunned, reviled and called cruel names. It is the same with what I was told of gentiles. Perhaps someone on the street wears clothes that I find to be provocative. Is this a social ill? Is this an evil directed against me? Ought I to respond with judgment and with anger?

In Genesis 50:19, Joseph responds to his brothers, who are willing to become his slaves, "Am I in place of God?"

Joseph knows his place. He does not judge and punish his brothers. He does not punish them by sending them to become slaves. He simply responds, very gently, accepting them, their actions and their repentance, saying

"Am I in place of God?"

Every person deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, even those whose physical or spiritual activities do not correspond to our own. As long as the person does not perpetuate a social ill, and as long as he does not hurt other human beings in a deliberate manner, his actions are his own, especially those that exist between himself and God.

I am not in place of God, and I do not know what God thinks. It is not for me to act differently toward someone because his actions place him outside my comfort zone. It is for me to attempt to understand, to be as kind and compassionate as possible, to be willing to listen instead of judging or generalizing, to be willing to hear of the pain that others have experienced and what led them to their decision, for good or ill. To understand is not to condone, and I am not God.

SCW Myths

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People often view Stern as a continuation of high school, and refer to it as a "fake college," where there is no real sense of community and students are only on campus four days a week.

I don't know who these people are. Does anybody realize what goes on at what they call a real college? People are off campus more than they are on, and they are drunk more than they are sober. I believe that education is preparation for life. Students say that education is not the real world, and college is not the real world. They have a debauched existence in college and do all these crazy things. People have to become mature and get with it. I think our college is the way life is supposed to be lived. This is college, and these other campuses are an aberration, with the crazy things that go on and the self-destructive behavior, the lack of *kavod habriot* (human dignity), people not valuing money and time which they invested in their education. If you call that college, I call that a continuation of high school. I think people are confused; they don't understand what a yardstick is. I think Stern is a very serious institution. Maybe what resembles the high school experience is that they continue to learn Torah. But that's not high school- that's what kept us alive all these years, and that's what makes us special. To put down the very thing that I think is the core of our identity- you have to do some self reflection.

Where does this warped perspective stem from?

Sexism. Tell me why Yeshiva College is not considered a continuation of high school? It's

pure and simple sexism. What women do is always viewed as lesser.

How can we correct that view?

We just have to go forward with pride. We have to make people understand the great faculty and students that we have. We just have to knock their socks off by showing off our tremendous accomplishments.

What image do you want Stern to portray?

To me, it's an institution that's really a revolution in the history of the Jewish people because of its commitment to the highest level of Jewish studies and general studies for women. We don't have a historical precedence for that. It's groundbreaking and revolutionary. People are doing it [learning] *l'shem shamayim* (for its own sake). They are truly interested in growing intellectually and spiritually, and developing their minds and their skills. They have the mindset to contribute to society. Women can fulfill themselves and take advantage of the time we're in and use the tools provided to them to maximize their potential. Students who are not coming to Stern and not concentrating on Judaic studies are squandering an incredible opportunity. Stern is truly a revolutionary institution and the best one, and the women here are carrying that revolution forward in brilliant ways. Whether they are teachers of Torah, or physicians, social workers, therapists, journalists; whatever they do is done with intelligence and empathy. They are bringing with them the best we can hope for in the Jewish community.

Fashion Internship

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elements of couture designs, and the styles of early designers. Not only was I surrounded by beautiful apparel, but I also had the opportunity to meet some very influential people in the industry. I met designers and buyers from Abercrombie, Juicy Couture, American Eagle, and Josephine Chause, among others.

At one point this summer, my boss received a large shipment of vintage cloth. There was so much of it lying around the showroom that we weren't sure where to fit it all. We decided to design and sell a special edition, vintage bag constructed from this excess fabric. I was privileged to be part of the design team. I gave my input, learned how to create a flat design on the computer, and hand-stamped each bag. In total, there was enough material for about 75 bags. Each bag was distinctive and unique, and they all came out really nicely. Half the bags were sold to high-end retail stores while the rest were sold to select clientele. After all the hard work I put in, I received one of these bags as a gift for my efforts.

Women's Summer Kollel

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and Pizza and Parsha, both for girls in grades 1-8.

"The Teaneck Beit Midrash is the type of opportunity I yearned for in elementary school and high school," remarked Adatto. "We have put together a program that fosters relationships with girls who will continue on a path of learning and leadership."

"While I can say a lot about how the shiurim at night were enjoyable, I think the message behind them is even stronger," commented participant Chava Chaitovsky (SCW '08). "Women of our generation who have had the opportunity to learn intensively in Israel, Stern, or other venues often wonder if there is anything out there for us after we leave those institutions. The Teaneck Beit Midrash Program made a point of including a continuous series of shiurim on an

extremely advanced level during the evening slot and showing that yes, you can work during the day and still engage in serious limud Torah."

The program, the first of its kind at Yeshiva University, was intended to provide women of all ages with the knowledge and tools to become both Judaic scholars and role models for the Orthodox community. The highly successful program took place at Maayanot Yeshiva High School for Girls, where it will hopefully reconvene next summer.

"This is an outgrowth of our commitment to women's leadership and Jewish education," said Rabbi Brander. "This unique venture follows on the heels of Midreshet Yom Rishon, our Sunday learning program for women on the YU campus, the GPATS program, and numerous leadership fellowships for women. This is just the beginning."

Comments? Questions? Suggestions?
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Rabbi Reiss Milstein

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ed that the female undergraduates could still feel the reverberations of the on goings at RIETS, despite the seminary's exclusively male constituency. "Torah education should emanate through the entire YU community," he emphasized. "There is no reason the women at Stern shouldn't benefit from the Torah learning that goes on in the yeshiva."

At the same time, however, Rabbi Reiss noted the importance of secular studies, which confer YU with the second half of its unique Torah U'Madda mantra. "The philosophy is that we need to be proud about who we are; to recognize excellence in Torah and the value of worldly disciplines."

Loans

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undergraduates. The lenders listed represent the diversity of options available, ranging from larger conglomerates to non-profits and smaller businesses specializing in higher education.

"These five are here because we know that you are getting good deals [through them]," said Friedman. "Anybody you choose, you'll be fine."

The five suggested lenders are listed horizontally and alphabetically, precluding the perception that some are preferred over others. For the department's website, on which the company names could be arranged only vertically, efforts were made to ensure that the order switched each time the page was visited.

In order for a private lender to be included in the brochure and on the website, the company must meet the university's standards for excellent service, in addition to other qualifications. Interestingly, Student Loan Xpress, a lender currently under investigation for its questionable ties to the deposed financial aid director at Columbia, was dropped from YU's list after its service was deemed unsatisfactory.

Friedman articulated the importance of matching students with secure loan policies best suited for their individual needs. "We're only part of this partnership for four undergraduate years," he explained. "[The students] have ten more years of repayment to go with."

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"Our reorganization is the first step toward combining organizations on several campuses into a stronger, more coherent whole," Milstein elaborated.

"One of the things the university needs to address is how the technological infrastructure supports the student body," stated Andrea Zalaznik Burdick, director of Institutional Research, who will be working together with Milstein.

For instance, when many students log on to banner at once, it slows down the process for every individual, "like traffic congestion on a highway," she

observed. "We need to work on increasing the bandwidth so that there will be a better level of connectivity to enable more people to use the system at the same time."

Milstein is confident that this problem will be addressed. "We are moving rapidly to improve the network infrastructure for faster, more reliable connectivity and other services," he confirmed.

He also emphasized that the widespread effort to implement technological advancements across YU as a whole is not limited to computer systems. The CIO is not only concerned with "dra-

matic expansion of bandwidth and upgrading network hardware," but is also committed to "accelerating the introduction of new technology in many forms—notebooks, handhelds, etc.—into the YU community."

Milstein has plans to establish a more focused approach to problem resolutions as well as customer service in Information Technology Services. This will ensure that users of the technological systems, both faculty and students, will be assisted in the adjustment to the higher level of technology that is widespread across the campuses.

He is thrilled with his warm reception by the YU community. "I have been greeted with good will, openness, and a desire for success in improving and expanding the use of information technology," he remarked.

"Having someone on board like Marc Milstein is good for the university as a whole," Burdick added. "We have made investments in technology that on a whole have advanced the university. We have made huge strides, and having a strong leader like Marc, I'm sure we will make even greater strides."

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