



The Yeshiva University OBSERVER

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Courtesy of YU Productions

Dean Michael Ginzberg and SSSBSC Presidents Michelle Laufer and Yehuda Feldman observe speakers at Sy Syms Gala. Article on page 6.

Understanding Halakhic Policy: Rabbinic Authority at SCW

BY ESTHER BARUH

Determining halakha on the Beren campus is no simple matter. The wide scope of issues raised by students, ranging from more personal inquiries to broader questions of school policy, has prevented any one individual from serving as the college's absolute decider. As a result, rulings on subjects such as candle-lighting in dormitories and women's megillah reading are the products of a group decision-making process.

Depending on the breadth and gravity of the issue at hand, halakhic policy will be handled either by rabbis at SCW or may travel up the ranks to the Washington Heights rabbinical contingent of Yeshiva University.

SCW Dean Karen Bacon explained the first step in the deliberation process: "When an issue might come up that students raise that require some discussions, we typically consult with Rabbi Kanarfogel and Rabbi Hochberg."

Students will often bring halakhic issues to the attention of the mashgichim ruchani'im on the Beren campus. It is often then the job of Rabbi Ephraim Kanarfogel, chairman of the Rebecca Ivry Department of Jewish Studies, and Rabbi Shlomo Hochberg, mashgiach ruchani, to render a decision. The process may involve other rabbis as well, a venture that Rabbi Kanarfogel termed "a consensus."

"There are very few questions that come up globally," pointed out Rabbi Hochberg. "When they come up, Rabbi Kanarfogel [and] myself may discuss it. One or two of the roshei yeshiva also, if we feel a need to."

Rabbis Kanarfogel and Hochberg handle smaller, more localized

concerns, with occasional consultation of other rabbis or experts as well. Rabbi Yosef Blau, mashgiach ruchani of the Wilf campus, is one individual who is sometimes asked for his opinion. "One of the things we would discuss with Rabbi Blau is what should we bring to Dr. Lamm, and what can be handled more locally," explained Rabbi Kanarfogel.

Rabbi Kanarfogel stressed that it is not a matter of rabbis at either Beren or Wilf being more equipped to handle questions, but rather utilizing the knowledge and skills of rabbis spanning the two campuses. "We've never been left out," he said. "It's not an uptown-downtown thing. I think the mixing of uptown and downtown is good."

Often, roshei yeshiva with an intimate knowledge of particular issues are consulted, as well as lay experts. The use of dorm elevators on Shabbat was one issue in which a conglomeration of individuals helped to reach a conclusion. "Rabbi Blau met with Rabbi Hochberg [and] he consulted with me," related Rabbi Kanarfogel. In addition to Rabbi Blau, electricity experts were consulted so as to gain a more intricate knowledge of the elevator mechanism. "We went with a consensus of experts in this matter," Rabbi Kanarfogel continued. "We have to come up with a position that works for an institution as large as ours."

The kashrut in the cafeterias of the Beren campus, as well as that of the Wilf campus, is supervised uniformly by the Orthodox Union. The SCW dress code is not a matter of halakha, but rather university policy.

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SCW's First Graduating Class Celebrates 50th Anniversary

BY HILLY KREIGER

In addition to Commencement, SCW will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of its first graduating class on Thursday, May 22.

Scheduled as an all-day event, participants in the reunion will be marching in the Commencement ceremonies and will be cited for their achievements, with special recognition from YU President Richard M. Joel.

This is really an amazing and momentous occasion," commented Allison Singer, associate director of the Office of Alumni Affairs. "It is the first time SCW has a class celebrating 50 years since graduating. It is also an exciting moment for women's education and a time to look towards the future and continue that path. The women of the Class of 1958 were trailblazers, a very special group of women, and we are celebrating

them as an important part of SCW."

Following the ceremonies, the women will be given a guided tour of Stern College, which has undergone numerous physical changes in the last 50 years. These changes include the new state-of-the-art Eisenberg Beit Midrash, the new entranceway, and updated laboratories.

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Straddling Two Worlds, Chabad Students Carve Niche on Beren Campus

BY JACKIE FAST

The student body of Stern College for Women (SCW) includes a range of women from many different countries and communities. One of these communities is that of the worldwide Chabad-Lubavitch movement, the Jewish group known for its international outreach efforts and fervent messianic aspirations.

The Lubavitch women at SCW comprise a committed, vocal group who maintain a steadfast balance between a demanding college career and communal expectations. Ilana Rauch (SCW '10) admits that she lives in two different worlds. Along with a growing number of other students, she attends classes at SCW and commutes daily from the Crown



Courtesy of Devorah Kashanian Huber

Stern women gather for Chabad Club shabbaton in Crown Heights, Brooklyn

Continued on page 17

Fourth Floor Plans Finalized for 215 Lex

BY ARIELLA WEINBERGER

Expansion on the Beren Campus is continually in progress, as the next phase of construction begins on the fourth floor of the 215 Lexington building, to which the psychology and speech pathology and audiology departments will relocate in time for the fall 2008 semester.

Although the basic structure of the fourth floor will remain untouched, with only a few doorways and walls to be added, the hope is that by September, new faculty offices, a student lounge, classrooms, and state-of-the-art labs will be available for the university's use. According to SCW Dean Karen Bacon, "The goal is to decompress and to create rational arrangements." These new arrangements will

allow the administration to create a sense of community for faculty and students within the two large majors. Additionally, giving most professors their own offices will make it easier to arrange meetings, as they will no longer have to divide time and space with fellow faculty members.

The addition of the student lounge, open to undergraduates of all majors, is also intended to lend to the feeling of cohesiveness.

The floor plan is similar to that of the seventh and eighth floors of 215 Lexington. Along the outer perimeter of the building will be faculty offices, as well as a few classrooms and the student lounge. The interior section of the floor will be comprised of new labs for the two departments. These labs will include an experimental psychology lab with space

for record keeping, and quiet rooms for speech and audiology testing.

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STAFF EDITORIALS

Here's Looking at You

BY SARA LEFKOVITZ

Perhaps it is a bit anachronistic to describe The Observer's mission in its final issue, but at the close of the academic year, I feel the need, hopefully justifiably, of breaking from the traditional editorial framework to reflect more personally on the challenges of printing a women's newspaper.

The women of the Beren campus are uniquely situated. On the one hand, they clearly attend a single-sex college, host to its own grounds, both physical and academic. On the other, they are members of a larger institution, a university encompassing the intellectual pursuits and achievements of the more than 10 schools and interdisciplinary institutes within its domain.

A student newspaper is faced with the task of both informing and representing its constituents. Given the distinctive nature of Stern College for Women and its place within the larger university, it is often difficult to determine what type of focus would best serve the female undergraduate population. Each set of editors, in a sort of cost-benefit analysis, weighs the relative merits of utilizing macroscopic and microscopic perspectives.

This year's editors have sided in favor of the more localized scope, for reasons other than convenience. Our news reporting has generally concentrated on Beren campus developments and our feature stories have spotlighted the various issues, be it academic, social, or religious,

with which the women here frequently contend. While some prospective journalists uptown may have bristled at the policy, we maintained a strict "women only" writer-ship.

All of these decisions were made as part of The Observer's efforts to promote the interests and concerns of the undergraduate women. Even further, we sought to promote the women themselves, in terms of their own self-image. The "inferiority complex" of attending SCW, however unreasonable, has plagued many a student. We felt that even if we were not successful in serving as an agent for significant change, we could at least deliver a product of quality and professionalism that the women could invest in and be proud of.

This so-called inferiority complex has another component: the malaise characterized by the fear that female undergraduates are receiving substandard treatment at the hands of the university; the belief that the grass in Tenzer Garden is far greener than the grass in Midtown.

In its attempts to advocate on behalf of the Beren campus, The Observer has also, at times, fallen prey to this attitude. While highlighting deficiencies vis-à-vis other schools, namely Yeshiva College, is constructive when it comes to egregious oversights like salary discrepancies, it became apparent that we were much better off dealing with less flagrant problems within our own setting, without necessarily referencing the status quo elsewhere.

In our articles, we intentionally sought out the voice of Dean Ba-

con, attempting to raise student consciousness about her knowledge and ability to resolve the issues so often mistakenly directed to others. Whether these pieces directly influenced the dean to reinstitute her open forum meetings on the Beren campus is uncertain, but it is safe to assume that they have fostered a greater awareness of her central role at the college.

By turning inward, drawing attention to the resources at our disposal, we can take stock in the strengths of our institution and more effectively redress its weaknesses. As a campus, we have made tremendous progress, and the months ahead look increasingly brighter as we continue to advance as an academic and social community.

I would like to thank three administrators, all of them women, who supported The Observer's efforts at improvement and encouraged us in our mission to better serve the Beren campus: Dean Bacon, Vice President for Communications Georgia Pollak, and Associate Dean of Students Zelda Braun. As we have mentioned repeatedly, whether more overtly in editorials, or more subtly in other articles, it is crucial for the undergraduate women to have accessible models of female leadership.

It is also important to recognize the leaders within our own ranks and with that I acknowledge The Observer's editorial board and journalists. Their passion for this college and dedication to its students proved invaluable in accomplishing much of the work we set out to do.

On a final note, I wish the best

of luck to my successor, Olivia Wiznitzer. While the vision she brings to next year's Observer may end up being very different from my own, I am confident that she will raise the newspaper to unprecedented heights.

Corrections

In the April issue of The Observer, the article "Interdisciplinary Courses to Enrich SCW Science Curricula" incorrectly mentioned that the author contacted all five professors mentioned. Only Dr. Robin Freyberg and Dr. Anatoly Frenkel were contacted.

In the April issue, the author of the article "Essay: Students Reflect on Israel at 60" is Meira Faratci.

The Observer sincerely regrets the two errors.

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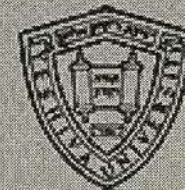
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Academia Anxiety

BY ADINA SCHWARTZ

With my upcoming graduation at the end of May, I find myself reflecting on whether or not Yeshiva University has amply prepared me for the "real" world. My college experience was enjoyable, there's no doubt about that. Student Council, Israel Club, and TAC events, CJF Torah Tours, and the Stern College Drama Society have left me with long-lasting, fond memories. Warm, enthusiastic teachers have engaged me, and my peers, with their thought-provoking and mind-expanding classes. Additionally, my experiences working on *The Observer* have been more than just positive; they have been life changing. So I will always look back on my years at Stern with nostalgia and may even find myself wiping away a tear. However, as an English Literature major at Stern, I feel in no way ready to embark on the journey into academia that I so desperately wish to take.

There is no one to specifically blame for this. It is not the fault of my English professors who exposed me to the joys of reading, research, and study; they were hired for teaching literature, not for instructing graduate school applicants. It is not necessarily the fault of the staff of Career Advisement either; they always avail themselves to students wanting to improve their personal statements and resumes. Nonetheless, Yeshiva University is culpable for its lack of faculty members who know what graduate schools are looking for. And not just in the area of English Literature. History is another department that is sorely lacking in advisement for those students interested in graduate schools in that subject. I am sure that there are also other majors at Stern and Yeshiva College that have students struggling to go into academia.

Both professors and students often tell me how incredibly competitive academia is. Many people in the United States want to become professors in their favorite subjects and teach comfortably in a university for the rest of their lives. Yet no one has given me any suggestions of how to deal with this competition and attempt to find a job. Pre-med and



pre-health students are aware of the requirements necessary for their desired occupations, as well as which jobs and internships will most impress the schools they are applying to. Those students majoring in education learn proper classroom management and have experience actually teaching. Meanwhile, those who want to further their studies in the humanities are forced to sink or swim when it comes to applying to graduate schools and finding a job in academia.

While all the professors agree that one must go to a top tier graduate school in order to compete with others for college teaching positions, they do not even agree upon which are the top schools. Nor are they able to help a student choose the best school for him- or herself. Neither the professors nor Academic Advisement know

what the strengths of each graduate school program are. And they are also unaware of what a personal statement for a graduate school should look like.

Stern needs to begin hiring professors who are able to assist students who want to go into the field of academia. These should be professors who have been on the receiving end of the application process, not just those who got into graduate school themselves, but people who know exactly what schools are looking for in a student. Though I am aware that there are currently few undergraduates in YU pursuing academia in the humanities, I believe there would be far more if students were assured that the university would properly prepare them for it.

As We Stand In Silence

BY JAIMIE FOGEL

Sirens blare all the time on Lexington Avenue. There is rarely a class that passes undisturbed by cars, fire trucks or ambulances racing by on the busy streets below. In a city teeming with over eight million residents, one can imagine that emergencies occur quite often. The sirens of Manhattan have an immediacy to their ring—at that moment there is someone screaming as they burn in a fire; someone lying in pain and sprawled on the floor after a bad fall in the landing of a staircase; a family member crying as they watch their father, sister, brother or mother suffering. But we never cease our daily activities, stopping to think

about the possible implications of the siren's blare. We close the windows, complain about the city's constant bustle and continue on with our day.

But the sirens that blare on the streets of Israel on Yom Hashoah and Yom Hazikaron stop traffic on highways. They adjure Egged bus drivers to step out of their vehicles and stand erect in a city intersection. They inspire even the most religiously disconnected to stand for a moment in respectful silence. Those sirens scream of no immediate pain. They scream for those who can no longer raise their voices, and bring forth the internal suffering felt by so many citizens of Israel who long for their fallen friends and family. Those sirens fill a moment with more images and emo-

tions than words could ever produce.

I remember hearing the siren for the first time. Sometime on the morning of Yom Hashoah in the lobby of my seminary, it blared like the sounds of air raids I had seen in war movies. I remember standing still for a moment in the lobby, never before having felt part of such a societal, national commemoration. The realization became that much bolder on Yom Hazikaron, when my classmates and I all stopped in the streets of Jerusalem's Bayit Vegan neighborhood on our way back to school from our visit to Mount Herzl. All of the cars braked softly on

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The Race Disgrace

BY YAELE FROHLICH

Student Council and TAC elections on April 2 more closely resembled a kindergarten word search game than undergraduate elections at a well-known American university. I, for one, was severely disappointed.

The election process was simple: fellow voters and I were each handed a slip of paper bearing candidates' names and the positions for which they were running. We then had a chance to glance briefly at each candidate's paragraph-long biography and headshot before circling a name and scurrying to class. No speeches, and few—if any—hints at why any particular woman should win her post. Good luck to any female choosing a class representative without ever having heard of the candidates. Once or twice, when I was truly stumped for an educated decision, I circled a name randomly. Surely a person's ascent to power in a student-run government should be more sophisticated than via a game of "eenie-meenie miny moe" and a popularity contest!

While I did not expect candidates to knock on dorm doors with flyer-filled fists, take to the cafeterias

shouting out innovative ideas, or bribe voters with the large, heavenly chocolate chip cookies occasionally distributed on the Beren campus to increase student participation in university-funded events, I would have liked to know more about the women I voted for than merely their knowledge of synonyms for "excited" or "enthusiastic," their sense of comma placement, and the extent of their poster-making abilities.

Stern College has such an abundance of talented women that it seems a shame that individuals running for leadership positions do not have a real opportunity to win their classmates' votes through creative, persuasive, and intelligent argument.

I do not mean to undermine the competency and dedication of the women currently serving on Student Council and TAC, nor of the recent election winners; Stern College has seen a fantastic year and I am confident will see many more. However, it is possible that some wonderful candidates get overlooked every year due to the current electoral system. Students should be able to make as much of an informed vote as possible.

Reforming the Jewish Studies Major

BY SHAYNA HOENIG

The Jewish studies major at Stern College for Women is in need of serious improvement.

Students majoring in the subject should be required to take certain prerequisite courses so that they will all share a standard baseline of knowledge. Furthermore, those majoring in Jewish studies should be expected to attain their bachelor's in this field through rigorous textual study, not simply by sitting through frontal lectures and shiurim.

A building is only as good as the foundation upon which it is built. This is a fundamental lesson in life that is certainly applicable to the pursuit of undergraduate knowledge. Prerequisite courses are equalizers, ensuring that all students in a given field enter into upper level classes with similar backgrounds, hopefully enriching further study for all those involved. Additionally, prerequisite classes often give students a vital foundation upon which subsequent knowledge in their subject of study will be built. Oftentimes, topics that are touched upon in an intro level course are further expanded in later, more advanced classes. Thus, without the necessary preliminary knowledge, students are at a disadvantage.

Most, if not all, major academic departments in Stern have prerequisite courses that students are required to take before advancing in that academic discipline. All students must take English Composition before progressing to higher level English courses, Sense of Music before Harmony I, and General Chemistry before taking Organic or Physical Chemistry. It would be futile to try advancing in those or other areas without the introductory level

knowledge, let alone to even consider completing a major in that area.

The Jewish studies major presently does not have prerequisite courses. Granted, Hebrew 1205 must come before Hebrew 1206, and those in the Basic Jewish Studies Program must begin there before taking more advanced Judaic studies, and everyone must complete a few semesters on CORE; but seriously speaking, there is no "English Comp" equivalent for Jewish studies majors.

The undergraduate degree awarded to Jewish studies majors needs more defined standards of requirements. There is no reason why Jewish studies majors should not be required to take, depending on their area of concentration in Jewish studies, Intro to Biblical Exegesis, Intro to the Halakhic Process, Survey of Jewish Philosophy or Jewish History, etc.—some type of prerequisite course that will enable Jewish studies students to master certain skills that are involved in studying Torah on a collegiate level, before they walk off with a degree. As the premier Orthodox university, Yeshiva University's Jewish studies major should accordingly rank among the best in the United States.

Let me be clear: this is not a slight against the Jewish studies professors. The issue is simply the nature of the Jewish studies major. I am not advocating that academic Bible become a requirement for all Bible majors; I am simply suggesting that the level and textual rigor involved in Jewish studies courses be raised to a higher standard.

As it stands now, the Jewish studies major is, unfortunately, not as highly regarded as it should

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Honest Politics

BY SOPHIE MARMOR

Whenever I discuss the race for the Democratic presidential nomination, I typically enter into the same discussion over and over again from my peers here at Stern. "Well, I don't want either of them, but if I had to pick one I guess I'd pick Hillary. That Obama guy—he's Islamic." I then go on to ask my friends if they're being serious or if just spewing a bad joke that they've read from Mad Magazine. Unfortunately, the answer I get to this question is as consistent as the answer I get to my earlier question. "Yes," most of my friends will reply, "I'm serious."

Senator Barack Obama certainly does have an exotic background. Born to a black father and a white mother in Hawaii, in addition to having lived in Indonesia, it really isn't surprising that many of his opponents argue that he doesn't have that much in common with the average American citizen. Since Senator Obama has led such an unusual life, it's almost expected that many people have heard information funneled through an ill-fated national game of telephone, information about him that is blatantly inaccurate. With the middle name "Hussein," it stands to reason that one of these false statements would be that Senator Obama is a Muslim.

While I would even go so far as to say that it would be acceptable to assume that Senator Obama might be more sympathetic to the Is-

lamic world than we would like him to be—I personally don't believe it, but I can understand why someone would—it is dishonest to accuse him of being a Muslim. To dispute that Obama subscribes to the Christian faith is utterly false; the man has been baptized, married in a Christian church, and has had his two children baptized. Furthermore, those who are so quick to denounce Obama over the Reverend Wright controversy are generally the same people who believe that he is Muslim, even though the two concerns are contradictory. To be clear, I think that Reverend Wright's comments and attitudes are outrageous, and I also think that Obama's association with him is equally outrageous. However, that notion does not make Obama any more Muslim than the facts previously on the ground indicated. He isn't Muslim. Obama's affiliation—present or former—with Wright really only serves to reinforce his Christian identity, in spite of how cable news depicts Wright as a man angry enough to be Iraq's latest hit Shiite cleric.

We as religious Jews have an obligation to rise above bigotry. While I personally do not endorse Senator Obama as a candidate, I believe it is necessary to raise this issue for the sake of intellectual honesty. It is far more important for an appreciation of truth to prevail over political pettiness. After all, if the Jewish people won't uphold the fundamental value of integrity, who will?

To Speak Articulately: Refinement, Reverence, and Respect in Language

BY OLIVIA WIZNITZER

What does it mean to speak in a respectful and articulate matter? What does this mean, most particularly, with regard to the sacred texts we study, that is, our Tanakh, Gemara and the like? Is it appropriate to feel so close to the characters in these works that we observe their actions and speak about them as we would to our friends, casually calling them "morons" or "fools" due to their seemingly inappropriate behavior? Or is there a particular measure of respect that one needs to reserve for speaking about biblical characters and others prominently featured within sacred works?

This is not a question that appears out of a vacuum. Rather, the Gemara clearly depicts the ramifications and repercussions of speech that is too familiar. In Sanhedrin 102b, we read of a story regarding R' Ashi. R' Ashi was speaking about King Menashe, and having concluded his lecture for the day, informs his students that tomorrow he will continue speaking to them about their "friend." That night, King Menashe comes to visit R' Ashi in a dream. He tests his knowledge and finds him lacking. It is then that he rebukes him for being so familiar and disrespectful as to address him with the appellation "friend." Now, R' Ashi's comment

was hardly negative! To be a friend of R' Ashi is surely a compliment; it is the farthest thing possible from our contemporary talk of "morons" and "fools." And yet, even this word, this terming of the King as one's "friend" was regarded as inappropriate and crossing boundaries.

The issue of refined speech is further discussed in Pesachim with a tale of three priests who are describing the size of the *lehem-hapanim* (showbread) that was distributed to them. One said his portion was the size of a bean, the other the size of an olive, and the third the size of a lizard's tail. Since the third one compared the *lehem-hapanim* to something that was unclean, a lizard's tail, it was determined that they ought to check into his lineage. Sure enough, his lineage was not pure and he was not meant to be participating as a priest.

One might ask at this point, what about situations in which we are clearly meant to judge? What about situations in which the characters in Tanakh have flaws and suffer from their improper decisions; surely there is nothing wrong in pointing these out? No, there is indeed nothing wrong with that—so long as one does so respectfully.

To pass judgment on any biblical character, to mock them or deride them, is simply not to under-

stand them. What is worse, it reflects on the person who mocks or disrespects them rather than the characters themselves, as is demonstrated in the Gemara. It is the one who does not express himself properly who is suspected of impure lineage, or who will not assuredly become a leader of Israel. It is incredibly important to take care to address the people and subject matter of what is holy with the reverence and respect that is due them. Biblical characters may have sinned, they may have had flaws, but that does not give us the right to mock these flaws or to speak of them as we would those who are close to us.

Though perhaps even that bears thought. How often have I heard someone justify his or her behavior by stating, "It was just a joke," or "You know what I really meant." Do I? Must it always be the fault of the person who is informed he or she is "too sensitive" if they take words literally, and do not read into them some pure and hidden meaning known only to the speaker? If one wishes to be understood properly, it follows that it is important to present one's ideas in a clear, articulate and respectful manner rather than attempting to gain scurrilous favor by engaging in sensationalist diatribes and discussions.

The way we speak reflects upon our own character; we must be sensitive to not only the way our words are intended but the way that the listener receives them. It may be true that I say something bearing no ill will, but if I am not looking at my words through the eyes of the one who is listening to them, I will err. Do I say this is easy? Of course it is not easy. It is difficult to be aware of others and the way in which they react to one's words. But to claim that "there is nothing that can be done," that "this is simply who I am," to excuse one's excesses by claiming that one is "passionate" by nature or that one's "jaded outlook, cynicism, sarcasm, all of which have specific times and places when appropriate, simply "aid one in learning"—is merely a desire not to try.

People often determine that they speak plainly; "tough," to anyone who does not enjoy it. I for one do not enjoy it, hate the times that I fall prey to it, and regret that there have been times when I am unable to learn from scholars, not because they were not brilliant and well-informed, but because they did not express themselves as scholars should; they were quick to pass judgment, quick to find fault, and quick to articulate themselves in a manner which was exceedingly familiar and in bad taste. In such a situation I believe it behooves us all to think and take more care with the way we speak, and to attempt to explain ourselves in a manner befitting our true characters and personalities, which I believe to be pure.

Jewish Studies

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be. A student can take the easiest Judaic classes, never engage in textual analysis, and receive a degree declaring that their efforts warrant a bachelor's in Jewish studies. It was insinuated to a friend of mine that to strengthen her qualifications as a candidate for graduate school she should switch out of her Jewish studies major, since the major is not viewed with the utmost seriousness. Granted, lighter classes or less textually demanding courses have a place in the course catalogue and are suitable for many students, but to permit those courses to comprise the majority of one's Jewish studies major somewhat belittles the value of the degree.

I am not advocating that Stern format its Jewish studies program so that it becomes akin to the Jewish studies programs offered in top secular universities. After all, Torah study is different from any other area of academic study, not to mention that Yeshiva University is first and foremost an Orthodox institution. I am not even intimating that exposure to academic outside sources become standard and required for all Jewish studies majors, although I am sure that some would advocate that proposition. What I am suggesting though, is that students pursuing a major in Jewish studies should not be able to complete this major without having extensive experience with and exposure to Hebrew texts during their course of study.

As We Stand in Silence

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the roads, we stopped our chatting and, for a moment, I understood what it meant to share a national destiny. To be part of a community which on that day, recognized that it shared each other's sorrow and pain.

Over my past three years in Stern, I've built a strong community among peers. With each passing semester, I have come to intimately know and respect new faces and have had the opportunity to openly share thoughts and ideas with friends, classmates and professors. I've come a long way since my first semester in which I realized that medicine was not my life passion and in which I yearned on a daily basis to be 6,000 miles away in Israel. I was never unhappy in Stern. In fact, school was the best thing in my life at that point. But there was profound internal and religious confusion, which clouded my mind in those early months.

Six semesters later, I can safely say that the friends I have made and the professors who have given over their thoughtful insights have transformed me into a remarkably different individual than the lost, young girl who pushed through the revolving doors of Levy lobby to take her Stern ID photo. Then, the smile was fake. But now, as I think back to the learning done in these halls and the discussions had late at night about Modern

Orthodoxy, literature, society and sometimes even boys, I can not help but smile a broad, penetrating grin for all of the good that has resulted.

But there is sadness. There is sadness for the loss of a community that will be officially declared at 11 a.m. on May 22nd at the graduation of the 2008 senior class. There is a feeling that the tapestry we have worked so hard to weave as a community of observant women is about to be pulled out from beneath our feet. There will be no more late night visits to the roommate down the hall, no more warm greetings from professors we have spent semesters working and learning with, and no more signs plastered on our walls begging us to come to an event and be part of something larger than ourselves. We seniors have come to the end, and to put it simply, it's frightening. And as someone who is about to make aliyah, moving to Israel to begin a life I have been dreaming of for the past decade, this sense of communal loss is heightened even more.

But at least for now, for me, there will be that siren. There will be the comfort that I am part of a national communal destiny, which is a true reality for a Jew anywhere in the world but is most palpably felt in the State of Israel. Similar to my fellow seniors, I will have to begin building a new community of friends and colleagues I respect, sharing both

joyous and sad occasions with them. But again, this need to build becomes heightened when there are no family members to stand at its foundation. What gives me the most hope is that I know the skills I cultivated in Stern as a student leader and as a passionate peer will be the guiding forces of my life's next stage. I only hope that those who still have time left in Stern will find opportunities for initiative taking and communal building, because it is those skills which are perhaps the most important lessons a student can learn here.

The prophet Yirmiyahu (29:4) composed a letter of consolation to comfort the early wave of Jews sent into the Babylonian exile. He understood their profound loss of community, their fears about remaining observant once no longer living on the holy soil of Israel, and it is with his simple words of comfort with which I would like to close: "Build houses and live in them, plant gardens and eat their fruit. Take wives and beget sons and daughters... And seek the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you and pray to God on its behalf; for in its prosperity you shall prosper."

I hope to see you in Israel.

Jaimie Fogel will be starting a blog later this summer called *Living the Dream* about being a new *oleh* in Israel. Stay tuned for news on its development.

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



BY RENA WIESEN

Before leaving the 245 Lexington building after the Yom HaZikaron program this week, a friend and I looked at the pictures on display in the lobby of those who sacrificed their lives for Am Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael. Two or three lines underneath each face allowed us a glimpse of the personality behind the photo. My friend was particularly struck by the difference in the descriptions of two people: a young

woman who was remembered as generous and warm and a young man who was recalled as a straight-A student who liked logic games.

"Look at the difference between these two descriptions," she said. "How would you rather be remembered—smart and studious, or generous and warm?"

Her comment was made in passing, but it made me reflect back on my year and what made it memorable, specifically the student activity and community on campus, in which I was fortunate to have been closely involved.

Every day we make decisions; every day we take small steps in one direction or another, not always thinking about the ultimate consequences, be they our reputations, legacies, or simply whether or not we are moving towards our goal of who we ultimate-

ly want to be and what we ultimately want to accomplish. But when we do focus our actions and our energies in a particular direction, it is amazing how quickly and confidently we can move closer to our goal, and therefore leave behind us a wonderful legacy, full of unbelievable accomplishments.

Clearly, this is true with regard to personal choices, of which often only we ourselves can judge the results. Yet it is also true of decisions and actions made by and done on behalf of the community at large. And often, the effect of those actions is much larger and more meaningful than the effect of the personal ones, a phenomenon that I saw this year.

Look at what we have done for the Beren Campus community this year! There was so much activity, so many events, that it was impossible to attend even half of them. The

councils, the clubs, the various committees and the class boards did a fantastic job planning events and lectures that appealed to just about everyone in our diverse student body. We had our first YUnite- Beren Style Shabbaton, designed to generate greater unity on campus. At every meal I sat with different students and faculty, and enjoyed meeting new people. Throughout the year, many women got involved in activities and even initiated new activities and clubs. I received countless e-mails with students' ideas, from social justice activity suggestions to a French crepe party, as well as everything in between, including a message from a student asking if there was some way we could recognize the security guards for their hard work. The Beren campus buildings could barely contain all the meetings and flyers that eventually

emerged from these initial thoughts.

There is no question in my mind of how this year will be remembered. We should be so proud of ourselves and what we have achieved. With the goal of strengthening our community continuously in mind, our accomplishments and our energies this year were unparalleled, and will undoubtedly leave an indelible impression on everyone who saw and experienced them. I know that it will certainly leave an impression on me. It was truly a privilege to have been involved so personally with this extraordinary community of women. I can only imagine what new heights will be attained next year.

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



BY LAURA SHUMAN

The well-known and highly regarded concept of a *tiyul* (trip) in Israel was somewhat of a funny phenomenon to me because in retrospect it looked like we had no real destination. The hike of Har Shlmo specifically, a six hour hike with climbing, crawling, jumping, and a break in the middle to eat an Israeli roll with frozen deli, culminated in a 15 minute stretch of completely dry flat land. When we boarded the buses, we gave ourselves a pat on the back and made our way back to Yerushalayim. The moment that hike was over I felt fulfilled, exhilarated, and proud that I had conquered one more mountain of

Israel, but at the same time I recognized that most of these *tiyulim* had no real destination aside from the bus that we started from. What was the essence of a *tiyul* without a destination?

Aha! The essence of the *tiyul* was the *tiyul* itself. The process. The sun beating down on our necks. The blisters in our shoes, jumping off small cliffs and the excitement of marking the halfway mark where there is nowhere to go but forward. The feeling that the next step, even when it was hard, was to push ourselves further.

That was our year. All of the emotions, all the energies essentially have culminated into a year that has just flown by. This is true to the extent that I feel that I can say that I myself have been a recipient of the energies here. The power of our women coming together in *tefilah*, for a *chagigah*, is something that has changed worlds.

I suppose that every year, each set of students, which is in a constant state of evolution, feels as if it has brought the community to the highest level that it could go, and yet I believe that if this notion is true, then I hope that we as TAC along with all of the councils and each individual student recognizes the tremendous growth that has transpired in our hallways, classrooms, and dormitories.

We have joined together in learning, in dance and song, in the

face of tremendous highs and painful lows of our immediate and larger Jewish community. That is what it is all about. We have cried over the loss of our Yeshiva boys in Mercar Harav, we have davened for members in our community and seen the hand of God in true bloom. Smokey Jane's raised the voices of our talented singers from all walks of Sten life while raising \$1500 for Gush Katif Kallot.

At the end of the day, this is the *tiyul*. The climb itself is the destination. We are working towards something that we are at both part of and at once something bigger than ourselves. We worked a little harder. We took a step out of our comfort zone. Great ideas such as the Torah Scholarship Series, the Sephardic Club, Smokey Jane's Café were pushed to fruition.

We began the year with a vision of where we were going, aiming to set weekly permanence to Torah study. T-Cubed, Mincha minyan, and Spice it Up! All continued from last year and kicked into high gear by the first week of school, these programs were enhanced by new faces and new energies. We began the year as "Yitzhak avinu" who maintained the wheels dug by his father Avraham Avinu. Yet we continued to blossom as many students saw their own personal sparks of truth and brought to the community clubs such as the

Shmirat Halashon Action Committee, Sephardic Club, Torah Scholarship Series, shiurim for Tinok ben Aviva, and Yom Iyuv on fast days. Students came out of the wood work for Chabad Club Fabrengens. Medical Ethics continued to thrive, as Social Justice Society brought new life and new issues to the social consciousness of the school.

We are a product of what has been accomplished, but we are ultimately defined by where we are going. When Yaakov left Israel, we read "Vayetze yaakov m'beer sheva, vayelech charana"—and Yaakov left Beer Sheva and went to Charan. The Torah could have simply written where Yakov was coming from, or where Yaakov was going, yet it chose to note both. The balance displayed in this *pasuk* is the balance that we find ourselves in as we stand at the end of this year, and at eve of a new one. We are defined by where we are coming from, but ultimately by where we are going. Continuity and following through with this year will bring us closer to a unified and elevated student community.

It goes without words that there are four particular people in this school that literally pushed the pulse of TAC this year. I would like to give *hakarat hatov* to Jaimie Fogel, Arielle Frankston Morris, Reena Ribalt, and

Chanie Dinerman, who have given tremendously of their time and energy to TAC and the entire student body. The many clubs and individuals who have had a direct hand in maintaining the wells and planting new seeds to blossom are too many to write here, but you know who you are. Thank you.

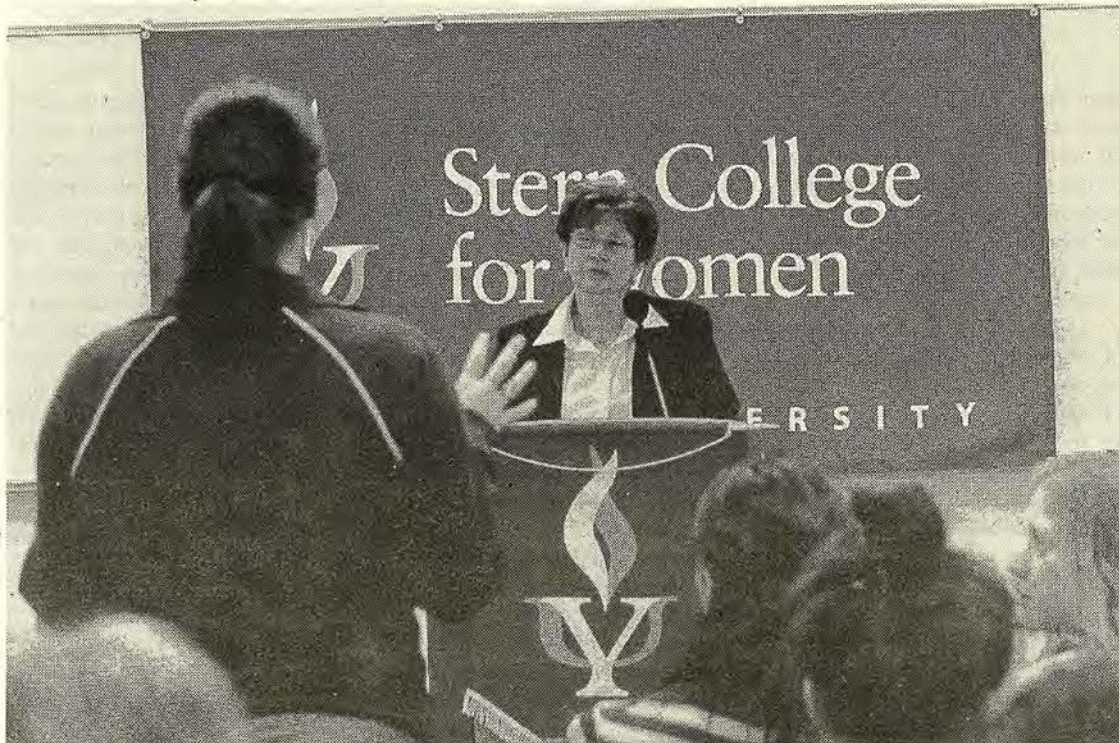
A potato, a wire, and a light bulb were three objects with no apparent relationship to each other. My 5th grade teacher challenged us to find a way to illuminate that light. Some lined up the potato, wire, and light bulb in a line. Others played around with the wire and the light bulb, looking at the potato as a kind of foundation on which to place everything. Yet one student did something so simple, yet so clear once it finally happened—placing one side of the wire in the potato, and one side in the light bulb, and just like that three inanimate objects became alive, pulsing with energy. The simple connection of people has the potential to illuminate the world around us. It is *achdut* after all that we are working for.

It has been an honor and humbling experience to serve the community and I know that next year's *tiyul* will be out of this world.

Congratulations to the Class of 2008!

NEWS

In Final Interview, Dean Reflects on Past Year, with Eye Towards Future



Courtesy of YU Productions

Dean Karen Bacon addresses student questions in first "Meet the Dean" forum

BY YAEL WOLYNETZ

Both President Joel at the town hall meeting and Dean Ginzberg at the Sy Syms dinner mentioned how the spring season brings a sense of rejuvenation to the world of academia. What does spring mean to you?

Spring brings a sense of optimism, renewal of the trees, the dogwoods and rosebuds are blooming everywhere. It also brings a sense of freedom, as we no longer have to wear our heavy winter coats and boots. These psychological and physical freedoms translate into a feeling of excitement and opportunity. Even though the semester is coming to a close, I don't suspend my thinking about problems we face at SCW. But we face these problems with a new optimism which can lead to new directions.

I was wondering if you could share some high points of this year at SCW.

We have had a wonderfully productive year. The recruitment of new faculty that has taken place is one such example. We have all been energized by this process because the new faces have reminded all of us about the exciting possibilities that lie ahead.

Additionally, several faculty members have received grants to push ahead their research. Dr. Vigodner's project is particularly interesting, as she moves her research into a different direction actively involving students. Her research relates to the effects of second hand smoke on male infertility. Dr. Babich will continue his research on in-vitro toxicology and the benefits or harms of familiar substances, including various teas. The number of faculty who have

been traveling to present their research at conferences both nationally and internationally is a good indicator of the sophisticated research of our faculty and the number of these presentations is growing significantly.

This year had the largest enrollment on campus, and this May, the largest class in the history of our S. Daniel Abraham Honor's Program will graduate with 26 students. On a whole, SCW is on the move.

What can we expect from the new hires?

New courses, but that is only the beginning. The curriculum committee is also working to expand our interdisciplinary course offerings. Some will be taught by one professor, others will be team-taught by two faculty members in different fields. The purpose of these courses is to challenge the students and teach them to attack problems and texts from different disciplinary perspectives.

Have you received any responses from students to the proposed curriculum changes, as reported in last month's issue of The Observer?

Most students that I have spoken with sound enthusiastic, although I am not sure if they totally understand the changes that will occur. Before the faculty takes their summer leave, we will have our final vote. Most members of the faculty are positively inclined. Assuming the curriculum changes are adopted, they will not be implemented until fall of 2009. However, one change has already been put in place for fall 2008. Non-science majors who choose to study Biology will only be required to complete one semester of lab, instead

of the former requirement which mandated two consecutive semesters.

Do you have any reflections on the first "Meet the Dean" that took place during Club Hour on April 30?

I thought it was great. We used to do it many years ago, and I was delighted that students wanted an informal session. I don't know if I touched on the issues that students wanted to hear about, but when I opened the floor to questions, students asked engaging questions. I think it is something we will continue to do on a yearly basis.

During the Spring Town Hall Meeting, you were accused of not meeting with students. What were your reactions to that accusation?

For the purposes of accuracy, the quote was "the dean does not see students." I don't know where someone got this idea. However, students at SCW go many different places and can speak with many different people about academic issues. They don't feel like they necessarily have to talk to the dean. I see this as one of the strengths of a small college.

Certainly students should feel free to come speak with me, and I think they do, and I try to connect them to various opportunities. Just recently, I got an email that the university was looking to participate in an oral history project. I remembered a group of students who had taken an oral history class in the fall semester, so I emailed them asking if they were interested. When I know students and their interests, these are the kinds of connections I can make.

But the reality is that "the dean certainly does see students." Nevertheless, SCW is not a rigidly

hierarchical environment and this is our strength, not our weakness. There are a huge number of academic voices at SCW for students to consult.

How will the budget cuts throughout the university at large affect SCW?

I have only dealt with the budget in a global sense up to now, so I can't comment on individual issues. However, what is clear is that the university has exceeded its operating budget, even though we are very strong fiscally. So the challenge is to evaluate where we are now and compare that to our resources for next year. If we need to cut back, I have a couple ideas in my mind. We are overfed at this university. Every event consists of food and drink. It may seem trivial but these costs add up. I am going to look into things like that. Addition-

ally, the Student Life Committee has brought to our attention several ways to keep our school "green." We should look into printing on two sides of the paper, since we consume huge amounts of paper. We should look to be more conservative in general. None of these changes, however, will affect the quality of education and life on campus. It is just a matter of functioning more conservatively.

What did you think of the opinions piece in last month's Observer entitled, 'Stern College: School of Thought?' whereby the author raised a troubling question. "Is a genuine academic, thought-filled environment a possibility in Stern College's future?"

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Syms Dinner Celebrates School Achievements

BY YAEL WOLYNETZ

On April 30, Yeshiva University's Sy Syms School of Business (SSSB) honored both alumni and graduating seniors at its annual awards ceremony and gala dinner at Bridgewater, located at the South Street Seaport.

President Richard M. Joel gave introductory greetings, noting that "what began last year as a student- and alumni-initiated celebration of our 20th anniversary will now become an annual event to recognize our achievements as well as reach for new levels of accomplishment."

The gala served as the official welcoming forum for Dr. Michael J. Ginzberg, new dean of SSSB, who assumed his position this past July. The dinner featured three other honorees, each a YU alumnus who has made significant contributions in his or her field.

Rabbi Moshe Bleich, director of International Tax at Deloitte LLP, stood out, as a four-time graduate of the university. His credentials include graduating from Yeshiva University High School for Boys, a bachelor's in accounting from SSSB, rabbinic ordination from the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS), and a law degree from the Benjamin Cardozo School of Law. Rabbi Bleich was described as "the epitome of Torah U'Madda values."

In his speech, Bleich recognized the centrality of these values in his everyday life. "Caring for others and being sensitive to surrounding circumstances will give you a balanced platform to make more compassionate, ethical business decisions," he maintained.

J.J. Sussman, director of Business Development at Scan Disk

Corporation, called his undergraduate education "priceless." He attributes much of his success to both business and interpersonal skills learned at YU. After graduating SSSB with a bachelor's degree in accounting, Sussman moved to Israel, where he received his MBA from Kellogg-Ricanti, a joint MBA program of Tel Aviv University and Northwestern University. After serving in the artillery corps of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), Sussman became involved in the business of technological companies. Acting as the head of the Modi'in Chapter of YU Israel alumni, Sussman has maintained his relationship with the university.

Sussman urged audience members to "invest in Israel." He noted that investments from Americans have the potential to provide many jobs for Israelis, which would substantially benefit their economy. Speaking to the diverse crowd, Sussman reminded his audience that "success is about turning our ideals into practice."

Deborah Ifrah, vice president of Investment Banking at J.P. Morgan Securities, graduated Sy Syms in 1999. She enjoyed the dual curriculum, instrumental in preparing her for "the fusion of Judaism and career success."

While identifying and thanking the individuals and institutions that both taught and influenced her, Ifrah noted, "The dedication and caliber of SSSB's world-class professors continue to have resounding impact and relevance to my professional and personal life."

In speaking directly to students and recent graduates, Ifrah reminded them to "apply the lessons and skills that Yeshiva

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Survivor and Students Share Stories of Holocaust

BY YAEL WOLYNETZ

On May 1, hundreds of Yeshiva University undergraduate students gathered in Weissberg Commons on the Wilf campus in commemoration of Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day. The turnout was larger than the organizers had anticipated, and facilities brought in an extra 100 chairs to accommodate the crowd.

The ceremony began with an address by President Richard M. Joel. He noted the centrality of Holocaust remembrance in the daily lives of YU students. "We don't need a specific date to remember, since we remember every day," he said. Nonetheless, he recognized the importance of partaking in the act of remembering at the same time as the broader Jewish community.

Sharing a personal anecdote from his childhood, President Joel recalled how every Friday night before she lit the Shabbat candles, his grandmother would always say in Yiddish, "It's hard to be a Jew." Growing up, President Joel always understood her statement in a negative context, until he had his own family and was able to understand her message on a deeper level. President Joel also touched on the importance of keeping the Holocaust as a "memory and not history."

In his closing remarks, he shared a story about Jewish philanthropist Edgar Bronfman, with

dent Joel urged members of the audience to maintain a similar sentiment.

Following President Joel's remarks, Sefi Lerner (SCW '08), one of the organizers of the program, called on eight students who each had a grandparent who survived the Holocaust to share his or her grandparent's story. The students lit candles, with a total of six candles lit, in memory of the six million who perished at the hands of the Nazis.

Among the students who spoke were Mollie Sharfman, Liat Segal, Kaley Wajcman, Gila Cohen, Adira Katlowitz, Amanda Ruben, Bezalel Wasser, Shloimie Zefren and Sam Sroka. Each shared a testimony of survival and faith.

While each story was remarkable in its own right, Liat Segal's story was an eye opener for many students. "Having grown up in an Ashkenazi environment, I have become increasingly familiar with the accounts of Holocaust survivors from Poland, Germany, Russia, and many other European countries," Segal began. "However, I have also grown up as the proud heir of a Libyan Jewish heritage. As a result, I have become aware of the Libyan experience of the Holocaust. Though lesser-known and quite different from the European account, Libyan Jewry faced grave hardships during the Holocaust at the hands of Mussolini and his Italian army," she explained.

Amanda Ruben (SCW '09) delivered a message to the audience on behalf of her grandfather Ernest Kan, who survived a series of concentration camps throughout the war. Ruben read from her grandfather's letter: "Nobody is born with hatred, we acquire it from other people. If we want peace in this world, we have to eradicate hatred, bigotry, and prejudice, and only then will we be able to live in harmony and peace together."

Bezalel Wasser (YC '08) explained his decision to participate in the candle lighting ceremony. "My whole life, my grandmother has told me Holocaust stories," he said. "Despite all the hardships, she kept her trust in Hashem even when she lost her whole family. When I am faced with difficulties I remember her testimony of faith. I like to repeat her story in order to inspire other people to keep their faith, even when times get tough."

Jennifer and Shira Deluty (SCW '10) proudly introduced their grandfather, Maurice Deluty, the keynote speaker of the program. In their introduction, they shared a story from their 2005 family trip to Poland with their parents and grandparents. While standing at Auschwitz, they recalled looking at their grandfather and seeing him smiling. Perplexed by this sight, they asked why he was smiling, to which he responded, "Never did I expect to stand here with my children



Courtesy of Liatte Tsarfati

Students listen to Holocaust survivor Mr. Maurice Deluty

whom President Joel had a close relationship in his former position as Hillel Director. At a fundraising event, Bronfman delivered a compelling speech about the Holocaust. Afterward, an audience member approached him and said, "Mr. Bronfman, you spoke so passionately about the Holocaust, you must have had a lot of family that were killed." To that statement, Bronfman replied, "Six million of my family died." Presi-

Segal continued to tell the story of her grandmother, Aliza Chalak-Bornstein, who lived in Bengazi, Libya and survived the Jado concentration camp. "This is the story of several thousands of people; a story that has somehow been almost lost in time," Segal concluded. "In hearing the stories of our brothers, we unite and stand stronger, as a people who commemorate its past, and celebrate its future, as one."

and grandchildren. For me, this is proof that the Nazis didn't succeed."

Before sharing his story of survival, Maurice Deluty spoke about his "plan to perpetuate the legacy of *zachor*" which was approved by various Jewish organizations and rabbis, to keep alive the memory of those who perished in the Holocaust.

Continued on page 8

2008 Commencement to Recognize ADL Director and UMichigan Scholar

BY MICHAL GOLAN

On May 22, Yeshiva University (YU) will celebrate its 77th annual commencement. Unlike last year's ceremony, which took place at Radio City Music Hall, this year's graduation will occur in the WaMu Theater in Madison Square Garden.

This year, YU has selected only two individuals to receive the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters, a prestigious award granted to those with impressive accomplishments, whose efforts have been geared toward changing the world in some way. The two degree recipients, Mr. Abraham Foxman and Dr. Edie N. Goldenberg, will address the students of YU as part of the graduation ceremony.

Foxman began working for the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in 1965, and became the national director in 1987, a position he has maintained ever since. According to the ADL's mission statement, it was founded in 1913 by B'nai B'rith as an attempt to halt the denigration of Jews, and to fight for equality and justice. During his career at the ADL, Foxman has headed numerous efforts to end bigotry and discrimination toward the Jewish community, as well as protecting civil rights for all people. His published works include "Never Again? The Threat of the New Anti-Semitism" and "The Deadliest Lies: The Israel Lobby and the Myth of Jewish Control," published in 2003 and 2007, respectively.

The ADL director, born in Poland in 1940, survived the Holocaust and immigrated to the United States in 1950. After attending the Yeshiva of Flatbush, he went on to obtain a bachelor's degree in political science from City College of the City University of New York, and from there proceeded to New York University School of Law, as well as to the Jewish Theological Seminary.

According to Georgia Pollak, vice president for Communications and Public Affairs at YU, Foxman was selected as an Honorary Degree Recipient for being "an internationally recognized figure who is a great articulator of the Jewish condition and defender of the right of the Jewish people to be a people." "He's also a man of very strong Jewish values who speaks out for his sense of those values," she added.

The second honoree, Dr. Edie N. Goldenberg, is currently a professor of Political Science and Public Policy at the University of Michigan (U-M). She has been a part of the university since 1974, holding various faculty positions, including dean of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, and director of the U-M Institute of Public Policy Studies.

After receiving a bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan in political science in 1967, Goldenberg proceeded to complete both a master's degree and Ph.D in political science at Stanford Uni-

versity. Later, she embarked on a teaching career at both Stanford and U-M. Goldenberg still maintains faculty positions at both universities.

"I was pleasantly surprised to learn about the honorary degree, and I feel greatly honored to be recognized by Yeshiva University," commented Goldenberg.

As a member of the Academic Advisory Committee of YU, Goldenberg's understanding of students and her insight into education make her a strong asset to the institution. Goldenberg is also an elected member of the National Academy of Public Administration, a member of the Corporation of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and an Academic Fellow of the Carnegie Corporation.

Goldenberg has had extensive administrative experience in U-M, as well as in the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. Over the past 40 years, she has served as a consultant at various organizations and institutions and has been invited to speak as a guest lecturer for a wide host of audiences. She has conducted extensive research on education, increasing her value to the multiple institutions and committees that she aids.

Many of her publications have focused on areas such as government policy, media, research, bureaucracy, and campaigning strategies and techniques. Some of her noteworthy publications include "Why Hire Non-Tenure Faculty?" (2002), as well as "How Does University Decision Making Shape the Faculty?" (2004).

In 1997, Goldenberg was chosen as one of Detroit's 100 Most Influential Women, according to Crain's Detroit Business. She has also received numerous other grants and awards in a wide range of associations and institutions.

SCW Economics Chair Dr. Dennis Hoover has been awarded the Lillian F. and William L. Silber Professor of the Year Award, an award whose recipient is decided by student vote. Speaking at the Beren campus awards ceremony on May 5, Hoover expressed gratitude to many people for the honor, including his parents, his wife, the Office of the Dean, the faculty, and his students.

"I'd like to thank our students for their enthusiasm and interest in economics, and for saying thank you to me countless times after my classes have ended each day, hopefully not just because the classes had finally ended," Hoover joked.

Selected students from the Beren campus will also be honored at graduation, and will have the opportunity to address the student body. These include Limor Wigder, valedictorian of General Studies, Jessica Weiss, valedictorian for the Rebecca Ivry Department for Excellence in Jewish Studies. Daniella Ulmer, valedictorian of Sy Syms School of Business (SSSB) spoke previously at the awards ceremony preceding the Sy Syms dinner.

50th Anniversary

Continued from front page

The women will then be served a luncheon at SCW. The formal reunion of the Class of '58 will take place at the Yeshiva University Museum, where the members will have the opportunity to catch up and reminisce.

The graduating class of 1958 consisted of 25 women, three of whom are now deceased. Seven members of the class currently reside in Israel, and the rest live in various locations throughout the United States and Canada. One of the women from Israel is planning to fly in to participate in the occasion.

This year, YU is also hosting reunions in honor of the 25th and 40th anniversaries of the graduating classes of 1983 and 1968, respectively.

Mrs. Audrey Lookstein, a member of the class of '58 who will be participating in the reunion, shared memories from her four years at Stern. "Although the majors were limited, we each found one that best suited us," she said. "We had one member of the class who went to medical school, and some became teachers." Lookstein recalled that although they were the very first

SCW students, her class was blessed with wonderful teachers who became friends to them over the years.

She also remembered the many kinks that had to be worked out. "The building was under construction the whole first year, so we went to class amid the construction. We also hand-operated an old-fashioned elevator with a wheel in order to gain access to the upper floors."

In its early years, SCW fostered a very, Zionist atmosphere. Lookstein noted that almost half of her class moved to Israel in later years.

Lookstein came to SCW with a large contingent of girls from Central Yeshiva, which is now known as Yeshiva University High School for Girls. She is most in touch with those SCW classmates with whom she also went to high school.

In appreciation for the financial aid she received as a student, Lookstein now donates funds for two scholarships at SCW. She has one daughter, Shira Baruch, who graduated from SCW in the class of 1987, and her granddaughter, Rebecca Cinnamon (SCW '10), is currently enrolled.

4th Floor Expansion

Continued from front page

There will also be a security guard stationed on the floor, as well as a much-needed storage room for deliveries. All of the new classrooms are expected to have state-of-the-art multimedia equipment as well, ensuring maximum benefit from this new area.

When asked whether separating these majors so distinctly from all the others will undermine the feeling of community within SCW as a whole, Dean Bacon weighed the considerations. "What we will gain by a sense of community is more than what we will lose by organizing everything separately," she explained.

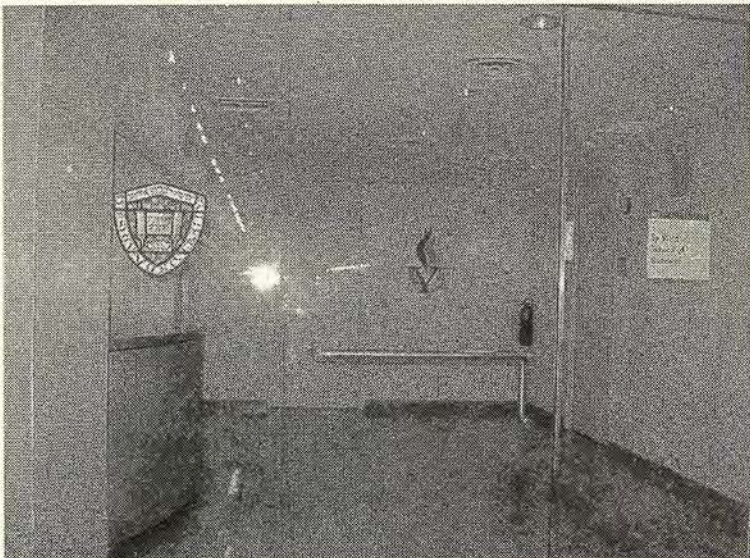
Dean Bacon discussed the need for coherence at SCW, and expressed future plans of moving the education and sociology departments to the fifth and sixth floors of the 215 building, as they overlap with some

psychology courses. Additionally, with this organized layout, faculty can gather together relatively easily for conferences and seminars.

The plans for the development of the fourth floor are now set, except for the time frame, which should be determined at a meeting next week.

The grand scheme of the design for the fifth and sixth floors is still unknown. However, Dean Bacon is sure of its "functionally workable and visually pleasing setting. It will be done with taste and sensitivity to the fact that we are not squandering space, which is very pressing in Midtown Manhattan," she said.

For now, "the psychology department was the most pressing need to revitalize, as it is one of the larger majors here," Dean Bacon continued. "With the addition of a new faculty member, Dr. Harburger, they desperately needed a better home."



Michelle Shapiro/The Observer

Entrance to fourth floor of 215 Lexington Avenue

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University and Syms' unique education affords, and be a living example of a true, God-fearing leader."

In her address at the awards ceremony prior to the gala, Daniella Ulmer, Dean Harold Nierenberg Memorial Valedictorian, spoke about her current experiences at SSSB. "To paraphrase President Richard Joel, I truly feel that not only have I been 'enabled,' I have been 'ennobled,'" Ulmer said.

"I have been 'enabled' by exposure to a broad spectrum of college and business courses, and by the opportunity to pursue my special interest in the fashion industry by participating in a joint program pioneered by the Sy Syms School of Business with the Fashion Institute of Technol-

Sy Syms Dinner

ogy," she explained. "However important that aspect of my education has been, I have been better equipped to meet the challenges of today's complex society because my professors and the entire YU community has been equally concerned with 'ennobling' my fellow students and me."

Touching on recent events, Ulmer highlighted the uniqueness of SSSB. "In the last few years, the spectacular failure by far too many business leaders to behave ethically has often dominated the news. This has led to an increased focus on business ethics in many business schools. But at Yeshiva University, business ethics is not just one course taught to students. Business ethics is just one aspect of the Torah values that are the foundation of all teachings at this incredible institution."

According to Michelle Laufer (SSSB '08), Beren co-president of the Sy Syms Student Council, "The dinner proved to be successful at all ends. Students not only gathered with more than 500 guests, but they were afforded the opportunity to meet and network with Sy Syms alums in the attempt to connect the ever-growing and strengthening Sy Syms family, be it resulting in future mentorships, internships, and jobs for our students."

Dean Bacon Interview

Continued from page 6

When looking at a group of SCW students, including the most academically talented and those who appear mediocre, I never can be sure which will have the most creative mind in the future. SCW reflects a diverse group of students and I believe is no less academic than many other colleges. I sit in on classes, and while it's true, some of the students sit distractedly, and it's hard to tell if they are prepared, that doesn't take away from the discussion of lively minds that is taking place amongst other students. Moving outside the university, I would note something somewhat parallel. Part of going to *shul* is the value of coming together with a group and gathering with a

similar voice. We shouldn't impugn the *shul* because some of the congregants do not fully participate. Similarly, I believe we should be cautious in painting our college in broad strokes. To do so encourages stigmas and stereotyping. In addition, in general, as women, we are burdened with stereotypes. The election is bringing to the surface issues of sexism that we continually have to fight against.

What can you say about the future direction of SCW?

We are growing significantly in our quality of education, opportunities and visibility. We need to enhance that visibility, and the CJF has helped by running various programs that take our talented women out to

the communities. Our new masters program in Biblical and Talmudic Interpretation is an expansion of academic opportunity. Graduates, by what they do, by their success, also bring visibility to our college. But, to maximize that effect, it is important to always say, "I am an SCW graduate." You have to say it so people can connect excellence to our college.

Yom Hashoah

Continued from page 7

"The essential aspect is for families to adopt the name of someone who died, without any living relatives to date," Deluty explained. "Once the name has been adopted, the family will observe their *yartzeit*, candles will be lit, and possibly *kaddish* recited." Additionally, information about the adoptee's biography will be distributed to the families.

"When children see the *yartzeits* being observed, they will ask questions and get proper explanations and meaning," Deluty added. He is hopeful that this project will serve as a "reinforcement of memory, a security of *hemshech* (continuity)." He called on audience members who were internet savvy to come forward and help him in his project.

Deluty then began to tell his tale of tragedy and survival. After spending three years in Auschwitz

and Buchenwald, Deluty jumped off a transit train and survived through a series of unlikely circumstances.

Deluty has dedicated a lot of time to speaking to youth, in both American and German schools. During his closing statements, he shared a question from a memorable speaking engagement. After speaking at a yeshiva in Long Island, Deluty was dumbfounded when a student asked him to share his views on believing in G-d after witnessing the events of the Holocaust. "For a moment I was stuck and overwhelmed by the question," Deluty recalled. After collecting his thoughts, however, he responded. "I only existed. I couldn't let my mind go further; otherwise the consequences could have taken a toll on me."

Jaimie Fogel, TAC vice president and one of the program's organizers, explained the structure of the ceremony. "We chose to include students in order to personalize Yom

Hashoah," Fogel said. "This day is not only one which belongs to the past but which is woven into the fabric of our present lives as well. It is only through this type of memory that the Holocaust and the Jewish triumph over the Nazis will not be forgotten."

Lerner commented on the inclusion of speakers from two distinctly different generations. "It was important for us to have both a survivor speak and the grandchildren of survivors," she said. "It is critical for us to hear the first hand stories of those who lived through the shoah. At the same time, we must begin to take the responsibility of passing on those memories. The grandchildren of survivors who have been told the stories and messages of their grandparents were the appropriate people to demonstrate this. Their lighting of the *yartzeit* candles represents our efforts to keep the memories alive."

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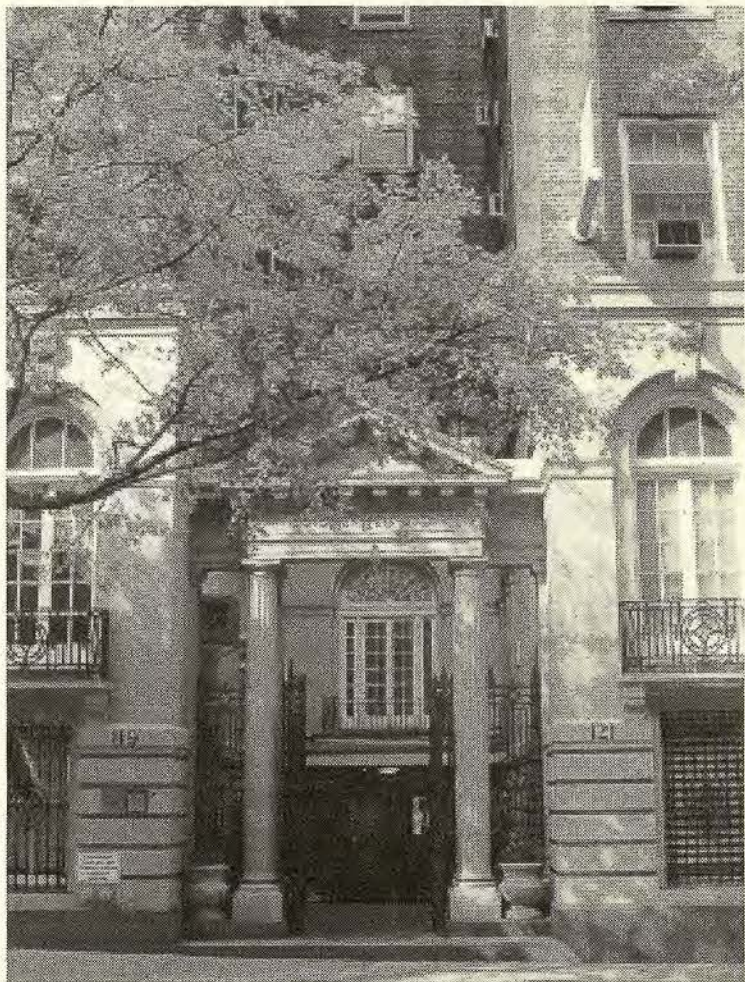
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FEATURES

Summer Housing Opens Options for Stern Students



Sara Lefkowitz/The Observer

Schottenstein Residence Hall, one of two facilities used for summer housing

BY ALIZA VISHNIAVSKY

The end of May at Stern College for Women (SCW) means that it is time to pack up a year's worth of books, papers, and clothing in preparation for a summer away from the Midtown campus. However, some women who are pursuing summer plans in the New York City environs have the opportunity to delay their packing for a month, as they have the option of extending their stay in Beren campus housing.

Residence life provides housing free of charge for SCW and Sy Syms School of Business (SSSB) students who attend classes in the first SCW summer school session or in the joint program at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT). Additionally, women who are doing internships for credit or are conducting research alongside university professors are eligible for free housing. In the past, the dorms have also been open to women participating in the summer learning program, which will not take place this year. Students doing research live in apartments in the Lexington Plaza building, located on Lexington Avenue between East 31st Street and East 32nd Street, while all other students live in Schottenstein Residence Hall.

According to Shana Glasser, associate director of Residence Life, about 120 students take advantage of the summer housing arrangements in a typical year. The department expects the same amount this year.

Students move into their assigned room during the end of finals

week and are expected to vacate their room on July 1st. Glasser explained that a lot of maintenance needs to be performed at Schottenstein, so it is easier for everyone if the work gets done when no one is living in the building. The research students, however, are allowed to remain in their apartments through the end of July, since many of them continue their projects after the July 1st move-out date.

In addition to current SCW and SSSB students, the dorms are used by Summer@YU, a co-ed summer program for high school students directed by the Office of Admissions. The program houses its participants, advisors, and the couple who runs its programming in the SCW dorms. This year, the high school women will live in the 35th Street dorm and the men will live in the 36th Street dorm.

"It is a great opportunity to host the high school students and their chaperones," noted Glasser. "It gives them a chance to see what living on campus is really like."

Summer housing applications were due May 5, but Glasser admitted that the Office of Residence Life is very flexible for students who need housing at the last minute. Jackie Fast (SCW '08) described her experience with summer housing this past summer. When, at the very last minute, she decided to extend her year-long internship past the spring semester, she contacted the housing office and was given a room right away.

Since the two cafeterias on the Beren campus are not open during summer break, obtaining food is not as

CJF Enlists YU Grad Students in Website for Jewish Teens

BY SHAYNA HOENIG

In today's computer age, people turn to the cyber world as an accessible source of information and research. The popularity of the internet has resulted in a shift of elements of social interaction to the digital sphere, including venues such as the blogosphere and other social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace.

Many Jewish youth organizations have attempted to channel the instant connection available through the internet into sources of education and interaction by developing websites geared specifically to Jewish teenagers. Frumteens.com, a website run by an anonymous moderator, is one online forum which contains hundreds of threads dealing with anything from skirt lengths to Zionism. Negiah.org, started by the Orthodox Union's youth organization NCSY, serves as the first-ever abstinence website. The Center for the Jewish Future (CJF), Yeshiva University's division of community enrichment, has joined these efforts in a partnership with a new teen website known as TheLockers.net.

The Lockers, created and directed by Rabbi Shua Eliovson, is an anonymous online forum that allows Jewish high school students to post statements, questions, concerns, or other feelings on a wide range of topics. Every message that is submitted is reviewed by a moderator in order to ascertain that the post is appropriate for public viewing, and does not contain offensive or hurtful content. The Lockers contains several different forum topics, nicknamed "lockers," including discussions on relationships, stress, drugs, body image, faith, and school, among other topics. The Lockers currently boasts over 2,000 topics and a member count numbering over 3,000.

In need of skilled moderators for his website, Eliovson turned to Yeshiva University as a "place to find committed Jewish leaders," explained Chana Topek of the CJF, who is also a student Wurzweiler School of Social Work. "The CJF took on

this partnership and planned a series of training sessions for those who moderated the website this year. The CJF also held monthly meetings on a host of different topics pertinent to teens in order to allow the moderators time to meet, discuss, and learn."

The training sessions, run through the CJF, included discussions about teen psychology, drugs and self-esteem with Yeshiva University faculty members Dr. David Pelcovitz, Dr. Jonathan Fast, and Rabbi Yosef Blau. Moderators also met with Dr. Norman Blumenthal, director of the Chai Lifeline trauma center; Laura Freiman LCSW, who specializes in working with young adults; Dr. Rona Novick, renowned bully prevention educator and faculty member at Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration; and three high school students from Philadelphia. CJF Presidential Fellow Jenni Richton explained that the high school students—two juniors and one senior, who were recommended by Freiman—"served as a panel" for the moderators and educators involved.

The YU moderators are individuals in different graduate level programs, including RIETS, Wurzweiler, Azrieli, and the Graduate Program for Advanced Talmudic Studies (GPATS), who rotate monitoring the website in four-hour shifts. The moderators' responsibilities include editing posts for obscenities or other inappropriate content, reporting worrisome posts to an administrator in the event that it becomes imperative to do so, and censoring posts which disclose too much personal information about a poster, as the site is intended to be completely anonymous. The moderators do not, however, respond to posts. Freiman continues to meet with the moderators on a regular basis.

"The big difference between this and other sites is that it is moderated. There are adults available to offer help," explained Dr. Pelcovitz. "Students have free voice on this site to talk to each other. Students will therefore hopefully have the feeling of not being alone."

Rabbi Kenneth Brander, dean

of the CJF, sees the partnership with The Lockers as an opportunity for graduate students who will be assuming positions of communal leadership to gain first-hand knowledge of what Jewish teenagers are talking about. "We thought, 'Can you imagine if we taught issues of young adults?'" he related. "It would be theory and practice at the same time. We felt that The Lockers would be an unbelievable way for students to see what challenges high school students face."

"We are empowering students and empowering Rabbi Eliovson, continued Rabbi Brander. "Acting as moderators allows students to learn these skills in a much more active way. My responsibility is not to one particular school of the university. If I can convene the energy of many different schools of the university, I'm fulfilling my mandate as the CJF."

According to Rabbi Brander, The Lockers will not only serve to help the teens posting on the website, but will provide the participating moderators with "the opportunity to serve the Jewish community and to recognize that they can really transform the world around them." Rabbi Brander stressed the importance of providing YU students interested in communal work with a current understanding of what challenges, issues, and dilemmas high school students face. Additionally, the moderator job gives the participants training in dealing with issues that they may face in their respective future professions. The CJF has received positive feedback from those employed as moderators by The Lockers.

The website seems to be operating successfully. "From what we can tell, there are a number of kids who have been suicidal who have been subsequently helped through The Lockers," related Pelcovitz.

"This was an important initiative for YU-CJF," added Topek. "We have access to young Jewish leaders and young Jewish leaders are exactly what The Lockers needs. The Lockers provides an 'inside look' into the Jewish teenager's mind, which many young professionals can gain from."

easy as it is during the regular school year. However, the C-store, located in Schottenstein Residence Hall, is open during the mornings and evenings. Food Services stocks the store with fresh food, such as bagels, and the store also has a microwave available to heat up frozen meals. Additionally, Glasser pointed out that most of the summer school classes are held uptown, so students may take advantage the Skycap on the 12th floor of Belfer Hall, open throughout the summer.

The summer housing option, which has been offered for the past seven years, gains popularity each year.

"There is a lot of interest to stay in the city over the summer," reported Glasser. "Our dorms are in

a central location for many internships and research opportunities. It's just a service to the students. We hope it allows them to pursue interests over the summer, especially for out-of-town students."

Miriam Merzel (SCW '09), a second-year student majoring in biology, was very satisfied with her stay in Beren Campus housing last summer. "I am very glad they gave me summer housing. It enabled me to stay in New York to do research with a professor, because being from outside the New York area, I would not have had anywhere to live," explained Merzel.

Elana Clark (SCW '08), who lived in a Lexington Plaza apartment with Merzel, added, "It was great liv-

ing in an apartment." She mentioned one drawback: "The apartments were not cleaned after the spring semester students moved out. But, after cleaning it up, we really had a fun time living in an apartment over the summer."

Clark, who resides in Teaneck, New Jersey, chose to use housing as a much more convenient alternative to commuting every day. "I had to be at the lab in Sloan Kettering by 8:30, so it really made my summer research a whole lot easier," said Clark.

In terms of the lack of available food facilities on campus, Clark remarked that she was very grateful that she had a kitchen to use over

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Stern Through the Ages

The 1970s Revolution in Women's Learning

BY SOPHIE MARMOR AND
OLIVIA WIZNITZER

Based on the events that took place at SCW in the 1970s, it is safe to assume that students at the time believed that academic opportunities should be open to any young woman eager to expand her intellectual horizons. The watershed events of the 1970s fostered a greater commitment to women's scholarship.

The decade of the 70s saw a revolution in women's Torah learning at SCW. Perhaps the most dramatic event that took place during the decade was Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik's famous inaugural lecture for the Beit Midrash Program, given in 1977. Prior to the Rav's initial lecture, Talmud study was virtually closed to all Jewish women, perhaps with the exception of students at the Maimonides School in Boston.

The Rav's understanding that Jewish women must be exposed to Torah she'baal peh (oral law) predates this historic lecture. In a letter penned in May of 1953, available in "Community, Covenant and Commitment," he states, "Not only is the teaching of Torah she-beal peh to girls permissible but it is nowadays an absolute imperative. This policy of discrimination between the sexes as to subject matter and method of instruction [...] has contributed greatly to the deterioration and downfall of traditional Judaism." Despite his view, the only official course available to SCW students prior to 1977 was a 1959 course entitled "Mishnah: Selections from Moed."

However, Rabbi Herschel Billet recalls the Rav's encouraging



Courtesy of YU Archives

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik delivers Talmud shiur at Stern College for Women, with Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm, Rabbi Saul Berman, and Rabbi Mordechai Willig in attendance (L-R)

young male students, particularly some of the members of his shiur, to volunteer to go to Stern and teach aspiring females. As he recalls, the classes were taught in the dormitory. "We were allowed on 34th Street off Park Avenue, so we went up, I think, on the second floor, and we had a bunch of classes going on there; there were some lounge rooms or study rooms set aside for us." In terms of

any differences encountered between teaching men and women, Rabbi Billet stated that "I think in general teaching Talmud to women who have a typical high school yeshiva education as opposed to the men is going to be different because the curriculum for men is more geared toward that [Talmud education]. In those days, men's learning in the preparatory yeshiva was always more intense—

but I can say that the women were very, very enthusiastic and very diligent." Nevertheless, these informal classes preceded the start of an official program to teach the women.

In a review of "Community, Covenant and Commitment" for the Jewish Action Magazine of fall 2005, Moses Meiselman quotes the Rav's words on his car ride back home after the inaugural lecture for

the Beit Midrash Program. The Rav stated that exposing women to Torah she'baal peh would "be a springboard to expose them to the masa u'mattan (give-and-take) of the Torah She'al Peh," leading them to see that "the halachic process is not random and they would see the sophistication of Torah as in other areas."

Rabbi Saul Berman, Rabbi Norman Lamm, Rabbi Mordechai Willig, Dean Bacon and many others attended the inaugural lecture, which was held in the North Wing of the Library. Since the event was somewhat controversial, it was important that so many rabbinic figures were present, lending their public support to the Rav. Rabbi Berman accompanied the Rav, but stopped so as to allow Dean Bacon to say a few brief words. The Rav then spoke on a topic from Mesechet Pesachim.

Rabbi Willig taught the first Beit Midrash Program Talmud shiur, continuing with Pesachim.

The changes to the SCW curriculum must be understood within the context of a unique time frame. Dean Bacon was appointed the Monique C. Katz Dean only in 1977; after just one year as dean of the college, positive, visible changes, such as the Beit Midrash Program were apparent. Likewise, it is also important to recognize that the Beit Midrash Program could not have taken place without the support of the new president of Yeshiva University, Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm. Rabbi Lamm was elected president in 1976, and like Dean Bacon, wasted no time in bringing much-needed change to the Yeshiva University community.

Summer Housing

Continued from page 10

the summer. "Even in the month when the C-store was open, having the kitchen was really the only way to ensure a good three meals a day."

Fast, who lived in Schottenstein Residence Hall for the month of June, recounted that without a kitchen she found herself eating out for a lot for meals, though she did make some use of the C-store.

Some felt that the summer housing option should be made available to more students, even those working at internships which though not linked academically to the university, are still located in New York City.

Malka Bromberg (SCW '09), who stayed in the Lexington Plaza apartments during her research job last summer, asserted: "Housing should be open first to students who are doing things through YU, but there are so many empty rooms. There should be openings for other students for a fee."

Rabbinic Authority and Halakhic Process at SCW

Continued from front page

"The policies are related to halakhic criteria, but it's not a halakhic policy," articulated Rabbi Hochberg. "The rabbis did not impose the dress code."

Rabbi Hochberg listed the Chanukah candle-lighting method as another issue that was solved with inter-campus consultation. "[When] the Schottenstein dorm was new, the question came up where to light there. I was asked the question unofficially," he related. Rabbi Hochberg ended up going in person to Schottenstein Residence Hall to examine the structure of the lounge, and eventually determined the best course of action in conjunction with YU Rosh Yeshiva Rabbi Mordechai Willig.

The wide spectrum of halakhic issues sometimes results in the transference of halakhic decisions to Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm, chancellor of the university. "Things come up from what I would call the very large and the very momentous to the more day-to-day," noted Rabbi Kanarfogel. "Something like the policy in terms of megillah reading is a more momentous issue. Megillah reading is Dr. Lamm's call."

"We are very comfortable

with him because he certainly has an idea of what is going on on this campus," enthused Rabbi Kanarfogel. "I consider him a rebbe for all. He has more experience and knowledge and know-how than any of us."

Rabbi Lamm sees his role as final decider of halakhic policy as



Courtesy of YU Productions

YU Chancellor Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm

part of his larger role as a communal leader. "Issues that have consequences that involve a tzibbur (group), have communal consequences, should really be decided by people who lead the community," he asserted. "A

halakha must be given in context. In one context it's forbidden and in another it's permitted. Sometimes you have to have someone outside of Stern College see a broader view."

He cited the issue of having a women's megillah reading on the Beren campus as one issue whose volatility and complexity made it appropriate for him to decide on the university policy.

"Everything factors in. I know the halakha is one way according to some poskim, another way according to other poskim," he pointed out. "You have issues of kavod habriyos (human dignity), issues of consequences for the entire community, issues of the reputations of Yeshiva and Stern, issues of the reputation of Torah."

Rabbi Lamm noted that it would be possible to revisit such an issue after a few years, but at the time of his decision-making, he felt the best course of action would be to disallow the practice. "I felt it would be too divisive and cause too much turmoil on campus," he recounted. "Kavod haTorah would not gain."

Halakhic issues that come up in the YU graduate schools are also forwarded to Rabbi Lamm's desk. Rabbi Lamm observed that paskening

for the graduate schools is a different enterprise than for the undergraduate schools, as the graduate school demographic is comprised of students who are non-Jewish and non-observant as well. "You have to know how to answer questions for people who aren't observant," he stated. "You have to know who's asking. [It] depends on that, how you answer."

Rabbi Lamm has been handling larger halakhic questions since his tenure as president of the university began in 1976.

"Other than Dr. Lamm, who is the bottom line, these things are usually handled by a nice consensus," Rabbi Kanarfogel declared, speaking of the halakhic decision-making process. He clarified that if a majority of consultants are comfortable with a decision, then that is the policy that is put into practice. "[A consensus] will certainly obviate the need to bring everything up to Dr. Lamm," he emphasized.

"In many ways it's a collaborative effort," affirmed Dean Bacon. "It's much more of a consultative kind of community."

ISRAEL

YU Community Commemorates then Celebrates: Hundreds Gather in Lamport Auditorium for Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut

BY SHIFFY STAIMAN

At 7:30 p.m. on May 7, the YU community gathered in the Wilf Campus's Lamport Auditorium to first remember the fallen Israeli soldiers and then to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut through *tefilla chagigit*, dancing and falafel.

Many students felt that the program gave them a chance to connect, even while living in the Diaspora. Dana Adler (SCW '09), who trained in an IDF combat unit, remarked that being in YU is the "second best place after being in Israel" for these days.

The ceremony began with student leaders, the seven newly elected presidents of the various student councils, carrying Israeli flags. The Israeli flag in the center was lowered and the organizer of the event, Yael Wolynetz (SCW '08), delivered the opening remarks. Before remembering the Israeli casualties of war and terrorism, Wolynetz took a moment to remember the victims of the recent devastating cyclone in Myanmar.

The remarks were followed by the YU A capella group's beautiful rendition of *mah avarech* (How shall I bless?), an Israeli song often sung to pay tribute to the soldiers who died at such a young age.

Perhaps one of the most touching moments of the evening was when six students, all of whom had either served in the Israeli Defense Forces or *Sherut Leumi* (National Service), were called up to light candles. Six candles were lit, each representing a decade of war, tragedy and victims.

Adler, one of the six students, remarked that she is "continually im-

pressed" with the university's attitude to Yom Ha'atzmaut and Yom Hazikaron in YU. "I thought it was really special because coming back from Israel and the army, I had a mix of different emotions and did not know how things work here. I am surprised and impressed how people react and how Yom Ha'atzmaut is celebrated."

The first speaker, Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm, was introduced by TAC President Laura Shuman (SCW '09). He opened with the caveat, "I am not going to give any *missar*, any *drush*, any *hashkafa*; I am going to simply tell you a story." Rabbi Lamm enlightened the crowd with his memories of being a student at YU in 1948. At the time, although far from the fighting in Israel (then Palestine), Rabbi Lamm and his peers felt a strong sense of responsibility and helped in any way they could.

"I shall always remain impressed with our student body," said Rabbi Lamm.

Rabbi Lamm fondly recalled the invitation the students extended to Menachem Begin to speak at Yeshiva College in 1948. Indeed, Begin did come and he addressed the students in Yiddish while standing at the same podium from which Rabbi Lamm spoke. As Begin proclaimed, "there are no two Jerusalems!" Rabbi Lamm remembered that the crowd burst into applause, marking a precedent for "what YU students always will do on behalf of the State of Israel."

YU President Richard M. Joel recited the *kel maleh* for all those who lost their lives in protecting the State of Israel. President Joel briefly shared with the audience his recognition that "there is a



Courtesy of Ayala Kurlander

Students decorate kites in celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut

sense of oneness wherever we are, but our hearts are always there."

Rav Meir Goldwicht, Rosh Yeshiva at the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS), introduced by SOY President Noson Waitman, spoke about actualizing man's potential and making sacrifices for one's people and one's land. Jessica Tugetman (SCW '10) found what Rav Goldwicht said to be "exactly what needed to be heard." "I love that he spoke in Hebrew," she added.

As Rav Goldwicht's speech came to a close and the sky grew darker, the pivotal transition between the melancholy Yom Hazikaron and the joyous Yom Ha'atzmaut drew nearer. Wolynetz spoke of the challenge in making the transition suitable. "It's always a difficult transition to make, and we thought the shofar blowing

was appropriate," said Wolynetz.

In her remarks during the ceremony, Wolynetz reminded the audience of a prior usage of the shofar to mark a historical and emotional transition. "In 1967, when the Israeli army re-conquered Yerushalayim after the Six Day[s] War, Rav Shlomo Goren, chief rabbi of the military, marked the transition from war to the joy of having captured Yerushalayim with the traditional sound of the shofar," she explained. "So too, as we move from the sadness of Yom Hazikaron to the joy of Yom Ha'atzmaut, we will make this transition with the penetrating, multifaceted sound of the shofar which can arouse us to do *teshuva* (repent), can announce G-d's presence on *Har Sinai* (Mount Sinai) and which can convey the profound joy of finally capturing *Har Habayit* (The

Temple Mount) after two thousands years without it." The Israeli flag was then raised and the festivities began.

Michelle Laufer, president of SSSBSC, introduced guest speaker Mr. Benjamin Krasna, Deputy Consul General to Israel in New York. Krasna, an MTA graduate, spoke about the difficulty of celebrating when the sorrows of Yom Hazikaron are still fresh in mind and when Israel continues to face numerous difficulties.

"We've been given a gift on a silver platter," Krasna exclaimed, quoting from the famous poem of Natan Alterman. He encouraged the audience to celebrate what was achieved and use that energy to help Israel even further.

Daniel Stokar, president of YSU, introduced Rosh Yeshiva Rabbi Shalom Rosner, as the last speaker of the evening. Rabbi Rosner, who is making aliyah this coming summer, advised the crowd to "treasure" and "embrace" the gift of Israel. "Today we have a second chance," he said. "Our call is to not let it slip away another time."

Wolynetz said she was especially moved by Rosner's passionate delivery. "He drove home the message to the audience of the importance of *Medinat Yisrael* (Israel statehood) to our nation," Wolynetz related.

The uplifting words of all of the speakers were an appropriate segue into the *ma'ariv chagigi* led by Azi Grysman. The walls were shaking from the hundreds of voices joined in prayer. To end off the powerful evening, tribute was paid to both Israel and the United States with the singing of the Hatikva and the Star Spangled Banner.

Brandeis Conference Introduces New Center for Israel Studies

BY YAELE FROHLICH

Brandeis University hosted roughly 300 people at a conference entitled "Visions & Visionaries: Imagining Israel at Sixty" on April 6, including Dr. Ruth Bevan and twelve Yeshiva University (YU) students, most of whom are enrolled in Bevan's Israeli Political Thought honors course. The conference celebrated the opening of Brandeis's Schusterman Center for Israel Studies, which will be devoted to the study of modern Israel and will, according to Brandeis University President Jehuda Reinharz, be "based on scholarship and not advocacy."

Lynn Schusterman, chair of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, hopes the new center is just the beginning of many similar endeavors in the nation's colleges and universities. "Israel, past, present, and future deserves its place

in the academic world," she said. "I envision a time...where every major institution of higher learning in this country will offer at least one course about Israel, where everyone recognizes Israel as the Jewish homeland, as a key ally of the United States."

A panel of three speakers featuring David Makovsky, Ruth Gavison, and Hillel Halkin commented on challenges facing Israel and the Jewish Diaspora and fielded questions from the audience, including several posed by YU students.

Gavison, a professor of human rights at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, spoke about Israel as both a Jewish state and a democracy. She insisted that Israel has a Jewish majority, but is not a theocracy, and that the "religious monopoly" over marriage and divorce is "a bad thing" and "should be abolished."

Following Gavison's presentation, Makovsky, a Middle East professor at Johns Hopkins Univer-

sity, spoke about the Iranian nuclear threat. According to Makovsky, the new president of the United States will focus on dialogue and negotiations with Iran, leaving Israel as the sole country that may launch an attack in the foreseeable future against the uranium-enriching Islamic state. As for this year, "only Israel," he maintained, "will be considering a military operation against Iran in 2008."

Makovsky theorized that the United States might even cut a deal with Iran at the expense of Arab countries. Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair told Makovsky the week before the conference that leaders of these Arab countries have been raising fears of a nuclear Iran with increasing urgency at diplomatic meetings. "A nuclear Iran will trigger a nuclear arms race in the Middle East," warned Makovsky, who also serves as director of the Project on the Middle East Peace Process at the Washington Institute for Near East

Policy. He added that while Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Turkey would pursue their own nuclear programs, other countries such as Syria, might seek an alliance with Iran and other nations under an "Iranian umbrella."

Arab states, predicted Makovsky, may also be forced into cooperation with Israel to deal with their common threat; hostile countries may have to become friendly for their own security. "This coalition of Arab states and Israel could be very important," he said, "but stymied."

Halkin, a journalist and translator, addressed yet another challenge facing the Jewish world: the spread of English and the decline of Hebrew among Jews, which he said makes world Jewry "vulnerably transparent to the outside world."

"Nothing is secret," Halkin added. "What could be said in Jerusalem could be in the papers tomorrow in New York." If English is the language of Jewish political thought, then Jews

must be careful to keep in mind how the world will view their opinions.

The decline of Hebrew also dilutes Jewish culture, Halkin lamented. While most Jews a hundred years ago spoke Jewish dialects such as Yiddish, Ladino, Judeo-Arabic or Judeo-Italian, knowledge of Hebrew used to be the hallmark of educated Jews, a method of communication between Jews of different language groups and an aspiration of the masses. Now, declared Halkin, with the availability of English translations of Judaic texts and other Hebrew works—which the S. Y. Agnon translator admitted has improved Jewish literacy and increased communication among the Jewish people—"It is too easy to cling to English."

Hebrew, for its part, has transformed into a language that is localized in Israel, used primarily for common speech there, and often lit-

Students Remember the Fallen at Beren Yom Hazikaron Ceremony

BY LIATTE TSARFATI

On Tuesday evening, May 6, over 250 Yeshiva University students, staff, faculty, and guests gathered in Koch Auditorium for the second annual Yom Hazikaron event, organized by Nina Bursky-Tammam (SCW '08) and Simeon Botwinick (YC '09).

Behind the scenes, a team of dedicated students and administrators ensured that this year's Yom Hazikaron would be a success. Sefi Lerner (SCW '08), Mati Eizenshtein (YC '11), Nava Billet (SCW '09), and Deans Beth Hait and Zeldra Braun, from Student Affairs, dedicated much time and effort.

The program opened with a candle-lighting ceremony, commemorating the fallen soldiers of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and victims of terror. The memory of the masses was honored by focusing on two individuals: Noam Mayerson and Roi Klein, z"l, both of whom were killed in the second Lebanon war in 2006.

Bursky-Tammam, the first speaker, shared her thoughts regarding the significance of Yom Hazikaron. Following these introductory words, Nava Billet, provided a personal account of her friend Noam Mayerson. Billet and Mayerson were tour guides together at *El Artzi*, a field school in Eilat.

Billet described Mayerson as "intelligent, passionate about Torah, truth, kindness and friendship," and

as someone who "loved his family, the land of Israel, and the educational goals he dreamt of fulfilling." Mayerson, a tank commander, was called up during the mobilization for the second Lebanon war. The Shabbat before he was killed, he gave a pep talk to his comrades. Billet explained that he encouraged them with the words of Maimonides in Law of Kings, stating that "[the soldier] is prohibited from thinking of his wife and children because they serve as a distraction from the goal in war: to defend the nation." He was killed, alongside Yotam Lotan, on a mission near the town of Bint Jbeil in southern Lebanon. "Yom Hazikaron is for remembering," Billet concluded, blessing the memory of the fallen.

Katy Mayerson, Noam's first cousin, was invited to share a few words. The 13-year old told the crowded room that she knew nothing could bring Noam back, but she "decided to do something that would keep him smiling in heaven," recalling Noam's ever-present smile. She helped raise funds to rebuild a bomb-blasted children's park in Kiryat Shmonah. The ground-breaking for the Noam Mayerson playground is set for June of this year.

Following Katy Mayerson's remarks, a slideshow prepared by Noam's family, was screened. Narrated by Chaim Mayerson, Noam's father, the presentation depicted Noam in army khakis, dancing with friends, loung-



Michelle Shapiro/The Observer

Nava Billet speaks about friend Noam Mayerson (z"l) on eve of Yom Hazikaron

ing with family, and hiking in Eilat.

In accordance with Yom Hazikaron custom, the gathering stood for the prayer for the IDF. Afterward, the audience viewed the

documentary "With All Your Soul: The Story of Major Roi Klein." The commander of Golani Brigade 51, Klein, was a husband and father of two small children. When a grenade

was launched at his comrades, he jumped on the grenade to block it from killing the soldiers nearby, and cried out the words of the Shema as he died. "It was just like in the legends," commented a soldier who witnessed Roi's last moment, "he said Shema with real intent." Klein was described as a courageous and learned man. He had already received a medal of honor at the young age of 26. Not only was he dedicated to the military, but all who knew him, whether in a community or military context, described him as being passionate about his Torah learning as well.

Students, faculty, and staff paused amidst their tears for a moment of silence in memory of all those who fell for the sake of the State of Israel. The evening concluded with the united voices of the audience singing Israel's historic national anthem, Hatikvah.

While studying abroad in Israel, Bursky-Tammam explained, she was very moved by the remembrance commemorations that took place there for the fallen soldiers. She was inspired to create a program that would help make Yom Hazikaron a deeper and more personal event for students at YU. "It is overwhelming to think of what it means to be a part of something so immensely valuable that people are willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for it—and that is one of the most painful but one of the most important parts of Yom Hazikaron," she said.

Brandeis Conference

Continued from page 12

tered with hardly-disguised English words. "The Jewish people no longer has a language of its own," observed Halkin. "We have become a people that needs to be translated to itself, a people living in translation." And no translation is perfect. "[Translation] purports to be the original when it is not," Halkin continued.

Halkin connected the lack of a universally spoken Jewish language with a lack of universal Jewish identity. "We're an amorphous people... more than [at] any other period of our history," he observed. "The Jewish people has a problem on its hands. I don't know that it's possible to achieve a sense of unity that there once was."

He noted that when Jews—sometimes even family members—fought bitterly over ideology in the past, each party at least understood why the other held his or her particular view. Now, said Halkin, "we don't even know anymore where we're coming from. We're drifting apart." Halkin proclaimed that he did not have answers to these problems. But he sincerely believes that the issues he raised are contemporary and very real.

Following the thought-provoking panel discussion, keynote speaker Shlomo Avineri, a professor of political science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem who served as director-general of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's first government, expressed optimism about Israel's place in the world. "There is no democratic country in the world today," he stated, "whose government does

not accept Israel's right to exist."

Avineri also encouraged the idea of families living for a year in Israel, comparable to the year abroad of many Jewish teenagers following high school graduation—a sort of "Birthright for families." While he surmised that such families would be more likely to subsequently move to Israel permanently, benefiting Israel, the families would experience other benefits.

"When you come and live in Israel for one year," said Avineri, "all of a sudden Rosh Hashanah is something different than Rosh Hashanah in New York or in Boston. Yom Kippur is something different—only in Israel." Also, people residing in Israel read about many aspects of Israeli society and culture in Israeli newspapers, not just the terrible headlines that often overshadow Israel's vibrancy in the international media. "All of a sudden," continued Avineri, "you understand the complexities... that there are no easy solutions. You have an existential feeling that is present in your understanding of the country. This is the real Israel."

Still, said Avineri, creating a place for a people that is ancient and simultaneously modern and progressive is "a work in progress."

The speeches were followed by a formal reception and dinner. Although the YU representatives had to leave before dessert to return to New York, several unsung heroes ensured that each student walked away with a boxed slice of chocolate cheesecake to digest on the bus ride home—a side to the many thought-provoking comments heard throughout the day.

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See www.fleetwoodsynagogue.org for details about the community.

ARTS & CULTURE

Israel Revealed: The Beauty of the Night

BY OLIVIA WIZNITZER

May 11, 2008 marks the opening of "Celestial Nights: Visions of an Ancient Land" at the YU Museum. "Celestial Nights" features photographs of landscapes in Israel and the Sinai Desert, taken by acclaimed artist Neil Folberg, whose work is breathtaking in scope and focus. Luminescent, enthralling and otherwise picturesque and magical, these images capture the very essence of the land; its wide skies and open spaces demonstrating the vast beauty that is the land of Israel.

The YU Museum is the final stop on the "Celestial Nights" tour, coming at an extremely apropos time, directly following Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day. Indeed, the entire exhibit celebrates the anniversary of Israel's 60th year of statehood.

Reba Wulkan, curator of the exhibit, explains that these photographs educate and enhance the viewer's understanding of Jewish culture in "a very particular and unusual way." In part this is due to the magical qualities apparent in these starry skies and climes; Wulkan describes the photographs as "sensitive, mysterious, magical, glowing, enlightening, beautiful and spiritual."

The exhibit is particularly significant to the modern Jew as it "offers another language for depicting the evidence of God's presence on earth and in the cosmos." Folberg is a master of his medium, having trained with legendary photographer Ansel Adams, and, "showing the land's natural beauty through specific places, vistas, and scenes— which in itself is



Courtesy of YU Museum

aesthetically amazing, Folberg takes his medium to the limits and experiments with infrared and high-speed film and exposures, resulting in artful photographs that are constructed using a variety of technical means."

While each photograph is evocative, Wulkan particularly recommends viewing "Thistles, Gush Halav, 2000" due to its "multi-dimensional textures, elements, and beauty of place and time captured," and "Sagittarius, 2000" for its "ethereality, out of worldliness." "Starry Grove" is also a favorite due to

its masterful juxtaposition of trees against an expansive galaxy of stars.

The show demonstrates the beauty and grandeur of the land of Israel in a truly magical way, and allows for a spiritual appreciation of its glory. "Celestial Nights" will remain open until August 24.

Please note that the artist will be at the YU Museum and explain his work on May 29, 2008 at 6:00 PM.

Rutka's Notebook: The Polish Anne Frank

BY ALISA UNGAR-SARGON

The launching party for "Rutka's Notebook," a diary written in 1943 Poland by a 14-year-old girl named Rutka Laskier, took place May 1 at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in Battery Park. Published by Time Books in conjunction with Yad Vashem, the 60-page diary was preserved by Rutka's Polish friend for 62 years before being released to the Polish public and most recently, to Hebrew- and English-speaking readers.

President and Publisher of Time Books, Richard Fraiman, emceed the intimate gathering, managing somehow to maintain the solemn tone of the event and simultaneously keep up the spirits. Zahava Scherz, Rutka's half-sister, was the main speaker of the night.

Scherz's father, before he passed on, was the sole survivor of his family, and never told Scherz about his prior children. In a heavy Israeli accent, Scherz told over the story of how she accidentally uncovered a family photo album containing pictures of a girl who looked remarkably like her. When she questioned her father, he told her about his previous family, lost in the flames of Auschwitz. A telephone call two years ago from Menachem Lior, a native of her father's hometown in Poland, alerted Scherz to the discovery of her half-sister's writings. "It took some time for me to read the diary, because I couldn't understand and I couldn't read the Polish language," Scherz said. "But when I started to read it, because someone had translated it for me to Hebrew, I started to

discover Rutka, my half-sister. And I started to love her, to adore her, and to be very, very proud [of] her."

The short excerpt read from the diary itself acutely depicted the anxiety and panic of Rutka's experience, bringing it to a disturbing reality. Alongside her descriptions of adolescent day-to-day life were her alarming feelings of hatred and indifference towards the Germans and a gruesomely detailed murder.

Pitched as the "Polish Anne Frank," the instigators behind the promotion of "Rutka's Notebook" intend the memoir to be just that: read throughout the world, studied in schools, and examined in-depth by anyone of quality, reawakening the by-now dormant sensitivities toward the Holocaust. Though the many museums across the Atlantic are clearly on the radar, the compassion from the post-war generation is slowly evaporating, evident especially in the current state of the Israeli conflict and in the outbreaks of anti-Semitism that frequent newspaper pages. With a new Anne Frank, perhaps a hope for some of that old compassion may be revived long enough to be of some use.

Though her experiences hardly left her innocent, Rutka's account, like that of Anne Frank, is the record of a nation's turning point told by a person who was once considered its future. Forsaken in the past, she has left a legacy to her people, entrusting her story—her facts and her feelings—to their rebuilding. As Scherz said, "Rutka is not with us, and she will always remain 14, and she will always remain with us."

The Secret Scroll Unrolled

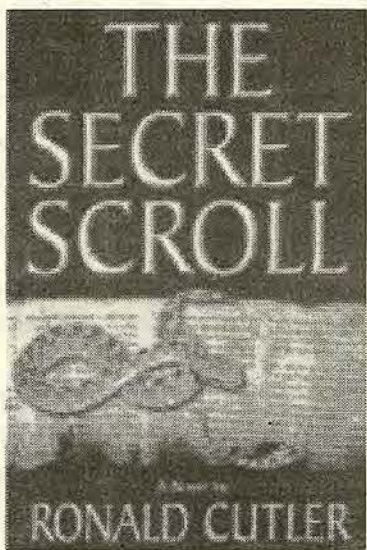
BY OLIVIA WIZNITZER

Ronald Cutler's first novel, "The Secret Scroll," suffers from an ailment that appears to afflict many a promising action thriller—it's yet another Dan Brown wannabe, an attempt at "The Da Vinci Code" without being as clever or controversial. While "The Secret Scroll" definitely allows for some interesting ideas, the methods of detection, deduction and understanding on the part of Josh Cohan, the novel's protagonist, are hardly as interesting as the symbology touted by Brown. This trend continues when Danielle, the necessary love interest, is continuously portrayed as being witty, clever and having the ability to talk her way out of tight situations, yet rarely demonstrates this supposed skill, relying instead upon the conveniently-timed affections of a large body-guard in order to escape from prison.

Admittedly, the ideas behind the novel are interesting. Josh Cohan discovers a manuscript that may dis-

rupt the entire State of Israel, if not the world, and is suddenly drawn into a world of intrigue as others demonstrate that they will do anything in order to get their hands on the scroll in question. Unfortunately, all subtlety is lost with Cutler's heavy-handed attempt to demonstrate the importance of the scroll, apparently a biography penned by Jesus Christ himself. That Jesus would write a scroll refuting all the claims later to be made about him, including that of his divinity, is highly comical. It is a little too convenient, and therefore, a little ridiculous.

The rest of the novel reads in this comical vein, which is sad, as it is meant to be serious. Josh Cohan is hardly human. His extraordinary dreams, meditative state, intuition and emotion guide him, so that the reader has no ability to guess at his moves or determine where the plot is leading. The author is always able to throw in another wrench if he so desires and cite Cohan's almost magical abilities whenever one would reach a logical dead end, in which case the



action would stop. Cutler has a way of telling his reader everything, not allowing her to infer from the text or put ideas together for herself. This is extremely annoying, and makes for a very bad plot. The best action novels are those where the reader

seems to understand where something is heading, is right there alongside the character, in his head, looking at the information that has been dealt him, making decisions alongside him. Cohan's mystical abilities preclude that sense of connection.

Also preposterous is Cohan's inhuman ability to get over the deaths of friends in no time at all. Cohan's childhood friend Avner offers him everything in order to aid him in hiding the scroll, and eventually loses his life because of it. Cohan's reaction is melodramatic and foreseeable. "He forced himself to look at Avner's face, frozen in death in a mask of agony. He would gain fury from the image, and from that fury, resolve. He stood and fought back his revulsion, then kissed the burly man on his cheek. "I will not let your death mean nothing." Words so trite and cliché make me sick. But if that's not bad enough, we find Josh intimately involved with Avner's girlfriend Danielle a couple days later. Because that's how you mourn for your dead childhood friend,

whose death you swore to avenge.

Cult leaders and organizations with shady names like "The Master" and "The Guardians" make it even worse. The organization features the typical megalomaniac in power, his face twisted with hate. He is an extremist who hides behind lies and lore that has been handed down; he enjoys whipping people and plans to offer Danielle to his son in some extremely shady sexual rite. His character is undeveloped, his motivations incomprehensible. He has simply been assigned the villain's role and is doing his best to fill it.

Tedious, cliché and melodramatic, "The Secret Scroll" lacks an interesting interplay of events, the logic that so delights the thriller-connoisseur, and any sense of craftsmanship. The book feels as though it were slapped together, one grandiose idea colliding with the next. If Ronald Cutler did indeed read more than 75 books in preparation for writing this one, one might hope that it showed a little more.

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SCIENCE & HEALTH

Contraception Constrained: SCW Health Center Explains Rationale for Birth Control Policy

BY AVIVA MILLER & GAVRIELLA PIKE

Campus health centers located at colleges around the country serve various functions for their students, providing routine medical attention, education about safe sex practices, alcohol, and substance abuse, and nutritional guidance. Recent cuts in the discounts offered to women who buy contraceptives at college health centers have caused the cost of birth control to increase. This measure, implemented in 2007, affects students nationwide, as college health centers have typically been an inexpensive source of necessary birth control. However, the women at Stern College for Women (SCW) face a different set of circumstances altogether—the health center at SCW does not offer any kind of contraceptives to its students.

The health center, located on the second floor of Brookdale Residence Hall on the Beren campus, receives very few inquiries for contraceptives. “Only one to three students per year ask for birth control,” stated Mary Little, physician assistant and director of the SCW health center.

There are a number of reasons why Stern College students might avail themselves of contraceptives. In addition to its obvious effect, birth control serves other medical functions as well, such as regulating menstruation, treating severe PMS, and reducing acne. While the reality is such that some single women are sexually active, there are also numerous married students who may employ the use of contraceptives, and for whom local access to birth control could be helpful.

University officials explained the reasoning behind the health center’s choice not to supply birth control, referring only to medical considerations, rather than halakha.

“Contraception is viewed as specialty care to be prescribed and monitored by an outside physician or health care provider,” explained Dr. Chaim Nissel, associate dean of students for Health Affairs. “As such, students requesting birth control pills are referred to a gynecologist for a gynecological exam and prescriptions.” He noted that Ms. Little is available to discuss general health issues with students, including sexual health.

University Dean of Students Dr. Victor Schwartz cited the Office of Student Affairs as a main arbiter of campus health policy, with the supervision of the vice president for University Life and the president and cabinet of the university when necessary. “We have a contract with Beth Israel around provision of health care on campus,” he related. “Decisions are made on the basis of the general standard of care in college health services, cost, and need. Beth Israel provides similar services for several small universities in the New York area.”

“I do not know the history of how the decision was originally made not to provide birth control, but I know that many small schools do not, since it falls outside the range of general urgent care medicine which is the mandate of the health service,” revealed Dr. Schwartz. “Our service would discuss and make necessary referrals for any care of this type.”

The health center’s responsibilities consist mainly of attention to more routine student needs. Dr. Nissel emphasized that the purpose of

the SCW health center is for minor student complaints, such as colds, various aches and pains, and “episodic illnesses and minor injuries,” as listed in the health center brochure.

“It also administers various injections and shots for students in need, and monitors immunization compliance,” Dr. Nissel enumerated. “The Health Service is also helpful to students with outside referrals for specialty care, medical test, lab work, etc.” Nissel included contraception in the category of medical issues that are referred to outside physicians.

In contrast, other women’s institutions, such as Barnard College, have continued to offer contraceptives to its students, despite the recent price hike. According to the Barnard College health center’s website, it has “been able to maintain the low discount price for oral contraceptives and emergency contraception for the immediate future.” The center guarantees full confidentiality to students and will issue prescriptions for discounted birth control directly from the center.

Associate Dean of Students Zeldra Braun emphasized that students should be responsible for their own health needs. “I believe strongly in women’s health education,” she asserted. “Women must be educated about their health issues, but they must take charge and take care of themselves. When a woman makes certain decisions about her health issues, she should responsibly discuss those through with the pertinent parties.”

As another option for students seeking birth control, Dr. Nissel pointed out, “The morning-after pill is now available over-the-counter, as a prescription is no longer needed.”

Curriculum Changes Bring Greater Flexibility, Diversity to Biology Majors

BY MIRIAM MERZEL

At the recent open forum with SCW Dean Karen Bacon, plans were revealed for curriculum changes throughout the college, some of which impact the school’s science departments.

While several adjustments will be implemented in the coming year, the final modifications will become effective in the fall of 2009.

Both science and non-science majors will be affected by changes to the science departments, which are intended to give students more diversity in the courses they can take, more flexibility in scheduling, and more relief from some of the stress of large laboratory classes.

The modifications concerning the science requirements for non-majors will include a revised requirement for current students as well as newly drafted requirements for incoming students. Currently, every student at SCW is required to take a full-year science course with its corresponding laboratory. From now on, as a temporary measure until the final curriculum changes are in place, students who choose to fulfill this requirement by taking the class “Biology Essentials” will only be required to take one semester of lab, as opposed to two. This is part of the shift to the new curriculum where, explained Associate Dean Ethel Orlian, “Students will be required to take a one-semester interdisciplinary science lecture course dealing with an issue which they will explore from many perspectives and a one-semester lecture/lab course in a specific science.”

Biology Department Chair Dr. Harvey Babich provided more detailed information regarding such interdisciplinary science courses. “For the latter, the biology, chemistry/biochemistry, and physics departments are developing suitable 4-credit courses for the non-science majors,” he explained.

The Biology Department has plans to develop classes such as “Biology of Women,” “Protecting

Your Body,” “Genes and You,” “Interface of Technology and Health,” “Understanding the Environment,” “How the Body Works,” “Biodiversity: the Human Impact,” and “C.S.I.—the Biology of Forensics.”

The curriculum changes also impact biology majors at SCW. “The only [changes] currently being implemented relate to making it possible for students to fulfill a distribution requirement with a lecture only course and not just with a lecture/lab course as is currently required, and a modification of the two two-credit course requirement,” stated Dean Bacon.

All biology majors are required to take four four-credit courses and one from each of three different areas of science: Area I (population biology, evolution, and ecology), Area II (molecular and cellular), and Area III (organismal). Until now, students needed to attend a laboratory with the class fulfilling the “area requirement.” With the new curriculum, however, the requirement of four four-credit courses and two two-credit courses will still remain, but the specific area courses can now be fulfilled with lecture-only courses. The changes give students more flexibility in taking lab courses that relate more to their goals and interests.

“It gives the students more options,” commented Chana Kosofsky (SCW ’09). “Most biology majors are going into health fields, and this enables them to concentrate on classes required for those areas.”

Courses with this lecture-only option include “Immunology,” “Ecology,” and “Invertebrate Zoology.” Students can now take Ecology or Invertebrate Zoology as a two-credit lecture course that will fulfill their Area I requirement of a course in the category of Ecology, Evolution, and Population Biology.

“I think these changes are great,” said Daphne Davis (SCW ’09), also a biology major. “Labs take a lot of time and this frees our schedules to take other sciences we are more interested in.”

Ferkauf Program Provides Research Forum for Students

BY NILI SELESKI

On May 15, the Ferkauf Graduate School of Psychology and the Institute of Public Health Sciences will be hosting the fifth annual Yeshiva University Behavioral Science Student Research Conference. While scheduled to be held on the Jack and Pearl Resnick campus of Albert Einstein College of Medicine (AECOM), “Research Day,” as the program is commonly called, is open to all undergraduate and graduate students at the university.

Research Day began when Dr. Sonia Suchday, associate professor of psychology at Ferkauf, advocated for the conference and helped form a university-wide committee to launch the event. Five years ago, the first conference was held with support from YU President Richard M. Joel and funding from Provost Morton Lowengrub’s office.

“This being the fifth Annual

YU Research Day, it is an important event as it is another milestone in the growth of YU as an institution exemplifying the highest academic qualities,” noted Michael Gill, associate Dean and Master’s for Mental Health Counseling Program Director at Ferkauf.

Gill added that the event is critical because it unites the various schools and departments from all of the university’s various campuses.

From noon until 4 p.m., attendees will partake in a two-part program. First, President Joel and his wife, Esther Joel, Ph.D, an alumna of Ferkauf, will greet attendees. The program will continue with addresses from Dr. Lowengrub, who has supported research as a means of improving academic quality, and from the keynote speaker, Dr. Laurie Bauman, professor of pediatrics at AECOM and director of the Preventative Intervention Research Center at AECOM.

Dr. Bauman, one of the

top grant-funded researchers at AECOM, will speak on the topic “The Seduction of Individual Level Models of Behavior.”

Student research will fill the second part of the afternoon; Research Day continues with a poster presentation featuring over sixty different projects. Students and researchers from all over YU will present their research and take the opportunity to discuss their findings with other students, faculty, and attendees of the conference.

According to Gill, poster presentations support the goal of the conference, which has two different objectives. The first is to create a forum where individual students are able to showcase their research, helpful for resume building. The second is to inspire other students throughout the university, whether graduate or undergraduate, as well as other conference attendees, to appreciate the importance of

research in an academic institution.

“I would say that it motivates university students to take pride in their work and to aspire to take their work out to national and international conferences and even to publish their work in journals and professional publications,” continued Gill. “All of this continues to build YU’s reputation as a premier place for higher learning.”

Research Day will provide the second university forum for SCW students to present their research, supplementing the biology

and chemistry poster competition held at the Beren campus towards the beginning of each school year.

Center for Ethics Event, in Conjunction with NYU, Discusses Public Health

BY NILI SELESKI

On the evening of April 30, the Center for Jewish History hosted a lecture by Professor Onora O'Neill titled "Broadening Bioethics: Clinical Ethics, Public Health, and Global Health."

The talk was attended by graduate students of Yeshiva University, a small showing of undergraduate students from Stern College for Women, and several scholars of bioethics from different universities.

YU's Center for Ethics and the New York University Center for Bioethics co-sponsored the event, adding this lecture to the YU Center for Ethics' ongoing efforts to promote ethical discussions within the YU community and beyond. Thought-provoking lectures of this sort are meant for YU faculty, students, and alumni, as well as for others from outside the university and focus on ethical issues that affect a broad range of intellectual studies and professions.

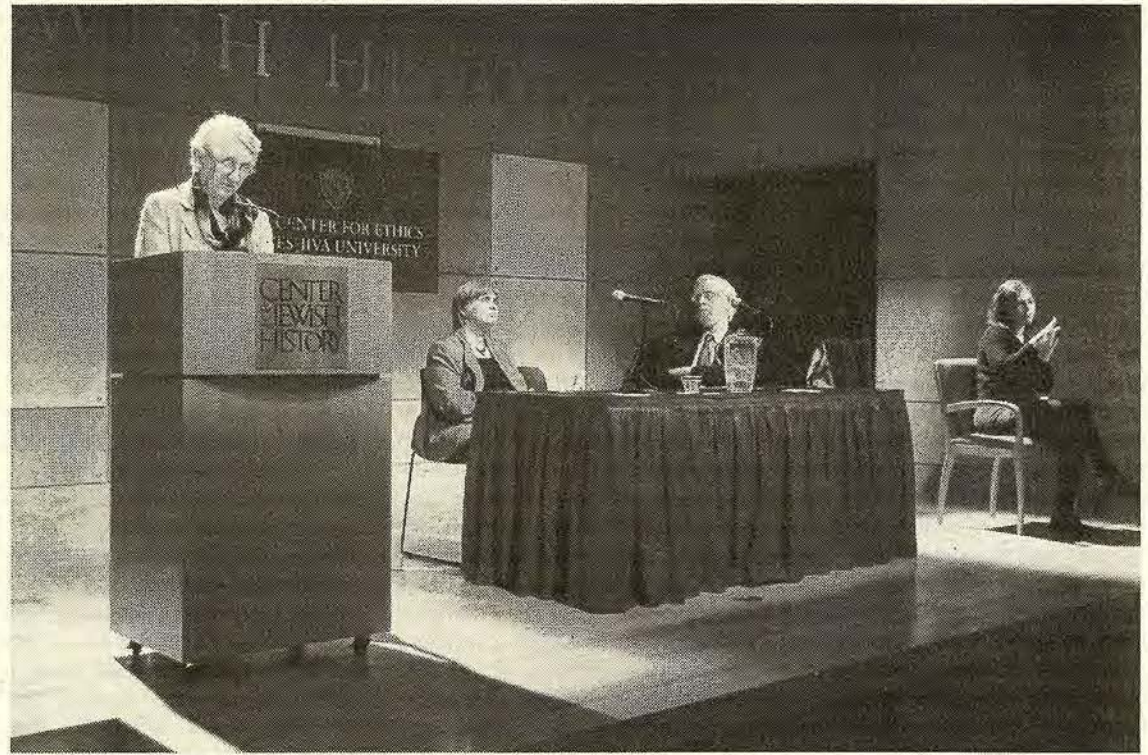
Professor O'Neill is particularly qualified to speak for the Center, as she is the author of multiple papers about global ethics and trust, accountability in public life, and bioethics. She is the president of the British Academy, professor of philo-

sophy at Cambridge University, and a Life Peer in the House of Lords. In addition, she has chaired the Nuffield Council of Bioethics and the Human Genetics Advisory Commission.

Professor O'Neill visited YU as the second Leonard and Tobee Kaplan Scholar-in-Residence of the Center for Ethics at Yeshiva University. Scholars-in-residence are meant to introduce leading ethics scholars to the YU community and allow for the interaction between the scholar and all of those within YU, including students, alumni, and faculty. The scholar is also given the opportunity to meet with those outside of YU in the New York community at large and discuss various ethical issues.

According to John Fousek, Ph.D., program director for the YU Center for Ethics, "Professor O'Neill's lecture provided a unique opportunity for interdisciplinary discussion of the relationship between bioethics and the ethics of public and global health. In keeping with one of the main objectives of our Scholar-in-Residence Program, it engaged members of the YU community, and the broader community, with ideas and arguments with which they would not otherwise be engaged.

The evening's topic was se-



Courtesy of YU Productions

Professor Onora O'Neill delivers lecture at Center for Ethics event

lected for three main reasons. First, both the Center for Ethics's director, Dr. Adrienne Asch, and its director of Research, Dr. David Wasserman, have been especially involved in the area

of bioethics. Additionally, Fousek pointed out that the topic generates significant interest on the undergraduate level as well, "as demonstrated by the vibrancy of the undergradu-

ate Student Medical Ethics Society." Last, the focus on bioethics helped

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Chabad Students Carve Niche at SCW

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Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn, Chabad's flagship community.

Rauch's encounters with Chabad span most of her lifetime, from the *shlichim* (emissaries) at the University of Texas near her home in Austin, who encouraged her to become observant, to her high school years at a Chabad institution in Brooklyn. For a student to move to Crown Heights and choose to attend Stern is "really not such a normal path," she confessed, although there are a sizable number of SCW students and alumni living in the predominantly Lubavitch section of Brooklyn. With a growing number of other Lubavitchers, she has found SCW to be a supportive environment, where most other students "are really cool with me being Lubavitch."

Senior Lea New (SCW '08) noted that the amount of SCW women involved in Chabad has risen drastically in the years that she's been at Stern. "When I entered campus as a sophomore, there were about five or six students with lifelong affiliation to Chabad communities here," reckoned New. "Now there are about twenty. These are students who went to Chabad seminaries and everything."

"I used to be just about the only student who commuted from Crown Heights, and now there are several others," she continued. "On top of that, there are lots of others who are not from big Chabad communities like Crown Heights but who have an affiliation with *shlichim* and with Lubavitch ideas."

The Chabad Club's frequent

activities, including the regular *farbrengens* (spiritual gatherings), shabbatons in Crown Heights, and the weekly Tanya shiur report strong attendance. "I think that the Chabad Club on campus has grown over the years and has brought interesting programming on campus, welcoming all students and offering all types of Chabad experiences to enhance the diversity on campus," Associate Dean of Students Zeldra Braun maintained.

These programs have encouraged students on campus who aren't strongly involved with Chabad—or who aren't affiliated with the movement at all—to participate in its teachings and community. Hilly Krieger (SCW '08), who is not affiliated with Chabad, pointed out that the weekly Tanya shiur is well advertised, and even students who aren't involved in Chabad have definitely heard of its existence.

Myriam Schottenstein (SCW '08), from Columbus, Ohio, has been involved with Chabad for much of her life. At the same time, she doesn't allow her Chabad associations to subsume her identity. "I have Chabad friends here, but really, I'm friends with everyone. Chabad isn't at all the way that I label myself—it's not like I walk around with an 'I'm Chabad' sign on me or anything," she explained. All the same, she appreciates being able to maintain involvement in Chabad through activities on campus.

Another sign of the Chabad Club's impact on campus is the petition it organized to increase the availability of *chalav Yisrael* (kosher-supervised dairy) foods in the cafeterias. "I think that overall they're

pretty accommodating, which is great because we are such a minority," remarked Schottenstein, who participated in the petition, hoping for greater availability of *chalav Yisrael* yogurt.

Lubavitch students observed that their beliefs are challenged on campus only infrequently. Most students interviewed for this article said that in their experience, new people that they meet are either genuinely curious about Lubavitch practices or don't express any opinion. "Most people I meet don't ask me any questions about Chabad," commented New. "If they do, it's because they don't know much about Chabad first-hand, or all they've heard are the David Berger-style polemics. But no one I've encountered has ever said anything hostile."

Schottenstein concurred. "I haven't even encountered David Berger's article. Of people who know that I'm Lubavitch, most don't ask me any questions. If any of them do ask, they're usually just genuinely curious. I once met someone who said something challenging, but in general people either think it's interesting, or say nothing at all."

Lubavitch students haven't described any issues with the content of Judaic studies courses at Stern. "I have really loved Stern so far and my classes have been great," enthused Rauch. "I once attended one shiur that I found very bothersome, where the rabbi was really derisive of Chassidim. But in my classes, everything has been fine so far."

The only subject matter that occasionally prompts heated conversation is messianism. "Sometimes

people ask me, 'you don't think that the Rebbe is *Mashiach* (Messiah), do you?'" related Rauch. "A question like this sometimes reflects being closed-minded about Chabad's teachings and assuming that they run against rational thought, but when I answer people, I always focus more on what we have in common than on what divides us."

The limited exposure between communities also runs in the other direction. Students who maintain one foot on the Beren campus and another in Crown Heights have found that the Chabad world often expresses curiosity about SCW as well.

SCW is an unlikely destination for a young woman within the larger Chabad community. Although many Lubavitch seminaries and institutions have no antipathy toward college and the idea of higher education, many young women raised in established Chabad communities are "self-censoring," according to New. Many are not interested in college, and those who do want a degree are more likely to seek more affordable, faster, and supposedly more right-wing schooling options like Touro College. New attended Seminary Chaya Mushka in Tzfat, Israel during her freshman year and found that the administration never said anything negative about SCW, but that she was only one of three students who chose to continue on to the college after seminary.

Rabbi Alter Metzger, a former *gabbai* (assistant) of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and a professor at SCW, finds the school to be a positive environment for many Chabad students. "Lubavitch people tend to come

from very diverse backgrounds, and there are definitely some Chabad students for whom Stern is the best place for them to be, although it depends on the person," he remarked.

Regarding attending SCW, New has found that her Crown Heights neighbors "don't look down on it, but they're usually pretty surprised."

"I definitely get defined as a 'college-goer,' a serious student, who actually cares about learning," she articulated. "It's kind of uncommon, but not viewed as anything bad per se."

Rauch echoed New's sentiments. "I don't think that my two worlds are antagonistic to one another. Except that there's maybe a social distrust in Crown Heights of the Modern Orthodox lifestyle at Stern. People, maybe, are not trustworthy of a modern lifestyle, like activities between genders or too much focus on secular studies. But I think that this issue is cultural as opposed to religious. My rabbis and religious views find no conflict between *Chassidus* and being at Stern, and I would add that I think that my standards are consistent with Lubavitch, for the most part."

According to Rauch, the one thing that Stern lacks is the close-knit warmth of a campus Chabad House. "I realize that we're a *frum* (religious) school so it's not like we need one in the way that other colleges do," she said. "But I grew up around a campus Chabad House, and I wish that there was some way to offer that experience here at Stern."

FASHION & STYLE

En Vogue Inspiration: Where do you get your dose?

BY CHANA FILLER

Inspiration is garnered from a plethora of sources, as well as an assortment of diverse experiences; the most profound of which come from within. A stimulating encounter evokes an inner sense of motivation, an impetus which ought to induce us to ask ourselves how that encounter makes us feel. What does it force us to think about? How will we react and contend with it? What have we done or accomplished thus far in that realm? What challenges have we faced? Once we have assessed our passions, preferences, capabilities, strengths, talents, triumphs and failures, our newfound insight and appreciation is absorbed within our individual personas.

When it comes to our personal style, whether consciously or not, we all go through this process. We are inspired by art, music, nature, dance, literature, philosophy,

and the list goes on, ad infinitum. We then integrate those ideas and ideals, which specifically speak to us, into our own sartorial personas. We dare to try something new on for size and then gauge our gut reactions.

We have all experienced our share of fashion sensations and fiascos, the notable OMG moments which compel us to exclaim, "OMG—that dress was tailor made for me!" or contrarily, "OMG! That is so not flattering, what was I thinking?!" We assess these moments, and from each occasion we edit that sartorial persona. Sometimes those incidents elicit vows never to be caught dead in a certain outfit again, while others induce shopping sprees of vast proportions to overhaul our wardrobes.

In each case we are reacting to an emotion, as we consider how that garment affected us in our attempts at self-expression and improvement. Did we feel attractive or just plain ugly? Glamorous or

dowdy? Sophisticated or unkempt? Classic or trendy? In answering these questions we try to remain true to ourselves, and in a certain sense it seems we literally wear our hearts on our sleeves. In some way we strive to convey our values, assets, affinities, aversions, and various other qualities with our taste in clothes.

It may seem outlandish to assert that what we wear really speaks that much about our interests. Yet, whether it is intentional or not, we are all somewhat engaged in this process. Our thoughts, opinions, and feelings inspire the creation of our individual characters, and while it may prove more overt in some than in others, we all convey our individuality with our mode of dress.

So the challenge that remains is to find, and avail ourselves of our personal wells of inspiration. Remain in tune to your personal and distinct feelings and celebrate them with a worthy wardrobe.

Fashion on the Far Side

BY EFRAT OKRENT

After spending ten fast paced days in Tokyo, Japan, I realized my trip would not be complete without a visit to the famous Harajuku Street. The surprisingly tiny thoroughfare in the center of the fashion district of Tokyo is rapidly becoming the next major Fashion Capital of the world.

Harajuku is renowned worldwide for its young, urban style and eccentric fashion. Harajuku originated when a group of aberrant youth gathered in the street which had been closed off by authorities. It was there that they created their own outlandish style, and the phenomenon took off.

In the cluttered, yet quaint alleyways of Harajuku Street, the women and men (but mainly women) reveal the latest fashion extremes as they dress up as characters from an anime, or movie. At times, as I walked down the street, it felt as if I was in the midst of a film set, and the outfits worn by the platinum blond youth seemed to be conceived by professional costume designers. A few women even sported the Little Bo Peep look, replete with knee highs, bonnets, cane and all. Many groups such as Gothic Lolita, Gyaru and Kogal, comprise the sub-culture who loiter there.

Another element incorporated by the Harajuku devotees was intentional mismatching of bold electric colors. For instance, if someone is wearing a bright pink t-shirt, they may choose to sport neon green and yellow striped knee highs and plastic jewelry to complete the look. Yet every outfit seemed to have a common denominator among the chaos to bring it all together.

A third style that was popu-

lar among the fashion-forward Harajuku crowd was layering. One individual might be caught wearing at least four tops! These daring Japanese women were dressed in

der to achieve a complex look without appearing awkward or just plain messy. For example, those that copiously layered their tops, made sure to keep it simple on the bottom, usually



Courtesy of Efrat Okrent

shirts, hoodies, vests, and jackets (in that order) in a concerted effort to express their individual style.

The final touches adorning the ensembles were the perfect array of accessories. Vests, belts, hats, and scarves were worn, rain or shine. After viewing the astounding amalgam of styles created by each passerby, it became evident to me that the Japanese aesthetic truly takes into account the concept of balance. Balancing is extremely important to master in or-

wearing short shorts, or fitted jeans.

Since Harajuku Street is the up-and-coming fashion capital of the world, look to these women to inspire some sartorial spice! However, you may want to tone it down a bit and replicate the trends with more muted, wearable versions. So the next time you're enjoying your sushi and planning what to wear the next day, think of your friends in Japan, and you are sure to be a hit!

Industry Insider: SCW Student Studies at New York's Fashion Library



BY JUDY LEFKOWITZ

This past summer I had an extremely rewarding experience while working at Albright Fashion Library, a high-end designer showroom catering to top stylists who work on magazine spreads, advertising campaigns, editorials, books and more. The showroom staffers are the stylists, assisting them with the varied looks and pieces needed to complete their jobs.

Albright Fashion Library was founded four years ago by stylist Irene Albright and today is a 7,000 square foot showroom replete with the latest designer duds in the heart of downtown Manhattan. The showroom features established designers like Dolce and Lanvin, as well as up-and-coming designers like Rachel Roy and Olga Kapustina. The inventory also includes remarkable vintage pieces alongside the latest styles straight off the runways.

On my first day I jumped right in and got down to business. I learned from the bottom up, quite literally. I spent the entire day in the shoe department, rearranging and editing

the stock of heels, wedges, sandals and flats. Editing the showroom is something that is done often because there are always new pieces coming in and outdated pieces to be removed. I gained a sense of the assortment of shoes the stylists would be most likely to make use of and disposed of the rest. After getting to know the footwear and apparel a bit better, I began assisting the stylist in the shipping and receiving departments.

I was also involved in the buying process at Albright. Every so often, the stylists would take shopping trips to high-end stores and purchase new pieces to update the showroom. Hundreds of thousands of dollars of clothing is purchased during these excursions, but not all of these pieces are kept in the showroom. The stylists have to go through each item very carefully to decide whether it will be rented out as much as is necessary to cover its cost.

Working at a place like Albright definitely has its perks. The employees often take home free designer apparel from the showroom. Additionally, the employees are permitted to borrow the clothing whenever they want. I gladly made use of these great policies over the summer.

My colleagues at Albright were extremely warm and welcoming. They took me in and taught me everything they knew. I learned that styling is an essential element in the fashion industry. It is almost as important as the designers themselves. The stylists are the creative minds who match up the diverse pieces to create signature looks. Without their efforts, the clothes would be plain old tops and bottoms, just pieces without panache. Coordinating the elements in a way that highlights each aspect without overdoing it requires skill and experience, since styling is truly a form of art and self-expression.

Center for Ethics Event

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realize the center's goal of developing and strengthening its relationship with programs at other universities.

The lecture emphasized the idea that issues of ethics can

be interdisciplinary, cutting across the boundaries of different academic disciplines, professions, and education levels. O'Neill also emphasized the importance of engaging others in such discussions.



The following men have failed, to date, to deliver a document of Jewish divorce to their wives:

Joseph Aday – Anaheim, CA
Jacob Binson – Montreal, Canada
Yossi Davis – Brooklyn, NY
Yona Gelernter – Crown Heights, NY
Martin Geller – Brooklyn, NY
Zisha Grossman – Brooklyn, NY
Ariel Hacoheh – Queens, NY
Meir Kin – Los Angeles, CA
Efim Kolominsky – Cleveland, OH
Leroy Krantz – Brooklyn, NY
Gal Levenstein – Brooklyn, NY
Menachem Lowy – Passaic, NJ
Sandy Milgraum – Highland Park, NJ
Efraim Ohana – Baltimore, MD
Samuel Rosenbloom – Baltimore, MD
Danny Zadok – Tarzana, CA

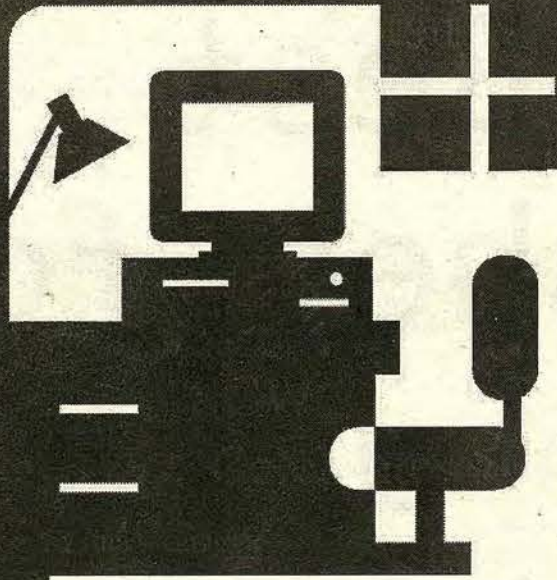
Documents of their recalcitrance from recognized Jewish courts are available upon request.

An agunah (the plural of which is agunot) is a woman who is no longer in a functional marriage and whose husband cannot or will not give her a Jewish divorce (in Hebrew: get). Leading psychologists have stated that the withholding of a get is a form of domestic abuse.

The Jewish community is encouraged to provide support to agunot and persuade these men to appear and comply with a recognized Jewish court to adjudicate outstanding issues of divorce.

Best
 Wishes for
 an
 Enjoyable
 and
 Relaxing
 Summer!

THE OBSERVER WOULD LIKE
 TO WISH THE WOMEN OF
 THE BEREN CAMPUS
 BEST OF LUCK ON
 FINAL EXAMS!



On Behalf of the Entire
Yeshiva University
Beren Campus
Office of Student Affairs

Good Luck on Finals!

Have a Great Summer!

