



The Yeshiva University

OBSERVER

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CJF Dean Dons New Hats

By Sophie Felder

Rabbi Kenneth Brander spoke to The Observer to answer our questions about the CJF, debunk a few myths, and talk about the future. Stemming from a desire to “take admissions to the next level,” President Richard Joel asked Rabbi Brander to assume the position of Special Assistant to the President for undergraduate admissions. In a letter to the deans, President Joel put forward his desire to place Rabbi Brander in this role, stating “With the forthcoming aliyah of Vice President Hillel Davis and John Fisher’s retirement in June, I’ve asked Dean Brander to accept a 2- year assignment as special assistant to the President for undergraduate admissions, taking responsibility for the admissions process. In this position, he will work closely with Moish Kranzler, our extraordinary Director of Admissions, and his team.” This role will be coupled with Brander’s existing role at the helm of the CJF, as well as a new role at the head of student programming. As leader of these three departments, Rabbi Brander hopes to combine their respective strengths in a manner that will allow each department to benefit from the others, whilst also ensuring that the departments

maintain their individual identity, and remain “mission driven,” a job he is leaving to the directors of each department.

Brander stresses that this new move does not mean the Office of Admissions or the Office of Student Life will now report to the CJF; Rabbi Brander’s role as the dean of the CJF as well as of these two offices will not drastically change the relationship between these departments of YU, but will merely allow for a more symbiotic relationship.

The decision to become head of Student Life programming was not one that Rabbi Brander made lightly, but after two months of thinking about it, Brander realized that the CJF could offer Student Life an expertise in programming that would benefit YU’s student body. He will receive direct reports from Marc Spear, formerly leadership- training director for the CJF, who is now directing the Office of Student Life on both the Beren and Wilf campuses.

The Shabbaton for Student Leaders—taking place August 26-27—is an example of the way that the CJF’s experience in leadership training has benefited the running of the Student Life offices.

Although the CJF has a lot of expertise in certain areas, Brander



Rabbi Kenneth Brander; Credit: YU

is adamant that the interaction between the CJF and Student Life will be modeled after a “ground up” approach. He says, “Our goal is to listen to student leaders and be a service to them...give them a platform and empower them.”

Shabbat on the YC campus was specifically identified as an area wherein the CJF programming know-how could play a vital role in helping out student programming. With the help of Rabbis Penner and Reiss from RIETS and Rabbi Dovid Miller, the new Masgiach Ruchani at Yeshiva, Rabbi Brander is hoping to create a culture where Shabbat programming is developed

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Revamped YU Website Unveiled to (Generally) Positive Reviews

By Ilana Brandt

The Office of Information Technology Services was particularly bustling this summer as they prepared and launched the new YU website on August 15. The new website is an innovative advancement for the entire YU community. The website’s redesign highlights YU’s ongoing desire to remain at the forefront of technological advancements, recognizing the importance of technology in the world that we live in today.

Acknowledging the many ways that technology can be utilized to enhance communication channels and just make life easier, YU is also on Facebook, Twitter and Youtube. All official YU social networking pages can be easily accessed directly through the new website. Although one might expect that seeing YU on Facebook would have the effect of producing the same uncomfortable grimace that occurs after a parent comments on a picture from one’s high school graduation, it is actually more like receiving a care package in the middle of finals: unnecessary but comforting nonetheless.

When first logging onto the new website, one is instantly struck by the site’s sleek and modern design. The white background provides a clean backdrop for the helpful links and pictures on display. The updated photos present the university in a current light, whilst allowing visitors to the website a clear idea of the image that the University wishes to promote. Pictures of men in the *beit midrash* *shteiging* like professionals, along with the informative Stern College Campus Tour Youtube series, are immediately visible to site visitors. The Campus Tour is both educational and entertaining for students new and old. It is the perfect medium for alumni to reminisce, and for perspective students to become captivated in all that Stern College has to offer.

The creators of the website may have viewed the picture of the *Roshei Yeshiva* dancing outside of the new *beit midrash* as the cherry on the top of the digital cake, serving as a reminder of our Jewish identity, Jewish pride, and national love: Torah and dancing, and highlighting the notion that YU is the perfect dichotomy of

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Syms Celebrates 25 Years; New Leadership Carries SSB a Step Ahead

By Marganit Rauch

Momentous changes to the Syms School of Business (SSB) this year include an increased overlap between SSB and departments in YC and SCW, a new leadership team, and, yes, the shortening of its name. These changes are part of the streamlining overhaul of YU’s undergraduate schools, a plan announced to the student body in May.

Positive changes have been made to the leadership team of YU’s business school, with the appointment of a new director, Dr. Moses Pava, along with two new associate directors, Professor Michael Strauss, and Dr. Avi Giloni. All three have been with the school for a number of years,

in various positions, and all bring with them impeccable business resumes that highlight their



Dr. Moses Pava; Credit: YU

expertise and knowledge in their fields. Giloni has been appointed Associate Director for Academic Research, and Strauss will be Associate Director of Student Advising and Administration.

This leadership team will be working with the other undergraduate units of YU, in consonance with the vision expressed by President Richard Joel in his email announcement to the student body—creating a “unified undergraduate faculty.”

The new leadership at SSB is looking to ensure that the school will grow and prosper, and so is continuing to pursue the school’s accreditation process with the Association to Advance Collegiate

Schools of Business. They will also seek to strengthen academic offerings and take advantage of related disciplines in SCW and YC, such as mathematics and economics.

“The business world is changing at a dramatic pace,” noted Pava, “and we want our students and graduates to take charge of their

careers from the first day they step foot on our campus.” With this in mind Pava hopes that students will take advantage of the high-level classes offered, as well as the Career Development Center, which can help make sure that Syms students are well prepared for jobs in the business

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THE OBSERVER

Welcome to the Stern Community

Renee Kestenbaum, Editor-in-Chief

Dark and still, a Friday night.

In my host's home, the husband's tuneful "Shalom Aleichem" fills, in a lonely and yet cheering way, the space carved open by silence. For most in the midwestern college town I adopted for seven weeks this summer, Friday night plans end in tipsy staggering down Main Street, perhaps belting out a few toneless chords. The inebriated nightlife is raucous, but walk just a few blocks north and you find deserted homes and dimmed lights, the streets dark and still. Here, I spent *Shabbat* with the city's two—two—*Shomer Shabbat* families.

The town boasts a moderately-sized Reform-Conservative temple, though I learned that many of its members are not *halakhically* Jewish; of all the couples, the vast majority are intermarried. Having been raised in a large Modern Orthodox community, it was shocking to encounter a place so isolated. With only two fully observant families, the infrastructure they need has not yet been established.

No synagogue, which means no community hub and no Orthodox *minyanim* except those arranged for special occasions: holidays, *yahrzeits*, a *brit milah*. No school or *mikvah* [ritual bath]. No JCC. No kosher meat or dairy, and certainly nowhere to eat out.

Aside from capturing the deteriorating landscape of today's American Jewry, spending time in the Midwest actually nuanced my thoughts on community.

The community, such as it is, in that midwestern town depends heavily on each Jewish individual to

innovate. One organizes kosher meat orders from a larger city, while another teaches in the Hebrew school. This one offers his backyard pool as a *mikvah* for the men, while another offers his home as a *shul* of sorts, a place where a handful pray together *b'yachidut* [alone, ie without a *minyan*].

Additionally, in this micro-community, the personal qualities and strengths of every individual are considered, appreciated, and crucial. Out there, there is no such thing as avoiding eye contact with another Jew in the elevator, or only sitting with one crowd at dinner.

And so we arrive at Stern. Stern College for Women offers many of a Jewish community's innumerable conveniences and significant advantages, those that are sorely lacking in that town out west.

Community here is in such abundance, I believe, that we take it for granted. The apathy, in turn, dulls our sensitivities for our community's individuals. If they are outside our circle, we take them for granted as well.

This year, in addition to providing in-depth and intriguing coverage of news and events around school, in the local area, and in the Jewish world, we at The Observer are going to reveal the individuals in our community.

We are going to ask for your opinions on surveys and in op-eds. We are going to ask about your experiences; we are introducing a column dedicated to collecting and showcasing student stories.

Best of luck with the new school year. Hope to hear from you soon.

Keeping You Informed

By Sophie Felder

Towards the end of the 2010-2011 school year, students at the YU undergraduate campuses were made aware of a number of changes that would be occurring within the administration and infrastructure of the University. As every good college experience should be one where a student's vocabulary can be expanded, students were particularly grateful for the new word (or, blanket-term) that came along with these changes—"re-imagining."

Even though this addition to their vernacular was excellent, many of the students felt that the information presented to them was vague, to say the least, and

so we at The Observer have made it our job to clarify exactly what this "re-imagining" will entail. The Observer will also be making a concentrated effort throughout the year to keep the student body abreast of any new changes.

In our first issue, we address the changes to the Syms School of Business (not a typo, read all about what happened to Sy) as well as the new roles that Rabbi Brander has assumed in addition to his leadership of the CJF; namely his positions as Special Assistant to the President for undergraduate admissions, and head of the programming aspects of Student Life. Rabbi Brander spoke with The Observer

to discuss these roles as well as the changes and improvements he hopes to implement within these three branches of the YU undergrad administration.

We will also be utilizing our website to keep you up-to-date between print editions.

Keep reading The Observer for comprehensive articles covering the changes within your university. We are looking forward to imparting President Joel's perspective on these changes. Feel free to contact The Observer throughout the year with any questions or issues you think should be addressed.

The Yeshiva University

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NEWS

Bike Share Program to Begin in New York

By Rachel Benaim

A new bike share program by the Bloomberg administration would make bicycles readily available for rent to the New York City public, if it ever gets off the ground. Already a success in other cities world-wide, such as London, Paris, and Washington D.C., bike sharing would install a network of public-use bicycle stations where bikes can be rented for a relatively low cost.

According to NYC's official bike share business plan, such programs are defined by their low costs, the high concentration of their bike stations over the program area, and their easy, 24-hour operations. With the stations placed at multiple locations across the city, one is sure to find a convenient pick-up and drop-off point no matter their starting point or destination.

The NYC council has established a relatively easy procedure for enlisting in this program; anyone can sign up for daily, weekly or annual memberships, which can be purchased online or at any bike-station. Once in possession of a membership card, users merely have to swipe the card or enter their pin number at any bike station, after which they are free to select a bicycle and ride off into the proverbial sunset. Returning a bicycle is just as simple. The user finds a bike station near their destination and rolls the bicycle into an open docking station, which will electronically register the bike's return.

A trial for the bike share

program was scheduled to begin in lower Manhattan this month. However, the city has yet to choose a vendor to operate the program, inviting speculation that the program's launch will be pushed back several months.

For college students, a bike-share program would allow for a cheaper, healthier option of getting around NYC. Many students dislike walking in the City, finding the congestion unbearable, influencing their more expensive choices of transportation: taxis, or even, in comparison to bikes, subways. Cycling in Manhattan has not always been feasible, as this used to require students owning a bike, or renting long-term, storing their bikes in the dorms, and finding a place to park at their destination.

With this new program, however, a student does not have to worry about such logistics, thus making cycling both a cheap and fun way to see and travel around New York. Not to mention circumventing traffic both of the pedestrian and car variety.

A bike share program is not only a more economical way of travelling than the subway or a taxi, it is also a healthier way. As the upper classmen know, the "freshmen 15" is no myth—and it doesn't end with freshmen year! A conscious effort must be made to maintain a healthy lifestyle, especially in the competitive, rigorous, and sleep-deprived environment that makes up our college years. By choosing to participate in the bike share

program as opposed to "subway-ing it" all across the east side, women between the ages of 18-25 could burn an approximated additional 315 calories. According to lead dieticians, cycling is one of the best cardio activities; and one that can relieve stress, and even increase general happiness.

If all the above isn't enough of an incentive, environmentally conscious people should feel inspired by the fact that biking has little impact on the environment. By using bikes in place of other modes of transportation in a city so filled with pollution, any individual can make a contribution to cutting down environmental contamination in the City.

Even the participation of a small percentage of New Yorkers in this bike share program could significantly decrease the NY carbon footprint.

New York will certainly benefit from this new program, however the question remains whether the trial will exceed the Bloomberg Administration's expectations.

There are many concrete concerns being raised by the New York community as a whole. For example, will there now be a congestion of lawless cyclists in the City? There has already been a significant increase in cyclist related motor vehicle accidents—will the existence of a bike share program increase that statistic even more? Another issue is the minimal bike lane space in the already congested NYC streets and avenues. How



Bicycling: a faster way around NYC. Credit: Ed Yourdon/Creative Commons

will the influx of more cyclists be compensated on the roads? Perhaps because it will mean fewer motor vehicles; however, the bike share program seems to appeal more to pedestrians and subway-frequenters so decreased car traffic seems unlikely.

However, the most crippling concern being raised at the moment is in regards to the city's precious sidewalk space. Will the kiosks swamp the already limited sidewalk space? Although it has not yet been confirmed exactly how much space the bike share kiosks will occupy, New Yorkers are already beside themselves at the prospect of giving up any of their treasured sidewalk. We on 34th street are quite lucky seeing as how the

sidewalk is vast enough to allow for being serenaded by a group of fundraising males without disrupting the flow of traffic. However, in other neighborhood like, for instance, The Village, there is literally already no room to move through the street's cramped hustle and bustle—an addition of any immovable object would be nearly impossible to manage.

Regardless of some skeptical questions raised by New Yorkers, this reporter will definitely be taking advantage of this new program, and she hopes to see all her fellow students doing the same!

Website, continued from front page

Torah U'Mada—solely found, as the new website slogan proclaims, "nowhere but here."

Yet not everyone is equally pleased with the new website. Some feel that the photos on the homepage do not give off the most favourable impression of YU. "Am I the only one who is uncomfortable with the fact that when one accesses our university's homepage the first thing one sees is a picture of bearded men dancing," comments an anonymous SCW student. "Nothing is wrong with it per se, it is just not necessarily the association I want a potential employer to have with my degree."

The people behind this new website have clearly taken into consideration the individual needs of YU students. Just as each student has unique interests, so too do they each look for different things from the YU website. With this in mind the website has the excitingly innovative "My Links" section, where students can choose the links that they want on their personalized yu.edu homepage. So far, the most popular bookmarks for students are Stern College, myyu, Housing-Men, Student Gmail, Student Finance, Athletics, Registrar, and Angel.

The crafty web designers in the Office of Information Technology

Services have also adjusted the site's general search bar thus making it more user-friendly and streamlined. They have also made it easier to find certain pages, such as the Stern webpage; which is now simply an option in the "Quicklinks" section in the middle of the homepage, as opposed to the rather more hassle-filled search that students had to undertake before. And have we mentioned that one no longer has to worry about the temperamental drop down menu? A definite plus, if you ask me. Morris Isaacson of The Office of Information Technology Services sums it up as the "new website revolution," which, despite a

couple of glitches, "is a step in the right direction."

Some students are having trouble navigating the new site. An incoming senior, Leora Stroh, reminisced about the more familiar version of the old website, "I haven't found it that simple to find what I need on this new website, like the Angel link, so I find myself having to Google that a lot." Certainly at the time of writing this article the website appeared to be experiencing technical difficulties and would not allow this writer even a glimpse of the homepage. Yet it cannot be denied that the new website is much sleeker than the previous version. For all those

Compu-Sci majors asking for specifics, they removed the slew of old, incorrect, or redundant pages that were previously clogging up the website. The full website is in fact down to about 12,000 pages from the 65,000 they had before.

A university's website offers the unique opportunity of allowing visitors to the homepage a visual depiction of what the university stands for. This new website is no exception, and is a key instrument in promoting Yeshiva University's image to the world. It is an orthodox institution with modern students and traditional values, all displayed on the Internet for the world to see and marvel.

B'vakasha lishlo'ach michtavim v'kvetchim l'cheef ha'iton

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NEWS

Brander, continued from front page

by students, Roshei Yeshiva, faculty and staff, and Shabbat programming that will offer alternatives to the traditional frontal presentations. Rabbi Brander reiterated that these changes will not be imposed; rather Rabbi Brander envisions a co-operative relationship, one that will create a voice for YC students and involving them in conversation. He also reiterated that some of these changes will take place over time, with a focus on serving the students and at the same time being fiscally responsible.

The importance of the student voice was a recurring theme in our discussion. Rabbi Brander mentioned a few ideas that he hopes will engage students and administration alike in conversation. He is launching the email service answers@yu.edu, a service that will make it much more straightforward for students with questions or concerns to contact the relevant people. Says Rabbi Brander "We are a small university campus with tremendous opportunities, including the benefit of a small university feeling. When students meet up with bureaucracy, they should have a channel with which to communicate... students need to know that they are going to be heard. Whether it be help in finding answers to a personal issue (finding a chavrusa, a problem with an administrative office), a general concern on campus, or the proper place to propose a new idea, answers@yu.edu will provide the who, what, where and when through its relationships with key YU personnel and access to comprehensive information."

Rabbi Brander also commented on his personal desire to communicate with student leaders and create an open relationship, based on conversation and mutual opportunities for learning from each other. He mentioned conducting a monthly conversation with student leaders, modeled after the phone conferences he holds with over 90 Jewish leaders from around the country every six weeks to discuss various issues communities are facing. These conversations provide a time for assessment and a discussion of future growth, "What can we be doing better, what's going well, what needs to improve and what can we learn from each other."

Regarding the relationship between the CJF and the Office of Admissions, Rabbi Brander focused on the ways in which the

relationships and connections the CJF has with communities around the globe can be utilized to attract, and connect to, students. He referred to the rabbis that have been placed in synagogues, schools, kollelim, the Institute's give back fellows, and alumni across the country who serve as role models to young people, stating, "We should be leveraging the fact that we have connections all over the country. Communities connect with YU because they are interested in our ideology. How do communities expect to grow as YU communities if we don't generate enough graduates to help add the YU color(s) to the community tapestry?" Rabbi Brander hopes to encourage those placed in communities by YU, to help with increasing admissions.

Rabbi Brander seemed proud to comment that in terms of CJF finances, "CJF is 75 percent endowment and grant driven and 25 percent fundraising," which should lay to rest any rumors of student's tuition dollars being used to fund CJF projects.

He made note of recent contributions garnered after the Championsgate Conference (a YU/CJF-run conference for community leaders), commenting on the fact that attendees at the conference were excited to contribute to YU and the CJF upon recognizing the value of the former's undergraduate experience and the latter's services to the community.

Brander added that the CJF has had to downsize for financial reasons and therefore reduced positions. Regarding admissions he did make some staff changes, including hiring two new recruiting positions. Rabbi Brander also touched upon the cuts made at the Office of Student Life—which has taken serious hits, with many retired personnel not being replaced. All three departments have had to make reductions to be fiscally responsible, but Rabbi Brander believes that the services that will be offered will be "targeted and first rate."

Rabbi Brander put these changes in the context of the "re-imagining" as mentioned by the Vice Provost Lawrence Schiffman. Rabbi Brander discussed his plan to hold bi-monthly conversations with senior administration officials as well in order to continue the theme of all levels of the administration learning from each other. Rabbi Brander added that these relationships can only be maintained if lines

Survey Says ...

Of the 168 respondents to the survey, 49.4% are women and 44% men. 39.3% are entering their third year on campus, followed by 25.6% entering their second year, fifth-year students (15.5%), seniors (11.9%), and First Time On Campus students (7.7%). 59.9% are not in the Honors Program.

12.5% of respondents are Syms students.

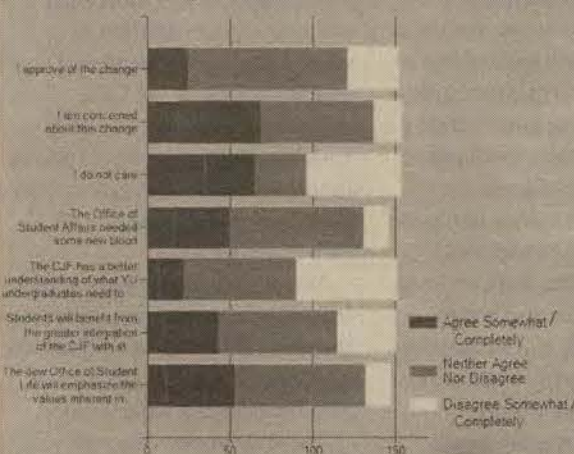
The Office of Student Life

Are you aware that the Office of Student Affairs has been replaced with the Office of Student Life, which reports to Rabbi Brander?

Yes: 52.4%

No: 47.6%

To what degree do the following statements reflect your thoughts?



Most respondents answered neutrally when speculating about the Office of Student Life. As one student put it, "I have absolutely no intel as to the specifics of this change, and as a result can make no value judgements."

Other responses:

"Many events that the Office of Student Affairs ran have nothing to do with the CJF mission... Will the CJF's mission mean that these societies and programming will be neglected?"

"To be honest, I am unaware of what this change means. It sounds to me like they just changed their name and I don't know either party."

"I am somewhat concerned that the new management will focus too much on ensuring the 'Jewish future' through coed events (i.e. opportunities for singles to meet) at the expense of the intellectual and spiritual needs of the students, as well as the (often- ignored) necessity of catering to those students who are interested in maximizing the single- sex environment they are paying for."

"One major concern of mine is the geography issues. Stern and YC are on opposite ends of Manhattan. How will the change affect Stern, particularly when Rabbi Brander's offices are on the Wilf Campus?"

of communication remain open and consistent. He repeated his earnest desire to speak to students, and more importantly to learn from them.

Speaking with Rabbi Brander left me with a heartening

experience. He is a modest individual who appreciates the work of those who came before him, and is eager to learn from those around him. What remains to be seen is if these conversations can also lead to

productive action. To this Rabbi Brander would respond, "It takes time to see the changes," but students should expect to see a difference in all three of these departments.

"I worry that the needs of the students will not be properly addressed when the one to whom the Office reports has his mind on so many other things... An organization which dedicates so much time elsewhere is the wrong party to deal with the students' campus life and issues. Joint programs would certainly be beneficial to all, however a separate office which reports to the Deans is a better option."

Syms Merge

Are you aware that Syms School of Business is streamlining and merging its departments with SCW and YC?

Yes: 91.6%

No: 8.4%

Respondents were again offered statements to agree or disagree with.

Is the merge a good idea? Opinion is split. 38.7% agree completely or somewhat agree, followed by 31.9% who gave a neutral response and 23.1% disagree completely or somewhat disagree.

A 66.9% majority of SCW and YC students agree, completely or somewhat, that the change to the business school did not affect them.

9.3% of respondents are concerned about fulfilling their degree requirements.

"Will this lower the YU undergraduate schools' reputation vis-à-vis acceptance requirements (high school GPA, SAT scores, etc)? Will our college education be viewed as less prestigious?"

"While I think it is excellent that students can now take electives or minor in a subject offered by the other college, I hope it is not at the detriment of the Syms students. I also would like to know how much money will or will not be saved by this switch."

"The change just makes sense for everyone in YU."

How were you made aware of the changes to Student Life and Syms?

President Joel's email announcement: 37.6%

A professor or other faculty member: 4.8%

A Friend: 31.5%

I was not aware until I took this survey: 17.6%

Other responses: Town Hall Meeting, Word of Mouth

Do you think the extent of President Joel's vision to reimagine the university was communicated well to students?

Yes: 22%

No: 67.9%

"There should have been a Town Hall meeting before everybody freaked out about Sy Syms."

"I think he communicated it well, but needs to bring more concrete examples and show his plans."

NEWS

Syms, continued from front page

world. Pava also hopes to instill the spirit of entrepreneurship in students at Syms, with an increased commitment to "experience based learning."

In a letter posted on the YU blog, Pava declares his desire that the streamlining of the school's name, downsized from the mouthful Sy Syms School of Business, "reflect[s]... an enhanced focus on strengthening relationships among administration, staff, faculty, students, alumni and others."

As Syms celebrates its 25th anniversary, the leadership is

keen to prove that students have much to look forward to. Amongst other new programs being introduced next year, there will be a lecture series entitled "Leading with Meaning: the Spirit of Jewish Enterprise." This series will incorporate roundtable discussions with Jewish business leaders and academics. "I view the new Syms School of Business as a learning community," commented Pava, "devoted to nurturing great Jewish business leaders. Our focus during the upcoming year is on teaching values-based leadership."

Some students felt dissatisfied with the way the news of these changes was relayed to them, feeling as though the administration had left students out of the loop. "I don't feel like we've really been given any honest answers," commented one disgruntled Syms student who wishes to remain anonymous, "I wish they would just give us some straight up information about what's going on."

Over the summer more such information in fact became available for students at SSB with regard to the reshaping

of their school, in particular regarding changes within the administration, though specific details about new course offerings and requirements for the '12-'13 academic year have yet to emerge.

In order to guarantee open communication between the students and the administration, Pava will be holding Town Hall meetings on both campuses, where students will be able to have their questions answered.

Syms students can also look forward to an exciting year of events and activities under its new student leadership. "Our

priority for the coming year is to create an increased level of school pride," comments Tziona Rosenzweig, Treasurer for the SSB Student Council '11-'12. "We will be working together with the administration to make this academic year the best yet."

With both the student and staff leadership eager to make any improvements necessary to ensure that SSB remains a step ahead, it looks as though the student body will certainly have reason to be proud of their school.

FEATURES

Student Accounts

We bring you this column in the spirit of highlighting the individuals who make up Beren Campus, allowing new voices to be heard, and developing appreciation for and interest in all those students we see only in the library, the cafeteria, or the shuttle. Each month, we will call upon SCW students and their professors to briefly share their stories, opinions, and experiences surrounding a given topic. It is our goal to feature a spectrum of voices and deepen our understanding of the Stern College community.

Next month is the tenth anniversary of the September 11 attacks. That day has been memorialized as a defining moment of the 21st Century, especially here in New York. What do you remember from that day? What will you be thinking about on the anniversary?

TOVA LAHASKY SCW '13

"On a clear day you can see them standing strong side by side," my mother told me while driving down the Belt Parkway one spring day. I was seven years old. Since then, I always hoped for the sky to be clear whenever we took the Belt to my grandparents' house.

My mother used to take me and my brother canoeing in Bayswater. "There they are, Ma!"

"What?"

"The Twins! There they are!"

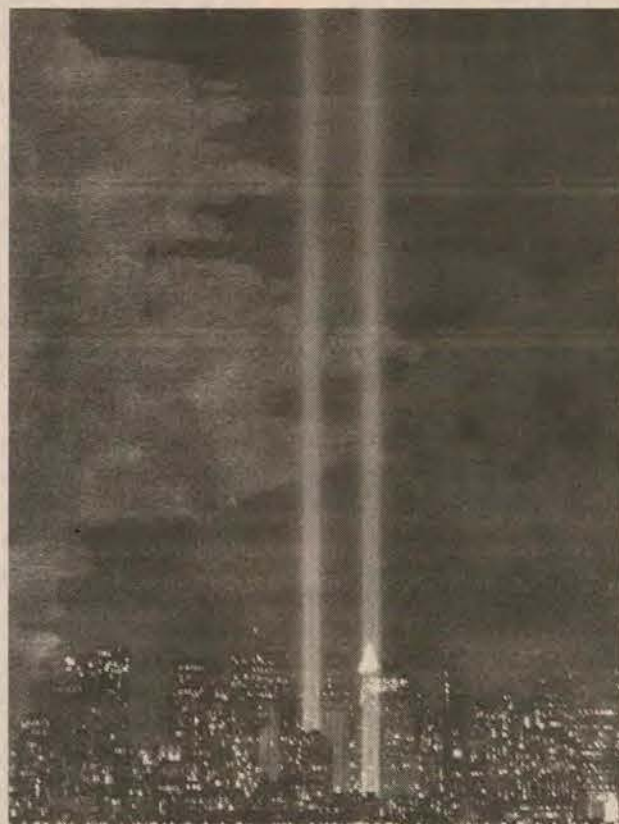
I was so excited that I had identified the Twin Towers in another place. I would look for the Twin Towers everywhere we went. There were several routes where I knew that, on a clear day, I would find the Twin Towers. One of them was on my way to school.

The morning of September 11th, 2001 was clear. It looked like it was going to be a beautiful day. My fourth grade self stared out the window, watching the Twin Towers glide across the horizon as we sped down Beach Channel Drive along the bay towards Bell Harbor. Within an hour the Twin Towers would be burning.

As I can recall, no one explained what was happening. Instead, there were just bits and pieces of the tragedy floating around the air. It was as if we would not be able to hear, as if we could not understand. We definitely heard. We heard "Twin Towers"... "plane crash"... "death". But I'm not sure that we understood. I think my first glimpse of understanding came when we sped by the bay on the way home and I looked out my window for them, "standing strong side by side" but instead, I discovered a cloud of smoke and ash.

It's been ten years. While the smoke has subsided and the ash has been cleared away, the memory of this poignant day in my childhood is still clear. The Twin Towers represented stability and security to me. I would move but they would stay still. Always.

September 11th taught me that stability



Ghost Towers Annual Memorial Credit: Jackie/Creative Commons

is an illusion and I have to be grateful for all the wonderful gifts I have in my life: my wonderful family, friends and teachers who have given me so much. I know they are not secure and there's no guarantee I will

always have them. I am grateful for having food, shelter, and health so that I can enjoy the people and opportunities in my life.

I am especially grateful for the ability to simply wake up every morning. Sometimes, I do take life for granted and sometimes I do forget to say thank you. But this year on September 11th I know that the message will be just as clear and alive as my memory of the smoke.

DINA MUSKIN SCW '12

"GILA! GILA! GILA!" It was 6:30 AM and I could not understand why my father was shrieking my sister's name half way across our house. Abruptly awakened from her peaceful sleep, my sister Gila ran to see what the commotion was all about. She found my father standing in front of the television, remote in hand, struggling to turn on the television. Gila came to his aid, and soon our den was filled with the live footage we are all so familiar with... first it was the South Tower, and then the North Tower.

Living in Los Angeles, I felt that the tragedy seemed somewhat removed. My sister and I went to school that morning just like any other day. Of course the news was

on the whole way there, but I still did not grasp the enormity of the facts, due to my 11-year-old naivety. During *davening* a few kids were told that their parents were waiting to take them home. Thereafter,

we were informed of the horrific facts. Though we were miles away from the scene, there was still one plane headed for the Los Angeles International Airport. Many Jewish intuitions were closing down for the day, lest they become the next target. My school's administration desperately wanted to remain open to prove that we had nothing to fear, but was unable to do so as teachers and parents panicked. Filled with fear and confusion, my classmates and I said *Tehillim* as we waited for our parents in emergency evacuation mode. Once I was back home, I sat glued to the television watching and re-watching as the America I knew was changed forever.

AYALA RAICE SCW '12

When I was asked to share my story from the perspective of a New Yorker, I start to retrace the happenings of the day in my mind. The play-by-play countdown is in a dramatic fashion that starts with my commute into the city over the George Washington Bridge. I was staring at the perfectly clear sky with buildings piercing through it, only thirty minutes before the first plane would hit the tower. The principal gathered all the 7th and 8th graders—the big kids at school—into the *shul*. I will always remember that I was thinking we were about to get in trouble for stealing *siddurim* from the younger grades and how I feared the inevitable punishment. I can still visualize our principal crying to us, begging us not to tell any younger children so they wouldn't be frightened. The one thing that I always remember is what happened

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Enough is Enough

In July 2011 a small group of Tel Avivians, frustrated with the high cost of housing, protested by sleeping in tents on Rothschild Blvd. The protests quickly spread and grew in numbers, now encompassing a list of social and economic complaints against the government. Udi Greenboim, YC '13, interviewed Orly Weisselberg, an original protestor and prominent activist.

Udi Greenboim: How did it come to the point of protest and what made you personally decide that it was time to take action?

Orly Weisselberg: Well that's an interesting question since I'm normally the type of person who, up until this point in my life, has never really had an interest in politics. I used to be much more passive...

This whole story really boils down to the prices of apartments in Tel Aviv. I don't know if you're aware that the cost of an apartment in Tel Aviv today (regardless of how small), won't cost less than 3,000 Shekel. Meaning that if someone were to want to get a two-bedroom apartment with a roommate, it will cost each person 3,000 Shekel. The average wages for young people is about half of what the average rent is. And that's not even including gas, electricity, maintenance, etc... It was these types of conditions that really got me angry and what led me to protest.

UG: Why do you have a problem with this if that is the way a free market works?

OW: That's exactly what the government told us when we started asking questions. I understand that the market is based on supply and demand and that high demand is what pushes prices up, however, that is by no means a law of nature. And I think that when we've reached a point like we're at now (of complete market failure) that is when the government should step in and try and correct it. Anyways, in my personal situation, my landlord raised the rent to an extreme level and that's after it already went up 20% in the past year.

UG: Did the price go up so steeply because of taxes or because this is the way the market functions?

OW: There is no reason. I guess you can say that it was because of the market, however, nothing happened in the past year that should have acted as a catalyst for it. The only thing that happened in the past year was that prices to buy and rent apartments went up. Once my landlord raised my rent again, I said "enough," I couldn't handle it anymore because the prices were already at a premium. So I began to look for a new apartment and I happened to come across Daphni Leef's Facebook page. She started

an event and in the description she wrote 'sick of the housing situation and we're going down to Rothschild Blvd. to protest.' At that time there were something like 30 attending members for the event (this was at the very, very beginning).

UG: What do you think you can do if this is just the natural way of the market?

OW: I'm not sure if you've heard what has been going on in the last month- and- a- half, but people are getting out on the



Protesting on Rothschild Blvd. Credit: Liron Almog

street and now we have hundreds of tents all over Israel in protest.

UG: Who is funding this protest?

OW: Everyone makes a personal contribution. The tents only cost 50- 100 Shekel.

UG: So people have stopped going to work? They just sit in tents all day in protest?

OW: People come to the tents at night and they go to work in the morning. At the beginning of the protest the logistics of the tents were more of an issue.

However, that's no longer an issue. The protests are larger and more serious. Tel Aviv has never had 300,000 people protesting. And the protests have even gone on to cover other living costs besides for housing. It's not only an issue of taxes; you need to create more solutions to get the cost of living to go down. Creating more houses, adding more supply to reduce the price of current houses. We discuss it and we know that there are many more steps that can be thought of.

UG: Do you have any examples?

OW: One of the examples is rent control.

UG: But rent control in NY has destroyed the real estate market there. You don't see what has happened in that state?

OW: Yeah, that is not a good

solution. Another solution would be public housing. It used to be that when the country was originally founded, the government would build and operate public housing. Those houses are really for people who can't afford anything. This used to be the way. They stopped, ignored it, and it disappeared.

UG: And how does that relate to you personally?

OW: It doesn't. I'm talking about the country as one. If public housing were to be reinstated

then it would ease things for everyone. An additional solution would be affordable housing. The idea is that at the same building at the center of the city would be a few different sizes of apartments. For example, two-bedrooms and smaller. There does not exist a two-bedroom apartment in Israel. The government gives the developers and builders incentive to build only from three- and- a- half bedrooms and up. And this is not a viable solution for young people. They're only for families with money. Young people cannot afford those apartments. There is a lot of demand for two-bedroom apartments.

UG: If there is a lot of demand for them then let's make a lot of money. Let's start together and build two bedroom apartments and we'll make a lot of money together.

OW: What do you mean?

UG: You're saying that there is a market for two- and- three-bedroom apartments- let's build.

OW: Okay excellent! We want people to build. There is *Minhal Mikarkay Yisrael* [Israel Land Administration] that is giving leases of land to people but they don't build on it. They have all the necessary approval to build but they don't. And besides

that, there is no incentive to build apartments less than three and a half rooms. Who ends up owning/leasing the land? Whoever puts in the highest bid! Let me remind you, the land in Israel is not privately owned. All of the land belongs to the Israeli government. This means that *Minhal Mikarkay Yisrael* is selling the land to whoever offered the highest bid. And what do you think the developer that bought it is going to build? Apartments for young people? No, apartments for people who have money. They don't build apartments for young people who can't afford them. By the way, it's not just young people but elderly too.

UG: But in New York, we as students live in places that are less nice- - -

OW: - - - Nobody wants. Well there is definitely always going to be more expensive places to live. Jerusalem for example is very expensive. In Jerusalem there are thousands of empty apartments; foreigners buy them for vacation homes but they're standing empty and these people don't rent them. In Tel Aviv you have this problem too, but these vacation homes only make up 10% of the overall housing.

There is a problem with transportation. You don't want to live in Ashdod or Cholon because transportation is very bad and you would need to have a car. The roads over here are a disaster. It takes you an hour and a half- - -

UG: There is a new road from Rishon Letzion to Jerusalem...

OW: Do you know how many cars are running on this road every morning? 2 million! Every day there is a traffic jam. In Israel, the infrastructure is horrible. Rishon Letzion to Tel Aviv would take an hour and they're only a short distance away. Public transportation? Let's not even go there... In short, we understand that from all aspects the government... At the same time the doctors are striking, and the social workers were on strike not too long ago. All of a sudden we understand that all of the public services that we pay for are the worst in the world and yet we're paying 50% taxes for them. We're demanding a change. There is a goal- - -

UG: I would like to go back to the foreigners. I want to know how foreigners in the U.S. should view your protest, how they [the foreigners] should help, and how

you want them to get involved.

OW: I'll tell you the story of what's happening here. The story is very important in the society of Israel. It's very clean. There's the middle class that carries most of the burden but doesn't get back the benefits for its money. Our demand is to change the priorities [of money distribution]. The government talks about open market but nobody is asking the average private citizen what he is expecting, what he likes, what social services he expects, his opinion on health services, housing, and all of the business.

About the question of foreigners- I would be glad to hear from all of the people in the world (especially the Jews) that they care about Israel. If they do, they should put pressure on the government to change the priorities and to solve the problems that are very, very bad in the society of Israel.

UG: What are the priorities? Why are these protests more important than security?

OW: Security is important but it's not everything. We don't only want to be protected by the government. We want to live here and we want to live well.

UG: But one- and- a- half million Israeli citizens traveled abroad this year. How do you say that they don't live well? People in Israel live better than the entire world. In the last six months, the Israeli economy had an unemployment rate of 6%. While the whole world is at 20%. This is not clear to me...

OW: Well this is true... But okay. The health system is collapsing. The education system is collapsing. Everything is going to more and more private companies. Our tomorrow is in danger.

UG: Why do you think that privatization is a bad thing?

OW: In the U.S., the public services are bad. You're not allowed to privatize them because the free market failed to succeed on those issues. In Israel we have *Ovdei Kablan*. *Ovdei Kablan* are outside contractors. The number of them here is enormous- it doesn't make sense. These people are working without social rights, without a pension, nobody protection them, no guaranteed vacation. They can be fired at any moment. We don't want privatization anymore. We don't want the market to get out of

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hand. The Israeli market got out of hand with real estate... Listen, it's not a big deal to go to a bar, travel abroad, have an iPhone, or own a laptop. However, when it comes to buying a house, I would never be able to. Even if I gave up all of the previously mentioned luxuries, I would have no chance. We can sit down together and we can do all the math calculation and I will prove to you how I will never have a chance to buy a house, even if I'm working in the high-tech sector and I'm making 4 times the average salary of the market, the pricing of housing here is at a level where I don't have a chance.

When my parents came to Israel they worked very, very hard. By the way, we're also working very hard. And we're also working 10-12 hour days. But the difference between us is that my parents knew that if they didn't travel abroad and they made sure to save shekel by shekel, they could one day buy a house and give an education to their kids. I cannot promise these things. Even if I earn a lot of money. Even if I save. I simply cannot do that.

UG: You don't see what has happened in the world? In Europe? Especially in the U.S? I see people that have lost tons in the real estate market, lost their jobs, and have no opportunity to travel abroad. But it doesn't mean that--

OW: That is a bad example. I don't want to live in the U.S. Sorry, but I don't think that people live well in the U.S. People work like dogs, they need to pay for their healthcare, the education is going down--

UG: People need to work for their money...

OW: Absolutely. People need to work for their money and pay taxes. They need to help the country help them. The

country needs to provide social services. Other countries (like in Europe) are in good shape. However, [Netanyahu] cannot ignore these things. When he ignores them bad things happen. Very, very bad things. Bad events like in the U.S for example. Like somebody who is born into poor/bad neighborhood doesn't get healthcare... We want to get to that point?

UG: In principle some of the things you are saying are correct. However, this doesn't change the fact that Israel's economy is on solid ground and the rest of the world is collapsing financially... Therefore it hurts me that some of the people in Israel don't see how good they have it.

OW: Everyone talks about economy and success. I'm earning... I'm an academic. An attorney. I'm from a good family. My profile is of a person who should be prospering. However, I'm not because the social services I received are very, very bad. And the situation of the housing is impossible. I happen to be in a good shape because my [budget is balanced], but many of my friends end up in the red every month. And we're not talking about students.

Not long ago they published a cost of living guide in Israel compared to other countries in the world. The basic cost of living here will let you spend more than you earn every month. People here are relaxed when their bank account is overdrawn. The cost of living here is impossible. In addition to this, we don't receive the public services that we're supposed to. We pay almost 50% taxes, we're signed up in the reserves, and we serve 3 years in the military. I'm not talking about weak people. I'm talking about middle class people that live in the metropolitan cities. Their

situation is bad. You don't feel the prosperity.

UG: So what do you think needs to be done with the 50% taxes to have a better distribution? It looks to me that you're attacking the government just for the sake of it. At least this is how it appears to



Thousands protest near Tel Aviv. Credit: Avivi/Creative Commons

me as an outsider...

OW: That's not entirely true. Yes, there is a political aspect to it. But it's not just that. It's true that the government distributes taxes to certain sectors. However, it's not to the sectors that are working hard for this money. It's true but let's put that on the side... A minority of the people in Israel control the vast amount of the wealth...

UG: What do you suggest that the State of Israel does? Take their money?

OW: There are many democratic and legitimate ways to better distribute the wealth. There are tax brackets, there is a limit of salary, there are taxes on-- They do it by changing the tax code...

UG: Taking money away from people seems like communism...

OW: It's not taking the money away from the people to force on them the laws that are supposed to be forced on them. We have here selective enforcement of the

law. Never mind... It's not that you ask me what needs to be done and I have the answer. It's very, very complicated. We need to change a lot of things. It's not a case where if you change one thing then everything will suddenly be okay. We need to attack the

problems from different angles. For example, the security budget. Yes, it's true that today there is no direct security threat.

UG: The security is the first step. Without it you have nothing.

OW: This isn't 1948 or 1967. Israel doesn't face the prospect of being destroyed.

UG: What about Iran?

OW: We've been hearing about Iran for 60 years. We need to live a normal life. Security isn't worth anything if the country will deteriorate from within. By the way, lately, there have been a lot of key military people who said that it is possible to cut the military budget. With all due respect, this is not a *Parah Kedusha*. It's not a case where we're forbidden to cut the military budget. What we have here is an agenda that is specifically not liberal. We [the protest movement] want to say 'enough'. The government has other responsibilities besides for

security.

UG: In principle do you think that this is an internal issue? Do you think that American Jews shouldn't be worried about it?

OW: I think that it's an issue for whoever lives here and works here. I want for all the people in the world to tell the Israeli governments that it should change its priorities if it wants to exist for another 60 years. This way won't work. I would be very happy if we would receive help from outside the country in terms of pressuring the government. For sure this is an internal issue, but we need help from outside.

UG: Do you have any other ideas, questions or things you want to say to the students at YU?

OW: I want to say that one of the things that happens here that you definitely don't see from NY is that people are going out into the streets and then tents and they're starting to talk. They're having real conversations about things that they didn't speak about before in the privacy of their own homes. People are showing involvement and what has happened here is that they talk about issues that have been ignored for a long time. At the beginning, the government tried to dismiss us as a small group of protestors with a political agenda. "Only in Tel Aviv, etc." Today, however, the protests are happening all over the country.

UG: *Kibush Ha'aretz?*

OW: Yes. All of a sudden people are talking. And it's not only about politics. And I have to say, it's making me very excited.

For another take on these protests, turn to Page 15

Reflections in the Water

By Lauren Sherman

August 6, 2011 is Jamaican Emancipation Day. This day marks the Jamaican peoples' freedom from slavery 177 years ago. Its memory lies in the rain that keeps the land lush and green. Today, it is raining in Jamaica. It is the kind of tropical rain that does not discriminate; it pours equally on everything. It pours on the heads of the rich and poor, both of whom have been taxed by the recent economic times here, in reminder that we are all alike. It pours on the resorts built on

former sugar plantations, on the many former slave huts dotting the landscape along the roadside, and runs through the meager villages into the blue Caribbean ocean like rivers of sorrow. It sparkles like tears of joy bringing hope as Jamaica celebrates Emancipation Day.

I visited the small Jewish cemetery in Lucea, a little town in the Hannover Parrish close to Negril. Jews and Jamaica are a love affair that tells a story of flight from persecution and a

new beginning. Most Jews left to the States, including Alexander Gabay, perhaps no relation, who according to the Ellis Island records arrived on the Princess May on November 20, 1922, from Montego Bay.

Despite the fact that I have been to cemeteries several times over the years, I could sense something was different about this one, located along the main road between Montego Bay and Negril. This cemetery tells the story of its people: tombstones

bear the names of Sephardic Jews who fled the Spanish Inquisition to the New World, as well as Ashkenazi Jews who arrived in the late nineteenth-century. The locals have cannibalized most of the marble stones for building material, and there are some 12 scattered graves remaining. There had been repairs done on some of the cracked tombstones, which exercised my abilities at puzzle work in Hebrew and English.

A small grave of a tender child reminds us that Jamaica

was ravaged by a Yellow Fever epidemic at the end of the 19th century.

At the center of the cemetery is the grave of Samuel Emanuel. Emanuel was an attorney who was born in London and eventually moved to Jamaica. From the description, his soul returned to its maker at the age of 65 on Yom Kippur in 1896. A special fence surrounds Emanuel's grave, in the same way that mystery surrounds his life and death. It boggles my

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when the principal told us the news. While most people seemed utterly baffled, the information was incomprehensible, as though it literally could not be a reality, one girl screamed, so loudly and so heartbreakingly, that we knew this was real and we knew she had a parent in one of the towers. When this realization hit, more people started to cry, remembering that their own relatives were in the buildings. I, too, thought my father was in the towers. Since all the phone lines were down, no



Permanent memorial at Ground Zero, nearly complete.
Credit: Thomas Costello

one could get through to find out who was alive and who was not. We were trapped in school, waiting for more news, waiting for the day to end, waiting for the world to make sense again.

Ten years have gone by, and while I can relive the horror and ache of that day so vividly, now I seem more struck by how that one day seeped into my childhood and, in a way, defined it. The tragedy of September 11th occurred exactly one month before my 12th birthday, just before my bat-mitzvah. This one-day in history changed my generation and most definitely changed me. It's not just that as a child I was scared of imminent attack or war or death, but the notion that someone so far away could drastically alter my life shook me to my core. When Osama bin Laden was killed, some students my age rejoiced, some were relieved, and some weren't sure what to make of it. As I sat in my dorm lounge watching the news coverage, surrounded

by my peers, by the children of September 11th, I cried. I cried, not out of relief, or happiness, or even sadness, but out of the realization of the pain we were carrying with us for ten years.

JOHN KRISKIEWICZ

SCW INSTRUCTOR OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

"After ten years of construction, these buildings were not admired widely by New Yorkers or architectural critics when they were completed in 1976..." This was what

I said when I displayed the last image of my last lecture for the weeklong course that I gave on the Architecture of Lower Manhattan at the South Street Seaport Museum on the evening of September 10, 2001. I continued, "...After thirty years, however, most have grown accustomed to the towers of the World Trade Center on the skyline and can't imagine New York without them."

Climbing from the subway the next morning, I could

see billowing smoke in the cloudless blue sky. I began to think, "High-rise fire... the WTC is designed to handle that... it is compartmentalized into fire resistant compartments... occupants will evacuate to the floors above or below... the sprinkler system will suppress the spread of flame until the firefighters arrive... automatic dampers will contain the smoke. I have to get to work... haven't these people seen a fire before?" I walked on. Looking up, hundreds of sheets of paper were floating in the breeze, catching the light. It was both beautiful and mysterious. "Hmmm," I mused, "Perhaps this is some sort of advertising stunt?" Then... echoing through the canyons... BOOM!

As I evacuated the area with my students at the direction of the police, I was confronted with something I had never contemplated before... what would I do if faced with the unimaginable? I am no hero. But with the responsibility to my group

my adrenaline kicked in. Just put one foot in front of the other. Keep everyone together and calm. I was very proud of my fellow New Yorkers that day. Although we were trying to make sense of it all as the air became saturated with debris, I was heartened by the overall camaraderie... a determination to get through this together. I saw the best in others on the worst of days. That is what I will remember.

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mind to consider how Jews have traveled to various corners of the world and have settled in towns, seemingly in the middle of nowhere. And yet, all those years ago in Lucea, there was someone who could chisel Hebrew words on the tombstone.

Standing in the middle of the jungle that has consumed the cemetery, I clear some of the debris and participate in the *Kaddish* ceremony in memory of the departed. A beloved, religious, generous family man.

As the allotted time for the cemetery visit was ending I couldn't bring myself to leave. I walked over to the Episcopalian

Church next door and saw their Rastafarian gardener fine pruning the cemetery located on the church grounds. After asking him how much he earns a day, for reference value, I am directed to Minister Lynch who lives in a big two-hundred-year-old white house on top of the hill. I inquire with him as to who takes care of the Jewish cemetery.

Lynch is a late middle-aged Jamaican, who tells me he is ill and that he can involve himself with church matters. His responsibility is the cemetery of the white community that lived there two hundred years prior. Yes, ironically now it is a black

minister who preserves with alacrity and pride the ancient cemetery of the white slave and plantation owners who built the Church, as well as the Women's Prison, where I should inquire further. I return to the cemetery, squeeze through the fence and cross the 300-foot courtyard to the Prison, which is now a Museum preserving where female slaves were incarcerated, flogged, or often starved to death. From the appearance of the prison, not all of the hurricanes and Caribbean storms of the past century and more could chase away the anguish of the place. I enter the confines of one of the

cells and tried to transpose myself in time.

A small window allowed prisoners to peer out at the ocean, without the relief of a breeze. Life in this prison was hell without hope. Perhaps the inmates saw an occasional Jewish funeral occurring nearby through the ten-inch window.

Alas, the museum caretaker tells me that no one cares for the Jewish cemetery. Yes, it is now up to all of us as the opportunity avails us to preserve our history and give dignity to our people in their resting places. We work out a financial arrangement wherein he will hire a gardener to clear

the brush and debris and email me photos. The taxi is waiting, and I smile at the thought that taxis in New York and Jamaica are identical. I take one last look at the cemetery and the ocean from the prison. On the way back in the taxi, spirits sealed behind, I take note of a ZIM ship proudly flying the Israeli flag in the waters not more than a mile away from the cemetery. I watch with silence and pride that the heritage of the Jewish people can be found in all parts of the world including Lucea, Jamaica.



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SPORTS

Summer of Sports '11 Recap

By Meira Lerner

Were you too busy over the summer to watch the summer's major sporting events? If so, the following brief summer sports recap should help you talk intelligibly about the sporting world with your friends:

June 12 - BASKETBALL. Dallas Mavericks defeat Miami Heat in the NBA Finals. The Cleveland Cavaliers laugh as LeBron James, the infamous Cavalier star who ran to Miami in pursuit of an NBA championship ring, still managed to end the season with empty fingers.

June 15 - HOCKEY. Boston Bruins win the Stanley Cup for the first time since 1972. Entering the NHL Finals as the favorites, the Vancouver Canucks only managed to score 8 goals on Bruins' goalie Tim Thomas, while the Bruins scored 23 goals on the Canucks over the course of the seven-game series.

July 3 - TENNIS. Serbian Novak Djokovic beat Rafael Nadal in the Wimbledon final. Not only did Djokovic defeat Nadal in Wimbledon, but he also received Nadal's previous ranking as the #1 tennis player in the world.

July 17 - SOCCER. Japanese women beat U.S.A in the FIFA Women's World Cup. Not once, but twice it appeared that the American women had scored the winning goal - first off the foot of Alex Morgan and then off the head of veteran Abby Wombach. Both times, Japan responded with goals of their own, sending the game to a shootout. Japan won the shootout, becoming the first Asian team to win a world cup.

July 24 - BIKING. Cadel Evans becomes the first Australian to win the Tour de France. Brothers Andy and Frank Schleck take second and third.

July 25 - SOFTBALL. USA overpowers Japan in the World Cup of Softball. Just eight days after USA's disappointing loss to Japan in the FIFA World Cup, USA women face Japan again - but, this time, on a softball diamond. USA won the game 6-4 for their fifth straight World Cup of Softball title.

July 25 - FOOTBALL. Fans celebrate as news spreads that the NFL Lockout has officially come to an end. NFL football teams rush to prepare for the upcoming season in what little time remains. Unfortunately, the NBA Lockout continues.

July 30 - SWIMMING. Michael Phelps, Ryan Lochte, and sixteen-year-old breakout star Missy Franklin prevail at Worlds, giving us great anticipation for the upcoming London Olympics in 2012.

September Home Game Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
				September 1 8:00
	4	5 8:00	6 8:00	7 8:00 8:00
11 11:00 12:00 3:00 TBA	12 7:00		13 8:00	14 8:00
18		19 8:00 8:00	20	21 8:00 8:00
25 TBA TBA	26	27	28	29

*For more details and game recaps, visit yumacs.com.

People of the Ball



In general, this column will describe the life and accomplishments of a Jewish athlete. This article, however, will be dedicated to a Jewish philanthropist well known in the sports world, Myra Hiatt Kraft. Myra, one of the world's most generous and goodhearted professional sports figures, lost her battle to cancer this summer on July 20.

You may be acquainted with Myra through her husband, Bob Kraft, the owner of the New England Patriots who was praised for his vital role in ending the NFL lockout this summer. Perhaps, you are familiar with Myra from Kraft Stadium in Jerusalem where all of the American Flag Football in Israel games are played. Myra's greatest legacy to the world, however, is as a tremendous philanthropist.

Despite a privileged childhood, Myra only thought of others, even from the young age of five. As she told the Jerusalem Post in 2008, "One morning, I got up, took a bag, and decided to go out to the neighborhood to raise money for the poor children in Europe and Palestine. I went door-to-door. My mother was getting frantic because I was late and she had no idea where I was. I came in dragging this sack of money."

Myra's philanthropic pursuits only increased as she grew older. Myra even argued against buying the New England Patriots in favor of donating additional millions of dollars to charity instead. Though Myra reluctantly gave in

to her family's wishes to buy the football team, she soon learned that her newfound fame allowed her mere presence at fundraisers to make the events successful. Myra did not only write checks for millions of dollars to worthy causes but she devoted herself full time to raising money for charities.

Myra saw all men as equal and faced the world with a definite moral compass. Myra's son Jonathan recounted the following story describing his mother's courage to stand against wrongdoing. While visiting South Africa, Myra noticed some police officers attempting to arrest black men for roaming the city at night without proper documents. Myra, horrified, told the officers that she too did not walk around with the necessary documents. She challenged the officers to arrest her alongside the black men. Myra's arrest was only prevented when Jonathan, fearing for his mother's safety, carried her - still screaming - away from the officers.

Myra's demeanor in the absence of wrongdoing, however, could not have been more agreeable. I had the honor of meeting Myra twice in the past. Though all the surrounding people flocked around Myra, she was pleasant, laid back, and easygoing.

It is rare to meet someone so generous, courageous, and amiable as Myra Kraft. Her legacy will live on in the millions of lives she affected.

Sports Quotes

"The Vision of a Champion is someone who is bent over, drenched in sweat, and at the point of exhaustion when no one else is watching." - Anson Dorrance

"Some of the world's greatest feats were accomplished by people not smart enough to know they were impossible." - Doug Larson

"The spirit, the will to win, and the will to excel are the things that endure. These qualities are so much more important than the events that occur." - Vince Lombardi

"Some people say I have attitude - maybe I do, but I think you have to. You have to believe in yourself when no one else does - that makes you a winner right there." - Venus Williams

ARTS AND LIFESTYLE

She's a Pirate! The Adventures of Grace O'Malley

By Gila Yarmush

Grace O'Malley was born into an Irish piratical dynasty and was therefore exposed at an early age to the trade. Naturally, O'Malley herself became a pirate, a profession she retained her entire life. O'Malley and the sea had a devoted lifelong relationship.

Grace O'Malley was born in Connaught, located on the west coast of Ireland around the year 1530 to Dubhdara O'Malley, who was the local chieftain, and Margaret O'Malley. Both were seafarers, and while growing up, Grace O'Malley accompanied her father on his voyages. According to tradition, O'Malley acquired her nickname "Granuaile" from one such voyage. It is believed that when Dubhdara refused to let O'Malley join him on a voyage, she went off and returned in boy's attire and short hair. Her father then agreed to let her accompany him. Why Dubhdara allowed O'Malley to come aboard

after changing her clothes and cutting her hair is unclear, but it is supposedly from this short haircut that she received the nickname "Granuaile" which means "bald."

O'Malley, also known as "Granny Wale," "Grana Weil," or "Graun'ya Uaile," was the only child to both her parents. She had one half sibling, Dónal-ne- Piopa (Dónal of the Pipes), but it is unclear whether Dónal was an illegitimate child or if Dubhdara had been married prior to marrying Margaret O'Malley. O'Malley spoke Latin, as demonstrated from conversations she had later in life with English officials.

While few facts are known about O'Malley's early years, more is known about her life from the age of sixteen, when she married her first husband, Dónal O'Flaherty, onwards. Marrying O'Flaherty was an astute political

move on O'Malley's part as Dónal O'Flaherty was the tánaist, or successor, of the O'Flaherty clan and would inherit all of modern day Connemara. O'Malley had three children with Dónal O'Flaherty: Owen, Murrough, and Margaret.

During her marriage to O'Flaherty, O'Malley did not abandon piracy and attacked merchant ships traveling to Galway, on the west coast of Ireland. O'Malley was such a menace that the authorities at Galway wrote to the English officials in Dublin:

roads used by the O'Malleys and O'Flaherties with their galleys along our coasts, where they have been taking sundry ships bound for this poor town, which they have not only rifled to the utter overthrow of their owners and merchants, but

*have most wickedly murdered divers of young men to the great terror of such as would willingly traffic. . .*¹

O'Malley also enriched herself by granting safe passage to ships for a tax or a portion of their cargo. Even in marriage, O'Malley remained loyal to the sea.

Several years after they married, O'Flaherty was killed in inter-clan warfare with the Joyces. Following O'Flaherty's death, O'Malley returned to her father's land and started commanding a fleet. This fleet was comprised of the men she had led while married to O'Flaherty and who had wished to remain under her command. During this time she also gathered "two hundred fighting men"² from the clans of O'Malley, Bourke, O'Flaherty, MacCormack, MacNally, MacConroy and Clandonnells. This was an amazing

accomplishment considering that the clan members put aside their personal hostilities toward each other, left their clans, and submitted to the leadership of O'Malley. No matter O'Malley's stage in life, wife or widow, piracy was a profession she simply would not renounce.

After her father's death, it appears that O'Malley became the official leader of a majority of the fleet. Around this time, the passages into Clew Bay and towards Erris and Tirawley were under her control. Her fleet therefore would attack ships travelling from Donegal, in the northwest, to Waterford, in the south. Most ships that passed through her waters, however, preferred to pay her requested fee and be granted safe passage rather than engage in a conflict with her ships. For these merchants to have acquiesced to such a deal, attests to the

Continued on page 12

shalom bombay
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Night at the Newseum

By Sophie Felder

Though the Newseum in Washington D.C. is one of only a few in the city that charge an entry fee, it is undoubtedly worth every cent and it seemed only appropriate that our newspaper take a look at a museum dedicated to what we do. The museum's impressive collection of artifacts (think: an entire section of the Berlin Wall, handwritten poems by Saddam Hussein and the Unibomber's cabin) is enhanced by a multimedia experience that is reminiscent of a news source itself, and invites your eyes and ears to experience the history of news, learn about the media process and engage in the ethical and moral questions that revolve at the core of reporting the day's events.

The Newseum skillfully walks the fine line of being child-friendly while also catering to adults. The collection included truly moving exhibits that also functioned as memorials to 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina. The exhibits were artful and evocative, addressing the political aspects of the aftermath of Katrina, the coverage of both events and the utter trauma, in a comprehensive and thoughtful manner. These photo collections and video essays are not necessarily child friendly, but the museum makes room for more light-hearted fun in the multi media room one floor down. Here, children can play newscaster in front of a green screen and watch recordings of themselves reporting the daily news. They can

also interact with the astounding number of computers that offer quiz-like games to draw children in and engage in ethical questions—what would they do if they had reported something wrong? Would they Photoshop something to make a story more compelling? Whatever the age, the Newseum is able to access patrons, and educate and engage them. This is definitely a museum experience that demands time and attention. I walked for six hours, cried a little and thought hard.

Other collections include an impressive history of the media with many original documents and films that lead viewers through the thoughts and ideas of the founders of democracy. There are many artifacts from some of the most famous cases in history and the involvement of the media, including instances when the media got it wrong. The exhibits are continually updated - only six days after a debt ceiling agreement was reached; there were John Stuart clips and other comments on the debt agreement. Already, the question of the media's involvement in the debt crisis was being addressed for visitors.

It is certainly a trip worth taking. The Newseum has a lot to offer in terms of addressing the identity of the media as well as the role of the media as a function of democracy. So, if you care about democracy, it is probably worth checking out. Tickets are \$17.95 plus tax with a valid student ID card and it's worth getting there at opening to avoid the crowds.

ARTS AND LIFESTYLE

You've Got The Beat!

A Cultural History Behind the Music of Sephardi/Mizrachi Selichot

By Atara Arbesfeld

It's that time of year again. Jews around the world are encouraged to reflect and repent the month before the start of the Jewish New Year, from the beginning of *Elul* until *Rosh Hashana*. Other than listening to the almost daily *shofar* blasts, many Jews of Sephardi and Mizrachi origin have the tradition of reciting the *Selichot* service during *Shacharit* prayers for the entire month before *Rosh Hashana*.

The custom of *Selichot* originated in the *Aggadah*. *Tanna De'vei Eliyahu*, Chap. 23 tells us that King David cried before G-d and pleaded with Him to find a way for the Jewish people to attain atonement for their sins. G-d responded that if the Jewish people would gather together, confess their sins following the order of the prayers of *teshuvah*, they would be forgiven. According to Sephardi tradition, since we are very fearful to receive G-d's judgment on *Rosh Hashanah*, we repent and confess our sins before that day.

The contrast between this tradition and the Ashkenazi *Selichot*, which are recited during the time between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, could not be any more different. Though the prayers and motives of *teshuvah* [repentance] are essentially the same for both groups, the melodies of the Ashkenazi *Selichot* and High Holidays prayers bring forth feelings of fear and awe, while the music of the Sephardim—the best example being the famous *piyut* [poem] "*Adon HaSelichot*"—can be described as joyful, lively, and even triumphant in their confidence of G-d's love and forgiveness for His chosen people. According to Sephardi tradition, since we are very fearful to receive G-d's judgment on *Rosh Hashanah*, we repent and confess our sins before that day (the reasons for why the Ashkenazim say *Selichot* later are beyond the scope of this article. See *The Minhagim* by Abraham Chill for a more detailed explanation.) The

enchanting music of Sephardim, however, developed due partly to the influences in their host countries.

According to Avigdor Levy's *Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, Sephardi and Mizrachi Jewish music were heavily inspired by the surrounding cultures of their host countries in Spain, North Africa, and the Middle East. Whereas the Ashkenazi West insisted on assimilation to one unified cultural norm, the millet system in place in the Ottoman empire encouraged a merging of diverse cultures, including the Jews. Thus, Ottoman music stemmed from Byzantine, Persian, and Arabic origins. Much of the similarities between Sephardi and Turkish music came from sharing the same techniques and instruments. Like Turkish music, Sephardi music is monophonic – no harmony or part-singing, just one musical line dominates. *Melisma*, a singing technique in which one word of text is stretched out over many notes,

was also implemented in songs and gave the music its highly decorated and ornamented impression.

The Sephardi rabbis from the Gaonic period recognized the spiritual significance that music has on the soul, as Rabbi Saadia Gaon wrote in his work *Emunot Ve'Deot* on the eight types of musical rhythms that affect one's temperament. Sephardi musical practices are maintained orally and a few of the repertoire have been recorded in written format. Though the limited musical notation has been published only recently, the liturgical text throughout the centuries has been recorded by the *chachamim*, and *paytanim* [poets] of various types of religious music included composed *piyutim* and *pizmonim* [hymns recited by the *chazzan* and congregation responsively] that are major components of the *Selichot* service.

Famous *piyutim* in the *Selichot* service include the aforementioned "*Adon HaSelichot*," which is in

an alphabetical acrostic, and "*Et Shaarei Ratzon*," which recounts the event of the *Akeidah*. Its authorship is attributed to Jehuda Samuel Abbas, who wrote it in Ladino around 1200 C.E. Another famous *paytan* is Rabbi Yehuda HaLevy, the famous author of the philosophical work the *Kuzari*. He wrote *piyutim* including "*Yashen Al Teradam*," which borrows a *pasuk* from *Sefer Yonah* urging the individual to awake from his slumber and seek G-d's mercy during *Selichot*.

Today, many recordings of the Sephardi *Selichot* service remain popular not only during the High Holiday season but also all year round due to its nostalgia, tradition, and inspirational music. The performers are both religious and secular, musicians who unite in reliving their heritage and perhaps even reigniting the spiritual spark within. Have a *shana tovah* and may we continue to keep the inspiration in ourselves all year round!

Puzzle Corner

By Davida Kollmar

This summer I was privileged to participate in the first ever Bar Ilan-Yeshiva University Summer Science Research Internship Program. Of course, one of the best parts of the program was meeting the other students who were conducting their research in various scientific disciplines, including computers. Over the course of our very intense time in Israel, we bonded to the point that by the end of the summer we all called each other by different crazy nicknames (such as "Goldfarb") and I had an inside joke with each one. Can you match each student (3 boys- Eli, Fred, and Jake, and 3 girls- Dalya, Nicole, and Ronit) to his/her area of research, nickname, and the joke I had with each?

* Nicole started the whole nickname business when she dubbed herself "Rinicolous;" the rest of us subsequently continued the trend.

* One student was nicknamed "SSJ" as a joke, after the title character in the music video in which he/she had starred.

* The biology student was known as "Shochet" because many chicken embryos were killed over the course of her work.

* The three girls are "Shoshvina", the psychology student (as she says, it really is a science!) and the one with whom I watched the final of the World Cup for women's soccer although I had initially thought I would watch it alone; the three boys are "Mr. Fun," the Engineering student (who was not Eli), and the one whom I had once led on a bad shortcut.

* Ronit and Jake studied chemistry and math, in some order.

* Dalya was not the girl with whom I had a Chavruta.

* The math major liked to joke that I would always announce when it was time to board the busses.

Be the first to email your answer to scwobserver@gmail.com and win a \$15 iTunes gift card!

YOUR GUIDE To Beren Lounges

By Neema Fischman

Greetings and best regards! I'd like to take this opportunity to bid you upperclassmen welcome back to our wonderful institution of higher education. And for those of you who are joining us for the first time, it's time for you to get acquainted with our campus. I'm here to assist in that endeavor.

The administration here at Stern College believes in providing us with all the copious space a campus in Manhattan offers. What does that mean for you, you ask? Go ahead, ask. All right, I'll tell you. It means Lounges! You know, cozy places to curl up in and pretend you are back wherever you came from, in your familiar living room? Here at Stern we have masses of lounges, each with their own unique charm.

For those of you who like a quiet-but-not-too-quiet place to study, you have choices! There's room 19C in Brookdale, which has a colorful lounge set up in one of the dorm rooms – and it's always open. Unfortunately, the couch isn't exactly a couch... you'll have to go discover what it actually is for yourself. Then, there's the back lounge in Schottenstein residence hall, which has squashy couches and beautiful wood tables

that call to mind a nineteenth century drawing room! And we must not forget about the little corner on the way to the reference library in 245 Lexington. You can get to the aforementioned lounge by way of the same staircase that you take to the cafeteria. It's dimly lit, but there are tables and a couch, snack machines and a Television- the perfect recipe for between-class productivity! If you're between classes in 215 Lexington, that's no problem! You'll find a little lounge in the psychology department on the fourth floor with wonderfully comfortable chairs... and a lounge on the seventh floor that you can't miss... unless you are in the habit of walking out of the elevator with your eyes closed!

If you're looking for a place to hang out with your friends and talk we have places for that too! My personal favorite is the white couches grouped together on the first floor of the Stern Building. Despite its extremely public location, it's a popular place to catch up with friends or curl up with a laptop and check e-mail – giving your over-worked and under-nourished body a break from studying! Then, there

are the front lounges in ALL the Residence Halls, where you can hang out with your friends who live on both campuses... and even friends that don't go to YU at all. They're all pretty noisy, but Brookdale is the noisiest since that's where you can also catch the inter-campus shuttle (just remember to reserve a seat beforehand because the shuttle is always full!)

If you're an avid follower of a TV series, we have lounges for that too. The back lounge in Brookdale has a television that is almost always on, but there are certain shows that everybody wants to watch! Don't worry, though, there's a TV on the eighth floor of the east wing of Schottenstein if there's something you want to watch by yourself. The nice thing about that lounge is it's never very crowded so you can watch TV, talk to friends, or study!

And if you are looking for a place to have a private conversation? I wish you the best of luck! No Stern College for Women student has found that pocket of emptiness yet... but you may be the first to succeed.

ARTS AND LIFESTYLE

O'Malley, continued from Page 10

marine power O'Malley must have possessed. O'Malley's marine strength is further substantiated by the reputation she gained at this time as the pirate queen.

Regarding all royalty, legendary stories abound, and O'Malley was not exception. One such legend, that happened near Dublin, at Howth Island, is of particular interest. At Howth, the main port of Dublin, O'Malley stopped to restock on provisions on her return voyage. As O'Malley was the leader, it was her role to ask for assistance from the local lord, as par Gaelic custom. Dublin, however, was in the Pale. The Pale was the English "colonial enclave comprising the counties of Meath, Louth, Kildare, and Dublin."³ Being an English colony, its denizens did not abide by this custom, and the local lord refused to assist O'Malley. This lack of assistance incensed O'Malley. While returning to her ship she met the lord's grandson and heir. In revenge for the lord's lack of hospitality, she kidnapped him. The lord attempted to save his heir by ransom. That, however, was not O'Malley's request. Instead, O'Malley demanded that the local lord make her a promise: in the future he would always assist those who requested help. The local lord agreed and presented her with a ring as an assurance of their agreement.

While this story has not been clearly recorded, it has customarily been associated with O'Malley. Duaid MacFirbis, a seventeenth century historian, however, accredits this story to the MacWilliam of Mayo, Richard

Bourke, in the 1400s. MacFirbis could have accredited the story to a male due to certain gender biases at the time, and therefore it will be assumed that it was, in fact, O'Malley who struck the deal with the lord. This incident is consequential as it serves to illustrate the distance of O'Malley's voyages, since Dublin is on the east coast of Ireland and O'Malley lived on the west, and again substantiates her marine strength.

In 1566 O'Malley married her second husband Richard Bourke. Upon marrying Bourke, O'Malley moved to his land, Rockfleet Castle in County Mayo. Bourke was the chieftain of the Ulick tribe and "a principle contender for power in Connaught."⁴ When Bourke married O'Malley he already had four children: Edmund, Walter, John and Catherine, but he did have a child with O'Malley. This son's name was Theobald, and he became his mother's heir. Theobald is better known as Tibbot-ne-Long, Toby of the Ships, as tradition claims that he was born at sea. Nothing and no one could separate the sea and O'Malley.

O'Malley might have been a powerful pirate, but that does not mean she did not occasionally encounter trouble. In 1577 O'Malley had travelled to southern Ireland on a piratical venture. This time, unfortunately, she was not successful. O'Malley was kidnapped and locked in the Limerick prison by the Earl of Desmond, an Irishman, not trusted by the English. To convince the English of his loyalty,

the Earl of Desmond captured O'Malley. In 1578, after two years of being jailed in Limerick, O'Malley was transferred to a jail in Dublin castle. For unknown reasons, O'Malley was released in 1579 and returned to Rockfleet Castle.

Soon after her return to Rockfleet Castle, O'Malley was besieged by soldiers from Galway. They were instructed to kidnap her in revenge for her assaults on the Galway shipping. O'Malley, however, forced them to retreat or become her prisoners. O'Malley, even after being locked up in prison for two years, proved that in no way was her marine authority and power weakened.

Eventually, when Royal oversight of Ireland was no longer carried out by a tyrannical oppressor, O'Malley returned to raiding the western coast of Ireland. Even at this later point in life O'Malley was such a marine force that "[t]he Earl of Thomond reported his men having to fight off her raiders."⁵

Raiding the west coast of Ireland is where O'Malley's piratical career began and, essentially, ended. Although there is no mention of when or where she died, O'Malley had proven to the very end that she would always return to the sea, the vast expanse that had no bounds.

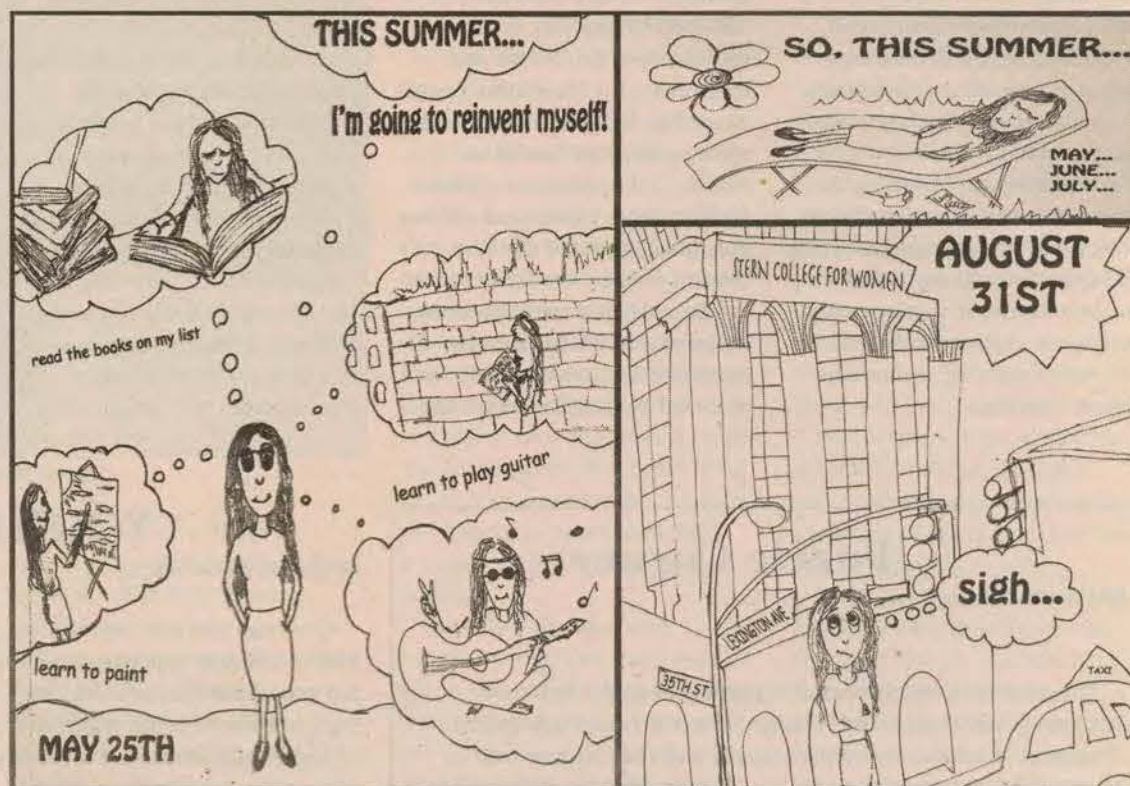
1. Judith Cook, *Pirate Queen: The Life of Grace O'Malley 1530-1603* (Douglas Village: Mercier Press, 2004), 35

2. Anne Chambers, *Granuaile: The Life and Times of Grace O'Malley c. 1530-1603* (Dublin: The Irish American Book Company, 1998), 64

3. Judith Cook, *Pirate Queen: The Life of Grace O'Malley 1530-1603*, 2

4. Anne Chambers, *Granuaile: The Life and Times of Grace O'Malley c. 1530-1603*, 77

5. Judith Cook, *Pirate Queen: The Life of Grace O'Malley 1530-1603*, 168



Cartoon by Yael Roberts

SCIENCE AND HEALTH

Special Delivery

by Miri Mandelbaum

This summer I had an incredible opportunity to shadow an obstetrician. An OB's job is quite exhilarating, and most definitely unpredictable. I got a small taste of how unpredictable it is when the doctor once called me at midnight to tell me there was a woman in labor and I should come over to the hospital right away. That time, I opted for my bed. I later found out that the woman was in labor for another eight hours before giving birth. Talk about unpredictable.

I did make it to two deliveries. Two women were in labor on

the same afternoon. The doctor and I shuffled back and forth between the two hospital rooms. Finally, the time came for the first delivery. We got all geared up in the robe, the gloves, the hairnets, the boots - the whole shebang. I felt ridiculous in the huge, baggy costume. As I looked on from afar, unsure of my role, the doctor yelled at me, "You can't catch a baby from four feet away!" He really meant it. I took a few steps closer, and watched as the baby's head began to appear. Once the head was out, it was only a matter of seconds before the little girl

was born. I was there to catch her.

The doctor handed me the baby, and I held her as he cut the umbilical cord. It was an exhilarating moment. I was holding this beautiful baby in her first moments of life. I witnessed, firsthand, the miracle of creation. I felt that same exhilaration when I held a newborn baby boy at the second delivery.

That day, I witnessed the births of two precious Jewish children. I had the privilege of holding each in his and her first moments in this world. I couldn't help but marvel at the

miraculous event taking place before my eyes. I have a deepened respect for the wondrousness of a woman's body after seeing what it is capable of. That respect, of course, reflects back to the Creator *asher yatzar et ha'adam b'chachma* - who created man with wisdom. It is only with tremendous wisdom that such a miraculous phenomenon is a part of everyday life. It is with wisdom that a woman's body knows how to best adapt to her baby's needs as it grows. It is with wisdom that these perfect little bodies developed from almost

nothing, each organ in the right place, keeping the child alive. It is with wisdom that these babies, once dependent completely on their mothers, are now capable of living and breathing on their own to one day grow into people with emotions, imagination, and intelligent ideas, just like each of us. It is with the deepest wisdom that G-d created the universe and allowed us to glimpse a bit of creation each time we watch a new child being born.

SCIENCE AND HEALTH

Lovely Ladies Love to Lather on the Sunscreen

By Rose Snyder

Before we turn our backs on summer and return to the streets of Midtown Manhattan, let us take one last look at those terrific tans. We all know that without proper protection, soaking up the sun can have dangerous effects. Although that tan may soon fade, it is never too late to start taking the necessary steps to protect your skin.

Whether you are a bio major dedicating her life to finding cures, or not, you do need to know this: the United States Department of Health and Safety has declared ultraviolet rays from the sun as a known carcinogen and that up to eighty percent of these rays can penetrate the clouds and reach us.¹ UV rays are the number one cause of skin cancer² and sunscreen should be worn for protection even on cloudy days.³ Cloudiness, however, still surrounds the average person's knowledge of which sunscreens are best, how they work, and how they should be worn.

The sun emits both visible and invisible rays. The invisible rays are called ultraviolet (UV) rays and are divided into two categories. UVA rays are longer and affect the deep layers of the

skin. They damage collagen and elastin, causing premature skin aging (read here: wrinkles) and stimulate the production of skin pigments, which can cause brown spots and hyperpigmentation. UVA rays are especially dangerous because they can be absorbed through glass, so soaking up sunlight through your living room window won't protect you from damage. UVB rays affect the outer layer of the skin and cause sunburn.⁴ The American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) has an easy way to remember which rays are which: A for aging and B for burning.⁵ Most importantly, however, both types of UV rays cause DNA damage in the skin cells which increases the risk of developing skin cancer.

Sunscreen can work to protect the skin from these DNA-damaging rays in either of two ways, depending on its main ingredients. Common natural ingredients are titanium dioxide and zinc oxide. They work like a mirror, protecting the skin by deflecting the sun's rays. The skin does not absorb these ingredients, so sunscreen made from these natural ingredients is good for sensitive skin.

On the other hand, chemical

ingredients, like avobenzone or oxibenzonone, work by absorbing the UV light before it hits the skin. Chemical ingredients are synthetic substances that are often absorbed by the skin and may cause irritation or allergic reactions.⁶

The Food and Drug Administration has set up a system to regulate the varying degrees of protection that different sunscreens provide. The Sun Protection Factor—or SPF—refers to the effectiveness of the sunscreen and helps determine how long one can stay out in the sun before burning. This time varies depending on each person's sensitivity to the sun.

To find out how effective a particular SPF is for you, figure out how long in the sun it takes for you to burn, without sunscreen. Multiply the number of minutes by the SPF of your sunscreen. That will give you an estimate of how long your sunscreen will be effective.

Of course, most people do not know how long it takes them to start to burn, and finding out can be both painful and dangerous. In addition, many other complications apply when determining the effectiveness of

a particular sunscreen: sunscreen breaks down and wears off, especially after swimming and heavy sweating. Even sweat-proof sunscreen is not truly sweat-proof.

There also is no evidence that an SPF over 50 is any more effective than SPF 30-50. SPF refers to protection against UVB rays, while UVA rays are just as harmful. Only sunscreens labeled "broad spectrum" block both UVA and UVB rays, but even then there is no way to regulate the UVA protection. Interestingly, the FDA recently created new rules to regulate SPF. These rules may not take effect for another year or two, but they will ensure that products labeled "broad spectrum" provide equal protection against both UVA and UVB rays.

Furthermore, dermatologists say that most people apply sunscreen incorrectly, so an SPF of 30 actually provides an SPF of 2.3-5.5. To correct this, buy a broad spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. Use

about an ounce—that's enough to fill a shot glass—to cover all exposed skin. Reapply every two hours, regardless of SPF, and immediately after swimming or heavy sweating.⁷

So lather on the sunscreen, ladies, and protect your skin before heading out into that Manhattan sunshine.

1. <http://www.aad.org/media-resources/stats-and-facts/prevention-and-care/sunscreens>
2. <http://www.webmd.com/healthy-beauty/guide/sun-exposure-skin-cancer>
3. <http://www.aad.org/media-resources/stats-and-facts/prevention-and-care/sunscreens>
4. <http://www.drrobin.md/frequently-asked-questions.html>
5. <http://www.aad.org/media-resources/stats-and-facts/prevention-and-care/sunscreens>
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7. Jane Brody, "Explaining Sunscreen and the New Rules," *New York Times*, 20 June 2011.

Picnics, Mayonnaise, and Food Poisoning...Oh My?

By Shulamit Brunswick

Finally, it's summer! The weather's nice and hot, the sun is perfect for tanning, and the time is ripe for a picnic. You haven't gone on a picnic since last summer and you just can't wait to sit down in the shade of an obliging tree with a basket full of goodies. Yum...heaven. Pass the potato salad.

Wait a minute! Potato salad? On a picnic? Potato salad is full of mayonnaise! You don't want to spend your perfect summer day in the emergency room doubled over with food poisoning! Maybe you should leave the mayonnaise at home and stick to something safer. Like PB&J.

Or should you? Much of the fear of food poisoning is caused by a lack of understanding of where it comes from. Mayonnaise is not a jar of food poisoning kept dormant while in the fridge. Rather, food poisoning is caused by bacteria, viruses, parasites, or toxins that come in contact with the food. These microbes are persnickety little creatures, the one of the Goldilocks of the animal kingdom, if you will; they only grow when conditions are just right. They need just the right

temperature, pH, and food source, among other things, to thrive.

Most commercially-prepared food undergoes various processes to ensure that harmful microbes aren't packaged along with it. If that new jar of mayonnaise was perfectly clear of harmful microbes, it follows that at some point between opening the jar and eating your potato salad some sneaky little microbe got in and started to multiply.

Generally, unless you are dealing with raw meat, poultry, or fish, harmful microbes come in contact with your food because of improper hand washing or using dirty utensils when preparing the food.

Improper refrigeration can also lead to the growth of harmful bacteria. Most bacteria that are found in foods need a nice, warm environment to grow. Most food that goes directly from refrigerator, to plate, to mouth hasn't had a chance to come up to temperature, and the bacteria haven't had a chance to multiply to levels that can cause illness. Refrigerated foods that are left out on the counter too long, or spend an afternoon in a warm

Science Book Short

Disappearing Spoon Leaves Lasting Impression

By Helen Ayala Unger

"When most people think of the periodic table, they remember a chart hanging on the front wall of their high school chemistry class," begins the first science pick of the fall semester. *The Disappearing Spoon: and Other True Tales of Madness, Love, and the History of the World*, written by acclaimed science journalist Sam Kean, chronicles the development of the periodic table through the discovery of the elements housed within it. The book is split into 19 chapters, each discussing a different set of elements. This eye-opening book allows the reader to break free of their high school impressions of a one-dimensional chart and connect with the history of the elements in an engaging and stimulating way.

Kean delves into not only the properties of the elements on the periodic table and the stories of their discovery, but also into the



personal tales of the scientists who discovered them. For example, readers will uncover not only the characteristics of berkelium (element 97), but also the Cold War politics that influenced the naming of the element. The author transitions from scientists' individual sagas to hard chemistry facts with ease, never losing his accessible,

friendly tone. By the last page, readers are left with knowledge spanning disciplines such as fine arts, psychology, and military strategy—not just chemistry.

Ultimately, this month's featured science read was as exciting as it was fact-filled. Kean's well-researched and well-organized scientific knowledge was coupled with an approachable and flowing writing style, producing a book that is hard to put down. The author succeeded in his task to make the periodic table come alive to his readers; *The Disappearing Spoon* is a book that will leave a lasting impression.

Helen Ayala Unger is a Junior at SCW from Cleveland, Ohio, majoring in Biology. In her spare time, she enjoys fashioning gallium spoons and having tea parties. Go Cavs!

SCIENCE AND HEALTH

Yogurt: a Tasty Superfood

By Naamah Plotzker

At breakfast time in the Stern cafeteria, the yogurt line is the longest (second, perhaps, to the coffee machines). Those already in on the yogurt trend may not yet be aware of how extensive yogurt's health properties are, and for whoever's still stocking up on Apple Jacks, you may want to reconsider.

Yogurt has many health benefits and it may even especially advantageous to eat yogurt for breakfast, as opposed to, say, cereal and milk.

Yogurt is milk-based, and milk contains 9 essential nutrients:

- o Calcium, which aside from building bones and teeth, plays important roles in physiological processes like muscle contraction, conduction of electrical signals in the heart, and exocytosis of neurotransmitters—the ejection of chemicals from the end, or axon, of one nerve cell to communicate with other nerve cells.
- o Protein, which is the building block of many of the structures in the body. Without protein intake, the body would not have sources for new materials with which to grow and repair the body. Proteins are also catalysts, called enzymes, for many of the body's functions. Enzymes lower the amount of energy required for the chemical reactions that the body performs. Additionally, proteins can be converted in carbohydrates and used as energy sources when carbohydrates, the body's main energy source, are not available.
- o Potassium, which is another crucial ion in neuron firing. Some studies have also found a con-

nection between adequate levels of potassium in the body and healthy blood pressure.

- o Phosphorus in the form of phosphate, which is an element indispensable to life. It is present in the cell membrane, the backbone of DNA and RNA, and adenosine triphosphate, or ATP. The enamel of bones and teeth are comprised mainly of a compound called calcium phosphate. A lesser-known process is phosphorylation, meaning addition of a phosphate to a preexisting molecule, which activates many of the biochemical processes that take place in the body.

- o Vitamin D, a lipid, which is a co-factor in intestinal absorption of calcium. Although vitamin D is an important nutrient, ingesting too much can be toxic, so be careful!

- o Vitamin B12, which is an organic compound that aids in proper functioning of the nervous system as well as the synthesis of blood.

- o Vitamin A, which is mostly found in the form of retinyl palmitate in foods of animal origins, and is converted into three other important forms after it is ingested. Retinal aids color vision, rhodopsin aids low-light and night vision, and retinoic acid is a growth factor which signals cell growth.

- o Riboflavin, another B vitamin, which is crucial in what probably is the body's most important process: cellular respiration, which synthesizes the energy the body uses to carry out all its other work. It is the main component of

FAD, a co-factor that carries electrons in the citric acid cycle and electron transport chain stages of cellular respiration.

- o Niacin, like riboflavin, which is a B vitamin essential in cellular respiration. Niacin derivatives comprise NAD, the main co-factor in cellular respiration. It has also been found to block the breakdown of fats which would otherwise be used to build LDL, the "bad" cholesterol.

Yogurt has all the nutrients of plain milk, and more.

The "live and active cultures" label on yogurt containers refers to the live bacteria that are added to milk to enable it to ferment into yogurt, turning lactose, the sugar found in milk, into lactic acid. *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, a rod-shaped species, and *Streptococcus thermophilus*, a bead-shaped species, are primarily the bacteria that are used.

These two species of bacteria have health-promoting characteristics. They have been shown to be linked to more effective absorption of some nutrients, decreased incidence of colon cancer, lower cholesterol, higher immunity, aid healing after gastrointestinal infections, decrease in yeast infections, and easier digestion by lactose-intolerant individuals.

A famous (and often infamous) characteristic of bacteria is its ability to multiply exponentially. In the case of yogurt, this characteristic is a very good thing. When the bacteria multiply, they are a strong force in reducing the breakdown of bile into carcinogenic bile acids, protecting your

colon from cancer. Yogurt consumption has also been linked to lower cholesterol, and though the reason for this is not yet certain, it may be because the bacteria absorbs some cholesterol from the bloodstream.

Yogurt absorbs the calcium and B vitamins better than milk because lactic acid aids in their digestion, and protein is already partially digested during fermentation, so ultimately the body can digest it more effectively. As a result, yogurt ends up being a better source of the same nutrients as milk. (Make no mistake; milk itself still is exceptionally healthy, and you should continue to drink it!)

Even lactose-intolerant individuals can reap yogurt's benefits! This is because lactose intolerance is the result of the body's failure to produce the enzyme lactase, which digests the lactose in milk. Since yogurt has less lactose and more lactic acid, the bacterial cultures can produce enough lactase themselves to assimilate the remaining lactose.

Does Greek yogurt have any additional health benefits over those of regular yogurt?

The label on a container of Chobani claims that the yogurt contains "two times more protein than regular yogurts." During its straining process, more water is removed than for regular yogurt, so the bulk of the volume is just protein-rich yogurt. Additional health advantages of Greek yogurt are lower amounts of sodium and carbohydrates.

As the old adage goes, "break-

fast is the most important meal of the day," and it is true; eating breakfast has been proven to have many positive effects. Yogurt, especially Greek yogurt, is a smart choice for the most important meal because its high protein content will help you feel fuller and you will eat less during the rest of the day, and all its nutrients can get your day started on the right foot.

Yogurt is a versatile breakfast food. Many people mix their yogurt with fruit, granola, or honey, which makes for an interesting and filling breakfast. Blended in a smoothie, it is a fabulous pick-me-up. I even have a friend who likes her yogurt with balsamic vinegar! Around the world, and especially in Eastern countries such as India, yogurt is a staple made into soups and salads and is seasoned with all types of spices and herbs.

Although yogurt can be a very healthy food, do not be fooled into thinking that all yogurt products are healthy. Make sure that you buy yogurt with the National Yogurt Association's "live and active cultures" seal, and that the yogurt does not contain added sugars, especially corn syrup, and artificial ingredients.

If you already love yogurt and eat it frequently, you are doing the right thing! If you have not gotten into it yet but want to be healthy, try grabbing a yogurt for breakfast tomorrow.

Food Poisoning, Continued from page 13

picnic basket, have the potential to provide the bacteria with a nice environment to grow.

New research, however, suggests that mayonnaise may be not that bad. In fact, a 2008 New York Times article reported that a study published in the *Journal of Food Protection* (JFP) found that the growth of harmful bacteria in contaminated chicken and ham slowed and, in some cases, even stopped altogether in the presence of mayonnaise. A 2009 New York Times article reported that the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) came out with a list of the ten riskiest foods for causing food poisoning and mayonnaise was nowhere on the list. Why not? And why did mayonnaise slow the growth of bacteria in the JFP study?

Most commercially-prepared

mayonnaise contains large amounts of vinegar or other acidic substances that lower the pH of the mayonnaise, an environmental factor that is extremely inhospitable to bacteria, prohibiting their growth and sometimes killing them outright. This, in fact, gives commercial mayonnaise an increased protection against spoilage, though we do not suggest that foods containing mayonnaise are safe to eat when they have been out of the refrigerator for an extended period of time.

Bacteria find their way into food more easily than one might think, so how do you protect your food while on a picnic? Make sure your work surface is clean, your hands are washed well, and you use clean utensils and containers when preparing the food.

Package or serve prepared foods in different containers than the ones used to prepare them, as this prevents microbes that may have gotten into the containers during preparation from latching onto the finished product.

Wrap prepared foods in plastic, foil, or reusable containers to keep them protected.

Picnic baskets may be idyllic, but a better option would be a cooler and ice-packs as this will keep the food cooler and fresher. Be warned, a cooler is no substitute for a refrigerator and will not protect food indefinitely.

These are some things that will make your picnic more enjoyable and keep the bacteria at bay.

Too bad we can't say the same for the ants.

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OPINIONS

Summer of Discontent

By Marganit Rauch

The Observer faces the unfortunate reality of being a monthly newspaper, which—given the News's nasty habit of changing far more frequently than one might like—has meant that news is typically not reported as it happens, but after the event, and often much after. Luckily The Observer is an intelligent newspaper, and has decided to try and rectify this situation with a website that will provide more frequent news updates. For now, this article will summarize a couple of events that took place over the summer, events that have been chosen for the neat way they relate to one another.

As a famous Russian novelist once [almost] said, "Happy revolutions are all alike; every unhappy revolution is unhappy in its own way." Whilst I am not sure that a happy revolution actually exists, the latter part of this sentence can certainly be applied to the various revolutions, riots, and protests that have filled the newspapers over the past few months. The Arab Spring—the name given to the series of demonstrations and

protests that have occurred in the Arab world over this past year—is no longer 'new' news, but it continues to fill the headlines due to its ever-changing nature. However, the focus of this article will not be on those revolutions, as they are not only impossible to condense but also require daily updating. Rather, let us focus on the social protests in Israel, and England. The Arab Spring remains noteworthy here if only as a springboard from which the Israeli protestors drew inspiration.

To the average reader of a newspaper, the power of a single person became quite obvious in recent months. Whilst one can certainly argue over the exact cause of the Arab Spring, the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi certainly provided an impetus, and as news of his protest spread, others were quick to rally around. Had Bouazizi's act been quietly hushed up, it is possible that the revolutions would not have happened at that time (although they were bound to happen, eventually). The importance of the Internet as a means to spread

news also became relevant, with social networking outlets such as Twitter and Facebook widely touted as the forces behind the spread of the revolutions.

These same social networks came under heavy criticism for the roles they played in the recent riots in the United Kingdom, with questions raised of whether these websites could temporarily close until the riots calmed down. The stimulus for these riots was supposedly the shooting of Mark Duggan by the police. Duggan was shot in Tottenham, London, during an attempt to arrest him. The circumstances of his death were murky, and led to a public demonstration against the police, which then escalated into horrific scenes of violence and rioting.

Unlike the Arab Spring, however, the "social protests" in the United Kingdom were far from inspiring, nor did they herald any sort of constructive change. Many of the rioters themselves did not attribute any sort of positive motive to their destructive acts. In fact, as one eloquent (and anonymous) youth put it, "it's 'cos we can. Innit."



London: Firefighters put out a blaze set by young rioters this August.

Certainly Twitter, Facebook, and most notably, Blackberry Messenger, played their parts in allowing the rioters to communicate with one another, yet to assign too much blame to social networking would be foolish, and would give a perhaps more commendable air of planning and premeditation to the riots, when it is far more obvious that these were spontaneous acts committed by youths in search of free "stuff."

One cannot even argue that these rioters chose their victims

carefully, knowing who they were hurting. One anonymous youth said in an interview that, "We're sticking it to the rich." Even if that were the case, the extent of the damage that these riots caused is unforgivable, but worse still is that, in fact, these riots did not just affect the wealthy. The victims of these riots were often not wealthy at all, but hard-working shop owners who had spent years building up businesses. The riots were quite literally random

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Finding Your Balance

By Joanna Ross-Tash

Yoga is the best way to attain strength, flexibility, and serenity. When life is busy and demanding, practitioners of yoga, or yogis, find their mental calmness tucked away in yoga studios all over the world. Bikram Yoga (Traditional Hot Yoga) is a favorite of many yogis. It is a ninety-minute class that includes twenty-six set poses that are performed in a room set at about 105 degrees, breaking from the rush of daily life and creating a space for meditation and introspection.

New Yorkers – and even SCW students – can find a cheap and accessible place to practice yoga. For instance, Yoga to the People houses a conveniently located studio on 1017 6th Avenue (38th Street). Just around the corner is a five-dollar yoga class awaiting your visit.

I was first introduced to Yoga to the People when I attended Bikram Yoga with SCW's very own health club. One year later, I am completely shocked that my first experience did not deter me from ever going back. The heat of the room, the difficulty of the unfamiliar poses, and the oily panini that I ate before the

session created a nauseating and somewhat painful first encounter with yoga. However, and quite fortunately, I tried a different yoga class – Power Vinyasa Flow – and was hooked by the lower temperature and numerous poses that both relaxed and invigorated my body. Soon, my days began to schedule themselves around my one hour of heated bliss. My body began to feel leaner and stronger, while my mind began to experience serenity. I became addicted to my newly limber hips,

to my controlled breath, and to the buzzing sensation that I felt across my limbs everyday. I became addicted to the way that I could watch myself slowly change into a more open, stronger, and flexible self with patience and practice. All of the difficulties that were presented in my daily life became challenges that I could (and would) overcome. Rather than feeling stress and anxiety, I felt that I was a warrior. I began to see a parallel between my actions in class and my actions

out of class. In the same way that I would simply breathe through difficult patches of poses, I would also simply be that strong and able person I have always wanted to be after class. All of this for the cheap price of five dollars.

Whether in class or running around the busy city, do not be afraid to try new things. Once you are able to no longer fear the unknown and accept the challenge of a new position, your mind will become more open to new opportunities in your daily life. You become less fearful and less inhibited, giving yourself the freedom to experience your own greater potential. Like trying a headstand for the first time, it is likely that you will fail to find perfect balance in your life without some calm control.

Yoga has given me focus, perspective, and most importantly acceptance. There are days where I am asked by the yoga instructor to calmly twist my body into the eagle pose. This is the pose that I have struggled with for months and months, determined to find the balance and strength the pose demands. I no longer feel the frustration while a burn inside me

tries to take away my breath or I lose my balance and fall a little. No longer do I develop minor anxiety when I am inadequate or incapable of attaining perfect balance and coordination. I patiently await my opportunity to shine through the moments. I breathe when the burning sensation fill every muscle in my body. I do not shy away from a challenge because I know that if I just breathe, stick with the pose a little longer, and allow myself to experience the discomfort, I will be much stronger in the long run. Demand a little more out of your day, walk around the corner, and give yoga a chance.



Yoga to the People, at 38th Street, offers \$5 yoga classes.

OPINIONS

Social Action

By Avi Bagley, YC '12

On March 13, 1964, a young woman named Kitty Genovese was murdered and raped. What made this case interesting and famous was that an estimated twelve people witnessed the events on this day in some way, yet shockingly, none of them called the police. This led to a number of psychological investigations into how it could be that people just ignored the screams. Psychologists then made a discovery about human behavior which became known as the "bystander effect". The bystander effect is the idea that a person will not take action if other people witness the same event due to the expectation that someone else will take care of it. Well I want to confess that I am a subject of the bystander effect, as well as much

of the YU/Stern community.

At the beginning of last year, I sat in on a number of events that took place in the YU/Stern community. The one thing that shocked me most was the astonishingly low number of participants in these social action events. One event, in particular, is highlighted in my mind. The Holocaust committee ran an event where they previewed a film, and then had a panel discussion about it. Naturally, I care about Holocaust remembrance and appreciate a healthy discussion, and I attended the event. In Belfer Hall, on the first floor, a room was set up with a lot of chairs and tables. I remember sitting down and waiting for the room to fill up. It never did. In fact the room looked quite empty. All

I could do was wonder how an event as important and urgent as this could be overlooked by the majority of this large Jewish community.

No one is really to blame and it is far from anyone's fault. Ironically, the problem is that we are constantly surrounded by Jews. We are a homogeneous group of people. In Yeshiva College and in SCW we are completely entrenched in a Jewish atmosphere. This atmosphere leads to a number of things. Mainly, though, it leads to apathy.

When I talk about apathy, I have to define it first. The apathy that I refer to is not necessarily negative. It is the kind of non-caring that evolves from a caring attitude. We all, in the YU community, care about

the Jewish community. If we did not, a lot of us would not be attending Yeshiva University. The problem occurs when there are so many people caring. It becomes easy for us to lay the burden on others' shoulders. When there are so many people just like us, who also care, then we think "let them do the work" so that we can concentrate on other matters. This leads to inadequate attendance at awareness events, and inadequate social action.

Imagine what a school like YU could accomplish if we all put our similarities together and gathered for a greater cause. If we all decided not just to talk about how we support Israel and chessed, but to act as one. Imagine if we all signed up for rallies, helped the sick and poor in New York City,

and helped pass the message of the Holocaust on to the younger generations. We are all different and unique and we all have different ways of expressing ourselves. However, there is one commonality between us all - we are all Jewish. That being the case, let's not sit around and make excuses for not promoting social action. Let us get up and rally, as one united student body, to try to make a difference in this world. Let us stand together and raise our voices so that we are not just one among a million universities, but that we actually stand for something: we stand for the Jewish people, as one, forever.

Riots, continued from page 15

acts of destruction perpetrated by a young generation, with the only message one could possibly perceive being that the most important thing in life is to have the latest HD television. And sweatpants.

The aftermath of the riots provided an opportunity for members of the British public to redeem themselves, with large clean-up acts organized by various groups, and Facebook groups aplenty denouncing the acts committed by the rioters. These actions, though admirable, were not enough to rid the UK of the memory of a country on fire, and the rioters have certainly caused an unpleasant blight on the reputation of the UK's youth.

The rioters in the UK may have felt entitled to their form of social protest because of the poor socio-economic backgrounds that many of them came from (although by the end of the riots it seemed as though it did not matter whether one was rich, poor, Oxbridge educated, or not—it was all hands on deck) but the way that they showed their dissatisfaction with their situation is all the more embarrassing when one compares it to the much more inspiring social protestation that occurred almost simultaneously in Israel.

Once again it was the apparent combination of a single person, Daphni Leef, and the use of Facebook that spurred a multitude of others to join in her protest. Frustrated with the high price of rent in Israel, Leef decided to erect a tent in Central Tel Aviv, and utilized Facebook

to call upon others to join her—a call that was answered by a huge amount of Israelis, with a Ha'aretz poll suggesting that 87% of Israelis are behind the protests.

The protests are non-violent, and have brought together the young people of Israel. This is a protest that transcends political sentiments—both the left-wingers and the right-wingers need a place to live—and so it is almost singular in its unifying capability. This is a rally for affordable living, for cheaper education, and for more reasonable living standards. It is the middle class that often loses out at times of economic turmoil, and it is this middle class which makes up a large part of the protesters. Yet this is a protest that hopes to benefit everyone, not just the students who started it—which is slated as the reason for Leef's adamant rejection of Netanyahu's plan that offered a solution just for students.

The growing gulf between the rich and the poor in Israel has led to this middle-class crisis. There is affordable housing available in certain areas of Israel, but these are more unpleasant areas, where people who have a choice do not want to live. In the major cities, property prices have indeed sky-rocketed, and the scarcity of affordable housing is due to a limited supply of available housing and great deal of property being owned by the very rich who, seeking good returns on their investments, have increased the price of rent. The government could build more

affordable housing, but to do this it would need a great deal of money. Any party in power in the Knesset is far too beholden to the small pressure groups they represent. This has meant that certain sectors of the country get money without needing to offer any positive contribution (or, to be less politically correct, act as parasites), and other sectors just get more money than is perhaps sensible. Ideally the government would be able to revamp its priorities and spend less money on these sectors, and on national security, but this latter seems unlikely and impractical unless political stability can be reached.

Writing from the UK, this protest in Israel is inspiring, pictures of tent cities warming the heart in a way completely antithetical with the terrible pictures of destruction that came from the protests in the UK. Yet is not without its faults. The beauty of this protest mainly lies in the positive aspect of the coming together of a nation for a cause. "It's been really nice seeing the younger generation standing up for something" notes Sara, a student at Ben-Gurion University in Be'er Sheva, "but the practicalities haven't really been considered. Everyone started demonstrating but perhaps one needs to recognize that it might not be economically viable for the government to just give into our demands.

"The Israeli economy is fairly stable, for the government to put so much more money into housing, they'd have to take it

from somewhere else. A lot of the money is spent on national security—and it's hard to make the case that money should be taken from there."

That the Israeli government



Israel: signs hanging in a tent city

must recognize the importance of a conversation that does not solely revolve around national security is indisputable. Social progress is necessary to ensure the continuing success of Israeli society. Nevertheless, the realities of living in a country permanently under threat means that the government cannot avail itself of certain liberties that other governments might have in their possession.

At the time of writing this article, the Negev is suffering from a fresh onslaught of rockets, and the question of going back into Gaza is once again fresh on everyone's lips. It is unclear what will happen to the protests, and the demands on the government, as the government decides how

best to approach these new attacks. It is encouraging to see the Israeli public protesting something as normal as housing prices and living standards. The Israeli news has been so

filled with the protests that one could almost (although never entirely) forget the many barriers that still stand in the way of a country at peace. Seeing the younger generation unite in the tent cities, regardless of their political leanings, is heartening and allows for the possibility that, perhaps, the Israeli public will one day agree on a political stance. Unfortunately, the rockets come as a harsh reminder of the other obstacles to peace, which show no signs of coming to an agreement about anything.