



The Yeshiva University

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Major News, No Minor Required:

A Look at the Recent SY SYMS Academic Policy Changes

Rivka Hia On the morning of November 14th, students at the Beren campus received an e-mail from Dean Bacon and Dean Pava informing them of two academic policy changes. The first change allows Stern College for Women students to take two business courses at the Sy Syms School of Business as electives towards their General Education requirements—“whether or not they complete a business minor.” The second change requires students at SSSB to take “the same Jewish Studies program” as SCW students, adding on an additional two credits in Jewish History, three in Jewish Philosophy, as well as seven additional CORE credits.

Many students have been asking themselves what caused these changes. According to Student Academic Affairs Committee (SAAC)’s co-chairs Robin Joshowitz ’14 and Penina Bernstein ’14, the policy that SCW students could only audit Sy Syms classes but not take



them for credit has been challenged by students for years, and was most recently a subject of discussion at the Beren Town Hall meeting this fall. In the words of Sy Syms Dean Moses Pava, bringing the issue up at the town hall meeting with President Joel “didn’t hurt.”

Dean Pava further noted that “Stern College faculty has been asking for this for some time. This year in particular, President Joel’s

course (“Leadership in the Non-Profit World”) was an anomaly—all students would not get credit. The policy has outlived itself.”

When asked if there was anyone in particular responsible for this policy change, Dean Pava replied that “the credit goes to Dean Bacon for liberalizing Stern’s policy.”

According to Dean Bacon, Sy Syms originally asked SCW to only count business

classes towards a minor in order to encourage students to try Sy Syms classes. “Apparently it didn’t accomplish a lot. Students had to commit to many courses instead of one.”

Describing the new policy change as “Plan B,” Dean Bacon went on to explain that “we wanted to give students more of an opportunity to make informed choices. Students were hesitant to take courses unless they counted. The main concern should be ‘what can I learn?’ not ‘what does it count for?’ We decided to make it easier for students to try things out,” she added.

How will the ‘no minor requirement’ impact Stern students? According to Bernstein, “it will encourage more students to take a Syms class. Instead of going back and forth whether or not to take it, just take it.”

Making it easier for Stern students to take Sy Syms classes is important, according to *Continued on page 3*

Not Just a Game: “Knockout Game” and the Recent Shootings

Elana Kook What first seemed like a random string of assault attacks does not appear to be random anymore. Although the attacks originally started sporadically in large cities outside of New York, over the past few weeks New York City has become the epicenter of the attacks known as the “knockout game”. Although the perpetrators have been reported to be teenagers and young adults, some as young as twelve or thirteen years old, the nature of the assaults do not resemble that of child’s play. Victims of these attacks are innocent pedestrians who are blind-sighted with a blow to the head, with the intent to cause a concussion, or “knockout” the victim. The innocent victims of these attacks are at best left lying on the pavement, and some of these attacks have been reported to even be fatal. Police are speculating that the object of this so-

called game is to knock out the unsuspecting individual with once punch.

Not only do these sporadic assaults seem to be connected, the recent “knockout” attacks have called into question the possible underlying motivation of anti-Semitism. Having an already notorious tumultuous history between the African American and Jewish communities in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, the recent attacks have re-sparked controversy after a number of the victims of the latest “knockout” attacks have been members of the Jewish community. In November, a man was charged with third-degree assault and with assault as a hate crime after allegedly punching twenty-four year old Shmuel Perl, a Jewish man in Crown Heights. This is not the first of the attacks allegedly aimed towards Jews. Other *Continued on page 7*

My YU: An Expanded Palace of Pluralism

Yael Roberts As I begin to read “Expanding the Palace of Jewry” by Jina Davidovich in the November 18 issue of *The Observer*, I nod my head and smile. I fundamentally agree with her sentiments about how Stern College has gifted her with a love of Torah, a lifelong community of supportive women, and a feeling of obligation to change the world. The article offers a rich perspective from an alumna looking back on her Stern experience, and the parts of her Stern career that she highlights as meaningful, inspiring, and life-changing are experiences many at Stern can relate to for their power and potency.

As I continue to read, however, I am struck by Davidovich’s claim that Yeshiva University has failed to interact and converse with other denominations. She states that in “an environment like Yeshiva University, tunnel vision when relating to the Jewish community is an all-too-pervasive epidemic.” Additionally, the values of intrafaith dialogue have “yet to permeate the walls of Yeshiva University, which often tend to shut out more than they let in.”

It is true that the institution, Yeshiva University, does not, to my knowledge, encourage its students to converse with other Jewish denominations. There are no roundtable discussions with Conservative and Reform Rabbis hosted in Yagoda Commons, nor are there events co-hosted with JTS or HUC. I believe that these conversations are important and necessary. But, by-and-large, Yeshiva University, as an institution, does not reach out to other denominations, nor does it encourage its students to do so.

However, there is a distinction between the institution of Yeshiva University and its student body. Davidovich argues for the imperative to converse with other denominations on a communal and individual level. She writes, “Just as an individual Jew cannot exist as an island – for whom will he bicker and argue with – the Modern Orthodox community cannot exist as an island, ignoring the other denominations and groups of Jews who are equally committed to and passionate about their Judaism.”

I wholeheartedly agree. But what I disagree with here is Davidovich’s claim that the community and individuals at Yeshiva University have not accomplished this imperative. They have.

I cannot speak for the entire student body. I am sure that others have had different experiences than I have had. I can only speak for my experience within the student body, as a fourth-year student who cares deeply about my fellow students and about this university.

Stern College is by no means a diverse place. We are, for the most part, female, Jewish, and white. We often hail from “in-towner” areas, and most of us define as Orthodox Jews. The stereotypes are true, and as with all stereotypes, there are exceptions.

Not everyone here defines as an Orthodox Jew. Amongst those that do, there exists a wide range of observance. From students who do not adhere to halakha at all to those who adhere to it with the utmost stringency, from those who are self-proclaimed atheists to those who believe that God dictates their every move, the *Continued on page 3*



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A man in Brooklyn says he’s a victim of the Knockout Game.

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An Imperfect Hero: Remembering Nelson Mandela

Hannah Dreyfus Reinstein In a historic passing that went largely unrecognized in the Yeshiva University community, Nelson Mandela, the revered South African anti-apartheid icon, died on Thursday, December 5th at age 95.

Mandela leaves behind a legacy of heroism in the face of tremendous adversity. In 1962, he was arrested for his militant sabotage campaign against the apartheid government. Convicted of conspiracy to overthrow the state, he was sentenced to life imprisonment and sent to Robben Island. As inmate No. 466/64, he slept on the floor of a six-foot-wide cell for 27 years. While incarcerated, Mandela earned a law degree via correspondence.

During those two-plus decades, the global anti-apartheid movement gained traction. His incarceration began to draw the world's attention. Songs were dedicated to him, and 600 million people watched the Free Mandela

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."
— Nelson Mandela

concert at London's Wembley Stadium in 1988.

In 1985, Mandela refused the government's offer to free him if he renounced armed struggle against apartheid. It wasn't until South African President P.W. Botha had a stroke and was replaced by F.W. de Klerk in 1989 that the world finally prepared for Mandela's imminent release. On February 11th, 1990, an aged Mandela closed his cell door for the last time. He was met on the other side by an exuberant crowd.

Directly after his release, Mandela joined negotiations with President F. W. de Klerk to abolish apartheid and establish multiracial elections in 1994, in which he led the African National Congress (ANC) to victory and became South Africa's first black president.



He and de Klerk were honored with the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts. Mandela published his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, in 1995.

A democratic hero. An idealist. A visionary. It is difficult not to marvel at the accomplishments and progress brought about by this one man.

Yet, in the Jewish community, there is a feeling of unease with indiscriminately venerating Mandela. He openly supported and aligned himself with the Palestinian cause, viewing them as fellow "freedom fighters." He is critiqued time and again for his embrace of Yasir Arafat, calling him a "brother" and a "comrade in arms." He did not reject the PLO, stating in 1990, "We do not reject the PLO as a terrorist organization." In 2000, Mandela defended Iran's false conviction of 13 Iranian Jews for espionage, calling the trial "free and fair." He encouraged Israel to give over the West Bank to a Palestinian state, though qualifying that the Arabs must first recognize Israel "under secure borders."

However, though Mandela

"There is no passion to be found playing small—in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living."
— Nelson Mandela

never evaded accusations of being anti-Israel, and despite the fact that he allied himself with parties who denied Israel's right to exist, Mandela forged close ties with South Africa's Jewish community.

He notably reached out to the country's late Chief Rabbi, Cyril Harris, and appeared at many Jewish events.

Yet, Mandela additionally failed to challenge the violent regimes of tyrants like Kaddafi in Libya and Mugabe in Zimbabwe. While he himself renounced a regime of violence, he understood and sympathized with the effectiveness of militant action, even terrorism.

With so many seeming stains on his record, how are we supposed to remember this great man? A degree of ambivalence is understandable. Must his imperfections detract from his legacy?

I argue to the contrary. Appreciating a holistic and realistic picture of Mandela's life need not diminish from our reverence. Can we say he did not consort with terrorists? No. But does he remain a model of democracy, a shining example of the powers of reconciliation and forgiveness? Absolutely.

History often has the tendency
"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."
— Nelson Mandela

to whitewash the legacies of its most beloved heroes. Those who throw dirt on pristine portraits are labeled as conspirators and muckrakers, disrupting an otherwise perfect memory.

But history need not idealize its heroes. Mandela need not be absolved of his mistakes in order to be remembered as a luminary. After all, our own tradition and texts make a point of documenting the missteps and oversights of our greatest biblical heroes. They remain heroes nonetheless.

Here's to one dignified, imperfect hero. Thank you for giving the world hope. Thank you, Nelson Mandela, for teaching us about the power for good nestled in every beating human heart.

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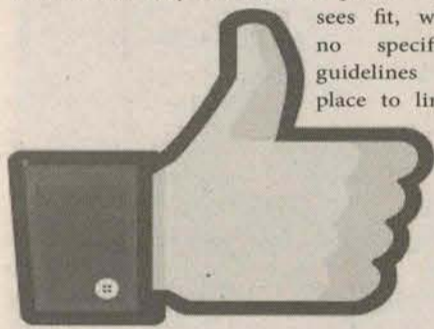
SternConnects: SCW's Facebook Culture

Shira Leff Social media has done for the Stern community what democracy has done for politics. Neither class rank, experience, or GPA matters on social media. With student-started and maintained Facebook groups, students of all ranks can communicate and collaborate with each other, creating a closer Stern community and increasing the camaraderie of the Stern College student body.

While Stern does have its own Google group, with emails affectionately called 'studs' sent out to the entire student body, these emails are filtered through a moderator, and there is a long list of criteria which must be met in order for a message to be approved. In contrast, the group description of Stern's largest student-run Facebook group, Stern-In-The-Know, is "a group where anyone can ask anything related to Stern: classes, teachers, caf food, you name it," an apt description of the group's purpose.

Currently boasting 730 members and counting, Stern-In-The-Know is the fastest way to get YU-related information of any kind, including assignments, schedule changes, caf openings and closings, student-offered services and businesses, and other bits of important information. Any student can post as she

sees fit, with no specified guidelines in place to limit



the post's content. Also, the lack of a moderator allows for no time gaps in posting; students often post to the group as late as 2, 3, and even 4 AM—and shockingly, others respond at those hours as well.

Facebook also allows for communication with past Stern students. There are quite a few alumni on the Stern-in-the-Know group; since there is no moderator, students are not automatically removed when they graduate, and some alumni prefer to remain in the group. This allows current Stern students to glean helpful advice and tips from those who've experienced a particular situation before them. Communication with past students also allows current students to start building their professional network in a way that is more informal and perhaps more helpful than traditional methods. Students have also been known to find mentors from the group, such as when past students answered their questions in a particularly helpful way and personal relationships were formed.

Facebook is particularly helpful in spreading university-wide events. On Facebook, one can create and share events with friends, complete with pictures and updates. This is an incredibly helpful feature for students who wish to let the Stern community know about events occurring in the university, and the system is particularly essential for those events that need to have a minimum number of students attending. With the Facebook events system, events can be shared with friends, who can then share the event with their own friends, creating a huge audience in a very short amount of time. When shared with the 730+ members of Stern-in-the-Know, along with the student council groups and individual

club groups, that audience grows ever larger. Furthermore, one can see which friends are attending the event, which adds a peer pressure factor and also frequently increases not only attendance, but enthusiasm and school-spirit as well. Event organizers and invited guests can also post comments, which generate added buzz for the event. Finally, last-minute details and changes can also be posted to the event, which is integral for the smooth running of events. S-studs cannot boast such features.

While Stern-In-The-Know is the largest and most well-known Stern Facebook group, it is by no means the only one. Each student council has its own group, along with each class of YU (i.e. class of 2014, 2015, 2016) and many student-run clubs create their own pages as well. The very-active Yeshiva Rides group allows students to offer rides to fellow YU students to specified locations; students also search for rides on this group. The group Textbook Exchange is very active at the beginning and end of every semester; students post tens of posts a day where they buy and sell textbooks and other class materials to each other. YU Apartments is another active group where apartment leads (and related items such as furniture) in the Heights are posted.

Stern Compliments is a new arrival to the Stern College Facebook scene. It is not a group; rather, it appears as a person that one must 'friend' in order to see updates. Currently boasting 515 friends and counting, the initiative was started and is run by an anonymous Stern student, who also serves as the group's moderator. Students submit compliments about other Stern students as a message to 'Stern Compliments'. The anonymous moderator reviews the submitted entries for

NEWS

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appropriateness, and then posts them as her status so that all of Stern Compliments' friends can see it. The student to whom the post is addressed is tagged, and other students can and do 'like' the post. The purpose of the moderator as the middleman is that all compliments are thereby anonymous, all posted under the guise of 'Stern Compliments'. The moderator explains her motivation for starting the group: "Often we see so much good in both our friends, and people who we are not necessarily friends with, but we never express it, either because it's awkward, or because it just doesn't come up. Conversely, so many people do so much good and they feel unappreciated because no one seems to notice. The Compliments page creates a perfect opportunity to show people that you do notice their greatness, but without having to feel uncomfortable telling them directly. It's really important for people to feel that what they are doing matters and is noticed and appreciated. As students of Yeshiva University, we can make that move, and contribute to the love between all the people of Am Yisrael."

One of the main benefits of attending Yeshiva University is tapping into a community that is at once close-knit and diverse. Student-run Facebook groups serve as the catalyst that links these paradoxical elements of Stern College, creating a student body that is warm, cohesive, and most importantly, connected.

Jew in the City's 2013 All Star Event: A Celebration of Orthodox Judaism

Naomi Wakschlag Where can you find a CNN reporter interviewing a man in a *bekeshe*, shot glasses brimming with soup, and a girl holding a flaming marshmallow on a stick? Look no further than the Second Annual Jew in the City All Star Event.

Since 2007, Jew in the City has been working to demolish the negative stereotype of Orthodox Jews among non-Jews and non-Orthodox Jews and to provide a real look into the beauty of Orthodox Judaism. According to its mission statement, Jew in the City's events, online videos, and other projects aim to broadcast "the message that Orthodox Jews can be funny, approachable, educated, pro-women and open-minded."

At its annual All Star Event, which took place on Sunday evening, November 24 and was timed to coincide with the rare overlap of Chanukah and Thanksgiving, Jew in the City honored ten successful Orthodox Jewish professionals from a diverse array of backgrounds and disciplines. This year's honorees included Nobel Laureate Dr. Robert Aumann, *Fill the Void* director Rama Burshtein, Issamar Ginsburg, a marketing guru listed as one of Inc. Magazine's Top 10 Entrepreneurs and the descendant of prominent Hassidic Rabbis, Dr. Laurel Steinherz, Director of Pediatric Cardiology at Memorial Sloan Kettering and co-founder of Camp Simcha, and the first Orthodox women's basketball player, Naama Shafir, among others.

At 6:30 PM, the doors to Manhattan's newly renovated Lincoln Square Synagogue were opened for the party, which was complete with news reporters and a red carpet. The main

lights were dimmed and colorful spotlights swept back and forth, illuminating the crowd of over 150 people, while a DJ blasted popular contemporary Jewish tunes, including the Maccabeats' smash hit Candlelight. Guests were treated to a delicious spread, which, in honor of the upcoming holidays, included a latke bar with utensils bearing the message "Happy Thanksgiving." Several of the All-Stars were present and roamed about the room, answering questions.

"Religiosity does not mean sacrifice," noted Issamar Ginzberg, the only All Star who arrived in a *bekeshe* and black hat and later donned a streimel. "It hasn't hurt me. If anything, it has helped. All the men who come in wearing suits look the same after a while, but people remember me."

According to Dr. Laurel Steinherz, the hardest challenge of being an Orthodox Jew in the professional world is "the time constraints of Shabbat and Yom Tov." She explained that though she always tried to make it home for Shabbat for the benefit of her family, she always had a backup plan, in case she couldn't make it back in time, which thankfully was not that often.

Guests of the event included many other successful Orthodox professionals, including the two members of Bulletproof Stockings, an all-female, American Hasidic rock band. In a comment which seemed to encapsulate the credo of Jew in the City, Dalia Shusterman, half of the musical pair, offered the following message to Orthodox Jews striving for professional success: "There is always a kosher way to do what you want to do."

Major News, No Minor Required

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Dean Pava, because all students, regardless of their major, will be confronted with different aspects of business in their careers. As he put it, "whether going into business or not, you will be going into business."

As to the new Judaic studies requirements policy, Dean Pava thinks that it not will have a "major impact." He added, "It will encourage more solidarity at the Beren campus and if you plan accordingly it shouldn't be a hurdle." According to Dean Bacon, "Some will take more Jewish Studies courses. For many there will be no impact. For others it will be wonderful to have more Jewish Studies—that's why people come to Stern."

What about having non-majors in Sy Syms classes? "This won't be such a big deal," Dean Pava insists. "Students have done this in the past. This is all for the good—diverse students, diverse perspectives." Dean Bacon offered a less enthusiastic view: "It's possible classes will get bigger. Popular classes will get bigger. I don't know if heterogeneity will be positive—it'll be an experiment."

Current Syms students do not have to scramble to fulfill the new Judaic requirements since they are 'grandfathered' in, with the new Judaic policy taking effect with the incoming freshman class. Though the e-mail about the policy changes did state that "graduating seniors who might have difficulty fulfilling this requirement should meet with their Academic Advisor," this seems to have been some sort of mistake and Academic Advisement has since been notified about the stipulation that current Syms student are exempt from

the new policy change.

SCW student Rena Blatt '15 remarked that "it's amazing Stern is willing to accommodate students who have an interest in business but aren't able to minor in it."

In light of the policy changes, Bernstein encourages students to continue to bring suggestions and concerns to SAAC's attention. "It is helpful having a conduit where meaningful discussions can take place. Good suggestions will make the Deans enthusiastic," she remarked. Added Joshowitz, "Sometimes students don't think issues are important. We are a good liaison. We don't mind bringing these issues up." According to Dean Bacon, the administration is receptive to the feedback of the student body. "Our doors are always open," she stated. "Come in anytime and talk."

Though the old policies were long-standing, their purpose was unclear even to the Deans. When asked about the origins of the 'minor required for Syms courses to count' policy, Dean Pava commented "I never understood the old policy. It didn't make a whole lot of sense to be honest." As to the origins of the differing Judaic Studies policies, Dean Bacon similarly answered, "I don't know. Maybe a mistake? An oversight? No logical basis."

Students, faculty and deans all want more reciprocity between the two schools at the Beren campus, and given that many of our current academic policies were made by previous administrations and so their origins are often unknown, dialogue between the students and administration, faculty and administration is clearly essential. Maybe two Town Hall meetings a year is not enough.

YU Admissions and Your Social Media Footprint

Sara Olson You likely remember those stressful months in your senior year as you labored over your Stern application. There were essay questions, transcript requests, a list of your extracurricular activities, and the endless stream of repetitious forms that were likely responsible for the memorization of your social security number. But in addition to your resume, did the YU admissions office pay close attention to your Facebook page and Twitter account? Does the admissions office have a policy regarding prospective students' social media footprints and how does YU's policy compare to other colleges in the U.S.?

In a recent New York Times article entitled, "They Loved Your G.P.A. Then They Saw Your Tweets," journalist Natasha Singer investigated the policies of admissions offices in a variety of universities, focusing specifically on whether or not the universities researched prospective students' social media and other online activities. As this research would be for the purpose of learning more about the student, it could involve looking for both red flags (posts or comments that reflect negatively on the student's character) and green flags, such as postings of awards or projects. While

none of the schools she interviewed had any official policy, and most did not look at the social media of prospective students, some do allow their admissions officers to do online research about prospective students' on an as-needed basis.

The larger question, of course, is what sort of policy YU admissions has. Need applicants to YU undergraduate and masters programs make a point to edit their Facebook pages? Should they post papers or projects in order to impress an admissions officer looking for further information?

Rabbi Kenneth Brander, Vice President for University and Community Life and The David Mitzer Dean of the Center for the Jewish Future (CJF), responded with an emphatic no.

"We do not actively 'check out' each student using social media sites," said Rabbi Brander. He explained that this policy is

based on the fact that YU Admissions uses a "High Touch Approach to recruitment" – high involvement with the potential students.

"We don't purchase lists," said Rabbi Brander. "For example, the College Board's SAT program sells lists of [high school] juniors and seniors indicating those who are

Jewish and have high SAT grades. We don't buy those lists. We have professional relationships with all of the schools that we recruit from [and] those close relationships we have with our feeder high schools allow us to gain insight into our applicants. We also interview

every potential student, which is no longer the norm in other universities. With that much interaction with our potential students and the fact that we re-engage with a large percentage of them in Israel, we don't see any need to use social media [or other online research]."

"If a prospective student were to post a disparaging comment on Twitter about a university, that school may still see that post."

It should be noted, however, that universities likely keep track of their own mentions on the internet by whatever sources, for PR purposes. So if a prospective student were to post a disparaging comment on Twitter about a university, that school may still see that post.

"Students [have] posted comments on Facebook which may come to our attention," noted Rabbi Brander.

Whether a university or grad school has a policy to research potential students using social media or not, common sense would dictate that in any event, one should be careful about what one posts on the internet. Snooping admissions officers aside, Natasha Singer noted in her article that, today, it is a given that businesses will be checking out job candidates' online profiles.

"Nothing is private on the Internet," cautioned Rabbi Brander. "And while you might not care about a certain posting in high school or in college, it may come to harm you about issues much more important than university acceptance."

Charlie Harary's Tips for a Successful Life: Coming Soon to Your TV

Riva Tropp Over the last few decades, Professor Charlie Harary has become a household name among Modern Orthodox teens. Professor Harary's motivational speeches and videos on the outreach website Aish.com attest to the quality of his unique wisdom in business and Torah, and Syms students enjoy learning from Professor Harary firsthand in his popular leadership classes. But Professor Harary is taking his lessons to the next level with his new show, the *Elements of Success*, soon to premier on The Jewish Channel. The Observer had the opportunity to speak to Mr. Harary about his show and the secret to true success.

Observer: Success comes in many forms, and can mean different things to different people. What is your definition of success in *The Elements of Success*?

CH: Success to me is the approach that you use as you engage in life. In everything that you're doing, there's a mentality that moves you to do the best you can, to accomplish, to

overcome, to achieve in every scenario. And if it's a process, it can be studied. There are people that over their lifetimes have achieved a certain amount of material-value based success. They're heads of industries; they've created products that have made a difference in peoples' lives; they're philanthropists; they've defended people; they've grown and overcome challenges to be where they are. So in various areas they've achieved a certain level of success, and the question is... can you capture it? Can you scale it? Can you teach it? Is it something you can take to students and say, "okay, if you can do these things, you can increase your chances of success? If you can not do these habits or these things, you can decrease your chances of failure." So that's really an idea which turned into a show.

What was it like to film the show? How long did it take?

What's amazing about anything on a screen is that it takes so much longer than you think. If you're shooting a four minute video

and you want to do it well, it's going to take double, triple, five times that amount. If you're shooting a thirty minute show, you want to get two and a half hours or more of footage. So you're cutting scenes double times, you're doing voiceovers, you're constantly working to take your four-five hours of content and honing it into twenty six minutes of great stuff, or of the best stuff you have. But that's how it works. What's amazing to me is that whenever you do something on a screen, it always has the illusion that it's sort of natural. It's really not.

Is there an underlying message that drives your motivational speaking?

My underlying message and goal in every speech is that I want everybody to live an awesome life. If you really look at the science of it, most of peoples' ability to have an experience called "an awesome life" comes from their ability to strengthen that which they have—their mind, their focus, their perspective, and to navigate through life's ups and downs. We think that we are more susceptible to the

outside world than we truly are. We have more control. We have more capacity. We have more ability. When we redefine success as an effort-based system, we've got more enjoyment of life. So much of the things that we want, we could have if we just learned some basic skills. And I want more than anything in the world for everybody to have the best life they can. I don't care if they get it from my videos, and I don't care if they know my name. I just want people to walk around and have great lives, because that's what I think G-d wants them to have, and if we as people can help each other do that, I think we're doing what He wants from us.

Is there anyone you would consider a role model for your road to success?

I look a lot to biblical figures for their strength. I look at Yoseph who was in the middle of nowhere, getting basically the wrong messages from G-d, because every time he did something great, he got knocked down. And the ability for someone like Yoseph to climb out of every challenge and hold on, and this is all before he was thirty...I think that's inspiring. Look around to some characters in our history, and you learn life lessons.

What could you tell Stern students to do now to increase their chances of future success?

First and foremost is to realize that so much is determined by their mentality. Science shows that, actually, happiness leads to success. Success doesn't lead to happiness. The way you approach life is what you're going to get out of life. You can be stressed about the final and freak out, or you can be stressed and get excited by the challenge. Your perspective is going to shape what you do. When we start being proactive and engaging in the world in a more empowered state, we start being able to do much more. The company Hewlett-Packard was famous for saying, "fail often and fail fast." Fail. Try. But don't get hung up on it. Do the best you can. Take on a tough class. Get up in the morning, try again. And if you fail often and you fail fast, you're allowing yourself to live a successful lifestyle.



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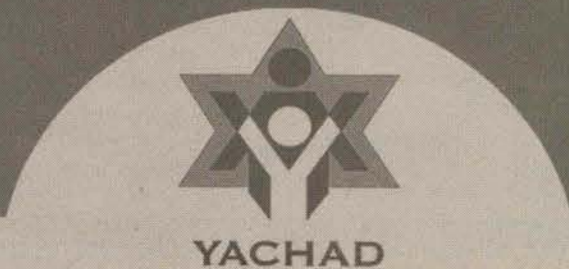
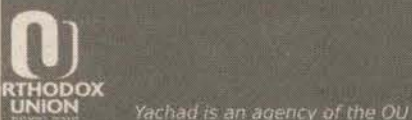
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FEATURES

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Naftali Bennett: A Changing Vision for the State of Israel

Daniella Penn Waving aside the standing ovation of an enthusiastic crowd in Belfer Hall on the night of November 25th, Member of Knesset Naftali Bennett spoke purposefully and passionately about the state of affairs in Israel and of his vision for her future. Arguing for a shift in perspective from Israel as a "shelter state" to an "*Ohr Lagoyim*," a light unto the nations, Bennett heralded an era focused on the pride and capability of the Jewish people in the land of Israel, in which Israel will share her

achievements—technological, military—with others to become a world leader.

In terms of promoting change, Bennett is in a good position to do so. Currently the Minister of Economy, Minister of Religious Services, and Minister for Jerusalem and Foreign Affairs, Bennett's political party *Habayit Hayehudi* now occupies twelve seats in the Knesset, quadrupling their numbers since last election. The party encourages the reclamation of the Israeli people's connection to the land and Nation of Israel within the context of Torah. While acknowledging the importance of diversity (four of the twelve *Habayit Hayehudi* members of Knesset are secular Jews), Bennett insisted that it is time for religious awareness to become central in the running of the State. And, the YU community is in the perfect position to further this goal. Whether or not one chooses to make the move,

the support of Jews in and outside of Israel are key in determining the success of the state. As a business strategy, Bennett contended, "Israel is a hell of an investment." One might call it optimism; Bennett sees it as reality.

Bennett's story was a personal as well as a political one. He traced his family's transition from unaffiliated to Orthodox, and his own journey from Upper West Side entrepreneur to Knesset politician. Speaking as a seasoned businessman, he offered his best advice to aspiring entrepreneurs: "choose the right partner." Speaking as a veteran commander of elite army unit *Tzayeret Matkal*, he provided a model for the successful military career of a religious Jew.

The dual nature of Bennett's speech, both practical and political, were especially significant for Talia Kugelman, Sy Syms '15, who helped bring Bennett to YU as Vice

President of Sy Syms Student Council. Pleased by the huge turnout for the event, Kugelman stated that Bennett is a role model for both Sy Syms students and the larger student body alike.

Kugelman stated that for Syms students, "he embodies the entrepreneurial spirit." For the rest of the student body, "Naftali Bennett is a great role model, and it is important to continue to educate students about Israel."

Students seemed to take away a renewed sense of pride and confidence in Israel. After the speech, Orit Bitton, SCW '15, noted enthusiastically, "Naftali Bennett was able to leave the audience of a sense of pride for our land, a desire to be part of its history, and a sense of responsibility to do whatever we can for Israel and our brethren living there."

Devorah Yarmush, President of the Israel Club, also shared her appreciation for Bennett's visit to the Yehsiva University campus, "I am incredibly thankful that Minister of Knesset Naftali Bennet was able to join us to address the YU student body, he reminded us that while Israel fights its own battles, the country still continues to be invested in giving back to the world."

Bennett's hope for Israel lies beyond simply perpetuating itself. When the floor was opened for questions, students asked how Bennett felt about Israel's security in light of recent developments in talks with Iran. While addressing the students' concerns, Bennett was clear that the primary issue at stake for Israel is not national security but something deeper. Bennett in his address to the YU community echoed a sentiment that although Israel is certainly not free of her security concerns, Israel must not continue to be defined by setbacks. Rather, Israel must be defined as a State of "*ohr*," realizing a spiritual and moral, as well as political and economic mission. There is no better time to recommit ourselves to the continuation and flourishing of the Jewish people, a message Naftali Bennett would not have us forget.



The Failure of the BDS Movement: Numerous Artists to Perform in Israel in 2014

Shira Kaye As Stern students, we take for granted the umpteen amounts of concerts here in New York City. But for residents of Israel, a concert from their favorite pop star is a rare opportunity. For the upcoming year, a growing number of singers have added Israel to their tour itineraries, despite the continuous efforts by the "Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions" movement to pressure celebrities not to perform in Israel. According to Tourist Israel's website, artists set to perform in 2014 include stars Justin Timberlake, Beyonce, Miley Cyrus, Cyndi Lauper, and Julio Iglesias.

Since 2005, when the BDS campaign was first launched, the movement has been fervently pressuring famous figures not to appear or perform in Israel. The goal of the Palestinian Civil Society's movement, according to its official statement, is to take "non violent punitive measures" through urging "people of conscience all over the world to impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel...until Israel meets its obligation to recognize the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination."

In addition to discouraging pop stars from performing in Israel, the movement attempts to accomplish its goals through demonstrating, calling for the boycott of Israeli

goods, and pressing for the removal of Israeli advertisements.

In past years, BDS has succeeded in convincing several singers, among them Elvis Costello, the Pixies, Carlos Santana, and Stevie Wonder, in addition to major movie stars Meg Ryan and Dustin Hoffman, to cancel their shows and appearances in Israel and events relating to Israel. According to Forbes, their excuses appeared in the form of "scheduling conflicts".

Though many stars have yielded to rising pressures, there are various artists who nevertheless continued with their performances. In 2011, the BDS movement sent a letter to R&B singer Macy Gray, declaring that "Palestinians are subjected to... the crime of apartheid," and continued to note that "an international performance in Israel is understood amongst the Israeli public as condoning this reality."

Macy Gray posed the question of whether or not she should perform in Israel to her fans via Twitter, and ultimately decided to continue with her show in Tel Aviv.

More recently, in May 2013, Alicia Keys received vehement letters protesting her upcoming performance in Israel from Roger Waters, former band member of Pink Floyd,

and Alice Walker, author of *The Color Purple*. Walker's open letter was posted on the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel's website, which declares its allegiance to the BDS movement. Walker informed Keys that she was placing herself in "soul danger" by performing in Israel, which Walker called an apartheid country. She also claimed that the U.S. government espouses a regime that is "cruel, unjust, and unbelievable evil."

Similarly, Waters urged Keys, on the website of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, to refrain from lending "legitimacy to the Israeli government policies of illegal, apartheid, occupation of the homelands of the indigenous people of Palestine." Despite these pressuring demands, Alicia Keys performed in the Nokia Stadium in Tel Aviv on July 4th, telling the New York Times, "music is a universal language that is meant to unify audiences in peace and love, and that is the spirit of our show."

This summer, the former lead singer of The Animals, Eric Burdon, temporarily cancelled his performance in Tel Aviv. According to Forbes, this cancellation was due to actual death threats received from the self-proclaimed non-violent BDS campaign.

Ultimately, the show was reinstated and he performed in Binyamina, near Haifa, in August. Similar death threats were reported to have trailed Paul McCartney in 2008, though he too proceeded with his performance in Israel.

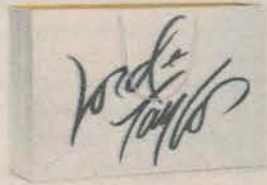
Numerous other stars have performed in Israel in past years, including Rihanna, Justin Bieber, Madonna, and Elton John. Earlier this year, rumors began to spread that Rihanna was aligning with the BDS movement when she allegedly replaced the words "All I see is dollar signs" with "All I see is Palestine" in the song "Pour It Up" during her Tel Aviv show. The Washington Post eventually refuted this claim; it is apparent in the videos circulating the web that no such substitution took place. What this incident does illustrate, though, is that every concert in Israel becomes colored by politics.

Though stars may not outwardly side with one position, any appearance or nonappearance in Israel is subject to political debate. In the past, the BDS movement has had minor success in preventing stars from playing in Israel. The imminent arrival of some of the most popular artists today, however, demonstrates the increasing failure of the BDS campaign in accomplishing its mission.

Holiday Window-Shopping on Fifth Avenue

Makena Owens During the holiday season, shoppers and tourists from all over the world flock to New York City to experience its reported magic. While the city certainly puts on a show year round with its larger-than-life divisions of national retailers, its true extravagance is unleashed during the holidays. Department store windows become so elaborate that travel websites suggest viewing them as a tourist activity. Retailers even account for these gawkers, and erect guardrails for viewers to line up against and direct traffic away from the busy streets. Now, just because you're Stern student who lives in New York City, don't think that its enchantment has worn off: you'd be remiss to not take a stroll up Fifth Avenue this year to do some serious window-shopping. And the best part of this endeavor? It's free! Read on to learn about the best window-shopping experiences in the city this year. As a side note, this field trip is most magnificent at night.

Lord and Taylor (between 38th and 39th streets)



Large, flat sketches of Santa and his entourage move mechanically to create a storybook effect. While somewhat understated, the sceneries are timeless—perhaps a nod to Lord and Taylor's targeted customer and her sense of style.

Saks Fifth Avenue (between 48th and 49th streets)



At Saks, the exhibition becomes much more elaborate and modern. There are two parts to Saks' display, both equally impressive. Half of the windows focus on fashion: mannequins dressed in Oscar de La Rente, Versace, and Jimmy Choo wear embellished velvet, sparkling under chilly blue lighting and dazzling against faux-snow. Each display also has a backdrop that outlines the blueprint of a snowflake. Now turn the corner of the block and experience something more whimsical—the tale of the #SaksYeti. A huge, fluffy, white creature takes over the other side of the building's display, with his story printed on the windows for shoppers to follow. His adventures include scaling the Saks building and sailing the East River. Saks is even selling smaller versions of the yeti and his accompanying storybook.

A Potpourri of Shops In Between

Before heading to the next big department store, don't forget to pay attention to the smaller shops between 49th and 57th streets that also boast magnificent window displays. Juicy Couture's



giant, pink and gold storefront features white palm trees and mannequins dressed in black and pink; tropical scenery is juxtaposed to the other snowy windows. Salvatore Ferragamo presents ties on chrome jungle animals seen through holes in the all-black windows. Fendi takes an avant-garde approach by stacking furry, boxy creatures with angry eyes in its display and clinging their LED counterparts to the building. BVLGARI drapes a giant LED insect across its store that looks like it's made of diamonds and rubies. One of the most entertaining displays, though, is Henri Bendel. This retailer has created a tribute to illustrator Al Hirschfeld with three-dimensional caricatures of stars such as Whoopi Goldberg, Audrey Hepburn, Matthew Broderick, and Woody Allen engaged in a hilarious holiday soirée.



Bergdorf Goodman (between 57th and 58th streets, near Grand Army Plaza)

These windows probably attract the most attention. If you want to get a good look at Bergdorf's luxury fashion fantasyland, you'll have to fight past tourists who struggle to take in every glittering detail. The theme at Bergdorf's this year is Holidays on Ice—everything from Christmas, Valentine's Day, Fourth of July, and Halloween is featured. Bergdorf's probably has the most intricate displays that truly transport the viewer into a different world. Each window also features intricate gowns by designers like Alexander McQueen to compliment the scenery. There are even smaller insets between the larger windows to showcase accessories and other "holidays" like Groundhog Day.



Bloomingdale's (Lexington Avenue between 59th and 60th streets)

While not on the Fifth Avenue route, Bloomingdale's is well worth the extra trek. The store's glowing displays are featured in the Women's Wear Daily article, "New York Holiday Windows Go High Tech." The theme is "All Wrapped Up," and each window features a wrapped present containing a gift from a different country. Everywhere from China to France to Italy is represented with glittering recreations of the country's landmarks.



So there you have it. It really is that easy (and free) to experience some holiday magic in New York City right now. This Thursday night, consider bringing a friend, taking a trip along Fifth Avenue (with a short skip over to Lex) and really taking in the City of Neon and Chrome.



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Barneys' New York

Not Just a Game: "Knockout Game" and the Recent Shootings

Continued from page 1

reported Jewish victims include a seventy-eight year old woman, a young boy walking to yeshiva, a nineteen-year old man walking on the street, and several others.

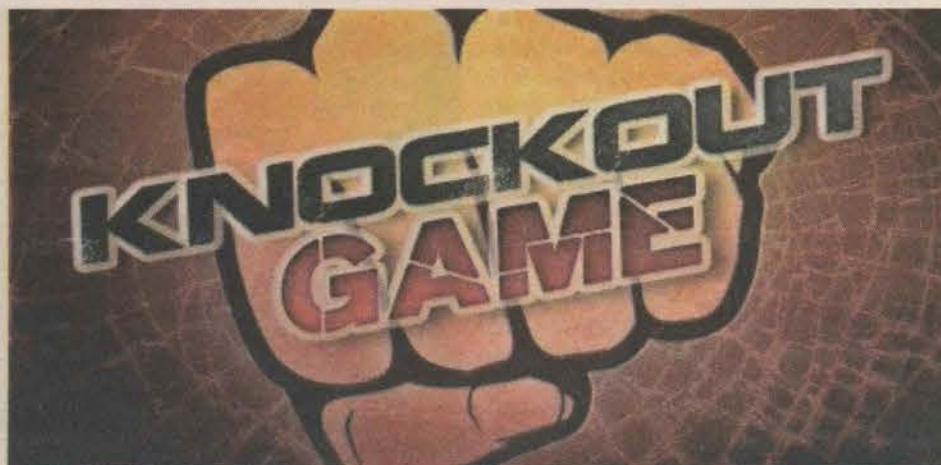
As if the attacks alone were not disturbing enough, the glorification of these attacks have gone viral on social media. Many of these attacks have been recorded, and posted on several social media sites. This trend raises suspicion on several accounts. The fact that there is footage of these attacks, and thus someone must find it fascinating enough to capture and share the videos on the internet, is proof that these attacks are somewhat of a joke to the perpetrators. In addition, it must be a group act if someone is deliberately there at the scene and capturing the attacks by video.

Several of the knockout videos have hundreds of thousands of views, and a similar corresponding number of shares to other social media sites. These attacks are glorified, and social media has become the new medium for these perpetrators to share these horrific scenes with their eager viewers. In an era where social media is captivating hundreds of

millions of followers, these recent viral videos are abusing the power of social media to spread messages of crime and violence. And in doing so, they are captivating an eager vast audience of teenagers. With such a captivated audience, and violent videos being mistaken for a source of entertainment, it raises uneasiness about the newfound role of social media and

entertainment.

In light of the recent "knockout" attacks, and the still raw emotions elicited by the recent shootings at the Garden State Plaza Mall and Bryant Park, it has become evident that violent acts have started to become a recurring trend. The recent shootings in Midtown, New Jersey, and the seemingly anti-Semitic driven assaults



hit close to home for Stern students.

Chaya Kanarfogel, SCW '15 and a Bergen County resident, expresses her uneasiness about these recent events. "It was shocking to hear that such things could be happening here, so close to home. You think that you walk around completely safe in an environment protected by justice. At first, I didn't see much of a significance of the scary events happening so close to each other, but because they did turn out that way, I think I became more aware of them as they happened, and have become more cautious of my surroundings."

To many, the recent violent attacks are a rude wake-up call. Although we live in a sheltered environment where the nerve-racking outside world often seems to be a hushed lull, we unfortunately live in a world where violence is becoming a trend, attacks are publicized as a form of entertainment, and anti-Semitism is still rampant. These recent events should not scare us, but rather cause us to question the state of morality in our society today.

HEALTH CORNER

Making the Best of your Caf Card

Talia Molotsky School is stressful enough. Why should mealtime have to be a stressful experience as well?

Here are 7 important building blocks of a nutritious diet that will be a recipe for success in Stern's Cafeteria:

1. Salad toppings can make or break your salad

Because a salad often consists of a small amount of various foods, it is a difficult task to construct a healthy salad or to recognize an unhealthy salad. That is why awareness is key. The latest official Dietary Guidelines released by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) suggest consuming more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, seafood, and fat-free and low-fat dairy products. Some examples of these types of foods that can be found in our very own cafe include cherry tomatoes, bananas, apples, cucumbers, peppers (without the added oil), beets, onions, hearts of palm, jicama, and olives. In terms of dairy products, the caf cheeses can be a stumbling block nutritionally. Per 100 grams, the Mozzarella cheese is healthier than the shredded American cheese with 300 calories versus the 371 calories in American cheese. American cheese is also significantly more fatty, with more than double the amount of sodium and less protein than mozzarella. Feta, on the other hand, is a more viable option than the American cheese health-wise. While high in sodium, feta has 264 calories per 100 grams and almost the same amount of fat as in mozzarella.

2. Always read nutrition facts

This skill is key to healthy eating. Looking at the daily values of each food group as well as calorie counts is a good place to start. However, many of the unpackaged foods in the cafe don't bear nutrition facts, so it is difficult to understand which foods contain what. The avocados by the caf salad bar and the small packets of peanut butter contain large quantities of fat. Based on the 2,000 calorie standard diet, one full avocado contains 35% of the fat a person should consume in one day, and more than one third of your total fat consumption. The packaged 3/4 oz. of Smuckers Peanut Butter contain 11 grams of fat, 16% of the recommended fat intake per day. These foods should not be necessarily cut out of your diet, but should be consumed in moderation. It should also be noted that any fried food in the caf contains lots of oil, a lot of calories, and are extremely high in fat. Therefore, eating fried foods on a daily basis will lead to a significant hyper consumption of fats.

3. Proteins and carbohydrates help you stay full longer

Two important components of a diet include proteins and carbohydrates. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that proteins are important components of every cell in the human body, making them an extremely essential part of our diets. The salmon served in the cafe is a great source of protein, as are chick peas, edamame, packaged turkey, quinoa, any of the yogurts, or a carton of

milk to complement your cereal. Carbohydrates are almost as important to any diet as proteins. Carbohydrates make glucose, which gives your body energy. The baked potatoes in the cafe are filling and low calorie. Sweet potatoes, especially, are nutrient rich and high in fiber, making you full for longer. Cereal is also high in carbohydrates, but often there is much added sugar, which is discouraged by the HHS and USDA.

4. Times of Your Meals

The typical meal divisions for a day are the standard breakfast, lunch, and dinner, though some will argue that six smaller meals are the healthier way to go. Whichever way you choose may depend on your own eating habits as well as your class schedule. Be aware that eating lunch at 11:30 may leave you hungry before dinnertime. This runs the risk of snacking, as does dinner that is eaten too early. Also be aware that eating a heavy dinner or snack before bed does not give your body sufficient time to properly digest. This can cause acid reflux or weight gain.

5. Food in Moderation

One of the most important rules in nutrition is that there is no one food that you can "never eat." The key is to know yourself. If you are a person who likes chocolate, it is okay to eat it on occasion. Try fun-sized chocolate bars instead of the full-sized bars. This gives you the taste you crave, without ruining a whole week of healthy eating. Keeping a food journal is a good way to become aware of your portions.

Write down everything you eat for a week and you will find yourself becoming more aware of just how much food you eat.

6. A Healthy Diet does not Equal a Healthy Lifestyle

Eating healthy can be a challenge to many young women, and mastering this skill can take years or a lifetime. However, being "healthy" in the broader sense includes taking care of your body in other senses, too. Drinking plenty of water keeps you full and hydrated. Dehydration can lead to headaches and overeating, as can insufficient sleep. To complement a healthy diet, the CDC suggests getting 150 minutes of exercise each week. This can be done in larger chunks to as small as just ten minutes of brisk activity at a time. This activity can be anywhere between moderate and vigorous in intensity, but note, says the CDC, that one minute of vigorous activity is about the same as two minutes of moderate activity. Luckily, Stern dorms have exercise rooms with a variety of equipment (and air conditioning!).

With these tips in your back pocket, you can begin to navigate your way through the Stern cafeteria and beyond. Don't be afraid to ask a question if you don't know about a particular food. Almost every food has online Nutrition Facts that can help you be an informed eater, so look it up online. Food is a necessity so investing in a healthy diet can be a valuable tool that improves your lifestyle as a whole.

An Athlete Attends Macs Madness

Stephanie Greenberg After careful deliberation, intense planning, and much concern, Coach Nesta Felix finally uttered the words that the Lady Macs had been anxiously awaiting since last season. The team was free to attend this year's Men's Macs Madness. A plan was devised to ensure that the Ladies would not be missing a night's practice, which included a practice before the 7:30 shuttle to take them straight to the game; no showers necessary. After not being able to attend last year's basketball extravaganza, my team and I were determined to show our faces at this year's event. We refused to miss this opportunity to support our fellow athletes, especially with whom we share the same passion of basketball.

Although much of the crowd had dispersed for Thanksgiving break, there was no shortage of excitement in the Max Stern Athletics Center. With Joe Bednarsh serving as the fan photographer, and Ruthie Heller taking videos of the action, the night would be forever documented. The rally towels handed out displayed light blue writing to represent the

month's Prostate Cancer awareness. Heller also ran (pun intended) the halftime show, which let some of the fans participate in a shooting contest. The Macs put on quite a show, and brought the game into overtime, keeping the crowd on its feet, rally towels in hand, for the remainder of the performance. The cheering and Movember Mustaches grew along with the nervousness. Would the fighting Maccabees be able to capture the victory against the Hawks?

The Macs battled hard, but the full court miracle was not taking center stage that night. However, the intensity and excitement was felt so strongly around the gym that us fans really felt like we were a part of the game, a part of the team. We all felt like players on the bench waiting to enter the action; and we all were ready and willing to help our fellow Maccabees.

Macs Madness is not only a great way to show school spirit, but is also a way of uniting all students in a realm outside of the classroom. Every individual student is an important part of the "YU Team," and should always be there to support and cheer on their teammates. You

don't have to be an athlete to join in at Macs Madness and take your own "free shot" at making new friends and having a great time.

Whether a win or loss, Macs Madness proved, yet again, to be a success in showing support for our school, and the "YU Team,"

of which we are all fortunate to be members. Stay tuned for updates on Lady Mac's Madness, which will be hosted in the Baruch gym in the near future.



www.facebook.com, Movember Macs Madness

Stern College Dramatic's Society "The Wizard of Oz"

Shoshana Bachrach Stern College Dramatics Society's fall production of "The Wizard of Oz" proved to be magical in more ways than one. With an impressive cast, clever choreography, and bright costuming, SCDS brought an optimistic classic to life, proving itself capable of tackling a larger production. The well-executed show diverted attention from - but didn't quite conceal - the fact that the staging options available were not ideal.

Faced with the task of breathing new life into a well-known show, SCDS achieved success with aplomb, in large part due to an impressive cast. The three diva-ish talking trees and one-liners dropped by various Ozians nearly stole the show; every word out of veteran SCDS actress Tova Kay's mouth had girls actually snorting with laughter. Sharona Kay (no relation) destroyed any lingering associations with Wicked's sensitive Elphaba with a Wicked

Witch who was at the same time hilariously psychotic and kind of terrifying. Rachel Sterman delighted as a patient and beatific Glinda, singing with the skill and ease of a veteran. The four travelers seeking the Wizard meshed into a terrific group, alternating between joy and fear with gusto. Talia Molotsky perfected the scarecrow's clumsy yet controlled amble; Sara Rozner's Tinman was, ironically, adorably wholehearted; Daniella Eson's Cowardly Lion seemed to have leapt straight from the movie screen; and Zahava Taylor balanced Dorothy's naïve determination with a knockout voice that seemed wise beyond her years. But due to consistently poor lighting, many scenes had the actors' faces shrouded in shadow, taking away from the wonderful chemistry happening on stage.

Though the lighting was dim, the colorful and varied costumes nearly made up for it.

The contrast between sepia-toned Kansas and technicolored Oz was created entirely by the costumes, with dusty

browns and greens giving way to neons and brights. The varying styles and textures onstage were a clever move, keeping the all-green costumes of the Emerald City scenes from merging into one green mass. Choreographer Helene Sonenberg's bouncy dance numbers matched the show's optimistic vibe, with the costumes giving the dances even more life. A favorite was the oddly creepy jitterbug, where the witch's minions attempted to dance Dorothy and Co. to death.

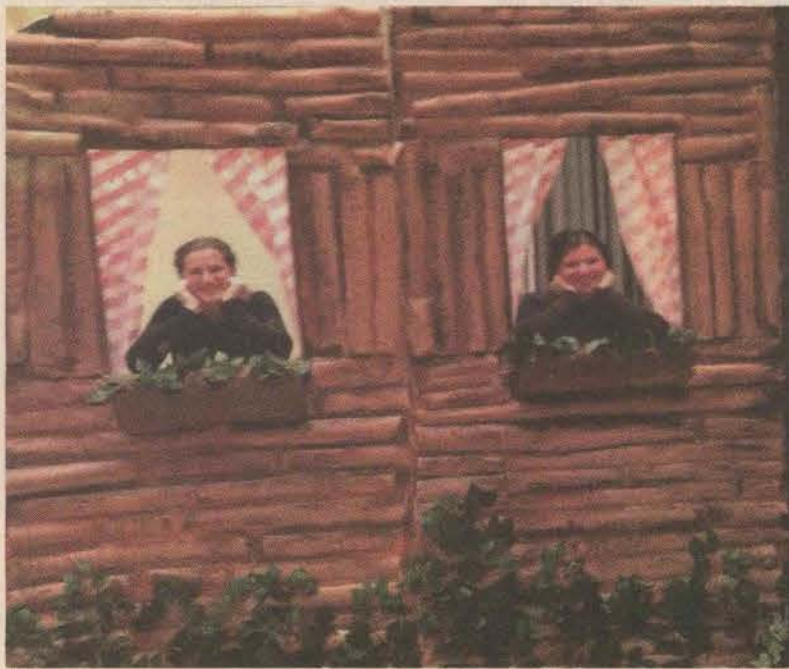
Lighting, sound, and special effects were a mixed success, possibly due to the expansiveness of the stage. While Norman Thomas is a great resource for Beren Campus, its size can cause issues. Projections onto the huge background served as a set, which was a creative solution, but the image was barely visible whenever the lights were on. Still, well placed props, including an extremely impressive hand-constructed house, kept the effect from being entirely lost. A

ARTS & CULTURE

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coughing smoke machine, meant to simulate the hurricane, would have needed steroids to even half-fill the stage, but the simple-yet-ingenious witch-melting scene all but made up for it.

Altogether, these flaws couldn't bring down what was a definite success for SCDS. They brought back the punchy colors, didn't-see-it-coming talent, and boundless energy that made last spring's musical so popular. Hopefully, with more time spent in the venue, the hardworking SCDS will find some creative lifehacks to make Norman Thomas work better in their favor. It would be a shame for technical difficulties to undermine such amazing work and talent.



Film Talk: *Don Jon*

Abigail Bachrach Don Jon is a Joseph Gordon-Levitt trifecta of a film - the actor directs, writes and stars. The effort works - his directorial debut is mostly good, sometimes even great. Sweet, funny, and a moral rollercoaster, Don Jon disarms its viewer with the story of an Italian-American whose

dedication to his favorite things leads to a reliance on a vice that gets him into trouble.

Gordon-Levitt plays the title character of the film - he is Jon to his family, Don to his "guys," his friends. His borderline obsessive compulsiveness is no secret, instead the film's opening monologue has Don narrate his routine as he informs the audience of the things he cares about - his body, car, friends, family, church and the hook, his porn. As slick as the oil in his hair, Don sleeps with a steady stream of girls. But none of them are sufficient; instead he watches porn each night.

The groans and squeals of Don's porn are not for the faint of heart. Clips of it are shown to the audience in a film that wholly deserves its R rating. Yet the movie is poignant and sensitive; characters and their lives bring a level of elegance to a topic generally considered the lowest of the low. Don Jon is not, however, a film about porn. It is instead a film about a man who watches porn, in fact, the film challenges stereotypes about pornography, Don's need and maybe, just maybe addiction, are but a sidenote in the routines and expectations that control Don's life.

Don Jon is a likable character, the film makes sure of it. As the classic song "Good Vibrations" plays in his car, or "ride," Gordon-Levitt's

character sings and dances along, only to realize he is being watched as he slows to a stop at a red light. He then looks the other way. The neighboring car speeds off come green, and he cannot help but continue to sing along. It is a wonderful moment, cute and funny, but also a portrayal of a character.

The camera insists on reinforcing Don's constant routines for its viewer, often to what feels like a patronizing effect. When Don inevitably begins his transformation, the filmgoer watches the same walk he makes to the gym from prior scenes. This time, he pauses, shrugs and plays basketball instead of his usual weightlifting. Would the viewer have understood Don's shift without these shots? Absolutely. Each time the initial routine Don narrates in the beginning is repeated, the camera maintains the same order and in fact, the same setting and style of filming for each shot. It's an intentional technique, one that hammers a little more than necessary for the viewer. Subtlety is not Don Jon's type nor is it the film's.

Still, Don Jon is a good movie and the various supporting characters in the film are what make it so. When he falls for Barbara, played by Scarlet Johansson, Don sees in her his ideal woman. With a Jersey accent that puts Snooki to shame and chomping gum while, Johansson alternates between a manipulative woman looking to control her man and a doe-eyed blonde looking to manufacture her own fairy tale. Her character is as fun to watch on screen as Johansson appears to have had in

the role. She pouts, poses and seduces Don, all the while she is molding him into her ideal boyfriend.

Sex scenes in Don Jon are uncomfortable; one in particular provokes a squirming sensation as Don attempts to maneuver a quickie in a car with Julianne Moore's doped-up character, an initially annoying classmate he confides in. Wonderful in any role, Moore plays her part perfectly, maybe a little too well. But this may be the point. As Don's unrealistic expectations begins to change, so do the stereotypes characters evoke. The relationship between Gordon-Levitt and Moore falls a little flat, but his chemistry with Johansson makes up for it.

Part of Don's routine is dinner with his family. A stand-out performance by Tony Danza as Don's brusque father makes you want to cry and laugh simultaneously every time he fights with his son. All Don's mother, played by Glenna Headly, wants is grandchildren and it is funny when she laments this to her son, but her pain is felt too. The intersection of emotion from the family scenes provides an added depth to Don lacking in his other interactions. It is Don Jon's sister who is the most wonderful, played by a sullen, silent Brie Larson. Her outburst in a later scene reflects Don's changes as she says something of value for the first time - another instance of the film's need to declare the obvious - but it is also witty, funny and great acting too. Gordon-Levitt's characters are genuine and the film worth watching.



An Introspection: Magritte at MoMA

MoMA

The Museum of Modern Art

Jordana Burstein Pipes, skies, the female body, chess pawns, bowler hats. These are just some examples of repetitive motifs found in the paintings of Belgian Surrealist, Rene Magritte. One can see these motifs and more at the current MoMA exhibit, "Magritte: The Mystery of the Ordinary, 1926-1938." The selected paintings, which portray "ordinary" objects in peculiar ways, are among the higher echelon of his oeuvre, evidenced by the mass scholarship and commercialization of a number of these works. Who hasn't seen that famous painting with a pipe, accompanied by the French words, translated as, "This is not a pipe"? Better known as *The Treachery of Images* (1929), this famous painting (now on view) is accessible to all – whether by being familiar with the work itself or by grasping its effect on art and philosophy. If this is not a pipe, then what is it? How can one represent a pipe? Essentially, what is representation? In other words, Magritte's motifs have an effect on us all, whether we are conscious of it or not.

Upon arriving at the exhibit, I was told by a staff member that there would be a short wait before proceeding in. Nearly seven minutes later, I was looking at Magritte's early *Untitled* drawings. However, it was his paintings, some small, others life-size, which impressed me. Encompassing the first central wall was *The Menaced Assassin* (1927). This painting always seemed odd to me, and seeing it in person heightened its inscrutability. The juxtaposition of a supine and bloodied nude woman in the middle ground with a bourgeois man (the assassin?) beside her is immediately striking. The addition of the two identical bourgeois men

in bowler hats, standing in the foreground, and the mere heads of three men peering in from the background is baffling. What is the viewer to make of this collection of figures and their relationships to one another?

Also on view is *Not to be Reproduced* (1937), a painting which depicts a man standing before a mirror, but while the book on the ledge is correctly reflected, the back of the man's head is seen, and thus reflected incorrectly. In portraying this, Magritte continues to toy with the viewer's perceptions; yet again, how does the viewer synthesize the contradictory aspects of the painting? Furthermore, how is the viewer to make sense of *The Rape* (1934), a painting of a female face, where, in place of eyes are breasts, instead of a nose, a belly button, and replacing a mouth, a vagina? Substituting parts or objects for normally conceived ones is a running theme in the exhibited artworks. The viewer comes to realize this, in addition to many more puns concerning the notion of representation.

Walking through the exhibit—viewing the paintings and watching the various patrons and their reactions—facilitated the formation of the larger question at hand: what is the relationship between one Magritte painting and

the next—between, for example, *The Menaced Assassin* and the painting adjacent to it? This is precisely where motifs come in. To understand Magritte's paintings, is to contemplate them as a collective whole, where motifs function as the bridge between artworks.

The exhibit is successful in allowing the viewer to recognize the repeating motifs from one work to the next. Even with a cursory walk through the gallery, one can develop an immediate sense of Magritte's style and the puns he uses. This is not to say that one can easily interpret a Magritte painting; however, through a collective discernment of the motifs and obscure juxtapositions, one begins to question the notion of representation and art, in general.

Similarly, while observing the museum-goers reactions, I noted a universality inherent in Magritte's works. Different viewers, whether conversing in English, French, or Spanish, time and again chuckled at one painting, snickered at the next, and found themselves

repulsed by another. Patrons of all ages were present, from college-age students like myself, to older men and women, to classes of first graders on field trips. A myriad of ages, genders, races, and ethnicities can be found in a Magritte exhibit like the current one. These viewers find themselves confounded by his art and asking more questions than obtaining answers.

While the average viewer will not emerge from the exhibit completely enlightened by the artworks, he/she will certainly attain an understanding of Magritte's approach to representation. In doing so, the patron becomes introspective of how art functions in his/her daily life. The universality of the repetitive motifs makes it incumbent upon the viewer to ask, albeit not always answer, how the works collectively question perception, the subconscious, and ultimately engage with "The Mystery of the Ordinary."



45 Seconds of Eternity: Yayoi Kusama's *I Who Arrived in Heaven*



Mia Guttmann Yayoi Kusama's *I Who Arrived in Heaven* is a current exhibition on view at the David Zwirner Gallery. This exhibit, which closes on December 21st, is a combination of 27 large-scale paintings, a video installation, and two infinity rooms. An infinity room is the descriptive term assigned to Kusama's installations, which feature mirrors and water to create the perception of the installation occupying an infinite space. At the age of 83, Kusama has been living by choice in a psychiatric facility located in Tokyo for the past 35 years due to her mental fragility. Her installations and paintings bring the viewer into a parallel realm of tranquil hallucinations where the persistence of self is without boundaries normally mandated by the confining sanity of our minds.

Perhaps the most popular room in the exhibition is Kusama's *Infinity Mirrored Room—The Souls of Millions of Light Years Away*. This installation is set in a closet-sized space paneled with mirrors. Viewers enter in groups of 2-3 and stand on a strip of flooring

that is surrounded by a shallow reflection pool. The dark space of the installation is illuminated by 75 LED-colored lights suspended at varying lengths from the ceiling which flicker on and off. The result is a 45-second journey, which transcends both space and time. The mirrors and flooring reflect the lights, creating a space uninhibited by the concrete walls. Viewers experience bouts of infinite

lights contrasted by sudden darkness, leading to the inevitable contemplation of life and death. One patron, Michaela Katz, described how the installation made her feel "serene, as though the outside world didn't exist." Kusama's exhibit immediately transports viewers to another plane of visual perception.

The exhibit was instantaneously popularized on Instagram, under the hashtag Yayoi Kusama. Yet in order to view the infinity room you must wait in a line that ranges from one to three hours. This may appear to be an unconscionable payment of time, but it is a 3-hour wait for a glimpse at eternity. The three hours seem like a blip in time after experiencing 45 seconds in the infinity room. Although the exhibit will be up for the rest of the month, it is suggested to attend sooner rather than later; it is probable that the wait for the exhibit will only grow longer as the exhibit nears its end. It should also be noted that there is no line for the second infinity room, paintings, or the video installation. If traveling in a group, you can even take turns going to the other exhibits

while waiting in the 3-hour line.

The second mirrored infinity room, entitled *Love is Calling*, is a larger space where approximately 4-10 people are allowed at a time. This room is an uncanny maze of inflatable tentacle-like forms which are covered in the artist's signature polka dots. The fluorescent tentacles which gradually shift in color protrude from every crevice of the room. The result of these elements is an immersive kaleidoscopic wonderland. Using the same manipulation of space, Kusama is able to create an alternate reality from both our perceived reality and the alternate space she proposed in *The Souls of Millions of Light Years Away*.

In the same gallery space as *Love is Calling* is Kusama's video installation of her recitation of the song *Manhattan Suicide Addict*. This video display is set in a pitch dark space illuminated only by the projection of Kusama reciting her song as photographs of her previous works rotate in the background. The projection is flanked on both sides by two twelve-foot tall mirrors, creating an infinite projection of the artist and her work. The recitation of the song provides the viewer with a glimpse into the psychedelic world of Kusama, and the use of projection and mirrors creates a self-referential video that plays with perception of depth and flatness.

The 27 acrylic paintings are probably the most underrated part of the exhibition, but is not to be missed. Each canvas is an amalgamation of representational and non-representational forms, both alluding to images of basic life forms one might encounter under a microscope. Each

painting consists of a careful balance of colors so vibrantly fluorescent it is almost nauseating (in an oddly indulgent and gratifying way). The intense colors and odd distribution of shape accost the eye, inducing a psychedelic experience. If the viewer were to look from the painting to the stark white walls of the gallery a hallucinatory film of color and shape would surely emerge. Kusama's exhibition *I Who Arrived in Heaven* is an experience that should not be missed. Whether you are a lover of contemporary art or are simply curious, the sensory experience of this installation will resonate with eve



Did YUnite? Reflections on the YU Community

Elana Kook I don't consider myself the stereotypical in-towner at Stern. As much as I love going home for the occasional Shabbat, I don't run back to Teaneck at every possible opportunity. I don't rush home as soon as my 3:00PM class ends on Thursday, as if the clock struck midnight and I was going to turn back into a country bumpkin. I enjoy traveling to different college campuses and experiencing the different Shabbat environments their communities offer. However, whenever I venture to another college campus, I can't help but feel a pang of jealousy over the warm sentiments of a tight-knit community, drawn together by their commitment to Judaism. I am envious of the responsibility each individual in the community feels to contribute, and most importantly, to get to know one another personally.

I am well aware that there are many elements that make students in other universities envious of YU students. We are lucky to have the opportunity to learn Torah in a formal setting, we have chagigim off from school, and we face no adversity toward our commitment to Torah U'Mitzvot and the State of Israel. These privileges that we are bestowed should be the recipe for creating a close-knit community: shared values, shared experiences, and shared

goals. However, there is a palpable barrier that blocks these aspirations of a community from becoming reality.

In forming a community, Yeshiva University faces the obvious difficulty of two separate campuses. As much as there is an effort to provide shuttle services between both campuses, many Stern students feel uncomfortable traveling to the Heights. And, if they do venture uptown, it is likely just to do homework in the library or hear a speaker, not just to go hang out. There is little feeling that it is our campus, too. It is as if we go to separate universities.

That is where the important role of Shabbat comes into play. Every "In-Shabbat" in Stern feels like a high school shabbaton. I remember last year, my first semester on campus, a friend convinced me to stay in Stern for the TAC/SOY shabbaton. Thinking I would perhaps meet new people, I was overwhelmed by the lack of warmth and discomfort I felt amongst throngs of people I did not know. Having remembered my experience last year, I was skeptical about staying in for the YUnite shabbaton the weekend of December 7th. But, submitting to my friends' coaxing once again, I was assured this was "the best Shabbat" to stay in school.

At first, I was frustrated to have seemingly gotten myself into a similar predicament as last year: an overcrowded Koch Auditorium, and once again, unfamiliar faces. I thought that this was going to be yet another early Friday night, heading up to my room, cuddling up with a book, and avoiding the festivities. Conveniently, however, "potluck learning" was in the lounge of my building, and I decided to see what it was all about.

I admit that I was still callous about the whole "Shabbaton" in general. But after the learning I was sitting in a circle with a group of students, and a friend asked me how I was enjoying Shabbat thus far. I was about to go on a rant about how much I dislike these "Shabbatons," until I realized something important: I was sitting in a circle, with people I did not necessarily know, enjoying myself and meeting new people. Two things I did not expect from myself that Shabbat.

As Shabbat day came along, I found myself still becoming slightly annoyed at the same Shabbaton-esque festivities. Nonetheless, I found myself appeased by the fact that I had made new friends, and for the first time in my

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time in Stern, I started to sense a community in the making.

I still think YU has a ways to go. For starters, we need to stop calling Shabbat in Stern "Shabbatons," and instead allow for the magic of a regular Shabbat to be sufficient. After a long week of school, I think many of us can agree that simply "laid-back" weekends need to be added into the repertoire of YU Shabbat. And moreover, there is a natural aspect to Shabbat, a certain unidentifiable ingredient, that allows for bonding and a sense of community to come with ease. I learned that the subtle and informal moments, like Shabbat, are the elements that have the power to transform any environment into a community.

Y do U Go Uptown?

What the Stern Campus Library Has to Offer

Chaya Spigelman Throughout my three years as a Stern student, a certain issue, or perhaps occurrence with which I take issue, has given me pause.

I'm sure you all have noticed the fairly common practice of Stern students taking the shuttle uptown to the Wilf campus to purportedly study in the Mendel Gottesman Library. While I have no doubt that in many instances these women are actually studying in the library, I do, however, argue that this could not possibly be the primary motivating factor behind choosing to go uptown rather than study

in one of Stern's two perfectly well-equipped libraries.

Having held a work-study position in both the circulating and reference sections of the Hedi-Sternberg Library for two consecutive semesters, I am well prepared to defend my position. Students are largely unaware of what the Stern campus library has to offer. This causes the current feeling that conducting a research paper necessitates shuttling uptown.

Allow me to enumerate the resources afforded by the Hedi-Sternberg library. Any book, movie, and/or journal article required

by a professor for a specific course is made available by the reference library for two hour time periods as is the case with YC courses in the Mendel-Gottesman library. Also, little known fact: if you need the book in question over-night, you can check it out as the library closes and bring it back in the morning.

The Stern campus library also houses numerous research resources from books on Davinci and Monet for Art History research papers to online access to scientific journal databases for papers in the biological and/or chemical sciences. And for any book that the Hedi-Sternberg library does not contain within its walls, never fear! There is always interlibrary loan, a system through which students can obtain virtually any book that the heart or mind desires via connection with many libraries in the surrounding area including that of Hunter College and Baruch College. In my personal experience, it takes no more than a few days to receive books requested through interlibrary loan, and just one day if the book requested is coming from the Mendel-Gottesman library uptown. This system is both simple and convenient, no nauseating shuttle ride necessary.

And for those individuals who enjoy utilizing library resources for non-school related activities, you will be happy to know that the Hedi-Sternberg library contains a variety of books for leisure reading from more classic literature such as Shakespeare, Jane Austen, and Sylvia Plath to contemporary favorites such as the complete Harry Potter and Hunger Games series, neither of which the Wilf campus library has to offer. The Beren campus library also contains a highly varied DVD selection including such critically acclaimed titles as *My Fair Lady*, *Gattaca*, and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* which represent the romance, sci-fi and gothic genres respectively. The selection may be lacking in more modern movies, but it is more than the complete lack of leisure movie entertainment that the Wilf campus library has to offer.

There are those Stern students who will argue that there is more space in the library uptown; that it provides a "better" study environment, because it's more like a university library, while there is still somewhere to go if you

want quiet; there is ample table space where one can spread out; and there are books there that are needed for certain research papers, books that the Stern campus library doesn't have.

Regarding the assertion that there is more space in the Mendel-Gottesman library, speaking strictly in terms of square footage, that is an undeniable fact. However, there are also proportionally more students on the Wilf campus, meaning that during exam time, space is extremely limited on both campuses. Whether or not the Mendel-Gottesman library provides a better study environment may be viewed as purely a matter of preference. However, a better study environment is one that provides plenty of natural lighting and an overall quiet atmosphere that is less like a university library, lacking in what I call "the scene," otherwise know as the tendency toward dressing up to court the men on campus while "studying" and socializing as if the library were a cafeteria. Also, due to the fact that sound travels between the floors that are connected via the staircase through the center of the library, finding a quiet place to study requires secluding oneself in certain limited areas of the library. Additionally, there are more tables than one may realize in the Stern campus library. There are two large tables on the first floor of the circulation library, one table on the second floor of the circulation library, two tables in the group study room located in the back of the first floor reference library, one table in the media room located on the second floor of the reference library, and two tables in the communal space on the second floor of the reference library.

Let's be honest with ourselves. Are we spending counterproductive time in traffic on the FDR for the vast wealth of otherwise unattainable research materials, or are we going to drink of the fountain that is the university library "scene"? If the latter is in fact the case, that is a perfectly legitimate reason to go uptown. But it is my hope that, armed with the knowledge of the plethora of resources that the Hedi-Sternberg library can provide, you will be confident in the Beren campus library's capability to provide you with the resources and the environment necessary to succeed in your academic endeavors.



Molly Pocrass

My YU: An Expanded Palace of Pluralism

Continued from page 1

pluralism at this university is astounding.

Sure, there are few among the student body who actively represent other denominations in Judaism. Yet I do believe that there are students here who are just as representative of these bodies of observance as anyone publicly affiliated with the movements. To me, this is the most ideal form of pluralism: a pluralism without labels.

True, demarcations exist between students of different opinions and religious practices. But these demarcations do not strike me as walls. "Something there is that doesn't love a wall": the students of this institution. Amongst the students here, there is a constant visiting of the neighbor if you will, a breaching of the fence, a true practicing of the dictum

"V'ahavtah l'reachah kamoachah."

For me, Stern College has been a wall-less place, a place where Jews from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences come together, united by a deep interest in their religion, be it from a halakhic or non-halakhic standpoint. In fact, when I spent this past summer at Pardes (a self-proclaimed pluralistic institution), I felt no different than I feel in the hallways and classrooms of Stern. I felt able to share the same thoughts, engage in the same conversations, and explore the same issues. Both Stern and Pardes have served for me as communities composed of a multiplicity of voices, searching for meaning.

While I have not found walls within this institution, it is true that walls are springing up within Orthodoxy beyond our

doors. Denominations within Orthodoxy are becoming increasingly resistant to Open Orthodoxy. Yet within YU, I have found an open and welcoming environment here for Open Orthodoxy, all other forms of Orthodoxy, and even denominations beyond Orthodoxy. I don't think YU is the problem in the wall-filled world of Orthodox Jewry. On the contrary—I think we have the power to bring about a solution.

As a member of the student body, I believe it is we who have made this place a palace, and an ever-expanding one. By acting in a regal, honorable way, respectful of all forms of Judaism and all viewpoints, we have created a place that it is open, and tolerant, respectful and majestic. I am proud to be part of the student body of this institution, regardless of

what "The Institution" might say, or have to say publicly.

The Anat Barber quote that Davidovich concludes with actually epitomizes the experience I have had at Stern College. It is here that I feel I have learned "about the multiplicity of Jewish voices." I have learned from those "who see themselves as ultimate truth and reject" what I believe, and thus I have been able to "refine and deepen [my] Jewish understanding regardless of [my] own religious approach."

I am a Jew who does not "dress, think, or act" in the way that "we" do, and I can confidently say that, you, reader of this article, student at Yeshiva University, do not dress, think, or act in the way "we" do either.

Partnership Minyanim: Fracturing Tradition?



Shoshana Halpern The flagship institution of *Torah U'madah*, YU faces constant scrutiny from the broader Orthodox community. YU typically responds to such scrutiny by adopting cautious policies toward many of today's controversial *halachic* and *hashkafic* issues. Many of those issues revolve around women's roles in the mainstream Orthodox fold. For example, YU students who attend the Limmud Conference, an initiative sponsored by the Limmud organization to bring a diverse group of Jews together, are not allowed to attend its partnership minyan. The partnership minyan movement, though relatively recent, is quickly gaining popularity in many modern Orthodox circles, especially on college campuses. On November 15th, I, along with seven other Yeshiva University students, attended the first Intercollegiate Partnership Minyan Shabbaton at the University of Pennsylvania.

The Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance, most predominantly known as JOFA, defines Partnership Minyan as one that is "both committed to maintaining *halachic* standards and practices and also committed to including women in ritual leadership roles to the fullest extent possible within the boundaries of Jewish Law." Although women are not counted toward a minyan in the traditional sense, the service will not begin until ten men and ten women are present. Immediately, this requirement demonstrates the inherent respect and importance that the minyan has for women's attendance. Additionally, women lead the parts of services such as *Kabbalat Shabbat* on Friday night and *Psukei D'Zimra* on Shabbat day, which are not considered *dvarim sheb'kdushah*. The *Kabbalat Shabbat* at the Penn-hosted Shabbaton was a beautiful and spiritually uplifting experience, with neither side of the *mechitza* overpowering the other.

Attendees of partnership minyanim attend for a number of reasons. Some simply find the service to be more enjoyable because of the additional singing. Others, however, believe the new services to represent a

more significant break. Gavriel Brown (YC '14) expressed his concerns. "Some see the minyanim as fundamental to their Judaism and look to these minyanim as their community. I think the latter represents a self-inflicted break with the mainstream and can justifiably seem threatening to modern Orthodox communities," said Brown.

However, it was abundantly clear to any participant on the Shabbaton that the movement's purpose is not to subvert Orthodox norms. It stems from the pure intentions of those individuals who feel that their religious needs are not being met by traditional Orthodox minyanim.

Raphi Ozarowski (YC' 15) reflected on the Shabbaton, "I definitely admire what the movement claims as its values, goals such as the maximum ritual inclusion of women within the bounds of halacha and an inspirational and accessible prayer service for all."

On the women's side during a conventional minyan, *Kriyat HaTorah* can be an unpleasant part of the services. Avigayil Bachrach (SCW 15) expresses, "I generally avoid *Kriyat Hatorah* whenever possible." Such feelings are quite common. Partnership minyanim acknowledge this problem, and adjust the protocol accordingly to rectify this feeling. Women are able to read from the Torah, receive *aliyot* and act as a *gabait*.

Although the idea of including women in *Kriyat HaTorah* may be seen as progressive and untraditional, it gives women an opportunity to become involved in an area of *tefilah* where they often feel marginalized. For example, on the Shabbaton I was given my first *aliya*. Knowledge of my imminent role in the service motivated me to pay closer attention. I was finally let in on an experience which, despite my years spent at Jewish day schools and camps, had been inaccessible to me.

Upon further discussion with my peers at the conference, I realized I was not alone. The majority of women who grow up "frum" know very little about the intricacies of *Kriyat*

Hatorah. Regardless of whether one agrees with the ideology of partnership minyanim, this should be disconcerting. Women are sectioned off and excluded from the service, coming to shul as members of the audience and not as participants.

There are Rabbis who have written and spoken as opponents of the movement, claiming that it is antithetical to tradition. However, attendees of partnership movements would argue just the opposite: it is an attempt to unlock the tradition and make it accessible to all.

Raphi Ozarowski continues his response

to the Shabbaton by adding a final note about the minyanim: "It only begs the bigger question of how we are supposed to grapple with a *halachic* system... Attempting for partial egalitarianism in our philosophy of halacha feels like a bit of a cop-out."

Many members of the Shabbaton shared this frustration. However, *halacha* is an integral aspect of the movement, and although the movement does not solve every situation where halacha and our instinctual egalitarian values conflict, it is definitely a positive start to a longer journey.



The Color of Mozart

Tamar Levy Neil Harbisson was born with achromatopsia, total colorblindness. For Harbisson, television still appears in black and white. Since the age of 21, he has been able to detect colors using his sense of hearing rather than sight with a prosthetic device he calls an "eyeborg." This device allows him to hear the color spectrum, even colors which the human eye cannot detect, such as Ultraviolet (UV) light and Infrared light. Subsequently, Harbisson describes his condition as "sonochromatism", where he possesses an extra sense that relates color and sound. This is different than synesthesia, a condition in which in response to a stimulus, a sensory or cognitive pathway is triggered and leads to an involuntary response of another sensory or cognitive pathway.

In 2003, through his work with Adam Montandon, a cyberneticist (a person who studies the approaches for exploring systems, their structures, and their possibilities, including learning, social control, and communication) and Peter Kese, Harbisson helped to create the Electronic Eye which he now wears on his forehead. In 2009, Matias Lizana was able to convert the "eyeborg" into a chip. This chip is able to be implanted into the brain. Through this device, the frequencies of light are converted into sound frequencies, which Harbisson consequently hears. This Electronic Eye is a color sensor that detects the color frequency which is then sent to a chip in the back of his head. During this process, light is converted into lower-pitched tones that Harbisson can hear through the bone—called bone conduction. This ultimately allows Harbisson to hear color.

Since 2004, Harbisson has been hearing color. He has memorized the musical notes and would name the sound frequencies he heard according to the names of the colors. He gradually started having preferred colors—based on his favorite melodies and sound frequencies. Harbisson explains how he used to dress in a way that looked good, but now he dresses in a way that "sounds good." As a result, he may wear colors that clash but "sound beautiful." He explains how he will dress in B minor to a funeral—which is actually composed of the colors turquoise, purple, and orange.

Harbisson's perception of beauty has also changed. When he looks at a person, he hears the person's face. Someone may look beautiful but sound terrible. The opposite also occurs.

The Electronic Eye has secondary effects. Whenever Harbisson hears sounds, the sounds become colors (in addition to the original goal, where colors become sounds). Harbisson can now paint peoples' voices, because the voices have frequencies that can be converted into colors. For example, Mozart is yellow in color.

Harbisson has added to his color spectrum colors that cannot be viewed by the human eye, such as Ultraviolet and Infrared light. He now knows whether it is a good day to sunbathe or not—he can hear the UV light outside. UV light is extremely dangerous for the human body so if he hears UV light (which

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varies in intensity depending on the day), he knows that it is not a safe day to be outside.

Rafel Duran Torrent, a Spanish film director, made a short video about Neil Harbisson in 2012. This film won the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival's Focus Forward Filmmakers' Competition in 2013.

Through this developing technology, those

who are colorblind are now able to appreciate our beautifully tinted world through the eyes of color—even if it may be through the shade of music. Those who are blessed with clear eyesight can also benefit from the creation of such technology, as Harbisson comments, "If salads sounded like Justin Bieber, children would eat more vegetables."



Botox for Migraines?

Yael Horvath Migraine headaches are currently one of the most common neurological disorders in the developed world, affecting more than 37 million people in the US alone. In a recent poll, adults of all ages considered migraines to be one of the top 20 disabilities that they lost healthy years to. Despite its debilitating and far-reaching effects, it is one of the least publicly-funded conditions of all neurological illnesses relative to its economic impact. As college students, many of us are oh-too-familiar with migraine headaches; debilitating headaches that cause intense pulsing or throbbing pain are often called "sick headaches" because they are accompanied by nausea and sensitivity to light and sound.

To all the migraine sufferers out there—there is good news. The FDA believes that Botox injections may be effective in the prevention of migraines. A recent article published in *Headache* magazine further substantiates this claim. In the scientific study related to the article, Avi Ashkenazi explores the use and effectiveness of Botulinum toxin to treat migraines, and in the process, gives a new face to Botox, the conventionally used cosmetic filler that has accrued household-name status over the years due to its explosive popularity in dermatological clinics.

Botox, which is produced by the bacteria *Clostridium Botulinum*, is one of the most potent toxins found in nature. Until recently, the toxin's biggest contribution to society was

its reversible, dose-dependent muscle-relaxing properties, making it the ideal wrinkle-preventer. Aside from its muscle-relaxing properties, however, Ashkenazi's team found that Botox produces pain-relieving effects as well.

While studying Botox for treating headaches, mixed results pushed the researchers to break the generic category of headache into more specific brackets. Two large, randomized controlled trials studying episodic migraines (EM) and tension headaches failed to show a significant beneficial effect of BoNT. However, when two large trials were performed on those with chronic migraines or chronic daily headaches, BoNT was a success. Two trials were conducted during which patients were either injected with Botox or given a placebo. In both trials, patients who had received the Botox treatment experienced far less pain and noted a significant improvement in their quality of life.

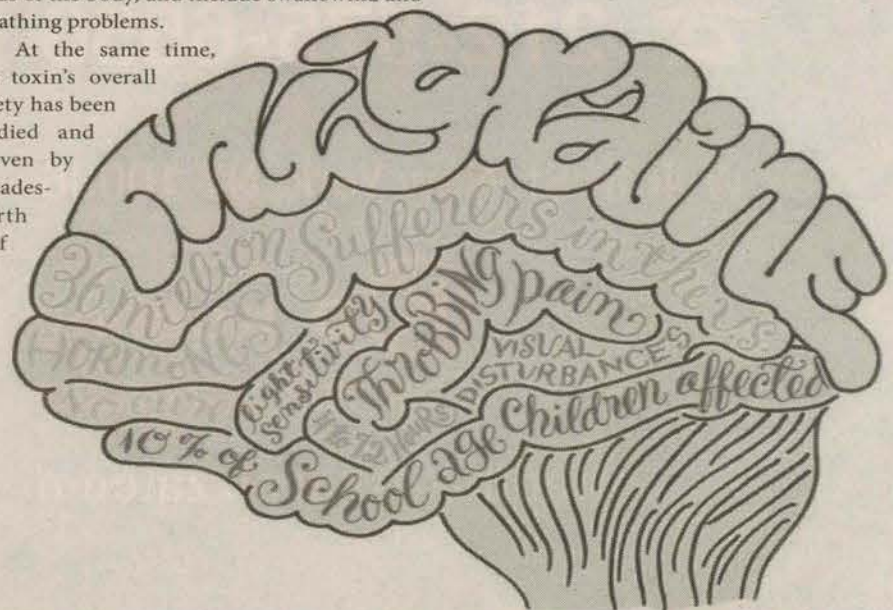
In cases that showed a positive correlation between BoNT administration and pain-relief, a headache index, which is a composite measurement of headache frequency, severity, and duration, showed that week eight post-injection was the time period during which patients had a minimal headache frequency and felt the least pain. These effects lasted for about three months.

At this point, Botox to treat migraines has only been approved for people with chronic

migraines, which has been defined as a "distinct and severe neurological disorder characterized by patients who have a history of migraine and suffer from headaches on 15 or more days per month with headaches lasting four hours a day or longer." In addition, side effects have been noted which include neck pain and headache. Other side effects are related to symptoms related to the effects of the botulinum toxin spreading from the area of injection to other areas of the body, and include swallowing and breathing problems.

At the same time, the toxin's overall safety has been studied and proven by decades-worth of

clinical use. The FDA says it knows of no confirmed cases of the spread of the toxin effect when Botox has been used at the recommended dose to treat chronic migraines. Botox for headaches, and not just for wrinkles, appears to be a clinical breakthrough, providing a new twist on an old classic. In the near future, Botox can help alleviate some of that migraine pain, and provide relief for those afflicted with this neurological disorder.



Smart Glasses: The Vision of Sight Restoration

Allison Tawil Over the past few years, there has been a rapid and unstoppable increase in the development of technology. Technologies that were once considered efficient are now deemed archaic and new technology is constantly replacing old methods. That being said, it seems as if Seeing Eye dogs are about to be replaced with something big, something that could grant the blind unheard of visual abilities— smart glasses.

The idea that there will soon be a device that will actually be able to “see” for those who cannot sounds fictitious. However, scientists have created machinery that can accomplish this feat. “Smart glasses” are computerized glasses that are able to detect objects and display the objects on their lenses. The glasses would help the visually impaired navigate using their own sight, rather than using help from an outside source.

The glasses use two cameras (just as the eyes produce two images), each located on the corners of the glasses, to record the image in front of the person. Software in the device

then displays the image from the cameras on transparent LED lenses. The glasses detect how far away objects are from the wearer by comparing the image of both cameras. The software is also able to read text and translate it into audible speech. Additionally, the glasses are equipped with a gyroscope to measure the orientation of the glasses, a compass, and a GPS system.

As the majority of registered blind people are still able to perceive light and motion, these types of glasses would be extremely helpful to the blind community. The transparent LED display allows wearers to view enhanced images on the screen as well as use their remaining vision.

The technology was created by Dr. Stephen Hicks of the University of Oxford. Although there are already some complicated ways to restore sight to the blind (such as implanting a chip into the person’s eye), these glasses are meant to be a simple means of restoring sight. They are easy to use, safe, and are proportionally cheaper than implant surgery.

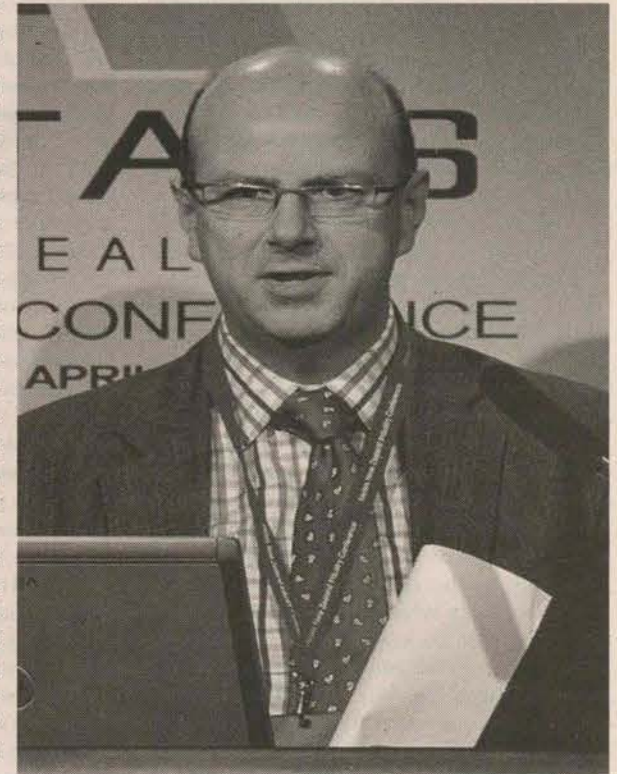
The National Federation of the Blind estimates that there are over 6 million Americans currently living with blindness. As for the definition of blindness, according to their website, “We encourage persons to consider themselves

blind if their sight is bad enough—even with corrective lenses—that they must use alternative methods to engage in any activity that persons with normal vision would do using their eyes.” And that number is increasing. As America’s baby boomers are aging, more and more of them are losing their vision. According to the organization Eye Care America, one in three Americans over the age of 65 have some type of vision-impairing disease.

Current devices being used to assist blind and visually impaired people to navigate include guide dogs, or Seeing Eye dogs, and white canes. While sources report that guide dogs have been used as early as the 1500s, the first guide dog training school was opened in Germany during World War I. In America, the widespread use of guide dogs didn’t start until the 1930s. These dogs do just what their title sounds like: they help their owners navigate. White canes started being used after World War I, and they help users detect objects in front of them.

As the technology of smart glasses is further developed, scientists hope to add more features, such as using brightness levels to show depth. Eventually, the glasses will be able to read bus signs and know the location of the bus, giving the wearer directions to

a destination. Ultimately, the glasses would be an essential product for every visually impaired person. These glasses grant visually impaired people a form of independence that would have been impossible to experience just one hundred years ago, and better yet, they reduce the need to rely on a dog or a stick.



HOMEMADE AUTHENTIC ITALIAN PIZZA

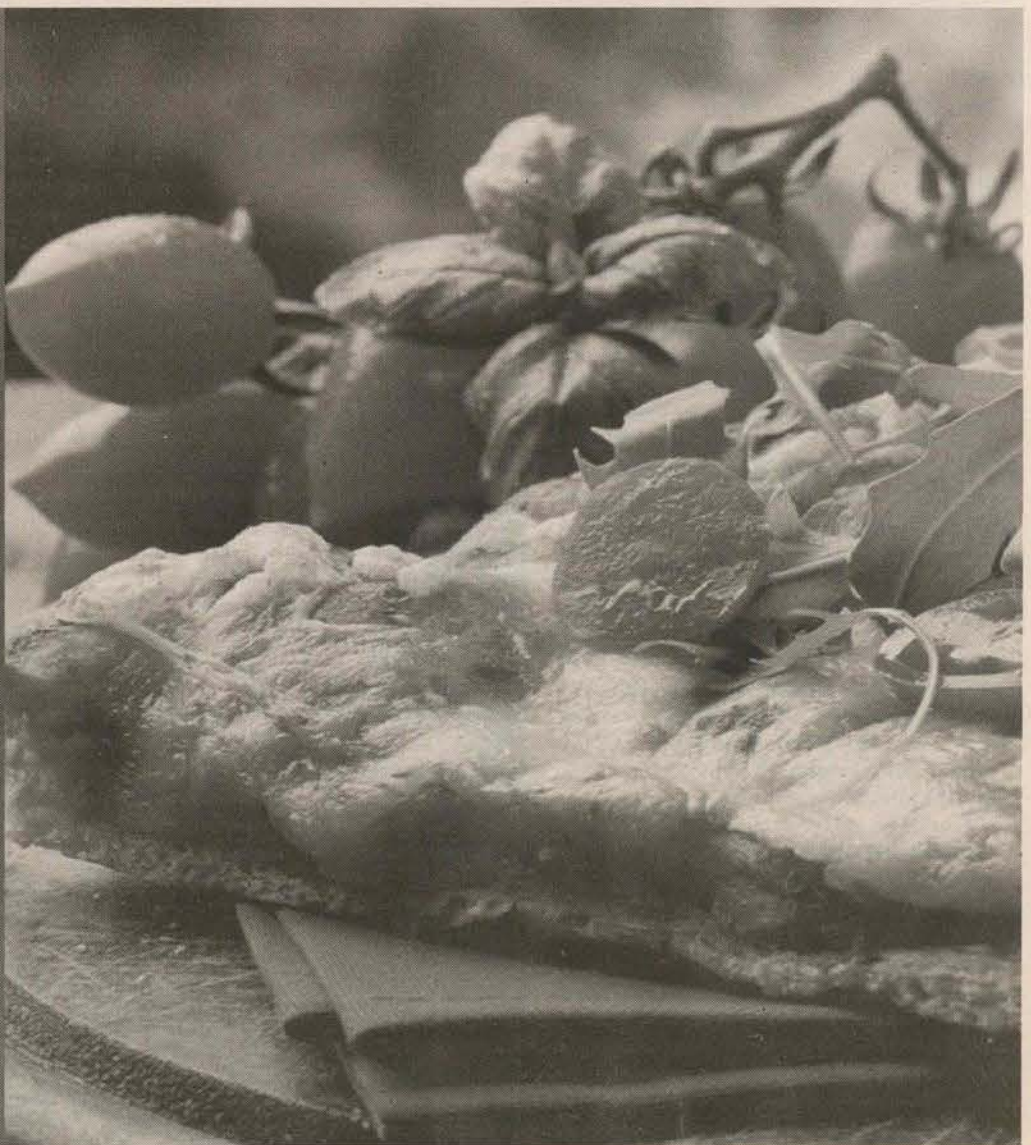
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Warm Up Your Winter

Ahava Muskat Whether you are lucky enough to live on 35th Street, or a little farther away in

Brookdale, 36th Street, Schottenstein, or the Heights, we all have experienced the bitter winter cold. Besides for wearing a coat and all the necessary accessories, what else can you do to help your body maintain its internal homeostasis? Here are some useful and interesting tips that have been scientifically proven to warm you up in the winter:

1. Spend time in social environments with people that you care about. This may seem a little bit surprising (or, at the very least, random) but in reality, it's been shown that spending time with others can make one feel physically warmer. In fact, the University of Toronto researched this phenomenon and concluded that being lonely actually makes one colder! Two studies were conducted to investigate this phenomenon. One study split up participants into two groups: One group was told to recall a time they had felt included, and the second group was told to recall a time they felt excluded. When later asked to estimate the temperature of the room, the group asked to recall a time they felt excluded reported estimating a lower room temperature than the other group. In a second study, a group of participants were made to feel excluded through a virtual ball game. These individuals wanted warmer food and drink after the game than the other participants. That being said, winter is the time to walk to school with a friend, and hang out with people during the

day. Ironically, hibernating and hiding away from the cold alone will make you colder!

2. Start your meals with a bowl of soup. Firstly, the heat from the soup warms a person up internally and physically raises one's body temperature. Starting a meal with a bowl of soup is also a great way to lose weight. Penn State University conducted a study in 2007, which found that people who start their meals with soup consume 20 percent less calories than people who don't start their meals with soup. The best kind of soup to eat to accomplish both these goals is vegetable soup.

3. Consume portion-sized amounts of healthy fats. Nuts, seeds, olives, and avocados are very good foods to eat and keep one warm. Healthy fats are essential in helping the body maintain its temperature. It has actually been reported that people who are on diets that very much restrict their fat intake have reported feeling colder than a person not on this kind of diet.

4. Stay away from drinking alcohol. Alcohol decreases one's body temperature and makes the body more vulnerable to hypothermia. Also, a very important homeostatic reaction to cold is prevented due to alcohol consumption: shivering. Shivering gets one's blood moving, and burns bodily calories as heat and energy, making you feel warmer. One who drinks alcohol may feel temporarily warmer because his/her blood vessels open up more, a process known as vasodilation. This

causes the blood vessels to send warm blood away from internal organs to the surface of the skin. However, in the long run, the real effect of alcohol is the body's significant lack of ability to fight against the cold.

5. Eat a gingerbread cookie. Ginger is a root herb that is commonly believed to possess the ability to "get the blood flowing". Even as an ingredient in food, ginger is reported to raise one's internal body heat. Hot peppers and brown rice (a complex carb) have also been shown to make one warmer, because these foods are harder for the body to digest.

6. Wear white. Although it's commonly thought that wearing black and darker colors can keep a person warmer, in reality wearing white is more effective. The color white

functions as a reflector. White absorbs no color— it reflects all colors. So if one wears white, natural body heat can be trapped into the clothing. Contrastingly, darker colors are less likely to trap a person's own body heat. [Disclaimer: This theory is not yet completely verified but it is scientific concept that is being studied.]

7. Give someone a hug. The body heat transferred through giving a hug can help your body warm up. Another advantage to giving someone a hug (besides for showing care or affection to the one you are hugging) is that oxytocin is released. This hormone reduces blood pressure and stress levels.

Hope these tips help you have a healthful and warm winter!



A Tale of Two Degrees: D.O. vs. M.D.

Dahlia Pasik For the first time, Stern College hosted its own Medical School Fair. A range of medical schools were represented, including NYU Medical School, Hofstra North Shore-LIJ School of Medicine, The Medical School for International Health, New York Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine, Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Sackler School of Medicine, Technion American Medical School, Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine, and Weill Medical College of Cornell University. Transportation was provided from the Wilf Campus so that Yeshiva College pre-medical students could benefit from this event as well. Among the range of medical schools present at the fair, it is interesting to note that there was a fair ratio of osteopathic schools to allopathic schools. However, what I found even more interesting is that more than half of the pre-med students at the fair had little knowledge about the differences between osteopathic and allopathic medicine.

"D.O.s can't prescribe medication, right?" said a fellow eager student standing next to me near the NYIT Osteopathic School representative. Wrong. Therefore, before I divulge in the multiple benefits of hosting this fair at Stern, I do feel like there is a misconception about D.O.s which needs to be addressed.

M.D.s, or medical doctors, and D.O.s, doctors of osteopathic medicine, share more similarities than you'd think. Both schools share the same curriculum, have access to the same residencies, and (once certified)

will have identical salaries. Essentially, osteopathic medicine is a system of medicine based on the theory that disturbances in the musculoskeletal system affect other bodily parts, causing many disorders that can be corrected by various manipulative techniques in combination with conventional medical, surgical, pharmacological and therapeutic procedures. Surprisingly enough, osteopathic schools actually incorporate more into their curriculum: a series of techniques primarily focused on the prevention of disease. Actually, the distinction between M.D.s and D.O.s is really only known among students in the medical field as they require different applications. People who are not medical doctors, i.e., a fair amount of the population, really have no idea that there is a difference. Check: your favorite childhood Pediatrician may in fact be a D.O.!

Once in practice, D.O.s can exceed to great, if not greater heights than M.D.s; that is, if he/she is an exceptional physician. Over this past summer, I met Dr. Jane Owen, the Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Montefiore Medical Center, the university hospital for the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. She is also the director of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Women's Health at Bronx East. Dr. Jane Owen is a graduate of NYIT School of Osteopathic Medicine. After explaining to me the difference between a D.O. and M.D. degree, she emphasized why she chose to go to an Osteopathic School. She knows more about the body as a fully integrated system than her

fellow M.D. graduates and revels in telling me about her lunch meeting with a cardiologist, a Cornell Medical School graduate. The friend had post-partum carpal tunnel syndrome, and when they discussed her unresolved CTS, she was unfamiliar with basic anatomy and the options available to her other than pain relievers and surgery. It was a surprise that the cardiologist was unaware of any possible rehab option and alternative treatment; an essential part of the osteopathic school curriculum that is evidently lacking in allopathic schools. As proven by Dr. Jane Owen, the osteopathic path to medicine can be fascinating as well as more fulfilling, in her case, than following the common allopathic route.

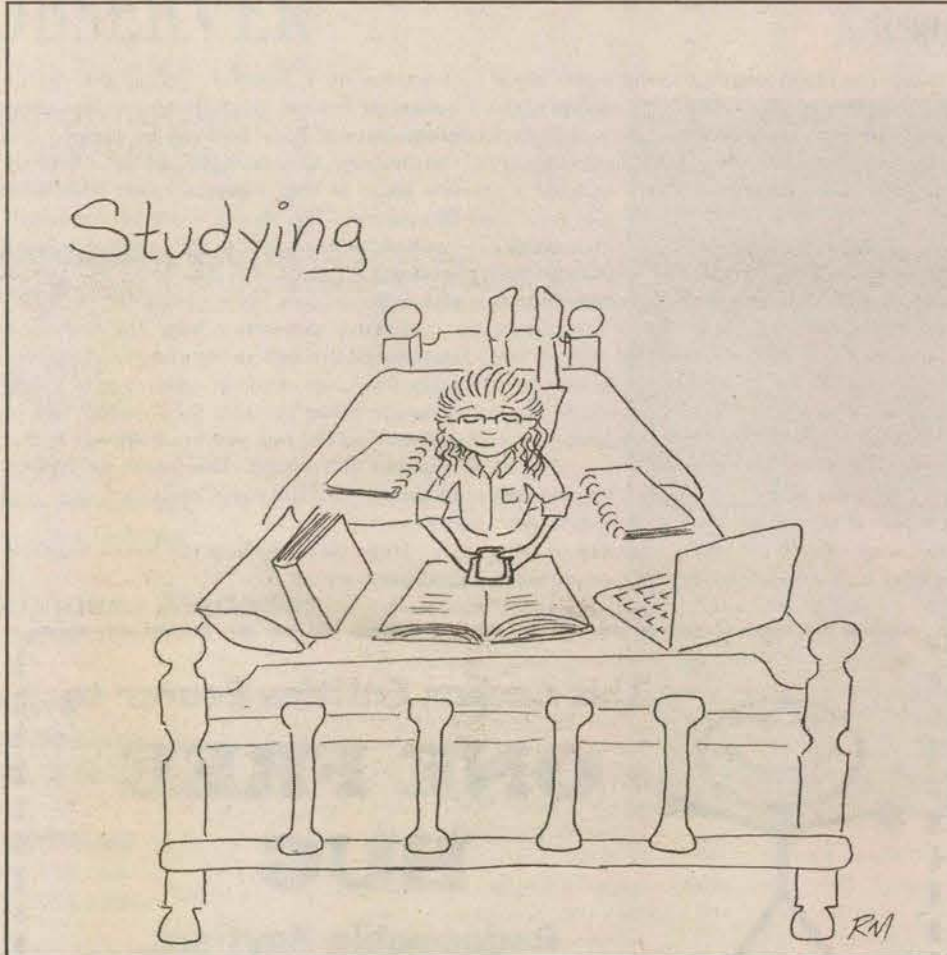
The equivalent professional opportunities available to both M.D. and D.O. graduates were firmly declared less than a decade ago. In 2005, Jordan Cohen, the president of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) stated: "After more than a century of often bitterly contentious relationships between the osteopathic and allopathic medical professionals, we now find ourselves living at a time when osteopathic and allopathic graduates are both sought after by many of the same residency programs; both licensed by the same licensing boards; are both privileged by many of the same hospitals; and are found in appreciable numbers on the faculties of each other's medical schools." Well, there you have it.

The next question then becomes: If there is little difference, then why all the D.O.-hate? Well, for the most part, there really is no hate.

It mostly stems from ignorance or a lack of knowledge on the part of premedical students that have not done adequate research about these two degrees. Additionally, D.O. schools tend to look for slightly different things in applicants than allopathic schools. The NYIT Osteopathic School of Medicine representative summarizes it for me, "If we see an applicant with a 4.0 GPA, a fantastic MCAT score, and little outside volunteering or involvement in the field of medicine, we most probably will not accept him. However, a student with a slightly lower GPA or MCAT score, but has shown an unwavering commitment to medicine through volunteering and actively involving himself in the medical field— this applicant we are more likely to accept".

I believe that the Medical School Fair at Stern was a success and a positive experience. It exposed students to many different schools, both allopathic and osteopathic, in addition to presenting two American programs in Israel (Sackler and Technion), the relatively new and unconventional Hofstra Medical School, and many more. Overall, the Fair was a great way of introducing different options to pre-medical students, whether they are starting out on the arduous journey or in the process of applying. And remember, the primary goal is that you are doing something rewarding with your life. Fulfill that dream. It is up to you to determine what the two letters after your last name really mean.

Cartoon of the Month



Rachel Miriam Rosenfeld

Take a Moment to Remember



ST Schwartz One year later, Americans are searching for a meaningful way to remember and honor the victims of Sandy Hook Elementary School. Camera crews and reporters flooded main street while Americans tried to find ways to show their support for the victims' families. However, instead of public displays of mourning and support, families and government officials have requested that people pledge small acts of kindness in their own neighborhoods and towns. Today, tomorrow, or in the next few months, try and do an act of kindness for someone you care about, or a stranger, in honor of the victims who will never have another chance to do the same. Take a moment to think, and remember.

*Still haven't written for the Observer? Don't worry, the semester's almost over, but the year is not! Contact an editor today, get involved, and always remember to **WRITE ON!***

NEXT MONTH IN STERN...

January 2014						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 New Years	2 SCW Final Exams	3 SCW Final Exams	4 Parshat Bo Finals Shabbaton
5 SCW Final Exams	6 SCW Final Exams	7 SCW Final Exams	8 Intersession	9 Intersession	10 Intersession	11 Parshat Bishalach Intersession
12 Intersession	13 Intersession	14 Intersession	15 Intersession	16 Intersession	17 Intersession	18 Parshat Yisro
19 Orientation	20 MLK Day Orientation	21 First Day of Class	22	23 WBB vs. The King's College	24	25 Parshat Mishpatim Welcome Back and TAC Shabbaton
26 WBB vs. Albany College of Phar- macy	27 MBB vs. NYU-Poly	28	29	30 WREST vs. College of Mount Saint Vincent	31	

RAQUEL MILLER