



The Yeshiva University

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Creating an Open Dialogue with Academic Advisement

Sara C. Olson At a town hall meeting with University President Richard Joel in November, Gaby Elkaim (SCW '14) voiced her concern, based on her own and others experiences, regarding the ability of Academic Advisement to effectively and adequately address the needs of the student body. Her statement led to a meeting last month between Elkaim and Miriam Schechter, director of the Academic Advisement Center.

"I hadn't intended [my comments] to go anywhere," said Elkaim, "but after the town hall meeting, I was approached by several students thanking me for what I had said, and asking me to be a representative for their complaints. I emailed Miriam Schechter, apologized if my comments [at the town hall meeting] had come off as harsh, and told

her that students had approached me to act as their representative. She agreed to meet with me at some point. I decided that if we were going to meet, I would need a cohesive presentation."

Using Facebook, Elkaim posted a survey of free response questions, which received 63 responses (both positive and negative), totaling about 5% of the student body. Though her survey clearly represents the opinions of a minority of the school population, Elkaim used her findings to create a proposal for her meeting because, as she noted, "the same problems were recurring...complaints were consistent and were independent of academic standing or major."

One of the problems that showed up
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Beyond the Blue Bottle

Yaelle Lasson Where else would you find a group of 90 Jewish college students on a Monday night in February during midterm season? It is certainly not expected to find them serving up classy wines, eating choice steaks, and hanging out on a dessert yacht.

While not exactly the standards of a typical college party, the Kosher Food and Wine Experience at Pier 60 of Chelsea Piers attracts Jewish college students from the New York City every year, majority of which attend Yeshiva University.

The Kosher Food and Wine Experience is now in its 8th year and is a destination for kosher wine aficionados and foodies from all over the world. Events take place in New York, Los Angeles, London, Miami, and Israel. This year, KFWE added a luxury yacht to the event, which featured two floors of desserts and dessert wines, in addition to a mixology bar and a lounge area.

The KFWE in New York draws about 90 pourers to pour the over 200 featured high end wines. Because many of the top-tier wines are not Mevushal (not cooked, therefore many only be handled by a Jew who is Shomer Shabbat), all of those 90 pourers must be Shomer Shabbat. The job of the pourers is to open and pour wine

for all the guests that arrive at wine company's table and stand among the winery staff.

"It's great to be part of a Jewish, classy and high end event that is professional," says Daniela Garzon, Stern College senior and 3 year veteran at KFWE. "And don't worry, I am not even skipping class!"

The event specifically appeals to Stern students because of the quick, 15 minute crosstown bus ride to Chelsea Piers. "It is a great place for [Stern girls] when they are on their break working to try many different restaurants that they might not be able to experience because of their significant higher costs than Mendy's, Eden Wok, and Tiberias. It's an opportunity to enjoy great food and work at the same time," says Shlomo Blashka, Wine and Spirits Educator at the Royal Wine Corporation and manager of the pourers at the event. Blashka estimates that 50 of the students are from Stern and Yeshiva College, 15 are from Touro College, and 10 from Queens College.

The second shift of the KFWE, which includes over 20 different catering and restaurant vendors from the tri-state area, is even more popular with Stern students because it takes place after the school day. Prior to the
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Largest Gift in Einstein's History to Boost Faculty and Research, Not Scholarship Program

Rina Haller At Muriel Block's bequest, \$160 million was recently given to Albert Einstein College of Medicine. The gift is the largest in Einstein's near 60 years and ranked six in The Chronicle of Philanthropy's 2013 list of the nation's top donations. According to Matthew Yaniv, Director of Media Relations, "Ms. Block stipulated that her gift exclusively support medical research at Einstein."

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Therefore, the donation will not go towards the Einstein medical schools scholarships that are highly sought after by many of SCW's pre-med students.

The donation is part of Einstein's capital campaign, which went public in April 2013 and has raised \$440 million to date. The Block donation will be used to establish endowed chairs for scholars to be known as Harold and Muriel Block Scholars. In addition to the scholars, several buildings and institutes have been named after the Blocks: The Harold and Muriel Block Building, The Harold and Muriel Block Institute for Brain Research, and The Harold and Muriel Block Institute for Clinical and Translational Research at Einstein and Montefiore.

"Current and future students will benefit enormously from recruiting top faculty and exploring new areas of research," Mr. Yaniv said.



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Muriel Block began her relationship with Einstein in the 1970's when she and her husband Harold Block, a New York City real estate executive and philanthropist, joined Einstein's Society of founders as members. Block served on Einstein's Women's Division national board and New York chapter executive board. Block continued her involvement after Harold's death in 1987.

At the time of Muriel's death in September 2010, having given nearly \$22 million in 2003, she was considered one of Einstein's most generous supporters.

According to Dr. Allan Spiegel, Dean of Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Block's recent gift of \$160 million will strengthen the university's research departments as well as its overall mission to improve human health.

The Yeshiva University
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"Zionism Today" Panel Brings J Street to YU

Shalva Ginsparg A much-anticipated panel discussion entitled "Zionism Today" drew large crowds to the midtown campus on Tuesday evening, March 11th. Sponsored in large part by the Israel Club and the Soldiers in Exile Club, the panel was advertised as a debate between "three Jews, three stories, three perspectives." The three Jews featured were Danny Ayalon, Israel's former ambassador to the U.S. and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jeremy Ben-Ami, founder and executive director of J Street, and Yehudah HaKohen, founder and director of Alternative Action. Much of the buzz surrounding the event concerned the decision to include J Street on the panel. The event marks the first time that the liberal advocacy group often accused of being more pro-Palestinian than Pro-Israel has been invited to Yeshiva University.

For the organizers of the event, the desire to invite panelists from very different points on the political spectrum created significant logistical challenges. Yitz Eichenstein, a student at RIETS and one of the main organizers of the panel, described the difficulty of convincing the YU administration to permit J Street to attend. Though he eventually met with success, the YU administration would not allow J Street to come alone because of a "concern about the outcome" and also insisted that the event not be open to the public. Even after the panelists were approved, Eichenstein still faced backlash from YU students, and some of the posters advertising the event on

campus were defaced. Yaacov Sultan, a sophomore at YC and the moderator of the panel, described the security challenges of the event. (This writer was stopped more than once to show YU ID in the 245 buildings and security guards were stationed throughout the building during the event). Despite the difficulty, Sultan congratulated security for taking the "right measures" to ensure that the panel ran smoothly and was not disrupted by protestors.

The debate was comprised of three segments, the first of which was a series of general questions answered by each of the panelists. Key topics in this part of the debate included the definition of Zionism, the viability of a two-state solution, and the proper role of both the U.S. and American Jewish community in Israeli politics. J Street's Ben-Ami remarked that he was pleasantly surprised to find that he so closely agreed with the more right-wing Ambassador Ayalon's approach to the two-state solution (both presented it as the primary vehicle for peace in the Middle East). HaKohen denounced the two-state solution, contending that it satisfies no one and forces Israel to give back land which is "the cradle of Jewish civilization." He also condemned Ayalon and Ben-Ami's chumminess with the US, claiming that Israel is a Western satellite and vassal and that it is "ridiculous" for Israel to align itself with the West instead of embracing its "authentic Semitic identity."

"We are a Middle Eastern country trying to be Western and making a fool of ourselves in the

process," he added later on in the debate.

In the second segment of the debate, each panelist was given the opportunity to ask the other two panelists a question. HaKohen pressed Ben-Ami to justify his support of the two-state solution despite a legacy fraught with failure, and Ben-Ami took Ayalon to task for supporting the two-state solution while still advocating for the building of settlements. Ayalon and HaKohen also clashed over the legitimacy of the "Palestinian narrative," which Ayalon unequivocally deemed false and which HaKohen insisted must be given attention to and regarded sympathetically.

"I will never accept the Palestinian narrative," Ayalon said in response to HaKohen.

The debate culminated with a series of question from the audience as well as final remarks by each of the panelists.

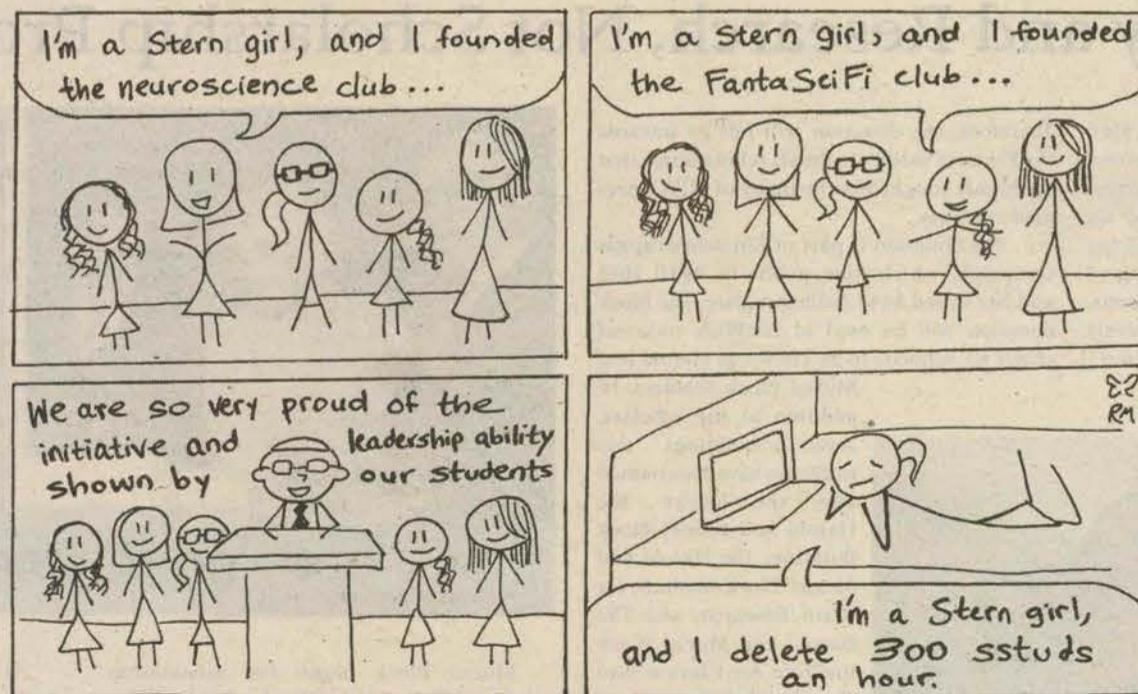
In his closing remarks, J Street's Ben-Ami announced that all students interested in speaking to him further and learning more about J Street should follow him to Tiberias for a post-panel meeting.

Elisheva Rabinovich ('16) commented that she was "very impressed that YU was willing to host this sort of event and to discuss these issues in a public setting." A Stern graduate who was in attendance declined to comment publicly because of how controversial she found the event to be.

A recording of the event is scheduled to be posted within the next few days.

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Lizzie Rozentsvayge and Rachel Miriam Rosenfeld

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Mechinah Program Reaches New Milestones, Looks to the Future

NEWS

ADENA KLEINER
SHALVA GINSPIRG

Shayna Darling On a recent Thursday night in February, girls from Stern's Mechinah program could be found skating across the slick surface of Bryant Park's ice skating rink. This outing was just one of many events that have been sponsored throughout the year for a group of girls on campus whose presence is not known for its size, but for its constant enthusiasm for Judaism.

While it may be easy to fall into the trap of believing that every Stern girl's life follows a similar pattern of attending a Jewish day school and spending a year abroad in seminary, there are many girls whose current enrollment in Stern came about from a circuitous and often times unexpected process; one that is derived from a leap of faith and from a proactive decision to enrich their Jewish lives. These are

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the girls of Stern's Mechinah program, which caters to students who did not attend Jewish day schools and which is working this semester to continue to expand in size and to strengthen its presence on campus.

The Mechinah Program, whose uptown equivalent is known as JSS, is spearheaded by Mrs. Shoshana Schechter, current director of the program and Bible teacher at Stern.

When still a Stern student, Schechter was shocked to discover that many of her peers came to Stern without a Jewish background or a support system, and that they struggled to find Judaic classes that catered to their skill sets and backgrounds. She began to vocalize the need for Stern to accommodate the many different types of girls who attend the university.

A few years later, after Mrs. Schechter had already graduated from Columbia's School of Journalism, she began teaching beginner-level Judaic classes at Stern. It was around this time that Richard Joel became president of Yeshiva University. As a former president and international director of Hillel with years of experience reaching out to young adults and building Jewish life on the university campus, he was concerned that there was no Stern equivalent to the JSS program. With his encouragement and with the efforts of Rabbi Ephraim Kanarfogel, current chair of the Jewish studies department, the Mechina program began to take form and Schechter was chosen to direct it.

Today, Mechinah now holds an important presence on campus.

Whereas in its early years there was an average of seven Mechinah students, there are now around 30 per year. The Mechinah program encompasses both in-class and extracurricular opportunities, and includes classes taught by Mrs. Schechter and Rabbi Lawrence Hajioff, Shabbatons, a chavrutah or learning partner program, and other fun extracurricular events. But above all, it gives students coming to Stern with similar backgrounds the ability to develop close bonds with each other and with teachers, and to inspire one another. As Mrs. Schechter remarked, "It's not just about having classes on a certain level, it's about community."

The Mechinah program is currently headed by co-Presidents Michelle Navon ('14) and Lea Bekhar ('14). Navon, who started out at Stern as a true freshman and is now finishing up her fourth year, remarked that "Mechinah has made a huge impact on my life. If it wasn't for this program, I would never have thought to attend Stern." Bekhar, also a senior, commented that Mechina is a great platform to unite people with similar interests and to provide support and advice. "Mechinah for me has been a family," she said. Lee Sahar, a current Mechinah member, echoed Bekhar's sentiments: "Mechina is my immediate family in Stern; it's who I turn to when I need my dose of support."

Mechinah has many events throughout the year, some of which are co-sponsored by JSS. This includes shiurim, holiday events such as donut decorating for Hanukkah, Shabbatons with inspiring Rabbis, Rebbetzins, and teachers, and get-togethers like the recent ice skating event.

There is one event—or more precisely, a program—that is seemingly the culmination of all that Mechinah has to offer: July in Jerusalem. Generously sponsored by donor Mary Schwartz, July in Jerusalem ranges between a few weeks to a month long and encapsulates the seminary and yeshiva experience in a limited amount of time. Open to both JSS and Mechinah students, it is an invigorating and exciting summer program that features classes in the morning, and different trips and volunteer opportunities later in the day. Students who attend July in Jerusalem truly form a cohesive unit, and past years have shown that they are more likely to become Mechinah leaders on campus. July in Jerusalem will be running this summer from July 28th through August 13th, and is actively looking for those who are interested.

Creating an Open Dialogue with Academic Advisement

Continued from page 1

consistently in the survey was student dissatisfaction with academic advisement. Complaints included being misinformed and a seeming lack of communication between academic advisement and other departments vis-à-vis requirements for different majors/departments.

"I felt that my meeting with Mrs. Schechter went well, that I was heard out respectfully, and she was troubled by the fact that there was so much dissatisfaction on the part of the student body," Elkaim remarked after the meeting. "From her perspective, Mrs. Schechter stressed that she felt some student complaints are the result of students not assuming responsibility." For example, though some complain that academic advisement is not helpful in explaining requirements, there are color-coded sheets that list requirements for each major available in the academic advisement office; general academic policies are available upon request; and the Banner schedule includes a column at the end of each course with a description of what requirements that course fulfills.

"[We currently have a situation where] students meet with an advisor once, get fed up, and never went back because they feel that the advisor failed them," said Elkaim. "Some students just go to seniors, who have been on campus longer, and ask them for tips about planning a schedule. Rather than learning the ropes by the end of one's college career, we should be taught from the beginning."

Elkaim proposed that meetings should be set up between student and academic advisor early on, preferably during the first semester.

The student would choose an advisor to work with for the duration of their stay in Stern, and at their first meeting create a plan for the student's entire college career, based on an intended major. Students who are undecided in their majors could plan for a few options. Sheets similar to those used for the junior and senior check could be utilized to that end.

"Having a comprehensive meeting to go over requirements, policy, and career planning could solve many of our current problems," said Elkaim.

Elkaim also pointed out that there are organizations in place on campus whose job is to monitor the various departments and see what needs improving.

"We have the Department of Student Life, which acts as a liaison between the student body and the administration," she said, "and there is also the Department of Institutional Research, who put out surveys to examine student satisfaction and see which offices and departments could use improvement."

Elkaim's main reason for meeting with academic advisement was to start – and hopefully perpetuate – an open dialogue between students and academic advisors.

"Academic advisement is important and necessary, and there should not have to be animosity to any degree," emphasized Elkaim. "If a student feels a meeting did not go well for whatever reason, they should express that to the advisor. Students must realize that they are participants in a dialogue, so silence will only perpetuate problems. If we can all be more aware of the concerns on either side, we can have a more open and respectful discussion."

High Culture, Low Spirits

Riva Tropp Stern students often have the impression that if they love an impractical subject, such as the history of the baroque period or studio art, their only career options are to forsake their dreams and go into accounting, or become historians and live off of packaged soups. In the shadow of the 2008 recession, this stereotype has been particularly prevalent. Students are being told to buckle-down and find more practical careers, and many colleges have been shutting down more and more 'unnecessary' aspects of their educational curriculums. But despite economic tough-times, a panel of Stern alumni recently featured at a Career Center event on the midtown campus showed that humanities majors can succeed.

The first woman on the panel was EY Zipris, a former English Literature major at Stern and a current manager of Program and Professional Development at the Museum of the City of New York. Ms. Zipris' major and career path are not intuitively connected, something she regards as a rule rather than an exception for humanities majors. "I really don't think it matters what you major in unless you have a very clear set path that you want to focus in. If you love things and you want to study them while you're in college, take the opportunity to do so; it's going to lead you to the path you really want to be on," she said.

For humanities majors, that path can often bring surprises, as in the case of Miriam Gloger. For most of her childhood, Ms. Gloger wanted to be an entomologist. But when she got to college, she disliked

the mathematical emphasis that the subject held. She graduated as a history major and decided to go into library science, having taken some language courses on the side. The library-world is difficult to break into, but one particular class that she took at Stern set her apart from other applicants. "I got my job because of Yiddish," Ms. Gloger explained. "The position was advertised to do Hebrew and Yiddish cataloging with a grant project with NYPL. The job was made for me or I was made for the job."

Sometimes people get lucky with their job-finding, but climbing the career ladder can take a staggering amount of work. A case in point was panelist Judith Kaplan, a current senior product manager at Ralph Lauren who, in one early internship of her career, worked for six days a week, including Saturday nights, and sometimes put in 22 hours a day, though the internship was unpaid. She regards that internship as one of "the most valuable things" she's done for her career. Ms. Kaplan's current occupation is still demanding, but she considers it well worth it. "I found something that I was passionate about," she said.

Stern alumni of the past have managed to enjoy a liberal arts education and dominate the job market. However, these women graduated a decade ago, and things have changed at Yeshiva University. The fact that humanities departments like French and Music are quietly disappearing or are at risk, and that languages like Yiddish are no longer offered suggests that the recession is taking a harsh toll on Yeshiva University's liberal arts ideals.

FEATURES

Beyond the Blue Bottle

MAKENA OWENS
YAELE LASSON

Continued from page 1

event, in the large room of Pier 60 overlooking the Hudson River, Blashka gives all the pourers a brief tutorial as to how to pour the wine correctly and how to put corks back into the bottles. They are also warned by the Mashgiach at the event that they may not allow anyone to pour wine for himself or herself and they are the only ones at the table who can handle the bottles in any way.

Sarah King, a senior at Stern, has been working for Bartenura Winery for the past 2 years. "I most enjoy meeting people and asking where they are from and why they are looking," she says as she recommends a red Joyvin to a guest. King and others all said that they found out about the event from Stern College: In the Know. "As a college student, I don't get to experience something like this often," noted Stern student Michal Denberg, also pouring for Bartenura. Evan Kalatizadeh, Yeshiva College senior, mentioned that he most enjoyed seeing

how Israelis conduct business with each other. Gabi Stein, a sophomore at Stern College says that she learned a lot more than she knew about the wines and a little bit of some waitressing skills as well.

Garzon says that when she started, she was most taken aback by the amounts of spitting of wine. Now after 3 years, Garzon has been placed with Capcanes Tarra Di Seta, a Tuscany winery because she can speak Spanish with the winery staff. Garzon was excited to show off an oversized bottle of wine on display that was decanted and served to guests. She even has spent the past three years collecting the leftover corks from the event for an art mural.

What happens when a pourer is allowed wines at his or her winery and then many others from across the room? Blashka answers that, "Real wine tasting is tasting and then spitting out the wine. I make note of those acting responsibly and hire them again next year."

Even if a student is not interested in

professionally working with wines, there is still a lot to learn from working at KFWE. "One of the greatest skills anyone can learn at these events is patience and working under pressure," Blashka remarks. "You will have 2000 attendees clamoring for wine but you will learn how to perform efficiently and quickly to handle the consumers demands."

KFWE really does expand the horizons and wine knowledge of Jewish college students beyond the "blue bottle." "With such an array of wine and food, KFWE is a

great opportunity to discover great wine, fun new restaurants, or just a have a magical night out," says Jay Buchsbaum of the Royal Wine Corporation. There clearly a demand for kosher food and wine, and Jewish college students want to be a part of it.

"I think it is important for YU students to explore New York City's Jewish art and culture scene," says Aryeh Younger, a YU Senior who was covering the event for a Jewish publication. He adds, "What a better way to bring in the month of Adar!"



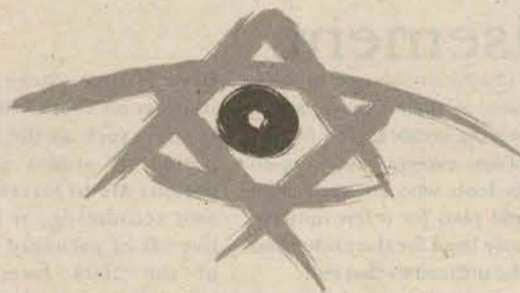
New Taglit-Birthright Bus Eligibilities Introduce a YU Bus

Shira Kaye If you have spent any time traveling in Israel, there's no doubt that you have witnessed a Taglit-Birthright Israel group touring the land for the first time. You may have even made friends with the participants or danced with them at the Kotel. For those unfamiliar with Birthright mission, the trips seek to ensure the continuity of the Jewish people while giving young Jews a sense of connection to their Jewish identity and land at no cost to the applicant. During a ten-day experience, participants tour all over Israel, learning about Jewish history and discussing national themes such as Shabbat, community, and Torah study.

Advisors on Taglit-Birthright range in religiosity and nationality; on the American programs, there is at least one American and one Israeli advisor. These Birthright trips, funded by private donations and the Israeli government, are generally targeted at non-religious and non-affiliated Jews. However, there are also modern-Orthodox trips, sponsored by the Orthodox Union's Israel

Free Spirit, targeted to participants who affiliate with Orthodoxy but never received the chance to tour the land.

Previously, for participants to be eligible for the free trip, they had to be aged 18-26, identify as Jewish, have at least one Jewish parent, and have never toured Israel as part of an organized program. This year, Taglit-Birthright Israel has changed its eligibility requirements. Now, participants who have toured Israel in the past with an official group can apply to Birthright or Israel Free Spirit Trips, as long as they were under eighteen during the time of their visit. In other words, even someone who attended a summer program such as Mach Hach Ba'Aretz or BBYO but did not spend a year in a yeshiva or seminary is eligible to apply.



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According to Corrine Malachi, an intern at Israel Free Spirit and a sophomore at Stern, the new eligibilities will greatly expand the applicant pool. She has heard many people say that they have been excluded from applying to Taglit-Birthright because they previously attended a BBYO Israel trip, but with the new broadening eligibility requirements, they are now able and excited to apply.

Ari Ziegler, Gamification Associate at the OU, encouraged Malachi to spread the word to Stern and Yeshiva College students about the new requirements. Malachi, who interviews applicants for Taglit-Birthright, has already noticed a wide number of Stern and YC students who are applying. According to Ziegler Israel Free Spirit intends to accommodate this new demographic this summer with a bus specifically for Yeshiva University students.

Take Rivka Lubin, a junior at Stern who did not spend a year studying in Israel and always wanted the chance to attend Taglit-Birthright. She was unable to participate in programs in the past because they coincided

with school, but now, she is excited to apply to the summer trip as part of the YU bus. Lubin chose to apply because she has not been to Israel since she was eleven, and she wants to "learn more about the land and grow closer to it. [She] wants to gain greater knowledge and really understand [her] roots."

Likewise, Daniel Shemen, a freshman at YU, did not spend a year in Israel and is looking forward to a Taglit-Birthright experience this summer. Although he has family who lives in Israel, every time that he visits he "finds a new place that [he has] never been to." Shemen applied to Taglit-Birthright because he "thought it would be a good way to get to know Israel a little bit better, and it's a great way to spend part of your summer."

Beyond these two YU students, the applicant pool within Orthodox circles is already expanding. The new bus is a great opportunity for students like Lubin and Shemen to take advantage of everything Israel has to offer, and considering the new requirement changes, many other Stern and YC students will benefit as well.



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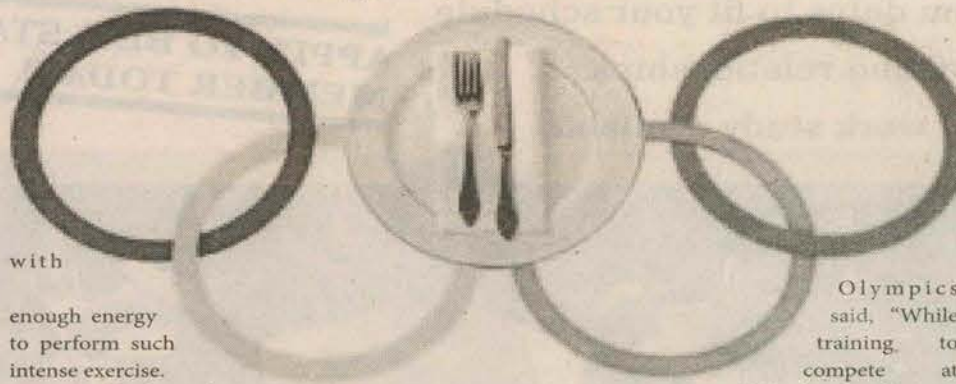


HEALTH CORNER

Eating like an Olympian

Shlomit Kahan While watching the Olympics, you may have wondered how Olympians manage to land such high jumps and run so many miles. The answer lies within their diets. An Olympian consumes between 3500 and 7000 calories a day, which is almost triple the amount consumed by the average person, a mere 1600 to 1800 calories. However, if Olympians were to eat the same amount of calories as the average person, they wouldn't have enough energy for their vigorous training.

Olympians start out their day with a large breakfast because they need fuel to start their day. Army Captain Chris Fogt, a member of the American bobsled team said that a typical breakfast for him consists of three or four eggs, two pancakes, oatmeal, yogurt, and orange juice. To someone who is not an olympian, this sounds like a huge breakfast, but for him it is necessary. He needs to be able to push a bobsled, which weighs 500 pounds, at a quick speed. If he were just to have a bowl of cereal for breakfast, those calories could not sustain him



with enough energy to perform such intense exercise.

During the day, Olympians try to eat balanced meals of fruits, vegetables, proteins, and carbohydrates because their bodies need to be able to endure during their long hours of training. One might think that Olympians can eat whatever they want to reach their high calorie intake, but this is the opposite of the truth. Mr. Weber-Gale, a swimmer who won two gold medals at the 2008 Summer

Olympics said, "While training to compete at high levels of sport can sometimes include infrequent fast food and junk, it generally does not."

Olympians also avoid eating junk food because it can cause them to gain unnecessary weight, which could interfere with their training. Michelle Kwan's coach, Frank Carrol, said that most Asian skater's diet consists mainly of rice, vegetables,

and fish because these foods makes them less vulnerable to weight gain. They avoid eating beef and fats to prevent from gaining unwanted extra weight.

Even though Olympians consume many more calories than the average person on a given day, an average person can still learn aspects from an Olympian's diet in order to eat healthfully. One lesson is to always make sure that we eat breakfast in order to start the day off energized. We also learn from Olympians that the more we exert ourselves during the day, the more we need to eat. However, the foods we eat should be healthy foods that are energy yielding such as vegetables, fruits, proteins, and carbohydrates. An Olympian diet can also teach us to severely limit our junk food intake because junk food doesn't give us necessary energy, rather unwanted fat. An average person who follows these Olympic guidelines, is sure to yield Olympic levels of success in their own diet!

My Favorite Olympian

Rebecca Yoshor On Sunday, February 23rd, the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics came to a close and the final results came in. Russia maximized their home field advantage, raking in both the title for highest amount of medals won overall, as well as the highest amount of gold medals. The United States took home the second highest amount of medals, with twenty-eight medals total. However, the United States only ranked fourth in terms of gold medals, with only nine gold medals won. More bad news: the Sochi <http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/>

Winter Olympics are the first Winter Olympics since 1936 where the U.S hasn't medaled in individual figure skating and the first Olympics since 1984 that the U.S hasn't medaled in speed-skating. Although the women's team did manage to win a silver medal, both the men and women's hockey teams experienced crushing defeats.

But before we Americans get too down on ourselves, there are a few important Olympic highlights that we can bask in. Figure skating team Meryl Davis and Charlie White medaled gold in

ice dancing and bronze in the pair's figure skating competition. Sage Kotsenburg won the gold medal in the snowboard slope competition. Ted Ligety won the gold in the Men's Giant Slalom. Joss Christensen skied his way to a gold in the men's ski slopestyle competition. Jamie Anderson also placed gold in the first-ever women's slopestyle

competition and Maddie Bowman took home the first-ever U.S gold in women's half-pipe skiing.

But, in my mind, the biggest

highlight of the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics was eighteen year old Mikaela Shiffrin, who placed gold in the women's giant slalom competition, becoming the youngest slalom gold medalist in Olympic history. But Mikaela's gold medal is not the reason why she is my favorite Olympic athlete of 2014.

Mikaela is a unique Olympian because she is a pioneer within her sport. While most well known U.S skiers such as Lindsey Vonn focus on speed, Mikaela, from a young age, has focused on perfecting her skiing technique and the precision of her movements. Mikaela doesn't rely on her natural aptitude or athleticism to carry her through competition. She is an incredibly disciplined and hardworking athlete. Her enormous success in the Olympic is no doubt



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due to her hard work and diligence. In fact, in the final leg of her gold-winning race, Shiffrin nearly crashed. Fortunately, her training and devotion to mastering her skiing technique came through. Shiffrin's description of how she recovered from her near-crash on the course, demonstrates her mastered technique. "I've made that recovery in practice a hundred times, if not more. So I said, 'You know what to do — charge back into the course.'" She went on from this recovery to win the race and the gold.

I am excited to see where Mikeala goes from her victory in the Olympics. I don't expect to see her taking any breaks from training. She will keep practicing and perfecting her craft. I am definitely looking forward to cheering her on at the next Winter Olympics.



Film Talk: *Monuments Men*

Ayden Pahmer Ever since I saw the first trailer for the movie *Monuments Men*, I knew I wanted to see the film. It appeared to have a perfect blend of action-adventure, historical accuracy, and stellar acting. Yet, while watching it, I wasn't sure how to react. On the one hand, the characters felt like little bugs, scurrying

www.imdb.com



around the scenes and accomplishing very little until the end. On the other hand, there were some spectacular lines and images that left a lasting impression on me.

Throughout the film, a lot of...nothing... happens. The plot centers around a man named Frank Stokes, played by George Clooney, who gets permission from President Roosevelt to organize a team of art collectors and historians to traverse Europe in an attempt to save as much of the world's stolen art from the Germans as they can. They are also racing against the Russians, who want to find the art and keep it for themselves as reparation. By contrast, this eight-person American team, nicknamed the Monuments Men, wants to restore the art to their rightful owners. To maximize their chance, the team splits up—and this is where the cinematic mistakes begin.

In order to fully capture the extent of this historical story, the director needed to pan back and forth between the teams. Unfortunately, that meant that the viewers were never given the chance to develop an emotional attachment to any of the groups. True, everyone got their big moment: striking visuals, suspenseful music, displays of heroism and bravery, all creating some really effective scenes. But then, just as abruptly as the scene

began, the audience was dragged away to watch another group explore their own "moment". This constant movement never gave us the opportunity to watch any of the characters develop, and hence, they all lost their personality and distinctiveness. Each character blended into the other (I don't think I even remember their names), leaving the viewer with a hodgepodge of drudgery that they had to wade through just to get to the end of the film.

Despite these downfalls, there were a number of redeeming qualities about the film. One of the most memorable instances was the young German soldiers setting fire to some of the paintings. You can't help but feel emotion rising inside of you at the sense of loss. More personally, at one point the Monuments Men find a large barrel of gold teeth, and although not explicitly stated, it is obvious that these came from the Jews who were sent to die in Hitler's concentration camps—that, to the Nazis, all the Jewish people boiled down to as a people was our gold. Our value lay, not in our rich culture, but in our physical and fleeting possessions.

This film included some very strong ideas

that should leave a substantial mark on us today. Clooney tells the president, "We're fighting for a culture, a way of life. You can wipe them out...[but] if you destroy their achievements, their history, it's as if they never existed." These men weren't fighting for themselves, their country or their families. They were fighting for their culture; they were fighting for the delicate footprint that each generation leaves on this earth. They were fighting to maintain something that they believed was worth maintaining: a society, an achievement, a tradition, a way of life.

We all partake in the culture our societies have created for us: we live, eat, and breathe an air that is steeped with history and traditions. Broadway shows, movie theaters, historical landmarks are all part of a culture that we ourselves have helped create. We perpetuate this culture by partaking and indulging in it. And so now we need to ask ourselves: is this a culture worth maintaining? Are our cultural achievements worth sustaining? If the answer is yes, then we must assume the role of *Monuments Men* ourselves.

Smokey Jane's Cafe: A Review

Shayna Darling At 8:30 PM on the dot, a line amassed outside the doors of Koch Auditorium. It was time yet again for Stern College's annual Smokey Jane's Café. Modeled after a jazz bar circa the 1920's, Smokey Jane's definitely succeeded on this count. The lights were dim save for a spotlight that shone on the Stern women who took the stage and belted out tunes. Jazzy melodies rang through the air and went on to ensure the success of the evening, while audience members laughed and chattered throughout the show.

When the doors opened, a stream of girls steadily flowed into the room, their excitement palpable in the air. Many made their way over to the mocktail bar, where I sat surrounded by Sprite and maraschino cherries. As drinks were poured, the first performer, Sarah Alt, took the stage. She's more commonly known as the president of the Torah Activities Council, but Alt's performance of "Love You I Do" from the musical *Dreamgirls* proved that she is a woman of many talents. Alt said of the experience, "Performing at Smokey Jane's was a great opportunity for me to connect to the community at Stern in a way that is totally different than I usually do. I loved having the chance to share a piece of myself with others, feel their support, and

enjoy the amazing talent in the student body all at the same time."

Her jazzy ensemble soon came to a finish, and other girls carried on the night with a variety of performances. Although every girl's performance was valuable in its own way, some particularly stood out. Orly Gabay's

Shoshana Seidenfeld



rendition of "All That Jazz" from *Chicago* was accompanied by a generous amount of enthusiasm and livened up the atmosphere. Zahava Taylor, who sang "Wishing You Were Somehow Here Again," from the *Phantom of the Opera*, blew the audience away with her operatic abilities. Esther Tsvaygenbaum's first

performance at Smokey Jane's, "Listen," from *Dreamgirls*, was a powerful and moving solo. Another highlight was the fun and energetic performance of "Good Morning Baltimore" from *Hairspray* by Malka Katz, Sarah Katz, and Dana Weinstein. Clad in similarly bright outfits and majorly teased hair, the trio cheerfully sang out the lyrics.

Many would agree that the centerpiece of the evening was Malka Sigal's "Hakuna Matata" from *The Lion King*. The performance was engaging, and thoroughly enjoyed by the audience. No one was expecting the moment when she effortlessly let down her hair to reveal a lion's mane that she excitedly shook out, prompting loud laughter from the audience.

By the end of the evening while I sat at the mocktail table with corn syrup coating my hands, Mazal Tov Amsalam's performance of "Falling Slowly" from the musical *Once* wound down the excitement. Despite ranging the gamut from somber to hilarious, the night's performances blended together effortlessly to create a laid back and talent-filled evening. Smokey Jane's has been a mainstay of Stern throughout the years, and the evening made clear exactly why this is so.

Celebrating What I Be Jews of NY

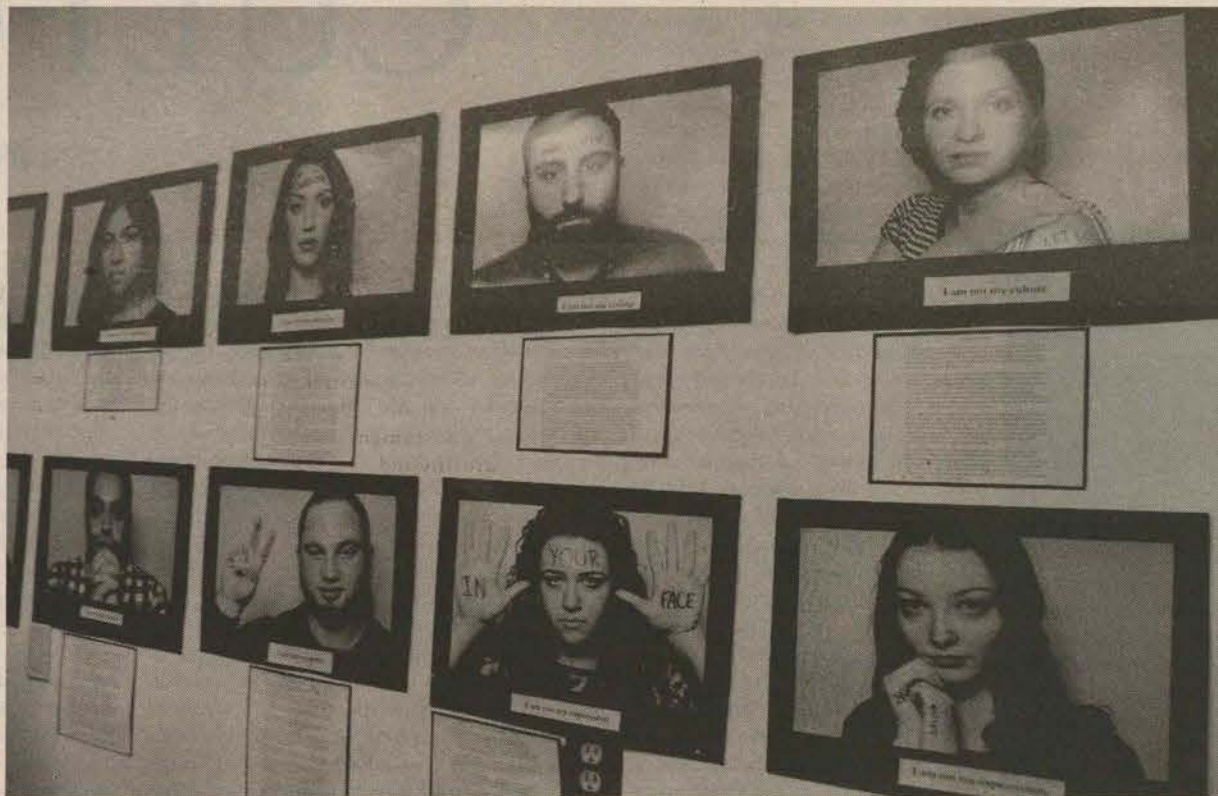
Hannah Rozenblat Photos from Steve Rosenfield's 'What I Be: Jews of NY + honorary guests' photo-shoot created quite a splash when they hit the internet in January, earning a flurry of likes and comments, as well as significant media attention. Nearly one hundred people participated in the project over the course of one week in January, taking the Jewish community of New York by storm.

The project enjoyed a more formal celebration at Mister Rogers in Crown Heights on Saturday night, February 22nd, as participants and viewers flocked to see prints of the compelling images in person. The event, which sold out in advance, was attended by nearly 300 people, an impressive number considering the size of the venue, which was filled to capacity. A total of 225 tickets were sold, in addition to the special guests and family members who attended the gala.

"It feels great that the event sold out," commented Mati Engel, who organized the What I Be photo-shoot of the Jews of New York along with Stern College student Dasha Sominski. "I wish there was room for more people to come quite honestly, but then again we didn't want to lose the intimate feeling, so this venue was nicely sized to maintain that."

Sominski, who wanted the event to include everyone, had initially been concerned about the event inadvertently seeming exclusive and limited to the participants of the project. "But in the end, everyone who really wanted to was able to attend," Sominski stated, finding it "gratifying and rewarding" to know that so many people wanted to be involved in the event. The proliferation of excited Facebook posts attested to the enthusiasm many had for the project and the event.

Mister Rogers, a photography studio and event space that is owned by Ruvi Lieder (who generously allowed it to be used for the event for free), featured a modest-size gallery visible through the glass window of the storefront. All of the images created during this chapter of the What I Be project were on display along



with the personal statements written by some of the participants. During the first part of the evening, guests mingled in the gallery and enjoyed the wine reception as they absorbed the images and the messages behind them. Watching participants coming face-to-face with their images and taking in the feelings that this meaningful experience produced could not compare to simply viewing the images online.

Engel and Sominski highlighted the unity of the crowd and the strong sense of dignity and respect involved in the experience of viewing the images as a community. "I think for the first time I really fathomed how incredibly meaningful this experience was for people," Engel said. "To see 90 images of people shedding away layers was an incredible sight. A true accomplishment. I also sensed a strong sense of dignity and respect in the room with all the images."

A spacious brick-walled back room provided the setting for the second half of the evening, consisting of a documentary screening on the What I Be process and a concert celebrating this gallery of portraits,

with performances by Trevor Hall, Swear and Shake, and Maya Isacowitz.

The documentary, which was created by Elisheva Engel, the younger sister of Mati Engel, emphasized the creation of the project. Elisheva, who witnessed the project's development and participated in it herself, recorded the project's process and the participants' experiences. "Going in I wasn't sure exactly what I wanted the documentary to look like," Elisheva admitted, "but as time went on and I got a better understanding of the project and its power, I decided to make it a meaningful piece that would stir those same emotions I felt on the set of the project." She highlighted the nerves, hesitations and excitement that went into participating, conducting individual interviews with participants after the photo-shoots had concluded. "The film is all truthful, which makes it all the more powerful," Elisheva explained. The documentary will soon be available for viewing online for the public as well as for those unable to attend the event.

The success of the event went beyond even what its organizers expected, creating an opportunity to go further with this project and make the most of the inspiring message that it brings to the public. In addition to the documentary, which will be released to the public soon, Engel and Sominski are in the planning stages of their next step of action: an organization run by students for students that seeks to create safe spaces for young Jews to interact with art on a more intimate level. While most of the proceeds from ticket sales went towards creating the event, the remaining amount will be used as the base capital for the new organization. "It was important for me and Mati that the project itself wouldn't just burn out after it's done and would translate into something meaningful," Sominski explained.

Although this chapter of the project culminated in the wildly successful celebration at Mister Rogers, it will not be moving further in its current form for the Jews of NY. Sominski and Engel are interested in going further with the idea behind it: of a community producing meaningful things and coming together to create innovative platforms of expression.

Judging by the success of the 'What I Be: Jews of NY' celebration, they are quite certainly succeeding thus far.



The Honors Program Takes Lincoln Center

Talia Bassali On Thursday evening, February 27th, the students of the S. Daniel Abraham Honors Program had the unique privilege of attending a ballet at Lincoln Center's David H. Koch Theater, along with the director of the Honors Program, Dr. Cynthia Wachtell. The performance lasted two hours and consisted of three different ballet pieces: *Bal de Couture*, *Danse a Grande Vitesse*, and *The Four Seasons*.

Before the show, the students had the opportunity to speak with a performer and soloist in the first ballet, Ashley Laracey. Ashley, who is now thirty years old, shared her story with the Honors students. She began ballet at age five, and attended a boarding school specializing in ballet for high school, where she

graduated valedictorian of her class, both in academics and in dance. She's been dancing for the New York City Ballet Company since 2002, and was promoted just last year to a soloist.

The students then had a Q&A session with Ashley, where one student asked about her favorite thing about being a ballerina. Ashley responded that what she loves most is the challenge of being a professional dancer, and the devotion needed in order to succeed. In response to another student's question about the prevalence of eating disorders in dancers, Ashley opened up to the group and told them that she suffered from anorexia in her teen years. She explained that there is a lot of pressure on ballerinas to look good and stay thin, but that

a dancer's talent and hard work are what really matter. Now that she is more experienced and healthy, she serves as a role model and advice-giver to younger dancers who may have body image issues and eating disorders.

Ashley then led the students backstage, where they were able to take pictures and experience a little piece of what performers feel while they are on stage.

Finally, it was 7:30, and time for the show to begin. The Honors students took their seats as the first piece began. It was a fashion show inspired dance, in which all the costumes were designed by Valentino. The women wore big, puffy dresses and the men were in sleek suits. It was a fun and vibrant performance

to watch, and an inspiring one for those interested in fashion.

The second piece was rather modern and focused on the dancers' bodies with fast paced choreography, making it interesting and exciting to watch. It included complicated steps, jumps, and spins, and intricate group movement.

The final dance was split into four parts, each symbolizing one of the four seasons. It was a very elegant and beautiful visual experience, with colorful costumes corresponding to each of the seasons. There was a floral set design to accompany the ambiance.

Overall, the Honors Program trip to the ballet at Lincoln Center was an enchanting and memorable one.

Beyoncé: Not My Feminist Icon

Shoshana Bachrach It's been a good year to be Beyoncé. The secret release of a "visual album," a daring move deemed revolutionary, calculated to send the world into an online media frenzy—and succeeding. A much-loved performance at the Grammys brought up residual praise of from last years Super Bowl performance as compared to Bruno Mars and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. And in addition to her many adored roles- mother, wife, maverick-society has now bestowed upon her yet another title of societal conquest: Feminist.

For many, Beyoncé's good year has rubbed off onto the rest of us plebeians and society at large. Critics hearken Beyoncé as the new face of feminism, a status she cemented with a short piece on gender equality for The Shriver Report. This is a status that has, unfortunately, been misplaced. One should emulate celebrities such as Beyoncé as they see fit, but outside of that she is not the feminist icon women need to, as the Shriver Report put so succinctly, "modernize America's relationship to women." In fact, it is unwise for society to look for guidance from a woman who is the archetype of the emerging, media-conceived female stereotype.

As feminism becomes more and more accepted by mainstream society, this is the image that has begun to emerge: the boss, the woman who isn't just leaning in but is at the head of the table, simultaneously all-powerful and free of error. These women are awesome; we all saw last years Super Bowl Halftime show; we

get it. But making Beyoncé the face of feminism will ultimately pull the movement away from its trajectory back into a conversation that we are tired of having: must a women aim to have it all? And based on pop culture, the answer seems to be yes- and nothing less.

Plenty of artists over the years have declared themselves feminists, delivered powerful messages of strength and smarts directly to young women, but none have had the mantle of Grand Feminist bestowed upon them like Beyoncé. While this seems like advancement, it's precisely the opposite: society has not moved beyond defining women in archetypes. Before women dealt with being perceived as lesser, but now we must all adhere to a mythical ideal of the woman who has it all, that if and only if a woman has achieved this, allows her to be a true icon. You'd be hard-pressed to find a popular feminist icon—as in, a woman largely celebrated by the media—who isn't married, or at least, doesn't have children. We hear little about Zooey Deschanel, a small-screen actress who has openly discussed feminism, in exchange for write up after write up analyzing Beyoncé's paragraph-long snippet on equal pay. The message being sent to young women is that they only have a powerful voice to contribute to the public sphere if they are superhuman. Have the Obamas on speed dial? Then we want to hear your views on women in society. Struggling to find your place in a changing world? Not so much. Even

OPINIONS

RACHEL RENZ
SHOSHANA BACHRACH

Lena Dunham, the creator of HBO's *Girls* and arguably the loudest voice of our generation falls into the same trap, garnering more attention for her wunderkind status than the actual public statements she makes.

Ironically, upon closer inspection, many of Beyoncé's songs aren't necessarily about female empowerment—they're about her empowerment. Beyoncé's music is generally a testament to her own power that we are invited to witness. And it is in this stage in her career, as she is being labeled a feminist queen, that her music, with hits like "Grown Woman," and "Bow Down Bitches," has taken a decidedly narcissistic turn. To put it bluntly, Beyoncé did not, until recently, directly address the idea of being interested in broader female empowerment. What made her a socially accepted "feminist" is her goddess-like perfection, as fans put it.

Women should certainly aspire to Beyoncé-like feats of greatness. But for 2014 to be a "good" year for women's rights, we need to stop equating the idea of female empowerment with female perfection. Placing women on a pedestal

isn't going to lead to more egalitarian media representation, or bridge the wage gap; in all likelihood the reverse will occur, as higher and higher standards are placed upon women to live up to a new stereotype. It's certainly not a bad thing for women to have powerful and seemingly perfect role models for motivation, but once these women are labeled as examples of feminists, feminism will no longer be available to the masses but to an elite group of women who adhere to the new image of female power.

"I'm not bossy," says Beyoncé in a video for *Ban Bossy*, "I'm the boss." It's great that she's using her powerful celebrity to encourage women to lean in. But feminism is more than just leaning in- teaching girls to be powerful is just one element. Feminism is a movement about advancing women's roles in society- not just powerful, extroverted women, or married women, or brilliant women. All women. Continue to worship Beyoncé as you please, but unless we're ready for the new wave of feminine stigma, let's refrain from making her our messiah.

The Aftermath of Apathy: My Trip to the Anne Frank House

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was so much to do, and so little time. Adrenaline was coursing through me.

We walked through the winding streets of Amsterdam for about an hour trying to find the first stop on our itinerary, the Anne Frank House. As we passed by countless dingy bars and even a brothel or two, we remained unfazed by the irony of our surroundings and our desired destination.

But for some reason, when we arrived I was surprised. I had a distorted image of how I thought the Anne Frank House would look. But in front of me stood a slight narrow building that was obscurely hidden on

the side of a cathedral.

As we entered the dimly lit building, we followed the crowd. We entered room after room, and climbed flight after flight of stairs until we reached the actual annex. The rooms contained either video segments of heart-wrenching pictures or different Holocaust memorabilia.

By the look of the tall blond European-looking people around me, it took about a second to realize that my friend and I were the only Jews in the museum. And it may have been a figment of my imagination, but I am pretty sure that everyone around me knew it too. But the physical appearances were not the pinnacle

moment for me. As I looked around, I realized that I was emotionally isolated.

Like the people around me, this was the first time I had ever been in a place that was an authentic historical landmark and tribute to the Holocaust. I have never gone to Poland, and having very few family members who were in the Holocaust, it is not something spoken about frequently in my family. Yet, many of the people around me were having immense emotional reactions: there were friends hugging friends and numerous disbelief stricken faces. Many of these people have probably never even spoken to a Jew, yet something about Anne's story and the tragedy that befell upon the Jews in the Holocaust clearly struck a cord.

We finally reached the small and gloomy annex. As I watched the scene unfold around me, I was waiting for my eyes to fill with tears. As the only Jews there, I expected a feeling of immediate connection to the atrocity of the Holocaust. At the very least, if I could not cry for what happened to the Jewish people, I awaited a feeling of sadness as I read the optimistic quotes of one special young girl whose life was cut way too short.

My anticipation quickly flared into anger. What was wrong with me? One answer that I tried pushing to the back-burner slowly became unavoidable as it inched towards the forefront of my thoughts: Have I become apathetic?

As I absentmindedly traveled through the last rooms of museum I began to wonder if the phenomenon that I was experiencing was perhaps indicative of a greater problem. Have

I become too overexposed to the gruesome details and pictures, so much so that an annex emblematic of our greatest demise has turned into just an attic? The Holocaust has become so engrained in my education that perhaps I no longer grasp its magnitude.

I think my experience served as an important wake-up call. This year marks seventy years since the death of Anne Frank. Seventy years is long enough to make you forget, but it is not long enough to erase the impact of the Holocaust. The world might forget about the Holocaust, but the hatred continues. If the Jews forget, or become apathetic, then who will make sure history does not repeat itself?

Only one month ago, on a go a train passing by Auschwitz, someone accessed the speaker and announced that the Jews have arrived at their final destination. Apathy presents a grave danger for the Jews of the past, present, and future. The only thing more dangerous than hatred itself is the apathy of its victims. If we are silenced, then who is going stand up for the Jews on that train?

I think the optimistic outlook Anne Frank had on the good of humanity needs to continue to be actualized. If Anne has taught me anything, it is that mankind has the immense power to do good and influence others. It is the decisions that are made once our surroundings are internalized that reflect inner strength and identity. If there is no longer empathy, it leaves a perilous gap for Anne's belief of "Despite everything, I believe that people are really good at heart" to fall to the wayside.

Oh Holy Night: The Importance of Interfaith Dialogue

Rachel Renz The idiosyncratic aspect of journalism lies in the fact that stories create themselves. While journalists certainly present facts in narrative form, I, as a journalist and a writer, certainly view facts and events in narrative form from the start. When I completed writing Part I of my reflections on attending Midnight Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral this past Christmas Eve, I expected to provide Part II as a chance to discuss my relationship to those of other faiths, and perhaps share my thoughts on how religious or holy space is created and used. However, foolish was I to suspect an article such as this should go unaddressed by the university body. I certainly expected feedback, ranging from those who appreciated my take on the experience to those who might have a wholly different attitude towards the notion of Jews in other traditions' holy spaces. Yet I found that the article was taken by many as a chance to accuse both the Observer's discretion when publishing, and my own apparently dishonorable and un-Jewish behavior for having entered a church and, perhaps worse, written about it.

I want to take this Part II to encourage the community at Yeshiva University especially to test their religious comfort zones, to value curiosity and challenge their faith. An appropriate text to bring for support would be Ari Goldman, a YU grad and former New York Times writer. In his book, *The Search for God at Harvard*, Goldman discusses the experience of being an Orthodox Jew assigned to write about religion throughout the US, and his efforts to educate himself in other faiths by spending a year at Harvard Divinity in the 1980's. While outlining the many professors he had and the courses he taught, he repeatedly quotes a key line from a religion professor, Diane Eck: "If you know religion...you don't know any" (Goldman, 262). To truly be religious means, to me, that one must be religious in a responsible way: one must remain educated, worldly, and realistic.

One of the criticisms my Part I received was that I am describing going into a church without recognizing the abuse Jews have encountered at the hands of Christians in the past (most notably throughout the Middle Ages). I think this is a particularly

interesting criticism, symptomatic of an all too common mistake made by Jews: to assume that past persecution taints all descendants of persecutors. This mentality smells to me of something distinctly Christian, as a matter of fact: the doctrine of Original Sin. The idea that descendants of sinners bear the burden of sin as well is antithetical to Jewish values, and mustn't be inappropriately and hypocritically imposed on other communities. One is certainly allowed, nay, encouraged, to criticize past communities for the persecutions Jews received. However, part of emotional and historical maturity demands, challenges us to see children, not as their parents, but as themselves, and judge them accordingly. Just as we believe "one must not be punished for the sins of the fathers," we must not punish others for the sins of their fathers.

At Yeshiva University, administrators and students alike are responsible for creating and continually fostering an environment in which it is permissible to exercise free speech both in the name of religious conviction, but also in the name of religious curiosity. It is a bastardization

of Judaism and Jewish values, as well as a juvenile stance, to discourage students from exploration.

When I attended the mass at St. Patrick's this December, I met a number of Christians who asked me about my affiliation. When I explained that I was Jewish, I received a warm welcome, not a welcome which is secretly a cloaked invitation to convert, nor a welcome intended to missionize. On the contrary, it was a welcome that simply assured that I was permitted to observe a ceremony, a gesture that quelled my fears that these Christians might feel I had made them a spectacle during their holy day. The woman I sat beside during the service actually discussed interfaith dialogue with me, as we shared experiences in each other's religious spaces. We even exchanged contact information in order to attend interfaith events together in the future. I do hope that when I return to St. Patrick's Cathedral next Christmas, I will proudly be able to say that my alma mater provided me with the tools to go out and precisely engage in interfaith, curious, challenging experiences.

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Live and Let Brain Die

Allison Tawil There has always been a very fine-line differentiating the role of religion and law in America, an especially true statement with regard to medicine. Rulings relating to abortion and contraception are almost never free of controversy, and in many instances, religious groups are the main influence on whether such laws are passed or not. The moment of death is not excluded from the controversy. Although it is widely presumed that the difference between life and death should be a clearly defined topic that is universally agreed upon, two recent cases that occurred in American hospitals demonstrate that this is far from reality.

Brain death is the irreversible end of brain activity due to death of the cerebral neurons which follows loss of oxygen in brain tissue. The blurred lines between life and death are due to the use of life support machines or ventilators. Traditionally, death is defined as the moment that the heart has stopped beating. This prevents oxygen from being delivered to the organs, which results in a loss of function. A ventilator allows air to flow in and out of a patient's lungs keeping the heart beating, and supplying vital organs with oxygen.

Ventilators are also used in patients with brain damage. In a normally functioning body, respiration and heart beat are automatic functions. However, in a patient with brain damage, this automatic signaling system is impaired. The patient is hooked up to a ventilator to guarantee that oxygen is sent throughout the body so there is no further damage to other organs. In such a case, there is hope that the patient's brain will recover and the other organs will still be working properly.

Unfortunately, this is not always the case. When the damaged brain fails to make a recovery and the brain as a whole stops to function, the person is considered to be brain dead. Although brain death is considered legal death, uncertainty lies in the fact that the heart

keeps beating. Some argue that if a person

breathing, they should be considered alive even though their brain is not working, as this fits in well with the traditional view of death. Much doubt and speculation shrouds this legal definition and patients' families always have their own opinions regarding the status of their loved one. Interestingly, patients classified as brain-dead can have their organs removed for organ donation.

A brain-dead individual has no clinical evidence of brain function upon examination, which includes no response to pain and no cranial nerve reflexes. In order to properly classify brain death, physicians must distinguish between brain death and states that may mimic brain death such as barbiturate overdose, alcohol intoxication, sedative overdose, hypothermia, hypoglycemia, coma, or chronic vegetative states. In a situation of brain death, brain electrical activity can stop completely, or drop so low that it is undetectable with medical equipment. Therefore, an EEG graph will be completely horizontal, a line that can be present during deep anesthesia or cardiac arrest. In the United States, a flat EEG test is not required to certify death, although it has confirmatory value. Legal criteria vary, but in general they require neurological examinations by two different physicians. Some medical dictionaries define brain death as cerebral death, or death of the cerebrum, while other definitions include the brainstem. The following two recent cases are the perfect

demonstration of the confusion that surrounds a unanimous definition for brain death.

The first case is as follows: Jahi McMath, a thirteen year-old girl went in for a routine tonsillectomy. Of course, as with any surgical procedure, there are risks involved. Jahi suffered from complications which caused her brain to stop functioning. Doctors had her put on a ventilator, so although she was brain dead, she was still breathing. The hospital declared Jahi dead, issued her death certificate, and wanted to remove her from the ventilator. Her family strongly objected, as they were sure that Jahi was still breathing, hence she was still "alive". They believed that Jahi would recover if given the proper treatment. However, doctors refused to give her treatment as she was a dead patient. The family took this to court and fought to keep Jahi on the ventilator. They found a treatment center that specializes in recovery from brain injuries and would accept Jahi and treat her. After a long struggle, Jahi (legally considered a dead body) was allowed to be moved from the hospital to this specialized center, where she currently is being treated.

The second case involved a pregnant woman in Texas, Marlise Muñoz; who suffered from a blood clot and collapsed in her home in the fourteenth week of her pregnancy. She was rushed to the hospital and put on a ventilator. She was later declared brain dead, but Texas law requires hospitals

to do all they can to protect a fetus, so the woman was kept on life support. Unlike Jahi McMath's family, Muñoz's family had accepted the fact that she was dead and wanted her to be taken off of the ventilator. The hospital refused, as their best interest was to save the fetus, and they claimed they would be breaking Texas law by taking her off of the ventilator. After much debate, the hospital finally took her off of the ventilator and let the fetus "die" when it was 22 weeks into the gestation period

What do we learn from these two cases? As seamlessly stated in a recent *New York Times* article, "A prolonged heartbeat has created the perception of life for Jahi's family, while for Ms. Muñoz's relatives it represents a denial of the right to die." The main consideration in this hotly contended topic is who has the right to regulate the decision between life and death? Some would call it unfair or even unconstitutional for state and federal law to go against a family's religious and cultural beliefs, but it is also not proper if a family's beliefs go against a legitimate law. Even with the endeavored sensitivity of American law and the attempted separation of religion and government, we will still inevitably encounter struggles within the law concerning such matters. So, will there ever be a solution? I guess we have to wait until our next life to find out.

Same Gender Education: Good for Your Education (Maybe Bad for Your Social Life)

Dahlia Pasik Same-sex schools have dealt with controversy since their inception. At Stern, we have the advantage of being in an all women's institution. Some may argue, however, that this is not in fact an "advantage."

Many of the arguments circulate around the discussion of whether being in a same-sex environment promotes or disrupts academic achievement. A study conducted in Seoul, South Korea examined this exact issue. In Seoul, students are randomly assigned either to single-sex or co-ed high schools. The results were collected after their 4-year high school curriculum, and the data was quite astounding. The analyses showed that attending a same-sex school was associated with higher average scores on Korean and English test scores. Compared with co-educational schools, single-sex schools have a higher percentage of graduates who moved on to four-year colleges.

Another study performed showed that girls' knowledge of physics increased when they were in an institution with only girls, versus a co-ed environment. The researchers, Bettina Hannover and Ursula Kessels, randomly assigned 8th-graders either to single-gender physics class or to coed physics class, for the

duration of one school year. At the end of the year, the girls who had been randomly assigned to the all-girls classroom were more adept in physics. These girls were also less likely to succumb to the stereotype that "physics is for boys." As opposed to the girls found in the co-ed environment, which were less successful in physics and were also more susceptible to the belief that physics is a male science.

However, the studies do not end here. Researchers at Stetson University in Florida completed a three-year pilot project comparing single-sex classrooms with coed classrooms at Woodward Avenue Elementary School, a nearby neighborhood public school. Students in the 4th grade at Woodward were assigned either to single-sex or coed classrooms. All relevant parameters were matched; the teachers were the same, the class sizes were similar, and all other factors were identical. The researchers compared the results scored on the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test), between both the same-sex class and the coed class. The results were the following: boys in coed classes: 37% scored proficient and girls in coed classes, 59% scored proficient. As opposed to the co-ed classes, girls in single-sex classes:

75% scored proficient and boys in single-sex classes, 86% scored proficient.

Interestingly, some of the effects of being educated in a co-ed environment are not readily proven in a simple test score. It's been noted that girls and boys in single gender schools tend to explore their interests beyond any gender stereotypes. A British researcher compared the attitudes of 13 and 14 year-old pupils toward different subjects. Students at co-ed schools tended to have gender-typical subject preferences: boys at co-ed schools liked math and science and geared away from drama or languages. However, boys at single-sex schools were more interested in drama, biology and languages. And, as somewhat expected, girls at girls-only schools were more interested in math and science than girls at co-ed schools.

At the same time, definitive scientific evidence shows that there are actual anatomical differences between the male and female brains which may account for differences in academic performance and preferences. In 2001, researchers from Harvard found that certain parts of the brain were different sizes in males and females. Parts of the frontal lobe, responsible for problem-solving and decision-

making, and the limbic cortex, responsible for modulating emotions, were larger in women. In men, the parietal cortex, which is the center for spatial reasoning, and the amygdala, which regulates social behavior, was larger. Men also have about 6.5 times more gray matter in the brain than women, while women have about 10 times more white matter than men. These dissimilarities may account for differences in how men and women think. Men seem to think with their gray matter, which is full of active neurons. Women think with the white matter, which consists more of connections between the neurons, allowing for a woman's brain to work faster than a man's.

Aside from the differences in anatomical structure between the male and female brain, the brains of the two genders are wired differently which could explain the stereotypical differences in male and female behavior. Researchers found that many of the connections in a male brain run between the front and the back of the same side of the brain. In women, the connections to run from side to side between the left and right hemispheres. Researchers believe the physical

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Same Gender Education: Good for Your Education (Maybe Bad for Your Social Life)

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differences between the two sexes in the way the brain is hardwired could play an important role in understanding why men are in general better at spatial tasks involving muscle control while women are better at verbal tasks involving memory and intuition. "These maps show us a stark difference - and complementarity - in the architecture of the human brain that helps to provide a potential neural basis as to why men excel at certain tasks, and women at others," said Ragini Verma, professor of radiology at the University of Pennsylvania.

Even with these biological differences between male and female brains in mind, differences in educational environment definitely stress or diminish the "natural" intellectual functions in the academic setting. To further prove that single-sex environment correlates with a reduction of any gender-associated stereotype, in 2003, there was a study conducted in the University of Virginia. They found that boys who attended single-sex schools were more than twice as likely to pursue

interests in subjects such as art, music, drama, and foreign languages, compared to boys who attended coed schools.

It seems that the bottom line is clear: single-sex schools break down gender stereotypes, while co-ed schools reinforce them. However, as a Stern College student, I wonder if the gender stereotypes and lower academic achievement that exist in co-ed high schools are present in colleges. This proves difficult since it is illegal to study genders in schools in the U.S. Even outside of the U.S., the only studies conducted were primarily on elementary-aged students.

I decided to broach the subject with YU undergraduates to see how they felt. Mordechai Smith '14, Biology major and Public Health minor, said, "Some girls and guys will find co-ed classrooms distracting. Some girls may feel like they have to be stupid to get guys to like them... Others, though, just won't care and will do well in school either way. In either case, it's important to develop co-ed social skills before entering the workplace." Smith adds, "While being in a single-sex institution like YU and Stern

may have its advantages (like avoiding getting matched up with the girl three seats to your left and you didn't realize until you already agreed to a date), I do believe that students should involve themselves in co-ed environments."

As Smith stated, it would seem that there is a definite place for co-ed settings - but it may not be the classroom.

Next, I was interested in finding out a Stern girl's perspective

Tova Kutner '14, Biology major at Stern, states, "I truly love the environment that an all-female university has to offer. From academics to social life, I feel like I have gained a tremendous amount. I don't think I am missing out on anything." I then ask Tova if she feels that being around only girls helps her academically and she does not hesitate to respond: "Yes, definitely. Fewer distractions. I am able to focus more on my academics." As stated by Mordechai and Tova, it would seem that both genders appreciate the same-gender college experience that YU has to offer.

I then presented the subject to Leeora

Weisenberg, a Queens College junior who is majoring in Media Studies, with a Business and Liberal Arts minor. She states, "Obviously there is that sense of 'oh...there are boys around'... but then you get used to it. I do not feel that it affects my studies. And honestly, that is how the real world is..." I agree with Leeora; as she also correctly points out that all graduate schools as well as any professional career will, in fact, involve the presence of both genders.

So, Stern students: as you whip your wavy locks into a high bun, do realize that we in fact have the advantage of being in an academic environment with only girls. The aforementioned studies, as well as a plethora of others, all indicate that there is a definite correlation, (especially among girls) between a higher academic performance and a same-sex learning environment. At the same time, no direct causation exists and gender studies have thus far not been explicitly explored in the college setting.

Project TEACH Makes Waves Across Campus

Yael Farzan Project TEACH, or "Together Educating All Children in Hospitals," is a new club on campus that seeks to reach out to young children in the hospital by teaching them lessons in science and the humanities. TEACH is a program co-run by Yeshiva University undergraduate students - both on the Wilf and Beren campuses - and Einstein Medical School students, and is under the guidance of Dr. Edward Burns, M.D. and dean at Einstein. The project was founded in the spring of 2013 with the intention of having students lead educational and recreational activities in inpatient hospital playrooms. To date, the program has recruited over 250 volunteers and has expanded to the following hospitals: The Children's Hospital at Montefiore, Long Island Jewish Medical Center, Beth Israel Medical Center (EEG Unit), Jacobi Medical Center, NYP/Weill Cornell Medical Center, and Columbia Presbyterian Hospital. The Observer recently had the opportunity to interview the founders of project TEACH: Yosefa Schoor, Stern '14 and Yair Saperstein, YC '12. We also had a chance to speak to Jackie Benayoun, one of the TEACH volunteers and hospital leader.

O: What gave you the initiative to start this program?

Schoor: The project began from a love of children, medicine, and having fun. After shadowing for a Pediatric Neurologist and seeing how many children were stuck in hospitals with minimal stimulation or excitement over the course of their lengthy visits, I decided that something had to change.

After speaking to Dr. Loewy, the pre-med adviser at Stern, I realized last year that we could make a perfect match between children in hospitals and smart college student. After some research, Yair Saperstein - a current AECOM student - and I realized that there was a niche within hospitals that Yeshiva University students could fill: an opportunity for YU students to help out the community in a way that has heretofore not been addressed. When a child is in the hospital, it is often as if the whole family is in the hospital. The sick child and his/her accompanying siblings are often in need of resources that cannot be adequately supplied by the hospital, whether it is caring visitors, "recreational" education, or warm companionship.

With this in mind, Yair Saperstein reached out to the staff at Montefiore and secured an opportunity to run a pilot program of TEACH. Additionally, I started speaking to students on campus. The magnitude of interested volunteers was incredible. It seemed like every student I spoke to expressed his or her profound interest at the thought of the idea and the opportunity to service these children in such a momentous way.

Saperstein: We also reached out to Dean Edward Burns, the Dean of Yeshiva University's AECOM, who extended his financial support and full encouragement of the project. He has been an integral adviser to our efforts and has offered much helpful guidance and advice throughout our project.

According to Dean Burns, "Our hopes and dreams for all YU students is that they

internalize the lessons of our timeless Torah both in their personal behavior as well as their contributions to society. The students who dedicate their free time to educating hospitalized children as part of Project TEACH personify the melding of Torah values, compassion and a commitment to tikun olam. I am very proud of them as representing YU's finest."

O: Where do you see Project TEACH in a year from now?

Schoor: In short, we hope to expand TEACH to many universities and hospitals throughout the United States. Ultimately, our goal is to expand to Israel as well. There, we hope to implement TEACH throughout the universities and high schools in order to enable healthy Jewish children to provide their assistance to their fellows brethren in-need.

Saperstein: Even as we expand, we treasure the hospitals we are in now, and the children whom we have the opportunity to reach out to.

O: What distinguishes TEACH from other similar programs (i.e. Project Sunshine)?

Saperstein: What we provide is experiential learning in the form of recreational-educational activities. It's recreation with a higher purpose. It's education while it's fun. No other programs provide this unique of fun, education, and warm, friendly companionship rolled into an organized set of modules.

O: Jackie, can you describe a typical TEACH visit at the hospital?

Benayoun: A typical TEACH visit involves meeting with the child life director at the hospital and being directed to a location—

either a playroom area or patient bedside. Then, the TEACH volunteers explain a science concept and do a hands-on project with the kids. This gives patients the opportunity to learn and play in an interactive way, since they are the ones doing the module, which is really neat. The volunteers and leaders are there to answer questions, and engage the patients and their siblings with the task at hand.

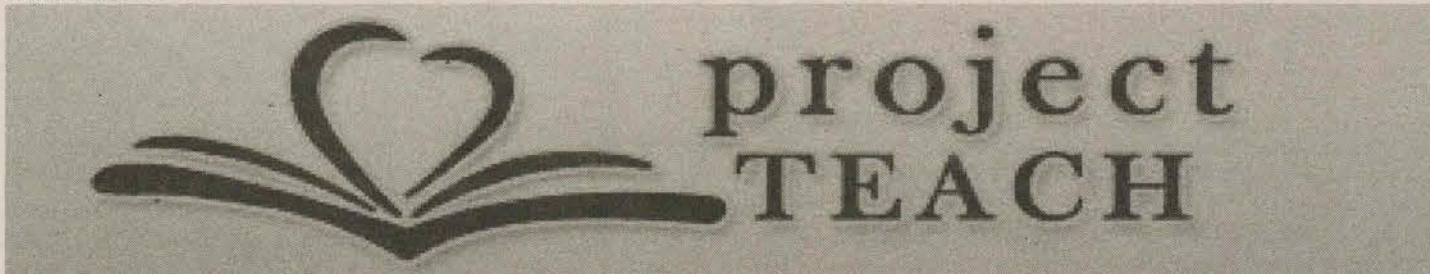
O: What do you like most about your interactions with the patients?

Benayoun: I really enjoy watching a child's face [and often his or her parent's] light up as the volcano "blows up" and the experiment works as planned. The hospital environment can often be draining and tiring so it's exciting to provide the kids and their families with an educational and fun distraction. Many of the patients we work with in the program are connected to I.V. poles and monitors, so it's really important to get their minds off of things. I'm glad we are able to do so.

O: What motivated you to be involved in the program and assume a hospital leader position?

Benayoun: I was very drawn to the program's message; the fact that in combined education with recreation. I've also noticed that there's a lot of wait-time in hospitals, which isn't always easy—especially for kids. The fact that this was a program founded by YU students inspired me to join, because it showed me how a little initiative and vision could come a long way. I strongly believe that this program can reach many hospitals and recruit volunteers from various universities in the years to come. That's why I became a hospital leader; I wanted to expand the program and make it as far reaching as possible. To do so, I contacted the child life department at Columbia Presbyterian, the hospital that I volunteer at. And there's been such great reception; the child life department said that we are the first educational science program to approach them! Which is all very exciting as we're going to host our first pilot event at Columbia on March 27th. So if you haven't already signed up, now's the time!

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STALKER

The Stern College

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF STERN COLLEGE AND SYMS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

BREAKING NEWS: Married Bus Eliminated, Then Restored, Then Eliminated, Then Restored

Chana Brauser Shestack Each morning, Brookdale residents elbow their way out of their crowded rooms, 29th streeters begin the four to seven minute walk

through a cooler part of midtown, 35th street chosen ones whip up a stack of pancakes in their luxurious kitchens, and 36th street dwellers chat about how great

36th is. Meanwhile, in another, darker part of town, the married students wait.

If you've ever taken the bumpy road up to Yeshiva University's Wilf Campus, you know that as you get closer and closer, the skies seem to get darker, trees look more sinister, and brightly-lit "food trucks" haunt the streets. While most wouldn't describe the areas of

Washington Heights inhabited by

the YU community as "charming," it does have its charms, most notably the 1 train downtown. Are the girls who huddle outside of Zysman every morning, in rain or in snow, particularly pleased

to be living in the Heights? Perhaps (not), but the trek to Stern each morning certainly does afford lighter skies, more innocent-looking trees, and the kind of food trucks that actually serve food.

Unlike the preciseness employed in the Stern caf when it comes time to unhook the forbidding orange chain that separates students from the food they love to hate, the "married bus," as it is wont to be called, leaves both its ring and its sense of commitment behind as it saunters up Amsterdam each morning sometime around 8 but never quite when you expect it. Dependable it is not, but depend on it Stern and GPATS students do.

But just a few weeks ago, the careful relationship that the married bus had

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Eitan's Guide to Trickin Yo' Man into Thinking You Are More Religious Than You Actually Are

Eitan Levine Everyone you know got engaged last week and it's about time you get engaged also. As far as marriage is concerned, Jewish girls age in dog years after they hit 18. It is a fact that most of the unmarried girls reading this article look like Tilda Swinton to eligible males.

So let's break it down, how do you get a man? Easy, be religious. It's THAT simple. The problem is that the deck is inherently stacked against women. How are you suppose to show men how frum you are when you can't lain, you can't do Hagbah, you can't give shiurim or teach torah to anyone not in Yeshivat Noam Elementary school and you can't even look most Rabbis in the eyes (the good ones at least). Also, let's be honest, you've slipped since Israel. We've all done it, being Jewish is not easy, that's why it's called "being Jewish" and not "being Christian" #ChristBurn. So the question really becomes, how do you convince the men of Yeshiva University that you are more frum than you actually are?

I'm here for you. If you follow these 7 simple rules I guarantee that you will get married and be pregnant by 2016.

1. Claim that Quinoa Isn't Kosher

Saying "quinoa" in a pre-Passover lecture is like yelling "bomb" in an airport. These little spaghetti(?) pellets cause all the halachic trouble of a partnership minyan but without all the preachy references to Anita Diamant's "The Red Tent."

Frum people don't eat quinoa on

Passover, frummer people NEVER eat quinoa out of fear they might crave it on Passover (frumerer people pronounce "torah" as "toyreh").

2. ABBG (Always Be Benching Gomel)

Anytime you use a preposition to describe something you just did should

be followed up with you asking "where is the nearest place I can bench gomel?" Constantly thanking god for not dying in a fire is the best way to show a guy that you are super frum. Just got back from Dunkin Donuts? Bench Gomel. Just crossed the street to go to a HASC

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Newspaper *The Backward* Sugarcoats Everything about YU

Sam Reinstein Despite being founded merely a year and a half ago, the Jewish magazine *The Backward* has recently entered the public discourse. Some have noticed a common trend regarding the current articles, a persistent focus on Yeshiva University in general and its Rosh HaYeshiva, Rabbi Hershel Schachter. Despite not having any formal relationship with the university or with Rav Shachter, *The Backward* has not let a fortnight go by

without discussing something that has happened in the Washington Heights premises.

In an article titled "Rabbi Shachter begins #FeedTheDeed," *The Backward* described the beginnings of the Facebook meme. Rav Shachter was getting food in the Sky Café one afternoon, when he saw a dean behind him looking for her wallet. Someone then snatched a picture of the Rabbi paying for the Dean's meal. Yeshiva University posted the photo

with #FeedtheDean, but the Internet took over and made it more general. Rather than seeing it as an individual circumstance, *The Backward* discussed the Rabbi's proclivity for helping those in need at great length. Some felt that they are trying too hard to say good things about a Rabbi who is already deemed to be the upmost scholar in the Jewish community, agreed upon by all.

Last week, another article appeared

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THE BACKWARDS

The Stern College
STALKER

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Founded by the women of Yeshiva University's Stern College in 1941, The Stalker is the (un)official newspaper representing the student body of Stern College when they relax and stop asking professors what will be on the midterm. The Stalker is an appendage that is living on the back of the actual paper and will probably not be published ever again. Views expressed in The Stalker reflect EVERY SINGLE view of the student body of Stern. Not really, but wouldn't it be nifty if we could capture everyone's opinion in one paper? I bet real papers would look for the secret. All Stalker content is copyrighted and may not be reprinted without permission. But definitely read it and pass it around

The Benefits of Budget Cuts: Finding the Silver Lining

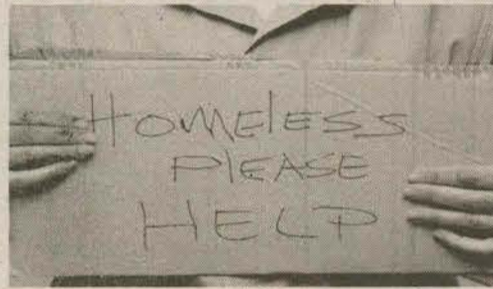
Hannah Dreyfus-Reinstein As you may have heard, YU is in a pretty strapped financial situation. Somewhere along the line, someone, somehow misplaced a couple hundred million dollars—and the rest is history. Today, YU is literally selling the buildings beneath our feet to keep itself afloat. In a recent Jewish Week article, Observer editor in chief Hannah Dreyfus and expert on all things YU was quoted commenting on the adverse affects selling our homes might have on our paycheck-to-Golan student existence. Students “don’t have jobs yet,” Dreyfus astutely noted. No money and no homes is a concerning state of affairs.

However, I feel it is important to take a step back and appraise the situation from a different angle. The constant stream of negativity aimed at YU has blinded us to the benefits of budget cuts. We need to find the silver lining in this situation. I’d like to suggest a few unanticipated perks that accompany disassembling our university, building by precious building.

1. We’ll be able to spend more time with the Washington Heights natives. Yes, Washington Heights isn’t just known for its clean streets and safe environment. The Heights is also known for its friendly, outgoing denizens. I mean, what can’t be awesome about people who like to throw wild parties on your street corner at 4 a.m. in the morning? They must have a lot to party about. No longer being able to find affordable housing will allow us YU students to start partying with them. You know that ice-cream truck that circles the YU periphery at dawn? It could be ours! We could drive that truck! And, we already know

all the best Latino tunes from our neighbors’ unexpected early-morning romps. So, let’s get comfortable with a new community. Everyone always complains about YU being ‘insular’ and ‘homogenous’ anyways—it’s time that we add some serious diversity to our group of friends.

2. We will learn to appreciate the ascetic lifestyle. Beds, chairs, roofs—we’ve been living lives of gluttony for too long. It’s time we practice some abstinence (double entendre acknowledged). There’s no



better way to get in touch with our inner life-goals and feelings than to remove all other distractions from our lives. If YU must sell our homes to pay the electricity bills, so be it. We will ascend to unprecedented levels of nirvana in the absence of everything we once had.

3. We will bond together as a student body in mutual hatred and frustration. That’s right—within the YU student body, we’re constantly getting into fundamental arguments with one another. Partnership minyamin, policies towards Israel, salad dressings in the caf—you name it, we’ve argued about it. That’s why we need something so powerful it will unify us all, even more than the pursuit of Carlos and Gabby’s. Being incensed at the administration for taking away our homes (and nearly bussing) is a cause that potent. Together,

students of YU from all different stripes and backgrounds will bond together under one flag, light their torches, grab their pitchforks, and go together find someone to blame.

4. It will encourage students to expand their range of career options. Yes, we know—male or female, if you’re a first-year on campus you think you’re going to med school. But not everyone can be a doctor. Maybe it’s time for some creativity. No longer having housing or dorms will encourage students to seek more unconventional ways of making money.

For example: robbing a bank, or perhaps robbing Tiberius. Pick-pocketing professionally. Street performing. Illegally soliciting money on the subway. Collecting plastic bottles from the trashcans around all New York. While these means of paying your now substantially

increased rent might not give your mom that many bragging rights, desperate times call for pretending you can breakdance in a cramped subway car. YU students will be forced to get practical and break out of their previously monochromatic career goals.

So, stop buying into all the negativity! These budget cuts are actually helping us. Whoever is responsible for losing us that few hundred billion (and it can’t just have been Madoff) should be personally thanked for his efforts. In fact, why don’t all us soon-to-be-homeless students go camp out beneath our beneficiaries’ windows and play them a special medley of the Heights-soundtrack we are privileged to wake up to at 4 a.m. every morning. Our new Washington Heights friends will surely be happy to join in the fun.



“Oh, that three billion dollars.”

STALKER
COLLECTION

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Interested in writing for The Stalker? Well that's a shame because we don't check our email or ever go to the office. It's basically just a room with two broken typewriters and a Mac without a keyboard or mouse. Seriously what jerk stole the mouse? Besides I bet you can't spell and that is really really important to us. And I bet you don't know the difference between "You're" and "Your". You better NOT BOTHER! Just kidding, your great, WRITE ON:)

The New Yorker

How the Other Half Lives: Confessions of an Out-of-Towner

Shalva Ginsparg Maybe if I stare long enough at my contact list, I think to myself, someone will hear my telepathic prayer: please invite me for Shabbos! Please invite me for Shabbos!

Words fail to aptly describe the hospitality of my in-towner friends, but every once and a while there's a week when someone has the nerve to get engaged and invite in-towners for the Shabbos Kallah. Or when all eligible in-towners, seized by some inexplicable and pernicious desire to do good, ship out to Shabbatonim around the U.S. where they get no sleep, exhaust their vocal chords, and subsist solely on sour sticks and Kumsitzes.

Staying in is always a good option, but I sense that my sanity depends

upon a change of scene, preferably one set in the suburbs and dotted with those brown and green edifices which I am told are called trees.

Suddenly, my phone vibrates. My heart leaps.

Alas, it's Angel reminding me about a paper looming sinisterly on the horizon. Disappointment sets in. With a sigh, I pull up my contact list again and continue gazing fixedly at the screen, until my eyelids, unable to hold out, slowly droop shut.

I. Dear In-Towner,

Unlike you and Dumbledore, I do not have a map of the subway tattooed to my leg. In fact, it was just last week that I discovered that NYC is actually a grid and just yesterday that I realized that the streets turn from East to West at 5th Avenue. As it turns out, there are no boats or cargo at Port Authority.

In addition, I am convinced that Broadway (the street, not the shows) is out to get me. The shows merely have it in for my budget.

Also, the subway frightens me. It is inhabited by loud, menacing people.

Sometimes they don't even say hello or smile.

II. Dear In-Towner,

Thank you for your

patience when I ask if Washington Heights is uptown or downtown or when I take the LIRR to Jamaica and wind up in southern Pittsburgh.

Once my cell-phone regains reception, I'll be calling you for directions.

Also: leftovers. The single most beautiful word in the English language.

To you, dear in-towner, the term likely conjures up images of wilting lettuce, cholent congealed into a single, malodourous mass, and a Tupperware of gelatinous chicken soup.

To me, it signifies home-cooked food and the precious pennies I will not have to spend on my caf card.

III. Dear In-Towner,

I'm on my way back from the dorms after Pesach vacation. I'm red-faced from dragging my suitcase to Brookdale. The taxi left me off at the corner of Park and 34th but naturally I lost my way and had to trek along the East river, with gusts of cold, polluted air beating against my face and making my knuckles bleed.

My suitcase is full to the gills with all of the clothes I will need to brave the NY winter. All of my clothes, except for the pretty new shirt I bought while I was home. It was a hard decision—heat-retaining winter jacket with new thermal insulation technology or pretty shirt?—but fortunately, pragmatism

prevailed and I packed away the shirt for another occasion.

I don't feel too bad for myself. After all, I can always bring it up next time I go home. And besides, as a wise friend often says, sacrifice helps build character.

I heave my suitcase through the door. Too broad to fit comfortably through the doorframe, it pushes back against the doorpost with force, toppling me to the floor like a bowling pin. I ease myself up and steady my gait. 'Don't let this suitcase get the best of you,' I tell myself.

Wisened up, I position the bulging suitcase sideways through the door. At long last, my suitcase and I have crossed over the threshold. I collapse onto my bed and try not to think about my wonderful family back home.

Suddenly a lovely in-towner comes traipsing through the door.

We hug and converse. Out of the corner of my eye, I notice a small, dainty parcel in her right hand.

"What have you got there?" I ask pleasantly.

"Oh this," she says, with a dismissive shrug. "It's everything I need for tonight. I'm going home tomorrow to bring the rest of my clothes for the week."

I smile weakly.

Then I faint.



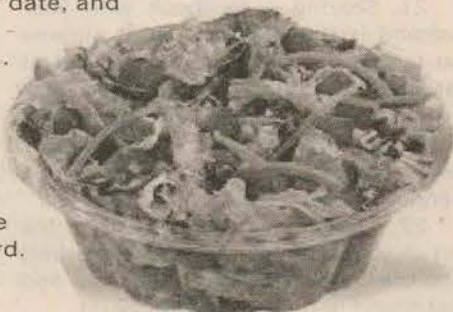
Top Ten Signs You Attend an All-Women's College:



Simi Lobell

1. You find yourself gazing wistfully at the little stick man on the men's bathroom plaque.
2. You have to descend seven flights of stairs to find the men's bathroom plaque.
3. You find yourself winking at the janitor before complimenting his brand of mop. The sponge is soooo absorbent.
4. He says he likes your mop, too. You tell him it's your hair.
5. R-O-Y-G-B-I-V has become an acronym for the colors of your outfit on a given day. Hey, it's not easy to color coordinate Naomi Birnbaum's

- 1997 Bat Mitzvah slacks with your brother's MTA basketball pullover.
6. Your feet and lower calves take the shape of an UGG boot even when you're not wearing them.
7. It often feels like a mosquito got caught in your eardrum. Then you realize your roommate just came back from her date, and you're on jury duty.
8. Your hormones flare up every night... after a chicken dinner. Baked, not fried.
9. You report a burglary when you find the toilet seat up, before your friend assures you she was just cleaning.
10. Fliers for the annual Super Bowl night viewing of *The Notebook* are plastered to every hallway bulletin board. They're serving grass-root beer.



A Modest Wedding Proposal

Rivka Hia Ever get that awkward feeling when you're at a frum wedding and you're not sure when to dance with the bride/groom?

"We did spend our whole lives together, but does she/he want to dance with me right now?"

"Let the ladies in the color coordinated outfits go first, then her second cousin Zissy who flew in from Israel; I'll dance with her eventually."

What if society agreed upon scheduled dance times for every wedding attendee? That way everybody would get a turn to dance, with the time allocated to each reflecting how close the two of you are. No more second-guessing which concentric circle to dance in—seating cards will indicate which circle to be a part of and your turn to dance. For the unfortunate members of the singles scene, yellow reflective vests will be handed out to indicate availability, preventing frankly aimless mingling with those already hitched whose significant others (wisely) chose to sit out from the chaos we call the union of two souls.

If being bounced from the main circle to dancing the Horah with the bride's great aunt isn't awkward enough, we guests also have to deal with the awkwardness of leaving a wedding.

"Did I dance enough?"

"Do I need to say goodbye?"

"Was that really the desert? Maybe I should wait for something else...?"

"How will I get past the photographers and the crowding relatives?"

The couple should just announce the order in which guests should leave, making that awkward moment a swifter process for all, and allowing the couple to get on with their blissful new life together.

Weddings are stressful enough without the subliminal eye glances back and forth between other guests confused about proper etiquettes. Simple pre-wedding scheduling simplifies the process for everyone. Trying to dart between two guys dressed as clowns to get a water bottle to the groom? Save yourself the hassle and schedule the water breaks as well! Listen: at the very least the bride and groom, are dancing up a storm, and at most fasted the whole day and barely got a bite in during the yichud room thanks to the (just trying to do his job) photographer. Water breaks on the twenty-minute mark would only be appreciated. With a tradition as regimented as ours, it's about time that we conceive of ways to streamline the wedding process for both the bride and groom and the guests. Seriously—don't get me started on the open bar situation...

But at the end of the night (I mean really, who has day weddings?) the important thing to remember is the wedding is all about the guests. After all, the couple and their love only have about a 50% survival rate, but we've all showed up to celebrate that meager statistic. Why shouldn't we have a 100% chance of enjoying ourselves?

22 Reasons to Get Engaged By 22

(A response to 23 THINGS TO DO INSTEAD OF GETTING ENGAGED BEFORE YOU'RE 23)

Adena Kleiner As the usual pre-Purim engagement season wraps up, I've been noticing how many of my friends are still single and are choosing to not get engaged and/or married before they hit the big (I don't know about you but I'm feeling...) 22.

And you know what...I get it.

It's too warm outside...who has time to cuddle and talk about their feelings.... life after graduation is a breeze, being confused about your future is just so liberating...so why not prolong this honeymoon phase of your life, right? It's hip. It's cool. It's independent. You have no strings attached to anyone or anything-the world is your oyster. When you're single you have an excuse to pull off the same perfectly "Shirley Temple" (Aleha Shalom) curled hair you sported at your bat mitzvah, and also, Netflix is underratedly an AH-mazing best friend. Why would you ever want to put a ring on it? YOLO. YOSO. You're only single once... Oh wait.

Recent research shows that if you're not married by the age of twenty two, you are more or less destined to be single forever. Being single is no longer just a part of the college experience, but rather, something that MORE: The Magazine for Older Women should probably be printing on. Headlines could read,

"How to budget your retirement plan AND your dating life at the same time!" "What's HOT: Sixty and Still Single"

Don't get me wrong I'd like to be single forever too. I want to always have a social calendar free of obligations, the thrill of being able to meet my soul mate on a CJF trip, and an excuse to never learn how to cook because I can just buy dinner in the caf. But WANT and NEED are two entirely different things. I NEED to start fulfilling MY obligation of building a faithful house in Israel and NEED to be the type of woman you WANT to marry. I understand that my dreams and selfish desires will NEED to come later.

Also, at the age of 22, I should know exactly who I am, what I'm doing, and who I want to be doing it with for the next year... and even more so, for the rest of my life. And that's awesome.

What inspired me and what justifies my whining about all of my feelings in such a public forum is The Facebook. I keep seeing all of these notifications that "X and Y" are no longer in a relationship, or "A" is single. Then there are those pictures of girls posting selfies or pictures of them doing really cute things bythemselves which get about 136 likes within the first 2 minutes of being put up. Should I be thinking about hitting up the single scene? Since Stern Orientation week, I've never NOT had a serious boy friend! Is there something wrong with me? WHAT IS WRONG WITH ME AND WHY HAS NO ONE TOLD ME ABOUT IT FOR ALL THESE YEARS!?

But then I look at my life, my serious relationships, the wedding registry (I may or may not have ready to be posted) and my future marriage... and I realize that it's awesome. It literally isn't me, it's them.

I have begun to notice a

common thread amongst all these young bachelorettes: inexperience. Inexperience with dating, traveling, risks, higher education, career direction, religious exploration, etc... They're all waiting for some backpacking trip to Thailand to find out who they really are, when they can really just do that by finding a husband. A husband can do that all for you...so I can't help but feel like a lot of these girls who are single are doing it as a cop-out. Being single is a way for young people to hide behind some new Pintrest interior design project, Season 3 of Downton Abbey, or a late-night run to Tiberias, instead of dealing with life's highs and lows. It's a safety blanket. It's an admission that the world is just too big and scary to deal with; thus, you now have no choice but to selfishly only care about yourself, write a blog or get a ridiculous haircut.

Don't get me wrong, life isn't just about terminal degrees, bills, and tough decisions. I recognize that it is important to travel, eat at fun restaurants and instagram about it all. But guess what?! You're not supposed to do it alone. At least that's what G-d has to say about it (Genesis 2:18). And I don't know about you, but I tend to trust Him on such things, ya know? So grow, learn, become the person you're supposed to be, but do it with the father of your children!

Look, I recognize that my opinion is not going to be popular... especially amongst those who fall into the "in the 22 and above" category. But to quote the cinematic classic "Wedding Crashers," (coincidence...I think not...) "Sorry, I'm not sorry."

Sure. Some days I wake up and stare at my ceiling thinking: "I just wish I was single." But then I think of what my life will be like when I'm married and I realize, who is really winning here? So in case I haven't convinced you yet, here are a couple of more practical reasons to get engaged and or married before the age of 22.

22 reasons to get married before 22

1. If you failed your finals last semester...it's totally fine as long as your husband got all As. (h/t Stern in the Know.)

2. You'll be relieved in May when you won't have to deal with the awkward, "who's going to room with who in the Heights" drama. Everyone knows who you're rooming with.

3. Why pay for your own toilet paper when you can buy a lifetime supply on your friend's caf card?! Cheers to fake money!

4. You never have to worry about bad hair days or making time to shower, when you can always throw on that Kim Kardashian-inspired floor length sheitl you've had your eye on.

5. Shopping online is the best when you're ordering for two! You always seem to meet the minimum free shipping limit. Sawweeet.

6. No one can judge you for spending too much time in the library uptown...and now you can rightfully judge everyone else.

7. Maximize the opportunity for someone to pay for your morning

commute by taking the GPATS bus. #tooreal #toosoon?

8. When you have to take you husband's grad school plans into account, it will probably reduce the number of programs you can apply to. Wooohoo less applications to fill out!! Ain't nobody got time for that.

9. Making dinner is a breeze because you have tons of leftover mushroom quiche, and strawberry mango salad left over from your bridal shower. You also still keep finding random bits of toilet paper from one of the shower games. You win some you lose some, right?

10. You now have a reason to stalk other peoples wedding pictures on Facebook...you need inspiration for your wedding...you're not just stalking them for the sake of stalking them. Who does that?

11. Have trouble keeping in touch? Now you can use one of those free sheitl contests as a way to connect with all those hundreds of people you haven't spoken to in years!!

12. You now have so many opportunities to do chessed and host your single friends for dinner, a shabbos meal, a hurricane...or even set them up with your husband's chevruta!

13. Coincidentally, your wedding helped you realize your new-found love for running and neon colored sneakers.

14. You're BFF with Nechama Price. 'Nuff said.

15. Being married provides you with SO many more activities you can do while bored in class...checking your wedding registry seriously takes up a ton of time...time that you just don't have during the week!

16. You have an entire new wardrobe courtesy of Sheva Brachot week. Worth it.

17. Being able to snuggle up on the couch and read before Friday night dinner is so much better than having to scavenge for your basheret at Kabbat Shabbat at Mount Sinai or the TAC-SOY Shabbaton.

18. Now you can freely give your opinion to your friends on EVERYTHING, because now that you're married you're TOTALLY an expert on life.

19. You always wanted a cookbook filled with pictures of your friend's faces in it! Why look at picture of delectable salad when you can look at a picture of you and that friend you don't talk to so much, back when you were fat in seminary.

20. Now you have an excuse to wear mittens!! Winter gloves, and more importantly lab gloves just don't fit over your cushion cut halo ring. It's tough being a bio major, ya know?

21. Sharing a facebook with your husband is the BEST, cuz a. it allowed you to revive your facebook account- it was getting confusing remembering all of your friends emails and passwords and b. you get double the amounts of likes now that its your friends + his friends. But who's counting anyway?

22. You get to spend everyday of the rest of your long life (Ad Meah V'esrim!) with the most AMAZING husband and best friend in the whole wide world.

Midtown girl

Ayayayayaya

Midtown girl

She's on the shuttle to her YU world
I bet she's never dated a Heights guy
Maybe it's because she's too shy

I'm gonna try for a midtown girl
She's been living in her Torah-Madda world

As long as any sem girl can
And now she's looking for a YU man
That's what I am

And when she knows what
She wants from her shuttle ride
And when she wakes up
And makes up her mind

She'll see I am *frum* enough
Even though
I'm in love with a Stern girl
You know I've seen her in the library
She's getting tired of that ringless finger
And staring at the Maccabeats singer
She's still single

Ayayayayaya

Midtown girl

You know I can't afford a cab each time
But maybe someday when we go out
She'll see it's *shayach* throughout
And then the vort

And when she's 'studying'
I'm making the moves
And when I call her
She'll say she approves

She'll see I am *frum* enough
Even though I'm in love
With a Stern girl
She's been living in her midtown world
As long as any single girl can
And now she's looking for a YU man
That's what I am

...ayayayaya...

Stern girl

She's now my uptown girl
Don't you know I'm in love
With an uptown girl

My uptown girl
Don't You know I'm in love
With an uptown girl
My uptown girl
Don't you know I'm in love
With an uptown girl
My uptown girl
she's an uptown girl



www.gedalyahreback.org

Beren Campus Security Guards Beg Students to stop taking

Rebecca Yoshor Over the past few weeks, a new trend called "Feed the Deed" has emerged on social media. "Feed the Deed" participants perform a good deed, upload a video or picture of themselves performing the good deed onto a social media platform such as Facebook, and then nominate four friends to also commit to doing a good deed within the next twenty-four hours.

On Beren campus, security guards have become the major recipients of acts of kindness performed by Stern students attempting to fulfill their "Feed the Deed" obligations. From donuts, to pizza, to cake, chips, and various types of candy,

students have bombarded the security staff with an overwhelming display of kindness and appreciation. Unfortunately, all these acts of kindness have begun to add up and affect the security guards in a very unpleasant way.

"Before this "Feed the Deed" movement, I was down five pounds from my post-New Years diet. Now I've gained all that weight back and added some more!" laments one security guard, who wished to remain anonymous.

Between mouthfuls of M&M's, the most recent act of kindness from a Stern student, another security guard added, "We

appreciate the students' efforts to perform acts of kindness, but they are really testing our ability to stick to our diets."

February and March are already difficult months for dieters who started off 2014 resolving to lose weight. Their enthusiasm for their diets was waning on its own by the end of January. Now, the recent barrage of snacks and sweets from students eager to do a participant in the "Feed the Deed" movement has seriously threatened their weight loss resolutions even further.

"Look, we understand how much "Feed the Deed" means to Stern students" says a security guard. "We aren't unreasonable

about accepting food gifts. We would just prefer them to be healthier. Instead of bringing donuts, students could bring apples or a healthy juice."

So Stern students, on behalf of the Beren campus security staff, I would like to issue a plea. Before you head to Crumbs or Bravo to perform your "Feed the Deed" act of kindness, please be considerate of our security guard and re-think your decision. As I'm sure many Stern students know, weight loss is hard. So maybe make your act of kindness a little less about "feed" and more about the "deed."

Frozen in Real Life

Sarah Katz A blizzard here, an ice-storm there. Slush on the streets and piles of snow at every turn. This winter, the weather in the Tri-State area has been anything but mild. While many of us may be inclined to blame God or the meteorologists for the recent frigid months, the real culprit lurks behind Disney's innocent name. Yes, in a new film that is funny and touching for all ages, Disney has managed to capture audiences with the tale of *Frozen*. But the night *Frozen* won the Academy Award for Best Animated Film, meteorologists began predicting snow all across the Tri-State area. Coincidence? I think not! Ever since the major success of Disney's latest animated musical hit, the snow has been coming down and, well, making roads "frozen" everywhere.

If you've been living under a pile of snow this winter, *Frozen* is about two princess sisters, Elsa and Anna. Elsa has the magical power to turn everything she touches into snow, while Anna has no powers of her own and is trying to determine why her sister seems so distant from her. When Arendelle, the fictional city that Elsa and Anna live in, turns into a winter wonderland due to Elsa's powers, Anna along with two friends she makes along the way, Kristoff and Olaf, try to save not only her kingdom, but the relationship she has with her sister.

Like the plagued Arendelle, cities in the Tri-State area have not experienced so much snow in many years and people are thinking that the success of the film is the culprit. Is Disney even cleverer than we think? Disney after all is one of the most powerful companies in the world— if they had the power to control the weather in their favor to boost ticket sales, wouldn't they? *Frozen* has already grossed one billion dollars and has exceeded *The Lion King* as the highest grossing animated Disney film. Too bad Disney didn't think to change the climate to that of a sweltering desert for *The Lion King's* release -- who knows how much money Disney would have made?! Everyone would have been rushing to the air-conditioned movie theaters, faster than someone could say "Hakuna Matata."

During those months that the movie has been in theater, November through February, there has been an exceedingly high percentage of snow for the winter. Of course this is all speculation, but if anyone could magically change the weather in their favor, Disney could definitely do it. After all isn't Disney the company that is supposed to make dreams come true?



The Backward Sugarcoats Everything

Continued from page 13
in *The Backward*, this time about YU's financial situation. The recession has been hard on YU, as it has been on most institutions; however, much of YU's money was left in VDIGX, a mutual fund that has outperformed the market. "Not everything is as dark and gloomy as other papers would like you to believe," said Richard Simmons Joel, President of the University.

"We have made mistakes, but many of our investments have done well." The article also discussed an interview with a student of Rabbi Sheep, Chancellor and former President. The student discussed how nice Rabbi Sheep was during his first day of college. "Not knowing where any of the buildings are was very confusing, but the Rabbi took out time to help me," said the student. "I didn't even know who he was at the time, but he got me through that first day with his kind words."

A third article appeared this week when YU decided to keep their football coach despite complaints that he had not put forth a team in his entire tenure as coach of the team. Amazingly, this story was taken up by the New York Post.

Many have criticized *The Backward* for whitewashing the daily activities in YU by only citing the times it does things well. Should any type of controversy emerge from the university, it will be very interesting to see how *The Backward* handles it.



www.teepublic.com

How to Buy Tefillin: A Woman's Guide to Fulfilling an Awkward Mitzvah Which Might Get Her Stoned

Phylacta Totafot Buying tefillin for your first time is a scary experience. After all, so many things to choose from! The only thing you get to really choose is size. (You're not getting a pair of those Chabad-size monsters, are you? No? Good.) Not the color—dull, bland, black. Not the shape—all tefillin are identical. We women know that it's the inside that counts, and, guess what—that's all the same too!

Wearing tefillin can also be terrifying for the first time. The stares, the quiet whispers, and the feeling of your shidduch points plummeting.

That said, there are ways to make your experience a meaningful one; after all, getting threats and snide looks just doesn't make a girl feel good about her newest toy. Here's a couple of tips of how to enjoy your new mitzvah:

1. Tefillin Barbie: you know you have wanted one since you first saw her. Swagging her Steinsaltz, and doing hagbah like a pro, she's always been your idol. So go on, buy one!
2. Wear a pink tallis! Seeing as you can't accessorize your tefillin, you need to find some way to express your individuality, plus avoid any issues of beged ish. A pink tallis is the perfect way to do that. Don't forget techeles, and be sure that they are a complementary shade of blue!
3. For all the married ladies, be sure you can wear your tefillin with a sheitel! Remember, tefillin must rest behind your hairline, so either only wear headband falls, or be sure to get an all human hair sheitel with a human hair net, to prevent chatzizah issues. (When in a pinch, an opaque shower cap is an acceptable alternative, especially one with bright

- colors and a super-chic pattern! But avoid clashing with your tallis at all costs!)
4. Short sleeve t-shirts (I know, soooo pritzusdik). The tefillin shel yad need to go above your elbow, and must be directly on the skin. Be sure to get t-shirts (in patterns and colors that match your super-cute tallis) that are wide sleeved, and wear one every day.
5. A long, heartfelt poignant essay on Tablet. We all know that no spiritual agony is complete without a baring-of-the-soul at Tablet Magazine. Before you bust out your new accouterments, pen an essay for the masses to read. Who knows—a few may be inspired by you!
6. Custom weights for the tefillin shel rosh. After they tie behind your head, the straps kinda just hang there. You need to be sure that they don't drape over your bust—after all, tznius is still a middah! Tie

- the weights to the ends of the straps of the tefillin, so that they can't drape over you, but will just hang at your sides. You know what the midrash said— b'zechus nashim tzidkanyios!
 7. Cookbooks. Not to lose weight or learn how to cook for your basheret—you need to go on a special diet! Time to avoid all beans, eggs, and dairy products. Flatulence would be seriously awkward while wearing those tefillin, not to mention an issur deoraisa! Say goodbye to soda, wheat, cucumbers, and cauliflower. It's time to figure out how to cook like the fierce tefillin-wearing lady you are. (And who knows— your mad skills in the kitchen may just help you find your bashert!)
- Good luck to you! Parade those tefillin with pride. I will be watching from the sidelines, in awe of your fierceness, while gossiping behind your back.

Married Bus Eliminated... ...Then Restored

Continued from page 13

Stern been cultivating with its legions of and GPATS girls eager to make their way downtown each morning seemed to have hit a speed bump. Just when the bus-goers were beginning to get past the memory of angsty mornings earlier this year involving the arrival of one mini-bus and one bus driver stubbornly insisting that 50 girls could "just get on" to a bus designed to hold half that amount, tragedy struck again.

On an otherwise normal night in the Heights, those Stern students who depend on the bus each morning browsed their Facebook feeds in an effort to distract themselves from the cacophony of curiously late-night ice cream truck music and those songs you hear in Zumba class punctuated by the sweet voices of children playing in the park hours after conventionally appropriate bedtimes. Before long, everyone had seen it: a link to an Observer news update informing students that the bus would no longer be servicing Stern students but would instead be replaced by a 15-seater van intended to faithfully ferry GPATS students to the Beit Midrash in what was being touted as the original and divinely inspired plan for the married bus.

As the shock settled in, married Stern students began sending a flurry of heartbroken and angry texts, asking each other where they had gone wrong with the married bus. "Was it something I said?" sobbed one student, who had married only weeks earlier but had quickly grown attached to the bus, while another, more veteran rider, married nearly a year, expressed anger at the flighty nature of the married bus and asked when it would "start acting like it's in a committed relationship." The more practical of the bunch asked the questions everyone was too frazzled to ask: "So what happens if a 16th person joins GPATS?" asked one particularly incensed married student, looking up

from her phone in between angry texts. "Are they going to deny more women access to Talmud study or will they simply tape a seat to the roof?"

That night, while some married Stern students slept fitfully, saddled with the knowledge that the married bus would remain a reality for just two days more, those students who had been keeping vigil on Facebook and stewing in their own thoughts of inequality and resentment were gratified with an update on the Observer website, informing students that the administration was "already working on ensuring that there is a way for students to get to school in the mornings," and that the bus would remain in place until then. Shaken students wondered what the cryptic message implied; was Stern investing in a new subway line that would shuttle directly down to Lexington Ave? Would students be treated to a helicopter ride or perhaps even a number of well-trained horses?

In the days to come, a final update was issued by the Stern administration, declaring that "transportation between the Beren campus and Washington Heights is remaining the same. Should there be any questions in the future, please feel free to email answers@yu.edu." In the weeks since the break-up and heavily moderated reconciliation, the married students remain hopeful that their previous relationship with the married bus can be fully restored to the way things were in (what students now realize were) its honeymoon days.

The dynamic each morning as married girls wait for the married bus has shifted; whereas before, its arrival would be greeted with a chorus of "Finally" and "Thought this day would never come," married students now offer thoughtful cups of coffee as they gingerly climb aboard and quietly settle in for the ride, welcoming the brighter skies as they head down the FDR as signs of a brighter future.

The Mysterious Case of the Disappearing Male

Allison Tawil Perhaps there is a scientific basis to the shidduch crisis: the end of the male gender. But you know what, who needs men anyway? They just might not be around in about a million years anyway. So the countdown is on.

First, let me explain. Although this is a Purim article, it's not completely a hoax. As we all know, each and every one of us is born with 46 chromosomes, which contain all of our genetic material that makes us who we are. Two of these chromosomes are designated for our gender. For females, there are two X chromosomes. In men, there is one X and one Y chromosome.

So what's the big deal you ask? Well, there is evidence that the Y chromosome has shrunk over the past millennium. And guys, that is not a good thing. This means that you're having a harder time in evolutionary adaptation than us girls (not like we needed scientific evidence to prove that one). I guess Darwin was right about survival of the fittest and natural selection after all. It seems as if Mother Nature has naturally selected us, women, to continue propagating the species. In fact, scientists are now predicting that if this phenomenon continues, the male gender will cease to exist!

While X and Y chromosomes used to share about 800 genes in common, presently the Y chromosome only contains 19 of its original genes, plus the sex determining gene. This is easily observed by the sizes of the chromosomes, the Y chromosome is just a fraction of the X chromosome's size. The theory is that eventually, just as the original 781 genes on the Y

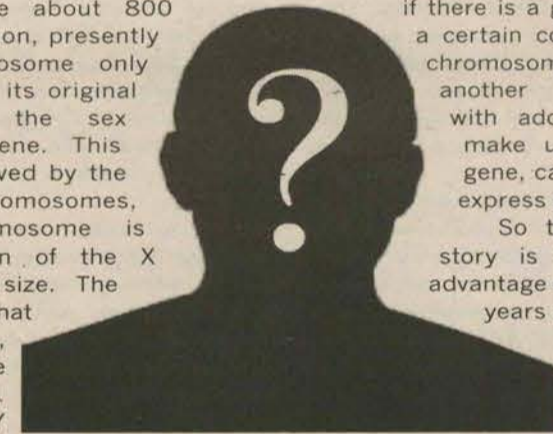
chromosome have disappeared, so too will the remaining genes on the Y, causing the chromosome to disappear altogether. This would probably take at least a million years to happen, but it's always important to think ahead.

An example of a species that is thriving in the absence of males is the Laredo striped whiptail lizards that live in the Rio Grande Valley area of Texas and Mexico. These females reproduce through parthenogenesis (basically cloning themselves), in theory, it's possible that it's just a matter of time (in an evolutionary sense) that humans would be able to reproduce in this way as well.

One day, it probably will be possible for a world to be sustained without males. But even if I haven't convinced you thus far, there is still proof to why females are genetically superior. Take color blindness. How many females do you know with this condition? Probably not very many, if any. Yep, and that's because of our double X chromosome. Certain diseases are X-linked, meaning that the gene for the disease is found on the X chromosome. Because girls have two X chromosomes, if one of them has an allele that encodes for the disease, the other X chromosome may be free of that diseased-causing allele, so the girl won't have the condition. However, in males,

if there is a gene encoding for a certain condition on the X chromosome, they don't have another X chromosome with additional genes to make up for the faulty gene, causing the male to express the faulty gene.

So the moral of the story is this: boys, take advantage of your last million years you have on this earth. And just admit that girls are better.



Eitan's Guide to Trickin Yo' Man into Thinking You Are More Religious Than You Actually Are

Continued from page 13

charity fundraiser? Bench Gomel: Just got back from Benching Gomel? Bench Gomel. The girl who thanks G-d for being alive will have something to live for: A husband.

3. Be Pretty

This is pure math. God wouldn't make frum girls not pretty so if you want to trick a guy into thinking you are frum, be pretty. Also, any girl who is described as having "a nice neshama" is secretly a kofer sent by J Street to force RIETS students to consider the good parts of a 2-state solution.

Save yourself the trouble of explaining to RIETS students you aren't pro-Palestine, be pretty.

4. Don't Even Know what a Partnership Minyan Is

I'm not going to tell you what a partnership minyan is because it angers me and I want this to be a peaceful

article. Just know that when you hear what a partnership minyan is, you will be confused and infuriated.

Want a frum man? Here is what you do:

Make sure you don't find out what a partnership minyan is. On your first date he will inevitably say something like "I hate partnership minyans," at which point you will say "what is that?" and he will say "It's _____." When he finishes explaining what it is, your job is to cry and say something like "why would hakadosh baruch hu allow such evil to infiltrate our community?" Book a wedding hall because when he hears this he will immediately propose.

Also, remember that the torah says minyans are suppose to be led by "Adam and Steve" not "Adam and Eve." Keep partnership minyanim out of our religion.

5. Never Learn Gemara

Nothing turns off a YU bochur more than a girl that reads gemara. It's a scientific fact that everyone who attends Drisha dies alone. Do you wanna die alone? No? Didn't think so. Put down that Talmud Bavli and pick up that copy of "The Magic Touch."

Also, Side note: You aren't missing anything, Gemara sucks. It's complicated, it's in a different language that isn't hebrew but like totally isn't not Hebrew and there are no pictures except that one where Rashi drew a triangle to describe how he made sure that non-Jews wouldn't touch meat he had delivered to him or some other made-up thing like that. Trust me, you aren't missing much.

6. Speak Hebrew ALWAYS

Nothin' makes YU guys more excited than a girl who speaks Hebrew. 100% of the guys in YU did 2 things while on their Israel year: 1) Went to Ein Gedi to look

at the vegetation and watch the graceful Hyrax roam the countryside. 2) Fell in love with some Israeli girl who works at a Pizza store in Beit Shemesh and then contemplated making Aliyah for 2 weeks but then went home for passover break and decided he didn't want to make Aliyah.

You speaking Hebrew is going to remind him of those two weeks of shomer bliss he felt in Israel, while you speaking English is going to make him feel guilty for loving America. The good part about this is that Yeshiva Day Schools teach Hebrew worse than YU teaches you how to interact with minorities in the workplace. What that means is that you don't need to be fluent, just enough to get through customs at Ben Gurion.

7. Don't Have Elbows

If you don't have elbows then you won't need to cover your elbows. Simple science.

7 Girls you Meet in the Stern Elevators: Stern at Stern

Rachel Rolnick The **"Phone Talker"**: The girl loudly gabbing away on her phone to her boyfriend, BFF, fiancé, blah blah blah. Yes, we are all dying to hear about your trip to J. Crew yesterday. Obviously we all know about the sale and are so proud of the amount of times you went to the gym this week.

The **"Fourth Floor Exiter"**: The girl that crams all the way into the elevator and gets off on the fourth floor, two flights up. As she leaves, you can literally feel everyone in the elevator judging her for not taking the stairs.

The **"Too Close for Comfort Girl"**: The girl who is smushed up against you with absolutely no regard for personal space. Well, because anything seems to fly in the Stern elevator. You can feel her breathing and it's so uncomfortable, you just want to drop to the floor. But you can't because someone else is on your toes.

The **"Oh I can just squeeze In"**: That girl who gets in the elevator when it's already stuffed to the gills. We're talking maximum capacity. The worst is

when her bag gets in the way of the door closing. The doors decide whether they should close on her or not. If this type's tendencies seem to overlap with "Fourth Floor Exiter"--- she should be expelled.

The **"Too Friendly"** girl: "So how's everyone doing today?!" We're all wonderful. Well, now that you mention it, we are all crammed into this elevator! Thank you much for asking!

The **"Cross Elevator Conversationers"**: You're waiting for the elevator with a friend, chatting away. The elevator comes; everyone floods in. You and your friend are on opposite ends of the elevator now. But does that stop you from finishing your little chit-chat? Nope!

The **"Awkward Male Teacher"**: The inevitable. He's shoved into a corner, probably silently praying for his life and pretending its not as awkward as everyone knows it is.

Hmmm... Maybe you should just take the stairs.

Talia Stern You may have wondered: is having the last name "Stern" at Stern College an advantage, a nuisance, or just plain funny? If you're one of the lucky ones to be blessed (or cursed?) with this phenomenon, you may find yourself wandering the Beren campus feeling disoriented and confused: why is everyone wearing sweatshirts with my name on it? Why do I hear people talking about me all day long? Who are the *original* Sterns of Stern College? These are just a few of the questions that people with the last name Stern at Stern College ask themselves. And since those around the chosen ones are still left wondering if the double-name is indeed a blessing or a curse, I sat down with Talia Stern to shed some light on the true life of someone with the last name Stern at Stern.

Observer: Hi, Talia. What would you say your biggest challenge is about having the last name Stern at Stern?

Talia Stern: Hi, Talia. First, I can't thank you enough for giving me the time to talk about my experience here as a Stern student (in more ways than one). I feel that it is a taboo topic that doesn't get discussed nearly enough in our circles, but it's time that people really start thinking about this issue. I would say that the hardest part is meeting new people--I've just grown to expect them to say, "Your last name is Stern and you go to Stern?!" I try to make them feel good, so I usually laugh. But let me assure you, I've heard that joke about 1,000 times before. (If you've ever made that joke to me and I laughed politely, I'm sorry you have to find out like this.) Also, booking shuttles can be a little bit tricky. Here's an actual conversation I had once with security:

"Hi, I'd like to book a shuttle tonight for 7:30."

"Alright--what's your last name?"

"Stern"

"What's your last name?"

"...Stern"

"No, I need your last name!"

"My last name is Stern!"

O: And how did that make you feel?

TS: Stern. I felt stern.

O: Nice one! But seriously, are you doing anything to raise awareness about this highly sensitive issue around

campus?

TS: This semester, I've actually just started the Stern@Stern club here on Beren Campus. It's a new initiative that spreads awareness on this situation. I have an idea for a sort of empathy project where the entire student body takes on the last name "Stern" for one day, just to experience what it's like. As of now, I'm the only member of the club and so the weekly meetings are pretty quiet, but I'm getting some positive vibes. There's a kid with the last name "Yeshiva" on the uptown campus that keeps asking me to join his club, and so I'm considering expanding Stern@Stern to both campuses.

O: Wow, that sounds excellent. Alright, so sometimes things can be tough, I see. But are there any positive aspects to having the last name Stern at Stern?

TS: Actually, one of the main reasons I chose to go to Stern was to save myself the trouble of labeling my clothes. I also love to tell people that I'm related to the Sterns of Stern College. I watch people's eyes light up, and I even get a little more respect. It's a good deal. Also, I've got a sweatshirt with the word STERN sprawled across the back, so usually I tell people I'm on the volleyball/basketball/softball team and that it's part of my uniform. So, in summary, a lot of people at school think I'm the great-granddaughter of our school's founder and that I'm a great athlete. You could say I've found a way to make my situation work in my favor.

O: What solutions do you have for someone at Stern who might be struggling like yourself with a competing last name?

TS: The way I see it, we have five ways to escape this reality:

- Find a new donor and change the name of the school
- Legally change our last name
- Make up a last name
- Get married and change our name
- Get married and not change our name but just use our husband's name for avoiding "Stern's in Stern?!" situations

...But any and all other suggestions are welcome.

O: Anything else you'd like to say before we wrap up this interview?

TS: To everyone else out there with the last name Stern: Please come find me and consider joining the club. So far at my time at Stern, I've only met one other person with the last name Stern, but there must be more. I KNOW YOU'RE OUT THERE!

And to everyone out there *without* the last name Stern: please consider the next time you want to make a "Stern at Stern" joke. And when we lie to you and tell you we're related to the Stern family, please still be our friend out of your own free will, and not because you just found out we can't let you in on some mysterious family perks.

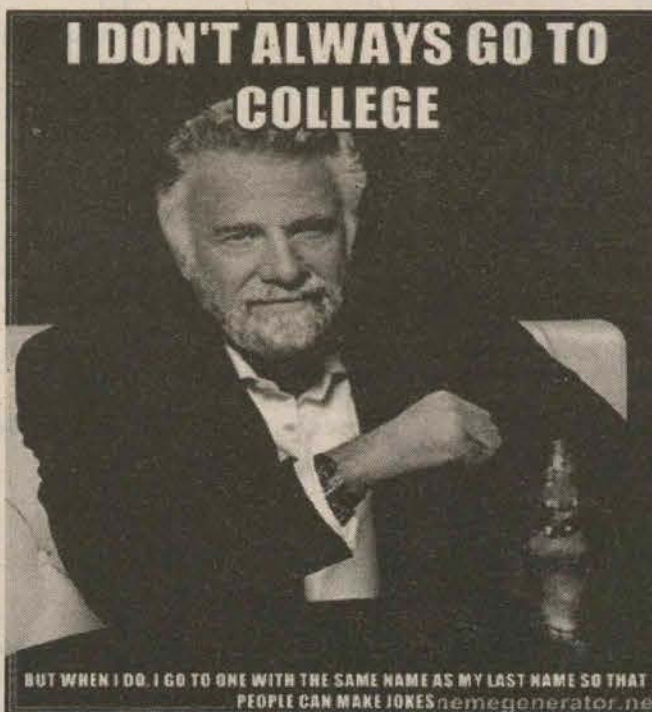
Academic Advisement: A Graphic Expose

Rachel Renz Breaking news: A report has recently come out slandering Stern Academic Advisement for being "too friendly, welcoming" and acting with "an overabundance of generosity and understanding."

Potential influences are hypothesized to be the use of illegal substances, or the prospect of early retirement. No less than ten students this year have received smiles from academic advisement, shocking some students to the point of light-headedness. An "AA" insider exposes the situation, explaining, "This is a radically new change in the notion of advisor-student relationship theory; some postmodern scholars now posit that it might actually be beneficial to treat students with dignity, and soften the iron fist of advising practices." Students had long complained about the ironically unethical policies practiced in the mysterious advisement offices. There were rumors this past October from a number of graduates who expressed concern over having not yet received their diploma. One woman was in tears. "I graduated Stern College in 1967, hoping to pursue a doctorate in Kantian philosophy. However, the registrars never sent me my well-deserved diploma, and so I have been

relegated to simply becoming the neighborhood sheitel macher. I never wanted this to happen." With this change, however, graduation rates are up, diplomas are being printed by the bucket-load, and Stern matriculation is hopping.

The change in academic advisement's treatment of the Stern student population comes at a most apropos time, as only a month ago today, Stern had been as risk of hosting an anarchic rebellion, led by Stern leaders on behalf of their persecuted status. "I never thought I would be persecuted among my own kind!" one angry student yelled while she painted signs "Storm the Bastille 2014!!" Even a faculty member who asked to remain anonymous had expressed support for student rebellion. "I know Egypt's Arab Spring was messy and it's not going well in Syria either, but I unfortunately think that, having studied political science and having taught at Stern college for a number of years, the student rebellion against academic advisement is going to be the most violent bloodbath in a century." Fortunately, this revolt a la the French Revolution will no longer take place as planned. In fact, a strange notion of love and equality takes its place at this time. Truly "v'nafoch hu."



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Inaugural No Pants Elevator Ride Only Modest Success

Panty Pantsless Tuesday, February 15, 2014, 1:15PM. It looked to be just your ordinary club hour at Stern College. Students streamed out of class and raced into the caf, grabbing salads and sushi, screaming and jesting for places in line. The steady roar of conversation in the room grew louder as more and more students filed in, until, suddenly, the room went silent.

One Stern girl (who preferred not to be named) with a long sleeved, high collared shirt, not wearing pants, as per the dress code, was standing up on a chair. "We've had enough," she hollered. "Enough of this disrespect, this kefirah. For your rebiim! For our Torah! Girls, wearing pants to class! I cannot believe their audacity! It may not last any longer! Join me!" And with that, she sprinted towards the elevator.

And so began the inaugural no-pants-elevator ride at Stern. Modeled after the annual no-pants-subway ride, which is sponsored by Improv Everywhere, this elevator ride had a slightly more political message, and was officially backed by Tznius Everywhere.

Girls, screaming in protest, and of course not wearing pants, crowded into the three

Stanton Hall elevators. Whereas before, the fashion competition had centered around whether your purse was Juicy or Chanel, now, if you weren't wearing Victoria's secret underwear, everyone knew. The Target girls were shunned, and if you had purchased your underwear at CVS, even the Target girls were looking down on you.

The ride continued, up and down the floors, undisturbed. The caf Rabbis pretended not to notice (but secretly waited for the elevators to return to the basement). Meanwhile, Rabbis still shoved their way into the elevator, using their kipot as blindfolds. As the elevator stopped on each floor, girls exclaimed, "Oh my Hashem! I haven't seen such a protest against our current standards since I glimpsed a woman laying tefillin!" Following the ride, Dean Orlian told

The Observer, "I am so proud of these Stern women. I've been sending out those emails reminding students that we have a dress code here for years, and no one seemed to be reading them. Now, all of our tznius problems are solved. People have realized, that there is, in fact, a dress code."

One Bible teacher remarked, "What avodas Hashem! If they do this wherever they go, I'm sure they'll find shidduchim. I sense many single-sex pre-class dance parties in the future!"

Yet somehow, the next day at school, the pants had returned in earnest. Instead of Dean Orlian, this time the email came from Mrs. Schechter, with the subject line: "you need a tznius check!" The email read:

"YOU ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE A TZNIUS CHECK BEFORE YOU CAN GRADUATE.

NOW IS THE TIME TO HAVE THAT CHECK. DON'T WAIT UNTIL YOUR LAST SEMESTER WHEN IT IS TOO LATE.

The implications weren't stated, but Stern girls familiar with the recent RIETS controversy knew very well what "too late" meant. It was turning into a "Your pants or your diploma" situation, very quickly.

But the leggings continued to populate the second and third floors of Sy Syms, while student-athletes lounged in their sweatpants in the 245 lobby.

So, was this venture truly effective? It's still hard to tell. But get ready to ride. Next year's no-pants-elevator ride is in the works, a confidential source told *The Observer*.



Your Semicha AND Your Wife

Sam Reinstein Yeshiva University's Rabbinical school appears to be helping students who are getting their ordination far beyond the mere realms of their education. Through internships and leadership positions given through RIETS, a number of those receiving their ordination this year have found their eventual soul mates.

On hearing of the statistics, several YU-ordained local rabbis said they were stunned by the move. "I think it's a wonderful thing," said the Rabbi of a large congregation, who wished to remain anonymous. "This is the perfect way to handle the situation."

In a letter to the RIETS students, Rabbi Menachem Penner, acting dean of RIETS, asserted that "not all individuals given the title of 'rabbi' are equipped to serve as husbands in a Jewish home." The letter says this is "especially true when breaking new ground in areas unforeseen to earlier generations. We can put people in situations where we can see if things are shayach (appropriate) beforehand, and let it go from there."

However, for many young rabbis, being a student at RIETS has proved the perfect opportunity to snag a mate. This, of course, does not mean that students only enter RIETS in order to make themselves more eligible bachelors. While some may suggest a conflict of interests, it is most certainly not true. "It's all about passion for the rabbinate," asserted one semicha student emphatically. "And, if it happens to impress the ladies, so be it."

NEXT MONTH IN STERN...

LIRPA MCMXIV						
Ice Cream Sunday	funday	Tu-Tu-Tuesday	There is nothing funny about Wednesday	LOKIDAY	French Friday	HOLY SABBATH
		1/ March 32	2	3 MTEN vs St. Joseph's College (LI) MVB vs Webb Institute	4 	5 Parshat Metzora TAC/SOY Shabbaton
6 MVB vs College of Mount Saint Vincent MVB vs New Jersey City University	7 *SNOW* *DAY*	8	9 BB vs Maritime College	10	11 BB vs Albertus Magnus College (DH)	12 Parshat Achrei Mot In-House Shabbaton
13 YU Curling Team vs. Touro Curling Team	14 Erev Pesach	15 Pesach	16 Pesach	17 Succos	18 Pesach	19 <i>Parshat Matzoh</i> Pesach
20 Pesach	21 Pesach	22 Pesach	23 Travel Day	24	25 SENIOR DITCH DAY	26 Parshat Kedoshim Observer/Commentator The Journal of Fine Arts Shabbaton
27 BB vs Lehman College (DH)	28 BB vs John Jay College of Criminal Justice	29	30 			

RAQUEL MILLER