

"MUCH JOY,
MUCH JOY!"

THE COMMENTATOR

The Independent Student Newspaper of Yeshiva University

"SPRING HAS
ARRIVED,
PESACH
COMETH!!!"

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YU Roller Hockey Rolls Through Pool Play At National Tournament

By MOSHE GENUTH

The Yeshiva University roller hockey team traveled up to Rochester, NY on Tuesday to take part in the NCRHA National Tournament. The annual event

brings in the best roller hockey teams from across the country, and for the third straight year, YU received a bid. With three games of pool play on Wednesday and Thursday, followed by a single elimination playoff format starting Friday, the boys rested up on

Tuesday in preparation for the big games ahead of them.

The first matchup of the tournament for YU was a 10 a.m. tilt against the James Madison University Dukes. Despite being out of their conference, the Macs had faced the Dukes in an

exhibition game in November which Yeshiva won 5-2. YU started off the scoring early when Moshe Genuth found Ami Rosenfeld open in the middle for a tap in. Three more goals by the Ami-Geno line, as well as an impressive effort by Daniel Bordan, chased the JMU

goalie and put Yeshiva up 5-0 after one period. The Macs followed with strong defense and a few more goals to deliver a dominating 8-0 win in game one of the tournament.

After a few hours of relaxation, the Macs were back at it for a 6:30 p.m. game against Missouri S&T Miners. The Miners, another out of conference opponent, played Yeshiva at the national tournament last year in Fargo, ND, where the Macs triumphed over them 7-3. The scoring once again was started off by Yeshiva thanks to a big takeaway by rookie defenseman Zev Markowitz, which he dished to Daniel Bordan. Another Bordan goal on some smooth stick-handling put YU up 2-0 going into the first intermission. A power play goal by Matthew Carl and two more scores from Bordan (a #HatTrick) gave YU a 6-0 advantage before the Miners finally broke through, ending goaltender Scott Weissman's amazing shutout streak of nearly 5 periods at Nationals. Regardless, the Macs finished strong and put away Missouri S&T 10-2, half of



A team huddle at the Natty's

AVI EDELL

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Einstein Granted Independent Degree-Granting Abilities, Will Maintain Jewish Identity

By JACOB ROSENFELD

The Albert Einstein College of Medicine (AECOM) has been officially awarded degree-granting abilities from the New York Board of Regents. This is a major milestone in the transitional period of AECOM as they finalize their spin off from Yeshiva University and become a jointly owned entity of both Yeshiva University and Montefiore Health Services.

In Sept. 2015, Einstein was spun into a newly formed corporation named "AECOM, Inc." which has been jointly owned by Montefiore and YU. This has enabled Montefiore and Einstein to maintain certain systems during the transition period and, most importantly, their degree-granting ability which has continued to be from Yeshiva University. On

March 4, Einstein, along with YU and Montefiore, announced that Einstein had been awarded an absolute charter and degree-granting abilities from the New York Board of Regents.

President Rabbi Dr. Ari Berman said regarding the advancement of the transitions that "Einstein continues to be an important affiliate of Yeshiva University and a shining example of our commitment to preparing students with the knowledge and tools to have a meaningful and positive impact on the world. We look forward to building upon our joint collaboration with Montefiore to create and nurture opportunities that foster new standards of academic excellence."

When asked what the collaboration between Yeshiva and

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Academic Integrity and a Modified Core Curriculum: Fall 2019 Wilf Campus Academic Updates

By BENJAMIN KOSLOWE

In advance of the Fall 2019 semester, the Yeshiva College Deans have enacted several academic policy changes that will impact academic integrity, the Yeshiva College Core Curriculum and the Hebrew language requirements. The Commentator sat down with Dean of Undergraduate Faculty Karen Bacon and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs Shalom Holtz, as well as with members of student council who were involved in policy brainstorming conversations. A detailed presentation of the changes follows in the remainder of this article.

Academic Integrity

As was documented in The Commentator as recently as last semester, Yeshiva University has struggled with the problems of plagiarism, answer-sharing and general cheating for decades. Breaches of academic integrity have ebbed

and flowed as policies and cultures changed over the years.

This year, Yeshiva College Student Association (YCSA) President Amitai Miller (YC '19) and Vice President Akiva Frishman (YC '19) worked closely with the deans to work on policies aimed at curbing the cheating problem. On Wednesday, April 3, the Deans Office released the following new policies regulating exams and reports:

1) To the extent appropriate and possible, exams and finals will be given in 3-4 designated rooms with video-surveillance. This policy will include introductory courses in Biology, Chemistry, Calculus, Psychology, Computer Science, Economic and Statistics.

2) Proctors will be present for all non-essay based exams, midterms and finals conducted in courses with over 25 students. Additionally, proctors will be present for all exams, midterms and finals in the pre-health track and within the Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics Departments.

3) Faculty will require students to submit reports through Turnitin, an online program for identifying plagiarism.

Dean Holtz shared with The Commentator that the "06" course in each Hebrew track, which is the terminal course that students are required to take, will focus more on conversational Hebrew.

4) Both test banks and old exams that were returned to students of previous years are considered fair study materials and may be used to prepare for tests. We will be working towards setting up a

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What's Apple Up To?

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

A Call to Digitize YU's Student Newspapers

By **BENJAMIN KOSLOWE**

Just over one year ago, I had the unique pleasure of meeting and chatting with Rabbi Joseph Karasick. A Yeshiva College ('43) and Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary ('45) graduate, Rabbi Karasick served the Jewish community at large for over ten years, as the president of the Orthodox Union from 1966-1972, and as chairman of its Board of Directors from 1972-1978. Among many other achievements during his long career, which he documents in his memoir, Rabbi Karasick interacted closely with Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik and saw the trajectory of American Orthodoxy shift from dire to hopeful. He also served as one of the first editors-in-chief of The Commentator.

Currently the oldest-living former editor-in-chief of The Commentator, Rabbi Karasick edited the paper in the 1942-43 academic year, running a newspaper that in some ways has not changed over the decades: it covered news such as curricular updates, drama events and college sports; it served as a platform for student opinions about literature, extracurricular activities and politics; and it criticized the administration on occasion, for example, when a controversial dormitory curfew was imposed on students.

which he felt are still emblematic of his writer's voice. He shared with me details that don't jump off of the pages, such as how he gathered information about Europe's concentration camps, and how YU administrators and students reacted when the issue hit shelves.

**

Rabbi Karasick's Commentator issues are just one small collection of thousands of fascinating stories that are documented in hundreds of newspapers that hit YU's shelves over the past 80+ years. Aside from that which Rabbi Karasick was able to share in person, newspaper archives attest to repeated themes, such as countless attempts to define "*Torah Umadda*," as well as unique episodes, such as the newspaper's decades-long struggle for independence, several sophisticated debates between college faculty and *roshei yeshiva* and even embarrassing moments such as a 1941 major Commentator headline that bashed Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik's candidacy for the position of *Rosh Yeshiva*.

Unfortunately, Commentator archives are not easily accessible. YU's Gottesman Library in Washington Heights owns original newspapers that are kept in a climate-controlled basement. Additionally, most of the archives have been scanned onto microfilms, which very patient students can borrow and read with the library's

to the public" by "brainstorming with our amazing librarians how to make this a reality." To their credit, YU's librarians have encouraged the project and help push it forward. They informed me that the library owns most of the archives of The Observer, another independent student newspaper that was founded by Stern College for Women students in 1958, as well. Starting at the end of May 2018, Paul Glassman, the Director of University Libraries, convened several meetings with members of both newspapers, librarians and representatives from YU's Marketing & Communications, Alumni Affairs, General Counsel, Institutional Advancement and Government Relations agencies, for the purpose of evaluating digitizing YU's student newspapers.

The meetings were productive, and several YU librarians graciously took on the task of locating potential vendors to whom a scanning and digitization project could be outsourced. By the final meeting, which took place in November, the librarians presented two potential avenues for digitization: One theoretical project, which would create an advanced platform of fully-searchable PDFs with optical character recognition (OCR), similar to platforms used by The Daily Pennsylvanian and The Cornell Daily Sun, would cost in the range of \$100,000. A slightly less ambitious project, which would simply utilize an already-existing (and soon-to-be renovated) platform for hosting PDF files, similar to YU's yearbooks and other collections already hosted by YU's Digital Library, would cost in the cheaper range of \$10,000-\$15,000.

Unfortunately, YU's student digitization project all but came to a halt after that November meeting. I was unable to convince Provost Selma Botman to sponsor the project, so I instead spent a few weeks emailing back and forth with Institutional Advancement and Alumni Affairs to gather email addresses of old editors-in-chief, with the hope of perhaps reaching out to them for donations. Eventually, due to everyone's busy schedules, the conversations dimmed to a near-silence for the past few months.

In The Commentator's long history, some things never change. Editors come and go, make whatever impact they can and then pass on the torch at the end of the spring semester. Every now and then, though, game-changers present themselves, and the only question is whether or not those with the power to seize the moment will do so. The time for me to vacate my post nears, but the framework has been set for the newspapers, with the help of YU, to scan the archives and share them with the public. I call upon the administration — in particular, Provost Botman and Institutional Advancement, who have the power to designate and gather funding — to actively take on this important project.

The entirety of The Commentator's archives ought to be accessible to a wider audience.

In other ways, Rabbi Karasick's Commentator was vastly different from today's. It represented only Yeshiva College. It printed cigarette advertisements. And it struggled, due to technological constraints, to utilize creative layout or photography, or to even ever exceed eight pages of print.

What caught my eye the most, though, while reading through Rabbi Karasick's volume of The Commentator, was the issue that he published on March 4, 1943. With a front-page illustration of a hand sinking in turbulent waters above large-print "Out of the Depths Have I Cried Unto Thee, O Lord," the six-page issue included horrifying articles calling attention to European atrocities that could no longer be ignored. As much as the newspaper decried the actions of the Nazis, it also blamed American Jewry — and Yeshiva College classmates — for refusing to believe the news about its people's destruction, and for not protesting Nazi violence.

For close to half an hour, I showed Rabbi Karasick a printed version of his 1943 Holocaust exposé. When we read through his editorial, titled "Save Us, O Lord," he pointed out various phrases and wordings that he recalled composing and

clunky microfilm readers. Finally, most of the microfilms from the 1930s through the 1990s have been copied, printed and placed into reference binders, which can be accessed in the Gottesman Library.

This current state of affairs has been sufficient to serve certain purposes. For the past two years, The Commentator has been able to reprint archives in the well-received "From the Archives" column. However, reprinting a few dozen articles out of thousands is not enough. The entirety of The Commentator's archives ought to be accessible to a wider audience.

The archives can be made accessible with a digitizing project. Newspaper digitizing projects are commonplace among American universities. Every Ivy League student newspaper has been digitized. Other schools closer in ranking to YU have also digitized their student newspapers, such as Fordham University and Stony Brook University, as have many schools ranked significantly lower than YU, including Duquesne University and University of Delaware. If The Duquesne Duke merits digitization, certainly The Commentator does as well.

In my opening editorial last May, I committed The Commentator to "digitizing its archives and making them available

THE COMMENTATOR 2018-2019

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The Commentator is the student newspaper of Yeshiva University.

For 84 years, The Commentator has served students and administrators as a communicative conduit; a kinetic vehicle disseminating undergraduate social, religious and academic beliefs across the student bodies; and a reliable reflection of Yeshiva student life to the broader Jewish and American communities.

The Commentator staff claims students spanning the diverse spectrum of backgrounds and beliefs represented at Yeshiva.

We are united by our passion for living the ideals of Torah Umadda, and a commitment to journalistic excellence.

Visit us online at
www.yucommentator.org.



1 April Showers Bring Wasted Hours

“Avengers: End Game,” “Game of Thrones,” “Shazam” and “Killing Eve” all in one month? It’s a good thing I already don’t go to *shiur* because no way I am showing up this month.

2 “Duck Hunter Shoots Angel” Playbill

WOW! This layout is fantastic! The Commentator should really take notes.

3 Kol Hamevasser’s New First Issue

PHEW! I was starting to worry that Perspective would be the only publication of any worth on this campus.

4 Gronkowski Retiring

This news only further proves that Tom Brady will be playing football until the end of time as we know it.

5 Stephen A.’s Video on Magic Johnson’s Retirement

Everything about this video is amazing, especially the shout out to the palm trees in the background. I don’t understand what Stephen A. was doing there. Did he think people would not believe him when he said he was in L.A.? Stay in your lane, Stephen A., and leave the shout outs to me.

6 Dirk Nowitzki and Dwyane Wade Retirements

Thanks for the memories.

7 Data in the News Event

Seriously... who are we trying to kid here?

7 UP ⚡ 7 DOWN

BY SAMUEL GELMAN

1 Astros’ T-Shirt Cannon Lawsuit

Is nothing in this world sacred anymore? Next thing you know, they will be coming for our Key Food grapes!

2 March Madness Championship in Apikores April

What the heck is this doing here? Go back to Modern Orthodox March, you poser.

3 3 Mexican Countries

Fox News is like that annoying in-towner who thinks anything that isn’t Florida or Los Angeles is simply “Texas.”

4 50 % Percent Scholarships to Both Syms and Katz

You think I’m going to attend a graduate school that does not spell out the percent sign? I’m a pretentious Commentator editor. You are going to have to do better than that.

5 Student Council Elections

It’s election season everyone, and you know what that means! Bad photoshop and false promises galore! #GetNagelToOpenAt7:30

6 Gross Food By Hefker Table

Why is everything always so wet?

7 Space Landing Failure

At least we’ll always have the cherry tomato.

Letter to the Editor: YU is No Exception: The Child Victims Act is an Important Vehicle for Justice

To the Editor:

On March 31, The Commentator ran an editorial by Benjamin Koslowe titled “Does the Child Victims Act Over- Punish Yeshiva University?” which asserted that Yeshiva University might face too harsh a punishment for its role in crimes of sexual abuse as early as the 1960’s and as recently as 2001. I would like to respond to his claims, provide additional information and context and address my criticisms of The Commentator this year.

It is important to first address what the Child Victims Act (CVA) is. I spoke with Asher Lovy, the Director of Community Organizing for ZA’AKAH and an advocate and political activist for the CVA and survivors of childhood sexual assault. Mr. Lovy explained that, in general, a statute of limitation exists for damages and crimes because as time goes on, crimes become harder to report. Additionally, there is value in timely reporting.

There is a unique challenge in litigation involving sexual assault because survivors tend to report abuse later in life. One study found that the average age of disclosure to be 52.2 years old. The purpose of the CVA is to allow survivors to come forward when they are ready and pursue justice and compensation. Survivors face an uphill battle to get any form of justice, and the CVA provides them a greater opportunity to seek it. The CVA will not facilitate criminal proceedings for most cases that have already passed the previous statute of limitations. However, now, thanks to the new CVA, perhaps some measure of comfort, closure and justice can be given to survivors, even if the case is limited to a civil proceeding. It is important to note that the same court procedures and standards of proof still apply in civil proceedings. The only difference is that cases will no longer be tossed due to an unjustly restrictive statute of limitations.

In his editorial, Mr. Koslowe questions whether the “ideal means by which the system of law will ... right past wrongs” can be achieved by the “sought-after restitution — specifically, legally forcing Yeshiva University to pay victims millions in compensation.” I do not think that this question is specific to the CVA, but is rather a more general point about whether the form of justice pursued by the legal system is ideal. This also does not mitigate the claim against Yeshiva University. Mr. Koslowe also claims that the moral quandary is an “unresolved issue” as “evident by the years-long struggle over the attempted lawsuit.” The reason the first lawsuit took many years and was unsuccessful is not a testament to the difficulty of the moral quandary but to the limitations of the previous incarnation of the law and to the desire of Yeshiva University to avoid punishment. Yeshiva University facilitated abuse and now it must answer for that.

Mr. Koslowe correctly points out that, as a result of the proceedings, Yeshiva University might have to pay a large sum of money at a time when Yeshiva University’s financial standings are unstable. I fail to see why paying reparations to the survivors constitutes over-punishment. The damage done to survivors should not be measured by the balance sheet of Yeshiva University. The fairness of the punishment should be measured by the severity of the crime and the extent of the damage.

Mr. Koslowe also has misgivings on the matter of punishing an institution for the behavior of its former employees. I think that this claim is incompatible with the nature of an institution. An institution is made up of its staff and legacy. Yeshiva University still employs people that were employed during the scandal, including people who were prominent then and are prominent now. Furthermore, Yeshiva University lays claim to all of its positive legacies from the past. When walking on Amsterdam Avenue, one can see quotes from various

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continued from Page 3*

figures from times long past praising Yeshiva University. There is no disclaimer saying that the past is not reflective of where the institution stands now. School gear claims an establishment date that predates the birth of any current faculty. The crimes Yeshiva University enabled are unfortunately part of its legacy. Reparations have been paid by countries whose governments have long been changed. The call of justice is ever present, as justice has no expiration date.

If Yeshiva University truly wants to show it has progressed past its past then it should be willing to pay restitution. Having teachers watch videos and take classes is only as meaningful as the justice Yeshiva University is willing to accept. The survivors were hurt by the abuse and the indifference of the institution. They will bear the scars forever. The least they deserve is financial compensation.

Mr. Koslowe also wonders about whether it would be fair for Yeshiva University to be punished for having an internal investigation. I believe it would be fair and in the best interest of justice and truth. Even assuming that the investigation was not a mere cynical attempt to avoid future liability, attempting

to find a problem after the fact should not absolve an institution from the damage it facilitated. If Mr. Koslowe is worried that this will prevent future institutions from carrying out investigations, then I would be remiss to point out that had the CVA been in effect earlier there would be no need for an internal investigation to begin with! The police would have investigated Yeshiva University.

*If Yeshiva University
truly wants to show it has
progressed past its past then
it should be willing to pay
restitution.*

Mr. Koslowe points out that payments to victims of sexual abuse will hurt the financial stability of Yeshiva University, and claims that “This type of punishment is ethically questionable.” Later Mr. Koslowe objects on the grounds that it will hurt education and extracurricular programming, Yeshiva University’s ability to hire, and the ability of the university to increase salaries; thus

making the primary sufferers of the suit current YU students and employees, rather than the abusers. Mr. Koslowe also contends that the survivors should “consider pursuing individual alleged abusers rather than ... Yeshiva University.” In response to the first point, the pain and health of survivors is more pertinent.

Towards the end of his piece, Mr. Koslowe wonders if a lawsuit by way of the CVA would achieve its goal “if the goal is deterrence” in the case of Yeshiva University. I would like to argue that deterrence is not as important as justice. I also think that on the matter of deterrence, nothing deters as well as punishment. Yeshiva University being absolved because of its “openness to working together with victims to brainstorm how to prevent sexual abuse going forward” is not a deterrent to Yeshiva University or other institutions watching. Paying lip-service to the fight against sexual abuse is not the same as making reparations to survivors who continue to suffer.

Overall, I think the article is lacking on many fronts. I certainly disagree with the reasoning, but my main issue is with what I perceive to be a lack of care taken in the process and formulation of the article. I believe that The Commentator staff should have

urged the author to speak to survivors and advocates for the bill.

I have often been asked why it is that, on several occasions this year, I have been a harsh critic of The Commentator. My answer is that I have only criticized The Commentator because I thought it was necessary. At times it seems as if The Commentator is focused on maximizing readership. Although running controversial articles has, at times, yielded important criticism and pushback on powerful figures, garnering clicks should not be an objective unto itself.

Readership and controversy are merely means; the goal of journalism should be to encourage open and informed discussion in ways that challenge existing power structures and encourage accountability. Engagement is important, but it must be done in a way that respects the intelligence of the student body. I cannot imagine the difficulties the student papers face — their work is vital — but holding them accountable is just as important as student journalism itself. When The Commentator undertakes this endeavor, we all benefit from a more intelligent discourse.

Izzy Hadar (SSSB ‘19)

*ACADEMIC UPDATES,
continued from Front Page*

repository of test banks and exams that were returned to students, to be accessed through the library to ensure equal access of resources.

5) Students will no longer be permitted to use personal calculators on examinations in the Mathematics and Chemistry introductory level courses. Students will be provided with university calculators for examinations when needed.

“Yeshiva College strives to ensure that each student will maintain the highest moral, ethical and academic standards,” the academic statement wrote. “The governing principle within the curriculum is academic integrity-accepting the responsibility for being judged on the basis of your own work and your own achievements.”

In addition to new regulations, the academic integrity statement also encouraged students to utilize the “Report a Violation Service” following observed breaches of academic integrity.

“Since the beginning of the year, it’s been our student council’s mission to work towards preventing violations of academic integrity,” expressed YCSA President Amitai Miller. “This effort took a lot of work, and though there is still a ways to go, I am hopeful that these new rules will start to curb the problem of cheating. Akiva and I are deeply appreciative to Deans Bacon, Sugarman and Holtz, for their willingness to hear from students and for their commitment to implement substantive policy changes.”

In addition to the new policies, the Provost’s Office, along with Prof. David Pelcovitz, over the following several weeks is conducting discussions with focus groups of student leaders to discuss academic integrity, for the purpose of brainstorming how to instill the importance of honor in classes and on written assignments. Dean Bacon

explained that in addition to the importance of instituting policies, it is also important to work on changing cultures that might lead to breaches of academic integrity.

“Integrity is a life-long virtue that we cherish and expect everyone in the YU family to live by,” wrote Provost Selma Botman. “Academic integrity is a hallmark of higher education and a value that is a principle of Yeshiva University.”

Core Curriculum

Over the past few weeks, several curricular restructuring brainstorming sessions have been taking place. Most notably, a major restructuring of Yeshiva College Jewish Studies was announced last month. Among such discussions, Yeshiva College faculty have conducted several meetings to evaluate the General Studies Core Curriculum, and the curriculum has now been lightly modified for the upcoming Fall 2019 semester.

Going forward, there will no longer exist department codes for the six Core requirements — Contemporary World Cultures (COWC), Cultures Over Time (CUOT), Experimental & Quantitative Methods (EXQM), Human Behavior & Social Institutions (HBSI), Interpreting the Creative (INTC) and Natural World (NAWO). Instead, these requirements will be folded into standard departmental courses, eliminating cross-listing of such courses. Different classes will have Core “attributes,” in the same way that they currently have “Honors” or “Writing Intensive” attributes.

Dean Bacon explained that the purpose of this update is to encourage students to look for courses in departments that interest them. For example, a student might look to the History department for an interesting course, and perhaps pick a specific course that has an “HBSI” attribute to fulfill the Core requirement.

Starting next semester, two courses that are taken to fulfill for Core requirements may also count

towards students’ major requirements. Dean Holtz explained that this new policy is an expansion of the science model that has existed until now, by which science and STEM majors were effectively exempted from taking EXQM and NAWO. Now, every student in Yeshiva College can effectively have two Core courses folded into his major.

According to Dean Holtz, these academic updates have allowed the college to increase the number of Core courses. Whereas last fall included only 25 Core offerings, Fall 2019 will include 40. Deans Holtz and Bacon emphasized the importance of increasing choice for students. The Commentator reported last month about how increasing curricular choices is in line with President Berman’s recent experimentation with the notion of “optionality,” the idea being to maximize academic options for students, in some cases by reducing requirements, to address issues such as the limited time during the day and other factors that currently, in theory, turn potential students away from Yeshiva University.

Like before, AP exams will continue to fulfill requirements, although they will now fulfill Core requirements as well. For example, “AP American Government & Politics” will fulfill COWC, and “AP Physics 1” will fulfill NAWO. The full list of AP equivalency can be accessed online.

Dean Holtz told The Commentator that no professors had to be dismissed due to the academic updates. Dean Bacon as well emphasized that no faculty were exclusively Core Requirements faculty, which allowed for easy reshuffling between departments.

As the new requirements are categorically subsumed under the old requirements, current students who have already fulfilled their Core requirements will not need to make any changes to their academic plans.



Gottesman Library

THE COMMENTATOR

Hebrew Language

At the present time, the Hebrew language requirements remain unchanged. Since this Spring 2019 semester, as The Commentator recently reported, male undergraduate students have been required to take between one and three semesters of Hebrew language, depending on their track placement as determined by a YU-administered language competency examination.

This being the case, Dean Holtz shared with The Commentator that the “06” course in each Hebrew track, which is the terminal course that students are required to take, will focus more on conversational Hebrew, instead of grammar. Additionally, students at the advanced “1300” level will have the option of taking either conversational or grammatical Hebrew. Dean Holtz also said that there will likely be an option for advanced students to take Biblical Hebrew to fulfill the language requirement.

Additionally, whereas students were previously placed into Hebrew tracks by taking a placement exam during freshman orientation, they will now take placement exams online while they are studying for the year in Israel. Dean Holtz explained that there is an online program that can ensure proper proctoring and fair exam-taking. Dean Bacon added that this new system will allow students to register for Hebrew language at the same time as registering for

their other first semester courses. Students who do not spend the year in Israel will take the placement exam over the summer, similar to how such students take a math placement exam over the summer.

Dean Bacon noted that the new placement exam infrastructure will allow for students to benefit from more academic advising and guidance during their freshman registration process.

Other Updates

For the time being, there are no changes to Wilf Campus undergraduate policies for transferring morning program HES credits. As in previous semesters, Mazer School of Talmudic Studies (MYP) and Irving I. Stone Beit Midrash Program (SBMP) students continue to have the option to transfer up to three credits from their morning studies to their college transcript each semester, while Isaac Breuer College of Hebraic Studies (IBC) and James Striar School (JSS) students remain required to include a three-credit grade on their college transcript which is an aggregate of their morning program course grades.

Additionally, updates to the MYYU Banner system, which is used for course registration, continue to be discussed, but formal updates are being postponed for the time being.

*ROLLER HOCKEY,
continued from Front Page*

which were scored by Daniel Bordan, for win number two of the day.

The boys headed back to the hotel for an abbreviated BBQ and a few hours of sleep before their next game, a 10 a.m. contest versus the Sam Houston State University Bearkats. This would be the final game of pool play and would determine first place. SHSU put in an early first goal, but Yeshiva answered back with three in a row. The Macs got two more in

the second before the Bearkats struck again. The third period was more of the same with Sam Houston striking first but YU answering with three, finishing off the Bearkats by

big wins with an excellent 26 to 5 goal differential. They kicked off the playoffs with a matchup against ECHRA rival Syracuse University Orange. After quickly going down

With less than six minutes left YU tied it back it up and took the game to overtime. In overtime Matthew “MC Hammer” Carl batted in a bouncing puck to win it for the Macs and bring them to the next round on Saturday night when they played in the Elite Eight against Endicott College.

Make sure to follow the YU Roller Hockey team on social media (@yurollerhockey) and watch their games LIVE at <https://ncrha.org/page.php?page=ncrha-tv>

The Maccabees swept pool play with three big wins with an excellent 26 to 5 goal differential.

a final score of 8-3. Matthew Carl picked up four goals on the game and Captain Benji Shulman added three assists.

The Maccabees swept pool play with three

3-0, and ending the 2nd period down 4-3 the Macs still had work to do. After a game-tying goal by Zev Markowitz, Orange quickly got two back and put the Macs back down 6-4.

*EINSTEIN,
continued from Front Page*

Montefiore will entail, a university spokesperson said, “Under the collaboration, Einstein is an affiliate of both Yeshiva University and Montefiore, with Yeshiva University serving as Einstein’s academic affiliate and Montefiore serving as Einstein’s clinical and research affiliate.”

In regards to student life that affects many Yeshiva alumni and Einstein students, the Yeshiva University spokesperson assured, “Under the joint collaboration agreement, Einstein continues to maintain a Jewish mission and will continue to have such practices that are consistent with orthodox Jewish law and practices. In addition, Yeshiva University continues to have oversight over Einstein’s continuation and implementation of such Jewish mission and practices including orthodox Jewish observance of *kashrus* and Shabbat/Yom Tov. Therefore we do not expect any change in Jewish life on campus.”

In addition to no changes regarding the Jewish life on campus, Yeshiva University also informed The Commentator that Yeshiva students will receive the same treatment they have in the past. The Yeshiva University spokesperson said, “Einstein remains the affiliated medical school of Yeshiva University. We do not anticipate any change to the historic relationship and admissions process

that has benefited our students for decades. Yeshiva University is one of the top feeder schools to Einstein and Einstein has always shown a special affinity toward our students. Einstein is expected to continue its current practices pertaining to the acceptance of graduates of Yeshiva University. Our student admission numbers into Einstein have remained extremely strong and we expect that will continue.”

Einstein has not received approval to sponsor foreign students — existing foreign students have remained students of Yeshiva University under a separate agreement — and YU continues to sponsor them.”

The idea of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (AECOM) was first brought in the mid-40s by President Samuel Belkin. In 1951 he received approval from the state of New York for the care of patients at the Bronx Municipal Hospital

Einstein quickly became “the crown jewel” of Yeshiva’s graduate schools as it gained national recognition. Einstein quickly expanded its research programs and in 1964 opened the first Department of Genetics in the United States. Over time, Einstein’s accomplishments and contributions have had endless repercussions for the field of medicine.

Being a graduate school of Yeshiva, students of the under-

In June 2014, a memorandum of understanding was issued between Montefiore Health System and Yeshiva University. Memoranda of understanding are a standard business procedure that are not legally binding, but state that a deal or contract is imminent. As the faculty senate of Einstein issued a vote of no confidence in former President Richard Joel in Jan. 2015, a deal was being finalized between Montefiore and Yeshiva.

Several weeks later, on Feb. 3, 2015, Montefiore Health System and Yeshiva University issued a joint statement announced an agreement to terms of a deal, essentially a sale, that would grant Montefiore greater control over Einstein. The deal stipulated that Yeshiva would maintain a 49 percent equity stake in AECOM and all of the real estate owned by the school but all decisions and planning would be up to Montefiore. This was clearly a financially motivated move, as The Commentator reported, given that Einstein accounted for nearly two-thirds of Yeshiva University’s 2014 budget deficit. The transaction allows Montefiore Health System to take over operations of Einstein and be further in sync with operations at Montefiore Medical Center, Einstein’s teaching hospital. They hope these changes will allow for more efficient and cost-effective management of both institutions allowing Einstein to maintain a connection with Yeshiva while being run by a health-focused organization.

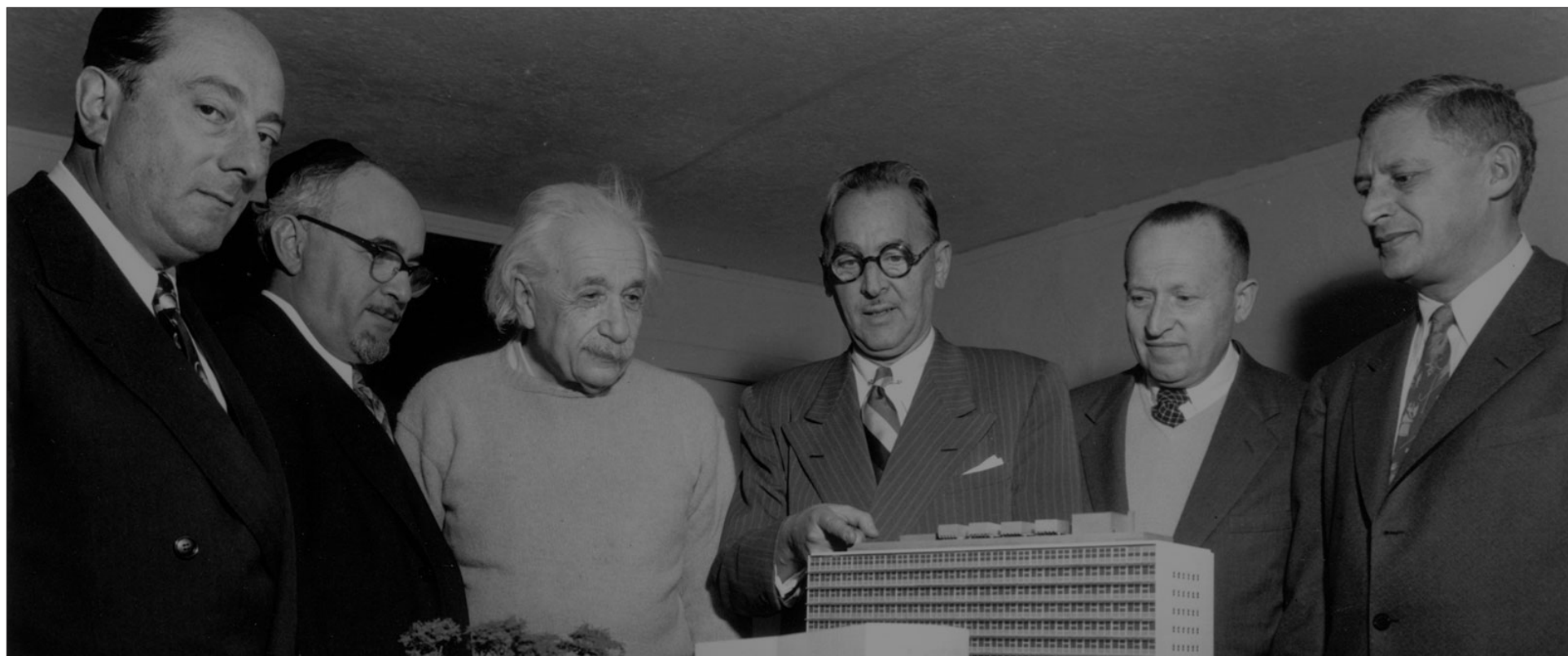
These changes will allow for more efficient and cost-effective management of both institutions allowing Einstein to maintain a connection with Yeshiva while being run by a health-focused organization.

Other changes that affect students is concerning Einstein’s degree-granting ability. In an April 9 email, Brenda Loewy, Director of Pre-Health Advisement at Stern College for Women, informed students that Einstein will not be accepting students without American citizenship during the 2019, 2020 and possibly 2021 admissions cycles. The Yeshiva spokesperson said, “Albert Einstein College of Medicine is now an independent academic institution, with the authority to confer its own medical and graduate degrees. Einstein’s academic independence is the result of a vote by the Board of Regents of New York State’s Department of Education, which awarded Einstein an absolute charter, establishing it as an autonomous educational institution...

and his pet project was becoming a reality. The goal of Einstein was to “welcome students of all creeds and races” during a time when many medical school admissions were discriminatory against Jews, blacks and Catholics. Two years later, on March 15, 1953, Albert Einstein agreed to allow his name to be used as the name for Yeshiva’s to-be medical school to help achieve this mantra of fair admissions. In Oct. 1953, the first building of the newly formed Albert Einstein College of Medicine began construction on their main building in the Bronx. That building is still in use today and is known as the Leo Forchheimer Medical Sciences Building. On Sept. 15, 1955, the first class at Einstein began with a total of 56 students and 75 faculty members.

graduate schools often found it easier to be accepted to Einstein compared to other medical schools of the same tier. In addition, the Orthodox Jewish identity of the school, including adherence to the Jewish calendar and its holidays and maintaining a kosher dining hall, made it a further top choice of Yeshiva students.

Over the years, AECOM began to become a monetary burden on Yeshiva as the financial state of AECOM, and the University as a whole began to come into question. The Commentator has previously detailed how such financial woes came about at Yeshiva University and Einstein and the details are a familiar storyline of heightened spending before a financial downturn and overall mismanagement of funds and programming.



Professor Albert Einstein and President Samuel Belkin look at an architect’s model of the medical college.

“Volozhin Yeshiva” Survey Email Ruffles Feathers

By BENJAMIN KOSLOWE

A group of vigilante Yeshiva University undergraduates has initiated a platform for the purpose of informing classmates about potentially *halakhically* problematic material that they may encounter in courses offered by Yeshiva College and Sy Syms School of Business.

The group of students is operating under the anonymous email address of “thevolzhinyeshiva@gmail.com,” which also operates a semi-active Twitter account with the handle @VolozhinYeshiva. The group claims to be the continuation of the Volozhin Yeshiva, a prominent Lithuanian *yeshiva* that operated from 1803 until 1892, when *roshei yeshiva* decided to terminate operations rather than succumb to Russian pressures to increase secular studies in their curriculum. According to the group’s profile, “YU’s founders were descendants and students of the Volozhin Yeshiva. We are it’s [sic] continuation! We are Volozhin!”

The group gained attention two weeks ago on the evening of Monday, April 1 when hundreds of male Yeshiva University undergraduates received an email from the account encouraging them to fill out a course evaluation form to anonymously submit information about specific classes in which *halakhic* issues may have arisen. The email requested that submissions be as precise as possible, and added that “the project is being run with input and advice from Rabbanim.” Submissions are then evaluated by the group’s moderators, and, after approval, are posted on a public Google Doc.

As of the time of publication, 12 courses have been listed on the document. The courses, which all list professors’ names,

allegedly taught or presented questionable material such as R rated movies, “inappropriate paintings” and Kierkegaard’s “Fear and Trembling.” Other courses listed include “Human and Animal Physiology,” which allegedly displayed “pictures of human and animal physiology” on the board, and “Principles of Biology II,” in which, allegedly, “such topics as evolution were taught as scientific dogma.”

by students for students and not one that necessarily requires involvement from the university,” the group explained.

The group declined to share precise details about how they gathered students’ email addresses, or which students in particular were contacted, offering only that “emails were gathered over a period of time from public sources. No specific groups of students were singled out.”

Dean Fred Sugarman described the initiative as “very strange and troubling.”

When asked for comment, both the Yeshiva College and Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS) deans claimed to have no knowledge of the project. The Yeshiva College deans in particular expressed disappointment with the initiative, noting that they are open to critiques about *halakhic* issues that may present themselves in courses. Dean Fred Sugarman described the initiative as “very strange and troubling.”

A brief Commentator investigation revealed that the group is administered by a team of current YU students, who spoke with the newspaper on the condition of anonymity.

The students explained that they spoke with several rabbis “to ensure what we are doing is *halakhically* permissible and how to keep it that way and, more generally, how to go about in a respectful manner.” When pressed about which rabbis in particular they consulted, the group said that “YU rabbis were consulted.”

The group did not consult with the deans in advance of their initiative. “We feel that this is a public information project

“We are simply trying to inform students of potential *halakhic* issues within classes,” the students explained when asked about the goal of the project. “It is always better to know what one is getting oneself into when they are signing up for classes.” The students added, “We would like to note that we are not trying to cause anyone trouble nor upset or offend people. We are just looking to help out the students.” They also shared that they “have heard from students across all majors, morning programs and religious spectrums that they would be interested in this information.”

Some students have raised the concern that this group’s initiative, due to the nature of anonymous submissions, may be subject to factual inaccuracies. Indeed, one Yeshiva College student, who preferred to remain anonymous, told The Commentator that the submission about “Principles of Biology II” was his own. “I submitted my post about evolution simply to troll Volozhin Yeshiva,” the student explained. “I also should note that my original post was edited by the moderators, which probably means that

they suspected that I made up the post, but decided to publish it anyway.”

When asked about such accuracy concerns, the group of students insisted that they “are only looking to publish things that are fact. This is a program that will only work with the cooperation of the students, so we are asking all of the students to take it seriously.”

Aside from concerns regarding vigilantism and accuracy, the other major concern, expressed by many students and professors, had to do with the issue of besmirching professors by name in a public setting. In response to this concern, the students explained that they have consulted with several *poskim* and concluded that “all the things the teacher presents and assigns to classes are done in public and therefore considered public knowledge (*befarhesiya*).” They added that “even if it was not public knowledge it is permissible to warn people of things” and that “anything that might be remotely subjective, and border on *lashon hara*, we will research, and we turn to rabbinic guidance to make sure that it is permissible before publishing it.”

The group also encouraged students who may be concerned to speak with their rabbis. “The rabbis we consulted were in favor of the project,” the students explained, “and felt that it is permissible as long as we follow certain standards.”

“It is important to also note that we are not attacking any teachers personally,” the students concluded. “We only wish to publish the content and syllabi of classes so students can be informed about the content of their classes before enrolling.”



As of the time of publication, 12 courses have been listed on the document.

Sherwood Goffin, Renowned Cantor and Educator, Dies at 77

By BENJAMIN KOSLOWE

Editor's Note: This article was originally published online on April 4.

Cantor Sherwood Goffin, the cantor of Lincoln Square Synagogue on Manhattan's West Side from its founding in 1965 until 2016, and a teacher of Jewish Liturgy and Folk Music since 1987 at Yeshiva University's Belz School of Jewish Music, died on Wednesday, April 3. Goffin, a resident of Manhattan's Upper West Side, leaves behind his wife Batya, as well as three children and several grandchildren. He was 77 years old.

Goffin grew up in New Haven, CT and attended high school at Mesivta Torah Vodaath in Brooklyn. He received a B.A. in psychology from Yeshiva College in 1963 and a Cantorial Degree from Belz School of Jewish Music in 1966.

"Cantor Goffin was a master teacher who not only taught the music of *tefillah*, but who instilled within each of his students the immense responsibility one assumes as he represents the *kahal* before the *Ribbono Shel Olam*," expressed Akiva Schiff (YC '19), a student who took several Belz electives with Cantor Goffin.

From the 1960s and through the late-1990s, Cantor Goffin, known by many congregants and admirers as "The Chaz" (short

for "*chazzan*," the Hebrew word for cantor), was a popular artist in the world of contemporary Jewish music, performing at many concert venues in America and producing

performing at concerts so that he could instead devote more energy to his cantorial role at Lincoln Square Synagogue and his academic role at Yeshiva University. As a

400 bar mitzvahs and sang at hundreds of weddings. Since Goffin's retirement, Cantor Yanky Lemmer has served as Head Cantor at the synagogue.

"Cantor Goffin was a master teacher who not only taught the music of tefillah, but who instilled within each of his students the immense responsibility one assumes as he represents the kahal before the Ribbono Shel Olam."

Akiva Schiff

six record albums. He sang at every NCSY National Convention from 1962-1991. With his concert performances, Goffin popularized many songs, including "*Eitz Chaim Hi*" that is sung in many synagogues on Shabbat, the usage of "*Keitzad Merakdim*" for "*Lecha Dodi*" and many varied *niggunim* of the Bostoner Rebbe.

During those same decades, Cantor Goffin regularly participated in rallies protesting the Soviet Union's treatment of its Jewish populace, singing rally songs before tens of thousands of Jews standing in solidarity at the United Nations or elsewhere. He sang at every Soviet Jewry demonstration in New York from 1964-1991.

Since 1996, Cantor Goffin stopped

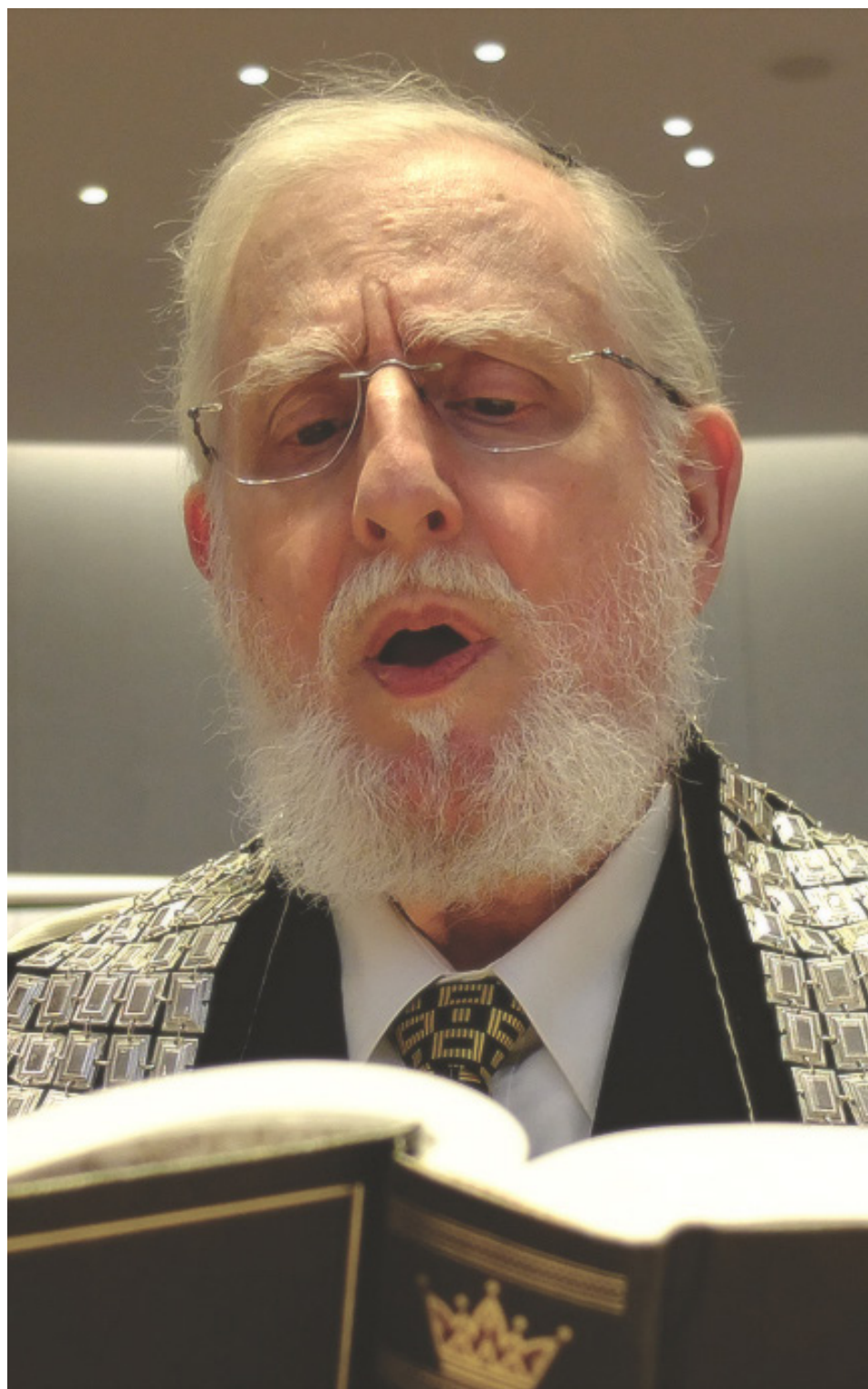
teacher in Belz School of Music, Goffin for over 30 years consistently taught courses to college students and aspiring *baalei tefillah* (leaders of prayer); most recently, in Fall 2018, Goffin taught "Megilot Cantillation" and "Shabbat Shaharit." Recognized as an expert on *Nusach HaTefillah* (the liturgical traditions of Jewish prayers), Goffin regularly lectured on the subject of the traditional Jewish prayer services' cantillations and melodies. Goffin released several MP3 CDs that featured his renditions of Jewish prayers and music.

In his role as Cantor at the Lincoln Square Synagogue, Goffin led prayer services for over 50 years. Beyond the synagogue itself, Goffin during his career prepared over

"Chazan Goffin ZT"L was one of my favorite teachers in YU, and I learned most of what I know about davening and *nusach* because of him," wrote Jonathan Roytenberg (YC '18), a student who studied many courses with Cantor Goffin. "His passing is truly a personal loss for me. I will never forget everything he taught me and will cherish every memory I had in his classes."

Cantor Goffin's funeral took place on Thursday, April 4 at the Lincoln Square Synagogue.

May Cantor Goffin's family be comforted together with the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.



Cantor Sherwood Goffin

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QUEENS COLLEGE CUNY



Stern students with series creators Leah Gottfried and Jessica Schechter

STERN COLLEGE DRAMATICS SOCIETY

SCDS Hosts 'Soon By You' Creators for a Viewing Party

By SARA MARCUS

The Stern College Dramatics Society hosted Leah Gottfried and Jessica Schechter on March 5. Leah and Jessica are producers and stars of the comedy web series about Orthodox dating, "Soon By You." The duo was hosted by SCDS for a viewing of the first episode of the show's second season, followed by a discussion with the two actresses.

"Soon By You," which premiered in 2016, tells the story of six Modern Orthodox singles living in Manhattan, struggling to balance ambitions, expectations and dating lives. Over 100,000 people have watched the series, and the Stern students that assembled to watch the episode represent a core audience that finds "Soon By You" one of the rare, if not only programs, where they can see themselves accurately represented.

"It was so much fun watching with you guys ... you got it. You're like the ideal audience," said Gottfried, when a member of the audience pointed out a genetic screening joke between characters only one week after

Stern hosted a JScreen registration for the student body.

Gottfried spoke of how many of the emotions around the anxieties and aspirations of being young and single are universal, even if many of the experiences depicted on the show are specific to Orthodox Jews in New York City. Schechter added that they strove to be honest about the specificities of dating

that the creation of the show came about when the two sat down and Gottfried simply asked about her dating misadventure stories.

Gottfried said she is passionate about portraying Modern Orthodox Jews authentically, and is encouraged by the positive reactions of the show's audience.

When asked about delivering important messages amidst the humor, Gottfried ex-

plained that many of the sponsors that support the show's funding are Jewish social organizations that reflect their values, such as the Halachic Organ Donor Society and Ora, an organization "seeking to eliminate abuse from the Jewish divorce process."

process, developing realistic characters, filming with child actors, their experiences in the tiny world of Orthodox artists and actors and their plans for the future of the show. "This is 'Soon By You,' uncensored!" joked Schechter as the crowd laughed and commented throughout.

Gottfried, a Stern graduate herself, added,

"I always love coming back to Stern. I feel like I learned so much here. I shaped a film major here and a lot of what I learned ... I learn on a daily basis and in creating the show. It's wonderful to be back here. And there are so many young women with so many amazing ideas and we need to empower their voices. It's so important to hear our stories."

Eliana Azizallahoff, a Stern junior and SDCS member, described the event as "an incredible opportunity." YU's all about Torah U'Madah, and this is a really good representation of that in action," she said. When you see Modern Orthodoxy at play, you see the practicality of juggling your religious convictions with actually living life in New York City."

They spoke about their writing and casting

Many of the sponsors that support the show's funding are Jewish social organizations that reflect their values, such as the Halachic Organ Donor Society and Ora, an organization "seeking to eliminate abuse from the Jewish divorce process."

while Orthodox, the complexities of "being religious, being human, trying to navigate those two worlds of having desires that are perfectly natural but also trying to exist within a *halakhic* framework and pushing up against that." Gottfried and Schechter were friends and supporters of each other's creative endeavors for years. Schechter joked

plained that many of the sponsors that support the show's funding are Jewish social organizations that reflect their values, such as the Halachic Organ Donor Society and the Organization for the Resolution of Agunot (ORA), an organization "seeking to eliminate abuse from the Jewish divorce process."

They spoke about their writing and casting




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Here’s Who’s Running for Student Council President

Traditionally, student council presidential candidates introduce themselves to the electorate in *The Commentator* at the beginning of the campaigning period. Below, each contender writes about his background and the goals he has for his desired position. The introductions are arranged by council first (YSU, SOY, YCSA, SYMSSC) and alphabetically second. Elections will take place this Wednesday, April 17.

Yeshiva Student Union (YSU)

ARIEL SACKNOVITZ
Hi! My name is Ariel Sacknovitz and I am the sole candidate for YSU President. My goal as president will be to listen to student voices and to give students the opportunity to become involved in and better YU so that it can be the best school for all of us. I also want to create a strong feeling of YU pride. I feel that one of the biggest problems that YU faces is the lack of connection that students feel to the YU institution. I would like to develop and facilitate new programming and a new atmosphere so that every student wants to share their connection to YU for years to come.

Student Organization of Yeshiva (SOY)

YONI BROTH
Hi guys! My name is Yoni Broth, and I am running for SOY president. I grew up in the community of Silver Spring, MD and am currently in the Sy Syms School of Business, with the hope of double majoring in BIMA and Management. As someone who is a baller, an academic, a shtick master and, to quote my Rebbi Rav Rosensweig, a “young *talmid chacham*,” I believe that I can represent all of our communities and provide us students with the leadership necessary for everyone to enjoy their college experience. With the hopes of making more SOY FREE Shabboses, adding a coffee room, getting tissues in the buildings and creating individual programs for

all four morning programs, I believe that I will make a great SOY president!
If you have any ideas on how to create special programs for your group in YU, I’d love to hear them and add them to the list of things that I have in mind already.
YONI SONNENSCHN
My name is Yoni Sonnenschein, but I think most people in YU know me as Sonny. I came to YU after learning for two years in Yeshivat Sha’alvim. I am currently an upper junior learning in Rabbi Sobolofsky’s *shiur* in MYP and studying management. YU is an unbelievable place that offers so many diverse opportunities to religiously grow. I appreciate all that YU has done for

JAKE STERN
Hi! My name is Jake Stern, and I am running for president of SOY. I am from Highland Park/Edison, NJ and went to JEC for high school and then KBY for two years. Over the course of my life as a whole, and specifically my time at YU, I have been exposed to many kinds of Jews. My goal if elected would be to cater to the many kinds of Jews across our campus, while maintaining a sense of warmth and community. I think that more diverse programming is required for a diverse student population, even just as far scheduling goes. Some people are morning birds and others are night owls. Some student have labs at night, and others are representing us through sports teams.

Sy Syms Student Council – Men (SYMSSC)
DANIEL ELIAS
Hi everybody! My name is Daniel Elias, and I am running for president of Sy Syms. I was born and raised in Los Angeles and went to YULA Boys HS. After an impactful year and half at Yeshivat Hakotel, I came to YU, where I am majoring in Finance. As president, my priority will be to make the students feel represented to the administration and rest of the student body. I wholeheartedly love YU, and I promise to give this position my time and commitment so that Syms will be better off for the students by the time I am done. Thank you, and #VOTELIAS.

Traditionally, student council presidential candidates introduce themselves to the electorate in *The Commentator* at the beginning of the campaigning period. Here, each contender writes about his background and the goals he has for his desired position.

me, and really want to put in the *hishtadlus* into facilitating the best possible *yeshiva* experience. My goals are to create opportunities in which individuals can grow, build a warm *yeshiva* environment for everyone and be a person people feel can always give suggestions. I want to share some of my more specific goals. I stay in at least three *Shabbosim* a month, and have noticed that themed *Shabbosim* in which individual topics are addressed have the most impact. Creating *vaadim* given by *kollel* guys and professionals that help prepare *bnei yeshiva* for when they leave YU is also something I would like to see. I also would like to bring back events like the Chanukah concert and the cholent cook-off, as well as enhance events like the *chagigas* and the Purim *shtetl*. These are just a few of many ideas in ways to better our *yeshiva*.
The question is what makes me special? I have always been a person dedicated to the *klal*. I am also outgoing, and interact with many students in our *yeshiva*. I have the drive and passion that I always do something 110 percent.

Setting up venues and opportunities for all students to engage in more Torah study will be my first priority.
On the more wordly side of things, there are also changes I would like to make. One big example that I will try to find a way to provide coffee available for all those who engaging in Torah learning in our great institution. Whether they learn in Glueck or Zysman; whether they are in BMP, IBC, JSS or MYP. I am always available and open to suggestions. Let’s work together and “Bring (Jake) Stern to Wilf.”

Yeshiva College Student Association (YCSA)
No candidates have officially signed up to be on the ballot. Write-in votes are permitted on election day.

CHAYIM MAHGEREFTEH
Hello. My name is Chayim Mahgerefteh and I’m running for Syms president because I want to continue serving in the Syms Student Council and help make a difference. My service as Syms treasurer this year has given me the experience and knowledge it takes to lead this amazing student body as president. You may be wondering what my role as Syms Treasurer consists of. For starters, I had monthly meetings with the Office of Student Life discussing the Syms budget and the causes for expenses in order to know how to strategically plan events for the rest of the year. I have also been working with my fellow council members on organizing the annual Syms Dinner which is on May 12 (and everyone is encouraged to sign up). If I’m given the opportunity to become Syms president, I promise to be your voice and do what will be best for the student body. Yeshiva University is an amazing institution, and I would be tremendously honored to be the president of the Syms Student Council.



Clockwise from top-left: Daniel Elias, Jake Stern, Yoni Broth, Yoni Sonnenschein, Ariel Sacknovitz and Chayim Mahgerefteh

Adam Gerdts Appointed Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Third Day of Giving Announced

By **SAMUEL GELMAN (HOUSTON, TX)**

Adam Gerdts has been named the new Vice President of Institutional Advancement (IA), according to YU News. He replaces Julie Schreier, who has served as interim Vice President since Sept. 2018. Schreier will continue to serve in her role as Chief of Staff to President Ari Berman, a position she has held since Feb. 2018.

Gerdts will become the third VP of IA in three years following departures by Schreier and Alyssa Herman, who served in the position for one year. Over the last two years, IA has experienced large turnovers, losing 13 employees, including Associate Vice President for Institutional Advancement Paul S. Glasser.

Gerdts started his career in 2002, working on fund and capital campaigns for the Manhattan Theater Club and Broadway's Biltmore Theater. In 2006, he moved to American Friends of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem before becoming the director of the Young Alumni Programs for Carolina Annual Fund at the University of North Carolina (UNC). At UNC, he worked his way up the chain of command until becoming the

associate dean of advancement in 2014.

"This is an incredibly exciting time to join Yeshiva University," said Gerdts. "I plan to work tirelessly alongside university leadership and the institutional advancement team to increase the private philanthropic support of YU."

In an email with The Commentator, Gerdts announced that the next Day of Giving would be held on Sept. 18, 2019. While no financial target was given, Gerdts emphasized that student engagement and volunteering would be the key to success and that he hopes many students get as involved as possible. This will be the third Day of Giving, with the first two bringing in \$6 million and \$4.5 million, respectively.

"This is a moment of incredible opportunity for Yeshiva University as we expand our reach and chart a course toward transformative growth," said President Berman in a statement for YU News.

The Office of Institutional Advancement is also responsible for major fundraising events such as the Hanukkah Dinner. This past year, the Hanukkah Dinner raised over \$5 million, which marked a 16 percent increase over last year's dinner and constituted the largest sum in at least six years.



Adam Gerdts

YU NEWS

YU Petition Supports New Pedestrian Plaza on Amsterdam Avenue

By **ELISHEVA KOHN**

For the past few weeks, YU students have been collecting signatures from Washington Heights residents for a petition in support of creating a Pedestrian Plaza on Amsterdam Ave. on the Wilf Campus. Manhattan Community Board 12's Parks and Cultural Committee is currently considering a local proposal to install pedestrian amenities between 184th and 186th St. in order to beautify the currently-unused area and provide a public space for the community.

The proposed Plaza would stretch over the existing sidewalk and street closure on Amsterdam Ave. Mirroring the communal

area by the YU library also referred to as "the quad," the plaza would provide the community with benches, trash cans, lampposts, greenery and umbrellas. The 34,000-square-foot pedestrian area is expected to cost \$4.47 million.

The project aims to take advantage of a location that has been unused for years. The plaza would not limit parking or disturb traffic.

In collaboration with YU Government Relations Director Jon Greenfield, members of the International Club have been approaching local residents to spread the word about the petition. "We have been conducting a far-reaching and comprehensive community survey," said Greenfield, referring to

the bilingual nature of the petition. Spanish-speaking students have been heavily involved in the project, reassuring neighbors that the designated space would be open to everyone. As of the time of publication YU students have gathered 95 signatures.

for the communal area's upkeep. The Plaza on 185th received approval in 2015 and was completed in 2017. Similarly, the proposed plaza would be a "multi-year" project, but Greenfield remains optimistic. The project was originally initiated by YU but quickly

"The students were very powerful voices. The work of the International Club, in particular, was integral for the process."

YU Government Relations Director Jon Greenfield

YU has an agreement with the Department of Transportation regarding the existing 185th St. Plaza. The university is responsible

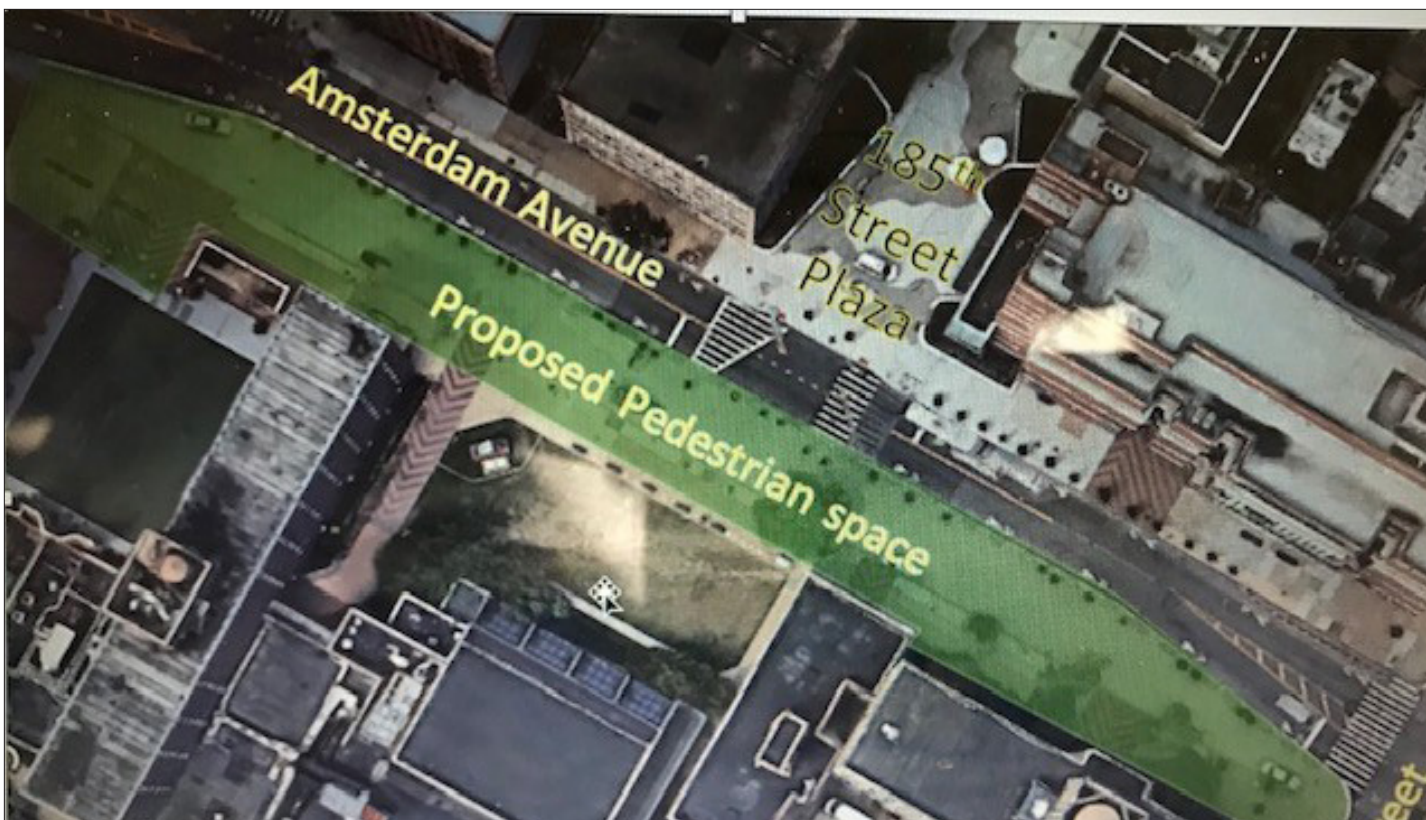
gained support from the board. "We are confident that this is a proposal that will generate significant community benefit," stated Greenfield.

"It's nice that the Washington Heights community would be able to enjoy [the Plaza]," said Jacopo Pagliara (Syms '20), who spent his last few Sundays collecting signatures from locals. "Green areas could integrate the community we live in with our own community on campus."

On April 1, Community Board 12 hosted a public hearing regarding the plaza proposal in Furst Hall 535. More than a dozen YU students presented the work they have done so far on the project. "The students were very powerful voices," remarked Greenfield. "The work of the International Club, in particular, was integral for the process." Their commitment and hard work ultimately led to the Board unanimously voting in favor of the project.

The next steps include securing funding in the New York City budget and collecting additional signatures.

"I feel proud to have contributed to this project," said Aharaon Benchimol (YC '21), a political science major. "I see it as giving back to YU. They granted us international students a great opportunity. This is my *hakarot hatov*."



Proposed plans for the Plaza

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

FROM THE COMMIE ARCHIVES

Editor's Note: Though YU today may be seen as proudly and loudly pro-Israel, this was not always the case. In this issue, The Commentator reprints several archives following a visit to YU by Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, which received a reaction that many readers today would likely find surprising.

day, as in my day, some members of the editorial staff lay out their own money for materials. Printing any publication costs money—even more when it has a very limited circulation such as *Masmid*. Were it not for ads (which take up only a few pages), the charge for *Masmid* would be even higher. If Mrs. Boyd and all the other parents were willing to pay this higher amount and have ads eliminated, I'm sure the editors would be overjoyed. I would have been—it would have cut down on a lot of book-keeping and headaches. One of the reasons for accepting ads is to help students who cannot afford to pay out of their own pocket. I do not feel that soliciting

One of the best ways her son could become a "learned and honorable Jewish man . . . and perpetuate such spirit in his children," and, in addition, interest them in a Yeshiva education, would be to keep a copy of *Masmid* prominently displayed in his bookcase. I enjoy receiving THE COMMENTATOR—ads and all—as a means of keeping in touch with my alma mater. (And I have to—or, rather, enjoy—paying for it [alumni dues]).

Bernard Zazula, M.D.
Editor - *Masmid* 1961

Athletic Facilities

To the Editor:
The vast and sprawling athletic complex at YU is unquestionably unparalleled.

real soccer, held vivid in the players' minds. No time limit is set for track.

Mark Haberman '70
Mike Gordon '70

Eshkol Implores YU Students To Aid Israel Through Aliyah



I was, therefore, greatly concerned, both as an alumnus and a soldier, to read the black-bordered article in a recent issue of *Hamevaser* noting the demise of the lottery as a method of determining which members of the *semicha* class would enter the chaplaincy. I remember when I was in RIETS how we complained about the statement promising to serve our country loyally and faithfully as chaplains in return for the time to sit and learn for *semicha*. This was an easy way of avoiding the draft—something I hold against no one. However, very few of us took advantage of those extra three years or so at Yeshiva which were necessary to receive *semicha*. Those, on the other hand, who remained, had

The Commentator Archives

THE COMMENTATOR

From the Archives (February 15, 1968; Volume 33 Issue 7) — Eshkol Implores YU Students To Aid Israel Through Aliyah

By COMMENTATOR STAFF

Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol concluded his tour of the United States with an

address before a joint meeting of the Stern and Yeshiva College student bodies, January 9. Over 2,500 students heard the prime minister in Lamport Auditorium and on the closed-circuit TV in the *Beit Hamedrash*.

Speaking in Hebrew, Mr. Eshkol prefaced his remark by saying that Israel is grateful for the volunteers who came to aid it in its hour of need. However, unlike a factory that can be on work shifts, a country needs permanent

workers. This need is greater today in light of the expanded borders which resulted from the Six-Day War. People, especially young people with initiative and leadership qualities, are needed as immigrants.

From the Archives (February 15, 1968; Volume 33 Issue 7) — From The Editor's Desk: "If I Forsake Thee, O Jerusalem"

By GARY SCHIFF
(COMMENTATOR EIC 1967-68)

Twice in the last year Yeshiva University has gone through the motions of proper diplomatic protocol in welcoming distinguished Israeli statesmen: first, David Ben-Gurion and most recently Levi Eshkol. Yes, we thronged Lamport Auditorium; yes, we applauded every lofty sounding phrase; yes, Public Relations was happy with the press coverage; yes, the trustees were pleased with the praise heaped upon them for their contributions to the Israel Emergency Fund; yes, yes, and yes again.

To me it was all *deja vu*. All the actors played their parts adequately (even if they didn't speak coherently). A good time was had by all.

Eshkol came to plead for *aliyah* to save the Israel we all profess to love. He was greeted by a close-minded crowd made up of individuals who frankly have no intention whatsoever of picking up and moving to Israel. Indeed, Dr. Belkin made it patently clear that he believes Israel needs YU as much as YU needs Israel; that we are all honorary alumni of Israel but that America is

and always will be our home; and that YU is not about to dismantle its far-flung teaching centers and relocate in Israel. Poor Eshkol! If YU people, who are supposed to be the most Jewishly committed of American Jews, are cold to *aliyah*, what can he expect from the millions of our acculturated, assimilated, intermarried brethren?

The Eshkol affair is symptomatic of the lack of any official YU stance or policy towards Israel. One would expect that the greatest Jewish institution of learning in America would be a center of enthusiasm for, and involvement in, Israel.

This couldn't be farther from the truth. YU is ashamed to fly the *Magen David* alongside the Stars and Stripes and its own sovereign banner on the Main Center flagpoles (though it hypocritically does display the Israeli colors inside Lamport!) The YU mentality has begun to think of Yeshiva as a substitute for Israel, the Jerusalem of the New World. People here really think that Boro Park is to be equated with Jerusalem. This illusory view of YU's historical importance in relation to Israel is widespread. I couldn't help feeling that when our President greeted the Israeli Prime Minister it was on the level of equals, which is certainly not the case, let nobody be mistaken.

What connections does Yeshiva University have with Israel? Pitifully few. A handful of EMC students are sent to Machon Gold each year with the Jewish Agency, not YU, footing the bill. A larger number go to the Hebrew University for a year on their own steam, while some others attend various Israeli *yeshivot*, again without direct YU involvement. Our University has no exchange program of either students, faculty or ideas with any Israeli institution. Even Bar Ilan University, which was patterned after YU and built under the leadership of YU men, has no joint academic or other programs. The Israeli authorities even offered Yeshiva University its own building in Israel to establish a modest Israeli branch, but YU refused. Too expensive. How much does the Science Center cost?

Our Israel Institute consisted of a few courses in Bernard Revel Graduate School taught by the late Dr. Samuel Mirsky. Now that he is gone, the future of the Institute is bleak. A few little things like summer tours to Europe and Israel run by CSD for over-indulgent parents and over-sophisticated teenagers fill out the picture.

Oh, lest I forget, the level of Hebrew language arts at Yeshiva, as I have written a number of times to no avail, is appalling. I

doubt whether more than a handful of the 2,000 spectators at the Eshkol extravaganza knew enough Hebrew to follow him well. Interestingly, there is a small organization of YU alumni in Israel. But they are the exceptions and are looked upon (if mentioned at all) as oddballs.

Finally, on the religious level, we find little or no thinking at Yeshiva on the religious significance of Israel and *halachic* imperative of living there. Certainly this issue is at least as central to Judaism as the content of *matzah* or homiletics on the weekly portion of the Law. If there is one issue that our indigenous *gedolim* have eschewed, it is that of Israel. Because of this cold shoulder YU extends to Israel, last *Yom Ha'atzmaut* went unmarked by our institution, save for a few spontaneous student demonstrations.

I am not naive enough to believe that the assimilationist trend among American Jews will reverse itself and that many of them will emigrate to Israel. YU is no exception. It is a prisoner of its social and cultural milieu. It, too, is assimilationist; only our type of assimilationist wears a *yarmulke* (hopefully) and lives in Monsey, not Bronxville. Is it really too much to expect YU to foster a little old-fashioned Zionism?

From the Archives (February 29, 1968; Volume 33 Issue 8) — Letter to the Editor

By SHLOMO RUSS

To the Editor:

In his last column, Gary Schiff stated that "The Eshkol affair is symptomatic of the lack of any official YU stance or policy towards Israel." While this indifference might be true pertaining to the State of Israel, there is clearly an actively negative attitude towards

students who seek to further their education in Israel. I write this as a former YU student as well as one who studied in Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh in Israel.

Owing to the fact that the noun Yeshiva appears in front of the title University, the administration gives sixteen credits for a year of study at Kerem B'Yavneh. This partial credit, however, is underscored by the fact that Queens College gives 32 credits for a year

at Yavneh. One must come to the conclusion that YU actively discourages students from attending Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh where *yishuv Eretz Yisrael* is emphasized. *Chas v'chalila* if students do attend Yavneh they are subsequently discouraged or deterred from attending YU because of the limitation of credits.

Within the last year I know of at least five New York students who went to Yavneh who

have rejected the idea of continuing their studies at YU. Four of them are attending or planning to attend Queens College.

It seems, therefore, that the administration of Yeshiva University is actively discouraging the rise of a subculture of students who believe that a commitment to Torah is a commitment to Israel.

Shlomo Russ

Law Review

Expressive Conduct — Food for Thought

By ASHIRA POLLACK

On June 4, 2018, in *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*, the United States Supreme Court ruled 7-2 in favor of Jack Phillips, owner of Masterpiece Cakeshop. This effectively concluded the case that had prompted a contentious debate which held the entire nation captive. However, the verdict spurred an avalanche of legal questions, many of which still remained. This article addresses one of these questions: Should a custom-made wedding cake constitute expressive conduct, and, therefore, be included in protected speech under the Constitution's First Amendment?

Background

Mr. Phillips, a devout Christian, declined to create and sell a custom wedding cake to same-sex couple Mr. Charlie Craig and Mr. David Mullins, arguing that doing so would be in conflict with his religious beliefs. His attorneys asserted that a custom wedding cake should constitute expressive conduct and should, therefore, be protected under the Free Speech clause of the Constitution's First Amendment. They also claimed that Mr. Phillips should be able to exercise his religious beliefs by declining to bake a custom wedding cake as protected under the Free Exercise clause of the Constitution's First Amendment.

Craig and Mullins argued that Phillips had discriminated against them on the basis of their sexual orientation. Their attorneys asserted that Phillips must bake the couple a wedding cake given that Colorado's public accommodation laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. They also argued that the cake should not qualify as expressive conduct and therefore should not be protected under the Free Speech clause.

Craig and Mullins brought a lawsuit against Phillips in *Craig v. Masterpiece Cakeshop*, in which the lower court ruled in favor of Craig. Phillips then proceeded to appeal the decision to the United States Supreme Court in *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*. The Court overturned the decision of the lower court, ruling in favor of Masterpiece Cakeshop. The Court did so, not because it recognized the cake as speech, but due to the "religious hostility on the part of the State itself" in the administrative hearing of *Craig v. Masterpiece Cakeshop*, which violated the "State's obligation of religious neutrality" as protected under the First Amendment's Free Exercise clause. Although the focus was on the "religious hostility on the part of the State itself," what is the argument for a custom-made wedding cake constituting expressive conduct? Should the cake be protected as

speech under the Free Speech clause? Why or why not?

The Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment

The Free Speech clause reads "Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech." Law professor David L. Hudson Jr. explains that this clause not only prohibits the government from punishing speech, but also "prevents the government from punishing a person for refusing to articulate, advocate, or adhere to the government's approved messages." The prime example of this is the Supreme Court's decision in *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette* (1943), in which the court ruled that a state cannot force children to stand for or salute the flag and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. As seen in *Texas v. Johnson*, 491 U.S. 397 (1989), freedom of speech also includes the right to engage in symbolic speech, for example, burning the flag in protest.

Expressive Conduct as Protected Speech

As clarified by Andrew Jensen in his article "Compelled Speech, Expressive Conduct, and Wedding Cakes: A Commentary on *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*" in *Duke Journal of Constitutional Law & Public Policy* (April 2018), included in symbolic speech is expressive conduct. In the ruling of *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette* (1943), "Chief Justice Hughes led [the] Court in holding that the display of a red flag as a symbol of opposition by peaceful and legal means to organized government was protected by the free speech guarantees of the Constitution" (Jensen 149). That is to say, expressive conduct was understood as symbolic action, even if such action did not include distinct symbols such as words or letters.

Two-Pronged Test for Expressive Conduct

To determine if an action constitutes expressive conduct — and therefore protected speech — courts have adopted a two-pronged test as used in *Texas v. Johnson*, 491 U.S. 397 (1989): (a) Is the conduct "traditionally protected?" (Jensen 150) (b) If the conduct is not traditionally protected, was there "intent to convey a particularized message...[and great] likelihood that the message would be understood by those who viewed it?" (Jensen 151).

In *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*, Phillips argued that the wedding cake he was asked to create would pass this two-pronged test and should qualify as expressive conduct. Under the first prong, he asserted that his cake was a

form of art and art is a form of conduct that is traditionally protected. Under the second prong, even if the Court did not recognize his cake as a form of art, "wedding cakes, to Phillips, play an integral role in wedding ceremonies and are inherently meaningful and celebratory...[and if] guests of Craig and Mullins saw them celebrate their commitment with a Masterpiece cake created by Phillips, they would take this to mean that Phillips approves of and is celebrating the marriage as well, contrary to his true feelings" (Jensen 153).

Craig and Mullins argued that Phillips's cake should not constitute expressive conduct because it is not generally thought of as art nor would be understood as expressive by their guests. Furthermore, even if the cake was to be considered as artistic expression, Masterpiece Cakeshop is a bakery that is open to the public. Therefore, Phillips is subject to public accommodation laws, laws that are both neutral and generally applicable, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

How Have the Courts Ruled?

In *Craig v. Masterpiece Cakeshop*, the lower court ruled in favor of Craig, rejecting Phillips's claim that requiring him to bake a cake would violate his freedom of speech.

In *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*, although the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Masterpiece Cakeshop, Justice Thomas noted that "the Court does not hold that wedding cakes are speech or expression entitled to First Amendment protection."

Legalities Aside

What is legal and what is right do not always converge. While Justice Thomas's comments may have been legally correct and in accordance with precedent, the practical applications of this policy may lead to dissonant outcomes. The beauty of capitalism is its voluntary nature. This beauty manifests itself when a vendor willingly engages in a transaction with a willing customer. When either party's hand is forced, no matter the justification, it distorts the entire process, perverting a free market exchange and possibly damaging the social fabric involved. One could argue: If a vendor discriminates, let everyone see his or her act of discrimination, and then choose — voluntarily — whether or not to continue to patronize the vendor. Those who discriminate for evil purposes will be seen as just that — evil, and will, without the intervention of a court, soon be run out of business.

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From the Vice President's Desk

Cash Back: What to do with the Student Activities Budget Surplus

By JUDAH STIEFEL

Before reading this article, you should know that I did my job on student council so well this year that it will not exist next year. Only joking. The YSU Vice President of Classes has about as much power as the Vice President of the United States. That being said, time on student council has provided me with unique insight into the mechanics of the YU student government. I'm here to talk to you about how we choose to spend our money; specifically, our student activities budget.

Currently, the student activities fee is \$250 a year, charged to students separately from tuition. Of that money, Yeshiva Student Union (YSU) was given \$77,589 to spend this year. As of February 13th, only \$23,297 has been spent. While some of the remaining \$50,000 has been designated for various causes, there is still a great amount waiting for allotment. The Yeshiva College Student Association (YCSA) is faced with a similar situation, having a great amount of undesignated money left over in its budget. The question each of these student councils must ask themselves is how to spend the money and with what considerations to approach these decisions.

While funding choices may seem trivial, trends in YSU spending are highly suggestive of student priorities within our university. Much of the spending has gone towards food and supplies for events. A rough budget this year allotted \$30,439 to dining services, with only \$10,841 being spent so far. The next highest allotment was for "general supplies," a nonspecific category which was expected to cost approximately \$22,737. The rest of the budget was allocated accordingly, with \$7,000 for transportation, \$4,600 for housekeeping and \$4,000 for security.

While this may seem odd or trivial, there's nothing wrong with this. One of the most important roles the student council embodies is an enabler for student vision. Students who have visions for a specific event can rely on the student government to provide them with the funding necessary to make that vision a reality. If students ask for programming that mainly consists of food, then the student governments should honor those requests. The larger question, as posed earlier, is what student government should do with the excess money it has in its budget.

The surplus from the YCSA budget is being invested in swag giveaways. YCSA decided that what students might appreciate most would be tasteful apparel that would be classy enough for students to wear proudly and on a regular basis. A similar approach

was requested by clubs for special events and activities. There's always room to improve life on campus. Students were not restricted in running events. More could have been run, in which case more funding would have been provided.

While funding choices may seem trivial, trends in YSU spending are highly suggestive of student priorities within our university.

was taken last year, when \$8,000 was spent on sweatpants; but with an entire day already dedicated to swag, is this really the best use of our money?

As for the YSU surplus, it is still unclear where that money will go. It's possible we will take the YCSA approach and spend it on free food and more swag. One student council member even suggested jokingly that we do cash giveaways, sending the money back to the students. But I can't help but wonder what could have been if the money

You may ask, however, "Why don't you do these things? You seem to be in the best position to run beneficial events." The answer is, you're right, and I've often asked myself this same question. There's always more to be done. The answer I've arrived at seems to apply to the condition of the YU student in general. The dual curriculum really does take up a massive amount of energy. Additionally, students are encouraged to get involved in numerous clubs and initiatives. It's easy to spread oneself too thin, getting stretched in

each direction by classes, tests and ten other extracurriculars at once. Instead of getting caught up in a million different things, we should focus on fewer individual responsibilities, pouring more energy into specific causes we can be passionate about. Doing one or two things right can speak much louder than putting minimal time into eight different clubs.

From a practical standpoint, there is a great deal of time left in the year. If you have a big idea you want to enact, now is the time to do it. Propose bold events and they might be funded. Alternatively, approach a student council member and tell them your idea. On a small campus like our own, one person's passion can go a long way. Reach out to speakers. Run a paint night. Find the thing you care most about. The student council can help you achieve it... or... you can have another pair of blue YU sweatpants.



Cake Wars, one of the many YSU-sponsored events

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

Sammy K: Still Winnin', Still Ballin'

By ELLIE PARKER

Atlanta is the home of many important innovations, namely Coca Cola, CNN and, more recently, Sammy K.

Born Samuel Kalnitz, Sammy K. followed the trajectory of many of his Atlanta-based, Jewish counterparts. He lived in a predominantly Jewish neighborhood, attended an Orthodox shul and went to the Jewish high school in the area. He spent two years at Yeshivat Mevaseret Zion in Israel and a year at YU. From the outside, Sammy seemed like any other aspiring business management major. But one thing set him apart: He had dreams of becoming the first well-known Orthodox Jewish rapper.

Growing up in a home that disapproved of his affinity for hip-hop culture, Sammy

had to find ways of hiding his obsession. As he put it, "it was so different than the world I was living in. I was growing up in a very strict environment and music to me was a release." He would sneak music from Lil' Wayne, Kanye West, Wiz Khalifa, Mac Miller and Ludacris and began to form his own specific style: rap that encompasses a unique sense of storytelling and upbeat sound. For years, his peers viewed his infatuation with rap as a hobby, but Sammy aspired for more. While in Israel, Sammy dropped a couple of well-known singles including "Negatives" and "Alone," which he dedicated to Ezra Schwartz. But his big break came last year with his single "Kosher Kosher," which quickly circulated, gathering over 20,000 views, and helped Sammy gain notoriety as an up-and-coming young, Jewish rapper.

As momentum picked up, Sammy landed a record deal with On Point Entertainment.

Upon hearing some of his tracks and communicating with Sammy's producer, On Point Entertainment was quick to sign Sammy and assist him in releasing weekly free styles and performing shows at local Atlanta venues.

It is no longer a matter of "if" Sammy K will make it in hip-hop. We are merely waiting for the "when."

This allowed Sammy to pursue his career goals while also delivering on his promise to produce fun, sophisticated and meaningful songs. His freestyles regularly receive hundreds of views and show Sammy's natural talent for rap. They cover mainstream songs, like "Going Bad" and "Wow," and allow for

Sammy to put his own spin on these covers. Most recently, Sammy released his single "Still Winnin, Still Ballin," which upped Sammy's views to over 2,000, showing his fans that he is ready for the world to hear his flow.

I went to high school with Samuel. Though he hadn't yet signed any record deals or written any hits, there was no doubt he would be big one day. His confidence was tangible and his swagger unparalleled; he knew he could take the world by storm. This infectious ambition is still very much apparent in Sammy's commitment to his craft and his values, always leaving his fans wanting more. It is no longer a matter of "if" Sammy K will make it in hip-hop. We are merely waiting for the "when."

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The Jewish Naqba: The Forced Urbanization of Mizrahi Jewish Refugees

By **ARYEH SCHONBRUN**

While recently on a long trip (by Israeli standards), I sat on a train as it carried me through Israel's periphery, en route to the metropolitan *Mercaz*. As we passed through the ancient cities of Ramle and Lod, I sat and read chapter 27 of Marx's "Capital." I don't usually spend my free time reading archaic historical accounts of land-theft, but, on account of the tedious boredom of a long journey and a desire to better understand the impurities of postmodern Capitalism, I found myself enthralled in the dark history of land enclosure, theft and criminal privatization.

Marx, in his attempt to personalize the crimes of the proto-capitalists, turns to historical databases to argue his point. He describes in detail the individual perpetrators and victims and the circumstances that allowed for the utter destruction of the English middle class prior to and during the Industrial Revolution. I won't bore you now with the entire corpus of evidence and testimonies that he cites. Instead, I've chosen one excerpt that illustrates well the calamitous effect that land enclosures and forced evictions had on the Scots.

As an example of the method obtaining in the 19th century, the "clearing" made by the Duchess of Sutherland will suffice here. This person, well instructed in economy, resolved, on entering upon her government, to effect a radical cure, and to turn the whole country, whose population had already been, by earlier processes of the like kind, reduced to 15,000, into a sheep-walk. From 1814 to 1820 these 15,000 inhabitants, about 3,000 families, were systematically hunted and rooted out. All their villages were destroyed and burnt, all their fields turned into pasture. British soldiers enforced this eviction, and came to blows with the inhabitants. One old woman was burnt to death in the flames of the hut, which she refused to leave. Thus this fine lady appropriated 794,000 acres of land that had from time immemorial belonged to the clan. She assigned to the expelled inhabitants about 6,000 acres on the sea-shore — 2 acres per family ... In the year 1835, the 15,000 Gaels were already replaced by 131,000 sheep.

As Marx tells it, the Scots of Sutherland, as a result of a capitalistic government plot, were violently forced off their land,

upon the penalty of death, and reimbursed with tiny parcels, far away from their ancestral holdings. Additionally, the forces that conquered their land and villages did not repopulate the vacated region. Instead, they converted the fields and villages into pastureland for the myriad sheep, leaving the homes of the expropriated Scots destroyed and unmaintained. Historically, a victorious army takes advantage of all the human advantages of conquered territory. They send colonists to live in and populate the territories. The Capitalist invasion, however, never showed much interest in such an enterprise. Efficient capital production, not tending to the land or its inhabitants, has always defined Capitalist expansion, and the Scots irreparably suffered.

Reading such an account while traversing Israel's near-vacant, undeveloped, southern periphery, I began to ponder the political and social factors that led to the suffocating, highly-dense and geographically unsustainable reality of Israel's urban core. Israel, unlike what you may have heard, does not, at first glance, strike one as a land-deprived country. Israel's population, while still growing, does not make efficient use of its resources. The *Mercaz*, an agglomeration of around twenty urban centers and suburbs, represents around 24 percent of Israel's entire population. Even after accounting for the vast areas of desert that remain understandably uninhabited, a quick drive through Israel's heartland, the *Sharon* Plain, can give you an idea of the problem at hand.

Instead of properly designing cities along with their public-utilities, transport and other modern amenities, many Israeli cities have grown lazily. High-rise apartments, irritating to the eye and disturbing to the surrounding cityscape, sprout up randomly, as contractors find and exploit lucrative plots of land granted to them by a notoriously unreliable public bureaucracy (Israeli Land Authority and the JNF). Instead of investing in natural growth and sophisticated expansion, Israel's cities, once the rallying cry of the Zionist movement, have become the bane of our society. Urban Israeli life, devoid of much of the features of modern economies, public transport, work near to home, public parks and open spaces, lacks the vitality of the classical Israeli spirit and continuously oppresses its inhabitants. The combination of poor planning and crass business opportunism has transformed Israel's dense urban conglomerate into a third-world metropolis, the opposite of functional Western megacities (think of Tokyo, Hong Kong and Berlin, London and Paris).

Alternatively, much of the land that could be used for natural growth and responsible expansion lies fallow, as a select few families tend to their livestock, vegetables and large plots of land. Even if they wish to sell their land to developers, many government regulations stand in their way, restricting their freedoms and Israel's ability to develop. Thus, the contrast struck me as I made my way to Tel Aviv. While for most of the trip I noted very little development as I surveyed much of the pastoral, rural countryside, the landscape changed rapidly as I approached the metropolis. I didn't see trees, nor parks. Just tall, residential high-rises, culminating in the new skyscrapers of Tel Aviv's post-modern, neo-capitalistic boom.

Bewildered by the odd structure of Israel's urban development, I began to think about the circumstances that created today's situation. To that end, inspired by Marx and unnerved by my experience, I started to see similarities between the Palestinian *Naqba*

and the cruel history of land-theft.

In May of 1948, the Arab states of the Middle East declared war on Israel. Israel's War of Independence, alternately known in Arabic as "the *catastrophe*," cemented Israel's presence in world politics, and offered the Jews a chance at rejuvenation following the Holocaust. For the Arab residents of Palestine, however, it spelled chaos, disenfranchisement and loss of their homes. Around 800,000 Arabs left Palestine during the conflict, leaving behind around 400 depopulated towns and villages. Of those villages, only around seven were eventually repopulated with Jewish residents, the vast majority (around 92 percent) of previously inhabited villages were destroyed, neglected or forgotten in the tumultuous years of Israel's rebirth.

Why did the government destroy the towns and villages of the departed Arabs instead of using them to house the immigrants who had just been entirely dispossessed by the Western-backed dictatorships of their native lands?

Israel's Jewish population, while numbering only around 600,000 in early 1948, exploded in the subsequent years, overtaken by massive numbers of immigrants from Europe and the Middle East. By the end of the 1950s, Israel had settled over two million Jews within its borders, stretching its welfare system thin and causing much stress. Israel had not had time to ready itself for such a torrent of refugees and, owing to the relatively young age of the country, did not have all the necessary infrastructure to deal with such numbers. Israel entered into a period of harsh austerity (*Tzena*), a system of food and utilities rationing, and housed many of the new immigrants in make-shift shelters, large camps of substandard housing (aluminum shelters) called *maabarot*. Anyone who has seen the quintessential cinematic portrayal of such an experience in "*Sallah Shabati*" can easily imagine what kind of toll such an experience would have taken on the shocked, traumatized refugees. Eventually, the refugees left the camps, built cities and permanently settled, but it took time and left a lasting mark on the younger generations. The systematic repression of these masses, a disproportionate number of them *Mizrahi* Jews, did not end when they left the *ghettos* of the absorption communities. It expanded to all forms of employment, housing and education.

The question remains: Why did the government subject the new arrivals to such horrid conditions? Why did the government destroy the towns and villages of the departed Arabs instead of using them to house the immigrants who had just been entirely dispossessed by the Western-backed dictatorships of their native lands? If 800,000 Arabs left, leaving behind many thousands of homes, hundreds of villages and hectares of fertile farmland, why did such precious resources go to waste? The bigger question which we must also ask: what caused the departure of the Arab population? Whose interests did it serve?

Normally, when approaching the topic, we highlight the external *nationalistic* struggles of two warring peoples: Israelis vs. Arabs, Jews vs. Muslims. However, as we can surely see by the Israeli government's failure to address the needs of Jewish refugees by appropriating the lost capital of the departing Arabs, the nationalistic/colonialist answer does not provide us proper understanding.

If it *were* just a nationalistically motivated usurpation, the government would have gladly given land to those needy Jews, desperate for a place to call home.

Instead, as we witnessed, the Jews were forced into concentrated *ghettos*, makeshift urban dwellings, and not allowed to establish themselves in the small communities of historical villages and homesteads. Instead of letting the Jewish migrants develop a community of *moshavot* and *kibbutzim* as the older settlers had done upon reaching Israel, the government forced most of the new immigrants into densely-packed urban settlements, thereby restricting them from access to the vast land-resources (which were subsequently appropriated to the ruling *Ashkenazi* elite) of the recently depopulated land. The resulting masses, unable to fend

for themselves, unable to live a self-sufficient lifestyle like their *Ashekenazi* brethren or their Arab predecessors, were doomed to the banality and oppression of the modern proletariat.

Upon further consideration, we can conclude that the destruction of the Arab villages did not only transform Israel's demographics, it also represented the end of the yeoman farmer in the region. Until then, most of the Arabs remained in control of their family plots of land. They tilled their soil on their own, grew their own food and ate the fruits of their own labor. When the Arabs left, they left fallow not only their fields but also the myths of the self-sufficient, independent farmer (the *falah*). That persona, which served the early *kibbutznikim* so well, was lost with them, and the newly-arrived immigrants quickly forgot their appreciation for the direct relationship of farmer and land. Instead, they became trapped in the Capitalistic world of inequality and government corruption. The Western-backed government and *Ashkenazi* elite, sensing the immediate danger posed by reviving the independent spirit of the yeoman, quickly appropriated the land left by the Arab refugees and destroyed the evidence of the self-sufficient *falah*. Israel had won the war, and Western imperialism had beaten back the Arab menace.

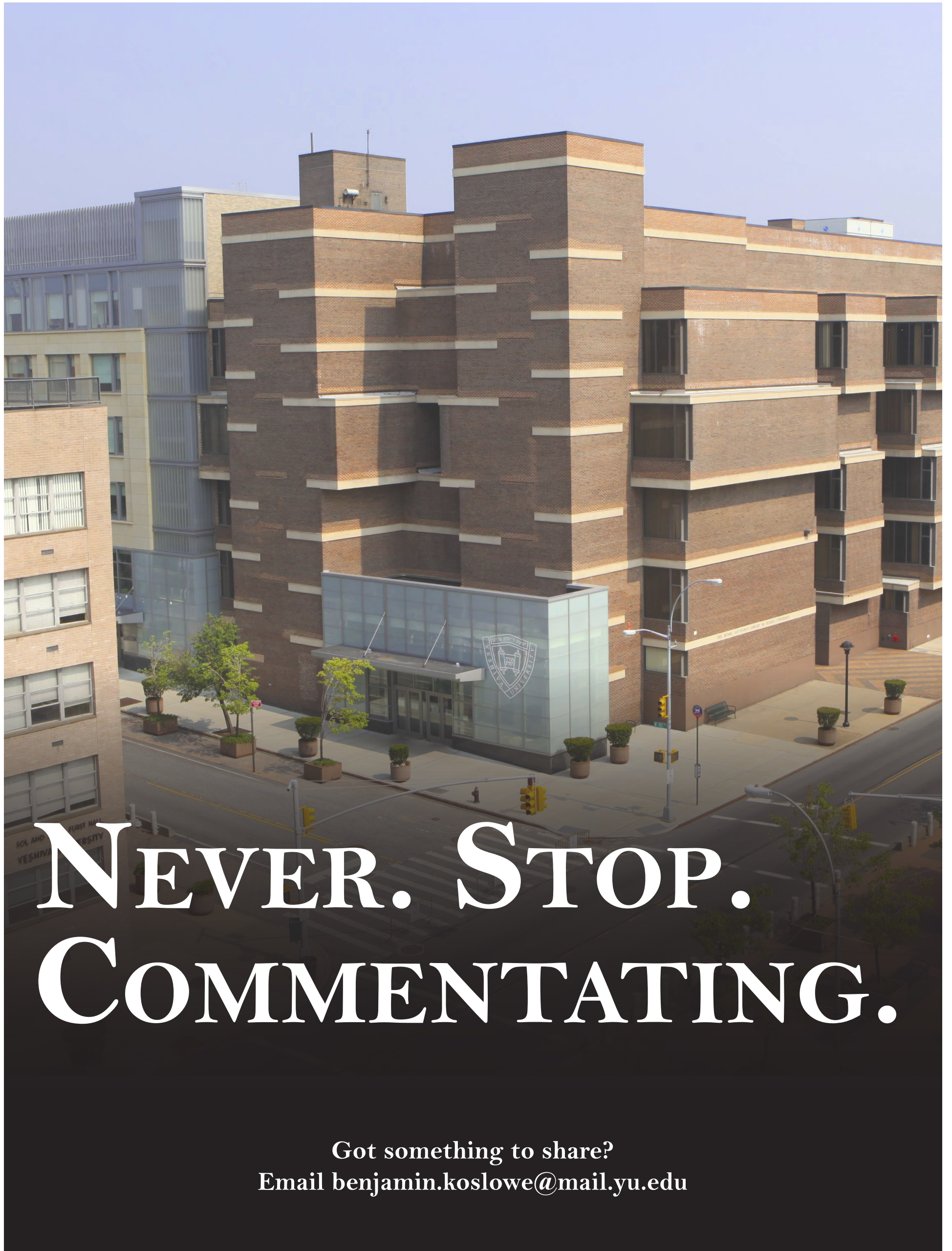
If the satellite villages of the long-departed Arabs would have seen new life, I feel quite certain that the map of Israel would look different. The main cities, instead of forming an unending desert of urban sprawl, would have developed competitively, incorporating the interests of the many communities and identities of Israel. We would not have bulldozed the rich cultures of all our brethren, rather we would have internalized each group in a complex structure of village, city, town. For now, we must live with the monotony of post-modern Israel. That is, until we make peace with the Arab world.

An early Israeli ode to the Jewish *falah*:
Lo and behold,
How great is the day!
A fire burns in the chest
And the plow
Yet again works the field.
(Zalman Heyn, 1937)



A Proud *Falah*

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Behind The Scenes With The Confessions' Queen

By EFRAT MALACHI

What happens when you put a Lindenberg and a Zuckerberg together in the same room? The YU/Stern Confessions and Crushes pages are realized and satiate the satire needs of the YU online community. Along with its humorous personality, the pages have made developments in areas of counseling that have served many students with ranging issues regarding relationships, religion and society. Often, you will find genuine advice given over in the comments that have made a real difference for the anonymous posters and observers, which Shifra Lindenberg, the founder of the pages, is very proud of, as she expressed, "I was glad to hear that people were able to use the pages as a platform to talk and get help for their issues through this networking effort."

Looking at its trends, the pages will only increase in popularity and continue to grapple with the dynamic realities and personalities of YU.

An advantageous feature of these pages is that people can send in their secrets anonymously. Though there has been some false speculation going around that it's merely a kosher "Mean Girls" Burn Book waiting to be printed and plastered all over YU, this is far from the truth. The page does not collect emails or names, and zero trace is left behind due to the page's programming through its Google Form settings. This grants people the privilege of honest and free expression, which allows flooding reactions to be unbiased.

These ideas, which stem from Shifra's love for creating content and managing, have

snowballed into a mini movement that aims to simply make people happy. "I like making people laugh and making funny content to see how far it goes and how many people it can reach," said Lindenberg. Recently, she was discovered by a well-known Facebook page called Student Problems. They had viewed her work and decided to feature one of her memes on their platform. This was a great milestone, as it enabled her to reach a larger audience beyond the virtual walls of YU.

Many of the confessions and crushes are filtered due to the overwhelming amount that are sent in daily. Despite the time and energy expended to the pages, there is a fun element to it. Shifra has a process in which she first sweeps through all of the potential posts, prioritizes some and then designates the rest to a status of either pending or passing depending on the content. While both pages have similar goals and styles, they are somewhat distinct. During its infancy, the Confessions page had been receiving many statements about people's secret crushes, so it resulted with Shifra making a spin-off, or, in her words, "a sister splinter page" that's solely devoted to matters of the heart.

On the Crushes page, everyone is a fan of someone or some aspect(s) of their crush. There are no specified parameters. One will see many admirers trying to catch their crushes' attention in all kinds of innovative ways, such as Crush #510: "E: I don't get your last name but you are so sweet and bubbly and you always just bring a smile to my face." The page is also used by students who just want to joke around and give their friends some unsolicited free PR, such as Crush #26: "J.S. is the most handsome man in this entire religion ... Plus he's smart and does science things." And don't think the page ignores those who are not involved, as we see from Crush #468: "The shtark guys who are too frum for this page make me swoon."

The Confessions page operates slightly different. The more noticeable difference is that it presents a larger pool of emotions and a wide array of problems, which creates



YU and Stern Confessions

a greater following and a significantly higher number of posts. Its focus shifts in every post and the subject matter are almost unpredictable. It has also spawned a group of selfless members — who I call "supreme supporters" — who actively respond empathetically to the confessions seeking advice on anything from religion to relationships to personal identity. Together, they offer a listening ear and provide various resources and information to better the situation. It's basically like sending a communal, virtual hug.

Of course, the page is also known for its less sensitive and personal content, such as Confession #21: "People who switch out of YU are hot" and Confession #528: "The only reason I want to go to YU is for the shtick. YU is the biggest Jewish meme and I want to be part of that."

At the same time, there have been more controversial topics introduced and heated debates, such as Confession #716: "YU is the best university! You will never find a college with so many great people. If you

complain about YU, go to other college and enjoy BDS!" But this is the whole point; to engage people in a real conversation and learn from one another despite some of our differences. The spectrum is vast and this page gives each point on it a voice. It provides a stage for any and every belief, which can potentially be unpopular and uncommon, to be seen.

At the end of the day, both pages serve unique functions. Looking at its trends, both pages will only increase in popularity and continue to grapple with the dynamic realities and personalities of YU. And that's the beauty of it. It's a classic cliché, but the greatest part of YU is the student body and the way they practice their passions. Lindenberg has done just that, using her passion for online content in a productive way to pull the community closer to a place of better understanding. This is the start of, as the old saying goes, building tomorrow, today.

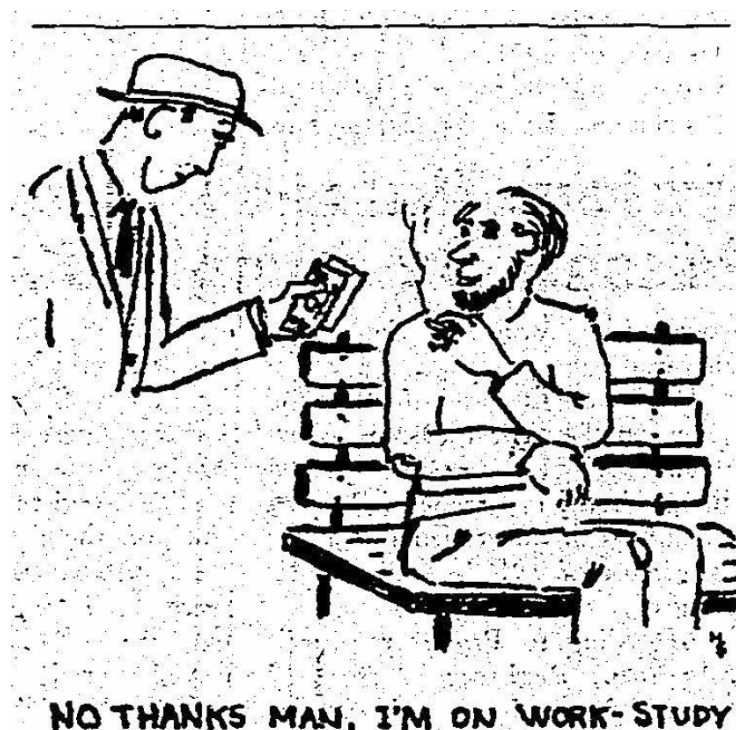
YU: Uncovered

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Flashbacks



"NO THANKS MAN, I'M ON WORK-STUDY"

March 2, 1967; Volume 32 Issue 9

From the SCWSC Vice President's Desk

Everything Matters

By TALYA SABAN

Nearly a month ago, I found myself amongst a group of people in the Brookdale front lounge. I was working alone at a table when I began to overhear the conversation beside me: “The Purim *Chagiga* was boring and I regret that we stayed in for it,” said one of my fellow Beren students. “I don’t think the Yom Ha’atzmaut day will be fun if we have to go all the way uptown for it. Why can’t they just have something here?” I was partially in and out of my work, listening to their conversation, when one girl noticed I was actually a member of one of the councils that put these events together. She immediately felt embarrassed and noticeably attempted to change the tone of the conversation. The two students sitting with her then began apologizing to me once they realized who I was.

I wanted to let them know, however, that I was here to help them make a change on campus, so I told them that I would love to hear more about what they had to say about these events so I could bring their suggestions back to the councils. The girls looked back and forth at each other, but none of them seemed to have any desire to say anything. I asked again, this time in regards to the *Chagiga* alone, but they shrugged it off, saying that “it didn’t really matter.”

It’s been life altering watching the school take a multitude of strides forward, but I feel that often our successes as a community have been overshadowed by what is going wrong.

I often feel frustrated with the negative light that we, as students, have on the community here in YU. Instead of influencing the change we would like on campus, I, as well as many others, often find myself *complaining* about it. The snowball of complaints have turned the surroundings of YU into a cold, unappreciative environment that grows with each hill it rolls down. After finding myself

buried under the snowball of complaints that I and my friends have inculcated into our experience here, I realized that I needed to wipe the sleet that I spread across my tracks and take my first step onto a new path geared towards changing our view of changing YU.

Running for student council last year was my first step. I made a vow not just to identify problems, but to create solutions. I was privileged to gain a seat on the council, and consequently learn from and feel comfortable sharing my ideas with an extraordinary group of student leaders and the staff of the Office of Student Life. It’s been life altering watching the school take a multitude of strides forward, but I feel that often our successes as a community have been overshadowed by what is going wrong. We have yet to strongly recognize the good.

The Torah Activities Council (TAC) president, Adina Cohen, spearheaded an initiative that has allowed the Beren community to take part in a more rigorous and intense learning schedule, bringing the Torah study on our campus to a completely new level. Watching our student body presidents, specifically Nolan Edmonson and Shoshana Marder, put together a vigil for the Pittsburgh community in a matter of hours filled me with reverence towards their desire to take a stance that YU supports every single Jew, no matter the community they belong to. Our two YUPAC presidents Jake Benyowitz and

allowed our Beren students to experience a Shabbat in the Heights community. Former YU Macs basketball captain, Michal Alge, became the first female athlete at YU to record 1000 rebound and points.



Beren Campus

SHIRA LEVITT

However, the thing I am most proud of is the International’s and Sephardic Club’s Shabbaton, which took place on the Beren campus two weeks ago. The Shabbaton took months of meticulous planning, as the executive boards of these clubs worked day and night hiring speakers, organizing tedious logistical details, ordering supplies on a limited budget and following up with the Office of Student Life and their acting liaisons. One of the club presidents, Raquel Sofer, worked endlessly with the international community on campus, making sure that all opinions were heard so the Shabbat could be as successful and welcoming as possible. The dedication even extended to Shabbat day itself, when, after more people than they expected showed up, they found room to make everyone feel welcome there.

The Shabbat itself was an eye opening experience. Not only was I able to witness

friendships in the making, see leadership roles be passed down and watch as the students who planned such an incredible Shabbat take in their well-deserved glory. I was also able to see all of it through the

backdrop of the the endless amount of effort, meticulous planning, and dedication that went into it. It gave me a new sense of appreciation for what goes on around here, giving a glimpse into the bigger picture.

As the end of Shabbat arrived, I realized that, far too often, people take these moments for granted, failing to see the hard work, perseverance and complete dedication that goes into them. Throughout this year, our leaders brought about change, giving us a roadmap to follow to bring our own ideas to life. We must leave our complaints without vision on the sidelines to make space for criticism that begs for action, while also not forgetting that nothing here comes easy. We must understand that *everything matters*, and that everyone can play a part. Once we do that, there is not telling how much we can accomplish.

Preview of the 2019 NFL Draft

By MAYER FINK

The National Football League (NFL) draft is a great time to build the dynasties of tomorrow, today. Many teams are eager to be successful in the draft weekend have been spending many long and arduous nights building their draft boards. It’s important to note that the general managers of NFL teams are watching and listening to everything — except this article of course. As much as we know about the upcoming draft, they know more. There are some teams that have more pressure to obtain game-changing players during the draft weekend. With the picks that will be made, some teams have the potential to open their championship window, while others may see their window closing. In this article, I will present five teams that are under the most pressure to make valuable selections in the 2019 NFL draft.

Oakland Raiders

With three picks in the first round, all the pressure is on Oakland Raiders. This is due to the fallout with Khalil Mack. Besides for

trading a talented player prior to the 2018 season, the Raiders also bottomed out during the season, finishing 4-12 and last in their division.

Many teams are eager to be successful in the draft weekend since have been spending many long and arduous nights building their draft boards.

As a result of the Mack trade, the Raiders currently have a depleted defense. They, therefore, should make an effort to draft skilled defensive players. With the fourth pick in the first round, they should grab the best defensive player available. In all likelihood, this will likely be Josh Allen, a defensive lineman from the University of Kentucky, or Ed Oliver, a defensive tackle from the University of Houston.

Due to the Mack trade, the Raiders also have the 24th pick of the first round.

They should draft a corner like Rock Ya Sin from Temple University with that pick. Additionally, they have the 27th pick, which they should use to draft an offensive guard like Garrett Bradbury from North Carolina State University in order to boost the interior of the offensive line. In later rounds, they should try to select one tight end in order to fix the lack of depth at the position. They may also have some room to add a running back or a receiver to the squad, however, these positions are not as necessary to fill as others.

New York Giants

The Giants have been one of the worst teams in the National Football Conference (NFC) for a few years. Since they refused to re-sign standout safety Landon Collins and traded Odell Beckham to the Browns for the 17th pick in the draft, it is evident that they are attempting to a rebuild from the ground up. They must think about the future of their franchise in this draft, regardless of the confidence they may have in Eli Manning. The Giants should take a quarterback with the sixth pick in the draft, whether it is Kyler

Murray or Dwayne Haskins. I mentioned in my previous article how a quarterback selection can be the highest risk of any position. That being said the Giants must take that risk.

With the 17th pick, they need to get the best defensive player available. After trading key defensive players like Oliver Vernon, Damon Harrison and Landon Collins, the Giants need replacements for their positions. One of the draft prospects for their defense includes Rashan Gary, who played defensive line at the University of Michigan.

In the later rounds, they need to add offensive linemen, which will improve the still inefficient offensive line. They also should try to improve their defense with the rest of their picks. They may have some room to add a receiver to the squad, however, that should not be a priority.

Denver Broncos

John Elway is a fan favorite in Denver. Unfortunately, as an executive, he may be

Continued on Page 20

*NFL,
continued from Page 19*

fighting for his job. Since their Super Bowl victory in the 2015-2016 season, the Broncos have been the worst performing team in their division, going 20-28 the last three seasons. Either in this or next year's draft class they will need to draft a quarterback. If they don't go with a quarterback, they will probably draft a cornerback or a safety like Taylor Rapp from the University of Washington. The Broncos need to fix their offensive line as well as their receiving positions in this draft as well.

In the second round, I see the Broncos grabbing a tight end like Isaac Nauta from the University of Georgia or Irv Smith from the University of Alabama. In the third round, they may reach for a receiver like Deebo Samuel from the University of South Carolina or David Sills from West Virginia University, but they should try to address the offensive line in these rounds. The late rounds should also be devoted to retooling the offensive line as well as drafting extra pieces on the defense for backup if a player gets injured.

Green Bay Packers

The championship window is closing. Some would say it shut under the reign of Aaron Rodgers. With a depleted roster, the Packers are no longer the "kings of the north." The Packers fired their head coach Mike McCarthy this past season in an attempt to regain

the dominance they previously had.

The Packers have two first round picks this year. They, therefore, cannot afford to make any poor decisions. With the 12th pick, they will probably land the best player available which may be Jeffery Simmons, a defensive lineman from Mississippi State University. Another possible draft for the Packers would be Rashan Gary, a defensive tackle from the University of Michigan. With the 30th pick, the Packers may trade out of the first round. If not, they will probably add a receiver or tight end like Noah Fant from the University of Iowa. From rounds two to six, they have seven draft selections. This amount of picks provides the Packers with a great opportunity to develop into one of the top teams in the NFC again. Their defense needs some improvement but the main emphasis should be on the offensive line and the receivers.

Pittsburgh Steelers

This was a tough off-season in Pittsburgh, losing stars Le'veon Bell to the Jets and Antonio Brown to the Raiders. The Steelers used to be a dominant force in their division and the rest of the conference. They need to have a good draft to revive the terrible, tumultuous off-season. They still have plenty of skilled players that should be ready to step up this season. With that in mind, I see them trying to find a playmaker on defense in the first round but, with only the 20th pick to start things off, it looks like they will end up with a



The 2016 NFL Draft

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pass rusher like Brian Burns from Florida State University (hit or miss with that pick). They need offensive line depth and tight end depth and should address those issues in the later rounds. In the second, they should try to get a middle linebacker. The franchise is still reeling from the devastating Ryan Shazier injury and hasn't had an anchor on the defense since. Someone like TJ Edwards can be a good fit in the Pittsburgh defense.

Due to the Antonio Brown trade, the Steelers have two third-round selections. With these picks,

they can possibly find an offensive lineman like Greg Little or Mitch Hyatt. The Steelers may also look for defensive reinforcement like Dre'mont Jones from Ohio State University or cornerback Julian Love from the University Notre Dame.

I must give an honorable mention to the rest of the American Football Conference (AFC) North division. With all the offseason acquisitions, this division is completely up for grabs for any one of those teams. I believe the team with the best draft class will take

the division in the upcoming regular season, with the possibility of dominating for the next few years as well.

With that in mind, any team can turn around their fortune in this draft. Some teams are borderline Super Bowl contenders, like the Colts, Texans, Chiefs, Saints, Eagles, Cowboys and Bears. They can build Super Bowl champion rosters in this draft. Other teams, like the Patriots, Rams and Saints, are already built to win a Super Bowl; this draft can just re-establish that.

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After 37 Years, Zecharia Baumel Finally Returns Home

By CHANA WEINBERG

When Gilad Shalit miraculously returned to Israel in Oct. 2011, Rabbi Moshe Rosenberg of Cong. Etz Chaim in Kew Gardens Hills replaced Shalit's name with an extended pause during the prayer for the return of lost soldiers. This past Shabbat, *Zecharia Shlomo ben Miriam Baumel*, or, Zecharia

Baumel, received the same treatment — after 37 years of uncertainty, his remains have returned to Israel for proper burial.

Israeli Intelligence operatives in Syria located the remains of Sgt. Baumel, one of the IDF soldiers MIA since the First Lebanon War in 1982. Russian and Syrian forces extracted the body, which arrived in Israel via El-Al airplane on April 3. He was buried in the military

cemetery on Mt. Hertz on April 4. After a painful wait, the Baumel family could finally eulogize and sit shiva for their loved one.

"Your commanders and comrades — some of them have grandchildren," President Reuven Rivlin told the Israeli flag-clad coffin, "but we are burying you today as a 22-year-old soldier." At 22-years old, Baumel was a student in the tenth class of *Yeshivat Har Etzion*.

American born, Zach was a sort of advisor to the *yeshiva's* American students, known to attend their basketball games and other events. He was also a brother and a son.

In her eulogy, Osnat Haberman told the thousands of funeral-goers that for 37 years she longed to give her brother a hug — how she now finds solace in knowing that the earth for which Zecharia gave his life now embraces him in an eternal

hug.

His return is a miracle. I am not referring to how the extraction team was able to retrieve the body, though that was miraculous as well. I mean the miracle of grief, the grief that comes with knowing. Now the family can sit *shiva* and grieve, they can take the first step in the healing process — an unthinkable step they could not have taken when awaiting news of Zecharia's return.

Etched into my brain is the image of the rectangular card with the prayer that I received as an eight-year-old and the strong voice of my congregation saying his name during Shabbat services. The full Hebrew name, *Zecharia Shlomo ben Miriam Baumel*, is so ingrained in my consciousness that when I saw the notification about his return, I had to read it twice before realizing that I knew the person it was talking about. I do not think I am alone in that experience. This is the consequence that comes with the gap time created — a gap where people were born and grew up while Zecharia remained his 22-year-old self.

While the eulogies of President Rivlin and Prime Minister Netanyahu contained plenty of political maneuvers, at one point Rivlin quoted a letter Zecharia wrote to his family days before he went missing: "It seems that I will not be home very soon." No one could have known how long his family would have to wait until their son returned home, and now that he has, it is finally time to mourn. Time to mourn and time to continue to ask G-d to return the other missing soldiers to their families, so that they too can begin to mourn.



Zecharia Baumel H"YD

JPOST

An Improved Judaic Studies Education

By AARON KOLLER

As reported in *The Commentator* on March 14, the Beren Department of Jewish Studies voted last month to overhaul the Jewish Studies requirements for Yeshiva College. While this still needs the approval of the rest of the Yeshiva College faculty, I wanted to communicate some of the thinking behind the changes, and share some of my personal thoughts on this new era of Jewish Studies at YC.

The requirements exist because, for many decades, Yeshiva University has believed that educated Jewish adults have to know not only the Jewish texts most commonly taught in *yeshivot*, but a broader range of sources and methodologies. This has largely focused on *Tanakh* and Jewish History. Many decades ago, the yeshiva carved out two hours each week for the instruction of *Tanakh* — a radical move in the context of *yeshivot* — and students took a course on *Tanakh* every semester of their four-year college careers, eight courses in total. Over the years, the nature of those courses and their quantity changed, but the core belief remains: a Modern Orthodox Jew has to know not just "the Bible as quoted in the *Bavli*," but *Tanakh* on its own terms.

For many decades, too, the College insisted that a graduate be acquainted with the broad sweep of Jewish history. A two-semester course on the subject was mandatory; beginning roughly with the Second Temple period, and continuing to the rise of modern Israel, the course admirably familiarized generations of students with many of the eras, communities, and movements within the broad and rich millennia-long history of the Jewish people.

all of Jewish history, so the requirement was replaced by two courses on various eras of that history. We privileged general intellectual sophistication alongside (and sometimes in place of) sheer quantity of content. I think this was and is a defensible move, maybe the only defensible move. It comes with new challenges, however.

Yeshiva College has also changed along with the broader landscape of higher education. We still have impressively bright,

Students are happy to learn the history of Jews in the medieval and modern periods and become acquainted with Isaiah and Ezra, but this has not been central to their identities.

But times, students, and academic methods all change. The Bible classes were supplemented by an "Introductory" course, which addressed method in studying *Tanakh* from a historical and thematic perspective, including both traditional Jewish sources and modern methods illuminated by our new knowledge of the ancient Near East. The requirement shrunk from eight courses to four — of which three were texts, conceding that we would not cover large swaths of *Tanakh*. The faculty also long ago conceded that it was increasingly challenging to cover

industrious, passionate students. But as the culture of the mid-twentieth century was replaced by that of the '90s and then the next century, the notion of students grappling with their yeshiva and college educations, in which Jewish Studies provided a hinge, producing a grand synthesis called "Modern Orthodoxy," seemed increasingly quaint. Students are happy to learn the history of Jews in the medieval and modern periods and become acquainted with Isaiah and Ezra, but this has not been central to their identities. I say this with sadness because

I am describing the demise of a vision of Modern Orthodoxy that I still find inspiring.

I also write *be-dema'* because to some extent, these changes reflect that we, the department, have not succeeded in transmitting to our students the beauty and significance inherent in grappling profoundly with the text of the Bible and its eternal message; we have not convinced them that this is worthwhile. As former Dean Dr. Barry Eichler put it, "How many students appreciate the necessity of studying *Tanakh* and religious literature and liturgy in their original languages? How many value the ability to understand and appreciate the nuances and interpretive differences of the text as well as its beauty of expression?" This failure is one shared by us along with the broader Jewish educational system, and we take this responsibility seriously.

On the other hand, I am excited about the real educational benefits that will come from the changes. This new structure has immediate benefits in terms of the range of courses being offered. One ironic result of the way the requirements used to be structured was that a course on the history and culture of Modern Israel — clearly a topic

Continued on Page 22

Words and Wings: YCDS' "Duck Hunter Shoots Angel" Makes Headlines

By SARIT PERL

Editor's Note: This article was originally published online on April 6.

"DUCK HUNTER SHOOTS ANGEL." With a title like that, even the most avid theatergoer is left scratching their head: What could the play possibly be about? What possessed the Yeshiva College Dramatics Society (YCDS) to choose it for their main-stage production and why should I be interested in seeing it?

Well, the title isn't a metaphor, it's a headline — and once that's clear, the title really does say it all. Cynical reporter Sandy (Yaacov Siev) and his photographer Lenny (Kyle Harris) are forced to chase the story of two brothers in Alabama, Duane and Duwell (Kesser Frankiel and Matan Shilat, respectively), who think they accidentally shot an angel. Billed as a comedy, the show is undeniably funny (albeit a bit racy — leave your kids at home for this one, folks); but

the real jewel of this play is not its surface plot, or even its comedy; it is Mitch Albom's exploration of thought-provoking themes that are shockingly relevant for a YU audience, and the heartfelt way that YCDS guides us through those themes.

played by Adam Alsberg, brings a youthful, infectious energy, Matthew Silkin's tabloid owner Lester is the entitled sleaze we expect him to be and Harris' Lenny simply tells it like it is. And then, there's Herschel Seigel's Alligator Man. You'll have to see the show to

show's costumes, designed and managed by Channah Bickford, and props, by Shai Yastrab and Natan Samson, are simple and straightforward, telling the story without drawing focus away from the characters. All of these elements are masterfully orchestrated by director Lin Snider, and overseen by technical director Benjy Kleiner and stage managers Elazar Krausz and Sarah Ben-Nun.

As Sandy is knocked off his high horse by two bumbling rednecks and forced to reconsider his past — and his future — audiences will embark on a journey even crazier than the title makes it sound. Could the timing of certain moments be tighter? Perhaps. Could certain characters' accents be sharper? Definitely. But YCDS more than makes up for their few technical flaws — or in Sandy's words, the "mistakes" that smack us through life — with an evening full of surprises, full of laughter and, above all, full of heart.

"Duck Hunter Shoots Angel" performed from April 6-11.

As Sandy is knocked off his high horse by two bumbling rednecks and forced to reconsider his past — and his future — audiences will embark on a journey even crazier than the title makes it sound.

Siev deftly balances Sandy's cynicism and vulnerabilities to create a character that is unbelievably real and undeniably human. Frankiel gives us the quintessential hillbilly with an accent and demeanor that even a Texas-raised Southerner like myself will find believable. Shilat's Dewell is wide-eyed and childlike, with a simple-mindedness that is both hilariously vacant and surprisingly insightful. "Gas-Mart" cashier Kansas,

even *try* to understand the Alligator Man.

YCDS' technical and creative team create an onstage world as captivating as the characters that inhabit it. The breathtaking set, created by Zvi Teitelbaum, looks and feels like a genuine slice of swampland, rigged with some delightfully surprising special effects, and brought to life with help from lighting engineer Zachary Greenberg and sound engineer David Levene. The



YCDS performs "Duck Hunter Shoots Angel" in the Schottenstein Theater in Washington Heights.

YCDS

IMPROVED JUDAIC STUDIES, continued from Page 21

of central importance and deep interest to our student body, for good reason — did not fulfill a requirement, and so did not attract students. Under the new structure, such a course counts for Jewish History, and Professor Olson will be teaching a course on the cultural history of Modern Israel in the fall.

The new requirements allow the faculty to teach in areas about which they are passionate and knowledgeable. Other new courses planned for the fall semester include Death, Dying, and the Good Life in Jewish Thought; Biblical Responses to the Hurban; and Derashot as a Window on Eastern European Jewish History. We also have a course on Talmud planned, to be taught by Dr. Ari Bergmann, who will be teaching in the department as an adjunct after teaching Talmud very successfully at Penn and Columbia over the past few years. We are very excited to have Dr. Bergmann on board. Obviously, besides the excitement for the faculty, the real beneficiaries are the students, who will have many more options

to choose from.

We are quite confident that these increases, quantitative and qualitative, in the Jewish Studies offerings will lead to more overall enjoyment on the part of the students. What we really hope, though, is that this enjoyment leads to improved education. We hope that students discover the joy and fulfillment in studying *Tanakh*, the challenge and gratification of wrestling with problems in Jewish thought, the excitement and satisfaction in encountering and understanding aspects of the Jewish past. We hope that these, in turn, inspire our students to go on and learn more, quest more, read more, study more. We will encourage students to find the areas of Jewish Studies that excite and inspire them, and pursue them. There is no maximum of Jewish Studies credits allowed. Take an extra elective or two, *lishmah*, to deepen your Jewish knowledge and engagements. The Jewish Studies faculty will continue to open the door to thrilling and sophisticated study of Jewish texts and historical experiences in their broader cultural contexts. We invite students to walk through with eyes and mind wide open.



This new structure has immediate benefits in terms of the range of courses being offered.

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There Was an Idea: A Tribute to the Phase I of the MCU

By **SAMUEL GELMAN (HOUSTON, TX)**

“You think you're the only superhero in the world? Mr. Stark, you've become part of a bigger universe, you just don't know it yet.”

These prophetic words were spoken by Nick Fury (Samuel L. Jackson) in the end credits scene of “Iron Man” over ten years ago, leading to the genesis of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) — a collection of interconnected superhero franchises, including Iron Man, Black Panther and Thor — that revolutionized the film industry. It was a breakthrough moment, though we didn't know it yet.

In 2008, a post-credits scene such as this one were not new phenomena. Superhero movies fans had been treated to end credits scenes previously. The much-maligned “Daredevil” and the horrendous “X-Men: The Last Stand” both utilized the post-credits scene to tease sequels that would (thankfully) never arrive. It appeared that the “Iron Man” scene was doing just that: teasing a direct sequel.

Except that it wasn't. It was testing something much, much grander. Yet, it would not be for another month before what was really happening would become clear to MCU fans. In June 2008, Marvel released their second movie of the summer, “The Incredible Hulk.” The movie did not make huge waves, receiving mixed reviews and becoming the lowest grossing film in the entire MCU. Yet, it had one defining moment, a moment that one could argue was more significant to the MCU than Nick Fury's opening speech.

In the final scene of *The Hulk*, General Thaddeus Ross (William Hurt), the film's secondary antagonist, sits in a bar, distraught about his recent loss to the Hulk. As the bar music fades into the background, the door to the bar opens, revealing a shadowy figure hidden by the blinding rays of the sun. He begins speaking to Ross and, while we still cannot see his face, we recognize his voice. We have heard this voice before; quite recently, in fact. It takes a second to hit, but it does, just as the camera turns to reveal the identity of the mystery figure: Robert Downey Jr.'s Tony Stark.

It was at this moment that it became clear just what was happening. “That's Iron Man,” I remember saying to my brother as we sat in the theater, stunned by what we were witnessing. The appearance of a titular character of one superhero franchise in another franchise's film was unprecedented. Up until now, everyone had existed on their own; Spider-Man stayed in his movies while the X-Men stayed in theirs. Not this time, said Marvel. They were not concerned with building up separate franchises. No, they wanted something much bigger. They were building a *universe*.

And build that universe they did, slowly but surely introducing the mainstream moviegoer to legendary comic characters such as Captain America (Chris Evans), Thor (Chris Hemsworth) and Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson), turning them into household names. With every release, Marvel added more pieces to their ever-growing toy collection while utilizing post-credits scenes and Clark Gregg's Agent Phil Coulson as the connecting threads between movies that allowed their universe to grow.

Five movies and four years later, the grand finale arrived. Marvel finally released “The Avengers.” With “Avengers: Infinity War” behind us and “End Game” right around the corner, it's hard to remember the excitement and novelty of this film, but it was grand. Like “The Incredible Hulk's” post-credits scene, this was an unprecedented event in film history. Three major franchises — Iron Man, Captain America and Thor — coming together for a movie event that expected the audience to be aware of all three franchises, their major players and their individual stories. It was a lot to ask of a movie audience and was a massive risk, but, thankfully, the world got on board. What followed was nostalgic and dream-like storytelling, reminding me of when I used to empty my box of action figures for a major fight. Except this time, the images were not in my head; they were on the big screen, and it was magnificent.

Yet, it was not the scale of the movie or the massive invasion of faceless aliens that made people fall in love with “The Avengers.” What made it so good was seeing the interactions between the major characters. Whether it was Tony Stark and Bruce Banner (now played by Mark Ruffalo) talking science, Steve Rogers and Stark clashing over ideology that would set the stage for one of the most engaging relationships in film I have seen in years, or Thor taking on an out-of-control Hulk, the chemistry between the team was electric and, more importantly, organic. The characters fed off each other, allowing their viewpoints and personalities to influence one another in ways that would impact their individual franchises. It was a collision of worlds, like watching your childhood friends meet your college

roommates with spectacular success. With “The Avengers,” Marvel had not just created a universe united by plot threads; they had created something that felt alive and, more importantly, human.

And just like that, after two hours of quips and a nuclear scare, it was over. Loki and Thor returned to Asgard with the Tesseract, Captain America went to work for S.H.I.E.L.D. while Stark and Banner started a science club. Sequels to “Iron Man 2,” “Captain America” and “Thor” were already announced. The Avengers were going their separate ways.

“Sir, how does it work now? They've gone their separate ways, some pretty extremely far. We get into a situation like this again, what happens then?” asked Maria Hill (Cobie Smulders), Fury's right-hand woman, at the end of “Avengers.”

“They'll come back... Because we'll need them to.”

With those words, Fury was once again setting the stage for the next phase of the MCU. The words sat in my head as the credits rolled on and I waited to see what Marvel had in store for me next. Finally, the first half of the credits ended, and the next threat was revealed. Thanos, the intergalactic titan and conqueror, sat on his infamous throne, giving the camera a chillingly terrifying smile as the screen cut to black.

We didn't yet know what Thanos had planned, but it did not matter. That smile told us all we needed to know. The Avengers would come back, for we would need them. Now, going into “End Game,” we need them more than ever.



“Avengers: Endgame” is set to release on April 26.

The Future Is Here... Not Quite

By SARAH TORQUEMAN

Mobile payments have been dubbed the “next big thing” for quite some time now. Along with drones, virtual reality and the cyborg workforce, they’ve become part of futuristic jargon. However, the thing with mobile payments is that there’s still lots of hype and little to show for it.

Since its debut, mobile payments simply haven’t yet taken flight. With Google Wallet released in 2011, Apple Pay in 2014 and Android and Samsung Pay in 2015, it seemed like these innovative ways to pay would’ve hit us by storm by now. Looking further back, Google Wallet actually launched over a decade after PayPal’s founding in 1998, which didn’t fully launch mobile payments until later.

Payment-by-scan technology has brought convenience to transactions and has stretched online actions to offline services.

According to eMarketer, only 7 percent of Americans use Apple Pay since its launch four years ago, and only 25 percent of American smartphone users use mobile payments for any purchase. While that’s been the case for the United States, China’s been different.

81 percent of smartphone users in China pay by phone. To say the least of this stark difference, substantial integration took merely 3 years to complete. During 2015 and 2016, Chinese tech giants Tencent and Alibaba (now under Ant Financial) who back WeChat and Alipay, respectively, introduced the ability to pay via a simple scan of a QR code. Mobile payments have since trickled down from large corporations and even to beggars on the streets. By purchasing simple point of sale (POS) devices, businesses can scan QR codes displayed on consumers’ smartphones to enable seamless payment.

Beggars on the streets have done similarly; by displaying WeChat and Alipay QR codes on cardboard signs around their necks, passersby can transfer funds immediately with a simple scan. In fact, total transactions on China’s mobile payment platforms are estimated at over \$17 trillion in 2017,

which surpassed China’s GDP, according to market research firm iResearch. While there are entire books and lectures dedicated to the transformative Chinese economy today, the reality is that payment-by-scan technology hasn’t come to be nearly as widespread in the United States and abroad as it has become in China.

of the futuristic notion of our smartphones completely replacing the functionality of our credit cards. Mobile payment providers have attempted to incentivize merchants to integrate their technology into their businesses. Apple, for one, partnered with Square, among others, on a program enabling local merchants to process \$12,000



Ways to pay expand as dozens of industries attempt to harness mobile payment technology for purchases.

The majority of American consumers are bogged down by the plastic credit card functioning as their primary purchasing tool. Designed for convenience already, mobile payments may be not viewed as substantially more convenient for American consumers as they are for the Chinese. That is because Chinese consumers leaped from making primarily cash payments to mobile payments and skipped right over credit cards. For them, WeChat and Alipay function as the convenient way to pay as the plastic credit card did for the average American when it replaced cash.

Tech giants seeking alternative revenue sources along with early adopters, dream

worth of payments for free if their customers use their smartphones to pay. This comes out to about \$350 in processing fee savings on the merchant side, as explained on Square’s site. Apple also provided marketing materials to place next to POS devices to promote mobile payment methods and to educate US consumers about the technology. Even so, eMarketer predicts that by 2022, Americans are expected to pay approximately \$161 billion each year via mobile payments – a clear increase from previous years.

Payment-by-scan technology has brought convenience to transactions and has stretched online actions to offline services. A primary example of this is Uber’s lead in the

ridesharing race. By harnessing smartphone technology and applying it to personal cars, it has created an “online-to-offline” business model, which has since been replicated in other markets. Mobile payments are being utilized to fuel the “online-to-offline,” or O2O, revolution, bringing the convenience and growth of e-commerce to the purchase of real-world services. O2O services include on-demand food delivery, hair styling, manicures and pet sitting services as well as ride-sharing platforms.

In addition to speeding up the O2O revolution and linking the online and offline realms, a transition to mobile payments may reap tremendous reward well beyond consumer convenience. For starters, mobile payment systems and merchants using them have the potential to aggregate an enormous amount of real-world data on the buyer behavior and consumption patterns of their users. With the growing amount of actionable consumer data, mobile payments give merchants a competitive edge over non-mobile payment companies and merchants. This is mainly because the data collected and analyzed can be used to understand their consumers and tailor products and services toward them, and especially can be used to better mobile payment systems. With more data points available, digital systems are able to improve their speed and precision creating greater convenience in the use of mobile payments furthering their use and ultimately increasing available data to further improve the systems.

Interestingly, at another attempt to attract consumers and build alternative revenue streams, in late March, Apple announced its Apple Card which will debut this summer. Apple Card is supposedly a “new kind of credit card” backed by Goldman Sachs in order to provide a digital-first financing option for consumers by integrating Apple Pay. The card also features chip technology so that consumers can use it at non-Apple Pay businesses. In an attempt to force its way into the financial services, Apple seems to be pushing its ready-made product and service onto consumers whether they like it or not.

Whether mobile payments become a universal norm or continue to boom primarily on the Eastern Hemisphere, countries and companies utilizing them will certainly have a data edge over those who do not. It remains to be seen whether mobile payments will bump out the incumbent plastic credit card or live up to the label as the “next big thing.”

A Fund That Aids and Educates

By EITAN LAVIAN

The Harold Charno Investment Fund, was founded in the 1990s by a current Sy Syms School of Business professor and is a student-managed investment portfolio that aims to generate profits that will provide additional scholarship funding to students in need. It was seeded with a \$100,000 donation from Harold Charno.

The fund itself is comprised of a stock broker who places the orders and acts as an advisor, a professor who oversees the fund and three current students who act as portfolio managers. Each year new portfolio managers are selected after going through a rigorous interview process. To get selected, managers must demonstrate an interest in finance and investing; an added bonus is having prior exposure to various investment vehicles.

The fund invests strictly in equities,

steering clear of the bond market. To invest in an equity, the three portfolio managers choose a stock and pitch the investment to the professor. After both the professor and broker approve the stock pitch, an order is placed.

position. Shavrick added that the fund tries to invest in companies with a maximum beta — a measure of how volatile a stock is relative to the market — of 1.5. Dedication to the fund is another factor that ensures success. Managers make sure to follow the market

Since its inception, the fund’s assets have been fairly volatile, being up 30% last year, generating \$30,000 in scholarship money; at one point

Isaac Shavrick, a current portfolio manager, explained that the fund tries to stay away from day trading — buying and selling of securities on the same day based on small price changes — and instead invests with a medium term horizon of three to six months.

One way the fund attempts to ensure success is through a strategic approach to predefined risk with stop loss point on each

closely while adopting and implementing strategies according to news, empirical data and technical and fundamental analysis in an effort to outperform the market.

Since its inception, the fund’s assets have been fairly volatile, up 30% last year, generating \$30,000 in scholarship money. When asking about the fund’s greatest success, Shavrick spoke about a time where assets

were at \$250,000, achieved through positive investment performance, as opposed to an additional capital raise. However, he did speak of a time where the fund’s assets sank below Charno’s initial investment of \$100,000.

When the fund’s assets grow far above \$100,000, managers sell their positions and revert back to their initial fund size of \$100,000. The current portfolio managers said that six months into their tenures they liquidated half of the portfolio to reset their portfolio in an effort to generate profits with new investments.

The Charno Investment Fund’s continued existence is impressive because funds of this type typically shut down after a few years due to lack of supervision and large amounts of day trading. Due to the managers’ dedication and hard work, scholarship money is generated and the fund is alive and well today.



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What's Apple Up To?

By AVI LEKOWSKY

We're all familiar with the story: Out of a small garage in Los Altos, California, three people came together to create one of the most valuable companies ever created. Apple Computer Company, as it was originally called, launched in 1977, truly revolutionizing computer technology. Over the years, Apple has continued to innovate, creating new computers, music players, phones and watches. Every top company in their respective fields are affectionately referred to as "the Apple of _," and even today, the design, polish and experience of an Apple product is top-notch.

On March 25, Apple held a press conference detailing new services that its devices would offer consumers. For example, Apple News+ is a service allowing users to access over 300+ publications, including The LA Times and WSJ, and online publications like Vox and TheSkimm for a flat rate of \$9.99 a month. Another service, Apple Arcade, offers over 100 games from esteemed game development companies around the world for a flat rate of \$9.99. These are playable on various Apple devices (iPad, iPhone, Mac and Apple TV) and are specially formatted for each device.

Making a stronger push into the financial industry, the Cupertino-based company announced its "Apple Card, a credit card offered in collaboration with Goldman Sachs. Impressive features include charts that detail your spending habits and encourage you to spend wiser, no annual fees and instant access to the card when you sign up instead of waiting for the card to come in the mail.

Finally, Apple TV+ is a streaming service offering exclusive TV shows and movies (a la Netflix Originals) created by some of the biggest names in Hollywood: Steven Spielberg, Oprah Winfrey, J.J. Abrams, they're all there.

It's clear that Apple took a significant shift in its business plan, steering away from new hardware and devices and towards more services. What's up with the change?

Apple has been close to reaching a break-

To help accelerate growth, Apple has introduced new products for categories with streaming markets. Be it TV, games, news; Apple's there.

ing point for a long time. For the past few years, the iPhone has represented most of their earnings. It's just such a successful product that other Apple devices can't compare. In the holiday quarter of 2018, Apple earned \$84.3 billion, with \$51 billion of that coming from iPhone sales. While it's an enormous amount of money by any count, it is a 14.9 percent drop in sales from last year. The market for customers who have never had a smartphone is shrinking and attempts to move into emerging markets like India have been unsuccessful. Along with this, market share in countries in China have dropped due to increased competition between local companies like Oppo and Huawei. Apple has realized iPhone sales can't increase as much as they used to in the past, simply because

most people who want one already have one. So how do they increase their revenue? By opening up to services.

It is safe to say a market of a billion-plus is a market worth expanding into. While products like AirPods and Apple Music might be available on other non-Apple devices, they are associated most often with Apple products. For example, fewer than 5 percent of users on Apple Music use an Android phone rather than an iPhone. There will always be competition between iPhone and Android phones, but most people are comfortable with what they have and don't want to learn a new interface. To offer services for your products exclusively is a way to help users use your service in a way incomparable to others and strengthens the grip the company has on you. That's part of why Google has a single sign-in system for all its services; the easier it is to sign up, the better.

At the same time, the services industry has been growing and growing. In the music industry alone, streaming now accounts for over 50 percent of revenue, and most experts expect it to only grow. Other services like Netflix and Hulu have helped usher in a new era of TV-watching and pushed other titans like Disney and Warner Bros. to release versions of services. The service industry is growing quickly, and Apple wants a sweet piece of that pie.

The announcement of these new services helps Apple grow their services division to heights it hasn't reached before. This past holiday quarter, revenue from the category reached \$10.9 billion, marking the first time it reached double digits. Since the third quarter of 2015, this category has grown double digits year by year due to growth in iCloud

usage and the introduction of Apple Music and Apple Pay. To help accelerate growth, Apple has introduced new products for categories with streaming markets. Be it TV, games, news; Apple's there.

Really, we won't be able to tell how this will impact Apple's bottom line for a year or two. Releasing so many services in the span of a few months? Tearing people away from their services they already use? On top of this, there are questions that focus on each service: If a celebrity is found doing something not up to Apple's squeaky-clean image, will they drop them from Apple TV+? If a news service is found guilty of collusion with an outside source, what will Apple do? All these questions will have to be answered somewhere down the line, but if we've learned anything about Apple's storied history, it's that they will somehow come out on top.



In an effort to diversify its revenue sources, Apple is launching many new services.

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Q&A with a Data Scientist

By ELI WEISS

As a graduating senior, I have had many students ask me about the BIMA major, seeking both advice and information about the data industry in general. Every major and field has its intricacies and lingo that seem opaque to outsiders. Because of the field's many confusing intricacies, I decided that I needed the help of an expert to help demystify data science and business analytics; I sought the advice of Tom Gorin, a Principal of data science at the Boston Consulting Group — a premier consulting firm. He has years of experience at the highest

level of business and data science in the world. a series of interviews about data science so that people can learn more by reading through some conversations I have had with experts in the field.

Eli Weiss: What is the value add that data science offers?

Tom Gorin: The value that data science offers is not new. First off, data science is the latest name of a set of former names for the same skillset, such as operations research groups, research and development, etc. Companies have been leveraging these skills for centuries. As was the case throughout time, the value is to find ways to do business better. That is a very wide-ranging statement. I think

people usually think of data science as a way to automate things, or to focus on personalized offerings for customers (at least these seem to be the top two use cases that I hear about currently). In my mind, there are numerous other areas where data science can have an impact, from transportation to community outreach. Transportation is an easy one with Uber and Lyft, or any of the scooter companies that have sprouted everywhere. However, if you think about traditional transportation (e.g. public transportation), one wonders what they could do better if they spent more time working with their data (actually, nobody wonders: they could do much better). At the

other end of the spectrum, I don't know of any use cases in community outreach (but I am sure there are many), how would you think of addressing homelessness, for example, with data science? It's a huge problem in San Francisco today, which is why I bring it up. I wonder (and I don't have the answer) what we could do with data to help address this challenge.

EW: What trends do you see in the data science community that we will see over the next 10 years? What will be the impact?

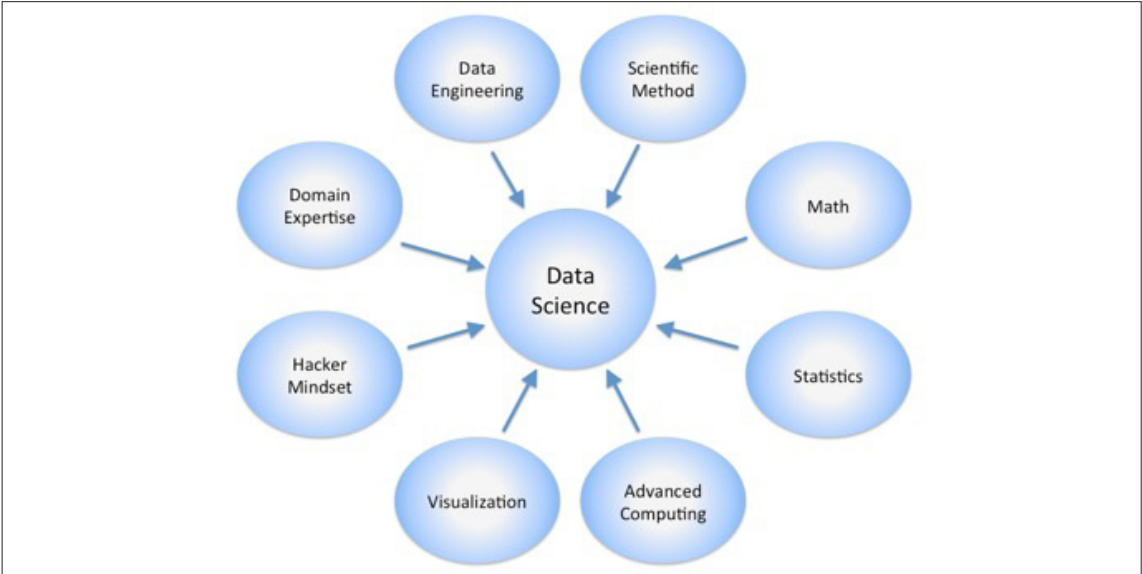
TG: Increase in focus on artificial intelligence. Use cases are not fully developed, but there is certainly a lot of push towards AI. The impact is hard to tell, but it will certainly be interesting to understand how AI develops and works. I was at a conference recently where one of the speakers talked about AI in an interesting way. His perspective was that AI is not a set of algorithms, unlike what people think of today (AI = neural networks or deep learning). Instead, his point was that AI is a collection of processes and methods that start with algorithms that can be used for forecasting, sentiment analysis, etc. The AI piece comes in when you start leveraging these algorithms to automate the end to end processes that are being managed by people today. So AI is more than a set of algorithms. It's about automation of processes that are managed by people today.

The impact of AI, in my mind,

will be exactly that: the ability to automate more and more of the tasks that require human supervision and allow people to focus on value-added tasks. The idea is not to remove people from the workplace, but rather to help them focus on more relevant tasks that computers cannot handle.

EW: What are the most important skills for students to be developing right now in school to be ready for the workplace?

TG: I think there are many, but it is difficult to say with certainty. If you are thinking of data science positions, you need to build a strong foundation for data science, whether in the fields of ML, statistics, optimization or other, combined with strong understanding of the tools that you will need to apply these methods. What I mean by that is that knowing optimization is not enough anymore. You will also need to have a strong knowledge of the tools that will allow you to apply optimization, which includes (for example), Python, R, SQL, CPLEX/OPL, etc. This also means getting some understanding of the systems that companies rely on for their day to day operations. Do they use SQL relational databases, are they using non-relational databases, what are the pros and cons of each, etc.?



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