



The WYHS brainstorm

It's Time to Hear What's on Your Mind!

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Living In an Oven

By Ilana Ben-Ezra ('10)

The earth is at a pivotal point in its environmental history that will either cause us to fall to our doom, or make us rise to the challenge. The culprit? Global warming. Global warming has occurred before in the earth's long history, but never at such a rapid rate. Over the past few centuries, the earth's temperature has increased an average of one degree Fahrenheit, which may seem insignificant, but in reality is quite alarming. Why the sudden increase? Scientists suggest that the answer may lie in human involvement.

Everyone knows what global warming is, right? After all, many of us are familiar with the plot of "The Day After Tomorrow." We have seen it on the big screen, but now that it is happening in our everyday lives, we should know what is causing it. Global warming is the by-product of the "Greenhouse Effect." The Greenhouse Effect is the process by which the sun's rays enter and exit the earth's atmosphere. A certain amount of the sun's rays are trapped by gasses like water vapor and carbon dioxide, and kept as heat in the atmosphere. The rest goes back out into space. Think of it as a section in a history book you're trying to read; you may not retain it all, but at least you'll get some of it.

This process has been going on for billions of years without human involvement, so what does this have to do with us? We are dangerously altering our climate by adding carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide comes directly

Celebrating Genocide

By Sarah Gross
('08)

Everyone knows that Thanksgiving is a huge national holiday – a time to watch the Macy's Parade, spend quality time with our families, eat turkey, watch the game on TV, and generally, to reflect upon how lucky we are for everything around us. Every American school child can tell you the story of Thanksgiving by heart. It generally goes like this: The Puritan separatists left Europe and settled in Plymouth to pursue religious freedom. In 1620, they set up their colony, thinking that everything would be easy in America. But more and more they found that it wasn't a walk in the park. They needed to find ways to survive, which proved to be a challenge. Fortunately,



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from pollution, such as burning solid waste and fossil fuels. Fossil fuels are consumed in everyday activities such as driving and using electricity. This extra carbon dioxide that we are producing is clogging up the earth's atmosphere and trapping more of the sun's rays than is "healthy." These extra rays are then heating up the earth – essentially creating an "oven." Even more startling is the fact that this carbon dioxide could naturally be absorbed by trees during photosynthesis, but humans are cutting down forests at such a high rate that this cannot happen. Without trees,



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Torture is Not the Answer

By Jessica Friedman ('08)

I was shocked to hear of the inhumane and abominable torture tactics that our government has been using against “suspected” terrorists in prison camps such as Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay detainment camp. It appears that our government has been violating standards set forth by the Third Geneva Convention on the lawful treatment of prisoners of war.

The American government acknowledges that ruthless torture of prisoners of war is indeed unlawful and illegal; however, it claims that there is a difference between “prisoners of war” and “enemy combatants.” I don’t buy it. If the United States is fighting the “War on Terror” and these “enemy combatants” are terrorists, then terrorists captured during this war certainly seem to be “prisoners of war” covered by the Geneva Convention.

While the word “torture” itself may have bad connotations, one cannot even imagine how horrible these tortures really are. Some of the reported torture tactics include wrapping a detainee’s body completely in duct tape, waterboarding, which induces water through the nose to make a

prisoner feel like he’s drowning, and hanging detainees from the ceilings for extended periods of time without food or water.

I believe that fighting the “War on Terror” must be our government’s top priority. But is lowering our standards to permit torture really the answer? Isn’t it a clear violation of everything we believe in as Americans? Our Constitution says that all suspects are innocent until proven guilty. If we punish suspected terrorists by means of torture – and never accord them a trial -- is that not subscribing to the doctrine of “guilty until proven innocent”? If we become torturers, how can we say that American democracy is morally superior?

A man that merely has a similar name to a suspected terrorist may be brought into prison and tortured for information he does not have. How can we expect a true terrorist, who presumably is willing to die for his cause, to admit to accusations, even if he is pelted with shards of glass or suspended upside down by a rope? Infiltration of terrorists groups, as the British did this summer, is what foils terrorist plots. Brutalization of suspects does not.

We cannot fight fire with fire.

*“Injustice
 anywhere is a
 threat to justice
 everywhere.”
 - Dr. Martin Luther
 King Jr.*

Racking up the Numbers in Iraq

By Mimi Atkin ('08)

505,000,000,000- Dollars approved for spending on the war in Iraq.

338,000,000,000- Dollars already spent, to date, on the war.

144,000- Number of American troops remaining on Iraqi soil.

21,077- Number of American soldiers who are currently wounded, due to the war.

2,787- Number of American casualties, from March 2003 through October 2006.

105- Number of American deaths in October 2006.

100 – Average number of civilians killed per day in June 2006.

30 - Percentage of surviving American soldiers who return home with severe psychological impairment.

The statistics are daunting. The numbers are brutal. The questions are endless. The answers are unsatisfying. When American troops invaded Iraq three and a half years ago, there seemed to be no “plan of action” – no strategy whatsoever. America had one goal: to play the heroic country, the international “good guy.” Contrarily, the war has generated horrifying consequences and has created a radicalized climate in the world. We have captured Saddam Hussein. We have asserted our authority in the Middle East. The troubling question remains: What are we still doing there?



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Global Warming - Continued from Page 1

there is no place for the carbon dioxide to go other than the atmosphere causing further heating of our world.

With this rise in temperature come deadly side effects. The oceans are heating up faster than a car interior on a summer day. This causes ice caps to melt, and water levels to rise, threatening to flood major coastal cities such as Miami and New York. Moreover, we are experiencing an increase in hurricanes as they feed off of hot ocean water.

Another consequence of global warming is more alarming. As crazy as it may sound, global warming may cause another Ice Age. As you're reading this, your eyes are probably popping out of their sockets. But in actuality, this theory fits with previous warming and cooling cycles. The Gulf Stream is a warm-water current that helps to keep the temperatures in the northern hemispheres moderate by bringing warm water from the equator up the east coast of the U.S, across the Atlantic, and finally to England. Global warming threatens this current, because melting ice caps in Greenland are adding billions of gallons of ice-cold water to the Gulf Stream, slowing its progress, and stopping it from bringing warm water (and therefore warm air) to the northern hemisphere. This theory explains the famous frozen Manhattan seen in “The Day After Tomorrow.”

Each time we turn on our car, each time we see smog rising from a factory, the threats to our environment are growing. The message is clear: stop polluting and start

caring, unless you want to move to Mars in the next 75 years. It is our future, and it is a very precarious one.

Even so, what can you do? There are several at-home solutions that collectively can make a difference. One of the most convenient and effective solutions is simply switching your light bulbs to compact fluorescent bulbs. This can help to save over 300 pounds of carbon dioxide a year (and will also save you money). Another solution of growing popularity is switching to a hybrid or fuel-efficient car. These can make a major impact, since such cars produce significantly less carbon dioxide. Though they seem small, all of these little environmentally-friendly acts will add up. In our own ways, we will be contributing to “Tikun Olam.”

As we move forward into the future, there will be newer, more innovative solutions. However, we can't just rely on the future to bring solutions to today's problems. If each of us does not act now to change our habits, then global warming will only escalate, and no technology will be able to reverse the damage, that we have done.

Chief Massasoit and his Pokanoket tribe taught the Pilgrims how to fish and hunt, and helped them plant vegetables that the Europeans had never seen such as corn, squash, and beans. The following year, the Puritans celebrated their first harvest which paralleled a Pokanoket festival called the Nikkomosachmiawene. During the Nikkomosachmiawene banquet, the indigenous people danced, played games, and gave donations to needy families to show gratitude for their own good fortune.

The part of the story that is never told is that despite the early friendship between the Puritans and the Pokanokets, the natives eventually faced ethnocide and genocide by the Europeans. The Europeans brought new diseases to the natives, and put them in slave labor camps originated by the Spanish called Encomiendas. It seems a little ironic that the Puritans, who were seeking religious tolerance and freedom, wouldn't accept the Indians and their culture. All the Arawaks were gone by 1535, and the Pequot community was gone shortly afterwards by 1638. Shouldn't the Puritans, who had been religiously persecuted, have felt even the slightest bit of remorse for doing the same thing to a harmless, spiritual group of Native Americans? It angers me to think that this happened, yet it is rarely publicized. Many people do not realize that the story of Thanksgiving is not the story of peace and brotherly love. It is a celebration of genocide!

The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment

SAT (Stress And Torture)

By Leah Wiznitzer ('08)

SAT. That single word causes high school juniors and seniors around the world to stress and panic. Students are told, day in and day out, that THIS is the test that will single-handedly determine their future. They spend countless hours in classrooms, with tutors, and with their prep books, writing practice essays, trying to memorize difficult vocabulary words or math formulas, and taking as many practice tests as they possibly can. In 2005, the College Board decided to make some changes in the SAT. The "New SAT" is longer, includes a new Writing section (comprised of an essay and multiple choice grammar questions), a more advanced Math section, and a new Critical Reading section in which the "analogies" have been removed. There are conflicting opinions as to whether this new test is valuable and essential or if it is simply unnecessary and outdated.

I think that there are both advantages and

of the Crime of Genocide, Article 2 (1948) defines "genocide" as "any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, such as: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group." Kind of rings a bell, huh? The Holocaust was a genocide, Rwanda was a genocide, and right now we are adamantly protesting the genocide in Darfur (Save Darfur!). So, why do I feel as if everyone has pulled a fast one over me? Why has no one ever told me about the genocide of the Native Americans? Why is it that my school (up until junior year, when we read Howard Zinn's first chapter on Columbus's ethnic cleansing of the Arawaks), my parents, and the books I have read all my life have hidden this from me? How has this been kept a secret for so long? For most of these questions, the answer is simply ignorance. Even with our new and improved American values and liberalism at the highest it has ever been, is anyone really willing to stand up and say, "No! This is not right!" Are we really willing to look at our families and say, "No! I reject this holiday"? I know in my heart that it is unacceptable to celebrate genocide. It takes a lot of guts to reject something that is now a family tradition with value. It would be difficult to give up one of my favorite family weekends, but this year I simply cannot eat turkey with the carefree attitude I have in years past. I will sit at my Thanksgiving table and educate family and friends on this terrible injustice. This year, the thing I am most thankful for is finally knowing the truth.

disadvantages to the SAT. On the positive side, every high school in the country has different teachers that have very subjective and diverse systems of grading. How can a college compare an A at one school to an A- at another school? They can't. By having one single and objective test that each student in the country takes, colleges have a standard for comparing students from many different backgrounds. The SAT was

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Just Blame it on Your Brain

By Harry Ganz ('08)

What makes a teenager a teenager? Is it the “teen” attached to the end of their age? Is it the ipod earbuds surgically attached to their ears? No. Recent studies suggest it may be physiological — it could be their brain.

The process starts with the development of the brain in the womb. When the brain is first formed and into the first eighteen months of life, the brain goes through a spurt of gray matter production. The gray matter is where all thought and cognitive function in the brain occurs. This gray matter is then pruned to form efficient connections between sections of the brain. Recent studies by the National Institutes of Mental Health (NIMH) using magnetic resonance imaging technology (MRI) have determined that this is not the only time that gray matter is modified in the brain. Just before puberty, the brain undergoes another set of gray matter thickening, but not all this gray matter stays. Some of the gray matter is eliminated in what is similar to a game of musical chairs: the brain produces way too

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View from Across the Pond

Shira Poliak ('08)

This past Succot I traveled to London with my family, where I suddenly found myself riding the lift to the flat, driving on the other side of the road, drinking cups of tea with milk and relishing chocolate biscuits. While London is simply a 6-hour leap across the Atlantic “Pond” from the US – and though we share a common language -- my experience in London gave me a greater appreciation for the great country we live in and the freedom we have in expressing our Jewish identities.



My family began touring at a place who's significance I only realize in retrospect: the deep underground Cabinet War Rooms and bunker of Prime Minister William Churchill during the Nazi's blitzkrieg attack on London during World War II. I learned of Churchill's brilliance and compassion in defeating the Nazis, and recognized how grateful I am – how grateful all Jews must be – to him for standing up to Hitler, and helping to save the world from Nazi domination.

What struck me, however, as my trip continued, was how different England is from what Churchill envisioned for his country's future. Nowadays, London is home to an ever-expanding Muslim population whose influence permeates English society. While there is no imminent threat to the Jewish community of London, the people we spoke to at a synagogue in downtown London were clearly fearful. Upon

arriving at the synagogue, we were questioned outside and only with the guard's approval could we enter the locked synagogue door. After letting us in, the guard quickly sealed the door tightly again. The Chief Rabbi of England, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, who spoke at the synagogue, was accompanied by two bodyguards at all times and we were told that he is on a British Muslim terror group's hit list. While the anti-Semitism in London may not be as strong as the anti-Semitic sentiment in France and elsewhere in Europe, the Jews we met were certainly cautious not to wear their kippot on the street.

While I was not scared to be a Jew in London during my short stay there, the daily occurrences – heightened security, a sense of cautiousness among the Jews with whom I shared the *chag* -- made me grateful for the liberties and freedom we often take for granted in America.



Drink Your Coffee Responsibly

By Daniella Greer ('09)

Writer's note: I sit here writing this article at 2 a.m. with a cup of steaming hot coffee in hand.

The newest fad in high schools and colleges worldwide has become drinking coffee. Young adults don't only drink coffee for its delicious taste (*Starbucks*), but also for the caffeine that students need to stay up to tackle their large amounts of homework. As a religious coffee drinker, drinking at least one and a half cups of coffee a day, I was ecstatic to learn of the many benefits coffee has. However, like every other good food on this planet, coffee does have detriments as well.

On the positive side, you should know that coffee contains antioxidants that destroy free radicals that are the cause of many cancers. That alone is an extreme benefit of drinking coffee. In addition, many studies show that coffee may reduce the risk of diabetes, Parkinson's disease, gallstones, and something that really shocked me – cavities.

However, when an individual consumes excessive amounts of coffee, having more than his body can tolerate, he may experience a rapid heartbeat, the jitters, and a sense of nervousness. In addition, unlimited coffee drinking may eventually cause high cholesterol levels, although research shows that this is only in the case of unfiltered coffee. Furthermore, because coffee is a crop, it can be contaminated with dangerous items such as pesticides and fertilizers. If you drink coffee, be sure to drink organic.

Alarming, many people become addicted to the caffeine in the coffee, using it as their only source for energy. Without caffeine, they simply cannot function, let alone get their work done. Fearing the addiction, many decide to switch to "decaf," but are deceived by its title. Beware: "Decaf" still contains low caffeine levels and will barely heal a person's addiction.

On a certain level, coffee can serve as a quick energy booster and can help students stay up late and complete their heavy workloads. However, once we deprive our bodies of sleep, it is extremely hard to get back into a normal cycle of work and sleep. Still, coffee isn't bad in moderation. So if you drink coffee, drink responsibly!

Writer's note: It's 3 a.m. Maybe I should put this cup of coffee down now and get some sleep!

SAT Continued from Page 4

created for this very purpose. Before SATs, most universities accepted students who were rich, elite, and educated. Therefore, when the SAT was first administered in 1948, it was seen as a revolutionary opportunity to give students of all ethnicities, of all economic and educational backgrounds, a fairer shot at college admission.

However, over time, the SAT has evolved into a test much different than intended. Instead of alleviating a burden, it has in fact caused an even greater one. When considering students' applications, college admissions officers take into account students' GPA from all four years of high school, SAT or ACT score, and extracurricular activities. To have one test that consists of four hours on a weekend morning weighed equally to four full years of hard work in school seems a bit extreme and unfair. The essay component of the "New SAT" is quite controversial as well. Two or three SAT graders are assigned to read and grade the essay, the highest grade being a six and the lowest grade being a one. Many consider this essay and its grading system to be subjective and therefore unfair for a standardized test. If a certain grader only likes a certain style of writing, and the essay received is not in the preferred style, the student who wrote that essay may suffer score-wise.

Many people, including myself, believe that the SATs are pointless. Since they are not based on what students learn in the classroom, they don't test or prove students' intellect. No one really knows what they measure besides students' test-taking capabilities in a timed fashion. The test doesn't measure creativity, intellectual curiosity, or critical thinking. What the SAT is, in essence, is a puzzle. It can be "cracked" by learning tricks and seeing patterns. In our modern society, the way students are cracking the code, is through months of private tutoring. SAT tutors are on high demand and are thus incredibly expensive. Because of this, only the rich students can afford tutors and have an advantage on the SAT as a result. In many ways, this has caused the same situation now that the SAT was created to rectify. Hopefully, because of the vicious cycle that the SAT has perpetuated, the tests will be abolished at some point in the future, which will alleviate students' stress and allow them to focus on true intellectual pursuits.

much gray matter than can be supported by the available space, nutrition, growth factors, and connections. The brain cells fight fiercely for a chair with only a small percentage gaining a seat and surviving.

What determines which brain cells live and which brain cells die? Usage. As an adolescent uses different parts of the brain, connections are formed and the brain cells are strengthened, and as an adolescent neglects certain parts of the brain, connections are broken and brain cells in those regions are diminished. For example, if a teenager devotes his or her time to playing Halo II, the brain would respond by creating connections between the parts of the brain activated by playing a video game, and by thickening the gray matter in those parts of the brain. On the other hand, if a teenager does not devote his or her time to playing chess, the parts of the brain responsible for playing chess would thin out and disconnect from each other. This “use it or lose it” concept may be scary to many teenagers, especially those who neglect their studies, but it seems to be unavoidable.

Another key difference between the teen brain and the adult brain is how decisions are made. Most of the gray matter that is being modified during the teenage years is in the frontal lobe, which controls “executive” functions such as organization, language skills, and logic. However, before the frontal lobe is fully developed, most of the teenager’s decisions are being processed by the amygdala, which controls “gut” reactions and the emotional sector of the brain. This explains why teenagers are more likely to gauge their decisions based on emotion rather than actual consequences. Conversely, adults use their fully-developed frontal lobe to control most of their decisions, and therefore are able to make controlled logical decisions.

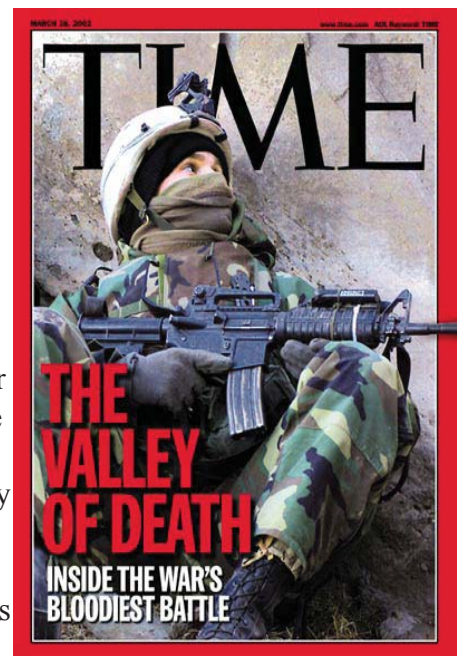
When does this change in decision-making occur? Usually in the early twenties when white (myelinated) matter forms connections between the frontal lobe and the rest of the brain.

This really isn’t anything new. Parents have known since the dawn of civilization that teenagers are crazy, but only now do we know why. So if someone ever asks you why you did something so stupid, feel free to blame it on your undeveloped brain.

Iraq Continued from Page 3

America hoped to build a democracy in Iraq and to provide the Iraqi civilians with a “better way of life.” However, forcing *your* way of life, whether or not it sustains a more productive form of government, onto a people who have never lived under such a governmental structure, is a blatant form of hegemony. Recent polls have shown that 82% of Iraqi civilians are becoming increasingly opposed to the prolonged presence of the coalition and are strongly displeased with the “heroic” intentions of our self-absorbed and excessively proud nation. Journalist Jonathan Schell explains it simply: democracy, in its purist sense, is characterized by a form of government that expresses the wants of the public. Therefore, in order for a true democracy to prevail – it must spring from the will of the people. The more America attempts to force governmental structure on the Iraqis, the more the Iraqis will hate the Americans, and perhaps the name of democracy as well.

As for the next valid question: when are we getting out? The Bush Administration has failed to convey a clear exit strategy for American troops to pull out of Iraqi territory. The years have been long. The days have been longer – each breeding more deaths: more parents, siblings, nieces and nephews lost. Was it worth the cost? Take a look at the numbers and decide for yourself.





ARTS AND CULTURE

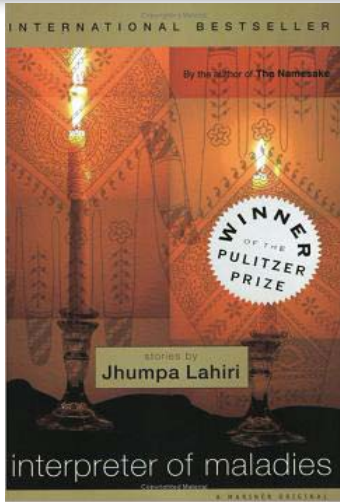


A Review of *The Interpreter of Maladies*

By Alexa Bryn
(‘08)

Jhumpa Lahiri is a master at capturing intimate moments with a subtle poignancy. Her tools are simple – tastes, smells, colors and objects – all indicative of the people and relationships that bear them. What is so remarkable about *The Interpreter of Maladies* is the way that Lahiri, through her eloquent prose, coaxes the reader into the foreign, yet intimate worlds she creates. Like a steaming cup of tea, Lahiri’s prose soothes and stings, so that the reader – like Lahiri’s characters – leaves each story a different person than before.

In the “Interpreter of Maladies,” the title story of her Pulitzer-Prize winning collection, an American woman tells a tour guide in India of a secret she has guiltily borne for eight years – hoping that her lack of intimacy with this stranger will make divulging the secret easier. But in sharing something so personal with a man she has only just met, she validates him, in a way his own wife never has. Though the two will never meet again, this moment of intimacy continues to affect them long after it is over – stretching their bond over continents. This same intimacy occurs in “When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine,” as Lahiri captures a young girl’s fascination with her parents’ older Indian friend. Mr. Pirzada visits the girl’s home each evening while his country,



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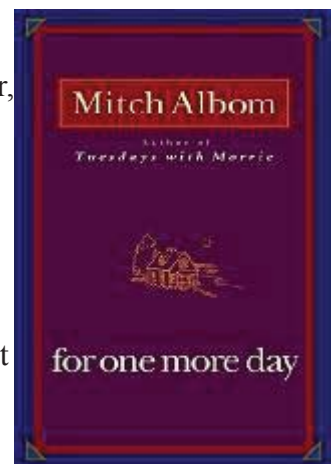
A review of *For One More Day* by Mitch Albom

By Nonny Gross (‘09)

What would you do if you could have one more day with a person you lost, one last chance to tell that person how you feel? What would you say? What would you fix?

In Mitch Albom’s newest novel, *For One More Day*, he explores these philosophical questions – causing the reader to contemplate the fleeting nature of life and the importance of maintaining healthy relationships. Albom conveys his message through his protagonist, Charley Benetto, a man who has hit rock bottom due to severe alcoholism. His lost baseball career and his dissolved family life have degenerated him to the point that he decides to take his own life. Just when his failed attempt leaves him hanging between life and death, he receives the chance to spend one more day with his mother, a woman who died eight years earlier.

As a child, Charley’s father forced him to choose between his parents, and though Charley chose his father, he was nonetheless abandoned by him. Though his mother would have gone to the end of the earth for Charley, he refused to return home and present her with the love and care she deserved. He left her alone for many years, absent during her fatal heart attack. Living with great remorse for this, Charley is given the



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embroiled in war with Pakistan. Each night as Mr. Prizada arrives, he engages in a ritual with the young girl where he presents her with a piece of candy. She keeps the candies in her jewelry box, and counts them nightly – even after he returns to his country – always thinking of him. Lahiri seems to be saying that it is these small moments in time – where strangers connect through glances, secrets, rituals, and pain – that shape and heal us all.

In a different set of stories, Lahiri contrasts the intimacy between strangers, with the lack of intimacy that too often exists between relatives and spouses. In “A Temporary Matter,” a couple who has drifted apart from one another find momentary intimacy when their power is cut off for a week. Although they are unable to speak when the lights are on, in the darkness they play a game where they divulge a new secret about themselves each night, until finally,

For One More Day

Continued from Page 8

powerful opportunity to meet her again and rectify his mistakes.

With its surreal, parable-like quality, *For One More Day* is the memorable story of love, forgiveness and family that drives home the age-old message “carpe diem,” or “seize the day.” As Charley’s mother says, “It’s such a shame to waste time. We always think we have so much of it.” Since most of us probably can’t have “one more day,” we learn from this book that we must take each opportunity to make things right before it is too late. You never know when a loved one is going to leave you, and when it happens, you want to be confident that your relationship was the best that it could have possibly been. Although the message is somewhat trite, what makes this novel special is the universality of Charlie’s experience. However surreal the narrative may seem, its concepts are all too real in our hearts.

each divulges a secret that shatters the other. In a jarring final scene, they cry together in the candlelight, intimate only through their pain. In a later story, “Mrs. Sen’s,” an older Indian woman – homesick and lonely in America – babysits for a young boy, Elliot, who is disconnected from his emotionally-absent mother. As Mrs. Sen, so disconnected from everything American, yearns for her family in Calcutta, she is buoyed by her relationship with Elliot. He validates her by attentively watching her knit and chop vegetables, eating her Indian food, and listening to her tales of home. In a particularly moving moment of disconnect, Elliot’s mother spits out Mrs. Sen’s food, finding the food that he so loves and needs, strange and unappetizing.

Though all of Lahiri’s characters are of Indian descent, it is only in her last story, “The Third and Final Continent,” that she confronts head-on the difficult task of finding intimacy in a strange land. In this story, a young groom in an arranged marriage in India leaves his new bride, and moves to America to work in the MIT library. Culture-shocked, he begins to dread his bride’s arrival in America – fearing her homesickness. Though they hardly know each other and their relationship is awkward at first, Lahiri conveys the beautiful way in which the culture barrier they experience in America brings them together.

At the end of the story, the young Indian immigrant sums up the experience of all of Lahiri’s characters, stating: “I know that my achievement is quite ordinary. I am not the only man to seek his fortune far from home, and certainly am not the first. Still, there are times I am bewildered by each mile I have traveled, each meal I have eaten, each person I have known, each room in which I have slept. As ordinary as it all appears, there are times when it is beyond my imagination.” Though all of these encounters – among strangers, relatives, couples, and immigrants -- appear to be ordinary, Lahiri is able to breathe extraordinary humanity into each of them. Her words are simple, yet her stories carry such raw emotion, that they never cease to amaze me.



A New and Improved Marie Antoinette?

By Martha Baumgarten ('10)



Marie Antoinette has always been known as a cruel and frivolous monarch, one who was insensitive to the needs of her people. In the movie “Marie Antoinette” however, director Sofia Coppola gives the audience an entirely different insight into Marie Antoinette’s character. Coppola introduces Marie as a young girl at the tender age of 17, taken from her royal Austrian home to France, and forced into a politically-arranged marriage. Marie carries the burden of producing an heir to the French monarchy – an impossible task considering that her husband refuses to consummate her marriage. Coppola makes the audience feel sympathetic to Marie, and empathize with the pressure that she experiences.

The movie is truly an aesthetic masterpiece. Coppola’s approach to filming this historical film was unique. She juxtaposed elaborate sets and period costumes with modern music and current accents. The movie was filmed in the beautiful palace of Versailles, and the period furniture, costumes, and scenery were absolutely breathtaking. The many aesthetic touches lent a tremendous realism to the movie.

Unfortunately, the storyline just couldn’t match the aesthetics. At times, I had the feeling that the same original conflict was simply recurring in similar scenes. I left feeling that I had seen the movie numerous times before it actually finished. The film even ended abruptly, without explaining what ultimately happens to Marie.

Still, Dunst’s performance was splendid. She tried valiantly to breath life into the relatively flat and one-dimensional character Coppola created. If you like Kirsten Dunst, or if you simply want to lose yourself for 2 hours amidst beautiful period costumes and scenery, you should definitely see “Marie Antoinette.”

Come Check
Out...

Racheli's Closet

A NEW Boutique for girls, teens, and
women!

Trendy
Modest
Fashionable

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Boca Raton, FL
*On Montoya Circle

Contact Peggy Levy at (561) 929-0456

Everything's Tov at



Esther Amram ('10)

Boca Tov, located on
Powerline Road in Boca

Raton, is the new hangout for teens.

Under the leadership of the BRS Kollel, the new and improved restaurant has shown to be a success. Serving soups, salads, pastas, pizzas, desserts and more, the menu seems endless. Yet what is most special about the meal, is that you can eat with a large screen-TV in front of you. The TV even shows live footage of the Kotel through a web-cam! If that is not your style, you can pick up a book and learn Torah Lishma while you dine. They have a huge variety of books, ranging from *The Magic Touch* to *Living Inspired*. The couches are comfortable, perfect for lounging around and having a “kosher” time. The ambiance in Boca Tov is relaxed – it’s a great place to chill out, and a convenient place for Boca kids to grab a quick and tasty bite. Boca Tov is the place to be!



The Ticking Clock

By Avital Abir ('08)

I am a clock that has ticked and tocked
I'm the only one in the house up past eleven o'clock
My eyes are open, I'm wide-awake
So others won't make devastating mistakes
It's my job to keep everyone running on time
So that no one will ever fall behind

People look to me when they're feeling crazy
People look to me when things get hazy
You would think I would get sick of this life-style,
But truth be told, my job is quite worthwhile
For from up here I see man's potential
And how everything he does is consequential.

Man always thinks his time is too short,
And so here is my inspiring retort
Time is grand, time is sublime
Without time we would never be able to earn a dime
From the moment we are born until we are grown
Time represents the unknown
Yet, every hour, minute and second matters
Because time heals and time shatters.

Each moment brings us to where we are
We don't only get places with our cars
You see if we use and appreciate our time
We can all elevate ourselves to our prime
So say goodbye to procrastination and hesitation
And greet each moment with much elation.



The Swing

By Tamar Koenigsberg ('08)

As I visit my swing

My wooden home

I remember myself as a girl
Liberated, swaying in the wind

The crevices in the wood tell the tales of my
past
All my anger and pain
Relieved by my unconditional friend
The laughter that once danced upon her
Forever engraved in her seat

The swing has now grown old
Jagged, useless
Her splinters start to seep into my skin
Her wooden base transformed
No longer able to carry children
Helpless

I watch my son pick up the swing's pieces
Decrepitly strewn across my garage
Rough as calloused, seasoned skin
Lonely

As he begins to remold my childhood toy
I am scared for the splinters to cut him
But I realize I must let them
I will have to watch him fall
And rise again

As he secures the last screw
And climbs up on the seat
I feel young and free again
Eager to watch him embark
On his own life journey.



SPORTS



Heat Repeat?

By David Rand ('10)

Last season, the Miami Heat overcame the Chicago Bulls, the New Jersey Nets, and the Dallas Mavericks en route to their 1st NBA championship. After a relatively quiet, but nonetheless positive off-season, many experts are predicting the Heat to win their second NBA finals in as many years -- and if you ask me, I'll take their chances. With that being said, it'll surely be no cake walk, with the Eastern Conference becoming even stronger.

Miami fans are ecstatic about this upcoming season and have been chanting "Heat Repeat!" since last summer. Alonzo Mourning himself, like Shaq when he first arrived, has already predicted, in front of tens of thousands of fans, that his Heat will again be crowned NBA champs. They most certainly have a shot, with the lethal combination of Wade and Shaq leading the way. It'll be interesting to see if Zo can call the shots as well as the Shaq daddy.

From a fan's standpoint, Chicago, New Jersey, and Detroit are the few teams in the East that challenge the Heat (Oh wait! I forgot about the Knicks). After a strong off-season, the Bulls pose the biggest threat to the Heat. They snatched up Big Ben Wallace from the Motor City, as well as adding veteran P.J. Brown to their young and talented line-up. Up and coming guards Ben Gordon and Kirk Hinrich are going to build off of their already impressive careers, as the Bulls get ready to take things to the next level. Not to mention, they already proved that they can handle the Heat, when they crushed the former champs on opening night. The Detroit Pistons won consecutive Eastern Conference championships, before the Heat took it away from them. The loss of Ben Wallace, a former defensive player of the year, as well as an icon in the city of Detroit, was definitely hard to swallow for Detroit fans. Detroit filled the void left by Wallace by bringing in former



Wade slam dunks against the Wizards

San Antonio Spur, Nazr Mohammad, who brings a different style than Wallace, and will help Detroit in crunch time with free throws. With the other four starters from last season, Detroit is always a scary match-up. New Jersey will also be a tough opponent, with Jefferson, Carter, and Kidd all capable of 25 points in a night. In the West, the Suns, Mavs, Spurs, or Jazz, could very well face the Heat come this June.

The sky is the limit for this Heat team. However, it won't be easy for these guys to repeat. The Bulls, Pistons, and Nets are all trying to catch up to them. Like always, if they want to go far, the Heat will have to beat these teams, and they will face them a combined 11 times this season. Each one of these games is going to be a crucial milestone in the Heat's road to what hopefully will lead to another championship ring.