

# The BASH

THE BNEI AKIVA SCHOOLS HEADLINES

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## STUDCO vs COVID

Update from the Legendary President of Ulpana

**ARIELLE MAYER**  
PRESIDENT, UO STUDENT COUNCIL

Hey BAS! Congrats, we made it through 2020! Who knew? While this has been the craziest year ever, I'm so thankful for each and every one of you for making this year as amazing as it has been so far, even with all of our restrictions. COVID-19 only helped us prove how special BAS is and that nothing will get in the way of us having an amazing year! B'Ezrat Hashem, the next half of the school year will be even better and safer, but we should continue to have the same amount of ruach and achdut that constantly surrounds the BAS community no matter what. This connection is so strong that not even a worldwide pandemic can break us apart, so thank you all for your incredible ruach and positivity!

This year has been anything but normal, but thank G-d, we've still been able to have many exciting programs and activities going on while social distancing and wearing masks. During the first month of school, we had the annual Freshie-Senior BBQ, had an ice cream truck come to school, made bracelets for our sisters, and participated in a super fun see-run-build candy Sukkah competition by grades. The COVID-19 restrictions aren't stopping us from having an amazing year! Even during our week of online school, we continued to have fun activities such as daily activity booklets with fun games for everyone to complete. The month continued (in person!) with a picture scavenger hunt in honour of parshat Lech Lecha and we were able to learn more about Avraham's journey to Israel. Of course, we can't forget about the Ulpana's Got Talent competition! On the weekend that Shabbaton was supposed to be, we had some exciting surprises for you all. We enjoyed some delicious Kawartha Dairy ice cream and the photobooth by the "lake". We felt just like we were at Fern Resort! We then watched a fun video of teacher competitions and had each class predict the winners. Overall, these past three months have been incredible and I'm so grateful that we've been able to spend them together in person.

This year can be looked at in two ways: an excuse to stop trying, or a reason to grow even further. COVID-19 is only a part of our year, but it does not define how our year will be; that is up to us. I am so confident that we will be able to make the most of this year, no matter the challenges or obstacles in our way. We have already been able to do so much in these short three months and I guarantee you that the rest of the year will be just as amazing, if not better, whether we're in person or online. I can't wait to B'Ezrat Hashem see you all again after the break!



## Things To Do Over Winter Break

**RACHEL GOLDSTEIN**

Do you ever find yourself feeling bored out of your mind whenever there's a vacation from school? Do you want to spice up your life and be more content than 110% of the world's population? Well this article is definitely for you (no clickbait)! Here is a list of ten, COVID-friendly must-dos for over winter break, and it doesn't include completing the school assignments that were due two weeks ago. Enjoy!

1. Go on a technology cleanse. Throw your phone out the window and buy a pigeon to deliver messages instead. People will be in shock when they find a pigeon casually sitting on their windowsill. You'll likely become a trendsetter.
2. Annoy your siblings and family. It's just a given.
3. Learn a new language – because how awesome would it be to have a full-on conversation with Kesty in Russian?

4. Go on socially distant walks with your friends. Don't forget to complain to them about how you've been learning from home since the beginning of school.
5. Take up a new hobby – whether that's cooking, baking, running, or sleeping.
6. Travel vicariously to distant lands.
7. Test the bag of old batteries down in the basement.
8. Assemble new furniture from Ikea. That is guaranteed to take you three months to do. While you're at it, translate the whole Ikea catalogue into English.
9. Ponder life's pressing questions: Do Danish people eat danishes for breakfast?
10. Breathe — and wait for things to return to normal!

# Ask Me About My Mask!

IZZY ADLER

Forget about designer handbags and avant-garde shoes, face masks are all the rage! There are plenty of different masks out there, but have you ever thought about whether you are purchasing the correct one? You would hate to be walking around in last week's mask while everybody else is strutting through the school hallways with the best of the best.

Which mask is the best, though? Truthfully, shopping for a mask is very similar to shopping for a pair of shoes. It must fit right, feel right, and look right. Experts say that the fabric masks are the best, especially when it is difficult to maintain a two metre physical distance from other people. Fabric masks are like Converse – everybody has them laying around somewhere, and they come in every single pattern and colour imaginable. In fact, wearing a fabric mask can reduce the spread of your own infectious respiratory droplets, in other words... your germs. I know what you are thinking: "If this is true, I'm just going to make my own fabric masks! Why waste the money?" Absolutely not! Homemade masks are not proper medical devices and therefore are not regulated like a medical mask is. Every single mask you purchase to reduce the spread of COVID-19 has been tested to recognized standards (we hope). Without the proper internal nasal bar inside the mask, the virus particles will not be blocked.

Additionally, masks with exhalation valves are not recommended either. These masks are like the ten-inch heels, everybody wants them, but once you have them on your body you realize how awful they truly are. These masks do not protect others from COVID-19 or limit the virus. This is why the masks with respirators, like the N95, are reserved for health care providers directing care to COVID-19 patients.

Finally, the most common mask we see is the classic medical mask. These masks are like the UGG boots in the shoe world, everybody has them! These masks are the best for protecting health care providers and slowing the spread of the virus. So next time you find yourself wondering which mask to buy, ask yourself if you would rather wear Converse, ten-inch heels, or UGG boots.



## מה קורה עם השליחים שלנו?

אלי יסאר

מאז שהתחילה שנת הלימודים נאלצנו להסתגל לכל השינויים שקוביד גרם. עם זאת, דבר אחד שאנחנו אסירי תודה עליו הוא שלא היינו צריכים להתחיל את השנה בלי השליחים האהובים עלינו. השנה, כמו בכל השנים הקודמות, בית הספר שלנו הביא קבוצה נוספת של מורים ישראלים להצטרף למשפחת בתי הספר בני עקיבא ואנחנו כל כך שמחים על הצטרפותם. אחת השליחות היא המורה נטעיה וכדי להכיר אותה קצת יותר טוב שאלתי אותה כמה שאלות. תודה לך מורה נטעיה על זמנך!

נוס עשר! (: והעובדה שהגעתי לכאן לבד בלי המשפחה.

**מה הדבר שהכי טוב בעיניך בהתנהלות הקנדית, האם יש משהו שהיית מאמצת?**

הרוגע! הכל מתנהל בנחת, אין הרבה לחץ ולדעתי זה שונה מאוד.

**למה את הכי מתגעגעת בארץ?**

וודאי שאני מתגעגעת למשפחה שלי, וגם, זה ישמע מוזר, אבל אני מתגעגעת לחוצפה הישראלית (:

**אנו לומדים מהתורה שלפעמים אנו זקוקים למישהו מבחוץ עם נקודת מבט חדשה שתעזור לנו להשתפר, מה את יכולה להציע לנו מנקודת הראיה שלך?**

לאור העובדה שקשה מאוד להפריד את חווית המציאות של קנדה בזמן הקורונה מהחוויה של המציאות בקנדה בתקופה רגילה, קשה לי מאוד להעריך ולשפוט את המצב באופן אובייקטיבי...

**האם יש עוד משהו שתציי להוסיף?**

אני כל כך שמחה שזכיתי להגיע לכאן ולהכיר אנשים נהדרים וקהילה מדהימה, אין עוד הרבה כאלה! מאתלת לכולם בהצלחה!

אנחנו למדים שההגעה של נטעיה כמו גם השליחים האחרים כרוכים בהשקעה וויתורים מצידם. זוהי הזדמנות נפלאה להודות לכולכם!

**אלי: כדי להתחיל, האם תוכלי לספר לנו משהו חדש על עצמך (תחומי העניין שלך, מדוע החלטת להיות מורה)?**

נטעיה: האמת היא שאני אוהבת הרבה דברים; אני אוהבת עובדות הנדומליות ומעניינות ותמיד מנסה להכניס אותן לשיעורים שלי. אני מאוד אוהבת לעזור לאנשים, בהתחלה הייתי בכלל אמורה להיות פסיכולוגית, למרות שזה לא כזה שונה מלהיות מורה (: אבל "אדם מתכנן וה' צוחק..."

**האם אי פעם היית בקנדה בעבר או שזו הפעם הראשונה שלך?**

זו פעם ראשונה שאני חיה ועובדת בחו"ל וזו חוויה מעניינת ומאתגרת כאחד.

**מה גרם לך להחליט להגיע לקנדה עכשיו, בתקופה כל כך מאתגרת?**

קודם כל אני מודה על ההזדמנות להגיע ולהיות חלק בקהילה המדהימה הזו, במיוחד בזמנים כה קשים. דווקא בתקופה כזו אני חושבת שהרגשתי שיש כאן הזדמנות בשבילי באמת לצאת לשליחות ולעשות משהו למען האמונה שלי וקירוב הלבבות בעם ישראל.

**לפעמים, האופי הקנדי מתנגש עם האופי הישראלי. האם את מרגישה שהתרגלת להבדלי התרבות?**

לא! אני חושבת שאני אצטרך עוד כמה חודשים טובים עד שאתרגל... לא רק לאופי, אלא גם למושגים שונים. כמו למשל ההבדלים בין מעלות פרנהייט לצלזיוס, מה שגרם לכך שהשבת הראשונה שלי בקנדה היתה עם אוכל לא מבושל בחלקו.

**מה היה האתגר הגדול ביותר במעברך לטורונטו?**

הקור! השלג! העובדה שאני לא יודעת איך נוהגים במי-



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## Thank You, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

### A Tribute to a Renowned Jewish Leader

ELI YISSAR AND RENA TORCZYNER

On Motzei Shabbat of November 7th, the world shook with the news of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks's passing. Rabbi Sacks *zt"l* was a leader who impacted us all by connecting the modern world to Orthodox thought and inspired so many of us in countless ways of life. We have all surely read multiple tributes already and have taken his life lessons to heart. As high school students, we are all at a point when we must choose what we believe in and how we want to act. We should try to connect to Rabbi Sacks's lessons and live by them every day. Here are three incredible quotes from the Rabbi himself that will help us do so.

1. "Make space in your life for the things that matter, for family and friends, love and generosity, fun and joy. Without this, you will burn out in mid-career and wonder where your life went." We understand, as high schoolers we are often so focused on all of the tests and assignments we have to study for that we don't have time for the fun stuff. But let's take Rabbi Sacks' lesson to heart and really try to do one extra mitzvah every day.

2. "To ask is to believe that somewhere there is an answer...we ask not because we doubt but because we believe." It is not uncommon for high school students to find themselves wondering about the many aspects of Judaism. While we could run away from these questions, we urge everyone to find a teacher or Rabbi that we trust and ask them instead. This way, we will be able to further connect with Hashem and Judaism.

3. "While everyone else is thinking about economics and politics, executive salaries and the future of the euro, do the opposite, even if it's hard. Invest in the spirit." We all know we have been guilty of doing this during the recent American elections. It's totally alright to educate ourselves and be involved in current events. Still, while we do so, let's not forget to focus on our spirits as well and to trust in Hashem's plan.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks *zt"l* has been an incredible leader for so long, and there are many more lessons that we can learn from him. I hope that these three will be able to guide us. In light of Hanukkah, let's not forget one last quote from the Rabbi: "Hanukkah is about the freedom to be true to what we believe without denying the freedom of those who believe otherwise. It's about lighting our candle, while not being threatened by or threatening anyone else's candle." Let's all act on our Jewish pride and make sure we continue to respect others' pride along the way.

## Chanukah and Purim: A Story Comparison

OREL ZVI

Chanukah and Purim are both holidays implemented by the rabbis, and have many similarities. Both holidays feature "colourful" stories that stay in the minds of kids, both celebrate Jewish victory over prosecution, both are filled with miracles, and both are so important that the rabbis turned their observance into rabbinic commandments. With so many similarities between the two holidays and their stories, what is the crucial difference that separates them?

In order to answer this question, we must look deeper into the stories of both holidays. Everything in the world has two parts – the external and the internal. When you first look at something, your eyes tell you what's on the outside. Many of us stop there. Externally, the stories look and sound identical: a nation tries to kill us and we overpower them with the help of G-d, and we react with celebrations of thanks

and joy. But if we take the time to look deep into these stories, we will be able to see the biggest difference, which is the way that the Jewish people were planned to be killed.

On Purim, persecutors wanted to kill ALL the Jews, while on Chanukah, persecutors wanted to kill only observant Jews. When Haman sent out the decree to kill the Jews he stated: "לְהַשְׁמִיד לְהַרְגוֹ וְלֵאמֹד אֶת-כָּל-הַיְהוּדִים מִנְּעַר וְעַד-זָקֵן וְטַף וְנָשִׁים". He sought to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all the Jews, young and old, infants and women. Haman planned an all-out physical attack. Unlike Haman, Antiochus attacked the Jews spiritually, where he did not allow them to worship their own G-d but, rather forced them to worship the Greek gods. Antiochus tried to prevent the Jews from teaching the Torah to their children. He burned Torah scrolls and defiled the Temple. He forced them to eat foods that were forbidden by the Torah. He didn't allow

them to give a Brit Milah and made them work on Shabbat. A spiritual danger towards the Jewish nation is a significantly greater threat than physical danger.

Rabbi Baruch Rosenblum expands on this point by stating that this is the reason the Jews took a stand physically in Chanukah, and not Purim. In the story of Purim when the Jews heard about the terrible decree Haman sent out, Esther told them to have three days of fasting and prayer towards G-d. But in the story of Chanukah, when the Jews met a spiritual danger, they took the problem into their own hands – as seen when Mattathias rounded up a group of religious Jews and went straight into a physical war.

Both stories seem similar until we take a deeper look into it, because only when you would look at something deeply – in order to understand what's "inside" of it – you can find its beauty.

# Israel Advocacy Among Celebrities

## Why Celebrity Influence Matters

RENA TORCZYNER

We live in a world today that preaches freedom of speech. Forums both on and offline spanning hundreds of widely used platforms present this opportunity, and their users take up the pen eagerly to share their thoughts. To give one example: social media, where the passionate of every generation spill their lives, values, and ideals.

What about people who aren't passionate about politics, or particularly educated about current events? They must acquire an opinion, which can be done in either of two ways:

1. Learn the facts and craft the ideas themselves.
2. Read through others' opinions and adopt them as their own.

When discussing a topic like the Middle East, and specifically Israel, many of the indifferent will default to the second option, simply due to the sheer scale of the subject. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict spans *millennia*; it brings into the picture not only Israeli and Palestinian history, but incorporates the West as well, dating back to the British Mandate in the Middle East. It isn't a simple read-through-a-fact-sheet or learn a few stories and you've got it down. Consequently, many turn to pre-formed opinions, and who better to look to for this than the idols of society?

Celebrities (even the definition of the word, and what it entails) are controversial. Nevertheless, one thing we must all acknowledge is that, at the end of the day, these people have a stronger social media platform than the average user, and have amassed a strong fan following among whom their words carry weight. We admire their clothing, their singing, their acting, their personalities (or our narrow perception based on what we see on-screen). Once we become fans, their opinions mean something to

us, so when we are obsessed with a song like "Don't Start Now" and Dua Lipa shares a #FreePalestine post on Twitter, that will have a strong impact on both us and her other 6.6 million followers. The next time we hear someone speaking about the conflict, we have a side to take – perhaps no backup, but a bias that will make it more difficult to convince us into a pro-Israeli perspective.

Still, this goes both ways. While Dua Lipa may not support Israel, Bon Jovi does. So does Scarlett Johansson, and so did Frank Sinatra... from petitions to social media posts to a simple unwavering loyalty,

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### *Once we become fans, their opinions mean something to us,*

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several of those in society's spotlight have stepped up for Israel, in doing so rejecting the discouragement of their pro-Palestinian peers.

We can appreciate this support all the more because of who it is coming from. Not only do these people have a larger platform to express their opinions, but they also have a much greater risk involved. In an industry based on entertainment, you need people supporting you, because without people to entertain you are out of a job. It is walking a very thin line to begin to introduce personal ideas, knowing that many others will not agree with you, and it can end up being detrimental to your career. Most celebrities are highly aware of this, and thus make sure not to speak up about an issue unless they are willing to receive the backlash and continue despite it. It is not an easy decision, and so the Israelis for

whom these celebrities are speaking feel all the more grateful for the support.

Now, where do we stand? We have many of these societal idols who stand for us and many who stand against... but where does that lead us?

It leads us to our turn. If others are speaking up, it's high time we do too. That does not mean targeting BDS supporters or pro-Palestinians. On the contrary, they are not the target audience at all. Everything we do is to convince the undecided, the aforementioned fandom who are neutral in their stance on Israel until their idols make a statement one way or the other. When we respond to an anti-Semitic post, it is not necessarily to convince the author who is already firm in his/her view, rather to make sure that someone who is scrolling through will see that there is more than one side to the story. When we educate ourselves on current events in the Middle East, we are ensuring we will have the ability to shoot down arguments that are based on false premises. When we thank a celebrity for their support, however it is given, we are showing that the backing is mutual – that the hate they get for their decision is not the only feeling they have inspired, because to us, the situation may seem just that much more hopeful for their loyalty.

Celebrities have the power to project their opinions to masses of people, but the groundwork – the obligation to personally interact with others and advocate for our country – falls to us. By learning which people are loyal to us, we can make sure they know the impact they have had, and spread that impact as much as possible throughout our communities – both physical and online. They have spoken out; now it's time for us to move this forward.

## Say Yes to an Israeli Dress: Pnina Tornai's Rise to Fame

IZZY ADLER

Ruffles, bows, taffeta and sparkles all represent the elegance and charm that is displayed on the most elegant gowns in the world. A wedding dress defines the day you remember for the rest of your life. Whether your gown depicts luxury and class or dazzle and flash, the dress tells it all.

Pnina Tornai is an Israeli fashion and wedding dress designer. Before Tornai's rise to fame, she enlisted in Israel's mandatory military service. After serving in the military, Tornai moved to Paris, France to pursue an acting career. During Tornai's time in Paris

she developed a passion for vintage couture fashion. After spending ten years in Paris, she made her way back to Israel and opened a small clothing store in Tel-Aviv with one seamstress. Tornai's shop only consisted of day and evening gowns until a bride walked into the store asking her to recreate one of her evening gowns into a wedding dress. Tornai accepted the challenge and made the dress for her customer. The dress was a major success and was featured on the front page of an Israeli newspaper. Due to the dress's popularity, Tornai attracted a lot of brides-to-be looking for wedding dresses. In

1992, Tornai transformed her shop into a bridal salon.

By 2005, the ever-so-famous New York City bridal boutique, Kleinfeld Bridal, brought Tornai in as a permanent designer for their company. Within two years she was their top vendor. Today, Tornai is the only designer to have her own bridal boutique within Kleinfeld's. Her dresses are sold all over the world, including China, South Korea, Angola, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Israel, the Bahamas, Canada, and the United States. Her gowns are constantly featured on TLC's reality television show *Say Yes to the Dress*, which airs in over 145 countries. Pictures of her gowns have been published in *People Magazine*, *The New York Times Fashion & Style Magazine*, and *Women's Wear Daily*

*Fashion Magazine*. Each and every one of Tornai's gowns is hand sewn with fabrics imported from Europe. Her famous body-hugging corsets are dressed up with Swarovski crystals and precious stones. She also has an entire modest line for religious Jewish & Muslim brides.

Tornai exhibits the true meaning of fashion. She takes inspiration from Israel and around the world to build her own bridal empire that has truly taken the world by storm. It is very important for an Israeli designer like Pnina Tornai to work internationally. Brides of all backgrounds gain respect for the Israelis and the Jewish people when they fawn over a Pnina Tornai wedding dress.

# Gen Z's Perception of the Holocaust

## The Influence of TikTok on Holocaust Education

ELI YISSAR

By now, I am sure that everyone reading this article knows about TikTok, the social media platform that has taken the world by storm. The platform is all about sharing videos and trying to get featured on the 'For You' recommendations page for other users, in order to receive more views. This results in the video maker's fifteen seconds of fame. Creators have taken this in various directions: some have chosen the comedy route, others have tried to show off their talents (dancing in particular), and others have been accused of using their looks to gain followers. Regardless of the way it started, many people have become so concerned with obtaining their fifteen seconds of fame that some stopped thinking some of their decisions through.

Over the past few months, there have been several trends, which catch on and are recreated by thousands of TikTok users. Many of these trends are innocent and entertaining, but one that does not fit either of those adjectives is the Holocaust trend. This trend involved people dressing up as Holocaust victims (wearing yellow stars, striped shirts, and creating bruises with their makeup), some even used the backdrop of a Nazi concentration camp, and others pretended that they were in heaven and told their Holocaust story. Some TikTokers pretended to die in their showers, and some acted as if they were walking towards a gas chamber. Needless to say, many people on this platform were appalled by the trend and called out some of the people who made these videos. Although this trend is no longer in play it is important to talk about how we, as a Jewish community, can respond to such uploads.

After the backlash, many people came out to say that they created these videos in order to reach out to the younger generation and educate them about the horrors of the Holocaust. They chose to use a platform with which they were comfortable, and knew that younger people were as well. These TikTokers figured that this would be a good way to bring aware-



Photo by Solen Feyissa on Unsplash

ness, especially at a time when Holocaust denial is at a rise. We all know the saying, *it's the thought that counts*. It follows that we should be able to forgive these users whilst still showing them the error in their judgement. There are, after all, much better ways to educate young people about the Holocaust, even while still using TikTok.

Sadly, this was not the case for many others who uploaded Holocaust trend videos. Many had the goal of making fun of the atrocities that occurred in the Holocaust and created a form of denial, sending the message that, *"It couldn't have been that bad; why are you Jews always complaining about it?"* Some upladders went so far as to compare IDF soldiers to Nazi criminals. This made it difficult to forget or justify.

Is it enough to just ignore such videos? This is a question that I had asked myself when I first came across them. I didn't know what the best solution was, but I couldn't just keep scrolling. Although I am definitely not a social media expert, this is what I have learned so far:

1. **The comments section makes a difference.** More often than not, people who are offended by certain posts choose not to do anything about them because they don't think anything they write will make a difference to the original poster. I used to be one of those people, but now, I am here to inform you that this is not the

case! How many times have any of you scrolled through the comments of a TikTok video, or other social media post, because you didn't understand a joke? Or maybe, you wanted to make sure that you were not the only one that found it funny? People go through the comments all the time which makes it all the more important to call out people who are including false, offensive, or even harmful information in their videos. That way, when someone doesn't know anything about the topic (which is usually the vast majority of viewers) and looks through the comments section for some more information, they will learn that there are multiple points of view and that the video posted is not the word of G-d. That being said, you are definitely not expected to write a five paragraph essay teaching them about Jewish history; it would suffice to write, *this is not true* followed by a little bit of information on how you know that.

2. **All of these people are not necessarily antisemitic.** I know, the first reaction for us (the people have been educated about the Holocaust all our lives) is to call these people antisemitic, and leave it at that. Here is the thing... many of these people have not been as well-educated about the genocide as we have been. They don't come from an evil place, just an ignorant one, so the best way to react is to educate. Try letting these people

know a little more about the topic. Express the reason that you found the video offensive. This could even be a great lesson for us to learn. If we don't know enough about a topic, we should never pretend we do because we could easily be spreading offensive misinformation, which is the last thing any of us want.

3. **Comparing Israel to Nazi Germany, or the IDF to Nazi soldiers is antisemitic.** In this case, using education is incredibly important, primarily for all the people who will be seeing the video without knowing the truth. Such statements try to erase the significance and uniqueness of the Holocaust, while also attacking the validity of Israel as a state. The best way to go about this is to be very clear about what kind of things Israel does today and explicitly writing the difference between that and the atrocities of the Holocaust. Some arguments can include: Israel has given equal citizenship status to all of its citizens regardless of religion and has never done anything to exterminate a group of people, whereas the Holocaust was a genocide that murdered eleven million innocent people (you definitely don't have to only talk about the Jews, bring up the murder of the communists, the disabled, the gypsies, the LGBTQ+ community, etc).

Remember: your voice matters. Use it. People care what you have to say.

# Israel's Advancements in Alzheimer's Dementia

LIR YISSAR

January is Alzheimer's Awareness month in Canada. Alzheimer's is a growing problem with more than 50 million people suffering from this disease worldwide. To raise money for a cure please donate to Alzheimer's Society of Canada and follow @alzheimers\_helpglobal to help raise awareness. Even when it seems that there is no way to stop this disease from taking over our loved ones, people around the world are working hard in order to find a cure, including Israel.

Once, we were full of blossoming trees. Trees that would change colours every fall. Trees that spread deep roots. Then, a few trees in a huge forest get poisoned. Slowly, one tree fell, another's leaves didn't grow back, and all of the beautiful roots began disintegrating. This is our forest of memories and the poison is Alzheimer's Dementia (AD).

Alzheimer's Dementia is a disease that causes memory loss in its early stages, and worsens in its later stages to the point where an individual cannot carry out simple conversations or respond to his/her surroundings. At the moment, AD has no cure but scientists around the world are constantly working together to progress the existing methods of preventing, diagnosing, and treating this overpowering brain disorder. Israeli scientists are among the collaborators. They have been working hard for years to find different treatments in order to help those suffering from Alzheimer's Disease, and, hopefully, cure the disease. Here are a few examples of promising Israeli inventions and discoveries.

## Prevention

Many different genetic mutations and environmental factors increase the risk of an individual being diagnosed with Alzheimer's Dementia. This includes; heart disease, diabetes, stroke, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Israeli scientist Professor Eitan Okun, at Paul E. Feder Alzheimer's Research Lab in Bar-Ilan University, has been testing an Alzheimer's Vaccine.

Vaccines give the body a weakened dose of a virus in order to help build immunity against the stronger villain. Okun's technique is to prepare the body to attack amyloid beta protein clumps in the brain, the signature sign of AD.

Okun has already been experimenting on mice and is now moving on to a clinical trial that is focused on people who have a high risk of developing early onset (under 50 years of age) Alzheimer's Disease. These trials will allow Okun to determine if the vaccine is successful and how it affects the human body. Depending on the results, Okun will understand how much more time is needed before it can go global.

Okun has also been exploring different ways to diagnose AD early on, using advanced MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) and technologies to detect the early progression of amyloid beta protein.

## Diagnosis

PET scans and spinal taps are now the most reliable and standard way of diagnosing Alzheimer's Disease around the world, but they are expensive and have many risks, including infections, brain herniation, and high radiation exposure. Israel is developing tests that are non-invasive, affordable and can provide an earlier diagnosis.

A new MRI technique records molecular changes in brain tissue, which could help early diagnosis in both Alzheimer's and



Parkinson's Disease. This is being developed by researchers from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Dr. Aviv Mezer, a lead researcher, explains that the new MRI technique will allow doctors to differentiate between brain scans of the same patient that were taken over a period of time, to compare the healthy and diseased brain tissue.

Dr. Shahar Arzy, director of the computational neuropsychiatry lab at Hadassah Hebrew University Medical Center in Jerusalem, worked with her team to create Clara. Clara works as an artificially intelligent ChatBot that could potentially detect early signs of Alzheimer's Disease, based on the understanding that AD affects the brain's orientation system before memory. Using this information, Clara asks patients about themselves and their relationships with people, events, and places. Then, Clara compares the answers to a computer-based test made for diagnosing Alzheimer's Dementia very early on.

Arzy and her team have posted a study claiming that Clara is correct 95% of the time. Clara is now three years into a five-year trial at Harvard to compare data given by the system to data from AD markers taken via Amyloid PET scans, quantitative and functional MRI, and other neuropsychological tests.

## Treatment

There are many different medications for Alzheimer's Disease, including Israeli-made Exelon, but they cannot cure or stop the progression of this disease. Rather, they can relieve or delay symptoms. An Israeli Professor, Marin Kupiec, and colleagues at Tel Aviv University, suggest that it may be possible to reverse the protein clumping involved in neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Disease. Amyloid protein growth increases with age and can lead to neurodegeneration because proteins can create incorrect form, where they're misfolded. Kupiec says that removing glucose from a certain clump of protein makes it dissolve. If results can be repeated in more complex proteins, then scientists will have a new research avenue toward treatments that can reverse the neurodegeneration effect of protein build-up.

These are just a few of the many advances Israel has made towards preventing, diagnosing, and curing Alzheimer's Dementia. Ladostigil, NeuroAD, and ElMindA are a few more. With Israel and the rest of the world working together to fight this awful disease, one day we may be able to live knowing that our forest of trees won't ever lose its leaves.



## Trump and Climate Change

### A Failure for the Ages

JOSEPH NEWMAN

Donald Trump does not play by the rules. His roller coaster ride of a presidency has been one defined by constant reversals and surprises. And yet the 45th president of the United States, unconventional and unpredictable as he may be, has consistently followed one rule in particular throughout his tenure: he does not like to acknowledge the inconvenient. In the Trump universe, America is a country free of racism, COVID-19 is no deadlier than the seasonal flu, and the 2020 Presidential Election was rigged by Joe Biden and the fake news media.

So it is unsurprising that the current commander in chief's attitudes towards the climate crisis are as those of most people to Bigfoot or the Loch Ness monster; climate change, in the President's mind, is a scary idea, but at the end of the day does not exist and is therefore no cause for concern. Long before running for office, Trump loudly questioned the existence of human-caused climate change, making over 120 statements on social media denying climate change or mocking those working to address it before assuming office, as reported by the BBC. In a now-infamous 2012 Tweet, Trump charged that "[t]he concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing non-competitive."

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*Trump's dangerous war against truth has brought climate change denialism... into the American political mainstream*

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And while, after he stepped into the political limelight after his upset electoral win in 2016, he toned down some of his rhetoric, Trump's hostility towards science continues to influence his climate policy. Less than a month after assuming office, Trump appointed climate change denier Scott Pruitt to head the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the country's most powerful environmental regulator. Shortly afterward, in December 2017, contrary to the warnings of top climatologists and despite the US having seen a marked increase in the frequency and severity of natural disasters due to climate change, the Trump administration removed climate change from the Department of Defense's list of national security threats. In 2018, after the publication of the Fourth National Climate Assessment, which warned that unchecked climate change would devastate the American economy, Trump dismissed the findings of the report, telling journalists assembled outside the White House that "I

don't believe it."

But the effects of Donald Trump's beliefs about climate change on US policy have not only been symbolic. This year, Trump slashed EPA funding by 26%, leaving the agency, now led by a former coal lobbyist, forced to end 50 environmental programs and with few resources to conduct crucial research and development to combat the climate crisis. The current president's administration has rolled back numerous Obama-era restrictions on air pollution and scrapped the former President's ambitious Clean Power Plan. The current President's undermining the EPA has weakened the agency's prosecuting power, bringing enforcement of environmental regulations to a 30-year low. Recently, Trump has ordered a sharp increase in logging on public lands under the guise of a wildfire prevention strategy, and authorized drilling for oil in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. The Trump administration has ceased cooperation with the international community in

the fight against climate change, having in 2019 withdrawn the USA from the landmark 2015 Paris Climate Accord, joining only Nicaragua and Syria as the only three countries not party to the agreement. According to a New York Times tally, the Trump administration has to date repealed 84 environmental regulations, and is working to reverse 20 more by the end of his tenure.

Trump's dangerous war against truth has brought climate change denialism, a view once limited to a fringe few conspiracy theorists and "independent scientists" whose research happened to be funded by the oil industry, into the American political mainstream, paving the way for his anti-science campaign to influence America's climate policies for decades to come.

The world stands at a tipping point in the fight against climate change. And while the situation is still salvageable if addressed seriously and with appropriate action, we cannot stand idly by as the world teeters on the brink of a climate catastrophe, with irreversible and disastrous consequences for humanity and the planet. With Trump poised to leave office in January of next year, America has a chance, with renewed respect for science and an emphasis on international cooperation, to reclaim its place as a world leader in the battle of our generation.

## Update on the Incoming COVID-19 Remedy

### What to Expect with Vaccines on the Horizon

MICHAEL ROBERTS

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, life was normal. Surgical masks were almost never worn except in medical contexts. Social distancing was unheard of. Events involving crowds of tens of thousands of people were regular. Hand shaking was widespread. A high-five was the common greeting between friends. Entering others' residences was familiar. Vacations to distant destinations were enthusiastically planned and enjoyed. Closed-book assessments were expected. A sick student stayed home and didn't attend class. There are seemingly infinite others.

Then, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. On March 13th, 2020, the Canadian government passed many laws which interfered with normal life in order to fight the deadly, contagious SARS-COV2 virus, the virus that caused a worldwide pandemic. The wearing of a surgical mask is now mandatory indoors and is often seen outdoors. Social distancing is encouraged. Hand shaking or high-fiving is prohibited, and violators are fined when caught by law enforcement. Inviting others into one's residence is condemned. Recreational aviation is nearly nonexistent. A sick student is expected to attend class remotely. Therefore, all assessments must be open-book or oral.

Fortunately, this won't be the reality for long. There will be a remedy to the COVID-19 pandemic: a vaccine. A vaccine is a product that stimulates a person's immune system to produce immunity to a specific disease, protecting the person from that disease, according to the Center for Disease Control's definition.

There are five stages for a vaccine candidate to get approved: preclinical trials, three phases of clinical trials, and governmental review. Pre-clinical trials are done on human cells and live animals to determine a starting safe dose for human volunteers in the clinical trials. If there is no safe dose, the vaccine candidate is discarded. The first phase of clinical trials determines the highest dose of the vaccine candidate that can be administered without severe side effects through tests on healthy volunteers. The second phase of clinical trials determine whether the dose determined in the first phase works as a remedy (to some degree) for the disease it was intended to treat. The third phase of clinical trials determines whether the vaccine candidate is a better remedy to the disease than a placebo or the standard treatment. Every phase of clinical trials requires more volunteers than the previous.

After the three phases, the vaccine candidate's owner applies for its approval from national governments. The national government reviews the vaccine candidate and does some of



its own testing and decides whether to approve. If they do, the vaccine is available for use in the government's country.

It takes years of research and develop to a vaccine candidate. However, pharmaceutical companies got a head start with SARS-COV vaccine candidates and the SARS-COV2 genome sequence in January 2020. According to the New York Times' COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker, there are: more than 87 vaccine candidates in preclinical trials, 38 vaccine candidates in phase one, 17 vaccine candidates in phase two, 13 vaccine candidates in phase three, and six vaccines prematurely approved by Russia, China, and/or the United Arab Emirates. Those six candidates aren't prematurely approved by Western governments to prevent a non-effective vaccine candidate from encouraging people to stop abiding by the COVID-19 restrictions.

There are three vaccine candidates with primary results. US pharmaceutical corporation Pfizer and German biotechnology company BioNTech wrapped up their

Phase three trials on November 18th, and reported their vaccine candidate, BNT162b2, to have a 95% efficiency rate, way above the US Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) minimum of 50%. Pfizer and BioNTech submitted an emergency approval application to the FDA on November 20th and the results are pending.

US-based Moderna also has promising phase three results. A preliminary analysis has reported that their vaccine candidate, mRNA-1273, is 94.5% effective. 90 out of 95 phase three volunteers who got COVID-19 took a placebo, not the vaccine. Moderna plans to submit an emergency approval application within the next few weeks.

British-Swedish pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca and the UK's University of Oxford have a vaccine candidate, AZD1222, with promising preliminary results. There are two shots for AZD1222 – one initial shot, and one booster. Among the volunteers who received the initial shot at full dose, there was only a 62% rate of efficiency. Among the volunteers who received the initial

shot at half the dose, there was a 90% efficiency rate. However, less than 2 800 volunteers received the initial shot at half the dose, so the data is still inconclusive. If the AstraZeneca vaccine is approved, it will be easier to mass produce, store, and afford than the above vaccine candidates, which are genetic vaccines. They inject SARS-COV2 genes into human cells to cause an immune response. On the other hand, this vaccine candidate is a viral vector, a harmless virus engineered to carry some SARS-COV2 genes.

There is immense hope that a vaccine candidate will be approved soon. This will be great, as a vaccine will be the main remedy for the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we must continue to abide by public health guidelines to stop the spread of SARS-COV2 until those guidelines are retracted by public health agencies. Hopefully, the COVID-19 pandemic will end soon so we can return to the normal life we currently miss so much.



## How President Trump Changed America and the World for Good

### A Positive Look into the Tenure of the 45th President of the United States

NOAH BERGER

On June 16th, 2015, President Donald J. Trump announced his candidacy for the Republican Party. Few took his announcement seriously, as he was a political outsider.

However, after landslide victories in the primaries, Donald J. Trump was declared the victor of the Republican Party nomination, and went on to win the 2016 election. From the first day of his campaign, he was attacked by the mainstream media (dominated by CNN and MSNBC), as well as “parroted by the Canadian media” as quoted by Sir Conrad Black.

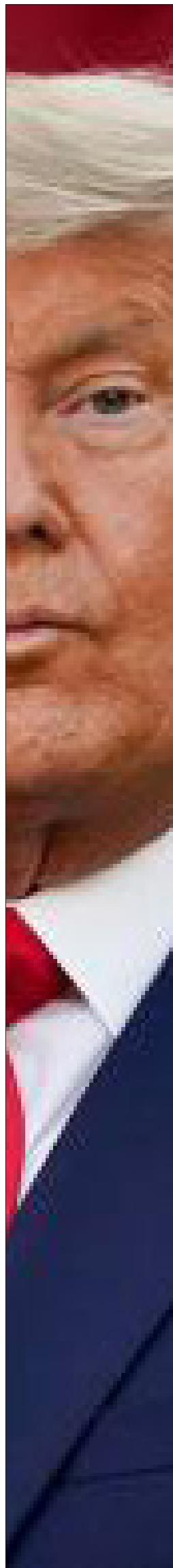
During President Trump’s campaign, his motto was “Make America Great Again”. After eight years of limited accomplishments by President Obama and Vice-President Joe Biden, America needed a change. President Trump put America first by bringing jobs back to the US from China, withdrawing from the radical Paris Climate Agreement, and pulling out of the Iran Nuclear Deal – all while protecting America’s borders by building the Southern Border Wall and placing travel bans on countries associated with terrorism. At the time of this article’s writing, the non-certified President-Elect Joe Biden wants to reverse putting America first. He will re-enter the Paris Climate Agreement and Iran Nuclear Deal, and loosen border restrictions which many fear.

Before COVID-19, the US had the greatest economy of the world. Tax Reform for large corporations helped increase America’s wealth and jobs. Record low unemployment numbers were documented for minorities. The Dow Jones increased from 18,000 to nearly 30,000 points during Trump’s first three years. As of September 2018, according to the White House, there had been an increase of 400,000 manufacturing jobs, and 3.9 million Americans had been lifted off of food stamps.

President Trump’s most notable accomplishment is his foreign policy, which has been mostly ignored by mainstream media. Destroying ISIS, killing its leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and Iranian General Soleimani were all relegated to the bottom of the newsfeed, just like the Abraham Accords, the recent normalization of relations between Israel, Bahrain, UAE and Sudan. The moving of the embassy to Jerusalem and recognizing the Golan Heights were both moves that showed America’s belief in the Jewish State of Israel.

When COVID-19 came to the US, President Trump was quick to respond by closing the border to China. Response was immediate from some that the President was xenophobic, but he was actually later criticized for not acting sooner. The ongoing mainstream media bias against President Trump only increased with Big Tech Censorship, such as the censoring of the Hunter Biden corruption scandal. Recently, the Twitter CEO apologized for this censorship.

The past four years of President Trump have been a gift to America. Some of challenges to the 2020 election are legitimate and all ballots and challenges should be heard before certifying the election. Even if Joe Biden legitimately wins the Presidency, America can look forward to 2024 when President Trump has the chance to take it back.



## Injured America

### The Impact of Four Years of Donald Trump

BINYAMIN MAZIN

The residents of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue are expected to be good people that lead the United States to peace, unity, and safety. Yet, four years of Donald Trump’s outrages and terrible leadership has negatively affected Americans in many ways.

While the U.S. has assisted peace deals in the Middle East, anti-Semitic hate crimes have been on the rise throughout the country. In 2017, as reported by the FBI, there were 938 anti-Semitic hate crimes, up 40% from 684 cases in 2016. It’s no wonder hate crimes have risen with a xenophobic President (as exemplified by the president’s own words), as people feel he is backing their actions. Donald Trump also believes in many harmful conspiracy theories. In 2007, Trump stated that vaccines cause autism, a demonstrably false claim. The President also does not believe in climate change, an issue affecting the world. Trump said in 2018, “I don’t believe it,” when reporters asked him about the issue. As well, the U.S. withdrew from the Paris agreement which was supposed to reduce world carbon emissions, leading to a greener future.

Foreign policy has also dramatically suffered since Trump was elected as President. Trump has praised many of the world’s worst dictators, including Kim Jong Un, Xi Jinping, and Vladimir Putin. Trump has gone as far as to call many of them friends and even praised qualities of their countries, like restricted speech and censored journalism. During the G20 summit in Japan, Trump said to Vladimir Putin: “Get rid of them. Fake news is a great term, isn’t it? You don’t have this problem in Russia but we do,” referring to the controlled media in Russia. The Trump administration has separated many families at the Mexican border and even failed to reunite children with parents. Many families are separated at the border because the parents are considered criminals and taken into ICE custody. Simultaneously, the kids are treated as unaccompanied minors and are taken into custody by other government organizations. The parents are then deported, leaving the children behind. According to a report by Vox in 2018, 2700 children have been separated from their parents since President Trump came into power. According to the BBC, 666 children are still in the government’s custody, separated from their parents. The children may now be permanently separated as the American government cannot find their parents. The U.S. has tried but the effort has been minimal and the parents cannot be found, essentially turning them into orphans with no chance of a normal life.

Finally, looking at Trump’s COVID-19 response, it becomes evident that his administration’s response has been incompetent and we are lucky that on January 20th, 2021, he will no longer be the President of the United States. At the time of writing the U.S. is the 9th worst country when looking at COVID deaths: per one million people, a shockingly high number for the great superpower. Trump has continually downplayed the severity of the pandemic, even making fun of political rival Joe Biden for wearing masks so frequently. The President held massive rallies during his political campaign with no physical distancing and little mask-wearing. It was learned that Trump knew of his COVID exposure, yet still went to an event before announcing to the public that he was exposed.

While I join in appreciating the symbolism of moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem, I am left to wonder: at what cost does it come? How many children removed from their families are equal to one embassy move?



## Is Online Gaming a Sport?

ADAM LEBOWITZ AND  
GABRIEL KAPLAN

Electronic sports or Esports is a growing sensation that has swept the nation (not unlike the Coronavirus... but in a far more positive way). In March, the world was turned upside down, and during the following summer and spring months that are usually filled with outdoor activities such as basketball or baseball, maybe even a walk in the park, were closed until further notice. One of the few things that remained open to us was our electronics. At least we had those, and boy oh boy did we take advantage of our ability to stay on the couch for 24 hours straight. Some discovered new skills in these pressuring times, such as new movie marathon records or a newfound passion for all things *The Office*. Along with many others, some members of the school gravitated to gaming to fill their hours.

Then the summer passed like a flickering light and school came bashing through the brick wall we called Corona to force us back to reality. Everything changed due to COVID-19, such as cancelled concerts, postponed plays, bubbled sporting events, and finally, the school had to adjust to an atmosphere without our main passion – basketball. Like all others in this crucial time, we adapted, filling that void with an Or Chaim Esports team. Many reading this article are wondering, what exactly is Esports? Well, to quote Mr. Reiss, “It’s like basketball, but everyone has superpowers.” Mr. Reiss is not only a phenomenal guidance counselor for our school, but also the coach for all three Esports teams here.

The first game is Fortnite, a mother’s favourite. It is an open-world battle royale, last team standing clash, to eliminate other teams within a variety of terrains and items throughout the map. There are also the added elements of building weapons and fortifications, and the mobility and tactics of a first-person shooter. Next, Rocket League, is exactly as it sounds. Or, as Mr Reiss puts it, “Three-dimen-

sional soccer with rocket powered cars that can run up walls and do flips.” Finally, League of Legends is the most complicated of the bunch. It’s described as a MOBA or Multiplayer Online Battle Arena. It’s a five-on-five multiplayer battle arena, where each team battles across the map to destroy the enemy’s base. There are over 150 champions to choose from, each with unique abilities.

Despite all these different games and many different teams to manage, the school is still looking to expand this program. Mr. Reiss is also working towards adding two more games to the ever-growing program – Madden 21 and FIFA 21. One of Mr. Reiss’ goals is getting these teams known and building a fanbase, through which he can expand Esports at Or Chaim.

Basketball is a key part of our culture at YOC. This can be seen by how the former basketball team’s players’ names are honored on the walls of the school. Mr. Reiss is a strong advocate for Esports and claims that it could potentially replace certain aspects of regular sports. Specifically regarding basketball at Or Chaim, he said, “In a physical sense, no. Emotionally, yes. Esports has just as much mental engagement as basketball. However, culturally, maybe not quite yet, but we’re on the way.” Covid has definitely played an integral part in creating the Esports team, but Mr. Reiss has said that “YOC has been ready for a while, and Covid has simply given a chance for it to actually come to light.”

As a new and growing industry, there are many concerns to be had regarding Esports. One such concern is its effect on mental health. Esports can actually be very beneficial in keeping socially and mentally healthy by providing social support or social connectivity, and stress management. As such, Mr. Reiss has said that he will continue running Esports and ensuring there is a program like it so that students can stay mentally healthy and socially active. Just by virtue of having the team, Esports brings people who enjoy gaming together, and gives

them a chance to show off the skills they have spent hours working towards. It also creates a community for players to get together and connect, practicing their problem solving and team building skills. To quote Mr. Reiss, “You cannot win Esports alone, it is a team-based game, and it specifically requires the skills of working in tandem with other people.” Many of the games involved require quick thinking and team coordination on the same level as regular sports, ranging from constant communication, to predicting how the opposing team will move, to being there to intercept. It is no wonder that Esports is growing at a rapid rate as a multi-million-dollar industry, with many universities and high schools already having teams.

Looking at the role of physical sports, part of its goal is to create a recreational pastime for people to enjoy. As a league, Mr. Reiss says that, “Traditional sports fill a role of entertainment, stress management, team building, skill building, and social building.” Esports fill each of these in the same capacity – in fact, they are no different from physical sports in the concept of a league. The only real difference between traditional sports and Esports is the tradeoff of physical activity. However, in regards to mental exercise, Esports fill the same role just as well, if not better. Additionally, Mr. Reiss continues that just like regular sports, “When properly engaged, Esports helps to release pent-up energy, and can help act as a break from the stress of school.” It provides a short break from school in the same way that one would get up and play a round of basketball, then get back to their schoolwork. Esports may not be for everyone, but the least it is owed is a chance, and especially in these trying times, when we all need to be a little more open to accepting new things and adapting to what is presented before us.

# Three Key Leafs Signings

## Will Veteran Leadership be Enough to Push the Leafs Over the Top?

AHARON TORCZYNER

The Toronto Maple Leafs, as of November 4th, have made 37 transactions since the Stanley Cup was awarded on September 28th. Three players that the Leafs signed stand out in particular.

### Joe Thornton

Thornton, the former Boston Bruin and San Jose Shark, contributes as much on the ice as he does off-ice. He is a veteran in the NHL, having played 23 years already. He has already compiled over 1,500 points and has won too many awards to count, but the key is that he put up 31 points last year in 70 games on the 30th placed Sharks team. He's bound to add at least 10 points to that total playing on a playoff team in a third or fourth-line center position. Yann Gourde, third-line-centre of the Champion Tampa Bay Lightning, put up 30 points last year. He's also a guy that has seen it all in the playoffs: 179 playoff games, including a trip to the Stanley Cup Final in 2016. To put this into context, the Leafs' previous leader in playoff games played was Jason Spezza at 85. As well, as a former captain, Thornton knows how to lead, which is very important with any hockey team. He can also depend on his teammate of 13 seasons, Patrick Marleau, who played for two years in Toronto, for information. The knock against him is his injuries. He has missed time for tearing his ACL and MCL in his left and right leg during the past three seasons. That would normally be a bigger concern, but the Leafs brought him in on a \$700,000, one year contract, which means if they are disappointed in his play they can wait until the year is up, and if they really like him, then they can resign him for another year. Bringing experience and playmaking ability to the team could really help the Leafs out, and if it doesn't, then he'll be gone by next year.

### T.J. Brodie

Brodie, aged 30, has been playing in the NHL full-time for seven years, all with the Calgary Flames. In fact, he ranks ninth in games played for Calgary and was an assistant captain in 2015-16. He is slotted to play on the top pair, on the right side. The question is: what makes him special? When you look at his point totals, they aren't that impressive. 266 points in 634 games. What's special about Brodie is the way he plays. He doesn't rack up the points

like Erik Karlsson, but he can play responsibly in the defensive zone, and he is constantly moving when in the neutral zone, always looking for an open player. Brodie is also going to contribute to the struggling penalty kill that finished 21st in the league last year. He's signed to a \$20 million, four-year contract. A possible concern might be that at the end of the deal, he might be overpaid. Still, that's not the concern of the present – it's a future problem and nobody really knows where the Leafs will be at in four years. Brodie is expected to play big minutes and a key role on the penalty kill, that's why he is an important signing for the Leafs.

### Wayne Simmonds

Simmonds, a 12-year NHL veteran and a five-year assistant captain with Philadelphia, started his career in LA with the Kings. He became a 15-goal, 30- to 40-point player on the right or

left-wing and established himself as a solid net-front presence, on the powerplay and the penalty kill. After a trade to Philadelphia, he was again successful in front of the net. His point totals increased, hitting 50 or 60 points every year in a four-season stretch. He continued to play on both special teams. During that time, he was named to the all-star game and proclaimed MVP of the tournament. However, that four-year stretch ended three years ago. After the following year, 2017-18 Simmonds admitted to playing through five injuries. He missed seven games for a sixth injury. Those slowed him down and he only had 47 points in 62 games. That's still respectable. The next two seasons, though, were not good to say the least. One year: 30 points in 79 games, and no points in the playoffs. This past season with the Devils, 25 points in 68 games, again no playoffs. It is to be expected, though. He has

been injured quite a bit from trying to be that net-front presence, he's old in hockey years at 32, so the decline is expected. So why did the Leafs sign him? Well, first of all, he's been around the league. He's had experience and can bring leadership. He even won the 2018 Mark Messier Leadership Award. A second reason? Simmonds can still be that net-front presence even if he can't be the scoring forward he used to play. He can still kill penalties, be on the second powerplay unit, and play third or fourth line minutes. He can grind in the corners, and he's a physical forward who's willing to fight, anytime. The best part? He's signed to a one-year, \$700,000 deal, just like Thornton. If the Leafs like how he plays this year, then they can sign him to another one-year deal. If not, they can let him walk. It's hard not to like the signing of the guy from Scarborough, Ontario.

## School Activities, COVID Edition



# Dissecting Humour

SHIMI ROTHMAN

*“Explaining humor is a lot like dissecting a frog, you learn a lot in the process, but in the end you kill it.”*

— Mark Twain

Let us begin just before the period started, where my friend and I were in the science lab. We started discussing with Mr. Diena what we would be doing that class, which is when he told us we were going to be doing frog dissection. Before we knew it, the bell had rung and people started piling into the room, eager to start. Rabbi Diena started by telling everyone the basic lab procedure and split

us up into groups, since there were only so many frogs to go around. After Rabbi Diena assigned partners, he commenced the opening of the frog container; a plastic bucket that has a sealed lid. This took a lot longer than expected because the container was jammed. We ended up getting my lab partner, my friend from the beginning of the story, to go up and try opening it. However, when he could not get it open, we proceeded to try and cut it open with wire cutters and scissors. Unfortunately, we ended up spending 20 minutes opening the container but nobody noticed since the excitement in the room was so high and everyone

wanted to start dissecting. I, as well as my lab partner, got the first frog. The room was in awe, partially out of fear but mainly out of curiosity. Once we got the frogs, we proceeded to dissect it and started filling out our sheet that contained an overview of a frog, where we needed to fill out various parts of the frog’s internal body parts, as well as questions like: “Why do you think it is important for the frog to have his heart so close to his lungs?” and “Explain why dissections or dissection simulations are an important tool for biologists”. Sadly, nobody could finish the sheet because we did not have enough time due to the period ending. Without going into too much detail, it was definitely a cool experience to be able to see inside a carcass first-hand and not just on a SmartBoard or in a book.

Now, to explain Mark Twain’s quote; “Explaining humor is a lot like dissecting a frog, you learn a lot in the process, but in the end you kill it.” What Mark Twain meant was that when you start dissecting humour, you can learn from it but you end up making the joke no longer funny since you understand it. Humour is something that is a little bit outlandish. That is what makes it “funny”. Now, in regards to dissecting a frog, there are two main ways to explain Mr. Twain’s quote. Firstly, by dissecting a frog, you learn a lot from its body but as a result, you kill the frog just like you would kill a joke by explaining why it

is funny. Secondly, just like a joke is funny until you start understanding it, the curiosity of dissecting a frog is only there because you want to learn about the frog, the second you dissect it is when that curiosity dies down, which is similar to what happens with a joke. The way that this teaches us about humour is by explaining that it is only funny because it is outlandish. When you start explaining why it is funny, you lose the point of the joke, to make you laugh.

With that being said, this quote is true to life. The second you want to learn from something, to truly understand it, is when it stops being fun. The key is a balance in life. We should all want to learn more and improve ourselves but we should also enjoy ourselves, meaning we should not always learn at the cost of humour. Just like Mark Twain said, while “dissecting a frog, you learn a lot in the process, but in the end you kill it.”

Humour is a thing that we should all experience and seek because life is too short to not have fun, especially in these times with COVID. A quote from Oscar Wilde really puts things into perspective: “It is a curious fact that people are never so trivial as when they take themselves seriously.” We should all feel significant but sometimes you just have to laugh away the pain.

Sincerely,  
Shimi



## I Am Not a Satire Author

ORA LACOB

I have recently been informed what my position in this newspaper is. They said, “Is your satire article finished? It was due last week.” IMAGINE THE NERVE. I’ve been writing for this newspaper for years, and they have the chutzpah to come and call my work “satire”. I googled the definition of satire which read, “The use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people’s stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues.” As if! Satire schmatire, as if this is easy to write all this. Minutes of research go into these well-formulated, articulate articles!

Now where was I... oh yes, back to birds! If you look at bird migration pat-

terns in Ontario, you will know that this time period also marks the time which birds return from migration back to Ontario. If you read the last issue’s extremely serious and educational warning in my article, you would know the danger of birds. Winter is the only safe time we have, so that the bourgeoisie birds aren’t spying on us. By the end of Gemini season, you can no longer hide from the bourgeoisie, all of their birds have returned. You are unsafe.

And to put it into perspective, of course the bourgeoisie is fine with their birds migrating for the winter because nobody leaves their house then anyway, but summer, oh yes summer, summer is when people go out and experience the nice weather. That’s why they send their birds for summer, they

know when you like to go out.

On a slightly more important note, on November 26th, it was American Thanksgiving. They eat turkeys. America has a thing for big birds. Is this their way of trying to distract the locals from the bourgeoisie? Perhaps. On America’s big birds; the eagle is like America’s pet bird. Normal people have normal sized pet birds, but America likes everything bigger. So, their pet birds are oversized birds of prey. Normally, people eat chicken. But America celebrates its day of thanks with a glorified abnormally large chicken flavoured bird, the turkey.

To maintain the intellectual atmosphere I have most definitely created with this article, I will be sharing some of the world’s news, because I feel that international topics are very

important, especially to newspapers. According to news sources (but I won’t tell you which ones, you just have to trust me on this one, feel free to fact check it yourself, there is a video online but the photocopier of the newspaper for some reason doesn’t let you print out videos), Mark O’Donnell, a man from Florida, was seen throwing his 16-pound turkey into his swimming pool on November 25, a day before Thanksgiving. He claims it is a family tradition to thaw the turkey. I am pretty sure the term he is looking for is baptize, but who am I to judge how one chooses to unfreeze their toddler-sized bird. Tradition is tradition, and I respect Mark O’Donnell for his commitment to minhag hamishpacha.

# Grammy Predictions 2021

ALEEZA DEUTSCH

## Record of the Year

The nominations for Record of the Year are *Black Parade* by Beyoncé, *Colors* by Black Pumas, *Rockstar* by DaBaby featuring Roddy Ricch, *Say So* by Doja Cat, *Everything I Wanted* by Billie Eilish, *Don't Start Now* by Dua Lipa, *Circles* by Post Malone, and *Savage* by Megan Thee Stallion featuring Beyoncé. Many people have been predicting that the winner will be Post Malone's *Circles*. The song has been praised by critics and charted at number one on the Billboard Hot 100.

## Album of the Year

The nominations for Album of the Year are *Chilombo* by Jhené Aiko, *Black Pumas (Deluxe Edition)* by Black Pumas, *Everyday Life* by Coldplay, *Djesse Vol. 3* by Jacob Collier, *Women In Music Pt. III* by Haim, *Future Nostalgia* by Dua Lipa, *Hollywood's Bleeding* by Post Malone, and *Folklore* by Taylor Swift. Many people are confident that the award will go to Taylor Swift's *Folklore* album as it was one of the top-selling albums of the year and is home to the hit song *Cardigan*. The multi-genre album sold over 2 million copies in its first week.

## Song of the Year

The nominations for Song of the Year are *Black Parade* by Beyoncé, *The Box* by Roddy Ricch, *Cardigan* by Taylor Swift, *Circles* by Post Malone, *Don't Start Now* by Dua Lipa, *I Can't Breathe* by H.E.R., and *If The World Was Ending* by JP Saxe Featuring Julia Michaels. Like Album of the Year, people are confident that Taylor Swift will claim this award for



her song *Cardigan*. If she does, it will be her first award for Song of the Year.

## Best New Artist

The nominees for Best New Artist are Ingrid Andress, Phoebe Bridgers, Chika, Noah Cyrus, D Smoke, Doja Cat, Kaytranada, and Megan Thee Stallion. People have been speculating that the award will go to either Doja Cat or Megan Thee Stallion, who both have been extremely successful this past year. Both of them have had songs on the top of the Billboard Hot 100 chart and have extremely loyal fanbases.

## Snubs

When the nominees were announced, everyone was extremely surprised that The Weeknd wasn't nominated in any categories, despite having one of the best-selling albums and biggest songs of the year. His album *After Hours* and song *Blinding Lights* were majorly successful and had extremely high ratings. Everyone was sure that he would be nominated for at least three of the main categories, and many experts were even betting on him winning as well. The Weeknd took to his Twitter to voice his disappointment saying, "The Grammys remain corrupt. You owe me, my fans and the industry transparency..."

## Chesed vs. COVID-19



Movie Reviews

Enola Holmes



ELIANNA PERLMUTTER

4 of 5 stars  
 Genre: Action /Adventure  
 Rating: PG-13 (Violence)  
 Released: 9/23, 2020 on Netflix  
 Director: Harry Bradbeer  
 Lead Actors: Millie Bobby Brown, Henry Cavill, Sam Claflin, Louis Partridge

Enola Holmes is a fun-filled action adventure that takes place in the Victorian era. Set with the backdrop of the suffragette movement, it is a spinoff of the famous Sherlock Holmes mysteries, loosely based on the first of six in the fictional series by Nancy Springer. While filmed in the UK, Enola Holmes is a Hollywood-style movie appealing to families.

Set design and costumes convincingly transport the viewer to 19th century England where they meet sixteen-year-old Enola, played by Millie Bobby Brown. She is the younger sister of famous detective Sherlock Holmes. Enola was raised by her mother to be a strong, independent, and resourceful individual. Recognizing Enola's intelligence, her mother instills in her that "there are two paths you can take, yours or the path others choose for you", in contrast to her world, where women are overlooked.

The mystery begins when Enola's mother disappears and Enola is left in the care of her older brothers: Mycroft, played by Sam Claflin, and Sherlock, played by Henry Cavill. Unhappy with her brothers' plans for her future at a finishing school for young women,

Enola decides to run away to find her mother. Millie Bobby Brown brings wit and interest to the film by breaking the fourth wall to talk directly to the audience, while she takes the viewer with her on her journey.

In her attempt to find her mother, Enola's path collides with a young, attractive, but somewhat helpless Lord Viscount Tewkesbury (played by Louis Partridge). Before you know it they are both on the run for their lives. Enola proves to be a brilliant detective and master of disguise who outwits her siblings Mycroft and Sherlock. This is a fast paced and light-hearted adventure that takes the audience on several twists and turns. Watch out for the surprise ending.

Borat Subsequent Moviefilm: Delivery of Prodigious Bribe to American Regime for Make Benefit Once Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan



SHALOM FEUER

It was a Saturday night. I was about to watch Borat 2 with the boys. How bad could it be? I mean, the first Borat was a revolutionary movie which bred thousands of jokes and quips used to this day. I watched Borat 2 and felt sick in my stomach; not just because there was an overuse of jokes about women, but because of the fact that it (devastatingly) ruined the original. Wow, it was bad.

Where should I even begin? One of the things that made Borat such a good character was that he simply didn't care about anyone or any-

thing. Borat broke the boundaries of political correctness in order to deliver jokes. In Borat 2, Borat literally becomes a feminist, which is great, except it's a complete break from the character. Borat is someone who doesn't care about hurting people's feelings; he says what's on his mind. I felt that Borat 2 put a restriction on Borat's humour in order to fit his anti-Trump agenda.

The leader of Borat's transition is his daughter, Tutar. Tutar attempted to do what Borat does... but nobody can do what Borat does. As I watched the second movie, I cringed at how the character ultimately contributed to the diminishing of the classic Borat character little by little.

Overall, I didn't particularly enjoy Borat 2's focus on the plotline. In the original Borat, the plotline was straightforward: Borat goes to America, ultimately to find Pamela Anderson. This plotline was not the key part of the movie in any way, rather it was a way to get from joke to joke. In contrast, Borat 2 makes the plot the main point, with the jokes secondary. Due to this, Borat 2 has a deficiency of good jokes and an emphasis on a silly storyline.

In conclusion, whenever I feel sad about Borat 2, I can sit back, relax and watch the original Borat to return the smile to my face.



## The R + R Corner Mikayla Daniel

*Disclaimer: Books mentioned and recommended reflect the individual taste of the reviewer and are not officially endorsed by the school.*



**Book Name:** *Let's Go Swimming on Doomsday*

**Author:** Natalie C. Anderson

**Rating:** 8/10

**Genre:** YA Fiction

**Favourite Quote:** "I am not the match, I say to him in my mind. I was never the match, never the fire. I am the water. The weapon you fear more than gun or knife."

**Summary:** Dahir was kidnapped three years ago by the Jihadi terrorist group Al Shabab, and is declared dead. But is he? Sixteen-year-old Abdi (Dahir's brother) gets snatched by the CIA and is questioned and tortured until he agrees to join the Jihadi group, reporting back their every move – while his family hangs in the balance as leverage. He goes in as a pretender and comes out a monster. Abdi escapes but is caught by the police under a petty theft charge while trying to survive on the streets. When this happens, it forces him to stop running, and his past swallows him up.

**Book Name:** *The Cheerleaders*

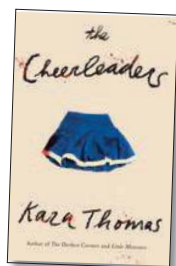
**Author:** Kara Thompson

**Rating:** 9.5/10

**Genre:** Mystery

**Favourite Quote:** "Pain isn't supposed to teach you anything. It only exists to hurt you."

**If you like this, I recommend:** *Two Can Keep a Secret* by Karen M. Mcmanus, *They All Fall Down* by Roxanne St. Claire



**Summary:** Murder; a car accident; a shooting. Five years ago, five girls died in three different ways. Coincidentally, they were all cheerleaders. Or was it a coincidence? Monica, the sister of one of the dead cheerleaders, is pulled into planning a five-year memorial for the cheerleaders but refuses to do it. The memorial creates a domino effect. Her seemingly normal life starts to crumble when she finds a stack of hidden letters in her stepfather (a police officer) office. Monica finds her dead sister's cell phone hidden in her house, and a web of clues falls on her head, bringing her to a thought... are all the deaths connected?



**Book Name:** *Blink*

**Author:** K.L. Slater

**Rating:** 7/10

**Genre:** Psychological Fiction

**Favourite quote:** "If hope is like the softest snow, then the dread that replaces it is the razor-sharp ice that will slash and pare your very soul to ribbons."

**If you like this, I recommend:** *One Of Us Is Lying* by Shalini Boland, *Wilder Girls* by Rory Power

**Summary:** This is the type of book that you either: 1) want to throttle a character, or 2) love them so much you want to hug them (you'll probably relate more to the former, though). Five-year-old Evie is gone; three years ago, she disappeared into thin air. No trace, witnesses, CCTV, or clues – it's an impossible case that has one clear ending, that evil will never be found. Toni, Evie's mother, still believes that her daughter is alive. Toni slowly heals herself and searches through her fragmented memories to piece together what truly happened to her daughter. Toni's mind is trapped, and broken; to save her daughter, she must save herself first.



## Riddles

Liora Ben-Murgi

What has to be broken before you can use it?

*An egg.*

What has hands, but can't clap?

*A clock.*

I am an odd number. Take away a letter and I become even. What number am I? *Seven.*

What begins with an "E" and only contains one letter? *An envelope.*

What 4-letter word can be written forward, backward or upside down, and can still be read from left to right? *NOON.*

K	X	S	E	F	O	O	D	B	Q	A	M	H	A	M	H	A	Q	G	M
Y	D	T	G	L	I	M	J	H	T	I	M	Y	I	U	P	W	M	A	O
J	Y	N	Y	L	H	A	N	T	I	B	O	A	P	Y	S	N	L	E	D
B	I	E	M	M	C	K	M	Y	M	S	H	U	U	I	C	L	B	J	O
K	Q	D	D	X	Y	X	E	D	Z	C	S	S	J	L	I	C	H	R	N
V	P	U	B	U	S	L	G	L	R	K	G	V	E	R	E	E	W	J	U
Y	T	T	C	U	W	H	W	O	I	N	H	R	K	H	N	K	I	H	T
B	X	S	Q	X	Z	N	D	U	Q	E	S	T	U	D	C	O	N	S	S
D	P	K	Y	T	K	I	Y	D	O	A	J	D	G	D	E	A	T	O	H
H	E	I	V	G	Q	M	F	R	S	N	L	Q	D	H	W	W	E	Q	L
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Q	O	I	Y	O	K	O	A	M	P	W	U	E	N	O	U	O	G	P	H
I	S	V	U	I	Z	E	T	R	Q	T	N	E	T	R	A	M	H	P	L
D	K	W	W	X	B	E	X	L	B	L	F	G	S	E	U	X	V	X	N

### The BASH

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Staff Advisor: Mr. Eric Saltsman

Editors-In-Chief: Chaim Sitnik,  
Chaim Straus, Rena Torczyner, Eli Yissar  
Contributors: Ahron Abrams, Izzy Adler,  
Liora Benmurgui, Noah Berger, Mikayla  
Daniel, Aleeza Deutsch, Shalom Feuer,

Rachel Goldstein, Gabriel Kaplan, Ora Lacob,  
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