

Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein Honors Program Newsletter

YCHonors is a department of:

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY



WHAT'S INSIDE:

PAGE 1
OPENING EVENTS

PAGE 2
A LETTER FROM
PROF. CWILICH

MEET YOUR
HONORS STUDENT
COUNCIL

PAGE 3
COMING
ATTRACTIONS

PAGE 4
FEATURED
UPCOMING EVENT:
VALUE AND THE
BRAIN

PAGE 5
HONORS TEACHING
FELLOWS

PAGE 6
CULTURAL EVENTS

Starting off the Year with a Bang:

Honors Events at Orientation

The Honors Program opened the year with several events during freshman orientation. Initially, Prof. Gabriel Cwilich did something momentous, something totally out of character. He wore a necktie! Prof. Cwilich told the freshmen that this is the beginning of a four year journey culminating in graduation, i.e. this will be the next time they will see him in a tie. Their job now is to fill that time with all of the wonderful programming and activities taking place at Yeshiva University, including those run by the Honors Program.



History in the making at YU Orientation 2013

Prof. Cwilich reiterated that everyone should take advantage of as many things as possible while here, since “you can sleep when you graduate.” Prof. Cwilich introduced the current staff of the Honors Program and then invited both YC Dean Barry Eichler and Vice Provost Lawrence Schiffman to welcome the new students. In particular, Dean Eichler encouraged them to realize that they had “the power to change” things for the better, both on and off campus. Several upperclassmen also came to speak about their involvement in student government and various extra-curricular activities at Yeshiva College, ranging from the SOY and YSU student councils to the Yeshiva College Dramatic Society, Project START! and *The Commentator*.

The second event kicked off the academic year for the incoming students with a fascinating discussion. A gathering of faculty, upperclassmen and incoming students in Belfer Hall’s Sky Cafe came to watch a presentation by Rebecca Skloot at the Detroit Public Library which described the research leading to her prize-winning book, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*.



Students and professors joined to watch the lecture. We discussed the ethical implications of the story, and in general the role of science and the liberal arts in education. This duality is the theme for the Honors Program this year. Prof. Yakov Peter, professor of biology at YU, gave a brief introduction to the science of the cell research involved and spoke about some of the contemporary issues brewing in that field. The students then broke up into small groups to discuss the interdisciplinary nature of the problems raised in Ms. Skloot’s book. And so began the 2013-2014 year in the Honors Program. It’s shaping up to be quite a year!



Dr. Peter spoke about the relevance of the HeLa cell line to current research

A LETTER FROM DR. CWILICH

Dear Students:

Now that the hiatus of the *chagim* is behind us, the new academic year has begun in earnest, and it has been a thrill welcome into our Program the record number of 79 new students who are now participating in Honors First Year Writing, and already making a difference in our Program with their engagement and enthusiasm.

This semester the Honors Program is offering a range of courses in all disciplines, both in the new CORE and in the majors, in which 316 students (a record for us) are registered. This includes more than 25 students on their way to writing an Honors thesis and graduating from our Program.

The response to new and current activities, both academic and those devoted to both the communal life of Washington Heights and the rich cultural setting of New York City, has been phenomenal and the Program is already actively preparing another set of wonderful courses and activities for the spring semester.

Concerning the current Honors staff, we have as our new Program Coordinator Josh Fluss, who recently finished the program and had a stint as chairman of the Student Council. His dedication and creativity and professionalism are already much in evidence. Welcome aboard, Josh!

My best wishes to all of you for a intense, exciting and fruitful semester!

MEET YOUR HONORS STUDENT COUNCIL

As the academic year returns to its regular pace following the *chagim*, it's time that you, the students, get to know your council a little better. This year's Chairman is Dani Schwalb, and Vice-Chairman is Josh Nagel. The remaining five members of the council are Natan Tracer, Netanel Spero, Chaim Metzger, and the two newest members of the council, Shlomo Friedman and Mordy Dubin. Congratulations on your recent election, and we expect to hear great things from all of you.

Regarding the activities of the Council, we are very pleased to announce that its current members have arranged the first annual Bi-Campus Honors Program *Shabbaton* on the Beren Campus! The *shabbaton* is scheduled for the spring '14 semester. Details to come.

Finally, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns for the Honors Student Council, including ideas for events you would like to see scheduled, you can always reach them at YCHonorsCouncil@gmail.com.

Let's make it another great year, there is sure to be many more great things to come!

HONORS PROGRAM STAFF

Gabriel Cwilich
Director
cwilich@yu.edu

Sam I. Gellens
Assistant Director
sgellens@yu.edu

Milagros Gonzalez
Executive Assistant
mgonzaL3@yu.edu

Ben Katz
Publicist
bkatz3@yu.edu

Josh Fluss
Program Coordinator
joshua.fluss@yu.edu

[Check out our blog @
blogs.yu.edu/honors](http://blogs.yu.edu/honors)

To unsubscribe, please send an email to yhonors@yu.edu with a polite request to do so.

Coming Attractions:

Here are some of the events taking place in the month of October!

October 10 – Humanities Book Series

Please join us in the Honors Lounge at 8 PM for the next installment in the Humanities in Dialogue. In honor of her new book, entitled *Having It All in the Belle Epoque: How French Women's Magazines Invented the Modern Woman*, Prof. Rachel Mesch will be interviewed by Prof. Marnin Young, professor of art history at Stern College. Come by for what is sure to be an insightful evening.

October 16 – Nobel Prize Nanosecond Party

The six Nobel Prizes for 2013 are being announced this week, and what better way to celebrate the awards than by learning all about the winners? Come to Belfer 218 at Club Hour (5:45 PM) to hear six professors from Yeshiva College and Stern, one in each field, discuss the prize-winning achievements each in bite-sized six minute summaries. Learn something new with your fellow students and enjoy some refreshments.

October 18 – Trip to the Hispanic Society of America

Friday morning, Prof. Bazet-Broitman will be taking her Honors Intermediate Spanish I on a guided tour of the Hispanic Society of America. Any students or faculty who are interested in attending may send their confirmation to broitman@yu.edu by Wednesday, October 16th.

October 20 – “A Film Unfinished”

In 1942, an unfinished movie was filmed in the Warsaw Ghetto by Nazi cameramen, which for 40 years was

believed to be the only footage of what life was like in this ghetto until the missing reel was found. Join the S. Daniel Abraham Honors Program at Stern College for a viewing of this documentary, which makes clear the propaganda nature of the film recorded only months before the liquidation of the Ghetto. We will also hear about the story of the film in a discussion with Noemi Schory, producer of the documentary. A bus will leave for the Beren Campus at 2:30 PM and return after the event. Stay tuned for details. More information about the film can be seen at <http://www.afilmunfinished.com/film.html>. If you are interested, please RSVP for the bus at YCHonors@yu.edu.

October 21 – The PPE Scholars Club

This entirely student-run initiative will have its inaugural event at 8:00 PM in the Honors Lounge. The PPE (Politics, Philosophy, and Economics) Scholars Club seeks to present those interested with a roundtable forum in which to engage one another about the foundations of political philosophy. The program hosts a student-designed curriculum, and participants are expected to read about 25 pages of background material in order to take part in each discussion. For those interested in joining or seeing the recommended reading list, please send an email to YUPPEScholars@gmail.com. There will be several events over the course of the semester, so stay tuned.

October 23 – Luncheon for Third Year Students

If you are a third year student in the honors program, whose first semester on campus was fall 2011 this Wednesday luncheon will be a special one for you. Join us in the Honors Lounge at 12 PM to focus on how to start thinking about the culmination of your Honors experience in Yeshiva College, how to make decisions about your future career plans and the role that an Honors thesis can play in your future. We will discuss how to start the thesis process, search for an appropriate mentor, and decide what courses to take in preparation. Pizza will be served. Please RSVP to YCHonors@yu.edu.

October 30 – “Mystery Religions, Missionaries, and Lost Manuscripts: Understanding the ‘Alawites and the Current Political Crisis in Syria”

Come to the Honors Lounge at 12 PM to hear Prof. Bella Tendler, a graduate of Stern College, and member of the History Department at Yeshiva University in the first installment of our “In Plain Words” series. Prof. Tendler holds a Ph.D. from Princeton University in Near Eastern Studies, and she specializes in heterodox Islamic groups. Her recent work focuses on the ‘Alawites, the secretive Islamic sect which rules Syria. She will discuss her recent discovery of a previously lost ‘Alawite manuscript and the light it sheds on the current sectarian strife in Syria. Pizza will be served. Please RSVP to YCHonors@yu.edu.

Featured Upcoming Event: Value and the Brain

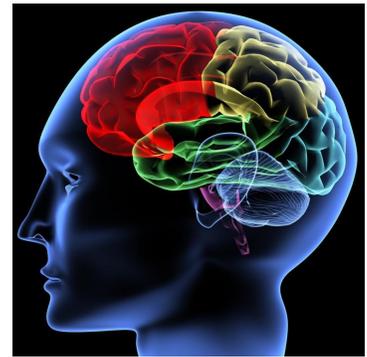


On Monday, October 14th at 12:00 PM in the Honors Lounge, we will be hosting a very special Monday edition of the Honors Luncheon Series. We will be featuring Professor Mark Solms, Chair of Neuropsychology at the University of Cape Town, a psychoanalyst and a lecturer in neurosurgery at the St Bartholomew's Hospital and the Royal London School of Medicine, and Director of the Arnold Pfeffer Center for Neuro-Psychoanalysis at the New York Psychoanalytic Institute.

Prof. Mark Solms is known for his contributions to the understanding of the brain mechanisms of dreaming, and his pioneering use of psychoanalytic methods and theories in contemporary neuroscience. He has published more than 250 chapters and articles in both neuroscientific and psychoanalytic journals and written five books, most recently *The Brain and the Inner World: An Introduction to the Neuroscience of the Subjective Experience*, which has been translated into eight languages.

Professor Solms will speak on the influence of the mind on the values we attribute to our world. This talk will continue the theme of the year, the interplay between the Sciences and the Humanities started during orientation. For instance, Professor Elizabeth Stewart, who invited Dr. Solms to YU said, "It is fascinating to

me that the relatively new field of 'neuropsychanalysis', of which Professor Solms is a leading exponent, realizes Freud's desires: to build a 'SCIENCE of the mind,' a project for which the scientists of Freud's own day lacked the tools." And as Professor Solms's talk makes clear, each of them has quite a bit to teach us about the other.



Please RSVP to YCHONORS@YU.EDU if you would like to attend so we can plan accordingly, and feel free to email us for further information. We look forward to seeing you there!

Prof. Neer Asherie Joins the Honors Program for another Edition of the Roundtable

A packed house arrived to hear Prof. Asherie talk about his background, schooling, and the process by which he became an academician and eventually joined the faculty at YU. Prof. Asherie both edified and entertained as he showed his formal robe from Cambridge and discussed his early interest in mathematical proofs which motivated him to pursuing a degree in physics. Thank you to all those who attended and especially Prof. Asherie for coming to speak to us.



Introducing the Honors Teaching Fellows for Fall 2013!

Congratulations to Gilad Barach, Israel Heller, and Dov Honick on your new positions

We have the pleasure to announce that we have resumed a program run in previous semesters, the Honors Teaching Fellows. Each Fellow is a fourth-year student in the Honors Program who is writing a thesis. They assist in an Honors class related to their field of expertise, helping the students from the perspective of an upperclassman who has handled the course material before.

Dov Honick is working in Prof. Richard Nochimson's "Classics to Renaissance" literature course, sampling several representative works from each major period. He is writing a thesis with Professor William Stenhouse and his research focuses on how Cicero constructs Roman identity in his writings. As a double major in history and English and a classical languages minor, Dov's thesis will bring together all of these interests. Additionally, he also has an interest in teaching. As someone who hopes to pursue a Ph.D. in history, becoming a Teaching Fellow offers a special opportunity. "I'm excited to see the classroom from a new angle," Honick said. "I think being involved in leading and moderating discussions on the material will give me a level of teaching experience that I wouldn't otherwise get."

Israel Heller, an English major and writing minor, is working on a thesis with Prof. Elizabeth Stewart and also assisting in her "Diaspora Literature" course. As Arts and Culture editor for the *YU Commentator*, Israel will be able to combine his interests in writing and music, and this course will work similarly for him. This CORE course focuses

on the construction of Diaspora identities in the literary realm, focusing on African, Latin American, Indian, and Jewish experiences in the 20th and 21st centuries. Heller's role is to introduce the students to the course's required texts by providing a brief background to the material. He hopes "to provide the students with the opportunity to dive into these subjects, some of which can be quite complex, with someone who at once has a grasp of the material, and is their peer."

The third Teaching Fellow for this semester is Gilad Barach. A physics and mathematics major who is writing his Honors thesis with Prof. Cwilich, Gilad is working as a Fellow in Prof. Neer Asherie's General Physics I class. He is also the president of START! Science, involved with the YC Physics club, *Kol Hamevaser*, and the *Gesher* journal, and hopes to bring his experience to helping students in this introductory course. As a Fellow, his role will be to make himself available to students in the class, to review difficult material with them and solve problems. As someone who has gone through upper-level physics classes, Gilad's insights will surely help younger students learn their way.

The Fellows are sure to have a profound effect on students because of their motivation. As Israel Heller summarized, "I want my fellow students to take away, from [my] being able to play this part in a YC course, the knowledge that YU affords them the opportunity to take a more active role in their education, should they choose to."

Cultural Events for Fall 2013

Join Professor Will Lee's class for a performance of
 "A Midsummer Night's Dream".
 Wednesday, October 23rd, 7:30 p.m.
 The Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center.

We are going to the San Francisco Symphony.
 Wednesday, November 13th, 8:00 p.m.
 Carnegie Hall.

Conductor: Michael Tilson Thomas.
 Soloist: Jeremy Denk, Piano.

BEETHOVEN, *Leonore Overture No. 3*
 STEVEN MACKEY, *Eating Greens*
 MOZART, Piano Concerto No. 25 in C Major, K. 503
 COPLAND, *Symphonic Ode*

Join the Honors Program in seeing "Waiting for
 Godot" by Samuel Beckett.
 Featuring Sir Ian McKellen and Sir Patrick Stewart.
 Sunday, November 17th, 3:00 p.m.
 Cort Theater.

"Big Band Holidays" at Jazz at Lincoln Center.
 Saturday Night, December 14th, 8:00 p.m.
 Rose Theater, Lincoln Center.

The **Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis,**
along with Cecile McLorin Salvant, performs choice
 instrumental arrangements by Swing Era titans as Duke
 Ellington, Count Basie, Benny Goodman, and Tommy Dorsey.

Join Professor Graciela Baret-Broitman's Honors
 Intermediate Spanish class for a performance of
 "Tosca".
 Monday, December 23rd, 7:30 p.m.
 The Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center.

Please contact YCHonors@YU.edu
 to RSVP for any of these events