

Lander College For Men

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Message From The Dean

In October 1999, I was visited at my London home by Dr Bernard Lander, who invited me to leave my position as Pro Vice-Chancellor for Quality & Standards at Middlesex University and cross the Atlantic to become the first Dean of Lander College for Men. I accepted the challenge with enthusiasm, but also with some trepidation.

The College is a unique experiment in Jewish higher education. Our mission is to offer students a high quality Jewish and a high quality secular education, striving over the four-year degree period to achieve excellence in both fields. It is difficult to obtain entry to our program: the average SAT score of our freshmen is 1200, and in the first round of admissions (Fall 2000) we rejected almost two-thirds of the students who applied to us.

Academic Vice-Dean Dr. Moshe Sokol and I have chosen as faculty scholars of repute who have Ph.D.s or equivalent and who are all active researchers and publishers. Students can thus be assured that their secular education is in the hands of scholars at the cutting-edges of their respective fields of study. There are regular research seminars, at which faculty present their latest research findings to their colleagues, their

students, and also to members of the local community.

We also have strict procedures in force to ensure the continued high quality of the teaching and learning. A teaching quality and academic standards committee, composed entirely of eminent scholars external to the College, oversees this process. The Faculty has recently adopted a policy on *Characteristics and Evaluation of Excellence in Teaching* which sets out our vision of the standard of teaching to which we aspire. I was gratified to learn from one member of the committee (an eminent tenured professor at one of the USA's leading private universities) that this policy was more rigorous than that in operation at his institution.

The pursuit of quality is a never-ending process. Students as well as faculty – and administrative staff – all have their part to play in the achievement of high quality and in its maintenance. Together I am sure that we can make *Lander College for Men* a byword for high quality and high standards, in both the religious and secular spheres.

Dr. Geoffrey Alderman
Dean, Lander College for Men

Faculty Perspectives

Is it *Really* About the Economy?

At the time of this writing (03.26.01), the Dow Jones Industrial Average is down approximately 14% from its year ago, all-time high. The NASDAQ composite index, which reflects more of the service and technology sectors, is down 60% from its peak. Jeepers! In contrast, the economy seems to be chugging along quite nicely with unemployment still very low, productivity racing apace, and no sign of negative industrial growth, which would be the key definition of recession.

Nevertheless, popular surveys of "consumer confidence," such as that conducted by the University of Michigan, indi-

cate a decreased willingness on the part of ordinary Americans to spend money at the pace of the late 90s. Why all the gloom? We are seeing a reversal of the now famous "Wealth Effect." Due to surging expectations for future corporate profits resulting from the "productivity boom," equity valuations soared in the late 90s. As early as December 5, 1996, Dr. Alan Greenspan famously speculated: "How do we know when *irrational exuberance* has unduly escalated asset prices?" Since then the Dow Jones tripled!

As a result, households grew to rely more and more on their balance sheet wealth,

(Cont. Is it *Really* About the Economy?)

that is to say, on their stock investments, than their annual income. Between the years 1988 – 1996 the ratio of household wealth to income averaged around five, that is, personal balance sheets were five times as great as annual household earnings. By 1998, this number approached 6.3 times and was going higher. One-half of all America is now invested in the stock market. In the late 90s, people were spending their unrealized stock market earnings, believing that the future would rectify their exuberance. This helped feed our incredible economic growth. The long-term average nominal return for the stock market is about 11%; the 20% returns of recent years just couldn't be sustained – productivity boom notwithstanding. Goodbye irrational expectations, hello diminished expectations. Bummer.

Moreover, high equity valuations made capital cheap and corporations added on capacity and produced inventories beyond the economic merits. Returns on capital investments were high! As Dr. Greenspan has indicated, it will take some time for these disequilibria to be worked off. And the Federal Reserve's ability to cure a lagging economy is less potent than it used to be. By easing interest rates, the manufacturing and housing sectors, which are reliant on borrowing, will be boosted. However, idea companies, i.e., businesses that profit not by manufacturing economies and reduced financing costs, but by successful product in-

troductions, today dominate our economy. Traditional expansionary Federal Reserve stimulus may thus be ineffective. As rates are reduced and the economy nonetheless suffers as the result of diminished expectations, a self-fulfilling, negative consumer psychology may take hold.

Against this background, in comes a new presidential administration. One year ago, there was no popular call for tax reduction. The electorate seemed to understand that taxes were necessary - as long as things were good. In the wake of this, neo-Reaganites, God knows why, pushed for a tax reduction plan. It did not matter that the year 2000 was not 1980 and that we were in a period of prosperity and not recession. The plan still wasn't popular, but as Greenspan surprisingly and preemptively lowered rates in January 2001, party politics jawboned that the tax plan was needed to prop up the "sagging economy." An idea with no economic rationale suddenly took on new legs. Consumer confidence suffered further. It just goes to show - words hurt!

In sum, reality bites. It doesn't help to make matters worse by propagating irrational gloom. Is it *really* about the economy, you ask? Definitely yes!and definitely not.

Kenneth S. Bigel, Ph.D.
Chairman, Department of Business

Web Weaves Togetherness

This article first appeared in the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (London), March 2, 2000.

The US system of regional accreditation may not survive the trend for online degrees. Last autumn, the eight regional commissions that accredit higher-education institutions in the United States - the "regionals" - jointly published a draft statement and guidelines on the evaluation of electronically offered degree and certificate programs.

It is intended that the eight commissions will adopt the draft as a common standard by which each of them will evaluate such programs in the future. By agreeing to a shared approach to this type of distance education, the regionals have signaled a revolution in the quality assurance of higher education.

Historically, the development of regional accreditation in the US reflected the two fundamental precepts that have hitherto governed the quality assurance process in higher education. The first emphasizes the importance of high standards. The second stresses the importance of institutional autonomy.

The federal administration in Washington has historically played no part in the accreditation of higher education institutions or in their quality assurance. American universities and colleges derive their degree-awarding powers from state governments, which alone have the authority to bestow charters. But, save for special arrangements in the state of New York, the task of monitoring the quality of education provided and the standard of the awards made has fallen to voluntary, non-governmental bodies, wholly

owned and managed by the institutions - the regional accrediting commissions.

Regional accreditation developed during the mid-20th century as a means of safeguarding the reputation of bona fide institutions when there was a mushrooming of bogus degree mills. Working in comparative isolation, each commission developed its own approach to quality assurance and was fiercely protective of its domain. In 1949, a National Commission on Accreditation was established as the first national organization to develop threshold criteria governing the work of accrediting bodies. In 1975, the National Commission merged with the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education to form the Council on Post-secondary Accreditation. But this attempt to combine the interests of degree and non-degree awarding bodies proved unsuccessful, and in 1993, the council was dissolved. Three years later, the Council on Higher Education Accreditation came into existence.

Regional accreditation was and is an expression of academic self-regulation and institutional autonomy. But a number of pressures are combining to question its future worth and relevance. The World Trade Organization has estimated that the US accounts for about \$8.5 billion of the \$27 billion annual value of international trade in education. But in Washington last September, a conference held under the auspices of the National Committee for International Trade in Education was told that the US was losing its share of this market. Reasons given included the inability and/or unwillingness of the regional commissions to contemplate and sanction novel forms of franchising in international collaboration and frustration on the part of overseas institutions at having to deal with several different accrediting agencies.

(Cont. Web Weaves Togetherness)

Traditionally, the regionals have accredited institutions, not individual programs of study. But, as the draft statement and guidelines declare, the application of new technologies to education has resulted in "unprecedented cooperative agreements and configurations" among accredited institutions as well as with "entities outside the academy". The draft statement goes on to make an astonishing admission: that "technologically mediated instruction (that is) not location dependent raises questions about the suitability of the regional approach to quality assurance."

The document says that the need for "a significant degree of cross-regional consistency" creates pressure for a "collaborative approach" that takes account of the fact that others, particularly states and the federal government, have a substantial voice in addressing quality assurance issues relating to distance education.

If, as some American pundits predict, something in the region of half of American higher education is electronically delivered by the end of 2025, the regional approach to quality assurance is bound to come under great pressure. That pressure could become intolerable if (as seems likely) electronic delivery develops into a partnership between institutions and the for-profit sector.

Regional accrediting commissions have little if any experience of interfacing with for-profit corporations. If such a corporation agrees to undergo inspection by a regional commission, and to pay for the privilege, it is bound to ask for a seat on the commission as a *quid pro quo* ("no taxation without representation"). And if for-profit corporations begin to sit on the commissions, the regional nature of accreditation in the US will soon come to be seen as utterly anachronistic.

One solution would be to replace the eight regional bodies with a single, federal entity. My guess is that the federalization of US quality assurance would be fiercely resisted in certain quarters. It certainly could not be imposed from above. Another solution is to encourage greater cooperation among the regionals and to urge them to adopt common policies. If the regionals begin to adopt absolutely identical policies and procedures, their continued separate existence, and cost, is bound to come under ever-greater scrutiny. Economics alone might seal their fate.

Dr. Geoffrey Alderman
Dean, Lander College for Men

Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is caused by infection with the bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi*, which is transmitted, to humans by the bite of an infected tick. Since 1990, over 90,000 cases of Lyme disease have been reported to the Center for Disease Control. Thus a reliable test for the rapid detection of *B. burgdorferi* in ticks is crucial for effective management of Lyme disease. Several types of tests for detecting *B. burgdorferi* exist. Although these tests are extremely sensitive, they are prone to false positive results and also require

a high level of technical skill.

Together with Dr. Ira Schwartz at New York Medical College, I have investigated the possibility of testing for the presence of *B. burgdorferi* by direct detection of its ribosomal RNA. Ribosomal RNA is a large molecule that is similar to DNA and is present in every ribosome - the protein synthesizing apparatus present in cells. The reason ribosomal RNA was chosen for detecting the presence of the bacteria is that each bacterial cell contains several thousand ribosomes and hence several thousand copies of its ribosomal RNA. The significance of the fact that many copies of ribosomal RNA are present in each bacterial cell is that it enables us to detect a tick that is infected with a low number of bacteria.

The procedure that we have developed involves first breaking open bacteria and incubating their RNA with a chemical agent that can adhere to RNA from *B. burgdorferi*. This chemical was designed to recognize RNA from *B. burgdorferi* only and not RNA from other types of bacteria. The presence of the chemical agent that adhered to the RNA from *B. burgdorferi* was detected using a reaction that results in production of light. Therefore emission of light will take place wherever *B. burgdorferi* is present and only if it is present. As we reported in the Journal of Medical Entomology in 2000 we have shown that this technique can be used to detect *B. burgdorferi* in ticks and does not give false positive results. Our intention is to increase the sensitivity of this assay even further and to make it usable for detection of *B. burgdorferi* in humans.

Dr. Kenneth Danishefsky
Chairman, Biology Department

The Students' Voice

Shaky Start. Solid Foundation.

With skeptical anticipation, we eagerly awaited our young investment club's first earnings report. Finally, our investing abilities would be judged. Well, the wait is over. Despite the declining market, which proved to be quite a test for rookie investors, our determination, gusto, and fearlessness made our investing debut a success. The novice investors managed to stay afloat during this trying period, which saw some of the worst first period market performances in over two decades.

Even though the Club lost money, the losses were minimal. From December fifteenth - two days after the Investment Club's birth - through April fifteenth the Club lost 3.36 % of its initial investment. This number may give the impression of a failed investing debut, but in truth the loss of *only* 3.36 % should be considered a feather in our hat. In a declining market such as the one the US has been experiencing, great losses are expected.

In this same time period, all the major stock market indexes lost much of its value. The S&P 500, in which half of our stock portfolio resides, fell 9.8 %. Meanwhile the NASDAQ composite index, in which one-third of our stock portfolio is invested, dropped an astronomical 26.07 %.

(Cont. Shaky Start. Solid Foundation.)

Compared to that, our paltry loss of 3.36 percent is impressive and encouraging. Two stocks contributed to most of our losses: Yahoo! Inc. and Genesis Microchip Inc., both of which call the NASDAQ home. In a mere two months, Yahoo! Inc. lost almost half its value and Genesis Microchip Inc. lost more than fifty percent of its worth. The only index that outperformed the club's portfolio was the Dow Jones Industrial Average which lost 2.95 %, a marginal lead over the Club.

In conclusion, Lander College Investment Club, has fared well in troubling times. Well, was it beginner's luck or do we really know what we are doing? Check it out next time, or if I may so brazenly suggest, check us out and join us, as we surge forward through these difficult, yet interesting times.

Ari Lasker
Statistician, Lander College Investment Club

48 Hours Later...



It has been almost eight months since that frightful first day when we first arrived at the college. The campus was desolate and barren; a hazardous construction site

covered in mud and a few "watch your step, please" signs. Well, the grass is almost grown and incredibly the one time swamp has been transformed into a beautiful and modern campus. From the meticulously sculptured landscaping in front of the main building to the wrought iron estate fence that keeps the students ~~in~~ safe, our grounds are surrounded by security and beauty. From the freshly tarred blacktop on the basketball courts to the cold marble benches that sent a chill up my spine the one time I sat on them, the builders have provided us with many ways to relax. The people who built Lander College deserve a lot of credit, especially for the eighteenth century French style lampposts that line our "quadrangle." As I write this article in the very luxurious student lounge looking down at the unused parking lot $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile away, and the otherworldly looking garbage cans "stratigerly" placed around the campus, I thank the people that built the school for doing such a great job.



Michael Assouline
Political Science Student

Our First Season

Throughout the country, thousands of colleges share in a celebration of athletic prowess through tournaments and good-natured competition. In line with its pledge to excel in all programs – academic, religious and otherwise - Lander College established an Athletics Department that has proven itself to be on the same standard. Under the guidance and leadership of the Athletics Department the first intramural basketball season at Lander College was a resounding success.

The season began with a tremendous reception from both faculty and students. The faculty and *hanhala* viewed the intra-college ball playing as a healthy outlet from the everyday pressures of academic life. The students felt this way as well, but anticipated the Wednesday night activity for a more poignant reason. It was a time to kick some patootie.

For seven weeks the league's twenty-four players traveled to Dov Revel, our sister campus in Forest Hills. The van ride to the gym was filled with playful taunting and an air of excitement. The enthusiasm en route to the court was matched by energetic zeal on the court. Soon enough, key players established themselves and rivalries emerged.

Each week, the warriors from each team prepared to do battle in the hardwood arena. Through sweat, aggressiveness and perseverance every game proved to be more competitive than the previous one. The teamwork displayed and the "for the love of the game" attitude exhibited were a pleasure to watch and experience.

Now, it would certainly be nice to say that everyone was a winner because everyone played his personal best. However, some people's personal best beat other people's personal best and that should be noted. So, to the team known simply as Team B, congratulations on a well-played season and good luck in the playoffs. And a note to all present and future league members: watch out for Team E in the fall.

Steven Hornung
Treasurer, Lander College Student Government

Chanu...err Purim 2001

Purim, huh? Yeah, what a Purim it was! Last issue we, I, someone with the same name as me, went as far as to say that the roof of the community will be blown off by Purim at Lander College. Well I guess it did! Truth be told, looking around, it was hard to tell whether guests outnumbered Yeshiva members or vice versa. There had been a buzz in the air in the weeks leading up to the big night. *Bochrim* had long sleepless nights due to the uncontrolled excitement. Finally, Taanis Esther was upon us. Now, not only could we not sleep, but also we couldn't eat. As for Purim itself, no one can argue the tireless effort put in by several students to perform a literal "*venahapach hu*" in the Bais Medrash. Who will ever forget the first ever Megilas Esther *laning* here at Lander? Maybe no one, but I can sure give you a big list of names that can't remember the

(Cont. Chanu...err Purim 2001)

morning version. A big shout out to those involved with the ingenious posters set up (if I may say so myself) and to those involved in the writing of the *shpeil*, which by the way was awesome (if I may say so myself). All in all, it was a night we won't forget, (providing we were sober) due to the *leibadikness* of the *bochrim*, the musical entertainment and the overall great atmosphere. The next day we went to Boro Park to rejoice with our Rabbeim, but not enough is remembered to comment. On behalf of all those involved, I feel it is pretty safe to say by the time Purim was over, there were no booze.

Avi Stern
Secretary, Lander College Student Government

Book Review

Democratic Distributive Justice
By Ross Zucker
336 pp. New York
Cambridge University Press

A Powerful New Brief for Equality

This article is reprinted from *Too Much*, with permission.

“The essential notion of democracy is rule of, by, and for the people. A political order cannot realize rule for the people unless it maintains conditions of economic justice. A government that supports an unjust economic order is wronging the people rather than ruling for them.”

Ross Zucker

Centuries ago, back in the Middle Ages, peasants were obligated to spend a good bit of their time tilling the fields of their lords, who were, in turn, legally entitled to everything the peasants produced.

All this, of course, strikes us today as terribly unjust and barbaric. People, we believe, are entitled to enjoy the fruits of their labors.

But how much fruit? Centuries from today, what will generations to come think about us? Will they read about average workers laboring an entire year to make what their corporate superiors earn in a single morning and recoil at the injustice of it all?

Ross Zucker, a political scientist at Lander College in New York, certainly hopes so. His new book, *Democratic Distributive Justice* (Cambridge University Press), just might help make the barbarities we take for granted today seem as revolting as the feudal privileges of ages long gone.

Zucker's work takes dead aim at the assumptions that buttress contemporary inequality, most notably the notion that the market rewards people appropriately for the economic value they create.

Some people, the 48-year-old Zucker readily agrees, do

work harder or better than others and are “due” extra rewards for their efforts. But much more goes into creating economic value, he argues, than the isolated efforts of individual producers.

“Produced commodities will not have value unless they are wanted or needed,” Zucker writes. “If being wanted or needed is an essential component of a thing's economic value, then people may be due the value created by this contribution.”

“And,” notes Zucker, “there are equalities in people's wants — for example, a common desire for a multiplicity of things — that motivate the expansion of produced value, making everyone equally due for the value that's created.”

To this “ethics of dueness,” Zucker adds what he calls an “ethics of community.” Zucker sees widespread cooperation, not just competition, in modern economic life.

A bakery counter clerk, for instance, is part of a single connected sequence that links “the miller, the farmer, the producer of ovens, of trucks and trains, of millstones and grinders, and the actions of all the other laborers who operate this equipment.”

“Such a sequence can only be called common action,” notes Zucker, and common action ought not be compensated on solely an individual basis.

“Community can provide a moral foundation for a principle of equal distribution of some income,” writes Zucker, “because membership in a community intuitively warrants sharing.”

The ethics of dueness and community create, for Zucker, a “redistributory property right.” In a true democracy, “a substantial portion of income” would be subject to egalitarian distribution, with the rest set by market dynamics.

The result, says the Yale-trained Zucker, would be a society that rejects the “absurd levels” of inequality we have now. But could Zucker's vision of distributive justice ever be realized in real life?

Large-scale political democracy itself, Zucker points out, was considered totally impractical until the end of the 18th century. Only small entities, like Greek city-states, could practice democracy, it was thought, and these small entities were inherently vulnerable to larger, nondemocratic states.

“Some profound ideas have had to go through literally centuries of development before they became practicable,” notes Zucker. “For centuries they just flickered as possibilities.”

Thanks to Zucker's new work, it's real distributive justice that now flickers more brightly.

Sam Pizzigati
Editor, *Too Much*

Is true economic justice achievable? Remember, until the late 1700s, philosophers dismissed democracy as impractical.

Letter To The Editor

China, The United States, and Israel

Some time ago, in the Israeli daily, *Yedioth Aharonoth*, there was a picture of China's Chiang Zemin wading, bobbing in the Dead Sea. He had visited Israel in order to improve relations with the Jewish State - and to seal the deal for the purchase of advanced reconnaissance airplanes. What an unusual picture!

Israel had signed the lucrative, multi-billion dollar contract with China several years earlier, with the US' State Department's knowledge and acquiescence. In an apparent change of heart, the US pressured Israel into renegeing on the deal, which would compromise US defense interests in the Pacific, and in the Taiwan Straits in particular.

Just very recently, the Chinese brought down a sophisticated US spy plane in international waters. The Chinese fighter jets that "buzzed" the aircraft could have had only two possible motivations for doing so: to scare the US away from the area (unlikely) or to bring the plane down. In short, it seems that the Chinese got from the US that which it failed to procure from the Israelis - and for free. How could no one have foreseen this?

Mira Shmaryahu Bigel
Forest Hills, NY

News Releases

Students Attain Internships

Rami Genauer, political science major and President of Lander College Political Science Society, has been accepted to join the Orthodox Union's summer internship program in Washington D.C. Under the auspices of the OU's Institute for Public Affairs, Rami will be working for MEMRI (Middle Eastern Media Research Institute), a highly regarded think-tank specializing in translation of Arab media.

Meir Hornung, an MIS and data communications major, has attained a position with the office of New York City Comptroller and mayoral candidate Allen Hevesi. Meir will be working in the Data and Information Services Department in Manhattan.

Avi Horowitz, a 19 year old finance major, will be working this summer at Prudential Securities in Manhattan. Prudential is one the largest financial services in America. Avi will be working as an assistant to a financial planner.

Mazal Tov To...

Rabbi and Mrs. Moshe Crystal on the birth of their daughter, Chava Gittel.

Rabbi and Mrs. Greenberg on the birth of their daughter, Sima

R' Doniel and Ziva Glanz on their recent marriage.

Eliav and Aviva Friedman on their recent marriage.

Yoel Meghedesc on his upcoming marriage to Lulu Fishman

Azriel Rauzman on his upcoming marriage to Ilana Shassir

We would like to thank all these individuals for their dedication and commitment to our institution. The administration and the students wish them continued Smachot and success in all their endeavors.

But Seriously...

Rejected Lander College Student Government Constitutional Amendments

Amendment #1:

Article 1 Section 1: The governing body shall be known as "We're the Student Government, Nanny Nanny Nanny."

Amendment #2:

Article 2 Section 1: The Treasurer may only embezzle school funds with an absolute majority vote by the Student Government.

Amendment #3:

Article 2 Section 4: Amendment #4 is declared null and void.

Amendment #4:

Article 3 Section 1: The elections must take pl...Oh what's the point?

Amendment #5:

Article 3 Section 2: Each Student gets one vote. Total. That's it. (Tip: Save it for the President, I mean, c'mon, do we really need a V.P.?)

Amendment #6:

Article 3 Section 3: If there are runners on first and second, or bases loaded with less than two outs, and the batter pops up in the infield, it shall be an infield fly, the batter is automatically out, and runners may advance at their own risk.

Amendment #7:

Article 4 Section 2: The Secretary shall provide complete notes from the previous meeting, coffee and/or hot chocolate, and foot massages upon request.

Amendment #8

Article 5 Section 1: If the President is unable to fulfill the responsibilities of office, the Vice President shall take over the position of President, and may legally put it on his resume.

Amendment #9:

Article 5 Section 3: "And the word of this constitution shall be spread throughout the school, and thou shalt knowest that I am... what? Yes, I'll be there in a min...Yes dear, coming.

Amendment #10:

Article 6 Section 1: Roses are red, violets are blue, hello to Lander, goodbye to YU.

For comments please contact us at:
thelanderchronicle@hotmail.com

Or you can send your letter to:

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