

**NFTY-NAR Fall Kallah 5771**  
**October 29-31, 2010 - URJ Eisner Camp**  
**Living NFTY: Bullying**

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**Touchstone Text**

“Even if we upset somebody only through harsh words, without committing any tangible act of injury, we are still required to seek forgiveness.” - *Maimonides, Laws of Repentance, 2:9*

**Goals**

- PPs will walk away with a better understanding of how bullying affects all people around them.
- PPs will make a conscious effort in the future to refrain from bullying and stop bullying in action.

**Objectives**

- PPs will create “confession cards” to discuss their relationship with bullying at the beginning of the program, and then turn these cards into “Hopes for the Future”
- PPs will discuss current events and Tyler Clementi through multiple different lenses to gain a better understanding of the effects of bullying.
- PPs will participate in a text study to understand Judaism’s position on bullying.

**Materials**

- Two-sided blank index cards
- Copies of Appendices A-F, H (Current Events Articles)
- Butcher Paper
- Markers
- Projector
- Computer
- Speakers

**People**

- 2 PL/TKs
- 12 GLs
- 160 PPs

**Space Needed**

- Large, open program space (i.e. Beit Am)

**Time Table**

00:00-00:07 – Introduction and Confession Cards  
00:07-00:15 – Current Events Articles Reading Period  
00:15-00:25 – Current Events Discussions  
00:25-00:28 – Shuffle and Regroup  
00:28-00:48 – Judaism Discussion and Text Study  
00:48-00:54 – Hope for the Future Cards  
00:54-01:00 – “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”/Wrap-up  
01:00-01:05 – Petition Signing (as leaving)

## **Detailed Procedure**

### **00:00-00:07 – Introduction and Confession Cards**

*PLs will welcome PPs to the program and explain that NFTY recently created an initiative called “Living NFTY: Bullying” to address the epidemic of bullying that has become increasingly prevalent in our society. All regions across North America will have the opportunity to program and learn about this initiative throughout the year. PLs will explain that our program will feature discussions surrounding current events and the death of Tyler Clementi, and then discussions about Judaism’s stance on bullying. When each PP enters the program space, they will receive a blank index card and a marker. After the brief introduction, PLs will give PPs the remaining time to write on these index card a “confession” about bullying. These “confessions” should explain your relationship with bullying, if you’ve ever been bullied, if you’ve ever been a bully, etc. These cards will be anonymous, and will be reused for another part of the program, so PLs will advise PPs to be open yet mindful of what they are writing. Please be appropriate and serious. Once PPs have completed their Confession Cards, they will be divided into 12 groups and instructed to move to their designated locations within the room.*

### **00:07-00:15 – Current Events Articles Reading Period**

*PPs will quickly introduce themselves to the group, sharing their name, TYG, and grade. PPs will read an article concerning bullying and Tyler Clementi. There are six different articles (Appendices A-F), and two groups will read the same article. Each group will read the following articles:*

- Groups 1 and 7: Appendix A*
- Groups 2 and 8: Appendix B*
- Groups 3 and 9: Appendix C*
- Groups 4 and 10: Appendix D*
- Groups 5 and 11: Appendix E*
- Groups 6 and 12: Appendix F*

### **00:15-00:25 – Current Events Discussions**

*After reading the article, PPs will engage in a discussion about what they have just read. This should be an open space for people to say what they would like surrounding Tyler Clementi and bullying. Guiding questions for discussion are located in Appendix G.*

### **00:25-00:28 – Shuffle and Regroup**

*PPs will be rearranged into 12 new groups so that for the second part of the program, there will be people who have read all six of the articles in each groups. PPs will be given three minutes to shuffle and regroup.*

### **00:28-00:48 – Judaism Discussion and Text Study**

*PPs will introduce themselves to their new groups, sharing their name, TYG, grade, and the source of the article that they just discussed. Then PPs will read a list of texts (Appendix H), and will engage in a discussion surrounding what Judaism has to say about bullying and how we as Jews should address the growing issue of bullying. Questions for the Judaism discussion can be found in Appendix I.*

**00:48-00:54 – “Hope for the Future” Cards**

*PPs will each receive one of the Confession Cards from the beginning of the program and a marker. PLs will explain that as we move out of this program, it is our hope that more people have hope for the future and a better understanding of the incredibly serious affects of bullying. PPs will be asked to take the index cards that they just received, and on the back write a “hope for the future” that they have about bullying, community, friendship, equality, and acceptance. After the program, we will be making a large mural out of these to represent NFTY-NAR’s commitment to end bullying and create a better future for ourselves and those around us.*

**00:54-01:00 – “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”/Wrap-up**

*While PPs are working on their “Hope for the Future” cards, the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” video will be played (Appendix J). PPs will watch the video and consider its meaning after our conversations throughout the program. If PPs have not completed their cards, they may do so during the video. At the end of the video, PLs will read the Keshet “Do Not Stand Idly By: A Jewish Community Pledge to Save Lives. PLs will thank PPs for participating in the program and remind that this is an ongoing discussion, and if they would like to talk about bullying or inclusion, NFTY is a safe environment in which to do that.*

**01:00-01:05 – Petition Signing (as leaving)**

*As PPs walk out, they will have the option to sign their name on the Keshet petition if they so choose to affirm their commitment to end bullying, especially in the Jewish world.*

## Appendix A – New York Times

October 3, 2010

### Suicides Put Light on Pressures of Gay Teenagers

By JESSE MCKINLEY

FRESNO, Calif. — When Seth Walsh was in the sixth grade, he turned to his mother one day and told her he had something to say.

“I was folding clothes, and he said, ‘Mom, I’m gay,’ ” said Wendy Walsh, a hairstylist and single mother of four. “I said, ‘O.K., sweetheart, I love you no matter what.’ ”

But last month, Seth went into the backyard of his home in the desert town of Tehachapi, Calif., and hanged himself, apparently unable to bear a relentless barrage of taunting, bullying and other abuse at the hands of his peers. After a little more than a week on life support, he died last Tuesday. He was 13.

The case of [Tyler Clementi](#), the Rutgers University freshman who jumped off the George Washington Bridge after a sexual encounter with another man was broadcast online, has shocked many. But his death is just one of several suicides in recent weeks by young gay teenagers who had been harassed by classmates, both in person and online.

The list includes Billy Lucas, a 15-year-old from Greensburg, Ind., who hanged himself on Sept. 9 after what classmates reportedly called a constant stream of invective against him at school.

Less than two weeks later, Asher Brown, a 13-year-old from the Houston suburbs, shot himself after coming out. He, too, had reported being taunted at his middle school, according to [The Houston Chronicle](#). His family has blamed school officials as failing to take action after they complained, something the school district has denied.

The deaths have set off an impassioned — and sometimes angry — response from gay activists and caught the attention of federal officials, including Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, who on Friday called the suicides “unnecessary tragedies” brought on by “the trauma of being bullied.”

“This is a moment where every one of us — parents, teachers, students, elected officials and all people of conscience — needs to stand up and speak out against intolerance in all its forms,” Mr. Duncan said.

And while suicide by gay teenagers has long been a troubling trend, experts say the stress can be even worse in rural places, where a lack of gay support services — or even openly gay people — can cause a sense of isolation to become unbearable.

“If you’re in the small community, the pressure is hard enough,” said Eliza Byard, executive director of the [Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network](#), which is based in New York. “And goodness knows people get enough signals about ‘how wrong it is to be gay’ without anyone in those communities actually having to say so.”

According to a recent survey conducted by Ms. Byard's group, nearly 9 of 10 gay, lesbian, transgender or bisexual middle and high school students suffered physical or verbal harassment in 2009, ranging from taunts to outright beatings.

In Mr. Clementi's case, prosecutors in New Jersey have charged two fellow Rutgers freshmen with invasion of privacy and are looking at the death as a possible hate crime. Prosecutors in Cypress, Tex., where Asher Brown died, said Friday that they would investigate what led to his suicide.

In a pair of blog postings last week, Dan Savage, a sex columnist based in Seattle, assigns the blame to negligent teachers and school administrators, bullying classmates and "hate groups that warp some young minds and torment others."

"There are accomplices out there," he wrote Saturday.

In an interview, Mr. Savage, who is gay, said he was particularly irate at religious leaders who used "antigay rhetoric."

"The problem is that kids are being exposed to this rhetoric, and then they go to the school and there's this gay kid," he said. "And how are they going to treat this gay kid who they've been told is trying to destroy their family? They're going to abuse him."

In late September, Mr. Savage began a project on YouTube called "It Gets Better," featuring gay adults talking about their experiences with harassment as adolescents.

In [one video](#), a gay man named Cyrus tells of his life as a closeted teenager in a small town in upstate New York.

"The main thing I wanted to come across from this video is how different my life is, how great my life is, and how happy I am in general," he says.

Glenda Testone, the executive director of the [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center](#) in New York City, said their youth programs serve about 50 young people a day, often suffering from "bullying, harassment or even violence."

"The three main groups of pivotal figures are family, friends and their schoolmates," she said. "And if they're feeling isolated and like they can't tell those people, it's going to be a very rough ride."

Here in Fresno, in California's conservative Central Valley, groups like [Equality California](#) have been more active in trying to establish outreach offices, particularly after an election defeat in 2008, when California voters approved [Proposition 8](#), which banned [same-sex marriage](#).

In Tehachapi, in Kern County south of here, more than 500 mourners attended a memorial on Friday for Seth Walsh. One of those, Jamie Elaine Phillips, a classmate and friend, said Seth had long known he was gay and had been teased for years.

“But this year it got much worse,” Jamie said. “People would say, ‘You should kill yourself,’ ‘You should go away,’ ‘You’re gay, who cares about you?’ ”

Richard L. Swanson, superintendent of the local school district, said his staff had conducted quarterly assemblies on behavior, taught tolerance in the classroom and had “definite discipline procedures that respond to bullying.”

“But these things didn’t prevent Seth’s tragedy,” he said in an e-mail. “Maybe they couldn’t have.”

For her part, Ms. Walsh said she had complained about Seth’s being picked on but did not want to cast blame, though she hoped his death would teach people “not to discriminate, not be prejudiced.”

“I truly hope,” she said, “that people understand that.”

*Ian Lovett contributed reporting from Tehachapi, Calif.*

## **Appendix B – AOL Politics Daily**

### **Tyler Clementi's Death: A Call to Action Against Cyberbullying**

What started as a smattering of Facebook status updates on my homepage soon erupted into an international news story. Tyler Clementi, a boy from my high school in Ridgewood, N.J. and a freshman at Rutgers University, committed suicide on Sept. 22. after a video of him having a private encounter with another man was streamed on the Internet.

Tyler was two years behind me at Ridgewood High, and although I did not know him, the tragedy has deeply affected me, as it has millions of others. It pains me that the perpetrators, believed to be Tyler's roommate and a friend, could be so cruel and reckless, and it pains me that Tyler was not able to see any future beyond such humiliation. While I am glad it is getting worldwide coverage, Tyler's death needs to be more than something for people to talk about. Tyler's story reminds us of the urgent need to prevent online harassment and abuse of social-networking sites.

The question is how to accomplish that.

We know that social-networking sites are not just about building friendships -- they are also used to spread gossip and negative remarks, and young people who socialize in the public sphere are especially vulnerable. While the "meet me at the flagpole" bully still exists, social-networking sites now provide a space for a more potent form of bullying that is easier to commit, and more destructive.

At the University of Notre Dame campus in South Bend, Ind., students were shaken and angered as they discussed Tyler's death. Katherine Madden, a junior economics and French major, said the Internet affords anonymity to bullies -- but not their victims. "They don't get that luxury of not having their name attached to a rumor."

Online abuse can also occur unintentionally, said Jackie Emmanuel, president of the Progressive Student Alliance. "Some people, teenagers in particular, believe [the Internet] permits them to say things far more inflammatory and hurtful than they would say in person," Emmanuel said. "Text can also be misconstrued easily -- a 'joke' on Facebook . . . can be perceived as a direct attack, because in text we lack the unspoken body language and intonation of voice of whomever we are speaking to."

Clearly, what makes cyberbullying so dangerous is that technology allows us to act on impulse, before conscience has time to check our baser instincts. We are able to detach ourselves from our actions, starting a chain of offenses but then quickly denying responsibility for them.

Some educators would like to see social networking disappear.

Last April, Anthony Orsini, principal of Ridgewood's Benjamin Franklin Middle School, sent an e-mail to parents that said in part: "It is time for every single member of the B.F. community to take a stand! There is absolutely, positively no reason for any middle school student to be a part of a social networking site!" As Orsini well knows, middle-school students are notorious for forming cliques -- excluding kids who don't fit in -- and failing to understand the extent of the damage they can do.

Others say education is a better antidote to cyberbullying. "I think we should teach kids that the world online affects the world outside of their computer," said Notre Dame student Brandon Buchanan. "We

need to teach them to be able to turn off those sorts of conversations before they become abusive."

For Alyssa Sappenfield, a junior sociology and psychology major, the recent tragedy speaks to a larger issue of invasion of privacy. "I think that the gay rights issue, while it is an extremely important issue, is not the main problem in this situation," she said. "The real violation here is [that of] privacy." Before the Age of the Internet, the media determined what information the public received. Now, anyone can publish anything, and privacy invasion has become endemic.

As an aspiring journalist, I have often wondered how my decisions as a reporter will play out in the real world. My minor at Notre Dame is "Journalism, Ethics, and Democracy," and integrated into my classes are ethical discussions about how reporters should act under given circumstances. Notre Dame makes an effort to educate its journalists to be not only good reporters, but also moral reporters. Despite this education, I still worry that I could make mistakes that will haunt me. What if I accidentally expose information about someone in a way that dramatically affects that person's life? What if I print misinformation about someone that, once posted on a Web site, spreads virally on the Internet and can never be completely wiped out? I now realize that these questions do not just apply to my position as a journalist, but also to my position as a young person socializing on the Web. When interacting on the Internet, we must always take into account those ethical issues, even if we think what we say on Facebook is "casual" and "doesn't really mean anything."

But as Tyler's death proves, the dangers the Internet poses to our relationships and identities are gravely underestimated. In just the last month, at least six young men have committed suicide in the United States as a result of abuse based on sexual orientation -- and two of those suicides were integrally related to online abuse. Similar instances of bullying occur constantly. Oftentimes, these bullies go unpunished either because they have acted anonymously, the severity of the situation is not recognized by those in authority, or the victims are too humiliated to speak out.

Tyler Clementi's parents said in a statement, "Regardless of legal outcomes, our hope is that our family's personal tragedy will serve as a call for compassion, empathy and human dignity." This call for compassion is imperative at middle schools, high schools, and college campuses, where students are still developing their identities and any blow to their reputations can seem absolutely overwhelming.

The recent suicides must be our call to action. Before we broadcast an opinion via tweet or Facebook status update, we must consider how our words might be understood out of context. We must work to teach children how to use the Internet ethically, reminding them of the consequences of words or pictures they post. We must make a concentrated effort to be tolerant, and remember that what we publish cannot be taken back, especially on the Internet where the line between public and private is blurred.

## Appendix C – JTA

### Op-Ed: There's no place for bullying in God's world

By Steven Burg

NEW YORK (JTA) -- I was saddened to hear of the death of Tyler Clementi, an 18-year-old college student driven to suicide by bullying over his sexual orientation. While Clementi's case has grabbed national headlines, it sadly is far from unique.

Last September alone, no fewer than six boys in the United States committed suicide as a response to bullying they suffered over their sexual identities. Several of the victims were as young as 13 years old.

Bullying is nothing new, but modern technology has caused it to explode in new and dangerous ways. In Clementi's case, intimate moments were webcast. Other teens are humiliated routinely via social networks. It takes no effort whatsoever to send a tweet, post a video or write on a virtual wall.

In the old days, bullies could usually only harass their intended victims live and in person. Nowadays a teen can be abused and publicly denigrated remotely and often anonymously.

Such cases are not limited to boys; nor are they limited to situations pertaining to the victims' sexuality. Three girls are awaiting trial in Massachusetts for their role in harassing a classmate to the point of suicide. Even when situations do not reach the point of suicide as a perceived means of escape, bullying lowers self-esteem and leads to depression and anxiety.

It is unacceptable to harass or bully anyone for any reason. It makes no difference what a person's race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or country of origin happens to be. A person's income or social status is immaterial. We are all created in the image of God, and the Torah demands that we extend common courtesy to one another.

Our responsibility goes even further in the case of the downtrodden and oppressed, insisting that we guard ourselves very carefully so as not to add to their troubles through our words and actions. (Causing pain to a widow, an orphan or a convert are particularly heinous acts under Torah law.)

Rabbi Akiva famously said in Leviticus 19:18 that the primary principle of the Torah is "love your neighbor as yourself." However, the Sifra (a book of the Midrash) immediately follows that statement with what it considers to be an even more important principle: The sage Ben Azzai cites in Genesis 5:1, "This is the book of the generations of Adam." The verse means that we all are descended from the same ancestors, Adam and Eve.

As important as the verse cited by Rabbi Akiva is, it's too easy for us to justify hating others because they are not our "neighbor"; that is, they are not like us. Ben Azzai's verse reminds us that black or white, rich or poor, straight or gay, Jewish, Christian or Muslim, we ultimately are one family -- the family of mankind.

Hate and fear of that which is different is not something with which we are born; it is something acquired. ("You've Got to Be Taught," the beautiful Rodgers and Hammerstein song in "South Pacific," sends out that message.) Accordingly, I implore all parents, teachers and other role models to actively encourage an environment of tolerance.

This doesn't mean that we have to agree with every decision that others may make in life. We may

disagree with others' theologies or lifestyles. But disagreement is not a license to abuse others. A child, a teen or an adult who harasses another person, verbally or physically, is automatically in the wrong.

At NCSY, we have adopted strict policies against acts of malice and aggression. All of our regions across North America are being instructed to have sessions on bullying. The Midwest Region, based in Chicago, already has announced a bullying program at its Fall Regional in Kansas City next weekend.

Unwelcome attention and a hostile environment are unacceptable regardless of the source. We all have the right to live free of intimidation. If we have legitimate differences of opinion with another person regarding religion, politics or other areas in which debate may be valid, that calls for thoughtful discussion and mutual respect.

I call upon parents, educators, clergy and all others who work with youth to join us in a zero-tolerance policy for bullying in all its forms, including cyberbullying. Not only will this save young lives from being needlessly thrown away, it will ensure a safer and healthier environment for all our children.

(Rabbi Steven Burg is the international director of NCSY, the youth program of the Orthodox Union.)

## **Appendix D – Manitou Messenger**

### **Internet births brave new world of bullying**

By Apoorva Pasricha

The aggressive, hostile individual who always finds the most vulnerable schoolmate to taunt has been a plague to schoolyards forever. In our technologically-advancing 21st century, the Internet has evolved the definition of the classic bully.

20 years ago, the bully physically or verbally abused the victim using profane language. Today, the bully is capable of invading the victim's privacy and broadcasting his or her personal life on the Internet, which is precisely what recently happened to a student at Rutgers University in New Jersey.

Tyler Clementi, a Rutgers freshman, committed suicide after experiencing negative exposure in cyberspace. According to New Jersey police, his roommate, Dharun Ravi, and classmate Molly Wei allegedly observed and videotaped Clementi's intimate encounter with a man. They streamed the encounter on YouTube. As a result of this humiliation, Clementi jumped off the George Washington Bridge.

Clementi is one of five young adults in the gay and lesbian community who have recently committed suicide due to cyberbullying. This issue opens the floodgates: GLBTQ young adults have few safe spots from bullies.

Who is responsible for protecting young adults from cyberbullying, especially when threats can be accessed by millions of people around the world? In such situations, it seems that there is no better option than suicide for individuals who are struggling to find a safe, accepting place in society.

What we, regular Internet users, deem an invasion of privacy in Clementi's situation, many consider manslaughter. What should the punishment be for acts like cyberbullying and online humiliation? This question is as difficult to answer as how to integrate our values and find a balance between our right to privacy and the urge to text, tweet, stream and post. At the same time, it's necessary to consider just how culpable an online bully is in someone's decision to end his or her life. In this case, public humiliation and sexual orientation was a deadly combination. Unfortunately, it is not the first time we have seen this fatal combination at work.

Overall the situation holds double standards. On one side, we are afraid of being bullied through the Internet, yet on the other, Facebook and Twitter encourage us to put every thought and moment online. We sacrifice our own privacy to the altar of connectedness and worry less about the privacy of others.

Amid all the social networking sites and progressive worldviews on technology, we get swept up in the temporary world of such sites, and it becomes harder to define boundaries.

Impulsiveness, immaturity and immense publishing power can be a dangerous mix. The ability to distinguish what is and is not acceptable to post online becomes crucial. Simply because we have the

privilege to post something online, does not always make the act morally repugnant.

Clementi's roommate misused his right to the Internet by tweeting private information about his roommate. After knowing that your private moment became public without your knowledge, what kind of an attitude should you take on in order to face the world?

Perhaps similar thoughts went through Clementi's mind, and he chose not to face the world at all. In some respect, he becomes responsible for his death too, simply because he made the choice of suicide. However, ultimately, it was his roommate whose actions pressured Clementi to make the fatal jump. Again, it becomes difficult to identify who holds the responsibility.

Contrary to what many people believe, the bullying situation among young adults has not worsened; we simply have easier access to people's privacies. 20 years ago, bullying happened on a similar scale, just not in the same ways.

With our technologically-advancing society, it is clear that bullying has grown in the cyberworld. However, the consequences are worse, and to prevent those, it's important to be aware of them. We must figure out a way to fight back against cyberbullies, just as we would in the schoolyard.

Apoorva Pasricha '14 (pasricha@stolaf.edu) is from Eagan, Minn. She plans on majoring in media studies and political science.

## Appendix E – New York Daily News

### **Rutgers freshman kills self after classmates use hidden camera to watch his sexual activity**

By Alison Gendar, Edgar Sandoval and Larry Mcshane

A Rutgers University freshman, distraught over a gay tryst splashed live across cyberspace by his roommate, plunged to his death from the George Washington Bridge.

"Jumping off the gw bridge sorry," read the final Facebook status from Tyler Clementi, just 72 hours after his private life suddenly became public knowledge.

The 18-year-old committed suicide after his dorm-room rendezvous was surreptitiously streamed on the Web via his roomie's hidden camera, sources told the Daily News.

The student who broadcast the liaison, and the friend who was with him, were arrested while Clementi's family waited for his body to be found.

"His poor parents," one police source said. "Shame is a terrible thing."

The quiet redhead, a scholarship student and skilled violinist, apparently asked roommate Dharun Ravi, 18, for some privacy on Sept. 19.

"Roommate asked for the room till midnight," Ravi wrote on Twitter that night. "I went into Molly's room and turned on my webcam. I saw him making out with a dude. Yay."

Authorities say Ravi streamed the action on the Web to friends - an illegal video transmission.

Two days later, in another Twitter post, Ravi indicated he had plans for a sequel.

"Yes, it's happening again," he wrote, inviting people to watch between 9:30 p.m. and midnight. The second streaming attempt failed, authorities said.

When Clementi learned of the vile voyeurism, he couldn't handle it and methodically planned his own death.

Sometime after 8 p.m. on Sept. 22, a friend said, he used his cell phone to change his Facebook status to the chilling farewell message.

Clementi wandered along the south walkway of the GWB from Fort Lee, N.J., to the tower on the New York side at 8:50 p.m., sources said.

Once there, he carefully left behind his wallet - including his license, AAA card and Rutgers ID - before leaping to his death. There was no note.

Authorities discovered the corpse of a white male floating Wednesday near the Columbia University boathouse, about 30 blocks north of the bridge, but no identification was made.

The dead teen's devastated family said they were "cooperating fully" with the continuing criminal probe against Ravi and his high-school pal and fellow Rutgers freshman Molly Wei.

"Tyler was a fine young man, and a distinguished musician," they wrote. "The family is heartbroken beyond words."

A priest spent about an hour Wednesday consoling the family at their Ridgewood, N.J., home.

Ravi and Wei were each charged with two counts of invasion of privacy. Ravi, freed on \$25,000 bail, faced two additional charges for his botched bid at beaming Clementi's love life on the Internet.

They face up to five years in prison if convicted.

Rutgers, which launched a program to promote civility on campus just this week, said if the allegations are true, the duo violated the school's "standards of decency and humanity."

The gay rights group Garden State Equality denounced the death as a hate crime.

Rutgers student Danielle Birnbohm, who lived next door to Clementi and Ravi, said the pair shared a room in the Davidson C dorm but spent little time together.

"[Tyler] kept to himself. He was a great person," said Birnbohm. "It's a shame. I can't believe someone would kill himself because of that."

Another dorm resident, Nicole Conter, recalled Clementi as "cute and quiet."

"He was in a band, and played instruments," said the chemistry major. "He really kept to himself."

At Ridgewood High School, the teen won a scholarship from the local symphony orchestra at his June graduation.

Ravi, of Plainsboro, and Wei, 18, of Princeton, were members of the same clique at West Windsor-Plainsboro High School North in New Jersey.

Friends described Ravi as an outgoing Ping-Pong player and Frisbee enthusiast who enjoyed a good prank.

"I think he's a good person," said Michael Zhuang, 17, a neighbor and former classmate. "I don't think he's a homophobe. It would've been no different if it was a girl in the room."

Imcshane@nydailynews.com

With Kerry Wills, Matthew Lysiak, John Lauinger, Jonathan Lemire and Samuel Goldsmith

## Appendix F – People Magazine

### Tormented to Death?

**Tyler Clementi, a gifted musician, killed himself after his college roommate streamed video that outed him as gay. But was his tragic death a hate crime—or a prank gone horribly wrong?**

Tyler Clementi was one of those kids who spent a lot of time on his own—not weird, just quiet. “He was always by himself with his iPod in his ears” says Kevin Muldoon, 17, a former classmate at New Jersey’s Ridgewood High School. But when he picked up his violin, the shy teen came alive. “There was deep emotion when he put that bow to his violin” says friend Morgan Knight, 18. “That’s how he expressed himself.”

Clementi did not get to play late on Sept. 22; instead he drove to the George Washington Bridge and jumped into the Hudson River. The tragedy of his suicide, at 18, has affected people around the world because of what preceded it: Just three days earlier, his freshman roommate at New Jersey’s Rutgers University, Dharun Ravi, 18, allegedly webcammed Clementi in an encounter with a man in their dorm room and streamed it live. Authorities have charged Ravi and another student—Molly Wei, 18, whose computer Ravi allegedly used—with invasion of privacy, which could lead to five years in prison. (The prosecutor is considering adding hate crime charges, which carry a maximum 10-year sentence but said Oct. 4 there may not be enough evidence.) What officials and friends are struggling to answer: Was this cold-blooded cyber-bullying or a dumb prank with awful, unforeseen consequences? “It’s not clear Mr. Ravi was motivated to harm Tyler because he was gay,” says former federal prosecutor Henry Klingeman. “But given the suicide and the attention, I’m certain the prosecutor will seek prison time.”

The harassment Clementi may have felt is all too common. A 2005 Harris poll found 90 percent of gay and lesbian teens say they’ve been bullied in the past year. And nearly two-thirds of these students feel unsafe in school, according to a 2009 survey by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network. In September alone, three other teens took their own lives after homophobic taunting. Still, the actions that may have prompted Clementi to kill himself seem particularly heartless, and they have touched a nerve across the country, sparking a national conversation on bullying and prompting talk show host Ellen DeGeneres to declare, “Something must be done.” Clementi’s mother, father, and two brothers “are devastated,” says Emmanuel Sosinsky, president of the Ridgewood Symphony Orchestra, with which Clementi played. “They were always so supportive of him.”

Clementi may not have had a big circle of friends, but he made an impression on the ones he had. “When I felt isolated, he showed me an immense amount of compassion,” says Morgan Knight. Clementi dazzled conductors and fellow violinists with his technique. But if he shared his musical gifts with the world, he kept his personal life hidden. “He was, as far as I know, completely in the closet,” says Knight. Clementi once called himself “practically asexual” in postings on the Internet message board JustUsBoys.com; there, he said, “I honestly don’t think people are mature enough to be having sex prior to collegeish years.”

On Sept. 19 Clementi invited a man to his dorm room. Clementi “asked for the room till midnight,” Ravi tweeted that evening. “I went to Molly’s room and turned on the webcam. I saw [Clementi] making out with a dude. Yay.” According to someone close to Wei, several students came to her room to watch. Two days later, Ravi tweeted he was going to secretly webcam Clementi again and share it with his Internet chat group. “Video chat me between the hours of 9:30 and 12,” he tweeted. “It’s happening again.”

By then Clementi had learned about the webcam and shut it down. He discussed the matter on the Internet forum and possibly with a resident adviser. "I'm kinda pissed," he wrote in a Sept. 21 post entitled "college roommate spying." Even so, he didn't seem overly distraught in the message-board postings and even later called Ravi "a pretty decent roommate." Yet just a day later, at 8:42 p.m., Clementi posted this terse status update on Facebook: "Jumping off the gw bridge. Sorry."

While Clementi's friends and family grieve, those who know Ravi and Wei—both popular, solid students—are stunned. Ravi "found irony and dark situations funny," says his friend Josh Rutstein. "He's not a monster." The outgoing Wei, a pharmacy student, "is one of the most caring people I've met," says a close friend. Wei's lawyer Rubin Sinins insists, "She did nothing wrong and committed no crime. There's not an ounce of bias in her."

Ravi and Wei were released while investigators keep digging into the case. Meanwhile hundreds of mourners held a vigil for Clementi on the Rutgers campus Oct. 3, and even those who never knew him sensed to sense his gentle spirit. "His parents lost a wonderful son, and we've lost a wonderful human being," says Emanuel Sosinsky. "His death is a loss to the world."

OTHER STORIES (from the magazine page)

### **Seth Walsh, 13**

On Sept. 19 the Tehachapi, Calif., middle schooler, picked on for being gay, hanged himself. At his memorial, his brother said, "He was the best big brother in the world—no the galaxy."

### **Asher Brown, 13**

The Houston eighth grader was tortured for being gay, lisping and being a Buddhist. On Sept. 23 he shot himself at home. "This is the worst club," says mom Amy Truong, "to be a member of."

### **Billy Lucas, 15**

After the high school freshman hanged himself Sept. 9, friend Jade Sansing told a reporter that bullies at the Greensburg, Ind., school would call Lucas "gay and tell him to go kill himself."

Written by Alex Tresniowski, Nicole Weisensee Egan, Diane Herbst, Charlotte Triggs, Lesley Messer, Joanne Fowler, Daniel S. Levy, and Nadine Shabeeb

## **Appendix G – Discussion Questions for Article**

1. What was your initial reaction to the article?
2. Have you ever been a bystander to a bullying?
3. Do you know anyone who refers to things as "so gay"?
4. Why do you think people do this?
5. How do we create "safe" environments?
6. What do you think is the most effective way to stop bullying/cyberbullying?

## **Appendix H – Text Study Texts**

One who rebukes a person shall in the end find more favor than the one who flatters with words. – Mishlei 28:23

God created man in God's image. In the image of God, God created him --Genesis 1:27

Life and death are in the hands of the tongue. - Proverbs 18:21

One who gives his neighbor a bad name, can never gain pardon. - Jerusalem Talmud, Bava Kamma 8:7

Why is gossip like a three-pronged tongue? Because it kills three people: the person who says it, the person who listens to it, and the person about whom it is said.- Babylonian Talmud, tractate Arakhin, page 15bμ

## **Appendix I – Discussion Questions for Judaism Section**

1. Have you ever been bullied for being Jewish?
2. Do you hide your Judaism or do you feel like you wear it on your sleeve?
3. Which text do you think relates most to the issue we're talking about/do you agree with most?  
Why?
4. What makes NFTY a safe environment?
5. Is the Jewish community as a whole safe?

**Appendix J – “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”**

<http://vimeo.com/1823335>