

Scoop – Alumna Headliner
Rebecca Seidel ('07)

- Since your graduation from SSSQ where has your path taken you?

After graduating from SSSQ, I went to Townsend Harris High School, and then Wesleyan University. At Wesleyan, I helped run our local radio station, WESU Middletown. I also hosted my own on-air show. I got really interested in working in radio professionally, and since podcasts were a growing medium, I became especially interested in that. After college, I moved back to Queens and landed a job as a podcast producer at SiriusXM, where I worked for three years. Then, this past June, I moved over to my current job as a podcast producer at Marvel.

- How did your education in high school and college influence your career choice?

I've loved writing since my Schechter days, and going to a humanities-focused high school helped me develop my writing skills. I wrote and edited for both my high school and college newspapers, losing a lot of sleep as editor-in-chief. College was where I really caught the "radio bug." Wesleyan was a phenomenal place full of creative people and energy, and I found so much community at the radio station there (and on campus in general). I didn't know how viable podcast production was as a career, but my professors and friends at Wesleyan encouraged me to try it out.

- Can you give us some insight about how a podcast works, developed?

Podcast production has a lot of steps. You have to nail down an interesting concept for a show, and figure out the show's style (is it an interview-based show, or a talk show, or a narrative show, or something else entirely?). You also have to figure out who your audience is--who are you trying to reach? When a show is up and running, the day-to-day production process includes finding and booking guests, scheduling and prepping for interviews, setting up recordings, and then editing and making sure it all sounds seamless. It's a lot to keep track of!

- How and when did you become involved with podcast production and what do you enjoy most about it?

I first got involved in podcast production in college, and then I really got the wheels turning at SiriusXM and on an independent podcast I still work on, Other Men Need Help. I love the community that has formed among professional podcast producers, and the risk-taking and creativity that the medium allows.

- How did you start your Podcast Club and how many segments are there?

Podcast Brunch Club was founded by a woman in Chicago named Adela Mizrachi. It's like a book club, but for podcast listening instead of reading. There are now chapters all over the world, including the NYC chapter, which I run. Every month, there's a new theme, with around four podcast episodes to listen to that relate to that theme. At the end of the month, we gather to talk about what we listened to (and just hang out!). Every month is different, and it's been a really lovely way to meet people and talk about podcasts.

- Describe what it felt like to be interviewed by Fox News

It was surreal! I grew up seeing Ernie Anastos' face on TV, so meeting him in person was wild. As an audio producer, I found it really interesting to see how live TV news is recorded and produced. And being at the anchor desk, with lights everywhere, was an experience I won't forget.

Onto some Schechter reflections ...

- What impact has Schechter Queens had on you - personally, spiritually and educationally?

SSSQ was the first big community I was part of, and being part of a community like that for nine years is a rare and incredible thing. As I've moved onto new stages of my life, I've grown increasingly grateful for the people I got to know at Schechter - friends, teachers, and everyone in between. Some of my classmates from Schechter Queens are still my closest friends. There were also teachers who encouraged me to write more and to challenge myself, and I have a lot of gratitude for them. ALSO, I'm always in awe of how many prayers, Hebrew songs, and conversational Hebrew I remember. It comes in handy at Shabbat services!

- Have you stayed connected with friends from SSSQ?

Yes! There are quite a few people I'm still in touch with and we hang out whenever we get the chance.

- Are you a member of any groups/organizations - Jewish or secular?

I'm a member of Jews for Racial and Economic Justice (JFREJ), an organization based in NYC that's doing phenomenal activist work.

- What would you say to younger SSSQ alum about being involved in community service?

Giving back to the community is incredibly important. Connecting with the people around you, with the earth, and with causes that matter to you will give you purpose and perspective.

... And my favorite, if you had one take away thought/feeling/memory about your SSSQ years what would it be?

Not sure how I can pick just one thing, but here's the first thing that came to mind: From second grade through fifth grade, I was in the Drama Club. Each year, we rehearsed and eventually put on a big show. I was a munchkin in the Wizard of Oz, a "lost boy" in Peter Pan, Alice in Alice in Wonderland, and Tzeitel in Fiddler on the Roof. I remember having the most fun at those rehearsals, and in the shows themselves. Schechter was an unforgettable place, and for me, those shows were the epitome of that. (And for better or worse, we still have all of the performances on VHS!)

My website: <http://rebecca-hope-seidel.com/>

- Podcast Brunch Club: <http://podcastbrunchclub.com/>
- Other Men Need Help (one of the podcasts I work on as a producer): <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/other-men-need-help/id1287185296>

