

## TORAH THOUGHTS – COLLEGE ADMISSIONS SCANDAL

College admissions can be a stressful process, as teens, helped by their families and others, strive to get into top institutions. Apparently, some parents paid to make it much easier.

Celebrities were among 50 people indicted in a widespread college admission bribery scandal. The case includes parents, ACT and SAT administrators, a test proctor and coaches at universities including Yale, Stanford, Georgetown, University of Southern California, UCLA and the University of Texas at Austin.

Prosecutors said parents paid a college test prep organization to help students cheat, either by having stand-ins take the tests for the teenagers, or by arranging for proctors to correct answers. College coaches were also allegedly bribed to label applicants as athletic recruits. For more go to <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/college-admissions-scandal-bribery-cheating-today-felicity-huffman-arrested-fbi-2019-03-12/>

Our tradition labels cheating as *geneivat daat*, or “stealing someone’s thoughts.” Thus, it is equivalent to robbery! In this case, the universities were robbed in that they were accepting subpar students. Furthermore, worthy students were robbed of a place at the school.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. Does this scandal shock you? Why or why not?
2. If you believe that the college admissions process is stressful, could it be made less so? How?
3. What does this teach about the influence of money in society?

Shabbat shalom,

Rabbi Pont