THE BLUE AND WHITE
Vol. VI, No. II November 1999
Columbia College, New York NY

ON FLORA
by Prof. Hillary Callaban

ON SEX
A Conversation with Judith Steinhart

SECRET'S OF THE RolMPHONE
by Michael Schiraldi
INTRODUCTION
MORNINGSIDE FLORA
FREE EATS
BLUE J.
ROLM SECRETS
STEINHART CONVERSATION
DECOROUS DECORATIONS
MEASURE FOR MEASURE
CURIO COLUMBIANA
LECTURE NOTES
LECTURE LISTINGS
TOLD BETWEEN PUFFS
CAMPUS GOSSIP

About the Cover:
At 96 years, Alma Mater is well over the legal drinking age. We raise a glass to the lady with the heart of bronze but the liver of steel. By Katerina A. Barry.
Vice at Columbia, we discovered all too quickly, happens behind closed, secretive doors, if at all.

Bestiality porn, for example, is certainly a vice. But as Jenna L. Mendelson points out in *Decorous Decoratings*, it’s not the kind of thing that’s widely appreciated. No, we are not a school of wild communal drinking (no alcohol in the common areas), spontaneous acts of reckless, celebratory violence (when did we last storm Baker Field?) or rampant sex (see our conversation with Alice’s Judith Steinhart, as if this claim needed corroboration). No, here at Columbia we dress in black, read philosophy at the Hungarian (whose storied bathroom walls are transcribed in *Columbiana*) and, with the exception of sharing cigarettes, perform our vices by ourselves.

But without falling from hedonism into existentialism we present a few facets of vice at Columbia, along with *Lecture Notes* and listings, just in case.

Correspondence from Dean Brian Paquette:
Michael Treadway’s article in *The Blue and White* (October 1999) prompts me to offer some clarification. Students requiring emergency room treatment for alcohol intoxication are not subject to Deans’ Discipline. While the Office of Student Affairs does not condone underage drinking or excessive drinking on the part of any student, the primary concern in these situations must be the individual student’s health. The Residential Programs Staff, working in concert with CAVA and the hospital’s care providers, attempts to act on behalf of the student through advocacy and follow up. We believe to address these situations in any other manner would be counterproductive.

This issue is our last of the semester. Have a splendid holiday!
Before Winter Sets in: A survey of local flora

by Professor Hillary Callahan

This is the first installment of what we hope will be a regular feature in the BG-W. The idea is to provide a nature guide to walking the Morningside Heights neighborhood. The guide will be written by Columbia scientists and published here in seasonal installments, beginning with this issue's Autumn-Winter piece.

Prof. Hillary Callahan is a member of Barnard's Dept. of Biological Sciences.

Tilia cordata

In rural areas, where basswoods and maples crowd the forest canopy, both species underwrite each springtime's burst of greenery by borrowing nitrogen from the rich, dark forest soil. Shedding leaves is all about retiring that year's debt. In the city, where basswoods are common street trees, mechanical blowers and sweepers make this type of natural economy impossible. It's no surprise that solitary urban basswoods don't live to be as old as their country cousins. And droughts don't help.

Although operating on a permanent deficit, most city basswoods persevere, and many manage to produce a yearly crop of seeds. As they shower the sidewalks with heart-shaped leaves, basswoods are also dumping hundreds of small spherical fruits. Dry and inedible, clusters of basswood fruits are attached by a strangely crooked stem to a leafy, wing-shaped structure, called a bract. As children, most of us played with helicopter-like maple seeds, called samaras. But few were taught to fly a basswood bract. It's never too late. First find a basswood tree by looking for the heart-shaped leaves. Then try finding a few fruit-bearing bracts. Toss them back into the air, and enjoy.

Before bracts bear fruits, they bear flowers, of course. So, any good basswood spots found this fall are worth visiting next summer. Prolific nectar production by basswood flowers gives the species its countrified name, bee tree. Euro-philic sophisticateds prefer to call them lindens. The species provides one of the few sweet notes in the city's generally sour summer odor, whatever the name.

Ginkgo biloba

Before winter sets in, consider a short visit to the Museum of Nearly-Extinct Trees. It's right behind Barnard College at 116th and Claremont. Every 25 feet or so, you'll see a genuine living fossil, a ginkgo.

Superficially, ginkgos look like ordinary trees. Their bark is brown and rough. Their green leaves have turned yellow and fallen to the sidewalk. Their twigs have formed fat brown buds that will burst back into green leaves next spring. To understand the ginkgo's antiquity, look closely at a leaf. Their fan-like shape and tight net of veins look nothing like the leaves of other modern trees and everything like 150 million year old ginkgo fossils.

It's a wonderful phrase, "living fossil"—exotic, worth preserving, a privilege to see. And it's true. The ginkgo is extinct in the wild. Until about 200 years ago, it survived only as a tree cultivated on the grounds of Chinese and Japanese temples. Europeans and North Americans have cultivated it for a century or
two. It's a favorite urban tree, tolerant of diverse climates and soils, and quite invulnerable to pollutants spewed by cars.

The gingko's extinction is puzzling. Wonder about it as you stroll through the museum, but avoid stepping on gingko seeds. Each one is wrapped in a fleshy, smelly coating. Claremont Avenue dog-walkers dutifully pick up after their pooches, but so far no one has volunteered to picks up rotting gingko flesh. A street of all-male gingkos, lacking fruits, could solve this stinky problem, but might be a rather curious botanical phenomenon in the shadow of the nation's finest women's college.

**POLYGONUM PERSICARIA**

The season for wildflowers is over, unless, like me, you love knotweed.

When someone writes a sequel to Betty Smith's *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, it ought to be about knotweed. Knotweed can endure any number of difficulties. It tolerates both flooding and drought, both shade and blazing sun. If fertilizer is applied, knotweed will suck it right up, filling space with masses of ugly jointed stems and multiple layers of its small, drab leaves. But knotweed needs no fertilizer.

Knotweed flowers for months, producing and shedding millions of seeds. The seeds will sprout whenever and wherever conditions are right. Usually, that's anywhere, and everywhere, and all year 'round. Just in case there's a problem, knotweed seeds live for decades.

Knotweed isn't just able to grow in sidewalk cracks. It has sprouted in every single sidewalk crack in the city.

Winter will eventually curb knotweed's profusion of tiny, pinkish, extremely unattractive flowers, but they are fairly invulnerable to the first few light frosts. To enjoy them, visit the south side of 120th Street between Broadway and Claremont, an almost perpetually shaded spot. Try picking them. I do. No one seems to mind.

Like most wildflowers and weeds, knotweed leaves will wilt instantly, and their stems will droop soon after. By morning, the flowers will disintegrate into a mess of dust and hard, shiny, black seeds. Sweep them up and toss them out. They'll grow.

---

**Blue and White Searching for a Charity**

The B&W is searching for a non-profit, charitable organization to adopt. Please send us recommendations for local organizations that you think would benefit from free advertisement in The B&W. Over the next three months, the editorial board will accept proposals of organizations that would benefit from The Blue and White's endorsement. Please outline how the organization allows Columbia students to effect meaningful change in the greater Morningside Heights and Harlem communities. Submissions, including the organization’s name, address and phone number as well as the senders name, school and class, should be emailed to theblueandwhite@columbia.edu.
Don Quixote de la Munchie: Food Errantry

by Don Sobrepeso

The poet once said, “The only food group I need is free food.” With this in mind, brave Paco and I set forth to test the honor of this most lauded of universities, to measure its fortitude in providing for our most worthy and impecunial dietary requisites. This was not a task for the faint of heart. It would involve braving hostile territory, raiding guarded caches under the very eye of the enemy and, most arduous of all, keeping a straight face.

For the sake of principle and our fellow Columbians, we poised ourselves to confront a week of our lives without paying for a single dinner. Did we complete this dire labor, this calvary? Read on, my brave compatriots!

Monday last we began our quest. Resourceful Paco and myself, upon turning home to our place of dwelling, did spy a most prodigious feast underway. Alack, the door was barred, blocked by amazons, sturdy looking and fierce. “This is the women’s mentoring program,” spake one of these to me, “You can’t come in unless you’re a mentor or mentee.”

We began devising a clever stratagem to gain our admittance to this splendor—rounded bries and cream filled camambert, swelling grapes on the table, crisp crackers of wheat, and yes, so was ambrosiac soda to be found there. And even as we were planning, we met the graphics editor of this very publication, Katerina Barry. Did she aid us on our journey, as ought a trusted colleague under even the direst of circumstances?

Nay! She cast us away, saying “Guys, there are deans here. C’mon. You’re gonna get me in trouble.” What fiend is this, who for fear of self-preservation would send away her mortally bound allies?

Tuesday we fared better. Resourceful Paco, scouring the land, did see on the bridge over Amsterdam a law school reception. Fine grounded flanks of beef and hearty ales were served. And these we procured. Were we scared? Verily, we brushed against discovery, but as I did avoid eye contact with some foul student of the law, I muttered something about “mergers and acquisitions in statutory code” to trustworthy Paco, and away we scaped, undetected.

Wednesday had I a midterm, so valiant Paco and myself did forego any adventurous questing.

Thursday was our triumph. At break of night we made for the faculty house, wherein was to be held a great banquet. For a firm of investment banking it was to be. The door was barred. A gaunt man did stop us and demanded in terms most base, “Hi, do you guys want to sign up for our seminar?” We wrote down on his page several pseudonyms and so we foiled this villain. Then we feasted.

There was savory sushi here and delicately fried egg rolls and exotic spiced satay of beef and e’en those little crumbly cheesy balls. But soon, as we did continue our well earned repast, were we thrown out of this halcyonic paradise. As it would seem, the joyous music of our laughter as we dined did distract the seminar in progress, the vile suitclad men of downtown.

But our night was not over, and so we proceeded to the famed hall of Uris, where the

Continued on page 36
BLUE J.

RIP On Broadway?; Extend URH checkout

Following is an electronic correspondence between Blue J. and various Columbia administrators about On Broadway, the web-based activities listing which was mysteriously shut down over the summer. Blue J. was very fond of On Broadway, and he set about researching its decline and fall and trying to bring it back to life. Here are the first results of those efforts.

From: B. J. <theblueandwhite@columbia.edu>
To: Robyn Hartman <rew26@columbia.edu>

I am writing as the managing editor of the Blue and White. I'm trying to find out what happened to On Broadway. The website still has a message that it is offline for the summer, and it appears that the email newsletter is no longer being sent either. Was On Broadway cut?

From: Robyn Hartman <rew26@columbia.edu>
To: B. J. <theblueandwhite@columbia.edu>

On Broadway no longer exists, unfortunately. We used to get the info used for it from the reservations computer systems, which are no longer part of the Student Activities operation. Lerner has taken over all reservations and thus now has the access to the information. Their website lists the weekly events happening in the building but I am aware that it does not have the same feel as On Broadway, nor does it allow for the option of a listserv. One of the things on my list is to see if there is a way for Lerner to revive this, possibly by creating a partnership with the Program Board—the new programming body we in Student Activities are in the process of setting up.

Do you know anyone that might be interested in working on this project should we make some headway on this in the near future?

From: B. J. <theblueandwhite@columbia.edu>
To: Harris Schwartz <schwart2@columbia.edu>, Dara Falco <df182@columbia.edu>

Student Activities has informed me that the main responsibility for event publicity now lies with the Lerner Hall staff. Last year Student Activities ran a website and mailing list called On Broadway, which was intended to be a comprehensive listing of lectures, events, meetings etc. on campus. The website is now down because the responsibility for this has passed from Student Activities to Lerner. But the Lerner website does not present information about events that occur elsewhere on campus, nor does it provide brief information about the groups whose events are listed with you.

Does Lerner plan to expand its web listings to include activities that occur in other venues on campus? Will it develop an information section, and provide links to groups' sites?

The Lerner Hall administrators have not, as yet, replied to this letter. Blue J. will keep readers informed of his continuing efforts to revive On Broadway.

Ah finals. That taxing time of year when we call Butler home and coffee flows through our veins like caffeinated blood. Lovers are replaced with study partners and books become our best of friends. "Adios amigos," we tell each other, "We'll celebrate when we're through with work." Which can be realistically rephrased as a variation on the theme of "Merry Christmas--see you next year." This is no way to end the semester. But with finals butting up against the holidays as is, it can be no other way.

Of course, the spring semester offers plenty in terms of extended stay. I can picture it now: After slaving away at final papers and exams we gather for a final weekend in which to part by partying. All it takes is moving the move-out date back one stinking day to Sunday. Besides, who doesn't like packing their parents' car while terribly hung over? If the administration gives us nothing else come May, let us have a last hurrah.
Secrets of the ROLM

by Mike Schiraldi

Once upon a morning early, I awoke but still was surly,
Rolled over and then gazed down to the SpyPhone on my floor.
Though “Message Waiting” wasn’t lit, something strange there didn’t fit.
I thought it over, bit by bit—I’d never seen this screen before.
“The LCD,” I muttered, “it says ‘CALL 36674—
Only this, and nothing more.”
I tried a good part of that day to make the message go away—
I pushed the buttons every way, and oh! They made my fingers sore.
Soon, though, I was forced to face it—this screen, I could not erase it.
How I wished I could replace it, place it with blank screen of yore—
The blank screen I was used to on my Model 624!
I could not take it anymore.

And so began my quest to be rid of the harmless but annoying eyesore. Of course, my first step was to follow instructions—I called the friend of mine whose number now marred my phone. All I could say was, “How did you get my phone to tell me to call you?”

That’s when I found out the bad news and the worse news—not only didn’t she know where the message came from or how to remove it, but the same thing had once happened to her phone and there it remained for the rest of the year.

That would not be acceptable for me. Determined to be master of my own device, I pored through manuals, searched the web, and talked to nerd after nerd. Finally, I called Communications Services and explained my problem. The answer was prompt if not polite: “I can’t tell you, but maybe there’s someone who can.” A woman, presumably his manager, came on the phone and denied my request just the same. Finally after much cajoling I was let in on the secret with the menacing addendum, “If students knew everything these phones are capable of, the system would overload.” This was the wrong thing to say. My digital tattoo problem was solved, but my curiosity had been piqued. Thus began my quest to uncover the secrets of the Rolm. Below you will find the results of my exploits.

Let’s begin with the “Call...” message on my LCD. If you dial someone with a Model 624 “SpyPhone” and press CAMP while the phone is ringing, a message will appear on their phone telling them to call your number. This comes in handy if someone’s mailbox is full or you really need to be called back and option three of special delivery instructions just won’t do the trick. Unfortunately, most students have Model 120 “Plain Old Phones” which lack silvery LCD screens and so can’t display anything at all. (How do you remove the message? See this article’s sidebar on the next page.)

While many students know how to forward their calls to another extension, few know that it is possible to turn off forwarding without returning home. In fact, it’s even possible to change the forwarding destination from another location. Here’s an example illustrating how it works: Athena is heading out to visit with her friend Aphrodite. She’s expecting an important call, so she forwards her phone there by picking up the handset, pressing FORWARD, and dialing Aphrodite’s number. After arriving at Aphrodite’s, Athena decides she’d rather hang out with her other friend Juno. So Athena dials her own number from Aphrodite’s phone, hears a dial tone, dials Juno’s number and hangs up. Now Athena’s phone is forwarded to Juno’s. To just shut off the forwarding entirely, Athena could simply dial her own number from the extension to
which she’s forwarded her calls and then hang up (which Aphrodite could also do, if she didn’t want Athena’s call).

Another little-known feature present on all Rolm phones is speed dialing. Using the instructions in the sidebar, you can program any phone number, local or outside, into buttons 1 through 9. However, a warning is in order at this point – speed dial programming is not for the faint of heart or the slow of brain. If you decide to live so dangerously, don’t leave your stored numbers on the phone at the end of the year. For one thing, it’s discourteous to the next resident. For another, there’s actually a way for that resident to find out all the numbers programmed into the phone, including any PSCs.

Curious readers may be wondering what happens if you program a phone number into your 0 key. This will actually reprogram your MSG WTG button. If you decide to try this, make sure you know your home system access number so you can eventually put things back the way they were. If you don’t know what a home system access number is, you probably shouldn’t be screwing with this.

There are at least two situations when you would want to reprogram MSG WTC. First, it’s great for confronting the busy signals encountered when buying World Series tickets or trying to win call-in contests. Also, try programming a consenting friend’s number into MSC WTC and hitting that button as fast as you can. Their phone will warble like a parakeet on crystal meth.

This trick is a great way to awaken oversleeping friends who aren’t answering their phones. An even better way is to simply press CONNECT while the phone is ringing. This overrides voicemail so the phone will keep ringing until the friend realizes that you’re not going away.

While these tricks all have legitimate uses, they can also be used for evil. Be warned, however, that the hand of justice is swift and merciless. So don’t harass anybody.

That’s not what these great tricks are for
As such a deed would bring reprove, while all the features be removed,
And our great Rolm phones, “Never more.”

### ROLM SECRETS IN BRIEF

1. To put a “CALL [your number]” message on someone’s phone: Press CAMP while their phone is ringing.
2. To remove a “CALL” message from your phone: Leave the phone on the hook and press 1
   Note: multiple “CALL” messages can be left. When the recipient presses 1, the oldest is erased and the next is displayed.
3. To change your forwarding remotely: Pick up the phone that your line is forwarded to. Dial yourself. Wait for the tone. Dial the new number you’d like to be forwarded to. Hang up.
4. To cancel your forwarding remotely: Same as above, but skip the penultimate step.
5. To program a speed dial number: Pick up the phone and dial ##3x, where x is a number from 1 to 9 (or 0 to program MSG WTC). Then dial the phone number you want to store. This can be either a simple 5-digit extension, or 97 followed by your PSC followed by any outside number you want.
6. To dial the number you just programmed: Pick up the phone and dial #3x. To erase a speed dial number: Pick up the phone and dial ##3x. Hang up.
7. To make someone’s phone ring and ring until they pick up (i.e. override voicemail): Press CONNECT while their phone is ringing.
Columbia Conversations

Judith Steinhart on Sex at Columbia

This month's conversation took place in the offices of Go Ask Alice, the health information website. Present were Judith Steinhart (JS), of University Health Services and Alice; Yuliya Shneyderman (YS), C'01, president of Conversio Virium; Isaac Silvergate (IS), C'00; Sheila Dvorak (DS), C'03. And from the Blue and White: Rachel Robertson (RR), C'00; Michael Treadway (MT), C'00; Noam M. Elcott (NME), C'00; Matthew Rascoff (MR), C'01; Katerina Barry (KB), C'00.

RR: What do people think of when they think of the Columbia sex scene? What images come to mind?

JS: Well, I think there are different pockets. One really interesting pocket, to me, is the virgins. Many people are uncomfortable being virgins, some people are okay being virgins but their partners are uncomfortable with them being virgins, they're ready to sexually activate them and they aren't ready. I think that gets underrated here. People come to Columbia and feel like everyone is sexually sophisticated. I've talked to seniors and graduate students who are virgins. So that's one pocket. Can anybody corroborate that?

MT: Religious groups?

JS: It's not only religious. It's people who haven't had opportunities, people who have made a decision not to have intercourse yet, people who have decided to postpone it. You probably know these people. I do too. They haven't been ready, for whatever reason.

SD: That was one of the most interesting things about coming... I came here not knowing anyone... and I'm living in Hartley where there's fourteen of us living in a suite. So one of the first things we did to get to know each other was we all sat down and took these purity tests on-line... You look over someone's shoulder and you're like, Oh my God you did that? Or, you mean you got a ninety-two percent pure? I was really surprised at the number of people in my suite who hadn't really had any experience. Not even just like having sex but like a sexual experience.

JS: Like French kissing.

MT: Judith, in the six years you've been here how would you see the trajectory of the Columbia sex scene, not just in terms of numbers of people having sex but in terms of openness on the campus, comfort level on the campus, and education?

JS: In fact, twenty-five years ago it was much more open to talk about what people were doing and how they felt about it... We have gotten much more conservative in terms of talking... However, on the other hand there are new pieces of information that I can talk to people about that I couldn't before. Emergency contraception was not something I talked about when I first got here because, even thought the health service has been making it available for about eleven years, it was a best kept secret. Another thing I've noticed is that people do not seem to me to be worried about safer sex the way they were seven years ago. And that is really interesting. I don't know if there's less condom use but there's clearly less concern about HIV, Herpes...Sheila, you're disagreeing?

SD: No, I'm just saying that I don't understand it. There's no way I would ever have sex without a condom, ever. There's too many risks.

MT: I would interpret this as saying that it's not that people aren't using them, but that it has become such a normative that it's not really a con-
cern anymore.

JS: I'm really not sure. I would like to think so. I would like to think that people are so comfortable using condoms that it's just part of sex.

MT: So Yuliya, what so you see as the role of your organization?

YS: Education. Conversion Virium is a completely discussion-based group. We're not providing demonstrations or anything. It's definitely education. People who come to the table on Activities Day are probably just curious. They come to the first meeting, we pass out information, and if it's not for them they don't come again. We have our little core group of people that are interested. We provide safety information and also technique.

JS: But if you met someone at the CV meeting you could ask them out for coffee afterwards?

YS: You could, it's not illegal or anything.

JS: Do people do that, though?

YS: I haven't seen it. Mostly people come who are interested in it and maybe they want to get their partners interested in it, or their partner is interested and they want to learn more about it, stuff like that.

JS: Let's come back now to what you were saying about the social scene. Sometimes talking about sex is almost premature. People need to connect with another person first. I've done certain programs where it was really interesting because the students wanted to do it on dating, and how to meet somebody. I learned from them about how little time they have to find people and how they really do need to study. And this is also one of the reasons why during safer sex week we have a flirting coach come and we also have a dirty dancing night. It's to provide people with other ways of being together. That's another pocket.

MT: So, working on pockets, how do you see people meeting up? What are the venues that Columbia students use to find other people?

JS: Well, where do you meet them? When have you looked at them and they've looked at you and there's been a little spark?

IS: Sport events. Like after soccer games and stuff like that. A lot of people are looking to just like go home with people because they're drunk and they're euphoric.

KB: I don't know. Other schools! I have a really bad habit of dating people who don't go to Columbia.

IS: Everyone does that. That's like the worst part. Every girl at this school is looking for guys outside Columbia. Oh, it's so not fair. And it's so true. It's ridiculous.

IS: But considering that there's four times as many women in this area then men... a lot of women say there are no good Columbia men. You hear it all the time. They look elsewhere.

MT: I'd say class is the place I meet people.

MR: That would be mine too.

IS: Really? I have never met a single girl in class. I feel uncomfortable talking to a girl in the classroom.

KB: It depends on what kind of classes you take.

IS: I don't know. There are two places I would never talk to a girl: the gym, and class. I just feel like they're not there to talk to guys.

RR: The gym? That's why they're there.

IS: I've always had this theory that girls never want to be talked to in places where they don't look their best. Seriously. So I feel like when they're at the gym and they're sweaty they're just not going to be in the mood to talk to a guy about anything. So I just steer clear.

KB: I think it's the opposite. If a guy wants to talk to you despite you not being all dressed up, it says something good about the guy. I'm
much less likely to talk to a guy in a bar than in a random place.

IS: Really?... I feel morally offended if you won’t talk to me in a bar. I’m like, you’re in a bar! Why are you here?

SD: It’s true! If people want to talk to you and you’re not in a setting that’s like specifically, “this is the place to pick people up”, then I feel like you’re actually interested in what I have to say or who I am.

KB: I think you should just go into it like, this is an interesting person. I’m going to become friends with them and if something develops it develops, if not, not.

RR: Yeah, but what guy meets a girl to be friends with her and not go further?

MR: Me.

RR: Then I’m impressed. I have very few male friends here while I had tons in high school and I’ve talked to guys who were like, that’s because a guy doesn’t want to be friends, he wants to hook up and if he sees that there’s no potential there then he sees becoming friends with you as a waste of time.

business school partook in the hour they call happy. Here we scaled the fence, and filled our bellies with many-toppinged pizza and more sushi and ales, before we were chased away by barbaric hosts of servers, angry when we could produce no “ID” on their insistent demand.

Friday and Saturday were naught and so with Sunday. Yet Monday night, the final of our arduous struggle, were we given the Spinning Sisters’ blessing, though ‘twas in a curse’s guise. We set first for the Korean Students’ Meeting, for which posted banners had proclaimed food to be proffered. And yet as we arrived we saw only chips of potato, and students wond’ring at our fine lineament and noble demeanor. And even so, we left.

As we headed home, we hailed a compatriot, a fellow journeyman in the noble quest. He spoke to us of festive happenings down in
Nothing makes me happier than walking into my room, kicking off my shoes, and nestling my feet into the thick blue bath mat covering the floor of my John Jay single. And I am not the only one who likes a room with a personal touch. A friend of mine declared that she did not feel “comfortable” until her room was decked out in souvenirs from her various South American travels. And rumor has it that a fellow student derives similar comfort from a wall full of bestiality porn, much to the distress of his roommate. My own room is decorated beneath a uniform three-foot deep layer of papers. My fluorescent Post-It Notes have vanished again. Despair.

Basic room decoration at Columbia seems to divide into three main categories: the pulled together room, the individual style room, the “I just sleep here (well, sometimes)” room, and the school of constructing all interior design entirely around bongs. Four main categories. Bongs. Those aiming for the pulled together look often make room decoration not just a one-time series of purchases, but an ongoing hobby. Such students have been known to comb through home decorating stores in search of the perfect teak laundry basket, or the ever-elusive pink shag rug. Shag? No thank you, we go to Columbia. The hard-core room enthusiast can even opt to take advantage of the direct shuttle from the Manhattan subway to the New Jersey Ikea. Ikea, like that movie Fight Club. Explains why Helena Bonham Carter doesn’t talk to me anymore. This fire alarm pull I stole will make a charming kleptomania addition to my windowsill.

Maintenance is key to the pulled together look, as dorm rooms are notorious for accruing bizarre odors and layer upon layer of dust. Room perfectionists may restlessly overhaul their rooms every few months. Such an undertaking can involve shifting and reshifting furniture, or even shopping sprees for new sheets, sandalwood laundry baskets or the elusive faux leopard skin throw mat. Obsessive-compulsive cacti collections or big boards of smarmy high school prom photos can also reflect this look. Meanwhile, in one of his profoundly latently homosexual moments, Reagan once said that Andy Williams's voice was a national treasure. Evidence for the Ronald’s other private life abounds.

“Missile defense,” you say? What you’re hearing is the sound of Freud snorting coffee out his nose.

Even more prevalent than the pulled together room is the individual style room. Followers of this school tend to put posters, stickers and pictures all over. Many fine-tune a unique look into a strong personal statement, ranging from, “I travel the world,” “I enjoy bestiality porn,” or its variant, “I am active in Republican politics.” This approach to room decoration usually takes shape within the first few weeks of a semester, but can change mercurially on little notice.

This is especially true when I know Bill Blass would hemorrhage spontaneously if he beheld my fashions. Students with statement-making rooms tend to keep them clean, with the possible exceptions of those who wish to make a statement through filth.

Continued on page 44
Thursday.
4 a.m. in the Fulton Street fish market the forklift
chases me down the aisle past the conch. At your back
sings the driver. I’m at your back watch
where you walk. Brie has her hands in her sweatshirt says these fleshy
tons
thrown all together
make the worst biological disaster no one ever heard of.
Lift chop sweep Louie cleans the tuna steak flushed toenail crimson.
I find sweet coffee buy it and shuffle through puddles of god-
knowswhat.
It’s a man’s world here they leer cause they’re bored I sneer cause I’m
tired. We get along.

Friday.
Up around eleven innings my knees start to buckle. Steve is feeding
me sprinkles out of a batting helmet I have to stop acting like I’m not
here. The daddy
in the forward box says bobby bo’s going to hit a home run and I
believe him! daughter
has yellow bangs and she stares but still won’t slap me five. Clap I’m
dead
asleep on the 7 out of flushing
sorry about your shoulder baby.

Saturday.
Hungry sucking bubbles through my straw all of a sudden like some-
body
turned the lights on
after hot towels they bring the food. There
are these dragging stretches of days where everything is bright and
blurry—
jewelry cucumber jagged diced. Waiting on telephone calls training
giant
cursive characters over the tri-state I never
pay for my dinners anymore.
Wonder when anyone will notice I’m hanging here butter soft
fresh from a nap
like red fish on rice.

—Sarah Lightdale C’01
THE SPANISH CATHOLIC

In the drunken streets of Grenada
the little boys hit
the bull hides of drums
in narrow streets
and the percussive echoes
off Arabic stone
confuse the rhythm.
The black ladies
celebrating death with a candle
walk silently in circles
to the cathedral.
Everyone a symbol,
the sangria bottle breaks
and the man selling candied apples
curses his fate.
Blue hooded men
church steeples hiding their eyes
hold gold canes
and scare the mangy dog
eating salty goat bones
in the cobblestone cracks.
The moon is full
though I cannot see it
through all the faces.
—Jonah Lehrer, C'03

THE APPLE AND THE FLOOD

The 8th day was an ignorant time:
Mosquitoes bled the river dry,
Clocks froze
And the tongue did not crave
Liquor or soma.
We slept silently on a soft bed
Of guiltless pornography
And the muscles of our smile
Flexed exhausted
Through the portly plastic guise
Of the commuter clown.
Our wet mouths beamed in the dark
Blissful like an unborn,
Until the jealous snake
Sold a blind man
the incandescent light
Glowing in the filaments
Of an apple, littering the streets of Eden.
The sweet juice dripped from our stout lips,
And our newly curious eyes
Gazed upwards at the melting wings of the boy.
We stared at the sun
and our eyes caught fire.
—Jonah Lehrer, C'03
The Hungarian Palimpsest

Along-standing landmark on Amsterdam Avenue, the Hungarian Pastry Shop exudes its own sort of Old World charm. It is a place where you can go to sit and study with a single cup of coffee for hours. Or you can just watch the (often vaguely Communist) graduate students who seem to congregate there debate post-structuralist critique, or the philosophy of Bakunin. Or else converse idly with China, the owner’s old cat, who seems always to be underfoot.

The real treasure of the Pastry Shop, however, is hidden away in the back in its single, tiny unisex bathroom. The patrons of this facility have seen fit, as they whiled away their time there, to fish out their ballpoints and grace the breadth and height of the room’s white walls with their singular graffiti, their thoughts, comments, ideas, ideals, memories, messages, poems, manifestoes, rants, questions and quotes. Obviously the result of a process of several years, the Hungarian Palimpsest is continually renewed, its sprawling scrawl stretching out across the walls, overlapping itself, layer upon layer. Often a new writing will obscure the message upon which it intends to comment. The owners of the store have apparently painted the writings over, but they bleed out into the new graffiti that is constantly added. It is truly a living record, and any attempt to capture its specific flux of odd wisdom and beauty is necessarily limited. The small sampling which follows may suffice to impart some understanding of its richness.

Some of the scrawls are direct reactions to the scene inside the Pastry Shop:

—Who’s that old guy who studies chemistry with the fat ass and ugly face?

—$1.20 for a cup of Tea!!! It’s Amsterdam, not Paris!!!

Some seem to have to do with nothing but themselves:

—Bring me back to West Berlin

—Revolution is the opiate of the intellectuals or:

—Robert is a shemale

And some make no sense whatever:

—TROOPS OF NOMADIC SAME-SEX-ORIENTED RUSSIANS ARE ROAMING ACROSS THE STEPPES AND RECRUITING FROM ISOLATED VILLAGES. THE ELDERS OF THE TRIBES HAVE ALL SEEN ANDY WARHOLS “LONESOME COWBOYS” AND REFER TO IT AS THEIR BIBLE

—Wake up, hegemonic fuck, there are others around you.

—LLAMAS ARE LARGER THAN FROGS

The most interesting messages, however, are those that open a dialogue, one artist adding his or her comments to an earlier graffito usually connecting them by use of little arrows:

—Love the life you lead then you can lead the life you love

below which, in another hand:

—signed “complacent”

—Want to live in an S.R.O.?—go to the Manhattan School of Music

—What’s an S.R.O.?

—So Ripped Off

—you’ve got that right

One daring artist, apparently well-advised of the bathroom walls’ productive nature, wrote a question as if s/he was writing to a magazine advice
column. Perhaps s/he did not anticipate quite the volume of responses that the question received, however. The entire conversation follows:

—I'm white, but I'm not attracted to white men—only black men. Is this racist?
—Who cares?
—No, you're just a self-loathing Caucasian homosexual
—and you like yourself. Yea, right.
—I'm a black man and I feel the same way about white women. It's not racist just a free choice and personal preference
—You're definitely the racist here—stop bringing into media sensational elevation of white and the white norm of beauty
—The only racist thing at this whole argument are the men + women who can't stand to see one of their own with the opposite skin color. This is jealousy/racism
—if you are categorically not attracted to your own race it is self-loathing and I think you have problems.
—Look out for fetishising, colorizing on the basis of even the most obvious typologies such as skin color, genital size, language, class! Perhaps especially, in the matter of love—oh!
—What's racist is not that you are only attracted to blacks, but why. It sounds like you have a racial fetish, which is dehumanizing and, yes, racist. Yet, sadly, not uncommon.
—Spare me.
—I agree, do you like them for who they are, or for the racial/racist myths you impose upon them? (i.e. 'thug' 'exotic' 'sex-machine' 'buck')
—Isn't THIS A MAN'S HANDWRITING? (referring to the original question)
—No, it's not! I wrote the original message. It's slightly fake-type handwriting so my friends won't recognize it. Actually, I do date white men, but I am finding black men increasingly attractive + white men decreasingly so, but I exaggerated for dramatic effect.
—If it's racist it's also misogynist. It becomes ridiculous. Isn't desire a form of fetish? Fuck who you want. Fight racism + misogynist politically.
—The handwriting analyst is racist + misogynistic

And finally, we have a hint that the formation of this inked masterpiece is held to some sort of patron imposed standard:
—JAMES AND RANDI 8/21/99 "a love that will never die"
—No insipid graffiti, please
On Monday, October 18, at 8 p.m., Professor of Biology Bob Pollack delivered the second in a series of thoughtful lectures on religion and science to a packed audience in IAB. Beginning with a quote from Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Faith and Reason*, Dr. Pollack offered a deft exploration of the parallels that exist under the surface between his faith, Judaism, and his field, molecular biology. Both exist to analyze and understand a revealed text, whether the Torah or the human genome. Both also look forward, he stressed, to a utopian time when that text will be fully understood and death will lose its dominion over man. DNA is merely the paradigm of a wholly new, but not contradictory, law.

Dr. Pollack drew from both contemporary research and rabbinical literature to emphasize the importance of religion as a factor in medicine and the compatibility of the two studies. Darwin, faced with man's descent from apes, may have delayed publishing for two decades, and every one of us, in Dr. Pollack's words, may be "a genetic experiment that can end only in death." Yet despite all this, Dr. Pollack soldiered through with complex, at once humanistic and deeply religious arguments on subjects as diverse as green-eyed frogs, the interrelationship between doctors, the Hippocratic Oath and the Talmud, and science's need for religion to transfer on it transcendence and meaning.

While Dr. Pollack is an eminent mind, the lecture had its moments of oversimplification. One of these came with Dr. Pollack's call for further study of the Placebo effect, whether in sugar pills or prayer, as a significant medical tool. Dr. Pollack linked the power of psychosomatic factors to the spiritual obligation of doctors not to appropriate moral authority, but to respect their patients' free will in making life and death decisions. What Dr. Pollack did not discuss fully was the possibility that researching the biochemical mechanisms by which actions like prayer have medical value could undermine religion. The lack of a stated religious faith, Dr. Pollack quoted from the *New Republic*, confers on a patient the health risk of smoking a pack a day of cigarettes for 40 years. But what if research finds the health benefits of Judaism can be had in weekly Torah shots, or that salvation in Christ, as the satirists at *The Onion Radio News* have suggested, will soon be available in convenient gel form? This was not a question Dr. Pollack chose to engage. Dr. Pollack earlier had been quick to point out that religion redeems ethical concerns about human cloning and genetic testing; without religion, attempting to preserve our conceptions of our own genetic uniqueness only shows denial. While quick to explain how religion should temper science, Dr. Pollack was not as forthcoming on how science might temper and even weaken religion.

These are, however, only niggling points. Dr. Pollack, with his Papa Smurf-cum-Zorba-the-Greek mystique and graceful quoting of Darwin and Niebuhr side by side, is a man easy to admire. He makes a compelling case for enduring unities between science and faith and is an eloquent defender of the continuing importance of religion in modern and specifically in the scientific life.

Join Dean Quigley, Dean Colombo, your College classmates and the editors of the *Blue and White* in an intimate discussion on: "Creating a College Community in a Multi-Schooled University." Thursday 9 December at 10:30 AM. To sign up, email theblueandwhite@columbia.edu.
LECTURE LISTINGS: Policy & Politics

Monday November 29
Institute on Western Europe Discussion A round-table discussion with Andrew Moravcsik, Harvard Government Department, on his book The Choice for Europe. 12:00-2:00 PM, Room 802 IAB

MPA Practicum Speaker Series Lecture Deputy Secretary Robert Mallet, U.S. Department of Commerce 4:30-5:45 PM, Kellogg Conference Center, Room 1501 IAB

Tuesday November 30
Institute of African Studies Lunchtime Seminar “Kinship: A Family’s Journey In Africa and America” 12:00-1:00 PM, Middle East Institute, Room 1118 IAB

Foreign Policy Association/SIPA Evening Lecture “Reflections on a Career in Public & International Affairs” Peter D. Bell, President, CARE USA, will lecture. Dean Lisa Anderson will preside. 5:30 PM, Kellogg Center, Room 1501 IAB

Wednesday December 1
Jewish Theological Seminary Public Lecture “Kosovo and Beyond: Can Religion Be the Solution instead of the Problem?” 7:00 PM, Jewish Theological Seminary, 3680 Broadway (at 122nd Street)

Center for Korea Research Film “A Hot Roof” 7:30 PM, Lehman Auditorium 202 Altschul, Barnard College

Thursday December 2
East Asian Institute Brown Bag Lecture “Is Banking Finance a Dinosaur? Recent Trends in Policy Based Finance in Japan” 12:00-1:30, Room 918 IAB

The Institute of War and Peace Studies/ International Conflict Resolution Program Brown Bag Seminar “Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation” Dr. R. Scott Appleby, Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame will hold a brown bag seminar discussing his new book. 12:30-2:00 PM, Room 1219 IAB

Friday December 3
Zhongwen Lun Lun Chinese Conversation Table 12:00-1:00 PM, Room 918 IAB

Each future Blue and White number will include listings devoted to a particular area of study or interest. We begin with “Policy & Politics,” which bears no connection at all to this issue’s theme of vice.
Continued from page 37

Finally, many students just opt for the classic “I just sleep here (well, sometimes)” look. Low-maintenance and versatile, this style of room decoration is likely also the cheapest and can itself convey a sense of personal style. The “I just sleep here” ambience can be as simple as a crumpled sheet in the corner of the mattress, bare walls, or a heap of dirty laundry in the corner. If the student actually does sleep in the room, he may sometimes open the window to air things out, but a strange smell, whether of old laundry or neglected food or the bodies in the freezer, enhances the overall feel.

Spicing up the room’s papers sea with a book crust, including Notes of a Soviet Actor, Bluffing Your Way In Art, and a classic 1938 Nazi music history emphasizing how effeminate Jewish opera giant Giacomo Meyerbeer’s Robert le Diable is just because of one dancing dead nuns scene. Next up: mounting on the wall a vinyl copy of Jefferson Starship’s Winds of Change album.

Unfortunately, rooms of this type are the most likely to develop problems with dust and rodent infestation, but because they are intended to seem only sporadically inhabited, this makes the statement that much more potent.

For many students, college is the first opportunity to decorate rooms without unwanted, bills-paying parental interlopers. It is a chance to develop a personal style for living space design, and, like everything in college, only improves with experimentation.

Diacritical blackguards! Postmodern Paracelsus sings to me of love—get thee behind me, Perry Como! In spiritus sanctum, cheeseburgers, four for a dollar; gorgonzola extra.

It’s best not to define a Columbia student by his living quarters, as he is likely to tire of the lava lamp on his desk, the Peruvian tapestry hanging from his ceiling, or even the teak laundry basket courtesy of the parents’ credit card. Instead, the student living in chaos today could be installing neon-lit blue ramps tomorrow.

Think how far we can soar from our days topping radiators with a United Nations of beer bottles.
Verily Veritas is not so spry as he was. Back when he was getting his start, VV was there in a straw hat shouting huzzahs for the Republic's cocky young President, that Grover somebody. 1893 was a very good year. Verily's times have been like wine from old vintage kegs, that have flowed sweet and clear, from the brim to the dregs, they were some very good years. These are telling words for a life, ones that have been plagiarized by every two-bit singing act to come out of Hoboken. Yet for all this time, Verily's only disappointment is the shortage of vice at Columbia today.

Vice is something relative. It can only be vice if it comes full of chutzpah, accompanied by scandal, brouhahas and charivaris of all shapes and sizes. These are endangered species in contemporary Morningside Heights. When sex is as simple as saying, "Oh yeah, we hooked up," the opportunity for Victorian morality plays goes down the drain. Even if Mayor Giuliani himself were discovered in flagrante delicto with a 300 pound manatee, it wouldn't make better than A27 in the Times. Perhaps it might if Mrs. Giuliani asked for a divorce, but it would only make it above the fold if she demanded a video deposition from the offending sea mammal. Ours is a different world.

Once, tittering and titillation were great spectator sports. Sin, guilt, and tragedy were all over. Now VV asks the breeze if anyone still even knows how to enjoy watching people's lives crash on the rocks of sanctimonious mores. They ask if he has heard of Schadenfreude, and meditatively he replies, "Gesundheit." Back in the Gilded '90s, we could share a chortle over brandies at that delightfully vulgar entertainment of our inbred brethren to the south, the Princeton First-Year. We ourselves were busy burning Anglo-Saxon readers out on Hamilton lawn, but it made for great backroom banter. When some poor campus architect got shot down by a Rubenesque young lady-actress's jealous husband, we were agog for weeks. But VV hasn't seen anyone truly agog on the Morningside Campus in 60 years. Ever since we let those Italians scamper around underground with uranium, it's been anything goes. What does it even mean to be agog anymore? In its day, agog meant admiring some sublimely salacious line in the Core texts. Perhaps the agog undergraduate might even cut himself a fresh quill to underline the naughty phrase. When a puckish mood prevailed later, one could then recount it to some fair Barnard student, so that she, too, might be agog. But no one gets agog at all anymore.

Verily Veritas concludes that the youth of today have, alas, gone straight down the crapper, to coin a phrase. Everything is a fait accompli. "We were drunk, we were horny, it happened, get over it," she explains to Verily. The wry, risqué inflections, the arched eyebrow, the damning half-shake of the head to condemn that woman of the night whose services Great Uncle has been retaining in the servants' quarters again—all this is obsolete. There are no latter day Scarlet Letters. No longer do University Presidents rend their vestments to reveal the crimson T that brands them Tippler. The greatest sin in New York today is Andrew Lloyd Webber's continued employment. What has become of us?

—Verily Veritas
Course reviews, professor critiques:
The CCSC Courseguide
http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ccsc

Selling textbooks? Looking for cheap books?
Forget poster and take it online
https://www1.columbia.edu/sec/bboard/ccsc/books

Any questions?
dial 1-CCSC
We’ve got answers.

DINING ON CAMPUS

- JOHN JAY DINING ROOM
  John Jay Hall – Main Level
  Breakfast
  Monday–Friday. 7:30–10:00 am
  Continental Breakfast
  Monday–Friday. 10:00–10:45 am
  Lunch
  Monday–Friday. 11:30 am–2:00 pm
  Dinner
  Daily. 5:00–8:00 pm
  Brunch
  Saturday–Sunday. 11:30 am–2:00 pm

- JJ’S PLACE
  John Jay Hall – Lower Level
  Monday–Thursday. 8:00 am–2:00 am
  Friday. 8:00 am–9:00 pm
  Saturday. 9:00 am–9:00 pm
  Sunday. 9:00 am–2:00 am

- THE FOOD COURT AT WIEN HALL
  Wien Hall–First Floor
  Monday–Thursday. 7:30 am–9:00 pm
  Friday. 7:30 am–6:00 pm
  Saturday. Closed
  Sunday. 12:30–9:00 pm

- CAFE (212) AT ALFRED LERNER HALL
  Campus Level
  Monday–Thursday. 7:30 am–2:00 am
  Friday. 7:30 am–9:00 pm
  Saturday. 11:00 am–9:00 pm
  Sunday. 11:00 am–2:00 am

- LENFEST CAFE
  Jerome Greene Hall–Third Floor
  Monday–Friday. 8:00 am–5:00 pm

- CARLETON LOUNGE
  Mudd Building–Fourth Floor
  Monday–Friday
  8:00 am–5:00 pm

- URIS DELI
  Uris Hall–Main Floor
  Monday—Wednesday
  7:30 am–7:00 pm
  Thursday–Friday
  7:30 am–5:00 pm

STUDENTS SAVE 8.25% on every food purchase made with Dining Dollars - enroll today at 103 Wien Hall!!!
Fencing coach George Kolombotavich, spying a Bad Religion T-shirt, has expressed bemusement. “It almost seems redundant, Bad Religion. Is that a group of religions?” inquired Kolombotavich. Meanwhile, fencing coach Dr. Aladar Kogler has been seen around the Dodge Fitness Center trendsetting anew look, that of a windbreaker with apparently nothing underneath. The Blue and White celebrates the men who make Columbia fencing one of our most successful athletic teams.

The Burgess-Carpenter collection has recently begun withdrawing some of its Richard Hofstadter items, including a handsome edition of A.J. Smith and His America with Dr. Hofstadter’s autograph. The Blue and White thanks the University libraries for their largesse.

Commentary from Columbia’s greatest film critic in The Blue and White’s ongoing Andrew Sarris CultureWatch:

“In my soul, I’m Robert Redford. On the exterior, I’m one of those Warner Brothers gangsters with a machine gun in a violin case.”

“I detect an ironic attitude. That’ll never do in a class this size—leads to mob violence.”

“Dietrich was zaftig in The Blue Angel—no Christy Turlington. There were no anorexics then. This is real sauerkraut-wienerschnitzel German beefiness. Dietrich was pansexual. She slept with everything. Winston Churchill said her legs were among the high points of Western civilization.”

“I was born in 1928. I’m over 70 now, and I lived through the Great Depression. I wasn’t as poor as Frank McCourt says he was. Until I was about three, I rode around in a Pierce Arrow car. We were broke for about ten years, but people were much nicer then. . . . A lot of movies now are open-ended and despairing. Are you all depressed? I come from the good old days—we had the Great Depression, we had World War II, the Holocaust, and now no one has any hope for the future.”

“Everybody’s writing about the death of the novel. That’s bullshit. There’s just nobody to read the great novels.”

“Ashley Judd has attitude, yet is somehow attractive.”

“If you don’t like Grand Illusion, you’re expelled from the human race.”

“What is it with this Brad Pitt thing? He hasn’t made a good movie in 37 years. Am I missing something?”

Interested in a tiny little moment of social interaction (or absurd lack thereof) noted recently? I was walking behind a tall student with headphones on who was knocked out of step by a frazzled female student on a cell phone coming up some steps. She paused from her conversation to turn around and yell out an apology, but as the young man had on his headphones, the basic courtesy was lost on all but me.

—Elinor Adams, C’01

November 1999
In the spirit of great debates of yore—Lincoln-Douglas, Kennedy-Nixon, yea even Abraham and the All Mighty—the Columbia community was shaken to its very foundations as the Columbia Campaign to End the Death Penalty took on the Columbia Conservatives in a prime time match-up over the fate of Mumia Abu Jamal. While the Conservatives were no match for the preparedness of their opponents, defenders of Mumia, well, they had to defend a convicted cop killer. Many B&W editors—opposed to the death penalty but not convinced of Mumia innocence—would hope for respectively less radical and callous arguments from each side.

Dean Quigley announced the endowment of four new professorships in the Core. These are to be given on a five-year rotating to faculty who have devoted themselves to teaching Core classes and who have done so with remarkable style. Congratulations to the first recipients: Kathy Eden, Mark van Doren Professor; Martha Howell, Gustave M. Berne Professor; Careth Williams, Theodore Kahan Professor; and Jim Zetzel, James R. Barker Professor.

The quandary: What is the first Greek word of the Iliad? No one in our suite could recall. We knew it was translated as "rage"... but what was the goddam Greek? Nostos we had, eudaimonia we could manage, but without a Classicist, without a First-year in Lit Hum, and without a Greek-English dictionary, what were we to do?

The inspired idea: To stand at that crowded corner where Hamilton meets South Field and shout out the question. It took about 30 seconds till someone shouted back the correct answer: Menin.