CULINARY HUMANITIES: A proposal
by Mariel L. Wolfson

AREA STUDIES DEFENDED II
by Prof. Mark von Hagen

BARNARD SWIPE ACCESS
Blue J.

THE LAST DAYS OF RIVER
A Conversation

TOLD BETWEEN PUFFS, FROM RUSSIA
Verily Veritas
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About the Cover:
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Admit it. You LOVE making copies.
This number of The Blue and White proposes quite a bit of change in the way we do business around here. But as the oldest magazine on campus, we're also believers in institutional memory. Hilary E. Feldstein argues against Professor Mark von Hagen's proposal, and in favor is the traditional departmental division of academic labor.

For our conversation we visited River Hall, which is being gutted and totally redone over the summer. According to URH, River is the place for "students who march to the beat of a different drummer." Which means, according to residents of River, "students who smoke crystal meth." We certainly hope River won't abandon its traditions of mischief.

We've been up to a little mischief ourselves. See Curio Columbiana and Blue J for details.

"Letters from Abroad" is a new feature inaugurated in this issue. We have a note about Israeli kibbutz life and suggestions for summer travel in some out-of-the-way northern European and Far Eastern destinations. Chances are you didn't spend your spring break in the Faeroes Islands, but if you see Columbians munching on lutefisk, you'll know where they got the idea.

Finally, we welcome some new members to the Blue and White staff. We're very excited to have: Richard J. Mammana C'02, Hilary E. Feldstein C'01 and Mariel L. Wolfson C'02.

We are currently recruiting writers, artists, editors and layout staff for next year. We invite our readers to our general meeting at 8:00 PM on April 10 in the 10th Floor Hartley Library. If you'd like more information, we can be reached by email at theblueandwhite@columbia.edu.
Area studies and the future of the academy II

by Professor Mark von Hagen

In the last issue of the B&W, Professor of History Mark von Hagen described the challenges facing the regional institutes that study the non-American world. In this continuation of his discussion, he offers a preliminary set of responses to the critics of area studies and suggests how these discussions are related to important changes underway in undergraduate education.

How do we begin to answer these criticisms, which are made considerably more forceful in the wake of the recent transformations of the post-Soviet world toward market economies and diverse levels of democratization. These transformations are being understood as the triumph of the American way, or the triumph of the market economy, or globalization, and even as the “end of history.”

If, indeed, the American way has triumphed, that triumph has already begun to change the way we understand the American way; but historians might remind us that such total triumphs are usually not terribly permanent in any case. Incidentally, very few universities have North American regional institutes, and Columbia’s Institute on Western Europe has not been among the most visible of the regional centers; in part, this was because most of American social science theory has been fundamentally Euro-American in its origins and thematic concerns, so there was less of a perceived need for Euro-American area studies as a distinctive sphere.

One of our most important responses has been to insist that the two approaches that are contrasted so sharply by our critics, the comparative, quantitative, theory-driven research of the social scientists and the deep, contextually-based knowledge that is the essence of area studies, are in fact complementary models of knowledge. At some important level, what we are talking about in the relationship between the social science and humanities disciplines, on the one hand, and the regional institutes on the other is two very different but complementary models of organizing similarity and difference. The disciplines political science and economics most clearly organize their institutional practices and identities around “functional” similarities that in most cases are presumed to exist in all societies and therefore transcend national and regional boundaries. The area studies centers, in contrast, are built around the principles of a different set of unities or similarities, namely the institutions, practices, social structures, and cultural formations that characterize a region or set of states with a shared common predicament that is presumed to be at least partly the legacy of a commonly shared past. (In this sense, they are closer to literature departments and history department sub-fields that are organized closer to regional and national boundaries.)

Another response is that regional scholars have rapidly become comparativists and enthusiastically applied theoretical models from outside the region to understand the once less-familiar processes of ethnic mobilization, the consolidation of democracies and the emergence of varieties of post-communist capitalisms. Even those who had “just” studied the Soviet Union now face 15 successor states and the emergence of regions as political and economic actors. For several years now, the Harriman Institute has hosted the annual conventions of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, one of the most international, interdisciplinary, inter-generational, and inter-regional gatherings of scholars that has emerged from the Soviet collapse. And some of the most interesting writing about nationalism, ethnic identity-formation, and ethnic conflict has come from...
regional specialists as they struggle to make sense of the Yugoslav wars of succession, the civil wars and ethnic violence in Transcaucasia and Tajikistan. And those same scholars are reading the works of their colleagues who have studied communal violence in South Asia and failed postcolonial states in sub-Saharan Africa. In other words, area studies scholars, including the postcommunist institutes, have already moved a long distance from the picture of intellectual isolation that our critics have drawn. But I think we have also preserved the most important part of our past approaches, and that is the insistence on local, deep knowledge.

The kind of local, deep knowledge with which area studies has become identified is a powerful testing ground for the theory that is developed or evolved in the traditional mainstream disciplines. More importantly, the space of inter-disciplinarity has been the site for many important theoretical "breakthroughs" by providing some institutional mechanisms for the transfer of knowledge, most often in the form of models or paradigms, from one discipline to another. This advantage of inter-disciplinarity, by the way, is an important part of the intellectual rationale for the new Center for Comparative Literature and Society, which represents another effort to re-imagine the relationships between scholars who study culture and their counterparts in the social sciences and professional schools, and especially with the regional institutes.

Let me suggest one very palpable way in which these two approaches differ significantly, again from the vantage point of a regional specialist, and that is in our insistence on local, deep knowledge. In what exactly does local, deep knowledge consist? I won't presume to offer a definitive characterization, but I think I can open up some room for helpful discussion by focusing on one of the "sore points" of regional scholars: mastery of non-English languages as a credential for scholarly authority. Why, in other words, do we in the regional studies model place such intellectual and professional investment in the fluent mastery of a foreign language (and moreover some prolonged in-country residence and research experience) that is native to the region we study? In still other words, why do we treat those who don't or won't master a second language with such skepticism as to their skills of interpretation?

Because those of us who have reached a certain level of proficiency can appreciate how difficult it is to capture precisely in one language what we can express in another with relative ease, i.e., the difficulties of translation,

Continued on page 90

A Response

Professor Mark von Hagen makes a strong argument for regional studies centers. In last month's Blue and White von Hagen discussed the development of area studies programs as a response to the globalization of world politics. One effect of the increased interaction between countries has been a growing awareness of cultural differences and how specific societies respond to them, particularly non-Western cultures. Regional studies programs such as the Harriman Institute have helped to garner attention for sometimes overlooked or misrepresented cultures and have sought to equalize the emphasis on Western and non-Western cultures in the American university system. As Professor von Hagen notes, one local effect of the attempt to decrease the Eurocentrism in university curricula has been the addition of the Major Cultures requirement to the Columbia College Core curriculum.

However, not acknowledging the influence of predominantly Western cultures on non-Western cultures is just as exclusionary as the former system of Eurocentric studies. According to von Hagen, the subjects contained within each area studies center would be united by their membership within a region or set of nations with a shared historical, polit-

Continued on page 93
This is the story of the generations of Barnard and Columbia. King George II begot Columbia in 1754. Years passed and President Frederick A. P. Barnard saw Alma Mater was barren because she had no women, and he pleaded with the trustees on her behalf. The trustees responded to his plea, and a women’s college was conceived. But the two colleges struggled in the womb of Alma Mater, and Alma said, “If so, why do I exist?” She went to inquire of the trustees.

And the trustees answered her: “Two independent undergraduate institutions are in your womb; / Two separate peoples shall issue from your body; / One people shall be mightier than the other; / and the older shall serve the younger. / By right of birth I will allow them to swipe in each other’s dorms / but forever they shall snipe at each other’s norms / the swipe, yea, shall be taken away / by signing in they’ll be made to pay.”

When her time to give birth was at hand in 1889, there were twins in her womb. The first one emerged light blue, like a hairy mantle all over; so they named him Columbia College in the City of New York. Then his sister emerged, holding on the heel of Columbia; so they named her Barnard College, an Independent Women’s College Affiliated With Columbia University. Alma Mater was 135 years old when they were born.

Once when Barnard’s Hewitt Hall Dining Room was serving stew the Columbia track team came back from Baker Field, famished. And the Columbians said to the guard in Hewitt, “Let us swipe our Columbia Cards and have some of that red stew to gulp down, for we are famished.” And the Barnard guard said, “You may take of the stew, but you must sell us your swipe-right. From this time hence, you may no longer swipe into Barnard buildings.” And the Columbians said, “We are starving to death, so what use is our Barnard swipe access?” But the Barnard desk attendant said, “Swear to us first.” So he swore to her an oath, and sold his swipe-right to Barnard dorms.

The trustees heard of the deceit, and they said to Barnard, “Your deception was evil in the eyes of the trustees. / What shall we do—raise your student fees? / No, you shall pay / with what you took away. / Your punishment shall be / no Columbia swipe for twelve years times three.”

The punishment was bitter for Barnard, and she cried, “O trustees, merciful trustees, slow to anger, full of generosity and truth / I have sinned in your eyes and in my own. / Restore to us the swipe access of old / bring us back in from the cold. / We’ll even give back Columbia’s access / If only you’ll end our tremendous distress!

No word yet from the trustees.

According to Prof. James Shapiro, Columbia administrators go to bed every night wondering how much more they’ll be able to get away with before students start “screaming and yelling.” Word has reached Blue J that the University has applied to the city for a permit to build a permanent building on the site of the Lion’s Court “shack.” We wish the administration sweet dreams!
Have you ever asked yourself:
• Is my college experience all I want it to be?
• What's the point of this Sisyphean struggle?
• Does anyone else here feel my pain?

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Culinary Humanities: a proposal

by Mariel L. Wolfson

Fast forward a few years and imagine yourself at a swank New York soirée. You’re winning, dining and schmoozing with *hoi polloi*, cocktail in hand. Thanks to the Core Curriculum, you are a veritable fontain of sparkling conversation. You wax rhapsodic on everything from *ekphrasis* in the Iliad to the African masks on the women in Picasso’s Demoiselles d’Avignon (which, incidentally, makes for an interesting connection with the visceral wildness of Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring*). You are—the other guests can’t help commenting—such a well-educated, well-rounded, delightful young person. Yes indeed, you are a graduate of the Core, and your erudition dazzles those who would otherwise lament the decline of American educational standards.

Geez, all that chatting—you’ve really worked up an appetite. Oh good, it’s time to sit down to dinner. You’ll chink glasses of the deep ruby Medoc and exclaim, “How I love these California Chardonnays!” Fellow Columbians, are you horrified by such a scenario? Could it happen to you? It will, unless you are a member of that esteemed minority: the intelligentsia of haute cuisine. The aforementioned Columbia College alum could be you. For something is sorely missing from our otherwise full-bodied education.

Yes, the Core is plagued by a hitherto neglected lacuna; a defect that can only be remedied by the addition of a new requirement that I hereby propose to the esteemed Committee on the Core Curriculum: “C1125: Masterpieces of Western Food and Wine.” I predict that before long “Culinary Humanities” will come to be popularly known as “Cul Hum” and will earn its rightful place alongside the venerable stand-bys of an undergraduate education at Columbia. Our Center for Career Services offers a “business etiquette dinner,” but aren’t they missing the real point? Who cares if you use the right fork if you can’t tell a Bordeaux from a Chardonnay?

Although the syllabus for Culinary Humanities is still in the developmental stage, several matters have been raised in consultation with my exploratory committee:

The subject of food is essential to a full understanding of Western society and culture. In that famed mythological contest, Athena produced the olive tree for Athens. Her rival Poseidon offered some H2O. The rest is history. Whether Cul Hum will commence in Ancient Greece remains to be decided. Will we organize the course chronologically, geographically, or thematically? Our Roman ancestors mustn’t be ignored, though they were fond of *garum*, a sort of rotting fish sauce likely to assault our olfactory and gustatory sensibilities. Also ripe for analysis is the Medieval feast. Furthermore, we shall debunk the myth of Marco Polo and his pasta and give ample attention to the New World’s potato. By the time we hit modernism at the end of the semester, things could get really interesting.

Like any good Core Curriculum class, Culinary Humanities will be founded on primary sources: foods themselves. Music Hum has the listening hour; Art Hum has slide after slide in those soporific darkened rooms. It follows logically that Cul Hum should incorporate direct experience of the medium under consideration—the staples of Western cuisine. I will not deny that this bold new addition may get pricey: let’s hope “enlargement and enhancement” doesn’t rear its ugly head in the face of Cul Hum, depriving students of essential lessons. I am confident that with some
maneuvering we can make this innovation palatable to our alumni friends at Goldman, Merrill and Morgan.

And if not: hunger strike, anyone? New York City offers tremendous resources for studying great works of Art and Music, and the same can be said for food. With the addition of Cul Hum, students will go beyond the Met, St. John the Divine, and the Philharmonic. Le Bernadin? Here we come! I’m sure the administration always intended that the Columbia Card would get us into more than a modest number of museums. Let’s put our connections to work! Reports on restaurant visits will be required by all instructors so that students may develop the vocabulary of culinary criticism. Some preparatory reading of the late Craig Claiborne and Ruth Reichl classics will be required, which brings me to my next point.

Having established that the comestibles themselves are of primary importance, some supplementary reading is of course in order. Here comes the third in the series of those custom-published Columbia readers: The Culinary Humanities Primary Source Reader. Applications for the editorship are currently being accepted. You may fancy yourself a literary savant, but are you versed in the Great Books of the epicurean (small e, thank you) world? Does Le Ménagier de Paris mean anything to you? How about Le Viandier de Tailléver? Soon you’ll be tossing these titles around as if they were the three plays of the Oresteia.

There’s likely to be a fair amount of meat in any study of Western haute cuisine, and this brings up one of the more challenging issues surrounding Cul Hum. A substantial percentage of the students in any section of the class are likely to be vegetarian, kosher, halal, or otherwise restricted in diet. Creating separate syllabi is surely not an option. Culinary Humanities is not to be overwhelmed by the specter of political correctness. My opinion may be unsavory to some. Yet as a vegetarian myself, I assure you that this dilemma will be addressed carefully. The problem actually raises an interesting question: can the meat be “reinterpreted” in order to give Columbia’s vegetarians an accurate Cul Hum experience? The powers of soy become more impressive every day. Would such a conversion really be so different from reading the Iliad in English as opposed to ancient Greek? “Tofu as Translation!” I defer to the philosophers on this one.

Finally, the wine issue is thorny. Oenology could be a course in itself, as it is at Cornell (and at Columbia’s own Reid Hall). Cul Hum must find a way to give students an adequate grounding in the principles of wine while ensuring that the course does not acquire the reputation of a biweekly Bacchic frenzy (and they think Art Hum classes are over-enrolled!) The Greeks mixed their wine with water. Medieval folks had hipocras, a spiced, sweet wine. In the spirit of the Core, we’ll discuss these and other topics at breakneck speed!

Culinary Humanities is an addition to the Core whose time has come. But like a good (or bad) cheese, the idea will probably be set aside to age in the dusty files of Eileen Gillooly. The students will idle, starving for knowledge and waiting for Cl 125 to come to fruition. In the meantime, we can only hope that it acquires an even fuller, more robust character. So as not to waste any more time in the cave of culinary ignorance, The Blue and White hereby assumes the weighty task of educating the Columbia community in the culinary culture of the West.

Live it up. But where?

General Room Selection will take place April 10–14 in Carman Lounge from 9:30 AM till 4:30 PM. This is when you pick a room if you haven’t picked in Group Suite Selection with a group of your nearest and dearest. Now you can look forward to living next to a beautiful stranger or that weird girl who lurks around the classical philology section of the stacks. Be fleet of foot, the best rooms are going fast.
Columbia Conversations

The last residents of River

Our conversation this month is dedicated to the famed dormitory called River, which will be thoroughly renovated this summer. No one is quite sure whether the building will maintain its distinctive artiness and edginess once it has fluorescent pod-lighting, Lerner-leather sofas and heat. We visited the dorm, whose address is 545 W114th Street, and spoke with some current residents. Present were Rose Francis C'00, Travis White C'00, Josh Krefetz C'00, Mike Votta C'00, Steven Tommasini E'00, Len Fliegel C'00, Katerina A. Barry C'00 and Conversations Editor Rachel E. Robertson C'00.

KB: So what creates this "off-beat" River vibe?
JK: The reason it has that vibe is because it's on the verge of Armageddon.
MV: And plus things are falling down so there's this weird feeling of impending doom, and that's sort of what gives River its dynamic.
JK: Like a dangling sword of Damocles over all of our heads.
RR: Yeah, so, it's being torn down and they keep telling us all this stuff at meetings that are like, "Find out what River's going to be like next year!" and they keep telling us that they're going to recreate it with the same vibe and "off-beat feel"...
RF: What a bunch of bullshit!
RR: We only got in trouble because they sent the janitor to paint over everything, but he didn't do it because he's nice, and likes us, and didn't want to paint over it all. But URH or whoever thought that he did and that we just ran over and drew everything back up exactly where it was before.
RF: Well, Len lived in the same one and he woke up one morning and rolled out of bed and hit his leg on the opposite wall.
RR: And how was that?
MV: Oh, and another cool thing about River besides the people and being able to draw on the walls is that there aren't RAs on every floor and you never see the RAs and they never bother you. And it smells like weed all the time and no one cares.
ST: You can smoke in the hallway.
RF: You can spray the fire extinguisher water everywhere.
MV: And the hallways are situated so that you can climb them.
RR: Also, River's very conducive to getting to know people. Like me, Rose and Travis didn't know these guys until this year. And the same thing happened last year. We met a bunch of people.
TW: Speaking of, I saw Mike Bell and, Rose, he says you’re a bitch for not calling him.
RF: No way! We met him here last year and he’s a legend. A lot of legends live in River.
RR: It’s a legendary dorm.
MV: We’re like the hall of fame.
RF: Me and Rachel are like the only athletes in this building.
RR: Yeah. It’s a very non-athletic dorm.
RF: Our whole team made fun of us about living in River. They called us the River Rats.
RR: And here’s a theory I have about River. The rat myth about River having rats, which isn’t a total myth because there are rats in the streets, but the myth about there being rats in the building, I think, is perpetuated by the people who live here to keep the community tight and all the bullshit people out.
TW: Yeah, but the biggest roaches in the world besides South America live in this basement.
RF: That’s a damn lie!
JK: Travis is trying to spread a myth.
TW: Oh my God, you guys are crazy! I wish I had a picture. They’re huge! We can go down there and look now.
ST: I’ve had roaches in my room and my room’s way cleaner than any of yours. Except for Rose. But I’ve seen roaches bigger in Carman.
MV: Oh, the ceiling caved in on Josh’s floor.
RF: The people at Career Services were telling me their ceiling’s caved in a few times and they blame it on the billion-dollar infrastructure of East Campus.
JK: Look, EC just sucks.
RR: Yeah. One reason why EC sucks and River is awesome is that EC is like a hotel and it just reminds you of how you have this transient existence that no one cares about at Columbia. But here, you feel like it’s really your place.
MV: When you’re here, you’re family.
JK: Rachel, when you’re in those EC rooms, don’t you feel totally isolated from everything?
RR: Yeah, because nobody socializes there.
TW: They don’t even have real light bulbs there.
JK: That’s a main part of River’s hominess. We have incandescent lighting while EC’s is fluorescent.
TW: Fluorescent lighting is depressing. They’ve done studies on that.
RR: Steve broke this light bulb up here by punting a football into it. And I was standing under it and all the broken glass fell on my head. I was picking shards of glass out of my hair the whole next day.
MV: One night me and Rachel got in a fight with the fire extinguishers.
RR: Yeah, that was crazy. That’s why all those drawings have drips on them.
ST: We had a toga party once.
RF: Did you know the football team’s having a toga party tonight?
JK: See River is like the avant-garde that comes up with all the ideas and then frats copy them.
MV: Yeah, we draw on the walls and then after they yell at us about it. They have a River event where you can draw on the walls in the basement.
RF: Hey, where’s the River rat? We have a mascot called the River rat. I think he’s in Len’s room.
KB: What is it?

Summer, 2000: Lerner and River Confused
RF: Oh, it's rubber. It's not real. We used to hide him all over the kitchen.
RR: And we freaked out a couple people by throwing him around the corner when they were walking down the hallway.
RF: There's also a real rat that we call River rat that lives on 114th.
TW: It attacked me and Rachel once.
RR: Well, it jumped on my foot and then I kicked it onto Travis. By accident. But the fake River rat eventually became a bigger part of our community and started smoking joints with us.
MV: He smokes cigarettes, too. Without flicking the ash.
RR: I think River is the dorm for seniors who like to act like freshmen. It's like a freshman dorm for your senior year.
JK: Not everyone here is like that though. I think some people are unhappy.
RR: Josh is trying to change that though. He likes to knock on people's doors, wait for them to open it and then pass in a lit joint.
TW: Josh, you should tell the tale of Holt. It's like the legend that River was founded on.
JK: Katerina might have to be high to understand it. (Josh stops tape. Says to Katerina: "Do you smoke dope?" The group ridicules him for being so paranoid.)
(Tape begins again)
JK: That's right. I'm addicted to hundreds of drugs. Oh, the biggest drug in River is not pot, but ice.
MV: In smokable form.
JK: It's highly illegal.
RR: Once the keg in my room exploded in Josh's face. We had a party a long time ago, but the keg was still in my room and it didn't have a tap on it, and Josh wanted to know what would happen if he pushed down on the spot where the tap goes in. I didn't think anything much would happen because I forgot about how the pressure had probably been building for a month. So Josh leaned over it and pushed it and all this beer just exploded in his face. It also went all over my room. I was writing a paper and there was beer dripping down the screen of my computer. And my bed was drenched in beer.
JK: Then we developed plans to shoot Mike and Len with the keg/beer cannon when they came back from going out. But that still hasn't happened. We're pretty social, but don't you think there's a lot of solitary people in River too?
ST: Yes.
RR: They're not solitary in the depressed sort of way, though.
MV: They're the loners.
JK: I mean, this is a place for people who have rebellion in their hearts.
RR: Steve, were you with me when we were peeling the wall away from that hole and trying to read the newspaper inside to find out how old River was?
ST: Yeah, we traced the building back to 1993.
LF: You know, River will never be the same after this year. Hey, are you taping me? Turn that shit off, man!
BODY IMAGE & HEALTHY EATING
W2000y

A Healthy Body Image Can Allow You To:
- Focus energy on your strengths and goals beyond your appearance.
- Eat foods you enjoy.
- Exercise for health: building strength and energy, and having fun, too.
- Eat when your body's hungry and stop when it's full.
- Enjoy physical and emotional intimacy.
- Savor the tastes, textures, and colors of food.
- Share meals and other social activities with ease.
- Appreciate each person's uniqueness.
- Celebrate life!

Body Image BOOSTERS
- Learn to accept and love yourself. Beauty comes in all shapes and sizes.
- Educate yourself about good nutrition.
- Appreciate compliments.
- Think positively about yourself and others.
- Get to know different kinds of people beyond their outward appearance.
- Focus on what you like about your body and what it can do (e.g., how it functions and makes you feel good).
- Find an activity that builds your confidence.
- Concentrate on your health and not the numbers on the scale.
- Question the media's unrealistic ideals.
- Understand that your appearance does not define who you are.

Unhealthy Signs
- Constantly thinking about eating, body size, and exercise
- Fearful of gaining weight
- Extremity critical of your appearance (e.g., body shape, muscle mass)
- Consistently feeling depressed or anxious
- Feeling guilty or ashamed after eating
- Ritualized behavior around food or exercise
- Eating when nervous, lonely, depressed, or angry
- Food and/or exercise has gotten in the way of relationships
- Eating in secret
- Using diuretics, laxatives, diet pills, or vomiting to get rid of food
- Having perfectionistic standards about career, school, relationships, etc.

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- CUHRS EATING DISORDERS TEAM: 854-1177
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HERMES
Have bitten
the apple of
AOL Instant Messenger.

HOPE
Fireflies flit
Spiral upwards
Lost in love and a swirl of wind
But
Uncontrollably tacking across a breezy night
They still flash their landing lights
Hoping for something
Intrinsically
Instinctually
Right.

BESMIRCH
Say, slippery sauntering she,
Sliding past my eyes,
Attired in a viscous pool of shiny slimy gold;
so cold;
Please, pretty prancing princess
Praying prayers for the pets of the rich and
famous,
Whose “amens” and “alleluias” pitch past my
ears;
Pray pose a little closer to my window;
what innuendo.
She speaks, spraying staccato sounds
Straight starboard my shrinking, slinking
soul,
“Swing low”
“Sing low”
“Lights low”
Smile skidding to a slight sensuous smirk,
“You know”;
we go
so low.

ALLEGORY
Sitting in the parking lot of Heaven
sprawled in between two chariots
smoking a cigarette—
I turn to my companion and say,
“God! This is the life.”

He nods and
showing off,
takes a drag through the hole in His palm.
Across the gap, down in Hell
a tormented sinner sees us and
begins to beg for a drop of water but
changed his mind and
attempts to bum a cigarette instead.
Jesus says, “That’s a new one” and
flicks him a butt;
And either it hits the even more
tormented sinner in the eye or
lands perfectly and gave him one
instant of pleasure, thus upsetting
the whole balance between heaven
and hell and thus
unseating all the angels;
I can’t remember
(I was too busy looking for
my matches).
I. VIRGINS MAKING LOVE

two puzzle pieces
who have no picture
to compare it to

II. APPLE

I pluck you from the many
hanging on this tree,
cover you in breath,
make you shine.

I bite—break through to juice—
let one drop roll from the corner of my lips—
down my chin—
onto my breast, where it soaks in.

III. ON THE WALL

She hated to be
on top, watching Jesus flap
with the wood headboard.

—Melissa Viscovich, B’01

DINER

the hour
has sliced itself in half
and we sit,
examining
indecipherables—
beginnings and ends—
lackadaisically stirring
soup
we negotiate private
morasses of
predictions, predilections,
distinct indecisions.

The hour has split itself in half
opening to reveal its machinations
with weak, innocent protestations
most hours—fleeting
but this one, intent on keeping
itself the subject of speculation
has confused its beginnings and ends
with an air of evasions, complications...

You stir your soup, I sip my tea;
We shall not ask “What shall it be?”
Embarrassed, pretended disparity.

And yet—and yet, is this the way that we
forget?
With slices of lemon and steam,
with a shift and a sigh and a meaningful
  glance in the other direction?
What a question.

—Erin Thompson, B’02

The Columbia Review publishes poetry, short stories, creative non-fiction and visual art in its annual magazine and features poems monthly in The B&W. Consider submitting your own work for publication. To learn more, please visit www.columbia.edu/cu/review.
In our constant search here at the B&W to bring to you, in this space, different and compelling texts that you may otherwise have overlooked in your bustle through Columbia, we have realized that there is one source of voluminous information that we ourselves have been overlooking.

We refer to information saved on the hard drives of the various public computers scattered around campus. Here Lit Hum papers unabashedly rub shoulders with doctoral dissertations, and early-in-the-semester L&R papers are often as impossible to decipher as graduate-level philosophy papers. Though, thankfully, they're usually pretty short.

For your perusal, then, a brief (and by no means representative) selection follows. Keep in mind that many of these were certainly culled from first, very rough, drafts, but do read carefully. Some are truly awful, but many are thought provoking, and many more are just plain weird. And if you happen to spot something that looks too eerily familiar, and are inclined to be upset, please take our loving advice: keep it to yourself and smile. Take a deep breath, and remember that this is all in good fun, that chances are only yourself and some anonymous TA will recognize your quoted lines, and above all, that, for the future, there is a reason that a higher power has provided us with something called the 'delete' command.

As the opening credits unfolded, I told myself it might not be so bad and that I should keep an open mind, that there must be more to the movie than the previews suggest, and that to ignore the stench from the man sitting behind me...

Thesis: People who procrastinate are like hunters.

The most obvious answer to this question is that the whore is inherently more shocking than a girl in a matador costume.

Also, what Bartley [sic] relies on his living is only ginger nuts because he does not go out for dinner nor eats vegetables. Moreover, Bartley seems "alone, absolutely alone in the universe" that it is hard to find a single relative or friend of his. Now let’s talk about the lawyer.

I’m Fast Eddie with the broken thumb
You could pop my heart like bubble-gum
You could fill me up with helium
In your arms I could become

Obviously, I do not suggest that we slaughter our children. Although such a plan is quite practical.

The reader must view the process of fulfilling one’s physical desires as a procedure that although sometime rigorous, is generally enjoyable with no negative consequences.

There are two motivations behind my application to the M. Phil program: I have not been intellectually satisfied by undergraduate study and studying Shakespeare’s, for me, a truly enjoyable pastime.

While ballroom dancing and the cinema were indisputably activities of the elite, in my research it was difficult to find women who admitted to having taken part in them. Many claimed their parents had been very strict and would not allow them to go to such things. In
the contemporary newspapers, however, the evidence that “modern” women did go to dances is incontrovertible. Even the nuns took their pupils to the cinema.

Although reflecting on the similarities between these two texts proves to be more astounding to the mind and much more interesting, their differences however, cannot be disregarded. In the Epic of Gilgamesh, Enlil is infuriated by the noise and clamour of human beings and thus is unable to sleep. ... In Genesis, God realizes that the heart of man is filled with wickedness.... This appears to be a much more justified reason for killing all of humankind.

Theresa Cross was left to be on her own, marrying from husband to husband. She was jealous and her marriages were her meal tickets. She was happy with money; and nice with it.

Animal movies, just like they have on channel thirteen only they had somehow got them onto film... all you could really ever make out of it was that the narrator was English. The English are like the reigning authority on animal know how.

An industrial engineering [sic] has to study the sciences, economics and human factors.... An industrial engineer is thus a hybrid resulting from a businessman and an engineer.

Whether GLAAD is able to keep Dr. Schellessinger [sic] off the air or not, the fact that Bill Bradley said her views “make me sick to my stomach” and Al Gore spoke at the Gay and Lesbian Community Center the day before the New York primary suggests that a revolution is in the works, and it may get messy.

This morning, awaking again in the porridge of self-doubt... Yes, that is how numb I am!
Continued from page 77

which amount to cultural interpretation gaps. (Those of us who live or work in close contact with non-native speakers of English appreciate the density/opacity of communication even on matters of the most fundamental intimacy and urgency.) Our appreciation of the difficulties of translation produces above all a psychological state in which we operate as scholars, which generally would caution us to be modest in our expectations of how far we can stretch conceptual paradigms that have their origins in Euro-Atlantic market democracies of a peculiar kind at a specific historical stage.

By all means, those paradigms ought to be tested in being applied to other regional cultures (as they are being tested in life), but the assumption that the researcher will find cross-regional commonalities ought not to be so strong as to blind her to the resistances that the other culture is offering. Deep, local knowledge also means listening to intellectual voices from the region as a check on our own often unconscious Euro-American intellectual triumphalism. In short, the regionalist scholar believes that learning a language proficiently means learning a culture, both its contemporary institutions and practices, but also its intellectual, cultural, and political traditions, as frameworks and contexts for interpreting political, social, economic and technological changes.

Which brings me finally to the changing relationship of postcommunist area studies to undergraduates and to some potential links to emerging programs (in ethnicity and race, comparative literature, gender) at Columbia and elsewhere. Our institutes which study East Asia, South Asia, Africa, and Latin America, what we used to know as the Third World or developing world, have begun to enter into new types of relationships with undergraduates via the programs that are centered on diaspora or minority communities in the United States, namely the programs in African-American, Asian-American, and Latino studies. These latter programs now insist that students of the American experience gain some familiarity with the "home" culture of origin that shaped the non-Euroamerican community's experience of encounter with "Anglo-Saxon" civilization. These programs and the Major Cultures requirement were responses to a perceived Eurocentrism of the traditional core. Russia and Eastern Europe have a no doubt more complicated relationship to European (and Euroamerican) culture than the other ethnic groups discussed above. Generations of Russian and East European intellectuals imagined themselves as Europeans, while only rarely—and this is more true in the 20th century—were they acknowledged as such by Europeans themselves. On the other hand, for a good part of the non-European world, Russia especially was another European colonial power and the Soviet Union occupied one pole of a bipolar world whose superpowers sought to establish their dominance in the rest of the world. So Russia, or Eurasia as a more comprehensive and suggestive name, is neither European nor Asian, but has important historical and contemporary pulls in both directions. Think about the Core Curriculum; most Lit Hum or CC syllabi do not include any works by authors from Russia, Eastern Europe or Central Asia. Occasionally a Lit Hum instructor might include Dostoevsky's Notes from the Underground and an even rarer CC instructor might include some political tracts of Vladimir Lenin, but for the most part works that have their origins east of Germany do not count as European. So does this mean that Eurasia ought to be considered among the Major Cultures? This is something that is of course open for discussion, but in some important ways reflects some of the same issues that I raised above in other contexts.

I'd like to return in closing to a more practical issue again, namely the relationship of the area institutes to the Major Cultures curriculum and to the ethnic studies programs. Even before the recent
appearance in American universities and colleges, and Columbia in particular, of the children of post-Soviet emigrations/diasporas, Russian and East European area studies fulfilled a somewhat similar function, if informally, in relation to Jewish studies, since so many of America’s Jewish citizens trace their ancestry to lands of the Russian Empire or former Soviet bloc. But now, with a substantial number of students whose first language might have been Russian, and whose parents left cities in places from Ukraine and Lithuania to Uzbekistan and Siberia (or occasionally international students who are very much citizens of post-Soviet states), we have a new population of “heritage” students who are able to do much more sophisticated work in Russian than previous generations or often than their American non-émigré counterparts.

But even here much has changed. Originally, when the Russian Institute was founded, and it was renamed in honor of our donor as the W. Averell Harriman Institute for Advanced Study of the Soviet Union, it was assumed that the Institute would be for graduate students and faculty exclusively. This was based on the assumption that the absence of Russian- and other East European-language programs in American high schools meant that only a small group of American undergraduates at certain colleges might be able to attain the proficiency needed for serious work in the region. The number of high schools across the country that now offer some level of Russian (and occasionally Polish, Ukrainian, or Lithuanian) language means that the Harriman Institute (which has dropped not only the Soviet Union from its title but also the advanced study part of its identity) can now look to an undergraduate population that has the requisite language skills that are the key entry ticket to area studies. This until fairly recently was not the case. Unlike Spanish, French, German (and elsewhere Chinese, Italian and some other languages), East European languages appeared relatively late in American high schools. And finally, a recent New York Times article reported that 1,200 American students every year are spending part or all of one their academic years in Russia or a former Soviet state. If you compare this number to the 60 Americans who were allowed to study in the Soviet Union when I was an undergraduate (in the 1970s) on the various official exchange programs, then the possibilities for acquiring that deep knowledge of the region are infinitely greater.

I conclude these preliminary thoughts, which I hope have helped B&W readers understand some of the issues and stakes involved in the rethinking of area studies and regional institutes, not only the Harriman and not only at Columbia, but across the North American university landscape.

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**The Blue and White** is recruiting staff writers, editors and artists for next year. Come to our general meeting:

**Monday, April 10th, at 8:00 PM in the 10th Floor Hartley Library.**

Contact theblueandwhite@columbia.edu.

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The Student Council on the Web http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ccsc
Verily Veritas has returned from his mission to Moscow, and Columbia culture is looking a lot brighter. Don’t get Verily wrong; he adores filling dinners of pickled cabbage and fried eggs. Yet after the trauma of thawed Cold War fashions, from terrifying takes on tweed to the somewhat easy virtue knee-boots-and-nothing-else attitude so in vogue among eligible Muscovite bachelorettes, Morningside Heights seems a veritable haven of virtue and good taste, sartorial, gustatory and otherwise.

What’s more, other than such radio play bright spots as Alexander Varlamov’s sweet 1938 Stalinist jazz reading of ‘She’s a Latin From Manhattan,’ the poor Russian Federation is sinking in a widening gyre of musical badness. Moscow is a far cry from Columbia DJ craftsmanship. In Moscow, only those prepared for continuous loops of such luminaries as the Backstreet Boys and the Spice Girls, as well as all sorts of marvelous drug bonuses slipped in one’s drinks, can really enjoy the club scene reputed to be the craziest in Europe. Verily restrained himself to evenings beside the Czar’s box at the Bolshoi. There he could glance at a well-thumbed Pique-Dame libretto while balancing opera glasses, all skills practiced on the Columbia campus. Was it not in some nook of Barnard Hall where a dazzling Norwegian instructed Verily in the finer points of cradling a glass of Dubonnet and looking pensive to Bach partitas?

And where better, Verily wonders, than New York to learn that spirit of ecumenical Judaism-cum-economic-ideology that lends delight to stocking up at the Bolshoi buffet at intermission? There, a touch of the caviar, a bit of chocolate and fruit, and a generous dose of smooth Russian shampanskoe can run as high as four or five dollars. Yet for anything below high culture, Moscow can be a lonely place. This fact impressed itself on Verily while he toured the outskirts of Moscow. At the museum displaying a boat constructed by Peter the Great, he could still hear the strains of Boney M’s greatest hits blaring out of the newly built boat restaurant a quarter mile away. Verily confesses that he may have had his own Boney M phase in days of yore, but that was long before Columbia set him straight on a steady diet of Copland Kraftwerk. Thanks to Columbia, Verily knows better.

It’s refreshing to see a place like Moscow where people are free to enjoy accordion music in smoky restaurants filled with dark-suited, no-necked figures paying their respects to some gruff man in a dangerously ruffled silk blouse open halfway down his chest. In Morningside Heights, it may be hard to come by reasonably priced busts of Gorky to breathe more socialist realist life into that sluggish CC paper. Really good borscht stateside remains elusive, although a Ukrainian restaurant Verily knows downtown is home to an adorable pet cat more portly than Harold Bloom. Just why is difficult to articulate or defend, but Verily is grateful to be back home again.

Columbia tour guides may not have tales to match those of Verily’s Kremlin guide, who recounted on several occasions with a wryly matter-of-fact grin that Ivan the Terrible’s son Dmitri was "gutted like a sheep." Yet it’s nice to relax in that familiar, enriching, variegated New York culture after time in Moscow, teeming capital of the East. There, as many people squeeze into one urban mass, struggling to adjust to new influxes of free markets and bad T.G.I. Friday’s, as there are in the entirety of tri-state civilization, as well as much of New Jersey. Even New York, the tarnished, indifferent metropolis, seems restful coming back. Verily, succored by Columbia from mobster Slavs and Eurodisco, is finally home again.

—Verily Veritas
Continued from page 77

cial and economic situation. Although I admire this attempt to increase the profile of undervalued cultures within our educational system, I also think this system ignores the reality of current world politics.

By way of example, I'll relate a personal observation. During winter break, I traveled in Eastern Europe, where the influence of Western European culture has grown rapidly since the fall of Communism. In Budapest—a city that has managed to retain much of its cultural heritage and Hungarian individuality—there are aspects of city life that are undeniably mediated by Western influence. The recent conversion to a capitalist economy has resulted in a McDonald's on every street corner. Traditional open-air markets still do exist, but they are often in the shadow of towering multi-level malls and supermarkets, an undeniably Western (if not uniquely American) influence. To study Hungarian culture as it has evolved down to the present requires an understanding of the incorporation of Western European economics, politics and social characteristics into modern Hungarian life. Within von Hagen's proposed area studies centers, however, such collaboration between Western and non-Western scholars would be difficult since each center would only be comprised of people studying particular regions.

Von Hagen distinguishes regional studies centers from the Center for Comparative Literature and Society by noting that the former would require a focused and deep knowledge of both language and culture. As a Comparative Literature major, I know firsthand that my department puts just as strong an emphasis on language and culture as von Hagen's proposed area studies centers. The requirements for my major are saturated with a focus on language proficiency in not just one but two foreign languages. In fact, foreign language classes make up over half of the total departmental credits required of a Comp Lit major. The one difference I can find between my department and von Hagen's proposal is the emphasis on literature, though even in that area students have some flexibility. In the event that a student wants to study a specific culture and language not addressed by existing courses, it is usually possible to design a major within the University system that would incorporate both subjects.

Von Hagen points out the importance of not depending on translations when studying a foreign culture, but the reality is that most students cannot master a foreign language before beginning to study the culture associated with it. Although he is correct in noting that students are entering college with an increasingly diverse exposure to non-Western languages, the number of them who actually choose to continue language study is not as large. Should the University deny students the opportunity of studying Eastern European politics because they have yet to master the nuances of Russian, Czech and Hungarian?

Once an institution begins to select cultural areas for fund allocation, a Pandora's Box of cultural divisions opens. With the already vexing question of just how Southeast Asian studies fits into the MEALAC and EALAC departments, the University would no doubt be bombarded by requests for increasingly specific Area Studies Centers if it were to comply with von Hagen's proposal. If a Center for South East Asian studies is established, shouldn't one also be opened for Northern Asian societies such as Mongolia and Tibet? And what about Northern European cultures such as Iceland and Finland? They too are significantly different from Western European nations and deserve the distinction of a separate cultural center.

The issue really boils down to University funding. As Professor von Hagen points out in his first article, most of the professors involved
in his proposed area studies centers would still
be considered members of other departments
as well. With a specific cultural center, profes­
sors would double the chances of getting fund­
ing.

The University system currently offers stu­
dents the opportunity to combine two areas of
focus into one major if they so desire. Von
Hagen’s proposed programs exist; students
need only to be interested enough in the sub­
ject to apply for independent majors. Since such
regional studies programs already attract rela­
tively few students and only those who are
highly motivated to study such a specific area, to
my mind the only advantage of having an estab­
lished areas studies department is to give that
particular culture prominence within the uni­
versity. This exposure, however, can be achieved
in other ways, such as lectures, film screenings
and cultural events. Separate funding for such
specific studies would funnel money away from
other equally lingual and interdisciplinary
departments.

— Hilary Feldstein, C’02
LETTERS FROM ABROAD

Reflections of a Kibbutznik: Slouching toward Danzig

Letters from Abroad, a new feature, continues our "Columbia International" theme of October's number. We'll publish pieces by associates of the magazine and the University who are either now on foreign soil (as in our first letter here) or yearning to be there (as in our second). The column will take up the pleasures and travails of travelling far and near, questing, sojourning, etc. Please write us!

I do not have short shorts or a silly hat. I have read no A. D. Gordon (important advocate of kibbutz life), and still can’t stand the smell of cow dung. I don’t have a constant body odor. But in some unexplainable way, I am a kibbutznik, with a different silly hat on my head, my sabra girlfriend in short shorts on my mind, Gordon’s Dry Gin in hand and the stink of cow dung seemingly following my path. Well, maybe that just makes me a silly, perverted, smelly drunk, but I like to think it makes me a kibbutznik.

I love eating cream of wheat, toast, cucumbers, and tomatoes for breakfast. I love having lunch as the biggest meal of the day. I love seeing the same boots on every man’s feet, and smelling the odor of an old age home when I come to lunch early. There is a beauty to the simplicity, the sharing and the really boring night life. As Ben Gurion, the first prime minister of Israel, once wrote: "To revive the barren, to produce where all is dead, to be in harmony with nature and each other, cucumbers and tomatoes and a wicked odor ... that is what kibbutz means to me."

THE CARROT FACTORY

Seventy tons of carrots. If on a strict diet of my carrots, I could turn the entire population of Manhattan orange. Imagine a bulk of those seventy tons coming your way, on two conveyer belts. Imagine having to transfer 600 kg (1300 lbs.) bins of grade B carrots, 25 kg (53 lbs.) bags of grade A carrots, seal and stack those bags by yourself, all without allowing one precious carrot to hit the ground. Imagine what would happen if I screwed up. Piles of carrots. Russian ladies, covered in delicious carrots, damning Gorbachev for forcing them to Israel to have some peace in Communism. Imported Thai workers smiling, because that is all they do. And an overweight Israeli cursing in Arabic. I avoided all of these potential disasters and managed to keep the entire factory running smoothly, and I ate a whole bunch of carrots.

MEALS

The tray, plate, silverware, and sliced bread come first. Followed by the main course stand, usually some form of chicken, often schnitzel. Then cucumber salad, sliced cucumbers, cucumbers whole, sliced tomatoes, whole tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, tomato salad, cucumber and tomato salad, tehina, eggplant salad, Thousand Island dressing, etc. Then potatoes, clumpy spaghetti, some bland soup and tomato sauce. Then a bin of oranges. And, finally, water and milk.

With all of that food, you’d think it could fill you up. But kibbutz food is magic food. It never fills you up (except for twice: once when I ate twenty chicken legs, and the other when I ate twenty wings). You eat more and more, and by the time you have to return to work, you still want more. And then you go to work, hungry, hungry for more tomatoes and carrots.

THE NIGHT LIFE

Basketball, movies and locked doors...that is all.

LAUNDRY

To have free laundry is a joy I now appreciate, but to have free laundry that does not require you labeling every item of clothing with your “Chaver” (friend) name (mine is Dudu, which is short for David, which isn’t my name, which makes me think that this wasn’t what they had in mind), and
having your clothing with holes returned with a red patch that says, “Schnitzel is good,” is even more fantastic.

BEING A SPICE BOY

Being a spice boy, an employee of the spice factory, is a great joy. Besides making you feel like you’re involved in a lucrative drug trade, it is the only place in the world where I can fart and the smell of paprika or dill is more powerful. As I am sure you could imagine, I took full advantage of this odor-eating location. As for the work itself, I poured 2 kg of paprika into plastic bags, sealed and labeled them, placed them in boxes, taped the boxes and stacked them. Every so often they would ask me to cover a label that read “Cocaine” or “The Purest Heroin in the Middle East,” with a paprika label, and would mumble, “Damn printer these days, always making mistakes.” I knew better, and those boxes never made it on the truck, and “Dudu” got himself a new pair of shoes!

MY SHOWER

There is some unexplainable humor in being able to piss in the toilet, while under a shower, whose head causes a spray to soak the entire bathroom, never opening or closing the nonexistent shower curtain, all while sitting on a plastic stool. That is my shower.

MY EXPERIENCE

Although I don’t feel, as of yet, that I am connecting with the land, as the pioneers did, I do feel that I am connecting with my father, also a Columbia man (graduate school), and his father. To work in a factory, dirty, in the same clothes day after day, thinking about everything but the task at hand, because it doesn’t require much thinking, and letting the mind wonder about the easier days to come is great. Although my experience is not nearly as genuine as my father’s and grandfather’s were—for this is a forced experience and have full assurance that I will not be working ever again in a factory—I enjoy every moment. I am waiting for the time where I can reminisce with my two older generations about our factory days.

As for the other, non factory, work (cactus garden, cafeteria, maintenance, etc.), I feel like the idealistic Lenny from “Of Mice and Men,” always asking to hear about living off the “fat of the land,” except I don’t like bunnies nearly as much.

A stute readers of the Blue and White always write home. Or at least we hope they do. With an aim to inculcate that good habit as deeply as possible in our audience’s minds, we’ve compiled a short list of the places many are likely to visit this summer. Read well, peripatetic Columbians!

The East European capital of ex-pat American youngsters with wanderlust in the nineties was Prague. But those in the know in the naughties will henceforth be spending their time in Carpatho-Ruthenia.

Balmy Baltic summers always take the mind to Danzig, whose Weinbrennerstraße knows no parallel among towns of the Hanseatic League as the venue for a good walk with your ladyfriend. This Free City is the only place east of Berlin to party with sauerkraut and beer like there’s no tomorrow. Pack seersucker suits and gingham dresses, but remember riot gear too! The local Polish population, occupied primarily in shipbuilding, is restless.

There’s no reason not to make use of father’s 200-foot yacht to visit two small maritime vacation spots increasingly popular among residents of Walpole, Mass. Åland and the Faeroes both offer breezy shores and friendly denizens to soften the painful pangs of pining for Columbia’s happy land.

Åland is a province of Finland to most of the outside world, but in point of fact it’s an independent, demilitarized country unto itself with full power to refuse the salacious advances of the European Union. Swedish is the lingua franca, and every member of Parliament has a webpage, so you can check ahead on the worldwide web to see the friends I hope you’ll keep forever.

Far afield in the Faeroes you’ll need a hale and hearty hybrid of Icelandic and Danish to make your desire for lutefisk known. A high standard of living and a penchant for all-night chess matches makes this a good place to duplicate the way Butler used to be. The large local population of svelte singers of songs makes this the best-kept secret of the north.
Atlantic for a rising Columbia sophomore in search of a woman to woo. But surely some must cast their eyes to the East. *Ex Oriente Lux*, after all! This year you’re in luck. Macau is full of your NYU Film School compatriots making short flicks in red tones on the local casino mafia. (*Shanghai Triad anyone?*) But not to worry; Portuguese police keep the naughty nihilists confined to the non-tourist quarter, leaving the devout excursioner free to venerate the finger bones of Saint Francis Xavier. They repose here.

And last but not least, just up the coast is Kiautschau. The locals like to call it Tsingtao, but they bow to occidental preference in light of the civic benefits of such innovations as Wilhelmplatz and the Bibliotek für Liturgiewissenschaft und Kunst. If tensions betwixt Formosa and the Mainland heat up too much, though, you needn’t really go all the way to Kiautschau to drink in Tsingtao. There’s one waiting for you right around the corner at Ollie’s.

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**URH**

**Columbia University Residence Halls**

**Summer in the City**

Whether you’re working, studying, or just partying in the city this summer, the dorms are a great place to crash. You’ll be living in a community of other students who’ve decided to spend their lazy days in the Big Apple. It’s life in the dorms without the pressure of the regular school year, and there are always people around. If you want to get in on the party, you’ll need to apply for Summer Housing through URH.

*Summer housing applications* and important information regarding summer living at Columbia are now available online at [http://www.columbia.edu/cu/reshalls/summer](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/reshalls/summer).

**Calendar For Summer 2000 Housing**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>APRIL 7</td>
<td>Summer Housing Applications Due At 125 Wallach Hall with a $25.00 non-refundable application fee.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAY 21</td>
<td>Summer Housing Check In, Wallach Lounge 12:00 PM– 5:00PM</td>
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<td>JULY 1</td>
<td>First Summer Session Check-Out.</td>
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<tr>
<td>JULY 3</td>
<td>Second Summer Session Check-In.</td>
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<tr>
<td>JULY 24</td>
<td>Last Day for NEW Summer Session Housing Assignments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUGUST 12</td>
<td>Check out of Summer Session Housing by 12:00 noon.</td>
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Remember: You can submit maintenance work orders online through the URH website. If your shelves are busted or your sink is dripping in that annoying way that is just A-rhythmic enough so that you cannot ignore it, go to [http://www.columbia.edu/cu/reshalls/maintreq.html](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/reshalls/maintreq.html)

Though this on-line form is for routine maintenance only; if you are having an emergency such as a leak or other potentially dangerous situation, call x4-2779 immediately.
What is a law of science? Is there any difference between laws of science and scientific facts? These questions are the current topic of discussion in Professor David Albert's lecture class, Philosophy of Science W3551.

Throughout the 20th century Columbia's Philosophy Department specialized in the philosophy of science. One of the greatest figures in the field, Ernest Nagel, taught here from 1930–1973. With 51 vocal and engaged students, this course is one of the most popular lecture classes in the Philosophy Department this semester.

Prof. Albert explained recently that there are two types of view about scientific laws. "Metaphysically robust" positions hold that scientific laws, like political laws, have "grounding facts." The grounding facts for political laws are the inscriptions in the law codes. The grounding facts for scientific laws might be thought of as similarly "written" into such concepts as mass, energy, acceleration, etc. The relations between these concepts may be thought of as "out there" in what Prof. Albert amusingly calls "heaven."

Opposing the robust position is the metaphysically minimalistic, or nominalistic, side. Minimalists of the school of Hume say that laws are just truths written in a general form. They don't have a privileged epistemic status above the mere fact that they are true, qualitative statements about the world. Some true statements happen to be very general and informative (such as "F=MA"), others happen to be very specific (such as "frogs have four legs"), but there's nothing more necessary about F in fact being equal to MA than there is about frogs in fact having four legs. In the philosophical jargon, this position says that laws "supervene on their particulars," that exist only in their instances, and not in any deeper sense. One exponent of this view was Nelson Goodman, the Harvard aesthetician and metaphysician. (Goodman was an art gallery owner before he became a professor!)

These, then, are the most radical grounds staked by either side. One more moderate position has been put forward by J. S. Mill, Frank Ramsey (a friend of Wittgenstein who died tragically young), and David Lewis, the Princeton philosopher. They say laws do supervene on their particulars, but they are different from the ordinary truths because they possess both informative explanatory power and simplicity. De facto truths usually seem to possess one or the other. A detailed catalogue of everything observed in the world would certainly be highly informative but it couldn't be said to be simple. A tautology such as "either horses are mammals or they are not" is certainly simple and certainly always true, but it's not particularly informative. Consider some laws, on the other hand. F=MA is informative about all sorts of situations. It's also very simple. The Mill-Ramsey-Lewis position is attractive because it satisfies our intuition that there's something different about laws, but it doesn't require us to believe in grounding facts in a dubious law heaven.

But there's a problem. Consider a universe \( \pi \) of a single static atom. Newton's laws hold, but so does an even simpler law: "Nothing ever happens in \( \pi \)." So according to the Mill-Ramsey-Lewis argument F=MA is true in \( \pi \) but it's not a law because it's not simple. That strikes most people as absurd.

What is simplicity anyway? Isn't it a feature of our conventions, like our formal language of variables? We could imagine a language which took statements about frogs to be simpler than statements about all objects in motion. This is the objection of Bas van Fraassen, another Princeton professor. There are no scientific laws, he says, because there is nothing that governs the mere facts of the universe the way the penal code governs citizens. Laws are just facts writ large.

Perhaps it was a poet, not a philosopher, who got it best. W. H. Auden wrote, in a famous poem, that law is "like love we don't know where or why."
A plaque has been set in the pavement in front of Lemer Hall to mark the former site of Ferris Booth Hall. Unfortunately, the text wore away some two days after the laying of the slab. Our staff epigraphists are still agonizing over some of the glyphs, but they agree on the following:

On this si## st#od a b###ding #######
ho## to get##ra##ons ## st####ts
Fe##is Bo#### Ha##
###icated in ##60 ## e ##mory of
Ferris Holyo## Boo##
(1##3-1###)

Colu####a ####### Cla## of ##24
#udent Lea##r Far##hted Busine#### and
Philan####### Devo### Son of Colu####

We hope an inscription in some more durable material can be placed soon. If not, then perhaps a marker can be made in memory of the original marker just in front of it.

It has come to the attention of The Blue and White that certain underclassmen, despite the much-touted value of a Core education, are still reading at a high school level. Our correspondent reports that, on a recent night at 1020, several juniors were heard loudly proclaiming the virtues of the new campus hotspot: 1020’s basement. Under questioning, said juniors referred to last issue’s Campus Gossip in which the cool seniors were said to be “Underground.” The seniors in question, who are pleased to know that they are considered “cool” by the younger generation, are greatly encouraged by the confusion generated by their not-so-inside joke.

They encourage all those still in the dark to enjoy the wild parties in the basement.

Rumors circulate that posters around campus for movie showings have been vanishing, including those for the Science Fiction Society and Casa Italiana. Kudos to the Ferris Reel Film Society, the only major film group to survive the rash of poster thefts unscathed, for its expanding role in campus screenings and its highly successful promotion techniques.

The Blue and White’s correspondents on the aristo-frat scene report that Columbia’s storied St. A’s is loosening its party requirements. In addition to invitations, proof of ancestral passage on the Mayflower now also gets you through the door. Our man tells us that, since the advent of the Civil Rights era, St. A’s has been a leader in embracing scantily-clad women of all races, creeds and colors. The Blue and White toasts St. A’s for the continued progressive ideals embodied in its 1967 bylaw, welcoming “all sprightly young vixens of any ethnicity.”

As part of an exhibition currently running at the Wallach Art Gallery, College Walk has been beautified by a neo-Classical fragment found in the wastelands of New Jersey. While Art Hum students resolutely claim “Dawn” for the western pediment on the Parthenon, sources close to The B& W reveal it as a Pennsylvania Station original. This source—identified only as “explanatory sign”—describes a sister statue, “Dusk,” whose Antique costume shuns the prudish “Alma Mater” in favor of the liberated “Liberty” and proudly bares one breast. Not
wanting Dawn to play Leah to her sister's Rachel, vandals have spray-painted twice the exposed bosom the sculptor thought better concealed. Though some suspect foul play on the part of Fiji, others protest that stone women—however scantily dressed—are not easily inebriated. The B&W expects that when day breaks and the issue is re-dressed, Dawn should awaken in a more permanent bed: the wooden crate has got to go.

Have you ever seen a man from Wisconsin take off his shirt? In Greek? Have you ever seen a blind man screaming? In Greek? Chances that you can answer in the affirmative are slim, despite the Columbia Core focus on tragedies that include all of the above.

Barnard Senior Devon Harlow's production of Euripides' Hecuba last week took a mighty, blinding stab at remedying this cultural gap in the community's knowledge of ancient Greek Drama.

We've never seen an Odysseus quite so mean as Pedro de Blas, or a handmaiden/Polydorus/Chorus member quite so versatile as Katya Shapiro BC'02. The thrice-split title role came from Tali Gai, Jane Chen and Meredith Safran—seamless! Agamemnon came through in a twinned-casting: Peter Freuler, C'00 and Matt Wilson, C'00. Strong delivery, strong-greaved.

Richard Mammana, C'02, was blinded, bloodied and prophetic—a common trio in Greek drama, it seems. His portrayal of Polymestor showed us what happens when you seduce a man, kill his children and rip out his eyes. It wasn't pretty. But he did it handsomely.

And the chorus! Quelle chorus! Alternately haunting and taunting, naughty and nice, they offered narrative odes like we've never heard before.

The stars of the show, though, were Polymestor's daughter-princesses: Isabel Locosco Da Silva C'16, Catherine Denison Quigley C'20 and Caroline Denison Quigley C'19. Euripides would have been proud.

The Blue and White can't think of a better service rendered than Harlow's in the theater department this year.

O Devon of the rosy-fingered dawn: Ne'er before have the walls of Minor Latham Resounded in Hellenic tongue like the body-choked Skamander conquered by Hephaistos-fire or the wine-dark sea pierced by a bolt of lighting! Kudos!

In her popular "Science of Psychology" survey, Professor Norma Graham recently introduced "the littlest TA," Christopher Yorganson, age 2, who proved himself a promising applicant for the Class of 2019. Professor Graham began with discussions of the relative growth rates of myelin, nerve tissue and glial cells as brain weight increases, as well as other presenting other material from the Princeton Center for Infancy, a research locus that could explain a great deal about that university's student body. Professor Graham then offered Christopher the microphone, where he voiced such toy demands as, "I need car!" Professor Graham began to point out Christopher's command at subject-verb-object articulation until a dejected Christopher demanded his mike back. Professor Graham's subsequent lecturing was sometimes difficult to hear, with the microphone the almost exclusive domain of Christopher, but it featured Professor Graham teaching Christopher how to jump. There was also a digression into Freudian development; asked if he loved a baby doll in his arms, Christopher answered proudly to a rapt audience, "Poo poo! Boo poo!" Professor Graham, who was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1993, was also overheard at one point to ask, "Can you give your puppy luvv? Can you give your puppy luvvv? Give it a kiss! Yay! Yay!" The Blue and White commends Professor Graham: you're only young once, but you can warm hearts forever.

TV monitors were installed recently throughout Lerner Hall. They're ugly!