THE DROWNED AND THE SAVED
by Isaac Vita Kohn

GIN AND JUICE
by Erica Grieder

BOOKMARKS
by the B&W Staff
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On the Cover:
"Vehicles of Columbia," by Paul Heyer

Typographical Note

The Blue and White is set in Bodoni Old Face, which was revived by Gunter Gerhard Lange based on original designs by Giambattista Bodoni of Parma (active 1765–1813). The display faces are Weiss and Cantoria.

Established as it was in the 1890’s, The Blue and White knows about a few things about being old school, literally speaking. Of course, nowadays the term “old school” means something altogether different, and despite the generally happy co-existence of both old schools on campus, there is nevertheless an element of humor to it all: we are equally at home discussing Cicero and Snoop Dogg. With that in mind, your friends at The Blue and White have undertaken a casual canvassing of things old school, in both meanings of the phrase.

Readers curious about the Columbia of old are encouraged to check out this number’s Curio, wherein a treat from days of old awaits. One tradition that has survived the test of time is the swimming requirement, which is examined with intermittent amusement and frustration by Isaac Kohn in “The Drowned and the Saved.” And for a quaff of spirits truly old, drop in on Mephiscotcheles and Booze Hum.

Those seeking the new old school are certain to enjoy Elisa Barquin’s profile of Dave Gudis in Campus Characters. And Erica Grieder is sure to delight with “Gin and Juice,” a new installment in the adventures concerning a certain gentleman and cowboy introduced in the last number. Also, be sure to check out Measure for Measure, as good poetry is at once old and new.

The poet John Ashbery once ended a novel with the word “foehn,” knowing that when his readers turned to their dictionaries, they would be closing one book and opening another. These words, too, mark both a closing and an opening: when next you pick up an issue of The Blue and White, it will have passed from the ink-stained hands of its current Editor-in-Chief to the trusty hands of Craig Hollander, C’04. To Mr. Hollander, then, and the readers of The Blue and White, a toast to happy endings and beginnings.

THE BLUE AND WHITE

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The Blue and White invites contributions of original work from the Columbia community and welcomes letters from readers.

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Campus Characters

You might not know the following figures—but you should. In Campus Characters, our newest feature, The Blue and White introduces you to a handful of Columbians who are up to interesting and extraordinary things, and whose stories beg to be shared. If you’d like to suggest a Campus Character, send us an e-mail at theblueandwhite@columbia.edu.

Dave Gudis

“Yo, your boy is niiiice!” Dave Gudis, C’03, is so fresh that even his fans have fans.

When Gudis took the stage at the Apollo Theater last month, it took the crowd a long stunned minute to realize that the white kid on stage holding the microphone was the one producing the pumping house music and old school tunes. with only his mouth. The minute passed and they were up out of their chairs, as much into the beats themselves as to their unlikely source.

Dave, or MC Squared to his fans, had taken first place in four rounds of the Apollo’s Amateur Night Competition by the time I made it uptown. The show I saw, which was subsequently televised nationwide, was a showcase of the season’s most popular acts (and a few really unpopular ones, giving the restless audience a the chance to boo at least subsequently televised nationwide, was a showcase of the season’s most popular acts (and a few really unpopular ones, giving the restless audience a chance to boo at least a couple of acts off the stage). Despite what he described as “a ruthless crowd,” Dave managed to win the house’s raucous approval, and eventually, the night’s competition.

His season of stardom at the Apollo may be over, but Dave’s beatboxing career is still going strong. From his humble beginning as “MC Squared the Math Rapper,” for a high school presentation, and the admonitions of his parents to “stop that clicking sound,” Dave has nursed his talent into an art. Over the past four years he has performed all over the city—you’ve no doubt seen his many performances being rebroadcast on CUTV. He even took his talents to international audiences while studying abroad in Salamanca, Spain. “Hago ritmos con mi boca…” he told the Spanish DJ, trying to explain his untranslatable talent.

Though Dave is passionate about hip hop and beatboxing (he has written a lengthy research paper on the latter, which he prints out for me in all seriousness: contemporary debate locates the first beatboxer, I learn, somewhere between Doug E. Fresh and Buffy the Fat Boys...) he has managed to find somewhere between Doug E. Fresh and Buffy from the Fat Boys...he has managed to find time at Columbia to complete pre-med studies and a concentration in math, while checking his e-mail every five to ten minutes. Highly compassionate, eager to become a doctor and already accepted to several medical schools, Dave’s ambitious future plans don’t exclude a beatboxing career. “I have no plans of stopping,” he says without hesitation. Perhaps future B&H readers can look forward, then, to a Campus Characters follow-up on David Gudis ’03, MC MD?

Jax Russo

If you have ever been to Butler Library, 1020, Ferris Booth, or The Spectator office, chances are you’ve met Jacqueline Marie Cecilia Russo, C’04. Don’t bother learning those names—her friends call her “Jax,” and she considers you a friend.

While Jax is involved in more extracurricular activities than she can remember, she is best known for being Columbia’s most social butterfly, flitting around in a quixotic quest to befriend everyone at Columbia, in New York, and, perhaps, the world. An extrovert to the extreme, she acts as though she had been deprived of human contact during her childhood. As a first-year, Jax soon realized that she had to develop a system to keep track of her many acquaintances. She created an online mailing list, which started with 174 subscribers and has since blossomed to more than 350. In addition to displaying creative new ways to use the exclamation point (the signature on her e-mails reads: Jax!), she keeps her subscribers informed about everything from special events to birthdays. In her latest mailing, for example, Jax exclaims: “Congratulations to Amit Melwani for being the one of 400 APPLICANTS to land a job at one of the prestigious IB Firms! YAY AMIT!”

Some interpret Jax’s mailing list as a ploy to win friends. Others liken her gregariousness to a politician shaking dirty hands or kissing ugly babies. On this point, I will remain firm: Jax is not trying to win a popularity contest. Rather, it is her sincerity that makes her a Campus Character. To Jax, her subscribers are not just e-mail addresses; they are her friends. As she does before every holiday, prior to winter break Jax invited all her subscribers to spend Christmas with her family in Long Island. She wrote: “As always, anyone who would like to is welcome to the Russo house for the Christmas Holiday! My mom will be cooking, and Christmas dinner at my house is traditionally better than Thanksgiving. . . all are welcome!!!” For those who know Jax, there is no doubt that her invitation was genuine. In fact, several subscribers did celebrate Christmas with the Russos. And, if every subscriber sent her an RSVP, there simply would have been several hundred more stockings hanging in the Russo house.

Jax is our friendly neighborhood socialite. Demonstrating hospitality that would put Homer’s Penelope to shame, she adamantly refuses to lock her dorm room, welcoming anyone to use her computer, fridge, television, and vast movie collection without asking permission. She’s organized bi-weekly aerobic workout sessions on her floor, and her next project is to host potluck dinners every other Thursday night in her room. Is she crazy? Yes, about her friends!!! –EB

Illustrated by Paul Heyer

March 2003

The Blue and White
Callie Jones
Calvert Jones’ curly locks still have their recently-showered sheen. However, her fingers have begun to threaten this follicular order as she shifts awkwardly in one of the Butler lab’s coveted swivel chairs. Today, Jones, C’03, tells me, she has become unsatisfied with her daily activity; she is concerned with her comportment. While her thoughts are not as soaked through with Heidegger as they once were, she nevertheless suspects that she is, perhaps, not alive to her surroundings; perhaps too much of her environment has become mere equipment. Such concerns are not only somewhat mysterious, but also surprising: I know of no person whose comportment exudes as much lively curiosity or whose intellect is so loaded with creative tension.

These sorts of concerns seemed very distant when Callie was in the throes of her semester-long love affair. East Berlin was in equal proportions the eminently challenging and exceedingly accommodating paramour. The unstable patchwork of the wobbegoncity was the site on which Callie plumbed her Teutonic spring that is currently awaiting publication. The memoir stands alongside a body of work that ranges from discussions of Kant’s transcendental ideal in the original German to the Java code for a highly marketable piece of ATM furniture. Callie’s intellectual quiver contains no distinct arrows for each of her disciplines. Thus, in her EC single you will find trophies commemorating her victories in the mock trial courtroom alongside the volumes of Thomas Mann, V.S Ramachandran, and Ludwig Wittgenstein. In her most ambitious shot yet, her senior thesis aims to prod herself from the confines of Dauman. Her disarming smile informs me of my naïveté and simultaneously forgives me for it. The explanations I would need in order to engage in this dialectic will have to wait for another time. For now, Callie has lost interest in discussing her own transient malaise and has begun to prod me enthusiastically about the details of my own daily activity. “When was the last time you made a moral decision?” she asks. “Do you ever really reason morally?” The pace of the conversation waxes as she tests the argument of her senior thesis against my deontic behavior. As we take the walk to Pinnacle for midnight coffee, I am once again struck that such an agile construction—the one striding confidently beside me—might assess her own comportment to be unsatisfactory.

A Career Comes to a Close
by Alex Angert

A fair number of my friends and neighbors, being either in school or at least familiar with the concept, have expressed their desire to read more about this peculiar institution. Being curious myself, I agreed to investigate, but rather than roving (who has the time?) I withdrew to my garret and picked apart my own tawdry experience. After a good many spasms of nostalgia and regret, I sketched out this true account, padded it with conjecture, fabrication, and pop philosophy, and sent it to my editor. He published it to the great relief of my friends and neighbors and to the deep chagrin of my girlfriend’s cat, which has been left out of the story entirely.

Cynically speaking, I remember my school years as an orgy of bad advice hooted by older people in positions of authority. Occasionally there was an actual moment of truth, like when Mrs. Jordan told our 3rd grade class not to eat Elmer’s Glue. But one brilliant admonition could hardly redeem her entire profession. Lucky for them, it only took six more years for a second brilliant piece of advice to come along.

If I remember correctly, and in all probability I do not, this second epiphany took place in the spring of my fourteenth year. It was then that, standing next to the lime bean trays on a cloudy May day, my ninth grade Biology teacher Mr. Price let us in on a little secret. “When you graduate,” he said, “if you remember two percent of what you learned in school, consider yourselves lucky.” I tell you, I have never heard anything more reassuring in my life.

Back in junior high, everyone needed to be reassured. That first September, we left behind the cozy world of prime numbers, vocabulary quizzes and art classes to find our schedules laden with a host of gibberish-like aberrations—geometry, trigonometry, chemistry, wood shop. All these Greek roots at our fingertips were sillizing, our voices were squeaking, and our parents were fast becoming intolerable bores.

What would junior high have been like without Saved By the Bell and The Wonder Years? Two, maybe three, of us would have made it alive. It didn’t matter whether yours was an inner city public school or a suburban private academy. No quantity of caviar lunches and polo lessons could save your pimpled face from ridicule by the cutest, most rapidly developing young vixen in the class.

How quickly we lost our innocence! Forging permission slips, skipping class and other dark arts were unknown to us in elementary school. There, it was all puzzles and games, trips and activities, book reports and dioramas. We walked to the cafeteria in lines. Lines! At least I had the good fortune of spending first and second grade at PS #45 in Kishinev, Moldova. Boy, those Moldovans didn’t fool around. In second grade, we learned decimals and ran 5 kilometers twice a week. After lunch, they taught us how to sew wallets. So maybe I hadn’t much innocence to lose in the first place.

In any case, I grew to prefer the States. In America, elementary school was fun. There was a little cubby for your winter coat, a playground full of friendly hobos, and a girls’ room you could push your shy friends into. The buses were yellow, as were the juice boxes and that big bird that taught letters on TV.

Even now, a week doesn’t go by without my wishing to be Billy Madison, to bring the hindsight of an adult to the carefree life of a child. In college, I grew immeasurably. I learned. So, Much. I reached my frontiers, redrew my boundaries, and populated my world with good folks (as the Prez sez). But there’s a million ways to go in life, and who
The Blue J likes to keep her eye on all things extracurricular. Recently, she discovered that The Columbia Daily Spectator has a policy that forbids any member of its Executive Board from being on the E-Board of another club. Although The Spectator is to be commended for so vigilently protecting its journalistic integrity, one of the regrettable effects of requiring students to spectate is that it drastically limits The Spec staff’s involvement in other clubs. Yet, Blue J doesn’t blame The Spectator for this. She realizes that Columbia’s rigorous academic workload makes it difficult for students to assume leadership roles in multiple organizations. The Spec’s policy simply ensures that its E-Board members are not over-committed and can devote all of their attention to breaking news, roving reporting, and flawless copyediting.

Nevertheless, the J wonders whether this policy isn’t part of a larger question needing answering: how can we get the flock of campus publications flying in a tighter formation? After consulting the St. Louis Cardinals, the Baltimore Orioles, and, of course, the Toronto Blue Jays, the J feels that she has a way to make the system fair. According to her plan, all first-years wishing to participate in a campus publication will be asked to submit samples of their work as well as an application detailing their skills to every publication. The first-years will then be entered into a draft pool. After a draft order is randomly determined, the publications will draft the first-years. Thus, publications can select the first-years with the specific skills that they need and mold them as they see fit.

Rest assured that the J’s plan would not rob the draftees of their freedom. After the first semester of the draftee’s second year, he or she will have the option of becoming a free agent and signing with any publication that desires their services. Undoubtedly, the laws of supply and demand will force the publications to compete to sign the best free agents. Blue J feels this will lead to publications offering free agents incentives, like multi-semester deals, no-trade clauses, and editorships to sign with them.

If a publication drafts a bad egg or fails to sign an impact free agent, hope for the club is far from lost. Blue J expects that trading members will be an integral and exciting part of her system. For example, let’s say the Columbia Political Review needs a young writer like The Spec’s Kathleen Carr, C’06. The Spec might be willing to trade Carr, but only if the CPR offers out-going veteran Adam B. Kushner, C’03 and a member-to-be named later in return. Or maybe Helvidius is in dire need of a cartoonist. The Blue and White might entertain offers for the prodigiously talented Allen O’Rourke, C’04, but only if Helvidius were willing to offer a young editor, a first round draft pick, and a fat ABC-SDA approved e-form in exchange.

Without the Blue J’s plan, publications will continue to operate in anarchy. However, once her system is implemented, the publications that draft, trade, and train their members wisely will be the ones that deserve flight.
Columbia's commitment to general education--to its fabled Core Curriculum, the foundation of its liberal arts education--has always been qualified by loopholes of various sorts. The school has never shown much interest in teaching science students to write, for instance, or in teaching humanities students to add. English majors take classes like Physics for Poets, which--if third-hand anecdotal evidence is any indication--is approximately like pretending to teach chimpanzees to build a computer. Physics majors take Logic and Rhetoric, which--if first-hand perceptual experience is any indication--is a bit like teaching apes to peck out the works of Shakespeare. Mathematics majors routinely graduate without ever learning what a rational number is. Philosophy majors routinely graduate without ever learning what a preposition is. But for decades, nary a student has graduated from Columbia College without treading water. The school's ingenious Core Curriculum reflects truly laudable priorities. For example, an EALAC major certainly doesn't need to know what chlorofluorocarbons are. Never mind that those careless aerosol users will help to accelerate the melting rate of the polar ice caps to a pace so rapid that global ocean levels rise and Columbia is buried by fathoms of salty seawater (just as it was buried by Fathom). At least they'll be able to backstroke their way to solid ground.

As a side note, one can't help noting that the University is starting to show a renewed interest in teaching those pesky philosophy majors about scientific method. Thankfully, they're introducing a course that will have all the wonderful features you may remember from L&R.

Remember that endearing course? As every first-year realized immediately, there are two kinds of L&R students. Some know how to write, more or less. Some, well, don't. The ingenuity of L&R was in its split-the-difference approach: target the class at an "average" student so that the class is too advanced to be of help to some students and too elementary to be of help to the others.

Well, writing is no longer the only skill that the University tries (poorly) to teach to first-years. Now there will be a bit more balance in the curriculum, thanks to the new science Core class. Like L&R, it will feature the single-track, undifferentiated pedagogical model that will leave the poet lost and the physicist bored. One might argue that we should be content with this zero-sum game; at least it passes the Hippocratic "do no harm" test. Except when you factor in thousands of squandered tuition dollars. But don't forget: the English major may never learn what CFCs are, but he'll be able to swim to shore when the Day of Judgment comes.

The Blue and White has spent many nights toiling away to tease out the logic behind Columbia College's venerable swimming requirement, often the last requirement students fulfill before graduating. Of course, engineering students are exempt from the swim test, a loophole that has stymied many a Bowlerstaffer. Such complications notwithstanding, we have resolutely researched (and carefully conjectured) to bring you a variety of plausible explanations to choose from. Let us know which you find the most convincing.

- A Columbia student or graduate drowned in the Hudson. The University decided to require graduates to pass a swim test. Engineers are exempted because they can use a calculator.
- A Columbia student or graduate drowned. When his parents donated a sum of money to the University, in honor, they requested that undergraduates be required to learn to swim. The University is never swayed by a buck, of course; but as it happens, the idea of a swim test coincidentally found its way onto the agenda at an administration meeting around the same time. Engineers are exempted because they can use a calculator.
- A Columbia student or graduate drowned at sea during the war. His parents donated a sum of money to the University, in his honor, with the condition that undergraduates be required to learn to swim. The idea is that if you can swim a few laps in a college pool, you can swim the Atlantic too, in a pinch. Engineers are exempted because they can use a calculator (or because with engineers, on the other hand, there's no point; the best kind of engineer is the kind that's stuck at the bottom of the ocean).
- A Columbia student or graduate drowned with the sinking of the Titanic. When his parents donated a sum of money to the University, in his honor, they requested that undergraduates be required to learn to swim. Hopefully, this would prevent them from drowning with the sinking of the Titanic in the future. Engineers are exempted because they can use a calculator (or, because they can build/repair a boat in case of emergency).
- A Harvard student or graduate drowned with the sinking of the Titanic. When his parents donated a sum of money to Harvard, in his honor, they requested that undergraduates be required to learn to swim. In keeping with the single-track, undifferentiated pedagogical model that will leave the poet lost and the physicist bored, he can't be all that surprised to find that there are irrational number policies as well. But for decades, nary a student has graduated from Columbia College without treading water. The school's ingenious Core Curriculum reflects truly laudable priorities. For example, an EALAC major certainly doesn't need to know what chlorofluorocarbons are. Never mind that those careless aerosol users will help to accelerate the melting rate of the polar ice caps to a pace so rapid that global ocean levels rise and Columbia is buried by fathoms of salty seawater (just as it was buried by Fathom). At least they'll be able to backstroke their way to solid ground.

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Gin and Juice
by Erica Grieder

W

ith so much drama in Laredo these days, it is difficult to always be a gentleman. Nevertheless, I, somehow, some way, continue to comport myself with the dignity befitting my station almost every single day. On one night not so long ago, however, I feel my composure may have lapsed. I was returning from a long day of solitary reflection, and noticed an establishment at the end of the street from which light and noise flowed like music. To my back, the desert was dark and dry.

Curiosity, I hesitate to admit, claimed precedence over my judgment. When I reached the porch it seemed as though the barman was waiting for me; but quickly I understood that his easy smile and greeting had nothing to do with me personally. “Halloa!” he said, and hiccupped. Beneath his bulbous body his legs in their chaps wobbled. As I made no reply the barman continued. “Stranger,” he said, drawing another generous measure of whiskey in my direction. I swiped a grimy hand against his mouth. At the mention of the word “stranger” he turned upwards to mine in a most appealing way. “Are you alright?” I said, ‘You misheard. Some gin, moderated by a little bit of juice.” He raised his skinny shoulders and poured another generous measure of whiskey in my cup. I handed him some money. “Good,” he said. “Good. Everybody else here got their liquor and ain’t put in fer it neither.”

As I sipped the second glass a most peculiar sensation took hold of me. My cheeks burned and trembled. My arms dangled long, and my head became so hot that it was necessary to remove my hat. A young woman with rosy cheeks was smiling and waving at me. She turned upwards to mine in a most appealing way. “You got yours, now I gots to get mine!” Sadie said, “Haw!” At around this point I decided that there was nothing funny about Sadie’s elixir. I found myself near to choking on it, and was forced to put my cup down on the table. “Aww,” said Sadie, laying a cooling hand on my forehead without concern for what the room might think, “Are yew alright?”

The room was swirling. Sadie thought I should go upstairs and lie down to rest. I stood up with great difficulty and let her lead me through the crowd. We were forced to turn back once for my suitcase, which I had left with great carelessness under our table, but after that we were able to make our way through the knots of cowboys and girls, and up the creaking stairs. She brought me to a room with frilly curtains and expanse of bedding. “Lay back,” she said, unbuttoning my jacket, “Jus’ lay back.”

After this point, I must confess, my recollections of the evening become considerably less distinct, whether through the influence of the whiskey or the stirrings of my conscience. I remember very little, in fact, until the next morning, when the sunlight beating down on me woke me from a particularly heavy slumber. I woke wildly and was in a terror lest my suitcase had been lost. I had not noticed that Sadie was up until she produced the suitcase from the corner and thrust it into my surprised arms. She was fully dressed and shod, and turned to the door. “Well!” I said, peering at her wide face ringed by a halo of golden curls all come undone. “Sadie my darling, are you leaving? Where are you going?”

She hesitated for just a moment in the doorway. “Aw, don’ get upset, honey,” she said. “That’s just how it goes.”

I scrambled in a most unseemly way to make sense of this woman’s wiles. “I don’t understand!” I said, my cry muffled by my shirt as I pulled it over my head.

Sadie stopped and smiled a smile as cruel as the sun. “I don’t love you though,” she said, “I’m out the door.” The door clicked softly behind her and I fell back amongst the pillows, clutching my suitcase and gasping sore with shame at my own conduct.
Measure for Measure

THE NIGHT OF THE GENERALS
Have you ever seen
the Night of the Generals
starring Peter O'Toole
as one of the generals
who leaves the motorcade
and races up the stairs
where outside the window
of the murdered woman's abode
the night is slanted
and the stars are beaming
like proud corporals
who are about to become
little star-generals
because they have served
with dignity and honor
in the night of the generals
while far below, real generals
are looking up
for a sign or a message
from their astral counterparts
and saluting them? —Davey Volner

SŒUR DE LAIT
What happens to our sisters when the physicists come in on the tide?
The sunny play of eels and responsibility along the coast,
farm-fresh eggs, authority, secular enthusiasm, the butterknife becomes the sky.
And the bishop that fell into the drink? And the cardinals that dot the sky?
The ardent prunes of charity course towards recognition,
a pink box is left in a turban of pride,
the murder weapon neatly spread out between the mauve domes
of fountain hospitals, crab baskets, civics lessons, good homes.
What brave trout sagas will come to be told between the ovens
where we bake our bread? Shoehorn of provinces!
These uncertain fables Bray and grow fat in the valley,
spilling bright hares into a life with no consequences, no bed time,
though the rich distance that divides the plate of fritters
from the well-kept sea may be blocked from you at any time.
For if you come from a good family you surely know
the fatal receipt of the Villain and the Golden Bisque,
how he painstakingly kept the rock hen outside the barn,
how he swallowed the islands and married his rivals,
how he searched the dark parcel, how he birthed the new mayor,
how he quit the country of braised chairs and candied friends,
laying down his cruel arms in a spoken wing, towards morning,
to prevent himself from becoming a saint. —Michael S. Paulson

YOU WATCHED ME DISEMBARK
The train came bearing joy
disheveled travelers, and me.
You watched me disembark,
you took me by the hand
to where our surrey waited in the dry dusty road,
golden in the burnt umber sun of a late afternoon,
ready to take us to the cabin,
for a weekend among some trees
and green daffodil gardens.
There is really nothing to speak of but
my shirt stained with the grease of potato chips.
“I don't think
I have never seen a daffodil before,”
I thought to myself.
But you told me they were beautiful,
and I imagine they are.
After another minute you said,
“It is just over yon hill,” and tossed your cigarette out the smallish window.
I stroked the lavender fringe on your dress and asked,
“Will we arrive in time for supper?”
The driver glared at me.
A moment later you said, “Perhaps.”
We passed an innocent old man at the crest of a hill.
“He is a bourgeois anarchist,” you said,
though you are not easily offended by such things,
and I am not either.
“That kid's Camaro is a bulging anachronism,” I said and pointed.
“No, I am not that.”
“What? Bulging?”
“Bulging? No, no, an anarchist.”
“I know,” I said, “because we really can't help competing.”
Like a delayed spring you were quiet for too long.
Then you looked out the window and said,
“Movement is blessed.”
“So is staying put,” I thought.
“It is always the present,
and while riding in a surrey,
the present is always changing,
the landscape flickers like a film,” you said.
“Shut the fuck up,” I said.
Then, “This shirt was only eight dollars. I got it on clearance.”
“Clearance is essential.”
“Why are the wheels always falling off and the horses always getting tired?”
“Getting tired?” you said. —Tom Kelly

CURIO COLUMBIANA

Below some fun reading from the New York Times, 1899-1900, regarding curriculum changes at ol’ CU.

The New York Times – Saturday Review June 17, 1899 (page 392)

DEAN VAN AMRINGE'S ADDRESS.
At the commencement of Columbia University last week a number of honorary degrees were given to several men prominent in science and in the affairs of the day. Among those so honored were Rear Admiral Melville, Chief Engineer of the Navy, and Gov. Roosevelt. Prof. J. H. Van Amringe, Dean of the College and Acting President of the University, presided, and granted the degrees with appropriate speeches describing the achievements of the recipients in their several fields of work. In conferring the degree of Master of Arts upon John A. Stewart, Esq., Prof. Van Amringe said:

"Olim in discipulis nostri collegii ascriptum, postea utilitati hujus urbis bonoque publico devotum semper atque deditum, jam dudum secura fuit; nunc sancto et gratiae nostrorum obliviscimur sed hodie in aula nostram inaciter enavigasset subito, sicut coeli rabile classis Hispanorum cum adversus..."

The New York Times June 17, 1899 (page 6)

SOME CICERONIAN COMPLIMENTS. [Editorial]
We conceive that THE TIMES SATURDAY REVIEW is doing a public service of its kind in reporting literally the remarks which Dean Van Amringe, in his capacity of Acting President of Columbia, had to make, at the commencement of that institution last week, to the eminent persons whom it delighted to honor by complimentary degrees. It is not likely that many of the immediate auditors of these remarks both heard and understood them. But the young readers who are acquiring the classics, and the old readers who are desirous of “rubbing them up,” ought to be obliged to THE SATURDAY
TOLD BETWEEN PUFFS

A sudden snow is falling violently but beautifully outside Verily’s window even as he writes these words, transforming both his physical and mental landscapes unrecognizably. Columbia sits high on its hill, dusted in wonder, rescued from mundanity; and even the nethermost reaches of VV’s vagabond heart cannot resist the enrosselling effects of a snowstorm of sentimentality. Verily finds himself in the eye of a reverie.

The freshness of the snow returns your faithful correspondent to the days when his collegiate career was just beginning: when ambition conquered heavy eyelids, when optimism flowed as freely in the dorns as Olde English, and when the lurid promise of floorsest cast a rapturous spell unmatched since visions of sugar plums danced in his head. Lolling about the stacks, Verily would gaze greedily and gesture expansively: one day, he would master all of these books.

New York City would not escape a thorough ravishing by Hurricane Verily, either: the cognoscenti would line up to pay homage asVV, gliding through the gilded streets like a conquering chieftain, dispensed witticisms like so much Halloween candy. In Verily’s cal low days, empires were built up and brought down before lunche time. Regarding Columbia through these newly rediscovered eyes, VV is amazed at the accumulation of residue that has piled up like a snowdrift on the doorstep of his mind. Does he grow wiser, or just more cynical?

Columbians are possessed of the type of curmudgeonly charm that is a telltale accessory to newfound sophistication. An ancillary pleasure, and for a sense of wonderment that doesn’t require the whitewashing effects of higher education. That battle has been stayed up late blathering about this and that with perfect strangers as though he were posing for a photo for a Columbia recruitment pamphlet. Think pre-Disney Times Square.

The哥伦比亚 that seduced Verily all those semesters ago hasn’t gone anywhere; Verily had just forgotten to remember it. It’s stop ping to be struck by the beauty of the city. It’s in the subtle additions and subtractions to the gloriously derivative fantasies of yester year; he hasn’t read everyone in Butler, but at least he’s read everyone on its façade. If there’s one lesson he can learn from the freshpeople flocking about campus, it’s to shed his criti cal carapace and see things anew. Watching people doing what they thought they were supposed for a photo for a Columbia recruitment pamphlet. Think pre-Disney Times Square.

On campus, fencing and contempt are the only sports that are alive and well. Verily, aghast at the thought of wearing white after Labor Day, delights instead in verbal thrusts and parries. His heart soared with appreciation when one wonderfully scruffy and prolix philo-friend deftly dismissed a writing instructor of his as “the kind of writer that works out.” But there is something to be said for simpler pleasures, and for a sense of wonderment that doesn’t require the whitewashing effects of higher education. Enough with erudition, for a bit at least. After one too many seminars on the meaning of meaning, VV is out to rediscover the Columbia he knew before he knew better, when a young lad’s vision was more likely to be impaired by beer goggles than thesis goggles. It’s been a while since Verily has stayed up late blathering about this and that with perfect strangers as though he were posing for a photo for a Columbia recruitment pamphlet. Think pre-Disney Times Square.

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Sprinkleslovakia
By Allen O’Rourke

I travel to discover other states of mind,” writes V. S. Naipaul. Having recently trav- eled to the Czech Republic, I write to share what I have discovered regarding the surpris- ing state of pastries in Prague.

My singular discovery occurred at the Café Imperial, a charming café tucked away on a side street near the ever-popular Municipal House. With its tall ceilings and mosaic-covered walls, the Imperial has an elegant but welcoming atmosphere—and an alarming amount of trafficking in jelly donuts. In fact, every order of coffee comes with one freshly-baked jelly donut, and jelly donuts figure prominently into the café’s local fame and infamy. This is confirmed when, upon inspecting the bilingual menu, one discovers a curious passage referring to something locals call “Saturnin’s Bowl.” I can vouchsafe that it is worthy of its fantastical name.

My friend and I entered the café around 8:00pm, accompanied by three girls who measured their disbelief of the stories they had heard circulating about the place. After drinks and dessert, we called for the check—and for Saturnin’s Bowl. The waiter’s face brightened with surprise. He glanced around the room—filled with between 30 and 40 people—and cautiously took our money. We watched as the wait staff anxiously scurried about making several preparations. For some time they huddled in the corner, surveying the room and holding discussions. Our waiter approached the bowl and inspected its contents, while another went next door and informed the adjoining restaurant’s wait staff, which soon clustered near the café’s main entrance. Finally, our waiter ceremoniously crossed the room and placed the bowl on our table, while the remaining wait staff positioned themselves around the café’s periphery, holding their trays with both hands like shields.

Saturnin’s Bowl is a large vessel that is filled with the previous day’s leftover jelly donuts. It costs 1,943 Czech crowns—about $66—which seems steep, even by Czech standards, but is actually quite a bargain, considering that in purchasing the donuts, you also purchase the right to throw them at other customers. Incredulous? Allow me to quote the menu: “SPECIAL OFFER Saturnin’s Bowl 1943 CZK (bowl of yesterday’s doughnuts these you can throw at other customers / served only for sober people more than 21 years age / payment in advance required) DANGER! WARNING FOR GOOD CUSTOMERS! The bowl is placed visibly on our bar. In case you don’t see it there, quickly leave coffee-room, if you stay longer it’s only at your own risk!”

The next moments were rather awkward. While our waiter dashed off amid requested amenities, the other customers eyed the cavalier, donut-wielding Americans before them with justifiable apprehension. Breaking stiff silence, someone whispered “I think that waiter just nodded.” I fired the first donut.

About fifteen feet off there were five British tourists having drinks together. Among them was one vociferous fellow whose bellowing had captured my attention several minutes before, and whose braying had secured his fate as my first casualty. My missile struck this chap just under the chin, and shortly thereafter my friend nailed the woman beside him—mind you, this was only the beginning. We expended another three or four donuts on the British folks, after which time my friend besieged the contiguous five-person table. Among the formerly dubious girls, one grabbed several donuts and traversed the restaurant, picking off people sitting farther away. Another stood and began quickly snapping photos, while the third sought protection from errant donuts.

Four couples were cozily sitting beside windows along the sidewalk; I recall especially two newlyweds having dinner. The woman quietly gazed through the window, and her husband affectedly raised his glass and smelled the wine’s bouquet. I promptly threw two donuts, the first crashing into the fellow’s ear, the other toppling the woman’s wine glass. Succeeding throws systematically picked off the remaining couples along the sidewalk.

Having sufficiently battered more proximate customers, we weighted ourselves with jelly donuts and moved elsewhere. The café room was L-shaped and quite spacious from our position on the L, we could not see the whole room. Also, there were several wide pillars flanking the walls opposite the windows. From behind these pillars, my friend and I threw donuts across the L’s inner corner and toward the back of the room. The lobbed donuts fell upon several unsuspecting groups, and because we remained obscured behind the pillars, the projectiles were entirely unaccounted for, the phenomena altogether unexplained.

We threw the café into total disarray. Glasses and dishes fell and shattered, and I recall several chairs being overturned. Donuts were scattered all over the floor, and there was powdered sugar everywhere. Surprisingly, the other customers never joined forces to launch any sort of coordinated counterattack. Nearly all of them laughed, and toward the end some returned fire—especially the British tourists—but overall, they were like stunned deer.

The bowl finally exhausted, we headed for the door, closely followed by flying donuts, one skipping off my shoulder. We burst out into the sidewalk, our hysterical laughter frightening the passers-by. Taking stock, we found ourselves unscathed and ridiculous; our casualties went no further than one thoroughly wine-soaked blouse. Sadly, it seems that the Café Imperial’s days are numbered. With the Czech Republic’s impending accession into the European Union, the Imperial will no doubt have difficulties meeting the EU’s stringent human rights standards, and will presumably find itself having to either rethink its donut-hurling policy or relocate to the Slovak Republic.
In the spirit of spirits of old, we turn to the two pillars of Western Civilization: Mead and Grog. Without these inestimable beverages, our Empire’s edifices—cultural and civil—would surely have toppled, and, more’s the worse, Western Man would have been rendered incapable of tippling—and thus, perversely, of toppling—at all. Mead is truly a draught of the ancients, the result of an unscrupulous (and never fully well explained) fermentation process involving honey and water. Given a wide variety of interpretations, subsequent dilutions, and expressions of unimaginable disgust, mead has tempered its pagan wrath over the centuries, and even the OED, that bastion of antiquities, allows the term’s application to “a sweet drink charged with carbonic gas, and flavored with some syrup, as sarsaparilla.” Our inebriated and idolatrous ancestors are no doubt rolling in their cairns. In spite of its recent degrading descent, mead remains a sinewy and sugar that [this mixture] should be made more palatable to them.” Vernon had already acquired the derisive nickname “Old Grogram” as a result of his wearing a grogram cloak he particularly (and peculiarly, as grogram is an exceedingly coarse material composed of mohair and wool) favored. Their tongues no doubt numbed by the foul admixture of rum and water, the sailors took to calling their new allowance “Grog.” Amidst all this linguistic and etymological chaos, it is perhaps worth noting the officers still received their rum “neat” until 1970, at which point the entire practice was discarded. Whether this accounts for the Empire’s subsequent fortunes, or for the historically recent way in which the sun seems to set upon Her more frequently, is of course a rummy matter.

-Mephiscotchel

I created an evangelistic flyer, a combination of a rave flyer and gospel tract, geared toward that audience. Unfortunately, not a single person showed up as a result of those contacts.

Knowledge of the language and issues of business is extremely desirable, although a strict business background is not necessary.

What is needed most?: A tireless work ethic, a sense of amorality / confidence, highly-tuned writing skills, and a penetrating familiarity with the library. This is a huge opportunity for the right mind.

A political system based on the domination and subjugation of the poor minority by the rich majority is not just an evil system of exploitation; it is domination and exploitation, pure and simple.

A group of five peasant INDIANS walk with a herd of llamas and lambs. Two children kick some balls made of animal hair. They are dirty with sand and they look happy. The adults are serious. Three of them are carrying firewood on their shoulders.

A more primitive state of society would be delicious to me.
bodies have roughly the same number of hair follicles as chimps, and our skin in [sic] covered in short, fine hairs. In fact, the hair of a 7-month chimp embryo is distributed in the same manner as that of a newborn human infant: there is fine, long hair on the head, and an invisible downy coat that covers the smooth skin of the body.

When I arrived at the performance I noticed the audience was well dressed and appeared to be experienced opera attendees. I however was dressed in nice attire but definitely the not up to the same caliber as the surrounding audience. I felt a little uncomfortable about my dress and lack of opera knowledge and figured the audience members would make comments to each other about me. When they did not. I realized that like most people in an awkward situation, I had assumed that everyone was focusing on me. What a selfish thought!

On Friday, we celebrate the grandfather of all holidays, Valentine’s Day. It is the one holiday that takes us past the earliest constructs of civilized society, beyond national and cultural identity, beyond family, past even the ancient religious rites we use to preserve our souls. Valentine’s Day renews the lesson our earliest ancestors learned: that the love that we use to preserve our souls.

Now it is the pleasure and the pain of the sexual difference, and of sexual and social reality—indeed, of reality itself (and this, as Ehrenreich, Jacobs, and Hess write, in “an ethic of love and compassion”)—that as we have seen earlier in the present volume, is most in question in the still active one-hundred year old Sexual Question; that is, the question of love (or Eros), on which as Freud evidently believed the future of civilization depends; whereas the main thrust of Nietzschean philosophy is very different; it is the contrary spirit, so Deleuze emphasizes, of “commanding and obeying,” that is, “distance.” Nietzsche’s preferred value, and very far from the value of closeness, and of touching and being touched.

Now there are only a few main solutions to the riddle of life (although on the microlevel, as many solutions as there are living things).

He is known as “God’s hands” and “Divine Hands” because of his uncanny ability to uncover ancient objects.

Furthermore, the melody of people singing and the scent of strong incense pervaded my senses, effectively permitting me to indulge myself.

And you say that you miss me? I can tell you that you can’t miss me as much as I miss you. I miss you that it hurts. I hate it and I love it. This is paradox and it makes me that angry that I want to scream. Did you want to make me scream? Thank you! Well done!

A Cenco DuNouy tensiometer with a platinum-iridium was used for surface tension measurements.

Where is the accountability? When things are going well, nobody seems to ask questions. This is not just a Japanese fault. Think Enron.

Asuncion Lavrin’s writings in Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America contrasts the sexual norms prescribed by the Catholic Church and the theocratic Spanish government and the actual behavioral responses of those living in the colonies, and specifically those living in colonial Mexico or New Spain.

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A>CULINARY HUMANITIES
A SPORTY SAUTÉ, A PHYSICAL POACH

Ah, like starchy pasta water, we reserve the B&W’s Culinary Humanities to thicken the plot. The solitude of eating alone nourishes not the mind, thus blessed was I to meet J.R., my fellow gastronome. His hair tossed like Bob Dylan’s on the cover of Blonde on Blonde, outfitted in jeans, a t-shirt and a pair of black Dansko clogs, J.R. fits well the part of the quintessential urban cook. Let the truth be known: certain praises cast at his feet (loose women declare “I love a man in clogs”) played a decisive role in my most recent foot apparel acquisition.

Recovering from the blustery cold, J.R. and I recently feasted on wild boar and pasta with mashed sardines, dill, raisins, and saffron at Locanda Vini e Olii in Brooklyn (www.locandiniesoli.com). As my liege Tacitus reported on Tiberius’ rampant executions, “It was a massacre.” Carlo Hauner’s Sicilian sweet wine that we there sampled with its honeydew bouquet was instantly the booty of our desire. Thus, out from the port of Brooklyn we embarked.

Like General Patton storming Messina, our clogs trampled even the most treacherous of volcanic ascents of the Aeolian Isles in conquest of the native’s caper bushes and sweet malvasia, the ambrosia of their Gods. Fresh from the cases of our gear, among the steaming undergarments, the salted capers were expressly delivered to chef Eric Ripert of Le Bernadin fame upon homecoming. And if per-chance you delighted in Ripert’s $158 tasting menu acquisition.

Sparing the embarrassing stories of near paralysis while tasting mushrooms (uncooked, poisonous), or shaving off slivers of left thumb (cooks generally die young), J.R. parlayed his experience at our city’s great hotbeds of haute cuisine, Le Bernadini and Le Cirque.

Alas, while fending off enemy onslaught, faithful J.R. incurred some injury from an infidel’s arrow to the heel and now and must recover his spring Parmesan from DiPalo Dairy of Little Italy and can only take short strolls through Riverside Park. I, now of single mind, must persevere. While trotting the last ball-busting 800 meters of the New York City Marathon, I spotted Daniel Boulud, former executive chef of Le Cirque, taking his regular 3pm lunch break. Approaching the savory god for a last boost of morale, I shouted, “Daniel!” as I threw wide my arms in full stride. “Aux innocents les mains pleines! Figurez-vous que vous êtes aux Indes! (Fortune is kind to fools. Imagine yourself in India.)” he belched, embracing me to his chest and my & Phily Hotel. Sweat-soaked and startled, I broke off from his bosom in time to beat a pack of 67 year olds to the glory of the finish line.

My victory lap ended at a table of the supreme Café Boulud where my fans awaited. “Long live sport and food!” were the echoing cries that poured out onto the street. Clutching a wreath of laurel and my finely minted medal, I relished a meal of bouillabaisse and spiced pork belly. “So much for calories burnt, enjoy me to the company of Nike” was the start to my speech as I thought wistfully of heroic J.R. Libations of champagne flowed, on the house. —Pontius Pulate

The Blue and White
Wiling away the time before another Nobility and Civility class, several students and an inconspicuous B&W staffer were civilly discussing Thucydides when the august Professor Wm. Theodore deBary sauntered in and casually greeted one of their number with, “Louis.” To which the startled student replied, “my name’s Sam.”

Professor deBary, by way of explanation, pointed to the student’s shirt, which prominently featured Louis Armstrong. The students had again lapsed into discussion when deBary slipped in again with, “I used to see Louis play in the 1930s at the Apollo,” and ambled off again.

Now thoroughly stunned, the students were completely unprepared for deBary, turning on a dime and waving a pointed finger for emphasis, intoning “The Apollo!”

Obviously not fearing karmic retribution, the owners of Global Ink decided to dance on the grave of now-defunct rival Universal News. The same day the shutters went down and the “THIS SPACE FOR RENT” signs went up on Universal, Global plastered cheerful flyers over Universal’s storefront, thanking everyone for their support and offering free coffee to loyal neighborhood customers. The Blue & White, appreciating schadenfreude in these circumstances, joins Global Ink in celebrating the departure of the cavalier Universal News.

FROM THE BULLIET FILES:
Due to an unfortunate scheduling snafu on the part of the B&W’s Official Bulliet Correspondent, the Bulliet Files are currently closed. Those wishing to see it re-opened are encouraged to send their favorite Professor Bulliet moments and quotations to: theblueandwhite@columbia.edu.

From a FEEDback Columbia Dining Services Comment Card posted in the John Jay Dining hall: Comment: “The cranberry juice tastes like water.” Response: “We’re discussing the problem with the machines.”

In his Economics/Philosophy Seminar, John Collins recently brought this joke to the table: A masochist and a sadist are introduced. The masochist says to the sadist, “Please beat me with this stick.’ The sadist replies, “No.”

The puzzled philosophers at The Blue and White, neither masochists nor economists (which is not to suggest that the two are mutually exclusive designations), can only assume that this relates somehow to supply and demand.

During the 301st episode of The Simpsons, Lisa is offered a scholarship to the Seven Sister school of her choice. While fantasizing about the scholarship, Lisa envisions the embodiment of Barnard (decked out in a hot blue toga) enticing her with the words: “Come to Barnard, we’re Columbia’s girl-next-door.” Kudos the the Administration for their continued efforts to lure the best and brightest television stars—real and otherwise—to campus.

THE B&W ARCHIVES:
“Two towels are now hanging in the Arts washroom.” —Campus Gossip, 1892.

As night fell and this winter’s record-breaking blizzard gathered strength, a UFM register girl flattered one B&W editor by asking him on a date to the Coney Island beach. Moreover, the invitation was extended in Spanish. Collectively touched on his behalf, The Blue & White takes this opportunity to commend UFM for its nondiscriminatory hiring of friendly Hispanic Polar Bear Club members despite these frigid economic times.

Postscript: When said staffer had to politely reject the date, he accidentally did so in Portuguese, at the sound of which the register girl lost all interest.

New York Popover, on 119th and Amsterdam…it’s ugly!

The Blue and White