ATTACK OF THE STRONG BARNARD WOMAN!
by Michelle Legro

PERSONAL ADS
by The Blue and White Staff

THE LOVING SYNDROME
by Max Overly
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Cover by Cara Rachele

Typographical Note
The text of The Blue and White is set in Bodoni Old Face, which was revived by Günter Gerhard Lange based on original designs by Giambattista Bodoni of Parma (active 1765–1813). The display faces are Weiss and Cantoria.
The Blue and White invites contributions of original work from the Columbia community and welcomes letters from readers. Articles represent the opinions of their authors.

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The Blue and White, traditionally the last breath, the last hurrah. Turn out the lights; it’s very late already, and we’ve got to be up so early! But when magister Bernini melted marble to make Teresa flesh, he gave the exclamation point over to women forever. An accidental feminist, that roguish sculptor. But Teresa’s ecstasy was both end and beginning; “Fin!” and “Roll tape!” Not surprising that she believed women were uniquely suited to love their God.

Perhaps it’s only proper, then, to conclude my tenure as editor with this our Misogyny Issue. Can women speak of bigotry in any tone other than indignant? Acknowledge the ugly, I believe, and you diminish its power. Laugh at it, and it deflates to the absurd. If it worked on Rumpelstiltskin it ought to silence the Devil’s modern minions as well. I hope the forces of righteous liberal judgment consider this thought before they come after The Blue and White with pitchforks, pikes, and hardback volumes of Catherine MacKinnon.

Of course, not all our content should incite the angry mob; Michelle Legro’s “Attack of the Strong Barnard Woman” engages the potentialities of the women’s lib movement. Check out her lighthearted call to arms on page 92. A cry of a more frantic tone rings from page 96; the first thaws of March have gotten the Be-W staff feverish with spring in “Personal Ads.” And speaking of flowering youths, Miss Legro also presents “Hair Apparent” on page 98, a lurid (and completely true!) account of John Ruskin and his little girls. Our campus characters this month are handsome beyond compare; they’re worth an ogle or two.

This issue marks the passing of the buck; Zachary H. Bendiner will assume charge of The Blue and White in the upcoming issue. In chess notation, “!” has another sense beyond the libidinal: “a brilliant move.” With such ability as the gentleman possesses, he will have no need of all the luck I wish him. ☺
You might not know the following figures—but you should. In Campus Characters, 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.

IRENE MALATESTA

“Behind you is a flogger.”

Welcome to the lair of Irene Malatesta, B’05. Don’t let the bubbly demeanor, Mark Rothko paintings on the wall, or her Art History major fool you, because Irene’s real interest lies in the darker arts: bondage, domination, sadomasochism.

As president of Conversio Virium, Columbia’s BDSM support group, she oversees the discussion and instruction of proper, safe, erotic ass-whipping. How does the nice daughter of conservative Seattle suburbanites end up the type who realizes that she and her boyfriend are meant for each other because “he went on a business trip and brought me back a gas mask?”

At first, it wasn’t because she liked pain. She was just an average freshman, hanging around the Ayn Rand discussion group, where she met a CV member. She started going to meetings. “I thought I wasn’t into beating or being beaten, but I was fascinated by the aesthetic of bondage and restraint.” That would change.

“I explored this masochistic thing for a while,” she cheerily relates. Why? “The old cliché of working out emotional issues on your body.” Once very confused and a little bit depressed, Irene says, “BDSM helped me work through a lot.” In fact, she’s now the one on top. “Now, I want to be the whipper as opposed to the whippoo.” Hence the flogger.

Even with this newfound confidence, Irene hasn’t told her parents about her habits. “I’m not going to mail them a copy of this issue, if you know what I mean.” She’s pretty sure her mother has figured it out, though. “If you go around with shoes like this [points to heels that can only be described as garish and threatening] or own this” [takes a handful of heavy-duty rope off her wall], it’s probably not that difficult to deduce the truth, she says.

But Irene also feels that, in the end, it’s nobody’s business what she does in her dungeon. “I don’t need to broadcast it,” she asserts, “but that’s not the same as denying it.” She respects her parents, and knows that if they explicitly found out, her dad “would have a heart attack.”

Hopefully, they didn’t see the front page of a recent issue of the Spectator, which featured a picture of Irene fondling a man dressed up as a bunny at the Fed Bash. She made eight bucks in tips go-go dancing that night. But that’s small change for Irene.

What about that time she was paid good money for dancing around naked like a tiger? “I wasn’t naked. I was in body paint!” Semantics. When she was still an underclassman, a friend of hers helped get her a job at a private party in Poundbridge, New York, hosted by “a weird
middle-aged couple for all their weird middle-aged friends." They had a fortune teller, a multi-million dollar mansion, and probably some cocktail weenies, but Irene was clearly the main attraction. Dressed in a fetching ensemble of thong, boots, and body paint, her job was "sort of to wander around and be tigerish." Not everybody appreciated her performance. "All the women there clearly hated me."

Irene's aspirations are pretty normal for your everyday ass-whipping tiger queen: going to law school. "I have a formless, nebulous desire to attain power," she says, but she's unsure if she actually wants to go through with it. Plus, "I'm probably not going to attain it by talking about my sadomasochistic tendencies to people who are going to publish it."

Despite this faux pas, Irene is approaching contentment. Citing Hegel, she thinks her desire to be happy has finally superceded her desire to be great. And now, she knows her limitations. "I've given up on trying to achieve calm," she blithely admits. "I'm now learning to throw knives." -AZZ

NATE TREADWELL

One evening this summer at a Bay Area hoolah bar, Nate Treadwell, C'05 and his friends made a joke of their own progressivism by renaming themselves with offensive epithets.

Anjana Sharma, whose activism is informed by her biraciality, became "Half-and-half?" Superfeminist Jacob McKean was dubbed "God's Gift to Women." And Nate was "Mr. Humility."

The nickname is characteristically ironic. Wiry, cynical Nate, with his holier-than-thou preacher's baritone and more-confident-than-Spivak politics, carries himself as if he's never underestimated what he can do for the world.

In 1988, he stood on the side of the road for three hours with a Vote Dukakis sign. It was getting dark, and it was not a busy road. He was six.

Grown-up Nate calls himself a feminist first and an anarchist second. He believes the Left needs a concrete agenda that "gives more political and economic power to people who don't have it." He's made his name on campus by pushing the Columbia microcosm toward such an agenda—which has meant everything from convincing the University to sever its contracts with sweatshop-

using Lands' End, in 2003, to writing a four-year series of righteously angry letters to the Spectator. (In October 2001, as a new freshman, he responded to a column entitled "Patriotism for Patriarchs" as follows: "My American civilization is not the violent reaction characterized by Columbus, it is the constant struggle for freedom fought for by Harriet Tubman, John Brown, Angela Davis, and Subcomandante Marcos." Take that, patriot.)

Certain things about Nate make his politics relatively unsurprising. Last month, for instance, he was bragging about his new "ten-eye veggie-leather steel-toed paratrooper boots," which he bought at a leather-free shoe store called Moo-Shoes: "I'm hoping that they'll make me look like a vegan that could kick your ass."

In other ways, though, he seems an unlikely product of his circumstances. The son of physician parents, Nate went to high school at Phillips Exeter Academy ("It's a very hazing-oriented atmosphere," he says. "...I loved it"). And these days he likes doing a lot of things that are aimed more at recreation than justice: playing in abandoned buildings, going to queer bars, watching South Park and The Family Guy, playing no-stakes games of Texas Hold-'em (often naked), hanging

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Illustrated by Ajay Kurian

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Whenever Verily Veritas passes by the cast of Rodin’s *Thinker* on Philosophy Lawn he is reminded of sculptor Claes Oldenburg’s desire for an art that did something “besides sit on its ass in a museum all day.” For if museums impart value to the objects they house, Philosophy’s *Thinker* does the reverse. You see, Rodin’s trope for contemplation—naked, male, and massive—is itself now a trope for high, heavy culture—so high and heavy it often falls from above to crush unsuspecting cartoon characters. Presumably, this is what the University wanted to say in inviting the sculpture to sit on its ass in front of Philosophy: serious stuff goes on here; frivolous things beware.

Naturally, some aesthetes will consider it vulgar to hire a masterpiece simply to proclaim, “smart people inside.” Surely it reduces Rodin’s work to a crass sign (or perhaps Columbia’s copy, not an “original” cast, does this innately). In either case, Rodin’s *Thinker* is too profound to sit outside like a bouncer barking the drink specials at a state school bar. In the words of Dr. Indiana Jones, it belongs in a museum.

Of course, the same holds for less canonical works—otherwise people might not know to look at them. Long ago, serious paintings were festooned with ornate gilt frames denoting their importance, but today’s museums make it easier: the gravity of a thing corresponds to the amount of empty white wall around it. Thus modern museums not only tell the hapless visitor what to look at but also ensure that visitors don’t get distracted by anything save the colorful NYU students. Verily Veritas understands why people happily pay $20 to enter the new MoMA: it has the biggest, whitest walls in town.

But this has been old news since Marcel Duchamp used a gallery to turn a urinal into an *objet d’art*. Since then, countless brave artists have subverted, transgressed, and problematized art spaces into oblivion—but hopefully in a reputable gallery. Many even tout the hermetic quality of the museum space as liberating, as if its white walls impart autonomy and cleanliness from the grimy, business-suited world outside. This is simply silly: recall New York’s warhorse example of aesthetic controversy, the “Sensation” exhibit, which featured the Virgin Mary, some elephant dung, and Mayor Giuliani. Most parties involved in the ruckus were unaware that they were inadvertently raising the value of a collection owned by the PR firm whose own masterworks included a last-minute image revamp for South Africa’s apartheid National Party. Comparatively, the recent Christo and Jeanne-Claued project *The Gates*, which abandoned the safety of white walls to brave both the elements and the non-paying park hordes, could only do so bad as a Laura Bush cameo.

Some will protest that Central Park in winter is more frozen than a Bill Viola installation. What, exactly, is to be gained by stepping out into that frightful world where “installations” are done by the person from Sears? The answer may be “longevity,” for poor artworks are now squatting in spaces that need them less and less. Museums render objects notable by placing them in notable space; further, they continually push the boundaries of what their spaces can deem notable. Thus in MoMA’s excellent industrial design section one can peer back into that ancient era before iPods had click wheels. But if anything becomes notable in the right space, why should museums pay millions for a Jasper Johns when they could just build the right space and call it a day? Precisely this is happening. Way back in 1989 Peter Eisenman’s Wexner Center opened without any actual art inside to emphasize the notable building design. More currently, Frank Gehry’s crazed, curvy Bilbao Museum attracts hordes of international visitors who could care less about the frankly mundane collection.

Tragically, contemporary art may have relevance foisted upon it. Verily Veritas can only imagine that, as our museums become more and more artless, our artworks will have to follow the Columbia *Thinker*’s example and plant their posteriors elsewhere, anywhere. Of course not everyone gets to hawk Hegel for musty Ivy League philosophy departments. But surely anything beats the scene at the Guggenheim, where they’ll be showing the same old blockbuster and smut film retrospectives until the summer crowds die down. —Verily Veritas

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**The Blue and White**
Alma, that font of wisdom and good sense, hasn’t been laid in a really long time. It’s not that Austin Quigley doesn’t get her metallic juices flowing; it’s just that she’s caught up in that bronze burqa.

A little history is in order. In 1982, shortly before the introduction of women to campus, a rogue dean of Columbia College feared the worst. Soon, wenches would pollute South Lawn, and rampant coitus—uninterruptus!—would descend upon campus and replace the frottage, masturbation, and independent reading that had satisfied the men of Columbia for so many years. In the catacombs beneath Ferris Booth Hall, that dean forged a plan. And then he forged a metallic robe. Late that night, Alma’s sheer nightie became an iron curtain.

The Owl, with nothing left to hoot about retreated into the folds of her robe. Students followed its lead. Boxers replaced briefs; sweaters grew looser, and an age of repression descended upon Columbia.

Time passes. Empires, hemlines rise and fall]

Deconstructionism. The Major Cultures requirement. Pogs. New horrors replaced old horrors, but Columbia’s relentless chastity remained.

In 1996, Lerner was erected. He was the only one. For twenty-three years now, students have traded liberation for virginity in the name of boogeyman constructs like “respect” and “Andrea Dworkin.”

Who can blame them? They are only emulating their queen’s Spartan abstinence. In that metal muumuu, she reminds them of their mothers. And not in a kinky way.

But the recent uncovering of Alma’s true history proves that the members of this Moral Majority are simply being duped by a powerful cabal of sexually repressed white men. This is not uncommon among Moral Majorities. But it is inexcusable.

It is not too late to get play. The Columbia community must stand in solidarity and help her shed her garments. This Hellenistic flower must finally bloom. It will be better than Glass House Rocks.

But freedom will not come easily. Like so many at Columbia, it may not come at all. There are those who would rather not let Alma go beyond the “Frontiers of Science.” There are sinister forces that will do anything to stop her from enjoying her core curriculum. There is one evil woman who will stop at no cost to prevent Alma’s physical education. But who? Go ask Alice!

Students love Alice! for her Latin dancing lessons, free massages, and dental dams. They cannot suspect that she harbors a dark side as carefully hidden as Ann Coulter’s cloven hooves. But she! fears the competition. If she were no longer Columbia’s resident sex goddess, who would double-click her Java-enhanced hyperlinks? She would be left alone, resigned to her lonely struggle to create the Safest Sex kit.

So she will fight. She will do anything to keep Alma mounted on her throne and nowhere else. She may pass out pamphlets encouraging students to contact her for a good time. She may accuse Alma of statue-atory rape. We must not let her efforts interfere with our quest. We cannot be moved by these vaginal monologues.

The Blue J envisions a campus where Alma can realize her metallic urges. The burqa of Morningside Heights, that unwieldy symbol of a bygone age of chauvinist moralism, will crumble. Alma’s right hand will grip her scepter with fury, and it will reign without fail.

But despite all this possible progress, students shouldn’t get too excited. Yes, Jefferson and Hamilton will probably break from their pedestals and fight to the death for a shot at Alma Mater’s glory, but they too miss the point. Ultimately, Alma’s glory is her own, and for her own enjoyment. Anyone who thinks otherwise is burqa-ing up the wrong tree. ☺
Attack of the Strong Barnard Woman!

by Michelle Legro

She started out like any other Barnard first-year, but then she grew strong.

Too strong.

It began innocently enough. At first she welcomed the hourly phone calls from Doris in College Activities reminding her how strong she was and that Lion King tickets were only fifteen dollars. Her classes were great: Women and Culture, Sexuality and Sports, Vaginas and Vectors. She loved hanging out with the other girls on her floor—the late night lanyard sessions, the topless pillow fights—and she didn’t mind kissing her roommate either, even if it was just for practice.

But soon things began to change.

During a certain unnamed time of the month, she noticed that she was becoming more moody than usual. She wanted to eat chocolate, of course, but she also had an unexplained urge to set fire to children and dropkick small puppies. And it wasn’t just her, but her roommate, the other girls on her hall, and the other girls on her hall’s sisters in Jersey City. Their appetites became insatiable. {Id on ‘t even like cupcakes, she thought, and still I keep eating and eating. God I am such a fatty. A fatfatfatty!). They grew outwards. They grew upwards. They grew strong. Soon she had utter domination over the menses of the greater tri-state area, an entire army of women confident with their sexuality, and secure in knowledge that the reign of men was at an end.

It wasn’t long before City Hall got wind of this menstruational mandate.

“It’s that Barnard girl!” shouted the Mayor, “Why... why, she’s a menace!”

“I know!” lamented the Commissioner of Police. “My wife has got all these new-fangled notions in her head about voting and stenography! She’s even started to wear pants!”

There came a faint knock at the door.

“Enter!” shouted the Commissioner.

A small aide poked his head into the room.

“Sir... it’s... it’s the...” he stammered.

“Out with it man!”

“It’s the night sir. They want it back.”

Striding up to the window, the Mayor surveyed his fair city. “Want it back? But ladies have always had the night. It’s what they do!” He paused, cock-
A British political party prints a campaign poster criticizing the economic policy of the Tory leader, who is Jewish. The mocking caption reads, “I can spend the same money twice,” and above this is a strong-featured, menacing old man waving a gold watch. The party is Labour, the Tory leader is Michael Howard, and the year is this one.

I don’t charge that anti-Semitism still pervades Britain; rather, the poster demonstrates that stereotypes persevere even after the hatred wilts away. Their cultural staying power was deftly examined in the 2003 graphic novel *Fagin the Jew*, written by the recently deceased Will Eisner. “Stereotype is an essential tool of graphic storytelling,” he writes in the foreword, and so Eisner has seized upon Fagin of Charles Dickens’s *Oliver Twist*—the cruel, money-grubbing cheat who ranks below only Shylock and Judas among classic anti-Semitic caricatures—and told Fagin’s biography from the thief’s-eye view.

*Fagin the Jew* is marvelous and important, as well as wonderfully drawn. The book illuminates Fagin, but neither defends nor justifies him.

Eisner’s ingenious device has Fagin wasting away in jail, telling his life story to a tall, well-dressed man with a hidden face whom Fagin addresses as “Mister Dickens.” Fagin’s alien upbringing—born to immigrant Jewish parents in mean-streets London—ironically makes for a typical, even stereotypical Dickensian childhood. He becomes entangled in crime, gets shipped off to a penal colony, and returns to a life of buying goods cheap and selling them for more money. Throughout the narrative, he experiences the entrenched anti-Semitism of nineteenth-century Britain.

The last half of the novel is a retelling of *Oliver Twist* itself. As with Tom Stoppard composing *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, Eisner binds himself to the pre-existent parameters of the well-known character he adopts. Dickens’s Fagin is a monster, and Eisner portrays him as such.

“But isn’t that stealing?” Oliver questions. “It’s either that or begging in the street! Eh… Which, boy? Which?” is Fagin’s response, a demonic sneer spreading across his face. Fagin’s rough upbringing, which theoretically conditioned him to become this villain, serves only as a cushion for the reader’s condemnation, not a palliative. While Fagin remains a crude caricature, Eisner brings subtlety and skill not only to the images but to the narrative.

The pacing is brisk but not rushed, at least until the swampy retelling of *Oliver Twist*. The panels consistently read left-to-right, top-to-bottom, and while readers of more experimental graphic novels may find this unadventurous, it makes the work accessible while maintaining narrative force. Finally, the brown-and-white ink drawings are evocative, telling, and often quite pretty. Eisner’s faces are wonderful—none more than Fagin’s, at first handsome and slightly exotic, later simultaneously mean and pathetic.

What makes *Fagin the Jew* significant is its refusal to paint Fagin, an ultimate caricature, as anything other than a caricature. Fagin’s tale is no apologia; nor is he exonerated. A lesser artist would have depicted a more sympathetic Fagin, perhaps one who reforms and spends his remaining years doing good. But that would be a cop-out, and Eisner knows it. “My version of Fagin is, I believe,” writes Eisner, “a
I mean, someone dependable to take care of your falcon. Not just some guy off the streets.

What if I was really no different from the doll? If there had been some kind of blip in the creation of the universe, would I have been this doll; this terrifying thing with a misshapen nose? Would she have been me, crazily tearing off my clothing as I lay powerless in her hands? Was Gary God?

Oh, don’t pretend you care about the guy with the goiter. He just leaves so the pretty people can enjoy their yogurt together.

Diamonds are a Girl’s Best...Emancipator?

Beating up your neighbor because he greets you, laughing at every person’s face, kicking a pregnant woman in her stomach and looking at everyone with your hand covering one eye are all productions of your wildest dreams.

Kurt: It’s just another kind of movie, that’s all. Like ET or something. Did you see ET, yet?
Betsy: No.
Kurt: It’s pretty good. He’s like Jesus but he has these ... scales on him.

For an astronaut ... sex should be an expression of love.

Although, the republicans are now the “white house” winners (the most important trophy in U.S. soccer) the democrats won’t be satisfied until they get this important price again. Now, the “demos” have to prove their superiority in the next encounter, although is not a season match, only a friendly one, they have to start winning games to increase their points that, in a future, may help them to succeed in this cruel competition.

As a result of this diffusion, the ocean becomes an enormous pool of substance that allows it to house such enigmatic and unexplainably large beings such as Moby Dick....A second property that Melville has allowed the ocean is the presence of quintessence.

That’s why I want to be part of the SIPA, studying the Master in International Affairs. In my opinion I would be able to get the tools necessary to help Mexico immerse in the globalization that the world is experimenting today.

Putting on masks, running around screaming, doing stuff with snakes. Well, I’m glad physics school is under control.

“An abo’tion had been scheduled when yo’ mother was pregnant,” he explains. “Her original doctors had taken her blood and concluded that she had German measles and that her child would be bo’n defo’med. Fortunately fo’ you, yo’ motha could not go through with the abortion. She came to me for a second opinion and I determined that her blood was fine. We found out that the other doctors had mixed up the blood samples.” So I was born.

Veggie Oil to be used in school districts and city buses!!
My wife says, “Isn’t it great? Now women will be exploring space. I said, ‘There’s a space you might want to explore—it’s called the kitchen.’ Oh, that was a thing to say at the time. But I was only kidding. My wife knows how to cook—you have to give her that.

True or false: an astronaut should sleep with men she doesn’t like?

The man has got himself a goiter and the girl is, like, ‘Fuck this, I’m dating the goiterman and I really don’t want to be in this position—man and goiter et cetera. But then he steps aside—he’s not the date—and you see this really attractive guy. That’s Roger. He could be that guy.

Are you wearing body-glitter, Mr. Weber?

Dean walks away and approaches Father. Father, a man of about 60, sits in a chair in a dark room. He speaks clearly with dignity. He wears an overcoat and he eats pistachio nuts from a paper cup. The floor is littered with red shells. He has one leg.

If you don’t know the difference between there, their, and they’re, I’m not fucking you...seriously.

Scientists sang fight songs as they brilliantly designed the vicious weapons that would annihilate rival nations.

I recently found out that the special composition of Manhattan’s bedrock is what makes it possible for the city to exist.

He turned the light off and a light murmur started to spread through the classroom. A mix of tension and excitement emanated from the students. I slowly took off my socks, then my pants, my underwear, my shirt, and my bra. I could barely see the naked bodies as I walked through the room....There were bodies touching and mixing. I didn’t mingle with the group; instead I started to move through the room in a kind of dance. The exercise seemed to have lost its point.

Every now and again, Kiwi had dreams about Luscious Robichaux, his face sunken and dyspeptic, scowling at him astride an albino bull gator. “Dad?” Kiwi would say, and then usually the dream would take some inconvenient turn, suddenly he’d be dreaming of camels or Siamese twins on conjoined pogo sticks.

As a newspaper editor, I found that it is important to realize what is important and relevant to the task at hand, and to continue moving in the right direction... In short, I am adaptable to discovering the best methods, while always focusing on the goals.

People living directly beside a dam will act unconcerned about the breakage of the dam, even though it would result in their deaths, because denial is the only way to keep their sanity.

Anyway, in the bathroom I was struck by an actual peak in everyone’s performance—the band was communing like never before—rising and falling in intensity together and by the end of the song everyone was just happening!

What is it to be the same person today as one was in the past, or will be in the future?

To my knowledge, adventure stories do not occur in Greek myth as much as they do in modern stories.

My father, the Minotaur, is more obdurate than any man. Sure, it was his decision, to sell the farm and hitch himself to a 4,000-pound prairie schooner, and head out West. But our road forked a long time ago, months before we ever yoked Dad to the wagon. If my father was the apple-biter, my mother was his temptress Eve. It was Mom who showed him the book.
Personal Ads

True love may be foreign to The Blue and White, but the quest for it is not. Here we confess our hearts’ desires for the benefit of Columbia’s love-starved fops, aging professors, and resident perverts for whom the night has not yet been taken. The ads are followed by our Lerner or McIntosh mailbox numbers. Should particularly poignant responses find their way into our boxes (and hearts), you may find them printed in our next issue.

SEEKING MEN

I am without pretensions, if by pretensions you mean pants. (McIntosh 6040)

I can deflesh you with my eyes (nice zygomatics, by the way), but the undressing part is up to you. (1915)

Hey man! Wanna party? No I know it’s Tuesday. How about I buy you two? One? You can only drink one forty? Pussy. Let’s have a dance party. (2632)

Courtesan seeks King of France to make love not war. (McIntosh 6040)

Does no one understand your Art? They’re philistines, baby. Extremely understanding brunette seeks brilliant yet vulnerable artiste on verge of pecuniary and critical success. Poets particularly desired. Those in possession of self-worth or clear understanding of New York State prenuptial laws need not apply. (5545)

I’m dating three boys at once. I don’t know what to do. You know what that’s like, right? (4508)

A pretty, young student of Foucault is looking for love, sweet and slow. She’s footloose and fancy free and possibly dirty so please, no talk of the pomo. (5444)

I’m so into you, this autopsy should be a breeze. (1915)

I first saw you at Versailles, in the Galeries des Glaces. You were short, dark, handsome, and a little complex. I was the Emperor of all France. How I long to see your face again. Meet me at the reflecting pool at sunset. (1791)

Hi! You think we haven’t met, but actually freshman year your friend kept having sex in my friend’s bed and it was really awkward for my friend and then you were in my English class and now you’re friends with my friend and I saw you the other day and you always look so BEAUTIFUL every time I see you. OKAY! I LOVE YOU! GOODBYE! (2875)

SEEKING WOMEN

I put the man back in man-boy. (1791)

Ever wonder what GS means by “non-traditional student”? Hold still a minute. (c/o GS Lounge)

Orientalist seeks Other. (3112)

Ahem. Please wait a second as I commence. Now let us begin. (1346)

Me: imprisoned orca. You: alienated orphan. (2480)

Man loses libido in blizzard, seeks snowblower. (2480)

History will vindicate you. (3386)

Did you know Joyce’s great grandnephew and I went to the same summer camp?! (1909)

Man of dichotomous mores seeks solely ma­donnas and whores. (2480)
Cary Grant lookalike seeks blind woman. (1346)

Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, B, A, Select, Start. (2480)

Come for the jazz, stay for the coiffure. (c/o GS Lounge)

I have a head of hair that looks like Apollo had sex with a mop. (1373)

Please do familiarize me with that idiom. (1514)

Technically, they’re not beer goggles. They’re scotch goggles. (4465)

My hands are too callused to row the boat anymore. (1300)

Monkey see, monkey do. And do again. And again. And until you ask it to stop. (1909)

Wanna get a burrito? (2480)

Young caligynephobe seeks beautiful woman for aversion therapy. (3386)

I can make ten fruit puns in under a minute. We’d make a hell of a pear. (3112)

I have vanquished thee. Now give me thy girdle. (1346)

Do you have any _____ in you? Want some? Possibilities: Polish mill worker, Kaiser Wilhelm, allegory of painting (c/o GS Lounge)

SEEKING SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY

Seeking lipstick for make-up sex. (4465)

You are: rich, sweet, and strong. About twelve years old and straight from Kentucky. Come to me and let us spend the night ridiculing Jack Daniels. I’m thirsty for your love. (4465)

Desperate loner longs for Natalie Portman, Carrie Fisher, and a herd of ewoks. (2418)

I voted for Nader. Who wants to punch me? (5844)

I’m sorry about your cat. Burp. (3112)

I know I’m cute. Is that still cute? (2480, 2875, 3112, 4058, 4465, 5545)

I saw you yesterday walking through Lerner. You’ve stolen my heart the way my daddy stole cattle before the posse caught and hanged him. (2663)

Stroke me once, shame on you. Stroke me twice, shame on me. Stroke me thrice? Let’s not go there. (2480)

Witerary monthly seeks nubile techie with web design experience. Shoddy academic record and indeterminate graduation date preferred. Please contact theblueandwhite@columbia.edu.

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March 2005
Hair Apparent
by Michelle Legro

"I don’t know anything dreadful enough to liken to you..."
-letter from John Ruskin to his wife Effie, 1847

His story began in the usual way: boy meets girl; girl spurns boy; boy grows up but continues to yearn for pre-pubescent love, marries disastrously and is forced to seek solace in paganism, pedophilia, and pointed arches.

The boy was John Ruskin, who was to become the Victorian era’s preeminent art critic and whose writings were essential items in the library of any well-read gentleman. The girl was named Clotilde, but Ruskin called her by her middle name, Adele, so that he could better write her truly awful poems in rhyming verse. She was fourteen and he sixteen when they met, and the love affair that ensued was distinctly one-sided. She was amused by him, but she was also amused by shiny things and small furry animals, and generally dismissed him out of hand. When she left the country to marry a French nobleman four years later, Ruskin fell romantically ill, vowed that his heart was broken in twain, and bound himself to his study of art as his only love—that is, until he met thirteen-year-old Euphemia Chalmers Gray.

A distant cousin and ten years his junior, Effie, as she was called, was a cheerful and pretty young thing that Ruskin used as a muse for a tepid but popular fairy tale, having now moved beyond awful poetry. But the fact remained that she was pushing third for his affections, the first remaining his duty to his work, the other being the vestiges of Adele. Often throughout their seven-year courtship, he simply couldn’t be bothered by her. “I find work good for me,” he wrote to her in one of his typical love letters, “and when I am busy upon architecture or mathematics I sometimes nearly forget all about you!” Ruskin considered marriage a rounding out of his life, fulfilling his emotional needs sufficiently so that he might focus on his quickly maturing work. He was prepared to take Effie on and care for her, anticipating a good-tempered girl whom he might mold into a faithful companion.

What he remained unprepared for was the hair. Down there.

After all, Ruskin was a student of high art, familiar only with smoothed over Greek statues and academic nudes who were far from rough in the buff. Nothing could have prepared him for the follicular shock of his wedding night. Effie was just as naive, and took his disgust to heart, sincerely believing that there was something malformed about her person. For much of her marriage she was considered to be “ill” by both Ruskin and Ruskin’s mother, who remained troublesomem close throughout the marriage, as befits any son with psychosexual issues. Ruskin went so far as to prompt Effie to keep a journal chronicling her “problems,” blaming her sexuality for their unhappy marriage. In a letter from 1847, ever the doting lover, he elegantly pointed out these grievous faults: “But you know now my sweet you are...you are a very sufficient and entire man-trap—you are a pitfall—a snare—an ignus-fatuus—a beautiful destruction—a Medusa...”

Ruskin could only then have been grateful for the arrival of John Everett Millais to his lodge in Scotland. Millais was a...
dashing, floppy-haired member of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, who had read Ruskin’s *Modern Painters* as a call to arms against “artificiality” in academic painting and heeded Ruskin’s championing of a keen observation of nature. Traveling to Scotland to pay homage to his master and paint his portrait, Millais would leave under quite different circumstances. The painter was drawn to Effie in her sad and loveless state, and proceeded to court her through long walks, longer walks, and the pretense of actually getting a haircut. Smitten with Millais, Effie sought an end to the six-year marriage, revealing the truth behind Ruskin’s non-consummation in a letter to her parents:

“He alleged various reasons, hatred to children, religious motives, a desire to preserve my beauty, and finally this last year, told me his true reason (and this to me is as villainous as all the rest), that he had imagined women were quite different to what he says I was and that the reason he did not make me his Wife was because he was disgusted with my persons the first evening 10th April.”

The annulment went to the courts on the grounds of impotence, but in his defense, Ruskin merely corroborated the strange account above, testifying that on his wedding night he discovered “a physical blemish on his wife that made it impossible for him to have sexual intercourse with her” Effie had undergone numerous medical examinations confirming that she was perfectly normal, and in an act of subtle vindication proceeded to marry and promptly have eight children with Millais.

This was perhaps for the best, as Ruskin could finally settle down into his studies. The final volume of *Modern Painters* would be published in 1860, and was to be his last work that focused primarily on art criticism. By age fifty-seven Ruskin was undergoing a serious crisis of faith that left him a self-diagnosed pagan, distrustful of religion.

Enter the third and final female in Ruskin’s life, the aptly named Rose La Touche, whom he made his pet when she attained the ripe age of ten, declared his love for when she was a flowering thirteen, and proposed marriage to when she reached a sensible eighteen. This passion wiped away—or at least transformed—any memories of the ancient Adele, as Ruskin took the rose as his emblem, seeding his writing with profuse flower allusions and again spewing out awful poetry. With his newfound distance from religion, Ruskin set out to free the young girl’s soul from the horrors of a Calvinist upbringing (which became a recurring subject of obsession in his writings) but he could only helplessly stand by as she wasted away from brain fever. His effort at marrying her would come to nothing, as Ruskin’s previous “pitfall” Ef-fie returned to write a savage letter informing Rose’s mother of Ruskin’s “unnaturalness”—requiting the accusation he’d leveled at her so many years ago. The situation deteriorated as Rose succumbed to her illness and eventually died in an insane asylum at the age of twenty-seven.

Ruskin’s pedophilia—while full of private tragedy and disappointment—unfortunately fit into his general views on aesthetics and the ideal. Ruskin’s delight in young girls—along with the attendant reluctance to let them turn into women—informed his notions of purity and feminine beauty. A champion of nature and observation, he still managed to remain blind when he so chose, letting his own fetishes and prudishness stand in for nature. Although his passion for Rose La Touche had a lasting impact on his life and work, he had never consummated his love, remaining haunted by that singular night with Effie. It is unfortunate then that the Pre-Raphaelite movement that named Ruskin as its *père* should be remembered primarily for its thick-lipped and doe-eyed women, those ravishing, docile Medusas whose most prominent feature seemed a fitting irony—shining, gleaming, flaxen, waxen, and always down to there.

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*Marc Tracy*

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**Marc Tracy**
This issue of *The Blue and White* has been brought you in part by the Office of the University Chaplain.

"The Office of the University Chaplain affirms *The Blue and White* and its many contributions to the common life of Columbia University."
The Columbia male, despite a rigorous training in the classics, all too often falls short of the amorous expectations a girl would have of a Latin lover. Witness this exchange of a courting couple in a piece from The Blue and White, Vol. II, No. XX, March 2, 1892, as ample evidence.

NOT INDIFFERENT

I'm not a bashful man. In fact, I have been known to flirt with a pretty girl, but never to a desperate degree. One thing I cannot do, is to make love indiscriminately—to kiss and spoon with each and every girl that comes along. It seems so senseless—nay, even worse. Jessie Van Ness thought the same, and was a decidedly sensible girl. At least, I believed she was, and that was why I asked her to go riding one moonlit night.

She accepted, and at the appointed time we started with a good pair of horses and a light vehicle. Somehow the moonlight affects girls sadly, and the “moonstruck madness,” of which Milton speaks, fell upon Jessie.

First she wanted to drive. As the horses were spirited, and the rough road was often darkly shaded by a dense growth of trees on either side, I demurred. However, Jessie ruled, or rather reigned, and took the guiding lines into her hands. Now she grew chilly. It was an insufferably warm night, but she must have something around her. The lap robe would not do. I could not be deprived of my coat. I could think of nothing else to put around her, unless it be my arm, and the thought of that made me involuntarily move a little farther away from her. Then she grew afraid. At each shadow moving in the roadway she would grasp my arm with one hand, the horses going into the ditch meanwhile. Disgusted and alarmed, I took the reins, and tried to calm her troubled spirit, succeeding only after having made some foolish speeches that were drawn out by pleading looks.

Silence reigned a moment ; then she sighed. It was not a short sigh that might mean relief or trouble, but a long sigh that might mean anything.

“What's the matter?” I asked, in alarm.

“Oh nothing,” she returned, in low and plaintive tones.

Silence followed, broken only by another sigh, more prolonged and pathetic than the first. Stopping the horses, I demanded:

“What is the matter?”

“No one loves me,” came the half sobbing tones.

My breath was taken away. Her very eyes—which I must admit were beautiful—seemed to ask something of me. The temptation was too much, and heroic measures had to be adopted for my salvation.

“Someone does,” I answered.

“Who?” came the entreating question, as Jessie put her hand softly on my arm.

“Your father.” And we drove home in silence.
Misogyny comes to me first in the most unlikely of guises; Fate, growing whimsical in her old age, has begun employing strange messengers. Thus, nursing a two-day-old hangover, I find myself on an airplane with my planned in-flight reading (War & Peace, which I have been reading exclusively during plane travel for the past six years) securely stowed in the overhead compartment. I am in a middle seat; between me and Chapter XXXVIII sits what can only be described, and charitably at that, as an unfortunate hybridization of an overripe bosc pear and an attendee of the 2004 Sumo Wrestlers' Ethel Merman Drag Convention. Disconsolate, and unable in my haggard state to attract the attention of the stewardess (she is maddeningly adjusting her slip in the bulkhead with her back to me), I resort to perusing the in-flight magazine.

This is where Fate steps in, trodding on toes and jostling tray tables as she comes. Page 37 of this oppressively buoyant publication (entitled, God save us, Up! like some overly demanding semi-verbal toddler) comprised a monthly column which hubristically tried its rather ladylike hand at a bit of literary criticism. I will spare my gentle readers the gruesome details, and simply say that this month's “Sky High Concept, by Andrea Killjoy,” attempted to address itself with a great deal of moral integrity to the trend of “woman-haters, misogynists, chauvinists, and pig-headed paternalists who seem to comprise the collected narrators of every novel written in the city of New York, usually by someone with the Christian name of Jonathan.”

Writers, those cursed with the need to express the inner turmoil of their writerly Soul on the page, preferably in a commercially viable but still artistically dignified form, will have guessed where I am going with this. For everyone else, I'll simply say that my own novel, The Loving Syndrome, the sprawling story of Annabelle Vaughn-Willhelms and her tortured love triangle with handsome, brooding Lex Underly and the severe-jawed but in his own way rather precious Lieutenant von Williams, has been stalled now for close to six months; that my editor first dropped me, then called me at three in the morning on a Tuesday to confess that she loved me, that she had always loved me, that she had never known what love was until she met me, then dropped me again, then quit the publishing industry for good and went to work writing copy for www.zoroastergreetings.com (“May you be one with Ahura Mazda, / from this day / forward. / Love, Your Name Goes Here”); and finally that I was flying from New York to the large Southeastern city I used to call home specifically to escape the massive, monolithic block that had been impeding my creative process for half a year. A writer in such a state will grasp at anything. Could my salvation really be as simple as all this? Is there simply too much love in The Loving Syndrome? If misogyny works for the Brooklyn Johns, not to mention a whole slew of modish hipster poetasters whom poor Miss Killjoy probably never had the joy of knowing, why shouldn’t it work for modest Max Overly?
The problem is that while I am not opposed to becoming a misogynist by trade, I suspect that I lack the inborn temperament that turns so many successful novelists into misogynists, misanthropists, and other unhappily isolated types. Indeed, the first word I think of when I recall the women I’ve known is “gratitude” (an unpleasant admission, no more so for me than for my reader, I presume).

Take for example my most recent affair, a lovely redheaded piece of tail whom I admired for her penetrating intellect and lovely set of morals, and who was incidentally a secondary reason for my trip back to the Southeast. Annabel (no relation to the character in TLS) had recently asked if I would be willing to meet her family in a nearby small Southeastern city; and while most men might argue that the little temptress was merely trying to get her filthy paws on me and my family wealth, that the child should not have been trusted as far as she could be thrown (which, given the onset of her mid-twenties, was certainly no longer very far), that commitment from a woman is like commitment from a cat—it stops the moment you stop putting food in her bowl—that a woman with her man’s best interest at heart is either not a woman or dating one, I, oh-so-trusting Overly, was more than happy to oblige. Here’s how the conversation went:

“So, Max.”
“Annabel?”
“Can I ask you a question?”
“Of course, my darling. What is it?”
“Well, my parents have been asking about you lately...my mother especially has been hinting that she’d like to meet you, and...”
“And you want me to drive out to Bumblefuck and have Sanka with your podunk excuse for a family while I’m home?”
“Well, I...”
“Oh, no, that’s fine, sink your claws into me, see what I care.”

Indeed, I remained resolutely pro-family, pro-relationship, a thoroughly modern, emasculated, new age male in the weeks following the conversation. Only as the date drew near did I begin to realize that a concession to Annabel and her family—probably (visceral shudder here, please) Methodists all—would be a defeat for my Art. I decided to go a little bit more “on the offensive.”

“So Max?”
“Yes, dearest?”
“We’re going to my small Southeastern town on Thursday, O.K.?”
“So you can whore it up with some farm boy, I assume. Jesus Christ, you women are all the same, I don’t know why I bother...”
“No, I mean you and me. So you can meet my family, remember?”
“Ah, yes. That. Uh, sure, Thursday should be fine.”

Later that week:
“If I told you something was really important to me, would you try to be more sensitive about it in the future?”

“More sensitive? Of course—I can’t believe—I mean—I’m just, I’m shocked that you could—How could you even ask me that?”

“I just feel like you haven’t been taking this whole family visit very seriously, Max. It really matters to me.”

“Oh, Holy Fuck, not that again.”

In the end the day for our visit came and went; I had managed somewhere along the way to catch Fate’s cold, and weakly mustered the Too Sniffly Defense. By the New Year, Annabel and her asexual misandrist stick of a best friend had circled the womanly wagons, and I was out in the cold, with my cold, and the distinct sense that this entire experiment was not going according to plan. I had made some small concessions to the Muse of Misogyny, and what had it gotten me?

And to make matters worse, Annabel’s departure had left me unexpectedly desolate. Of course I missed Annabel, but it was unclear to me what exactly I was missing. Mind you, it’s not that I don’t understand women. Readers of my collection of short stories (The Carnival of Raingear, 1999)—and admittedly there were few of them—can attest to my keen sensitivity to women’s needs and concerns. But Annabel had always been opaque to me; she was the last place I’d have looked for understanding, or compassion, or some semblance of the sense that I was communing with a fellow participant in the Human Condition, rather syndrome continued on page 109
Knock knock.
How does a thermometer work?
By measuring the density of students passing by.

Have you noticed how our professor hardly studied
when did war become so unpopular remember the bloodlust of Alexander the Great check out my muscles you’ve been
to the gym want to stop at Hamilton I can’t I have
following the primaries it’s all about trust

I’m studying the aboriginal brisk morning! Duane Reade and Starbucks
we could never be needing have you been able to find a copy of
one full cup of furtive glance over at that girl she’s
stealing your smiles improve the world I want to improve the world
ever hear Taj Mahal “I woke up this mornin’ feelin’ so good you know
I laid back down again” I’ve slept through half of let me see your
this test is going to Hey Kim!

Once I’ve left college I don’t know either guidance there’s no
we sure pay Dean is a baby at the Met my art history class
I’ve developed a real passion April June and November
all the rest have you noticed how Amsterdam curves to touch
the moon is so full of itself a mansion in the night watches over us
freedom is a mansion that is built not bequeathed

Sorry I pecked your wing yesterday trying to get at that bagel.

—David Austerweil
8TH ST. AND 2ND AVE

We step out of each other and into the Ukrainian bar like giddy Matryoshka dolls. After a few drinks, Tanya begins to get sassy with a dartless dartboard, pummeling it with nipples. A man in a coat with a fur collar drinks vodka out of an enormous radish; he shakes his head and takes a bite out of his cup. I spot a boy with eyes as shiny as Charon’s coins, pouring himself a beer out of the samovar. He gives me a good squint, then takes a red thumbtack out of his pocket and jams it into Donetsk, my birthplace, on the map behind him.

—Katya Apekina
BOOZE HUMANITIES

Cock of the Walk

This would be the last time that Mephiscotches watched the news in a bar. Following the hubbub about Larry Summers through the dim haze of a pomegranate mojito made his head hurt. Whether or not men and women think differently, he thought to himself, they certainly drink differently.


He tried looking to precedent, but that only made things worse. Hemingway fought bulls, shot elephants, and drank daiquiris. Atomic-age hotties Mamie Eisenhower and Bess Truman drank bourbon old-fashioneds. And Fitzgerald drank anything that had fermented for at least a week.

Now Mephiscotches has never drunk great draughts at the well of knowledge—he prefers shots of self-loathing at the bar of condescension—but for any intellectual problem more severe than curing a hangover, he tends to turn to philosophy. After all, the Queen of the Sciences has been a steady tippler from her first symposium up through Bibo ergo sum. So pouring himself a bowl of wine, he set out to find the Platonic ideal of the manly drink. He hit the Internet in search of a stiff one.

After hours of careful Googling, he understood the process by which the gin martini became the apple martini (centuries of careful grafting). He knew that Tennessee whiskey had to be made in Tennessee, while Kentucky bourbon could be made anywhere in the United States. And he figured out the recipe for Three Penis Wine (duck, dog, and seal). But he still couldn’t find a drink manly enough to shed light on his question.

Until, perusing a seventeenth-century recipe book, he stumbled upon Cock Ale. This concoction, originally served at cock fights, was made by boiling a rooster in several gallons of ale, with a few added spices. If a hearty brew with a poultry supplement doesn’t get your rooster crowing, a 1675 petition, allegedly from the women of London, claims that coffee (introduced to England only a few decades before) has “so Eunuch’d our Husbands, and Crippled our more kind Gallants, that they are become as Impotent, as Age, and as unfruitful as those Desarts whence that unhappy Berry is said to be brought.” Only a return to drinking Cock Ale will enable them to beget “a Race of Lusty Hero’s... able by their Achievements, to equal the Glories of our Ancestors.”

Unfortunately, that race of lusty heroes was never begot. According to the seventeenth-century writer James Howell, coffee soon replaced the morning pint of beer. Some historians argue that the resulting clarity of mind and hyperactivity kick-started the industrial revolution that turned men from bareback riders to golfcart drivers.

What’s more, in at least one account, the word “cock-ale,” through centuries of drunken slurring, became “cocktail,” a libation, alas, whose manly pluck would give way to the Flirtinis, Pink Ladies, and Screaming Multiple Orgasms cheerily tossed back by wannabe Carries, Charlottes, and Miranda. And Scott Fitzgerald.

And that made Mephiscotches’ head hurt.

—Mephiscotches

Cock-Ale

Take eight Gallons of Ale, then take a Cock, and boil him well, with four pound of Raisins of the Sun well stoned, two or three Nutmegs, three or four flakes of Mace, half a pound of Dates; beat these all in a Mortar, and put to them two quarts of the best Sack; and when the Ale hath done working, put these in, and stop it close six or seven days, and then Bottle it, and a Moneth after you may drink it.

—from The Accomplish’d Lady’s Delight in Preserving, Physick, Beautifying, and Cookery. London, 1675
Sweden. Land of Lutefisk and Lingonberries. Truly, at least from Gustav Vasa's ascension to the throne in 1523, that which is Swedish has unfailingly coincided with that which I love. This, of course, is due in no small part to the hypnotic, oddly sexual locution of the Swedish Chef. But let that go.

So, when word arrived that March was "Beyond Blond" Swedish Lifestyle Month, I took out my Maypole a little early, jumped in the sauna, and began to pore over the schedule of events. And there, just beneath the notice for "Fitness the Swedish Way Series: Nordic Walking with Malin Svensson," I found a most curious event announcement: "Swedish Functional Food for a Healthy Lifestyle."

Functional food, ja? Like cucumbers? I set about to research (or, in Swedish, forskning). A few well-placed potato casseroles, and the elegant doors of the top secret Swedish Embassy Archives swung open to me.

And here is where I learned that Sweden is well on its way to becoming The Incredible Hulk of the Arctic Circle. Functional food, it turns out, is merely vitamin- or pharmaceutical-enhanced grub that goes above and beyond the purview of basic nutrition. Imagine calcium-fortified Tropicana, but on Nordic steroids. Imagine gastritis-fighting mangos, anti-diarrheal rutabega, or maybe even diabetes-beating mahi mahi. All of these could be proffered to the public as a cheap means of vaccination and nutrition.

As usual, our Scandinavian socialist friends are ahead of the curve—as recently as 2002, Sweden was, according to the Scottish Enterprise, the worldwide leader in making your food function right. Långsam 'svajning!' (That's Swedish for "Hell yeah!")

Fearful of the Swedish behemoth, Swiss scientists have embarked on a high profile operation to bring Vitamin A-enriched rice to Southeast Asia. Daffodils, it seems, contain the genetic recipe for Vitamin A (dorks in coats call it beta-carotene), and by inserting it in rice seeds, they have created what they can only call "Golden Rice." If this super staple is more than just a flash in a pan, the influx of Vitamin A could help cut down on third world infant mortality and make deficiency-caused blindness a thing of the past. Anyone who knows the true nature of these things, of course, can see only the Swedish élan embodied in the work of these admittedly competent, but utterly frumpy Swiss.

Of course, even Sweden needs a comeuppance once in a while. Critics—not all of them envious neighboring ski jumpers—have pointed out that a preoccupation with the glories of super-rice and their lot distracts from the root cause of malnutrition: poverty, and global economic inequality. Vitamin deficiencies are just a symptom of a much larger problem.

And, to be fair to Swedes and non-Swedes alike, it's probably true that Kraft and Proctor & Gamble aren't entering the functional food fray for the sake of ending poverty. Wariness is necessary, but some companies have adopted policies that even Jeffrey Sachs could love: biotech firms like Zeneca Agrochemicals, for example, have promised to essentially open-source some of their most revolutionary new technologies and patents.

Of course, even if governments endorse genetically jerry-
From witch-burning Puritans to the Harvard board of admissions, the Patriarchy has had a solid foothold in American society for some time. And the trouble is that other contemporary cultures don't seem to be faring any better. In response, many feminist anthropologists, historians, and sociologists have embraced the idea that a long, long time ago, in a place far, far away, things were different. Women were worshiped as goddesses and were central to political, economic, and social aspects of life. Anyone who has enjoyed, guiltily or otherwise, the stories of Ayla and Jondalar in Jean Auel's *Earth's Children* series, or Riane Eisler's "non-fictional" *The Chalice and the Blade* is well versed in this myth that every society was once a happy, peaceful group of earth- and goddess-worshipping people, living in harmony with nature, and controlled entirely by women.

The problem with this myth is just that: it's a myth. Faced with the dismal prospect of an inevitably domineering patriarch, scholars like Eisler and Marija Gimbutas, among others, have scrambled to find alternate models in human history, even if it meant going light on solid evidence. As laudable a goal as finding or creating a completely egalitarian society may be, the truth is that the idea of prehistorical matriarchal societies is completely unsupported by archaeological evidence, and is, moreover, unhelpful to the feminist cause.

The main evidence given by matriarchal supporters rests on the Neolithic goddess statues unearthed at many European archaeological sites. These large-hipped figurines prove to some researchers that women were given a more central role in society. Unfortunately, they make a weak case: worship of some females tells us absolutely nothing about the status of ordinary women in a society. Everyone knows that Medieval Christendom obsessed over the Virgin Mary, but women who missed out on immaculately conceiving our (male) Savior were generally treated like livestock or, at best, perks in financial transactions. Modern-day America also worships the ideal of the blonde and buxom Hollywood star, but these attributes hardly imply respect or reverence: just ask Anna Nicole Smith. Why then should we assume the Venus figurine statues are anything but an early iteration of *Staff* magazine?

No one denies that there are existing and probably past societies that are more egalitarian than our current model. Some women in some societies hold positions of economic or political power; many cultures allow women to control property and exert some choice in who they marry. However, we have no irrefutable evidence for any society in which women hold higher status than men, especially when it comes to freedom of sex. This consistent male control on female sexuality can be traced back to biology. Women are always sure that their children share 50% of their genes. Men aren't so lucky. This lack of paternity certainty has had dramatic affects on social organization and the implementation of an oppressive patriarchy. In fact, societies with low paternity certainty—societies in which women's sexual behavior is less controlled—tend overwhelmingly to have a system of matriarchal inheritance. A man who can't be sure he fathered his partner's children, and who thus risks expending resources on offspring that share none of his genes, instead supports his sister's children, with whom he is guaranteed to share at least 12% of his genetic material. Patrilineal inheritance systems require a ban on premarital sex, and a taboo on female infidelity within marriages, in order to help assure men that they are likely supporting their own offspring. In both cases, though, social and economic authority works toward maintaining genetic certainty for males.

Whatever the cause of patriarchy, inventing a mythical past (usually situated in a time before men learned their role in procreation, which likely changed as they started domesticating animals) does little...
to help the feminist cause. Cynthia Eller, in *The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory*, explains that danger involves “flattening differences among women, exaggerating differences between males and females, and handing women an identity that is symbolic, timeless, and archetypal, instead of giving them the freedom to craft identities that suit their individual temperaments and skills.” A special aspect of humanity is our ability to rise above the universal aspects of human nature that evolved in a very different environment than our current one. Admitting that men and women are predisposed by our different biologies to act or think differently does not justify morally abhorrent behavior, nor does it mean that oppressive patriarchal systems are inevitable. This does not mean we should give up the goal of treating men and women as individuals rather than according to stereotyped gender roles. But denying biological differences or claiming a mythical past in order to empower the current generation only perpetuates untruths and increases hostilities.

SYNDROME continued from page 103

than, oh, I don’t know, say, a fleshy automaton, a machine for making babies and ruining writers, sensibility rather than sense. I felt an absence in my heart, but what was it, ultimately, that should have been there?

Caitlin Maxwell-Wilcox didn’t answer the first time I called her, and for a moment I wondered whether she was back on suicide watch at the institution to which she’d been committed after we broke up and she dropped out of college. Then I realized that it had been over a year since that unfortunate incident (Christ, did I really devote a year of my life to probing the intellectual shallows of a Southern redhead just because of her curvaceous analytical turns of thought?), and that it was much more likely that she was merely sleeping. After the third call, she justified my woman’s intuition.

“Hello?”

“Hi. What are you doing?”

“What am I doing? What the hell time is it?”

“I don’t know. I think about 1:30ish.”

Fumbling sound. “It’s fucking 2:47 in the morning, Max. What the fuck?”

“Get dressed, let’s go for a walk.”

“I can’t go for a walk, I’m in bed.”

“Well, can you come downstairs at least? I’m getting wet down here.”

“You’re outside? Oh, good Lord.”

When she arrived downstairs Caitlin was cool and aloof. I looked at her, with her vague, slightly cross-eyed squint (she was apparently not wearing her contacts) and her frumpy pajama pants, and I began to despair of finding any consolation or conclusions therein. The conversation progressed fairly vacuously. Caitlin did not seem particularly happy to see me. I was not invited in. In fact, I was on the point of reconsidering the efficacy of my policy of running straight to previous ex-girlfriends, no matter how emotionally unhinged, after each break-up, when Miss M-W brought the matter to a head.

“So what the fuck’s your problem, Max? ‘Cause I’m getting cold out here.”

“Oh, that. Annabel and I broke up.”

“The character in your novel?”

“No, the other one.”

“Ah. I knew there was a reason I was being wary of you.”

“Wary of me?! What do you take me for? Do you think I came here to seduce you? Do you really think I could be that callous?”

“Well, yes.”

“O.K., sure, but do you really think I could be that obvious?”

“Um…”

“Listen, this is ridiculous. Can’t we go inside?”

“Not tonight, Max. Times are hard.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“I can’t afford the hospital bills anymore.”

“Oh, Holy Mother of Christ, you’re not blaming that on me again. Look, just because I knew you had a history of suicidal depression doesn’t—”

“Goodnight, Max.”

The whole trip was meaningless, empty. *The Loving Syndrome* is no more misogynistic than when I started out. And I’m afraid the failure is entirely mine—I am too sensitive, too empathetic, overall too decent, and it shall be my undoing as an Artist. But if I am to be held responsible for every little pill-popping wastrel strumpet temptress who plops herself into the psychiatric ward at the least sign of trouble, then I shall drop this misogynous thing entirely and devote my art to a new theme: There Is No Justice In This World.
Treadwell continued from page 89

out with his "bestest Professor friend" Julie Crawford, and playing NetHack ("Hello nate, welcome to net­hack, you are a chaotic female elven Wizard").

Which isn’t to say he’s slacking off. This year, Nate is “trying to bribe Wayne Ting to run a militant cam­paign for better financial aid for low-income students. And I’m trying to bribe him with sex.” How’s that going? “Not very well. He thinks it’s a dead end. But this is all part of my broader plan for spine transplants for Democrats.”

His last project at Columbia may be helping launch an SVRP-based program in which Columbia men can do work against sexual assault. A survivor of sexual assault himself, he is dedicated to making sure both his sweater-vest alma maters have strict and transparent policies and protections against sexual violence.

People tell him frequently that he “doesn’t seem like the kind of guy who would’ve gone to Exeter.” “What?” he responds. "I don’t seem like an upper-middle-class white guy?"

In fact, for all his dynamic energy, Nate seems reluctant to claim any kind of exceptionality. He must know that he’s wicked smart, a better writer than most of his professors, and more politically sophisticated than most of his peers. But he doesn’t seem to be particularly interested in those facts.

For the boy who would start the revolution, it’s an odd kind of humility. —MHG

Barnard Woman continued from pg 92

we think of the Commissioner?” she barked.

The military look was so three years ago, came the response.

“Do we find him cute or not cute?”

The chant began at the back and worked its way forward. Small hands pumped the air with each syllable, and the jangle of Tiffany heart bracelets tolled in unison.

Not cute.

The commissioner could feel a single drop of sweat roll down his forehead.

“And what is our sentence?” she roared.

With blood lust in their eyes they set upon the Commissioner like the dessert bar at a Sizzler. And just before he was torn to pieces, he thought he heard faintly, somewhere in the distance, the siren song of Clay Aiken.

But it was probably just the wind.  

Cul Hum continued from page 107

rigged jelly beans, will anyone want to buy it? American agribusiness tried to export their bionic grains to Europe a couple of years ago, and, reflecting more than your normal amount of anti-Ameri­can sentiment, the British tabloids reflected popular opinion when they railed against the invasion of “Frankenfood.”

As transatlantic trade battles rage, Sweden sits above, toiling to make the world a better place. No doubt, much of the controversy is rooted in that other Scandinavian country’s increased promi­nence in functional food technology. Yes, it’s those reprehensible malefactors from Finland, seething with fjord-envy. Leave it to the Swedes, damn it! And remember the Aaland Islands! —Pontius Palate

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CAMPUS GOSSIP

Two young men in CU sweatshirts stand at the 72nd Street entrance of Central Park. Contemplating the saffron spectacle before them, they prove once again why Columbia’s athletic record remains at the bottom of the Ivy League:

Student I: Dude, is this a race?
Student II: No... I think it's art.

Student: Do you think emasculation is a useful concept?
Professor: It's what the veterinarian did to my dog. I think that's useful.

Bow Staffer: Is this the line for 212?
Person Standing in Very Long Line in Lerner: No, it's the line for ABBA tickets. [look of confusion overcome Bow staffer] If you want to get a sandwich, just walk inside there.

A WORD FROM THE NUTRITIONISTS
An anthropology professor offered up this bit of dining etiquette: “You are not a snake! You do not swallow rats whole! This is why you have teeth, so you can bite off the rat’s head with your incisors and grind it up with your molars so as not to choke when you swallow.”

From a conversation between a boy and girl, apparently coming back from synagogue:

Girl: She feels horrible about it.
Boy: She does feel horrible. And she should feel horrible. Because she is a horrible person.

A Bow Dispatch From the Front:
“I am currently in Butler computer lab, and there is an elderly (about fifty-five, bespectacled) man in a sweater sitting next to me. He is smiling, and looking at action shots of Anna Kournikova (or is it Maria Sharapova?) playing tennis in skintight uniforms. He’s gone through about forty pictures so far, and he really is smiling. It’s like somebody gave him a present. Now he’s finished the gallery and gone back to reading something in Russian. Its 12:50 a.m. Anyone want to get coffee?”

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March 2005
A bewildered *B&W* staffer found himself pressed against a group of fraternity brothers waiting for drink wristbands at Glass House Rocks. Their analysis of the situation:

“Dude. If there are this many people waiting for wristbands *here*, think how many people there’ll be *inside* waiting for beer. And if there are that many people waiting for *beer*, think how many people there’ll be in the *bars* after they run out of beer...especially after we go back to the house and play mad Beirut for two hours.”

His logic found satisfying, the group departed, taking their syllogisms with them.

EVERYONE LOVES THE BLUE AND WHITE!

A *Blue and White* editor had the good fortune to have the company she keeps reaffirmed by her writing professor:

Prof.: There are some words which one only ever uses in writing and never actually says. “Donned” is one example. No one would ever say that they “don their coat” or “don their hat.”

*B&W*: I have friends who would say that.

Prof.: Well it looks like you’re going to need to get new friends.

From the always educational *Well-Woman* newsletter:

“Ever wonder which has more protein, semen or a pork chop? Look inside for the answer!”

From a lonely hand-painted banner in Lower Level McIntosh:

And the turtles, of course, all the turtles are FREE, as turtles, and maybe ALL people should be.

Large Broad-Shouldered Football-Playing Type 1: Hey, do you want to share a banana?
Large Broad-Shouldered Football-Playing Type 2: Do ya got one?
Large Broad-Shouldered Football-Playing Type 1: Yup.
Large Broad-Shouldered Football-Playing Type 2: Sure.

*N.B. Three people ended up sharing this banana.*

Paging the *OED*! These words were freshly minted by two members of a *B&W* staffer’s creative writing class:

agentic, adj.
Example: “Everybody listens to him...he’s like really agentic.”

uninvisibilize, v.
Example: “Maybe she doesn’t talk to him because she doesn’t want to risk uninvisibilizing herself.”

BULLIET FILES
1971. Iran. Whilst piloting a dune buggy across the vast expanse, Professor Richard Bulliet and a friend in the armed services unexpectedly fall into heated discussion about the viability of camel dung as fuel. Zippo in hand, Bulliet leaps from the vehicle and sets to it. “Two grown men trying to light camel dung.” Hours pass. Nothing. Twenty-four years later, he reflects: “I don’t know the kindling temperature of camel dung, but if any of you could let me know, it would be very appreciated. And we can get the barbecue going.”

Spring...it’s coming!