FEMINISM’S A BITCH
by Avi Zenilman

THE CLONE WARS
by Paul and Philip Fileri

EMBEDDED IN NEW YORK: OR, HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WHINING AND LOVE R.O.T.C.
by Izumi Devalier

PREZBO WANTS YOU!

THE BLUE AND WHITE
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Columbia University in the City of New York
hose ill-fitting suits congregating in Lerner can mean only one thing: Interview Season. Yes, whilst
the students writing theses on Menstruation and the Other toil in the bowels of Butler Library, those
slick econ majors are signing hefty contracts with the Goldmans, Lehmans, and Ben-Gurions of the
world. Are there not other post-college options? Certainly, you can always head off to the mountains,
smoke pot, and masturbate—making money on the side selling t-shirts that read “I got stoned in the
West Bank.” Such is the path of many an illustrious B&W alumnus. This lifestyle would, however,
run counter to social norms that frame one’s existence as but a means to impress potential sexual
partners at college reunions. And what (besides tufty facial hair) truly impresses the ladies? A man in uniform. Yes, Columbians might be
decidedly anti-war, but camouflage is decidedly sexy. Even B&W staffers are not immune to these charms, as evidenced by Izumi Devalier’s fetishization of the ROTC in “Embedded in New York” (p. 8). For over a month, Pvt. Devalier trained alongside Columbia’s army of five, investigating the veracity of that old adage, “Guns don’t kill people. ROTC cadets kill people.”
The only thing sexier than guns, of course, is a Ph.D. Academia may be disconnected from reality, but who wants to associate with our twisted world anyway? Instead, you can have all those gawky, smelly, curiously attractive English undergrads swoon over you. But before you can go to the prof shop to pick out your pipe, corduroy jacket, and ambiguously European affect, you need a dissertation. Luckily for all you would-be postcolonialists, a doctoral defense has gotten surprisingly easy in recent years, as Columbia and other universities have tried to hasten the graduation of TA unionizers. The result? A thesis entitled, “Dude, Where’s My Reliable Symbolic Order? Gross-out Comedies and the Rewriting of the Expressible.” We kid you not. See our collection of the finest doctoral discussions on teletubbies and ethical erections on p. 30.
If all else fails, you could become a stripper. But not if you’re Avi Zenilman. Or his daughter. See “Feminism’s a Bitch” on p. 24, to see why Pat Robertson is wrong and Avi’s mother is right. ★
They call him The Philosopher King.
The summer before his freshman year, he manned a hot dog stand back home in North Carolina. It turned out to be an ideal job. The pay wasn’t too great, but all that down time gave him a chance to catch up on some pleasure reading. In between lunch and the afternoon rush, he managed to get through his first reading of Herodotus. “It was good for just picking up and leaving off again,” he says.

And, while others were satisfied with the 150 assigned pages from Herodotus, Nick Flath, C’07, read all 600. Again. And all of Thucydides, and Boccaccio. For fun. “He’s almost stoic,” says one former Lit Hum classmate.

A double major in Classics and Computer Science and captain of the Quiz Bowl team, he has always been unfazed, if not flat-out excited, by intellectual challenge. Over the years, his family spent time in Japan, and by the age of ten he was basically fluent in Japanese. Back in the States, he continued Japanese classes in middle and high school, and somewhere along the way picked up Latin. In ninth grade, Nick and three of his comrades undertook a four-year cycle of college-level Latin. They became known as “The Latin IV,” and even considered jackets and a formal crest.

But even then, Nick was far from an over-narrow specialist. A friend from home (and former “Latin IV” member) explained: “Nick loves naval ships, is an excellent classical musician on both piano and viola, but was also the first man to get me to seriously listen to ‘Big Poppa.’” That would be track 13 off the first Notorious B.I.G. album, “Ready to Die.” Nick knows all the lyrics. Tupac and Wu-Tang are other favorite artists. Add an affinity for sumo wrestling, a love of opera, and a brown belt in Aikido (he describes it as a Japanese “philosophy of movement”), and you begin to get a fuller picture of Nick Flath, that skinny, blonde-haired boy smiling through a retainer.

While his skills would easily qualify him for a variety of scholarly internships, it seems that Nick would rather indulge his penchant for food vending. At the end of school last year, he responded to an ad on Craigslist to work the counter at a Harlem cake shop. Halfway through the summer, the shop was bought up and the business forced to move out. “The showcase was really empty, but my boss still wanted me to get rid of all the inventory. The last slices of cake were really, really tough to sell. People were justifiably suspicious of the final slice of German chocolate cake.” But in the end, everything went.

When asked what he wants to do later in life, Nick claims to have no master plan. He’s confident he’ll “find a use” for his education. In the meantime, he’s careful not to let studying take over his life. “I don’t think I’ve ever gone to bed after one or one-thirty,” he says. “Last semester my friend and I decided to watch every episode of Dragon Ball-Z. All 270 of them. Make sure that gets in.”

And remember: Nick may answer to “Philosopher King,” but he loves it when you call him Big Poppa. -MEH
What would compel a nice Jewish boy from Long Island to become one of the most outspoken Republicans at Columbia? How did someone pro-choice and pro-gay marriage, who supported Bill Clinton in ’92 and ’96 and Al Gore in 2000—and once even regarded Dick Cheney as a heartless oil baron—end up as president emeritus of the College Republicans and the token conservative columnist at the Spectator? Dennis Schmelzer, C’06, says he doesn’t remember precisely how it happened, but “it was something Bush said about six months after September 11, and it had something to do with Israel.”

Is Dennis a neoconservative? He flatly rejects the label. While he expresses admiration for Henry Kissinger (whom he quotes on his Facebook profile), he also refuses to pigeonhole himself as a foreign policy realist. Indeed, and probably unusually for a registered Republican, he refuses even to identify himself as conservative, preferring instead the term “moderate.” Dennis actually embraces the bulk of the Democratic Party’s domestic platform; he just doesn’t have any faith in the current party leadership to carry it out. His social views, he says, are in line with those of Alan Dershowitz. He doesn’t watch Fox News. He reads only The New York Times and The Washington Post. And while he enthusiastically worked for Bush’s re-election last year, he says he probably would have voted for Joe Lieberman had he received the Democratic nomination.

But Dennis’s self-proclaimed moderation extends past his specific views. It accurately describes both his personality and his approach to political issues in general. Ask Dennis a question, however confrontational, and he ready to receive a genial grin, along with a detailed, balanced, fifteen-minute explanation, complete with arguments, counter-arguments, disclaimers, and a healthy dose of both common sense and common ground. Mimicking his hero William Safire, Dennis describes himself as a contrarian, yet he goes out of his way to make people of whatever political leanings feel comfortable in his presence.

Part of understanding Dennis is understanding where he came from. His father’s biography reads like a transatlantic Forrest Gump’s (though not in terms of mental capability): born in Budapest in 1939, he was rescued from the Nazis by Raoul Wallenberg, only to have his family business nationalized by the post-war Communist government. After participating in the failed 1956 uprising against the Soviet Union, Dennis’s father fled to Austria and then to the United States, where he joined the military and flew missions over Vietnam during the Kennedy years, before returning to New York to work for the defense firm Northrop-Grumman. He also used to know George Soros. Not to mention the founders of the Hungarian Pastry Shop.

Much of Dennis’s political consciousness is rooted in this story. Dennis told me, for instance, well before John Kerry even received his presidential nomination, that Kerry was terribly unpopular among Vietnam vets like his father, and that this would prove to be his undoing. But Dennis also draws from his father’s experience his belief in military interventions to prevent genocide; his appreciation for the freedoms he has in the US; his respect for the military-industrial complex; his firm loyalty to Israel; and his love of Tokaji, a fine Hungarian wine.

Dennis maintains that the Columbia College Republicans, along with the New York GOP, is more diverse and tolerant of dissenting viewpoints than its Democratic counterpart. How else could one explain Dennis’s election to represent a membership almost entirely to the right of him?

But besides support for President Bush, Dennis does share one thing in common with every other Republican on campus: a bond forged by constantly suffering the contempt of the liberal majority. Dennis takes this in stride, believing that actually,
“Columbia is the best place to go as a Republican, because you get challenged a lot.” This, he argues, leaves Columbia Republicans better able to understand their own beliefs. And when one of Dennis’s professors once admitted to hating the GOP in front of the entire class, Dennis genuinely appreciated his honesty.

Dennis’s accomplishments are numerous: he worked for Northrop-Grumman, the U.S. Embassy in Budapest, and the Republican National Convention. He was also recently chosen to be a Presidential Fellow at the Center for the Study of the Presidency, and after he graduates this December, he’ll be moving to Brussels to work for the State Department.

Is there more to Dennis than politics? “Not really,” says Dennis. -DP

MAXIM PINKOVSKY

“He’s always right. Not almost always. Always,” says his former Professor Xaviar Sala-Martin.

Every student in his macro class last year knows his name, and most perk up slightly at its mention. Maxim Pinkovskiy, C’08, was “that kid.”

“He always sat in the front,” one student quickly replied when I asked him what he knew about Maxim. “Always answering everything.”

Some imitate his nasal voice, his plunking, Russian, almost-sounds-put-on accent, and the way he bobs his head as he speaks. Some immediately bring up his white loafers or his pants, which reach midway up his chest.

But while Pinkovskiy shares many of the characteristics of “that kid” from classrooms far and wide, he isn’t another über-driven Columbian looking to get ahead. When we meet, he pulls out my chair for me before sitting down and asks me how my classes are going. He is skinny and pale, with soft brown hair. And when he talks about classes or about books, he reminds me of a kid in a candy store, trying to describe everything he’s seeing. The first time we meet, he wears sweats (pulled way up), a plaid button-down shirt, and big round glasses.

What drives Pinkovskiy is not his hope to secure a summer internship at Morgan Stanley, or a full-time job on Wall Street, but his grandmother, whom he talks about in an almost reverent voice. It was her encouragement that pushed him to do well all through school in Park Slope, where he grew up after emigrating from St. Petersburg when he was seven.

“She never put too much pressure on me,” he said. When he would get a bad grade, “she would say, ‘It’s going to be better next time.’”

Pinkovskiy’s mother is a math teacher, and his father is a computer programmer. When he was younger, he remembers sitting with his mother learning about math. “She always made things fun, whether we were learning about right angles or anything else.”

Some of his fondest childhood memories are spending Friday afternoons with his father, playing with (and later learning how to design) computer programs. “He still teaches me things,” he said. “They both do. And sometimes now I teach them something new too.”

And he has plenty of time to teach. While many of his fellow students pride themselves on their independence, Pinkovskiy spends every weekend home in Brooklyn. It’s not that his parents are forcing him to do so, a fact he stresses more than once. “I don’t want to be one of those students who only sees his family for Thanksgiving and Christmas,” he said.

While he tells me in detail about each class he is taking, he struggles to come up with stories about sneaking into the West End or playing assassins. He is not a member of any of Columbia’s clubs or activities. Friends he mentions fall into two groups: students from class study groups or former professors.

Though he is only a sophomore, Pinkovskiy, who is already taking graduate classes, wants to go to grad school, get his Ph.D. in economics, and work on big problems like his role model, Sala-Martin, does. But his lofty goals are tempered with more traditional hopes. He wants to one day settle down, get married and have children. If possible, he says, he would like to live in Brooklyn, near his family. -AE
The reader would be forgiven if, late some night in the wake of a dissipated soirée, she found herself believing the stories of a handsome, hazy-eyed, dark-voiced man in a smoking jacket and rumpled cravat, inhabiting a haze of rich cigarette smoke and indeterminate maturity. We should all, perhaps, be forgiven for believing such stories, if only because one wants always to believe a man in a cravat.

Nevertheless, it has recently become clear that our own Verily Veritas has been capitalizing on his indeterminate identity and sumptuous smoking jackets in a most unscrupulous way. Here, for example, is a sentence overheard overwhelming an ingenuous attendee of the most recent BLUE AND WHITE party:

“I say, are you really walking all the way to Hamilton Hall? But surely that must be—ah, forgive me, I forget sometimes that it is no longer in its glorious situation on Madison Avenue.”

Or yet again:

“The Greenwich Village? Yes, I had a garret of my own in those quaint environs once. But that was when I was young, and it was easy to be young and poor in The Greenwich Village. In the mornings they would water the streets, and we would buy bouquets of—another whiskey? You're too kind.”

All fine and good, were it not for the sad truth that Verily Veritas never goes below 109th Street. It is possible, in fact, that Verily Veritas has never been below 109th Street. Unless you count Lisbon.

Oh, you proud Columbia Lions!—how stifled sounds your roar in the rarified, unsettlingly symmetrical quarters of Columbia's campus! How dare you call yourselves citizens of the greatest metropolis in the Mid-Atlantic, when even Verily Veritas, one of your soi-disant Sybarites, dares not stray more than a few blocks south of his home-fire?

Such, anyway, was the case put to him recently by one of his Illustrious Editors, who hoped at the very least to put some color into Verily's customarily virid visage. It is perhaps unsurprising that the Illustrious Editor received little satisfaction from Verily's response.

“My dear boy,” (Insufferable affectation!, mused Ill. Ed., smiling stiffly), “you rake me from stem to stern with misapprehensions and misguided missiles. I am not in the least unfamiliar with The Downtown, as you suggest, nor do I demure from an occasional perambulation through The Central Park—though I have noticed of late that many of its occupants have rather a different conception of 'gentlemen's engagements' than was formerly accepted in the better sets. Just last week I nearly made a grave error myself when an impudent rogue offered me satisfaction should I follow him to The Ramble.”

(An unprintable pun, centering around the phrase “a tight spot,” was here uttered, and as rapidly as possible forgotten.)

“What I don’t understand,” continued Verily, “is the Columbian’s desperately libidinous impulse toward the nether regions of our squalid island. Unsatisfied merely to gaze into the clear face of the City, your undergraduate eyes start drifting inexorably downward, and soon you’re roving all over her much-handled form, before, behind, between, above, below! The mere anti-hygienic character of such an excursion is enough to turn one’s stomach.”

Veritas took a long draught of his port, made a face, made a poor any-port-in-a-storm joke, made as if to change the subject.

“But surely,” one found oneself saying, “surely you don’t mean to tell us that you, of all people, find stimulation enough in poor, pathetic Morningside Heights?”

“My boy, listen to me carefully,” said Verily. “How far south have you been? I mean that as a gentlemanly question.”

105th Street.

“And, thence, did you gaze toward points more southerly?”

Certainly not!

“Then I have no qualms whatsoever in assuring you that at 90th Street, the sidewalk veritably ends, and is replaced by a region of darkest chaos, in which the howls of animalistic ravening are intermingled with a sound of human suffering the like of which you cannot conceive; that the lower half of Central Park is a Realm of Disappointment, comprising primarily a Sheep Meadow with no sheep and a Zoo with no giraffes; that the famed nightlife of Greenwich Village resembles nothing so much as that of Greenwich, Connecticut, both in socioeconomic makeup and musical taste; and that the Lower East Side has been actually aflame since the start of the tenement fires in the early nineteen-eighties, and remains uninhabited except by a race of smoke-breathing quadrupedal hell-beasts—mostly natives of Albany, I think.”

A pause.

“Verily, are you serious?”

“Ah! Verily, I am!” —Verily Veritas
Embedded in New York
Or, How I Learned to Stop Whining and Love ROTC.
BY IZUMI DEVALIER

The average Columbia student knows about as much about ROTC as she knows about assembling a rifle. Guns don’t kill people, the thinking goes: ROTC students kill people.

As for what they do when they’re not killing people (which, as it turns out, is always), most students draw a blank. To answer this question, I embedded myself with Columbia’s Reserve Officers’ Training Corps for a month, blending in about as well as a student clad in camouflage blends in on a crowded Manhattan sidewalk.

My life as a soldier began on a bright Friday morning when I was supposed to meet Army Cadet Private Riaz Zaidi, C’08, at 0915 in front of the 116th gates. Friday is a big day for ROTC cadets, with classroom instruction and leadership labs. Unfortunately, Friday is also a big day for drinkers like myself, and I usually spend the hours before noon pleasantly incapacitated.

As I stumbled out of my dorm and began sprinting to our meeting place, I panicked. Having failed to Facebook him in advance, I had no idea what Cadet Zaidi looked like. But then I spotted a tall figure sporting full camouflage and polished black boots. Thank God for conformity.

Columbia students must trek to Fordham University to participate in the New York City Army ROTC program, and to Manhattan College for the Air Force Program. The result of this exile, imposed since 1969 when student rioters prompted Columbia to end the program, has been a gradual dwindling of cadet enlistment. This year, only five Columbia cadets are enrolled in the Army, and three in the Air Force, including a visiting student from Tulane University. Together, they keep a low profile on campus, evading hostile stares as they quietly reconcile their civilian and military lives.

On the subway ride to Fordham’s Lincoln Center Campus, Cadet Zaidi skimmed the ten pages of reading he was assigned from the First Year Military Science (MS) textbook. More than once, I caught passengers staring at him, perhaps suspecting Bloomberg had upgraded subway security. He didn’t seem to care.

Illustrated by Jerone Hsu
When we arrived, the MS1 instructor, Major Riley, was already handing back the previous week’s quizzes. A handsome man in his thirties with closely cropped, dirty-blonde hair, Major Riley is the stuff of ROTC legend. For one, he is sickeningly fit: the Major scored a 414 on the extended scale of the Army’s Physical Fitness Test, which considers 300 a perfect score. He runs a five-minute mile, which he claims is “not that great at all,” and can perform 144 pushups in two minutes. Today he is teaching a tutorial on nutrition.

Major Riley teaches with what one would call the Socratic method, had Socrates been a drill sergeant. Major Riley: “Why do we eat?” Cadet Pham, NYU ’09: “Sustenance, sir!” Major Riley: “What is your body?” Cadet Lombardo, Manhattan College ’09: “An organic process, sir!”

This exchange was followed by a short lecture on the basic rules of healthy eating (“If it doesn’t grow, don’t eat it!”). Then class adjourned, and I went back to my bag of Doritos.

The following Wednesday, I set my alarm for the ungodly hour of 0600 and joined in the Physical Training at Central Park. Even though PT sessions take place three times a week, Cadet 2nd Lieutenant Sean Wilkes, C’06, told me I should start on a Wednesday since it was “light on running.” For someone whose athletic regimen is limited to power-walking the stretch from Lerner Hall to the International Affairs Building when I have a poli sci paper due, this was good news.

I should have known better. When Cadet Zaidi and I arrived at the southwestern entrance of Central Park, the other cadets had already begun filing into formation. Before I could gather what was going on, the senior cadet ordered everyone to begin marching. Then they started sprinting. I did not. I eventually found them stretching on a baseball diamond not far from where we had started. “Thank God that’s over,” I thought, proud of a hard day’s work. Sure, I was panting, but I had completed the run, however clumsily. I remember thinking, “Maybe I’m cut out for the army after all!”

Then the real routine began. Crunches, plyometric jumps, leg lifts, reverse curls, squats, lunges, bicycle kicks, sit-ups, chin-ups, push-ups, push-ups with your arms far apart, one-armed push-ups—did I mention push-ups? I tried to sit out of the exercises, but Major Riley caught me cheating and ordered me back.

By the time we finished my body felt like it was disintegrating. But the other cadets seemed unfazed. After reviewing several marching drills, they dispersed and set off for their morning classes. I spent the rest of the day immobilized in bed.

I was allowed to participate in most ROTC activities despite having blown my cover early on (Major Riley: “So what publication are you from?”). Given my cursory military knowledge, derived from repeated viewings of Spy Game, I had expected the Army to be more secretive. You could say we had our own little Don’t Ask Don’t Tell policy.

Field Training, however, was off-limits. Apparently they require military ID on military bases, and my CUID didn’t count. Field Training allows cadets to apply the skills learned in the MS tutorials and leadership labs to simulated tactical programs, including weapons and survival training. Imagine a giant ropes course with hand grenades, 50-pound rucksacks, rifles, and a lot of shouting.

But compared to some other ROTC regimens, Field Training coddles you. Cadet Wilkes described the Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Warfare exercises as “training seven days a week for five weeks, on about four to five hours of sleep a day, sometimes none. It’s grueling, but you survive.”

In one Chemical Warfare exercise, Wilkes had to walk through a gas chamber filled with CS gas (ortho-chlorobenzylidene-malononitrile). Cadets wore gas masks, but were required to remove them in the middle of the room, state their name and social security number, and answer a simple question such as, “What’s one plus one?”

Cadet Wilkes described the experience in the nonchalant verse of military poetry. “The purpose of this LDAC exercise is to give us experience with putting on our mask and MOPP suit in an NBC environment, and demonstrate the importance of doing so properly,” he said.

“I have an Air Force tradition you might be interested in,” Air Force Cadet Bob Wray, C’06, told me. He was referring to Detachment 506’s
quarter-annual “Dining-In” ceremony. “It’s a formal event, so you’ll have to wear a dress. And by the way, it’s on Long Island.”

When Cadet Wray and I arrived at the American Legion Outpost 958 in East Rockaway, members of the Color Guard, the Air Force’s flag-bearing unit, were already practicing for the opening ceremony.

“Dining-In’ is basically a unit-based formal dinner with a military flavor,” Wray explained, as he carefully transcribed the names of guests onto beige place-cards. While he paced around the room frantically issuing orders (“Has someone asked Major Brown if he wants chicken marsala or roast beef?? Someone make sure the colonel has a parking spot!”), I wandered aimlessly, shaking hands with the 80 or so guests in attendance and making idle chatter with cadets, commissioned officers, and their civilian dates.

One of my fellow civilians, Katherine, was a senior from NYU and by all accounts an ROTC groupie. As the roommate of a cadet, she had attended most of the detachment’s events. When I asked her why she hadn’t simply joined ROTC, she said she preferred being a “partial observer of the community. Plus the food is usually good.”

When the guest of honor, Air Force Colonel John Ranck, arrived, we took our seats. The dinner began with a flag ceremony, followed by a memorial commemorating POWs and persons missing in action.

The dinner itself was “scripted.” This meant that guests were treated to meticulously calibrated dialogue and strange military traditions such as the Grog ceremony, in which cadets devised witty stanzas exposing trivial infractions committed by fellow cadets (Sample: “I hereby spot a crooked bow / Off to the Grog you go!”). The loser drinks out of the Grog bowl, which normally contains a repulsive concoction of low-grade alcohols. But due to the underage audience, this particular Grog bowl contained a purple mixture of diet root beer, Red Bull, protein powder and Lucky Charms cereal.

By the time we had finished our desserts, I was beginning to see why these cadets were so attracted to ROTC. Beyond its military aspects the program offers a tight-knit community, much like a college fraternity, though it certainly has a different rhythm from the one most Columbians are used to.

On the train ride back to Manhattan, the train conductor looked at our group—two of us in elegant dresses and three cadets in full uniform—and exclaimed, “Hey guys, don’t you think it’s a little early for Halloween?” I thought about responding, but decided instead to enjoy the double life for a few more hours.
CU ARTS.COM

YOUR PORTAL TO THE ARTS
ON AND OFF CAMPUS
How many Columbia researchers does it take to invent a lightbulb? Who knows, but it takes about three thousand pencil-pushers to get the patent.

by Eric Wang


But as we learned in Frontiers of Science, it’s also really important—even for people who aren’t pre-med or SEAS. Flummoxed by bureaucracies, scared by chemical drums, and confused by all the numbers, The Blue and White dispatched ace reporter Eric Wang to translate the labyrinthine netherworld of patents at Columbia—apparently they are the engine of the post-industrial economy or something?—for our simple ears.

Granted by governments, patents enforce an inventor’s right of exclusive monopoly over his or her invention. An invention can be anything from Amazon’s “one-click” shopping to an overpriced scooter. And that’s only the start of the fun!


The bureaucracy that handles patents at Columbia is really complicated. The name to remember is Science and Technology Ventures (STV).

If a Columbia scientist thinks her research might be worth a patent, she notifies STV. Then they join up with attorneys from Columbia’s Patent and Licensing Group to make a patent claim. This involves a lot of paperwork—she has to define what exactly the invention is, and note any technologies used in the innovation process. Then, like an anxious high school senior, they mail off the claim to the US Patent Trademark Office and hope for an acceptance letter.

The bureaucracy is also really big.

Getting a patent is not as hard as getting into, say, Columbia. The patent office is pretty overwhelmed, and if you’ve done the work, you’ll usually get what you want. However, just like college, getting in doesn’t mean that you’re set for life. The real money comes from using patents for licensing and business creation. STV handles this. Since its inception, STV has acquired hundreds of licensing deals with companies and established 66 startups. Once STV—usually with the help of a researcher’s expertise and knowledge of the field—strikes a deal, Columbia Patent and Licensing Group attorneys finalize details and hammer out a legally binding license.

If you’re a researcher and you’ve received a patent, you are pretty much a rock star.

The majority of researchers do not have patented work. Many, including several directors of research programs, don’t even know how the process works. Last year Columbia obtained 52 patents, placing it tenth among American universities.

Richard Axel is the biggest rock star, and he’s the reason you’ve lost control of your DNA.

When people call university patent li-
censing a hits-driven business—kind of like Motown, but with physicists—they are probably talking about Columbia Medical School Professor Richard Axel. His groundbreaking discovery of gene-transfer techniques allowed scientists to insert genes into live organisms—and ushered in the biotech revolution. His 1983 patents have generated hundreds of millions of dollars annually.

Columbia can be as greedy as biotech companies when it comes to fighting over patents. And, when it fights, the bureaucracy gets even more complicated.

Patent prosecution is an extremely complex process, filled with loopholes only an overpaid lawyer could love. Through a “continuation filing,” Columbia revived the patents and effectively extended protection of the Axel research beyond the original 17 years (they were supposed to expire in 2000).

This technique, known as “submarine patenting,” was a common tactic until the patent office closed the loophole in 2002.

Thanks to legal pressure from biotech companies such as Amgen and Genentech, Columbia voluntarily suspended licenses from the Axel patents in 2005, and reached undisclosed settlements with most of the biotech companies. The university is still petitioning for another patent to cover the Axel research.

Despite all the legal fireworks, not all patents bring in a lot of money. Although they do fund study breaks!

Most patents don’t bring in that much money, and even great research can fail to yield lucrative patents.

In 1994, Professor Marty Chalfie, along with three other colleagues, published a seminal paper on green fluorescent protein (GFP). Found in jellyfish, this compound fluoresces under ultraviolet light. GFP should be a boon for (legal) drugmakers, allowing researchers to track protein and gene expression.

It’s not exactly clear what happens to all the patent money once Columbia receives it. Some people think this is a problem.

No one seems to know exactly where all the money goes. Lisa Courtney, Business Manager at the Office of the Treasurer and Controller, said that the Innovation Enterprise was in charge of this. The Innovation Enterprise ceased to exist in 2001 when it became STV. Meanwhile, STV Director Dr. Frank Carrigan said the “[money] goes into the Controller’s Office…and then the money is dispersed.” The issue of royalty transparency was raised by the University Senate in 2002, after the Budget Review Committee could not identify where $47.1 million in royalties from fiscal year 2000 had gone.

Researchers don’t really know where a lot of the money goes, either. But they get a little. They seem OK.

Only a fourth of the licensing royalties actually goes back to funding the research itself. The university, the researcher’s department and faculty, and the researcher each get a share. Licensing has not done very much for Professor Chalfie, whose work relies mostly on grants from the National Institute of Health. Professor Silverstein, one of the co-inventors of the Axel patents, stated “I’m sure that some of it is being pissed away…for the most part it’s going back to the university.” But at least we still get our study breaks.
The President, in his top-secret Mobile submarine headquarters on the ocean floor off the coast of Guam, felt the inconceivably massive explosion, which vaporized poor, stupid, Laurie and 85 million other Americans.

Don’t be an asshole, Sam. Nobody actually believes in evolution anymore. Darwin himself didn’t believe it. It WAS a theory that has been disproven time and time again. As for the bible, I could argue for that all day, not with faith, but with facts. Such as evidence of a world wide flood, the ark, propheticness, so on and so on.

When I was 14, my Grandmother died in her house, but her body did not.

I like to talk french, but I can’t very well, so I speak fringlish, it’s mostly french, but the words I don’t know, I say in English. Bonjour, mon chien s’appelle Taz, il est cute et fluffy. J’adore le barbe a papa(cotton Candy(I think)) est-ce que tu aime le barbe a papa? Si tu do, repond a ce message. Le video Sisterhood of the travelling Pants a etre tres bien, ce video a faire mes amis tres triste, elles cried, Mais je ne cry pas

When Agent Smith sews Neo’s mouth shut, he reacts by trying to open it. Effectively, Neo spends the entirety of Act One realizing that he needs to open his mouth, Act Two learning what to say, and Act Three communicating it as forcefully as possible.

No they say the cradle of CIVILISATION is in iraq or some shit, not mankind, that’s ethiopia/kenya/tanzania(one of them).
Thus in this way are smaller societies microcosms of larger ones. This mutualism governs the relationship of the individual and the world.

In the same way that we know that lemons are sour, we know that fascism is bad, that Saddam was evil and that the New World was found in 1492.

But otherwise, says the customary view, women were chattel.

If I were to think of educational subjects as a Swanson Hungry Man TV dinner: The fried chicken would be the main course in the biggest compartment with mashed potatoes in the upper left compartment and moving across the top, green peas and of course, some sort of dessert, most likely cranberry strudel. In my mind, science is the fried chicken. In this example, the mashed potatoes and cranberry strudel don’t matter, though they would if I was actually eating this meal.

I’m a fourteen-year-old boy trapped in an eighteen-year-old-girl’s body. What do I mean by this? Well, basically that I have a really dirty and immature sense of humor. But to branch out a bit, this also means that I relate well to guys and non-girly-girls, which I’ve found to be useful in my writing.

Neo struggles to decide whether or not he will seek the truth, effectively becoming his own antagonist in his attempt to discover the Matrix.

The whirling dervishes are Sufis. My grandmother is into all kinds of spiritual things and she asked me to go see them with her, so I did. Basically, it was like going to someone else’s two and a half hour temple service – pretty boring. However, I did learn a little something when the whirling dervishes finally came out (which was an hour and a half in). What they do is spin.

Once upon a time there was a loaf of bread named Jean Paul Gaultier. He put holes in bread for nefarious purposes.

Moving asymptotically, asymptotically, the brief biographical sketch that prefaces Peter H. Lee’s “The Rainy Season” is subtly paradigmatic as both cryptic and cryptographic, naming and asserting in order to both obscure and divulge.

“Trapition is like tradition, but it’s mispeled [sic].”

With certain principles in mind that I refused to sacrifice, I continued to adhere to my patients...

They were lying when they said the world was round. Because it was actually star-shaped. Like that noodle soup that Andy Warhol would have painted except he did chicken noodle instead. Then he was shot!

With those psychiatrist’s words, my father and I heaved a sigh of relief. A behavioral disability was the painless solution both parties had been looking for, a sort of God-given burden that doubled as an exquisite excuse for the rancid contours of my character, one I would need more and more often as I grew up.

“But a colonoscopy outside a doctor’s office would be sexual assault.”

He’d once told me that his mother chose the name because she had survived a suicide attempt involving painkillers and had interpreted her resuscitation - and, by extension, his birth - as an act of God. In reality, though, I found later that this was simply untrue. That it was not Martha Tronell who bestowed her son with his peculiar name but the Bayer corporation itself, which had bought the rights to name Aspirin when he was still in his mother’s womb.

Katherine hauled her husband’s body down the flight of stairs and through the back door into the garage. She lifted his body into the passenger seat of their new, black SUV and clicked the seatbelt into place. Click it or ticket she giggled to herself. She got into the driver’s seat and pulled out of the driveway. She hummed “It’s Raining Men” while she drove.
On entering the US before starting at Columbia, I was asked by the Immigration Officer which subject I was planning to study. “Philosophy,” I said. The man’s response was immediate: “So…tell me the meaning of life!”

This man’s view of philosophy as being about life, death, love, and other individual quandaries is not uncommon. Yet attend a philosophy class in any good North American university and you get a very different impression. Philosophers talk not about the meaning of life but about the *a priori*, utilitarianism, and Kantian Idealism. A philosophy major is more likely to be headed for law school than for a life of existential meditation.

The misconception about philosophy arises because most philosophers in Anglophone countries practice so-called “analytic” philosophy. They endeavor to write plainly, using the tools of formal logic in their arguments, and they often address highly abstract issues such as the nature of concepts, justification, knowledge, and ethics. This analytic philosophy (practiced by people like Russell, Quine, and Rawls) is often contrasted with “continental” philosophy, as practiced in France and Germany by figures such as Nietzsche, Sartre, and Foucault. Continental philosophers tend to treat more human issues, and write in more literary (though not necessarily less difficult) prose.

At American universities, much of the reading of continental philosophers takes place in humanities departments outside philosophy (which might explain why your CC preceptor never shuts up about Kierkegaard). France, as ever, does things differently. There, much more continental philosophy is studied in philosophy departments, while the analytic philosophy of the last century is less significant.

Given France’s different focus, it might seem fitting that when a profes-
sor of philosophy at the Collège de France visited Columbia in early October, he spoke not only about Michel Foucault’s *The Order of Things*, but also about cannibalism and Captain Cook, and something called “biosocial identity.” Yet this professor, Ian Hacking, was not a Frenchman but a Canadian, and not a continental philosopher but an important figure in the analytic philosophy of science.

Hacking is an exception among philosophers. Following a narrow analytic training, he has written on topics ranging from race to multiple personality, from social constructs to the history of probability theory. Yet he sees himself not as an interdisciplinary hybrid, but as an analytic philosopher applying his discipline to untraditional questions.

Hacking displayed his distinctive approach in his lecture on Foucault at the Schapiro Center on October 6. In a measured, confident tone, Hacking evoked the electric reaction to Foucault’s early work, focusing on the complete rethinking of the idea of madness in the Frenchman’s 1961 book *Madness and Civilization*. Foucault shows that from around 1650 to 1800, madness was considered a person’s deliberate choice of “unreason” (*déraison*) over conformity to the standard bourgeois rationality. Yet this conception of madness was soon supplanted. In the nineteenth century, madness became (and remains) not a choice relative to a particular cultural context but an objective mental illness, and it is the idea of madness as objective that Foucault attacks.

Hacking explored Foucault’s argument through the idea of “unreason.” For Hacking, the following sentence from Foucault is key:

> We must understand it [unreason] not as reason diseased, or as reason lost or alienated, but quite simply as reason dazzled.

It is this sort of dazzlement that after the eighteenth century ceased to manifest itself, except in the “flashes of lightning” found in the works of Hölderlin, Nietzsche, and Artaud, who all resisted the “gigantic moral imprisonment” that overcame their societies.

Speaking more personally, Hacking explained how Foucault’s philosophical tools and insights allowed him to do philosophy in a “new way,” to the point where he described a book he wrote on probability as a footnote to Foucault. Yet despite Hacking’s obvious admiration for much of Foucault’s work, he is no true believer. In an appendix to *Madness and Civilization*, Foucault wrote:

> Western madness has become a non-language because it has become a double language ... i.e. a matrix of the language which strictly speaking says nothing.

Hacking noted that this “very, very fanciful” linguistic philosophy is so at odds with Anglophone philosophy of language that he can’t understand it. Perhaps this is to his credit. Hacking is no mere exegete: he uses Foucault and other thinkers only when they enhance his own ideas.

A recent example of such an idea is that of “biosocial” identity, which Hacking discussed on October 5 at Akeel Bilgrami’s weekly seminar on identity and liberalism at Columbia’s Heyman Center. As Hacking explained, biosocial groups occur when people form a social group on the basis a shared biological trait. Until recently, most biosocial groups were families or larger ethnic groups. But in the last 20 years, various new kinds of biosocial group have sprung up, made possible by our increasing ability (mostly through genetics) to demonstrate biological differences between people. There are now communes for people born deaf, and lobby groups for people with various conditions (such as autism) that double as groups for socializing and solidarity.

Hacking’s isolation of the biological component of identity could provide a fruitful new way to think about modern identity. Yet frustratingly, he did little more than speculate on how important biosocial identity might become, while his frequent personal anecdotes were not quite interesting enough to make up for the lack of substance.

This is the problem of leaving your discipline: you risk spreading yourself too thin to produce any substantial ideas. This risk probably discourages other analytic philosophers from engaging in continental philosophy as Hacking has done, as there is so much difficult material to digest in both traditions. Yet, as Hacking shows, it is important that there be interaction between the traditions. Philosophical brilliance is a rarity, and philosophers should make use of it, from whichever tradition it happens to come.

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France, as ever, does things differently.
Some places on the New York subway map seem so disconnected from reality (read: Manhattan) that one may ask, “Why does the subway go that far?” The sleepy community of Ozone Park provides an answer... sort of. In the midst of residential tranquility lies a story of gangsters, horses, and really good soup.

Ozone Park lies in the southwest corner of Queens, to the west of JFK Airport and half a mile north of Jamaica Bay. It is a quiet, calm place, whose long straight streets are lined with well-kept little houses, many of which have small lawn statues of the Virgin Mary or donkeys pulling carts. A community that in some ways could not look more American, it is home to many recent immigrants, making Ozone Park a slightly odd mix of car-repair shops, baked goods equipment stores, and at least two storefronts next door to each other that specialize in sending packages direct to Guyana.

11:00 a.m.
Culture Clash
For a late breakfast, walk a few blocks from the A train’s 104th Street stop to C & C Italian Deli, at the corner of Centreville and Eckford Sts. From the outside, it looks like a standard deli that is bound to have brown floors, dirty bottles of Diet Coke, and the odd herbal additive next to the checkout counter. Sure enough, first impressions do not lie, but the run-down look is tempered by large, festive sausages hanging from the ceiling and an impressive array of marinated vegetables, like artichokes and red peppers. The embodiment of this strange synthesis of deli and Italian market is the omelette with two eggs, sopressata sausage, and provolone cheese. Order it to go, and eat it in the Centreville playground across the street.

11:30 a.m.
Horses and Discounts
Ozone Park’s main attraction is an icon of a bygone era, the Aqueduct Racetrack, affectionately known as The Big A. The racetrack offers 39 days of horse-racing in November and December. In recent years, it has been rebuilt and renovated—it is still an impressive sight. On Saturday, Sunday, and Tuesday, the Aqueduct Flea Market sets up shop in one of the parking lots, featuring tchotchkes, trash, and treasures alike.
1:00 p.m.
*Back on Track*
At the busy intersection of 103rd Avenue and Woodhaven Blvd., a small bungalow is home to the chiropractic services of Dr. Joseph Mancusi. The building’s owner has set up a nice homemade wine operation downstairs. And the product doesn’t even make you blind!

2:00 p.m.
*More than a Soupçon*
A tiny storefront with about 10 tables and a small counter, 101 Café (101st Avenue between 98th and 99th streets) has an enormous dinner menu with wraps and excellent coffee. But what sets this local hangout apart are the homemade soups. Available in decent-sized cups or enormous bowls, the three soups change daily and are reliably wonderful, but if split pea soup is listed, do not wait for your waitress to ask for your selection. This extremely thick, salty soup seems to have been invented for a rainy autumn day.

3:00 p.m.
*No Tourists, Just a Mob*
When you walk out of 101 Café, look across the street to a two-story building with papered up windows to the left of the party supplies store. This humble edifice used to be John Gotti’s hangout, the Bergin Hunt and Fish Club. While Cyndi Lauper may be Ozone Park’s most famous hometown girl, Gotti’s influence on the neighborhood was enormous. 108th Street appears to be just another set of charming residential blocks, But before prison, death, and *Growing Up Gotti*, the boss of the Gambino family lived in nearby Howard Beach, and once a year, Gotti threw a huge block party there, handing out free food and making sure that everyone cleaned up after themselves. Now, Gotti’s legacy has been reduced to a closed storefront, an empty street, and the occasional rumor about Jimmy Hoffa’s body.

4:00 p.m.
*Coming Home*
Any great adventure must end with an elegant escape. As you walk southward to Howard Beach, observe the oddity of traffic lights that lack a yellow light. Once in Howard Beach, make your way to the A train’s Howard Beach-JFK Airport stop. In the midst of a low-slung row of shops and an abundance of perfect bungalows stands the massive train station, a sleek, modern concrete bridge that seems utterly at odds with its surroundings, and thus perfect for this little area of contradictions. Rather than taking the A train back to Manhattan, board the AirTrain to JFK. Find a flight to Newark and enjoy a cup of coffee. Once in Newark, take a bus to the Port Authority bus terminal, get back on the A train to 59th Street, and transfer to the 1. This excursion will have still taken less time than a ride back on the A train.

—*Mark Krotov*
The Actress and the Ecstasy

Why Isabelle Huppert is the greatest French cultural innovation since the ménage à trois. By IGGY CORTEZ

Most Colombians know Isabelle Huppert as “that actress I had never heard of” who’s billing followed Dustin Hoffman’s on I Heart Huckabees’ posters last year. A smaller, but more fortunate, contingent may know her through The Piano Teacher—if only for the enormous poster hanging from the ceiling of Kim’s—in which she portrays a buttoned-up piano instructor whose tight coiffures and erect posture conceal a hidden life of self-destructive sexual desire. But few know her for the breadth of her brilliant career—the child-woman roles of the early seventies, the enduring creative affinity with director Claude Chabrol, and the frequent forays into dark territory that have given her a reputation for creative fearlessness.

While Huppert’s acclaim in America has been sparse compared to that of some of her French colleagues, this past October she was the focal point of some of New York City’s central cultural events, in what Professor Tom Bishop of NYU called a “type of manifestation I have never seen before for an actor.” Huppert was a power-house in Sarah Kane’s experimental play 4.48 Psychose at the Brooklyn Art Museum—in which she stood still for two hours, reciting a monologue about suicide, a feat that would have easily imploded in the hands of any lesser actor. She gave a deceptively bashful speech at the opening of an ongoing 26 film retrospective of her career at MoMA, and was interviewed by Tom Bishop and Judith Miller at a public discussion at NYU. A book of photo portraits of Huppert, who has been photographed by some of photography’s greats—from Cartier-Bresson to Nan Goldin—was also published at the end of the month in conjunction with a sister exhibit at PS1 Center of Contemporary Art.

While the curators at these institutions should be commended on their excellent taste (Huppert is one of the greatest artists of our time, working in any medium), their advocating of Huppert’s addition to a canon normally reserved for auteurs is not as adventurous as it may appear. Huppert’s stature has been gaining in the American press for the past few years—not as just another talented actor, but as someone exciting and mysterious, who challenges the most standard assumptions of what it means to be an actor. In a review of The Promised Life, J.Hoberman almost entirely disregarded the film to sing his praises of Huppert, calling her a “superb actress.
[who] can register more fugitive shifts in expression in a single take than most actresses manage in an entire movie. ... If it was Marlon Brando's genius to render the inarticulate eloquent, it is this most introspective of performers' genius to distinguish 47 varieties of blankness."

In other words, this sudden New York acclaim does nothing but confirm what many have long known: that Huppert is the embodiment of the actor as auteur, an artist whose particular vision structures a film, rather than simply being a formal element of it. The idea of the actor-auteur is not particularly original, but no other actor—not even the great Brando—has produced a body of work in which the actor-as-auteur theory can be applied so convincingly.

Her secret lies partly in the deeply unconventional way in which she approaches acting. Julia Kristeva, a Bulgarian feminist philosopher, points out that Huppert approaches her character not as a different person to be mimicked, but as a revision and interrogation of herself. The famous portrait in which Huppert impersonates Greta Garbo, the actress with whom she is most often compared, seems to crystallize this: while most actors would straightforwardly imitate Garbo, Huppert somehow effortlessly, powerfully evokes her.

One of the things Huppert shares with Garbo is an affinity for close-up shots, and therein lies another key to Huppert's art. The directors Huppert has worked with have wisely exploited close-ups on her remarkable face, which registers the slightest inflection of emotion—distilling, purifying and amplifying it. There is a remarkable moment in The Piano Teacher when her gaze remains immobile as she attempts to resist falling in love with a younger student. Her face doesn't move, but there is a distinct skepticism in her austerity, a gradual wetening of the eyes; it is the distillation of such enormous feelings with such exactness that makes this moment in cinema just as powerful as the secret permeating Angkor Wat in In the Mood for Love, or the blonde girl screaming inaudibly across the beach at the end of La Dolce Vita.

Given all this talent, it may seem surprising that a Susan Sontag essay enumerating Huppert's five essential qualities listed beauty as the first. But this is beauty as understood in a pagan sense, wherein beauty of the face signifies inner profundity. Barthes famously called the face of Garbo "an idea," in contrast with the pure emotional appeal of Audrey Hepburn's face, which he called "the event." Throughout her long career it has been Huppert's genius to embody both the idea and the event at once, with a subtlety uniquely her own.❖
CROCUSES

You know that time of year when
no one can really say how cold it is?

Manhattan mothers swelter in heavy coats,
push strollers of swaddled babies

past throngs of college students shivering
in corduroy, too drunk on sunlight to notice.

That time of year when spring playfully
purses her fat pink lips, toys with city
crocuses as sturdy as front porches,
as easily crushed as paper cups.

Do you know the bitter smell
of that second frost?

By now the doormen in perennial tassels
expect that lurking saboteur, that slow

but steady creep from tree to mossy tree
as Canada’s ice crusts over New York.

The frost that stalls the engine,
the frost that douses purple flames.

—Hannah Goldfield
ANOTHER MEANING OF NIGHT

It is my misfortune to have nothing to give but anachronism,
Potential that has no part in the final turn of the wheel,
Though it is more your misfortune, for even now
You stand counting off the minutes
On that watch you have worried too long.

We can accept defeat, or
We are left to atrophy without acceptance. And
it must be better to accept the life-sprung death before it passes us.

Stop nervously glancing after looking at your watch. Stop
Shining that flashlight under park benches and behind fountains.
Stop pacing and humming. Stop tapping and twittering.

And anachronism is not for us;
It bends into our time, our watches.
Potential before the closing days stagnates
Without fully existing, without unfolding.

All turn to look at you and me,
Pupils dilated and palms sweaty,
Their necks aflame and their backs tense.

And, whirling your light above your head,
You run across the street and shout before
Landing on the damp grass. They
Are in anguish but I tell them,
“Darkness is the best element after water, so swim.”

—Katie Reedy
BOOK REVIEW

Feminism's a Bitch

Female Chauvinist Pigs
Ariel Levy
Free Press
240 pages, $25.00

Making fun of liberals to justify a false notion of moral clarity is an easy way to make political friends, and popular culture is a pretty good place to start: how many times have you seen or read that Sex and the City is amoral, Girls Gone Wild is degrading to women, and that something is deeply, deeply wrong with our values?

When a conservative public figure delivers this kind of straight talk, my reaction is visceral: what a moral absolutist prude. When a famous liberal succumbs to this addiction to false clarity, I get equally annoyed: he's trying to look tough. However, when my mother—a hilariously left-wing social worker who called me last year in a panic when she read about Hillary Clinton’s mild skepticism on abortion (“HONEY, DO THE DEMOCRATS CARE ANYMORE ABOUT A WOMAN’S RIGHT TO CHOOSE!?”)—gives me the same lecture, it’s not only her nasal shriek that gets under my skin; it’s the gut feeling that she’s probably right.

So what’s the difference between Pat Robertson and my Jewish mother? Can liberalism offer a genuine critique of our sexual culture, or is that the exclusive domain of right-wing misogyny? Ariel Levy struggles with these questions in Female Chauvinist Pigs, and she brings a kinetic rage to her prose. Though her argument is convincing, there is a sense of trapped angst, a feeling that the rightness of her annoyance doesn’t matter because society has pressed the mute button and can tune out her yelling. Before examining why Levy’s book feels both entirely correct and futile, it should be made clear why Rev. Robertson would decry her while my mother would probably tell me to marry her and move to Park Slope.

A Female Chauvinist Pig (FCP), according to Levy, is the strange love-child of, well, feminism and male chauvinism: “She is post-feminist. She is funny. She gets it. She doesn’t mind cartoonish stereotypes of female sexuality, and she doesn’t mind a cartoonishly macho response to them.” The FCP cusses like a man, likes porn like a man, hates prissiness like a man, drinks beer like a man, and sometimes pole-dances and makes out with a girl to be ironic. And to impress men. This is where Levy sees a problem. “It can be fun to

Illustrated by Jerone Hsu
feel exceptional,” she writes. “But if you are the exception that proves the rule, and the rule is that women are inferior, you haven’t made any progress.”

Is the FCP actually evidence of something wrong, or is it proof that feminism has succeeded? Levy’s main point is that feminism’s goal is gender equality, not just a certain kind of sexual freedom. When an HBO female executive—comfortable in her success in a man’s world—bristles at the idea that there’s something exploitative about glorifying strippers, you kind of want Levy to lay off and give it up. But when she notes that, as of 2003, only 17 percent of mainstream Hollywood directors, producers, editors, screenwriters, and cinematographers were female, you start to think her frustration is valid.

She travels around with the (female) producers of *The Man Show* and *Girls Gone Wild*—intelligent, powerful women who view the women they film with a weirdly sexist dismay. She looks at the rapidly expanding subcultures of fake-stripper high school girls, fake-stripper single professional women, fake-boy lesbians, and fake-happy strippers. She watches *Sex and the City*, lamenting how it turns sex into an accumulative process similar to buying shoes, and how, for all its post-idealist radicalism, it ended on a tried-and-true note, each woman happy and monogamous with her Prince Charming. But at least Carrie Bradshaw was a real person, Levy somewhat hysterically exclaims. “The women who are really being emulated and obsessed over in our culture right now—strippers, porn stars, pinups—aren’t even people.” They are just images with “no ideas, no feelings, no political beliefs, no relationships, no past, no future, no humanity.” In the course of her exploration she discovers that, while there are liberated women who really are living the post-feminist dream, there are a lot more who are feebly using public displays of sexuality as a replacement for real empowerment. This is not a sexually healthy society, Levy argues; it is one that is relying on a superficial, misleading, perversely Disneyfied version of sex for guidance.

But what is a dismayed feminist to do? “Nobody wants to be their mother,” Levy writes. I think this gets at liberalism and feminism’s real dilemma, and not only because she and my mother agree. As a legal doctrine, liberalism is characterized by the extremely high value it puts on choice and individual rights—it holds that law should only do so much, and it envisions a society heavily based on the right to choose.

However, things get all mucked up when people make choices that liberals think should be legal but also find stupid. Levy is happy the women have these choices, but she thinks they’re not really taking advantage of them. She chides conservatives—who often watch the same trash liberals do—for supporting abstinence-only education, dismissing birth control, opposing gay marriage, and making sex something we see on TV but don’t talk about honestly. She’s convincing on this front, too, but attacking the Bush administration doesn’t make for an original book these days. However, attack both the religious right and secular pop culture and you’re onto something interesting, even if you end up as the hectoring mother who no one wants to be anymore.

It’s hard to criticize women’s sexual behavior without making it sound like you are issuing a blanket, priggish denial of woman’s sexuality. The criticism of post-feminism is not political or legal, but cultural, and sometimes it seems that there’s no progressive vocabulary in which to couch it. Sure, Levy can say she respects women’s choices—isn’t the ultimate sign of respect to openly take on someone’s ideas?—but it sounds like a weak caveat. She is trying to find a way to explain that the practice of post-feminism is not living up to its theory, but at the same time one can’t help but wonder whether her form of feminism is equally untenable. Caught between the two ideals of freedom and equality, fighting both Carrie Bradshaw and George W. Bush, Levy can only try to get hip liberals and humorless feminists back on the same page (or, as they used to say, subvert the dominant paradigm!), and hope all her sound and fury will signify something. -Avi Zenilman
The Clone Wars

NYU may have Mary Kate and Ashley, but Columbia’s got Jessica and Allison...not to mention Paul and Phil. What happens when The Blue and White asks one set of twins to investigate another? The universe may not have imploded, but the premise of one amazing porn flick may have inadvertently been discovered.

By Paul Fileri and Philip Fileri

Yes, they’re quite similar. But we doubt that’s escaped your attention over the past three years. After all, regular sightings of Allison and Jessica Cohen, C’06, around campus don’t require much effort, given that they travel as a duo, wear practically identical outfits every day, often walk in lockstep, and just happen to be twins of unmistakable physical likeness. Edit this into an exuberant thirty-second clip, and you’d have the makings of your very own Doublemint Gum ad. By the standards of this school, that’s more than enough to achieve minor celebrity status.

To a large part of the current senior class, Allison and Jessica remain known only by the tag they received early their freshman year: “the Carman twins.”

Little did they realize that choosing to share a double on the eleventh floor of that first-year holding pen would mean binding their identity to the name of the dismal specimen of brutalist architecture for years. A Spectator feature on the pair in the spring of that year cemented their high profile and effectively ratiﬁed the moniker for the record.

But what lies beyond this public image, beyond all the intimations of twin companionship run amok, sisterly closeness taken to a disturbing extreme? The Blue and White pondered this question with idle bemusement...
mester after semester, before finally acknowledging the matter’s urgency and setting out to obtain some answers. However, such answers were somewhat less than forthcoming.

This speculation had to cease, and we had to hear the sisters speak for themselves. But asked to offer one or two ways in which she distinguished herself from Jessica, Allison just laughed. Perhaps it was a tiresome request that could only call forth a rote response, formulated long ago. After a pause, the reply came: “we’re pretty much alike.” Jessica, to be fair, initially pointed out that one difference could be seen in their matching necklaces, each of which bears the wearer’s name. Stymied!

Two of the twins’ good friends (they have all the same friends, they attest) were ready, thankfully, to run down a series of distinctions. One likes blue, the other prefers purple. One chooses Coke, the other orders Dr. Pepper. Allison, the younger of the fraternal twins by one minute, is slightly shorter than her sister, and has a rounder face framed by curlier hair. Another bit of information gleaned: Jessica has the higher voice, but Allison has “bigger feet.”

While we were struck by how equally often each giggled during our interviews, one friend pegged Allison as cheerier and goofier, and Jessica more serious and direct. More ominously, though they are both “the sweetest, nicest people ever,” we were informed that “one will get angry faster, while the other will hold the grudge longer.” But more striking than their subtle differences was the comprehensive way in which their interests converged: the same extracurricular affiliations, the same enthusiasm for going clubbing on the weekend, the same courses, the same intention to continue their study of chemistry at the graduate level and focus on oncology research. All interesting as far as it goes—this roughly drawn sketch of comparisons—but alas, none of it was the stuff of revelation.

In the end, like all sharp B&W correspondents, we summoned the rigor, the certainty, and the social scientistic veneer of the psychological survey. If you were a tree, what kind would you be? What would you name your hypothetical triplet sister? Genetic cloning: good or bad idea? Most annoying aspect of Columbia? Which is it, blue or white? To the last three questions, we found consensus: good idea (within limits), bureaucratic hassles, blue. A gaping abyss of dissent, however, opened between their first two responses. We were left with this: Allison, the white maple, welcoming her new sister Elizabeth; and Jessica, the palm tree, desiring a Michelle.

It probably means nothing. Yes, they’re quite similar.

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Steve Martin’s “WASP” in the Lerner Black Box
Thursday, Nov. 10, 8:00 PM
Friday, Nov. 11, 8:00 PM
Saturday Nov. 12, 8:00 & 11:00 PM
Sponsored by the Office of the University Chaplain

The Merchant of Venice in the Roone Arledge Auditorium
Thursday, November 17, 8:00 pm
Friday, November 18, 8:00 pm
Saturday, November 19, 8:00 pm

www.columbia.edu/cu/shakespeare/
“THE BLUE AND WHITE...isn’t that a religious magazine? Are you some sort of Zionist publication?” No, and no. Not even secretly.

But, like any good tribe, we keep a sharp eye on our community’s needs, and a sharper eye on the movements of our rivals. And, when it was revealed that the Columbia Daily Spectator was publishing “La Pagina,” a one-page Spanish supplement to the paper to better serve its Spanish-speaking readers, we knew that there was a final misguided stereotype to exploit.

So, after much preparation, THE BLUE AND WHITE presents “HaDaf,” a one page Hebrew supplement for the local Hebraic community. After a little bit of cajoling, the editor of the new political magazine THE CURRENT Bari Weiss relented and agreed to write it. No vaguely imperialist sentiments! we cried, and she—along with anyone else who was in the Hillel computer lab from noon to 2 p.m. on Sunday, October 30—assented to our demands by writing about chocolate milk in a bag. L’Chaim!

1. שוק בשקית
2. כולם ידעו שארית ישראל על רבה ברגים. האם כולם ידעו? איזה ידוע נלך בהר?
3. והعرب 앞 חלול ובורים. הערלים מרגים דרים. אל הפרברים נפרדוquez. כולם ידעו בצרות ולא🇲בוסים בсужל.
4. והعرب לפני חלול ובורים. אל הפרברים נפרדוquez. כולם ידעו בצרות ולא苁וזים בсужל.
5. אל הפרברים נפרדוquez. ידוע בצרות ולא苁וזים בשקית!
6.鲛ה! מעשה באקエリア שוק בשקית.
7. שוק בשקית בשקית בלעתיי = ambrosia of the gods.
8. גידי לים יאום קרבו של שוק בשקית.
9. שוק—שמית!
10. שוק—ספגן!
The 112th Annual Varsity Show

ACTORS – SINGERS – DANCERS
COMEDIANS – IMPROVISORS:

Cast Auditions: Week of November 14th
Times/Locations TBA – Stay Tuned for Details


Get Involved!
1st Info session to be held in mid-November – Stay Tuned for Details

Any & All Questions:
Email varsity@columbia.edu
A rumor persists that the behavioral psychologist B.F. Skinner raised his second daughter in a
3x4-foot box and, lo and behold, she grew up to be a suicidal basket case. The obvious question on
all our minds is, why didn’t he just send her to graduate school? Physical and emotional isola-
tion? Check. 24-hour fluorescent lighting? Check. Years spent in a world so esoteric and abstract
you start writing fan mail to Heidegger and referring to him in conversation as “Marty”—shit,
we’ll take the box. The dissertation chronicles the grad student’s psychological and social deteriora-
tion. It’s the black box found among the burning wreckage of what was once a functional aircraft.
Friends and family pore over it, grasping for some clue as to what became of the person they once
knew. With this anthropological mission in mind, we present to you actual dissertations by some of
academia’s brightest minds, twisted after so many years of darkness.

Of goat glands, potency pills, and other conju-
gal acts (Creative nonfiction)
Rigby, Lawrence Dale, University of Missouri

Dude, Where’s My Reliable Symbolic Order?
Gross-out Comedies and the Rewriting of the
Expressible
Reidel, Luthe, Mohawk Valley Community College

When book-smart is not life-smart: Contexts of
sex risk at an Ivy-League university
Fry, Dana Lorrain, University of Pennsylvania

Toward a stupid composition: Critical peda-
gogy and the possibility of political hope
Edbauer, Jennifer Hope, University of Texas

Taking Away the Threat: Cribs and the Os-
bournes as Narratives of Domestication
Escoffery, David and Michelle Sullivan,
South Missouri State U.

The fantasy factory: Manufacturing pornog-
rphic ideologies
Flowers, Amy Lynn, USC
“Phone-sex offers described sexual communica-
tion, but the carnal reality based in solitude as
much as communion. There is no ‘objective’ meet-
ing of penis and vagina.”

‘No one does this for fun’: Contextualization
and process writing in an organic chemistry
laboratory course
Gay, Andrea, Columbia University Teachers College

Ethical erections? Politics and desire in discur-
sive constructions of the profeminist sexual self
Robinson, Philip W., Carleton University

Time for Teletubbies: Childhood, child partici-
pation, and the struggle for meaning
Cowart, Agatha Anne University of North Texas
“A textual analysis is presented, including the
methodologies of narrative theory, semiotics/struc-
turalism, and poststructuralism.”

The rhetoric of caution: How the rhetorical
strategies of President Bill ‘Comeback Kid’
Clinton facilitate his desire for control without
commitment
Escoffery, Leonie Isolyn, Florida Atlantic University
“When viewed from this angle of the critical prism,
what the President’s opponents portray as ‘slick’
can justifiably be characterized as ‘flexible.’”

Searching for a pragmatic aesthetic: The rhe-
torical strategies of Gangsta rappers. Myths,
rituals, and dramas of an outlaw music (2Pac,
Ice Cube, Snoop Doggy Dogg, Dr. Dre)
Warner, Ede, Jr., Wayne State University

Glorying boy holes: Masculinity, submission,
and the performativity of identity in ‘Coriola-
nus’ (William Shakespeare)
Solomon, Jesse, Emory
University
—Compiled by
Izumi Devalier

Illustrated by Jerone Hsu
CAMPUS GOSSIP

From the French Cultural Society alias:
“TO all those offended by the previous invitation,
Our sincerest apologies for having maligned your sensibilities with the use of the term ‘coon-ass.’ That is the common term within Louisiana and the gulf states for a person from Louisiana, usually of Creole or Cajun descent. It is not a racial term in any way, shape or form. Never has been, never will be. ‘Coon-ass’ is to Louisiana what ‘redneck’ is to Arkansas and Texas and ‘yankee’ is to New England. As a native of Lafayette, LA, I am a coon-ass, and the term is an endearment to my family, who have deep roots in the state. We in the FCS and Culinary Society apologize for the confusion.”

CHECK THE LOX ON YOUR DOORS!

From a letter taped to a door on the Upper West Side:
“I am a resident of [###] W. 82nd street. I live in the garden apartment and I am writing to inform you of an ongoing situation that has only been getting worse. Over the past two months someone from one of these buildings on 83rd street, approximately [###] 83rd street has thrown a fresh plain bagel into my yard. This has occurred on numerous occasions. The past two incidents have occurred when my wife and child have been in the yard, clearly indicating that it is the intention of this person to harm my wife and or child. We have therefore filed a complaint with the 20th precinct regarding this matter. If this does stop immediately we will have no choice but to investigate and prosecute to the full extent of the law.”

Acronym for the new Columbia Science, Math, and Engineering Secondary School: CSMESS.

YOU KNOW YOU’RE AT A REFORM SERVICE WHEN…

Overheard at Hillel’s Kol Nidre:
Yenta-in-training: “Yeah, so my friend in high school who got drunk at 14 and showed her tits on the bar at [the 106th street bar formerly known as] Canon’s is going to be a rabbi next week!”

Hey, we say let them get their kicks before seminary. Right, Ratzinger?

Overheard in the halls of John Jay:

Boy: If I had a choice between masturbating and going to JJ’s, I’d go to JJ’s.
Girl: You’d choose JJ’s over masturbating? Really?
Boy: I mean I can masturbate any time.
But think of all the things you can do with a Philly cheese steak at 3 a.m.

ON FATHERHOOD

Man on the subway talking to his son about the latter’s Halloween costume: “It’s not funny unless it scares babies.”

Judging from this criterion, my “abortion doctor clown” costume will be a riot!

Professor Manduchehr Kasheff, on the flavor of politics today:
“The flesh of Donald Rumsfeld is bitter. You cannot eat him with three kilos of honey. The flesh of Mr. Clinton, though, is sweet.”
Bantam Press has just released *A Briefer History of Time*, a simpler version of Stephen Hawking’s classic. Other abridged rehashings in the pipeline:

- *A Tale of One City*
- *War or Peace*
- *Paradise Misplaced*
- *Hamlette*
- *The Lion and the Wardrobe*
- *Absalom!*
- *On the Cul-de-Sac*
- *Finite Jest*
- *The Sun Almost Rises*
- *A Midsummer Daydream*
- *The Septameron*
- *Gulliver’s Travel*
- *All’s Well That Ends Soon*
- *The Minutes*
- *On the Immediate Family of Morals*
- *The Communist Courseworks Posting*

The October 17 *Spectator* editorial:

“Thankfully, Columbia has finally decided to make a major change in the disappointing way it handles fellowship applications. Always a few steps behind our peer institutions in competing for prestigious fellowships like the Rhodes, Marshall, and Truman, Columbia has been shut out entirely from landing a single winner of any of these awards in the last few years.”

“Quote of the Week” in the weekly e-mail from the soon-to-be-dissolved Scholars & Fellowships Office, sent that same afternoon:

“If a man loses pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured, or far away.”

—Walden, Henry David Thoreau (1854)

Yes, perhaps it’s time for a change.

Student Coalition on Expansion and Gentrification (SCEG) posted flyers in Hamilton featuring a bust of Plato with this text above: “If Bollinger had ever taken CC, he’d notice that Columbia’s expansion plans don’t resemble the ‘form of the good!’” Below the bust is the short quote: “Practice what you preach, y’all” —Plato.”

Scrawled in the margins of one poster: “Plato favored eminent domain.”

Indeed he did, but only by logically proving to his students that cornholing young boys would raise community living standards.

From a SEEJ e-mail with minutes of the previous meeting:

“Max announced ‘Bear Awareness Month’”

Correction in next e-mail:

“While bears are cool, I meant to announce that we’re in the middle of QUEER Awareness Month. Sorry if I was hard to understand; I hope that this makes a little more sense now. … -Max”

Max’s correction was unnecessary. Bears are gay.

FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF THAT’S JUST YOU

Overheard in Structure & Style:

“I think the way that they were relaxed, and were a little stoned, that was pretty lesbian to me. But that’s just me.”

The *B&W* website...it works (we hope)!