THE 114TH ANNUAL VARSITY SHOW
“Morningside Hates”

May 2, 3, and 4 in Roone Arledge Auditorium
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he Varsity Show was born in 1894, four gloriously quiet years after The Blue and White emerged from Alma Mater’s iron womb. As the bookish older sibling sat doodling in the corner, the Columbia family gathered around the precocious little runt. The Show, as it was known, could make “spirit fingers” before it could sit up, inspired the invention of the phonograph, and hung out with way too many socialists. It may have started as a sibling rivalry, but it soon turned into a sibling rout: this jealous rag, paralyzed by the onset of modernity, lay silent for more than a century.

But 100 years of solitude can ameliorate the pain of favoritism, if not a despicable addiction to mediocre puns, and our partnership stands as a monument to the genderless, eternal principle of siblinghood. Or so it stood until this year, when autumn boiled over into a series of demonstrations and anti-demonstrations, and The Blue and White went polychrome with envy. We, too, wanted to protest something—it looked like fun!

Historically, the sole force restraining The Blue and White from utter solipsism has been Columbia’s only tradition: the Varsity Show franchise. And severing those ties in protest seemed au courant, thus we took our crusade to the field of all 21st century battles: the Internet. We asked CCSC to ban the Varsity Show from the Columbia server and, when that didn’t work, we circulated a petition demanding that students pledge to avoid the production’s odious website. With characteristic sloth, we plagiarized twenty-two of this program’s twenty-eight pages from the Horace Mann Record and University Writing lens essays found in a dumpster behind John Jay.

Ultimately, The Blue and White repented. Though it’s crass to admit, we had drawn down our coffers (too much beer and skittles) and rumor had it that the Varsity Show was doing well for itself. Having discovered that hate doesn’t pay, we made amends, re-forged our bonds, and rewrote those blasted twenty-two pages. It is in this spirit of spring healing that the Varsity show team presents “Morningside Hates.” Please don’t protest it.
The Cast of Characters
(in order of appearance)

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR BRADBURY, an untenured expert in critical thought........................................KIERON CINDRIC
CAROLINE, an Admissions work-study with impossibly high standards....................................................LAURA KLEINBAUM
CARTER, a SEAS student with a one-track mind.....................................................................................TOBIN MITNICK
JUDITH SHAPIRO, the outgoing president of Barnard College.................................................................LAUREN CLOVER
JAMES McSHANE, the head of Columbia University Public Safety.........................................................WILL SNIDER
LIZZY, a Barnard Eco-Rep and faithful idealist.........................................................................................SARAH DOOLEY
DAVID, an optimistic transfer from Cornell.........................................................................................MICHAEL SNYDER

The Chorus

Zach Dyer (Camera Installer), Emily Alpern Fisch (Barnard Student),
Allie Paddock (Barnard Student, McBain Guard, Alma Mater),
Sophie Ragir (Barnard Student, Director of Admissions, Athena Statue),
Michael Seamen (Pinkberry Worker, Forum Questioner),
Jenny Vallancourt (Barnard Student, Forum Questioner)
Act I

PROLOGUE

SCENE 1: JAMES McSHANE’S OFFICE
SCENE 2: LEHMAN LAWN
SCENE 3: A CLASSROOM IN HAMILTON
SCENE 4: McBAIN
SCENE 5: THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE
SCENE 6: LEHMAN LAWN
SCENE 7: JUDITH SHAPIRO’S OFFICE
SCENE 8: ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR BRADBURY’S OFFICE
SCENE 9: PINKBERRY
THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE
SCENE 10: JAMES McSHANE’S OFFICE
VARIOUS LOCATIONS

“Columbia, I Am Here”

“Gotta Love to Hate”

“Every Glitch”

“Shoulder to Shoulder”

“Golden Nugget”

“20,000 Ivy Leaguers Under the Sea”

“Act I Finale”

Act II

SCENE 1: LEHMAN LAWN
SCENE 2: McBAIN HALL
SCENE 3: LEHMAN LAWN
SCENE 4: ROONE ARLEDGE AUDITORIUM
SCENE 5: LEHMAN LAWN
SCENE 6: LERNER HALL
SCENE 7: McBAIN HALL
SCENE 8: LEHMAN LAWN
SCENE 9: LOW PLAZA
SCENE 10: BARNARD CAMPUS
EPILOGUE

“Anti-Anti-Anti-Anti-Protest”

“I Hate that I Love You”

“Strong, Beautiful”

“Well, Woman”

“Strong, Beautiful (reprise)”

“Hero”

“Finale”

Varsity 2008
Kieron Cindric

“I’m cleanin’ up my room, it is so cool. / I’m cleanin’ up my room, and you should too-oo-ooo...” Kieron Cindric, C’08, is singing the first bar of “Cleanin’ Up My Room,” a toddler instructional take on ‘n sync’s “Tearin’ Up My Heart.” One evening, Kieron realized that 90s pop songs were the ideal vehicle for teaching his future kids their first important life lessons, and he went to work. This man has a brain wired for song.

You’ve probably seen Kieron and his blond curls before. He is a veteran of the Columbia stage, with memorable roles in Rocky Horror, Into the Woods and V112, in which he played troubled former child star Dylan Justin St. James.

Kieron inhabited this last role with characteristic flair, though there seems to be very little of the tortured artist or the petulant young star in him. “Maybe I’m a little like Dylan Justin,” he said. “I perform, and I guess I’m a little ridiculous—but I don’t have a drug problem or any of that. I’m much more...clean cut.”

His friends second this, praising his big heart and the baked goods—chocolate cupcakes and pumpkin bread—he often gives as gifts. Next year, Kieron will probably work part-time at an art museum and audition on Broadway, and perhaps wend his way towards art history graduate school. Unless, of course, “Oops, I Went In My Diaper” becomes the breakout single of the summer. –PBB

Sarah Dooley

As the youngest Varsity Show cast member, Sarah Dooley, B’11, represents the new generation of campus theater devotees. If her pink stick-on earrings, thrift-store t-shirt with airbrushed patriotic rabbit face, and side-career as an ironic YouTube pundit and self-deprecating MySpace singer-piano player are any indication, newcomers to the scene will have a whole lot of indie cred to live up to.

But Dooley’s not your typical indie girl. She’s funny and lively, eschewing eyeliner and dour expressions for the patter and quips of an experienced laugh-maker. Raised in Valparaiso, Indiana by professor parents, she got involved with local theaters as a matter of tradition—her entire family unit once performed in the stage version of Cinderella.

Dooley started making music upon meeting a man named Doug whose trailer was filled with recording equipment. She won’t divulge the details, and before that it gets really fuzzy: “I feel like I was born, and then I did the Varsity Show,” she chirps. –KER

Lauren Glover

Lauren Glover, B’09, looks like a dame from another era. Dolled up with bright red lips and a full-skirted dress, she appears ready to walk the red carpet at a 1940s Hollywood premiere, not to sit in the drab fluorescence of Café 212. And she knows it.

She’s got the accessories: “brooches that I bust out once in a while.” And her hair, a flirty batch of red-brown curls: “It keeps getting shorter and bigger.”

Credit Barnard President Judith Shapiro with inspiring the grandeur and the theatrics. Glover, who has spent the last six months trying to embody Barnard’s president, says it’s not easy to imitate the big, brassy woman with a penchant for belting out show tunes and holiday carols to an audience.
of mortified undergrads.

“She’s sort of larger than life,” Glover says. “I’m still trying to find a way to make myself that big.”

Like any good actress, Glover has conducted a detailed character study of J-Shap. She’s identified two sides of the woman’s style—the 1980s look, which manifests itself in cowboy boots and shoulder pads, and the more subdued 1940s sensibility: “She knits at fireside chats!”

Luckily for Glover, her own personal style has always tended toward the latter. When she needs to unwind, she reads etiquette books. –KML

**Laura Kleinbaum**

Between the hours of noon and one p.m. every Monday through Thursday, Laura Kleinbaum, C’08, can be found in Ferris Booth, dining with the fellow members of Plastix, a theater-crowd lunch group that coyly borrows its name from the Lindsay Lohan-Tina Fey masterpiece *Mean Girls*. Laura’s attendance is fitting, as she aspires to someday join the wisecracking cast of *Saturday Night Live*.

But though she lunches with them and actively participates in several theater groups on campus, including improv troupe Fruit Paunch, she doesn’t think of herself as a theater geek. She is just a Jersey girl—hailing from Florham Park, which she describes as a mafia town—with big dreams.

And also not-so-big dreams: if she doesn’t make it to the silver screen, she says she’d like to be the madam of a brothel, adding thoughtfully, “But I would never be a prostitute.” Odd as this seems, it’s not so difficult to imagine—with her carefully coiffed, sleek blonde hair and sharp, feline features, she’d look right at home sizing up johns in the plush lobby of a high-class escort-service.

Then again, her poise comes and goes. She has a reputation for falling off her chair, and while friends disagree about her skill as a dancer, they concur that she has coined several signature moves, including one called “The Charlie Brown” and one that involves “not moving the top of her body and moving her legs in wide circles.” –HGG

**Tobin Mitnick**

Listening to Tobin Mitnick, C’10, talk about his childhood is like sitting through a slightly gentler version of *E! True Hollywood Story*. Take his melodramatic account of Hansel and Gretel in the second grade: “I was obviously the best actor, but German, overweight kids got the main roles because they were blond. I was Townsperson #2.”

This episode did not mark the end of Mitnick’s struggles. He laments being the “kid who was talented but never able to channel [the talent] into anything meaningful.” Perhaps this is why Mitnick is so self-effacing. His self-deprecating remarks about his life—“My friends don’t like me a lot of the time”—stem from what he describes a “social neuroticism” inspired in part by the Core Curriculum. “He tears down institutions,” Mitnick says of Contemporary Civilization staple Friedrich Nietzsche.

And given his leading role as a smarmy jetsetter in *The Gates*, last year’s televised melodrama, Mitnick seems no stranger to negativity. He considers *V113*’s lampooning of the soap to be one of his most embarrassing moments at Columbia.

A more thinly-skinned thespian might have been turned off by the cruel realities of the theater world, but Mitnick appears to have finally found the niche he has been looking for. He has even begun to positively embrace his experience in *The Gates*: “It showed me where my priorities are. I am a stage actor.” –TJG

**Will Snider**

“What’s the difference between a Barnard girl and a slice of cheddar cheese?” Thus spake Barnard Joke Jerry, that lovable yet vile repository of Columbians’ collective unconscious embodied by Will Snider, C’09, at *V12*. Although
he’s best known for playing a decidedly one-sided character, Snider’s own theater experience could not be more multi-dimensional.

In his youth, he tried his hand as a techie. He abandoned the pursuit after wheeling a set piece into Cinderella the night of a performance—the accident broke the princess’s ankle. His second, more successful incarnation as a citizen of the stage was as a writer. While in high school, Snider became irritated by the scarcity of roles for teen actors and soon began writing age-appropriate plays—he hasn’t stopped since, adulthood be damned.

Snider is a bit quixotic. He’s now settled into his role as thespian, despite being rejected by LateNite five times and the Varsity Show once—both as cast member and writer. He’s prolific; so much so that the phrase “a Will Snider play” has entered into the Columbia lexicon.

But while his experience resembles that of a consummate theater kid, he’d rather spend weekends with his brothers in the Beta Theta Pi fraternity than enviously attending Tisch showcases. And while he knows how to give a memorable performance on stage, he also knows how to unwind with a cup or two (or six) of 1020’s draft.

Michael Snyder

“I’ve always had a crush on Lizzy,” Michael Snyder, C’10, admits of Pride and Prejudice’s protagonist, Elizabeth Bennett. “It might be dry, but I just love their repressed emotions.”

Sitting with his legs politely crossed and a cardigan decorously draped across his shoulders, Snyder, ever the gastronome and dilettante, asked to meet in the Café in Butler. Some students might call it a study lounge or cafeteria—but to Michael it is a café, and Elizabeth is always Lizzy.

Chatty and eloquent, Snyder is a gifted and compelling conversationalist, and he discusses life’s pleasures with charming affectations. “It’s great to order calamari in Barcelona with your parents, but it’s better to do Kiev without them,” he recommends, with all the savoir-faire and ease of a European diplomat. (Snyder grew up in Baltimore).

For all his thespian idiosyncrasies, Snyder is strikingly sincere and his complete lack of pretension wrapped in pretension is endearing. With uncalculated nonchalance, he shrugs off his extensive involvement in the Columbia theater community with “Oh, theater’s really just a hobby.” —MEQ

The Creative Team

Hannah Kass

Director

“As of last week, I’ve decided to switch out of the theater major and into the English major,” said Hannah Kass, B’09. Given that Kass is the director of V114, this is vaguely distressing news, especially coupled with her recent revelation that she would rather not be a theater director professionally.

But it’s entirely understandable—Kass has been working in professional theater in Manhattan since she was 16 years old. She quit her high school theater troupe and her school district hired her to direct the middle school’s plays. She’s been directing, in some form, ever since. She has worked on Broadway shows, on the Adirondack Theater Festival, and on the Fringe Festival, and directed last semester’s Into The Woods.

“It’s very different being a director and having the writers be alive and in the room with you,” she says. Not that she would want them otherwise.

When she’s not keeping the cast of V114 in line, Kass directs a chatty bunch of Upper West side children in a fourth grade Hebrew school class—“they are so brilliant and so interesting,” she trills. Directing the Varsity Show’s actors has immediate parallels to teaching ten-year-olds. “They have a lot to say and they just talk and talk and talk!” Kass is the quintessential mother hen and she genuinely enjoys their clucking. —AMP

Erin Byrne

Producer

Erin Byrne, B’09, begins our interview by peeling off her watch, as if to slip away from her self-described “full time job” producing the 114th Annual Varsity Show. But Byrne isn’t one to let things slide: Her Gchat status is always set to “busy” (still, she carries on 2 or 3 chat conversations at once); she includes “color cod-
ing” as one of her hobbies; and she categorically does not lose things. Tellingly, she spends her precious half hour with me jangling and snapping her watchband.

A mastermind and a mediator, she describes herself as both “really good at making things happen” and “really good at managing crises when things happen.” She’s all over the place, all of the time, out of her dorm room from 8:30 in the morning to one in the morning.

Nevertheless, she’s always in her element, maintaining a sort of sovereign presence. Five minutes into a conversation with her, it’s unsurprising to learn that she’s from L.A., that she’s an only child, and that she was captain of her high school water polo team. Yes, water polo: think hockey on a rink melted by apocalyptic climate change. It’s evident that prowess in the sport of unpadded, submarine jabs has undoubtedly prepared her for tonight’s show.

\[\text{Jeffrey Schwartz}
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Producer

As the co-producer of *V114*, Jeffrey Schwartz, C’10, is responsible for everything from securing space in Harlem for set construction to meeting with the head of Housing and Dining to distribute promotional V-shaped yellow cookies. Yellow has been the official hue of the Varsity show for years. “The tradition of the Varsity show is part of what [the producers] have to look out for,” Schwartz says.

That tradition is in good hands: Schwartz might have the highest humility-to-importance ratio of anyone involved in the Varsity Show. To him, the show is about “making people laugh at the things that piss you off all year,” though not much seems to piss Schwartz off.

His soft smile is more than an appealing trait; it’s also a job requirement for his production role, which he describes as “like being eight different people at once.” Of course, that means he gets to “have a hand in everything”—including the cookie jar. One of the themes of *V114* is “becoming more disconnected from what’s actually going on,” but Schwartz remains enthusiastic, saying that “the process of the V-show is as cool as what you see.” And since no one knows the process better than Schwartz, no one is in a better position to judge.

\[\text{Rob J. Trump}
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Writer

Rob J. Trump, C’09, says he’s not instinctively funny. But, after two consecutive years of writing the Varsity Show (not to mention the Project Bluelight film *Setup* and countless articles for *The Federalist*), he has become a looming figure in the Columbia comedy scene. He’s so large that he has a nemesis, Anti-RJT, a Bwog commenter who exists solely to lob insults at Trump: “Rob Trump is so pretentious that he pokes fun at himself because he believes it will increase his hilarity except—here’s a quarter, buy a clue—it totally won’t.” Any press is good press—Trump approved.

Trump’s endorsement of Anti-RJT is an indication of his keen awareness of his own love of himself. Where others might shy away from revealing their most embarrassing moments, Trump assures me that it’s okay to print that he once vomited at the dinner table while on a date. Unrelated, he relates: “I was just studying in Butler Library, just studying some math and listening to the Indigo Girls. Then my headphones came out and everyone knew I was listening to the Indigo Girls. But I didn’t care because I like the Indigo Girls, so there. My friends laughed at me, but I will have the last laugh.”

\[\text{James Williams}
\]

Writer

James Williams, C’08, thinks of his life as an academic discipline (most would consider it a sub-discipline). He calls it “James Williams studies.”

The lecture begins: “You can’t engage in James Williams studies without feeling like an asshole.” He’s quite serious and measured, as if he were fine-tuning his concerns about the credit crisis—but that’s unlikely because he hasn’t read a newspaper in months and he only (gasp!) “skims Bwog.” “I want to be able to go to
a cocktail party and talk about the election but I can’t,” he laments, gesturing to an invisible pile of invitations gone to waste.

With professorial rigor, Williams has expanded his academic field in all directions. One vantage point reveals a serious writer, who already has an HBO-style television pilot in mind. Journeys into the veterinary sub-sub-discipline have uncovered his adventures in dog walking, in which he gets paid to walk and watch T.V. with a dachshund named Prince.

Williams is mildly obsessed with intellectualizing his quirks; in fact, mild obsessions are sort of his forte. Variations include eating Dots candy in red, yellow and green traffic light patterns and intellectualizing everything around him. “I like to put the word ‘theory’ at the end of things,” he says.

He also likes exclamation points. “Varsity show has to be big!” he exclaims. “I am a fan of subtlety in general, but when at least 50 percent of your audience is drunk, you can’t really afford subtlety.” So there you have it: James Williams believes that you—or the person next to you—are currently intoxicated. –AMP

KATIE HATHAWAY
Composer / Lyricist

As a young girl growing up in New Jersey, Katie Hathaway, B ’10 dreamed of becoming a horse jockey, a desire spurred on by her love for Black Beauty, Misty of Chincoteague, and a growing collection of horse figurines. Her hopes of equestrian glory were crushed, however, after her first horseback-riding lesson ended with an outbreak of hives that not even an entire bottle of benadryl could quell. after confessing her equine tragedy, followed by an equally sad tale of a steed-drawn sleigh ride in the woods gone wrong, Hathaway apologizes. “I don’t know if that was a good anecdote. it was really sad,” she says. “I really wanted to be a horseback jockey! And now I’m writing songs for the Varsity Show.”

The transition was a bit less abrupt than Hathaway lets on. After beginning her career in composition by writing songs for grade school contests, Hathaway studied at the Manhattan School of Music pre-college program and spent time with the New York Youth Symphony’s Making Score project. Her pieces have been performed at the Lincoln Center Rose Studio and CAMI Hall, and on-campus at Columbia New Music concerts.

For all her prestige, Hathaway tends to hit a wall when titling her compositions, which is where her obsession with Lord of the Rings has come in handy in the past. “It’s fun to see how people react when they realize the title is of Elvish origin,” she says. –MIP

BENJAMIN VELEZ
Composer / Lyricist

Benjamin Velez, C’10, cuts a charismatic figure in the assertive spring sun: while other New Yorkers swelter in the unseasonable warmth, he seems right at home, at ease in his natural environment. “I’m from Miami,” he offers.

Outfitted with a kind smile and a quick wit, Velez explains that he was a member of the Varsity Show’s chorus last year, but being part of the creative team is “one hundred times better.” With his co-composer Katie Hathaway, B’10, Velez’s duties include lyrical and musical composition, as well as orchestrating a polyglot ensemble composed of everything from the violin to keyboard.

He is also responsible for conducting the pit orchestra during the live performances, in preparation for which he enrolled in a conducting seminar—his first course in his prospective field of study, music. One would expect such a breadth of obligations to over-tax even a creative mind, but his Varsity Show duties hardly begin to encompass Velez’s range of interests.

While still in high school, he composed lyrics for a musical about an alopecia-causing shampoo and in the same year, he won the Florida state science fair. “I sort of don’t want to have a major,” said Velez when asked about his academic plans, flashing a cheshire-cat grin. “College is the last chance to do and study whatever you want, and I don’t want to be pigeonholed.” –CML

EMILY BICKFORD
Choreographer

Williston, Vermont is a pastoral town mostly noted for the sprawling residential compounds that house Ben and Jerry’s. This was the home that Emily Bickford, B’09, found after her family emigrated from West Palm Beach. The visual panoply of New England shocked Bickford’s fragile Southern sensibilities, and she struggled to express her wonder at first seeing the sublime splendor of autumn in Vermont, which she described as “beautiful.”
Although she spoke only her native Floridian upon arrival, she quickly acquired the English skills she used to choreograph the hallowed Miss Vermont pageant, which she described as a “ridiculous experience.” Since then there’s been no earthly force capable of stopping her: neither the trials of directing community theater nor the summer camp challenge presented by Smelly Kelly, a recalcitrant summer camper who refused to take showers. Nothing deterred her inevitable ascension to the ranks of the V114 crew.

Bickford, whose next move may be to England, doesn’t think of herself as a theater person, although her love for all things Broadway quickly became apparent when she described her fondness for Gene Kelly, musicals, and modern dance—all with the same boundless enthusiasm that she uses to describe her love for her family. She describes a game in which her friends, thespians and musicians all, “sing one note and try and guess what song it is. I never want to play.” –ZvS

**Ben Weinryb Grohsgal**

*Art Director/Set Designer*

Fifty years from now, the lights will come up on the first scene of the 164th Varsity Show to reveal the frosty expanse of a desolate glacier, fashioned from plexiglas, Styrofoam, dust, and spray-on stuff. Naturally, it will be devoid of penguins, who, by that point, will all be dead. So too will the audience. That’s how he imagines it anyway.

“I really wanted to build a glacier in the beginning,” Weinryb Grohsgal told me with his signature toothy grin and bemused inflection that characterizes all of his utterances. Then he shook his head, “Yeah, there’s really no need for a glacier.” Like Pascal and Melville, Weinryb Grohsgal is ahead of his time.

But, while he’s waiting for his vision to catch on, he plays the modest role of Art Director in *this* Varsity Show, a position he describes with some self-deprecation. “There are at least 20 people who are directly under my control,” he told me, “and they’re willing to do whatever I want them to do. I just have to tell them something, and it’s actually hard to come up with that, you know? I’m usually not into, like, the whole reliability thing, you know, actually organizing things. I draw little pictures and occasionally make measurements of wood.”

The most nerve-wracking undertaking this time around? “Um,” Weinryb Grohsgal considered, “not killing people.” –AMF

**The Chorus**

Zach Dyer (C’11) is cock-a-hoop that his first show at Columbia is spent with *The 114th Varsity Show* cast, chorus and creative team. He writes for *Spectator* Music and relishes the perks of free concerts. He enjoys singing loudly, organic chemistry, dance parties, and punctuation. He spends a decent portion of his life on YouTube and is an accomplished Facebook stalker. Zach plans to major in biochemistry and creative writing.

Emily Alpern Fisch (B’11) is just thrilled to be making her Varsity Show debut! A regular at Nussbaum and Wu and Bon French Cleaners, Emily had a principal role in the off-Broadway musical, *A Stoop On Orchard Street* at age 14, and was a member for seven years of Imagination Stage’s nationally-acclaimed Deaf Access Theater Company in Bethesda, MD. Emily sends her love and thanks to everyone for being in her corner, and dedicates her performances to Professor Dennis Dalton (How can you leave? I just got here!), Mom (Really!!?...), Dad (Yes, I’m up), and her “Strong and Beautiful” nine-year-old sister, Abigail.

Allie Paddock (C’10) hails from the land of Ludacris and sweet tea (ATL that is) but is happy to say that the 114th cast and creative team have added some true southern comfort and love to her New York City home. Past performances at Columbia include *Into the Woods*, *XMAS 2!, Hotel: 8 Rooms*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, and Orchesis. Allie thanks her family and friends for their continual support, kindness, and inspiration.

Sophie Rager (B’11) is from Los Angeles, CA. She is so excited to be a part of *The 114th Annual Varsity Show*!!! This has been one of the most incredible experiences and she is so thankful to be working with such talented, dedicated, and outright awesome peo-
ple. So much love to Mama, Jonah, David, Mommo and Appah, and to all her friends who put up with her crazy rehearsal schedule this semester.

Michael Seaman (E’10) is thrilled to be performing in this year’s Varsity Show! Previous Columbia performances include XMAS! 2 and Into the Woods. Performances elsewhere include Camelot (Arthur), A Funny Thing... (Pseudolus), The Diary of Anne Frank (Otto Frank), The School for Wives (Arnolphe), among others. Michael would like to thank his friends and family. He’d also like to thank everyone involved with V-show for giving him his best semester yet!

Jenny Vallancourt (B’11) is thrilled to be a part of the Varsity Show! Jenny has performed in numerous community and educational theater productions, but will not be listing them here. Professionally, she appeared in the world premieres of October 1962 and the new musical Bookends, both with the New Jersey Repertory Company. Jenny loves and thanks everyone involved with this production. The Varsity Show is the most fun thing ever!

The Production Team

Colin Drummond (Cupcake Coordinator, C’09), in a quest to find a position with maximum power and minimum responsibility, has at last succeeded (Take that, Ben Parker!). Not to say he took his Cupcake role lightly. He took it very seriously and, when possible, with milk.

Caroline Englander (Stage Manager, B’10) is so proud to be a part of this year’s Varsity Show. Love and congratulations to the entire Varsity family. Past productions include XMAS! 2 (Set Design), CMTS’s Into the Woods (Stage Manager), The 114th Annual Varsity Show (Stage Manager), and Barnard’s Endzone (ASM).

Heather Englander (Stage Manager, B’10). This is Heather’s second year working on the Varsity Show. Having had too much fun last year, she couldn’t imagine not spending every moment with this group of people. Past productions include: Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act—Barnard Senior Thesis Festival 2008 (Set Design), XMAS! 2! (Set Design), CMTS’s Into the Woods (PSM), The 114th Annual Varsity Show (ASM), and ENDZONE (Prop Master/ASM).

Craig Grewe (Publicity, Law’09) is a publicist and event planner, as well as a law student. He has worked in entertainment events and publicity for six years, including stints at Warner Bros., MGM, Disney/Touchstone, and DreamWorks. He is delighted to have the opportunity to be a publicist for the Varsity Show this year. He resides in Los Angeles.

Jesse Horwitz (House Manager, C’10) is proud to manage the house, having previously managed the kitchen, the bathroom, and the butler’s pantry, and having served as the Secretary of the Interior to the last five presidential administrations. He hopes one day to expand his rule outside into the yard.

Becca Lewis (Assistant Producer, C’11) is thrilled to be part of The 114th Varsity Show and hopes to continue her involvement in the future. Thanks to Erin and Jeff for showing her the ropes!

Amanda Stoffel (Assistant Director, B’10) has had an extraordinary time working in V114. She has learned an immense amount from each member of the Creative Team and is incredibly grateful to have been a part of such a sacred and revered tradition. She would like to give Hannah Kass the biggest hug of all, for she has taught Amanda new ways of directing and has inspired her to adopt more techniques and skills to create the most successful production. To the cast, she would just like to express how proud and honored she has felt to work with such talented individuals. Thank you.

Sam Reisman (Publicity, C’10) has appeared in Barnard Theater Department’s A Dream Play, Have You Seen Steve Steven, and Twelfth Night. He directed Hardy Boys and the Mystery of Where Babies Come From for CU Players’ Absurdité anthology and was stage manager and film coordinator for Jester’s comedy show, Up Late With Jeff Julian. He is the Editor of The Fed.

The Design Team

Kate Brown (Head Costume Designer, B’08) is happy to be making costumes for her second consecutive Varsity Show! She enjoys sewing and making people wear funny things. Kate would like to thank her family and friends for helping her make it through senior year and her fellow costume designers Molly and Maddie for their awesome attitudes and creativity.

Madeleine Compagnon (Costume Designer, C’10) once came upon an old woman hunched over a spinning wheel. Madeleine sat down at the wheel, but
pricked her finger on the needle and fell into a deep slumber for 100 years. When she awoke, the spinning wheel was still there, so she was like, “Might as well spin my own T-shirts from this flax,” and a costumer was born. Madeleine looks remarkably good for her age. Madeleine was born. Madeleine looks remarkably good for her age.

**Meredith Craven (Make-up Designer, C’10)** is pleased as punch to be applying pretty colors to the faces of the Varsity Show cast! She has been continually amazed by the talents of everyone involved, particularly those of the lovely performers, who manage to remain absolutely still through even the sloppiest of giggles, particularly those of the lovely performers, who manage to remain absolutely still through even the sloppiest of eyeliner applications. Thanks, all!

**Halley Hair (Head Carpenter, C’11)** builds stuff, fails to sleep and has a great deal of fun. Carpentry may not be her life’s one true goal, but it most definitely lets her take out her frustration. Therefore, the Varsity Show has allowed her to remain a more well-adjusted person. Maybe.

**Sahar Hasan (Co-Sound Designer, E’10)** is a semi-introvert until after her morning coffee and a total extrovert after the fourth Red Bull. Sahar is a computer science major with an inclination toward sarcastic humor and late night Pink Floyd. She is new to the theater gig but has decided that apart from the perils of “YES-ing” too hard, it’s pretty sweet. Sahar’s ambition in life has not yet been made clear but she knows it will involve programming video games and being the brains behind a swift but bloodless South American coup.

**Zarah Iqbal (Lighting Designer, C’10)** is thrilled to be part of such a great team! Previous lighting and technical experience at Columbia has included The Sublet Experiment, Merrily We Roll Along, Macbeth, On Religion, and The 113th Varsity Show.

**Erica Kestenbaum (Properties, C’10)** is an anthropology and economics major. She hails from New York City and has relished this opportunity to spend quality time with the city’s amazing 99¢ stores. Erica has had a wonderful experience working with the creative minds behind the Varsity Show, especially the gifted folk of the Design Team.

**Sydney Kemp (Make-up and Hair Designer, B’10)** loved being apart of the V114 show and was happy to put makeup on the actors for a change versus solely dolling up her roommate Amanda.

**Doreen Lam (Scenic Painter, C’10)** likes to play with sharpies and black tape, but more importantly, she’s excited to be part of her first production here at Columbia. Her drug of choice is an over-priced Grande Soy Caramel Macchiato.

**Rebecca Lowsky (Scenic Painter, C’10)** is a visual arts major from Columbia, South Carolina. She doesn’t like grits, but she does say “y’all.” And that thing with the pig? Yeah, that happened. Enjoy the show!

**Katie Lupica (Makeup and Hair Designer & Scenic Painter, C’11)** has enjoyed being part of this crazy, wonderful team. She has appeared on stage at Columbia this year in Into The Woods, XMAS 2!, Egg and Peacock, Latenite, and Snow White (also this weekend!). She’s pretty sure you’re going to love this show.

**Brandie Moreno (Assistant Set Designer, C’09)** is an architecture student. This is her first time working on the Varsity Show and she is very excited about the end product. She has no spare time because she is a slave to her architecture studio but occasionally ventures outside to play soccer. In the future, Brandie hopes to channel her creative energies into humanitarian aid architecture but she’ll probably design a few more theatrical sets first.

**Ajit Pillai (Lighting Technician, E’11)** is working his first show at Columbia and is enjoying it. Ajit especially enjoys working with moving lights and using the cyc.

**Beck Pryor (Technical Director, C’09)** has acted as technical director for many Columbia productions, including this one.

**Molly Rabinowitz (Costume Designer, C’10)** pops, locks, and drops it. Well, not so much on the dropping part, though that is on her list of long-term goals. Other long-term goals include establishing a turf rivalry, successfully eating six saltines in under one minute, and finishing this sentence.

**Elizabeth Rice (Set Builder, E’11)** is pretty thrilled to be working on her first show at Columbia! She is from a little city called Bath, Maine and likes the outdoors, as well as cooking and listening to old music. When she isn’t thinking about traveling to wild places, you can probably find her laughing at or doing something silly.

**Will Schuessler (Co-Sound Designer, E’09)** has done a bunch of tech for Columbia shows. Just ask him. Incidentally, he’s the one you want to throw things at if you don’t like the sound. You can recognize him by the...
big glasses, unkempt goatee and general air of malaise from three tech weeks in a row. He may even be asleep.

Robert Stenson (Graphic and Web Designer, C’08) is from Cleveland, Ohio. He studies the history of architecture. He does some graphic design and some web design for various student groups and various student publications at Columbia. He would like to make maps and typefaces when he grows up. He is the drummer for the Americana band The Kitchen Cabinet. His favorite president is Ulysses S. Grant.

Nikitha Reddy Yereddi (Set Builder, E’10) was on the design team as set builder, after having been part of the running crew the year before. The last time she built anything was approximately three years ago, that too in high school, so she apologizes in the event that anything falls either apart or on you during the show.

The Orchestra

Nick Bazzano (Saxophones and Clarinet, C’10) … “You’re insane,” she murmurs.

Priyanka Chhablani (Drums and Percussion, C’08) concentrates in philosophy and is part of the Creative Writing Program. She is excited to be laying down beats in the Varsity Show for the first time. She once took Laura Kleinbaum to India and when Laura got sick, Priyanka decided to become a physician (Go Laura, woo woo!). When she’s not thinking about G.W.F. Hegel, her dream boy, Priyanka is dancing in front of the mirror to electro-house. Snare-Snare Crash!

Stacy Chu (Violin, C’10) is a sophomore studying neuroscience at the College. She plans on curing Alzheimer’s disease some day, but in the meantime she spends her free time seeking near-death experiences on skis, painting, overdosing on dark chocolate, and trying to play the violin. She’s thrilled to be a part of the Varsity Show for the first time.

Becky Greenstein (Trombone, B’10) is delighted to be involved in the Varsity Show for the first time, playing trombone in the orchestra. She was previously heard in the pit bands for Merrily We Roll Along and Urinetown and plays in the Columbia jazz big band. She also played Jack’s Mother in CMTS’ production of Into the Woods and assistant produced NOMADS’ Trees Like Nails. Many thanks to friends and family.

Gavin Harris (Trumpet, C’08) is performing in his third Varsity Show. Last year he discovered the inspirational mix for creativity: unfiltered Camel cigarettes, RC-Kola, and Doritos – the combination of which tastes like death, for those who are curious. This year he found another ingredient to add for a little spice: devil’s claw. Not much is known about this harpago side from Namibia, but careful, life may never be the same.

Kevin Hseih (Bass, C’11) is honored to be the bassist for the Varsity Show. His previous credits include CMTS’ Into the Woods and Love Could Drive a Person Crazy. Kevin hopes to become a permanent fixture of the New York Jazz scene and would like to say for the last time that “flute would NOT have been a better choice.”

Paul Rodgers (Piano, C’10) is excited to be hammering away at the piano in this year’s show. He hails from Potomac, MD, and has been playing the piano since he was five. When he’s not working with the Varsity Show, Paul might be found playing with Don Sickler’s big band, skiing, or listening to Prince.

Jessica Salinas (Flute, B’10) from time to time secretly covets the life of an NYU student, specifically of the chic hipster Asian film student persuasion. Possible goals for her 5-year plan are to own three to four puppies, live by the sea, paint watercolors in her spare time, and become a Vampire Weekend groupie.

David Shimmel (Keyboard and Synths, E’10) is studying mechanical and electrical engineering. His main musical influences are Progressive Metal, Power Metal, and Classical (Metal?). When not shredding a severe synth solo on his keytar, David enjoys lifting weights, playing video games, writing down funny things his professors say, and making jokes involving math and physics. His band recorded a CD; you should check it out.

Matt Stauffer (Electric Guitar and Cello, GS’09) is a music theory and composition major in General Studies. Though he spends most of his time singing with Uptown Vocal or promoting CU Snacks, he’s never been more eager to unleash some funky riffs on the guitar and cello for the Varsity Show.

Aileen Yan (Violin, E’11) is ecstatic to be in her first varsity show as a violinist in the pit. When not producing screeching sounds on her wood box, Aileen can be found with the Columbia Ballroom Dance Team. She also loves stuffing her face with food and then running like a maniac to burn it off.
Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following organizations for their generous contributions to the 114th incarnation of the Varsity Show:

OFFICIAL 2008 VARSITY SHOW SPONSORS

Columbia Alumni Association: James Harden ’78BUS, ’83PH, Chairman
The Columbia University Club of New York & the Young Alumni Association

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And endless love to our families & friends, whom we may now have time to see.
THE GLOSSARY OF THE 114TH VARSITY SHOW
(your source for understanding what the hell is going on)

- ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS do not usually have tenure, much to their dismay.
- CULPA (www.culpa.info) is the Columbia Underground Listing of Professor Ability, an independent website where students review professors. The site deems the best-reviewed professors “gold nuggets.”
- In the past few years, Columbia has suffered from a rash of HATE CRIMES on campus. In the most notorious recent incident, a black Teacher’s College professor—who has been accused of plagiarizing much of her published material—found a noose hanging on her office door.
- SEAS is the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences.
- JAMES McSHANE is the head of Columbia University Public Safety.
- “WAR ON FUN” is a phrase coined by student publications to describe the adminis-
istration’s crackdown on parties and underage drinking this year.

- **Judith Shapiro** is the current President of Barnard College. She will be stepping down at the end of the year.

- **Barnard** is the women’s college affiliated with Columbia University. The Columbia-Barnard relationship is complicated and strained, causing some Columbia students to look down on their Barnard peers.

- **The Nexus** will be Barnard’s new student center once its construction is complete. For most of this year, it has been an enormous hole in the middle of a very small campus.

- **Eco-Reps** is a campus environmental advocacy group.

- **Lysistrata**, by Aristophanes, was once a text on the Literature Humanities syllabus. It was recently replaced by *The Clouds*, by Aristophanes.

- **The “McBain Shaft”** is the column of open air that runs down the center of McBain residence hall. “Shaft rooms” do not have windows that look out onto the street, but rather onto an interior “courtyard” that is usually filled with trash. They are also small, hot, oddly shaped, and terrible to live in.

- Barnard and Columbia have **Cross-Registration**. It is much more difficult to spot a Barnard student in a Columbia class than the other way around.

- **NYU sucks.**

- **The Athena Statue**, which depicts an unofficial mascot of Barnard College, stands just outside of Barnard Hall.

- **Barnard Public Safety**, which is separate from Columbia Public Safety but has much less power, provides all Barnard students with rape whistles.

- **Pinkberry** is an L.A.-based, overpriced frozen yogurt chain that opened an outpost near campus this year.

- **Take Back the Night** is an annual march and speak-out at Barnard that aims to empower women in the fight against sexual assault and violence.

- **The Hunger Strike** was a protest this past fall during which students opposed what they saw as Columbia’s racially unjust actions and programming. They lived in an outdoor colony of tents in the middle of campus for ten days while consuming only coffee and watered-down Gatorade. Another group of students, who opposed the strikers’ tactics, protested the protest.

- **Mahmoud Ahmadinejad**, the President of Iran, spoke on campus this fall as part of Columbia’s World Leaders Forum. The event created both controversy and quotable phrases. In his opening remarks, CU President Lee C. Bollinger called Ahmadinejad a “cruel and petty dictator.” Later, Ahmadinejad claimed that there were no homosexuals in Iran.

- **“Strong, Beautiful Barnard Women”** is a phrase that the Barnard administration often uses to describe its students.

- **Glass House Rocks** is an annual event put on by the student councils in Lerner Hall. It features performances by dance and improv troupes, as well as free food and boredom.

- **Well-Woman** is the Barnard health promotion program.

- **Institutional History**, including an awareness of Columbia’s founders and most illustrious men, is an important part of Columbia lore.
When *The Blue and White* asked me to interview the writers of this year’s Varsity Show, I don’t think they were aware that I had tried out for the position myself and had been passed over. Later, they assured me that my hysterics did not need to be suppressed, as they were looking for an interview imbued with crippling rage anyway. Teeth clenched and belly full of mid-afternoon rum, I had a dialogue with writers Rob Trump (CC ’09) and James Williams (CC ’08).

*B&W:* So what was your impetus to try out to write for the Varsity Show?

Rob Trump: I had a really good time on it last year, and in the course of a year you learn so much about what works and what doesn’t. As writers last year, we learned a lot and got to a really great place, so I was really excited to use what I learned.

James Williams: Well, when I interviewed with them, I told them it was a desire to be part of the biggest tradition at Columbia. Really though, I had fallen into this pattern of fancying myself a writer even though I had never written anything longer than four pages. I wrote all these papers for school and articles for *The Blue and White*, and it was all bullshit. I wanted to sit down and to write something that would be substantial—a full length musical.

*B&W:* How has the writing process affected your lives outside of the Varsity Show?

JW: You get to feel, at least in some sense, that what you’re doing is as important as your academic work... it’s sort of a justification for slacking off.

RT: That is totally valid. You can completely convince yourself of that.

JW: Especially as a second semester senior. I mean, I’m taking a total of eight credits right now.

RT: Yeah, I’m not sure how it will turn out this semester, but last year when I was writing the show and only taking four classes, my G.P.A. was the worst it had ever been.
THE CONVERSATION

B&W: Is there a good way to describe your writing relationship?

RT: I think we were just buddies. We worked well together.

JW: I don’t know, can we come up with a pop culture analogy?

RT: Um... [long pause]. We were Hall and Oates. I just don’t know which one is which.

JW: I’m the one who wrote “Rich Girl.”

B&W: Tell me about the lamest joke that you had to cut from the show.

RT: [laughing] It has to be the “series of tubes” joke. That has to be it. It would have been so funny two years ago.

JW: I love it. What do you think of when you think of “a series of tubes?”


JW: Well, we had a guy trying to get an email from a girl so that he could meet her at her work-study job. He says, “Hey I got your email,” and she responds with, “That was fast.” And he says, “Yeah, the Internet is a magical thing. But not as magical as your series of tubes.”

RT: It would have been great when it was topical. The internet would have loved that joke.

JW: I would have emailed that to Ted Stevens but I don’t think he would have gotten it.

B&W: If you had all the money that people think you have, what would you have added to the show?

RT: I wanted everything on stage to be in constant motion. Maybe a rotating set, like having Pupin rotate around to reveal the Cyclotron, whirring in all its dead nuclear glory.

JW: At one point we decided that all the cast members should spend the entire show on Segways.

B&W: Can you describe the worst unsolicited suggestion that you got for the show?

JW: We got a ridiculous email a couple of days ago—The Blue and White got it too—revealing that CCSC President Michelle Diamond had been on the Disney reality show Bug Juice as a 13-year-old.

RT: And it was all, “You won’t believe this! Here’s the YouTube clip to prove it.” And my response was, “I believe it! It’s the most believable thing imaginable!” The email was saying, “You must put this in The Varsity Show! The world must know!” No. No. The world doesn’t care.

B&W: Knowing that the Varsity Show wouldn’t go on for another several months, how did you feel about working current events—like Ahmadinejad’s visit—into your script?

RT: I think we wanted to work them in on a basic level, but we didn’t want there to be a scene where we’re just making fun of “X”, and we didn’t want to make a few throwaway jokes.

JW: We tried to boil down the effect that a current event had on the mindset of the students. You know, what did having Ahmadinejad on campus do to the student population and what did having a hunger strike do to the student population? From that, we created some thematic elements for the show.

B&W: Okay, now we will move on to the Pressure Zone portion of the interview. It’s time to enter the Pressure Zone.

JW: Oh, God.

[All three enter the Pressure Zone.]
B&W: Who wins in a fight: Neil Armstrong (circa 1969) or Lance Armstrong?

[long pause]

RT: Where is the fight taking place?

JW: Yeah, if it’s on the moon or on a bike then I think that one’s a no-brainer.

B&W: Fine, the fight is taking place in a helicopter.

RT: Well if it takes place in a helicopter then I think the winner would be Leslie Nielsen from that opening sequence in *Naked Gun 2 1/2*. Was that *Naked Gun 2 1/2*?

B&W: Yeah. [Editor’s note: It was actually the last scene in *Naked Gun 33 1/3*.] Next question: Which one of you is Israel and which one of you is Palestine?

JW: I like to think of us more like Ireland and Northern Ireland.

RT: I still don’t know which one of us would be which.

JW: Doesn’t matter.

B&W: If you two got in a fight—a physical fight—what would happen? Who would win?

RT: I think we would just make up and become friends and write a Varsity Show.

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Alex Weinberg

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**REJECTED TITLES FOR THIS YEAR’S SHOW**

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**THE CONVERSATION**
From the Writers’ Notebooks

Writing the Varsity Show means writing a few dozen Varsity Shows’ worth of ideas, jokes, scenes, stories and characters. Here’s some of what never made it from the page to the stage.

- Sweet band name: Lee C. Bollinger and the Board of Trustees
- Shapiro: “Piano Stooge!”
  “That’s Dean Runsdorf to you!”
- Books they send you when you get accepted: The Iliad (Columbia) vs Anna Quindlen’s Blessings (Barnard)
- “Take my wife—please!”
- People leaving a party and then the host is hugging everyone in your group and they don’t know you but they hug you anyway = comedy
- Word Walls: the only form of art lower than a capella
- Frederico Garcia Lorquesis
- Modern Dance and Society: Dancing for Change and Changing for Dance
- They are in loooove now! They sing a loooove song!
- Columbia College of Columbia University in the City of New York in the State of New York in the country of the United States of America on the continent of North America on the planet of Earth in the Solar System in the Milky Way Galaxy in the Universe
- Sorority = “girl frat”
- Delete all male authors, delete all books
- THE WORLD EXPLODES
- rip-off pants
- “I’m sexier than consent”
- “She only has one friend, and that’s more pathetic than having no friends.”
- Wen Jin! Wen Jin!
- STDS in Aerospace
- “You think you’re better than me because you take lit hum? I’m in a first year seminar called DEATH! How intense is that!”
- “Bleeding-vagina liberal”
- Girl hears siren going off, points, yells: “Oh my god, racist grafitti! (beat) Sorry—I just assumed.”
- Bwog commenters shouting something really really angry and then saying a color.
- Leggings, ugg, miniskirt, all at the same time.
- Elements!
- FUCK my computer got stolen fuck fuck fuck my notes from the past two weeks are goneeeceee fuck shit fuck $$*^&
- Don’t make coke jokes. I hate coke jokes.
- Getting invited to a Facebook event that is 5000000000 FUCKING MILES AWAY
- Public safety’s goddamn dumb SUV’s
- That douche in big lectures: “Dude, I can’t talk. I’m in class. I know I called you! I just wanted to say hi.”
- (Group that knits hats/sweaters for the homeless: CLOSE-KNIT: Caring (for) Low-income Or Subjugated Ethnic Kinsmen (who) Need Insulation...To be given to them in winter)
- 3.) Socialites
- “In my mind, I just punched you in the face.”
- Song between people who nobody knows except for from their e-mails
- Econ Prof: “That works in practice, but does it work in theory?”
- How are we going to end this show again?
- You’ve Got Mail-ish conflict

—Compiled by the B&W staff
THE SHOWS

114 Years of Varsity Drama

1894 Joan of Arc  
1896 Buccaneer  
1897 Cleopatra  
1899 Varsity Show  
1900 The Governor’s Vrouw  
1901 Princess Proud  
1902 Vanity Fair  
1903 The Mischief Maker  
1904 The Isle of Illusia  
1905 The Khan of Kathan  
1906 The Conspirators  
1907 The Ides of March  
1908 Mr. King  
1909 In Newport  
1910 The King of Hilaria  
1911 Made in India  
1912 The Mysterious Miss Apache  
1913 The Brigands  
1914 The Merry Lunatic  
1915 On Your Way  
1916 The Peace Pirates  
1917 Home James  
1918 Ten for Five  
1919 Take a Chance  
1920 Fly with Me  
1921 You’ll Never Know  
1922 Steppe Around  
1923 Half Moon Inn  
1924 Old King’s  
1925 Half Moon Inn (again)  
1926 His Majesty, the Queen  
1927 Betty Behave  
1928 Zuleika, or the Sultan Insulted  
1929 Oh, Hector  
1930 HeighoPharoah  
1931 Great Shakes  
1932 How Revolting!  
1933 Home James  
1934 Laugh it Off!  
1935 Flair-Flair: The Idol of Peace  
1936 Off Your Marx  
1937 Some of the People  
1938 You’ve Got Something There  
1939 Fair Enough  
1940 Life Begins in ’40  
1941 Hit the Road  
1942 Saints Alive  
1944 On the Double  
1945 Second the Motion  
1946 Step Right Up  
1947 Dead to Rights  
1948 Streets of New York  
1949 Mr. Oscar  
1950 Wait for It  
1951 Babes in the Woods  
1952 Streets of New York  
1953 Shape of Things  
1954 Sky’s the Limit  
1955 When in Rome  
1959 Dig That Treasure  
1960 A Little Bit Different  
1961 Streets of New York  
1962 Guys and Dolls  
1963 Elsinore  
1964 Il Troubleshootore  
1965 Varsity Show  
1966 The Bawd’s Opera  
1967 Feathertop  
1978 The Great Columbia Riot of ’78  
1980 Come Fly With Me  
1982 College on Broadway  
1983 Fear of Scaffolding  
1984 The New U  
1985 Lost in Place  
1989 Sans Souci, Be Happy  
1990 Behind the Lion Curtain  
1991 The Silence of the Lions  
1993 Lion Game  
1994 Angels at Columbia: Centennial Approaches  
1995 Step Inside  
1996 Devil in a Light Blue Dress  
1997 Enlargement and Enhancement: The Scaffolding Years  
1998 Love is Indefinite  
1999 Beyond Oedipus: Leaving the Womb  
2000 Mo’ Money  
2001 Mo’ Problems  
2002 Sex, Lies, and Morningside  
2003 108th Annual Varsity Show  
2004 Dial “D” for Deadline  
2005 The Sound of Muses  
2006 Misery Loves Columbia  
2007 Insufficient Funds  
2008 Morningside Hates

22
On one Sunday afternoon in March that hinted of spring, the Wien Lounge was the happiest place on earth. Actors and actresses chattered and laughed as the show’s composer plunked out an upbeat melody on the piano. Kieron Cindric C’08 was twirling, kicking, twirling; a camera shooting him through an open window for a publicity spot. “It smells like mulch!” one actress sniffed. “No, it just smells like spring!” another shouted back.

Then the camera’s batteries died and everyone started singing about hate. That happy melody—one I associated with all of my favorite things about musical theater—was actually an ode to that most odious of emotions, entitled “Gotta Love to Hate.” But this rehearsal, I soon learned, would be dedicated to something more specific: the moves of hate. For hate is a finely gradated spectrum, and not all hand gestures, facial expressions, kicks, jabs, and pirouettes are appropriate for all levels of hate. So, pushing their chairs into a rough semicircle, the scene’s imaginary seminar room, the cast got ready for a good two hours of belting out “Gotta Love to Hate” with sufficiently spiteful body language.

“Detestation” occasioned a sway and forward body thrust, “Passionate opposer” got a sort of funky dance move, and “love to hate on Yale,” was worthy of an angry fist-pump. One cast member—eager, though perhaps overzealous—wanted to turn a simple twist in her chair to the words “take those happy thoughts and twist them” into a full body rotation, legs over the chair’s arm; this was instantly rejected. But, the choreographer needed more from Cindric, the scene’s star, whose nonchalant head-nod to “hating on brownnosers” was just not enough. “Go up to her,” she pointed to one of the seated students, “like you know who the brownnoser is.” The final pose—a crowd of condescending, cynical students—provoked the most debate. How could they convey their loathing in more than a dozen different ways? “I don’t know, I was doing this,” one actress made a nasty face and outstretched a hand with clawing, vaguely threatening fingers, “but that doesn’t make any sense.”

“Oh, this is such a small, little area!” someone complained. Clearly, Wien Lounge could not contain the hate. James Williams, one of the writers, plopped down beside me. Rob Trump, his partner, was across the room, hunched ponderously over a computer terminal. “He’s looking for material for admissions jokes,” Williams told me. A cold reading of a new scene earlier had convinced the two that a certain joke—“The internet is a magical thing, but not as magical as your series of tubes!”—was not going to work. Jim had his own joke about popping wheelies on a bicycle that was also on the docket for execution, but he was fairly confident that it would make the cut. “When Rob heard that, he said we had to cut it because it sounds like a joke they would make on Hey Arnold! I say, just because a joke could be on Hey Arnold! doesn’t mean it’s a bad joke.”

Meanwhile, hate had blossomed into a full-scale dance number, complete with a complicated series of out-in-in-out-left-rights that were not totally sinking in. “Right, left?” a frantic voice asked. “There’s something I never do after the turn, but I don’t know what it is.” The chief subject of hate was Wien’s floor: rickety, wooden, and—need not mention—poorly cared for, which was the source of more than a few slips and spills. “Are you hurt?” we all yelled when one of the lead dancers went down hard. “Just my ass and my head. Did my hole just get bigger?” She looked down at her ripped pants. Yes. “Can we just assume that this will work on a floor that’s not this floor?”

Illustrated by Maxine Keyes

—Andrew Flynn
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Can You Make a Varsity Show?

For 114 years, the Varsity Show has injected Columbia with laughter and merriment. You think you’ve got what it takes to look those 114 years in the face, point to yourself, and say, “now this is happening”? Take this quiz by V-Show Emerita Becky Abrams to find out if your audacity is justified!

1. TRADITION. The Varsity Show is all about its century-long heritage at Columbia. You choose to give history a crazy twist by:
   A. Opening with a football player kickline in which each guy gets kicked in the nuts. Possible disadvantage: You spoil the actual CU football season for everyone.
   B. Taking girls out of the show. This way, you’re also mimicking Shakespeare, so history gets more than its due. Possible disadvantage: A lot of guys coming out of the closet all at once might cause a bottleneck.
   C. Lampooning former CU and U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower by having the kids adoringly nickname him “Dwight-Eyes.” Possible disadvantage: Hard to say.
   D. Performing an exact copy of the previous year’s show. Possible disadvantage: Universe explodes.

2. COSTUMES. As costume designer, you decide to make your mark by:
   A. Being the first to use only body-paint on the cast and chorus.
   B. Putting everyone inside barrels with suspenders—maybe people will pay more money after.
   C. Playing a prank on everyone the night before open by shrinking their costumes in the dryer. Brobdingnagian Varsity show, prepare to look fat!
   D. Running onstage in a tuxedo vest and nothing else during the finale, yelling “Exclusion Suite airs tonight at nine!”

3. TIMELINESS. It’s just not a Varsity Show unless you’re pointing out something crazy that happened during the year. This year, you choose:
   A. The Giants winning the SuperBowl—you can use that kickline from before!
   B. Plagiarism and Hate Crimes—the gang learns a lesson in respect when their beloved teacher offers an Asian kid rice.
   C. Hunger Strike—anything is possible with this one. Maybe you go back in time to watch the 1968 protesters construct a giant tab of LSD out of papier-mâché. Or, you could always do a behind-the-scenes look at what hungry people talk about. (It’s food).
   D. Off-Campus Flex—students with huge meal plans hit themselves over the head again and again with those John Jay trays that say things like “Sodium NiTRAYte” and “why’d you buy meals if you weren’t TRAY freshman anymore?”

4. WRITING. Those lucky enough to write the Varsity Show have creative methods ranging from cool to just plain crazy. As writer, you plan to:
   A. Be Addison Anderson.
   B. Get used to the taste of Old Grand-dad Whiskey now, since it’s going to be your writing partner for the next five months.
   C. Encourage a lot of improvisation, a lot of ad-libs, stuff like that.
   D. Transpose the Columbia College Bulletin into a script. What’s more compelling than going over the requirements necessary to complete an American Studies degree?

SCORING:
 Mostly A’s: You’d probably be better off writing for a Japanese game show, since it looks like your favorite comedic trope is somebody getting kicked in the nuts. We wish you the best of luck and a cheap ticket to Tokyo.
 Mostly B’s: You’re kidding, right?
 Mostly C’s: Perhaps writing something like a “Junior Varsity Show” might be right up your alley—we can tell you’ve got potential, but your decision-making skills are worse than a Barnard girl’s, a-thank you!
 Mostly D’s: D’s?! You must have failed the semester. Just kidding, this is only a quiz in a program. But seriously, you did just fail the semester. Our condolences.
A few months ago, when the script of *V114* was still in its infancy, the creative team held a meeting to throw around ideas for possible themes. Katie Hathaway, co-composer and lyricist, while too feverish and ill to attend the meeting, was still well enough to send an email (written in size 14 Courier New font) to the C-Team listserv with her suggestions.

The email, which begins with a “hi” containing three i’s, details how the pervasiveness of hate in the campus zeitgeist would make a viable, successful theme—“just like i hate the nexus’ blah blah blah.” The suggestion proved viable indeed, and a *V114* theme was born. “don’t hate me,” the email concluded.

On April 1st, The cast and chorus of the Varsity Show received the following email from producers Erin Byrne and Jeff Schwartz:

Hey V114—

“We couldn’t be prouder of the hard work and dedication you’ve displayed since you all came on board last fall. Now, as we enter our last month of rehearsal before the big day, the homestretch, it’s time to "kick it up a notch."

In order to prepare for the magnitude and quality of the show we know we all want to put on, we will be increasing mandatory rehearsal hours beginning Wednesday. The new weekly schedule until the beginning of tech week will be as follows:

Full CAST and CHORUS
Monday–Friday 8pm–1am
Saturday–Sunday 9am–10pm

We realize that some of you are involved in other activities. We have attached the contact you all signed on December 1st to remind you of the commitment you made to Varsity Show four months ago. Note that you are only permitted to miss two rehearsals for ANY reason, including class.

According to the producers, several actors called their parents, cried, or canceled their weekend plans for the rest of the month.

On a night after rehearsal in late February, Varsity Show writers Rob Trump and James Williams were walking back to Williams’ off-campus apartment to work on the script. Suddenly, they found themselves surrounded by three men, one of who brandished a pistol and demanded the writers relinquish their belongings.

The thieves made off with cell phones, wallets, and, tragically, Williams’ computer, which contained a near-complete first draft of the show. Most of the work was recovered from email attachments and Trump’s own hard drive, but after a few weeks of tiresome “investigation” by CU Public Safety and the NYPD, it became apparent that the computer itself was gone for good, and that the culprits would continue to roam the streets as free men. Even now, justice remains unserved—although police are still keeping their eyes peeled for underground performances of a now-defunct version of *The 114th Annual Varsity Show*.

A quick look at Columbia’s mailing lists reveals all the various Varsity Show email aliases. In addition to varsity@columbia.edu and varsity-cast@columbia.edu, there’s varsity-cupcake@columbia.edu. Emails sent to this address go to just one person, Colin Drummond, who serves as the cast and crew’s official cupcake coordinator.

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