# THE BLUE & WHITE

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I do not intend to write a long note for this issue, as I believe all parting words should be brief. This is not to be curt, but what good has a long goodbye ever done save to sap the will of those caught up in flux and create intolerable, saccharine platitudes.

As you might have inferred from the above, this is my last issue of _The Blue & White_ as Editor-in-Chief of the magazine. My connections here run as deep as they can go in college—I have been lurking around and insinuating myself into this publication, but in print and on _Buog_, since the first weeks of my freshman year. Obviously, I’m a bit of a junkie for dying forms of media, so even when I step down, I won’t stop working for the magazine until the day they wrench me out of the St. Paul’s Chapel Crypt kicking and screaming.

But as I leave my editorial post (in much better hands in the future, I am sure), I can’t help recalling some lines from “Ozymandias” by Percy Shelley:

> “And on the pedestal these words appear:
>   ‘My name is Ozymandias, King of Kinds:
>   Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!’
>   Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
> ... The lone and level sands stretch far away.”

It’s the way of college—a rapid four-year turnover means that no matter the love you pour into your projects or the change you enact, all will be swallowed and eroded in the sands by the time you turn your head back to look at the gates you have just exited. A legacy is, in many ways, an inherently narcissistic thing to worry about, but it is not just a matter of name.

The human condition seems to entail the desire for more than our seed to survive. We seem hellbent on leaving some imprint wherever we pass, and many of us wish for it to be some happy if anonymous memory that eases the way for those to come. So I suppose my closing words are a wish: I hope that something written in this magazine in the past year has changed the way someone thinks, challenged a conception, or provided that service for years to come.

No, scratch that, I want my last words to be those which appear as the very last line of text in this magazine. That sentiment is the perfect one for me to make my exit upon.

> Adieu, mes chers. In the words and spirit of my kith and kin, laissez les bons temps rouler.

Mark Hay

(Outgoing) Editor-in-Chief

**Class Revelations**

_Every December_ The Blue & White _holds a holiday soirée. Whiskey flows abundantly, congenial conversation fills the air, and the new staff officially takes over the magazine. This year, our Managing Editor indulged in a few too many Jack and Cokes and delivered a drunken, eloquent speech explaining exactly what he and his fellow seniors considered the most powerful insights they’ve encountered in college. Since the Blue & White staff is comprised almost entirely of History and English majors (we have one guy who does claims..._
to do engineer-y type stuff) our natural instinct was to take notes. The next morning, after throwing Bwog’s hungover ass off the couch and popping three Excedrin, we decided to print it.

“To hold your interest, I’ll begin with the sexy bits. A member of the fairer institution across the street once told me that the part of the brain most involved with sex is 150% larger in men than in women. This should come as a relief to us all. All men occasionally wonder if their tendency to imagine a woman naked and contemplate how good sex with her would be is normal, but few have bothered to investigate. Don’t bother.

“In fact, consider yourself blessed to live in an era when you have some idea of what’s going on there. Back when Columbia men were obligated to stick a book in the door when a lady friend came a-calling (the clever ones resorted to a match book), our knowledge of the female anatomy about matched that of George Eliot’s late husband, who jumped into the Grand Canal of Venice upon discovering that women do in fact have pubic hair. Proof that what you don’t know can hurt you.

“That’s just a theory, but isn’t that kind of what theories are for? We’re never going to understand everything.

“Someone else once told me that beech trees aren’t actually individual trees. Beech tree groves are really one tree connected by many roots. Isn’t that amazing? The largest orgasm, I mean organism, (at this point he hiccuped and spilled some whiskey on the quartersawn oak floor) in the world is one huge beech tree. I’m not going to get all metaphysical on you now. No, we are not beech trees too.

“My point is that things aren’t always what they seem, as trite as that may sound. In fact, it’s a tendency among both nature and humans to simplify whenever possible. Much of what we consider a uniform entity is actually comprised of many complex details, ignored for the sake of convenience. Nineteenth century railroad executives created the modern time zones just so trains could run on a regular schedule. It’s impossible for it to be the same time in Boston and Detroit, they’re 700 fucking miles apart! Likewise, it wasn’t until 1989 that the federal government ceased to refer to Native Americans as “the red man.” I don’t mean to preach, but they’re obviously not all red.

“Embrace that complexity. Don’t obscure the details just because they confuse you. That’s the whole point of an intellectual endeavor.”

POSTCARD FROM MORNINGSIDE
A man walks into a bar in which a bad movie plays on several TV screens. Thirty minutes later, he freezes. “Wait... why are they playing Donnie Darko? Wait, wait, wait, that’s not Donnie Darko... why are they playing... the sequel to Donnie Darko?” This man is at 1020, where taste is relative, and perhaps ultimately irrelevant.

The second favorite Morningside dive bar of the staff of The Blue & White (Tap-a-Keg takes the cake). 1020 has a tradition of favoring, shall we say, unorthodox cinema. Except for special occasions, the bar shuns traditional options such as Top Gun or baseball. Whether screening the atypically cerebral (Mulholland Drive), the disturbingly grim (Monster), the grotesquely violent (District 9), or the shockingly insignificant (Cuba Gooding Jr.’s direct-to-DVD works), patrons have come to expect, and even revere, the not-quite-irony of the screenings and their environs.

The reason turns out not to be as sinister as might be feared. Friday night bartender Thalia Dergham, CC’12, explains, “Nobody ‘picks’ the movies at 1020. We simply pick a channel at the beginning of the night and usually leave it on unless something particularly disturbing comes on, even though usually when that happens we leave it on anyways.” She recalls Silence of the Lambs and The Lovely Bones as two—ahem—favorites. “The bartenders usually don’t know what is playing, because their backs are turned to the screens, so it’s a bit useless to ask them,” Dergham explains with a laugh. It appears that the randomness of 1020’s lineup is, indeed, random.

Just because the selection is governed by serendipity doesn’t mean that there is no accountability. 1020 lore has it that one Wednesday this semester, an uncensored porn movie ran for almost ten minutes. Eventually a middle-aged woman inquired at the bar. “I just wanted to see how long it would last,” the bartender replied.

“Students can be a little noisier than nuns,” admits Vice President of Campus Services Scott Wright. That’s discomforting to nearby residents of St. Hilda’s House, the convent on 113th and Riverside that Columbia is in the process of converting into a dorm.

Per Columbia tradition, neighbors were invited to a town hall meeting where some expressed concern about the possible increase in noise. Not everybody objects to the new arrangement, however. Keren Blum, Co-Director of the Chabad Resource Center at Columbia, lives close to St. Hilda’s. She explains, “[W]e were so excited that Columbia bought them because we were hoping that students would move in so we can service them more [...] If they make noise, I wouldn’t mind.”

Students who were salivating over the prospect of palatial singles in a lavish local did not have to wait long to have their hopes dashed once again by the
cruel mistress that is Columbia Housing, however. Columbia Housing expects to demolish most of the interior to make the space uniform with other campus housing. As for the dorm itself, the faux cherrywood-paneled library and main staircase will soon give way to the traditional Columbia brownstone housing layout, leaving only the original marble mantelpieces as remnants of the space’s former use. The walls will be repainted in order to flee from, as Wright puts it, “[that] institutional weird color you associate with elementary schools.”

The three brownstones which made up St. Hilda’s will remain connected under the new plan, but antiquated inconsistencies like the handicap-inaccessible steps throughout the halls will be fixed, and contractors are reinforcing unsound structures to bring the house into compliance with local student housing codes. The end result, as it stands now, will feel like some kind of hybrid between a frat house and the Intercultural Resource Center, according to Wright.

Dean Shollenberger has added that the space is earmarked for special interest housing. Whatever shape the dorms finally take, the new setup will bring a change to 113th Street. Steps which once saw quiet nuns pass will now seat disaffected smokers. At some point, they’ll probably be vomited on. And so it goes.

A s far as the late-night behavior of Columbia frat bros is concerned, most people assume it has more to do with Natty Light than mischievous cavorting. But those who enjoy a tale of late-night lasciviousness, take heart: a new rumor is making the rounds around the brownstones—the ones frats still inhabit, that is.

Suppbrookedly, an unidentified Columbia fraternity has been known to move the Wall Street Bull around this time of year, and the InterFraternal Council has their collective boxer briefs in a twist about it. In an email that could have been sent by your uptight (but supportive!) stepmother, IFC president Anthony Testa warns the Greek community that “these actions will not be tolerated this year and in the future” and that, in addition to being “definitely not allowed,” “the visibility of this action has the potential to get your organization and members into a significant amount of trouble—especially considering the heightened attention to Occupy Wall Street right now” (emphasis his).

Columbia’s fraternity brethren is no doubt one of the brawniest bunches around (“brawniest” being a relative term). Even so, the notion of a gaggle of brewski-fueled bros moving a 11-foot-tall, 7,000-pound statue in one of New York’s highest-security neighborhoods without attracting attention until now raises even the most skeptical eyebrow.

The Blue & White, greatly intrigued by these developments, contacted Testa for more details on the purported prank and received a response that, quite frankly, seemed like bull. He called the email merely “a precautionary measure” saying that he does not “believe this is a fraternity tradition.”

Most curiously, Testa now unofficially identifies the culprits as “a student group that is not part of the Greek community, but potentially wearing Greek letters.” The Blue & White is confused as to which student group unaffiliated with Greek life but wearing Greek letters would commit the same offense year after year, but we’ll give these upstanding service organizations the benefit of the doubt.

— Eric Wohlstadter

— Helen Bao

Illustrations by Emily Lazerwitz
You might not know the following figures—but you should. In Campus Characters, The Blue & White introduces you to a handful of Colombians who are up to interesting and extraordinary things and whose stories beg to be shared. If you’d like to suggest a Campus Character, send us an email at editors@theblueandwhite.org.

**Kenny Durell**

Kenny Durell, CC ’12, isn’t afraid to introduce himself. “I am frequently accused of being a little—probably a lot—too naive,” he admits with a grin. “At the end of the day, openness always works better... Why close yourself off to someone just because they weren’t randomly on your freshman floor?” Openness is his life philosophy, so striking up conversations with strangers is something he does frequently. “I’m always surprised when I meet someone who is a senior that I’ve never met before, just ‘cause there are like only one thousand people in the grade,” he says amiably.

Durell thinks the campus could benefit from a bit more openness. He dismisses the stereotypical neurotic, unhappy Columbia student, saying, “I feel like frequently at Columbia people criticize the lack of social interaction, but opening ourselves up to these kinds of new experiences could easily remedy a lot of our fears, or ironies, or worries. I feel like if you’re open to those kinds of interactions, things can go pretty well.”

Spend time with Durell and you’ll quickly realize that he sincerely subscribes to this life philosophy. According to his roommate of two years, Rohan Jotwani, CC ’12, “There is nobody else I know of who is willing to come to random loft parties in Brooklyn the night before his 7 am flight, to fly out to Cambodia just because, or to literally befriend people of every background and culture that he meets along the way.”

His openness goes past friendships—it’s defined his presence on campus. Durell never turns down a new adventure, and his hunt for novelty informs his choices. “I’ve always really been excited about new situations,” he says. This curiosity propelled him from his small California town to Columbia and also from the track team to his biggest commitment, and claim to fame, the University Senate.

While Durell certainly enjoys the perks of serving as a senator—the “coolness factor [of having an equal say in the Senate as law professors and administrators] will probably never wear off,” he admits—he means to seriously represent Columbia College to the University, and strives to be receptive to CC students’ worries. “I hope that anyone that knows me, knows me as someone they can reach out to, and as a senator it is my job to entertain any concern from anybody... This is a group of 6000 that I can represent to a body of 108 which actually makes very, very important decisions.” And while that sounds like politics-as-usual, Kenny means it. According to fellow Senator Eduardo Santana, CC ’13, “Working with Kenny on University Senate is not only a privilege, but an honor...if ever there is something that needs to get done, Kenny Durell is the one to make things happen.”

Durell’s been working to rectify the Bacchanal funding debacle, tirelessly meeting with Student Development and Activities, Dean of Community Development and Multicultural Affairs Terry Martinez, University Event Management, Facilities, Public Safety, and other administrators. In a “yourCCSC” video, he explains his goal of “at least rectifying it the future. If we get money out of it, well, that’s always the goal.”
Despite his important campus political position, the power never goes to Kenny’s head. “I don’t know how people see me. I’ve had my face on posters. Maybe I’m just a face on a poster,” he shrugs. Given his affinity for socializing and advocating, this seems highly unlikely. Jotwani affirms our suspicions: “To say that Kenny lights up any room he enters is an understatement; he’s more like a spontaneous, crazy-dancing supernova amongst dim lightbulbs.”

— Conor Skelding

DAN WEINSTEIN

I feel like I spend my time on all these different things, but I just can’t think of any of them,” Dan Weinstein, CC’12, says sheepishly as he pauses from rattling off an incomprehensible list of accomplishments, hobbies, and experiences.

Weinstein’s involvement in Columbia’s community has been so widespread that most students have probably met him in some capacity. He’s been involved in COOP since freshman year, and has served as a leader for COBOP, its biking orientation program, since sophomore year. “I love it a lot,” he reflects. “I just think that being outdoors is the number one bonding experience you can possibly have [...] and it is cool to know a subset of the incoming freshman class each year.”

But even those who wouldn’t dare pass the city limits owe Weinstein thanks for his part in another Columbia tradition: Bacchanal. As current president and a former concert chair, Weinstein was responsible for bringing Whiz Kalifa, Ghostface Killah, and Of Montreal to campus in 2010, and Das Racist and Snoop Dogg this past year. Though the club has recently been plagued by budget issues, Weinstein remains positive, and takes great pride in having the opportunity to “choose the direction of the biggest event on campus other than graduation.” His favorite part is building relationships with all of the musicians. “They’re some of the weirdest people to work with,” he laughs.

Yet it isn’t the likes of Ghostface Killah or Das Racist that receive the most plays on Weinstein’s iTunes. “I’m an avid classical music fan,” he admits. “I had a phase when I couldn’t fall asleep unless I was listening to Brahms’ violin concerto.” Weinstein puts his knowledge to work programming a classical radio show for WKCR every week, and spends much of his time at home playing the piano.

Weinstein moved to New Jersey in 9th grade, but his casual demeanor and love for the outdoors betray his Michigan roots. He tells tales of Colorado farm in California. The farm was near an area that is “apparently a big environmental catastrophe, but if you didn’t know that you’d think it was the most beautiful place ever,” he recalls wistfully.

Weinstein’s life is nothing if not balanced, and his love of nature is rivaled by his enthusiasm for Wikipedia. “I read a lot of it. You know those ads where they ask you to donate? I probably should. I probably will,” he reflects, chuckling. Later, he minimizes the history paper he’s writing to reveal a desktop background made up of a tiled collage of Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales’s austere headshots, underlining the validity of his claim. Though officially a history major, Weinstein also has a strong interest in computer science, a subject in which he is “somewhere between a major and a concentration.” He enjoys the contrast between history and computer science, but hopes to go into the world of tech startups after graduation. “[Programming] is just like taking courses in puzzles all the time!” he says excitedly.

Weinstein’s laudable involvement in the Columbia community becomes more impressive through his motley collection of hobbies and his everyman attitude. “When I say these things out loud I just don’t feel that unique,” he laughs, his humility only eclipsed by his genuine friendliness. Sarah Dion, CC’12, remarks, “I recently got in touch with someone whom I had never met through Dan for a club thing, and at the end of her reply to me, she wrote: ‘PS- Dan Weinstein is the best!’ I think that pretty accurately sums things up.”

— Brian Wagner
See, humans are creatures of habit. We are apprehensive about change in any shape or form, simply because revolutions—change at its most radical—force us to adjust to new circumstances. Just think of your truculent indignation over finding a new spot in Butler when your personal nook has been occupied, or the emotional trauma you suffer when Starbucks stops serving their Pumpkin Spice lattés in the spring. Well, maybe you don’t affect such a drastic response to a coffee craving. But we live in a fast-paced, high-stress environment, and so the attempt to normalize even the least important factors, such as the flavor of our espresso shots, becomes essential to our overall well-being.

I, though, believe you should dare to disrupt your daily routines. Finding a new spot at Butler holds the potential of snagging an attractive study-buddy, or eyeing an interesting title somewhere in Milstein. Such progressive changes can make life up and make an experience of mere existence. The tiniest tinge of chaos, the flap of a butterfly’s wings, or even a rabid pigeon’s, can be a transformative experience. First you lose your armchair, then your coffee, and suddenly it’s a whole new world. You may think that the status quo serves you well, but rarely do you consider the whole series of shake-ups that got you there in the first place.

While revolution can be counteractive to one’s torpidity, sometimes we actually want to, nay need to, shake up our lives. Consider the technological innovations that changed everything. Basically, in one giant, sweeping, revolutionary move, the Internet was popularized in the ‘90s and since then, life has been great. We got e-mail, Facebook, Youtube, Hulu, and Twitter. This most recent revolution led to great advancements in consumerism—a cause America can always get behind. The Information Revolution has ensured that never a second is wasted, and if you do manage to plop down in the library, Starbucks in hand, for an hour or two, you can while away the entire time trending poodles.

Looking back on other revolutions: that Agricultural one was also pretty chill. In the twelfth century, more effective ways of growing food meant more edibles. More food is always better than less food, even if our diet might have been healthier when we were scavenging for nuts and berries, high in omega-3 acids and anti-oxidants. This in turn led to even more people and cities and such and thus more revolutions that impacted the whole world. Then we had the Industrial Revolution, which was pretty baller, too: it got us cars and lights. This opened up the whole world of night driving!

Most importantly, changes are fun. We get cool things like new food, new technology, new music, new movies, new clothes, new poodles... Maybe we’ll get a new reallocation of wealth courtesy of the Occupy Wall Street folks. The thing is that mankind craves diverse entertainment, and revolutions of any sort provide a diversion from the daily routine. So maybe you can’t get a Pumpkin Spice latte in June, but that doesn’t mean you can’t agitate for it. So, join the Revolution. Go out and change someone’s mind or invent something. Create room for improvement and provide interesting distractions on our path to death. In fact, were it not for the French one, no one would be able to make fun of that short, little Corsican man, and that would be a terrible shame.
Bell-bottoms, disco, hula hoops: fads sneak up on us, grip us for a fleeting moment, and then leave us feeling abused and used. This year has seen the resurgence of one of the world’s most persistent fads: revolution. From the Middle East, to England, to New York City, to the “global community,” everyone this year is in their “season: an Arab spring, a Libyan summer, an American fall. This aphoristic formula for naming a revolution, “[Geographical location] [Season],” belies the creativity these revolutionaries claim to promote. Thanks to the Internet, the whole world is reverberating with tweets begging you to pledge loyalty with that ultimate signal of devotion—the retweet. Uncle World Wants YOU to Join the Revolution. It’s time to answer his call: No!

Let’s turn to our friendly neighborhood revolution, Occupy Wall Street. OWS proudly and megalomaniac-ly calls itself the “NYC Protest for World Revolution.” Given the broad scope of this call to action, you must know what you’re joining before you make the leap! First question to ask: What does the movement stand for? So far it’s objected to financial reform, the government, the NYPD, the Egyptian military, Walmart, Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and—as my colleague points out—Pumpkin Spice lattés. This is hardly a stable platform from which to rebel. As Mattathias Schwartz points out in his New Yorker article “Pre-Occupied,” for many in Zuccotti park, “vagueness is a virtue.” We should consider, though, that the Occupiers’ wishy-washy, starry-eyed rambling we’ve come to know may be only the face of the movement.

Its brains could be up to something totally different: Kalle Lasn, the creator of the OWS movement, calls for “surprise attacks against business as usual.”

Well, guess not. Joining a revolution without a unifying cause is a risk not worth taking, and one sure to lead to unnecessary turbulence. Without any clear goal in sight, there’s no telling what you’re signing up for when you commit to that fateful retweet. Looking at the motley crew of protesters at OWS, even the vagaries of the stock market seems steadier. And at least you have a general idea of when Starbucks is going to stop selling their foolish holiday beverages come spring—and you know it’s coming back in the fall! Sacrificing that security for uncertainly is downright foolish.

As it happens, most Occupiers aren’t insurrectionist anarchists or utopia-seeking socialists, they’re simply the discontented who feel cheated by their supposedly representative governments. In that case, America wants to support the movement. Undoubtedly, few could muster the strength to argue that the school system vibrant, and our pockets a-jingle. But just as a revolution is not a dinner party, it is no sleepover in a park—at least not anymore according to the NYPD. Why shake up the comfort of your daily routine in order to pursue goals which may not even be realizable?

At best, these revolutions crumble within a few days, and we can all look back and wonder what we were thinking. Just as you cringe at pictures of your dad’s plaid prom suit, you’re bound for nothing but embarrassment when looking back at the weeks you spend sleeping on the ground in a park wearing a sign that says “Bankers are Cylons.” Meanwhile, I’ll be here comfortably punching in and out at the same time, every morning, every night, every day, every week, happily marking the signposts of the road of familiarity.
Ah, Winter in the City—what could be finer? The lights, the furs, our fair University draped in snow. Such beautiful surroundings inevitably remind Verily V of happy times spent with dear friends and family, whether here in our fair Metropolis, at a chalet in Val d’Isère, or really anywhere a good mulled wine can be had. For our hero and his dear pup Wagner, the “Holiday Season” (as we are now to call it) always begins with a jaunt out to Grandmother Veritas’ house at Newport for Thanksgiving. This year was no different.

Leaving the travails of City life behind them, our flâneur and his little hound left the City on the New Haven-bound line. (The economic “recession,” it seems, insists on taking a toll on all of us, and so Father Veritas refused to hire a car.) Arriving at Grandmother’s the evening before the holiday, your own VV immediately found himself surrounded by cousins of all sorts. Truly, one hasn’t experienced a real family reunion until one has the Veritas clan all gathered under one roof!

Little Wagner was led away to join his own pack of canine cousins—Valerius, Vergil, and, of course, little Valentine—purebreds all, rest assured. Meanwhile, cousin Victor, that perennial family fop, grabbed our hero by the arm and sat him down in a chaise longue (not only by Louis Quatorze, but actually having belonged to Louis Quatorze, Grandmother always insists) to hear tell of his latest endeavors. The Transvaal, he insists, is still ripe with diamonds—but frankly who cares anymore? All that business at Kimberly has robbed the trade of a certain freedom. After an hour or so of that crucible, and the obligatory nightcap with Aunt Wilhelmina (every family has one), VV was warm in bed and fast asleep in the east wing. Or perhaps the north. Or the northeast, but one can never tell.

The next day: more of the same! Our hero managed to hide himself away in one of the lesser libraries as the staff busied themselves in the kitchens and the dining room, but when the dinner hour rolled round Verily V verily braced himself. Over an overdone turkey (a word to the wise: never hire a Spaniard to run your kitchen), our hero was treated to Uncle Vanya’s views on the woman question and samples of Cousin Virginia’s “photography” (excessively introspective and overly gray-scaled all-shots of fleshy girls in summer dresses; one shudders). But nonetheless, as glass of Château Lafitte followed glass of Château Lafite, and the server came round to replenish potatoes, your own Verily V felt himself at home amidst the Veriti. By the time the dessert dishes sitting before him, he regretted having arranged to take the first train out in the morning; Aunt Vivian’s customary after-dinner rendition of Auld Lang Sync notwithstanding, the feeling lingered ’til lights-out.

The next night, back in our Metropolis and toasting the holiday on a dear friend’s roof-top terrace, your own VV still found himself feeling a tad sentimental. What more might this holiday season bring? A new great-coat for Christmas? That longed-for New Year’s kiss? There is no way of knowing what dreams may come, but as the Bard says, we have only to “meet the time as it seeks us.” ✴
Space Jam
Lerner Hall and the Politics of Space
BY AUGUSTA HARRIS

Lerner Hall is experienced as a series of small gripes: the difficult turnstiles, its disorienting slant, the fading memory of Tasti-D-Lite. In contrast, the student center it displaced, Ferris Booth Hall, lives on as the ultimate Columbiana fantasy. The old building boasted a music and entertainment venue, a rifle range, a bowling alley, a real stairwell, and a walk-in refrigerator where the Columbia Bartending Agency kept their alcohol, which they served in the Ferris Booth’s student bar.

While some students wax nostalgic for a time when student space was actually available for student use, Matthew Harrison, CC’05, exhausted the subject, writing his Urban Studies thesis on Lerner. He examined how the building was designed to emulate the Low Steps on a sunny day, and evaluated how close it comes to achieving that goal. Bernard Tschumi, Dean of Columbia’s Graduate School of Architecture, was tasked with finding an architect for the planned student center—and chose himself. Tschumi, Harrison concluded, designed Lerner to be “a waste of space.”

This wasn’t much of an improvement upon the old building, which for all its perks, was not particularly effective. “[T]here was basically no one who was happy,” Harrison said. “It was an old, cheaply built, falling down building that was in bad condition.”

Ferris Booth Hall, Harrison goes on to explain, aged quickly. It was built before Columbia students lived on campus, and no longer satisfied the needs of an expanded, resident student body by the 1980s. In the fall of 1999, the University opened Alfred Lerner Hall, to mixed reviews. “Lerner is an infinitely nicer building,” Harrison insists. “Anyone who likes Ferris Booth Hall just wants an excuse to hate Lerner.”

But Lerner’s opening brought with it major issues of space allocation. While the fates of eight of its nine floors were decided upon, the sixth floor’s function was undetermined. Unoccupied for nine years, it became a wasteland of broken fitness machines and catering carts.

After the building opened, student groups were initially able to fill out an annual proposal for space anywhere in Lerner. A document from 1999 shows this simple proposal, which requires only the name of the organization, its president, and contact information, along with tentative plans for allocation of space. There was plenty of extra room for the general student body to hang out, and groups were able to lay claim to it without dispute. Eventually, the administration decided that its own need for space surpassed that of the students. And so began a systematic land grab—space for students and groups rapidly gave way to space for administrative offices and meeting rooms and booking the remaining space grew harder and harder. Lerner was colonized from within.

Backlash was swift: CCSC published a “Student Proposal for the Sixth Floor in Alfred Lerner Hall” (mysteriously still a wasteland well into the colonizing process), which insisted that “the entire sixth floor should be designated for student use.” Unsurprisingly, student polls showed that the last thing they wanted on the sixth floor was the administration. Harrison—previous president of CCSC—reminisces, “I fought that tug-of-war. It’s an ancient tug-of-war.”

“There is already growing frustration toward Columbia as an institution that places many demands
on students and gives them few means to meet them,” the proposal boldly stated. “The sixth floor of Lerner could either change that sentiment or reconfirm its validity.” That was 2003 and not much has changed. In 2009, it was announced that the entire sixth floor would be renovated to house the Division of Student Affairs, the Undergraduate Financial Aid and Educational Financing, and the Office of Judicial Affairs, in order to make room for the revamped and expanded offices for Student Advising on the fourth floor.

Despite the administration’s considerable investments in infrastructure, Barry Weinberg, CC’ 12, and current chair of the Student Governing Board, continues to pull for a change in Lerner.

“Students do not control Lerner,” Weinberg said. “SGB previously had control of how it was used. We don’t control it anymore.” In a meeting with the Student Governing Board, Weinberg condemned the space allocations. “There is a grand consensus that Lerner sucks,” he proclaimed, met by many nods and groans from his fellow SGB members. “It is not, in fact, a student center.”

Students, brought together at the grassroots level via a student-led forum, are currently drawing up plans for better student space, in consultation with architecture students and the administration itself—mainly Dean of CC James Valentini. There has been discussion of revamping either the second floor Broadway Room and piano lounge or the mezzanine in front of Ferris Booth Commons to be more hospitable to student life, perhaps by installing a game room or general lounge area.

Christina Fan, CC’ 13, of the Lerner Hall Advisory Board, a committee branch of SGA, confirmed that this has been a popular proposal: “One of the first things we talked about were the rentable video games and the policy of the game room.”

The SGB has voiced some concern over planning permanent change in the building, since Manhattanville’s expansion will change the amount of space available in Morningside. Once the graduate schools move north, their vacated buildings will be eagerly sought after, and deciding who gets what may prove equally controversial. Will there be more space for students? Or will there be more space for administrators, who will surely expand in numbers to accommodate the growth in enrollment across the University that will accompany the opening of Manhattanville? For now, Lerner remains a shiny, confused boondoggle. •

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15
The Historic District of Morningside Heights

Defining and Defending the Neighborhood’s Heritage

By Will Holt, Additional Reporting by Abigail Golden

Anyone walking around Morningside Heights who bothers to stop and look up at the surrounding buildings will recognize a unique beauty to the neighborhood. This goes beyond a matter of taste. The 2010 edition of the American Institute of Architects’ Guide to New York City, an inventory of the five boroughs’ notable architectural achievements, describes the neighborhood as follows: “Between the steep escarpment of Morningside Park on the east and the gentle slopes along the Hudson lie many of Manhattan’s most impressive visual architectural, and cultural delights.” Yet even with broad consensus on the historic and cultural importance of Morningside, the neighborhood has not received recognition and protection, as so many other areas have, as a historic district.

This is not for want of desire or effort, or even for want of official cooperation and recognition (in 2009, New York State’s Historic Preservation Office determined that Morningside Heights met both the state a national criteria to be registered as a historic place). In 1996, a group composed mostly of neighborhood residents, the Morningside Heights Historic District Committee (MHHDC), formed and presented an official proposal to recognize and protect the neighborhood to the New York City-Landmark Preservation Commission (NYC-LPC). The NYC-LPC has in turn recognized the importance of the neighborhood, but over fifteen years later nothing has come of the efforts to designate Morningside. This absurd delay stems mainly from the vagueness of NYC-LPC language, hard debates over what exactly constitutes a “neighborhood” for the purposes of designation, and vested interests, which harden and thicken the debates to a point of total traction.

In the NYC-LPC’s official rules, a neighborhood may be marked as a historic district if it has a “special character or specific historic or aesthetic interest,” representing “one or more periods of styles of architecture typical of one or more eras in the history of the city,” and constituting “a distinct section of the city.” For all this verbiage, there are no clear criteria for designation in this language.

Even with that vagueness, Morningside certainly represents a distinct historical, architectural and notable period and place in the history of Manhattan. Though the neighborhood began to develop unique landmarks with the initial construction of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in 1892 and the relocation of Columbia University from its downtown campus, the neighborhood was largely undeveloped at the turn of the century. Only in 1904 with the opening of the 1 train did the area become accessible for development and envelopment into the heart of the City.

The neighborhood developed from the late 1890s until 1920 in what the MHHDC referred to in its first written proposal as “a sustained, exuberant, cogent expression of the American Renaissance.” And though
many of the buildings developed in this era were part of the grandiose “Gothic Revival” style that characterizes New York architecture, Gregory Dietrich, a graduate of Columbia’s Historic Preservation and Real Estate Development masters program, local resident, and advisor to the MHHDC, points to Riverside Church and the Union Theological Seminary as two examples of buildings which, though Gothic Revival, retain a strong independent character.

Such notable buildings sprinkle the area from 110th to 125th Streets and between Morningside and Riverside Parks, some rather inconspicuous in their placement. The more visible include the Beaux-Arts apartment buildings on Broadway, Claremont Avenue, and Riverside Drive. Of these, the distinguished curved facades of The Colosseum and The Paterno, twin apartment buildings at 116th and Riverside Drive, illuminate the area’s architectural ambitions. In 1999, the New York Times architectural columnist Christopher Gray claimed that these buildings “[form] a gateway as impressive as any publicly built arch or plaza in New York.”

But Dietrich encourages all to pay a visit to less visible landmarks, tucked away into the corners of the neighborhood. He notes Bancroft Hall, a distinctive apartment building designed by Beaux-Arts architect Emery Roth (509 W. 121st St.) as emblematic of such buildings. And entire stretches of buildings tell a story of, as Dietrich says, the neighborhood’s “concentrated multi-family residential development in a short period of time.” These buildings were the settings in which American culture developed: F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote This Side of Paradise while in the neighborhood and George Gershwin began composing Rhapsody in Blue near the space now home to 1020.

Even this detailed catalog of the large and small treasures and historic riches of the neighborhood, Dietrich says, “does not do justice to the wealth of historic resources located in this community.”

After great delay the NYC-LPD returned a proposed recognition for the creation of a Morningside Heights Historic District. But the MHHDC flatly rejected the proposal. Dietrich explains that the NYC-LPC proposal only encompassed certain buildings on Riverside Drive and Claremont Avenue between West 110th and 119th Streets. This fell far short of the initial demand for recognition of the full neighborhood as historically significant.

Conspicuously missing from the NYC-LPC’s proposal were large swaths of properties owned outright by Columbia University. As Dietrich notes, “Columbia University is probably the most significant example of Beaux-Arts planning applied to an academic campus anywhere in the U.S., while Teacher’s College is a remarkable collection of English Gothic and Collegiate Gothic buildings.”

Including Columbia and its buildings in a historic district would give neighborhood residents input on all future development proposals in order to maintain the character of the neighborhood and would raise property values, while posting up a host of new regulations for all new projects and renovations that institutions like Columbia would embark on. This would hinder the University projects like one in 2010 that wiped out three brownstones on West 115th Street—some of the oldest multi-family residential buildings in the neighborhood.

Though the University certainly gains by a limited district recognition, the extent to which it has influenced these decisions remains unclear. When asked for comment on the prospect of a Morningside Heights Historic District by the New York Times in 2009, President Lee Bollinger declined to comment.

Dietrich believes the NYC-LPC just does not value the larger context and holistic conception of a neighborhood that helps to define and give value and character to those few buildings of especial notice. When the NYC-LPC invited residents to a community meeting in September 2010 to reassess the historic designation for Morningside Heights, most in attendance pushed for the recognition of the full Riverside to Morningside Parks, 110th to 125th Streets neighborhood. As reported in the Spectator, a new proposal for this area has been submitted to the NYC-LPC, which has itself produced a new, unseen proposal, but all remains under revision.

Whatever the outcome of these latest NYC-LPC deliberations, Dietrich remains optimistic. “The NYC-LPC meeting resulted in a renewal of the MHHDC’s advocacy efforts over the past year, which has entailed regular monthly meetings, collecting petition signatures to show the NYC-LPC broad-based community support, meeting with elected officials and their staff, and producing programs like walking tours and talks to promote awareness of the neighborhood’s rich and extraordinary historical and architectural significance.” Full recognition probably remains a long ways away. But at least in controversy and delay, the piqued attention to the neighborhood is finally giving the historic district its due, if not official, recognition.

DECEMBER 2011
When he assumed his role as Interim Dean in September, James Valentini identified the adjudication process for accusations of academic dishonesty as one area where he felt he could enact immediate change for the better. In an interview with Bwog at the beginning of the semester, he touched on recent changes to the administrative procedure. “It doesn’t matter what school you’re in; everyone’s going to be handled equally.” At the time, no public changes had been made known, nor was there any consensus among the student body that Columbia had ever had a rigorous policy for enforcing disciplinary procedures for cheating.

“It’s not something you’re going to feel on the student end,” explains Jeri Henry, Senior Assistant Dean in the Office of Judicial Affairs and Community Standards (OJA) and the person responsible for managing the adjudication of incidents of misconduct, academic and otherwise. OJA, a division of Student Affairs, is a relatively new office, founded in 2007, and in its four years has been a strong advocate for fair and holistic treatment of instances of cheating.

The landscape of academic dishonesty, however, is notoriously hard to navigate. In September 2010, The Blue & White explored the online black market for academic essays, written-to-order work commissioned by a specific student for a specific project, and thus nearly impossible to trace. This is just one of the many ways that new technologies have enabled more subtle forms of cheating to proliferate in the last few years—trends to which the academy has been very slow to adjust. Henry identifies a “generational divide” between students and professors as one of the main reasons that rigorous standards of what is cheating, and what is not, are extremely difficult to enforce.

And while students continue to find new ways to cheat, the administration trips over itself in its attempts to lay down the law. Until recently, each of the undergraduate schools—BC, CC and SEAS, and GS—had their own means of dealing with instances of academic misconduct. Given that students from all four schools are constantly taking classes together, this led to instances in which three different sanctions could be imposed on students complicit in the same offense. Having been personally privy to such a case, Dean Valentini was an outspoken advocate of unifying undergraduate processes and standards.

Expectations, experiences with cheating, and attitudes towards punishment vary widely across the different schools and disciplines. For example, while Columbia subscribes to Turnitin.com, a service that uses sophisticated analysis to determine whether an essay is original or not, the software is barely utilized. Philosophy Professor Christia Mercer observes that, “Up until very recently few faculty in Arts and Sciences used it. Typical Columbia: the administration paid for it and then didn’t tell anyone it was there to be used.” Professor of Political Science Dorian Warren didn’t even know that technology has radically changed the nature of the beast. “There’s probably been a spike [in cheating] in the past 10 or 20 years,” he hazards.

The rapid rise of international enrollment has also contributed to the general lack of clarity on what constitutes a violation of academic integrity. Wendy Schor-Haim, the Associate Director of Barnard’s Writing Program, explained that she joined Barnard’s Honor Board (the body of students, faculty, and administrators that hear disciplinary charges) as a result of her interaction with students from abroad. “I think it’s really important to understand that American expectations are not universal but are rather culturally determined. In courting and accepting a growing number of international students, part of our job is to make sure that they understand our expectations and practices in this area,” she said.

Despite the broad consensus among faculty,
the move to integrate all undergraduate schools remains somewhat of a pipe dream. While GS, SEAS, and CC have all been brought under the jurisdiction of OJA, Barnard has resolved to maintain a separate judicial process. This is both because their system is well-entrenched—the school’s Honor Code has been in place for almost a century—and because, on a larger scale, Barnard is interested in preserving its institutional identity. The Code and the history of its application are explained in detail on Barnard’s website, where it is made explicit that its policy applies to both Columbia students enrolled in Barnard classes and Barnard students at Columbia. In contrast, OJA merely provides a handful of links to various fragments of university and college policies. Fortunately, Henry worked part-time in the Barnard administration while attending law school, and so has a good relationship with the relevant partners on the other side of Broadway.

“Dean Valentini came in at a really exciting point,” Henry emphasized. In conjunction with the Dean’s office and the Committee on Instruction, the OJA is set to bring everyone into line by coming up with a detailed and explicit code of conduct that professors will be encouraged to enforce. “I’m certainly not going to tell faculty what to do, but they need to make expectations clear to students,” Henry noted. She and her team are set to visit every academic department to present on community standards, and encourage professors to take the initiative to stop cheating.

Professor Patricia Stokes of the Barnard psychology department feels that education is imperative. “If the examples of what cheating was and the consequences were made very clear, I don’t think kids would be inclined to cheat. I don’t think the consequences are clear,” she argues. Mercer and the Committee on the Core are thinking seriously about a mandatory testing system, not unlike AlchoholEDU, that would make students aware of gaps in their understanding; first-year students would be required to complete the online test before registering. OJA, however, has yet to announce their final recommendation. The office hasn’t been around long enough to compile significant statistics on the trends in offenses to be able to share with professors, but OJA plans to eventually create a set of resources and specific guidelines to share with all faculty, which can be incorporated into syllabi, examinations, or class-based discussions. These should be in place next year, as Henry first needs to meet with every academic department to explain the importance of faculty communication with OJA, and enforcing uniform standards, something she plans to begin next semester. The process is as pedagogical as it is administrative, and although it may seem less efficient than enforcing hardline policies similar to those at Barnard, it appears that the heuristic approach is paying off. “A student who returned from [academic] suspension actually hugged me,” Henry recalls. “You can imagine, I don’t get a lot of hugs.” Mercer sees potential for real change: “If the students know that we are actually taking it seriously and we know that the students are actually taking it seriously then there’s a kind of dynamic of optimism.” Perhaps this points to a more direct effect on undergraduates than Henry anticipates. Perhaps more hugs are in order.
“We have presidential candidates who don’t even believe in science... it’s mind-boggling!” New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg exclaimed at a recent international economic forum on Columbia’s campus. Science has certainly been on Bloomberg’s mind of late (not to mention for most of his life—he did, after all, make his name as a tech entrepreneur before it was cool). After his early-morning eviction of Zuccotti Park, his most publicized crusade over the past few months aims to reinvent New York as the next Silicon Valley. The mayor has called for universities all over the world to submit proposals for new tech campuses within the city.

Bloomberg extended the invitation on July 19th, promising free city land and $100 million in funding to the winning plan. The mayor speculated enthusiastically that the innovation (and the further innovation it sparks) could bring the city $6 billion in economic activity, and somewhere around 400 new companies with 22,000 new permanent jobs—what he called a “real game changer for this city.”

When the deadline for submissions arrived just three months later, the mayor’s office had received seven bids from a variety of global collaborations: Stanford, in partnership with the City College of New York, and Cornell, together with Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, chose Roosevelt Island as the site of their future campuses. Carnegie Mellon University teamed with Steiner Studios, a video production facility, in a bid for land in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Amity University, based in India, submitted a solo proposal and selected Governor’s Island as a potential site. NYU joined five other schools—the University of Toronto, University of Warwick, the Indian Institute of Technology in Bombay, City University of New York, and Carnegie Mellon—proposing to construct a campus in Downtown Brooklyn. The New York Genome Center, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Rockefeller University, and SUNY Stony Brook put forth a bid for a campus in Midtown Manhattan. Columbia conveniently integrated its proposal into its existing Manhattanville expansion plans.

The projects vary widely in both purpose and scale. The largest, Cornell’s requested 2.1 million sq ft, is five times larger than NYU’s smallest submission. Columbia falls neatly near the middle with a proposed 1.1 million sq ft. Though the mayor has only guaranteed $100 million in funding, the proposals have made it clear that the interested parties plan to make the most of the city’s land: both Cornell’s and Stanford’s proposals carry price tags above $2 billion. The mayor delighted in the 10,000-plus pages of proposals, calling them “stronger than anything we could have possibly expected.” A final decision is expected this January, though Bloomberg insisted in early November that there was no “one front runner,” even hinting at the possibility that more than one proposal may get the green light.

Columbia’s bid is a unique case, not only because it forewent use of the original three city plots proposed by Bloomberg (Roosevelt Island, Governor’s Island, and the Brooklyn Navy Yard) and neglected to partner with another institution, but also because the proposal is actually for five separate entities. A series of centers would constitute the hypothetical Institute for Data Sciences and Engineering: Smart Cities, New Media, Health Analytics, Cybersecurity, and Financial Analytics. These areas of focus reflect Columbia’s strengths in media, healthcare, and finance while expressing a clear commitment to interdisciplinary study. The expansion has more of a NoCo flavor than a Mudd one. According to Nate Levick, SEAS ’12 and ESC president, “The proposed ‘Data Sciences’ center will have incredible versatility and multi-disciplinarity (a word I just created), and those abilities will undoubtedly see use outside Engineering school—the idea is to bolster Columbia’s technological presence as a whole.”

The proposal spends significant time touting the accomplishments of Columbia’s engineers in line with the university’s recent efforts to rebrand itself as a major research institution. The plan’s strength lies in preexisting progress on Manhattanville construction,
and its emphasis on entrepreneurship and job creation. To date, Columbia takes credit for 4,000 inventions; 1,800 patents; 500 licenses; and the creation of 128 new companies (81 of them still active).

An advisory committee has been formed by the city to help review the proposals, and the Economic Development Corporation and City Council will undoubtedly offer their opinions, but the final say will likely come from Bloomberg alone, according to conversations the New York Times has had with city government officials. Each submission will be given a grade, which breaks down to 40 percent for economic impact and feasibility, 40 percent for the qualifications and record of the applicant(s), and 20 percent for how well the new establishment would be integrated with the city. Stanford and Cornell have received the most media buzz, but Columbia is in a strong position, particularly if the mayor should elect to award funding to multiple proposals.

Speaking at MIT the week the magazine went to print, Bloomberg stated that, “I think we’ve told three [teams] that they’re not going to make it and that we’re working with the last four,” though he quickly backtracked and reportedly told the New York Daily News that in fact only two of the seven proposals have been eliminated.

Sources claim that the five schools still in the running are Cornell, Stanford, Carnegie Mellon, Columbia, and NYU. According to Levick, the Dean of SEAS Feniosky Peña-Mora confirmed that our proposal “has indeed made it to the ‘short list’ of candidates.” Should this be the case, Columbia’s odds are favorable, as both Stanford and Cornell want to build on Roosevelt Island and thus cannot both be chosen if Bloomberg selects two proposals, essentially giving Columbia a 50-50 shot at the prize.

A rival elite institution in New York City could put significant pressure on Columbia, pushing it to dedicate more resources to strengthening its own engineering programs. It is likely that construction of the Institute for Data Sciences would go ahead even if Columbia’s proposal is rejected, but Bloomberg’s focus stretches beyond making or breaking ties with prestigious universities. At a press conference in July, the mayor expressed a desire for New York to become the “world capital of technological innovation,” starting with a new tech campus.

Much has been made of various unsuccessful efforts to incubate a new NorCal in other climes; even if NYC boasts a culture of sleepless programmers, high property costs remain a roadblock. Editorials in the Times and New York Magazine have argued that you cannot simply force Silicon Valley out of the ground, and that municipal funds would perhaps be better spent on the cultivation of a stronger community and infrastructure for engineers and researchers already working in the Big Apple. Even if the chances of New York becoming an innovators’ paradise are slim, shifting job markets and the growing demand of data analytics would make a science center within Manhattanville a logical and desirable addition.

With the recent announcement of a Facebook office in New York, it seems as if, despite skepticism, Bloomberg could be onto something. Even if Columbia doesn’t make the final cut, we’re already sitting on enough real estate to keep up with any newcomers. Just please don’t let it be NYU. •
Colleges are in the business of education. Though they are large private corporations that manage hundreds of millions, if not billions, of dollars a year, as non-profits, institutions of higher learning have a culture distinct from that of most for-profit private corporations. As Greg Brown, Barnard College’s Chief Operating Officer, says of the industry, “This isn’t corporate America, where the COO makes 100 times what anyone else makes.” In order to fulfill its mission, though, it has to manage its money well, which requires it to make decisions that, in the short-term, may not be seem to be in the best interests of its students.

Barnard, eking out its existence on a tiny endowment, has faced financial difficulties for years, and as a result adopted policies aimed at increasing revenue that have upset many students. Last year, it required all students, even those commuting to school or attending part-time, to purchase a mandatory meal plan, which costs at least $300 a semester. In October, Dean of Barnard College Avis Hinkson officially ended the informal practice of allowing some students to enroll as part-time students for their final semester of senior year, and paying significantly less for these fewer credits. The elimination of part-time enrollment set off a wave of controversy and renewed scrutiny of Barnard’s budget.

Technically, Barnard has always required all students to enroll full-time students for all of their eight semesters. In practice, though, any student could petition for part-time enrollment, and these petitions were almost always granted. Barnard thus developed a culture of part-time enrollment, and in some cases academic advisers even encouraged students to enroll part-time. The elimination of this informal policy takes away that option, which has upset many students. “It will certainly limit options of being ‘strong and beautiful’ on campus, given that students generally took this chance to take on special jobs and full-time internships,” says Hannah Goldstein, BC ’13. An outspoken critic of the change, she had planned to enroll part-time for her final semester next year and warns that the change “will encourage finance-conscious seniors to cut their time here short,” prompting them to graduate a semester early rather than pay for the cost of a final full-time semester.

When Hinkson discussed the policy at a Barnard Student Government Administration town hall meeting last month, she emphasized that it would encourage community-building by encouraging students to stay on campus and take more classes together, but also acknowledged that the decision was a financial one. The difference between a stu-
dent paying full-time and part-time enrollment is around $12,000. Barnard’s administration would continue to lose out on half a million dollars worth of revenue if, as in past years, 40 students opt for part-time enrollment each year. “Every little bit counts,” says Brown, Barnard’s COO—especially since Barnard has been running a roughly $2.5 million budget deficit for the last few years.

While the immediate deficits are largely the result of the construction of the $45 million Diana Center, Barnard also faces structural financial problems. Perhaps the biggest obstacle to financial security is Barnard’s pitiful endowment, which in 2011 stood at a mere $215.5 million. This is, unsurprisingly, dwarfed by Columbia’s (currently in excess of $7 billion), but even compared to its peer liberal arts institutions it seems exceptionally small. Top liberal arts schools like Amherst, Williams, Wellesley, and Smith all have endowments north of $1 billion, and even Mt. Holyoke and Bryn Mawr, two less selective women’s colleges, have endowments more than twice as large as Barnard’s.

“Barnard was started as an idea—‘Let’s educate women,’” says Mica Spicka, BC ’13 and the SGA’s junior representative to the Barnard Board of Trustees. “It wasn’t started because people had a pile of money and said, ‘Let’s invest this in a new college.’” For the first few years after it was founded in 1889, Barnard did not even have an endowment. Even after establishing one in 1898, Barnard always had trouble raising funds independent of Columbia. Spicka speculates that alumnae of Barnard who married alumni of Columbia tended to donate to Columbia rather than Barnard. “A couple where the wife went to Barnard and the husband went to Columbia will probably give to Columbia, especially if they have a son,” she says. For whatever reason, the rate of alumnae giving is relatively low at Barnard—only about 30 percent, compared to 36 percent at Columbia and 50 percent at Wellesley.

The small endowment means that Barnard must rely almost entirely on tuition and room and board fees to cover their yearly operating budget of $154.3 million. According to Brown, 78 percent of Barnard’s annual revenue of $151.5 million comes from tuition and room and board, while a mere six percent comes from the endowment. This puts Barnard in a precarious situation, especially since operating costs, particularly financial aid, continue to rise. Ten years ago, Barnard spent $13.9 million on need-based financial aid. Now, they spend $31.9 million, most of which does not come from the endowment. According to the Barnard’s “2011 Data Book,” a report on the school compiled by the Office of Institutional Research, Barnard covers only 14 percent of financial aid costs with endowment money, while its “Peer Schools,” a prestigious bunch ranging from Harvard and Princeton to Bryn Mawr and Trinity, on average use endowment money to cover 32 percent of financial aid. Barnard, to a greater degree than most other elite schools, is forced to rely on the aforementioned tuition and board fees.

Since most revenue comes from students’ tuition and fees, and operating costs continue to rise, tuition must increase dramatically to compensate. Last year, tuition alone was $38,868 per year, a tremendous leap from the price tag of $22,942 in 2000, and the college brought in $89 million from tuition and fees last year, compared to less than $50 million in 2000. Without the tuition increases, Barnard probably could not afford to meet its students’ full financial needs. Then again, if tuition were not $16,000 more per year than it was in 2000, less students might need financial aid.

At any rate, Barnard can’t just keep raising tuition prices indefinitely. “I think the days of 5 percent annual tuition increases are over,” Brown says. Instead, Barnard is planning to launch a major capital campaign next year to raise hundreds of millions of dollars. Those with knowledge of the new campaign are keeping quiet on the details, but it seems likely that a portion of the money will be used to fund the endowment, while the rest of it will be used to expand need-based financial aid and faculty salaries and benefits. According to Brown, these are two of Barnard’s top priorities. Allowing students the unofficial option of part-time enrollment is not.

Hopefully, the upcoming capital campaign will relieve some of the immediate pressure on Barnard’s budget, but Barnard will have to make more difficult financial decisions in the future. When that time comes, it would be wise to remember the lesson of the full-time enrollment controversy: just because a decision is financially sound does not mean it should be taken, especially without significant input from the students affected. Otherwise, they risk another backlash.
Talking About Talking About It
What Happened At Homecoming

BY ALLIE CURRY

Four years ago this fall, Columbia was thrust into the national spotlight when someone hung a noose on the office door of an African American professor at Teachers College. The noose represented the worst of a host of intimidating and insulting graffiti incidents that year, which created an environment in which the noose became all the more disturbing. In immediate reaction to the incident, students and faculty held a rally in protest and the NYPD deployed its hate crimes task force to investigate. In short, you couldn’t have been a student here and remained ignorant of the situation.

Now, in 2011, we have the opposite situation. Rumors are bubbling of racial tension on campus, but there is little evidence of proactive engagement with the problem. This is not to deny that student groups are not concerned with bias incidents, or to imply that they have not reacted. Rather, the reaction to the current uneasy climate has been notably less public and open than in the past.

To verify what students may have inferred by now from a series of posters, an allusive CCSC email, or just word of mouth, Associate Dean of Multicultural Affairs Terry Martinez confirms that, “Yes, there have been more incidents [of bias] reported this semester than in the recent past,” but declined to provide statistics.

Senior Assistant Dean of Judicial Affairs and Community Standards Jeri Henry, meanwhile, denies “any marked increase in bias-related incidents,” saying that “there is no evidence to suggest that the numbers differ from years past.”

Martinez attributes the disparity between her report and Dean Henry’s to a difference between the number of incidents brought forth to Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) for investigation and the number of incidents Henry’s office can actually adjudicate. She argues that often a lack of an identifiable perpetrator—for example when graffiti appears in a bathroom stall—or the severity of an offense—some incidents are “misinformed, poor choices” but don’t explicitly violate policy—limits OMA’s ability to refer parties to Judicial Affairs for formal hearings and resolution.

In any case, Martinez suggests that this semester’s rise in reported incidents may be misleading: “I do not believe this is due to an increase in the number of incidents,” she said, “but rather an increase in students’ awareness and a willingness to come forward to report things they have found to be personally offensive.” The implication is not only that students are becoming more comfortable approaching bodies such as OMA, but also that a shift has occurred in students’ sensitivity toward bias-motivated incidents.

The issue is largely a definitional one. What constitutes a “bias incident”? When is an act “bias-motivated” and when is it a just poor taste? Public Safety’s “Policy on the Response to Incidents of Bias” defines bias crimes, as “criminal activity motivated by the perpetrator’s bias toward certain actual or perceived personal characteristics of the victim.” Martinez herself considers bias-related incidents (or “hate-related,” here Martinez considers the terms interchangeable) to be “acts of hostility or discrimination against a particular group […] expressions in the form of language, words, signs, symbols, threats, or actions that could potentially cause alarm, anger, fear, or resentment in others, or that endanger the health, safety, and welfare of a member(s) of the University community, even when presented as a joke.” She continues: “What may be a joke to one individual may be seen as a threat to another, which is why we launch an investigation to determine not only the intent of the act, but also the impact as well.”

Though reports from OMA suggest that students are more receptive to formalized investigation and adjudication of bias-motivated incidents, students’ reluctance to publicize or discuss incidents directly is stifling the productive and public conversations initiatives such as Under1Roof (a program begun in
response to public demands and discourse on bias by students) encourage us to have.

In researching this piece, finding people willing to speak on the record about specific events proved to be nearly impossible. The only public statement on recent occurrences is a narrowly-circulated statement by the Native American Council (NAC), regarding an incident at Homecoming in which “some Native American students” approached an unnamed male “individual who was wearing a ‘headdress.’” According to the statement, the student balked at the request to remove the headdress, and friends of the offender later “followed and greeted” the complainants with a “tomahawk chop” gesture. The NAC statement called for increased “awareness about the importance of respecting the various cultures that exist on this campus,” “support when acts of bias occur,” and “the development of unity among the different communities on campus in order to prevent similar situations from occurring in the future.” Individual members of the organization, though, declined to comment or did not respond to requests for comment on the incident and their response to it.

Likewise, CCSC has referred to the incidents in passing without facing them directly. In an October 28th email to the students of Columbia College, CCSC President Aki Terasaki, CC’12, shared the council’s impression of “an increased number of bias incidents [...] that have recently occurred on campus this semester.” The Council responded by inviting Deans Melinda Aquino and Terry Martinez of the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Community Development to address the sudden spike at their next meeting. As a result of their conversation, the council decided to build a coalition of student leaders to discuss solidarity and anti-discrimination publicly.

Whether understood as a series or as a few isolated and barely-publicized bias incidents this semester (as the Spectator put it, “a smattering”), bulletin boards and walls across the Columbia campus point to a guilty conscience. Halloween 2011 saw a campus-wide proliferation of arresting posters depicting young individuals holding photos of people dressed as racist caricatures. In stern all-caps, the posters assert “WE’RE A CULTURE, NOT A COSTUME. THIS IS NOT WHO I AM AND IT IS NOT OKAY.” Martinez points to the OMA-sponsored campaign as “an example of a targeted effort to educate around a particular issue facing our community at a particular time.”

In response to the Homecoming incident and others, students brought the posters forward as a resource provided by STARS, Ohio University’s multi-cultural awareness initiative.

This fall, the general student population has been left to infer that a conversation about diversity is happening somewhere on campus from snippets of gossip, posters, and email blasts. While OMA is absolutely right to acknowledge and privilege the privacy and the wishes of those directly involved in such incidents over those of the community (for purposes of, as Dean Martinez puts it, not “re-victimizing the targets of those incidents”), students themselves need to be accountable for meaningful conversation about what it means to live in a diverse community. For most students, initiatives such as the STARS poster campaign serve as placeholders for dialogue rather than dialogue itself. In the opinion of this reporter, it seems very unlikely that the average Columbian has learned anything from the incidents or limited and semi-public responses of this semester.
A boy stands, trapped, a rope around his arms—
The center of an army’s firing hole.
Among the others there, the boy he harms—
And this boy: there’s a rope around his soul.

A pillbox full of blindfolds lies with mud
Along its walls to separate it from
The arsenal of ammunitions. Blood
Of past but not of present lines it, numb.

“What’s going on?! This cloth is on my eyes!”
“I can’t see, either!—I’m against the wall!”
“They’re walking back—but why, I just don’t know.”
“It looks as though they’re going to leave us here!”
“Of course! It was a test, it would appear!”
“They’re leaving us to die here in the snow?!”
“You mean they’re not to kill us after all?!”
“I know you are a fool—just not what size.”

A boy stood, trapped, a rope around him, harmed—
The center of an army’s firing hole.
Among the others there, he, the boy, armed,
Did kill and still does kill. Where is his soul?

- Daniel Valella
FOR EITHER OF THEM

She limps stepping slowly
Careful with each foot forward
The stairs are hard
It's old age

The city moves faster
As if completely removed
The wind acts on its own
People don't care

Polluted is the air
And not just with cigarette smoke
She doesn't have much longer
She knows it

The noise increases
As opposed to her time
It's become a burden
Of sorts for the boy

He feels very guilty
Among other things
But he's not so selfish
As to forget her

He wants to talk longer
But it doesn't feel right
He has his own life
Of which she is part

- Daniel Valella
Columbia Occupied

A Conversation with Todd Gitlin

By Anna Bahr

Columbia Journalism School Professor Todd Gitlin first immersed himself in protest culture when he got involved with New Left political activism in the 1960s. After a stint in the underground intellectual and writing culture, Gitlin turned to academia, becoming a prominent public intellectual and prolific author. He has recently asserted himself as a prominent and informed voice in the debates about the Occupy Wall Street movement, upon which he is currently writing a book. Gitlin recently found the time to sit down with Blue & White contributor Anna Bahr to discuss the trajectory, politics, and core values of the movement.

The Blue & White: In the last month the majority of media attention on the movement has been more focused on police brutality than what Occupy Wall Street has actually been accomplishing. Do you think the shift in focus has negatively affected the operation of the police force?

TG: Right after the eviction [from Zuccotti Park], I was hearing a lot of indignation and outrage about the police tactics and [Mayor Michael] Bloomberg. That was about two and a half weeks ago and it seems to have faded. In the conversations I’ve had since then with people since then, with people who had been deeply involved, there wasn’t that much about the police. They rolled up their sleeves and started to address other issues.

In terms of the outer impression, it probably looks to people who have not been paying such close attention that the big story is this collision, the confrontation. That always happens whenever there’s violence—that’s what happens.

B&W: Has the public and media attention on instances of violence detracted from the effectiveness of the movement’s other efforts?

TG: My judgment would be yes. It comes with the territory. There’s something so visceral about structured, patterned violence. It tends to become the central structure of a story, no matter what it is. People find themselves preoccupied with the tactics that were thrown up in front of people rather than the larger thrust of the movement.

However, I wouldn’t assume that this diversion lasts. All this is part of the process. If it really is as absorbing, if it does touch on such deeply held emotions, as I believe it does, then the popularity of the movement rises and falls, but the movement is sustained.

B&W: That may be true, but can emotion really be enough to carry the movement? It seemed like the protesters in Zuccotti were actually losing steam until Bloomberg cleared the park, which conveniently revitalized the movement just before the cold set in...
TG: You’re absolutely right. I have yet to meet somebody who thinks that the movement was thriving before the police arrived. The general consensus—in fact it’s unanimous—is that Bloomberg actually rescued the movement from some difficulties.

B&W: There was an immediate impetus to occupy another physical plant after Zuccotti was closed down, that manifested itself in the occupation of the New School.

TG: Sure, and that’s one thing that people talk about. I’m sure it will happen, but it won’t be a single locus. It’s highly unlikely that there will be a center. If for no other reason than that lower Manhattan doesn’t really offer it—there is no candidate [for a space].

It’s been two and a half months and the idea that there is a movement is installed in the culture now. Some of its phrasing is commonplace now, “99,” “1 percent,” and there are these networks that are organized projects. Obviously the Internet makes it easy for people to feel involved in something… It seems to me that there’s a critical mass of the activists who are thinking about the next phase—beyond next week.

Movements always have problems of self-maintenance and growth and questions of what to do for an encore. Some people will want to try to create a social equivalent of the kind of community that they experienced in Zuccotti Park. Maybe they will find substitute locations. Maybe there will be a proliferation of them. Maybe they will find interior locations to occupy or to utilize. That will be one component.

Then, at the other end of the vectors of ambition, there are the revolutionaries who see this movement as a launch into some sort of ongoing revolutionary movement that stands a chance of transforming the world. Then there’s a very large ground that lies somewhere between those poles that runs a gambit between people who want to keep the focus on particular economic-centered actions like focusing on certain banks, government regulations, or the need for taxing financial transactions; there will be some who want to play a part in political life in the longer run, and others who want to avoid being co-opted by the Democrats.

B&W: That seems like a fundamental inhibitor to the progression of the movement, though. How can a group that makes decisions based on consensus ever decide on a specific issue to delegate its attention and efforts to?

TG: There won’t be! This movement really is de-centered. But these working groups are not just rhetorical. They exist, they have specialized functions and they’re doing their things. That’s what makes it possible for a great range of orientations and activities to coexist. They will go one coexisting. They will be disgruntled, and there will always be people who think the old structure needs to be restored or that one activity is interfering with another, but those are normal tensions within a large movement. And it is a large movement that incorporates several cultures at once—and not just different demographics. That is built into being a large movement.

B&W: But none of those tensions could prove significant enough to fracture the movement?

TG: There are people who think cooperating with unions is a sellout, because they’re hierarchical and stuffy and they don’t want to go out to the streets. On the other hand, there are people who think that only when you maintain working relationships with such groups do you have a substantial political presence. But I haven’t heard anyone warning of fragmentation. If there were major outbursts of violence, I could see some serious cleavages developing, but so far, that hasn’t happened.

B&W: One of the elements of OWS that has been posited as a success of the movement is that it works outside of the political process while forcing politicians to react to its actions. Yet public discussion of the movement among elected officials has been relatively limited. Do you think it needs official recognition by government?

TG: The movement reasonably appraises its prospects as relying on their ability to sustain an independent identity. Not in a formal organization, necessarily, but even among the most reformist members of the movement, I don’t think there’s any desire to see the movement collapse into a support squad for the Democrats. The thrust of the movement is to have an independent identity.

I haven’t heard anybody advocate that the movement become partisan. All the movement rhetoric
is against that. Nonetheless, it is a force in society. In this ongoing argument about how Occupy is not like the Tea Party, the Tea Party from the beginning had a symbiotic relationship with the Republican apparatus.

It all boils down to different attitudes toward authority. The Tea Party people, even in their rambunctiousness, tend to be respecters of authority. The left is not. There couldn’t possibly be an equivalent of Freedom Works or the Koch brothers for the Occupy people.

B&W: Does it seem like the demographic makeup of the actual occupiers has shifted? The majority of occupiers seemed to initially be young, white, male, educated, and jobless. Now there is a significantly larger homeless contingent.

TG: Some people are saying if we can’t welcome the homeless then we’re worthless. Others are saying, yeah we’re for the 99 percent, but the homeless aren’t the 99 percent; they are a fraction of the 99 percent and we have to keep our eyes on the prize, which means curbing the power of the plutocrats and changing the structure of the political economy.

B&W: But has that presence changed the movement’s legitimacy in the eyes of the media or the public?

DS: It probably weakened it. Then came the police to rescue the movement from that image. It wasn’t so much homeless people as such, but criminality, drugs and violence, especially against women [in Zuccotti]. And now it won’t be so easy to tar them with that brush now that the tents are gone.

B&W: I want to go back and touch on police presence. Obviously, it is crucial that there be a police force at major protests to maintain order, but there is also value in disrupting stability to criticize political institutions. What is the appropriate role for the police in these situations? Should there be a confrontational element between dissenters and police forces in social movements?

TG: I’ll give you the weasely answer—it all depends. There’s certainly a moral factor for the more militant people in the movement. The trick for a social movement that practices civil disobedience is to avoid demonizing itself in the eyes of people who are not yet committed, but open-minded.

Secondly, all of these movements are theatrical, and the challenge is to perform for a large audience that, in no small part is people who are uncommitted but troubled by the current economic and social conditions and don’t know why they should take this movement seriously. Those people need to be convinced that something can be accomplished. Those people won’t be thrilled by streets being blocked. Those people want to see that something concrete can be won, not necessarily confronting the police,
but getting legislation passed.

Andrew Cuomo has recently reconsidered his objection to the “millionaire’s tax.” I think the movement can take credit for that. The movement needs to be able to take credit for such phenomenon. Also, if it can actually change bank policies, if it can help people who have been dispossessed, that it proves its reputation with the larger public.

There are forms of direct action that optimize the look of movement as being a movement on behalf of the general good. There are also forms of the movement that center on disruption that detract from it. There are debates about which is which. We will probably see varieties of both types.

B&W: Do you see OWS as still being in flux? That is, does it still have the potential to look different a month from now than it did a month ago? Or has it reached a plateau in terms of its presentation and strategy?

TG: All movements are constantly in flux. Occupy Wall Street has already learned so much from itself. It’s already polymorphous and various. There are a lot of activities going on that don’t make splashes in media. That will continue to be true through the winter months.

I would guess that the pattern has been set since the evictions will continue for a few months. But when the spring comes around I’m sure... there will be people who want to renew the bigger, more conspicuous occupations. And the police and politicians will have something to say about how they develop, too. If the occupiers are met with cannon shots of pepper spray, which is what the New York Post recommended, that will produce all kinds of reverberations. If the police are more genteel and accommodating, then something else will happen.

B&W: Occupy Wall Street has anarchist roots. How do you think the anarchist ideology has contributed to the success of OWS’ attempt to create a genuine democratic assembly?

TG: It’s contributed a lot. The whole notion of self-regulation and self-management, the disdain for formal authorities, the suspicion of leadership, the confidence in the capacities of people to govern themselves through direct democracy—those are time honored anarchist ideals. The impulse toward horizontality seems very powerful in this movement. Not everyone is enamored with these general assemblies—not everyone thinks that all the work of the movement can be done through them, but the default position of the movement is anarchist. That has been the central cultural tradition of the left for most of the last 40 years; it really is now the norm.

B&W: It seems like a movement without an official speaking head and without a formal way to address “the people” or the public. So far it’s successfully held onto its multifaceted, though officially undeclared, mission. But are those horizontal tactics really sustainable without an identifiable leadership?

TG: The mission is to arrest the power of the plutocracy. It doesn’t have to be officially stated. What does it mean to say we are the 99 percent? I’m not saying there’s no function to leadership, but it’s obvious what this movement is about. Not in its particulars, but in its thrust.

I’m not saying leaderlessness works for all purposes. The movement does need to institutionalize itself. It needs to be a regular feature of public life in order to have an enduring impact. It needs to constantly generate activity, constantly find work and meaningful place for new people so even if you’re [casually involved] there’s some work you can do to sustain the movement. That needs to be done in such a way that the structures are responsive to people’s desires, but also capable of growth—also conducive to both enlargement and responsiveness to the variety of claims.

Not everybody is an anarchist; not everybody has the same view of the total corruption of the political system. All people have to feel there is space for them in this movement. How it could conceivably come to pass that there’s a generally agreed upon leader... that’s a scenario I find it hard imagine. The media has a tendency to step in when there are no formal structures and certain people become celebrities, but this movement is highly averse to that process. What would be the scenario by which someone tried to place him or herself in that position and would be both a celebrity in the media’s eyes and a legitimate leader of the movement? I don’t see it. Not impossible but it would require a wrench in the spirit of the movement. So, I think it’s going to rumble along just as it is now.
So basically, the study shows some stuff about the mechanism of the relation between olfactory perception in insects that eat leaves and the chemotaxis behavior to a natural volatile that the green leaves emit.

En el mismo año, Jobs viajó a la India en busca de la iluminación espiritual y experimentó con LSD. Cuando él volvió a los Estados Unidos, Jobs, Steve Wozniak y Ronald Wayne fundaron la empresa Apple Computer y esta cambiaría el mundo.

Translation: In the same year, Jobs traveled to India in search of spiritual illumination and experimented with LSD. When he returned to the United States, Jobs, Steve Wozniak and Ronald Wayne founded the Apple Computer company and this would change the world.

In conclusion, in the Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle discusses community and friendship.

Ice Cream Man

When I met her she was just dying. She lived in that building right there. Hey, that’ll be three twenty-five for that king cone. That’s right. What a thing. She lived all that time and all the time she was dying.

Sappy: the anti-sponge, the unrememberer, in a grey unfolding in front of shuttered spaces.

Hey! I’m Vinnie Carbone, the carbon atom. Write my biography — where was I formed, what events changed my life, and how the heck did I end up in the toner of this laser printer?

Endowed with moral strength souls make the body an impenetrable wall which no javelin can hurt.

Most adult dragon players play the game alone or in pairs. A bit odd for an online game but when a younger player announces the completion of their rites, many players try to attend the ritual making ascension ceremonies one of the largest gatherings in the game and include everything from adopted family, new friends, complete strangers and even players not yet adult who are curious about what the ceremony entails.

I have to say, when I heard that we were going to read about homosexuality in Tokugawa Japan, I was quite excited.

The institution of marriage gives several big advantages to a family: the feeling of stability and trust. After marriage young people live together supporting each other and earning money to build or buy a house. Even if only the husband works and really brings income and the wife cares for him and the children, all their property is shared. It gives security to the family: the wife doesn’t worry, can have a baby and sit a home raising the baby.

He loved his shoes and it was important to him that his white ones remained clean throughout the day, which meant a lot of looking down and spitting on his fingers and spot cleaning. In extreme cases, he would cover scuffs in White Out we took from his dad’s office. Some days, we’d go pick up the White Out, then Tim would peer pressure me into spending my allowance on stale jelly donuts from a place across the street.

My pursuit of global political, social, and economic issues through my studies and research—along with my mastery of five languages and international work experience—has prepared me for work at the World Food Program.
MEETING THE NEIGHBORS

The following encounter is reported to have taken place between a young woman opening the door to the ADP brownstone in response to a grizzled, middle-aged man, aggressively ringing the doorbell.

Man: Did I wake you up?
ADP: Err, no, actually.
Man: Well I wish I had, because you goddamn kids keep me up every night with your parties!
ADP: I’m really sorry about that, sir, it’s—
Man: No! You know what? I’m gonna be as annoying as possible to you kids. I’m gonna make your life a living hell. I’m gonna stand here every morning and buzz you awake and—
ADP: Uhh, have you ever contacted our President about this? Or our alumni board? This really doesn’t seem like the most mature way to—
Man: Don’t talk to me about mature! You wanna call the cops on me!? Fine! I don’t care! I’m already going insane because of you assholes!
ADP slowly closes the door and walks back inside.
Man: [Incomprehensible screaming for another 10 minutes.]

PROBABLY NOT THE FIRST

A friend of The Blue & White witnessed a student vomit outside Butler, turn mid-stride, and say, "Ohhhh man ... too much JJ’s."

TO EACH HIS OWN

At the farmers’ market in late November, a kindly older woman approached the fishmonger. She inquired if he had had a pleasant Thanksgiving and enjoyed his turkey. He replied, nonplussed, that he had partaken instead in squid with rice.

THAT’S WHAT SHE SAID

A Columbia student, her mother, and grandmother, stroll by the South Lawns.
Mom: So are there snowball fights there?
Daughter: Yeah. And some people make...inappropriate snow men.
Grandmother, chuckling: Inappropriate snow men!

THANK YOU FOR SMOKING

A few weeks ago a Blue & White Senior Editor spotted her friend’s CC professor offering the friend a cigarette outside Hamilton as they discussed his participation grade. According to our sources they shared a smoke, but the student provided his own cigarette.

YOU HAVE TO TRY A LITTLE

On a recent Friday night, an affiliate of the magazine, just shy of legal drinking age, absent-mindedly presented her driver’s license to the bouncer at 1020. The bouncer studied it, gave it back to her and said, "You just gave me your real ID."
About fifteen minutes after the Blue & White learned this, a Senior Editor reported that someone tried to steal one of the metal signs off the wall and fell off the table.

A yard ... it’s too much meat! ✪
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