Buy Now, Pay Later
Questioning Columbia’s No-Loan Policy

Imagined Community
In Which a Blue & White Editor Gets bored@butler

Also Inside: How DateMySchool Gets Around
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JESSIE CHASAN-TABER, CC '16, Layout Editor

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THE BLUE & WHITE

Vol. XIX  FAMAM EXTENDIMUS FACTIS  No. VI

Columns
4 Bluebook
6 Blue Notes
8 Campus Characters
12 Verily Veritas
34 Digitalia Columbiana
35 Campus Gossip

Features
Will Holt & Torsten Odland 10 At Two Swords’ Length: Should You Represent?
Our Monthly Prose and Cons

Conor Skelding 13 Imagined Community
In Which a Blue & White Editor Gets bored@butler

Will Holt 16 Safe, Anonymous, Exclusive
How DateMySchool Gets Around

Allie Curry 18 So Three Beats Walk Into a Bar...
The West End’s Literary Legacy

Anna Bahr 20 Buy Now, Pay Later
Questioning Columbia’s No-Loan Policy

Kate Gamble & Sylvie Krekow 24 Fiction
Imagined Minutes from a Barnard Her Campus Meeting

Meredith Moore 27 Who’s the Boss?
Examining Columbia’s Startup Culture

Sylvie Krekow 30 Either Oar
A Conversation With Caryl Davies

theblueandwhite.org COVER: “The Eye of Sauron Visits Butler” by Leila Mgaloblishvili
It’s been a year since I became editor-in-chief of this magazine, which means the time has come for me to take my leave. And soon, I’ll be taking my leave from our fair university as well. It’s difficult not to long for departure as the sleepless nights and empty coffee cups begin to pile up, but as final projects and exams loom, I find myself procrastinating more than usual—sacrificing sleep and extra credit assignments for just a few more hours of talking with my suitmates, or taking the time to meet friends for dinner when sneaking a salad into Butler would have been far more responsible. I certainly don’t mind this trend either; I know that my least productive nights are the ones I’ll miss most. The nights spent in libraries will be lost to time, as they should be. But it’s the impromptu happy hours, the night my friends subjected me to a tirade of colorblindness tests after I mistook the color of my shirt, the time we embarked on a midnight trip to Riverside Park to properly bury a deceased hamster—these memories are the ones I’ll take with me. We all give so much of ourselves to Columbia during our time here. And it’s important to remember we leave with so much more than a diploma.

I appreciate you putting up with having the engineer run the literary magazine for the past few months. It is my earnest hope that something you’ve read over the last year has made you think, see, or experience Columbia in a slightly different way. Maybe you found some of your own Columbia in it, and maybe you got a glimpse of someone else’s. Maybe you even had a few laughs along the way. In any case, my work here is done. Warmer climates beckon.

Brian Wagner
(Outgoing) Editor-in-Chief

LOVE: THE SPEC IS ON IT
I found love in Literature Humanities
I found love with New York City
I found Gray at the edge of Central Park
with a picnic of chicken tikka masala
asking me if I’d like to be his girlfriend.

college students are looking
for some super smart conversations
and perhaps an excuse to be wined and dined
(older people should always treat)

love at Columbia is the intimate relationship
between interpersonal connections
and Columbia’s robust academic culture
Columbia is the nucleus from which our hunt for beauty begins.

Girls, we know you’re gorgeous!

The above lines were culled, verbatim, from the Columbia Daily Spectator’s Nov. 27 edition of The Canon, “On love,” and rearranged by The Blue & White.
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Allison Richards and I am a Masters student with the GSAS. I am writing you in regards to Will Holt’s wonderfully informative article on the Battle of Harlem Heights [Autumn Issue, page 20]. As a child, my late grandmother Jennice Richards (née Knowlton French), took great pride in documenting our family’s lineage. I recall her speaking of one relative in particular, known as “the Revolutionary War Hero,” Colonel Thomas Knowlton. Personally, I just remember him as “that guy who ordered the first shot at Bunker Hill.” Flash forward maybe two decades from my fond summers spent on the Maine coast; I’m following in the footsteps of my grandfather (Francis Elisha Richards) and getting my Masters at Columbia. So you must understand how much it surprised me to find another relative, Col. Knowlton, loosely affiliated with the school! Not only did my grandfather attend and receive his Masters from the Teacher’s College, but a direct relative died on the property!! To read Mr. Holt’s article not only gave me a lesson in early American history, but also touched a very sentimental spot in my heart. I will be giving a copy of the Autumn 2012 edition of The Blue and White to my Aunt Syb, who now maintains our family’s records. Hopefully, it will provide good use to future generations! Thank you!

Sincerely yours,
Allison Hope Richards
GSAS ‘14

POSTCARD FROM MORNINGSIDE

CORRECTIONS: In the autumn issue’s Campus Character profile of Carl Majeau, the name of his bandmate was misspelled. He is Ilan Marans, not Ilan Marron. The Campus Characters’ illustrations were drawn by Allison Henry, not Alison Henry. In the article on President Bollinger’s class, Mica Moore, a student in the course, is CC ’14, not CC ’15.
One letter and three numbers differentiate the UNI of Amy Johnson, CC ’13, from the UNI of Amy Johnson, Adjunct Assistant Professor of English and Comparative Literature. Given that alphanumeric UNIs comprise of a maximum seven characters and numerals, this is a substantial difference, and one that for more than three years prevented any email mix-ups between the two.

Late one night, the undergraduate A. Johnson received an email from a Lit Hum student of the postgraduate A. Johnson requesting edits on an assignment. In the attachment, the student began his essay with the following delicious metaphor:

Would you rather be a geese or an eagle? Geese and eagles differ sharply in their appearance and lifestyles. A goose flies gracefully and is beautiful in its own right but unlike the eagle, the goose does not have a propensity for leadership and honor. Eagles are circumspect, like Penelope, and they are almost always in solitude with a countenance of absolute determination and focus.

Inappropriate pluralization aside (this is why we edit, first-years!), astute readers will observe that this assignment refers to Penelope’s dream in Book XIX of the Odyssey, in which an eagle kills 20 geese as they gather at a trough. The relevance of the metaphor, however, ends there. Having read and subsequently forwarded the essay to a certain campus blog, the slightly younger, slightly tipsy, slightly guilty Amy Johnson couldn’t help but chuckle: “This poor kid sent me his paper, only to have me laughing at it.”

But instead of responding to the freshman’s email with a redirection or essay corrections, or contacting Professor Johnson about the confusion, Amy couldn’t bring herself to do anything but giggle about it with her friends. “It was more funny to think about than to actually deal with,” she explained.

As eagles and geese migrate homeward with the sunset, so too do emails zoom through cyberspace to awaiting inboxes (I do hope you deem my metaphor as apt as the erroneous emailer’s). But as they say, there is many a slip between a cup and a lip—emails being no exception. The story of Amy Johnson is the convergence of so much that is quintessentially Columbian: the Core, a mistaken UNI, an ignored email, and one painfully drawn out metaphor. (One last aside to our first-year: save that for U Writing.)

—Elizabeth Jacob

Imagine walking into an ornate dining room. You smell stuffed homemade cornish hen and roast duck with cherry sauce wafting from within the kitchen.
Fellow students provide table service. This was John Jay.

“[The food] was really high-end stuff at that time. It ranged all over the place,” Philip Bartolf, CC ’71, said. “The lower level was this immense kitchen facility.” Bartolf waited tables in John Jay Dining Hall for his work study job, which was part of his financial aid package.

Jobs were not only for work study students—all Columbia students were able to work in John Jay. During Bartolf’s work study, positions paid about $1.85 an hour and students on work study were expected to work 10 hours a week. Spectator classifieds often published Help Wanted ads to attract and encourage students to find work. One read, “Join Columbia Catering Service. Earn extra money for Christmas While Meeting Interesting People.”

Other than the fact that students were behind the counter, the cafeteria functionality was not so different from the way it is today. The waitstaff was reserved for work on special events like a football team celebrations or journalism cocktail parties. (One such waiter was Jack Kerouac, who waited tables to pay his tuition after a football injury made him ineligible for his scholarship. The highlight of his employment was freshening up the coffee cup of Nobel laureate Thomas Mann.) [For more Kerouac, see page 18!]

As the guests sat down, waiters shared with them a menu. The staff would then ensure the guests had juice, punch, and water on their tables. The dining hall also served alcohol, frequently hiring bartenders from the Columbia Bartending course.

Such service faded out at the beginning of the ’90s as the meal plan developed into what it is today: strictly hired professionals—either chefs or managers. While universities such as Harvard, Princeton, and Wesleyan currently follow a work study model, Columbia cannot.

The most recent agreement between Columbia and New York’s Health and Human Services Union that is published by Columbia (which, in typical Columbia webmaster style, expired in 2009) reads that “Full-time students in degree granting programs at Columbia university” are “excluded from each of the aforesaid bargaining units.” It seems you won’t be pouring coffee for Nobel laureates anytime soon.

—Augusta Harris
Campus Characters

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

**GRECIA BARBOZA**

“I don’t even know who the fuck this chick is. Saw her at a party last night and she seemed nice and chill,” a commenter announced on a Bwog post this past February. This chick was Grecia Barboza, CC ’13, and the commenter was responding to a deluge of vicious opinions that criticized everything from Grecia’s intelligence and appearance to her sexual history.

“Those comments were hilarious,” Grecia now says. “It’s cool that people think so strongly about me.” That she is able to so casually shrug off what most would find traumatizing is a testament to her self-confidence.

In her freshman year, Grecia became a cruelly targeted sensation on College ACB, a now-defunct online “Anonymous Confession Board.” As she sees it, the harassment began with boy drama and a mean girl, but soon grew out of control. She was receiving Facebook requests from strangers, and people were coming up to her at parties exclaiming, “You’re that girl!” Grecia’s best friend, Celia Cooper, BC ’13, attests that to this day boys reference College ACB in pick-up lines to Grecia.

When Grecia came to Columbia as a freshman, she was only sixteen (she started kindergarten when she was four, and was moved up a year in the middle of third grade). Rather than run and hide like most teenagers would, she embraced the College ACB infamy. Her mother, whom she calls at least once a day, told her to ignore the insults. So Grecia did. Now she’s a fixture at weekend goings-on, and puts on an inch or two of dark eye makeup every day to match her short black dresses.

She defiantly wears thick makeup everywhere: to hang out with friends, study, and even workout. “I’ve had long philosophical discussions and studied in Butler with her, and she still wears the black dress and makeup,” laughs Diego Zoghbi, CC ’14. The process of putting it on every morning is like therapy, Grecia says. “I just like feeling beautiful,” she says. Grecia admits that embracing her notoriety may have inflated her ego—though, she maintains, “I don’t think I’m that conceited…”

Before Celia met Grecia this past May, she “had heard her name but didn’t really know much about her.” This is a recurring theme. “I first heard of Grecia before I ever met her,” Diego concurs. By Grecia’s sophomore year, every Columbia board on College ACB featured her name. The subject could be “Hottest SEAS 2014 boy,” and still someone would write “Grecia Barboza.”

When Diego became friends with her, his friends were initially put-off. “People are intimidated by her,” Diego explains. “The persona that she’s created is strong.” Celia agrees that even though everyone knows who she is, not many know her. According to Celia, she is a family-oriented, traditionally romantic girl who is fluent in Spanish and has extensive knowledge about basketball and music. Diego adds that she is spontaneous and refreshingly silly: “the incarnation of YOLO.”

Campus Characters

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“I don’t know if people like me,” she says, admitting that she would like to know why she is so infamous. Nonetheless, “Being alive is amazing.” Like many college students searching for “meaning” and “truth,” she has been really into Nietzsche lately. She holds dear his belief that you should love life even when you are miserable because, in her words, “life is just so perfect.”

—Alexandra Stokos

JASMINE SUDARKASA

If you have not yet met Jasmine Sudarkasa, know that she wants to meet you. She thrives on being surrounded by people, and confesses, almost apologetically, “I need to be constantly stimulated.” Such dedication to relationships especially stands out at Columbia, where people notoriously shy away from waving to one another on College Walk. “Being caring doesn’t take anything from you,” she urges.

What’s most striking about Sudarkasa’s undertakings, from her involvement with the Black Theater Ensemble to her downtown fundraising position at Theatre for the New City, is the extent to which she takes them personally. “I’m very careful about what I invest in, because if I like it I’m going to be about it forever.” And in spite of her individual conviction, her activities share in common a commitment to other people. “I just want people to be happy!” she affirms constantly. Indeed, nothing Sudarkasa does is solitary, and she remains firmly committed to the idea that community is “our biggest untapped resource.”

Growing up, Jasmine struggled to find like-minded peers. Although you’d never guess from her accent, at seven years old Jasmine and her family left the US for South Africa, arriving less than five years after the official end of apartheid. After a contemplative pause—the only one of our entire interview—she describes the transition as “jarring.” Many of her classmates weren’t used to seeing people of color, and she felt discouraged from being as vivacious and loud as she could be at home. Needless to say, New York City was a welcome change.

Morgan Owens, CC ’13, met Jasmine at a South Florida meet-up for admitted Columbia students the summer before freshman year, and they’ve remained close ever since. Having not seen Jasmine again until move-in day, Morgan remembers “with just one panicked phone call she helped me move in all of my boxes.” Tiffany Rodriguez, BC ’13 recalls another memorable first impression: “we just ate corn nuts with a huge bag of watermelon Sour Patch…and sat on Low talking for four hours.”

While Sudarkasa may appear spontaneous, there is a certain degree of preemptive calculation she contemplates before fully committing to anything. She has to be energy-efficient in order to keep up with all her engagements. According to Alex Lopez, CC ’14, “This girl knows how to go hard but also has her shit together.”

Jasmine is also firmly committed to sisterhood as a member of Delta Sigma Theta, the same sorority her grandmother had joined before her. “The collective power of women is so fantastic...we have such depth of vision,” she exclaims.

A self-described “second grader still sharing pencils and trying to get people to play with me,” Jasmine humbly avoids a more sophisticated self-analysis to describe her accomplishments, though at other times, she speaks with an academic fluency, as if she had two entirely separate vocabularies. At one moment silly and cheerful, Jamine will then surprise you with a serious discussion of the reciprocity of her majors: Political Science and Comparative Ethnic Studies. She first chose CSER, and then realized that “you have to have perspective...in a lot of these more stratified disciplines, it’s easy to check out. You have to contextualize.”

Owens describes her friend as “intimidating with her exhaustive vocabulary...yet she has a softness to her,” which is apparent from first meeting. Jasmine insists I return to make cookies. “I’m serious about the baking,” she concludes.

—Somer Omar

Illustrations by Jiyoon Han
Let me start out by saying that I hate this school. There’s nothing that I like about it. I hate you, and I probably hate all the other versions of you that you call your friends. I hate all our teams and clubs, and I hate all sports, games, and organizations. But I wear Columbia apparel, and I’m proud of it.

Why wouldn’t you?
“Ah, it’s not my style.”

Not your “style”? Don’t want to look like a “bro”? Or a “douchebag”? I get it: only stupid people wear shirts and pants with letters on them. They must be so naïve, trying to fit in with the cultic, stereotypically collegiate crowd-life of football and pizza and dubstep. It’s barbaric. Don’t they know what it means to be an individual?

Oh, I could just vomit all over you when you whine like that. After three years spent in this self-important hellhole, I’ve gotten better at retaining my disgust, and refocusing my qi. So let’s talk about this: what is your style? Please, I’m just dying to know who you are.

Ugly sweater, ironic hat, classic vans, skinny-ass pants. Why—you’re your very own iconoclast! When your friends see you rolling in with cuffed jeans, they look at each other in half-embarrassment thinking, “Only he could pull that off.” Psych! I was being facetious, which is a trick of the mind. I see you thrifting for clothes that look like they’re sold at Urban Outfitters. I see you buying those suede boots. You look like everyone else that’s trying to forget that they’re a consumer-object—which is exactly the mentality that destroyed the revolution. The only difference between you and the “bros” or the people who wear velour tracksuits all the time is that you are trying so much harder to convince yourself that what you put on every morning means something. Your style is “I’m a hipster.” And hipsters can suck my dick. That’s a promise.

I know you have a Columbia hoodie. I know that your aunt or your parents bought it for you for a graduation present or something—it comes with the territory. It’s sitting in your dresser in mint condition, and yet I see you rocking that Cosby-chic pullover four times a week. So, honestly, why don’t you wear it? Because it doesn’t represent who you are? And all the nonsense that became hip within the last three years—that’s you? My eyes are welling up just thinking about how shitty you are.

I’ll break it down for you: you wear what you think is cool. That’s the only statement you can make, and it doesn’t go any deeper than that. What you think is cool is a combination of all the TV you’ve ever watched, the feedback your parents gave you as a kid, whether or not you’re European—there are a lot of variables, but basically all I’m saying is: you suck. You refuse to put on the hoodie, because that’s not cool. But conformity is conformity, “bro,” and if you try to tell me otherwise, I’ve got five knuckles for your throat.

“Oh, but what if my fake-ass friends won’t like me anymore?!” Get over yourself. I have no friends, and you don’t see me complain. Ever. Besides, if you keep looking for gratification in what other people think, you will never attain the eternal dao. Which is why I wear Columbia sweatpants, sweatshirt, and beanie every day, just to prove to all of you that I don’t care.

Don’t live in fear. Don’t be a slave. Put on the hoodie.
Represent?

Okay, yes, maybe I do have a Columbia hoodie stashed away somewhere. Fine. I’ll admit to that. It was a gift from my aunt. I run in it. I sweat in it...excessively. So I’m not going to wear that to class. But let’s not make this just about me. Why do you represent?

Surely it’s not because of that immense, irresistible solidarity you feel rising from your breast whenever you’re dining in John Jay. It’s not like you use a meal swipe to join all your peers, arrayed in blue and white, eagerly recounting the play-by-play of last weekend’s big defeat by Cornell. Come on. You’ve probably never even been to a Lions’ game. And, really, who cares?

Sporting anything with the Columbia brand makes a statement. Shit, wearing anything makes a statement. This isn’t UMich, where getting dressed in university apparel in the morning is as routine as brushing your teeth or putting on a pair of jeans. It’s not just a matter of having the hoodie; it’s making the conscious decision to wear it. Hell, it’s $40 for one of those things at the bookstore (although I doubt that crossed your mind when charged it to your parents’ credit card). Now you’re trying to tell me you just so happened to have it lying around?

You’re trying to tell me that you really don’t care? Maybe I am guilty of conformity, but you, my friend, are positively reeking of hypocrisy.

So while we’re at it, let me ask you another question: When you were going on college tours just a few years ago, did you buy other college hoodies, too? One from Columbia, another from Yale, another from Brown...You did, didn’t you! You had one from every school so you could hedge your bets—just biting your fingernails and waiting for the acceptance letters so that you could walk into the school the next day repping the Ivy League sweatshirt. And I make you sick? Jesus Christ, I’d rather drive a knife into my own leg than continue listening this.

Bottom line: Whether you admit it or not, you’re wearing that Columbia hoodie because of the status that you think it confers upon you. Decking yourself out in University-emblazoned sweatshirt, sweatpants, and beanie doesn’t exactly tell me that you don’t give a shit.

You’re wearing the hoodie so that friend of yours from home who had to settle for BU knows exactly where things are at these days, even if he did have the higher GPA in high school and “kind of deserved it more” than you did. Don’t pretend like clothing represents some kind of selfless pride in the institution. And don’t try to tell me that it’s just another thing to wear, ironic or not. Price-wise, you could have done much better at H&M or a thrift shop than that miserable Barnes & Noble under Lerner.

From what you’ve told me I think it’s safe to assume that you’re not an athlete (it’s probably safe to say that you’ve never even swung a fucking baseball bat). And the fact of the matter is that the only people who wear Columbia apparel regularly and proudly are either those getting up at 6 a.m. for practice or those who are out to prove something to those hipsters in the Village. And since you clearly don’t fit into the former category, it speaks to reason that you’ve positioned yourself squarely in the latter: just another smug, self-satisfied Columbian, still desperately trying to prove something after that rejection letter from Harvard. Don’t like it here? I call bullshit. Otherwise, go back to the Common App, jackass.
V. hadn’t been to Cambridge since before this last war, and so he’d been looking for an opportunity to make his way northward for some time. When his advisor mentioned that some materials in a Boston University library might help him in his latest attempt at producing an acceptable thesis—a critical treatment of Orwell’s schoolyard verse—V. held his nose, took his advisor at his word, and arranged to stay with his Harvard cousin, Frederick.

And so it was on Thursday night that V.V. boarded a midnight motorcoach in mid-town. As it bore him up along the Hudson, he could not help but ruminate about Civilization’s slow—and yet unfinished!—creep up the island of Manhattan.

Coming to his senses—and thereby putting to hard use the hard nose he inherited from his hard mother—he dispelled such thoughts. The cabin being deliciously free of the prying eyes of classmates and relatives, he began to skim a copy of On the Road for the dirty bits.

How fine to retreat from the City for a spell! Did not Steinbeck write, one cannot know warmth unless he knows cold? So it would be with Boston, which, by depriving him of New York’s vital heat, would upon return aid him in more profoundly loving his City.

So, many hours later, blinking and bleary-eyed, V.V. disembarked, tipped the coachman, and found himself at the wrong end of Boston’s South Station. What beastly people! Suffice it to say that V.’s ideas of how a visit to Massachusetts might make him adore New York the more were found factually accurate, though severely wanting romantically.

It was quite late when he arrived at Harvard, and the undergraduates were out upon the lawn. A dozen stood in a circle with raised glasses. “At last!” V. exulted. “Gentleman of the sort Columbia so sorely wants!” Drawing near, he chastised himself for his optimism—for the boorish boys’ reedy voices loosed echoing obscenities. He hurried past, only overhearing the two phrases “and then five beers!” and “opened doors after graduation.” How crass!

Still in search of a Harvard Gentleman, V. reached his cousin’s dormitory.

Waking up the next day with a fearsome hangover, V.V. thanked his unconscious cousin for his hospitality, and let himself out. As he walked along the Charles, Verily Veritas found his mind sharpened by the crisp Puritan air. His step lengthened, his lungs expanded, and pretty girls sitting upright on bicycles passed him by. He lit a cigarette, and, so many later, found himself across the river. All around him babbled barbaric students in fleeces and hooded sweaters—many of them with the scarlet letters B.U. stitched across their bosoms. V. raised his collar and peered out at them. He rushed into the library, somewhat relieved that the students here were of slightly less desperate condition.

Verily will not bore you with the details of his day of research: it was not fruitful—though V. did relish reading the correspondence of the editorial board of Partisan Review. Nonetheless, it was a beautiful day indoors, after which V.V. started toward South Station, thought better of it, and convinced Frederick to lend him his driver for 12 hours. V.V. concedes that this may have been less than Christian, given that Frederick was still not fully possessed of his usual incisive nature. As Fred’s sleek auto shot south, Verily Veritas took liberal advantage of the mini-bar. His head pleasantly clouded, he dozed, dreaming of his City.
“b@b provides a unique way of connecting people based purely on their thoughts,” said Jae Daemon, who maintains bored@butler and is the pseudonym of the site’s founder, Jonathan Pappas, CC ’06.

In 2006, Pappas created the site, when, late one night in Butler, he was bored. By 2009 it had opened branches across the Ivy League, gained popularity, and received venture capital (losing it once VC-mandated changes caused traffic to plunge). The board, known at many schools as a place for students to solicit hookups in the library stacks, gossip, and loose racial epithets, was infamous—and highly trafficked.

After going offline in 2009 for murky reasons, bored@butler returned in 2011 with a new feature that introduced a pseudonymous element—“personalities”—to a board that had formerly maintained strict anonymity. Personalities allow users to form identities, just like a user profile on any online forum. As Jae put it, “Personalities have injected an extra dimension of humanity that b@b has never really seen before,” thereby “creating a sense of community in a way that only pseudo-identity can accomplish.”

I contacted some of the site’s most prolific personalities to talk to them about the site. Many highly involved members of b@b typed out what they thought their multi-faceted, text-based community means. Those who agreed to meet in person—and most of those whom I contacted did—spoke very freely about what was, for some, their closest group of friends. (I regret that I lack the space to include everyone I talked with, because each described a different b@b.) Though an outsider, I became familiar with some of the little mythologies that every circle of friends develops (which is admittedly easier to do when many of the constitutive events are searchable). I became comfortable with their collective voice, a more intelligent sort of 4chan-speak that is strongly influenced by social anxiety, privilege, gender, and pretension—very Columbia concerns.

bored@butler is a world unto itself, which, by lurking on the board and in their chatroom, I came to understand better. Eventually, I realized what I was doing: studying, and possibly stalking, a group of friends. I wondered if what I was doing was okay; if it would be similarly justifiable to learn the conventions, inside jokes, and gossip of another clique that congregated primarily at 1020 and only secondarily online? I wondered where the line lay between observer and participant in a community that you need only register

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**Imagined Community**

*In Which a Blue & White Editor Gets bored@butler*

By Conor Skelding

Illustration by Katharine Lin
an account to join, but that supports a wide spectrum of investment.

Through b@b, students from across Columbia—from different schools, social circles, sensibilities, genders, and ethnicities—gather in a way they never would in reality. To name only a few that I met: a premedical student, an editor of another major campus publication, an engineer, a writer. Some visit the site to solicit emotional support from a group of willing listeners. Others are searching for a group of friends. Still others log on to take part in a candid and vicious meta-commentary on Columbia culture free from the University’s typical culture of politeness and political correctness.

Some personalities consider b@b “an island of misfit toys.” Geordi La Forge, who is in SEAS and requested that I not share his year, has dealt with depression and anxiety, and taken a gap year. “As a freshman,” he said in person, “I was scared to call Nightline because my voice is very recognizable, and I thought someone would recognize me. But through that site I felt safe.”

Today, he’s comfortable enough to meet other b@b personalities offline, and offer emotional support to his despairing anonymous users. “There have been many times that people have been suicidal on that site,” he said, and he’s spent hours backing them off of the edge.

Another personality, Anonivixen, a GS student, uses the site as an alternative connection to Columbia. Because of financial problems, she has had to take time off, and cannot live in Morningside Heights. “My entire GS friend group was gone, and I’m grateful that I had reached out to b@b because those are the people I still talk to,” she said.

Trying the site on a lark, she explained, “I ended up meeting people, hooking up with a few people, making friends.” Not that the site has always been friendly. As the longest-standing personality, she’s observed a major generational change: “Back then [last semester] it wasn’t as acceptable to openly meet people. Also, you had a lot of anons looking to hook up.”

Now, the site is far less anonymous, any mentions of hookups in the stacks are guaranteed to be ironic, and its users have moved into the real world. Late last year one personality was picked up by CAVA at her apartment after one of the first b@b meetups.

In addition to other meetups in Butler, dorms, and 1020, the site has started to act in, rather than just comment on, Columbia culture. On October 27, b@b members posted fliers opposing the Operation Ivy League frats regaining their houses on. On November 20 at noon, one user left a bottle of urine marked “COCONUT WATER” on Alma Mater’s pedestal, where Robert of the infamous open letter to Bwog had hoped to meet Kristine.

I asked Anonivixen what she, a student of color, thinks about the questionably racist and sexist comments on b@b. She’s conflicted. On one hand, she believes her time on the Internet desensitized her. “When I was in high school and had significantly less self-esteem, I used to cam-whore,” she confessed. “From there I heard so many nasty things, it’s kind of warped my brain.”

On the other hand, she explained, “It speaks volumes about a people, who can even get the joke, ‘Die cis scum.’ Set aside the Internet part of it. Think how much you have to know, how much about cultural sensitivity, and the queer community, to even be able to make fun of it.”

This aspect of the site—its rhetoric, which is widely considered objectionable—is what first drew one Feminist Fatale, BC ’13, to bored@butler. Her personality name, she explained, is only “a little ironic.” “I am a feminist,” she said, “but I do like to challenge people with the idea of what a feminist is.” Fem Fat, as she’s called for short on the site, arrived at the site last year, and found her passionate feminist arguments poorly received (“I’d been reading a lot of feminist theory,” she said). Once familiar with the site, she realized she’d been taking it too seriously. Every
argument must be nested in irony and inside jokes, and every statement is both serious and not-serious. To be bested by another user is to “get one’s jimmies rustled,” and made upset enough to post seriously.

As a feminist of color, Feminist Fatale explained, “I’m comfortable with bored@butler to the point that I understand where the joke is coming from.” However, she noted that ironizing issues of gender and privilege “is a double-edge sword.” Frequent jokes on the theme of “checking your [x] privilege” have “the effect of bringing the issue up, but also defusing it.”

Does serious discussion take place on b@b, I ask her? Without missing a beat, she replied, “Yeah, it totally does, and sometimes I’m the cause of it. I try to post things that make people think, and even with the trolls it still happens—not that she’s innocent, or wholly critical, of trolling. When I asked her about the two Bwog “shitposts”—when b@b users rush a Bwog comment thread and flood it with their own inside jokes—she giggled. “Oh yeah! Shitposting is fun. I posted a comment about sexism on the Halloween costumes, and it was satirical, but also my beliefs.”

Unlike many bored@butler personalities, Fem Fat has a busy social calendar off the board—indeed, as we walked through the Diana looking for a seat, she waved at or hugged at least three friends. But when she used to talk about b@b with her friends, she explained, they didn’t understand it. “Where bored@butler is a refuge for some, it is also just one form of expression for others,” she added, though she does recognize the service the site provided. Geordi. brg, a personality who wrote to me via b@b private message more colorfully described that expression: “Get on here, flash your virtual titties, whip out your virtual cock, and post with zero inhibition while maintaining anonymity. It’s not really complicated at all.”

Anonymous users who oppose this semester’s more communal direction would rather keep the site a late-night Facebook-alternative—more like it is on Dartmouth’s more active bored@baker, where fraternity gossip and “hottest 2016 girl” power rankings are common—rather than a more humane board dominated by a few power users, who, as Jae predicted, prevail over the anons in enacting their vision of the site. Jae wrote: “See Geordi Laforge [sic]. I love this guy. Strong personality.”

Jae, for his part, claims to be agnostic as to what sort of community each school should form. “[T]he cultures develop on their own. It is the same platform for everyone. I am just a service provider allowing it to exist.”

—Additional reporting by Luca Marzorati.

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“We’re kind of like a backroom bar compared to the other [Columbia] sites online.”

—Fuckitletsgobowling

“I’ve started to think of it as the modern kind of thing that Kerouac and his friends had, this bunch of people, where everyone is kind of a creative spirit or willing to say crazy things. It’s not like things have changed too much, but there will always be tight-asses and then people who will seek refuge somewhere […] that does sound pretentious. I was getting a little caught up in what I was saying.”

—the poet

“I think my posting style on the site really reflects the general tone on the site which is serious intellectual discourse.”

—The Dark Hand
Safe, Anonymous, Exclusive
How DateMySchool Gets Around
By Will Holt

During the first few weeks of the semester, passersby on Broadway may have noticed something peculiar parked outside the Barnard gates: a banged-up, magenta RV with the web address “datemyschool.com” painted in black and blue along its front and sides.

For the duration of its stay in Morningside Heights, the RV’s purpose went unannounced. In fact, the only hint at its mysterious presence on Broadway was the promise written on the side of the RV of “safe, anonymous, exclusive dating,” suggesting to bystanders conjugal visits in the back—which isn’t exactly inviting. (One imagines the interior to be akin to the VW bus on the floor of which you probably would have lost your virginity if you’d matured in 1975, or possibly a set piece from The Hills Have Eyes.) But before I could get inside and confirm my suspicions, the RV vanished. I immediately resorted to my fool-proof Plan B—email—and nervously solicited DateMySchool’s PR apparatus.

In early October, I received the following from one Melanie Wallner, director of public relations at DateMySchool: “As part of our national college tour, we’ve been taking [the RV] on the road to host parking parties at lots of college campuses, where we play music and give out freebies. Tomorrow it’ll be making its way back to NY from Philadelphia, so you should expect to see it again soon. :)

Just a few days later, the RV trundled up to the sidewalk outside HamDel. This was it. I sat down in the back of the RV with Wallner, curious about these “parking parties” and what exactly she had meant by “freebies.”

The RV’s interior lights had been broken for a while, and since dusk was coming on fast, we spoke in the hush of semi-darkness. Wallner, snug in a black shawl that seemed to swallow her whole, fielded my questions from behind a Formica table. Sensing skepticism, she was quick to qualify her obvious enthusiasm for the company.

“You have to understand that when I was at NYU, I was directing my own plays,” she said, “I was all about the human connection, so I was like, ‘Fuck the Internet!’

Still, after hearing about datemyschool.com from her mother, Wallner decided to try online dating: “I tried it out and it was so fast, so efficient, and I felt totally safe.”

Words like “efficiency” are often tossed around in discussions about DateMySchool. Started by Columbia Business School 2011 graduates Balazs Alexa and Jean Meyer, the company’s website provides a means of streamlining the online dating experience for college students by limiting profile access to select university email addresses. Alexa and Meyer initially envisioned DateMySchool as a place for the professionally ambitious to find love, with an eye toward grad students in particular (interestingly, 50 percent of Columbia undergrads on DateMySchool target Columbia graduate students specifically, while only 21 percent of graduates are looking for undergrads).

DateMySchool has been using the RV to raise awareness at various college campuses between Boston and Philadelphia. And while this may not sound like the ambitious “national college tour” that Wallner described to me via email, the company has been rap-
idly expanding online. As of early October, the website boasted 125,000 users and 1,384 four-year colleges in the United States alone.

Wallner, who “basically studied sex” at NYU’s Gallatin School of Individualized Study, is a true believer in the website’s promise of “Fast, Exclusive, Anonymous” dating. She had her first date through datemyschool.com immediately.

“When I asked him what he was doing,” Wallner recounted, “he said he was getting involved with DateMySchool. I thought, Hey, what a great idea!”

Wallner used that CBS student as a reference when she first reached out to DateMySchool in search of employment. After relentlessly (and fruitlessly, at first) marketing herself to the company’s founders, she broke into the business. According to Wallner, Alexa justified his decision to take her because, well, she’s an XX: “There always needs to be a woman in business. And I think you are a woman.”

The website’s founders have a knack for the weird, obscure, and philosophical. In a February 2011 New York Times profile, Meyer reflected on the paradoxical impossibility of romance in an age of unprecedented connectivity: “People in the 21st Century are alone,” he told Times reporter Hannah Miet. “We have so many new ways of communicating, and yet we are alone.”

Philosophical questions of modern romance aside, DateMySchool has shown great practicality and resourcefulness in its outreach. In Chicago and Miami, the company has recently teamed up with an ice cream truck company to make their message mobile. College students in those cities will soon be inundated with DateMySchool pens, door hangers, tote bags and Solo cups—“Tote bags for the girls and Solo cups for the guys.”

According to Wallner, this physical and material presence creates exactly the kind of awareness that DateMySchool aims for. “People love the RV,” she told me. “People love to tweet at it, Instagram it, whatever. We blast music, honk the horn, hit on guys—it’s great.”

From the very beginning, the founders of datemyschool.com have had a very hands-on attitude toward all their projects. A team member found the RV on the side of the road in Brooklyn and immediately set about securing it for the company. It needed serious work, Wallner reflected, but nothing a magenta paint job couldn’t fix.

Despite the relative inexperience of Wallner and her associates, DateMySchool has seen meteoric growth since its inception in 2010. The company’s strategy seems to be largely one of improvisation, and so far this approach has proven quite effective. And while I’m not exactly setting up my online dating profile just yet, I do respect Wallner for her persistence. During the interview, she insisted on three separate occasions that I join with datemyschool.com immediately. After all, “Five percent of your classmates are already on it.”

In the past few months, Wallner and her associates at DateMySchool have been working to increase that percentage. On November 27, the Spectator published an op-ed by Wallner titled “A Culture of Love,” in which she attempted to explain the “changing relationship dynamics at Columbia” through DateMySchool. Love, she argues, is “more attainable than ever [at Columbia] because of digital platforms like DateMySchool.” The story that she gives of her own involvement with the website is much the same that she told me in October, but with one significant addition: Since creating her profile, she has “exclusively gone for Columbia guys.”

The Spectator article essentially constitutes an 800-word advertisement disguised as an opinion piece, which reflects DateMySchool’s digital strategy thus far: get the message out in every way possible, and see what works.

“We’re just kids,” Wallner later said. “All of us are in our 20s and just out of college. We’re not professional PR people or anything like that. We’re really about doing it ourselves.”
So Three Beats Walk Into a Bar...

The West End's Literary Legacy

BY ALLIE CURRY

Few constants have accompanied The West End’s many transfers of ownership and various rebrandings since Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, CC ’48, William Burroughs, Lucien Carr, and others occupied a corner booth in the 1940s. The latest (and current) iteration is arguably the most self-effacing: in January 2007, Jeremy Merrin, CBS ’00, reopened the neighborhood fixture as Havana Central at The West End, a restaurant and bar that professes itself to be an homage to pre-Revolutionary Cuba. The former West End is now one of three Havana Central locations in New York, and contemporary reports seem to indicate the neighborhood and Columbia student body viewed the reopening with skepticism. Chris Shott of The New York Observer penned an especially caustic commentary, jeering at the restaurant’s “historic-preservation schtick” and its sherbert orange “freshly touched-up walls” (they were formerly a dingy white shade).

“This is, in fact, Jack Kerouac’s favorite New York dive bar,” Shott wrote. “At least, it used to be.”

In truth, reacting to the legacy of the Beats has been as much a part of The West End’s history as the Beats themselves. Columbia proper proves to be much more significant than a mere backdrop for the events, antics, and required readings that influenced members of the group in their early adulthood. One gathers that Ginsberg and Kerouac in particular had a complex relationship with the University; under the influence of Lionel Trilling and Mark Van Doren, these sometime-Columbians reacted to the University’s conservative intellectual character by writing throaty, Romantic literature. Today, both Columbia and Havana Central occasionally claim the Beats as their own, which is problematic in that it obscures the fact that, for Beats in the ’40s, Columbia was an institution to rebel against and The West End their neighborhood hangout.

Even in its heyday in the ’40s, Ginsberg believed the bar—later known to students as “The West End Gate” or “the ’stend” — aspired to be a “replica of a Greenwich Village dive.” In the early ’70s, the bar staged poetry readings, a practice borne out of Beat poetics, and looked to counter the formal nature of academic poetry readings across the street. A Spectator article from June 1973 called the management’s latest marketing an attempt at a “cultural renaissance” that connoted a shift in patronage. Once considered by one former manager as “a neighborhood bar” at the time of the Beats, The West End had, at this point, begun shifting itself into “a student bar” with “a burger and beer sensibility” (Merrin’s words in the 2007 Observer piece).

Other Spec articles from the ’70s and ’80s detail the physical characteristics of the bar as it expanded to accommodate multiple crowds with multiple musical preferences in one space. Sonically, the jazz room—which, as far as I can tell, never stopped hosting an excellent lineup of storied performers and luminaries—buzzed alongside the sounds of a jukebox and “video machine sound effects,” according to a 1981 report. “Don’t come expecting anything ‘avant-garde,’” the writer cautions.

Socially, the bar served as a space where Barnard women could
mix with Columbia men. Diana Trilling, literary critic (and wife of Lionel), called the West End “that dim way-station of undergraduate debauchery on Morningside Heights” in *The Partisan Review*. Author Joyce Johnson, who attended Barnard in early ’50s and dated Kerouac for two years, describes the interior in her memoir, *Minor Characters*, as:

A plain bar of dark wood and no particular charm, bottles lined up on mirrored tiers. A white-tiled floor sprinkled with sawdust. One of those nondescript places, before the era of white walls and potted ferns and imitation Tiffany lamps, that for some reason always made the best hangouts.

Despite its physical proximity to the Columbia gates, The West End always felt more than steps away from the campus proper. Most Beat travel literature and an April 2012 article in *The New York Times* argue to some degree that “Any pilgrim’s archeological Beat tour [. . .] must begin with the university (sic) itself, a useful antagonist in the iconoclasts’ quest for artistic self-actualization.”

Many have argued the socio-cultural and literary-interpretive conservativism of Columbia’s mid-century leadership were especially influential in the group’s conception of the establishment. After taking Lit Hum, Ginsberg felt convinced he wanted to be a poet and found a mentor in Trilling, who discouraged his interest in Whitman and Romantic-era poetry. When Ginsberg wrote a note that described a hope for a literature that recovers “naked personal subjective truth” and attached it to a copy of Howl, Trilling wrote back, saying that he did not like his poems. Barnard Professor of History Robert McCaughey’s history of the University, *Stand, Columbia*, describes Kerouac as a “student as much pushed away from somewhere as pulled to Columbia.” That is, while Kerouac was a student at Columbia, he was hardly representative of his class.

Today, the Beats are experiencing something of a moment: a spate of films and documentaries have been released chronicling the exploits of Kerouac, Burroughs, and Ginsberg, et al. The most Columbia-relevant one, *Kill Your Darlings*, is expected to premiere in 2013. The film reenacts the events of August 13, 1944, the night which Carr, a friend of Ginsberg and Kerouac, is believed to have killed his stalker in Riverside Park after an evening at The West End.

More than any other literary movement, the Beats are endlessly commodifiable—and Morningside obliges. As a contributor to this magazine wrote in 2008, “The Morningside village is a constructed reality.” When Merrin reopened The West End as Havana Central in 2007, he asked patrons to share memories of the former West End in exchange for free platters of empanadas. While Columbia Library’s ur-institutionalized archives hold a considerable collection of documents and letters shared between the Beats, informal, marginal, and privately-owned spaces such as The West End will ultimately have control of how they talk about their histories. No coat of aggressively orange paint can change that.*
Buy Now, Pay Later

Questioning Columbia's No-Loan Policy
BY ANNA BAHR

Considering that in 2011, two-thirds of American college seniors were graduating in debt, with an average of $26,600 per borrower, Columbia’s expectation that its undergraduate students will earn their degrees without owing a single cent to outside, non-University lenders is ambitious and certainly anomalous. With the price tag of annual costs at Columbia reaching over $60,000 annually (for reference, the median household income for the American family barely tops $50,000), 52% of students enrolled in CC receive some form of financial aid. Yet, “Students are expected to borrow $0 to attend Columbia,” Columbia College’s financial aid website boldly proclaims.

CC and SEAS students alike owe their thanks for such comprehensive coverage to the recent augmentation of Columbia’s financial aid services in the 2008-2009 academic year. A major revision converted all need-based loans into grants offered by the University itself, for students enrolled in both SEAS and CC. Students whose family incomes came to less than $60,000 annually became exempt from tuition payments, and major cuts were made to the expected parental contributions for students with family incomes between $60,000 and $100,000. As a result, Columbia added as much as $20,000 in grants for every student’s four-year aid package.

Still, what appears to be a borrowing-free guarantee is modified elsewhere on the site with a conditional statement: “Even though the recent Columbia financial aid enhancements have eliminated student loans from the initial financial aid award, students may still choose to finance their education through a combination of student loans, parent loans and/or monthly payment plans” [emphasis ours]. In other words, Columbia College and SEAS assure applicants that they can sufficiently lower the cost of education so that neither student nor family has to incur long term loan payments.

The expected family contribution is calculated based on a somewhat opaque assessment of “demonstrated need.” Although the phrase implies action on behalf of the recipient, in reality, demonstration looks like a standard formula with little case-by-case deviation. Students plug personal information into a “Net Price Calculator” which weighs factors such as familial income, assets, and number of siblings already in college. Out pops an estimation of your expected family contribution—a total the College has determined is well within any surplus fund for which your parents are responsible for contributing. And the offers are generous—the average student receives over $40,000. On the whole, students are satisfied, even surprised, at Columbia’s openhanded offers. But while these numbers tally neatly on paper, they don’t always add up in the real world, where the cost of living means more than “tuition” plus “books and miscellaneous.”

Dealing with the admission of over 2,000 students to CC and SEAS each year demands an efficient, streamlined formula from which everyone, on paper at least, benefits equally. But details are lost and extenuating circumstances overlooked. The number-driven system can actually create a disincentive for parents to accept promotions at work: the more you make, the more you’re expected to pay. As one student put it, “They get part of the story and give you as much as they can with it. But do they know my sister got no aid from her school and that we’re paying full price? I’d guess no.” Where the “Expected Need Calculator” may account for how many children in a family are being put through college at a time, it does not ask for how much aid each of those students receives. Unsurprisingly, for some Columbia students, inadequate support, whether from school or from home, or unforeseen changes lead them to take out loans. By and large, these undergraduates recognize debt as a relatively standard option. The enormous responsibility of paying for their education years after they are handed an impressive degree is an inevitable, if unsavory, reality.

Students whose needs are not fully met by Financial Aid and opt for loans are largely invisible in public communication of their difficulties. In general, students are happy with their financial aid packages, which, even when compared to its Ivy League
peers that enjoy much larger endowments (consider Columbia’s $8 billion compared to Harvard’s $34 billion), are generous. Columbia was, however, alone amongst the Ivies in omitting statistics regarding debt burdens for students. Among universities that do report average graduating debt, the Ivy League load was well below the national average, at less than $20,000 for the class of 2011. Considering that the financial aid available to universities is determined primarily by the size of their endowment, it is worth considering that the average debt of Harvard undergraduates, who benefit from an endowment over four times the size of Columbia’s, is still $11,780. At Yale, which has an aid program comparable to that of Columbia with 55 percent of its students (compared to 52 percent of Columbia students) receiving aid totalling $120 million annually (compared to Columbia’s $110 million) allocated to the financial aid budget, 26 percent of students still take out federal loans. It is only reasonable to assume that a comparable percentage do the same at Columbia. But how are we to know?

The lack of transparency extends to relationships among the student body. Because Columbia touts its zero-borrowing expectation, it is easy for a student with loans to assume he or she is the only person pushed to that point. One student, who wished to remain anonymous, admitted that “One of the hardest parts [of taking out loans at Columbia] is that it feels like you’re going at it alone. We read about the problem of student debt in the newspaper, but it has no observable reality here. Everyone assumes Columbia covers you.”

There is no question that Columbia has an excellent aid program. Indeed, the University was ranked number 9 nationally for the average amount of need-based aid awarded by US News & World Report and graced The Princeton Review’s 10-college “Financial Aid Honor Roll.” Where the University falls short is in its seemingly endemic resistance to open dialogue about loans—an absence manifest in both the administration’s reluctance to acknowledge the existence of student debt that its program cannot solve, and the students’ conclusion that, despite Columbia’s commitment to financial aid, their debt is their problem.

When dealing with an investment as valuable as their education, students are cautious not to upset the balance. Many expressed concern that attaching their name to any critical commentary of the workings of the Financial Aid and Educational Financing might affect the sums that get printed on their grant checks. The office itself was hesitant to speak with me, asking that all questions be submitted in writing to Sydney Gross, Director of Communications, before any interview with the Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Jessica Marinaccio. Even after my questions were approved, responses stuck to rehearsed answers more akin to website copy than candid commentary. When asked specifically where the disjuncture between the “$0 borrow” expectation and student loans came from, Dean Marinaccio responded that while aid packages are carefully considered, in order to avoid any debt: “Students or parents may choose to take out loans to fund their expected student or parent contribution, but this is each student’s and parent’s personal choice and not the expectation of Columbia.”

Columbia adamantly removes itself from the equation it helps to create, essentially outsourcing the burden that financial aid offices were created to address in the first place. In its eagerness to achieve the seemingly impossible—a totally debt-free college—it further isolates undergraduates who do not meet its “$0 borrow” expectation and demeans
the necessity of their loans by writing it off as a “personal choice.” Particularly for the students who fall somewhere in the middle, whose parents make too much for a free ride and far too little to pay the full bill, neglecting the debt conversation only perpetuates fears of paying loans off alone.

Mike Dryden*, CC ’14, grew up in an affluent area in an affluent family. His parents started a college savings fund when he was young, putting away small amounts of their yearly income in anticipation of the large, lump sum tuition costs they would pay later on. When Mike was eight, his father suffered from a debilitating stroke. His condition prevented him from working and compromised his health. He lost his job, and his family’s comfortable lifestyle took a hit. The sicker he became, the higher his health insurance rate climbed, and Mike’s family was forced to siphon money from his college fund to help pay for staggering hospital bills and doctor consultations.

Mike’s story is not atypical, even if the details are unique. Dipping into college saving has become the norm for college students with families facing the rising costs of living and healthcare. When he was accepted to Columbia, Mike worked closely with the Office of Financial Aid and Educational Financing, who offered him $25,000 each semester to cover tuition costs. But it wasn’t enough. “Yeah, I’m going to come out [of school] owing about $30,000 [in federal loans],” sighs Mike. “I’m navigating this thing all alone and I’m freaking out about it.” There’s only so much Columbia can offer students, and even with a generous package, Mike couldn’t afford to fix his computer or purchase his school books. His basic living expenses were not covered—even with Columbia’s help with free meal swipes. His parents were turned down for a Parent Plus loan, fixed-rate federal aid in which the debt burden falls on adults instead of their children.

In an implicit acknowledgment of undergraduates bearing debt, the financial aid office maintains mandatory education programs for a population it expects has no need to borrow. To help students navigate the loan process, Columbia requires that they take “Entrance Counseling”—an “online session that provides students with information on the terms of the loans they are taking out, including the interest rates, repayment terms, repayment options, and the borrower’s rights and responsibilities,” says Dean Marinaccio. Mike found the information to be confusing, and the single blitz of “counseling” did little to help him in considering his future. The Internet interface is no substitute for one-on-one face time—a resource Columbia students have struggled to access at the Office of Financial Aid and Educational Financing. “I wish they had a ‘Taking Out Loans for Dummies’ site that would just walk you through your prospects and the consequences of your loans step by step. The website is sometimes contradictory and it isn’t easy to sift through that stuff on your own,” says Mike. Amalia Scott, CC ’13, describes it simply as, “bullshit.”

The limited availability of appointments with aid officers has been a common complaint among students. “It obviously sucks,” sighs Amalia. “It’s just
NEITHER A BORROWER NOR A LENDER BE

too bureaucratic. It’s too difficult to make a meeting with them in person. You need to talk to them today and their next available date is like two weeks from then. They create a lot of panic by being impossible to get ahold of.” A recent internal review of the office, consisting of a focus group, student survey, and consultation of several educational groups, was concluded at the beginning of this semester, and its findings reflected these concerns exactly. In response, the office hired four additional staff members and expanded its office hours from six to 40 hours every week.

The cost of college necessarily detracts from the three core branches of CC’s stated mission: to offer students “intellectual mobility, social mobility, and career mobility.” Student debt precipitates a funnelling effect, pushing all but the most wealthy students to turn away from careers in social justice or literature when they consider the consequences of a degree without a sure-fire salaried safety net—an obvious limit to all three mobilities. “I hate placing a monetary value on my college experience, but that’s the only way I can think about it,” says Mike.

Mike stuck with his double major in English and Philosophy, although he considered switching to Computer Science or Economics, but says that he has considered withdrawing for a year to spend time saving money. It was a real possibility that he might not have been able to afford Columbia at all, and he still feels a deep thankfulness to the Aid Office for its generosity. “Columbia means so much to me. I’m lucky.”

Amalia was offered an incredibly generous tuition package by the aid office when she was first accepted. “They even paid for me to come out and tour the school,” she says. Amalia lights up when describing her aid package: “I essentially pay nothing for school. They were incredibly generous.”

But tuition isn’t everything. Even with a subsidized meal plan, the cost of living in New York is high for students working close to minimum wage work study jobs. “I guess I didn’t think much about my living costs. So I got [to New York] and I was starving. My freshman year was pathetic. I was literally begging people for food.” It took Amalia nearly a year to take out her first federal loan. It was the best thing she ever did. Without it, she says, her college lifestyle would have been “physically unhealthy.”

Nor did she let the burden of debt dictate her studies. “I’m not concerned about people hiring me for a job that will make me really rich. If I can subsist I will be fine. I am going to be really struggling. I am a little nervous about paying my debt in time, but I will be okay. And I think it will be worth it.”

To some extent, the handling of loans at the college is quintessentially Columbia. The aid policy works as well as any part of the college’s well-oiled bureaucracy. Students are well-funded. But, in typical fashion, Columbia keeps its distance from the unsavory conversations, giving students the leeway to work it out for themselves by making resources available but not obviously so. Conversations of the burden of student debt are often described as “crippling.”

*Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.
—Editing and additional reporting by Matt Schantz;
research by Leila Mgaloblishvili and Angelica Modabber.

Look forward to the second installment of our student debt series in the February 2013 issue in which we grapple with the question of loans at the School of General Studies.
Hey Her Campus ladies! Thanks soooooo much for coming to meeting (lylas). Here are the minutes from last time—feel free to take a pitch and lmk if you want to help coordinate any of the upcoming events! Remember: next week, we vote on a Barnard Her Campus social media representative, so if you have a really solid Twitter following (and can sass it up in under 150 characters, LOL), def consider running. Okay, I’m off to hot yoga—wish me luck in svasana!

xoxo, Barnard Her Campus EIC

“A girl should be two things: classy and fabulous”
—Coco Chanel

News & Features:
- Heart International’s Vodka Selection, Ranked by Calorie Count
- Heart Secretly Slutty Female Authors Over the Ages: A Retrospective
- Heart Embarrassing Moments: The Dropped Tampon Edition
- Heart Classroom Topics: To Raise Your Hand, or Not?
- Heart 10 Hot/Interesting Races To Be Seen With in Public
- Heart How to Use Your Gay Friends to Make Straight Boys Want You
- Heart Classroom Topics: Cutest Pens and Pencils, and How to Flaunt Your Oral Fixations
- Heart 10 Indie Love Songs to Cry About on a Saturday (Because You’re Single)
- Heart How to Look Like an Activist Without Doing Anything: Pins, Emotional Reactions, and More!
- Heart Top 5 Study Abroad Locations to Lose Weight in: From Algeria to Zimbabwe
- Heart 7 Sexy & Slimming Fonts: From Arial to Wingdings
- Heart How to Craft the Perfect Facebook Status (And Get His Attention, Too!)
- Heart Gay for a Day: That Time I Made Out With My Friend at Mel’s
- Heart A Tree Grows in Harlem: How to Stay Safe when Venturing Above 116th
- Heart Politi-talk: What Does Your Presidential Vote Say About Your Body Type?
- Heart How To Look Casual When You’re Stuck Eating Alone in Hewitt
- Heart Where to Work if You’re Having a Hot Day and Want to Be Seen
- Heart How to Deal with Mean Bwog Comments
- Heart Hottest Rooms in Butler: A Guide
- Heart New Slang: The End of YOLO?
- Heart Farting: Allowed?

Boys & Love:
- Heart Is He In It For You? Or Is He Just In You?
- Heart Handjobs: Antiquated, or Back on the Rise?
- Heart 7 Dildos That Will Do You Right
- Heart HERstory: I Settled for an Ugly Econ Major
- Heart HERstory: I Dated a Gay Hipster
- Heart HERstory: I Wasn’t Getting Laid, So I Went Lesbian
- Heart To Do Your T.A., or To Not Do Your T.A: That, Ladies, Is the Question
- Heart Ask a Columbia Guy: What’s the Hottest Major?
- Heart Columbia’s Underground Club Scene: Which Extracurriculars Are Hiding Secret Cuties?
- Heart Making it Through MoMA: How to Convince
FICTION

Your Alt Date You KNOW The Modern Classics

Health:
♥ HERstory: I’m Not Actually Allergic to Gluten, I Just Tell People That So I Don’t Have to Eat Carbs
♥ The Big Sub: Petition to Make it a Giant Cucumber Instead
♥ How to Smoke Weed in Front of Boys (And Avoid the Munchies!)
♥ The Pros and Cons of Getting Roofied
♥ 7 Low-Cal Ways to Cook Your Quinoa
♥ 6 Tampons to Trim Your Figure
♥ Water and Tea: Meet The Latest and Greatest in No-Cal Hydration
♥ Tone Your Thighs & Meet Some Guys: The Sexiest Sections of Dodge
♥ Foods That Make You Look Sexy When You Eat Them
♥ How to Make the Most of Your CAVA

Experience
♥ 12 New Names for your Downstairs Gal Pal
♥ Kate Moss: Getting a Little Chunky?
♥ HERstory: I Was Addicted to FroYo
♥ How to Hide Your Herpes
♥ Do I Smell Weird?

Style & Beauty:
♥ How to Style Your Hair “Down There”: Perms, Scrunchies, and More!
♥ Does This Stool Make Me Look Fat?
♥ How to Smell Expensive
♥ Seductive PJ’s: A Guide
♥ Mastering the Messy Bun
♥ Style Alert from our NYC Fashionista: NEW Hunter Boots
♥ Nail Polish Colors That Make Your Fingers Look Skinnier
♥ 8 Flattering Moleskines: Look Smart AND Skinny
♥ Skinny Socks: The Smallest Slimming Secret
♥ What Eye-Color is the Skinniest-Looking?

Polls & Quizzes:
♥ Which Hewitt Food Station is Right for You?
♥ Cheating: Okay if You Have Self-Esteem Issues?
♥ How Many Photos per Weekend Night Can I Instagram of Myself?
♥ How Quickly Do You Add Him on Facebook? How Soon is Too Soon?
♥ Pros and Cons: Should You Say You Go to Barnard, or Columbia?
♥ Which “Girls” Character Are You?
♥ Which Type of STD Are You?
♥ Is Casually Saying “the N Word” Okay?
♥ What’s on Your Snuggle Soundtrack?

Events:
♥ Her Campus x Sig Ep ABC Party: Anything But Carbs!
♥ Tis the SEASon: Her Campus Herds up 100 SEAS Cuties
♥ LWAGA “Ladies Who Aren’t Gettin Any” Forum hosted by Her Campus
♥ RIP Campus: A Retrospective Hosted by Her Campus and Theta
♥ Her Campus Craft Party: Make your own Bras and Panties from Found Objects in Morningside Park
♥ Her Campus x Skinny Girl Margaritas “Fabulous Fiesta” Meet ‘n Greet!
♥ Her Campus Potluck: Strictly Lettuce (brain-storm: what do we think of “Lettuce help you!” as a slogan?”)
♥ Her Campus Weigh-In! (Where There’s A Will, There’s A Weigh!)

Campus Cuties:
♥ Campus Fuglies: This Fat, Pimply Kid in my Psych Class
♥ Potential Campus Cuties (Anyone???? Ugh there are no cute boys here...)
♥ “It’s Like I’m Too Hot”: One Brave Campus Cutie Tells Us Why Sometimes, Being Sexy Is Hard
♥ Campus Celeb Spotlight: Bigga the Bouncer

Hot New Indie Love Songs:
♥ “Yellow” by Coldplay
♥ “Somebody That I Used to Know” by Gotye
♥ “Home” by Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeros
♥ “I Will Follow You Into the Dark” by Death Cab for Cutie
♥ “Wonderwall” by Oasis
♥ “Sleepyhead” by Passion Pit
♥ “Love I Don’t Have to Love” by Bright Eyes
♥ “Everytime We Touch” by Cascada
♥ “Kids” by MGMT

WINTER 2012
On a weekday afternoon at the Columbia Business Lab, I was met with hugs and chocolate from smiling employees. Sporting jeans and sweatshirts, young entrepreneurs were getting back to work after a free lunch of gourmet pizza courtesy of a sponsor. A far cry from the buttoned-down formality of Uris, the Lab is a “co-working space and entrepreneurship program” that provides recent CBS graduates with continued access to School resources, programming, events, and faculty advisors.

This is the casualness of a new breed of young professionals for whom work and life are inseparable. A particular kind of entrepreneurial venture, startups are small-scale, newly organized companies which seek to rapidly expand into the marketplace, principally by attracting investment. Because profitability might not arrive for several years, a startup is typified by a small workforce that shares the burden of labor, management, and promotion among only a handful of employees. A collaborative and intimate workplace that blurs traditional conventions of professional conduct with personal familiarity makes startups attractive to recent graduates, who are often reluctant to give up the social and intellectual freedom of university life. Liberating rather than oppressive, this constant flow of interaction often fosters creativity, and helps to explain how some of the most spectacularly successful companies of recent memory started in undergraduate dorm rooms. However, such horizontal organization can be risky when you’re betting not only your professional, but your personal life, on an uncertain project.

The prospect of breakthrough success can be misleading for soon-to-graduate students contemplating their first career moves. David Hu, SEAS ’13 and a computer science major, has issues with the term “startup” and its connotations of instant gratification. Hu is a passionate employee of Codecademy, a website founded by former Columbia students offering free online coding courses.

“I feel like startups are being too materialized at this point,” Hu said. “People view it as if they want to be the next Mark Zuckerberg, that they want to be famous. But a lot of people just want to create cool shit—they’re just trying to create something they’re passionate about.” He believes entrepreneurs who throw everything they have into the startup should be motivated by their desire to build something for the benefit of their potential users rather than the desire for instant postgraduate fame and glory.

Driven by such passion, product development itself becomes a kind of lifestyle. In traditional office structures, professional communication is strictly separate from casual socializing. It would be a faux pas for a recently hired associate to walk up to the CEO’s office and ask a question—let alone challenge the goals of the organization. But at startups, it’s the opposite: as your own boss and employee, you make the rules. Hu explains, “No one is telling you I want X, Y, and Z done by Friday—it’s up to you how to do it right. That is different from larger companies where there are more
explicit goals defined."

These principles of direct communication are the core of the Application Development Initiative (ADI)—a community of students from CC and SEAS that seeks to promote “creativity and technological aptitude.” Much more than an extracurricular activity, ADI represents a group of students who care about learning as a professional (and profitable) lifestyle. The ADI career fair on November 9 was populated by startup social butterflies buzzing with conversation and laughter. Job-seeking students were overdressed compared to their prospective employers who were outfitted in T-shirts, jeans, and shorts, sometimes with boxers hanging out.

Though affability is key, the ability to communicate without boundaries becomes most efficient when applied to online communication. Whereas spending time on Gmail or Twitter might be a no-go at Goldman Sachs, it’s expected—even encouraged—at startups, where capitalizing on social networking is an inexpensive way to both collaborate with other creative minds and push your product. As a result, online persona becomes just as, if not more, important than being personable in person, so that the ability to command a conference room may not be as sought-after as it is for larger, more established corporations.

However, there are disadvantages that come from the dominance of social media in the startup community—much for the same negative reasons that Facebook and Twitter affect communication in college. Social media can be a waste of time and extremely distracting, writes Forbes contributor Mark Evans. He explains, “There is so much belief that social media can generate major benefits that it’s all many startups embrace in terms of marketing.” While that may be true, new forms of social media can’t replace old-fashioned brand-building entirely.

Reliance on personal connections at startups is a fundamentally important means of creating a baseboard off which fledgling entrepreneurs can feel comfortable bouncing their ideas. The inviting atmosphere at the office encourages new employees to take on more challenges and responsibilities with less hesitation. In fact, the opportunity to see an idea through without the obstacles imposed by hierarchy is one of the primary reasons that Omar Haroun, CBS ’12, decided to pursue the startup career path.

Haroun graduated from University of California, Berkeley, with a BA in Economics in 2006, received a BA and MA in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics in 2008 from Oxford, and finally a joint JD and MBA program at Columbia.

An entrepreneurial intellectual, Haroun has always thrived on executing his ideas in collaborative settings. At Berkeley, he founded a surfboard exchange company, and at Oxford, a Zeta Psi fraternity chapter. Haroun reflected, “ideas would just come to me and I would want to see them through. I wasn’t thinking so much ‘Am I going to start a company or join a startup company after I graduate?’ I was thinking, ‘I want to keep the student lifestyle going as long as I can, and in the meantime just keep doing what I’m passionate about.’”

Given his impressive credentials, Haroun would have been well-qualified to pursue a career in law or academia. Nevertheless, he chose to continue the with collaborative and casual work methods that he had grown used to. With the help of Columbia Business Lab, he had the opportunity to start a business rather than resort to a more traditional path. Haroun co-founded Sportaneous, an app that seeks to make it easier for people to exercise by networking, connecting, and inviting others to participate in a fitness activity. He found the risk rewarding, explaining “the learning experience [at a startup] is really
unparalleled. I think it is a meritocracy at a startup, and you get a lot more credit if you do a good job.”

The definition of professional achievement takes on a personal significance for entrepreneurs in the startup world, who have to find success within themselves regardless of whether their product sells. Even with initial six-figure investments, startup founders often have to pay themselves modest salaries compared to what their skills could fetch within an established company. This is where the scaling of a startup becomes critical. By launching only a handful of dedicated individuals, startups can minimize costs and focus entirely on the product. By fine-tuning the good or service, a perfect pitch can catapult the company into rapid accumulation of hype and investment, which in turn can lead to profits. Rather than a guaranteed good salary, startups offer the prospect of a meteoric rise from modest to great. But this model anticipates a receptive audience in addition to a hopeful speculator; resources can become scarce just as quickly as they became available if the product does not catch on.

While this trajectory would seem to level the playing field for talented individuals, the world of startups and venture capital retains a reputation for being overwhelmingly white and male. Y Combinator, one of the most prestigious accelerators—the firms that provide the initial funding for startups—averages an annual class of startup founders that is just 4 percent female. Students who have found the startup lifestyle attractive would appear to have benefitted from a radically democratic corporate culture, but the demographics of startups still overshadow traditional professions: consider the gender divide among computer science majors, which while disproportionately male, are far from 96 percent of the labor force. While the trend to move to startups instead of a more traditional career path post-graduation is still too recent to draw deep structural conclusions from, it’s worth paying attention to the way that they complicate our understanding of personal accomplishment. We should be wary of conflating, rather than confusing, professional innovation with social progress.

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A Conversation with Caryn Davies

BY SYLVIE KREKOW

She may stand at an impressive 6'4”, but don't ask Caryn Davies about basketball: she's a rower. Before she graduated from Harvard in 2005, she took a year off of school to train for the 2004 Athens Olympics, where her boat earned a silver medal. Last summer, she led the U.S. Women's 8 to a gold medal—their second since Davies stroked the same boat in Beijing in 2008. If her athletic career isn't impressive enough, she's currently attending Columbia Law School. Davies sat down with managing editor (and occasional, much slower training buddy) Sylvie Krekow to talk about Olympic partying, self-doubt, and why sometimes even the top dogs need a good cry.

The Blue & White: What does the US Olympians Association actually do?

Caryn Davies: Mostly we just get Olympians together for social stuff. We try to support the Olympic movement—the Olympic movement being everything related to the Olympics, like community outreach—we go and speak in schools a lot [about the] idea of Olympism: being excellent. We try to support the USOC [US Olympic Committee] and inspire the next generation. We're horribly underfunded, but who isn't? It's hard to argue that we should get more money when athletes themselves aren't getting a lot of money.

B&W: I remember watching the closing ceremony from this year, in London, and it's like they jammed every famous performer in, for better or for worse. What was it like actually being there for the celebrations?

CD: It was pretty neat. The closing ceremony in particular is actually really tiring. You meet hours before it even starts—you all have to congregate in the Village, and then you all march in together, and you're just standing on the field for the show that takes two hours. I suppose it's like standing for a concert, but we've all been competing and partying, and some of the people are drunk, and some of the people are hungover, and we're all just like “Ahhhh!” People start sitting down, and half the people aren't even paying attention to the show—it's very different from the Opening Ceremony. The Opening Ceremony, everyone marches in with their country, it's very organized, and we all rush the field and meet other athletes from other countries. But God, you get tired with the closing ceremony. I was like, “I want to go home!”

B&W: So in the Olympic Village, it's only athletes, right?

CD: Yeah. Although I actually just discovered you can bring in guests. You get a maximum of four guests, and they can only be in the Village from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. But I did manage to get my parents in the Village, which was pretty neat. I got to give them a little tour. I don't think they thought it was as cool as I did, they were like, “That's nice.” I was like, “No, it's so freaking cool! Do you know how many people would kill to be in the Village?” And they were like, “That's great, honey.”

B&W: What do they think about your impressive rowing career, and the fact that you're an Olympian?

CD: They're definitely proud of me. I think my mom sometimes is like, “Hurry up and get a career. You did the rowing thing, now move on.” That's what she told me two years ago when I was going to go back to the Olympics. She was really worried that it would prevent me from getting a good job, because I spent so many years messing about. She's wrong, but she worries. Two days before the final, I get this photo from my Dad, and it's my Mom sitting there with my Uncle, and the caption is, “Trying to console a mother who has been informed that her daughter is rowing in 2016.” I was like, “Well, first of all, I never said I was thinking about that, but second of all, I don't need this right now!”
B&W: What’s harder: law school, or rowing a 2k [race]?

CD: I thought you were going to say training for the Olympics. A 2k, good or bad, is over in seven minutes and change, or on the water, six and change. I think law school is harder, because when you’re training, it’s so clear what the purpose is. And if you have to make a decision, all you have to ask yourself is, “Will this get me closer to my one goal?” Which is winning. If the answer is no, you can say no. With other commitments, you can just say, “No, sorry, can’t do it. I’ve got bigger fish to fry.”

Whereas law school—like with undergrad—you’ve got so many different things going on. You’ve got your social life, and you’ve got grades, your job search, and other extracurricular things you’re doing. You can focus on your job, but then you miss a lot of social opportunities. You can focus on grades, and stay home and study. But then you miss a lot of opportunities where, you know, the President of France is coming to speak. It’s overwhelming, isn’t it?

B&W: That’s one of the nicest things about rowing—when I’m on the water, or in the erg [rowing machine] room, I don’t have to think about anything else.

CD: Yeah. It’s so structured, it kind of forces you to get everything else in line. I’ve seen friends quit the team, citing schoolwork, and then their grades get worse, because they aren’t as disciplined. For me, it wasn’t really a question of whether or not I was going to row. In fact, that pretty much came first, which is why I’ve never confronted this issue of “what are my priorities” until I got to law school and was like, “Oh, crap. I better think about getting a job.”

My parents actually discouraged me, not because they didn’t want me to be an athlete, but because they didn’t want me to be so serious about it. In high school, I’d be getting up at 5:30, and they’d have to drive me to the gym before I got a license. So my poor dad got up at 5:30, and drove me to the gym, and would pick me up at 7:30 and drive me to school. They were really glad when I got a license.

B&W: When did you realize you were going to be an Olympian?

CD: When I was a kid, I thought I was going to go to the Winter Olympics and ski. This was not a realistic dream; I was a downhill racer until sophomore year of high school. And then I realized, (a), I’m not that good, and (b), I could hurt myself. I had a crash—it wasn’t super serious or anything—but I was like, “Oh, my god, I could have died. I think this other thing that I’m kind of good at could be better.”

But to this day, in a weird way, I actually prefer the Winter Olympics. In the winter, I’d park myself in front of the TV with hot chocolate and be so happy. So I thought I was going to be in the Winter Olympics, and that didn’t work out. My brother started rowing, and it wasn’t so much that I realized I could be an Olympic oarswoman as much as I realized I could make the Junior Team, because hey, my brother made the Junior Team, I’m as good as he is. Then my brother made Under 23s [the National Team], and I was like, “Yeah, I could do that.” And it was just incremental. It was mostly that I wanted to beat my brother. I wanted to do what he did.

B&W: I grew up in a ski resort, so I’d have to agree that the Winter Olympics are more fun to watch. Rowing is such a hard sport. What’s the most difficult
I think the most difficult part is the self-doubt. Especially after a race, but even after every practice: “Did I try hard enough? Did I do everything I could? Could I have pulled harder? Could I have focused more?” That’s something that I’ve always struggled with, because you’re chasing perfection. I hold myself to certain standards and sometimes you don’t reach those standards. Sometimes you can’t: you do your physical best, and you fall short, and that’s fine.

But even on those days when you meet your goal, sometimes you think, “Maybe my goal wasn’t hard enough. Maybe I should have set a more difficult goal for myself.” That’s hard. I think it takes a certain level of experience and maturity to just be okay with yourself. In my experience, once you let go of that judgment, you remove barriers and you can get even better.

What do you notice about the differences between you as an undergraduate athlete and you as an athlete now?

I don’t judge myself as much, although I still judge myself. I definitely feel like I have a more stable relationship to the sport. If I had a bad workout, my whole week would be ruined, whereas now, I don’t judge my self-worth quite so much by the numbers I see in front of me. I would like to attribute that to myself maturing, but I also think that was thrust upon me, because when I was younger I was always the fastest on the erg in my age group. Now, I have the slowest erg score in the boat—in 2008, I pulled a 6:49 [on my 2k]. I’m the slowest by far—all my teammates were in the 6:30s. I just had to be like, “This is what I got.” I can’t invest emotional energy into being the fastest, objectively, in a fitness test. I just am not capable, and I’ve accepted that. When you start rowing, you make so many improvements so quickly. I used to think I was going to break the world record on the erg. I was like, “I’m just gonna keep dropping 20 seconds every time I test, and I’m just going to smash that world record.” And then one year I was like, “No, that’s not going to happen, and I need to accept that.” It’s hard to accept that you have limits. But I’m okay with that. The standards of performance shifted a little bit, and I just had to perform what was good for me.

It’s hard not to tie your self-esteem to those scores sometimes.

Even when you get on the water, you have good days and bad days. Last fall, I was in a pair, and every week I was in last place. I would get off the water, and get into my car, and just cry. I was like, “I don’t know if I belong here, or what I’m doing here.” I just needed to cry. Then I would gather myself, and have breakfast, and it was all fine.

Rowing gets emotional sometimes. We nicknamed the couch in our coach’s office “the crying couch.”

Sometimes I wonder, especially for men coaching women—the first time someone cries in front of them, it must be like, “Whoa.” Tom [Terhaar] coached the lightweight men at Columbia before he came to the [women’s] National Team, and what surprised him the most was the crying. The first time someone cried, he said he wanted to say that line from A League of Their Own, except with rowing—“There’s no crying in rowing!” But there is. I think one of the biggest indicators in overtraining is emotional distress, and, especially in women, you cry. For no reason. One time Tom was like, “How’s it going?” And I was like, “[sobbing] I’m so tired, Tom!” He had no idea what to say.

Why did you choose Columbia for law school?

The easiest answer is, I didn’t get into my first choice. I really wanted to go to Stanford, so much so that in December of when I was applying, I just packed up my car and moved to San Francisco. But I didn’t get in, and it came down to a choice between Columbia and Berkeley. I visited Columbia, and I just really liked it. I was living in Berkeley at the time, and I loved it—beautiful campus—but I felt like Columbia was what I needed. I kept thinking about that song, that came out in like ’97, when I was in high school...There’s a line in there that says, “Live in New York once, but leave before you get too hard/Live in California once, but leave before you get too soft.” And I was like, you know, I feel like after three months of living in California, maybe I should try New York. So I came here.

This interview has been edited and condensed for clarity.
Sponsored in part by the Arts Initiative at Columbia University. This funding is made possible through a generous gift from The Gatsby Charitable Foundation.
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These excerpts were culled from documents left on Columbia’s lab computers. We encourage our readers to submit their own digitalia finds to us, via email, at editors@theblueandwhite.org.

But, as all three books emphasise, Mbeki was determined to avoid becoming the West’s “poodle.”

The filmmakers chose to have the actors portray various characters of different races and genders throughout different time periods. The visual was used to literally show that death is just another door and you open it and step into a new life.

A lot of people do not know the statistics and dangers of not wearing a helmet, just as they might not know the cost of treating a serious head injury. They also may not know how much a head injury will affect their quality of life.

Of course English has changed over time. However, how has it changed and what was the impetus for such transformation? Unfortunately, this essay cannot answer why it has changed.

When I spent a week in Lithuania and Poland, people kept asking me for directions: not just my walk but my Slavic features made me look like I belonged.

Boston and Cambridge are a train-ride away from my hometown of Worcester, Massachusetts, and they became the testing ground for the desperate and anguished teenage independence that sent me snarling to New York the minute I could manage it.

The question of how kindergarteners ‘do race’ through eating habits is significant because it provides insight into how children not only act on notions of race-based consumption and behavior that their parents and teachers instill in them, but moreover it illustrates how at such a young age they come to create and perpetuate these race-based notions themselves in the cafeteria.

Putting to death an entire people is a difficult decision to come to.

The only thing I love more than the production of Danger Mouse is the work of the Beatles, and the only thing I love more than the work of the Beatles is Jay-Z’s entire existence.

The whole of senior year is like an air bag that separates me from the broken glass and broken dreams of graduation.

What’s up baby? Haven’t seen you in decades. You live in John Jay now?

Listen! You are my people! And I have come to lead you! For too long have we toiled in SEXILE, cast from our homes at the whims of our lustful cohabitants!

I am excited to possibly join CBA not only because of my passion for alcoholic drinks but also because of the opportunities being a bartender would give me•
BETA THAN YOU
A rear-window tipster recently oversaw Beta initiation taking place in their backyard. Apparently, the raucous ritual involved pretty boring stuff: the brothers “sang a song about a ‘loving cup’ and passed around a chalice of champagne for everyone to drink.” As for their noise level, our tipster reports, the revelers “were generally loud.” When the sacred bonds of brotherhood had been solemnly extended to new members, someone from Watt shouted, “Shut up, you cocksuckers!” to which a Beta Brother jovially replied, “Fuck you! Rush Beta!” The Blue & White waits with bated breath to learn whether the Watt resident did eventually rush Beta, or chose to remain a poor GDI.

SHE DOESN’T EVEN GO HERE
Birva Patel, who posed as a Columbia student for at least nine months under the alias “Rhea Sen,” and who was arrested three times for it, has recently been spotted twice in Morningside Heights. First, she was spotted on the downtown platform of the 116th St. 1 stop. Second, she was spotted at Starbucks, that time by one of the female students who went on-record about Patel in the September 11 Spectator article.

HE CAME FROM BEHIND
One fine, recent morning at Oren’s, a “really tall guy” walked in and hugged a girl in line from behind. Line-people watched with mild, pre-caffeinated interest as the girl turned around and the tall guy exclaimed, “Oh, sorry! My mistake!” His actual girlfriend, standing at the other end of the line, (sporting a nearly identical hairstyle and coat, to be fair) burst out in laughter. All of the other people in the line smiled quietly to themselves or their companions, but, in the words of our tipster, after a while, “it dragged on sort of cloyingly because Oren’s is really small and the line is really long.”

HTTP 403: FORBIDDEN
The Cloaked Mask, Editor-In-Chief of specsucks, contacted an editor of this magazine to write an article. The editor declined.

SHE DOESN’T EVEN GO HERE
Birva Patel, who posed as a Columbia student for at least nine months under the alias “Rhea Sen,” and who was arrested three times for it, has recently been spotted twice in Morningside Heights. First, she was spotted on the downtown platform of the 116th St. 1 stop. Second, she was spotted at Starbucks, that time by one of the female students who went on-record about Patel in the September 11 Spectator article.

MOCK TRIAL
On December 2, halfway through Bwog’s weekly meeting (Sundays, from 8 to 9 p.m.), a member of CCSC’s Executive Board contacted an editor of this magazine over Gchat. At its 9 p.m. meeting, CCSC would be “talking about bwog comments” and what action CCSC should take regarding them. Vice President of Campus Services Scott Wright had been scheduled to present, but as it happened he had hurt his back, and CCSC needed another way to occupy its time. Despite being contacted unofficially and without notice, four editors did attend the meeting, where they observed CCSC spend half of its meeting dithering over exactly how it should best feed the trolls. Having spent long hours considering comment moderation, the editors knew better than to do the same, and declined to comment.

This issue... It’s at capacity!
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