Endangered Speeches
Columbia, Cornell, and Yale join forces to offer less commonly taught languages

The Student Doth Protest
A look at how Student-Worker Solidarity is taking shape

Also Inside: Judging a Book by its Covers
# THE BLUE AND WHITE

**Vol. XIX**

**THEMAM EXTENDIMUS FACTIS**

**No. V**

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**Cover:** "October Tribute" by Leila Mgaloblishvili

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*theblueandwhite.org*
TRANSACTIONS

ARRIVALS
Al Jaffee’s personal work and archives (Mad magazine), for the RBML

A new senator, for the College

Administrative dicta regarding school spirit

DEPARTURES
Sun tans
Knowing glances

Revelation of the Month

“I don’t think, global centers, contribute to the undergraduate learning process. Students go out to commercial centers in the rest of the world, and all they get exposed to is commercialism. They’re not going to learn the culture of those countries—they’ll take what’s immediately available in the current culture. It’s just academic tourism, and it doesn’t add up to anything.”

— Wm. Theodore de Bary, in The Eye

POSTCARD FROM MORNINGSIDE

Postcard by Leila Mgaloblishvili

Textile Trivia: the material corduroy, whose name is apocryphally derived from the French corde du roi (“cord of the King”), is distinguished by units called wales, which are the individual ridges of the fabric (and coincidentally, an autonomous country that is part of the United Kingdom). Measured in wales per inch, the typical corduroy is 11-wale (and found ruling trousers the world over).

However—though fall approaches and elbow-patched philosopher-kings even now claim campus, we at The Blue and White have found our attention held not by wooden-scarves, but rather by the more mundane school accoutrements carried and worn by Columbia’s Various Cliques. Some are rendered below.

The Police Safety "Tear" Hat

Corduroy Bottles

CBS Backpack

SEAB Beanie

Alumni Grounds

Go Messenger Bag

Columbia Admirers

4.36. Looking for that guy I met with the cuffed jeans, knitted sweater, and thick rimmed glasses,
Planet Kusfez is a pretty nice place. The Taq who inhabit it live in peace, and are neither confined to bodies nor separated into sexes. Its purple oceans are just the right density for floating on your back all day, zonked off the fruit of its Zerguh tree, which returns you to the mental state of a two-year-old, before language and self-consciousness crept in. Too bad it’s out in the boonocks... a good 7.31x10^{12} light-years away. Luckily, one of its spores made its way to us.

The library of the Columbia University Science Fiction Society landed over 40 years ago. After a particularly unstuck day muckling about in deep space, I journeyed to the Student Government Office to see what I’d find. One look at the Darth Vader piggy-bank-turned-door-stop, and I knew I was in the right place.

It’s a small room, lined floor to ceiling with alternate realities, from Ursula K. LeGuin to PKD, Russian dolls line the shelves. Crack open a book and the unassuming room transforms into a Hyperbolic Time Chamber, which is fortunate, considering it’s open a mere hour per week.

But it’s the life forms inhabiting the library that make it neat-o. CUSFSians, though they do have bodies, are peaceful beings. With their high-minded acceptance they’ve created a haven, welcome in a school that can sometimes feel as alienating as Traffalmadore. The sign on the library door: “Not too cool for you!”

Still, I approached with caution. A relative noob when it comes to science fiction and fantasy, I worried: “Will the librarian blast my head off if I can’t answer The Last Question?” I felt deep space getting a bit deeper as she gazed into her QuantumComp and I fiddled with my GNYSPhone. But then, we started talking. About books, movies, Lumpy Space Princess and how we hope to be the first eaten when Cthulhu awakens. Our voices rose.

The corners of our mouths drew back, and our eyes couldn’t have hurt.

Deep in the Columbia University Archives, in an alluringly titled box, “Unusual Cases and Scandals, 1930s-1960s,” lies the story of a young graduate student who tricked the admissions office into admitting him. That Pap had the financial flexibility extended beyond one student, so they turned to the federal authorities, notifying the State Department of the plot. The Director of Admissions, Frank H. Bowles, learned from his staff that the person who requested the application for Pap was not Mrs. Lang but a man who’d requested many applications to be sent to students across Europe, and likely had many affiliates like Mrs. Lang abroad.

Yet the admissions office never found enough information about that man to discover the extent of the scam, and the case was forgotten.

After the fruitless investigation, the admissions office decided to admit poor Pap anyway, saying that “in the case of Pap, who had an excellent scholastic record, there was no question at all about admitting him.” That Pap had the financial flexibility to pay such an enormous sum for the application couldn’t have hurt.

I called the admissions office to ask if disappointed Columbia applicants with similarly excellent records today could just fork over a few thousand for a quick admit. Their response? “No comment.”

The grad student working at the Rare Books and Manuscripts desk pulls out a box the size of an overstuffed briefcase and hands it to me. The side reads “Box 255: Symbols.” I lift the fifteen-pound block to the nearest desk and begin looking through magazine articles, old letters (or most often their carbon copies), Columbia pamphlets—an absurd and unnecessary amount of information relating to the Columbia coat-of-arms.

The file begins with sketches of Samuel Johnson’s, the first President of King’s College, own crest dating from the 1700s. The next section whisks me two hundred years into the future; it contains a letter from Milton Halsey Thomas, the curator of Columbiana (a now nonexistent collection of various Columbia paraphernalia, formerly housed in Low), to a Mr. Weston commissioned to design university shields.

The scene came to me as I sat in the library: Milton Halsey Thomas, fresh from a letter from his mother extolling his brother’s accomplishments as Dean of Yale College, paces his office, assessing his inadequate, dissatisfactory life as it stands. Curator of a museum in a college ranked almost best in the country, but just almost, he ponders how he might stop the voices of parents and peers barraging his psyche.

Looking up at the looming portrait of Samuel Johnson, our dear first university president, he notices the crest at the upper-right hand corner, along with with the original iron crown from King’s College in Chelsea under plate-glass next to his desk, and an idea formulates in his head. He sits down and drafts a letter to his dear friend Weston, and can’t help but mention the efficacy of Harvard, Princeton, and Yale’s own coats-of-arms.

I’m disappointed. When applying to Columbia, the shield seemed like a vestige of an ancient, honorable, and pretentious tradition: a mark that the school to which I was applying was the “real deal.” This now seems an obvious vanity play. My school’s symbol was born out of insecurity. I’m disappointed. When applying to Columbia, the shield seemed like a vestige of an ancient, honorable, and pretentious tradition: a mark that the school to which I was applying was the “real deal.” This now seems an obvious vanity play. My school’s symbol was born out of insecurity.

— Cooper Lynn

Illustrations by Rachel Agins and Leila Mgaloblishvili

Illustrations by Rachel Agins and Leila Mgaloblishvili
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.

**Paul Teitelbaum**

When I asked Paul Teitelbaum why he’d dropped out of Columbia in 1969, he grinned and said, “the short story is: sex, drugs, and rock and roll.”

We sat in his comfortable Brooklyn Heights apartment, surrounded by an immense collection of books and musical instruments. (“I have an entire shelf of translations of The Iliad and The Odyssey; although the Eagles is my favorite.”)

Paul entered Columbia in 1967 and threw himself whole-heartedly into hippie culture—at the expense of his studies. “It was intoxicating how fast, how easy it was,” he explained, fondly remembering walking into Wallach—then called Livingston—Hall and being engulfed in a fog of weed. “I had no chance to succeed [academically] in that environment.”

After taking part in the strike of 1968 (“I was fundamentally apolitical—beyond the core of serious activists, everyone else saw it as a big party”), Paul dropped out of school and left campus the following year with hopes of playing music professionally.

“There were two kinds of bands back then: the tight-pants musicians and the baggy-pants musicians. We had baggy pants, sorta like bums,” Paul said, describing his cover band.

After the band failed to hit it big, Paul joined a political organization. “I got involved in some crazy left politics,” he said, laughing. “It was sort of a rebirth of my generation at Max Caffé on 123rd St., he said. He picked up computer programming from a friend in the group.

Paul used his newfound skills to land a job at a software firm that developed technology for advertising groups. “Looking past all of the crazy stuff, the major work of my life is the system that my company built,” he said. He helped to develop an algorithm that tracked television ratings, “I worked as hard as I possibly could to learn and write these systems.”

After reducing his role in the company to consulting, Paul enrolled in the School of General Studies to study ancient Mediterranean history—where, over the past four years, he has taken classes at the luxurious rate of one per semester. “I needed something important to do—I wanted to find somewhere to put all of that energy,” he said. “And I didn’t want to play golf.” Paul leaned back, laughing. “I have so much time to devote to my classes, I must really be fucking with the curve!”

He grinned at the thought of Columbia forty years later. “It’s beautiful! Everything is so nice!” He continued. “Everything used to be so much dingier and seedier—you could smoke in the classrooms, we had the West End Bar, things like that. We really roamed the city back then.”

**Chad Brauze**

Chad Brauze, GS ’14, doesn’t use measuring cups. “You just do, and you taste,” he says.

Chad made his career as right-hand man of internationally renowned Chef Daniel Boulud at his Michelin three-star restaurant on the Upper East Side, DANIEL. When I met him on a breezy Thursday afternoon at Max Caffe on 123rd St., he had recently finished a cookbook with Boulud.

Brauze’s primary job: accomplishing the minor feat of writing and testing recipes for dishes from Boulud’s restaurant, putting the “taste, feel, and intuition” involved in professional cooking into words.

His career in the culinary industry began at the age of 13 when he got his first job as a dishwasher at the Brighton Bar and Grill in Brighton, Michigan. He did not originally set out to be a chef. He began at the University of Michigan, studying engineering. But an engineer Chad was not; when he first worked at the Brighton Bar and Grill in Brighton, Michigan. He did not originally set out to be a chef. He began at the University of Michigan, studying engineering. But an engineer Chad was not; when he first worked at the Boulevard, putting the “taste, feel, and intuition” involved in professional cooking into words.

Two years later, Chad swapped his slide rule for a spatula and transferred to the Culinary Institute of America in Upstate New York. Since graduation, as his friend Jerry Rivera, GS ’14, put it, “he’s been significantly lucky.” Chad started working for DANIEL and worked his way up to being a sous chef. There, he met his future wife Ashley, a pastry chef. “We complimented each other in the kitchen,” observed Chad. “I was the guy who makes meats and sauces; she made the pastries.”

After a few years at DANIEL, Chad made a European sojourn to work for El Bulli in Spain. At El Bulli, they practiced what he enthusiastically termed “avante garde molecular gastronomy.” Rivera filled in some of the aspects of this job that Chad omitted: he “worked at the best restaurant in the world, training under the best chef in the world.”

Chad exudes modesty. When a recent New Yorker article about Bulli featured Chad, “He acted as though it wasn’t a big deal,” said his friend Matt Powell, CC ’11. Rivera called him “extremely humble.” As Peter Awn, Dean of the School of General Studies, explained, “he’s so good that he doesn’t have to go around telling people about it.”

After Spain, Chad came back to New York, and eventually went back to work with Bulli at D’ANIEL. At that time, Chad read about Jacques Pépin. Pépin had gone to attend the School of General Studies in the middle of a cooking career and Chad was inspired. He saw something of himself in Pépin and realized that, though unrelated to his career designs, he’d always wanted a college education. He wrote a letter to Awn and another to Pépin, who encouraged him to apply and wrote him a recommendation at the luxurious rate of one per semester. “Definitely not.” Rivera went so far as to say that his academic interests along with cooking made Chad “sort of like a Renaissance man.”

Chad hopes to eventually open a restaurant with his wife. “Perhaps in Brooklyn,” he mused, “it’s much cheaper there.”

— Alexander Pines

— Daniel Stone
A
other Saturday night in Morningside Heights, another Saturday night inside Mel’s Burger Bar. And—oh, honey. Yet another girl crying outside Mel’s Burger Bar.

“Beer is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy,” indeed. But, although clearly full of beer, she looks neither loved nor happy. She is crying. And—to quote Ben Franklin again—though obviously sincere, the “violent natural inclinations” of the sweaty gentleman-scholar abutting me have failed to arouse the same in me. So I’ll go outside.

And I swear I know her—not by name, but by face. Sophomore year, we had econ. As far as campus recognition goes, we’re at the “Columbia nod.” (We were waving last year, but this year we shifted back down to the nod.) I’ve had a few, myself, and you know what—even if we’re back to the nod tomorrow, I’m in the mood for some desperately serious intimacy through drunken commiseration. Everything seems so immediate and serious when you’re the one venting, and so... semi-serious when you’re the one being vented to.

“Are you crying?” (My therapist has told me that I should try working on (a) compassion and (b) listening to others.) No reply. Once more, this time that I should try working on (a) compassion and (b) serious when you’re the one being vented to. (Wait—not just your best friend? Your roommate?)

But then you texted him. You were “thinking bt mel’s later.” So, Mel’s. Because he’s in your psych section, and you played footsie with him under the table last Wednesday.

So... Mel’s. You’ve got beer baptisms, the American flag, and the incongruously European bathroom setup. And: you see some lost soul kneel, look up towards heaven and fail to see God—when some second, lost-er soul dumps a pitcher of beer on the first’s head. Sticky-icky.

So, eschewing the burger bar’s much-vaunted beer selection, you got your $15 can of PBR. You looked around for him. You inquired: “U here?” No reply. But then you saw him.

You saw him, swapping spit with your best friend, with whom you had specifically gone out with just to dance. The rest is history.

Finally, she comes outside with a look of concern on her face. No way, this is not happening to me right now! Ugh, if I talk to her will it count as community service? (#Imasister)

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A
other Friday night in Morningside Heights, another Friday night inside Mel’s Burger Bar. (Wait, it’s Saturday? Whoops, I totally thought it was Friday.)

Inside there’s a girl checking her phone every ten seconds. She couldn’t look more lonely, even when that hot TA is totally into her. (He’s 40 but... I’d be down). What’s she moping about? At least she’s getting some attention.

She looks up from her phone and sees me. She nods, and I’m like, oh shit, am I supposed to know her? I smile at her and break eye contact. She nods at me. Seriously, why the fuck is she nodding at me? I’m not trying to get all judgemental, but nods are for people I know. Like, relax, at least smile, wave, and tell me what your name is before getting all personal! See, you’re either on my Anchor Splash team, or you’re not. And if you’re not, just give me a second to remember who you are, ok?

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F. had many hairs on her forearm; V. noted with relief. They were fine, dark hairs, and quite unattractive. Verily Veritas was glad to see them. You see, she was this sort of woman: intelligent, graceful, and charming. She had noble features: a symmetrical face and high cheekbones. She was from the City, and had gone to the right preparatory school. Her voice was dry, nasal, and respectful.

Since the start of the term, V. and F. had weekly seen one another in a literature seminar. Every meeting, she had not only been on-time and prepared—she had also been smartly dressed. From her side of the seminar table, she teased and corrected the critical-nonsense prevailing among their classmates, and occasionally shot playful glances at V. V. adored her. And yet: he found her undesirable. I.e., he literally found himself unable to desire her. To desire her, let alone to act on that desire, was revolting. It would require a full renunciation of self. (After all, the shameful parts must be called "pudenda" for a reason, he reasoned. Pudor was what Dido had, or lacked. And in his entanglement with her, Aeneas had acted less than pudor.)

But Verily Veritas was ignorant of the source of his paralysing whether it sprang from Protestant guilt, simple self-doubt, or some third, unthought-of cause was an inquiry for him to take up some later night, after a drink. The prospect of his three nightly glasses of cabernet gave him strength, and he cursed the day for its length.

When class met, his mind would drift—the departments of literature offered only so many seminars, after all, and over the years, V.V. had taken many twice. When his mind drifted, he would compare her to himself. And so he seldom concluded such comparisons without feeling shabby. Not that he’d been unaware of his shabbiness before—it was just that he had been rather proud of it. He’d felt it was a sort of Columbia man’s shabbiness. Now, he wondered... He lacked social graces. He was clumsy. He noticed that he sloshed; that his breath stank of coffee; that its shirt—less than fresh to start—reeked of stale tobacco. He felt like a knave.

And that is why he was glad to see the hairs on her arm. F. was human, after all. And to be human was to be imperfect (there was the high-church Protestantism). Not to say that he had ever really believed otherwise... only to say that F. had done just a superb job at concealing that fact before she walked out the door. The hairs on her arm made her dirty, and, to V.’s confusion, he found the corruption absolutely thrilling. He was himself, he reflected, still rather crummy. But he’d been crummy before, and it hadn’t ever stopped him. It was only the singularity of this one classmate, F., that had slowed him down. And now that he knew that she, too, was married by Original Sin, he could get down to the business of ordinary sin. V.V. returned to his flat to abuse himself.

On the Core:

On the Core: “Well, the courses are a farce. If some guy doesn’t want to take a course, doesn’t like it, there is no point in making him take it; he just won’t do the work—it’s a waste. I take humanities and I just don’t have the time for it—like, you’ve got to read 500-600 pages a week—like Don Quixote—stuff you want to read, but you want to read it in the summer....”

On the Core: “It’s very sterile and everything, concrete block construction—we have suites: two doubles next to each other with a bathroom and a suite, but it’s not really—yeah, it’s rather bitter.... Suppose you come back from a party or concert at four in the morning and you don’t feel like going to sleep and you want to play records or something; well you can’t do it because your roommate’s there and obviously, if you make any noise, he’s going to get out of his bed and kill you.”

On the Core: “A lot of the students are really getting frustrated, their rooms are small, it’s hard to meet girls, and they take it out on the dormitories; the walls are ripped... Guys above me were bowling last night and using the walls at the end of their corridor as the pin. So right now at both ends of the tenth floor you will find demolished walls, crushed concrete. The guys gotta do something, so they take a bowling ball and roll it down—nowhere to get rid of their steam. Guys throw garbage cans, firecrackers....”

On the Core: “There’s always Furnald lobby. Thousands of strangers there—it’s very strange. There are always people wandering around—people you’ve never seen and are never gonna see again. They happen to come here (I don’t know why) and they sit around the lobby, talk to somebody and get up and leave.” Another student: “One of the problems of that lounge is you have people talking there till five in the morning; you get up in the morning and you always see people talking in there. Of course it’s always the same group of people.” Another student: “Carman is like that too; I think if I had the choice I’d rather come to Furnald. There’s something about the people in Carman—they just seem to be the type of engineering students and people who are studying at five in the morning, taking their three minute break.”

On the Core: “There was a case where a maid found a considerable quantity of drugs in someone’s room—three kilos—and she reported it to the residence hall and they got all the deans together and were about to bust this guy, but fortunately they called the UDC [Undergraduate Dormitory Council] and the UDC convinced them not to do it.”

On the Core: “No one at CU has ever been punished for smoking pot....”
Columbia, Cornell, and Yale join forces to offer less commonly taught languages

BY NAOMI SHARP

There are twelve students in Professor Adeolu Ademoyo’s Intermediate Yoruba class, but anyone who glanced inside the room would only see two. The other seven—and Professor Ademoyo—are 200 miles away in Ithaca, New York.

Columbia doesn’t offer Yoruba, a Niger-Congo language used mainly in West Africa and rarely taught in the United States. But Cornell does, and Yoruba is one of the ten languages in the Shared Course Initiative—a collaboration between Columbia, Cornell, and Yale to pool their resources and let students take less commonly taught languages (LCTLs) through videoconferencing.

About 91% of students in the U.S. who study a language other than English choose French, German, Italian, or Spanish, according to the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages. The remaining tongues are considered LCTLs—the languages that most people in the world speak, and nine percent of Americans studying languages learn.

Some LCTLs, like Chinese, Japanese, and Arabic, have a strong following at top-ranked universities like Columbia. It is, of course, no coincidence that these languages are spoken in countries with fast-growing economies that are emerging as world powers. Students tend to study languages they believe will give them a professional advantage.

Low enrollment is the main reason that it’s rare to find a university teaching Tamil, Yoruba, or Khmer: a class must have a certain number of students to be worth the expense of a faculty instructor. “The universities in general don’t support [LCTL] classes,” says Professor Paul Hackett, who teaches Classical Tibetan at Columbia to an SCI class of both Columbia and Yale students. “They’re just not financially viable. You run them at a loss.”

“Unless,” he adds, “you have a very beneficent university that likes to indulge money-losing but culturally valuable things.”

Unsurprisingly, then, the SCI is not receiving funding from Columbia. Financial support from the university became even less likely after cuts during fiscal year 2010-11 in Title VI of the Higher Education Act, which helped fund LCTL education. Stéphane Charitos, the director of Columbia’s Language Resource Center, approached Cornell and Yale with the idea of the SCI, and the program received a five-year grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Columbia “has cautiously agreed to allow this initiative to take place,” says Bill Koulopoulos, the Senior Project Manager of distance learning at the LRC.

This is year two. The program began in Fall 2012 after a successful pilot that included three languages. This semester, Columbia offers Elementary Classical Tibetan, Elementary Ukrainian, Elementary Intermediate Romanian, Elementary Intermediate Tamil, and Advanced Dutch to students participating through videoconferencing at Cornell and Yale. Columbia students are taking SCI classes offered at Cornell in Elementary and Intermediate Yoruba. Two other SCI languages—Advanced Indonesian and Advanced Zulu—do not currently have Columbia participants, and Cornell’s Bengali and Khmer courses include students from Yale, but are not yet offered at Columbia.

Only two rooms at Columbia are equipped to host SCI classes. Both are in the Language Resource Center, which itself is located in the nightmarish maze of the International Affairs Building. (When I scheduled an interview with Bill Koulopoulos, he helpfully sent me a 2-minute YouTube video entitled “How to Get to the LRC.”)

Room 352 has one blue wall and hefty, bright orange swivel chairs with cup holders. On the wall at the front of the room are two large high-resolution screens with a video camera between them. The left screen functions like a projector in a traditional classroom, displaying PowerPoint slides and other teaching materials. The right screen is split in two: half shows the Columbia students as captured by the camera, and the other half shows their classmates at Cornell or Yale. Their classrooms have the same equipment as Columbia’s, though not as nice a color scheme.

In Professor Hackett’s 11 a.m. Classical Tibetan class on Monday morning, the four Yale students are on the screen give a friendly wave to their digital classmates. They set their backpacks down and pull out notebooks and binders. A member of Yale’s language department is there to pass out the weekly quiz, which Professor Hackett has emailed to her, and collect it to scan and email back to him.

“This is not online language learning,” says Koulopoulos, referring to another trend in distance education. An SCI classroom emulates a traditional one, so SCI students can’t take their classes wearing pajama pants as they eat a bowl of cereal in bed.

An SCI classroom emulates a traditional one, so SCI students can’t take their classes wearing pajama pants as they eat a bowl of cereal in bed.

“If I were in her position, I could understand if she felt that she’s not completely part of this classroom, because the other students are not physically around her,” says Professor de Groot. However, she says that she enjoys the challenge of the new program, and has seen it succeed in her class. She is also conscious of its demands compared to a traditional classroom: “You have to work harder sometimes as an
instructor to make sure it’s just as good.”

Koulopoulos, who runs trainings for Columbia’s SCI instructors, agreed: “It’s very important for instructors to kind of re-conceptualize the way they teach,” he says. Professor Momescu explains how she began teaching the Romanian courses, “I agreed to practically rewrite my teaching materials” to accommodate the videoconferencing system.

Despite positive responses from both professors and students, very few Columbia students are studying in SCI classrooms. Each class is capped at 12 students, but the numbers are sometimes much lower. Several classes only have one or two participants from Columbia. Some classes have none.

“The hope for the SCI is that languages taught using this methodology can be nurtured and incubated so that local enrollments can grow and stabilize at levels that would necessitate looking for a permanent instructor to be located locally,” said Stéphane Charitos, the director of the SCI. Koulopoulos adds that Yale has asked Columbia to teach Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian. With Mellon’s approval of the grant, the program will expand to include more languages—Columbia is interested in the Khmer and Sinhala programs at Cornell, says Charitos. Koulopoulos adds that Yale has asked Columbia to teach Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian. With an eye toward expanding the program to other schools, the SCI will also pilot a Modern Greek videoconferencing course.

This year, the SCI will ask the Mellon Foundation to extend its grant for three more years. If Mellon approves the grant, the program will expand to include more languages—Columbia is interested in the Khmer and Sinhala programs at Cornell, says Charitos. Koulopoulos adds that Yale has asked Columbia to teach Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian. With an eye toward expanding the program to other schools, the SCI will also pilot a Modern Greek course between Cornell and Brown University.

“I组合 my hybrid class of a higher quality than a traditional class,” he says—he gets better questions and deeper engagement from his videoconferencing course.

“It’s my favorite mode of teaching now, over a traditional class,” he continues. “And I find that because of the responses I get from students, not what I want to do.”

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Like Professor Ademoyo, teachers and LRC faculty behind the Shared Course Initiative call videoconferencing a “hybrid”—part traditional classroom, part online classroom. Many of them say that this hybrid is the future of language learning.

“Probably it’s the only way of distance teaching that does not give up the human presence in real time,” says Professor Momescu. “I would say in fewer words that it’s less lonely.”
Third is the One with the Treasure Chest

Columbia dropout, Jack Hidary, runs for mayor

BY LUCA MARZORATI

Jack Hidary—tech entrepreneur, millionaire, and aspiring politician—will not be the next mayor of New York. According to a recent The Wall Street Journal/NBC 4 New York/Marist poll, even if Hidary sways every undecided voter, he will still be a whopping 60 points behind front-running Democrat Bill de Blasio. The only drama left is to see whether Hidary will outperform Adolfo Carrion—a career Bronx politician—for third-place.

Nonetheless, Hidary is teeming with optimism about his grassroots campaign on the self-created “Jobs and Education” party line. And, despite the steep odds against him, Hidary’s far-fetched bid for mayor exemplifies the perversive incentives of the NYC political system: one where making untenable promises and exuding charisma is more important than attainable policy changes.

De Blasio, once the white knight of the forgotten bourgeoisie, is already beginning to temper promises made during the grueling race for the Democratic nomination. Undoubtedly, the legions of union workers and Brooklyn progressives will find Dante de Blasio’s afro decidedly less charming when his father has to reneg on campaign assurances.

For the other side, Joe Lhota, the Republican nominee, must have spent so much time in the trenches of city government that he didn’t realize that calling members of the Port Authority Police “mall cops” would alienate many of city’s already-scarce Republicans.

Ideologically, Hidary is closest to the current mayor, Michael Bloomberg. Both are pragmatic political newcomers who made fortunes in the private sector before turning their attention toward governing. Like Bloomberg, Hidary is solution-oriented and futuristic—more inclined to discuss ShotSpotterFlex, a program that can triangulate gunshot sounds and report them to police, than contracts with police unions. In short, Hidary is more concerned with the policy than the pitch, which significantly hurts his election odds in a city with as many complex and hard-to-relate decisions as New York.

This isn’t to say that Hidary is merely wishful—

...
Absolutism

Absolute’s bold on the Morningside bagel market

BY TAMzin PARCITER

There are certain paradoxical elements to the continuing success of Absolute Bagels. How can they make such delicious bagels and yet serve such horrible burnt coffee? How did a group of Thai bakers end up excelling at a traditionally Jewish trade? How can they have such high rankings from food critics and such low rankings by sanitation standards? In short, how can they fall short of most of the traditional qualifications for a “good restaurant” while succeeding in making us all hopeless Absolute addicts? These are the quandaries I struggle with as I stand in line, mouth watering, watching trays of steaming bagels appear magically from the kitchen.

If you have had the misfortune of drinking coffee at Absolute, then you probably spent your next visits determined to find an alternative beverage, and in doing so, probably noticed their Thai iced tea. Besides the bagels and spreads, the Thai iced tea is arguably the only worthwhile choice on their menu. When speaking with employees, I found that almost everyone who works there emigrated from Thailand, and that most of them have been there for at least five years. The owner, Sam Thongkrieng, moved to New York from Bangkok in the 80’s and upon tasting his first bagel, knew exactly where his life was headed. After learning the art of bagelcraft at Ess-a-Bagel, Thongkrieng opened Absolute in 1990.

When asked what distinguishes their bagels as superior, several employees emphasized that there are two noteworthy factors. Firstly, they stuck with New York Jewish tradition, using recipes that have remained relatively unchanged since the early 1900’s. Secondly, and probably more importantly, their bagels are fresh. According to bagel experts, (namely Ed Levine of seriouseats.com), even the best bagel is hardly worth eating after five hours. As a professional bagel eater, Levine believes that bagels should be eaten un toasted, but concedes that if the bagel is over five hours old (which ideally never happens), a toaster may actually be able to save it from an otherwise unsavory end.

Ranked by Business Insider and Zagat as the best bagels in all of NYC, described by bagel blogs (they exist) as having “the perfect ratio of crunchiness to soft chewiness”, and deemed by Columbia students “the best bagel in Morningside Heights”, there is no doubt that Absolute Bagels serves scrumptious bagels. But what about their rocky history with the NYC Department of Health? Since 2010, they’ve earned an ‘A’ on only 4 of 12 inspections, with the past 6 months being the longest period of time in which they have been able to sustain an ‘A’ grade. With reports of live mice, roaches, contaminated food, and bad hand-washing practices, Absolute Bagels has been shut down twice in their 23 years of existence, most recently this past January. In a city known for having a viciously competitive restaurant industry, failing health inspections could be reason enough to close many restaurants’ doors forever. Absolute Bagels, on the other hand, reopened their doors to a line down the block.

I wonder if, in another city, Absolute would have been regarded as the best of the best, or even the best. It’s the story of Thongkrieng assimilating and reworking a staple of NYC’s native culture, finding success and thereby enriching the city with another unique gem; the fact there are no clean tables to sit at, no polite small talk, no added ambiance, and no sanitation guarantee seems to be the play into the no bullsh*t, hurried New York ethos. But, truly, it feels as though Absolute Bagels can be naïve; it’s tasteless. You’re a jaded piece of shit like me, and that’s why I think this could be fun.”

“I’ll think about it.”

“Don’t think too hard.”

Andrew pushed a grape around on his plate, and decided finally to bury it in some mashed potatoes by slopping it with the head of his spoon.

“What’s that even supposed to mean?”

“It was real advice.”

Andrew finished his work by five; he had plenty of time. But, of course, now that he’d forced his head above the water and his free time was really free, he had to guard it vigilantly. Climbing into bed, where he did his serious thinking, he asked the question he was least comfortable with: what do I want what do I want what do I want what do I want what do I want?

He was curious about Williamsburg. People loved to mock it. Wilson especially—one of his running jokes was to invite new friends over to a fictitious

Illustration by Alexander Pines

Wilson

Andrew and Wilson head to Brooklyn

BY TORSTEN ODLAND

This is the second installment of “Wilson”—a novel in progress. The first chapter was published in our Orientation 2013 issue, and can be accessed at theblueandwhite.org.

November 2013

Illustration by Angel Jiang
“loft space”—and the cool aura the neighborhood had was beyond annoying; but it also seemed to be the only place people went when they wanted to explore the city.

He squirmed and looked out his window. Andrew wasn’t sure if he wanted to hang with Wilson for four hours straight. The night before they’d gone to a party and he spent the whole time frustrating Andrew’s attempts to flirt. “Be careful, god damn it,” he butted into a conversation between Andrew and a girl named Bridget, “Andrew is recovering from masturbation addiction. Don’t enable him. Andrew, whatever you do tonight, don’t whack it. I’ll know.”

He could be a real asshole, but Andrew was too kind to admit it without wincing. He got up and thumbed his windowsill. I made a mistake he crawled hand-over-hand to forgive Wilson my only substantial friend the hook sunk in, the biggest waste of time my only substantial friend what the fuck. He found the right memory and laughed

Well, no; the last thing she said as I walked out the door was, ‘Kegger tonight!’ But before that it was all—Carson was the name of the guy who threw the party, and it seemed to be a rager—Carson’s a funny guy isn’t he? And ‘Oh, I’ll bet it’s going to be a pretty big thing. Because you guys don’t even hang out really, right? Well that will be fun.’ ”

“And when I got back, at like 12:30, she was waiting for me in the kitchen. She wasn’t angry or anything, but she insisted that we chat even though I was obviously drunk. We never mentioned alcohol, and she pretended to be curious, asking who was there, if I had fun. ‘What do high school kids do at a party these days?’ But every minute or so, she’d sort of squint at me and ask, ‘Are you ok?’ ”

Andrew waited for the rest of the story, but when Wilson turned to him and cocked his head, he realized with a shiver that he was expected to comment.

“Wow,” he had no idea how to say what he felt without insulting Wilson’s mother. Strange and mean thing to do; she sounded spiteful without insulting Wilson’s mother. Strange and mean thing to do; she sounded spiteful what’s he trying to make me say? I didn’t exactly solicit this conversation, did he just want to bring her up? Spiteful in a protective way, but Andrew was humble enough to focus on the benefit of the doubt.

“I don’t know what kind of concern that is,” Wilson stared out the window at the shapes rushing past in the dark.

“Yes,” he nodded with closure, “Yep. That’s exactly the question.”

They walked from Bedford to Academy Records—the one destination Wilson knew in all of Brooklyn, as it turned out. The cool air and yellow lights filled Andrew with a self-satisfying kind of anticipation. The street was narrow; the buildings were short, which accentuated all the trees lining the sidewalk, orange already; the neighborhood seemed orderly and cute to him in a European way, though he’d never been to Europe.

There were young people everywhere; maybe the energy he felt was simply the sense of a communal hunt for fun. He scanned the sidewalk. They weren’t all hipsters, but the groups in the bars, the clusters of women crossing the street all seemed distinctly stylish, conscious. Andrew noted, as a built black dude with a near perfect beard walked by wearing a cape.

“You do think Williamsburg is cool because they got rid of all the guys wearing sweatspants and white t-shirts?”

“No comment.”

“I think I want to be a fashionslave.”

They stepped through the doors of the Academy and gazed upon some Australian psych song and Wilson greeted the cashier who only tightened his face and nodded. The store was expansive and bright, and Wilson was positively giddy at the sight of so many glistening, alphabetized LPs.

Wilson quickly made his way down the aisle. Andrew never understood the record fetish thing but had a weak respect for LPs as artifacts, and he walked over a box labeled David Bowie. He took out a copy of Station to Station and stared at Bowie’s cautious face.

Which came first, he wondered, the record stores or the “cool neighborhood” status, it seemed like a paradox I suppose it’s all just gentrification but he was more interested in coolness than gentrification, hands down, and it made him wince.

By the time Andrew thought to check on him, Wilson was already walking back to the front, his face colored with disappointment. He put his hand on his hips and sighed.

“The selection is impeccable. But because you don’t even know what you’re doing up there.”

“Ba dum tiss” Andrew shrugged, not sure what he’d wanted from Andrew either.
Flagging Enthusiasm

How General Studies is letting its nontraditional flag fly

BY CHANNING PREND

“I think the real question is: why shouldn’t we?” This was Tom Harford’s, GS Dean of Students’ somewhat trivial response to the question: why should GS have a flag? Flags for the other three undergraduate schools already fly at Hamilton, Mudd, and Barnard.

The School of General Studies, however lacks one of these generic Pantone 292-colored emblems. A fact which Nikki Morgan, GS ’13, sought to change last year. Thanks to her efforts, and a committee of student council members and administrators, a flag pole is scheduled for construction sometime this fall on the lawn outside Lewisohn Hall.

“This initiative rose organically from the motivations of the student body,” Dean Harford told me.

Asked to comment on the nascent flag, the prevailing response among students in the GS lounge was: “Thank you!” Elizabeth Soculla, GS ’17, stated, “I don’t really care.” Daniel Yang, GS ’16, remarked, “I’m totally indifferent to this project.”

Despite the student body’s disinterest and general lack of knowledge, Morgan maintains the project’s importance. “When a people establishes itself, one of the first things they do is plant a flag.” she said. This statement, if a bit dramatic, made me wonder: why is GS, after 66 years, only now establishing itself this way?

The School of General Studies has evolved considerably since its founding in 1947. At the time of its inception, the school was wholly removed from CC in design and study. Efforts to integrate it into the wider undergraduate community began in 1990 with the creation of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, a development that effectively unified the faculties of CC, GS, GSAS, the School of the Arts, and the School of Continuing Education. Up until that point, the schools were independent of one another academically. (Now they are bound in blood.)

Integration initiatives have not been confined to the academic sphere. Assimilation into student life improved in 2002 when, after years of lobbying, GS student council secured the right for GS students to fully participate in on-campus student organizations. Despite these, and countless other efforts, many GS students still feel separated from the rest of Columbia undergraduates. Matthew Traverse, GS ’15, stated, “GS likes to represent itself as a dynamic part of the community, but I don’t think many students are cognizant of our role here.” It remains to be seen how effectively these two communities can be reconciled.

Consider the differences in student bodies. Many GSers not only live off-campus, but have families and jobs. As Daniel Adams, a particularly blunt GS student put it, “We’re here to get our shit done. You’re not going to be sitting on the quad, holding hands, making lots of friends.” (When asked his graduation year he responded, “Who even knows.”) GS students are different from other undergraduates, and for this very reason they are so valuable to the Columbia community. However, despite the administration’s efforts to further integrate GS students with the other schools, to some extent the two groups live in different worlds.

Dean Harford hopes the flag will be planted outside Lewisohn soon. A design committee recently selected the layout for the flag, which Harford says will be “aesthetically attuned to the other undergraduate flags.” (It may or may not involve light blue and the school seal.)

What will this flag do for the student body? “I don’t think it will affect me in any way,” Jessi Ericson, GS ’15, said, reflecting the view of many fellow classmates.

Morgan, however, will continue to advocate for the project, “I want to show GSers that they do have a clear place on campus and in the Columbia community!”

The Student Doth Protest

A look at how Student-Worker Solidarity is taking shape

BY SOMER OMAR

Student-Worker Solidarity (SWS) is, first and foremost, a student organization. Two years ago, Jamile Barra, BC ’13, Emilie Segura, BC ’14, and Evan Burger, CC ’13, learned that Barnard had expressed grievances over new contract negotiations that cut maternity leave and retirement benefits, among other conflicts. Those students formed Students Support Barnard Workers, which spread across the street to gather more support from Columbia students. The group subsequently changed its name to Student-Worker Solidarity, though the subtle shift in name does not correspond with a shift in agency. Worker demonstrations and public displays are contractually limited, while student led ones are less so.

SWS consists primarily of Columbia College and Barnard students who advocate on behalf of campus workers for fair working conditions, with sizable support from graduate students in the history department where, Jane Brennan, CC ’14 and a lead SWS organizer, says “there’s a contingent of students... who are very radical and interested in labor rights.”

At a recent SWS meeting, about 20 students and a handful of supportive adults gathered in a circle on the floor in a Hamilton classroom. Attendants introduced themselves: name, preferred gender pronouns, favorite civic demonstration. The group avoids linear hierarchical organization, preferring half a dozen lead organizers to one leader.

SWS gained notoriety during the Faculty House demonstrations last winter, when it mobilized hundreds of students, Faculty House employees, and notable faculty members such as Eric Foner to voice their disappointment with the contract negotiation process. The issues at hand included whether to classify Faculty House workers as full-time or part-time, disagreements about tip allocations, and how to make demands for wage increases.

The group is built on the work of passionate students dedicated to righting perceived wrongs on behalf of one of the Columbia community’s over-looked segments: the workers that make the school a well-oiled machine, but aren’t typically given the ‘bread and butter’ status of students and professors. Their strategy follows a reliable formula: a grievance is identified and researched, and a petition of Columbia students and faculty is drafted and dropped in the inbox of the appropriate administrator. If they deem that administrator’s response to be subpar, SWS flexes its people power. Their current campaign urges administrators to install air conditioners for workers in the John Jay kitchen, which will mediate the sweltering temperatures that rise during food preparation.

SWS assembled about one thousand signatures on a petition articulating their goals, which was sent to Vicki Dunn, Executive Director of Dining. Soon afterward, members gathered in John Jay during dinnertime to chant about the predicament in front of students.

As of yet, it remains undetermined whether this traditional brand of student activism is in fact constructive. A Columbia administrator, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, aptly summarized their perspective on different strategies to confront challenges: “There are people who come to a closed door and think they have to knock it down, and there are people who come to a closed door and first try to turn the knob. Too frequently, people don’t try the knob.”

Jane shared the advice around which she tries to structure campaigns: the best tactics are most comfortable for you and least comfortable for your opponents. So while administrators may be used to perhaps drier and more tempered exchanges they are unaccustomed to this large student group that communicates on a louder, more aggressive and directly confrontational level.

Recounting the more extreme moments in SWS’s history, George Joseph, CC ’16 and a lead organizer, remembers 2012’s most controversial moment, when a horde of students, “marched into Hartley with 200 people and...the administrators’ door with all the offices was just locked...and so we’re banging on the door and chanting Scott Wright’s name...and then I started giving a speech that was specifically targeted to him, saying ‘Scott Wright, November 2013
how do you sleep at night?"

The dialogue between SWS members and administrative officials is limited. It often feels like the two speak in parallel rather than directly engaging. The administration assures that it’s working in good faith, and SWS shouts back that it’s not. It is unclear whether there are more productive alternatives to this method of communication.

SWS has thus far led three major campaigns, which are labeled as “fights” on their website: The Barnard Workers Fight, The Indus Valley Fight, and The Faculty House Fight. Indus Valley is an Indian restaurant on 100th and Broadway; the scuffle was on behalf of former employees who claimed inadequate compensation. About forty SWS members formed protest lines in front of Indus Valley, accusing the restaurant of mistreating its workers and discouraging diners from entering the establishment. Speaking to SWS’s high decibel protests, Jane noted that there is often a police presence to ensure community safety; “When we do a march outside of Columbia, the NYPD will usually come, or we’ll call them and they will...notify the NYPD as a courtesy, they come anyway.”

But is there any bite to SWS’s bark?

Tom Kappner, CC ’66 and participant in the 1968 takeover of campus led by Students for Democratic Society (SDS), who described himself not as an active participant in SWS but as “an observer who has a rich institutional memory,” Kappner stresses that “SWS is definitely effective through clearly not as much as SDS which shut down the University for a year...[it can] improve by intensifying what makes them strong: to challenge administration’s policies that are harmful to the Columbia community.”

Lizzy Wolozin, BC ’16 and other lead SWS organizer, claimed that “Empirically, SWS has accomplished much...We have waged three campaigns, all of which I consider successful...Students reached out to faculty, distributed fliers like it was nobody’s business, organized creative campaigns such as our Tumblr photo project that were effective in raising awareness about the current conflict as well as starting a dialogue surrounding worker’s rights on this campus.”

The core of Lizzy’s empirical proof comes from the volume of communicative material that SWS generates. While SWS focuses mostly on labor issues and demonstrating on behalf of campus workers, Columbia staff members are legally represented by several different unions; Columbia Dining employees, for instance, are represented by 1199 SEIU.

I spoke to several John Jay dining employees who had never heard of SWS, though one employee, Steve Tucker, had spoken to George Joseph concerning the uncomfortable temperature of the kitchen during food preparation. I asked whether he believed that the administration’s actions could be attributed to SWS’s efforts. He paused before conceding that “SWS pushed the issue faster.”

Explaining that they exhaust all established routes of communicating with administrators, Jane validates the efficacy of SWS’s public demonstrations: “The university responds to pressure. I heard administrators talking and, whether implicitly or explicitly, state that they’ll respond to student [pressure].” Does SWS’s strength lie in its volume? Jane explicitly, state that they’ll respond to student [pressure].”

The nature of the group’s dealings with the administration has been in flux since its inception. If this is standard for groups that depend on (sometimes adversarial) communication with administrators to enact change, SWS is no exception.

Last year, SWS gained ad hoc recognition from the Student Governing Board (SGB) during the Faculty House demonstrations, which provided the group with $1500, an audio set, access to reserve Low Plaza, and extra security—should it be necessary. Ad hoc recognition is one of SGB’s most powerful tools. The Board was established on the heels of the 1968 campus-wide riots, to ensure that activist student groups were empowered with systematic means of communicating their ideas.

This fall, SGB officially recognizes SWS. David Fine, CC ’73, who was SGB president when SWS applied for ad hoc recognition, recalled that “when [SWS] applied for ad hoc recognition, the administration did an amazing job of reacting quickly to their request and making sure that SWS members knew all the regulations related to that type of event. With our help they were able to get the event approved on the fast track...that had no small part to do with the administration being very helpful.”

But Jane doubted the benefits of the formal university affiliation. “With university recognition comes some sort of accountability and recognition of university regulations.” She added with a laugh: “That doesn’t mean that we can’t take off our [SWS] hats and form ad hoc groups.” One of the advantages of not being a recognized SGB group, Jane explained, was that Columbia struggled to define SWS, and had no concrete mode of contact with them. She noted, “I wouldn’t say we have a positive relationship with administrators, but some are more responsive than others.”

George fears that SWS’s email exchanges have been monitored by Columbia, saying that he thinks that multiple branches of the administration are coordinating to stop SWS. Though SWS has no proof their internal communication is under observation, the small print on columbia.edu email accounts legally sanctions surveillance by university administrators.

During SWS’s early days, the administration seemed far more supportive of the group’s work. In order to reserve space on campus for an event, groups must schedule an “event review,” a process that involves Public Safety and other offices relevant to the size and type of your event to ensure it is carried out as effectively (and safely) as possible. Fine recalls that SGB coordinated an event review with SWS during their Faculty House protests, “but the unusual thing with them is, [the administration] fast tracked event review to make sure SWS had space on campus.”

Given the chillier view that some SWS members hold of administrative intention, this helpful facilitation seemed slightly out of place. As David explained, “It’s not within [the administration’s] interests to interfere with student activist groups like this...there are thankfully apparatuses in place to protect student speech and student activism, like SGB.”

On one hand, being an SGB recognized group means that SWS can more easily interface with the administration—a crucial element of the group’s work, given that it cannot claim to advocate for better worker contracts without communicating with the contract negotiators, all of whom are administrators.

On the other hand, SWS members chafe at the anonymity and formality of this institutionalized communication style. Should SWS renege on SGB regulations and host a demonstration without administrative backing, it would detract all legitimacy from their claims of earnestly pursuing fair worker contracts.

I requested a comment from Scott Wright, the Vice President of Student and Administrative services, who is the natural SWS contact regarding the purview of his post. Addressing the temperature in the John Jay kitchen, Wright has “agreed to attempt an ongoing dialogue with the group,” and “will keep SWS informed about the solutions we identify.”

In response to an interview request, administrators from Dunn’s office forwarded me an email that was sent out to SWS by Scott Wright addressing the John Jay air conditioning petition, stating: “We are currently monitoring air quality and are already examining long term solutions for improved ventilation. I am available to meet with interested members of the student body to further discuss these issues and ongoing initiatives in John Jay dining hall.”

Columbia is institutionally equipped to accommodate SWS protests. The demonstrations educate students about civic involvement, administrative engagement, and the legality of union representation in a way they won’t experience in class; and SWS is certainly bringing about a cultural change that, as George pointed out, Columbia hasn’t seen for a while. However, its effectiveness as a student coalition bringing about functional change for the betterment of workers remains in doubt. It is worth keeping in mind Kappner’s note that SWS is still a very young group and, as the group matures, only its future strategic decisions and the kinds of cases it seeks to challenge will determine its substantive clout.
I Wonder

Debora Spar on why the second sex can’t always finish first

BY ANNA BAHR

Wonder Women: Sex, Power, and the Quest for Perfection
Sarah Crichton Books, 305 pages
$27.00

Debora Spar’s new book, Wonder Women: Sex, Power, and the Quest for Perfection is exactly what one expects: powerfully told, funny, empathetic, and, at this point, a bit stale. A companion to the recent rebranding of contemporary feminism by white, wealthy women, it advises the younger generation of privilege to adopt realistic expectations when considering their futures.

The book repeats the call to challenge impossible standards of perfection for overworked, underappreciated women who struggle to be respected in the office, keep their sex lives sexy, and produce the immaculately frosted cupcake for their child’s birthday.

Barnard College President Spar builds on the philosophies of New America Foundation President Anne-Marie Slaughter and Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg. She couples one cannot easily turn the pages without wrinkling or tearing them. Nor, for the same reason, could anyone sensibly leave it on a coffee table or put it on a shelf. Admittedly, this choice of cheap printing probably permits the Spectator to sell the books at a reasonable price with a profit margin. Yet, in an ironic twist, the preservation effort itself, the book, will not itself endure.

More inexcusably, little care was given to formatting the book itself. Beyond the cover design, which is functional, the rest of the book’s appearance leaves much to be desired. The introductory letter’s typesetting is grating.

To account for shifts in the paper’s size and format, front-page images are awkwardly stretched to fit the same-sized pages. Meanwhile, nothing was done to color and tone correct the front-pages themselves; they were simply taken as is from the digitized issues. The slightly yellowed pages might look good printed in color on glossy paper, but on the grey newsprint on which they were reprinted, they not only look terrible, but also preclude any sense of visual consistency.

Compounding this is the repeated decision to use blurry, improperly scanned pages. This reflects poorly on Spectator’s digitization efforts for which Spectator’s editors claim full credit in the preface, despite the fact that Columbia University Libraries covered most of the cost.

In the preface, the editors write that, beyond the web archives, the front pages exist “only in the conference room of our Broadway office and the archival room of Butler Library.” Inexplicably, “the archival room” does not exist. The editors were similarly unaware of the Butler Periodicals Room, which for decades has been the chief point of access to the Spectator’s archive.

In short: Spectator’s foray into fundraising through merchandising has not been executed unintelligently, only stupidly.

November 2013

Illustration by Rachel Agins

A Panoply of Spec

Judging a book by its covers

BY DANIEL STONE

Columbia Spectator: 60 Years of Front Pages
Spectator Publishing Company, 110 pages
$15.00

The Spectator Publishing Company recently released a slim book, Columbia Spectator: 60 Years of Front Pages, as part of its recent fundraising efforts. True to its name, it presents a hundred-odd front pages drawn from the sixty years of Spectator’s archives that were digitized as of last spring.

As front-page compilations go, the book succeeds. Despite all the laborious demands of creating the book, which involved culling the few representative pages from thousands, the volume’s editors performed a competent job of curation.

The obligatory events on the Columbia timeline get due recognition: Columbia’s 1954 bicentennial, the 1960 protests, Columbia’s first coed class, and Barack Obama’s reelection. Outside university events, such as President Kennedy’s assassination, also surface. Headlines with the names of university notables past, like Dwight Eisenhower and Averell Harriman, appear intermittently. And so, 60 Years treats us to a meandering, nostalgia-inducing procession through Columbia history that begins on September 16, 1953 and ends on November 30, 2012.

Still, the book fails on practical, physical grounds. The promise of the commemorative booklet is that it puts digitized archives to paper. But the work here is shoddy. The poor quality coated paper used for the cover is nearly as flimsy as the newsprint on which the rest of the book is printed. Consequently, one cannot easily turn the pages without wrinkling or tearing them. Nor, for the same reason, could anyone sensibly leave it on a coffee table or put it on a shelf.
I opened the door and found my son mock-crucified on his bedroom wall. Ezra, the neighbor boy, was holding my projector like a mystic flashlight.

Harold’s face stretched and sunk against my son’s ribs, rising with his breath like some entranced balloon.

Ezra spun around, “We’re not masturbating!”

“I know,” I said. “This is a good movie,” pointing to my son’s chest.

He opened his eyes eagerly. “You like it too?”

I smiled, and Maude jumped around on his pecs, singing for me about a million things.

— Torsten Odland

Tired

I’m tired...
I spoke with the trees.
I suffered through the famine with the sheep.
In the woods I sang with the birds.
I loved the farmer’s daughter.
I looked up at the sun.
I saw the lake.
I toiled with pots.
I swallowed the dust kicked up off a country road.
I saw the flowers of melancholy in my father’s field.
I saw death in my friend’s eyes.
I stuck out my hand to the souls of the drowned.
I’m tired...

— Thomas Bernhard, translated from the German by Torsten Odland
How one computer science student got from Mudd to Momofuku

BY MICHELLE CHERIPKA

ike most breakups, Don Lee’s led to a drink (or several) in a bar (or two); unlike most breakups, his reshaped what would happen to other men and women at other bars just like those in the years to come. A self-proclaimed “cocktail sherpa,” Don Lee, CC ’03, founder of Cocktail Kingdom, is now a leading authority on all things cocktail-related, from the tools used to make the drinks to the people who drink them.

The cocktail industry is an intimate and dedicated community. Today’s cocktail taste-makers aren’t designing a sweet edge to take the edge off; they want to craft a drink that reminds you of a dish you once ate that reminded you of Sunday morning breakfasts as a child. The $15 you might pay for a single drink at a PDT or Momofuku is worth it, the industry argues, because you actually experience that drink instead of simply tasting it. Cocktails need to be innovative in their fusion of textures and mathematical in their proportions. Don Lee is the guy whose creativity and precision popularized them for the masses.

“My job is to convince people they like gin when they think that they only like vodka,” he explains. As we sit in Cocktail Kingdom’s conference room, Lee tells me how he has become so adept at convincing people that they like gin when they want or hope to win.

Photography became a second centerpiece; Lee took a photography class with Thomas Roma, in which he was required to take a photograph and then present it objectively.

“You had to say what the piece objectively means, but we’re just college kids—we don’t know what we mean and we don’t know how to say anything.” Roma taught him how to say something, he says.

Cocktail Kingdom’s founder, hired Don Lee to manage the bar. Lee quit his day job at the IT firm and started working with cocktails full time. By 2009, dubbed “The Year of Don Lee” by cocktail experts and critics, he was a fixture of innovation in the cocktail scene. It was the year that he won every competition that he could ever want or hope to win.

Just a year after he started at Momofuku, Lee left to create Cocktail Kingdom. Originally a book republicating company, CK created photographic reprints of cocktail recipe books and manuals. Once CK began producing tools, Don Lee revolutionized the industry standards, updating the measurements and replacing the tools from the 19th century standard that had prevailed until the turn of the 21st century. His role in the company evolved to that of designer, creating prototypes and testing products.

Hearing him share anecdotes at 1020 and his favorite rooftops (SIPA and Mudd), it’s easy to forget that I’m talking with Don Lee, industry darling turned cocktail guru. But despite his humble nature, his expertise is undeniable and his approach to his work unique. An Old Fashioned is like a haiku: its form is simple, and yet the possible combination of spirits, sugars, bitters, and waters are legion.

His legacy drink? “I think the drink that will follow me to my grave is the Bacon Infused Old Fashioned,” he answers with a laugh. And that’s probably true, but not simply because of the taste. It’s synonymous with his name and perfectly reflects his ability to incorporate seemingly unrelated experiences to create a cohesive whole. Taking the flavor palate derived from Momofuku’s Ssäm Bar, which brought in Benton’s Bacon for several of their dishes, and pairing it with techniques inspired by WD50, he created more than another item on a menu.

With drinks like these, Don Lee forms a sensory experience without overwhelming the drinker’s memories of familiar drinks. Instead of detailing the process of fat-washing pork for the Bacon Infused Old Fashioned, which involves infusing the alcohol with flavors of meched fat, he offers a simile: it’s like accidentally getting syrup on your bacon when you pour it over your pancakes. This approach is one that he now teaches to bartenders in lectures and workshops across the world, pushing them to look at a customer’s experience instead of a drink.

It’s hard not to believe Don Lee as he smiles and repeats what his mentor had once told him: “We serve our guests, not cocktails.”

Interested in writing or illustrating for The Blue and White?

WE WANT YOU!

Drop by our weekly meeting Tuesdays at 9 p.m. in the basement of St. Paul’s Chapel.

Or, email editors@theblueandwhite.org.

November 2013
French Seek Asylum

Uncovering the former chambers of La Maison Française
BY MADELINE PAGES

In 1821, the view from 116th Street included neither Alma Mater nor Butler Library. Instead, you saw the Bloomingdale Lunatic Asylum. The only remaining shadow of that somewhat morbid history is our quaint Buell Hall.

Built in 1885, and originally named Macy Villa, Buell Hall was constructed as a homey haven for wealthy mental patients. Well over a hundred years later, Buell Hall has been transformed into the elegant home of La Maison Française, Columbia’s French cultural center, which celebrates its 100th birthday this year.

Bloomingdale made a splash in 19th century Manhattan. Its name graced the pages of the New York Tribune in 1872, under the headline “A Genuine Investigation of Bloomingdale Asylum.” That year, in true gonzo fashion, reporter Julius Chambers had himself committed to the asylum in order to conduct an investigation of treatment of patients behind closed doors. He played the part of the madman for ten days.

Chambers unearthed savage living conditions, beatings and other abuses by ward attendants, and... sane people? Yes, hidden among the truly ill were many stable individuals who, thanks to the unlawful leniency and greed of certain Bloomingdale staff members, were deemed lunatics and exposed to horrific ordeals. Chambers exposed these blatant violations.

With the help of his friends and editor, Chambers was moved up the social ladder of the committed—which was determined by one’s level of apparent mental stability—until he was released. His experiences came to light in a four-part exposé in the Tribune. Appalled by what he revealed, the public was inspired to support Chambers in his fight for asylum reforms; courts favored victims of cruel treatment in lawsuits against Bloomingdale, notably in the case of Mrs. James O. Norton (details of her case are not given). He succeeded not only in bringing attention to the atrocities committed by Bloomingdale, but completely rewriting the definition of lunacy for the state of New York to protect individuals from being unjustly imprisoned in an asylum. Other states’ laws, like Massachusetts’, were subsequently scrutinized. Twelve patients from Bloomingdale were released, deemed sane, after Chambers published the series.

Buell Hall still holds a prestigious place on campus today. After formally becoming part of Columbia in 1892, the building then called Macy Villa was used as the headquarters of the Columbia crew team, followed by Columbia College itself, as well as housing the offices of the Registrar, Dean of Graduate Faculties, Alumni Council, Undergraduate Admissions, and the Columbia University Press, among other occupants.

Buell Hall has been revamped since 1977 to make room for the Graduate School of Architecture and its galleries, and La Maison Française. La Maison occupies three refurbished rooms on the second floor and two galleries on the ground floor, where interested parties will find photos and postcards of the Hall from the 1970s, when La Maison moved in, as well as numerous documents and photos dating back to its founding in 1913.

"Stop Blogging for Free"

A conversation with Rick MacArthur
BY CONOR SKELDING

John “Rick” MacArthur, CC ’88, was a history major, though he spent more time in the Spec office than the classroom. He is now president and publisher of Harper’s Magazine. On his way down from an interview with David Dinkins, current SIPA professor and former Mayor of the City of New York, MacArthur met with The Blue and White in the lobby of the IAB.

The Blue and White: What most wanted to talk with you about is the Internet and journalism.

John “Rick” MacArthur: Well, you read my piece.

B&W: Lucky to see that in this issue. You talk about how good reporting is expensive, as opposed to aggregation, which is cheap. Do you fear that it’s idealistic to believe that the cream will just rise to the top, when someone with good taste but bad morals can just aggregate that expensive reporting and sell ads on top of it?

JRM: Well that’s what they’re doing. In effect, that’s what Google does—aided and abetted by the publishers, who give away too much free stuff. But Google does it anyway, with other aggregators, making it available for free. Every rewrite, every summary, every lifting of information from an original source that turns up on an aggregator goes for free, via Google. And Google says, “Oh, we’re not doing anything, you know. We’re not violating anyone’s copyright.” But of course they are. They live parasitically, off of other’s work, and they sell ads adjacent to that work.

Now, the more blatant rip-off artist like Arianna Huffington—I mean, what she’s doing is just unconscionable, and she’s getting away like bandit...

B&W: ...and being praised as a pioneer.

JRM: Yeah, as a pioneer. It’s outrageous. It’s a race to the bottom, like free trade.

I heard a reporter from the LA Times says today, “I feel like an old-fashioned reporter, because I read the entire article”—in Harper’s, the Vollman piece on reading his FBI file. So reporting is reading to the end of an article?

B&W: Well, because you can just hit Ctrl+F and find what you need to blurb it.

JRM: I guess...

B&W: What would you say to the student who wants to be a magazine writer?

JRM: I’d say, stop blogging for free. I gave a Delacorte lecture at the J-School last year. You can read it online for free, on the Providence Journal’s New England blog. Initially I wasn’t gonna put it up, but my editor told me not to be a wimp, and he put it up, and all hell broke loose. Fifty-fifty positive and negative—people are fanatics about the Internet. They really want to believe, badly, that it’s going to save journalism, and them personally. And I think that’s sad.

So there was a violent reaction. And in the Q-and-A afterward, some of the J-School students asked me, “Well, what should I do?” And I said, try to charge pennies for your blog. Even a little paywall is better than none. You’ll signal to the world what
you're writing has some value. That writing is work. And they said, “Well, nobody will read me.” Even Andrew Sullivan is putting up a paywall.

B&W: But he only got to that point because he started blogging for free.

JRM: Well, he’s one in ten thousand. Who else can do that?

B&W: Right.

JRM: And he already had a platform at The Atlantic, he was a paid employee there, and eventually he got big enough that he could go out on his own. But most people cannot do that. And we’ll see how long he can sustain it.

B&W: So it seems that you’re either for the Internet, or you’re against it.

JRM: Well, I’m not against it—that’s like being against...

B&W: Well, that’s what I mean, you’re either a techno-utopian, or, if not, you’re painted as...

JRM: Well, there are tremendous uses for it. I would like to believe that the Internet makes it harder for newspapers to self-censor. For instance, the New York Times in 2004: James Risen, one of their top investigative reporters, was ready to break the first big story about the NSA’s unconstitutional, warrantless wiretaps—two months before the election. And Bush has Sulzberger, publisher and the editor at the time, I guess Bill Keller, over to the White House, and persuades them to sit on it. So they don’t publish it; it’s not something you can do just fiddling around on the Internet and checking Twitter feeds.

B&W: Do you feel ostracized for speaking out? “Dead white magazines,” all that all? That n+1 piece?

JRM: My main exchanges have been with The Atlantic blogger who tries to make fun of me. What’s his name? Alexis Madrigal?

B&W: Alexis Madrigal [Ed. note: Madrigal is a senior editor at The Atlantic]. And the Observer in the latest issue: it was you, Franzen, and one other codger.

JRM: Yeah. But now I have Franzen on my side [...] And I’ve got Jann Winter, the Rolling Stone guy, he hasn’t fallen for this crap. And I’ve got Rupert Murdoch on my side [breaks into laughter]. He’s making money on the Wall Street Journal with a serious payroll. And the people at the Financial Times. But a huge amount of damage has been done, and your generation has been trained to think that writing has no monetary value.

The Guardian is doing great journalism and losing $50 million per year. Glenn Greenwald is very talented—he takes information and rewrites it in the credit card.

So being against it is pointless. It’s about using the Internet properly. And if people want to read a magazine on a screen, that’s their business. But they should pay for it, and there should be respect for writers, from both readers and publishers. This crowdsourcing crap is unbelievable.

My specialty in journalism is busting propaganda frauds. And that’s still going on in the conventional way. For instance, look at what’s going on in Syria right now: I’m not persuaded that the government has the facts to prove that the Syrian government ordered the chemical weapons attack. If they had it, they’re present it.

This is not to say that Assad didn’t do it. But talking to my military sources, there are questions about the rockets. But it takes work; it’s not something you can do just fiddling around on the Internet and checking Twitter feeds.

B&W: Do you feel ostracized for speaking out? "Dead white magazines," all that all? That n+1 piece?

JRM: My main exchanges have been with The Atlantic blogger who tries to make fun of me. What’s his name? Alexis Madrigal?

B&W: Well, right, I think the Internet is the PR-man’s-

JRM: --right, it’s his wet dream.

B&W: Let’s talk about Columbia College. Do you think the Core gave you a good bullshit filter?

JRM: Yes, I’m a Core fanatic. In fact if I were running the College, or the University, I would make CC and [now Literature] Humanities two-year courses. The good CC or Humanities professors are critical and skeptical of the texts, but think that even the not-great ones need to be sifted as part of the Western tradition. Joseph Rothchild, he’s dead now, he was my CC professor.

B&W: Did you take colloquium?

JRM: No. I spent too much time on Spectator. If I had to do it over, I would spend less time at Spectator and more in class. There were certain people who could do both easily; it wasn’t so easy for me. But at the time I was surrounded and influenced by people whose courses I didn’t even take, like Edward Said. He was a huge influence on me, and I got to know him after school, and went back to audit his class.

What I admired about people like Said and Rothchild, who came from such different ethnic and national backgrounds, was the rigor and the attention to the text, and the concentration on understanding what the writer is trying to say—before you start shooting your mouth off about it. Having a real insight takes work; it’s hard earned, and it cannot be fed.

B&W: Lit Hum for me was my intellectual awakening. I wish I could take it again or take some extension of it. They’re not texts to be treated lightly; you shouldn’t even learn how to read on them and then leave them behind.

JRM: I had terrific reading lessons from professors like Jim Shenton. He made me read Allan Nevins. I think Foner still assigns him—Foner is on my board at Harper’s. History written well had a huge impact on me, as did novels.

Where are you from?

B&W: Chicagoland. River Forest.

JRM: I’m from Winnetka/Wilmette. Chicago is frankly depressing to me. And so politically narrow.

Through my journalism career, I’ve been a relentless critic of Obama from the left. And Harper’s has been after him for years. I can’t not see him through the prism of the Chicago machine and the Daleys. One of the reasons he’s so passive is because he’s still waiting for the call from City Hall.

How did Rahm [Emanuel] go from chief of staff for Obama to Mayor of Chicago—grew up in Wilmette, by the way, did not grow up in Chicago—with no rivals. There were five people who could have beaten him in the primary, and not one run. Why? I just went to Chicago and confirmed what I had suspected. The Daleys said to them, “It’s Rahm’s turn.” It’s depressing that it’s that congealed.

“You don’t take the feed from Jay Carney, you talk to the mid-level bureaucrat that never gets interviewed to tell you the truth about the sanctions program against Iran.”

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“You don’t take the feed from Jay Carney, you talk to the mid-level bureaucrat that never gets interviewed to tell you the truth about the sanctions program against Iran.”
JRM: I can’t say how it’s gonna go. Ad revenue is fine if that’s what it takes for the B&W Sun-Times. I wrote for the B&W Sun-Times. I’ve seen it.

“None of your fucking business,” he said. He’d been extolling the Chicago public schools.

“Let’s move on to the next topic.”

JRM: That’s when you know that you’re doing the right thing. Bill McGill was the president of the university, and he got furious at Spectator when we got something right. Columbia used to buy buildings in the neighborhood, SROs and such, using dummy corporations. We exposed that. We exposed a scandal in food services, where the woman who ran the food services was getting kickbacks from vendors. It would infuriate these guys.

Oh! But the thing that made me happiest was not investigative, it was more of a crusade. They tried to make Henry Kissinger a professor. So there were protests, and we covered the protests to a great degree, and we editorialized, and McGill finally backed off.

He was such a politician, that you understood he floated it as a trial balloon to see what would happen. Well, we helped puncture it, and I was very proud of it. In those days it was a very important state... 

JRM: Well, Vietnam radicalized us. And Watergate showed us that journalism could have a political impact—not something to do for the hell of it, or for show. It showed us that journalism could have a political impact. They used it as a tool. They tried to make Henry Kissinger a professor. So there were protests, and we covered the protests to a great degree, and we editorialized, and McGill finally backed off.

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That was with Dan Janison—that’s our Spectator mafia, we just interviewed [SIPA professor David] Dinkins together [about Lhota and the mayoral race]. Let’s see if he remembers... [produces flip phone, dials Dan Janison]

[To Dan Janison] Hey, very quickly, Conor wants to know about the best fun we had at Spec. Were you there when McGill said to us, “I don’t give a shit about...”? It was Kissinger, right?

McGill said, “I was just floating a trial balloon.” And I said back, rather nastily, “Why don’t you float your trial balloons privately, and not with us.” And then he swore at us. He cursed us and then said, “Let’s move on to the next topic.”

B&W: When a fellow student threatens to call his dad’s lawyer on me...

JRM: That’s when you know that you’re doing the right thing. You gotta feel good about yourself and know that you did the right thing. You’re actually serving a purpose within the constitutional system.

JRM: Even that can’t lose money indefinitely.

B&W: Whenever a fellow student threatens to call his dad’s lawyer on me...

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B&W: I think everything is more polite now. Everything is layered with more PR. Even our student council is one more layer of PR to wade through to get to the truth.

JRM: Really?

B&W: Yes. And the one time a year a reporter gets a meeting with Bollinger, it is unfailingly polite.

JRM: Well, McGill to his credit met with us monthly. He felt it was incumbent upon him.

B&W: And who was the provost at that time?

JRM: It was Theodore de Bary.

B&W: No kidding.

JRM: Yes. And the one time a year a reporter gets a meeting with Bollinger, it is unfailingly polite.

JRM: I was Theodore de Bary.

B&W: Oh, yes.

JRM: Asian scholar.

B&W: And a Core zealot.

JRM: Yes. I liked him. And a College graduate?

JRM: Because they’re getting lower level instructors?

B&W: Yes. And that’s a problem with the Core right now—the stock of Columbia College educated professors who care about the Core is dwindling. And I doubt that our generation is getting the same good experience with the Core. Maybe 30% has a very good experience.

JRM: That’s when you know that you’re doing the right thing. You gotta feel good about yourself and know that you did the right thing. You’re actually serving a purpose within the constitutional system.

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“Let’s move on to the next topic.”

JRM: That’s when you know that you’re doing the right thing. Bill McGill was the president of the university, and he got furious at Spectator when we got something right. Columbia used to buy buildings in the neighborhood, SROs and such, using dummy corporations. We exposed that. We exposed a scandal in food services, where the woman who ran the food services was getting kickbacks from vendors. It would infuriate these guys.

Oh! But the thing that made me happiest was not investigative, it was more of a crusade. They tried to make Henry Kissinger a professor. So there were protests, and we covered the protests to a great degree, and we editorialized, and McGill finally backed off.

He was such a politician, that you understood he floated it as a trial balloon to see what would happen. Well, we helped puncture it, and I was very proud of it. In those days it was a very important state -

That was with Dan Janison—that’s our Spectator mafia, we just interviewed [SIPA professor David] Dinkins together [about Lhota and the mayoral race]. Let’s see if he remembers... [produces flip phone, dials Dan Janison]

[To Dan Janison] Hey, very quickly, Conor wants to know about the best fun we had at Spec. Were you there when McGill said to us, “I don’t give a shit about...”? It was Kissinger, right?

McGill said, “I was just floating a trial balloon.” And I said back, rather nastily, “Why don’t you float your trial balloons privately, and not with us.” And then he swore at us. He cursed us and then said, “Let’s move on to the next topic.”

B&W: I think everything is more polite now. Everything is layered with more PR. Even our student council is one more layer of PR to wade through to get to the truth.

JRM: Really?

B&W: Yes. And the one time a year a reporter gets a meeting with Bollinger, it is unfailingly polite.

JRM: Well, McGill to his credit met with us monthly. He felt it was incumbent upon him.

B&W: And who was the provost at that time?

JRM: It was Theodore de Bary.

B&W: No kidding.

JRM: Yes. And the one time a year a reporter gets a meeting with Bollinger, it is unfailingly polite.

JRM: I was Theodore de Bary.

B&W: Oh, yes.

JRM: Asian scholar.

B&W: And a Core zealot.

JRM: Yes. I liked him. And a College graduate?

JRM: Because they’re getting lower level instructors?

B&W: Yes. And that’s a problem with the Core right now—the stock of Columbia College educated professors who care about the Core is dwindling. And I doubt that our generation is getting the same good experience with the Core. Maybe 30% has a very good experience.
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Corrections: In the Orientation issue, contributor Michelle Cheripka’s name was misspelled. It is here correct. The Blue and White has a more embarrassing retraction to make: The translation of Rilke’s “First Elegy” printed in our Orientation 2013 issue was translated by Stephen Mitchell, not Torsten Odland, due to an administrative error. We apologize, and to especially Stephen Mitchell, whose superb translation, Duino Elegies and the Sonnets to Orpheus, is published by Vintage.
were very strict in those days, forbidding even a dot — wartime tires, and arrived, alas, too late for visiting. 

As Mayo told the story, he raced over to Athens in his every day does it? 

Remember Kant’s categorical imperative: What if such will take up the entire time? Thus, if you’ve already asked one or two questions, that’s it for today.

Learn to multiply! If your question or comment takes up three minutes of classtime or so, how many time you raise your hand.

If you think other students will not be interested, then save it for after class, email, or office hours. You don’t want the other students to roll their eyes every time you raise your hand.

In unrelated news, fraternities have reported an unprecedented number of rushes. AEPi in particular had five times more than usual. 

Our own football team, though it has not been making a name for itself on the field, has been making its way around the city. In well-tweeted events, the team was chaperoned on two trips: one to the Today Show, and the other to some NYC tech companies, including Bitly, Peek Analytics, and ZogSports. The football account included the hashtag #GeekingOut. The editors would like to append another: #BANGBANG.

This magazine has received reports that a Brown a capella group is planning an ambush of a Columbia a capella group.

DIRTY DANCING

Every Wednesday night, students dance on the grave of a graver, past Columbia at Senior Night, fittingly enough at Havana Central at the West End. At a recent one, a brother of Pi Kappa Alpha—recent recipient of the award for “Greek Man of the Year”—espied the Bwog editor, whom he knew from NSOP. He proceeded to repeatedly shout at her, “Fuck Bwog! Fuck Bwog! Fuck Bwog!”

In the course of dancing at Mel’s Burger Bar, one girl’s zipper was somehow hooked onto a guy’s carabiner, which he for some reason wore with his keys on his belt loop. The girl was still dancing and trying to laugh it off; the guy, reportedly, “wasn’t having any of it.” It took four minutes and two friends to extricate the revelers.

#GEEKINGOUT

From Spec Opinion: “Athletes often refer to the section of Dodge Fitness Center reserved for non-athletes as ‘the Muggle gym.”

PRIVILEGE

Shamus Khan, silver nugget of the Sociology department, gave a book talk at St. A’s. The subject of the lecture and title of the book were both Privilege. Khan’s major point revolved around how the elite sees itself less as a fortunate class and more as a deserving, talented class. Audience members were tepidly interested.

Freedom... it’s slavery!

CLEANING UP SHOP

Tony Lee, CC ’15, is the new president of the Activities Board at Columbia (ABC), as well as an account-holder on WikircU. His first action was to polish his own vanity page. His second was to delete the “Campus Perception” section from the ABC’s. Lee deleted the reference to V113, Insufficient Funds, in which the ABC “was portrayed as a manically greedy, evil organization, ” on account of “the shortchanging many student groups feel at the hands of Columbia’s administrative and student bureaucracy, of which ABC is an integral part.”

BROTHERLY LOVE

Every Wednesday night, students dance on the grave of a graver, past Columbia at Senior Night, fittingly enough at Havana Central at the West End. At a recent one, a brother of Pi Kappa Alpha—recent recipient of the award for “Greek Man of the Year”—espied the Bwog editor, whom he knew from NSOP. He proceeded to repeatedly shout at her, “Fuck Bwog! Fuck Bwog! Fuck Bwog!”

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PARTY CRASHING

Five seniors departed Lerner Pub, having arrived after the beer ran out. As they disappointedly climbed out of the party space, a fresh-faced high school students asked them eagerly, “Is that some awesome college party?!” Replying in the affirmative, the seniors handed over their wristbands, which the high school students ingeniously contrived to tape onto their own wrists, and they headed down into the party, The seniors reported having felt better and heading to 1020.
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