



CHRISTIAN DOUGLASS FOR SPECTATOR

GREEN THUMB | Maxine Webb, a well-known Morningside Park employee, strolls through the park on a frigid Friday.

Morningside Park employee out of a job after 10 years

Find a plant in Morningside Park, and there's a good chance it was planted by Maxine Webb, who has worked as one of the two employees assigned to the park for the last decade. But she lost her job last month due to budget cuts, and a local organization is looking to fund her position.

BY CHRISTIAN ZHANG

If she had to choose, Maxine Webb's favorite part of Morningside Park would be the Carl Schurz statue overlooking Harlem on 116th Street and Morningside Drive.

"You just got a bird's eye view from the south side to the north side," she said. "You're in the middle of everything."

"That's my Times Square right here," she said.

Webb, who lives in the Bronx, has worked at Morningside Park for the past 10 years as one of only two employees permanently assigned to the park. To Webb, Morningside Park is more than just her workplace—it's also where she first learned how to take care of plants and where she fell in love with the neighborhood.

For nine years, Webb was sponsored by the Greenacre Foundation, a nonprofit organization that supports city parks. But after funding fell short last year, members of the Friends of Morningside Park were only able to gather the funds necessary to sponsor Webb through the end of the season.

After finishing in January, Webb, 46, is now unemployed, but the Friends are raising money to continue sponsoring her job.

"We'd love to have her be around," Brad Taylor, the president of the Friends, said. "This is the first time when Friends of Morningside has been in a position to underwrite funds for a worker."

Taylor said the Friends will be organizing fundraisers to help support Webb—which will require a significant amount of money.

The 30-acre park "needs a lot of help," Webb said as she walked

SEE WEBB, page 2

Barnard application numbers up by 3%

Rise due to recruiting, higher profile for BC, admin says

BY CECILIA REYES
AND ABBY ABRAMS
Spectator Senior Staff Writers

The overall number of applications to Barnard College for the class of 2017 increased 3 percent from last year, rising from 5,428 to 5,609.

Barnard also received a record-breaking number of early decision applications for the class of 2017, seeing an increase of 6.8 percent from last year and a 53 percent increase over the past five years.

Since 2008, the total number of applications to Barnard has spiked 31 percent, when the college received 4,273 applications.

Dean of Enrollment Management Jennifer Fondiller said in a statement that she attributed the increase in applications to the college's "very hands-on and personal approach to recruiting, which includes one-on-one interviews during a time when many schools have abandoned the practice," as well as "our hugely successful fly-in program that allows low-income students to visit the campus."

Many students feel this change reflects a higher national and international profile for the college.

Barnard has "been doing a really good job of international outreach," Michelle Lappen, BC '14, said, adding that administrators are "working hard to get the name out there, not just in the U.S."

Others said they thought that

the media's focus on Barnard and women in general probably attracted more applications.

Mary Margaret Barr, BC '14, is from Alabama, where, she said, "no one knows what Barnard is."

"I think maybe people see the politics and want to come here," she said. "There's so much about women's rights in the news, so maybe people think 'I should be more aware of this and come here.'"

Ashiana Jivraj, BC '15, said that the publicity surrounding President Barack Obama's visit last year helped potential applicants to see Barnard as a viable choice for their college plans.

"Barnard is starting to stand on its own and have its own name as opposed to just being the sister school to Columbia," she said.

In addition, many students feel that while the college's relationship with Columbia serves as a big draw for applicants, the close community at Barnard is part of what makes it so unique.

"Columbia is huge and imposing, and yeah, it's beautiful," Katherine Lauricella, BC '15, said. "But you can come back here, and it's kind of like home. It's smaller, more manageable, and you know the people here."

Overall applications for Columbia College and the School of Engineering and Applied Science rose 5 percent this year, following last year's dip of almost 9 percent for the class of 2016.

Tracey Wang contributed reporting.
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Professor talks Core feminism

BY CAMILLE BAPTISTA
Columbia Daily Spectator

Classics professor Katharina Volk loves Ovid—but the Core Curriculum doesn't do justice to its discussions of gender and sexuality, she said in a lecture Monday afternoon.

As part of "Feminist to the Core," a speaker series run by Columbia's Institute for Research on Women and Gender that allows professors to analyze feminist themes within the Core, Volk spoke to a crowded room in the Schermerhorn Extension about the themes of gender and sexuality in the epic "Metamorphoses."

"One possibility is to view Ovid as a protofeminist," she said. "He's trying to give women a voice."

"The other way to think about it is that he's an extreme sexist," she added.

Volk, who received the Distinguished Columbia Faculty Award two years ago, highlighted areas of the Core Curriculum that neglect feminist themes. She expressed her desire for Columbia College students to read more than just books XII-XV of "Metamorphoses," saying that many of the epic's other books explore gender-related issues and that the sections students are currently assigned are "skewed toward male-genred themes" like the Trojan War.

According to Volk, the battle scenes in "Metamorphoses," which are heavy with traditionally masculine activity, are among those focused on by Literature Humanities sections. Volk questioned the

SEE VOLK, page 2

O'Donnell: CU blocking historic district

BY AVANTIKA KUMAR
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

State Assembly member Daniel O'Donnell said Columbia's failure to act is blocking historic district status for Morningside Heights.

At an event Thursday night, O'Donnell told Spectator that he attributes the neighborhood's lack of a historic district, a protection from the city that regulates changes to building exteriors, to "institutional blockage from Columbia University." "They've never come out in favor of the creation of a district, in any size, shape or form," said O'Donnell, a Morningside Heights resident since 1990. He is a strong advocate for local preservationists, calling historic district protection for the neighborhood "long overdue."

O'Donnell's comments came at the annual benefit party of the Morningside Heights Historic District Committee, an organization of preservationists who have also advocated for historic

district status. The benefit was held to honor professor Andrew Dolkart, who has written a book on Morningside Heights' history and done a 260-page study on West End Avenue.

"What are the forces that create neighborhoods?" Dolkart asked the assembled Morningside Heights locals, preservationists, and elected officials.

For Dolkart, it's the unique relationship between major institutions and a residential neighborhood that makes Morningside Heights a "special, special place"—one worthy of historic district designation.

"Andrew really occupies quite a few sectors when it comes to the preservation world," Gregory Dietrich, adviser to the MHHDC board, said, presenting Dolkart with the lighthearted "MoHi award"—miniature figurines of Low and Butler libraries—for him to "remember the spirit" of the committee.

The MHHDC has spent 15 years advocating for Morningside Heights' designation as a historic

district. The effort is currently awaiting approval from the city's Landmarks Preservation Commission, which local preservationists say is dragging its feet.

The committee last met with officials from the LPC in November, and MHHDC President Laura Friedman said she hopes to have another meeting scheduled with the LPC for the end of the month. Previously, the effort was held up because the committee and the LPC could not agree upon the historic district's potential boundaries. "It's not uncommon that it takes this long," Friedman said. "We feel that we can come to some agreement."

Friedman called the neighborhood remarkable both for its historic buildings—including the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the Riverside Church, the Union and Jewish theological seminaries, Grant's Tomb and the Columbia campus—and for how little has changed in the neighborhood's development.

SEE O'DONNELL, page 2

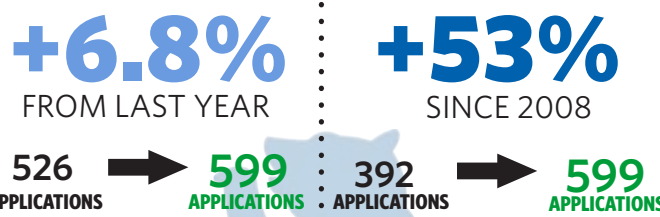


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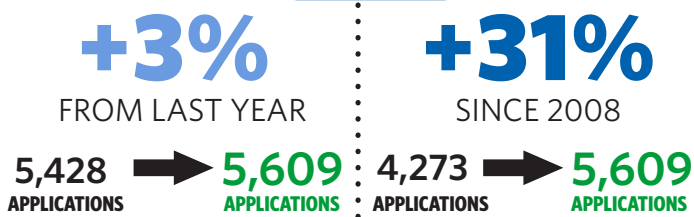
HISTORIC IMPORTANCE | O'Donnell says Columbia is preventing MoHi's historic preservation.

BARNARD COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

EARLY DECISION APPLICATIONS



OVERALL APPLICATIONS



GRAPHIC BY SINJINH SMITH

Freshman advocates for squash in 2020 Olympics

BY MOLLIE GALCHUS
Spectator Staff Writer

A Mexican immigrant whose family struggled to make ends meet, Reyna Pacheco, CC '16, never imagined that her passion for squash would earn her a plane ticket to Switzerland alongside the world's then-No. 1-ranked men's squash player, James Willstrop. But Pacheco's dedication had caught the attention of the World Squash Federation, and she was invited to join the federation's committee in Switzerland with the goal of helping to secure squash a spot in the 2020 Olympics.

Pacheco, who plays at the No. 2 position for the Columbia squash program, traveled to Switzerland last December with Federation President N. Ramachandran, CEO Andrew Shelley, and Willstrop

as they made their case to the International Olympic Committee.

Committee members first spotted Pacheco while she was coaching students in the Access Youth Academy, a nonprofit based in San Diego that focuses on academic tutoring, squash instruction, and community service for underprivileged children. It was this same program that introduced Pacheco to squash.

After speaking to Pacheco about the importance of squash in her life, they invited her to join their cause.

"It was amazing, because I shook their hands and told them I have an idea about squash getting to the Olympics. And they actually shook my hand and asked me a couple of questions," she said.

SEE SQUASH, page 3

A&E, PAGE 6

Morningsiders to open at Bacchanal

Despite technical difficulties, Morningsiders won Saturday's Battle of the Bands and will open at this year's Bacchanal.



OPINION, PAGE 4

Grappling with shame and recovery

Overcoming an eating disorder is an ongoing, and perhaps never-ending, journey, Rae Binstock writes.

Developing discourse

We must learn to debate and discuss constructively, Bob Sun writes.

SPORTS, PAGE 3

Harvard wins two, remains in first place

Over the weekend, Harvard and Princeton both won two games, while Yale and Columbia dropped two contests. All the other Ivies split their matches.

EVENTS

Music at St. Paul's

Listen to live music at St. Paul's Chapel, featuring renowned Romanian pianist Matei Varga.
St. Paul's Chapel, 6 p.m.

WEATHER

Today



32°/29°

Tomorrow



40°/22°

Camp Kesem’s Columbia chapter seeks to expand

BY HALLIE NELL SWANSON
Spectator Staff Writer

Columbia’s chapter of Camp Kesem has confirmed a new campsite for the summer, and the camp also plans to double its enrollment of students.

Camp Kesem, a nationwide nonprofit that holds college-student-run camps for children with a parent who has or has had cancer, came to Columbia last year. This summer, the chapter will move to Camp Ockanickon’s Matollionequay campsite in

Medford, N.J.

Cindy Ma, CC ’15 and the chapter’s public relations officer, said the move for 2013 reflected an expanding vision for the group. This year, the number of campers at the Columbia chapter will increase from 25 to 40, and the age limit from 13 to 16. Consequently, the organization will also need up to 24 more counselors.

Ifza Riaz, CC ’14 and the chapter’s fundraising coordinator, said it felt like the right time to expand. “Our mission is to grow, to bring the magic to more people, to touch more lives,” she said. Every one of



COURTESY OF CINDY MA

SUMMER ESCAPE | Camp Kesem provides a week-long camp for children who have a parent that has or has had cancer.

the 25 campers who attended the 2012 summer session wants to come back, but “we don’t want it to be an exclusive camp with the same people year after year,” she said.

Riaz said the project has long-term benefits for its campers.

“What was touching was a lot of the kids were like, ‘We want to go to Columbia University now and join Camp Kesem,’” she said. “If we increase the number of campers, the goal is to have them join Camp Kesem wherever they go to college and keep the mission going. We want to continue with the mission and make sure it doesn’t end.”

Camp Kesem was started at Stanford University in 2000 by students in Hillel. It now boasts 2,100 campers and 1,300 student leaders across 37 chapters. While the camp was named for the Hebrew word meaning “magic,” it is non-denominational.

Because the camp’s mission includes empowering college students and building leadership skills, the chapter leaders said that they are responsible for most aspects of the camp. Swati Amin, BC ’15, said that students are in charge of “everything, from finding a campsite to raising \$40,000 to organizing camp activities.”

Ma said that she joined the group because while growing up she had friends whose parents had cancer.

“Hanging out with friends and doing fun things was an escape from all that,” she said. “I feel like some of their childhood is taken away, and it’s great to have a week of camp where they can just forget about it, but be around people going

through the exact same thing.”

Sarah Stano, BC ’14 and a counselor last year, said that she joined partly because of being premed, and partly because her mother is a cancer survivor.

“Cancer support was a big part of growing up,” she said. “We’d always go on the walks for breast cancer, and I wanted to continue that when I came here.”

Amin, whose father had cancer, said she identified with Camp Kesem members.

“At a conference, one of the kids mentioned how saying ‘I know what you’re going through’ is one of the worst things you can say, because they don’t, but at Camp Kesem, everybody really does,” she said.

Stano said that the camp acts as a respite for children who are dealing with difficult issues at home relating to their parent’s cancer.

“We try and give them an escape, because they hear about medicine and cancer all the time when they’re home,” she said. “One of the campers said, ‘It’s so great to know other people I know I can call any time and they’ll understand what I’m going through.’”

Ma said the ending ceremony, called the Empowerment Ceremony, was one of her favorite memories from last year.

“During the week you see them just being kids, having fun, being carefree, and then in that moment they can get very serious and be very mature,” she said. “It’s very touching to see them cry not just for themselves but for other people, that kids that young are capable of compassion.”

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GSAPP professor honored at preservation benefit

O’DONNELL from front page

“It remains, basically, historically intact,” Friedman said, adding that tourists are attracted to neighborhoods with a sense of history. “This neighborhood is one of those places.”

O’Donnell was not the only attendee to criticize Columbia. Friedman said the Northwest Corner Building resembled a “refrigerator” and called for rezoning that would require new buildings to be designed contextually, taking nearby properties into account.

Arluck said that historic preservation in the area often involved protecting Columbia from itself, noting several brownstones on 115th Street that the University tore down in 2010. In its drive to acquire property, the University “tends to over-define its mission,” he said.

But Arluck added that Columbia is central to the neighborhood’s cultural atmosphere, and that its acquisitions have slowed down—with, in some cases, Columbia working cooperatively with the neighborhood.

“Columbia has long been a good steward of the valuable architectural legacy of its campus and community,” University spokesperson Dan Held said in a statement. “We have previously stated that we would be interested in the study of an appropriately defined district in the area.”

According to Steve Friedman, special projects chair for the committee, both the “sense of rootedness” from historic architecture

and the neighborhood’s friendliness and conveniences make it important to fight for historic district designation.

“It doesn’t feel transient,” Friedman said.

Another of the committee’s main projects is to stop the development of an apartment complex on the grounds of the St. John the Divine. The project lost its first developer, Equity Residential, last fall, and according to Friedman, the cathedral is trying to initiate work with developer Worldwide Holdings.

Cathedral officials could not be reached for comment.

Friedman said the committee will try to persuade members of the diocese and the public that “this is not an acceptable thing to do with that piece of property.”

Elected officials who came to the benefit to praise Dolkart’s work and voice support for the historic district designation included O’Donnell, City Council members Jessica Lappin and Gale Brewer, and Democratic District Leader Curtis Arluck.

“We all have our Andrew Dolkart stories,” Brewer said, recounting Dolkart’s importance to the West End Avenue historic district on the Upper West Side, which is currently in the process of being landmarked. Out of three sections of the plan, one has already been approved, and Brewer said she was sure that similar progress would eventually be made in Morningside Heights.

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Park group tries to fund Webb’s position

WEBB from front page

through the park in the freezing cold on Friday afternoon, enthusiastically gesturing toward different species of trees, bushes, and flower bulbs.

As she’s seen Morningside Heights and Harlem change over the past 10 years, Webb said she has tried to make the park’s plants as diverse as the people living nearby.

“The whole area’s changed,” Webb said. “You’ve got a whole new multicultural around here.” She said the trees and shrubs she added to the park were of “all the different species around the world.”

Webb was one of two permanent employees at the park, and groups of volunteers or seasonal workers would come in as needed. Part of Webb’s job as an assistant gardener was to train them.

“Every six months you get a new crew. And every time you get a new crew you have to train them,” she said. “They’re brand new, totally oblivious to gardening, so you have to train the people first, before you put a tool in their hand. It’s a hard job and we don’t have too many people doing that.”

Every morning, Webb surveyed the park with the crew and checked for fallen or loose branches, which pose a threat to pedestrians. Then she started her main task for the day, which in the spring and summer involved weeding and cleaning.

But what Webb really likes to do is plant.

“I love planting,” she said. “I love planting the bushes and the shrubs. I love planting and teaching people how to plant and maintain their plants. And I love to see part of nature come back, just taking care of the Earth.”

She points to a chubby squirrel running past.

“You’d be surprised the little things they plant in the park,” she said, referring to various berries and nuts park employees plant. “The animals can really nourish off of them.”

Webb came to the park in 2003 as part of a city program that trained people in gardening and landscaping skills. Her first teacher, Joe Spano, eventually became her supervisor and now works as the district’s gardener and horticulture trainer.

She says much has changed in the last 10 years. In addition to a major renovation and the removal and replanting of large areas of the park, the work Webb and her coworkers have done—like removing some trees and bushes where people could easily hide—has also made the park a safer place, she said.

“It’s come a long way,” she said. “Ten years, 15 years ago, you couldn’t even walk through this park. The students from Columbia couldn’t even walk through this park because it was filled with drugs, with prostitution, with homelessness.”

“Now the students want to cut

through the park, and why not?” she said. “It’s a beautiful park.”

She’s also seen some strange things happen in the park. Webb recalls a few years ago, somebody put an alligator in the pond, and the workers had to remove the animal.

As she passes a parked van, people inside start screaming. “HiMax,” “How are you doing?” and “Good to see you!” She smiles and waves as her former coworkers drive off.

Now, she spends her time helping her family with her gardening skills. Last week, she helped her mother—who taught Webb how to plant when she was young—plant some bulbs in her garden in Philadelphia. Her relatives in North Carolina always ask her to assist with planting trees and shrubs.

“I try to keep up my skills when I’m out of here,” she said.

If she doesn’t continue to work at Morningside Park, Webb said she’d like to go to Cornell and study agriculture.

“I would really want to learn more about the soil and the earth, so I can really get in touch with this gardening and landscaping,” she said.

Otherwise, she said she wants to keep working for the park.

“I love the people I work with. I love to do what I do,” she said. “I love Morningside. It’s the first park I worked for and the most beautiful park. It’s basically the heart of the community.”

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CC alum Kushner talks writing ‘Lincoln’ script

BY JENNY SINGER
Spectator Staff Writer

Two great American heroes appeared in an Upper West Side theater on a rainy night last Tuesday. Both men were tall, soft-spoken, funny, and controversial in their feelings about disenfranchised minorities. One was Abraham Lincoln and the other, playwright Tony Kushner.

Kushner, CC ’78, spoke at the New-York Historical Society, following a screening of the writer’s Academy Award-nominated film, “Lincoln.” In an awards season dominated by three riveting accounts of American bids for freedom (think “Argo” and “Zero Dark Thirty”), “Lincoln” is the only one with a story not in living memory, with dialogue that is sharp but not bantering, and with long shots of soldiers’ bodies lying crumpled in a field, rather than extended car chases. Its great boon in the media is British actor Daniel Day-Lewis’s bull’s-eye performance in the lead role. He is Lincoln in the way that we have idealized him—ungainly yet charming, troubled, and deeply witty, as he devotes the last months of his life to forcing the passage of the 13th Amendment, which ultimately abolished slavery in America.

The other great star of Steven Spielberg’s pet project is Kushner’s screenplay, 150 minutes of witty repartee and mournful pauses determined to make viewers care about 1865 America, whether they wanted to or not.

An adaptation of Doris Kearns Goodwin’s famed book, “Team of Rivals,” the screenplay is up for one of the film’s 12 nods. His screenplay for “Munich” was previously up for a nomination. Kushner has also received a Pulitzer Prize for his groundbreaking play, “Angels in America,” as well as two Tony awards.

Spectacled and smiling, Kushner proved to be surprisingly down-to-earth, considering his history of genius and accolades.

“I wanted to deal with his innards,” Kushner said. “Steven wanted to deal with him as a president.”

When Holzner asked how Kushner and Spielberg settled on dealing with this particular point in Lincoln’s presidency, Kushner responded that he had originally written a four-act screenplay spanning a larger section of the presidency.

“Steven responded most powerfully to the fight for the 13th Amendment,” he said.

Kushner added that he wanted



COURTESY OF JOAN MARCUS / STEVEN BARCLAY AGENCY

LINCOLN | Tony Kushner, CC ’78, penned the screenplay for the hit film “Lincoln.”

to zoom in on only one section of the president’s life, rather than create a “greatest hits cavalcade.”

So Kushner decided to focus on what made Lincoln unique.

“What made him different from everyone else was omnidirectional thinking,” Kushner said.

Finally, Kushner got around to gossip. When asked about Day-Lewis’s acting method, Kushner laughed.

“He didn’t share it with me,” he said. The first time he heard the actor’s gravely Illinoisian drawl, Kushner said he thought, “Oh my god, is he really going to do the whole movie like this?”

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Harvard stays ahead in league rankings

ATL from page 3

CORNELL VS. PENN, 71-69

Coming back from a 10-point deficit, Cornell edged out Penn (4-16, 1-2 Ivy) 71-69 on the Quakers’ home court, the Palestra, on Saturday.

Though Penn led 51-41 with 15 minutes remaining on the clock, the Big Red dominated the rest of the second half. Cornell was led by forward Errick Peck, with a game-high 20 points—including 15 points in the second half—off

the bench. With only 10 seconds on the clock, guard Galal Cancer, who tallied nine points and four assists off the bench, hit a fading shot in the paint to give the Big Red the hard-fought victory.

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Volk: Core should discuss gender more

VOLK from front page

poet’s intentions in those scenes.

“Is he actually denouncing male aggression?” Volk asked the audience. “Or is this a kind of violent pornography?”

Laura Ciolkowski, associate director of the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality, coordinated the series in an attempt to encourage Columbia College students to consider deeper questions about gender and sexuality and their presence in classic literature, explaining that the series serves as a “miniature illustration” of the mission of IRWGS.

“It is no longer appropriate to define gender studies as the study of women,” she said, explaining that the series hopes to promote “messy, noisy, provocative conversation about women and sexuality.”

Volk found comedy in many of the poem’s gender-related themes because of the unusual and daring way that Ovid explores them.

“A mother killing her child...

cannibalism... Obviously it’s problematic,” she joked as she reviewed the tale of Tereus, Philomela, and Procne.

“Metamorphoses” is really a text that is good to think with,” she said. “It’s great fun.”

Hope Silberstein, CC ’14, was surprised by the number of people who were interested in hearing Volk’s speech.

“People here are really progressive, but at the same time, you don’t really think that these feminist outlooks on the Core are really going to interest Columbia College students,” she said.

Silberstein said she attended the event for the opportunity to engage in a richer discussion of feminist topics. Students in the Core “are kind of robbed of not only female authors, but female stories,” she said.

Inez Bell, BC ’15, enjoys translating Latin and is also passionate about feminism. She said Volk’s discussion highlighted a key intersection between the two fields.

“It was interesting to combine two things that I wouldn’t

necessarily combine,” she said.

Ciolkowski, who said she loves the Core Curriculum, explained that in designing the lecture series, she aimed to choose texts that don’t necessarily lend themselves to discussions on gender or sexuality in the classroom.

“I love the idea of students coming to a program like this and then going back into the classroom and asking questions about gender and sexuality, and bringing that into the conversation in the classroom,” she said.

Upcoming discussions in the “Feminist to the Core” series will cover texts such as Dante’s “Divine Comedy,” William Shakespeare’s “King Lear,” and Fyodor Dostoevsky’s “Crime and Punishment,” with each talk featuring a different distinguished member of the Columbia faculty.

“We really see this series as being about a conversation with the core, to make the core experience even more rich, even more provocative than it already is,” Ciolkowski said. “It’s really about promoting conversation.”

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Finding a community in the Light Blue stands

COHAN from page 3

rooting for. At first, I thought Columbia was different. Everyone always talked about how Columbia lacked community, compassion, and excitement. But at the end, it wasn’t that different. Sports columnists have the tendency to complain about the prevalence of sports apathy on this campus, but I think that Peter proved to us yesterday, especially compared to London, in the grand scheme of things, we’re not that bad.

It was thanks to the Light Blue that I found my community. Now, I’m not saying that this should be the path for everyone. That’s as stupid and closed-minded as my

initial fear of not being allowed to root for Columbia. But it helped. It taught me an important lesson in self-confidence that, thanks to stupid anonymous comments, many Barnard first-years are pushed to learn.

At the end of the day, fans are fans. Columbia students are Columbia students. And, most importantly, friends are friends. No one who matters cares what school you go to, especially when you bleed Light Blue.

Rebeka Cohan is a Barnard College junior majoring in history. She is the staff development director and a former sports editor for Spectator. And One runs biweekly.

Floridita returns

FLORIDITA from back page

In addition to the generously portioned arroz con pollo in my second visit, I also shared a carne asada,—not to be mistaken for the Mexican grilled steak, but a tender pot roast dish. The fried plantains that came with my fellow diner’s burger was a pleasant surprise, fantastically caramelized and soft, with that distinct fried food whiff that reminds you it isn’t healthy, but sure is good. Dessert was a classic flan—nutty and not overly sweet—and a perfect finish to it all.

It may be quiet for now, but one senses that everybody there is happy to be back. What would make it great is if everybody else were.

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Rooting for Lions from Barnard

Barnard or Columbia? It's the argument that, for some ungodly reason, never seems to end. Columbia will win the men's basketball league 10 years straight before this "rivalry" is no longer a bone of contention. (And after this weekend, we know that streak almost certainly isn't starting this year. But I really, really don't want to talk about that. I'm pretending it didn't happen.)

As a junior, I really don't care anymore. Let's be honest: Barnard or Columbia, it doesn't matter. I'll love you no matter what (unless you root for Harvard or Ohio State). Sure, the whole rivalry thing totally used to be upsetting for me. And I mean upsetting in the most pathetic of ways. I used to be so unsure of my place within the Columbia community that I didn't feel as though I deserved to cheer for the Lions during football and basketball games.

Honestly, it's somewhat horrifying how much I used to care about dumb, anonymous comments on the Internet. They used to really get to me. But over the course of the past two years, something changed, and I found a spot within the Columbia community that I was confident about.

Columbians love to discuss community. Just yesterday, fellow columnist and friend Peter Andrews talked about what it's been like to go abroad and suddenly not have one. And to be perfectly honest? I can't imagine what that's like, especially as someone who struggled for so long to find her place in Morningside Heights. Whether or not you think the abstract idea of community is a real or an imaginary problem, I certainly struggled with feeling like I didn't belong.

For the longest time, I felt uncomfortable in the stands of Columbia sporting events, cheering for the Light Blue. Who was I, a Barnard student, to be rooting for Columbia teams? Especially considering the apparently prevalent problem of job-stealing Barnard students impersonating Columbians on their résumés? OK, it might not have made a lot of sense. Frankly, it was downright stupid. But in my silly freshman mind, I felt like an imposter.

And it made me sad. Yeah, it was about as imaginary as problems get—the people that matter don't care what school you go to. But I thought they did. How was my identity as a proud Barnard student going to fit with my growing fandom for the Light Blue?

It was all, pretty obviously, in my head. But hey, I was a self-conscious 18-year-old who had just started a new life in a strange city, at a school that isn't always the most welcoming. What it came down to was that I cared too much what these phantom, non-existent haters thought. For me, it didn't matter that these people didn't exist. Just the idea that they did—fueled by nasty, anonymous comments on Spec and Bwog—was enough to make me (someone who is frighteningly and needlessly neurotic) worry in the kind of way that would cut a year or two off my life.

But the more games I went to, the more I actually experienced the Columbia community. The more games I went to, the more I saw firsthand that no one cares. One of the best parts about going to a football or basketball game is the experience of being in a crowd. I've never felt quite as part of a community as I did during the Harvard-Columbia basketball game last year. The game went into overtime with 2,702 people (including Jeremy Lin and Spike Lee) watching, yelling, cheering, and screaming. And I was a part of that.

I wouldn't say that Columbia sports fans are special when it comes to having a community. In fact, the important thing is that they're just like everyone else. Being a part of a fan base gives people a community, where all that matters is what team you're



REBEKA COHAN
AND ONE



COURTESY OF WORLD SQUASH FEDERATION

GOING ABROAD | Reyna Pacheco, CC '16, and members of the World Squash Federation traveled to Switzerland to lobby for squash's inclusion in the 2020 Olympic games.

Pacheco lobbies for squash in 2020 Olympics

SQUASH from front page

"The next day I got an email and they asked me, 'Could you please consider coming to Switzerland to give a speech?'"

Pacheco was invited to speak about how valuable squash has been to her as she and her family were transitioning into life in the United States. Pacheco learned the necessary tools to become a committed student through squash, channeling her passion for squash to overcome several obstacles in her life.

The 4-foot-11 inch squash player came here with her mom and brother when she was four years old. "The difficulties were just the fact that we were just scrambling, and the mentality in my house is surviving. It wasn't about what you were doing four years from now—it was about what you were doing today," she said.

After struggling with a discipline record in school, Pacheco was introduced to squash in eighth grade, but never intended to play for long. But instead of quitting, Pacheco flourished on the court

and in school.

"The coach made me the captain of the team the first year and I said, 'You're crazy. Have you seen my discipline record?' But then things changed completely. My first year of squash, I got straight A's. Through squash I learned discipline, hard work, and commitment, and I could see a direct result between what I was doing, the hard work I was putting in, and how good I was getting at squash."

Pacheco also began coaching at the Access Youth Academy in high school. Her work with the nonprofit helped her focus on something other than on her family's financial instability.

"On the squash court, where I came from and how much money I had—that didn't matter. All that mattered was how hard I worked. And in education, that isn't always the case," Pacheco said.

Although joining a new team was at first intimidating, Pacheco soon found her Columbia teammates to be welcoming, from the moment in the cab ride to the airport when she shared how she first

became involved in squash.

And while Pacheco thrives on Columbia's squash team and as the recipient of a four-year financial-aid scholarship, she must constantly deal with the fact that not everybody in her family is as fortunate.

"Every day I wake up, I feel blessed to be here. My brother called me to tell me he had to drop out of school because he couldn't afford books and tuition, and I was about to tell him that I was about to go to Switzerland where everything [was] paid for, so that was difficult."

That means Pacheco takes her opportunities with squash all the more seriously. "My brother always tells me to work hard, because I will be able to achieve my dreams when he won't be able to, and so that's hard. But at the same time, squash makes all of these boundaries so much smaller," she said. "My biggest goal is to prove through squash that all these boundaries don't count."

As part of the first graduating class of the Access Youth Academy, Pacheco felt that her ability to impact a team would continue at

Columbia because of its own relatively new squash program.

Pacheco said she feels an immense amount of support from Columbia.

"You're not just one of a thousand students," Pacheco said, adding that the staff members "know me by my first name and that's pretty amazing. I don't think I could get that everywhere."

Pacheco's hopes for the future are centered on squash, including qualifying for individual nationals, the Lions making the A division, and becoming an all-American, in addition to creating a nonprofit organization abroad. But there's one goal that might take her to one of the world's largest stages: convincing the IOC to instate squash as an Olympic sport.

"There's something I can prove through squash that I can't prove through academics. There's no urban squash kid that has ever made it professionally, and I want to be the first one. I want to show the message that above all the obstacles, I can do it and that people like me can do it."

sports@columbiaspectator.com

Ivy (LW)		TEAM
1	4-0 (1)	HARVARD CRIMSON The Crimson won a tight game against Yale on Friday and an even closer double-overtime contest against Brown on Saturday.
2	3-0 (2)	PRINCETON TIGERS Aided by strong play from its forwards, Princeton defeated Cornell on Friday. The Tigers topped the Lions the next day.
3	2-2 (4)	CORNELL BIG RED After falling to Princeton on Friday, the Big Red topped Penn on the road in Saturday's 71-69 comeback victory.
4	2-2 (5)	BROWN BEARS The Bears dominated in the paint in Friday's victory over Dartmouth, but they could not top Harvard the next day.
5	1-2 (7)	PENN QUAKERS Penn could not stop the Big Red in the second half, but the Quakers defeated the Lions on Saturday.
6	1-3 (3)	COLUMBIA LIONS The Lions lost both of their games over the weekend and dropped three spots in the standings.
7	1-3 (6)	YALE BULLDOGS Shooting poorly in both games, Yale fell to first-place Harvard on Friday and last-place Dartmouth on Saturday.
8	1-3 (8)	DARTMOUTH BIG GREEN Dartmouth could not contain Brown in the paint on Friday, but the Big Green earned its first Ivy win against Yale.

Harvard remains in first, Yale drops both games

BY IKE CLEMENTE
KITMAN
Spectator Staff Writer

Over the weekend, Harvard continued to impress, winning both of its contests, while Princeton handily won both of its games. Meanwhile, Brown, Dartmouth, Penn, and Cornell split their contests, and Yale, tied with Dartmouth for last place in the Ivy League, dropped both of its games.

HARVARD VS. YALE, 67-64

Harvard (12-6, 4-0 Ivy), led by guard Wesley Saunders, who earned the first double-double of his career with 15 points and 11 assists, topped Yale (7-14, 1-3 Ivy) on Friday with a 67-64 victory on the road. Guard Laurent Rivard also scored 15 points, nailing five of seven attempted three-pointers. While the Bulldogs only shot 41.7 percent from the field, the Crimson connected on 54.8 percent of its attempted field goals. Guard Armani Cotton played well for the Bulldogs, shooting five for six from the field and two for three from beyond the arc.

BROWN VS. DARTMOUTH, 62-50

On Friday, Brown (8-10, 2-2 Ivy) hit the ground running against Dartmouth (5-13, 1-3 Ivy), outscoring the Big Green 33-23 in the first half of the Bears' 62-50 victory in Hanover. The Bears dominated in the paint, thanks to center Rafael Maia, who contributed a career-high 21 points on 10-of-11 shooting. Maia scored all of his points within the free throw lane. Brown handily outscored Dartmouth 28-12, and the Bears grabbed 27 rebounds to the Big Green's 23. Even in defeat, forward Connor Boehm, the only Dartmouth player to score in double digits, impressed for the Big Green, with 16 points on 7-of-11 shooting.

PRINCETON VS. CORNELL, 76-59

Extending its home Ivy League winning streak to 19 games, Princeton (10-7, 3-0 Ivy) crushed Cornell (10-11, 2-2 Ivy) in the Tigers' strong 76-59 victory

on Friday. Princeton fell behind early, missing nine of its first 10 shots, but the Tigers, led by their forwards, dominated the rest of the game, shooting 63.4 percent from the field after the disappointing start. The tag team of Denton Koon and Ian Hummer combined for the majority of the Tigers' points, with each forward scoring 22 points. Hummer and forward Hans Braseboth added nine rebounds for the Tigers.

DARTMOUTH VS. YALE, 71-62

On Saturday, Dartmouth won its first Ivy League contest and avenged Friday's loss against Brown with a 71-62 victory over Yale. Led by reserve forward/center Gabas Maldunas, who tallied 16 points and eight rebounds, the Big Green shot an impressive 51.1 percent from the field, compared to a measly 25.3 percent for the Bulldogs. Though he connected on only two of his 10 attempted three-pointers, Yale point guard Austin Morgan scored a game-high 20 points. Both teams shot well from the foul line, especially the Big Green, who nailed 22 of its 24 free throws. Yale pulled ahead early in the game, but Dartmouth erased the Bulldogs' 14-12 lead with 11 straight points and held the lead for the rest of the game.

HARVARD VS. BROWN, 89-82

Led by four players who scored more than 15 points, Harvard defeated Brown in a 89-82 double-overtime nail-biter in Cambridge on Saturday. Saunders, Rivard, guard Christian Webster, and guard Siyani Chambers scored 18, 16, 16, and 17 points, respectively, for the Crimson. Chambers also contributed a game-high 10 assists, and Webster nailed two key three-pointers in overtime to help improve Harvard's home record to 9-1. On the bright side for the Bears, guard Sean McGonagill led Brown with 20 points and eight assists, both highs for the game.



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Of course we agree!

Intelligent discussion is dead, right? The Internet has replaced it with anonymous masses calling each other inappropriate names and making unfounded comparisons to dead dictators. The press, according to the press, has become biased, thinly-veiled entertain-ment. And we all know looking to our leaders is futile, given the hyper-partisan nature of American politics. What has become of sober second thought, of enlightened dialectic? Are we condemned to lives full of anger and disagreement?

Columbia emphatically rejects this vision—and leads by example. After four years of rigorous, complex, and thoughtful debate, the University Senate’s Task Force on Morningside and Lamont Smoking Policy has come to the conclusion that they aim to “find areas of agreement, rather than areas of disagreement. We believe that there are several areas of agreement but that important matters remain to be resolved.” The senate, in all its precision, has left these areas of agreement unstated. Perhaps they include the existing ban on smoking within 20 feet of a University building—the one that was originally conceived in 2008—and consulted a variety of stakeholders to avoid the possibility of widespread “disagreement.” The locations in which smokers were allowed to light up remained largely unchanged, since residence halls already had 20-foot bans and many buildings had 20- or even 50-foot ones. That, of course, was less important than the process by which the senate was able to find some consensus.



BOB
SUN

Terms of Engagement

Too perfect

It’s taken me about four hours just to figure out how to begin this column. I’ve written, re-written, and discarded about a dozen different attention-grabbing anecdotes. I’ve struggled with my sentence structure—the words don’t flow, the clauses are clunky—and now I’m cranky. Now it’s getting late. I’m angry with myself, and a voice in my head is suggesting that I am, in fact, a complete failure of a writer (and possibly human being). It’s getting painful.

I guess it’s fitting, though, because this column is about perfectionism.

Perfectionism is a tiring, paralyzing condition that a lot of us live with. To be clear, perfectionism isn’t just about having high standards for the things that matter. It’s a totalizing mindset that tells us that a life well-lived requires maximum effort at all times; that our self-worth comes from the things that we’re able to do (and how well we do them). Beneath it all lies a deep-seated fear that we just aren’t good enough.

One can guess why. Since this is Columbia, it’s fair to assume that many of us have been forced our whole lives to repeatedly prove our worth before all sorts of people—demanding parents, judgmental peers, and shadowy admissions committees among them. Let’s not even mention the pressure of trying to prove we deserve a job in this “competitive new global economy.” Under this strain, there’s an inclination to believe that we can always be doing something more to make ourselves feel secure. And so we become perpetually anxious addicts to achievement, never knowing when to stop.

Steven Castellano’s great op-ed last week (“Less is more,” Jan. 28) showed how this urge to achieve weighs upon our courseloads each semester. Driven to do as much as humanly possible, we load ourselves with five, six, even seven classes a semester, often at the direct detriment to our health and happiness. But perfectionism doesn’t just mean working too much—it also means hiding weakness. When we’re surrounded by so many people who seem to have their shit together, it is extremely difficult to admit to feeling lost, depressed, or in need of help. It’s no surprise that psychologists have repeatedly identified perfectionism as a core component of issues such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and suicide.

When we live as perfectionists, we lose something that I think is far more important than grades or accolades—and that’s fundamental self-acceptance. As one of my close friends told me over the recently, “Something that I just fail at honoring is the idea that I and others are ‘worth it’ based on existence alone.” It makes me think of a question that one of my mentors posed to me recently: “At what point can you say to yourself, ‘I am enough’?”

The strange thing about Columbia is how it feels so never-ending sometimes. It’s really a 24/7 existence: what we do now affects how much time we’ll have to do for the next thing, which affects how much sleep we’ll get tonight, which affects how well we’ll do on the thing we have for tomorrow, and so on until we graduate. I’m a senior now, and it all feels like a blur. I look at the stacks of documents in the back of my room—the 30-page papers, the overflowing notebooks, the books crammed full of sticky tabs, and I recognize, dispassionately, that I have been extremely productive. Yet I feel a strange sense of emptiness and detachment, as if these reams of paper were produced by someone who I no longer fully recognize. Someone who didn’t wholly love what he was doing.

This semester—my last semester—I realize I have a whole life to live: one that is greater and more meaningful than the sum of my accomplishments or the average of my grades. A life that is too short to be based on fear. So as I navigate the non-stop, round-the-clock, day-in-day-out of being an overcommitted Columbia student, I want to learn how to stop short of perfection and say, “This is enough.” I’m not a failure because I didn’t get every internship I wanted. I’m not a failure because this column took me longer than expected to write. I’m not a failure if I don’t get a job this May.

I’m not perfect, and that’s OK. I am me. I try. And that’s enough.

Wilfred Chan is a senior majoring in political science. He is the founder of the Student Wellness Project. Chan-neling Discourse runs alternate Tuesdays.



WILFRED
CHAN

Chan-neling Discourse

That enforcement was non-existent before and after the passage of the campus-wide ban may have been immediately evident to some unorthodox students, but the faithful among us waited eagerly last fall for the senate to release a formal report to tell us the same. Only after having completed this important, predetermined step in the flowchart were they then able to move onto the “ongoing assessment” stage, the one that we are currently in. The received wisdom now seems to be the implementation of designated smoking areas on campus. And why not? The areas could be “little huts to shelter Columbians in the rain and the storms,” and could look like blue and white umbrellas if we follow the suggestion that University Senator and Business School professor Michael Adler made in 2010. In any case, a vote will not happen until the task force finishes its work “to sharpen the requirements and desiderata for smoking-permitted areas,” lest a simple, straightforward policy pass instead of one with the requisite “whereas”es and sub-bullet points.

What has become of sober second thought, of enlightened dialectic?

Some on campus, including Spectator’s editorial board, raise the criticism that four years of consultation to arrive in the same place is hardly the sign of an efficient and functioning process. But the majority of us know better—these past few years of committees

and subcommittees and plenaries and town halls are, in fact, evidence that the senate is fulfilling its role within the University. Only by extended, nested layers of deliberation can we be sure of removing any “controversy” or “disagreement” or “interest” that the wider campus community may have in the issue at hand. The last thing we would want is for the debate to escape the hallowed chambers of Low and the confidential records of the Senate committee. The worry, of course, is that if the University at large engages with potentially contentious issues, divisions will alienate certain groups from the already fragile and fractious community. By drawing out the discourse in such a structured way, we bore those who might have a strong opinion or stake enough to be sure we are not unduly offending anyone.

The senate is not the only University body with an interest in removing disagreement, and the smoking ban is not the only policy developed in this way. The trend seems to be to restrict as much political speech as possible to within the committees and task forces that vote on them. Managing tone and content is a lot more feasible through the pre-existing rules and procedures of limited space than in dorm hallways and on bulletin boards around campus. Even so, we have recently greater consciousness about other people’s feelings—we know how well-received and applauded Dean Shollenberger’s decision was to remove the Marching Band’s most recent Orgo Night poster. God forbid anyone should be upset at having strong opinions or political speech at a university.

Bob Sun is a Columbia College junior majoring in history and biology. He is a member of the Committee on Instruction. Terms of Engagement runs alternate Tuesdays.

Conquering your secret shame

BY RAE BINSTOCK

I relapsed the night after my op-ed about my eating disorder was published.

It was a low-key thing, drinking beer and listening to music in a friend’s room. One moment to another, a subtle shift—something that I had shaken off crept back up. Before I knew it, I was curled in bed, shivering with feverish chills, dizzy with nausea, my body groaning and aching from being overstuffed to almost inhuman levels with food I had barely tasted.

There is no cure for this problem. People with eating disorders work hard for years to change their habits and perspective, but none of us will ever be done. Food remains dangerous, even when you have recovered to the point where you aren’t afraid of it anymore. It doesn’t have to be the enemy, but you still can’t turn your back for a second. Drug addicts and alcoholics can refuse to touch a drink or a pill or a syringe—not so with eating disorders.

The fact is that eating disorders grow into you, like a benign tumor that wraps tentacles around your bones and chokes your arteries. No matter how long it’s been since the problem was malignant, it remains an important and inescapable secret that you carry wherever you go. After my op-ed came out in the Spectator, I was flooded with messages of love and positivity from friends and family. It stunned me to see how many people felt the need to reach out and give me the warmth and comfort of their support. But some told me other things: their own struggles, their own problems, their own years that had been spent fighting a silent and desperate fight. From an aunt to a close friend to the barest of acquaintances, people were coming out of the woodwork and giving a part of themselves to me. It was overwhelming and heartbreaking. It was also one of the greatest experiences of my life.

A friend of mine, Paulina Pinsky (BC ’15), IMed the night the piece came out. “It’s gonna be a year for me in March,” she said, “but it’s been a fucking horrible ride.” People referred to themselves and to me as “survivors,” a phrase that I would have thought cliché a year ago. But now I understand: During the worst moments, when

your body is not your own and your mind is murky with self-hatred and you feel unbearably disgusting, when you would rather consider a numb, beautiful, endless silence instead of another day of shame, survival is what you have.

People with eating disorders work hard for years to change their habits and perspective, but none of us will ever be done.

Except not. Because we have more than that. In a world where people suffer in every corner, where girls half my age have endured lifetimes of blinding pain and fear that I can’t even begin to conceive of, we can’t afford to just survive. We have to be there for each other, right now, right here, immediately, yesterday, tomorrow, and every single second that we have left. Chances are that if you don’t have an eating disorder yourself, you know someone who does; if you do have an eating disorder, chances are that you’ve told only the people you have to, and that they know only half the story. Replace “eating disorder” with whatever your secret shame is, but be honest with yourself: in some way, you have wrapped yourself in loneliness, banishing the people closest to you from the miserable places in your soul.

But they’re there, and they love you, and if they don’t, then someone else will. Love is the only thing in the world more plentiful than pain.

It won’t cure you—nothing will. It won’t erase the past. But if it hurts, and you tell someone, then it will change the game. It will make the future infinitesimally less frightening. It will make you a very small bit less guilty. And whether or not it ends up changing the game, it will change you.

The author is a Columbia College sophomore.

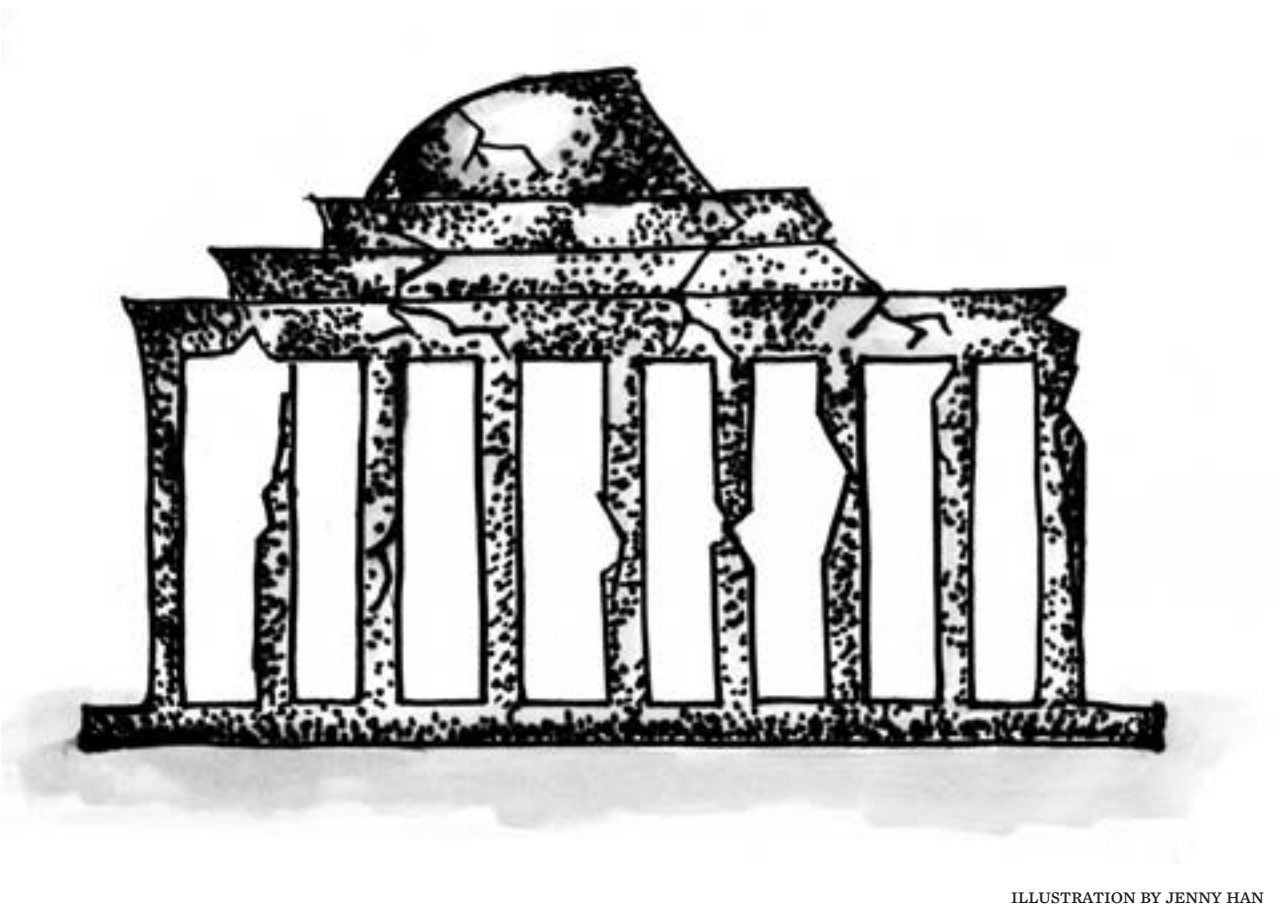


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Morningsiders pull through difficulties, win Battle of Bands

BY DAVID SALAZAR
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

What started with a video of Morningsiders singing their first single, “Empress,” in the John Jay Lounge, culminated in the group winning Saturday’s Battle of the Bands in Lerner Party Space, securing the opening act at Bacchanal.

Despite almost crippling technical difficulties, fans carried the band through the set.

“We couldn’t hear ourselves because the monitors weren’t working, plus none of our sound was working, plus Rob’s sound was going in and out,” violinist/vocalist Reid Jenkins, CC ’14, said, referring to pianist Robert Frech, CC ’14 and Spectator’s chief development officer. “We essentially were able to finish the song because people were singing along and keeping time for us.”

“Quite literally the enthusiasm just pushed us through the whole thing,” trumpeter/drummer Ben Kreitman, CC ’14, said. “It turned what otherwise would have been a very not fun set into a really amazing experience.” All of the band members were impressed by the crowd’s response—which is essentially the story of the band’s path to success.

It was last finals season when the video for “Empress” was released on YouTube, and nobody in the band was expecting the low-key video shoot filmed in a lounge commandeered from the Kingsmen to turn into an overnight hit.

“Personally, I was prepared to be like, ‘We made this video for people who know our music already and if this gets 300 or 400 views that would be pretty cool,’” bassist Vladimir Bernstein, CC ’14, said. “And then it had 300 views in a couple of hours.” As of Monday night, the video for “Empress” had 28,091 views.

The video’s success “changed the entire way I approach the band,” lead vocalist Magnus Ferguson, CC ’14, said.

“After ‘Empress,’ we realized there were people who wanted to hear us, more than our immediate

ONLINE



Visit www.columbiaspectator.com for Morningsiders’ set.



ALICE BREIDENBACH FOR SPECTATOR

EMPERORS | Morningsiders beat seven other student groups at Saturday’s Battle of the Bands.

friends at Columbia who we had been playing to,” Bernstein said.

If the video is indicative of the group’s overnight success, its casual feel and production is indicative of Morningsiders’ formation—“ad-hoc,” as Jenkins put it. Jenkins and Ferguson started playing music together their freshman year and brought Bernstein on board in their sophomore year. Finally, Kreitman joined the group last semester.

“We sort of just put things together ourselves,” Jenkins said. “I think that’s kind of what makes the video come alive, that we’re just sort of coming together and playing, and some of the spontaneity of making that first video is what’s special about it.”

Now, less than three months after that first video, the band is looking forward to its biggest gig yet, opening at Bacchanal, and turning its attention to a longer set and a wider audience.

“We have a back log of about 10 tunes to get to,” Bernstein said, with Ferguson adding that they “tend to incorporate two or three new songs in whatever show we do,” with the “hope we’ll have new work” for Bacchanal.

In addition to expanding the set list, the band

is working on expanding its arrangements and finesse.

“The more tools you have, the more combinations of them you can have,” Ferguson said about the abilities of the members and their instruments. “We’ve been sort of trying to stretch our stuff, and it’s amazing. It’s really, really fun to have this many weird sounds that you can make on command.”

The group’s expanding musical capabilities are moving it in new directions, too. It had hoped to debut a cover of a Stevie Nicks song—with Ferguson and Bernstein playing electric guitar and bass—as its final song at Battle of the Bands. Even though technical difficulties made that impossible, it’s indicative of the band’s desire to find new ways of using their various skills, which will be on full display at Bacchanal.

“Coming to Columbia, I always wanted to be in a band. And it’s finally happening,” Frech said. “Not only am I in a band, but I’m opening for Bacchanal. Six months ago I would have never imagined this would be happening. It’s happening. Let’s do it.”

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Floridita: New neighborhood, same quality food

BY ANDREA CHAN
Spectator Staff Writer

Perhaps it was for the best that I was not part of the generation of Columbia students that fondly remembers the old Floridita—the generation that’s bitter about its eviction from its original spot on Broadway and 129th Street and now jubilant about its revival. I just wanted to check out the new kid on the block. I wasn’t reminiscing as I worked on the arroz con pollo, but was simply satisfied by the perfectly succulent chicken and savory aromatic rice. I have to suspect, though, that if this was what people were missing for years, I would have been pretty upset too.

So far, it’s quiet at the new Floridita, located on 125th Street and 12th Avenue. Despite its celebratory rebirth last Sunday, the atmosphere of the restaurant during the lunch and dinner hours that I went was decidedly tranquil, with a few tables occupied here and there in the spacious dining room. But it’s still in its early days. It will take time for Floridita’s old clientele to make their way back, and for them to adjust to the obscurity of the new location. One can hope for Floridita, much like Dinosaur Bar-B-Que next door, to become a destination restaurant.

Still, I felt good about it—the way you feel good about warmly-lit, cheerfully musicked venues decked in vintage Latin-themed posters. The way you feel good about friendly, expedient service and warm toasted Italian-style bread. And, the way you feel good and a little lost about what to order from a wide-ranging, well-priced menu. Those with a gastronomic and sentimental blank slate will no doubt encounter a welcome dilemma when presented with Floridita’s celebration of Pan-Caribbean cuisine, with its generous breakfast selection, range of omelets, sandwiches, soups, beef, and chicken and seafood dishes—not to mention the specials, like the pollo guisado, a chicken stew, and the Costilla a la barbacoa, their barbeque spare ribs.

On my first visit, I shared a shrimp starter in garlic sauce, the garlic heavy on the nose but thankfully tempered on the palate, so as not to overpower the equally subtle shrimp. Next was the mofongo, a Puerto Rican dish that combines fried plantains with a meat (fried pork in my case, though also available in cheese and chicken) in a mortar and pestle-like device and served alongside beef gravy. A dish formulated by its economizing originators to stretch expensive meat, it was certainly filling, but not heavy, and doubly satisfying when accompanied by the gravy, which had extracted and developed maximum flavor from hours of cooking.

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Athena Film Festival honors women filmmakers in third year

BY ZOË MILLER
Spectator Staff Writer

The idea for the Athena Film Festival took root in 2009, the same year that public-interest attorney, activist, and journalist Kathryn Kolbert joined Barnard as the director of the Athena Center for Leadership Studies. After attending a celebration in honor of filmmaker Jane Campion at Gloria Steinem’s house, Kolbert realized that, even today, the film industry is male-dominated.

“A whole range of women filmmakers came in and said how difficult it was to make films with strong women,” Kolbert said.

But her friend, Melissa Silverstein, founder and editor of the feminist film blog Women and Hollywood, had a solution in mind. Silverstein set the initiative for a female-centric film festival in motion and Kolbert followed her lead.

Together, Kolbert and Silverstein founded the festival, which will stage its third annual set of screenings this weekend. The festival’s objective, Kolbert said, is to highlight “films that tell stories about women in real life and in fictional worlds, to help women see other women in strong roles.”

And “strong roles” are not just attributed to protagonists with positions in the oft-portrayed professions of medicine and law. Kolbert said that the films chosen for the festival depict “everything from women being groundskeepers to being boxers to show younger women what they can aspire to.”

The 2013 festival will run from Thursday through Sunday at Barnard, beginning with an award ceremony on Thursday night to recognize women leaders in the film industry. This year’s honorees include film and television producer Gale Anne Hurd (“The Walking Dead”); filmmaker,

marketer, and film distributor Ava DuVernay (whose film “Middle of Nowhere” was chosen for the festival); film critic and author Molly Haskell; the Film Society of Lincoln Center’s executive director Rose Kuo; and Pat Mitchell, the Paley Center for Media’s president and CEO.

Documentaries, feature films, and shorts alike are selected from an applicant pool of filmmakers from around the world. This year, four of the films—“Brave,” “Beasts of the Southern Wild,” “The Invisible War,” and “Inocente”—were nominated for Academy Awards.

Nominations are based on two criteria—diversity of subject matter and the prevalence of “strong, bold, and courageous women,” according to Kolbert. But the festival differs from others of its kind, in that it considers men and women.

“The story being told is what’s most important,” Kolbert said.

A glance at the festival’s schedule proves that the assortment is diverse, both thematically and linguistically. The films range in topic from a story of a teenage girl who becomes obsessed with ecological disasters after being abandoned by her single mother (“Future Weather”) to a Russian documentary about a 19-year-old girl involved in a Kremlin-sponsored political youth organization (“Putin’s Kiss”).

Drawing on her experiences as an activist, Kolbert said that what matters is moving people through cultural change.

“The festival is important because it is important for our culture to recognize a leader,” she said. “At first blink, you think of white men.”

Last year, 3,000 people attended the festival.

“I’m thrilled with how quickly it was able to grow into an institution,” Kolbert said.

For information about ticket prices, screening times, and locations, visit www.athenafilmfestival.com.

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COURTESY OF SUN MIN

PALLAS | Festival co-founders Melissa Silverstein (far left) and Kathryn Kolbert (third from right) pose with Katie Couric (third from left), Julie Taymor (center), and Barnard President Debora Spar (second from right).



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David Keyes
Founding Dean (2009-2013), Division of Mathematical and Computer Sciences and Engineering at KAUST

Wednesday, 6 February 2013, 4:00pm
Davis Auditorium, 4th Floor CEPSP, Morningside Campus
Reception following in Mudd 200 (at approximately 5:00pm)

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