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Look inside for dispatches from the student councils of Barnard and Columbia. The Columbia College Student Council's Sunday meeting featured a special guest.



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Whether you're a beginner or a pro, dance classes with Columbia's thriving tango community will bring out the Latin passion in you.

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Outside of the classroom, creative writing students at Columbia can fill the writing community void with groups such as The Ugly Fish Salon and *Quarto*.

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Columnist MaryAlice Parks endorses Mayor Bloomberg's proposal to close off parts of Broadway to cars, arguing that New York won't lose its identity if it clears its iconically congested streets.



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#### Light Blue Victimized By Injuries to Big Men

Chronic injury problems in the Columbia frontcourt have sidelined men's basketball stars such as Joe Bova, Brian Grimes, and Asenso Ampim for key games this year.



### Sports, page 8

#### Columbia Backcourt Overmatched in Losses

Women's basketball hosted Harvard and Dartmouth this weekend and emerged with two defeats. Columbia's guards were outplayed at key moments in the losing efforts.

## ONLINE

### ColumbiaSpectator.com

#### Crossing Over to the Immigrant Side

Check out the Spectacle blog for a review of Wayne Kramer's *Crossing Over*, a movie about the immigrants' struggles to receive legal status in Los Angeles.

## DOWNHILL FROM HERE



Andrew Scheineson / Staff Photographer



Colin Sullivan / Senior Staff Photographer

**SNOW DAY** | Columbia's campus got several inches of unexpected snow as a stressful midterms week approached. Riverside Park was full of children enjoying the opportunity for some sledding. Meanwhile, University staff spent most of the morning removing snow from campus walkways and paths.

## Group Promotes Palestinian Rights

BY KIM KIRSCHENBAUM  
*Spectator Staff Writer*

While January's wave of student activism surrounding the Gaza conflict has abated, another is on the rise with Monday's launch of a Palestinian rights campaign.

A group of Columbia students has announced the formation of the Columbia Palestine Forum, a campaign intended to gather support for Palestinian rights to education and self-determination. Inspired by student activism at other colleges, group members will hold a teach-in and a rally this week and will have released a list of demands that calls on Columbia to take a stand in defense of Palestinian students.

"President [Lee] Bollinger in the past has denounced a call for an academic boycott of Israel but

never acknowledged the fact that Palestinians don't have a right to education due to Israel's occupation," said Akua Gyamerah, Mailman School of Public Health '10, one of the group's organizers and a member of Barnard-Columbia International Socialist Organization. "We hope to get the attention of the University and have the University acknowledge us as a serious group."

The campaign's leaders, who were also a part of the Columbia Community in Standing with Gaza group during the January rallies, have been planning the campaign since the start of the semester. Through conference calls organized by the Campus Antiwar Network, group members have been communicating with students from Hampshire College and the University of Rochester, who persuaded their schools to

divest some of the companies that profit from the conflict.

The demands call on the University to grant a number of annual scholarships for Palestinian students to attend Columbia, to partner with and provide aid to a Palestinian university, to fully disclose its budget and endowment in order to ascertain that tuition money is not being used "to violate people's human rights," and to formally state support for the Palestinian right to self-determination.

The University has acknowledged in a statement that it has yet to hear these demands from the group. "Since this is the first we have heard of these particular demands from any students at Columbia, we can't comment specifically," Brian

SEE PALESTINE, page 2

## Bloomberg Cuts Funding for NYC Dept. of Parks and Rec.

BY AARON KIERSH  
*Spectator Staff Writer*

Once lauded as a champion of New York City's green spaces, Mayor Michael Bloomberg responded to the ongoing municipal fiscal crisis by slashing the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation's budget. While the mayor has not released information on how specific parks will be impacted, the cuts are likely to affect services and amenities at parks citywide, including local Morningside and Riverside Parks.

There are conflicting reports on how much money parks will lose in the next fiscal year. During his major Jan. 30 budget speech, Bloomberg revealed only one specific reduction—a \$5.6 million cut that will result in the loss of 167 seasonal employees. But the budget posted on the city's official Web site shows the Parks Department losing slightly more than \$20 million between 2009 and 2010. Meanwhile, some park advocates suggest that the cuts may not exceed \$14 million.

A Parks Department spokesman, Philip Abramson, declined to elaborate but said of the city's \$4 billion deficit, "Some tough economic times lie ahead—not only for New York City but for the state and the nation."

Abramson also said that Bloomberg's decision to shrink the parks budgets does not run counter to the mayor's policy of improving parks. "During Mayor Bloomberg's tenure, we have renovated and expanded New York City's emerald empire more than at any time since the 1930s."

Some local park watchers are not worried by the city's plans. Alexander Brash, senior northeast regional director of the National Parks Conservation Association, said that the department will probably privatize some

programs in order to cut costs and maintain the current level of service. "Even in this climate, the worst they might implement is a hiring freeze rather than layoffs," he said. "Layoffs are very disruptive. They happen, yes, but I don't see it happening at this point. Personally, I'm optimistic about this situation."

Brash expects the parks to increase revenue by raising fees and opening waterfront areas to businesses, and he predicts that some projects under construction may be shut down.

Yet not all local advocates are as confident about the future of city parks. Sheelah Feinberg, government and external relations director at New Yorkers for Parks, said that her group will oppose any budget reduction that may threaten the parks' maintenance.

"There is definitely a downward trend in terms of parks financing," she said, referring to this year's reductions as well as \$11 million of cuts last year. "We gave playgrounds in New York City a C+ grade this year because they weren't well-maintained. There was litter and graffiti. Seasonal staffing in the summer has to alleviate that."

Feinberg added that calling for additional funds is difficult in light of the current federal, state, and municipal budget woes, but she recommended that the parks request some federal stimulus money.

Other observers warn that the city will be presented with even greater expenses in the future if the current level of investment in parks is not maintained.

"I know that the city parks budget has been in a better place than it was in previous administrations," said Robin Dropkin, executive director of Parks & Trails New

SEE PARKS, page 2

## BC to Raise Tuition By Three Percent

### Tuition Hike Will Help College Meet Expected Increase in Aid

BY CARLY SILVER  
*Spectator Staff Writer*

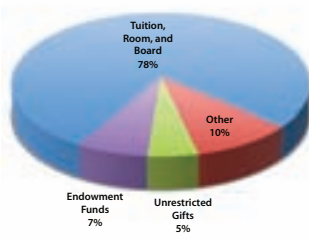
Gregory Brown, vice president of finance and planning at Barnard, announced a 3 percent tuition increase for the 2009-2010 academic year at a financial forum on Monday evening. The hike will amount to an increase of about \$1560 more per student, which Barnard hopes will bolster financial aid when coupled with a faculty wage freeze.

At the forum in the James Room, Brown elucidated Barnard's financial situation. While Brown said the endowment had crossed the \$200 million line two years ago, numbers that span Dec. 31, 2008 show a decline of about 25 percent to \$163 million. Though the loss seems dramatic, Brown contextualized it with a full explanation of finances at Barnard, illustrating that the absolute loss may not be as extreme as it looks.

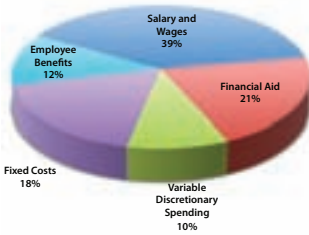
Brown used a presentation that he has shown to the Barnard Board of Trustees to illustrate Barnard's finances, specifically pointing to a pie chart that represented Barnard's budget revenue for Fiscal Year 2009. The chart displayed the makeup of the money on which Barnard runs, whose total added up to \$137.6 million. 78 percent of Barnard's revenue derives from tuition and room and board. Unrestricted gifts constitute five percent, and 10 percent of the revenue is labeled as "other." Funds drawn from the endowment consti-

#### BARNARD BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009

**Budget Revenue**  
Total: \$137.6 Million



**Budgeted Expenditure**  
Total: \$137.6 Million



Source: Greg Brown / Graphic by Yipeng Huang

tute only seven percent of revenue—as compared to 13 percent at Columbia and 34 percent at Wellesley—making the absolute losses amount to 25 percent of that seven percent, a meager loss when compared with those of other institutions of higher education.

Brown used a similar chart to outline Barnard's budget for 2009, explaining how the money would be allocated—39 percent of Barnard's annual revenue would go towards salary and wages, 12 percent would

SEE BARNARD FINANCE, page 2



Haley Vecchiarelli / Senior Staff Photographer

**BARNARD FINANCES** | Barnard's vice president for finance and planning explained the College's tuition increase to an audience of around 15.

## Turkish Law Professor Speaks on Democracy

BY HILARY SOLOFF  
*Spectator Staff Writer*

Ergun Ozbudun, professor of Law at Bilkent University, Turkey, has harsh words for Turkey's current government: "Pluralism is not in the structure of the state. The state is overpowering."

Ozbudun, a one-time chair of the academic committee to draft a new Turkish constitution and a Distinguished Scholar in Residence of the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life, spoke to a group of around 40 students and other guests Monday night on his hopes for democratic change in Turkey. The event was a precursor to a two-day conference this Friday and Saturday organized by Dr. Ahmet Kuru, deputy director of the Center for the Study of Democracy, Tolerance, and Religion. The conference is part of Kuru's wider lecture series entitled "Transforming Secularism, Democracy, and Nationalism in Turkey."

"In the aftermath of Sept. 11, people generally think in black and white, evil and good," Kuru said. "Islam is not compatible with democracy, Islam is not compatible with secularism. But we try to show that actually things are more complex, that Islam is not monolithic, that there are diverse Muslim politics, diverse interpretations of Islam."

Ozbudun sat at the head of a table with attendees filling up the remainder of the seats. The rest of the audience filled the room, sitting in chairs surrounding the edge of the room or standing in the back. Both Kuru and Alfred Stepan, director of the Center for the Study of Democracy, Tolerance, and Religion and a Wallace S. Sayre Professor of Government, opened the talk by introducing Ozbudun. Ozbudun, who began by reminiscing about the year



Elazibarusu.org.tr

#### ERGUN OZBUDUN

he spent as a visiting professor at Columbia 30 years ago, focused his talk on summarizing part of a larger study, "Turkey, Plural Society, and the Monolithic State." He argued that pluralism is not in the structure of the state of Turkey and that this paradox is the key to resolving many issues involving the democratization of Turkey. "The conflict between accountable authority and nonelected state agencies is a fundamental point of conflict," he added.

Kuru noted that a general goal of the talk was to contribute to several debates. He said that by discussing nationalism, populism, and secularism as key ideologies in the founding philosophy of the republic, Ozbudun is addressing the debate between Islam and secularism.

"The talk shows that there are not simply good guys, the secularists, and bad buys, the Islamists. There is more than that," Kuru said. "And it shows the relationship between ideology and democracy because people are not simply following material gains. You see how ideology is important in the Turkish case."

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## WEATHER

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EVENTS — MARCH 3

**Financial Crisis Discussion**  
Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz and economist Prabhat Patnaik will discuss the global financial crisis. Jomo Kwame Sundaram will moderate the discussion. Registration not required.

301 Uris, 11 a.m.

**Literature and Terror**  
Dalia Sofer, author of *The Septembers of Shiraz*, will participate in a discussion moderated by St. John's professor Dohra Ahmad and sponsored by the Institute of Religion, Culture, and Public Life.

IAB 1501, 7 p.m.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

*“As we look at reductions, we’re trying to make sure reductions don’t affect your classroom experience or your living experience.”*

—Greg Brown

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## Cuts Could Impact Parks In Morningside Heights

PARKS from front page

York, an Albany-based advocacy organization. “But the infrastructure is old. If you don’t replace the shingles every year, you’re going to have to eventually put a whole new roof on the house, which is more expensive than the repairs.”

Feinberg fears that continued cuts

may signal a return to the policies of earlier decades when neglected parks became notorious hotspots for crime. “Parks are an experience for New Yorkers to experience the outdoors in a safe and fun environment,” she said. “We don’t want parks to become the sore sights that they were in the 1970s.”

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## Group Issues Demands for Divestment, Scholarships

PALESTINE from front page

Connolly, associate vice president for media relations said in a statement on behalf of the University. “But it is worth noting that our University Senate ... is provided regular, detailed updates on the university’s budget and finances, which are also publicly reported each year.” Connolly also pointed to the University’s “actively engaged” Socially Responsible Investing committee and said that “we welcome qualified Palestinian students to Columbia and work with them, as we do with all international students and scholars, to facilitate visas and provide appropriate financial aid.”

Group members hope to read their demands to the Columbia administration at noon on Thursday following a Wednesday discussion forum for students, faculty, and New-York-area activists. Members have said they have not yet determined to which administrators they will be addressing their remarks.

While group members have said that their campaign is generating support, not all students agree with the group’s premise. “This is a deliberate attempt to single out one country, one group of people—Israel—among many other nations,” Jacob Shapiro, GS/JTS ’10 and

president of LionPAC, a pro-Israel student group, said of the campaign’s calls for divestment from the occupation. “I think the effort is totally unreasonable and misguided and in many cases factually inaccurate,” added Shapiro, who is also an editor in *Spectator*’s sports section. “The University’s job is not to condemn countries.”

Yet group members have defended their reasons for specifically addressing their campaign to Israel, stating that recent and past events have motivated students to take action.

“I think we have a very good reason to single out the actions of Israel,” said first-year GSAS student Matt Swagler, one of the group’s organizers and a member of the Barnard-Columbia International Socialist Organization. “I think there’s a very long history of the dispossession of the Palestinian people and the very recent destruction of Gaza.”

The group will be holding a mass organizing meeting next week centered on the list of demands and the topics of transparency and divestment. “As a group, we’re looking to make this a long-term project,” Swagler said. “The idea of this campaign isn’t that it’s going to be something that fades away at the end of the semester.”

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## Dispatches from Student Council Meetings

Columbia College Student Council

“You’d be shocked at how isolating Low Library is,” Senior Executive Vice President Robert Kasdin said at a recent Columbia College Student Council meeting.

“You should set up a Twitter account,” CCSC President George Krebs, CC ’09, replied.

And so Kasdin, of the University’s central administration, ventured out from Low on Sunday for an annual visit to the Council, one intended to boost the working relationship with the administration. But before hearing student suggestions for the College, Kasdin addressed University finances. He stressed that Columbia was relatively well-off financially compared to some of its peer institutions, though he did admit that there may be more difficulties this year in carving out the spring budget, particularly in defining where financial priorities lie.

“I worry a lot about the senior class,” Kasdin said of the difficulties students would face in navigating the job market upon graduation. “It’s a little more complicated right now.”

But space demands, advising, financial aid, and a desire for better campus cohesion were on the minds of council members. Students called for increased access to space in graduate schools and greater assistance for student groups with smaller budgets, some of which have experienced difficulties in reserving rooms for activities. With the Barnard student center and the future sixth floor Lerner advising center still under construction, members said that student space was lacking. Although Kasdin mentioned that he was under the impression that Lerner Six was “going well,” other administrators have said that the project may be several years from completion.

Kasdin also said that even after the

construction of new University buildings in Manhattanville, the Morningside Heights campus would remain the focal point of undergraduate life. It is unlikely that there will be dorms in the extended campus, he said, as the first major projects will be devoted to graduate research programs.

The fate of the Portal project—an online consolidated source for across-the-board student information—still seemed uncertain, with preliminary cost estimates exceeding \$75,000. “It’s really worth sitting down and crunching the numbers,” Kasdin said, questioning whether designing a new Web site for the Portal would be a good use of time in the remaining days of the semester.

Still, despite Kasdin’s worries for graduating seniors, he said he saw college as a “magical period” for students. While Kasdin said that many of the critiques council members had of Columbia were not issues he had direct control over, he encouraged the students to seek out college deans for help making day-to-day improvements.

No word on whether a Low Library Twitter account has been set up.

—Alix Pianin

Barnard’s Student Government Association

The Student Government Association held a shorter Monday night meeting than usual after a Barnard financial forum with Vice President of Finance Greg Brown. EcoReps, gender-blind housing, and security vans are just a few of the issues on members’ minds.

Although the previous one call, one drop-off policy of the Barnard security vans was unpopular, some Barnard students have also expressed dissatisfaction with the new multiple pick-up system. SGA President Sarah Besnoff, BC ’09, said she plans to



Courtesy of Columbia.edu  
ROBERT KASDIN

meet with the Barnard director of safety and security to address student issues.

A proposal for gender-blind housing is among the suggestions for new housing policies that members of the Barnard College Diversity Committee are planning to discuss with Residential Life and Housing and Barnard College Dean Dorothy Denburg. The Diversity Committee also resolved to encourage student groups to participate in the upcoming annual Welcome Weekend, which invites students from economically challenged areas to visit Barnard.

The EcoReps mentioned their concerns over campus water bottle usage, noting that campus institutions such as Java City may prove resistant to efforts to reduce sales of their best-selling product. A senior gift, council members suggested, may include an improved water fountain to increase non-bottled water availability. A meeting with President Debora Spar also brought up the possibility of creating a student wish list for green initiatives on campus.

—Carly Silver

## Losses Not Catastrophic in Context of BC

BARNARD FINANCE from front page

be spent on employee benefits, and 18 percent would be slated for fixed costs such as energy costs and the contract that affiliates Barnard with Columbia University. “Variable and discretionary spending” account for 10 percent of the budget.

This breakdown, in part, aided Brown and the trustees in calculating a tuition hike that would help the university meet a projected increase in financial aid requests. By increasing the tuition portion of Barnard’s revenue by three percent, the hike would free up more Barnard grant money for financial aid.

In a recent interview with *Spectator*, Barnard President Debora Spar stressed that she didn’t “want to see a large tuition increase, because that is asking one part of community to bear the burden. It’s a delicate balancing act.”

“For next year’s budget, we went to the trustees with a proposal for the lowest increase in over ten years for tuition, room, and

board,” Brown said. “What we are putting forward for next year is a commitment to financial aid first and foremost,” he said, adding that the faculty has been asked to sacrifice wage increases for the cause.

In the past year alone, Brown noted that 42 percent of Barnard students—about 1,100 students—received some sort of financial aid, up one percent from 2007-2008. The lowest need in the last decade was around five years ago when financial aid recipients made up 37 percent of Barnard students.

“Throughout the history of the institution, financial aid has really been at the core of who we are,” Brown said. Barnard financial aid will count for \$28.7 million in Fiscal Year 2009, which ends June 30, and is expected to rise to \$30.6 million by the end of Fiscal Year 2010. This year, when the economic crisis caught Barnard by surprise, need for aid increased, and projections fell \$1.5 million short. Barnard vice presidents trimmed their budgets in order to make up the difference.

Brown’s numbers for 2010 are estimates,

he said, since it’s too early to know what the new need will be for continuing students. Including books, room, and board, tuition annually amounts to about \$52,000. According to Barnard Director of Financial Aid Nanette Dilauro, who previously worked at Columbia’s Office of Financial Aid, Columbia’s Board of Trustees has not yet announced any tuition changes and will probably not do so until June.

Barnard’s Trustees are currently considering spending cuts. “I will say the fact that we’re going with no salary increases—at least that’s the recommendation for now,” Brown said. When asked about possible professional cuts, he replied, “I don’t know yet. I’m not projecting layoffs per se, but I’m looking at how we do the business that we do.”

Faculty training will also be reduced, but Barnard will not enact a hiring freeze. “If there’s a search for an open faculty position now, we’re going to complete it and fill that faculty position. As we look at reductions, we’re trying to make sure reductions don’t affect your classroom experience or your

## Harvard Delays Cornell’s Title Bid

BY MAX PURO  
*Spectator Senior Staff Writer*

Needing only two wins to clinch its second straight Ivy title, Cornell (19-9, 9-3 Ivy) traveled to Dartmouth and Harvard in its quest to seal the deal. When all was said and done, the Big Red were unable to punch their ticket to March Madness.

Friday night’s game in Hanover went according to plan, as the Big Red simply outclassed Dartmouth (9-17, 7-5) in every facet, cruising to a 75-57 win. After a three-pointer by David Rufful cut the Cornell lead to only two, the Big Red unleashed its balanced attack, closing the half with a 12-4 run.

In the second half, momentum seemed to shift sides as Dartmouth cut its deficit to three. But the Big Red stayed calm, hitting three straight three-pointers to put the game out of reach.

Cornell had four players in double figures, led by Ryan Wittman’s 20 points and six rebounds. The Big Red were also able to stymie Dartmouth’s offense, holding them to a 34.6 shooting percentage.

Looking to spoil Cornell’s title run, Harvard (13-13, 5-7) received solid performances from Drew Housman and Jeremy Lin as the Crimson edged the Big Red 71-70.

After Wittman hit one of two free throws to give Harvard a narrow one-point advantage with 1:46 to go, neither team was able to score down the stretch. Cornell had one more opportunity to take the lead, but Louis Dale’s last-second shot was deflected by Keith Wright to secure the victory.

Harvard shot an astounding 52.3 percent in the win. Both Lin and Housman scored 20 points and had four assists in leading the Crimson to its first weekend sweep of Columbia and Cornell in the last seven years. Wittman led the way for Cornell with 24 points.

With an opening to climb back into contention, Princeton (12-12, 7-4) got the job done, sweeping Brown (7-19, 1-11) and Yale (12-13, 7-5) over the weekend. After falling behind early on Friday, the Bears mounted a frantic first-half rally, going on a 13-4 run to end the period. But Princeton’s defense was

superb in the second half, holding Brown to 24 percent shooting, including 1-for-12 from downtown, en route to a 56-48 victory.

Coming off the bench, freshman Douglas Davis scored 16 points on 7-for-11 shooting to lead Princeton. Brown was carried by Peter Sullivan’s 21 points and Chris Skrelja’s 16 rebounds.

Just as in Friday’s match, Princeton jumped out to a huge lead against the Elis, scoring the first 14 points of the contest before Alex Zampier hit a three-pointer with 13:57 to go in the first half, triggering a 13-0 Yale run.

The Tigers built a seven-point halftime lead and held on for a 62-54 triumph. In the second half, the Tiger offense truly clicked as they shot 65 percent from the field to put the Bulldogs away.

Dan Mavraides led the way with 16 points and six rebounds. Davis had another solid outing, scoring 12 points off the bench. Yale had a big game from Zampier, who scored 19 points in 34 minutes of action. Prior to seeing their three-game winning streak snapped at Princeton, the Elis were able to defeat Penn (9-16, 5-6), 87-79. A see-saw first half put the teams nearly even at the half, but an offensive explosion by Yale in the second half put the Bulldogs ahead for good.

The Bulldogs shot a solid 62.1 percent as they scored 51 second-half points, including 40 from inside the paint. Yale had a solid performance again from Zampier (19 points) and Ross Morin (20 points, eight boards). Penn was led by 24 points off the bench from Harrison Gaines.

The weekend nearly turned into disaster for the Quakers as they got off to a poor start against Brown, who took a 13-point lead midway through the first half. But Penn battled back and headed into halftime down by only two.

Gaines again played a key role, scoring 14 points and grabbing six rebounds in the second half as Penn prevailed down the stretch, 64-54.

Kevin Egee scored 13 points for the Quakers. Matt Mullery paced Brown with a double-double in the loss (19 points and 10 rebounds).

BY KUNAL GUPTA  
*Spectator Senior Staff Writer*

The men’s tennis team finished off a weekend sweep on Monday, beating the College of Charleston 5-2 to push their spring record to 9-2. The Cougars were coming off of a 5-2 loss to Princeton on Sunday and will next travel to Richmond for a match on Wednesday. Columbia will return to action on Saturday, hosting the annual Varsity/Alumni Friends match. This will be the Lions’ last live action until they begin their spring break training trip in Texas.

“I thought it was a very, very good match,” head coach Bid Goswami said. “They were solid from top to bottom. They were all European, French, and Belgian players, and I think we played well.”

The Lions continued their strong doubles play on Monday, winning all three doubles matches, although each was fiercely contested.

Senior Bogdan Borta’s absence forced the Lions out of their regular lineup. “Bogdan had a presentation so he didn’t play in doubles,” Goswami said.

Haig Schneiderman, CC ’12, moved

up to play No. 1 doubles, and Mihai Nichifor, SEAS ’12, teamed up with Ekin Sezgen, CC ’12, to play No. 2 doubles. At No. 3 doubles was the normal duo of Dan Urban, CC ’09, and Rajeev Deb-Sen, CC ’12.

Each of the matches was close, as first and second doubles won 8-5, and third doubles won 8-6.

“I thought they played good doubles,” Goswami said. “The coach told me they played much better than they did against Princeton [on Sunday].”

Jon Wong, playing at his usual spot at No. 1 singles, led the Lions with an easy win.

“Jon, Bogdan, and Mihai all won pretty handily, so we were up 4-0 and so the rest of the matches played supertiebreaks instead of a third set,” Goswami said.

The final scores of the matches were not available by press time.

Overall, the Lions ended up sweeping three nonconference opponents this weekend, and their play against Charleston in particular seemed to please their head coach.

“I liked the way we played today,” Goswami said.

The Lions will play again on Saturday for the annual Varsity/Alumni Friends match.



Ajit Pillai / Senior Staff Photographer

**OWNING THE COURT** | Kevin Kung and the Lions knocked off the College of Charleston with a 5-2 victory on Monday, their fifth straight win. The victory capped a 3-0 weekend for the Light Blue.



BOOKS

Columbia Creative Writing Groups Join Forces

BY IAN SCHEFFLER  
*Spectator Staff Writer*

Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Nadine Gordimer, Orhan Pamuk—Columbia boasts an impressive history of student and faculty writers. Yet until the University instituted the creative writing major last year, the undergraduate share of that storied tradition was smaller than many writing enthusiasts would have liked.

In the last year, however, that pattern showed signs of change as many new or revitalized undergraduate groups and publications began to form close ties, laying the foundation for one of the most active and organized writing communities the University has seen in years.

Last fall, Nellie Bowles and Catherine Carberry, two CC '10 residents of Potluck House majoring in comparative literature and society, instituted Thursday night workshops in their brownstone. They named it the Ugly Fish Salon.

Don't let the capriciousness of the group's name fool you—the Salon takes writing seriously, bringing together professors and students to share their work and participate in workshop-style critiques. When Bowles posted fliers in Hamilton last fall, a gaggle of students arrived for the first meeting.

Since workshops in the creative writing department are capped at 15 students, the Salon fills a need for communal activity among young writers on campus. "Kids clearly

wanted it," Bowles said, "and kids clearly need something like this."

But it was not until the inception of monthly "lit nights" in the Postscript Art Gallery below St. Paul's Chapel that the breadth of that desire became clear. "The editors of more or less every campus journal were there," Bowles said. There is certainly no shortage of literary magazines on campus. Yet, as Bowles explained, the benefits of sharing one's work in a group are invaluable. "After you write a poem or a story by yourself," she said, "it's hard to have a sense of completion with anything you do."

That hunger for community has led a number of first-years who attended Salon meetings to create a new special interest community that will be called Writer's House. Next year, eight aspiring writers will live on the second floor of Wein.

"As a writer, the idea of people who share a general outlook is both comforting and enlightening and exciting. It is turning what is commonly looked at as a profession into a shared lifestyle and a friend group," said Jared Rosenfeld, CC '12 and a future resident of Writer's House.

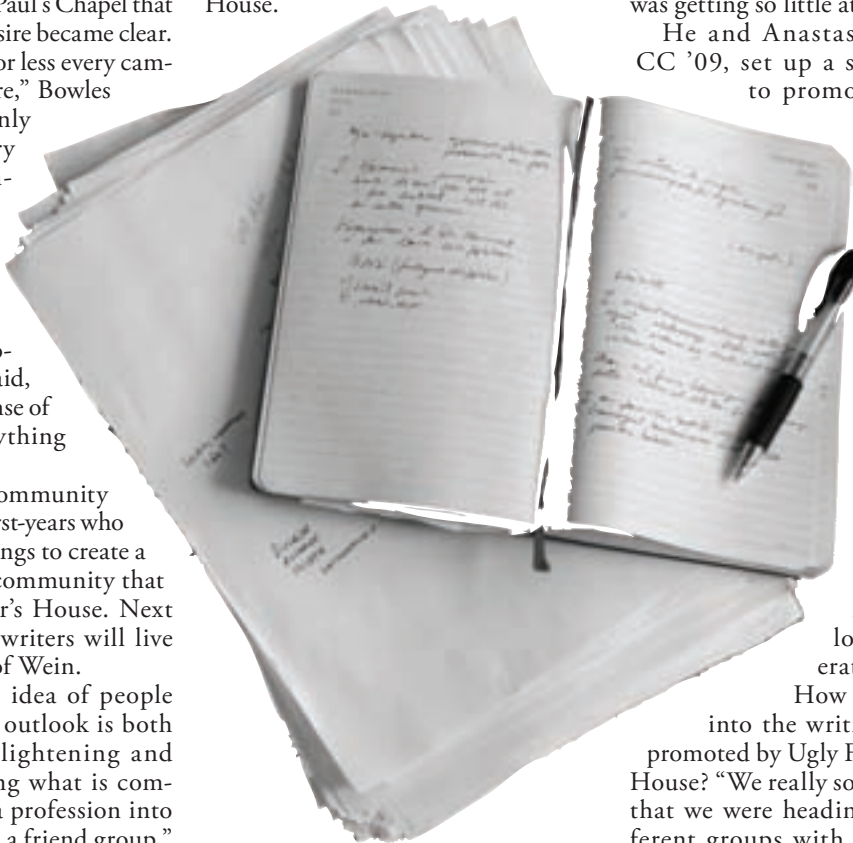
Writer's House aims both to provide a space in which writers can feel comfortable and to create a nexus for literary

events. "The main goal is to bring together the disparate pockets of writing enthusiasts," said Erica Weaver, CC '12 and co-coordinator of Writer's House.

editor Casey Black, GS '10, attended one *Quarto* meeting last fall and was "astonished that a literary magazine which has been around for 60 years was getting so little attention."

He and Anastasia McLetchie, CC '09, set up a series of events to promote *Quarto*, including a competitive reading judged by audience members whose winner (Dalton LaBarge, CC '12) will be published in this semester's issue. Of the magazine's long-term goals, Black said, "We want *Quarto* to be a new and fresh look at what literature is."

How does *Quarto* fit into the writing community promoted by Ugly Fish and Writer's House? "We really sort of recognized that we were heading up three different groups with three different functions," Black said. "We weren't interested in infiltrating one another, but supporting each other's roles, attending each other's events, ultimately forming a community."



Another player on the writing scene is *Quarto*, the creative writing department's recently revitalized undergraduate magazine. Co-executive

DANCE



**TWO TO TANGO** | Robin Thomas's Thursday night tango classes at Barnard bring dancers from all walks of life to the relaxed Argentinian-inspired atmosphere. The classes stress connection between partners, organic improvisation, and care-free creativity while transporting students to an alternate world.

Tango Finally Finds Its Comfort Zone at Columbia

BY CATHERINE RICE  
*Spectator Staff Writer*

If you don't like to dance, then you're probably the perfect candidate for Robin Thomas's Thursday night tango classes in 304 Barnard Hall.

Robin Thomas has been teaching Argentine tango at universities around the country for years with weekly classes at Princeton and Yale. He began the classes at Columbia only two years ago, and they've since grown to accommodate beginners in a class at 8 p.m., intermediate dancers at 9 p.m., and a practica (practice) session at 10 p.m. in which anyone can experiment with newly learned steps.

Thomas works to make tango more accessible by breaking down

steps in a non-stressful environment. Using the philosophy of the "five essential steps," Thomas gets his students to focus more on connecting with their partners and the music rather than worrying about sequences. "You don't need to do very much because tango is more about connection and entertaining your partner with musicality rather than doing complicated patterns that you've memorized," he said. Therefore, the stereotypical image of dancers working to impress audiences with intensely prepared technical steps does not apply.

The class is structured so that during the warm-up exercises, steps are broken down into simpler elements and practiced individually. The dancers stand all together in the beginning in a more open embrace. Then, later on, the dancers

work in pairs, and there is a more closed embrace that defines the connection between the two partners. Thomas's teaching partner, Kyra Mares, described this connection between partners as very special and unique with a lot of "unspoken communication."

Thomas also believes that Argentine tango lends itself particularly well to accessibility by virtue of its organic quality. "There is a connection in Argentine tango that I don't feel in other dances ... There's a lot of improvisation and creativity, and an almost unlimited number of possibilities for what you can do," Thomas said. The dancers work to enjoy moving with each other and with the music in a natural way rather than trying to compete in a more specialized atmosphere. "I don't know how to dance, but I know how to tango," Mares said.

The tango classes represent a way of teaching and learning that can only occur in the unique environment of the University. Thomas and Mares enjoy teaching students because the students are both quick to learn and sociable. "We try to make it funny, make people laugh. You don't have to be a dancer, we aim it towards something that everybody can do," Mares said. This is especially true of the practica, which gives dancers the opportunity to experiment with steps they've learned in class while working with more experienced dancers that may not attend the classes but will attend the practica. It also allows Thomas and Mares to give students personal attention, helping them with

particular moves without having to follow a schedule.

There is the sense between Thomas and Mares that tango dancers live in an alternate world, a place that is removed from the trivialities and weariness of everyday life and reality. It is for this reason that Thomas enjoys teaching students at Barnard and Columbia—because he believes that students don't live in the real world, and he finds it easier to connect with them when teaching. Mares, on the other hand, tries to bring tango "down-to-earth" by "simplifying it and making connections with everyday life things. These people are in the real world and they're coming into our world, and it's hard to understand what we're talking about."

Whatever world the teachers and students live in, the tango community at Columbia is one that is established and one that is determined to have a good time. In the practica, Thomas and Mares get to put some names to the faces that they've been teaching during classes. "We see all these faces every day, and we like to sit down and figure out what they do. It's great to get to know our students," Mares said.

Thomas and Mares simply hope that their emphasis on teaching young people will foster a growth in the tango community on Columbia's campus as well as at other universities and in the greater New York City area. "I've been teaching at Columbia for two years, and I feel as though we're just getting at the beginning. It's just about to begin growing a lot."



Kenneth Jackson / Staff Photographer

ART

Sculptures In Queens A Big Draw



ALYSSA RAPP  
**ART IN FOUR BOROUGHS**

Surrounded by a neon yellow pebbled courtyard and vintage storefronts, SculptureCenter in Long Island City, Queens deconstructs the boundaries between art and reception space.

Its warehouse structure provokes visual curiosity even before one reaches the visitor's booth that functions as part of the current exhibition.

The nonprofit center, run by a small, deeply committed staff, promotes the work of contemporary artists. Off the beaten track, it serves as less of a tourist destination than as a haunt of the art cognoscenti. According to director of communications and practicing artist Nickolas Roudané, the organization's independent status promotes its ability to challenge the viewer and to emanate a vibe that is both welcoming and experimental.

The architecture of this nineteenth-century trolley warehouse interacts with the pieces on display, negating the limits of what can and cannot constitute sculpture. Likewise, Roudané described the center as anything but a "hermetic, idealist space" since it allows the structural elements of the building to influence the works. In fact, Roudané assured me that I was not hallucinating when I noticed that even the site's fire alarms, peeling paint, and exposed pipes could conceptually connect with an installation.

He stated that the space's inherent overload of visual information challenges the artist and promotes a "dialogue between art and location."

The second floor of the center currently hosts the "In Practice" series and exhibits the work of emerging artists, who work with curators to adapt the pieces to the center's unique space.

According to Roudané, "The goal of contemporary art is to set off a series of questions." The current first floor exhibit, "The Space of the Work and the Place of the Object," analyzes the relationship between the sculpture to the way it was produced and calls attention to both the visual reception and temporal lives of the sculpted objects. In an installation of transparency film by Walead Beshty, the physical act of the film being X-rayed at an airport produces the vibrant colors of the installation while conceptually alluding to issues of international travel.

Roudané himself functions in this exhibit as part of Karen Schneider's piece *Tubular*. As Schneider places Roudané in a glass booth next to a temporary studio filled with his works in progress, she draws attention to Roudané's status as an artist working at an institution. Roudané's work focuses on painting landscape scenes that invoke the "imagination" and "construct a world within a world," which conveniently parallels his role in Schneider's piece.

The center encourages discourse as it hosts a practicing artists' lecture series in conjunction with The New School. The upcoming exhibit titled "The University of Trash" will generate a forum to study alternative methods of city planning. In April, the annual Lucky Draw benefit will include the work of over 150 artists, and this summer, artists and musicians will collaborate in a concert series accompanied by installations.

SculptureCenter generates a gray area for the production and reception of work in which the viewer's mind summons the space to meaning.

Alyssa Rapp is a Barnard College sophomore majoring in art history and visual arts. Art in Four Boroughs runs alternate Tuesdays.



Courtesy of SculptureCenter

**QUESTION IT** | The SculptureCenter brings sculpture and space into constant dialogue.













## Fiscal Concerns Guide GMs at NBA Deadline



CHARLES YOUNG

### CHARLES IN CHARGE

For the first time I can remember, what made the headlines after the NBA trade deadline this year wasn't what had actually happened, but what didn't.

In the details that have surfaced since Feb. 19, we have

learned that many current and former All-Stars, such as Amar'e Stoudemire and Vince Carter, were being offered on the trading block for little to nothing in return. In exchange for players who can get you 20 and 20 points every night, teams asked for nothing but expiring contracts. But no trades transpired. The only teams that got deals done were the ones that bribed other teams to take on more money. My own Toronto Raptors parted with a first-round pick and useful role player Jamarion Moon just for the privilege of not having to pay Jermaine O'Neal in 2010.

Not since the '70s have teams in the NBA been so financially strapped and so afraid to spend money. No potential contender this season added a veteran to get over the hump. Conversely, quite a few of them got worse by dumping salaries. The Detroit Pistons deep-sixed any realistic chance at a title this season by dropping Chauncey Billups for Allen Iverson's expiring contract. The Los Angeles Lakers traded valuable player Vladimir Radmanovic for spectacular draft bust Adam Morrison. While it would be untrue to say that what matters most to teams is no longer wins and losses, it would be fair to suggest that cash and the stars that generate it are almost as important.

This predicament can be blamed partly on the NBA itself. Over the past few years, the league has moved teams from larger to smaller markets, driven by the promise of new stadiums and an energized fanbase. This plan has backfired for many teams, as small markets labor to keep an NBA franchise afloat. Despite early excitement, the most important factor to basketball's survival in Memphis may be the fact that the Grizzlies' lease lasts well into the new decade. While Hurricane Katrina's effects on the city of New Orleans were undoubtedly severe and unforeseeable, the city was never a big market in the first place. That fact has become painfully obvious to the Hornets this year.

It is tragic that the league has become so financially vulnerable at a time when it is putting out its best product in more than a decade. The new talent that has flowed into the league since the 2003 draft class of LeBron James, Carmelo Anthony, and Dwayne Wade has provided the NBA with its highest level of play since the Jordan years. While "Be Like LeBron" doesn't quite roll off the tongue like MJ's slogan does, James's efforts with the Cavaliers are as noteworthy as Jordan's in his early years. But do veteran teams like the old Pistons stand in the young star's way? The 2009 Celtics and Spurs are at your service. Combine this storyline with other marketable faces such as Kobe Bryant, Dwight Howard, and Chris Paul, and it's hard to see what else the league could do from a product standpoint.

This renaissance has come at a time when many other leagues are unable to expand their reach. The NFL remains the king of sports and may always retain that title, but the MLB continues to be dogged by steroids and competitive balance issues. The NHL looks like it may shrink back to regional relevance. The cultural chasm between NASCAR and non-core audiences may be too great to be bridged, and tennis has steadily lost relevance since the retirement of Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi.

The uncertainty now facing the sports world clouds hopes for the NBA to rise in prominence. As teams dump salary, likable teams and high-quality play may go with it. If teams start having to bounce from city to city, fanbases will be destroyed. While pro basketball has money in the bank from its assured place on national television, will league offices want to know how many people are in front of those screens?

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## Injuries Hurt Light Blue in Home Stretch

BY LUCAS SHAW

Spectator Senior Staff Writer



File Photo

**DOWN AND OUT** | Joe Bova is just one of many Lions whose chronic injury problems have plagued the men's basketball team this season. Bova's back injury has kept him off the floor seven times so far this season.



### BRIAN GRIMES (ACL)

Grimes, a sophomore forward, has sat out the entire season with a torn ACL.

### JOE BOVA (BACK)

Forward Joe Bova, a senior, has missed seven games and his 220-pound frame has been missing in the paint.

### PATRICK FOLEY (FOOT)

Foley, a junior guard, sat out seven games with an ankle injury but has been playing well in Ivy action.

### ASENSO AMPIM (ANKLE)

Sophomore forward Asenso Ampim has been sidelined ten games this season with an ankle injury.

Graphic by Daniel Lasry

## Women's Basketball Victimized by Opposing Guards

BY SARAH SOMMER

Spectator Senior Staff Writer

This past weekend, the Columbia women's basketball team took on the top two Ivy League squads, Harvard and Dartmouth, at Levin Gymnasium. The Lions (13-13, 6-6 Ivy) kept both games close, but they were outplayed by opposing guards at crucial moments. As a result, Columbia was unable to win either matchup.

Towards the end of the first half against Harvard, freshman guard Melissa Shafer made two foul shots to cut the Crimson's lead to just one point. But Harvard's Brogan Berry, a freshman guard, came right back with a layup on the other end to give the Crimson (17-8, 9-2) a 29-26 halftime advantage. The Lions trailed by only three points with 2:45 left in regulation, but Harvard's guards cemented the win for their team.

Sophomore Christine Matera, who saw 17 minutes of action off the bench, hit consecutive three-pointers to give the Crimson a nine-point lead with 1:55 to play. Sophomore forward Judie Lomax cut into that advantage with two free throws for Columbia, but Berry answered with consecutive layups for Harvard. Berry, a starter, played for 36 minutes and made six of her seven field goal attempts.

With 27 seconds remaining and the game's outcome decided, Lomax fouled senior Emily Tay out of desperation. Tay, an all-Ivy first-team guard, sank both of her foul shots to finish with a game-high 23 points. When the final buzzer sounded, the Crimson walked away with a 71-58 victory.

Shafer and sophomore guard Kathleen Barry combined for 14 points off the bench for Columbia, but the Lions did not receive enough offense from their starting backcourt. Senior Katrina Cragg and junior Danielle Browne had just one field goal each, while junior Sara Yee made only two baskets. Furthermore, no

Columbia player sank a three-pointer in the defeat.

Columbia seemed to have rebounded from their loss when they faced Dartmouth (15-10, 10-1) the following night. The Lions were buoyed in the first half by Browne, who led her team with aggressive play on both ends of the floor.

With just under 10 minutes left in the period, Browne made consecutive layups. She was fouled on the second one and managed to tie the game at 13 after converting the three-point play. After the Big Green turned the ball over, Browne continued her offensive display with a three-pointer. She went on to record a steal on Dartmouth's next possession.

Toward the end of the first half, a steal by Browne led to a layup for Lomax. On Columbia's next two possessions, Browne once again scored consecutive layups. She finished the half with 12 points, and the Lions went into the locker room ahead 31-19.

"Honestly, I thought she played like a warrior," head coach Paul Nixon said. "She was ready to play, and that's the Danielle Browne we know and love."

When play resumed, however, Browne's impact decreased. The Big Green rallied behind a guard of its own en route to a 63-61 win. Senior Koren Schram, an all-Ivy first-team player, was limited to just two points in the first period. In the second half, however, she came through for Dartmouth with 15 points.

"The way that Danielle carried us in the first half, that's how she [Schram] carried them in the second half," Nixon said. "It's really a 'tale of two halves' situation, and that's basketball."

Browne led all scorers with 19 points. Cragg, meanwhile, was once again limited by the opposing defense and finished with six points for Columbia. She made just two of her 10 field goal attempts and missed five three-pointers. Barry scored eight points for the Lions, going 2-2 from behind the arc.

Columbia hits the road this weekend to wrap up Ivy play at Princeton and Penn.



Dan Fainstein / Senior Staff Photographer

**CATCHING FIRE** | Junior Danielle Browne turned out a stellar effort against Dartmouth, scoring 12 points in the first half to help stake Columbia to a 31-19 lead at the break.