

# Librarians say ‘Om’ at New York Public Library

BY AMANDA STIBEL  
*Columbia Daily Spectator*

Yogis didn’t need a book to figure out what downward-facing dog was last night at the New York Public Library on 100th Street.

The NYPL’s Bloomingdale Branch hosted its first yoga class on Wednesday—part of a larger initiative to reach out to the surrounding community, according to library manager Rebecca Donsky.

“We have the space, so I think we would be doing people a disservice if we didn’t provide active events that are good for mind and body,” Donsky said.

Local yoga instructor Christa Avampato, founder of Compass Yoga, said she suggested hosting a weekly free class to bring yoga to people who aren’t normally exposed to it.

“My goal is to teach yoga to underserved populations, so I wanted to offer a free class, and I really wanted it to be in my own neighborhood,” Avampato explained.

Pricey gym memberships are out of the question for many in the area, and as Avampato pointed out, many specialized classes like yoga, kickboxing, and spinning can feel intimidating to a first-timer. She said she believes an informal and relaxed atmosphere is less daunting to a beginner than a professional studio where everyone is decked out in Lululemon.

“You don’t want to walk into a yoga studio where everyone is looking all athletic and wonderful when you’re a little out of shape and have never done it before,” Avampato said.

Donsky said she thought the local library would be the perfect place for a comfortable yoga class.

“The library has become more of a community center. We still have the books—it’s still a nice, quiet place to read, study, and relax—but people are coming here to hang out,” Donsky said.

The 15 attendees included college students, parents, and even a Columbia grandparent, who attended with her friends. “Yoga is good for all ages. It is stress-relieving and relaxing, and even if you can’t do every pose, it’s great for your body,” Avampato explained.

Donsky said she was thrilled with the turnout at the class.

“It got quite a buzz,” she said.

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## TRANSFUSION EXCLUSION



ZARA CASTANY / SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**BLOOD** | Students attend a speech about the FDA’s controversial ban on blood donations from men who have sex with men.

# Barnard hosts third annual symposium in South Africa

BY ANNE BRINK  
*Columbia Daily Spectator*

While many of their peers did spring break on the beach in Florida, six Barnard students spent last week in South Africa at the college’s third annual global symposium, where over 460 people convened to discuss

female leadership.

The students were joined by Barnard President Debora Spar and a handful of other Barnard faculty members at the event, “Women Changing Africa,” in Johannesburg, which brought together female leaders in business, politics and academia from across Africa.

“I think that Africa is really at an interesting moment right now. There are some really bright signs of optimism on the continent, and a lot of those bright signs are women. Women are really leading the change in Africa,” Spar said, adding that Africa seemed like the obvious choice for this year’s symposium.

The annual conferences, which had previously been held in Beijing and Dubai, were started three years ago to focus on various parts of the world where women are making big changes for the next generation. Next year’s symposium will be held in Mumbai, India.

One panel called “Conversations on Leadership” focused on the current progress of female leaders in Africa and featured speakers like South African central bank Governor Gill Marcus, Ferial Haffajee, editor-in-chief of City Press, South Africa’s leading news source, and Rwandan senator Aloisea Inyumba, among others.

Another, focused on continuing women’s leadership in Africa and finding ways to inspire young women to succeed, included speakers like Susan Mboya, founder and president of the Zawadi Africa Education Fund and general manager of Coca-Cola, and Nndi Nwuneli, founder of LEAP Africa.

Marcus’ speech made a strong impression on Freesia Levine, BC ’11 and one of the six undergraduates chosen to attend the symposium.



COURTESY OF BARNARD COLLEGE

**LEADERSHIP** | Susan Mboya and Nndi Nwuneli sit on the panel “Voices of the Next Generation.”

**SEE AFRICA**, page 2

## NEWS BRIEF

### Westside to crack down on student shoplifters

Following an arrest on Tuesday, the management at Westside Market said they intend to change their policy toward student shoplifters.

“It’s not a joke anymore. We’ve let students get away with warnings for the past four years,” Nick Glenis, a store manager, said.

Glenis noted that this has been a particularly active year for student shoplifters attempting to steal food from Westside, despite the fact that at least 30 cameras are mounted in the store above the cash registers.

“We’ve probably arrested about 12 students ... [this year] alone,” he said.

On Tuesday night a female student was arrested after she was seen exiting

the store with roughly \$60 worth of groceries she had not paid for. After confronting the student, who a cashier said was a repeat offender, the manager on duty brought her back inside and called the New York Police Department. The student had put groceries directly into her bag.

Glenis, who was not present during the arrest, said the student may have been an upperclassman, around 20 or 21 years old.

Last semester the management posted signs around the store, stating that patrons could not bring reusable, cloth grocery bags into the store, due to concerns about shoplifting.

—Sonalee Rau



JASPER L. CLYATT / SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**NIGHT MARKET** | Shoppers walk by Westside Market. According to the management, about 12 students have been arrested this year for shoplifting,

## A&E, PAGE 3

### Music Unites supports campus and community

Columbia’s branch of Music Unites combines music and philanthropy, promoting student artists and donating to the local community by hosting its first ever event at Mel’s.



## OPINION, PAGE 4

### The terminal

Batmanghelidj paints a horrifying picture of the aerotropolis.

### Thumbing a ride

It’s OK to rely on the kindness of strangers.

## SPORTS, PAGE 6

### Downcap, not upcap, and not allcap,

Please keep under 30 words. Apiendi siminveni conserore quis et dolupture maximus coriae verum fuga. Et lit, inis vernam harci consequodit, que dolorio.

## EVENTS

### Are Grapes Fattening?

Uncover the myths surrounding nutrition and exercise with CU Sports dietician Karen Reznik Dolins. Trustees Room, Low Memorial Library. 12-1 p.m.

## WEATHER

### Today



39°/26°

### Tomorrow



40°/26°





COURTESY OF MILITARY VETERANS OF COLUMBIA

IN THE LOBBY | Columbia MilVets stand outside the office of Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY).

## MilVets call on Congress for grandfather clause

### VETS from front page

“We threatened to bring Anthony there just to kind of clear things up,” McClelland said, “to say we’re fighting to stay in school there [at Columbia], not to leave it.”

Maschek was with the MilVets for the trip and also lobbied for the grandfather clause. Since Maschek is a first year in GS, the bill is likely to raise his tuition costs without a grandfather clause.

The post-9/11 GI Bill, along with the Yellow Ribbon Program—in which the VA

matches tuition contributions from the University—gave eligible veterans at Columbia a tuition waiver, housing allowance, and \$2,700 per month living stipend. Rich Baldassari, GS and an organizer of the trip, said many were upset to learn they wouldn’t continue to receive those benefits. He said the trip was easy to pull together because of the “outpouring of people who wanted to help” from across GS.

“I don’t want to downplay my job—it was a lot of work—but it wasn’t so hard because a lot of people are really dedicated to this,” he said.

Lagana said he was pleasantly surprised at how easy it was to contact lawmakers in the nation’s capital.

“I had put Washington on a pedestal, almost. It had seemed a little inaccessible, but I found it was quite the opposite,” Lagana said.

He added that they will continue to monitor the progress of the amendment from New York.

“In terms of lobbying, I’d say it’s out of our hands at this point. I don’t know what else we can do,” he said.

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## Barnard students spend spring break in Africa

### AFRICA from front page

“She [Marcus] said it’s much harder to fight for issues than it is against issues. I think it is really powerful to switch our perspective and use that to drive our efforts,” she said of Marcus’ speech.

Spar said she believes encouraging women to take on professional and leadership roles in Africa was one of the primary goals of the conference and that she was particularly

pleased with the workshops Barnard held for local high school students.

In addition to Levine, Reni Calister, BC ’11, Hayley Milliman, BC ’12, Renee Sladja, BC ’13, Mbali Zoni, BC ’14, and Clare Korir, BC ’12, attended the conference and moderated workshops for local high school students.

“I was absolutely blown away by the eloquence, strength, and purpose of their [students’] ideas they had come up with in just 10 minutes. Young people can be an

enormous force in change,” said Levine, who is interested in going into education.

Spar said more and more students at Barnard are choosing to help the world abroad.

“We are already seeing our students do more study abroad programs in Africa. There are vast opportunities in public health, human rights, and education. There is no dearth of opportunities on the continent,” said Spar.

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COURTESY OF BARNARD COLLEGE

SPEECH | Barnard has previously hosted symposia in Dubai and Beijing. Next year’s will be in India.

# Faculty for a Reserve Officers Training Corps Program

The affirmative case for an ROTC program at Columbia has been crowded out by debate over legislation prohibiting military service by open homosexuals. The repeal of that legislation makes it possible to clearly state that case, which can be briefly summarized:

- It is damaging to democratic ideals of equality that graduates of highly selective, private universities are so underrepresented in the nation’s officer corps.
- That the officer corps is drawn disproportionately from non-urban settings and other regions of the nation creates an imbalance that benefits neither American society nor its military.
- At Columbia, military service should be recognized as a form of public service as is service in civil society.
- Our students’ prevailing experience is of great personal distance from military service, limiting preparation for citizenship.
- Reciprocally, military leaders are often uncomprehending of the values for which Columbia and its peer institutions stand. A civil-military gap caused by mutual incomprehension is undesirable.
- Diversity in the student body including students preparing for military service would help alleviate this situation.
- The university should not put obstacles in the way of students who wish to serve as commissioned officers and, in so doing, help finance their educations.
- These propositions are independent of judgments as individual citizens of policies involving the armed forces, and about which the university is institutionally neutral.

*Faculty signing this statement may not agree fully with all its features but all agree with the following:*

**Provided that ROTC is subject to the same academic procedures as govern other programs, we support the establishment of an ROTC program**

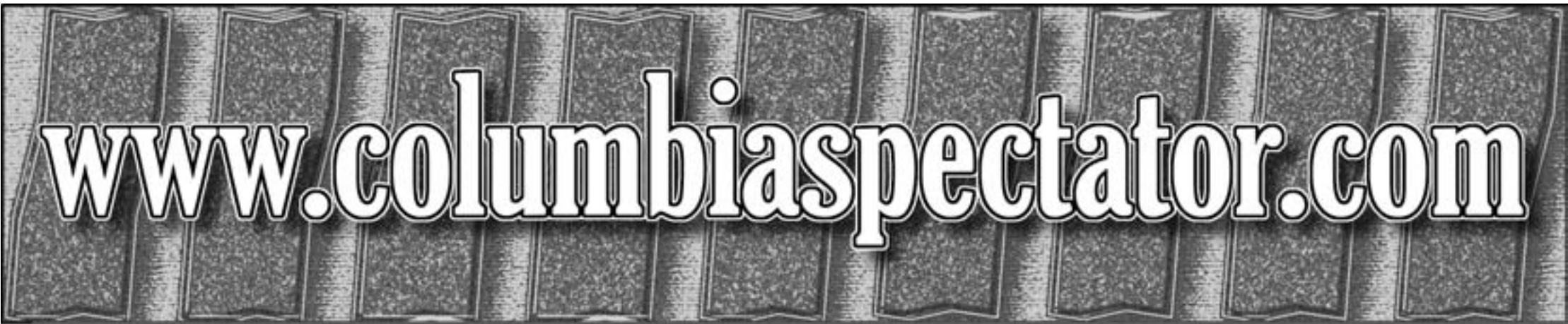
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# ‘The Wiz’ not in Kansas anymore, thanks to two white women

BY CHRISTINE JORDAN  
*Spectator Senior Staff Writer*

The Broadway classic “The Wiz” is a soulful ’70s retelling of “The Wizard of Oz” in the context of black culture. This weekend, “The Wiz” gets a one-of-a-kind retelling of its own: a 60-minute spoof staged by two white Barnard students.

Liz Watson and Colette McIntyre, both BC ’12, wrote and are starring in the original Columbia University Performing Arts League (CUPAL) special project “Operation: Ease on Down the Road.” The two-woman musical comedy hopes to amuse, challenge, and not totally offend audiences for two free performances on Friday, March 25, in the Lerner Black Box Theater.

“It’s a gag, in a way—two white girls doing ‘The Wiz,’” McIntyre said. “But we want to prove that you can be silly and lighthearted and still put on a great production, because something like this hasn’t been done at Columbia in a while.”

The co-writers and co-stars will be the first to admit that their conceit is a little inane and very much out there. Nonetheless, Watson and McIntyre think that a dose of outlandishness might be exactly what the extremely dedicated yet insular campus theater scene needs.

**BIG TALENT, SMALL COMMUNITY**

Proposing Watson and McIntyre’s oddball little show that could was, perhaps expectedly, an uphill battle.

“Ease on Down” started as a quirky idea two longtime friends riffed about, fresh off the set of another production, Columbia University Players’ “Black Comedy.” When they realized that they were equally serious about seeing the show become more than an inside joke, they searched for a producer and started filling out their CUPAL proposal.

“It was kind of hard to propose it because everyone in the theater community knew me and Colette,” Watson said. “When we came forward with the idea of the show, I think there was a little aspect of, ‘Uh-oh, these guys! This is going to be stupid and ridiculous!’”

Columbia’s theater scene can be intimidating even for those with no reputation to precede them. “People here are so serious about their love for their craft, so the same people are always doing it,” McIntyre said.

The team for “Ease on Down” really captures the smallness of Columbia’s theater crowd. It shares two key players with that campus comedy Goliath, the Varsity Show: Victoria Pollack, BC ’12, a 117th Varsity Show cast member and the choreographer of “Ease On Down,” and Solomon Hoffman, CC ’14, a 117th Varsity Show musical assistant and the production’s musical director.

“Varsity Show obviously has a special place in not just the Columbia theater community, but the Columbia community as a whole,” Hoffman said, adding that the creative vision for McIntyre

and Watson’s show was enough to sell him on a commitment to their show on top of a notoriously large one to the Varsity Show.

Pollack echoed the excitement of having the opportunity to work on something so different from Columbia theater’s usual offerings: “While there are a lot of awesome improv, sketch comedy, and theatrical comedies on campus, ‘EODTR’ is the only original scripted comedy performed by its writers,” she said.

Even though overlaps have meant that some cast and crew members have been sprinting between rehearsals, it was vital to the production’s staging, as most of the students working on “Ease on Down” joined after personal appeals.

Their producer, Will Hughes, CC ’13, who secured the show its Gatsby grant funding and CUPAL backing, was one such person. “Liz and Colette came to me with the idea, and I immediately decided to be a part of it. It’s such a funny, silly idea that I couldn’t wait to help make it a reality,” he said.

Director Victoria Ugarte, CC ’12, also answered their plea after having worked with both Watson and McIntyre in the past. They offered her a peculiar directorial challenge: How does a director lead a play that’s entirely the vision of her actors? As Ugarte said, “Directors normally have a say in everything from which play it is to the color tights an actress wears,” and that was much less so the case for “Ease on Down.”

Indeed, Watson and McIntyre knew how much they were asking of the team who signed on, but it was integral to the show’s execution.

“We needed people who got us and our sense of humor,” McIntyre said.

“And really trusted us,” Watson added.

**SETTING THE STAGE**

Columbia hasn’t had a shortage of student shows with humble beginnings. Last November’s “ReImagined,” for one, was put on by a handful of Columbia students at The Riverside Church without support from any campus organizations.

Nonetheless, more spontaneous, grassroots productions are the exception rather than the rule in Morningside, at least in recent years.

“I feel like when I came here, the opportunity for student-written comedy, unless you were in Chowdah or an improv group, was small,” Watson said. “We wanted to resurrect that spirit of, ‘I have an idea—why shouldn’t this be a CUPAL special project?’”

Hughes stressed how easy it is to apply for backing from CUPAL, CUArts, and the President and Provost’s Student Event Fund, and how organizations like CUPAL can help students outside organized groups do things like reserve space and apply for grants.

Coming from major comedic productions like the 116th Varsity Show and “XMAS! 5,” Hughes also emphasized the unique environment provided by nontraditional shows. He worked with Watson,



SERENA PIOL / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**WIZ KIDS** | Two white Barnard students stage an idiosyncratic take on hit musical “The Wiz.”

McIntyre, and Ugarte to craft the script and experiment with unusual styles and forms, and that only brought them closer together. “It’s been such an intimate show, with things like rehearsals in predominately our suites and our alcohol rotation for writing meetings,” he said.

**NOBODY BEATS ‘THE WIZ’**

Watson and McIntyre are not bashful about the natural affection they have for the “The Wiz” and its music.

“Genuinely, one of the reasons why we get along so well is that we both have a racially inappropriate but very deep and sincere love of funk music,” McIntyre, who DJs WKCR’s soul and funk show, said. The duo gleefully added that Watson’s ringtone is the soul classic “The Rubberband Man” by The Spinners.

Thus, the show took a shape that its ironic conceit may not make immediately apparent. “It’s not a cynical show,” Watson said. “We knew that it

wouldn’t be fun to watch two people be sarcastic for an hour.”

At the same time, “Ease on Down” is a platform for its creators to call out the movie they have adored since childhood. “When you see the movie when you’re older and you have some understanding of race relations and political correctness, it is just so bad,” McIntyre said of the show’s efforts to be empowering.

“We’re really asking what it means for two white girls to be doing ‘The Wiz,’” McIntyre said. “Can you do that while still genuinely loving the musical and celebrating African-American culture?”

But for all their commentary on the racial status quo, their hopes are still quite true to the show’s jokey origins.

“I want people to think it’s funny,” McIntyre said.

Watson continued, “Yeah, ‘not a horrible disaster’ would be nice.”

## Music Unites strikes a chord with philanthropy-minded student artists

BY ELISSE ROCHE  
*Columbia Daily Spectator*

Invested both in creative arts and community service, the group Music Unites seeks to foster a community that supports up-and-coming student artists and the local neighborhood.

As a subsection of the larger, citywide organization, the Columbia branch of Music Unites continues the mission of connecting people and uniting communities through music. Its first event, organized in collaboration with Frat DJs, will be held tonight, March 24, at 11:30 p.m. in Mel’s Burger Bar, featuring performances from bands Blaxel, Jake Snider, and EMEFE.

This reciprocal relationship between emerging performers and their surrounding community is what drew liaison and representative Sophia Melon, BC ’14, to the Columbia branch.

After being involved with CU Records, Columbia’s independent record label, Melon attended one of Music Unites’ informational sessions, researched the organization, and committed herself to its mission.

“I think what hooked me was that there is this philanthropic aspect, where you go into the inner-city school systems where the arts and funding is cut,” Melon said. “I believe that art is a very important part about education, so after I researched the organization, this sealed the deal for me.”

As a musician herself, Melon sympathizes with the needs of emerging and struggling artists. Music inspired her through its power to both cleanse and heal at age 10, when a young boy broke her heart.

“I wrote a song about it,” she said. “I went on stage and performed it, and I was heartbroken, but then afterwards I felt, I guess, cleansed. Since then, music has been something I have always turned to and something I can always rely on.”

Keeping in mind her personal experience as a guitarist, bassist, and singer-songwriter, Melon recognizes the importance of music and expression within a community, whether it is an Ivy League university or an inner-city neighborhood.

Music “crosses languages, it crosses barriers, it connects people,” Melon said. “I think that through art, we can save things and communicate in a way that can be, at times, more meaningful than just saying it.”

As a representative, Melon fosters a relationship with the larger organization of Music Unites by relaying information and administrative concerns. Columbia’s Music Unites branch currently has about 16 members, five of whom are administrators. Though relatively small,



COURTESY OF SOPHIA MELON

**ROCK OUT** | Blaxel, along with bands Jake Snider and EMEFE, will perform at Mel’s Burger Bar on March 24 in support of Music Unites.

the group hopes to spread awareness and recruit more members through its concert event at Mel’s.

“We’re specifically trying to create this community among Columbians that support our up-and-coming artists and that want to express themselves with music,” Melon said. “We want to create performance opportunities for them as much as possible so that they can get their music out there and feel supported.”

In addition to providing local opportunities, Columbia’s Music Unites hopes to connect these artists with the larger organization so that they can meet and, as Melon said, “pick the brains of” established people in the music industry.

According to Melon, “Music Unites wants to support music across the board,” regardless of genre. The event’s \$5 cover will be divided between \$2 for Frat DJs, which has promoted and coordinated the event, and \$3 for Music Unites’ charity efforts for local schools on the Upper West Side and in Harlem.

Out of the three featured student bands, the musical styles of EMEFE and Jake Snider run from folk-rock, singer-songwriter, and funk to Afro-pop. EMEFE recently released a new CD titled “Europe EP,” which will be available for purchase at the event. Jake Snider recently returned from doing showcases at South by Southwest, the annual film and music festival in Austin, Texas. Blaxel has a more funk- and rock-focused sound and is currently working on its EP.

## Professor discusses new book about digital media’s impact on psychoanalysis

BY NICOLLETTE BARSAMIAN  
*Spectator Staff Writer*

Tuesday night at Book Culture, Lydia H. Liu, the W.T. Tam Professor in the Humanities in the department of East Asian languages and culture and the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, hosted a lecture on her new book, “The Freudian Robot.”

The book is the first intensive study of the political history of digital writing and its relation to the Freudian unconscious.

When asked about her inspiration for the book, Liu said, “I come from a comparative literature background. I had written ‘The Clash of Empires’ about nineteenth-century communication technology and the way that it shaped the modern world order.” Liu then took those ideas and applied them to new technologies.

The event was a conversation between Liu and McKenzie Wark, the author of “Gamer Theory” and “A Hacker Manifesto” and the associate dean of faculty affairs at Eugene Lang College of the New School.

Liu explained that psychoanalysis was originally an important part of cybernetics theory and cyborg ideas.

“The common perception is that psychoanalysis has little to do with digital media and that digital media have nothing to do with psychoanalysis,” she said. Liu explained that, in light of so many books published about prosthetic limbs, eyes, and brains, the existential question arises: With all these artificial parts, are you still you?

Some may wonder what exactly a Freudian robot is. As robots are created to be more and more human, people might also become more and more robotlike. “Perhaps the robots need psychoanalysts!” Wark said.

Another key idea in Liu’s book is the “27th letter of the alphabet.” The English language gained another letter—space. Liu emphasized the importance of noting that space is not a negative space but a positive symbol.

Without space, everything one read would be gibberish. All symbols become discrete with the introduction of the space symbol. “Nobody paid attention to this addition of space. It is an ideographic space independent of sound—a post-phonetic ideographic symbol,” Liu said.

In addition to this complex discussion of language, the lecture covered topics from James Joyce to game theory. While the talk was at times hard to follow for those not well-versed in literary criticism and theory, it was nonetheless engaging.

Liu hopes that students take these words of advice from her book: “Be careful not to turn into a Freudian robot. Read more literature and history.”

When asked if she had an iPhone, she responded, “Yes, but I don’t have an iPad. And I only have one iPhone—I have many books.” There are problems with the way “we organize knowledge in general,” Liu said.

Liu concluded with advice for Columbia students: “Don’t think your discipline gives you the truth about the world. No one discipline does.”



ANDRA MIHALI / SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**OEDIPUS CYBORG** | Lydia Liu (left) promotes her book “The Freudian Robot” at Book Culture.





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# Beware the Aerotropolis

The English science fiction novelist J.G. Ballard once wrote, “I suspect that the airport will be the true city of the 21st century. The great airports are already the suburbs of an invisible world capital, a virtual metropolis whose fauborgs are named Heathrow, Kennedy, Charles de Gaulle, Nagoya, a centripetal city whose population forever circles its notional center, and will never need to gain access to its dark heart.” A deliciously prophetic quote, Ballard’s words introduce a new book by John Kasarda and Greg Lindsay titled “Aerotropolis.” The aerotropolis is a phenomenon we must all familiarize ourselves with, for it is going to become the defining model of urban development in the 21st century. As the economies of the world are increasingly interconnected via flight paths, as the airports of major cities pupate into veritable cities of their own, the aerotropolis, an organism of vitality and controlled chaos, will rise from brick and mortar.

Over spring break, many Columbians ventured to far-away climes. These travels almost certainly involved passing through airports and the experience of incredible potential for complete catastrophe. One might forget his identification; be mistaken for a terrorist; go to the wrong terminal; have unsolicited relations with a Republican senator; get food poisoning from a bad sandwich; be swindled for a bottle of lukewarm Dasani; miss his flight; get bumped to the next flight; experience further delays; be selected for additional screening; have unsolicited relations with a TSA agent; be seated in the middle seat next to a wailing baby, a loquacious cat lady, a pontificating ecclesiast, a snorer, a sick person, a sumo wrestler, or a terrorist with bombs in his briefs; have tomato juice spilled on his pants; be trapped in an endless line at immigration; be mistaken for a terrorist again; be interrogated; have his bag lost, stolen, or filled with cocaine; or have jet lag. Any one of these events will ruin a trip. The statistical likelihood suggests that one day, some person will experience all or most of these travesties in a single journey. May we pray for that poor soul.

## The tyranny of airports has affected a member of the Columbia community.

In a world where airports will come to define our cities and anchor them in a newly integrated global economy, the calamities of air travel will become the daily routine for millions. As the futurist Geoff Manaugh reports in his interview with the authors, hosted on Manaugh’s own BLDGBLOG, “If Atlanta’s Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport were to become its own country, its annual workforce and user base would make it ‘the twelfth most populous nation on Earth.’” The 12th most populous nation on earth is a sadistic land, dominated by a legitimized Big Brother who seeks to protect us from an alleged onslaught of murderous terrorists. It is a land where the rich and the poor are segregated from the moment the main terminal doors open, where the class system is laid bare and actually denoted by signs.

The tyranny of airports has already affected a member of the Columbia community. In mid-January, Columbia researcher Edward Hall was in line to pass through security when he suddenly realized he had forgotten his photo identification. The TSA agent would not allow him to proceed. Hall’s solution was heroic and his resolve admirable. He proceeded to sneak behind the ticket counter and ride the luggage belt all the way to the tarmac, where he was eventually arrested. His explanation: “I just wanted to make my flight.”

As citizens of an aerotropolis, we have been conditioned to see this behavior as roguish and criminal. But Edward Hall is a freedom fighter, one of our own who strove to overcome the maelstrom of economic inequality and political repression that is the modern airport. Airports are a wonderfully poetic allegory for modern living—masses moving in parallel lines, the fortunate in first class marginally better off, but pretty much as miserable as the hoi polloi. Everyone arrives at his final destination weary and wanting, unsure of what lies ahead, but certain that what has passed was less glamorous than hoped. Airports don’t just get us from A to B. They show us that both A and B are undesirable places that will never meet expectations. If these cruelly honest complexes are to be the center of our new urban landscapes, we should be wary of the dystopian future ahead. ABC is currently filming a new series titled “Pan Am.” A “Mad Men” in the skies, the show hearkens back to the glory days of air travel, a time when minxish flight attendants served generous glasses of Macallan 15, “homeland security” was a Soviet propagandist’s favorite slogan, and the idea of an aerotropolis was pure fancy. Maybe it should have stayed that way.

*Esfandiyar Batmanghelidj is a Columbia College first-year. He is a member of the rugby team. C.U. in Hell runs alternate Thursdays.*



ESFANDIYAR  
BATMAN-  
GHELIDJ

C.U. in  
Hell

# A Hitchhiker’s Manifesto

A little while ago, a friend of mine whom I had not seen since freshman year said this to me during one of those dreaded conversations about the near future: “Wait. You still have dreams after four years of Columbia?”

To see whether I do or not, about a week ago, my spring break travel buddy and I found ourselves on the outskirts of Santa Rosa, trying to hitch a ride along what I heard were the beautiful shores of Northern California.

Before I go on, yes, Mother, I do hitchhike. I have been doing it since the summer of 2007, when, thanks to a charming Italian truck driver named Antonio who has out-of-wedlock children scattered all over Europe and North Africa, I made it from Barcelona to Andalusia. My best friend and I appreciated that he subscribed to an old adage they teach in college: “Consent is sexy.” He asked many times. And he had the chivalry to still buy us lunch the ump-teenth time we said no. By the time we had to part, we were already missing him.

Yes, there have been others since. There was the lovely old Irish lady who, because I wasn’t a gypsy or a beggar, told me I “don’t look like a normal Romanian.” The Spanish butcher who went out of his way to drive me around his hometown when I confessed I did not have plans to stay and visit. And, of course, the occasional former hippie in his 40s. There were many. But I use protection. I try to look people in the eye and to see who they are rather than who I think they should be. That’s one thing I feel like I’ve been losing practice with since coming to America for college. That and dreaming.

No, Mother, I don’t do it to spite you or to worry you. I do it to travel more for less money. I do it to practice getting over my own massive label-generating prejudices. And I do it because I believe we live in a world where performing random acts of goodness without expecting to gain something in return is becoming an ever-larger evolutionary disadvantage. To invest in something or someone with no good reason is regarded as a silly concept. That just shouldn’t be.

I suppose I am an irresponsible lefty who will be ripped apart in the “real world,” at least the American version of it. Hell, I don’t even have a job yet. What’s worse, I am totally naïve. Together with my friend, I tried to import my



ANGELA  
RADULESCU

The  
Rookie  
Brain

European naïveté to northern California—it seemed like the more liberal corner of the country. We exposed ourselves to the possibility of having a gun pulled on us (true story, happened to a friend of mine in Oregon), of having unwanted encounters with drug traffickers, or of being mistaken for day laborers, and as soon as I was on that road, the drivers had instantly made up their minds about who I was and what kind of threat I might pose. That’s a little ironic, since it’s on the road where I dream and feel most like myself.

## To invest in something or someone with no good reason is regarded as a silly concept. That just shouldn’t be.

Admittedly, for all economic intents and purposes, we failed. In a full day’s work, we didn’t make it farther than 25 miles north from where we started. But in between spending money on two buses, we did get picked up once by a father of two who was on his way to his children’s baseball games. He didn’t seem like the most affluent of people. Definitely didn’t drive an SUV. Said he just “couldn’t leave us standing there.” We chatted about his adventures and misadventures in Tijuana. After he dropped us off, it was many long hours of fruitless thumbing in the rain and trying to read disgust, amusement, regret, or sheer confusion on the faces of drivers who passed by. Accepting defeat, we holed up in a McDonald’s to reflect, checked into a motel, and then finally took a bus back to Berkeley.

Three conclusions:

- 1) Really, America? I know that, as a classmate put it today during a seminar presentation about the failure of the auto industry, “it’s very American that your car is some sort of sanctuary.” But there’s plenty of room in that air-man-gling SUV of yours. You should start caring more.
- 2) I am getting my license this summer. And I’ll be damned if I don’t pick up hitchhikers.
- 3) I may be stubborn or a little stupid, but yes, I still have dreams. Especially after four years of Columbia.

*Angela Radulescu is a Columbia College senior majoring in neuroscience and behavior. She is a former Spectator photo editor. The Rookie Brain runs alternate Thursdays.*

# Columbia Inc.

BY DAVID ABUD

More than ever, top universities have engaged in a power struggle to appear to be the best university possible. In the premier colleges, this has led to record-breaking numbers of applicants and low acceptance rates, exploding endowments, booming construction on college campuses, absurd advertisement campaigns, and a growing administration to cope with it all. In other words, colleges are getting more and more stuff. At a time like this, however, it is necessary to stop and ask ourselves: Is this the way a university should behave?

## Columbia, doggedly following the trend, is acting more like a business than an educational institution.

We are now at a crucial turning point in our University’s history. We’re not only bigger, more selective, and more prominent than ever before—we’re also quite rich. Our endowment dwarfs many countries’ GDPs. Our total assets surpass \$11 billion. Just this year, Columbia’s fundraising campaign increased its goal from \$4 billion to \$5 billion. The Manhattanville expansion will cost over \$6 billion, likely displace at least 5,000 people, and cover an area of 17 acres.

Yet throughout this spending mania, spending on academics has decreased in almost all universities in the U.S.—and Columbia is no exception. A disproportionate number of professors are actually lecturers, adjunct faculty, or visiting professors. This is a national trend. While the quality of these educators might be comparable to those holding a tenured position, their time, money, and dedication are not. Often, these teachers have engagements at other colleges in the city in order to make ends meet. They are assigned too many classes and too many responsibilities to truly devote themselves to helping their students understand the material.

But Columbia isn’t like this, right? Even if it is, shouldn’t we have more professors because we are wealthy? Not so. While Columbia’s brochures boast that our student-faculty

ratio is 6:1 overall and 3:1 in the physical sciences, anyone would be hard-pressed to find a class in which there are even nine students, let alone three. Although the student-faculty ratio doesn’t necessarily translate into average class size, most classes in the physical sciences—especially the non-seminar and lower-level classes—have a class size of around 100, and many departments have too many students and not enough teachers.

The money that would typically go to educational needs is now being spent on sparkling new buildings, new administrators, new “centers,” and PrezBo’s seven-figure salary, which, at \$1.75 million, makes him one of the top 10 highest-paid college presidents in the U.S. and the highest-paid in the Ivy League.

While Columbia’s administration cannot directly allocate the funds that are donated to the University, it does have control over the proposals that go out to solicit this money. So a proposal to create a new \$100 million business school building is pitched to donors. Instead, proposals should be made to create more tenured positions or at least to renovate existing buildings. The reason proposals are not made for tenured positions or renovation is because these prospects are simply not as glorious as a 14-story interdisciplinary science building.

Columbia, doggedly following the trend, is acting more like a business than an educational institution. We spend money on making our school look pretty, while we are more empty on the inside than we would like to admit. Not only do we not have professors that can give more time and more resources to their students, but we use the money that is donated to us by the public to evict thousands of people from their homes and create more gated grounds of exclusivity.

While Columbia is far better than a vast majority of colleges from an academic standpoint, we are heading in a bad direction. The administration has to refocus on students and de-emphasize the physical aspects that hide the lack of academic attention. We don’t need more “pretty” (read: ugly) new buildings, or new global centers, or a new campus. We need more professors, we need to start looking after our community, and the administration needs to focus on us, the students, not on the well-being of Columbia University Inc.

*The author is a Columbia College first-year.*



WENDAN LI







# Too many unnecessary swim strokes

Five years ago, Dick Wolf learned the hard way about having too much of a good thing. The guy was on top of the TV world in the early 2000s. His hit show “Law & Order” had spawned two successful spinoffs, all three were regularly at the top of the prime-time ratings, and NBC was in talks to develop a feature length movie starring Sam Waterston.

In 2004, Wolf opened up negotiations with the Peacock to launch a fourth spinoff show along side “SVU” and “Criminal Intent”—“Law & Order: Trial By Jury.” Two months after its 2005 premiere, NBC announced the show’s cancellation. The additional member of the franchise further splintered the “Law & Order” viewing base, drastically dropping ratings for the other three shows as well.

Since 2005, none of Wolf’s shows have been regular ratings stalwarts, and much of this was due to the lack of interest in three different template crime dramas with 24-episode seasons, broadcast almost every night of the week. Last May, NBC finally cancelled the original “Law & Order” after 21 seasons and over 900 episodes. Wolf learned the hard way about the age-old rule of show business: “Leave them wanting more.”

“Lost” figured this out in its third season, when in the midst of middling ratings, producers decided to put a six-season cap on their show. Today, “Breaking Bad” and “Mad Men” have mastered this strategy by feeding their audiences only 13 episodes per season. Unfortunately, everyone hasn’t learned the lesson of restraint.

There are tons of examples of this in the sports world: the NCAA tournament considering expansion to 96 teams, European soccer having God-knows-how-many different championship titles every year, the Bowl schedule inflating to 35 games, and Rick Petino busting out four different lines of designer suits per season. The NFL seems to be the only sport following the “leave them wanting more” model, but even it is threatening to abandon its roots with this 18-game schedule proposal.

In no sport is there more of an excess of competition, however, than in swimming.

At the Olympics, there are 17 different events. At the NAAs, there are 16. All for the task of getting from point A to point B in the water.

The biggest issue is the number of strokes. Right now, there is of course the freestyle, along with the backstroke, the breaststroke, and the butterfly. But why are there so many restrictive, unnatural formats alongside freestyle? There are no “upside-down crawl” or “handstand-walk” events in track. There’s only “freestyle” running.

Part of what annoys me most about swimming’s excess of competition is how it skews NCAA championships and Olympic medal counts. Sure, Michael Phelps might be considered the “greatest Olympian of all time” since he’s won 14 gold medals in his career, but keep in mind that he’s competing in eight different events every four years.

It’s one thing to have different lengths, but to have four different strokes for each and every one of those distances is simply ridiculous. What if Misty May and Kerri Walsh could enter the “Blindfolded Beach Volleyball” event or if Evan Lysacek had a shot at another gold via the “Lava Figure Skating” event. Who decided that swimming should have 17 times the influence that basketball has in medal-count standings?

Imagine if we applied swimming rules to the Oscars. We’d have to give out honors for “Best Actor Playing a Character with an Accent” “Best Supporting Best Friend who Consoles Reese Witherspoon in a Romantic Comedy,” and “Best Costume Design Purchased Solely from the Kirkland Signature Collection” (not to mention the fact that we’d have to give out five different awards in each category depending on the length of the movie.)

I don’t understand why we have to put limitations on things for no reason other than to create a new event. In basketball, you obviously have to limit the physicality a defender can have by issuing fouls, and in boxing, fighters have to wear gloves to limit the violence of their punches. But in these cases, the respective restrictions are to keep the offense competitive in its ability to score and to protect the safety of competitors.

At the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the backstroke was about 9.8 percent slower than freestyle, the butterfly 10.8 percent slower, and the breaststroke a stunning 24.5 percent slower.

Who came up with these strokes? Was some guy just sitting around



JIM PAGELS

## On the Couch



FILE PHOTO

IN THE NICK OF TIME | Columbia's former Rookie of the Year returns to the top of the lineup this season to lead the Lions in their quest for Ivy League supremacy.

### SOFTBALL



FILE PHOTO

REDEMPTION | The Lions hope to bounce back with a doubleheader against the Jaspers after a rough stretch at the Hofstra Invitational.

## Softball team looks to change luck in Bronx

Despite the snow and hail that fell yesterday, the Light Blue softball team will be trying to turn up the heat in its intercity matchup.

The Columbia women’s softball team (5-14) will be looking to improve its record as it goes against the Manhattan College Jaspers (6-11) in a doubleheader this afternoon in Riverdale, NY.

Last weekend, the Lions participated in the Hofstra Invitational in Hempstead, NY., where they went 1-4. Their only win in the Invitational was over Connecticut. The Light Blue’s season has not been bright as of late, and today’s competition doesn’t look like it will be an easy chance to turn that around.

The Jaspers are coming off a 4-0 win over Lafayette (1-18) in the consolation game of the Seton Hall Pirate Classic. In the contest,

Manhattan freshman pitcher Kate Bowen allowed Lafayette only three hits through the course of the game, and sophomore outfielder Jen Keller scored two runs. Both Bowen and senior infielder Jaci Rahey were selected to the All-Tournament Team for their performance and will pose strong threats to the Light Blue’s success.

The Lions will rely on freshman pitcher Prophet Gaspard to have a solid outing. Gaspard, who was recently named Ivy League Softball Rookie of the Week, has been strong for Columbia lately and currently has a 2.01 ERA. In 48 innings, Gaspard has recorded a remarkable 41 strikeouts.

The first game is set to start at 3 p.m. and the second will begin at 5 p.m.

— Rebekah Cohan

thinking, “What’s the most bizarre way to contort my arms to get to the other end of the pool?” (According to Wikipedia, this is basically how the butterfly actually was invented.) My question is this: If you’re on a boat two miles off the coast, and it suddenly sinks, are you going to say, “You know what, I think I’m going to butterfly-stroke my way back to shore.”

Having a bizarre, unnaturally limiting stoke like the butterfly for swimmers is like hosting a wheelchair basketball tournament for able-bodied athletes. Why should I care about an event where everyone is restricted to a poorer performance with no reasons for safety or competitive balance?

With the NCAA Swimming and Diving Championships commencing today, I’ll certainly be paying attention to Columbia’s Adam Powell in his quest to bring home an NCAA championship to Morningside Heights as he competes in the 50 and 100 free events.

I can’t say the same for the rest of the competition, though.

Jim Pagels is a Columbia College sophomore

# Now-healthy senior standout brings spark back to lineup

BY RYAN YOUNG  
Spectator Staff Writer

Ever since being unanimously named Ivy League Rookie of the Year, now-senior outfielder Nick Cox has done it all for the Lions with his hitting, speed, defense, and leadership. But there is one feat that Cox would like to accomplish this year which he hasn’t managed since he was a freshman: lead his team to an Ivy League Championship.

He believes that the Lions have the tools to make the run in his senior season.

“Last year, we had a good chemistry among the guys and I think that, being that pretty much everyone is coming back, we’re just building on that chemistry, and I think the team is really, really strong together,” Cox said. “I think that shows on the field. Whether it’s hitting, defense, or pitching, everyone’s really flowing.”

He believes that the winning he experienced in his first year helped give him and the team confidence. Cox also draws on his high school baseball experiences—especially when his high school team won the state championship during his senior year, something which continues to help motivate him to try to win championships with Columbia. He also considers it important to use his experience to set an example for his team, working hard every day and doing whatever is necessary for the team to win.

This attitude has led head coach Brett Boretti to regard his leadoff hitter as one of the most important assets to his club.

“Nick has been our most dynamic player since he arrived on campus,” Boretti said. “I think he’s one of my most

favorite guys that I’ve ever been around to coach or to recruit. He’s a very smart player—he’s got great instincts.”

Boretti believes it is Cox’s leadership qualities that truly set him apart.

“He’s like another coach on the field, because of his positioning. He positions himself, he positions his corner outfielders accordingly,” Boretti said. “He brings a type of hunger, day in and day out to practice, that I think other guys watch and kind of feed off, because he’s no different when it comes to game time than when it comes to practice time. Special guys have that type of attitude and he’s one of those special type of players.”

Cox’s fellow outfielder, sophomore Nick Ferraresi, has admired the senior’s work ethic as well.

“I think he represents our seniors really well, being a leader,” Ferraresi said. “I think his success on the field dictates how we work hard as a team in practice and he’s one of the hardest workers we have.”

Cox has also earned his esteemed reputation with his success on the field. In his Ivy Rookie of the Year campaign, he also was named a Louisville Slugger Freshman All-American and batted .375 out of the leadoff spot that year in league play.

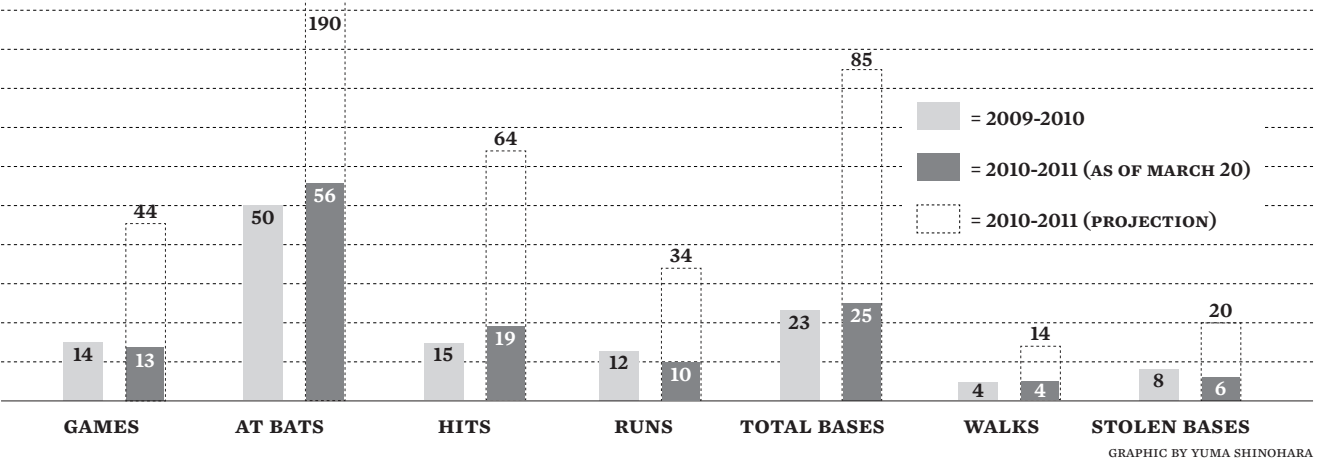
“I think it’s huge when we’re coming into a game and he’s leading off, especially if we’re an away team,” Ferraresi said. “Whether the pitcher’s intimidating or not, he’s just unfazed and gets up there, gets a hit, and that’s big for us momentum-wise.”

Boretti acknowledges that Cox likes to come out swinging, but sees his aggressiveness as a positive aspect of his

SEE COX, page 7

## BACK WITH A VENGEANCE

Just 13 games into the season, Nick Cox has already matched or exceeded most stats from his injury-ridden junior campaign.



GRAPHIC BY YUMA SHINOHARA



After frustrating season of injury, outfielder Cox back to full strength for the Lions in 2011

**COX from page 6**

game.

“He’s an aggressive kid,” he said. “If you come to our games, 99 percent of the time he’s going to swing at the first pitch of the game, no matter where it is—which is great. He’s a fiery competitor. He’s our catalyst, there’s no question about it. He gets on base, he steals immediately. He wants to create offense as much as possible.”

Cox has consistently used his speed to create havoc on the bases and to spark the team. He led the Lions with 28 stolen bases in his rookie season and

then with 16 steals the following year. He uses his speed to play superior defense in the outfield as well.

“I think a lot of times, because he’s got good offensive numbers that he puts up, sometimes his defense gets overlooked, but the guy covers a great amount of territory in centerfield, has a great arm, and he’s a very headsy player,” Boretti said.

Yet despite all the success, Cox did face a setback last year, when he was only able to play in 14 games due to a nerve impingement in his back that ended his season very early. The injury made it difficult for Cox to even bend

over, and prevented him from being able to run or swing the bat.

“It was a long recovery period pretty much all the way up to a month before coming back to school,” Cox said. But he found that the time off was also useful in that he was able to take a break and find other ways to prepare for games.

Despite the adversity and difficult road to recovery, Cox is now healthy and has regained his position as a force for the Lions in his final season.

“My back is feeling good, I’m feeling strong, and I’m looking forward to next weekend,” Cox said. He does not seem to have any lingering effects from

his injury.

“I think he’s responded very well from that [the injury],” Boretti said. “He hasn’t sulked about it or anything like that and he’s making the most of his opportunities now, and he knows that this is his last run here and he wants to do everything possible to make us successful.”

Cox has already gotten off to a great start, batting .339 with 10 RBIs and 6 steals, just 13 games into the season. He was named Ivy Player of the Week after he batted .375 and drove in six runs to lead his team to two out of three wins during the opening weekend of the season at the Bright

House Invitational hosted by Stetson University.

Cox’s goals for the rest of the season are pretty simple: The outfielder says he just wants to produce for the team and help out in getting wins. He also hopes the team continues to sustain its success and tries to improve as the season moves along.

“I expect us to remain focused and get better every day, which I think we’re doing,” he said.

Cox and the Lions will play a pair of doubleheaders against Holy Cross this weekend at Satow Stadium, opening up the home season at 1 p.m. on Saturday.





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