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Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Jessica Valenti, of feminist.com and co-editor of *Yes Means Yes: Visions of Female Sexual Power and A World without Rape*, addressed students in the closing lecture of SAAM.



A&E, page 3

Creative Writing majors take to the pen

Kassy Lee looks at the thrills and joys, as well as the pains and perils, of those who take their imagination to class and decide to become Creative Writing majors.



A&E, page 3

Gossip Girl goes back to theater thrills

Gossip Girl star and Barnard alumna Zuzana Szadkowski talks about her life on TV as well as her original love for theater including her performance in a new production.

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Colonialism's lasting legacy

Columnist Jon Hollander argues that the study of colonialism has been skewed to support a narrow political agenda and to reinforce stifling political correctness.



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Former Lion continues career in Europe

Reigning Ivy Player of the Year Henry Perkins, CC'08, has moved to Belgium to play for the Namur Angels. In his final season with Columbia, Perkins lead the team to the Ivy title.

ONLINE

Congratulate your graduate in the Spec

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IN THE RED



Daniel Yeow for *Spectator*



Daniel Yeow for *Spectator*

SUBWAY WOES | A belief held by New Yorkers in recent months was that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's budget woes could not possibly get worse. But on Wednesday, they did.

On Monday, the MTA announced that its deficit—projected as \$1.2 billion—would increase by \$621 million this year, despite what the Authority itself has termed a “doomsday” package of fare hikes and service cuts. Because the MTA is legally required to pass a balanced budget, these new figures mean that further hits to riders may be on the horizon.

The base subway and bus fare is set to increase to \$2.50 on May 31, and a second hike may be in the works, which would mark the first time in history that fares rose twice in a single year.

Seeking asylum in Morningside

BY KAT BALKOSKI
Spectator Staff Writer

As the tempting warmth of spring draws students from their hide-aways in Butler, Columbians experience the therapeutic effects of fresh air and blooming life. Over 100 years ago, a rather different group was benefiting from the natural beauty and spring's calm breeze in northwestern Manhattan: the patients of the Bloomingdale Mental Asylum.



Long before this lovely little patch of cement and grass was an urbanized neighborhood of academic and spiritual institutions, the area was home to a slightly different sort of institution.

In 1821, the New York Hospital opened a new mental facility near the village of Bloomingdale—the area now known as Morningside Heights, between 110th and 125th from Riverside to Morningside—as part of a plan to increase the availability of humane treatment for patients suffering from mental illnesses. The upper Manhattan location's natural beauty, stunning views, and peaceful environment were considered favorable to the treatment of patients.

“They owned the Columbia campus, the Barnard campus, and some land to the South as well,” said Andrew Dolkart, a professor at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, and an expert on the development of Morningside Heights.

According to reports, the asylum was quite successful, and cared for a group of patients varied in condition and in socioeconomic status.

A report compiled in 1848 categorized the divided causes of patient illnesses into 85 categories. Of these, 7.8 percent of cases were attributed to religion. Exaggerated religious sentiment

SEE MIND MATTERS, page 2

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Bancroft winners celebrate in Low

BY EMMA JACOBS
Spectator Staff Writer

One day, Harvard University President Drew Gilpin Faust missed a call from Columbia Provost Alan Brinkley.

“He said he had good news,” Faust recalled. “I said I could use some good news.” So she e-mailed Brinkley, asking him to call her.

Brinkley telephoned Faust late that night to inform her

that she had won a Bancroft Prize for her latest book, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*, published in 2008.

The Bancroft Prize, bestowed annually by Columbia University, is considered by many to be the greatest honor awarded for works of American history. On Wednesday night, Faust was joined for the awards dinner and presentation in Low Library by two fellow

historians at earlier stages in their academic careers.

“I was stunned and thrilled and honored,” she said.

Thomas Andrews, an assistant professor of history at the University of Colorado, Denver, won for his debut book, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War*. The book situates the labor dispute of 1914 known as the Ludlow Massacre in a

SEE BANCROFT, page 6



Angela Radulescu / Senior staff photographer

TESTING! After a swine flu scare on Tuesday, city health officials tested four children and one teacher at Ascension School, pictured.



Mary Ye / Staff photographer

PRIZES FOR THE PAST | The Bancroft Prize, awarded every year by the trustees of Columbia, went to three historians, including Harvard University President Drew Gilpin Faust, for their achievement in historical work.

EVENTS — APRIL 30

Quarto Launch Party
The literary magazine will celebrate the launch of its 60th issue. Join the party to hear authors read from their work. Stop by Campo afterwards to join the magazine's staff and partake in drink specials in honor of the launch.

603 Hamilton, 8:30 p.m.

"The Disappeared"
directed by Peter Sanders
The Organization of Latin American Students is screening this documentary about the Argentine "Dirty War" of 1976-1983. The director will introduce the film and take questions after the screening.

516 Hamilton, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I wish that feminism wasn't such a dirty word, including at Barnard."

—Nora Feinstein, CC '11

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CORRECTIONS

The article "University Senator Rajat Roy, SEAS '10, impeached by ESC," published on April 29, said that in two meetings the Engineering Student Council voted to impeach Roy but keep him on the council. In fact, the second meeting will occur next week, when the council will decide whether or not Roy will serve next year.



Joey Shemuel / Senior staff photographer

YES MEANS YES | Jessica Valenti, executive editor of feministing.com, a feminist blog and online community, addressed students in Held Auditorium on Tuesday evening to conclude Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Writer contemplates feminism, Internet

BY ANGELA RUGGIERO-CORLISS
Spectator Staff Writer

Fun. Cool. Edgy.
According to Jessica Valenti, feminism is all of these things, though her adjectives may challenge some stereotypes.
"People are too busy envisioning Birkenstocks in their head or something," she joked.
Valenti spoke last night to an audience of mostly young women in Barnard's Held Auditorium. She is the founder and executive editor of *Feministing*, a feminist blog and online community. She has written three books and co-edited *Yes Means Yes: Visions of Female Sexual Power and a World Without Rape*. Valenti talked about her work on *Feministing* and in editing *Yes Means Yes*, and she discussed issues including rape and sexual assault prevention.

The lecture and subsequent question-and-answer session were part of the fourth annual Jeanne Clery Lecture Series. The Barnard Columbia Rape Crisis/Anti-Violence Support Center organized the event. The lecture comes at the end of National Sexual Assault Awareness Month, which at Columbia and Barnard has included events such as Take Back the Night—a march for sexual assault awareness.

Valenti said the aim of *Yes Means Yes* is "to heal a sexual culture that is profoundly broken." She said that current society is characterized by "rape culture," which, she claims, holds women disproportionately responsible for maintaining their sexual safety. "The onus is on the woman not to get raped, not on the rapist to not commit assault," she said.

Valenti also spoke against what she called the "purity myth," a cultural construct that



Joey Shemuel / Senior staff photographer

celebrates the pure, virginal girl. "The purity myth is an integral part of rape culture," Valenti said, "because purity is the desired norm, it is fetishized and sexualized." She cited the sale of "training bras for toddlers" and girls' panties that read, "Who needs a credit card...?", to gasps of disgust and uncomfortable laughter from the audience.

"I feel like the Internet is the new public space," Valenti said, on her attempts to merge feminist activism with non-traditional media and pop culture. For example, *Yes Means Yes* is organized by themes, not sequentially, a way of organizing which was inspired by tagging and linking online. "It's like a choose-your-own-adventure anthology," she explained. "Every time you pick it up you can read it in a different way."

Valenti used an informal tone throughout her talk, peppering

the tough topic with sarcasm, jokes, and swear words. She said she uses a similar tone on the Web and in her books—a decision she said was "very strategic" made in order to reach a wider audience. "Feminism should be accessible to everyone, not just those who can afford to get their Masters and read Foucault," she said. "I try to keep it real."

When asked how Barnard and Columbia students could incorporate activism into their everyday lives, Valenti emphasized little things and interpersonal conversation. "It's not the big signs that's the activism," she said.

Nora Feinstein, CC '11, said that she was a big fan of Valenti and *Feministing*, but expressed regret over feminism's image in mainstream culture. "I wish that feminist wasn't such a dirty word, including at Barnard," she said.

news@columbiaspectator.com

Profs debate along departmental lines

FACULTY from front page

According to Middle East and Asian Languages professor Gil Anidjar, this opinion on how to tackle problems of academic freedom as Columbia faculty—the meeting's central thrust—was shared by others.

In an interview on Monday, Jacobson said that seven of the signatories wished to maintain anonymity, a sign, in her view, of the way that the issue has become unnecessarily politicized. "That kind of speaks to the atmosphere they find themselves in," she said.

Many of the letter's signatories work on Columbia's health sciences campus uptown, pointing to a divide witnessed in recent

years among University faculty concerned about Israel-Palestine relations.

While a letter in 2007 praising Bollinger for his opposition to academic boycotts on Israel included signatures from doctors and health professionals affiliated with Columbia, the February Gaza petition drew mostly professors in the anthropology, English, history, and MEALAC departments.

Jacobson said she did not disapprove of the meeting's exclusivity because the advisory committee organizers hope to create—precisely for dealing with Palestinian academic freedom—could exist only in the Arts and Sciences.

"That is where their strength lies," she said. Yet she was doubtful

that the organizers' views accurately reflected those of the attendees. "The impression from what people told me is that support for their position [for forming an advisory committee] was not what they hoped it would be," she said.

No official decisions have been made as to the status of an advisory committee. The Faculty of the Arts and Sciences is slated to reconvene for its last meeting of the semester on May 7.

Vice President for Arts and Sciences Nicholas Dirks, who oversees the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, declined to comment on the issue, citing the meeting's privacy.

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M'side history always institutional

MIND MATTERS from front page

was generally acknowledged to constitute a mental disorder in the 19th century.

The asylum's main building was grand and stately. One of the men responsible for construction described his motives in building such a respectable-looking institution, "This building ought to have the appearance of a palace, rather than a gaol, and by that means it will command the most wealthy patients in the United States."

Outside of the asylum's central building, extra pavilions were added to house "noisy" male and female patients. Separate pavilions also accommodated "refined" women and "wealthy" men. Later, even a bowling alley was added to the asylum grounds.

As the area around Bloomingdale began to urbanize, real-estate developers tried to squeeze out the Asylum.

"Real estate interests in the area tried to force them [Bloomingdale] out, but they were unsuccessful in doing it, ultimately," Dolkart said.

There was less pressure on the Orphan Asylum. Dolkart argued, in "Morningside Heights: A History of its Architecture and Development," that "while 'lunatics' might be considered poor neighbors, Christian orphans apparently did not depress real estate values."

In the 1880s, New York Hospital decided to relocate their mental facilities to White Plains due to increased urbanization.

Concurrently, Columbia University was contemplating a move and looking for a piece of land that was both urban and large enough for a campus.

Undoubtedly by pure coincidence, Columbia was then located on the former site of another asylum—the former Deaf and Dumb Asylum complex on Madison and East 49th. At this cramped location, facilities were limited, and Columbia's reputation was sinking. Moving represented a crucial step forward in the building of the University's image.

Certain trustees favored a move to the country (either upstate or New Jersey), but President Seth Low asserted the importance of an urban location from an educational perspective.

The property of Bloomingdale Asylum became the most reasonable choice, an area of the city in which large tracts of lands could still be purchased but which was about to be built-up.

Conspiracy theorists have argued that New York Hospital and Columbia entered into secret negotiations in order to preserve the neighborhood from immigrants and to impose their own elitism. But no evidence exists to support this theory. In fact, the price for the land was particularly steep. It appears that the hospital was more concerned with raising money for their new White Plains facility than preserving the hegemony of the neighborhood.

Real estate interests were "none too happy when Columbia bought either, because that meant that

it would remain undevelopable land," Dolkart said.

But the University expressed no concern over the move to the former site of a mental institution. "When you go through the correspondence relating to the move up here, they are not concerned about the mental institution issue," Dolkart said.

The architect for the Morningside campus, Charles Kim, planned to destroy all of the Bloomingdale buildings. Yet due to lack of funding, Buell Hall, otherwise known as La Maison Française, was preserved.

Campus tour guides may tell you that a contract existed between Columbia and Bloomingdale concerning the preservation of at least one building. "That's 100 percent false," said Dolkart. "I don't know where they get their stories."

Kim had planned for 12 classroom buildings, but only 9 were built. Originally, a building on the same model as Avery should have stood where Buell is. But money ran out, and Buell's quaint brick exterior today contrasts charmingly with the austere academic design of much of the rest of the campus.

The building was altered slightly: a first-floor porch was removed. "If you look carefully, you can see the ghost of the porch all around the building," Dolkart said.

Perhaps other ghosts of Bloomingdale continue to linger on the Columbia campus.

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ARTS&ENTERTAINMENT

BOOKS

Students find their voice through Creative Writing major

BY KASSY LEE
Columbia Daily Spectator

Those looking to fill that empty gap in next semester’s schedule may want to look for a new challenge for their imagination: the creative writing department.

Besides those kids who camp out on the fifth floor of John Jay, hoping to spot Federico García Lorca’s ghost, many students never give much thought to taking a class in the creative writing department. But the truth is that Columbia’s brick pathways have also been stepped on by the feet of many great authors: J.D. Salinger, Langston Hughes, Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac... the list goes on. With its convenient location in New York City, Columbia may be called an international mecca for all things literary, and has always been a breeding ground for young writers.

Even students uninterested in constructing the perfect sestina should know that a creative writing class can enhance problem solving in every subject, from anthropology to biophysics. Alan Ziegler, the professor and director of pedagogy and teacher training at the School of the Arts’ writing department, says, “Some of the most interesting students are those coming from outside of the major.”

But students who spend their weekend nights at poetry readings may fit perfectly into the major. The major is constructed of three parts. “In the major, students take five workshops and four seminars, and three related courses. We find that with that three-part approach we offer the best balance,” said Sam Lipsyte, the associate director of undergraduate creative writing for the department.



Krista Mar / Staff photographer

CREATIVE COLUMBIANS | Although some students have discounted the Creative Writing major because of registration problems, students find the classes a fun way to work with others to improve their original work.

SEE CREATIVE WRITING, page 6

THEATER

Gossip Girl star and Barnard alumna returns to the stage

BY LOUISA LEVY
Spectator Staff Writer

Spotted: Barnard alum playing a maid on the Upper East Side.

That’s right, *Gossip Girl*’s Dorota is Zuzanna Szadkowski, BC ’01.

Protected from the sun in the shade of Barnard Hall, Szadkowski is relaxed as she sits down for her interview before her final performance in *The Secret Life of the Office Worker*, which was performed at Riverside Theater through April 25. . She explains how her experience at Barnard helped her become one of the most recognizable character actors on television today.

Szadkowski was bit early by the acting bug. “I started acting when I was a kid, probably sixth or seventh grade. The first appeal for me was getting dolled up and the makeup and the drama of it,” said Szadkowski.

Szadkowski talks without a trace of Dorota’s well-known accent, though she herself was born in Poland. Moving to the United States at an early age, she acted in community theaters until she came to Barnard, where she majored in theater. “I wanted to have a liberal arts education and Barnard was perfect for me because ... it was a small program but I was still able to do really serious work with the acting and without going to the conservatory program.”

In addition to her well-rounded theater education at Barnard, Szadkowski had the unique opportunity to study theater abroad. One of Szadkowski’s favorite memories of Barnard is of using her Centennial Scholar award money to participate in the theater community in Warsaw. “My project was a huge deal for me. It allowed me to connect with my family over there,” said Szadkowski.



Louisa Levy for Spectator

THEATER GIRL | Zuzanna Szadkowski, BC ’01, is best known for the TV show *Gossip Girl*, but her real passion remains theater, and appeared in the Columbia production of *The Secret Life of the Office Worker*.

Though her Barnard education was invaluable, Szadkowski felt that she needed graduate school experience to actually land jobs. But even with an MFA in theatre from Harvard A.R.T. Institute,

Szadkowski never expected to be more than a character actor on the stage. When she booked her first television gig in 2007 on *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, she realized there were more opportunities for her to explore. “It was my first time that I realized that there were character roles in TV and film—it wasn’t just super gorgeous people,” said Szadkowski.

But when her agent got her into auditions for *Gossip Girl*, Szadkowski did not think it was a huge deal. “They were looking for a sixty year old lady to not say anything ... it’s just a maid, whatever,” she explained, “and it ended up being my most fabulous gig ever.”

According to Szadkowski, *Gossip Girl* is not just fabulous on screen. The atmosphere on set is warm and friendly and everybody is very professional. “I’m actually in awe of how they [the stars] are young, very attractive celebs, and yet they are on point at work and very welcoming to everyone around them.”

Despite her love of her current television role, Szadkowski cannot stay away from the stage for long, which brought her back to Columbia. “If I go a certain amount of time without working in the theatre I start to feel imbalanced,” said the actress. “The ideal life for me would be to work in TV and film and also do plays.”

But this working actress started out just like any other Barnard or Columbia student, with high hopes and a soft spot for Ollie’s and The Heights. Her advice for current students: “Juice as much fun out of it now. Take chances and take classes that maybe don’t fall directly in line with some sort of life plan that you have ... because what you end up doing or how your life will take shape might be very different from the fantasy you have for yourself now.”

MUSIC

Student redefines the meaning of classical music

BY ELIZABETH WHITMAN
Columbia Daily Spectator

As a cellist plucks at the string, sound waves reverberate into the microphone toward the audience. Behind the musician is a table, where Alex Klein, CC ’12, sits as he manipulates the sound of the cello with his computer. Klein wrote a piece for cello and electronics called “The Edge” this year.

Around campus, Klein is known for his use of electronics in his musical compositions, as well as his DJing. Driven by his interest in what he calls the divide between pop music and chamber music, Klein is wary of the distance between the two musical worlds and has been composing music for two years.

While he doubts that bridging the gap is actually possible, Klein likes to use his compositions to explore bringing elements from one genre to the other. He is also interested in the psychological and artistic implications of transferring those elements. Musical genres, he explains, are “not black and white.”

Although he mainly composes chamber music and only recently started using technology in his music, Klein regards the electronic part of his pieces as a second instrument.

Although electronics are used frequently nowadays in playing and recording music, sounds are often prerecorded, or technology is used to distort sounds. But in “The Edge,” the cellist is one player, and the electronic part operates as a second. The piece is really for two musicians, and all the sounds that the audience hears in a single performance are played during that performance—nothing is prerecorded.

Klein says performing the piece’s electronics is “a very active part” because one is “constantly changing the sound.” One of the many fascinating aspects of combining technology with music is the ability to “mess with sound to make it stranger,” he said.

As intellectual as composing music can seem, Klein describes his writing instead as “intuitive,” with more of an “emotional core.” A lot of his ideas focus on dreams and old memories. “I like to think of my music as a soundtrack to dreams,” he said. With such an emotional basis for his ideas, Klein ignores conventional harmony and melody in composition, instead taking a much more textural approach to writing. By juxtaposing textures on top of each other, he then creates the harmony and melody.

One unorthodox textural approach that Klein takes, for example, is in his recently composed “Nightlight Ocean” for orchestra, where on occasion the string instrument performers use their bows to rub the strings back and forth parallel to the direction of the string, rather than perpendicularly across the string. “I like subverting the usual uses of orchestras,” Klein said.

While pursuing his own creative goals, Klein plays both piano and viola, and manages to remain an active member of Columbia’s music scene, studying composition and participating in the Columbia University Orchestra and Columbia New Music, a group of undergraduate composers. Whether Klein’s music will pave a new future path for music is unknown—but he is certainly making a splash by bringing two worlds together.

FOOD

New recipes for Columbia chefs use spring produce

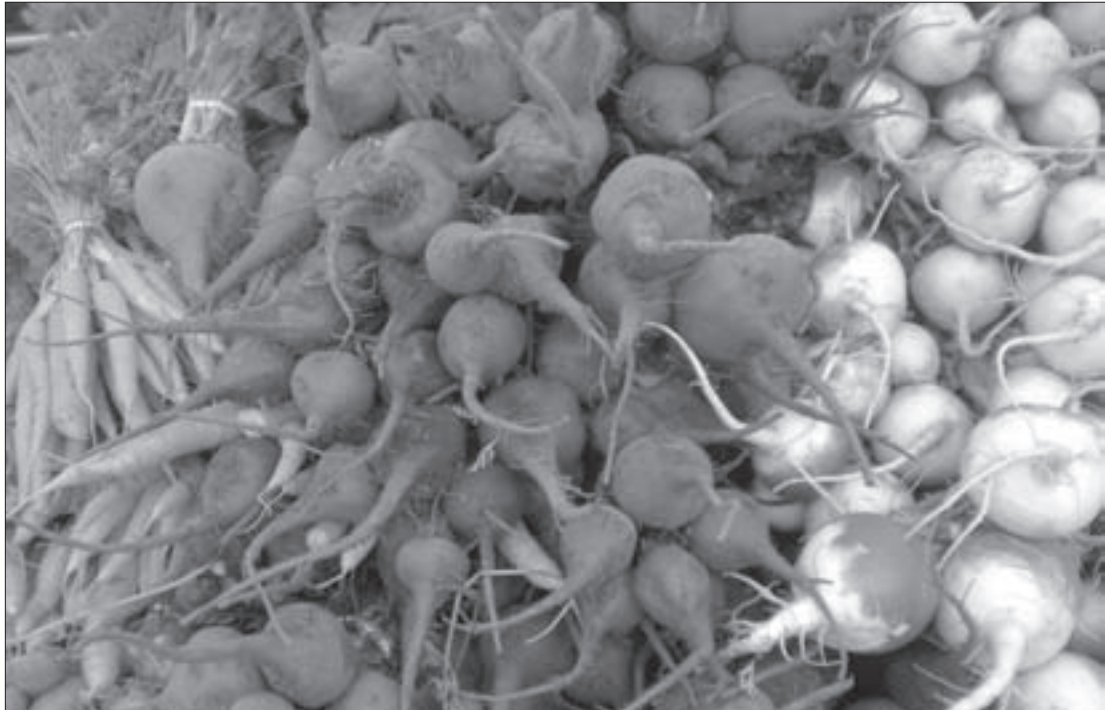
BY CLAIRE BULLEN
Spectator Staff Writer

As the first blush begins to creep across the swollen blossoms of Broadway’s magnolia trees and Low Plaza is filling up with sunstruck crowds, signs of spring are popping up throughout Morningside Heights. Black winter coats are exchanged for sundresses, the offerings at the biweekly Broadway farmers’ market are turning one shade more verdant, and the wooden crates of produce, once solely occupied by pallid and dirt-caked root vegetables, are now beginning to glow with signs of warmth and sun.

The past few weeks have caught the market in a state of transformation. Although many humble carrots and potatoes are still kicking around, fleets of pansies and tulips crowd the feet of passersby, coloring the sidewalks with jubilant colors. The proliferation of greenery is another change—spinach and rows of fresh herbs are newly available, glowing from their shelves.

But even the amateur chef scouring the market for ingredient inspirations has much to look forward to. Zach, a farmers’ market vendor for eight years now from Stannard Farms, an upstate New York outpost, confided that asparagus is just on the verge of ripeness and should be appearing on his stand within a few weeks. Asparagus is a versatile vegetable—he suggests roasting it with a salty swath of prosciutto. But those lusting after asparagus’ fresh spring crunch should note its tender tips fits perfectly into a salad alongside mixed greens, basil, tarragon, red onion, and orange segments, preferably with an herb vinaigrette dressing.

Those relishing the chance to throw some fresh blueberries into their morning pancakes or hankering to make a peach cobbler will be disappointed to learn that it is still a little too early in the season for most fruits. “We [Stannard Farms] are a few hours north of you, so we’re actually a little behind



Mallory Lance / Staff photographer

SPRING SWEETS | New fruits and vegetables appear at the weekly greenmarket on Broadway, which should give students a needed lift as spring begins to appear during finals week.

you in the season,” Zach pointed out, gesturing to a nearby bucket of daffodils. “Right now the fields are still pretty wet, but once they start drying out we’ll be able to begin a lot of planting.” What that means for us fructose-starved Columbians is that those lusted-after cartons of berries should begin to appear right around finals week, and, with any luck, there should be droves of fragrant offerings in time to serve as a temporary release from the inundation of stress.

Until then, the best recipes will be the ones that cross the seasonal cusp, linking more wintry vegetables with early spring herbs and greens. One good bet is vichyssoise, a classic French potato soup. It is the kind of cold soup perfect to sub in for heavy chilies and stews. To make it, sauté and soften half of a chopped onion and a cup of chopped leek before adding peeled and chopped potatoes, broth, and water. Simmer until the potatoes soften, and add fresh sorrel and chives for an herbaceous highlight to the creamy, pureed mixture.

On Beauty and Columbia

BY FERNANDA DIAZ

I am sitting across from Zadie Smith. It is Monday morning—the day my senior column is due, and the second-to-last Monday of classes—and I’m headed back uptown for my early PE class after having spent the night at home. I am supposed to be drafting my column in my head since I am on deadline, but all I can think about is the fact that one of my favorite writers is sitting on the opposite side of the same subway car as me, that she probably already saw me glancing at her three times between 23rd and 28th streets, and how to best look like I’m not really curious about what she will reveal after rifling through her tote bag. My mind wanders away from Columbia memories and to how this is awesome, but also how it sucks, because I wish I could talk to her, but don’t, because it’s mad creepy and, also, because I happen to be dressed like a 9-year-old.

But I must focus. This should be easy, since I have been doing the “writing my senior column through internal voice-over” thing since I was a freshman on the *Spectator* op-ed staff and learned they existed. But this time the nostalgic wisdom is flowing less clearly. This time, the musings don’t seem as obvious as they did back when I was still drunk on the idiosyncrasies of the Columbia experience and could not imagine how or why that feeling would ever go away. Now, most of my attempts to make conclusions about

my Columbia years are devolving into lamenting all the friendships I didn’t make and the classes I didn’t take or try hard enough in. The past year should have been the wonderful conclusion to an amazing college experience. Instead, it was lonely and difficult and has made the good parts seem too distant to draw upon.

Zadie Smith looks beautiful. She’s wearing a black dress and espadrille wedges, her hair in a tight bun that reveals big gold hoops reaching her shoulders, and I can’t wait to describe this to my friends. I type out a text that ends in “OMFG” and I address it to the many close friends who all happen to be some of the biggest Zadie Smith fans I know.

There’s no signal in the dark space beneath Times Square, and so I put my phone away because what if she can tell that I am typing out a very detailed description of the Tropicana orange juice she just produced from her purse and is now sipping with a straw? I’m in a better mood now, so this might help me think of what, if any, magical Columbia memories or optimistic life lessons I could draw upon to write my final *Spectator* piece.

I feel the pressure, mostly springing from the history of love I have for this newspaper. The stuff I’ve written for this op-ed page, more than any of the papers I’ve written for any class, defines what Columbia meant to me for most of my time here. I grew up on this page, met future boyfriends and mentors while laying out this page, cried over feedback I’ve gotten about my columns on this page. (<3 you, Bwog commenters!), and began whatever semblance of a career I could one day hope to have by becoming involved with this page. I fell in

love with Columbia when I arrived, and was lucky enough to have this page to document the process.

I start taking notes around the 103rd Street stop. Maybe I will write about this subway ride for my column, about the great friends I have to share this with, or about the way Zadie Smith somehow reminded me of the first few *Spec*-filled years during which I was so unabashedly optimistic and channeled that into romanticizing every Columbia experience.

Zadie Smith and I get off on the same platform, but we exit through different doors. I walk ahead of her, lest she think I’m full-on stalking, and emerge onto the sunny campus. The steps are half-covered in blue plastic chairs. (It begins!) I’m even closer to deadline, but I have a few extra minutes until strength training starts. I take out my notebook, and scribble something about “if I had taken a cab I would have missed this” and “the beauty of art and New York.” I’m amused by my own regression (or is it evolution?) into the girl who would sit on the benches outside Butler with a pen, listing the Columbia-specific details that made her feel so lucky to be here, at once exhausted by the workload and inspired by the variety of possibilities. Zadie Smith passes me, and I think I see her glance over at me. She has no idea, but with a week left of school, she



ILLUSTRATION BY NATALIE PORTER

somehow prevented me from writing a bumper of a retrospective senior column. And with this, I move on, impossibly with more love for both Zadie Smith and the years I spent at this complicated place.

The author is a Columbia College senior majoring in history. She was a columnist as a first-year and sophomore and was deputy editorial page editor for the 131st managing board.

Why yes, I go... here, there and everywhere?

BY LAURA SCHREIBER

A couple weeks ago, I received a letter in the mail written on Columbia University letterhead congratulating me on my acceptance to the Journalism School’s summer publishing

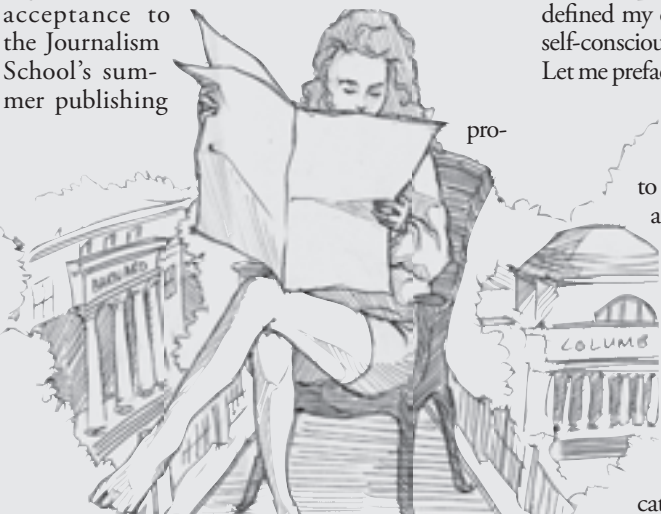


ILLUSTRATION BY CHANNA BAO

SENIOR COLUMN

gram. I rubbed my hands together, threw my head back, and let out a few victory whoops. “At last!” I cried, ripping the Barnard flip-flops from my feet and tossing them out my open window. “My plan is complete.”

At least, that is what I would have done if I were the Barnard student who lives in the imagination of a few Bwog commenters. Strangely enough, I have never met either of these people—the Columbia student who believes these stereotypes or the Barnard student who fulfills them—during my time here. But where is “here”? Barnard? Columbia? For a significant portion of my undergraduate years, the answer was somewhere in between: 2875 Broadway, the *Spectator* office.

People who know me may be surprised to learn that my *Spectator* experience (and for a while, *Spec* defined my college experience itself) was colored by self-consciousness related to being a Barnard student. Let me preface this column by saying that I have never felt disdain from anyone I worked with at *Spectator*—or any Columbia student or faculty member, for that matter—due to my college affiliation. I am not writing about a negative experience, but rather an ambivalent one.

To me, it seems that (non-apathetic) Barnard students tend to choose one of two paths: we either openly embrace our Barnard identity through Barnard activities or engage in Columbia activities without hiding our affiliation, but without parading it either. During my time here, I have fallen into the latter category. I don’t regret it. My experience at *Spectator* has been infinitely more valuable—and

certainly more fun—than the one I would have gotten had I limited myself to Barnard publications.

I understand the reasons to avoid emphasizing differences between Barnard and Columbia undergraduates involved in *Spec* and other joint organizations—the risk of feeding negative stereotypes. But I also feel like something important is lost due to this tendency to blend in. Barnard students do have distinct perspectives to provide because we go to a school with different values, different strengths, and different types of people.

During my first year, I focused exclusively on academics and had little involvement or investment in what happened across the street. When I joined *Spectator* my sophomore year, everything changed. I realized that for all intents and purposes, at *Spec*, being from Barnard was a non-issue. My college experience was more fulfilling now that I played a role in the news and activities occurring on both sides of Broadway. But as I became deeply involved at *Spec*, little things persistently reminded me of my non-Columbia identity. I had to talk my way into the Broadway dorm countless times when hunger-strike leaders chose the sky lounge as their meeting place. An article I wrote about students who marry as undergraduates provoked this miffed response from a fellow BC ’09-er: “As a student admissions representative at Barnard, I am concerned with the portrayal of Barnard students by others as women out to get a MRS.” With dismay, I realized that she thought I was a Columbia student with negative stereotypes about her school.

I began my senior year with a renewed commitment to get my parents’ money’s worth from my Barnard education. Though I remained involved in *Spec* as a

training editor and wrote the occasional article, I focused on academics in a way I had not since I joined *Spec*. For the first time, I began taking advantage of the opportunities for a personalized education that had led me to Barnard in the first place. A professor’s good word got me a job doing research for Barnard president Debora Spar, and I became deeply invested in my senior thesis—something I might not have written at all if I attended Columbia.

Given that Barnard tends to be well-represented on *Spectator*’s staff, I realize that my unease matters little in practical terms. Yet nothing eliminates the strangeness of having donated hundreds of hours (not to mention a few GPA points) to a publication whose name technically does not encompass my undergraduate identity. I rarely covered issues relating exclusively to Barnard for *Spec*, but can converse fluently on Columbia-related subjects that impact my school only tangentially. On the other hand, I take Columbia courses, rely on Columbia libraries, and steal as much of Columbia’s free food as I possibly can.

Spectator had a bigger impact on my life than any single course I took here. When I think back on my college years, I am more likely to remember charged student protest meetings and late nights in the *Spec* office than midnight breakfasts or Barnard spirit days. I think I made the right choice, but I also believe that there was no reason for me to feel that I needed to make that choice at all.

The author is a Barnard College senior majoring in history. She was the deputy news editor for the 131st deputy board and training news editor for the 132nd deputy board.

Letters to the Editor

In the name of political correctness, staff editorial over-reacts to campaign flyers

To the Editor:

I am troubled by the April 27 staff editorial “Not in the Clear.” It is unjust because “two Asian girls at the same time” is not in any way explicitly sexually suggestive. While the flyer could be understood in a sexual sense, rules on the content of flyers are only functional if the content is unambiguously a sexual suggestion. Any flyer, with any wording, can be “sexually suggestive” to some outlier on campus. The fact is, as we stand today, we will have two Asian girls on our class of 2010 board at the same time. Furthermore, no basis is provided for why the content is racist or sexist.

Arguing that the Clear Party broke a campaign rule is one thing, but by demanding an apology, the editorial attacks the party’s freedom of expression. They were portraying themselves, so if the material is sexist or racist, they are only undermining themselves. For example, I would have every right to call myself a fat, lazy Indian—this would be very stupid of me in a campaign, but not racist by any stretch because I describe only myself.

It is disconcerting that *Spectator* would so enthusiastically seek to curb freedom of expression to appease everyone in the name of political correctness. Well, I’m not appeased—I’m frustrated and intimidated by this censure. From soliciting opinions on campus, it seems I’m not the only one.

Sudeep Moniz, SEAS ’10
April 28, 2009

Earth Institute: where one can learn how to make a difference in environmental sustainability

To the Editor:

Emily Rose Jordan, CC ’09, had an important point to make in her April 23 op-ed “Let’s commence a no-paper tradition”—many of us are worried about the state of the planet, but also convinced there’s nothing any one person can do that will make a difference. I am the director of the Center for the Study of Science and Religion at Columbia. I am often taken for one of those people who think there is an either-or choice to be made here. Actually, my Center exists for precisely the reason Jordan has so well articulated. My

colleagues and I have come to understand that some of the most important problems we face—as we define such problems, they are the ones that threaten all lives on Earth including ours if we fail to act to ameliorate them—require both the insights of many religions and the insights of many sciences. I hope *Spectator* readers will take this thought from Jordan’s op-ed—the Earth Institute here is a place from which a single person can learn how best to make the biggest difference in ameliorating the risks to our planet, and for those whose motivations include their religion, the CSSR is the place from which to learn more about the Earth Institute. For instance, this Sunday and Monday, the CSSR will bring together scholars, scientists, and religious figures from around the world for Common Ground: Science and Religion in Dialogue for a Sustainable Future. I hope readers with an interest to attend will write to me directly.

Robert Pollack
Professor of biological sciences and director, CSSR
April 28, 2009

Article brings up important issue, but lacks depth of substance

To the Editor:

Discussing the issue of depression in the LGBTQ community is more than important—it’s necessary for positive social change. I worry, however, that the April 24 article “Adolescence tough for LGBTQ” classifies a group of people too generally, without acknowledging the depth of this issue.

While this article could have made very positive movement forward by focusing on the issues facing LGBTQ people and how they often lead to adolescent depression, it chose to focus simply on the idea that LGBTQ adolescents are often depressed. There is a fundamental difference between these two hooks, and I am concerned that this article failed to delve beneath the surface of this issue and into its underlying causes, intricacies, and nuances.

The stance of this piece causes readers to walk away thinking, “LGBTQ folks have a problem,” rather than, “society needs a change.” Furthermore, its generalizations suggest the possibility that

LGBTQ people are inherently depressed as a result of who they are—an idea that is not only false, but also absolutely deleterious to their perception in society. Being gay is not depressing. Ignorant people are depressing. I worry that this was not clear in the article.

I encourage *Spec* to continue to write about this issue; I simply hope that authors in the future focus on the issue’s depth, rather than broadly discussing its existence.

Sam Preston, CC ’12
Incoming co-publicity chair, Columbia Queer Alliance
April 24, 2009
Opinions expressed in this letter are those of the author and not necessarily those of CQA

Column’s misrepresentation of Butler Library policies calls for clarification

To the Editor:

I am writing to respond to two issues MaryAlice Parks raised in her April 20 column, “10 reasons why I am not ready to give to Columbia.”

First, parents and other immediate family members are always welcome in Butler Library and other CU libraries. Just be sure to first visit the Library Information Office in 201 Butler Library with your family member(s) to obtain a guest pass. If a student with his or her parent(s) was turned away or given inaccurate information, we apologize for the confusion.

Second, books borrowed via Borrow Direct do contain barcodes, and all receipts and returns of books are tracked in the Borrow Direct system. Unfortunately, the current Borrow Direct software does not integrate with our local circulation system, so Borrow Direct books do not appear in your library account. A new system (to be implemented in the coming year) will allow us to check out Borrow Direct books to your local library account when you pick them up and will make it easier for you (and us!) to identify the books you’ve requested and picked up.

Francie Mrkich
Acting director of access services and head of delivery services, Butler Library
April 24, 2009

Latin diplomas would indicate equal status of General Studies students

To the Editor:

In the April 26 article “Edwards wins General Studies council presidency” announcing the election results for General Studies Student Council, Scott Jurkowski, vice president of policy-elect, was quoted as saying that the Latin diploma for GS students was a “lower priority”; however, president-elect Edwards claimed the GS was “closer than ever” to getting their degrees in Latin. Jurkowski goes on to identify access to Core Curriculum classes for GS students as a bigger goal.

As former project manager for some of the biggest Fortune 100 companies and as a GS student, I am bewildered as to the reasoning in not seeking the “low hanging fruit” on the branch in obtaining equality and having the GS degree be in Latin just like the SEAS and CC counterparts. After spending more out-of-pocket on average than any CC or SEAS student (we pay by the credit and get less aid), GS students should be entitled to have their degrees in Latin and not be singled out as a second-class citizen to the other undergraduate schools. GS students work just as hard, if not harder, in earning their grades and contributing to their seminar discussions. GS students pay just as much for student activity fees, even though many of us have families to feed or jobs that barely let us take a full-time class schedule, let alone get to a student event. After just surrendering my own executive position at an advertising agency to focus on the final stretch towards graduation, I see a statement of equality potentially being the best gift from Columbia this year. As a future (donating) alumnus, I would rather not be dismayed with a degree that was a departure from the traditions that make this institution so amazing. As seen in last year’s lowa-to-White House Presidential race, long-term goals start with short-term “wins”; if the GSSC and the school cannot agree to have the degrees in Latin this year, I ask that they consider it retroactively when and if they do. Jurkowski’s goals of equalizing the Core for everyone are admirable, but equalizing the outcome for GS students in the past, present, and future through a Latin degree is just the “shot heard around the world” this campus needs.

Chuck Griffith, GS ’09
April 29, 2009

CU IN THE BIG APPLE



Mary Ye / Staff photographer

FREE FOOD | Yesterday, students from all four undergraduate schools stood in serpentine lines that stretched from Butler to College Walk. They beared the long wait to get free ice cream, burritos, chicken-and-rice, and other foods from street vendors.

Swine flu scare reaches Morningside Heights

SWINE FLU from front page

and will remain home until they have recovered, according to Zwilling.

His statement added that, “Ascension school and all other Catholic schools in the Archdiocese will continue to closely follow Health Department guidelines. Principals and pastors have been sent updated information on the appropriate procedures they should follow in the event that they suspect a case of flu in their school.”

Though rare in humans, swine flu symptoms appear to be those of seasonal allergies or flu. People with the respiratory infection have experienced fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue, and in some cases, diarrhea and vomiting. (See <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/student-services/preparedness/> for more information on swine flu prevention.)

The illness originally broke out in Mexico, and first

appeared in New York at the St. Francis Preparatory Academy in Fresh Meadows, Queens. Teachers College sent a message to the school’s students on Tuesday reporting that a student “was diagnosed this past Sunday with Type A Influenza, which has been linked to swine flu. We have been and will continue to be in touch with the student.” No further information about that student’s health has been reported.

Barnard’s and Columbia’s Health Services sent out school-wide e-mails on Wednesday, outlining symptoms and suggesting health tips to avoid infection. Columbia posted similar information on the University’s Web site. Precautionary measures include frequent washing of hands and face, use of tissues to contain sneezing, avoiding contact with things that are often touched, such as doorknobs, getting the influenza vaccine annually, and, avoiding contact with those who are ill.

Betsy Morris can be reached at betsy.morris@columbiaspectator.com

Brinkley honors best in history

BANCROFT from front page

social and environmental history of the United States’ pursuit of coal energy.

Pekka Hämäläinen is an assistant professor of history at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and the author of *The Comanche Empire*, a reinvestigation of the impact of the Comanches on the story of the American Southwest.

“What seems to be happening right now, in the past couple of years, there seems to be a trend of historians asking big questions, tackling big topics,” Hämäläinen said. “I think it’s an academic cycle.”

But in dramatic times, historical topics have taken on greater resonance. Faust came upon the subject of loss in the Civil War while researching her previous book, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War*.

She began work on her new topic after the Gulf War while working at Harvard, but found her topic taking on a “renewed salience” in the early 2000s. Although it was

difficult to stick with, Faust said she nevertheless found herself struck by “how extraordinary humans are in how they cope.”

Andrews discovered the topic of his book during a dinner of the student staple, tortellini. Imagining his pasta “flying back into the kitchen and disassembling themselves into their constituent parts,” Andrews said he found the idea of bringing together a labor and environmental history.

The period of history he covered was also a “time period of epiphany about where energy came from ... disasters would happen that would remind people how things happen,” he said.

According to Andrews, in the past “it has been easier to be a responsible historian and to ignore the environment.” For environmental historians, Andrews thinks this sign of recognition has been especially gratifying.

With the Bancroft, Andrews noted, “This book is going to be hard to live up to in the future.”

Brinkley, who will step down as provost at the end of this year and rejoin the history department

as a full time faculty member, presented the awards to the authors and their publishers.

“It’s an honor every year to present the Bancroft prizes,” he said. Brinkley said that books that have won under his tenure make him “all the more eager to get back to history.”

Lisa Ford received the Bancroft prize awarded each year to a Columbia graduate student. Her dissertation, “Settler Sovereignty: Jurisdiction and Indigenous People in Georgia and New South Wales, 1788-1836,” a comparative study of the European encounter with indigenous populations in the Americas and Australia, will be published by Harvard University Press.

Hämäläinen is deep into work on his next book, *The Shapes of Power: Frontiers, Borderlands, Middle Grounds of Empire in North America from 1600 to 1900*.

For Faust, who sent off the manuscript of *This Republic of Suffering* the week before assuming the presidency of her university, her own research has taken the back seat to running a university.

Learning to be creative on campus

CREATIVE WRITING from page 3

In the workshops, students’ writing is critiqued by a small group of other students at the same writing level.

The workshops are broken into three genres: fiction, non-fiction, and poetry, with classes at beginning, intermediate, advanced, and senior levels. Registration for the beginning classes is the same as that for any other class at Columbia—anyone can get in if it hasn’t filled up already. But higher up workshops requires a writing sample, though no priority is given to upperclassmen.

Although many students have complained about the lack of classes and the difficulty of registration, Ben Marcus, the chair of the undergraduate writing program, defended the major. “The major is really new. We are really attentive to the way the

major is unfolding. If anything, we’d like to offer more: more seminars, more diversity, more workshops—we hate to turn students away from our courses.”

For registration for the fall, students will have all summer to prepare a writing sample to get into the section of their dreams. Interested students simply need to get on the department’s list-serv to be notified of the due dates. “Registration can be kind of intimidating, but it works out usually for the best and you end up in a class you’ll learn from and enjoy,” said Erica Weaver, CC ’12, a current student in a beginning poetry workshop.

In seminars, students can focus on a particular element, craft, or genre in a rigorous setting. Seminars offered for this fall include courses on the first-person narrator, translation work, and the lyric poem. Amy Benson, a

lecturer and administrator for the department, said, “What I really love about the major itself is that combination of seminar and workshop—they [students] are getting a chance to focus on their writing with the workshop and an opportunity to be really rigorous in the seminar, focusing on the philosophical and ethical questions of ‘why do this, why bring the pen to the page.’”

The benefits of taking a class in creative writing are numerous—aside from personal cultivation, students also get the chance to take classes with established and published writers.

“I would say the best reason to take the workshops is for the knowledge and experience of the professor. It’s not everyday that you get successful, published authors critiquing and giving advice about your work,” said Jordan Lord, CC ’12.



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Charles in Charge says goodbye to Spec Sports

YOUNG from back page

that's enough to make a department worthwhile.

Spectator has been an integral part of my life for the past four years, and I would like to thank the people who have made it such an enjoyable experience.

BL, JL, MC, MS, and SS the degree to which you guys stepped up this year was unbelievable, and I have utmost confidence you all will bring the section back to where it should be next semester.

AP, AS, RS, LL, BC, and YH, the sports page would never have come together without you guys, and you own it as much as we do.

JT, JA, MP, and MV, I couldn't have asked for better people to work with during my four years here.

AK, JK, and JR, I learned everything from you guys about *Spec* and beyond.

To anyone I may have missed, thanks, and it's been a great four years.

Charles Young is a senior in the School of Engineering and Applied Science majoring in applied math.
sports@columbiaspectator.com

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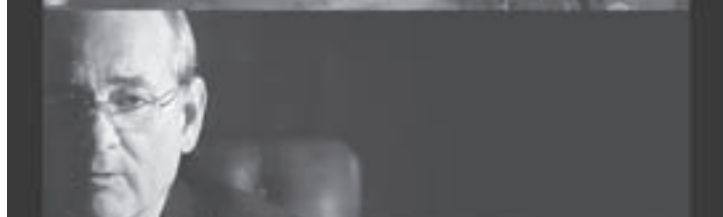
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The Columbia Daily Spectator is published Monday through Friday during the academic year, except during examination and vacation periods.

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Spectator is free on campus. Limit one copy per reader please.

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2875 Broadway, Third Floor
New York, NY 10025

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Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

ACROSS

1 Supplies case
4 Grille cover
7 African hot spot
13 Santa ___ winds
14 Rock band with a fishy name
16 One that got away
17 LPGA star Se Ri
18 "Unforgettable" singer
20 Fit for drafting
22 Pace
23 Goodyear's home
24 "Cold War" European
27 Nintendo rival
28 Any day now
29 Spoils
31 "1940s-'60s Pro Football Hall of Fame" quarterback
35 Den music setup
39 G.I. food in a plastic pouch
40 "Branch scout"
42 "Florida city near Fort Myers"
46 Reno-to-Boise dir.
47 Heineken brand
48 "House speaker before Newt Gingrich"
52 Wander
54 Gaseous: Pref.
55 Vegan's purchase
58 "Covered with black dots"
63 Bridge call
65 Spring
66 Formal intro?
67 "1976 Olympic decathlon champ"
70 Soft shoe, briefly
71 Fruit in a split
72 Houston pro, to fans
73 Word that homophonically forms a familiar word when attached to the end of the answer to each starred clue
74 Crude cabin
75 "Shoot!"

DOWN

1 "Batman" blow
2 Cockamamie
3 Initiates action
4 Deadpan Stein
5 Assay's substance
6 Union station?
7 McCain, e.g.: Abbr.
8 Pond organism
9 Snake oil salesman
10 Really dig
11 Enter again
12 Where the action is
15 1% alternative
19 Like some highlighted text: Abbr.
21 Paris possessive
25 Received
26 Wine bouquet
30 Sluggish Mel
31 Song spelled with arm motions
32 Composer
33 USPS delivery
34 Q.E.D. part
36 Dash
37 Feminine suffix
38 ___dokey
41 "Xanadu" rock go.
43 Ancient Italian
44 Corporate VIP
45 Norway's patron
49 Rand McNally staff
50 Co-pay, for instance
51 Tolkien henchmen
53 M.'s counterpart
55 1970 Potter title role
56 Talk show giant
57 Flora's partner
59 Hankerings
60 Red suit wearer
61 Ham it up
62 Uncertain
64 Transmitted
68 Crow family bird
69 Seoul soldier

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

VEGAS	RANT	MAST
AGRIPE	ELBE	EMMY
LOADED	EDICE	TAIL
ESS	LAST	NOZZLE
PLUTO	PAK	OER
HASANAX	TOGRINO	
ADACK	IMEAN	
YETI	UMBER	JAVA
ENNUI	AURAL	
FIREPLACE	GRATE	
ION	MAE	ADREP
ZIPLOC	BRIE	AHA
ABLE	KARATE	CHOP
ALAN	EXIT	THOSE
KEYS	DEMS	OASES

xwordeditor@aol.com 04/30/09

By Dan Nadler
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File photo

BASEBALL ABROAD | After dabbling in finance, former Lion Henry Perkins, CC '08, chose to return to baseball. Perkins joined the Namur Angels after he was contacted by Christophe Dassy, the current manager. Perkins is the second Ivy League graduate to play for Dassy, the first being Harvard graduate Morgan Brown, who played for the Angels in 2008.

Columbia baseball alum follows unconventional path after collegiate career

PERKINS from back page

player and we bring two U.S. players every year. We wouldn't survive at this level without that help."

"Not yet, at least," he added.

Like so many other recent college graduates, Henry Perkins was not immune to the financial collapse in the fall of 2008. A senior from Skaneateles, N.Y., he finished his four years at Columbia with a political science major and an Ivy League championship in baseball, and as the 2008 Ivy League Player of the Year—only the second player to win the award in Columbia history. He landed a job with Tellutt Prevon, a brokerage firm, and started training for a career in finance. His baseball days were behind him.

But by December, Perkins was unemployed. His initial thought was to begin the job search again in earnest. But an e-mail forwarded to him by Columbia baseball head coach Brett Boretta two weeks later changed that. It was the message that led to his acquaintance with Chris Dassy and the Namur Angels.

"I didn't reach out to him at all," Perkins said. "It's something that came to me."

For the most part, players who want to continue their careers overseas have to do most of the legwork in order to get noticed. Mister-baseball.com, for instance, is a Web site with a message board on which players can advertise themselves to teams looking for foreign players. Teams then scout the boards and contact the most promising prospects.

"My approach is a little more complicated," Dassy said. "I do it myself."

As Dassy explained it, he only looks at recent college graduates, "guys who are borderline pros but didn't get a good shot at it." The reasoning for this is mostly economical—"I can't afford pro guys," he said. Once he's targeted some players using statistics found online, Dassy e-mails their former coaches to get an assurance of the player's character and to set up a direct correspondence with the player.

Usually, Dassy aims for Division III players, preferably from schools with good academics. But last season, he brought in an American shortstop from a decidedly different background. His name was Morgan Brown, and like Henry Perkins, he was an Ivy League graduate.

Perhaps it's no surprise that Brown ended up in Belgium. A walk-on to the Harvard baseball team his freshman year, Brown came from a small public high school in New Hampshire that did not encourage any baseball attention from large colleges. Brown had wanted to play coming out of school, but no coaching staff was

interested, including Harvard. When he eventually approached head coach Joe Walsh, however, he was allowed to try out.

Over his four years in Cambridge, Mass., Brown experienced his fair share of successes and disappointments. He pitched at Fenway Park, home of the Boston Red Sox, during a Beanpot tournament game against the University of Massachusetts. His sophomore year, he was named the starting shortstop for the Crimson.

That same year, he dislocated his shoulder in his second at bat of the season, tearing his labrum. Months later, things got worse. An inadvertent ball to the face in a New England Collegiate Baseball League game broke his left eye socket and nose and ruptured an artery in his face.

"It ultimately required three surgeries and countless trips to the emergency room over two weeks finally to stop the bleeding and re-model my nose and eye area to allow me to breathe freely and to see again out of my left eye," Brown wrote in an e-mail.

The injuries Brown suffered, along with a developing interest in seeing the world, brought his dreams of pursuing professional baseball to an end. Instead, he took a year after graduation to go to India where he worked in the slums, helping out with an HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment program. On his return, Brown applied for the Rhodes Scholarship and made it to the national finalist level before being turned down.

But baseball had not left Brown's mind during his time abroad. He still thought about the pre-draft workout for the Mets that he took part in at Shea Stadium, just one day before his Harvard commencement, and his stint in a Canadian independent league the summer before he left for India.

"I eventually decided to try to play baseball again, but I knew after taking a year off it would be difficult to get signed by a U.S. independent team or to get tryouts for MLB teams," Brown said. "So I tried to work myself back into shape and I Google-searched for international baseball teams looking for players."

Namur was the first team to respond. According to Brown, it took them less than three minutes. Brown agreed to join the team on the condition that he could play a few games there and then return to the U.S. to join an American team. But a quadriceps injury caused him to

miss the preseason, and so he stayed in Belgium for the entire season.

Returning to top playing form was not easy. Brown had never been to Belgium and spoke no French. He had not played baseball in almost two years. On top of that, Namur's home field was almost unusable for practice because of weather conditions during the first month.

"I felt perpetually rusty," he said.

He still led the team in batting average, hits, home runs, runs batted in, and just about every other offensive category in his first and only season with the Angels.

"Compared to Division I and the Ivy League, it [the competition level in Belgium] is certainly well behind," Brown said. "There are a few quality players to be sure, but there is not the depth to make them competitive over an extended competition."

While he was in Belgium, Brown, along with other expatriates, would occasionally scrimmage with the Belgian national team. The team of foreigners, cobbled together with former collegiate Division III players and the occasional military personnel from a nearby NATO base, never lost a game to the cream of Belgium's baseball crop.

With Dassy's offer in hand, Perkins continued to debate his future. He talked to his parents and to Boretta, to his friends and other players who had gone overseas, Brown included. But in his mind, Perkins could not shake the feeling that he wanted to pick up a bat and glove at least once more.

"It was especially hard for me after having come off such a successful season individually and being named the Ivy League Player of the Year to have it all stop there," Perkins said.

So in January, Perkins agreed to join the Angels. His contract was modest: a 400-Euro monthly stipend, although the team covered housing and food expenses, as well as travel to and from the U.S. In addition to joining the Angels as the starting shortstop and occasional relief pitcher, Perkins would also work maintenance on the field, along with a job as an instructor for the Angels' youth players.

From the very start, however, Dassy told Perkins not to harbor illusions about being a professional baseball player in Belgium.

"He said, 'A lot of American players that we talk to think this is going to be some sort of guaranteed springboard to furthering a professional career and something that will get you noticed,'"

Perkins remembered. "He made it very clear that that's probably not going to be the case."

Four games into the 2009 season, Namur is 3-1, and tied for first place. That includes a win over the Port of Antwerp Royal Greys, who have won four straight Belgian league titles. In the victory, Perkins collected two hits and the game's lone run batted in. Zachary Potter, a fellow former collegiate player, struck out eight for the Angels in a four-hit shutout.

So far, Perkins has enjoyed his time across the Atlantic. In an e-mail sent after a weekend sweep of Borgerhout, Perkins wrote that he had found everyone in Namur accommodating and friendly. His teammates have been eager to talk baseball with someone from the U.S. A number of them keep tabs on MLB games online, although public coverage of baseball in Belgium remains low. Perkins has even been able to take part in international tournaments, including one in the Netherlands against members of the Dutch WBC team that shocked the world in March.

Perkins is scheduled to play in Belgium until the end of June, at which point his visa will expire and he will have to leave the country. Then Perkins will have to decide where to go next—come home and hang up his spikes or continue to cross the globe for another opportunity.

"I'd love to be able to build something out of it," Perkins said in March before leaving for Belgium. "But I don't have all my eggs in one basket. Like I said, I was looking for a job before I became interested in doing this baseball thing and I'm still looking for a job for when I come back to the United States if I need it."

Morgan Brown continued playing professionally after his time with Namur ended, heading to Australia. He is now back in the U.S. and, in an e-mail sent earlier this month, said that he had been invited to spring training with an unnamed Can-Am League team. His name does not currently appear on any Can-Am League roster.

Reflecting back on his time in Belgium, Brown mentioned the conflict between his expectations and the outcomes.

"I went with the wrong idea of what I was getting into," Brown said of Namur. "Clearly it was not a way to prepare to play professional baseball later in the summer. The expectation should be geared more towards trying to enjoy what baseball is played and especially finding something meaningful to do in the massive time away from baseball."

While playing in Belgium, Brown traveled Europe. He helped maintain the playing field at Namur and taught the younger players about baseball. He tried to learn French. He performed odd jobs here and there, such as helping a teammate build a patio. He privately tried to

PERKINS TENURE: YEAR-BY-YEAR RECORD			
	OVERALL RECORD	IVY RECORD	LEAGUE FINISH
2005	10-31	5-15	8th
2006	13-32	6-14	T-7th
2007	16-28-1	10-10	5th
2008	22-28	15-5	1st

come to terms with the opportunities he had been afforded which contrasted so much with the abject poverty he had worked to combat while in India. And he tried to enjoy the game that meant so much to him.

"Any time someone gives you a chance to continue to play baseball, get paid to do it, and live overseas, you almost need to pinch yourself because it sounds too good to be true," Brown said. "I can never say anything critical about such an experience."

One year ago, Henry Perkins and Columbia had just completed a four-game sweep against Penn to secure the Lou Gehrig Division regular-season title. Within a week, they were the champions of the Ivy League. Two weeks later, Perkins was the Ivy League Player of the Year.

This weekend, Perkins and his new team will travel just over 60 miles from Namur to Mortsel, a suburb of Antwerp, where the Angels will battle the Stars on May 2 in the fifth game of the young Belgian season. After the second game of the series the next day, the Angels will have their customary week off, during which Perkins will try to fill the downtime however he can.

When asked what the draw was of leaving home to play in a country where baseball was a very distant afterthought, Perkins answered the most straightforward way possible.

"I love to play baseball, and this is an opportunity to do it more," he said. "That's the initial draw for me. I don't care if at the end of the day I'm on the Yankees or whatever. I just love playing baseball."

There are no Yankees in Belgium. There are no major league scouts or stadiums filled with thousands of cheering fans. There are simply small fields and repurposed team names and games for the players who never had the chance to go pro but didn't want to stop playing. But no matter how far the dirt fields of Namur are from the finely manicured greens of the majors, places like Belgium are the opportunity for players like Perkins and Brown to continue their careers while the opportunity is still there.

"There will certainly come a time soon when I will explore some other avenues that are not focused on baseball," Brown said. "But I will enjoy every moment until then spent between the lines."

The heavyweight rowing team will try to return to its winning ways at the Maxwell Stevenson Cup this weekend.

TOMORROW



SPORTS

THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2009 • PAGE 10



The Columbia track and field team will run in its final tune-up this weekend before competing for the Ivy title.

TOMORROW

Bright spots for CU sports keep cynicism at bay



CHARLES YOUNG
CHARLES IN CHARGE

They say that cynicism is only the most common form of naivete. It's been more than three years since I first started covering Columbia sports, taking the women's basketball, softball, and men's soccer beats. Back then, there wasn't much happy news to write about. Under then-rookie head coach Paul Nixon, women's basketball struggled, winning just two Ivy games, both over equally bad Yale. Softball started strong, riding on then-senior pitcher Jackie Adelfio, but skidded to a 4-8 conference finish. And despite the excitement of a heralded new coach in Leo Chappel, men's soccer 2006 season ended without a single league win.

But as dreary as it sometimes was to see the Lions struggle through the beats I covered, no team's travails were more disheartening to watch than football's. During Bob Shoop's final season, spreads against Columbia widened to more than 20 points; even so, the opponents would cover every time. Enter new head coach Norries Wilson, and a new enthusiasm was infused into the program. But while the moral victories were many, the actual victories were few. The 2006 football team would fail to win an Ivy game until pulling out two straight against Cornell and Brown at the end of the season. It was tough not to harden and be cynical.

A funny thing happened on the way to graduation, however. The Lions won games. Titles, even.

The first team to raise hopes was women's soccer in fall of 2006. Having improved from a dreadful record in 2004 to threaten briefly in 2005, the Light Blue put together a flawless Ivy campaign to win the title, beating old favorite Dartmouth in the process.

Next came men's tennis in the spring of 2007. A perennially competitive team, the Lions overcame a disappointing '06 campaign to go 6-1 the next year, and win the title in a playoff against Penn.

But perhaps the most satisfying title for Columbia as an athletic program would come the next spring, as baseball coach Brett Boretti took a team that went 5-15 the year before he arrived, and 6-14 his first year, to a 15-5 Ivy record and a playoff win over Dartmouth for the Ivy title. To call this a dramatic turnaround of the program would be an understatement.

These successes come despite the dramatic institutional disadvantages inherent to be a city school. While sports events may be the ultimate gathering of crowds, the infrastructure needed to support teams is a decidedly suburban and space-consuming affair, something that goes against the character of a school located within six streets and a single avenue block. Elite programs have practice fields and facilities comparable in size to the entirety of Morningside campus. Compare that to Baker Field and the cozy confines of Dodge, and it becomes clear the constraints under which Columbia athletics has to operate.

And yet programs here persevere, and some even thrive. Traditional New York sport fencing continues to be the top program in the conference, and one of the top teams in the country. Men's tennis and women's soccer contend year in and year out, with tennis repeating their '07 performance to win the title again this year. Both basketball teams are now competitive, and coach Nixon's women's basketball squad has a chance to do something special in sophomore Judie Lomax's remaining years at Columbia.

There will probably never be a day where every single team that Columbia fields will be competitive. It may even be that competitiveness will not extend to most teams. But the bright spots are there, and as a city school's sports fans, perhaps

SENIOR COLUMN

"I love to play baseball, and this is an opportunity to do it more... That's the initial draw for me. I don't care if at the end of the day I'm on the Yankees or whatever. I just love playing baseball."

—Henry Perkins, CC '08

Baseball alum continues career overseas

Henry Perkins, CC '08, travels to Belgium to play pro ball

BY JONATHAN TAYLER
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Former Columbia second baseman Henry Perkins knew the following things about Namur, Belgium, before he decided to move there.

Namur is a small, quiet European town. Not at all like Paris or London or even Brussels, the capital that sits 30 miles to the north.

Namur is a typical European town: "Old city on a river, fort at the top of the hill, that sort of thing," Perkins said.

Namur is the capital of Wallonia, the French-speaking zone of Belgium. And that was it.

But the small Belgian town, sitting at the confluence of the Sambre and Meuse rivers and boasting a population just north of 100,000, did have one thing that Perkins knew very well: baseball. So Perkins, only a few months removed from his first and only Ivy League championship at Columbia, traded in his blue-and-gray Lions uniform for the yellow-and-black attire of the Namur Angels. The reigning Ivy League Player of the Year took his game across the ocean to one of the most baseball-poor countries in the world.

It all started with an out-of-the-blue e-mail from the small Belgian town that Henry Perkins knew nothing about.

The first record of baseball in Belgium, according to Josh Chetwynd's book *Baseball in Europe: A Country by Country History*, dates from 1889, about 20 years after the first professional baseball team came together in the U.S. The sport attracted the national interest after World War I brought American soldiers to the continent, so much so that the *New York Times* wondered in 1919 if baseball could become the new pastime of Belgium, France, and Holland. But despite baseball's sustained popularity in Belgium through the inter-war period, World War II proved a decisive blow to building a top-notch professional league there.

Today, as Major League Baseball looks to expand its presence in Europe, Belgian baseball lags considerably behind the relative powerhouse of the continent: the Netherlands. The Dutch already scored the biggest coup of any European country in the history of baseball, upsetting the Dominican Republic in the first round of the World Baseball Classic last March. But Belgium is far from replicating its northern neighbor's success.



File photo

Nonetheless, an eight-team professional baseball league does exist in Belgium, organized under the Royal Belgian Federation of Baseball and Softball (FRBBS). Like the National and American Leagues in the U.S., Belgium has two regional associations in Wallonia and Flanders. But of the eight teams in the top division, only the Namur Angels come from the Wallonian Francophone Belgian Baseball and Softball League (LFBBS). The other seven are based in and around Antwerp and Brussels, both part of the Flemish Baseball and Softball League (VBSL).

The Belgian professional season lasts from April until September with a preseason in March, although the poor weather in northern Europe makes it almost impossible to play in the early spring. Teams practice twice a week and play only twice a week, with both games set during the weekend. The rest of a player's time is spent lounging about, doing odd jobs

for the club, or traveling through Europe.

Club names are a motley mix of American inspirations, such as the Angels and Braves, and other, more esoteric creations. Teams such as the Brussels Kangaroos and the Koninklijke Squirrels square off every weekend, rosters comprised

mostly of local players and the occasional Dutch transplant.

But the odd Americans do crop up on rosters. Each team usually has a couple, either fresh out of college or washed out of independent or semi-pro leagues back home. Brought over on work visas, most leave for better opportunities elsewhere after a season.

Without fail, these wayward Americans dominate their Belgian



Graphic by Ben Cotton

EXPATRIATE | In his final season on the Columbia baseball team Henry Perkins, CC '08, led the Lions to their first conference title since 1977 and earned the honor of Ivy League Player of the Year. Perkins is now playing for the Namur Angels in Belgium.

competition. Joel McKeon, a former Chicago White Sox prospect who came to Belgium after a deal with an Italian team fell apart, was one of those players. In three years as a starter with the Brasschaat Braves, he never lost a game. Tom Magrann, a career minor leaguer with 10 big-league at bats to his name, won the Belgian triple crown in his only year with Brasschaat, hitting .605 with 18 home runs in 15 games.

Far fewer players make the trip in the opposite direction. The closest a Belgian has come to MLB was last season, when an 18-year-old catcher named Thomas De Wolf signed a minor-league contract with the New York Mets. De Wolf was the first Belgian ever to receive a professional contract in the U.S. He has apparently not played a single game for any team in the Mets organization.

Namur is something of a success story in Belgium. Only 20 years old as a franchise, the Angels jumped from Division 3 to Division 1 in just six years. For a region of the country that has had

organized baseball for only 21 years, reaching the level of the more-established Flemish teams was considered a tremendous accomplishment.

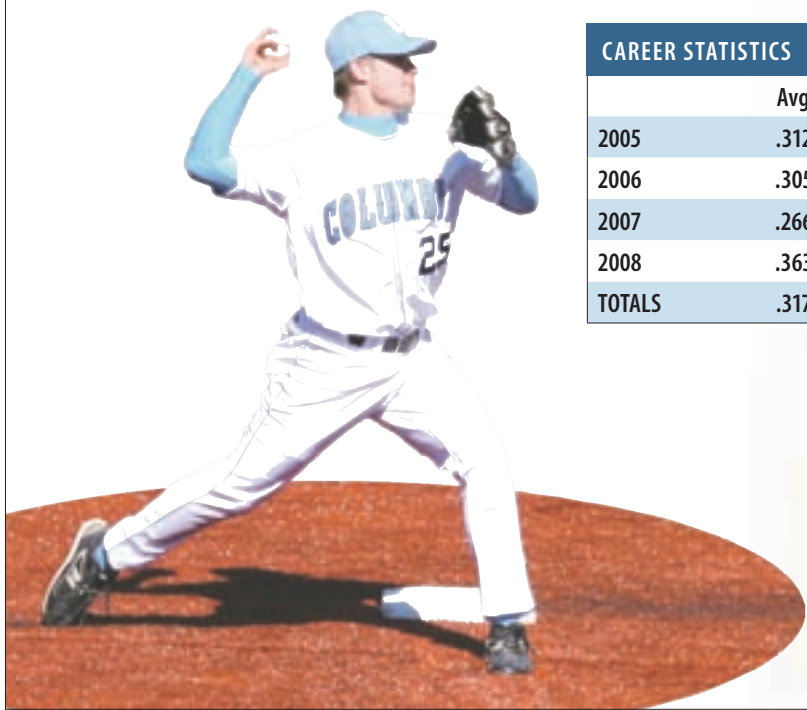
Christophe Dassy, current manager of the Angels, joined Namur in 1991 as a 17-year-old. He started out with their youth team after he returned from a school trip to the U.S. with a wooden bat and a baseball. Eventually funneled up to the senior squad, he was a member of the first Namur side to take part in Division 1 competition in 1995. He remembers all too well how that went.

"We got destroyed most times but almost managed to stay, losing the decisive game in front of the whole Antwerp baseball population, who were hard on us," Dassy wrote in an e-mail. "I will never forget that."

Shuttling back and forth between Divisions 1 and 2 for the next decade, Namur finally seems entrenched in Division 1 after a string of top-six finishes. Competition within the Belgian top league, however, remains decidedly favored toward the Flemish teams.

"Due to their location, Antwerp ball clubs often bring over some Dutch players," Dassy said. "The level in the Netherlands is higher and they can get good players at a discounted price. In Namur, we have mostly local guys but we also have a Dutch Antillean

SEE PERKINS, page 9



SEE YOUNG, page 7