



ACADEMIC ACTIVISTS | Gavin McGown (left) and Will Hughes are advocating for the creation of a queer studies concentration.

In Harlem, block assoc. seeks cultural balance

BY ALESSANDRA POBLADOR
Columbia Daily Spectator

Between ongoing redevelopment and a wave of new residents, West Harlem is changing quickly. But Cator Sparks, president of Block Association 122, wants to make sure that old and new residents work together to preserve the neighborhood's unique culture.

Block Association 122 unites the residents of West 122nd Street between Frederick Douglass and Adam Clayton Powell boulevards. Sparks, a fashion journalist who is originally from Atlanta, became the association's president in 2005, three years after moving to Harlem from downtown SoHo.

Sparks described the block as an eclectic but tight-knit community.

"It makes me sad when I walk down the street and I say hi to people and they don't say hi back," he said. "That's not Harlem, that's SoHo."

The block association is one of Harlem's great traditions, Sparks said. Started in the late '90s by Haja and Cindy Worley, Block Association 122 meets once every two months in a local church. The association, which has 80 people on its email list and about 15 regular participants, has organized many of the block's community projects, including the construction of tree guards, the development of a community garden, a weekly farmers' market, and an annual potluck.

"It's a very important part of the community here," West 122nd Street resident Mario Pinto said. "Harlem is known for that kind of grassroots movement."

The block association also functions as an important source of support in a neighborhood that occasionally must cope with destructive behavior. The association has helped residents report robbery and cases of abuse to the police.

"If somebody is doing something or needs something—if a cat is lost, if a kid needs a summer camp, if someone has a table for sale—then we are there to help," Sparks said. "It's a sense of community. It's bringing people together. It's knowing your neighbors."

SEE SPARKS, page 2

CU preps for science fundraising campaign

BY SONGYAO WANG
Columbia Daily Spectator

Columbia is looking to increase the profile of its natural science departments through a new fundraising effort. Still in its early stages, the Columbia Science Initiative is scheduled to shift into high gear early next semester.

"The Columbia Science Initiative is definitely something new for Columbia," said Amber Miller, dean of sciences in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. "We've had funding for the sciences here and there over the years, but I would say—from my memory—that this is the first time that we're going to have a coherent plan with a budget attached."

The nine natural science department chairs are currently putting together lists of projects that each department would like to see funded in the coming years. Miller, along with other administrators and the board of trustees, will review the departments' overall proposal once it's completed. Fundraising will begin after the

proposal is finalized and a comprehensive interdepartmental vision is created.

"We're trying to make this as inclusive as possible," Miller said, noting that faculty input will be important. In addition to fundraising, Columbia is "trying to establish a new way of doing things, such as streamlining the way professors get grants, building relationships between their labs, helping them overcome compliance regulations," she said.

"These things really create inconveniences in furthering research in the sciences, so we want to cut those to a minimum when we can," Miller said. She added that one of her main goals for the initiative is to achieve global top-10 rankings for every natural sciences departments.

Statistics department chair David Madigan expressed enthusiasm for the project. He said that the initiative came out of the realization that fundraising for the natural sciences has often been neglected at Columbia.

"Under Amber's leadership, we're really trying to be more aggressive in presenting

science to the community and raising the profile of science at Columbia, since we've got a lot to be proud of," he said. Miller took on the newly created dean of sciences role in April 2011.

Although neither Miller nor Madigan would comment extensively on specific projects they would like to see funded, both shared a few of their ideas. Miller said she would like to create a post-doctoral fellowship program modeled after the Harvard Society of Fellows, and Madigan said that he would like to see more joint hires between different departments.

Jerry Kisslinger, CC '79 and chief creative officer at the Office of Alumni and Development, said that he is excited to start working with potential donors once a proposal is finalized.

"I'm delighted to participate in this, which is very important to the development of the sciences at Columbia and very important to cultivating appreciation of the sciences for undergrads, grads, and faculty alike," he said.

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MTA introduces larger buses on popular M60 route

BY SOPHIE GAMEZ AND CASEY TOLAN
Columbia Daily Spectator

Straphangers who are used to coping with a crowded morning commute on the M60 are about to get a lot more space.

The city is adding larger buses to the route as more people take the M60, which runs from 106th Street up Broadway and past Columbia, across Harlem on 125th Street, and finally to LaGuardia Airport in Queens.

The new buses—which are known as articulated buses—are 62 feet long, compared to the standard buses' 40 feet. Articulated buses have about 60 seats, compared to about 40 seats in standard buses, Metropolitan Transportation Authority spokesperson Deirdre Parker said in a statement.

The larger buses are already being phased into the route, and all M60 buses will be articulated by January. While the new buses will save the city money, they will

also increase waiting times for commuters.

"Articulated buses move more people at a lower cost because they were running four buses an hour, and now they're running three buses an hour," said Gene Russianoff, president of the Straphangers Campaign, a public transportation advocacy group. "They're controversial with riders because the waits sometimes are longer as they run fewer buses."

SEE M60, page 7



LUKE HENDERSON / SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

GONNA NEED A BIGGER BUS | The MTA is introducing larger, more spacious M60 buses.

EDITORS' NOTE, PAGE 2

Spectator digital archive launched

After three years of fundraising and archival work by Spectator and Columbia University Libraries, Spectator's historical archive is now searchable and accessible online.

A&E, PAGE 3

MFA grad reflects on drugs, education in graphic novel

Matthew Parker looks back at his experiences with addiction and crime dating back to his childhood in an autobiographical work.



OPINION, PAGE 4

The best and brightest

James Yoon thinks that the pursuit of excellence can harm itself.

I was wrong

Bob Sun disapproves of how Columbia students disagree.

SPORTS, PAGE 6

Dartmouth, Princeton have successful weeks

The Tigers and Big Green will meet in a marquee Ivy matchup after big victories last week.

WEATHER

Today



77°/59°

Tomorrow



73°/59°

Columbia’s past, now online.

Spectator spends much of its time looking forward. Reporters try to catch the next big story and editors work on new ways to get you—students, faculty, neighbors, friends—the breaking news, commentary, and distractions that you want. But right now, we’re taking time to look backward into Spectator’s and Columbia’s history.

Beginning today, a big portion of that history is accessible online for everyone to see and search as we launch the Columbia Spectator Archive, a joint project from Spectator and the Columbia University Libraries. Almost every issue of the Spectator published from fall 1953 through spring 1985, as well as the 1991 and 1992 volumes, has been digitized and uploaded to the new site.

Until now, those who wanted to read Spectator content published more than a decade or so ago resorted to crumbling bound volumes in the Spectator office or fuzzy and incomplete microfilm rolls in the libraries. Spectator’s single bound copy of the 1968 volume has been kept in a locked cabinet, the key to which has been passed from to each successive editor in chief. Today, the text in those articles, headlines, bylines, photo captions, and advertisements is completely searchable, and each page and issue is also viewable and available for download.

Getting to this point took years of work from Spectator editors and Libraries staff, as well as significant financial contributions from Spectator alumni and friends. We’re now working around the clock to raise the final \$24,000 that Spectator needs to complete the archive, from our first issues in 1877 through 1953 and from 1993 to the beginning of the 21st century. (If you or someone you know could help us finish the job, please donate here!)

We invite you to click [here](#) or the button at the top of the site to explore the archive. Just a few seconds of searching can pull up some real gems. Don’t miss a moving piece about Columbia’s reaction to President John F. Kennedy’s assassination, a complete history of Barnard’s decision to remain independent, a summary of Postcrypt’s first event (with “coffee and pastries”), and, of course, a day-by-day account of the 1968 campus riots.

We hope you’ll use the archive to dig up information about your club’s founding, past campus controversies, and the history of Morningside Heights and Manhattanville (and their bagel establishments). If you have any questions, or find something especially interesting, let us know. We’ll be featuring more historical content across Spectator and Spectrum in the coming weeks, and using the archive to add context about Columbia’s past to the stories we’ll continue to write about Columbia’s future.

With gratitude,
Sarah Darville, Editor in Chief
Maggie Alden, Managing Editor
Alex Smyk, Publisher



HENRY WILLSON / SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

EYES ON THE STREET | Cator Sparks has been president of Block Association 122 since 2005.

Sparks works to preserve Harlem culture

SPARKS from front page

Sparks said he was among the first of an ongoing wave of new residents coming to the area. The block association now faces the challenge of getting residents unfamiliar with Harlem to embrace its unique culture and traditions. “A lot of the people moving up here don’t realize that they are moving to a place with economic difficulties, or a culture that’s been thriving for 50 years,” he said. Sparks noted that the street’s

most recent annual block party, which was attended by more than 200 people, prompted complaints for the first time in 10 years—particularly from new residents. “You cannot think like that if you’re going to live in Harlem,” he said. “You have to be part of the community and support what happens here.” Other association members echoed Sparks’ description of the neighborhood’s evolving culture. Pinto said that low rents have attracted renovations and new residents, which has

created a distinct “mix of old and new.” Cindy Worley called this mix “not a recipe for disaster, but a recipe for hope.” “I happen to think it’s a good thing for people of all stripes—all financial strata—to live among one another,” Worley said. “I have hope that rather than live in enmity, they could find common ground. And I would say that Cator is exactly the right person to encourage such empathy and understanding.” news@columbiaspectator.com

Queer studies faces long approval process

QUEER STUDIES from front page

“Its gestation period was a long one,” she said. “Even though there was some faculty interest in the field of human rights, and a center director, and a Law School faculty member’s human rights courses and programs, it did not really take root until there was a corps of

Arts and Sciences faculty who decided to teach human rights courses as part of their departmental teaching responsibilities,” Yatrakis said. If the Committee on Instruction turns down the queer studies proposal, Hughes, McGown, and Inglehart plan to petition the committee with the help of other students. For now,

though, they’re focused on finding a faculty sponsor, as well as compiling a list of already-offered interdisciplinary courses that might fit into the concentration. “We’ve been very happy with the support and definitely think this is a doable goal for the year,” Hughes said. rakhi.agrawal@columbiaspectator.com

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BEAUTY AND BRAINS | Left to right: Watt, Rancière, and Swenson sit on the discussion panel at “Aisthesis: Scenes from the Aesthetic Regime of Art.”

Rancière delivers lecture on aesthetics

BY SAM SEGAL
Columbia Daily Spectator

Touching on everything from modern architecture to “Avatar,” the only prerequisites for the Eugene J. Sheffer Distinguished Lecture were a stomach for philosophy and an ear for French accents.

French philosopher Jacques Rancière delivered the lecture, titled “Aisthesis: Scenes from the Aesthetic Regime of Art” on Sept. 19. The event, co-sponsored by the Heyman Center for the Humanities and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences was followed by a panel discussion featuring French professors Phil Watts and Madeleine Dobie, English professor Patricia Dailey, film professor Nico Baumbach, and French professor James Swenson of Rutgers University.

Watts introduced the noteworthy philosopher to a packed SIPA lecture hall as one of the most important thinkers to ever write about “the role of literature, art, and film in opening possibilities of democratic action.”

Rancière’s ability to “make it acceptable and interesting to think about aesthetics” accounted for the large turnout, English professor Nicholas Dames told Spectator.

Famous for his collaboration with Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser on “Reading Capital” and his writing on human rights, education, democracy, and aesthetics, Rancière discussed his latest book, “Aisthesis,” whose title translates from Greek to “general perception by the entire body—visual, tactile, and intellectual.” In the book, Rancière focuses on our general perception of art in modernity.

In the lecture, Rancière discussed the historical process by which, beginning in the 18th century,

a new way of recognizing and responding to art took hold.

“My basic assumption is that aesthetics doesn’t designate the study of art or the study of the beautiful,” Rancière said. “It designates a regime of experience, the one within which we have been accustomed to identify artistic practices.”

This “aesthetic regime,” which determines the way art is perceived and understood, spans everything from work’s material conditions to the set of emotional reactions that it evokes from its audience.

To unpack this regime’s origins, “Aisthesis” analyzes everyone from Charlie Chaplin to Stéphane Mallarmé.

“All the cases I examine are cases in which the question of is this art is the same as what is art,” he said. Ultimately these cases culminate in an interrogation of widespread contemporary attitudes toward modern art.

“The good thing about the panel is you have people from different perspectives,” Watts told Spectator after the lecture. “It pushed him into areas he wouldn’t otherwise have developed.”

Francophones delight: Maison Fracoise helped organize “Aisthesis,” and will continue presenting talks throughout the semester, with three fast approaching.

Tonight, Thomas Piketty, Professor of Economics at the Paris School of Economics, will give a talk, “Inequality in America: The 1% in International and Historical Perspective.”

Next month, on Oct. 11, a roundtable discussion, “Literature and History: Writing World War II in France,” will take place, followed closely by a conversation with French novelist Pierre Force on Oct. 17.

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‘Heroin, Handcuffs, and Higher Education’: from drugs to degree

BY LILY LIU-KRASON
Columbia Daily Spectator

The first book from Matthew Parker, SoA ’12, “Larceny in My Blood: A Memoir of Heroin, Handcuffs and Higher Education” is an honest account of one man’s struggle to break out of a life of addiction and crime. The book is a hybrid of the two worlds that Parker knows well—one illegal, one illustrious. Readers follow his tumultuous story through the pages of his self-illustrated graphic novel.

During his first prison sentence in 1987, Parker quickly learned, he writes, that “you have to adapt to survive.” He gives readers a crash course on how to survive and comments, “If, like me, you’re a white male, you have to pretend you’re a racist to avoid violent repercussions ... Try not to appear overly literate or intellectually eloquent.” Parker would have to assume this attitude every time he was sentenced to prison in order to be left alone by inmates. Despite the fact he struggled to blend in with his fellow prisoners, Parker illustrates how easy it was for him to keep returning, since the crimes stemming from his dependence on the drug were twofold. Besides the act of buying and consuming heroin, Parker also resorted to crime to fund his addiction: “Every day was a struggle to come up with dope money. Paying rent and bills were secondary.”

Eventually, Parker would “get caught again.” Not only did his hunger for heroin send him to jail repeatedly and force him to commit crimes, but it also kept him from having meaningful relationships. He explains that he and an ex-girlfriend broke apart because “my love of heroin was stronger than my love for her.” From his first job dealing pot at age 13, to his harsh years in prison where he had to assume an attitude of intolerance and ignorance to fit in, Parker provides a unique glimpse of a life of larceny and how easy it is to become entrapped in its cycle.

Parker’s illustrations and his voice provide wit, playfulness, and dark humor without detracting from

the earnestness of the narrative. Parker is both insightful and thoughtful when explaining the social dynamics of prison and the MFA program. Especially surprising and refreshing are the connections he draws between both, as he compares a federal institution with educational ones. For example, he compares the rift between the different nonfiction, fiction, and poetry MFA students to prison gangs.

“The inter-genre resentment isn’t as thick as it was in prison but is there nonetheless,” he writes. Parker also comments that the bureaucracies in the prison system are surprisingly similar to the bureaucracies at higher institutions, with rules that hindered his path in helping him access the help he needed—an idea many Columbians can sympathize with.

From his novel, it is obvious that Parker has come a long way against the odds, turning his life around in a way that many of us can barely imagine. In a moving passage, he writes about one of his moments of realization, saying, “I abhorred control and thought that being a junkie was very clever and very rebellious and very postmodern and very much outside of their [figures of authority’s] control. Then I looked around me. I was locked like an animal in a tiny cage ... I was totally, irrevocably, utterly in their control and had been for the past 13 years.” Despite these seemingly insurmountable circumstances, Parker also describes his challenging days at the Columbia nonfiction MFA program in a way to which many current Columbia students can relate.

The format of the novel is sometimes confusing, jumping around chronologically, and Parker occasionally throws in details that linger without explanation or place. But Parker’s compelling tale and ability to integrate his personal style into the novel lets it stand on its own. This book provides an eye-opening account for anyone, especially those at an Ivy League institution who may take for granted its diversity or opportunities for the pursuit of knowledge and truth many only dream of.

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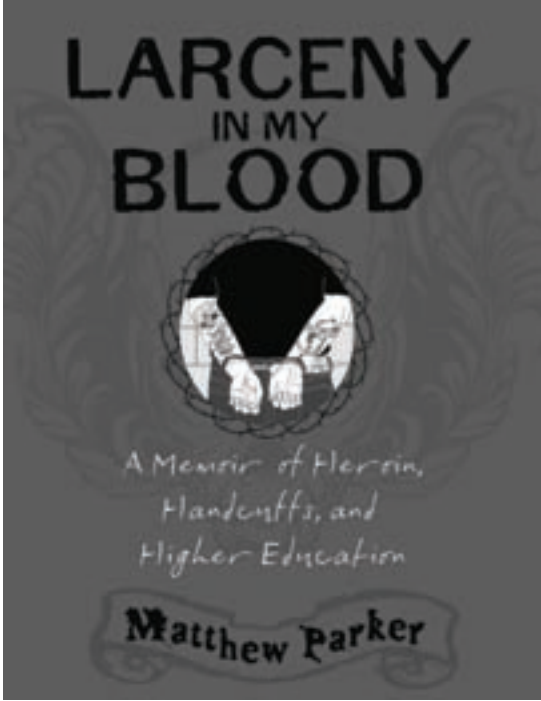


PHOTO COURTESY OF GOTHAM BOOKS/PENGUIN GROUP

BUST TO BOOK | Matthew Parker, SoA ’12, recently released his first book, a graphic novel detailing his journey from a turbulent stint in and out of jail to getting his MFA.

Society gives moviegoers cheap option

BY OLIVIA WONG
Columbia Daily Spectator

For the lazy, cash-strapped college student, cinema-style movies seem less worthy than food at Westside or time spent sleeping—even with the Arts Initiative discount.

Ferris Reel Film Society aims to shoot down those objections by holding cheap, on-campus movie screenings.

FRFS specializes in bringing a wide spectrum of films to campus before they are released on DVD. The screenings, which take place once a month, are either free or offered at a discount price—three dollars versus AMC Theatres’ fourteen—and the group even takes student suggestions into account.

With the successful reception of the group—notably a big turnout of 250 students for their first free screening of the year, the blockbuster summer hit “The Avengers”—the group is looking for new ways to branch out. The society plans to conduct a screening on the Barnard campus this year and take a break from Lerner, and according to president Luisa Lizoain, CC ’14, “We’re aiming to bring smaller movies to campus.”

But in the end, FRFS works democratically, showing the films that students want to see. For Lizoain, what makes the group special is that it is “more interested in trying to get student input rather than just us deciding for them.”

During NSOP week, FRFS held a meet and greet with the new freshmen and invited them to have an impact on campus their very first month here. After handing out a list of films and asking the students

to pick a favorite, “The Avengers” was selected for screening. The group acquired the rights to show the film from a distributor and brought the Columbia community together to watch a movie.

Vice President Kevin Shin, CC ’14, echoed this sentiment, saying, “It’s not about indie or blockbuster. Students decide what they want to watch.”

To further facilitate this process, the society will be taking suggestions via Facebook, Twitter, or email (frfs.columbia@gmail.com).

As for future events, FRFS is very excited about its October event, which it is co-sponsoring with another group on campus—the details are being kept hush-hush—and is hoped to be especially resonant with Columbia students. Malida teased, “[The event] will bring a documentary and panel that is more culturally relevant ... that people can identify with more than some box office hit.” While its members were hesitant to reveal too much about the event, which will take place October 18th at 7 p.m., it is safe to say that the group hopes the screening will be a powerful, shared experience for the Columbia community. As Kevin put it, “Film in general makes a very big impact ... It opens up a whole new perspective.”

But FRFS members can’t complain with the status quo.

When asked why she joined the group, Malida Tadesse, FRFS treasurer, CC ’14, and a design associate for Spectator, answered, “It’s fun to do something that you think really makes an impact on campus ... I mean, there are 250 people watching a movie in Lerner on a Thursday night.”

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COURTESY OF FERRIS REEL FILM SOCIETY

NIGHT AT THE MOVIES | Students gather in Roone Arledge Auditorium for Ferris Reel Film Society’s screening of blockbuster hit “The Avengers” last Thursday.





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Enemy of the good

The best and the brightest. They often use this expression at Convocation to describe Columbia's newest and most impressive entering class. If I could compare students to vehicles—which stems from my fascination with public transportation—every year there is always someone with a better, more robust engine than a student from the previous year. Someone who's been thoroughly inspected with more safeguards against mechanical failures than you. Someone who can cross the finish line faster than you.

At a time of increasing competition from abroad and within the country, schools tend to feel like high-speed autobahns rather than residential learning communities. As a resident adviser in John Jay, I have had conversations with first-years who already know what they want to do during and after college. Before ever stepping on campus, they have decided what they would major in, what student groups would benefit them in their professional careers, and what internships they would pursue in New York. Students gear up with demanding credits and majors to prove their multiple competencies. For them, classes in the Core are simply detours from the straight paths they had envisioned. Their bold ambitions make them squint at their exits from afar, when they could be enjoying the ride.

Voltaire famously wrote, “The best is the enemy of the good.” This quote often gets misinterpreted to mean that it's okay to not strive for excellence or even competence. What Voltaire means is that in their obsession with absolute perfection, people often sacrifice other worthwhile, good endeavors. It is still important to always strive for excellence. But it's worth noting



JAMES YOON

Yooniversity

Working together

BY RACHEL FERRARI

The latest security development on Barnard's campus has raised questions about the transparency of Barnard's administration. A plaque on the southern column of Barnard's gates states that BC/CU IDs are required for entry, although the policy has not always been enforced. Students are now required to show their ID when they enter campus between the hours of 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. This decision, like others, prompts students to question the role Barnard's Student Government Association plays in decision-making.

As last year's vice president of the SGA, I was personally involved in discussions that allowed me to contribute my opinion as a student. However, many unpopular decisions by the Barnard administration were made without consultation with the SGA or any students. In this particular case, though, we find a replicable model for collaboration among administrators and students. The importance of this security decision is not in the substance of the decision itself, but rather in the honest attempt to gauge students' potential reactions and justify changes to our campus experience.

Last spring, Diana Pennetti, Barnard director of public safety, requested a meeting with the SGA executive board to discuss how security concerns had prompted a need for an evaluation. Accompanied by chief operating officer Brown, Dean Hinkson, and associate dean Nuñez, Pennetti suggested that BC/CU IDs be required to enter the Barnard campus after 11 p.m. This was a rare opportunity for us to weigh in on an administrators' ideas prior to implementation. Pennetti explained that a variety of non-Columbia affiliated persons were being found on campus after hours. One incident involved a man who said he was going to be signed into the Quad, but was later found loitering, apparently uninvited. Pennetti's presentation to the executive board was compelling and straightforward, so we accepted her reasoning.

The words transparency and inclusion do nothing for us unless we are willing to act on them.

Pennetti's initiative to garner student feedback on a proposal prior to making a decision is unique, and was a step in the right direction. In the three years that I've been at Barnard, it appears as if frustrating administrative decisions were largely made without student input. When students expressed their discontent for the decision-making process to SGA and the administrators, I was perplexed to see decision-makers often disregarding such complaints and defending their decisions without much justification.

The SGA advocates for cooperation and participation in decision-making because everyone affected or involved wants to know that they are heard and understood. If representatives and administrators are willing to engage with students in the way we did with Pennetti—by informing others of ideas and considerations and adjusting to one another's needs and concerns—I know that Barnard would operate like a well-oiled machine. However, that isn't how it works yet.

When dealing with the immediate and long-term needs of the college, including student input is not only necessary, but extremely valuable. Barnard's mission is to cultivate self-possessed leaders who consider the needs of the people they lead. The best way to nurture such women is to offer opportunities for critical thinking and problem-solving on this very campus, in our immediate environment. The words transparency and inclusion do nothing for us unless we are willing to act on them. Not every decision will be popular, and it isn't a secret that the road ahead is not rosy. If we work in tandem throughout the process, I imagine these difficulties will be easier to comprehend and accept.

SGA members serve as leaders of the student body to communicate with administrators about what is important to us, but we are not the only students charged with this responsibility. Likewise, the administration must uphold their responsibility to communicate with us. It is imperative that, seeing as we all have a stake in this college's future, we all take appropriate steps to identify and ameliorate issues: delineate the timing, contributing factors, and potential consequences of a variety of options, consider the input of relevant parties whether positive or negative, and incorporate new ideas based on discussions. Rinse and repeat. A cooperative effort, whether it is for safety, finances, or fun, is a responsibility that belongs to all of us.

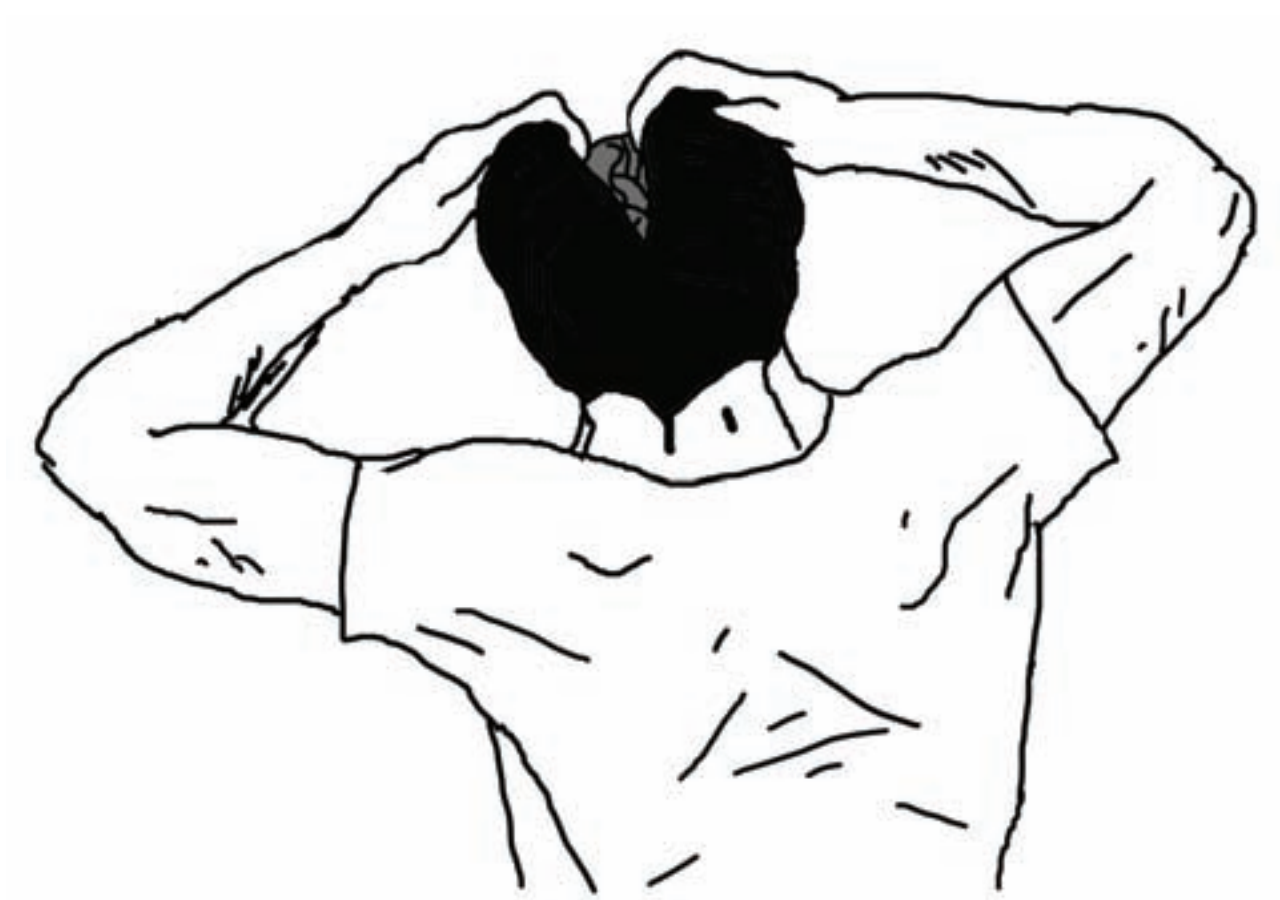
The author is a Barnard College senior majoring in urban studies. She is former vice president of the Student Governing Association and an Athena Scholar.

that in the race to finish first, leaders in highly specialized fields tend to lose their ability to relate their expertise to the average layperson.

At Columbia, I am concerned that in our pursuit of excellence, or perhaps even perfection, we are also sacrificing values that have served us well for 258 years. Columbia College proudly states in its mission statement that our students successfully achieve intellectual, social, and career mobility. Required courses in the Core ask students to question boundaries that have separated people from different times, professions, and disciplines. This mobility serves graduates well, as they enter a constantly changing world. When faced with an unpredictable future, it is best to be adaptable to change than to over-specialize in a skill that may no longer be useful.

Many have already reflected on the immense value of thriving in Columbia's intellectually and professionally diverse environment. However, there has been insufficient attention given to the lack of social cohesion and mobility among undergraduate students. Our undergraduate schools are at the heart of the University. The colleges were some of the first schools to take root in Morningside Heights, and they continue to drive the momentum of life on campus. Just as the colleges define the character of the University, the residence halls should occupy the center of the undergraduate experience.

Our dorms are the first buildings we ever set foot in upon arriving at Columbia. In comparison to the many self-selecting organizations on campus, university housing offers students little control over their community. You can't evict someone down the hall simply because the chemistry isn't right. It is here in these living spaces that we have the opportunity to find people who can challenge the core of our beliefs and practices. We thereby form social relationships as widely as possible, even with people we thought impossible to become friends with.



LAURA DIEZ DE BALDEON

What if we're wrong?

Enter a Contemporary Civilization class: the Greek word for virtue and its definition have been written on the board; copies of “The Republic” lie open on the table; the professor asks the class to find injustice in Plato's just society. As the discussion develops, it becomes clear that the professor is trying to move the students to evaluate modern equivalents and perhaps even learn something about their own sense of fairness. An hour later, however, many leave the room unsatisfied, annoyed at “that guy” for sidetracking the conversation. “That guy” is a common phenomenon—the person who is very sure of his own opinion and always seems to have something to say, regardless of its relevance or substance.



BOB SUN

Terms of Engagement

For an institution that prides itself on the quality of the discourse that goes on in its halls, we are surprisingly stubborn and sure of ourselves.

We have probably all been “that guy” on occasion, and we have almost certainly run into him on campus at one point or another. Not only is he obnoxious and annoying, but he can also be detrimental to the quality of the discourse and to the education of everyone in the room. If we are coming to college to broaden our horizons, to develop personally and intellectually, to understand ourselves and our world better, then we should have every right to be frustrated when our discussions, in class and out, often seem closer to the braying on network TV than to Glaucon's enlightened disagreements with Socrates.

The seminar session that spirals out of control is simply one particular example. What may start as a casual conversation about politics between two students trying to get to know each other can quickly devolve into a heated argument. Tempers flare and voices rise as neither participant wants to leave without having impressed the superiority of his opinion on the other. Alienation results: Both come away with a sense that the other is somehow illogical, deluded, or wrong.

Yet shortly after the rush and thrill of freshman year, people again feel the need to specialize—this time in their social lives. For this reason, I cringed as one of this year's Convocation speakers emphatically encouraged first-year students to religiously pursue what they're good at. I must acknowledge that it's important to stay committed to a passion, for it is what gets us out of bed every morning. There is, however, a tendency to focus on one's own interests to the point of lacking curiosity in others.

It follows then that upperclassmen residence halls lack a vibrant culture. As an RA last year, I encountered seniors who had already mentally checked-out by September and simply weren't interested in meeting their neighbors. I used to condone some of my peers' lack of interest in their floors. Perhaps they don't have the luxury of time. Perhaps they face a lot of pressure in the personal lives, I reasoned. A few did warrant the benefit of the doubt, as they were struggling with part-time jobs to pay for school. However, I also met many others who were actively involved in their respective campus groups. They had the time and means to participate in their residential community but chose not to.

Students' self-segregation into monolithic groups is closely related to the chronic habit of being the best. Because of some unspoken pressure to exert dominance in a social hierarchy, students often self-segregate into micro-communities, where it is easy to emerge as a leader with time and with support from like-minded individuals. For this reason, I say that the pursuit to be the absolute best is the enemy of the good. It is my hope that regardless of our different backgrounds, we can prioritize a shared sense of purpose for our campus, generation, nation, and the world.

James Yoon is a Columbia College senior majoring in environmental science and concentrating in biology. Yooniversity runs alternate Thursdays.

For an institution that prides itself on the quality of the discourse that goes on in its halls, we are surprisingly stubborn and sure of ourselves. We do not take the difficult step of simply walking away from a conversation that is going nowhere nearly often enough. Entertaining the possibility that we could be ill-informed, mistaken, or plain wrong on a given issue happens even less frequently. I know that I have been guilty of immediately becoming defensive when I read or hear a comment which with I seemed to disagree. It is an instinctive and understandable reaction, but what if we made a conscious effort to avoid seeing others' views as attacks on our own? What if we attempted to treat each contentious issue that arose as if we had no previous knowledge of it at all? This is of course a thought experiment—I do not suggest that we can somehow eliminate all bias from our opinions—but it can still have positive effects on our dialogue and what we get out of it.

Checking into class, a political forum, or a campus controversy with open-mindedness can help us learn and grow in a way at least as valuable as learning about, say, the biochemical pathway for glucose metabolism. To reconsider our prejudices and admit that we are wrong is a humbling experience, especially when so many of us are accustomed to being right (often but not limited to our past academic experiences). Being around smart people who think differently from us is, after all, one of the selling points of attending a college like Columbia. Such an environment can help us recognize and refine our own values and thought processes, but only if we let it. Less obviously, however, building a habit of withholding judgement will, over time, force us to demand more evidence to support any opinion if it is to stand up to our critical, dispassionate analyses.

An argument founded upon specific, trustworthy proof can only be stronger than one put together a priori. This is impressed upon us each time we write an essay or learn about an important experiment, yet this largely empirical method of reasoning does not seem to translate smoothly into our everyday lives. While we all know that a paper that does not cite any sources is certainly not going to receive a good grade (and may even be tantamount to plagiarism), we still follow and defend empty rhetoric that we agree with all too easily.

I am not saying that disagreement is bad, or that certain opinions should be suppressed. Disagreement is the catalyst for learning about and understanding others and, more importantly, ourselves. Constantly asking, “What if I am wrong?” will help us move towards a more developed, critical view of ourselves—away from entrenched debate and towards a personal dialectic.

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

The Columbia Daily Spectator accepts op-eds on any topic relevant to the Columbia University and Morningside Heights community. Op-eds should be roughly 650 words in length. We require that op-eds be sent exclusively to Spectator and will not consider articles that have already been published elsewhere. Letters to the Editor should be no longer than 350 words and must refer to an article from Spectator or The Eye, or a Spectrum post. Submissions should be sent to opinion@columbiaspectator.com. Please paste all submissions into the body of the email. Should we decide to publish your submission we will contact you via email.

Big Green, Tigers to meet in Ivy matchup

BY PHIL GODZIN
Columbia Daily Spectator

The beginning of Ivy play in women's soccer led to exciting finishes around the league. Dartmouth and Princeton excelled this week, promising a marquee matchup when the two squads face off this Saturday.

BROWN
The Bears made history last Thursday, as their shutout of UMass gave head coach Phil Pincince his 300th win. Starting his coaching career in 1977, Pincince became the 13th active Division I coach to reach that milestone. Senior Diana Ohrt's first goal of the season on a deflected free kick was enough for Brown's fourth consecutive 1-0 win. However, the Bears couldn't keep their streak alive on Sunday, as conference leader Dartmouth extended its own winning streak to four with a 2-1 win. Brown hosts Columbia on Saturday to face its second of 10 straight Ivy opponents.

CORNELL
Cornell is still looking for its first win of the season, falling to 0-9 after another disappointing weekend. Its weak offense, which has scored just nine goals all season, could not overcome an early 1-0 deficit against Columbia on Friday, marking its seventh consecutive loss to the Lions. After battling back late on Sunday against Niagara University to tie the game at one, Cornell surrendered the game-winner with 4.3 seconds left in the second half, handing the Big Red its third one-goal loss in four matches.

DARTMOUTH
Dartmouth continued its strong start to the season Thursday with a 5-0 beating of NJIT headlined by a season-high 30 shots. The Big Green implemented a new strategy that focused on crosses into the

box, which led to almost all of its goals and most of its scoring chances. On Sunday, Dartmouth extended its winning streak to four, as junior Marina Moschitto's second game-winner of the season edged Brown for a 2-1 win. Junior Chrissy Lozier scored in her third straight game to put Dartmouth up early. The Big Green continues its season Saturday against Princeton, which is right behind Dartmouth in the conference standings.

HARVARD
Harvard, last season's conference winner, lost its Ivy League opener to Penn on Friday on a heartbreaking header by Kaitlyn Moore with less than four seconds remaining in regulation. The 1-0 loss was not the result the Crimson expected and followed a 8-1 thrashing at home by Boston College. In its match against Penn, Harvard managed just one shot on net, which was easily stopped by goalie Sarah Banks. The Crimson will try to end its losing streak this week against Central Connecticut State and Yale.

PRINCETON
Princeton finished off a dominating week that began with a 5-2 win over Lafayette on Wednesday. Senior Jen Hoy scored three times, including two goals 24 seconds apart, to notch her second hat trick of the season. The Tigers then beat Yale 2-1 in overtime on Saturday in their Ivy League opener, after a Yale player headed a long throw-in into her own goal to end the game. Princeton went on to defeat Saint Peter's 6-1 on Tuesday to extend its winning streak to three games. Hoy added two more goals to bring her league-leading total to 11. She is third in all of Division I with 1.125 goals per game and is currently fourth in goals all-time at Princeton. Hoy and the Tigers will look to continue their



FILE PHOTO

GREEN MONSTERS | Dartmouth's Chrissy Lozier will lead the Big Green into a big Ivy contest with the Princeton Tigers this weekend

winning ways Saturday against Dartmouth.

PENN
Penn's last-second victory over Harvard in its Ivy opener was a huge win for the Quakers, as the winner of the matchup has gone on to win the conference each of the past three years. But Penn failed to carry

its momentum over to Sunday, as it fell 1-0 to Boise State at home. Penn had control for much of the match, holding the Broncos to just two shots in the second half, although one of the two was a free kick that found its way into the back of the net. The Quakers thought they had tied the game midway through the second half, but their goal was disallowed

by an offside call. Penn's next chance to get back into the win column will be against a winless Cornell squad on Friday.

YALE
The Bulldogs' only game of the week was a devastating overtime loss to Princeton on Saturday. Yale scored early, but was outshot 9-1 in the first half

and 16-6 for the match. The Yale defense neutralized Princeton star Jen Hoy, holding her to just four weak shots, but it was all for naught, as a Yale defender inadvertently headed a long throw into her own goal. The Bulldogs now have a week to get over the loss and prepare for Harvard on Saturday.
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Passion to Perform

Princeton’s Starks anchors Tigers defense

BY RACHEL TURNER
Spectator Staff Writer

It’s easy for Princeton linebacker Andrew Starks to trace back his love for football. The game is in the senior’s flesh and blood, as his father, Kevin Starks, played tight end in the NFL and coached him from age seven through high school.

“The time I was able to spend with my father, in addition to the knowledge of the game he shared with me every day, made football special,” the linebacker said.

Starks has been a defensive powerhouse throughout college, but played various offensive positions before coming to Princeton, giving him a thorough understanding of the game. Starks started college as a safety, but after his freshman season his coaches decided that he was better suited to play linebacker.

“Transitioning was definitely an adjustment,” Starks said. “It’s a completely different mindset. It’s much more reacting rather than thinking.”

Clearly the decision was a success, as Starks has received All-Ivy honors and ranked fourth in the Ivy League in tackles over the last two years. In his third year as a linebacker, Starks looks even stronger, recording double-digit tackles in the first two games of the season.

“I’ve seen the maturation,” Princeton head coach Bob Surace said. “He’s gone from the guy who makes a lot of tackles, kind of like the baseball player who hits a lot of singles in blowout games, to the guy who makes good football plays. He makes the high-effort plays that save touchdowns.”

Starks is on the radar of Lions head coach Pete Mangurian, who compares his versatility to that of Lions senior linebacker Ryan Murphy.

“He’s an impact player, he can do a lot of things,” Mangurian said. “He can play coverage, he can go out over guys, he can rush the quarterback, he can play more than one position.

“They do a really good job with him. They know what he is and what he’s capable of, and he can do it all.”

While Princeton is currently 0-2, the team has looked strong on the defensive end, as both games were decided by just a few points. Most recently, Princeton lost by one point after a last-minute, 53-yard field goal by Georgetown. This week, Starks believes the Tigers have to focus on tightening up their game.

“The Lions always give us a great game,” he said. “As a team, we will have to eliminate the mistakes that make it difficult to win games. Execution is the

key to success in any game.”

Much of the Tigers’ defensive success has been thanks to the co-captain duo of Starks and fellow senior Mike Catapano. Last week, the defense held the Hoyas to one offensive touchdown, and Starks recorded a career-high 16 tackles.

“He can destroy the game if you let him,” Mangurian said. “He’s one of those guys who has that kind of impact.”

In 2009 and 2010, the Lions dominated Princeton in their Ivy opener, but last year the Tigers came out on top in a close game. Both teams are eager to win the next game of this rivalry, but Starks is just excited to play it.

“This is my senior year. I want to enjoy every minute of it,” he said. “We’ve spent countless hours watching film, working out, and practicing, all in preparation for the eight games that we as seniors have remaining. We have an opportunity to go out on a high note, and that’s very exciting.”

But Starks has another special reason to play hard this week.

“I’ll admit to having a bit of a sweet tooth,” he said. “I’m very close with my little sister, and she promised to bake and then ship me a batch of chocolate chip cookies if I get 10 tackles for her on Saturday.”

sports@columbiaspectator.com

The role of sports writing at an Ivy institution

We love to watch colossal clashes between studied and expertly trained teams in opposition—the thrilling, and not-too-subtle, indulgence of our primal urge for violence and intuitive capacity for factional identification and outgroup hatred. We take great pleasure observing and analyzing the unfolding defensive and offensive strategies as if they were slowly forming an intricate masterpiece on canvas.



ALEX JONES

Armchair Athletics

Although the battle is public—consumed by an audience through a variety of media—the experience is most effective when personal. Revelatory catharsis is as common as immense tragedy.

These grand events do not only occur on the field, but in the press box. The clashes manifest as debates across pages on the Internet, and to a more limited extent, here in Spectator. I believe that such sports writing performs a critical role in our intellectual space, and we should consider integrating the valuable practices in our more common academic engagements.

In the last week, the Spec Sports pages have provided a variety of pieces analyzing Columbia’s football team and its first two games of the season. Besides run-of-the-mill recaps and box score explanations, many of the columnists have made it their task to diagnose the ills and prognosticate the fortunes of the team in padded spandex. Ryan Young saw glimmers of resilient potential underlying the losing effort against Fordham, Muneeb Alam pre-emptively framed the legacy of first-year coach Mangurian, and David Fine, adopting a completely

different task, summarily wrote off the winningest sports franchise in history and its fan base (hint: not Columbia-affiliated).

I had three primary thoughts when reading this crop of columns. First, the hyperbole and excitement of sports writing is bound by the quality of the subject. It’s hardly worth getting your jimmies rustled when “atmospherically optimistic” is the proper qualification for the expectation of running .500 on the season. Second, and more importantly, sports writing allows the personal expression of (nearly) unqualified opinions about a subject that will inevitably engender fervent rebuttal. Third, “Fine” is an amazing last name.

Sports writing performs a critical role in our intellectual space.

The nature of sports writing is entirely unique. When was the last time we inflated the competing ethics of Kant and Aristotle, for example, with the same vigorous spirit that we bring to sports, and then had a lively debate about virtue versus duty, or the possibility of slavery in the Kingdom of Ends? Sure, the activity might lend itself to dilution by rhetoric or the bastardization of content, but it would bring alive the personal relationship inherent to ideas, and, in this particular case, ethics. Could we admit that the specifics will be forgotten during the succeeding term break anyway, and that the literal contest of ideas is much closer to the historical origin Western ideas had in forums and salons—the intellectual stadiums of yore?

Engagement with ideas isn’t the trivial ability to recite a chain of sentences that passes for a definition, but, rather, it is the ownership and internalization of the full concept and the ability to organically produce conceptions. The successful completion of this activity in libraries or classrooms is tedious and fraught with frustration, but it is the exact same process that operates in the minds of sports writers and commentators, and they, apparently, find much satisfaction in exercising their competing interpretations without the burden of academic asceticism.

For example, it would be absurd to expect that a single writer could come to understand, clearly and distinctly, the full diversity of mind on a team with several dozen players. Simply, the success or failure of a football team is overdetermined past the point of hopeless ambiguity, and that is one reason why writers do not rely on the plodding academic method: identifying and analyzing causal chains so as to proffer a prediction of the future—acknowledging sources of error and bias with every breath.

The sports writer, doubtless, arms him or herself with a myriad of statistical tools and a wealth of experience, but the full concept of a sports team must be intuited or assumed. The Lions’ “chances” against Princeton next week are a result, a personal conception, and, as we can observe on these pages, are defended with vigor not applied in more objective, academic spaces.

For once, let us allow the athletics on campus to inform and pedagogically better our classrooms.

Alex Jones is a Columbia College senior majoring in philosophy and history. He is the editor in chief for Bwog. sports@columbiaspectator.com

Most commuters support larger M60 buses

M60 from front page

Buses will be scheduled to run every 10 minutes—a slightly longer wait than the current eight- to nine-minute interval, Parker said.

M60 ridership is up—according to the latest available data, it increased by 5.5 percent between April 2011 and April 2012. Meanwhile, bus ridership across the city has gone down, Russianoff said.

The M60 has “been competitive in the long term,” he said. “More people are discovering it and finding it’s a better way of getting to LaGuardia.”

Many M60 riders on Wednesday evening said they were in favor of the change. Frank Leroy, 45, who lives in Astoria and takes the M60 to LaGuardia about once a month, said that larger buses would be an improvement.

“The bus is dependable, but crowded,” Leroy said. “A lot of people have their entire luggage for the airport. I am all for larger buses ... I definitely think

overcrowding is a safety issue, when people put bags in the aisle.”

Anthony Wind, 24, a Teachers College student who rides the M60 four times a week, said that the buses get crowded at rush hour.

“I think a lot of the kids at the school live off campus, and they would really benefit from having a larger bus,” Wind said. “The train takes a long time, and it can be good when I have to read, but normally, I just want to get home because I’m hungry.”

“Even if the M60 comes less frequently, I’ll still ride the bus because it will get me where I need to go faster than anything else,” he added.

Ashley Lewis, 20, who rides the M60 once a week, has seen arguments start on crowded buses.

“Having larger buses will make everyone happier,” she said.

But Salam Uddin, 15, a high school student who takes the bus to a tutoring program at Columbia’s Double Discovery

Center, said he didn’t like the idea of longer waits.

“The bus is always crowded,” Uddin said. “Normally, I only wait 10 minutes for the bus, but if it takes too long, I take the train. If it takes longer for the bus to come, I probably won’t take the M60 anymore.”

And while the larger buses will hold more riders, they will also create new traffic for residents of a West End Avenue block. Because the current layover terminal on 106th Street between West End and Broadway—where the buses go when they finish their route—is only big enough for one articulated bus, an additional terminal will be built on West End Avenue between 107th and 108th streets.

A Community Board 7 committee voted to approve a pilot period for the new terminal earlier this month. Parker, the MTA spokesperson, said that the transit authority “will monitor the situation and make adjustments as needed.”

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