

INSIDE



A&E, page 3

Five's the charm for arts editors

This year's artsy and entertaining section editors wrap up the millennium by listing their top five picks, from the fun and goofy to the classy and classic.

Opinion, page 4

Out of time

Yurina Ko asserts that “now” will have passed by the time she finishes this sentence.



Sports, page 8

Men's basketball downs Bryant

The Light Blue earned its second straight road victory with a 69-57 win over the Bulldogs. Sophomore guard Noruwa Agho led the team with 23 points.

EVENTS

Last classes of the decade

The countdown to the nondenominational holiday celebration of your choice starts now.

All Day, Everywhere

Food at the Kraft Center

The Kraft Center is now open for late hours through reading week and finals. Come chill until 2 a.m. (most nights, anyway) and enjoy free food all afternoon and evening.

All Day, Kraft Center

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“We don't want to kill Goliath, but we need Goliath to learn to be a good neighbor and play nice with this neighborhood.”

—Rev. Earl Kooperkamp, Coalition to Preserve Community member

ONLINE

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News around the clock

Just like you, the news never sleeps. Check out our Web site 24/7 for campus and city news that matters to you.



Phoebe Lyle / Staff photographer

EMINENT DOMAIN? | On Saturday, 50 people attended a Manhattanville rally to celebrate the recent State Supreme Court ruling against the use of eminent domain.

University may be nearing credit limit

BY SAM LEVIN, KIM KIRSCHENBAUM, AND AMBER TUNNELL
Columbia Daily Spectator

Columbia may be approaching its credit limit.

University President Lee Bollinger said at a September University Senate meeting that Columbia now has to exercise caution in the amount of debt it assumes. To maintain its AAA credit rating, the University cannot exceed a certain debt capacity.

A rating from an outside credit rating agency, such as Moody's Corporation, provides information for lenders about the credit-worthiness of a borrower, such as Columbia, based on debt and other factors. AAA is the highest rating, which denotes the lowest risk of credit default.

According to online records of the University Senate plenary meeting minutes for Sept. 25, Bollinger “said Columbia can only take on so much debt consistent with its AAA rating. Leaving aside the reasonable debate about whether a AAA rating is worth it, he said, for the moment Columbia wants to maintain it.”

A major concern, according to Bollinger, is that one of the main lenders for international students pulled out last fall, forcing the University to guarantee loans, which makes them “part of the university's total debt capacity.”

On the issue of lending for international students, the minutes further said, “The president had decided to allow the use of university debt capacity for this purpose. He noted that a large percentage of these loans end up in default, a fraction likely to rise under conditions of economic distress.”

Economics professor Brendan O’Flaherty explained in an e-mail, “The credit rating is the judgment, partly subjective, by the credit rating agency, of how likely Columbia is to pay back the money it borrows. That depends on such things as size of the endowment, value of real estate that could be sold, underlying strength of the institution as a business, and of course, how much debt has already been issued and how much is likely to be issued in the future.”

Robert Kasdin, Columbia's senior executive vice president, said in an interview on Sunday that—though he did not attend the Senate meeting—the University is being careful. “At this time, financial prudence requires Columbia to remain cautious as it considers borrowing funds,” he said.

According to the 2009 Trustees of Columbia University financial statement, the University's current debt total is \$1,396,407, which reflects the “total bonds and notes payable.”

Kasdin declined to comment on the specifics of the University reaching its debt capacity and credit limit.

When asked about the relationship between the current state of the University's credit and funding for its planned 17-acre campus in Manhattanville, Kasdin said, “Columbia will continue over time to fund new construction across all of its campuses with its traditional combination of gifts, cash, and debt.”

According to several economics professors, the AAA rating could have important implications for the University's financial standing, though some questioned the validity of the rating process itself.

Economics professor Sally Davidson wrote in an e-mail, “The AAA rating means that Columbia can issue debt at a low interest rate, and this is important. A downgrade of its debt to AA, for example, would mean an increase in the interest cost on new debt issuance of between 1/8 to 1/4%. This is the downside.”

SEE CREDIT LIMIT, page 2

INSIDE THE DIANA



Carly Silver for Spectator



Carly Silver for Spectator

BARNARD'S NEW STUDENT CENTER | On Friday, Barnard led a hard-hat tour of the Diana, the college's new student center which is expected to open in January. Highlights included the cafeteria space and the blackbox theater. Students will be able to both work and sunbathe on the roof, which will have restricted access. See www.columbiaspectator.com for slideshow.

999 bottles of beer on the wall as La Negrita made over

BY GABRIELA HEMPFLING
Columbia Daily Spectator

Don't call it La Negrita anymore.

Popular campus bar La Negrita has received a swanky makeover and rechristening as part of the new manager's hope to refresh the venue's image after a year of financial woes.

The manager, Eric Johnson, has turned management over to restaurateur Marc Solomon, who has made a name for himself in recent years for revitalizing tired venues.

“I feel like it's going to be more like a SoHo downtown lounge with more of a hipster vibe,” Johnson said, adding that he hopes the new look will make La Negrita, or 999 as it has been renamed, more business. Johnson was brought in last April after the owners realized that the recession had damaged their ability to turn a profit.

In April, Johnson had told the old owners and loyal regulars he would do his best to keep La Negrita the same, save for a new toilet and some art for the walls. “You know there were a lot of people who really liked it this way, but I wish La Negrita the best of luck with its

new direction,” he said.

“There were people who were really loyal to La Negrita the way it was,” he added. “I didn't want to change its image, but now that its going in a new direction I wish them the best of luck.”

Solomon confirmed that he is trying to move away from the old image. “The legacy of what? Why would I preserve something that was dying?” he said. He said he agreed to become the new manager because he liked the owners, and wanted to try to realize what he saw as La Negrita's full potential.

“This place has some loyal customers so I'm keeping the same prices, but still trying to make it higher end.” He said that so far, business has been great, and the neighborhood has responded positively to the changes. “We don't have a lounge in the neighborhood like downtown,” he said of the rationale behind the makeover.

He also added that he is bringing in “British grub” like Shepards pie, adding outdoor seating and installing a fireplace in the back. He said he believes that these moves towards a more lounge-like environment will bring in more regulars.

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of the elections. He has also faced numerous charges of spying and being a threat to the national government.

“We hope to raise awareness about Kian's case, and show our support for him as a member of our academic community and as a renowned scholar who has been falsely accused and unjustly imprisoned,” said a graduate student involved in the campaign who was granted anonymity for security reasons. “The charges are nonsense. Kian is a dedicated scholar, and someone who cares deeply about Iran. He has worked throughout his career to foster understanding between Iran and the rest of the world. I was looking forward to seeing

him continue that work at Columbia this year, and it is terribly sad and frightening to know that he is in prison right now, instead of in a classroom here.”

“We, the undersigned faculty of Columbia University, call for the immediate and unconditional release of our colleague Dr. Kian Tajbakhsh,” the letter begins. It emphasizes his academic achievements and status as “an internationally recognized scholar who has taught at both American and Iranian universities.”

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Students, residents celebrate M'ville decision

Perkins speaks at rally and march in support of Appellate Court ruling

BY MAGGIE ASTOR
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

A Manhattanville rally drew fifty people to celebrate the recent state Supreme Court ruling against the use of eminent domain for Columbia's campus expansion and to urge University President Lee Bollinger to accept the decision.

Students and neighborhood residents gathered at Floridita Tapas Bar & Restaurant on Broadway and 125th Street before marching down Broadway, through College Walk, and down 116th Street to Bollinger's house on Morningside Drive, where they called on

Bollinger and the Empire State Development Corporation not to appeal.

“We don't want to face the destruction of a lovely neighborhood with businesses like Floridita,” said Tom DeMott, CC '80 and a member of the local Coalition to Preserve Community, adding of Bollinger, “He should not appeal this great decision.”

The New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division ruled Dec. 3 that state seizure of private property in the 17-acre expansion zone for Columbia's project—in exchange for market-rate compensation—was

SEE PROTEST, page 2

Deal allows 8 more workers to join UAW 2110

BY SAM LEVIN AND ALIX PIANIN
Columbia Daily Spectator

On Sunday evening, students celebrated Lerner Hall's tenth birthday in a CCSC-sponsored study break. But they're not the only ones who have a reason to rejoice.

For eight Columbia employees who work at Lerner, paying for health care is no longer a concern.

Last month, Columbia's administrative services and the local UAW 2110 Union—which represents University employees throughout the city—struck a deal that ended a longstanding grievance and brought eight new employees into the union.

According to Maida Rosenstein, president of the UAW 2110, the union filed a grievance against the University earlier this year on behalf of the Lerner Hall, AV Technician employees, in response to the University's hiring practices.

Rosenstein and Jennifer Myers, an organizer for 2110, said that the University

SEE LERNER, page 2

Faculty, students petition for Tajbakhsh's release

BY AMBER TUNNELL
Spectator Staff Writer

On Sunday, students and professors who know Kian Tajbakhsh—an urban planner who earned his Ph.D. from Columbia and was slated to teach here this semester—publicized a letter lobbying for his release from Iranian prison.

The letter, from kianletter@gmail.com, had gathered over 150 faculty signatures by press time.

Tajbakhsh, who was supposed to teach at Columbia's School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, was arrested this summer in Iran during the aftermath

WEATHER

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Barnard environmental science department hopes to renovate labs

BY MADINATOURE
Spectator Staff Writer

Barnard is seeking matching funds to integrate the environmental science department into one floor and increase interaction among undergraduates, graduates, and post-doctoral students.

After receiving a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 2005, Barnard aims to renovate the fourth floor of Altschul, which houses the environmental science department. The grant has already been used to renovate the eighth floor for the chemistry department and will be used to renovate the ninth floor for the biological sciences department, projects whose objectives centered more on increasing and reconfiguring space. The environmental

science department, though, envisions one floor for all of its courses as well as the creation of two new office spaces: one for a new faculty member and the other for different types of students to interact.

“My Introduction to Environmental Science course has about 120 students and there are eight lab sections that run almost every morning and every afternoon,” Peter Bower, senior lecturer, said. “Right now, that lab is in 616 Altschul [while] the environmental science department is on the fourth floor.”

The fourth floor of Altschul currently holds a large classroom for courses that require the use of computers. Bower said this classroom would be replaced by the sixth-floor lab to relocate all environmental science courses to the fourth floor,

where the majority of the department is already in place.

“This will have a major impact in that all the students will be able to relate to everyone in the department and not [be] isolated on the sixth floor,” Bower continued. “Just in terms of general logistics to have everything on one floor just makes it easier to move things around.”

Martin Stute, co-chair of the environmental science department and professor, agreed. “There are lots of students taking the class ... it’s a hands-on lab environment,” he said. “It makes it all easier to be on the fourth floor ... it kind of consolidates our department.”

The existing classroom on the sixth floor, he said, will either be merged with a classroom on the fifth floor or moved to the

upcoming Diana Student Center.

The project will also include the creation of two new office spaces on the fourth floor—one for a new faculty member and the other, a lounge space for post-doctoral scholars and graduate students.

“We are hoping to eventually hire an additional faculty member which we don’t have any office space for right now,” Stute said. “The other office we want to use sort of as a space where post-docs and graduate students can basically hang out and interact with us and our undergraduate students.”

Stute also described the project as crucial in strengthening the relationship that already exists between Barnard’s environmental science department and Columbia.

“We are very tightly connected to Columbia,” he said, mentioning that

he and another faculty member have appointments at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, a research institution and member of Columbia University’s Earth Institute. “We work with a lot of students at the graduate student level plus post-docs as well ... this will create some symmetry between those graduate students and post-docs and our undergraduate students.”

But the timing of the project will be determined once the necessary funds are raised.

“I think this is the kind of thing that can be done in the summer,” Bower said. “The existing rooms are there that basically have to be gutted. I don’t know the number but it’s got to be a substantial sum.”

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Protest praises Manhattanville decision

PROTEST from front page

illegal because, Justice James Catterson wrote, the expansion of an elite private university does not constitute a “public use,” and the Empire State Development Corporation’s designation of the neighborhood as “blighted” was made “in bad faith.”

ESDC, which approved eminent domain for the project in December 2008, said it would appeal the decision to the state’s highest court, the Court of Appeals, which recently ruled in favor of eminent domain for the controversial Atlantic Yards project in Brooklyn.

“Columbia is not a party in this litigation,” University spokesperson Victoria Benitez wrote in an e-mail. “The ESDC has issued a statement of its intent to appeal and we support that decision.” She added that preconstruction and demolition will continue for the planned Jerome L. Greene Science Center, located on property Columbia already owns.

Bollinger said last week that obtaining the remaining properties—Columbia already owns over 90 percent of the land in the expansion zone—was crucial, and without it, the expansion might not proceed.

“The University has been able to reach mutually beneficial agreements with dozens of the commercial property owners in the area, and we continue to hope to reach such agreements with the last two,” Benitez wrote.

But Saturday’s speakers railed

against the procedure. State Senator Bill Perkins (D-West Harlem) likened the threat of eminent domain to “using a gun in a mugging. ... You don’t always have to use the gun. People say, ‘Here, take my money.’”

Holding up a sign that read “Harlem is not for sale, it’s our home,” Perkins said to laughter from the crowd, “There’s not much more to say.”

Many attendees compared the court victory—which came as a surprise to many—as a modern-day David and Goliath story, and credited it to strong community mobilization.

“The lesson here is about struggle, that if a community struggles against seemingly gigantic, David and Goliath odds, you will prevail,” said Nellie Bailey, Harlem Tenants Council president and a member of the Coalition to Preserve Community, adding, “Power concedes nothing without a demand.”

Norman Siegel, attorney for Tuck-It-Away Self-Storage owner Nick Sprayregen—who, along with gas station owners Gurnam Singh and Parminder Kaur, was one of the plaintiffs in the cases the Appellate Division decided—added, “As a civil rights lawyer, by ideal situation is what we’ve had the past five years—the community coming together.”

“When it was obvious the deck was stacked against us, he nevertheless persevered,” Perkins said of Siegel. “Nothing could have exemplified the stacked deck more than this case. There

was collusion between Columbia and the state to create a definition of blight [that would find blight] where there was no blight. It was almost like saying it was night when the sun was out.”

On the steps of Bollinger’s house, overlooking Morningside Park and Central Harlem, the Rev. Earl Kooperkamp, also a CPC member, read from the biblical verse on David and Goliath.

“We don’t want to kill Goliath, but we need Goliath to learn to be a good neighbor and play nice with this neighborhood,” Kooperkamp said.

Erik Reinbergs, CC ’11 and a member of the Student Coalition on Expansion & Gentrification, said it was also important to send a message to Bollinger that not all students support the expansion.

“Columbia says this is being done in the students’ name, and that’s not true,” Reinbergs said.

Protesters referenced the 1968 backlash against the University’s plans to build a gym in Morningside Park as precedent for opposition halting a development plan.

“The gym was underway before the community actually started to fight back,” CPC member Mario Mazzoni said. “We have a five-year jump start on that. It’s by no means a done deal, and we will win this fight.”

“The most important ingredient is stamina,” Siegel said. “We have to outlast our opponent, and our opponent is formidable.”

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Columbia may be nearing credit limit

CREDIT LIMIT from front page

Davidson added, “In addition, Columbia’s peers—Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Stanford, MIT all have AAA ratings—does Columbia want to drop below this group? Probably not.”

Economics professor Phoebus Dhrymes—who co-authored a study examining the basis of the grades given by the three credit rating agencies—wrote in an e-mail

that there were still lingering ambiguities over the actual basis of the grading process.

“The three refused to disclose to us the precise basis on which their ratings were issued; we were only told that the criteria used had to do with their evaluation of the probability of default,” Dhrymes wrote.

Despite these uncertainties, he said, the rating still matters. “If Columbia loses its AAA rating

it means that, in the eyes of the people who buy its debt, its bonds become more risky.”

Dhrymes added that this situation reflects the current national state of the economy. He said, “This is a bit reminiscent of what is happening today in a larger political context, where recent additions to the national debt have led to concerns about endangering the credit rating of the US.”

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Colleagues agitate for Tajbakhsh’s release

TAJBAKHSH from front page

between the United States and Iran,” it states.

The letter also mentions that Tajbakhsh has served “as a consultant for several Iranian government organizations, including the Municipalities Organization, the Social Security Organization, and the Ministry of the Interior” as well as with “international nongovernmental organizations such as the World Bank, the Open Society Institute, and the Netherlands Association of Municipalities.” It says that this work “was conducted openly, with the knowledge and often at the invitation of the Iranian government.”

“Dr. Tajbakhsh’s re-arrest and his sentencing after a mass show trial without access to independent counsel, constitute a violation of human rights and an assault on academic freedom. We are deeply concerned about his well-being, particularly in light of the additional charges announced against him in November,” the letter concludes, adding, “We call on the Iranian authorities to release him

immediately and to allow him and his family to travel freely so that he may take up his position as a faculty member at our university.”

Tajbakhsh has faced a slew of charges. When he was arrested, he was accused of being a threat to national security for working with George Soros’ Open Society Institute—an organization Iran named a CIA operative—and being on the e-mail list of Gary Sick, a Columbia researcher whom Iran also connects with the CIA. Then, in October, he was sentenced to 15 years in prison for spying. Tajbakhsh appealed this sentence.

Tajbakhsh was recently given another charge of “spying for the George Soros foundation.”

Sick, a senior research scholar at the Middle East Institute of Columbia’s School of International and Public Affairs, called the charges against Tajbakhsh “absurd ... the best evidence of the underlying paranoia in the Iranian revolution government. They are persuaded that America is part of the revolution and trying to overthrow their government. They are

looking for anybody that has associated with foreign government. ... Some go to jail, others go to death,” he said.

“I have never been a CIA agent,” Sick added, stating that the accusation was invented by “an Iranian journalist or publisher.” He called it “disappointing” that there was “no effort to verify that it is true,” considering that “this is supposed to be a court case.”

“They can give you 15 years of jail for a rumor,” Sick said.

Of the campaign, he added, “Iran is arresting lots of people, many of my friends. I know a lot of people in Iran, and it makes them suspicious of me. With so much going on, people just forget about it. If Columbia can help keep it in front of the public, we should definitely do that. As a university, and as his friends, we need to make sure he doesn’t disappear out of sight.”

Two weeks ago, after Tajbakhsh faced the new charge, both the University and the White House issued statements calling for Tajbakhsh’s release.

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THE SECOND ANNUAL TOP 5 MOST RIDICULOUS/AWESOME FREE THINGS SENT TO A&E IN THE LAST YEAR
(OR: WHAT WE LEARNED WHILE CHECKING THE MAIL AT THE SPEC OFFICE)

A&E TOP FIVES:
FROM THE
STRANGE TO
THE SEDUCTIVE

TOP 5 WAYS TO PLAY THE COLUMBIA PART

Earlier this month, city life and gossip Web site Guest of a Guest revealed “the truth about Columbia.” Though I can’t dispute the fact that we “smarties let loose at Bar 1020,” I’m a little offended that our style is defined as “Abercrombie & Fitch, J. Crew, and lots and lots of sweats.” Here are five ways to look sharper and pulled together, like a true Columbian:

5. **Avoid looking like a bum:** Skip the sweats, leggings, and slipper shoes. If you want to stay casual, stick with fitted jeans and a button-down or a cozy sweater, paired with a blazer to sharpen the look. Add accessories like a scarf and colorful jewelry to mix it up.

4. **Rethink your bathroom routine:** To look good despite pulling an all-nighter, make use of some simple tricks. Baby powder your scalp if you don’t have time to take a shower (don’t forget to use deodorant, though), clear up sleepy red eyes with eye drops, and invest in concealer for dark circles.

3. **Check the weather:** It would be a shame to get caught in winter’s slushy rain and ruin your pulled together look simply because you don’t have an umbrella. Make sure you’re appropriately geared for the day’s forecast.

2. **Read up:** Or at least pretend to. Grab a newspaper between classes and read it—people will automatically assume you’re a genius. Bonus points for bringing up an article while answering a question in lecture.

1. **Feed your mind:** There’s no doubt about it, running on empty won’t get you far. Go for foods with protein to power through a long day. Consume some kind of caffeine to keep you awake—nobody looks cute sleeping in class.

—Helen Werbe, style editor

TOP 5 TV EVENTS THAT YOU DIDN’T SEE BUT
SHOULD KNOW ABOUT FOR HOLIDAY
COCKTAIL PARTIES

5. **“American Masters: Joan Baez”:** Right in the wheelhouse of the boomer generation that so dutifully donates to PBS, a program on Joan Baez is a sure topic of conversation at any cocktail party full of 50-somethings.

4. **Obama’s speech at West Point:** In this prime-time newscast, Obama announced that he would be sending 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan.

3. **“Bill Moyers Journal”:** An iconic liberal figure and former adviser to Lyndon Johnson, the name Bill Moyers still doesn’t mean much to the average college student. For holiday cocktail parties, here’s a quick primer: Moyers devoted one episode of his series “Bill Moyers Journal” to a re-examination of the way that president Johnson wrestled an insurgency in a faraway country that he inherited from his predecessor. Sound familiar?

2. **“Mad Men”:** First, points for “Mad Men” being the least erudite on the list. Remember, it’s the silences that say it all.

1. **Ken Burns’ “The National Parks: America’s Best Idea”:** This six-episode series gave the history of America’s national parks system. Beautiful and ponderous, the series makes all parents dream of taking their college-age kids on one last family road trip. Pretending to have seen it might help avoid said trip.

—Joe Daly, TV editor

TOP 5 GIMMICK
RESTAURANTS: FROM THE
HOKEY TO THE HOKEY-BUT-
STILL-DELICIOUS

5. **Mars 2112:** With waiters dressed as aliens and astronauts, this tourist black hole might thrill the child in us—but the food is far from out of this world.

4. **Two Boots Pizza:** The slices may be bland, but what’s lost in flavor is quickly won back in the novelty of ordering pizzas named after classic movie and TV characters. Patrons that get take-out and rent “The Big Lebowski” can have their “Dude” and eat it too.

3. **Peanut Butter & Co:** The chunky-versus-creamy debate just got a little more complicated with Peanut Butter & Co’s mission to inject PB and/or J into every conceivable recipe. But once students try the creations, the idea won’t seem so nutty.

2. **Alice’s Tea Cup:** This would-be eight-year-old birthday party haunt is made all-ages-acceptable by the acid trip-inspired theme. With pumpkin scones this flaky, tea parties are not only mad, but mad good.

1. **Insomnia Cookies:** The opportunity to eat freshly baked cookies at 3 a.m. would be enough to keep students with the midnight munchies coming back, but Insomnia doesn’t sit idly in its gimmicky glory. Instead, it’s dedicated to serving up warm, buttery, fresh-from-the-oven treats all night long. The best part? It’s too late to care about chocolate-covered lips.

—Devin Briski, food & drink editor

TOP 5 MOVIES TO GET HER IN THE MOOD

She laughed at your jokes, you grabbed the check, but now she wants to watch a movie. Here are five flicks to make sure you’re satisfied at the end of the night.

5. **“Basic Instinct”:** Sharon Stone shows more than some skin in this sexy murder mystery.

4. **“Bonnie and Clyde”:** Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway take it to the next level when breaking the bank is what has these lovers heading to bed.

3. **“Eyes Wide Shut”:** In this choice for art-house lovers, Tom Cruise goes through an odyssey of sexual erotica after finding out wife Nicole Kidman may have cheated on him. More artful than sexy, it still features plenty of very beautiful men and women in strange situations for all to appreciate.

2. **“To Have and Have Not”:** Lauren Bacall and Humphrey Bogart have never shown off so much heat as in this faux “Casablanca” sequel. Bacall’s famous line: “You know how to whistle, don’t you, Steve? You just put your lips together and... blow.”

1. **“Out of Sight”:** George Clooney is a bank robber and Jennifer Lopez is the officer out to get him. “Out of Sight” features one of the most sensual scenes ever committed to screen, as director Steven Soderbergh edits between a tender bar encounter and their later sexual encounter.

—Peter Labuza, film editor

TOP 5 E-MAIL SIGN-OFFS

“Best” literally just isn’t good enough—in fact, it can be downright insulting in certain contexts. These alternatives are surefire ways to brighten up inboxes—and faces—all across the world.

5. **Love:** It truly does make the universe go round, and there can never be too much of it.

4. **With all best wishes:** This is the (if you’ll pardon the repetition) best way to improve upon the drier-than-sandpaper “best,” but should still be used sparingly—i.e., only in professional correspondences.

3. **Godspeed:** It just sounds good. And it’s one of those words that is overtly religious but can be employed in secular contexts. And it’s both the name of a German heavy metal album and of Bartholomew Gosnold’s ship. What more can you ask?

2. **Any adverb that reflects your state of being:** “delightedly,” “affectionately,” “sleepily,” “sinfully,” “lackadaisically,” etc. If you want to be super snazzy, make one up from an adjective that isn’t typically employed as such—my personal favorite is “incandescently.”

1. **Cheers:** One can never go wrong by emulating the Brits. Or try “cheerio” for a slightly chirpier touch.

—Yin Yin Lu, books editor

TOP 5 WINTER BREAK GALLERIES

Spending a month away from the city’s museums and galleries is never fun. Luckily, the week before break gives art-lovers ample time to explore the city.

5. **Bauhaus 1919-1933, Workshops for Modernity at MoMA:** Hundreds of paintings, drawings, and furniture pieces fill the MoMA’s first major exhibition on the Bauhaus since 1938. If design is your thing, then this exhibit will certainly peak your interest.

4. **Kandinsky at the Guggenheim:** As students go off to break, so will this monumental exhibition. On view through Jan. 13, the Russian artist’s colorful, abstracted works are part of a 50th anniversary exhibition at the museum. Over 100 pieces fill the space and are organized chronologically to give visitors a sense of Kandinsky’s growth and innovation as an artist.

3. **Urs Fischer: Marguerite de Ponty at the New Museum:** Fisher has taken over three floors of the museum and filled them with a range of installations, walk-in tableaux, and gigantic still-lives. From pop-culture references to rotting vegetables, a trip downtown will be absurdly worth it.

2. **Mike Kelley: Horizontal Tracking Shots at Gagosian Gallery:** Kelley’s first all-painting show in New York, “Horizontal Tracking Shots” features artworks influenced by comic strips and science fiction. If Kelley doesn’t hit the spot, then the other Gagosian exhibits—Cy Twombly, Roger Ballen, and Modern Masters—definitely will.

1. **The New Acropolis Museum at the Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery:** No need to trek far during finals week. Wallach Art Gallery’s current exhibit will bring Greece to campus with this exhibit curated by professor Ioannis Mylonopoulos.

—Hannah Yudkin, art editor

TOP 5 PERFORMER MELTDOWNS

5. **Cate Blanchett:** Blanchett, currently starring in the Brooklyn Academy of Music’s production of “A Streetcar Named Desire,” ran off stage in a huff. The actress sustained a head injury and could not continue with that evening’s show.

4. **Karen Olivo:** She practically melted in tears as she accepted her first Tony Award, Best Featured Actress in a Musical, for her portrayal of the sassy Anita in the 2009 revival of “West Side Story.” She sobbed, “I’m completely unprepared for this.”

3. **Hugh Jackman:** Jackman finally gave in to the distracting ringing of a cell phone during an intense moment between him and fellow actor Daniel Craig in Broadway’s “A Steady Rain.” Pausing during his monologue, Jackman dropped his hands in frustrated concession: “Do you wanna get that?” He begged the phone’s owner to answer, refusing to continue until the ringing stopped.

2. **Ian Hart:** Just last month, actor Hart (most famously known as Professor Quirrell from the first Harry Potter film) allegedly jumped off the stage during the curtain call of his show “Speaking in Tongues” in London. Hart lunged at an audience member who had been talking throughout the performance.

1. **Patti LuPone:** The woman who started the madness. The Tony Award winner stopped mid-song to berate an audience member for taking pictures of her. LuPone was in the midst of a full-throttle breakdown as her character Mama Rose in Arthur Laurents’ revival of “Gypsy.” LuPone blasted over and over, “Who do you think you are?!” Well, no one will ever forget who she is.

—Ruthie Fierberg, theater editor



COLUMBIA SPECTATOR

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Optimism and Barnard's new meal plan policy

BY AMY CHEN

As a senior at Barnard, I am a member of the only class on campus that has experienced both the vibrancy of student life in McIntosh (Mac) and the seemingly endless years of construction for the Diana Center. Still, I eagerly look forward to my final semester with the Diana Center. As students consider the new, recently announced meal plan policy, I would like to bring attention to several points that come from my personal experience as a Barnard student.

The food available in Mac's Java City and the lower level dining caf  was great. I remember the options were more gourmet than what Hewitt and Java City currently serve. Mac's food was known to be fresh-prepared, and the many varieties of thin-crust pizza were very popular. There used to be a pay-per-pound salad bar, sushi take-out, soups, a panini/sandwich/wrap station, and an "action station" for pasta, Asian stir-fry, and more. I imagine that the Diana Center's food will be better than Mac's because of the brand new cooking facilities there. Any concerns about what specific types of food that will/should be served can be directed to SGA's Food Advisory Board, which was created in October 2009. The board brings together students and administrators from Barnard's Dining Services to

suggest changes or additions to the current food available. The Food Advisory Board also discusses concerns about food pricing on our campus.

Besides providing access to better food for the Barnard community, the new mandatory meal plan will help alleviate the tremendous overcrowding of Hewitt Dining Hall during peak hours. In my first year, the lines to get into Hewitt, the lines to get food at Hewitt, and the lines at Java City were never as long as they currently are now. The required meal plans will drive traffic to the Diana, which will make it more comfortable for both those who choose to eat in Hewitt and for those who eat in the new Diana Center caf s. Also, in the Diana Center, people are free to move around with their food after they have purchased it—there are numerous lounge spaces throughout the building where people can eat.

Furthermore, the policy will bring benefits to housing selection. Currently, sophomores, juniors and seniors feel they are being forced out of singles because of the unlimited meal plan requirement for all Quad residents. The new plan will now make Hewitt single rooms more appealing for sophomores, juniors, and seniors whose number-one priority in housing is a single room. Hewitt singles will now be comparable to Sulzberger Tower singles.

To address the issue of financial aid—the cost of the meal plan will be factored into every financial aid package; the new policy is supposed to guarantee that all students, regardless of socioeconomic background, have access to quality food on campus. Barnard is a school committed to never losing a student based on financial

background, and this will not change.

Considering the long-term goal of community-building, I think this meal plan policy is worth trying with that ideal in mind. As someone who works for Barnard's admissions office, I've heard that Barnard's biggest appeal to prospective students is the close, tight-knit community here. I support the new meal plan policy because I believe that it will accomplish the long-term goal of creating a close community in which students, faculty, administrators, staff, alumnae, and the greater University will all be able to share and identify with a space that defines Barnard. The Diana Center will have classrooms, event spaces, offices, and studios, but these are all spaces that are specific to particular groups on campus. It will be the dining facilities in the building that are open to all who associate with the Barnard community. It will be through this interaction—the running into a classmate while getting coffee, the study sessions over lunch with floormates, the catching up with that person you met during NSOP whom you haven't seen since—that will truly develop our sense of belonging and provide us with the opportunity to socialize and learn from each other. It is important to keep in mind that this is an initiative to create community; we need to try it out before we completely shut it down.

The author is a Barnard College senior majoring in economics. She is vice president of student activities on the Student Government Association of Barnard College. The author has submitted this piece independently—the views expressed in this op-ed do not necessarily represent those of SGA.

Staff Editorial

New Year's resolutions

With today's edition, Spectator closes another decade of production. It has been another exciting semester at Columbia—we launched the semester with two new deans, and we close with the future of Manhattanville hanging in the balance.

For our final staff editorial, we look ahead, writing five New Year's resolutions for Columbia. They may not be the five most pressing issues facing the University, nor are they all equal in their scope and importance. But they are what is on our minds, and we hope that our school leadership does not neglect these issues in 2010.

More financial aid for General Studies

As the New Year approaches, we hope that Columbia will continue to re-evaluate the financial aid packages it offers to GS students. The economic downturn has made it much more difficult to find affordable student loans, and many GS students graduate from Columbia with a significant amount of loan debt. In the coming months, we urge the GS administrators to continue their hard work in an effort to develop a financial aid system that will more effectively meet the needs of the GS student body as a whole.

A better approach to dining

This semester, new proposals for meal plans have resulted in dismay for students on both sides of Broadway. Barnard administrators have proposed mandatory meal plans while administrators at Columbia are considering converting JJ's Place, Ferris Booth, and Caf  212 into all-you-can-eat dining halls. These proposals may not work for students, who, for reasons of preference, cost, and dietary need, do not want their main source of food to come

from school or would like grab-and-go options at dining halls. Administrators need to think of different solutions to dining.

Sustained environmental stewardship

As a quintessential urban campus and a global leader in science, Columbia must also be at the national forefront of green initiatives. Whether through an aggressive and coordinated push for recycling, an expanded composting program, a more comprehensive waste-minimizing flying policy, or the reinstating of the RecycleBank program, Columbia should model for other universities what it means to educate sustainably—in every sense of the term.

A 24-hour Butler

In the upcoming year we'd like to see Butler Library open more floors for 24 hours. Study spaces are limited and Butlerites often limit themselves to the first two floors because rooms in the upper floors keep circulation desk hours. Many students now use the eighth floor, which is reserved for graduate students, because this floor does not close. More hours on the upper floors would help reduce crowding and create a better study environment.

A correct Core

The Core Curriculum defines our University, and professors, scholars, and administrators continually work to tweak and refine it. The upcoming year is an exciting one for Frontiers of Science, the newest addition to the Core. If the Frontiers overseers take the right steps, 2010 may be remembered as one in which a lackluster, unpopular requirement was transformed into a rock-solid foundation for college science, one that can act as a model for universities throughout the nation.

Put on your purple pants!

BY ELI GROBER

Hey! I have a suggestion. Let's all do something fun. Right now. Stop reading this, just for a second, and also stop anything else you may be doing while reading this (g-pod, i-mail, facespace, mybook, or whatever) and walk up to the person nearest to you and compliment them. Nobody near you? Call a friend you haven't seen in a while to take them on an adventure, right now. Or go on an adventure by yourself! Get a funny hat and go pretend to be a guard in front of Butler and open the door for everyone who comes in or out. Go bake a cake and leave it anonymously outside the door of a floormate you don't know very well. Or maybe just stop whatever assortment of activities you may be doing simultaneously long enough to just smile at a stranger.

Still reading this? Still also doing your homework and worrying about how your grade in sociology will affect your overall GPA (and hence your overall chances of getting into the graduate school of your choice)? I'm flattered that you can't tear your eyes away, but maybe I haven't gotten my point across. I am inviting you—nay, I am imploring you—to join me in an

activity I like to call "putting on your purple pants," or, in terms that make sense, "loosening up."

Now, I've only been at Columbia for a few months, so I'm still bug-eyed when I stare across College Walk at that building with a dome and columns that claims to be a library. I still sometimes lock myself out of my room, and I still ask my teacher if it would be alright if I left the room just for a moment to use the restroom. What I'm trying to say is that I've still got a lot to get used to here, like how there are no hall passes or bathroom sign-out sheets in college. And, I've still got a whole bunch to pick up on, like how there is no curfew in college. But even with my slowly fading naivet , and even with all of my bad jokes about hall passes and sign-out sheets, one thing I'm pretty certain about is that we, as a community, could benefit from a little more spontaneity. I think we could do with a little less stress and a little more smiling, especially as the frigid shadow of fall semester finals begins to creep ever closer.

This past weekend, after going home for my family's annual Thanksgiving dinner (followed by our annual across-the-table arguments), I decided to take a bus back to New York with a friend from home who has recently been living and working downtown. She showed up at my door with her luggage, a shopping bag, and really, really, really purple pants. She told me that she'd been forced out of bed at four in the morning this past Friday by her friends

to go shopping, and had decided to buy these purple pants and wear them around no matter what kind of looks her brother, friends, strangers, or I gave her, because they were fun and made people smile (or at least do a double-take as they passed by). Granted, this is not quite the kind of bold move made by, say, William Wallace in that Mel Gibson movie, nor was it even as bold as simply not wearing pants. And yet, it had made an impression on me.

I think we all need to take our own pairs of really, really, really purple pants out of the closet every now and then and strut around in them for a while. Just for fun. Just to smile. Just so others smile. Just to do something spontaneous. Just to remind ourselves that there are more important things in life than driving relentlessly forward through schoolwork and complaining about that chemistry midterm or the teacher who won't give anything higher than an A-/B+. There are things like smiling and laughing and playing that are equally as important as making sure you breathe at least once in a while and get your essay in on time.

So, put on your pair of purple pants, Columbia. Smile, for the sake of smiling. Do something really nice for someone you really don't know. Whistle while you (home)work. Be spontaneous, be bold, and, most importantly, enjoy yourself.

The author is a Columbia College first-year.

There will be time

"Isn't it funny how there's no such thing as 'now'?" I remember Mary saying. Seconds after I snapped my fingers, that moment was already technically in the past, and it only grows progressively more distant. But in comparison to what, if there's no time in which the present moment is frozen?

It's impossible to define or even grasp the present moment like the snap Mary and I heard eight years ago. The "now" keeps running off to the past, but the "now" is what's also moving forward like the dial on the clock. But along with this metaphysical confusion are people's tendencies to avoid the "now" as much as possible. At the end of the semester, it's especially difficult to find anyone on campus who isn't caught up in the unalterable past or the uncertain future.

A few hours ago, a student smoked her cigarette outside of Butler Library and said, "If I could turn back time, I would study more so I don't have to cram for exams now." Sighing, she tossed the cigarette on the ground and went back inside. I looked toward Low Plaza. I thought I spotted a beautiful star, but it started blinking red and blue lights, moving slowly westward. I guess I'm not really getting anything, after all. Not yet.

Mary visited me in the city two years ago. I had a terrible cold, and a very good friend of my mother's had suddenly passed away. Shocked, terrified, medicated, and confused, I looked at Mary, and she said we should go out, get some air. We took the 1 train downtown, got off at a random stop, and walked into a bar. We were tempted to (illegally) consume alcohol, but we ordered two Diet Cokes instead and talked about the absurdity, fragility, and spontaneity of life.

"I still remember the snap," she said. On my wall, a poster of Dal 's melting clocks and photographs of far-away galaxies haunt me as I write this very sentence. As I approach deadlines for school, my perception of time disintegrates, and then I figure, the Milky Way is going to collide with Andromeda soon anyway, which will burn my dead body and all of my current work into beautiful stardust. Aliens will photograph it and think, "How pretty?"

"Time, which changes people," Marcel Proust wrote, "does not alter the image we have retained of them." Just like that, snapshots of Mary, the gym, 115th Street, the cigarette, and everything else from my past linger in my consciousness like a collage of old Polaroids. And I remain disturbed and confused regarding the concept of time.

This is problematic, because I'm being tested on this topic in two philosophy courses next week. Time makes no sense to me anymore. Have I changed over time since the snap? Why do we always complain about having no time when we can't even define the present moment? Am I just wasting my time thinking about time? Or perhaps this confusion and skepticism is exactly what I need to wrap up another semester of being a philosophy major. If anything made perfect sense, I would have nothing on which to philosophize.

"There will be time, there will be time," T. S. Eliot wrote. And he's right—there "will" be time. Just not now.

Yurina Ko is a Barnard College junior majoring in philosophy. She is a senior editor of the Columbia Political Review. 2+2=5 runs alternate Mondays. opinion@columbiaspectator.com

POLITICS ON STILTS



SHAINA RUBIN

Spectator Opinion accepts submissions from diverse areas of interest. Submissions should be between 700 and 900 words and express an opinion that does not perpetuate stereotypes or unfairly label groups or individuals. All writers meet with an associate editor to edit their submission before publication. Submissions may be sent to opinion@columbiaspectator.com.

For more information, come to our meeting Sundays at 2:30 p.m. in the Spectator office on the corner of 112th Street and Broadway.

Ten years ago

Today marks the final edition of the decade for the *Columbia Daily Spectator*. So today, the opinion staff looks back. For the past year, we have solicited submissions, edited op-eds, and revised columns, but where were we ten years ago? We mark the end of the decade with reflections on the decade that was.

The mutant snail

BY BRIANA WONG

Ten years ago, I lived in an awkwardly shaped, neon-yellow house in Berkeley, Calif. The back portion, standing two stories high, was topped with a pitched roof, while the front portion was only one story high and had a flat roof, making the house evocative of some kind of giant, mutant snail. As a nine-year-old tomboy, I saw the old house, at different times, as my playground (or rather, my battle-ground), my laboratory, and my

place of business.

When my friends from my home-school group came over, all the kids raided the laundry closet and played a version of freeze-tag that involved hurling balled-up socks at one another. When there were no more socks to be thrown, we played kung fu instead, mimicking the moves we had learned from various kung fu movies. I prided myself on my mastery of the no-shadow kick from Yuen Woo-ping's classic "Iron Monkey."

During the lonely hours when there was no one to play with, I often turned to scientific experiments to keep my mind occupied. I once tried to bake Play-Doh in the microwave and then flooded the kitchen to see if my

shoes would float. I don't exactly remember what happened after that, but it may or may not have involved a wooden spoon.

My favorite memories from 1999 involve Tiger's Books, the bookstore my little sister and I started together. I typed out stories on the little nine-inch, black-and-white Mac my grandparents had sent me as an alternative to throwing it out, and my sister illustrated the pages once we had bound them together using colorful yarn. We used to sell the books to family and friends for one or two dollars. Family members were eligible for the discount, which was sometimes less than the standard price, sometimes more. The stories always contained some type

of moral and were sometimes based on the lives of people we knew. We eventually ended up distributing our own newsletter, "News Around the House," featuring juicy stories about which they were all just dying to hear. At least that one was complimentary.

Although the concept of home is a difficult one for me these days, considering the fact that my high school years alone spanned three schools, two languages, two countries, and both coasts, the adventures I had in the Mutant Snail perhaps make it the closest approximation.

The author is a Columbia College sophomore. She is an associate editorial page editor.

Beginning to end

BY EMILY TAMKIN

My fourth grade teacher was very clear. 2000 was actually not the beginning of a new millennium. That, she said, was only to be ushered in with Y2K+1. Her protestations didn't matter, though—at nine years old, I witnessed the end of an era. And I don't just mean the 1900s (or the '90s, for that matter—not that the rise of Britney and Justin aren't as notable as any other event to take place over the 20th century).

That year was the end of my faith in education for its own sake. The advent of the infamous ELA—that's New York state-speak for the English language test we took in fourth (and again in eighth) grade—ensured that we were taught to the test for over half the year. I'm not sure I've ever stopped learning in order to test well.

It was the end of my belief in human reason. In late December 1999, I went with my mother to the grocery store. We were not able to purchase anything, though—everyone had stocked up for what we were told was the inevitable and insurmountable crash of all technology. The good news is that our computers still worked on New Year's Day. The bad news is that we may or may not have had milk.

It was the end of the mystique of celebrity and personal ignorance of hip-hop. A rapper

moved into our town that year, and his eldest son was put in my class. He may have had daddy issues, or he may have been just another aloof nine-year-old boy. I was originally infuriated to be stuck with him on every project (this was also the end of my belief that being the class goody two-shoes is rewarded). But he wasn't so bad in the end.

There may have been more personal eras that drew to a close, but I don't remember them. I can, however, vividly recall the beginnings—the beginning of seeing myself as capable of advocacy (I argued that we should have an annual public speaking contest—the principal disagreed); the beginning of thinking that group punishment was wrong; the beginning of a rivalry that continued through much of high school; the beginning of existing in the double digits; the beginning of realizing that years and decades and centuries come to an end, and that new ones start.

I'm sure that there's plenty of fourth grade that I'm forgetting entirely, just as I'm sure that I will not remember much of sophomore year 10 years from now, as 2019 becomes 2020. But, at Green Day's urging (they were around back in fourth grade, but whatever they were up to didn't make it on to my cultural radar—some things never change), I will remember that every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end.

The end.

The author is a Columbia College sophomore. She is the deputy editorial page editor.

To a columnist: a letter ten years in the making

BY SHIRA BORZAK

Dear CML,

Ten years ago I was in fifth grade. Ten years ago, high schoolers seemed ancient, and I couldn't fathom that one day I would be 16 and get to drive a car. But even my ten-year-old self knew that all I wanted to do was go to college.

I have spent the last semester recruiting letters to the editor for the *Spectator*. So it feels natural

that I respond to your last column ("Sixty-nine theses, not in order") in letter form. Another of my tasks for the past two semesters was editing your column every other Wednesday night. You, CML, are a good writer. Very good. And smart. More than a few times your vocabulary stumped me, and I, a lifelong editor, had to go to Websters, intellectual tail between my legs.

But CML, your last column was different. First of all, sixty-nine theses? 69? Really, CML? Or was that sexually suggestive number a coincidence? Doubtful. You knew exactly what you were doing—your entire column, featuring the giggle-inducing number of theses that stated all that you hated about Columbia and New York, was written not with your usual elegance and intelligence, but with pure blunt force.

CML, I'm sorry you had such a bad college experience. I really

am. Mine hasn't been perfect either. I've dealt with challenges to my identity, social frustration, and grades that could have been better (or worse, the best I could have gotten). And some of your criticisms were spot on. But have you ever considered that other people are enjoying college? That New York isn't the stuff of your anti-establishment dreams, and yes, Times Square sucks, but it can actually offer legitimate life-shaping opportunities, some of which might actually be fun? That the rest of us who are gaining from this pretty solid institution aren't narrow and flawed but that, perhaps, it's you?

Let us enjoy college. I've been looking forward to it since I was ten. I know Columbia isn't what you thought it was, but it isn't a Disneyland bubble filled with rich white kids gallivanting around College Walk with their racist clubs. Don't lay blame on

your peers who manage to make this city and this school work for them.

Good luck with everything, CML. I hope you get less angry soon. Next time you publish something, make it purposeful, and I would love to read it. And for god's sake, using "69" insults you, and our, intelligence.

Best,
Shira Borzak
(Former) associate editorial page editor.

P.S. Yes, "Only at Columbia could people who sit in an office 40 hours a week listening to themselves call themselves 'journalists,'" but only at Columbia could people who bitch endlessly about the same thing for over 1,600 words a month call themselves columnists.

The author is a Barnard College sophomore. She is an associate editorial page editor.

The blind bard's blinding tale

BY ELAINE WANG

It's hard to believe that the decade of the aughts is drawing to a close. Ten years ago to this day, I had never stepped foot on the island of Manhattan, and my deepest impressions of the entire country came from watching episodes of "America's Most Wanted" while eating poutine 120 or so kilometers north of the northern border.

Last week, as I was taking the northbound A train from Brooklyn, a man wearing a conductor's navy blue jacket and cap walked onto the subway and sat in the seat across from me. He then pulled out, of all books, Homer's "The Odyssey" and proceeded to read it with a 3-D "Happy Feet" bookmark. For ineffable reasons, I could not stop smiling like a creep nor take my eyes off his eyes moving across the text.

I watched him get off two stops later and hop onto the train across the platform. I was certain he was an off-duty conductor, and at that moment, it made so much sense that he should be reading one of the greatest travel stories conceived. Although it cannot possibly be compared to Odysseus's

ten-year voyage, a subway ride from Far Rockaway to the northern reaches of Manhattan is still a hell of a distance, peppered with many a wacky New Yorker along the way. And he probably made this journey without thinking about it every day of his life.

As did I on a different journey, ten years ago, in fourth grade, in a town north of the northern border. The weekly stops on my journey consisted of school, babysitter's house, home, friend's house, and local Asian supermarket. Stunned by the news that we would migrate south, I awoke to this routine and could not recall even one noteworthy event over the entirety of fourth grade, a year of oblivion.

Perhaps in 2020, a new

iconic animated character will be marking the timeless pages of Homer. But like today, Homer will still be read as we each make our own crisscrossing journeys. The brilliant bard who wrote such engrossing tales was purportedly blind, but that doesn't give us an excuse to feign blindness to our tales in real time, does it? As the New Year approaches, I promise to myself that another decade from now, I will not be spinning a story of poutine and kilometers to fill the void in my recollection of this year. I will have something better to tell, and it will be a wholly original epic.

The author is a Columbia College sophomore. She is an associate editorial page editor.

Fourth grade: ain't nothin' but a heartache

BY DARYL SEITCHIK

Most people have "formative years." I had 1999. If you asked me how I was doing back then, I would have said, between swigs of Juicy Juice, that the only redeeming quality of fourth grade was that I was the same age as the kids in

"Hey Arnold!" Unfortunately, I have not changed since that year, because I had so many important failures. These failures shaped who I am today, for better or worse.

Failure #1: I was, without irony, president of the Backstreet Boys Fan Club for Halloween. I wore a fake backstage pass, a T-shirt with Brian Littrell's face, and carried a huge sign with hot pink bubble letters that read "BSB 4 LYFE!!" To my dismay, "Coolest Costume" went to the mermaid who hopped through the whole parade. After Jack the Ripper and a zombie sea monster, I was runner-up for "Scariest," and I have been ironic ever since.

Failure #2: When my mom said I would switch schools in two years, I wrote the Guinness Book of Records for my fourth grade class, as an early farewell. Titles ranged from "Most Hair" to "Asks the Stupidest Questions." Turns out, two years is a long, lonely time when you're "Most Likely to Get into Hogwarts" in a classroom full of jealous muggles. I was only trying to foreshadow my departure. Unfortunately, I never did get into Hogwarts—I only got into a private middle school for girls. This, in turn, foreshadows my byline.

Failure #3: On Field Day, I got an asthma attack in the relay race. After that, I was the "mascot," recruiting expert

fifth graders and spunky kindergarteners for dangerous rounds of dodge ball. For these, the gym teacher let me be the judge. I now recruit and edit articles for the Opinion page of the *Spectator*.

What I've learned from fourth grade is how to make fun of myself as I get older, and my failures and successes seem more serious and important. I'm proud of my lack of pride: It makes growing up less dark, even when I'm writing an article about it at 3 a.m. on a Saturday, between swigs of cold coffee.

The author is a Barnard College sophomore. She is an associate editorial page editor.

Dead guinea pigs and silent reading

BY AMIN GHADIMI

Ten years ago, I was in fourth grade. I don't remember fourth grade too well. There are just a few weird memories:

Our class had a pet guinea pig. It died. We made a little tissue-box coffin for it and buried it outside, next to the first grade classrooms. Even to my eight-year-old self, it all seemed a little juvenile. In retrospect, ten

years later, I can't help but sneer at the poor hygiene with which the whole affair was conducted. And in my imagination, I inevitably add to the scene Dwight Schrute playing a bright green recorder and Michael Scott delivering an awkwardly heart-wrenching funeral oration. And then, when I think of funeral orations, I think about Pericles and how everything in life goes back to Lit Hum. Even fourth

grade guinea pig funerals. My fourth grade class, Michael Scott, Pericles: We're all playing the same game.

I also hated silent reading and silent writing time in fourth grade. I decided one day that it would be a good idea to offer to help my teacher put up the bulletin board display during silent reading. I was delightedly surprised when she fell for such puerile machinations: she

thought I was just being nice, and I got to get out of reading another soporific child novel. Win-win. Little did I know then that college, that candyland of smart people bliss, is also all about silent reading and silent writing. Now, ten years later, sometimes I'd like to think that I've gotten a little better at silent reading and silent writing. But I haven't. And who would've known? There still are bulletin

boards in college to get you out of silent reading time, but those bulletin boards are called college newspapers, and silent reading time isn't at fixed times.

Looking back, we all know that the past ten years have been tumultuous ones for our planet. When the world rang in the new millennium—as I slept! my excitement couldn't keep my eight-year-old self awake!—no one could have predicted the

winding path that brought us to the end of 2009. But as we enter 2010, and as we turn the page on the final edition of *Spectator* this year, it's good to know that some things just don't ever change. Secretly I'm still a fourth grader, and I suspect that a lot of the rest of us are, too.

The author is a Columbia College sophomore. He is the editorial page editor.

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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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Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

ACROSS

1 Trumpet mufflers

6 Like pretzels

11 CD—

14 Observe Yom Kippur

15 Degrade

16 Latin lover's verb

17 Comical character in "Star Wars" films

19 ___ Bartlet, "The West Wing" president

20 O.K. Cornell event

21 Old enough

23 French designer's monogram

24 Father of Isaac

26 Takers of pics

29 Be superior to, as in the military

32 Japanese seath

33 Novel by a hawk

37 Hit on the noggin

39 Davis of "Dr. Dozelle"

40 "Golden" principle

41 Ticket-selling place

43 P. Heaney's kidnappers

44 "Is the gamble worth it?"

46 London guy

47 "Fencers, prepare to duel"

50 Sine ___ non: essential

52 Seismic event

53 "Could be"

58 Suffix with sub

59 "Stop complaining!" (and what you might do to the start of 17-, 30- or 41-Across)

62 Lead-in for metric

63 Whisky ___

64 Hollywood disco

64 Dad's brother, in Bordeaux

65 Play ___ view

66 Excited cry

67 Tries to find

DOWN

1 They're above caps.

31 Puccini title heroine

34 Heavy drinker

35 Fitzgerald of scat

36 Harvest

38 Instamatic maker

39 "The Wizard ___"

42 Cat's front foot

45 Sarnia: Pref.

46 Gangster Al

47 Furnish with gear

48 Emergency room VIP

49 Eva or Zsa Zsa

51 High hair styles

53 Otello's betrayer

54 Sty food

55 In days gone by

56 Fancy hat fabric

57 Sorbonne summers

60 "That's icky!"

61 Also

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IN PUBLIC MONIED

GET SOVER STARED

SASH ICES ANTSY

DREW CAREY

PAPAYA BABY JAR

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By Samantha Wiles

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12/14/09



Natasha Cline-Thomas for Spectator
DOUBLE-DOUBLE | Judie Lomax posted 25 points and 17 rebounds against Monmouth.

Light Blue erupts for 40 first-half points, triumphs over Hawks, 70-54

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL from back page

Monmouth freshman Alysha Womack made a tough jumper, Lomax took over. Following on her own miss, Lomax secured the offensive board and found Shafer for a 3-pointer. Lomax was then the recipient of a great assist, as freshman Simpson, who saw a season-high 17 minutes because of Dwyer's injury, had a beautiful dish to give Lomax the layup. This made the score 28-8 with six minutes left in the half.

Columbia went on an 8-0 run to end the half, which was capped by Barry making a tough contested shot on the left baseline to increase the Light Blue lead 40-18.

In the second half, although Columbia had what Nixon described as "mental lapses" which required him to send Sara Yee and Barry into the game again, the Lions were able to come out on top.

Lomax led the game in scoring despite battling nagging injuries. She credits her recent dominance—she had 30 points and 16 rebounds in a win against Wagner on Tuesday—to her teammates.

"My teammates have really done a great job of getting me the ball in places where I can be effective," Lomax said.

"We've been working in practice a lot on our offenses and finishing and really setting each other up," Barry had 16 points, five rebounds, two blocks, and a steal, continuing her impressive season. Senior center Caitlin Stachon and Simpson also stepped in to provide solid minutes as usual starter Dwyer played just two minutes in the game due to injury.

Columbia also did a better job taking care of the ball, turning the ball over just 12 times. They had committed 68 turnovers the past three games.

For Monmouth, Womack played well on the perimeter, contributing 14 points and three assists and Gomez was solid in the post with 12 points and 10 rebounds.

The Lions do not play again until Dec. 30 at Robert Morris (5-3). Senior guard Angela Pace leads the way for the Robert Morris Colonials, averaging 17 points, six rebounds, and six assists a game. Key to the Light Blue beating Robert Morris will be to limit Pace's contributions as well as to provide a solid team effort.

"There are a lot of areas we can still improve on," said Lomax. "Hopefully with the 17-day break, it'll be a perfect time to improve in the areas that we think are necessary."

Lions lock down on defense in second half to beat Bulldogs

MEN'S BASKETBALL from back page

"In the second half, we just wanted to keep the intensity going," Jones explained. "And we were able to do that. I thought our focus was really good."

The Light Blue finished the game with a season-high 14 steals, scoring 22 points off of turnovers.

At the same time, it was forcing miscues on the other end, Columbia had some issues itself turning the ball over. Scott, Foley, and Agho, the starting guards for the Light Blue, combined for eight turnovers and only two assists.

"I thought we had some bad ones today," said Jones. "I think it was our fourth or fifth game in thirteen days. And it was our second road game in a row, and I think we were real sluggish in some areas. There are some things we need to go over." However, Jones pointed out, for the game the Lions only had 15 turnovers, just one more than their team goal heading into each contest.

For the home team, freshman Raphael Jordan led the way with 13 points in 31 minutes. Classmate Michael Chronney chipped in 10 points and 5 rebounds, while Chris Birrell added eight points. Perhaps the player with the biggest impact was not even in the game. Senior Cecil Gresham, by far the Bulldogs' leading scorer as well as the team's statistical co-leader in rebounds per game, was sidelined by injury. His absence was severely felt on Bryant's end, as the Bulldogs failed to find a go-to option on offense despite the efforts of first-year competitors Chronney and Jordan.

The Bulldogs' lack of identity on offense did however indirectly work in their favor, at least in the first half. Jones pointed to Gresham's injury as one of the factors in Columbia's trouble early on in dealing with Bryant's offensive sets. Because Gresham has played such a large role for the Bulldogs so far this season, the Light Blue had a tough time figuring out what to expect from their opponents.

As a result of missing their star, the Bulldogs tried to slow the tempo of the game down and limit the Lions to fewer opportunities on offense.

"They were really trying to score late in the shot clock to try to slow the game down and make it less possessions," Jones said.

But figure it out they did, and thanks in large part to the heightened defensive pressure in the second 20 minutes, Columbia now looks ahead to an 11-day break with a winning record and a feeling of optimism.

"I was very pleased with our mindset today," Jones said. "I was more pleased with this game than with the Wagner game, to be honest with you. I thought from start to finish they played a more complete basketball game, even though it wasn't perfect."

Jones seemed to think the team was coming together, and ready to peak in time for the Ivy League conference.

"We have a lot of guys who are just starting to play together," Jones said. "And it's going to take us some time before I feel like we're where we need to be. I think we're moving in the right direction."

The key to continuing to improve: consistently having multiple threats on the offensive end.

"I think we have four guys who are capable of, night in and night out, scoring in double figures," Jones said. "And with those guys in double figures, I think we're just a lot better."

And so while other students are at home for winter break, the Lions will be busy continuing to come together in a slew of non-conference contests. On Dec. 23 Columbia will travel to Quinnipiac before returning home to host Maine on Dec. 30.

On Jan. 4, the Lions bring in the New Year with a home date against American. After travelling to Easton, Penn. to take on Lafayette two days later, Columbia plays their final Ivy League tune-up on Jan. 11 against St. Francis (NY) in Levien Gym. On Jan. 16, the Ivy League schedule begins with a matchup against reigning league champ Cornell in Ithaca, N.Y.

The Lions have their conference home opener against the Big Red the very next weekend on Jan. 23, just days after students return to campus. Six games separate Saturday's win in Smithfield, R.I. and Cornell's visit to Morningside Heights. Whether or not the Light Blue continues to come together on the offensive end will go a long way to determining how it fares during that all-important interlude.

Columbia fans have nothing to worry about, football isn't going anywhere

VELAZQUEZ from back page

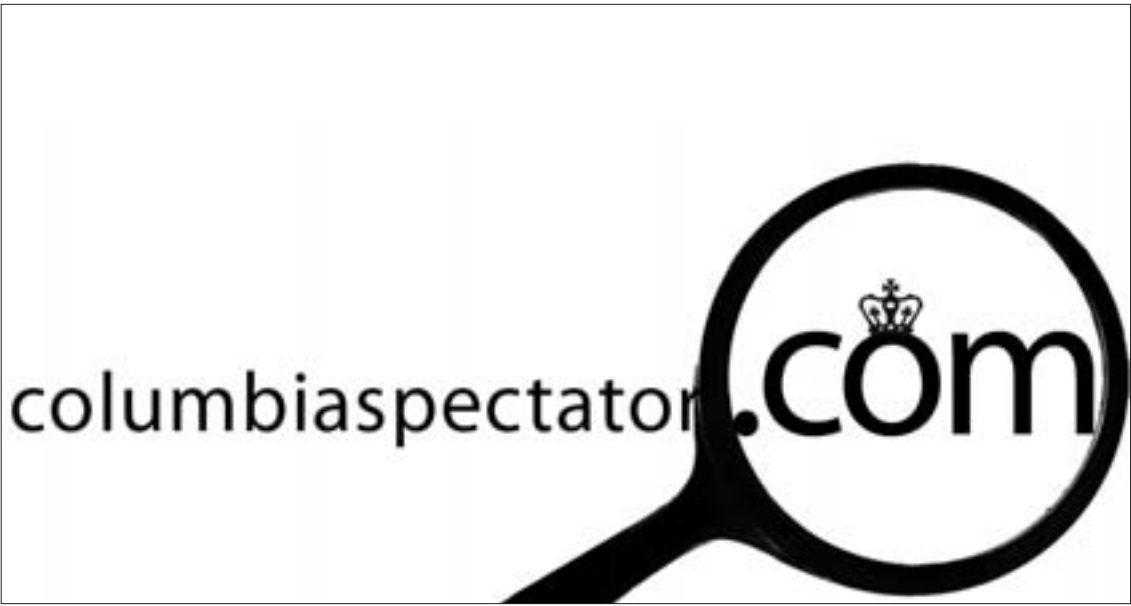
doesn't offer scholarships, which means that money isn't given to players that could have gone to other students.

The other explanation for why Columbia football is here to stay is because the school needs to keep up with the rest of the Ivy League. It would be a terrible decision for the University as a whole to discontinue football because that would give an edge to every other Ivy school in terms of recruiting students. A lack of a football team could also drive current and/or potential donors away, which actually hurts present and future students. Northeastern's biggest rival is Boston University and in order to save face in Boston, the Huskies need to keep up with the Terriers. Since BU doesn't have a football team, it doesn't hurt the rivalry for Northeastern to drop football—it just gives

them more time to focus on hockey season. Here at Columbia, we may not have a rival, but it is absolutely necessary for the University to keep up with the rest of the Ivy League—which makes it even crazier that there is no varsity men's lacrosse team, but that's a different issue altogether.

While these two reasons might be the main ones for why I believe Columbia football isn't going anywhere, it doesn't hurt that there's hope for the future. Of course, a 4-6 record wasn't what the team or its fans envisioned at the start of the season, but three Ivy wins and a strong corps of returning talent bodes well for next year. And who knows, maybe one of the guys from Hofstra or Northeastern will end up here in 2010.

*Matt Velazquez is a Columbia College senior majoring in history.
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Don't worry CU fans, football's here to stay



MATT
VELAZQUEZ
THE
X-FACTOR

Last weekend I went home to Connecticut to watch my high school football team compete in its first state championship game in our school's history. The game itself didn't go very well, but that's not the point of this column. The biggest surprise of my trip home was that Plainville High School-my school's Thanksgiving day rival and from the town I grew up playing sports in-had dropped its football program.

The end of Plainville High School football itself doesn't really bother me. Sure, I grew up and spent most of my youth in Plainville, but the only reason I liked playing against the Blue Devils was to beat all the guys who had become my secret nemeses while playing sports with or against them as a child. What got to me was that the recent and all too common trend of football programs being dropped finally hit close to home.

In the past few weeks, Hofstra and Northeastern have discontinued their football programs, both citing lack of attendance and the high cost of operation. Even the NFL isn't immune to these problems, as the Jacksonville Jaguars are struggling to maintain an audience in northern Florida and many other teams-even good ones-have struggled to fill the seats every week. The NFL aside, the plight of Hofstra and Northeastern should be of interest to Columbia fans. These teams struggled with some of the same problems that Columbia has in the past, including inconsistent results on the field and trouble getting people to attend games.

Anyone who follows Columbia football knows that since 1961, successes have been few and far between. Case in point, the Lions have recorded just four winning seasons since winning their only Ivy League title. While each team has had their ups and downs, Hofstra and Northeastern have both had legitimate successes in the past 15 years. The Pride has made the FCS playoff five times and advanced to the second round twice, while the Huskies hosted Fordham in the FCS playoffs in 2002. Both programs have gone through their fair share of struggles this decade, but I'm sure any Lions fan would kill to have seen a seven-or eight-win season—let alone a record above .500—in the past 10 years.

In the end, for both schools, the decision to discontinue their football programs came down to money and lack of attendance. One of Hofstra's main problems is that many students don't live on campus and the Pride pulled just 4,260 people per home game this season. In separate discussions with people affiliated with Northeastern—a current student and an alumnus—I was told that nobody at the school cares about the football team and the stadium is just too far away. They weren't kidding—the Huskies ranked 115th in the FCS in attendance this year with just 1,596 fans per home game.

The lack of attendance issue is one that affects the Columbia football program, as the Lions pulled the lowest crowds of any team in the Ivy League with just 4,027 people at each home game—down from 4,127 in 2008. The distance of Lawrence A. Wien Stadium from campus, despite the free fan buses to the games, is just too much for many Columbia students—something that helped kill Northeastern football. For those of you that might argue that Ivy League football is a hard sell, I give you Yale, which despite finishing lower than the Light Blue in the standings this year, averaged the third-most fans per game with 21,245. That many fans and the Bulldogs didn't even host “The Game” this year!

Given everything I've just said, you're probably wondering if Columbia football could endure the same fate as Hofstra and Northeastern. You don't need to worry, though; it's not going to happen here.

So why is football going to live on here in Morningside Heights... er... Inwood you might ask? There are two main reasons that the program is not going anywhere and the first is that it is not hemorrhaging money like programs at some other schools. Attendance may be relatively low, but the money that the football team uses isn't being taken away from other students or the University at large because it mainly operates with the Athletic Department's funds and donations from wealthy alums like Bill Campbell and Robert Kraft. In fact, it could be argued that many donations that are made to the school come from people because they have a tie to the school through the football program—the aforementioned Campbell and Kraft are proof of that. It also helps that, unlike Hofstra and Northeastern, Columbia

SEE VELAZQUEZ, page 7



File photo

SOLID PERFORMANCE | Forward Brian Grimes tallied 12 points and seven rebounds in the Lions second consecutive road win.

Second-half surge secures CU's win over Bryant

BY ZACH GLUBIAK
Spectator Staff Writer

On Saturday, Columbia picked up its second straight road win by handling Bryant comfortably in a 69-57 game that the Lions blew open with a strong second-half performance. The Light Blue found themselves holding a tenuous three-point lead at halftime after the Bulldogs connected on a 3-pointer with eight seconds left before the break. With the win, the Lions' record is now 5-4 while the Bulldogs fall to 0-10.

Columbia opened the second half with a 7-2 run and continued to dominate throughout, opening up an 11-point lead midway through the half. Sophomore guard Noruwa Agho continued his strong play and maintained his hot streak, following up a career-high 30 points against Wagner by scoring 23 points on 9-of-12 shooting. Agho was a big part of the Lions' push to distance themselves from the host Bulldogs in the second half, as 15 of his points came after halftime.

Columbia spread the points around on the afternoon. Four Light Blue players registered double-digit points, with junior Brian Grimes pulling down seven rebounds to go with his 12 points. Senior guards Patrick Foley and Niko Scott each contributed ten points, while

Asenso Ampim came off the bench to pull down a team-high 11 rebounds.

Head coach Joe Jones attributed his team's offensive balance to the cohesion his squad is developing as the team gets more time together.

“I think we're just getting more used to playing together,” Jones said. “We didn't have the luxury of having this group together last year,” he continued, citing the Light Blue's plethora of offseason injuries and changing roles. “With Pat Foley at full strength, Brian Grimes, John Daniels, and Mark Cisco, those are four guys that didn't play [much or] at all last year. Noruwa is in a different role than he was last year.”

Yet the game, a tale of two halves, hinged not on the Lions' offense but on their ability to turn up the pressure on the defensive end. Jones explained that in the first half the Lions were caught off guard by a few offensive sets from the Bulldogs, and needed halftime to go over defensive assignments.

“We made some adjustments at halftime,” Jones said, “on a couple of sets that they ran that we needed to go over. [In the first half] they caught us on some layups.”

Once Jones and the team broke from halftime the problems seemed to have been solved. Columbia wreaked havoc on Bryant's offense, limiting them to six points in the first 7:06 of the second half.

SEE MEN'S BASKETBALL, page 7

Lomax, Barry combine for 41 points in Light Blue victory

BY MICHAEL ZHONG
Spectator Staff Writer

Judie Lomax dominated the paint with 25 points and 17 rebounds and Kathleen Barry posted a superb all-around game, helping women's basketball improve to 6-4 with a 70-54 rout versus Monmouth.

The Lions had question marks on two of their key players. Judie Lomax was injured during practice, making her status uncertain, and Lauren Dwyer hurt her shoulder diving for a loose ball a minute into the match.

However, Columbia showed its grit with Dwyer and Lomax making shots early on as Columbia

stormed ahead. After that, Columbia forward Barry nailed a 3-pointer to make the score 12-0.

Monmouth center Chanel Gomez, who finished the game with 12 points and 10 rebounds, scored a layup to finally put the Hawks on the scoreboard.

Their celebration was short-lived as Lomax found Columbia guard Danielle Browne cutting into the lane for a layup to extend the Lions' lead to 14-2. Barry then displayed her defensive versatility, intercepting a pass and blocking a shot in the next few plays.

“She fills the entire box score all the way across,” Columbia head coach Paul Nixon said of Barry. “She's just a great player. She's the unsung hero of the team because she doesn't necessary

put up monster numbers but she just gives us so much.”

Following Barry's stretch of defensive plays, Browne contributed to Columbia's shutdown defense, intercepting a long ball that Monmouth freshman Adriana Allen tossed to try to get past the Light Blue full-court press. The play after that, Columbia sophomore Melissa Shafer heaved the ball across the court to lead a streaking Tyler Simpson in for a layup to make the score 16-2 with ten minutes left in the half.

With seven minutes left in the half, after

SEE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL, page 7

WINTER SPORTS SCHEDULE

MEN'S BASKETBALL

AT QUINNIPIAC, DEC. 23

VS. MAINE, DEC. 30

VS. AMERICAN, JAN. 4

AT LAFAYETTE, JAN. 6

VS. ST. FRANCIS (NY), JAN. 11

AT CORNELL, JAN. 23

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

AT ROBERT MORRIS, DEC. 30

VS. AMERICAN, JAN. 2

AT N.C. STATE, JAN. 4

AT ST. FRANCIS (NY), JAN. 11

AT CORNELL, JAN. 16

FENCING

AT NORTH AMERICAN CUP, JAN. 15-18

MEN'S SWIMMING

AT BUCKNELL, JAN. 17

WOMEN'S SWIMMING

AT BUCKNELL, JAN. 17

WRESTLING

VS. GEORGE MASON, JAN. 3

VS. OHIO STATE, JAN. 3

AT PITT DUELS, JAN. 9

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

2010

COMMENCEMENT

University Commencement for
the Class of 2010 will be held on
Tuesday, May 18, 2010, at 10:30 a.m.

For more information, please visit:
commencement.columbia.edu

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK