

TAKING A DEEP BREATH IN COLUMBIA'S SMOKING SECTION
INDIE SELLS OUT? • ANIMATION ON THE RUN

the eye

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THE NO WIN ZONE

HOW COLUMBIA
MANAGES ITS
LIBERAL
REPUTATION



the eye

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Cover Story



Urbanities



Columbia on Cloud Nine

Despite serious health risks and New York's city-wide ban on smoking, the appeal of cigarettes on campus hasn't faded.

Web Extras



Look Smart?

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From the Editor...

Last week the server went down. Those words hardly have the ring of "Hier ma mere est morte," but believe you me, the existential profundity is there. At four in the morning, three pages were incorrectly sent to the printer, resulting in our second Borat feature in a matter of three months. The man gets enough press.

The first order of business is to apologize to our film editor, Emily Rauber, and music editor Justin Gonçalves, both of whom put together stunning pages and whose articles will run through the week in the daily *Spectator*.

The unfortunate mishap was a testament to the futility of planning. But did you really miss anything in those three pages of *The Eye*?

I remember a TA of mine, a writer for the *New Republic*, telling the class that he had read the *Times* Op-Ed pages every day. One day, he threw the habit away, and after a migraine and group session, felt hardly the

worse for wear.

Needless to say, as an aspiring journalist, the anecdote proved a rather thorny barb. As a magazine writer, my place in the world is already rather tenuous.

I recall the era before I interned at a magazine. The wondrous ignorance I lived: How did they fill their pages? From where did they cull their troves of hidden vintage, and how did they balance it with a handle on substantive news and research?

A trip into any magazine office is a pilgrimage to the fax machine and an homage to the press release, and an entry into a world where the best font takes all. Then there's the shameless theft of intellectual property, which as a retired fact-checker I can tell you afflicts more than once celebrated critic.

To continue to read trend pieces—and what's more, to create them—would seem the ultimate fall. How low my self-esteem! It's a matter due for consider-

ation: Magazine reporting makes news. In spite of the machine designed to bring you the latest trends, a good piece speaks to the power of the individual editor. Matt Mireles brings you said good piece as he brings you a recurring dispatch and the voice of one man in Iraq

Reading integrates you into the world. With Columbia's reputation in flux, the very meaning of your degree hangs in the balance. Jennie Morgan speculates on the inflation of your \$40,000 investment.

Analysis can even rewrite history. In one new box set, TK sees the resuscitation of the much-maligned band Alkaline Trio. Max Foxman and I visit an exhibition of Wallace Berman's work, where NYU curators reveal the enduring relevance of an artist all but forgotten.

Magazine reporting is a clean metaphor for life. *The Eye* sees on!

INTERVIEW

By Sara Davis

A Writer Goes To Iraq And Back



COURTESY OF RAY LEMOINE

Ray LeMoine and his buddy Jeff Neumann took time off from selling “Yankees Suck” T-shirts at Red Sox games to go to Iraq in 2004, in no formal capacity. They ended up working for the Coalition Provisional Authority, the organization that ran Iraq immediately following the U.S. invasion. As things rapidly “went to shit,” Ray and Jeff distributed humanitarian aid in Sadr City, avoiding bombs and doing a surprising amount of drugs. Upon returning to the U.S. following a stint in jail and a “formal dissociation” from the U.S. Army, the two friends set about writing a book about their experiences. I caught up with Ray to talk about *Babylon By Bus* at a barbecue downtown.

You say in the book that your families thought you were assholes for going to Iraq. Can you elaborate on that? How much did people understand what you were doing?

Not many people did. The people who best understood were some of the more experienced journalists we met in Iraq who came from more unorthodox backgrounds.

I mean to go in the first place.

When we went there in the first place we went on our own will, we didn't tell anybody. We told a few people in random e-mails but only people who would understand. And at the time Baghdad wasn't anything like it is today. It's like comparing Brownsville, New York to Tribeca: it was like Tribeca then and it's like Brownsville now. And we were right there in Amman, which is like five or six hours away by car, so we just said “Fuck it, why not check it out?”

But to your families you were like [simulates typing] “Oh, hey, we're in Iraq?”

Yeah. I mean both of our families had trouble understanding who we were at the time anyway. We didn't expect them to understand and we weren't looking for that at all.

So it was like Tribeca then, but still, you know, not Tribeca. Were you worried about dying?

We were concerned about our safety. But we had been in the West Bank during really nasty stuff and in Gaza, which is nasty all the time. Baghdad is a huge city and if three car bombs went off in one day you might not even hear

any of them. That's a thing we didn't really understand either like how random the violence was. Really it was like getting struck by lightning.

Looking back considering what happened while we were there there's a lot of regret having gone. But when we went there was no blatant sign that things were going to go downhill so quickly. Basically everyone there was a little bit shocked at how quickly things really went to shit. I've never seen anything like it.

When you say “There's a lot of regret,” you don't mean you regret going, right?

I do. Of course. A friend of mine was killed basically because he worked with Jeff and myself and probably wouldn't have been killed otherwise. We should have probably not gone, but you know, we did.

Essentially it wasn't the media's fault that we didn't learn how bad it was in Baghdad, because there's only one side telling their story. We were getting the military's side, because you couldn't go out and fact check and get the Sunni insurgent side of it. The media knew what was going on but what are they going to write ... what they feel? They have to write based on quotes and facts and only one side was providing quotes and facts.

So what happened to this guy Ski [a teenaged U.S. soldier who becomes friends with Jeff and Ray in the book]?

We didn't have any contact with him till this summer when a magazine was fact checking an article and tracked him down on MySpace. He's all into Nine Inch Nails, he's like a goth guy now. He's a really cool kid. You would like him.

Did he read your book?

I assume he saw it. I'm not on MySpace. The book has a MySpace page.

Yeah, I noticed that. Weird.

[Pause]

Or not weird?

Yeah, it's pretty normal now. I mean, I would like to talk to Ski. If I ever went to Arizona I would look him up.

Did he get married to his girlfriend [aged 14 in the book]?

I don't think so. And from his MySpace page it doesn't look like they're still together. This kid was young. I mean he just came into our office and straight up asked us for drugs. And you know, we saw what his life was like, it's crazy what the army does. I mean I respect it.

You respect the army?

I respect service. I don't respect anything that's like ... designed to kill people. But I'm not actively against people who are in uniform at all, I'm actively for them. But I am against Pentagon policy, generally. It's hard to be pro ... world domination. It's like rooting for Coca-Cola.

How do you feel about what's going on Iraq now?

I had a nervous breakdown.

Oh no!

You know, it's the most stressful thing they put us on this book tour ... I don't know if the jokes went over well cause we kind of tried to do a parody of Hunter S. Thompson and New Journalism, how like they always put themselves into the story. But I don't think that people are really ready to laugh about what's going on over there. So we kind of jumped the gun on that. But we were just going with what happened in the seventies and that vibe.

That was the vibe you were having in person on the book tour?

That was the vibe we put into the book. We put into the book the vibe of our influences. Even the people who gave it a positive review—I don't know if they really got what we were trying to do. I think we kind of failed on that level.

So what do you do now?

Nothing.

For a living, nothing?

Pretty much. I get paid a little bit of money to do magazine work occasionally.

Writing?

Yeah. We got paid some money for the book. We sold a movie option ...

Is there going to be a movie?

No, it was sold ... at the time it was one of the most powerful people in Hollywood but now, well he got in a little trouble, to give you a hint.

Um. What?

He got in trouble this summer ... big trouble ... for insulting an entire race of people that I belong to ...

Oh. Harsh.

Mel Gibson.

Yeah.

So we sold it to him. So we don't know what's going to happen.

urbanities

It's 11 p.m. and a group of freshmen is huddled outside John Jay Hall talking, laughing—and smoking. It's 20 degrees, but the group is always there.

Despite a city ban on smoking in public places and increased on taxes on cigarettes, New York City continues to attract smokers from all across the world. And Columbia's campus is no different.

"When I came to New York, I morphed from an occasional smoker into a relative chain smoker," said Joseph Daniels, CC '09, who started smoking when he was 13. "The pressures of school, the drinking culture, the need for a legitimate break when studying—all seemed conducive to smoking more often and more heavily."

Even Samuel Seward, assistant vice president and medical director for Health Services at Columbia, understands that cigarettes can be a part of the transition to college.

"It is well known that people in their late teens and early twenties are at a time in their lives where smoking is an attractive thing to be doing ... we certainly see that here at Columbia. Some people come to Columbia already having started smoking and then there's a whole other population of students who start smoking here."

Despite the spike in cigarette use in college, Columbia students are at the national average for smoking—contrary to the popular perception that more kids smoke on this campus because of its urban location.

In fact, 80 percent of Columbia students do not smoke regularly, according to the National College Health Assessment survey that was taken by 2,078 undergraduate students in 2004. Student perception of cigarette use on campus is much higher than actual use, however. Undergraduates at Columbia are more likely than their peers nationally to think that "typical" students smoked one or more days in the last month.

This means that Columbians perceive themselves as social

smokers when in fact most students don't even smoke, according to Alice! Health Program Director Melissa Kenzig, who oversees administration of the online assessment.

The ban on smoking in the city has made an observable difference, however.

"The prevalence of smoking in the city is down and that's partly because of health policies and not

Thank You For [Not] Smoking

BY ISABEL BOHRER AND SADIA LATIFI

having smoking in public places. It's been a remarkable

curbing of smoking activity in New York City, and New York City is really one of the shining lights in public health perspective and that's by creating rules, by encouraging people not to smoke," Seward explained.

Daniels said that while the ban makes it difficult to smoke, it does little to detract from smoking itself.

"At times it does seem as if the city has a vendetta against smokers: not allowing us to smoke in bars or hookah establishments and charging exorbitant prices for cigarettes. But the truth about a smoker is this: place as many bans or taxes as one wants on smoking, smokers are going to smoke regardless," he said.

Addiction aside, there's another side effect of smoking—forming new friendships.

"There is definitely a vibrant and large smoking subculture at Columbia. People meet outside of the dormitories or Butler to have a cigarette and catch up," Daniels explained. "I

personally cannot count how many times I have called a friend solely to ask if he or she wants 'to go have a cig?' Moreover, it really is one of the greatest institutions (besides the cancer) for meeting new people. Almost half of my friends are either people I have met smoking or with whom I have gotten to truly become friends over a cigarette."

The camaraderie can especially strengthen during inclement weather.

"Smokers, even if they do not know one another, already have something in common, and when sitting in the cold January weather, it's nice to talk to that complete stranger smoking next to you about how much you're freezing your ass off," Daniels said.

The adverse health effects don't seem to matter, either.

"A lot of people enjoy smoking, they enjoy the taste of tobacco, and I think that frequently a lot of the adverse health effects that one needs to worry about with smoking truly won't be experienced for

decades and therefore, there's a sense that there's a lot of time between when this will catch up," Seward said.

One student, CC '07, who wished to remain anonymous, just recently quit smoking for health reasons after five years—even though he says he loves it.

"To be honest, I was mostly concerned about my skin and teeth ... and because I knew if I didn't stop now, I'd forever be a smoker," he explained.

He further described the paradoxical culture.

"It's an odd community, a camaraderie of people who 'bond' over their desire to be alone in the cold and away from others," he said.

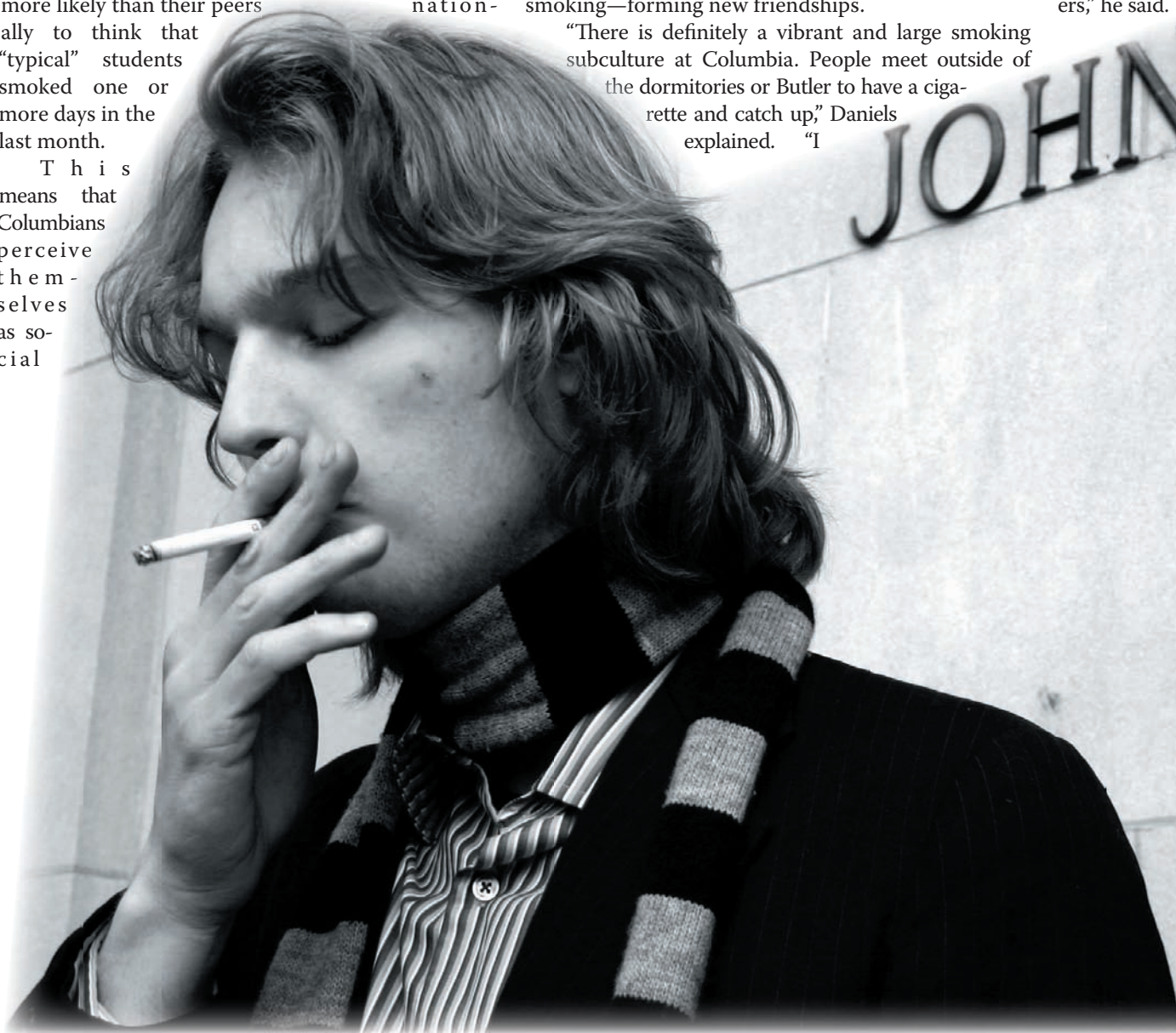


PHOTO BY DANIELLA ZALCMAN



PHOTO BY ANDREA SPER

Guarding With Rhythm

Michael Layne secures Carman with his fancy lyrics

BY SHIRLEY CHEN

It's late Monday evening and "she's a super fear, super freak ..." is blaring in the lobby of Carman Hall. It may seem a bit out of the ordinary for residential life, but Carman's residents are used to it by now—the music comes from Carman security's star personality, Michael Layne.

Every Monday, Thursday, and Friday, Layne entertains the Carman lobby by playing oldies and interacting with the residents.

"I love talking to the students ... they are driven but nice kids," he laughs. "Well, most of them... I would like my kids to be like them."

And the students enjoy his presence, too.

"Michael and I chat a lot!" resident Laura Taylor, CC '09, said. "I love his taste in music. It's nice to know them [the security guards] on a more personal level."

Layne brightens when a Reebok-sporting student greets him and inquires about his day. Regardless of his personal friendships with the students he sees day in and day out, Layne takes his job seriously.

For the past five years, Layne has had a perfect attendance record even though he commutes from Brooklyn. Although he has received recognition for this accomplishment, including an award from the department of public safety, Layne in-

sists that his commitment is not out of any desire for praise.

"I enjoy my job. These kids are very open minded and inspiring. I am motivated to do things because of them," he said.

Layne isn't one to be easily satisfied, however—he has plenty of goals for the new year. In particular, Layne would like to master more instruments and perhaps play professionally on a cruise ship. This goal reflects his passion for music, which extends back to the days when Layne worked security for Jay-Z and Damon Dash before they hit international fame.

Looking back on his time with Jay-Z, Layne remarks that his former boss "definitely gave the impression of being a player. Jay-Z knows that he's a big shot." Perhaps that's one of the reasons Layne prefers working at Columbia

"With Jay-Z, the environment was very hectic," he said. "We never knew when we were going to get off work because those guys party all the time!"

Nowadays, Layne himself is immersed in the music business by working on his own CD, entitled *Cruisin*. The CD is a collection of Layne's rendition of 16 retro songs, from Marley's "Could You Be Loved" to Gaye's "Sexual Healing." *Cruisin* can be purchased—and autographed—in the Carman lobby.

Letter From Baghdad

We continue from Nov. 25 with our weekly series from Lt. Josh Arthur, CC '04, who is currently stationed in Baghdad:

It's probably fair to say that Iraqis are targeting each other more than they are targeting Americans these days. Although groups more committed to violence against the other religious sect generally aren't exactly averse to taking out an American and killing two birds with one stone. Improvised explosive devices are the most common and generally the most feared threat from the insurgents and Anti-Iraqi Forces.

They're adaptable, they're smart, and though they may not have the most sophisticated technology, they exploit what they have to its deadliest potential. They watch American patrols and learn about our techniques and about our vehicles; they study their effective attacks from the past; they analyze their tactics and are constantly shifting them to try to stay one step ahead of us. Interestingly, it's generally rare these days to find tactics that are completely new as many groups have simply begun to revert to prior tricks from their grab bag to see if they'll work now that we expect something else—more often than not, they don't. We, of course, have systems and techniques to defeat or avoid many IED attacks, and we're finally getting ahead of them in some respects, but this is their home and they'll probably always have an advantage.

IEDs are probably the most widely feared threat because of their unpredictability. The only mitigating factor is knowing that an IED sizable enough to destroy an up-armored Humvee, let alone anything bigger, must be very large indeed.

The scarier if more localized fear is the emerging frequency of sniper attacks. They're able to hide, they're able to select their shot, and—most dangerously—they can shoot!

There's actually strong suspicion that a Chechen mercenary is carrying out some of the attacks; whether that's founded is beyond me. But it's always a scary thought to think that someone, somewhere, is waiting for you outside of your vehicle. It's particularly difficult with infantrymen who by their training feel more comfortable on the ground. It's what they see their role as, and it's how leaders have been taught to employ them. Infantrymen have no particular desire to stay cooped up in a vehicle for hours at a time, though they do it without complaint since they know it makes them safer.


The sniper threat is not the primary one; there are only so many snipers, and there are only so many opportunities that lend themselves to a sniper attack; avoiding those in the first place is the best way to beat them. Still, it's on most guys' minds, and that's probably the hoped-for effect overall by those coordinating the attacks.

General gunfire—as opposed to precision sniper fire—is seen by soldiers not so much as a threat but as an opportunity, interestingly enough. If they're going to be dumb enough to shoot at us, well heck, at least we have the chance to shoot back!

—Lieutenant Josh Arthur

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STAY TUNED

Keep watch for the next week's dispatch from Baghdad.

SIGN ON

For a full interview with Lieutenant Josh Arthur, visit *The Eye's* re-launched Web site at eye.columbiaspectator.com.





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Time to Guess the Real Obituary!

Voted Number One Game in America Three Years Running

BY J.D. PORTER

Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Three of the obituaries below are fanciful, but one is the real deal. Which tragedy rings true? E-mail your guesses to eyehumor@gmail.com for a chance to win tickets to the funeral!

MATTHEW DESMOND CARROWAY died peacefully at his home in Philadelphia on Monday, the 22nd of January. His battle with cancer lasted 24 years, but he never lost hope, or his sense of humor. "I'll beat this thing yet," he would say. In a metaphorical way, you have, Matt, you truly have. He is survived by his wife of 32 years, Jolie, and his two sons, Edward and Armand.

JESSICA STEWART BENSLEY joined God last Friday, the 19th of January, when she tragically lost control of her car during a torrential downpour. Officers say that it is best to leave the details of the accident undisclosed, "for the sake of the family." She is survived by her twin brother, Nathaniel.

MARTIN "MARTY" BRASELFELD passed away Monday, the 15th of January, when his heart gave out following a Knicks game. A lifelong fan, Marty would have been proud to know he went out supporting the Knicks. Born July 8, 1965, he was a friend to all who knew him. He is sur-



ILLUSTRATION BY SHAINA RUBIN

vived by his ex-wife Shirley and many friends. Here's hoping they have courtside seats in heaven, Marty.

KIM PINDER-SMITH pirouetted her way into heaven Wednesday, the 17th of January, after an unlikely accident at a rehearsal of the Los Angeles Ballet. A dedicated choreographer for over 15 years, she was renowned for her fun yet disciplined teaching style. She is survived by her husband of 16 years, Jonathan Pinder-Smith.

KENNETH WILSON MAGINOT met his maker on Wednesday, the 24th of January after 88 years of living. An atheist and World War II vet, Lieutenant Maginot was an ardent supporter of several causes. He is survived by his daughter, Rose Bensley, and two grandsons, Ben and Joseph.

Hint: You might need to brush up on your *Knicks knowledge* if you win the prize!

EGGS OVER EASY

University Raises Cash And Changes Lives

BY J.D. PORTER

Spectator Senior Staff Writer

The first annual University Egg Drive, a new initiative designed to raise money while also serving the community, will begin next weekend. As University President Lee Bollinger has said: "Are you a young woman between the ages of 18-24 currently attending an Ivy League institution? Would you like to help another woman get pregnant? If so, egg donation might be for you."

Interested women will have a chance to donate their eggs next Thursday through Sunday, on College Walk at any of several mobile surgery units. Health Services representatives say that the whole procedure should take less than four hours, and women will get free juice afterward, as well as a button displaying the "Beggin to Hope" slogan.

"These women are anonymously giving hope and eggs to tens and dozens of couples. The least we can do is give money to the University. So, that's exactly what we're doing."

"We're super-excited about this," said Dr. Elizabeth Breck. "Like they say, on a national scale, one in 350,000 donates, but one in 290,000 needs."

In addition to giving hope to barren women, the drive should raise a substantial amount of money for the University, which is currently in the middle of the largest fundraising drive in its history. Wealthy, impotent couples are often willing to pay as much as \$25,000 for Ivy League caliber eggs.

"You can't ignore that kind of profit," Bollinger said. "It's essentially free money. These people are really desperate."

The student council has organized a Get-Out-the-Eggs initiative designed to inform eligible women about the drive, including a booth in Lerner, approaching people outside Butler library, and placing posters in locations frequented by attractive women with high SAT scores.

"It's a particular kind of woman they're after here," said Student Council representative Mark Castrolano, CC '08. "We think she might be in the library."

Nonetheless, some students have expressed concerns about the idea, concerns that some say should have been obvious before the egg drive was even launched.

"Some of the egg requests are awfully ethno-specific," said Marla Forden, CC '08. "Why do they need specifically Ashkenazi Jewish eggs or Indian eggs? But I guess that's ultimately a minor drawback."

William Pander, dean of Financial Initiatives, first seized upon the idea of creating an egg drive while reading the back of a *New York Post* that someone had dropped in the subway.

"Sometimes you find useful ideas in strange places. In a way, I guess I just got lucky," he said. "And of course, the University did, too."

Getting a Handle on Scandal

Article by Jennie Morgan

Photo Illustration by Tina Gao

In his account of the 1968 Columbia student riots, then-student Frank da Cruz recalls “a carnival atmosphere the first day, with press photographers and reporters from magazines, the local newspapers, etc.” The following day, the story was on the front page of the *New York Times*. At the time, it was the greatest mass arrest in New York history: seven hundred people in one night.

On the quality of press coverage, Da Cruz observed that “the *Post* was fair, the *News* was atrocious, but the *Times* was beyond belief.”

Last semester, campus revolutionaries might have imagined the spirit of '68 reborn. During an Oct. 4 speech by Minuteman Project founder Jim Gilchrist, whose organization seeks to stop the flow of illegal immigrants from Mexico into Texas, members of the audience rushed the stage in protest, abruptly ending the event.

News of the political outburst rippled through campus immediately, and then caught the attention of national news media. Overnight, Columbia was making headlines, and the facts of the story seemed to hardly matter. Fox News aired several segments on Columbia up to two months after the incident, ranging from an investigation of students' sex lives to a news story from late 2005 about an alleged bias incident. City

newspapers and blogs soon jumped on the bandwagon, questioning the integrity and influence of Columbia as a powerhouse institution. Fox News' Bill O'Reilly asked, “Is Columbia University falling apart?”

It's a fair question. On an historically proactive campus—and one that hasn't shied from combatting perceived bias before—the extra media attention on Columbia's respect for the first amendment is indisputably tied to the University.

A staff of 24 people rounds out Columbia's office of public affairs, the administration's first line of defense when a media crisis unfolds. In addition to other tasks, staff members send press releases, field calls from alumni and concerned community members, train faculty to respond to the media, and pursue relationships with media sources.

In the two days following the Minuteman incident, the office began releasing daily statements from University President Lee Bollinger addressed to students, alumni, and members of the press.

Though vibrant student activism is nothing out of the ordinary for this campus, many alumni phoned in to express their concerns about the specifics of the event. “When I was an undergraduate, if you weren't in three pitched ideological battles a week here, you were considered to not be pulling your weight. It's part of our intellectual history of this institution, beyond just the issues of free



speech, that this is one of the things that coming to Columbia is all about,” said University Senator and alumnus Bradley Bloch at this past December’s senate discussion on free speech where he expressed his disappointment with the students.

Still, it appeared that Bollinger, who teaches a class on the First Amendment, was taking the matter seriously.

“This is not complicated,” Bollinger wrote in his first statement. “Students and faculty have rights to invite speakers to campus. Others have rights to hear them... We are called on to maintain our courage to confront bad words with better words.”

Despite the administration’s best efforts, word of the stage uprising had already leaked to the press. The protest brought Columbia onto the pages of the *New York Daily News* and two Fox News programmed debates: *Hannity and Colmes* and *The O’Reilly Factor*.

“Columbia University is a disgrace,” said Bill O’Reilly on the Oct. 5 installment of *The O’Reilly Factor*. “It is not interested in free speech or learning. It’s a place of indoctrination... All over the country these kinds of fascist tactics are being used by fanatical secular progressives who seek to impose their own views on others, and silence and/or harm people who oppose them. This kind of anti-American behavior must be condemned by all Americans, and places that allow these hooligans free reign, like Columbia University, must be held to account.” He concluded his address by calling upon alumni to discontinue their financial support of the University.

In the midst of a just-announced \$4 billion capital fundraising campaign by Bollinger four days before the incident, can any university afford this kind of public denouncement?

Paul Argenti, CC ’75, Business ’88, and a communications professor at

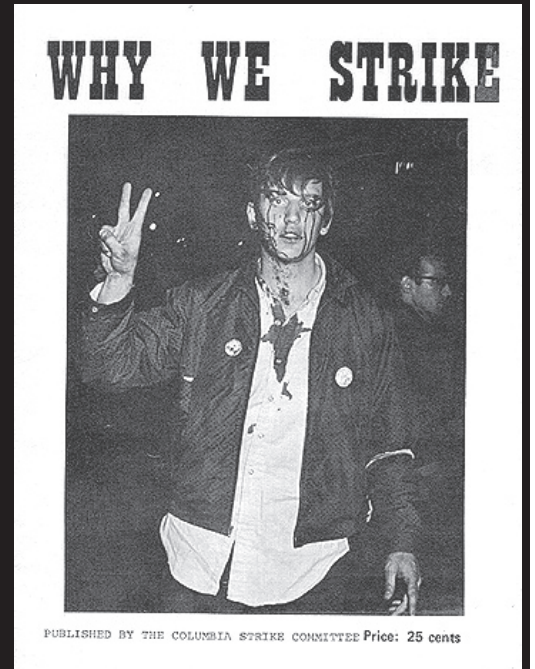
appeared under his byline. One of the pieces, titled “Free Speech Sacred—as Long as You’re a Liberal?,” reviewed the Minuteman incident. The second, “Wild Sex 101,” investigated the “kinky” sexual practices of Columbia students, ranging from a pornographic clip shown on CTV’s *Sexiled* to an undercover look at Conversio Virium, Columbia’s 13-year-old BDSM interest group.

The article was a deliberate smear. “Famed as a hotbed of debate over academic freedom, New York’s most elite school is also a playpen for sexual hijinks, sophomoric antics, and the wacky indulgences of the children of the rich,” Feiden wrote. He went on to recreate a meeting of Conversio Virium that had been surreptitiously observed by an anonymous *Daily News* reporter: “As a female student volunteer stood facing the blackboard, and two dozen Columbians watched, a lecturer who identified himself only as Dov flogged her repeatedly with leather whips, rubber hoses, and a cat-o’-nine-tails,” he wrote.

The Minuteman incident marks Columbia’s first major appearance in the headlines since 2004, when Columbia’s Middle East and Asian languages and cultures department faced allegations by Jewish and pro-Israel students who claimed that their views had been censored in class by pro-Palestinian professors. Unbeknownst to the University, the David Project, a pro-Israel lobby from Boston, had interviewed numerous students who claimed their views had been censored in class by professors, and had compiled the interviews in a documentary titled *Columbia Unbecoming*. The *New York Sun* broke news of the documentary’s existence in early 2005, and a *Times* editorial blasted the University shortly thereafter.

That incidents like MEALAC and the Minuteman protest made national news isn’t surprising, but what of the lesser stories that seem to inexplicably go to print? Undergraduate sex is hardly newsworthy at Columbia, or any college for that matter, but that didn’t stop Feiden from penning an article about

1968



Dartmouth who specializes in reputational risk, isn’t too worried about his alma mater.

“Reputation is made up of three levels: your identity, which is who you are, your image, which is how different people view you, and collective assessments of how students, trustees, professors, and others see you, in which case, Columbia has an amazing reputation,” Argenti said. “Anything that happens in the context of an institution that’s been around for 300 years is very different from what might happen in one you’ve never heard of.”

“Would [the Minuteman protest] in itself hurt Columbia’s reputation? I don’t think so. Is it something the president should be aware of? Obviously, he’s a free speech expert, clearly he’s on top of that situation. To really get things going, you have to have a lot of things go wrong,” he added, citing the tensions in the ’60s and ’70s. “All you have to have is one really bad series of events and things can turn the other way.”

“WHEN I WAS AN UNDERGRADUATE, IF YOU WEREN’T IN THREE PITCHED IDEOLOGICAL BATTLES A WEEK HERE, YOU WERE CONSIDERED TO NOT BE PULLING YOUR WEIGHT ... THIS IS ONE OF THE THINGS THAT COMING TO COLUMBIA IS ALL ABOUT”

Columbia’s illustrious history hasn’t stopped the press from at least trying to shake things up again.

Douglas Feiden, a reporter for the *New York Daily News*, has been on the front line of Columbia’s renewed press attention. On Nov. 26, 2006, two articles

it, or stop O’Reilly from inviting notorious right-wing pundit Ann Coulter on his show to discuss the article. And in December, O’Reilly brought on military veteran Matthew Sanchez, GS ’07, to discuss an alleged bias incident that had been committed against him more than a year prior.

Are these examples of media personalities with axes to grind against the University?

David Stone, Columbia’s executive vice president for communications, at-

tributes the one-note journalistic approach to the fact that the blogosphere has become a viable spot for news analysis. “The way in which media outlets find their niche is to appeal to an audience that wants a specific viewpoint, rather than attempting to be as balanced as possible,” he said.

Feiden declined to comment, while Fox News did not return repeated calls for comment. Stone offered his own theory for why Columbia seems to be getting so much media

attention:

“We are in New York City, which is the media capital of the country and for much of the world,” Stone added. “On the up side, many of our professors get quoted in the *New York Times*, and our Nobel Prize winners get a lot of attention. [But] unlike some of our peer institutions, when something is local

news here, it automatically puts it on a national level, when a lot of these controversies over politics and speech are happening everywhere.”

Rodney Benson, professor of journalism and communications at New York University, agreed: at the end of the day, it’s about academics.

“I think university reputations are slow to change, and any particular political incident or new event is not going to make a big difference,” he said. “Reputation is really rooted in the whole history of the institution and the age of the institution. A lot of that reputation has been passed along by word of mouth for a long time. You would want to look at things like how often the faculty at a given school is cited in publications like the *Chronicle of Higher Education*,” he continued. “Whether the university’s faculty is respected by the rest of academia is crucial.” Benson added that parents consider these factors important when deciding on a college for their children.

This year’s bad press doesn’t seem to be affecting the University’s reputation tangibly—just yet. Eric Furda, Columbia’s director of alumni relations, reported that donations to the University have not recently declined, and that it does not appear that negative press attention has affected the University’s

young people, and Columbia may have benefited from that over the long term,” said Robert Siegel, CC ’68 and a senior host of the NPR program *All Things Considered*. At the time, Siegel was an anchorman covering the riots for WKCR, Columbia’s student-run radio station.

While the ’68 riots may now have a nostalgic glow, the immediate repercussions were more serious—and expensive.

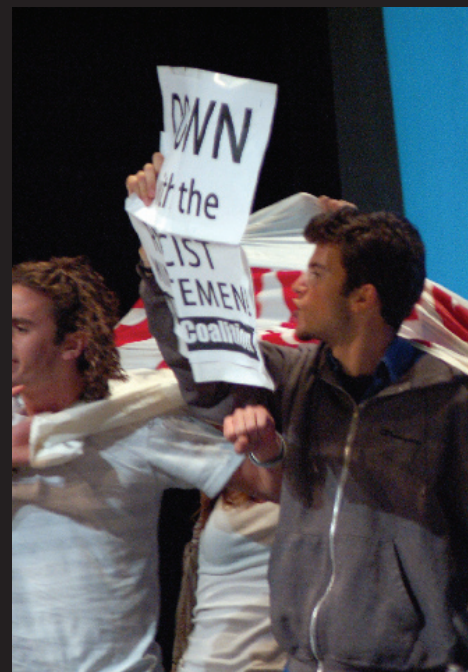
“My impression is that the admissions office looked more favorably on applicants who were less likely to be protesters,” said Siegel. “Parents didn’t want their kids going to Columbia is what I recall hearing from family members at the time, and faculty members considered it an affront to them.”

After suffering from intense media scrutiny, the University, feeling anxious about its image, began a \$20 million renovation to improve the quality of its much-criticized residence

halls, despite being in extreme financial difficulty, according to a September 2005 issue of *Columbia College Today*.

The renovations, however costly, did eventually generate positive press for the University. In 1970, the *Times* reported that “at Columbia, the rooms into which two students crowded are now singles, there are new television lounges on most dormitory floors, there is new furniture everywhere and,

“UNLIKE SOME OF OUR PEER INSTITUTIONS, WHEN SOMETHING IS LOCAL NEWS HERE, IT AUTOMATICALLY PUTS IT ON A NATIONAL LEVEL, WHEN A LOT OF THESE CONTROVERSIES OVER POLITICS AND SPEECH ARE HAPPENING EVERYWHERE.”



2006

overall financial well-being. Just this week, the *Spectator* reported that for the fifth year in a row, Columbia College received a record-breaking number of applicants.

Furda admits, however, that while Columbia’s general reputation might be safe, times of media scrutiny and political controversy do tend to be the most hectic ones in his office. In the aftermath of the Minuteman incident, Furda received approximately 200 e-mails from alumni and donors, 25 percent of which expressed positive sentiments about the way the University was handling the issue.

“There are always high emotions [after an incident like the Minuteman protest], and we want to respond to individuals with an on-time response,” he says. “Still, we also want to step back, and maybe be a little more thoughtful, and show what dialogue is like on the college campus. That takes a little bit more time.”

Furda said that striking a balance between responding quickly and responding thoughtfully is “probably the biggest challenge we have, and honestly a frustration that some of our alumni express. But when you want to understand the larger framework of why something happened, which is what alumni often want to know, that takes a process. It’ll take a meeting or two with student leaders, with the academic deans and the faculty.”

In the end, however, alumni frustrations tend to amount to just that: frustration. “So far, it’s been fine,” he explained. “But we still have to be very careful in how we respond to people, because the potential for loss of funds is always there.”

Today, the 1968 riots, which protested the University’s complicity with the Vietnam War as well as its poor relationship with the surrounding community, are remembered fondly as a positive symbol for student activism.

“When you speak of the ’60s, there’s a certain allure there for a lot of

since last year, each room has its own telephone.”

Siegel said he believes that Columbia’s temporary decline in reputation was likely due to the event’s magnitude.

“The Minutemen conflict does have implications because of the free speech issue, but it’s a tiny incident in comparison to ’68. At that time, if you had asked anyone in the country who remotely followed the news where a major protest had gone on, they would have said Columbia. Today, you’d have to ask specifically about a campus scandal, and then the top one would be Duke. If Columbia even came in second, it would be a miracle,” he says. Basically, prestige wears well.

“Look at what happened at Harvard,” Benson adds. “Its president got a lot of bad press, but that didn’t hurt Harvard’s reputation.” Duke University, which has come under fire due to rape allegations leveled against several members of the school’s lacrosse team, received the second highest number of applicants in its history this year.

Though the actions of last semester have elicited strong opinions from Columbia students and alumni, there is little indication that anyone is rethinking the value of their degree just yet.

“This doesn’t say you can’t get into deep trouble and that it doesn’t affect people’s perceptions of the University, though,” Argenti warned.

Joseph Sullivan, CC ’86 and Law ’89, may have put it best when he told the *Spectator* last semester that, though he thought the students acted “like a bunch of animals,” he didn’t think it would affect the University or his relationship with it.

“I just gave them like \$250 a week ago ... I’d only stop giving if they changed the Core Curriculum,” he said.

—Additional reporting by Alison Bumke, Hillary Busis, Max Foxman, Daryl King, Sadia Latifi



Diane Keaton proves yet again that there are no good roles for women over 60—or at least, not more than one role. See her aging, single, but peppy in *Because I Said So*, opening this Friday.



When Jet Li stars in a movie, he is almost certainly bound to kick ass. This time it's Jason Statham's. The brawl begins Friday in *Rogue*, music video director Phillip Atwell's film debut.



A KINDER, GENTLER WAR
DIVISIVE POLITICS ARE RELAXED IN AN *UNREASONABLE MAN*, GIVING RALPH NADER SOME RARE POSITIVE SCREEN TIME

COURTESY OF IFC FILMS

Politics Without Reason

Taking a fair and balanced look at Ralph Nader, *An Unreasonable Man* signals a willingness for greater impartiality in political docs

BY ROB BRINK

But the already constant noise of the 2008 U.S. presidential election is the menace of today, threatening to drown out the actual democratic process in lieu of punditry and analysis.

A faint silver lining glitters on the edge of this looming cloud of political gas: there will be plenty of dead airtime for citizens to think about the national election process. And film may be just the medium to start some discussions.

An Unreasonable Man, the documentary debut of Henriette Mantel and Steve Skrovan, tells the story of Ralph Nader, from his early days as a public interest lawyer through his more recent forays into presidential politics. Reproached alternately by the political left and right, how can one reconcile the two Ralphs?

Knowing Mantel had worked as an office manager for Nader decades ago, Skrovan originally approached her to collaborate on a sitcom about a public interest law office.

"Somewhere along the line, the idea of a documentary started to take over from the sitcom," Skrovan says. "I was struck by how many of his friends and former allies were mad at him. That seemed like an interesting conflict to explore. And it presented a story arc that asked a simple dramatic question: How does a man go from hero to pariah?"

That central question is framed from a perspective that leans slightly left-of-center. Skrovan's dramatic tension relies on the audience agreeing with the view that Nader dealt America a terrible blow

in the 2000 presidential election, when the votes he received were seemingly the deciding factor in the close Florida race. A Reagan-era republican might not understand the film at all, since Nader went from foe to friend in that camp's perspective. The film fails to create emotional conflict when viewed from the right.

Instead, the film's intention is to redeem Nader from the anger of the mainstream left. At one point, Columbia professor Todd Gitlin goes on a rant against Nader.

"It's the responsibility of a serious person not to be a fool," Gitlin says. "If the game was to get 5 percent so that you could get standing for the 2004 election under the election code, then he [Nader] should have campaigned in California and New York where he had many, many votes to pick up."

However, since the 2000 election, the Democratic Party has benefited enormously from a pull to the left that can largely be attributed to progressive grassroots organizers whose agenda and approach bear a striking resemblance to Nader's. Corporate malfeasance and election reform are themes du jour in the House. Thus, the emotional stakes of the film feel low, as the narrative is organized around a dramatic feeling of betrayal that has faded as Democratic fates have improved.

Unlike a sitcom, this film manages to move Nader's geek persona offstage and focus on his unwavering record of accomplishments. However, the film succeeds in something more interesting than the examination of Nader's changing reputation or unchanging character. It succinctly documents the forces that Nader fought at each stage of

his career. Those forces continue to play a role in our politics, and the contour of these forces is now much less controversial whether one looks from the right or left.

The filmmakers have elicited unguarded statements from every camp. For instance, Pat Buchanan offers a striking portrait of the Reagan revolution, which forced a turning point in Nader's career in the 1980s.

"The whole thing that we were trying to do with the New Deal coalition is to drive these wedges into the coalition, and take parts of it for the Republican base," Buchanan says. "You did this with social, cultural issues. You carve off all their issues which do not conflict with your own social and political beliefs, and you keep hammering them."

As a turning point, the film presents the Powell Memo, written by Justice Powell before he was appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

"There's a threat to America," he writes. "These public interest groups are a threat to America, and every corporation has to react. We have to take back the minds and hearts of the students and the academics and the media, and we've got to fight them tooth and nail." The film documents the largely successful fight by corporations to recapture their powerful position in national politics.

While the central narrative may be framed from a Democratic perspective, the interviewees range across the political spectrum. Skrovan notes that during two years of filming, Nader gave them only one admonition.

"Make sure you talk to people who oppose me.' That's pure Ralph. He never shies away from an argument," Skrovan says.

Though the film isn't particularly innovative in its structure, it could represent a bigger trend in documentary filmmaking—namely, political movies made without acidic agendas. While the filmmakers clearly have a point of view, there is no enemy—only a champion. And with Michael Moore being blamed for past Democratic losses almost as much as Nader, perhaps that's just what the party needs.

An Unreasonable Man opened yesterday at the IFC Center in New York and is due for national release soon. ■

Shooting the Messengers

Will someone please think of the children? The MPAA restricts ads and trailers, but the benefit is unclear

BY ARIEL KARLIN

There's something very scary lurking in homes nationwide, something almost impossible to avoid: commercials.

Creepy film trailers have become a staple of movie marketing, offering unsuspecting viewers heart-stopping scares, whether or not they are willing participants.

But how scary is too scary? Much of the attraction of horror films is in their palpable tension, imposed on audience members as they sit glued to the screen in suspense. If this effect can be simulated in the short span of a commercial, it would seem to be a valuable tool for advertising.

Unfortunately for the horror film industry, however, there's no way to direct the message exclusively to its intended audience, especially with the majority of advertising focused somewhat nebulously on television or the Internet. *The Messengers*, which comes out tomorrow, is about a house haunted by supernatural lurkers invisible to the eyes of adults. The film's trailer was originally deemed too scary for the masses and was only available for downloading between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. It could also only be shown before R-rated movies, by order of the Motion Picture Association of America. The restriction was ironic in light of the movie's premise—its intent was to prevent children from viewing a commercial for a film about beings that can only be seen by children.

The Messengers is certainly not the first movie to have faced these constraints. The MPAA has an entire division devoted to advertising, whose tasks include assessing an advertisement's "suitability for general audiences" and making "sure that the advertising is placed appropriately." For movies that are bound to offend, there is a special option to designate certain trailers as restricted, only to be shown before certain films, on limited-access

DON'T LOOK NOW THE MOVIE'S SCARY TRAILER MAY HAVE CAUSED A STIR, BUT IN THE PURSUIT OF PUBLICITY, MARKETERS KNOW NO FEAR.



COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT

Internet sites, and in late-night television spots.

The MPAA's treatment of *The Messengers'* advertising (and other trailers with potentially traumatizing visuals) is similar to the treatment that a full-length motion picture would receive. This emphasizes the growing similarity and important connection between short advertisements and the actual movies that they represent. While many observations have been made about the increasingly cinematic quality of television shows, little attention has been drawn to the television-like quality of movie trailers which, like an episode of *Lost*, leave the viewer involved in the story and wanting more. The entertainment value of stylized movie trailers is undeniable—they get right to the point in their offerings of excitement, celebrity, and the prospect of something fun to anticipate.

The mentality of showing up late to movies because "we'll only miss the previews" is on its way out, as the previews are becoming a part of the film-watching experience for viewers to enjoy. For advertisers, the appeal of movie trailers is a dream come true, and they haven't missed a chance to push the limits of audaciousness. Nothing is out-of-bounds in promoting movies—even if it means marketing the marketing itself, like announcing that the trailer for the new Harry Potter movie would accompany *Happy Feet*. Even the traditional voice-over is afforded many liberties these days, including having free rein to declare Peter O'Toole's part in *Venus* to be "the role of a lifetime."

Extravagant marketing strategies leave a strong impression on potential moviegoers—perhaps too strong. If viewers close their eyes until *30 Rock* comes back on instead of watching an ad for *The Messengers*, then they won't get the intended exposure to the commercial—although, admittedly, those people were probably not going to go see the movie, anyway. Like other trends that stick in the horror film genre—like Asian remakes or sinister British children—scary advertisements might be here to stay.

In addition to the content of the movie trailers, another huge appeal, especially for college students, is that the trailers can be viewed for free. As those who have repeatedly watched the trailer for *Factory Girl* instead of writing their papers know, trailers are available for free on a variety of Web sites, including iTunes. Free downloads on iTunes are always a draw—no matter how ridiculous the content—leading many young people to stuff their download libraries with pilots of shows they'll never watch, any song that's been a featured single of the week, from folk to techno, or almost any movie trailer. The iTunes store places its theatrical trailers alongside the rest of its downloadable media, as though they were actually worth purchasing.


Trailers offer cheap thrills without the high expectations and substantial time requirements of a full movie. In the city of New York, it costs more than \$10 to see a movie, but the movie advertisements can offer a taste of the same appeal—for free. ■

Front of the Queue

The cinematic expertise of professor Annette Insdorf has bedazzled Columbia's film department for many years, and this week, the director of undergraduate film studies shares her most recent thoughts.

- 1 In Deepa Mehta's superb *Water*, set in 1938 India, an eight-year-old girl whose husband dies is sent to a home where Hindu widows live in penitence.
- 2 *Perfume* is a sumptuous adaptation of Patrick Süskind's novel, often reminiscent of *The Tin Drum*. Director Tom Tykwer (*Run, Lola, Run*) evocatively recreates an ancient and odoriferous Paris.
- 3 *Dreamgirls*, smartly directed by Bill Condon, is a joyful musical.
- 4 Given that *Breaking and Entering* is gifted director Anthony Minghella's third collaboration with Jude Law and his second with Juliette Binoche, this contemporary London drama is promising.
- 5 Lasse Hallström's *The Hoax* sounds fascinating, with Richard Gere playing Clifford Irving—who tried to pull off a literary hoax with Howard Hughes' "autobiography."

—Compiled by Isabel Bohrer



DVD

DOUBLE FEATURE

☒
The Marine (2006)

☒
G.I. Jane (1997)

Spend your night inside this weekend kicking back, relaxing, and watching others sweat it out on the small screen. The newly released *The Marine* stars professional wrestler John Cena as a young marine recently discharged. He pursues a group of thieves who have kidnapped his wife in the course of their flight from justice. This movie, while short on introspection, is long on car chases, explosions, and heavily muscled men flying through the air. Once the smoke clears, continue the military theme with *G.I. Jane*, in which Demi Moore, in the face of a brutal commander, inhumane physical demands, and all expectations of failure, attempts to complete navy SEAL training. Demi's muscles may be smaller than John's, but he has only a handful of villains to fight while she is trying to change the minds and prejudices of an entire army. Viewers are encouraged to decide for themselves which of the two has more testosterone. —Chloe Smith



From the people who brought you *Scary Movie*, *Epic Movie* spoofs the biggest adventure movies of the past few years—and *Nacho Libre*. OPENS FRIDAY



Find out if the tricky Southern accent will elude fellow Irishmen Pierce Brosnan and Liam Neeson in the Civil-War-set *Seraphim Falls*. OPENS FRIDAY

TOILET HUMOR OPEN SEASON HERALDS BOTH A RETURN TO TRADITIONAL GIMMICKS AND AN ADVANCE IN TECHNOLOGY.



COURTESY OF COLUMBIA PICTURES

A Whole New World

Disney's reign over the world of animated movies may be over, but is CGI losing its footing?

BY MANDIE NOWAK

Few Columbia students are old, but our childhood cinematic memories are starting to show our age. And it's not just because the films featured such trivial topics as flying carpets, singing crabs, and feline monarchies; the technology of Hollywood that brought these fantasies to life has changed in a startlingly short amount of time. What was once an unusual novelty—computer animation—has changed the face of children's films forever, and the technology with which we're most familiar—cel animation—now finds itself in jeopardy.

Cel animation, which uses hand-drawn images instead of digitally created ones, has been the standard and, traditionally, the most popular method for animated features since Walt Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* in 1937. The longtime king of animation, Disney's studio reached its last peak around 15 years ago, when it released a string of highly successful films like *The Little Mermaid*, *The Lion King*, *Aladdin*, and *Beauty and the Beast*—which remains the only animated film to ever be nominated for an Academy Award for Best Picture.

But changes were already in motion. In 1984, a 27-year-old animator named John Lasseter was fired from his job at Disney and established, with George Lucas, the special-effects computer group that would ultimately become known as Pixar. Lasseter's innovative, first, computer-generated short, called "The Adventures of Andre and Wally B," was a creative and technical success and gradually won the attention of Walt Disney Studios. In 1991, Pixar and Disney created a deal to develop three full-length, animated motion pictures, and in 1995 Pixar's first feature, *Toy Story*, hit theaters, bringing with it a witty sensibility that didn't resemble the more prestigious Disney offerings. This was followed by the insect-themed *A Bug's Life* in 1998, which

rival-company DreamWorks countered with *Antz* (attempting to apply Woody Allen's adult humor to an ant colony—with limited success).

Overwhelmingly positive responses to computer-animated films, in terms of both aesthetics and plot, have led to the industry's rapid growth and development. Less than 10 years ago, there were only two struggling computer-animation companies producing major motion pictures—today, there are over two dozen. Some of the industry's biggest films, like *Shrek 2*, have grossed close to \$1 billion. Last year saw the release of over a dozen computer-animated motion pictures, and both major and independent film companies have planned for at least a dozen more in 2007.

In early January, Lions Gate released *Happily N'Ever After*, the year's first computer-generated feature, starring Freddie Prinze, Jr. and Sarah Michelle Gellar—and it didn't bode well for the technology. The film received overwhelmingly negative reviews from both critics and audiences, with complaints mainly stemming from the obvious and extensive borrowing from an earlier computer-generated success, *Shrek*. Where *Shrek* was hip and original, *Happily N'Ever After* was utterly lackluster. Perhaps the film failed because it didn't take aim at *Shrek's* main target—the serious and self-important classic Disney fairy tales. Though the films still exist on video shelves, a new Disney princess hasn't been inaugurated since *Mulan* in 1998, an indication that Disney definitely isn't rolling out royal hits like it once did. Biting criticism of Disney films seems much less timely as the films fall farther from relevance.

Happily N'Ever After's failure proved yet again that computer generation isn't necessarily a guarantee for success. But with films like *Ice Age: The Meltdown*, *Cars*, and *Happy Feet* dominating the media's attention and the box office, it's easy to assign the credit to the novelty of the technology, rather than the story or

the actors. The problem, though, is that the technology is no longer new. Additionally, the ever-growing number of CGI films only cannibalizes the potential audience.

The studios need to remember that movies like *Toy Story* and *Shrek* weren't successes simply because they weren't traditional animation. *Toy Story* was a great movie *before* it was computer animated. And *Happily N'Ever After* probably would have been panned no matter its format. The enthusiasm of the pioneers of computer animation—not only the novelty of their technique—accounts for the first computer-animated successes, just as in cel animation. Disney's first releases after *Snow White* were *Pinocchio*, *Fantasia*, *Dumbo*, and *Bambi*—now considered among the finest classics of animation, yet also the earliest.

Out on DVD next week, *Open Season* seems to conform to most computer-generated animation standards: it boasts an all-star cast, led by Ashton Kutcher and Martin Lawrence and features wild and wacky animals. In scale, the film isn't epic or particularly poignant, as *Finding Nemo* was, but instead relies on slapstick and crude humor often utilized by cartoons. In fact, many gags in the film could probably exist as individual shorts. Though not necessarily a step backwards, *Open Season* nonetheless represents at least a partial return to some of the more basic sensibilities of traditional animation.

The future of cel animation is in jeopardy, but it's not dead yet. Contradicting an earlier statement, Disney announced this summer that they were producing *The Frog Princess*, a proudly two-dimensional animated film. It's intended to provide a return to the classic musical Disney features of the '80s and '90s, partly ensured by hiring Ron Clements and John Musker, co-directors of *The Little Mermaid* and *Aladdin*. It will also feature a new African-American Disney princess, signaling Disney's desire to maintain tradition while integrating a forward-looking attitude.

Computer animation just may stand the test of time and perhaps eventually replace cel animation, the sentimental favorite of past generations. Maybe they can coexist. Or maybe our generation is just too mature to watch cartoons—but if that's true, then there's a whole block of late-night Cartoon Network that needs major reprogramming.

—Additional reporting by Emily Rauber

I Was a Teenage Filmmaker

Barnard student uses life experience to help tell a story of illness

BY SUSAN COHEN

It was an all too common plight—the end of my first year was rapidly approaching, and I still had no idea what I was going to do over the summer. A naive freshman, I believed that if I applied for any internship, I would get it. With this mentality, I applied to a film production company, confidently believing I would land the job. I was narrow-minded enough to *know* this small firm would be eager to have me work for them. It wasn't until the interview that I realized it had all been a juvenile fantasy, because I was clearly the wrong candidate—despite my interest in film.

Defeated, I resigned myself to yet another summer of wrangling second graders at the camp where I'd worked for the last two years. While I didn't hate being a counselor, begging seven-year-old boys to cooperate with me wasn't exactly my idea of a perfect summer vacation. Nevertheless, I signed the contract and prepared myself for two months of sticky hands, guarded patience, and saccharine smiles.

Not long after I made this decision, I was sitting down for dinner at Hewitt Dining Hall when I restlessly started thinking of other options. Maybe it was something they were cooking, but I suddenly came up with the idea to make a documentary on celiac disease—with which I had been diagnosed just before my freshman year of high school. It made so much sense that I was almost shocked, since the story had been brewing in my head for years. It had arrived just in time to save me from a summer of boredom and frustration.

Celiac disease is caused by an intolerance to gluten, the protein found in wheat, rye, barley, and malt. When people who have celiac disease eat foods containing gluten, their body attacks the villi in their small intestine, which are responsible for

the absorption of nutrients. The damage to their villi can lead to malabsorption of nutrients, eventually leading to malnutrition. People who have celiac disease may show no symptoms. They can also have symptoms like diarrhea, constipation, fatigue, stress fractures, osteoporosis, migraines, short stature, and infertility. The only cure for celiac disease is a strict gluten-free diet, in which all foods containing gluten are removed. An estimated one in 133 people in this country have celiac disease, but of these people, nearly all are undiagnosed or misdiagnosed.

Soon after finding out I had this disease, I went with my mom to buy gluten-free bread and baked goods from a specialty store called Foods by George, which is run by George Chookasian and his wife Ceil. I read their story while on the drive to New Jersey, so I knew they were special before I arrived. George left the finance industry to found Foods by George shortly after Ceil was diagnosed with celiac disease, combining both his passion for food and his love for Ceil. After meeting them—and falling in love with their food—I realized the personal sacrifices George and Ceil had made for the benefit of the larger celiac community.

I began to think that someone should capture

the story of their journey. My primary inspiration was the many people who have celiac disease, and those who have heard of it, that stigmatize it because of the strict dietary rules. But I had always considered celiac disease a positive part of my life—I had met so many interesting, wonderful people. And though I did have to give up some of the ease of eating at a “regular” pizzeria, my health is much more important than a slice of Koronet's. To me, George and Ceil embody the beauty and positive outlook of celiac disease, and I wanted to show the world their spirit. However, I was 14 or 15 at the time, and I didn't think there was anything I could do about it. But at 18, sitting in Hewitt, I felt much wiser. I was well aware that I needed to be the one to tell their story, since they had helped take care of me. My documentary was born on that night.

But it wouldn't remain as simple as telling a single story. Over the next few months, it would evolve and grow into something much bigger than I ever could have imagined: my documentary, *Generation Gluten-Free*.

Look for the continuation of this series in the Feb. 15 issue of *The Eye*, in which Cohen recounts the pre-production phase of her documentary.



PHOTO BY ISABELLE MILLS-TANNENBAUM

Front of the Queue

The Eye asks members of our community to tell us the next five movies they intend to see.

Anyone who works as a clerk at Kim's has to know a lot about movies; Ben Apatoff, 23, is no exception. Here are the next five he wants to see:

- 1 *The Comedians*
“I just read the book.”
- 2 *Idiocracy*
“It just came out.”
- 3 Volume 2 of *The Charles Bukowski Tapes*
“I probably sound like a pretentious twat now...”
- 4 *Children of Men*
“I've heard great things.”
- 5 *KISSology: Volume 1*
“It's on my Netflix.”

—Hillary Busis



☒ *Jesus Camp* (2006)

☒ *Saved!* (2004)

Want to see what happens when Christian values turn ugly? Check out this week's movies, which examine adolescent Bible-thumpers in two very different ways. *Saved!* is a satirical teen movie with a twist—its heroine is Mary, a Christ-fearing high school senior who selflessly sleeps with her boyfriend after he tells her he's gay. Unfortunately, her plan to save him from a depraved life of homosexuality backfires; his parents send him to a “de-gayification” compound shortly afterwards and she winds up pregnant and alone. But the actual young, evangelical Christians who appear in the documentary *Jesus Camp* probably won't find the premise of *Saved!* very amusing. The die-hard tots spend their summers at a place called “Kids on Fire,” which can only be described as a Christian boot camp, designed to carefully mold them into future proselytizers. With scenes of children praying to a cardboard cutout of President Bush, this movie should be watched before the lighthearted *Saved!*—if only to get its chilling images out of your mind.

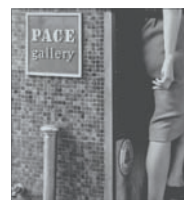
—Hillary Busis

DOUBLE DVD FEATURE

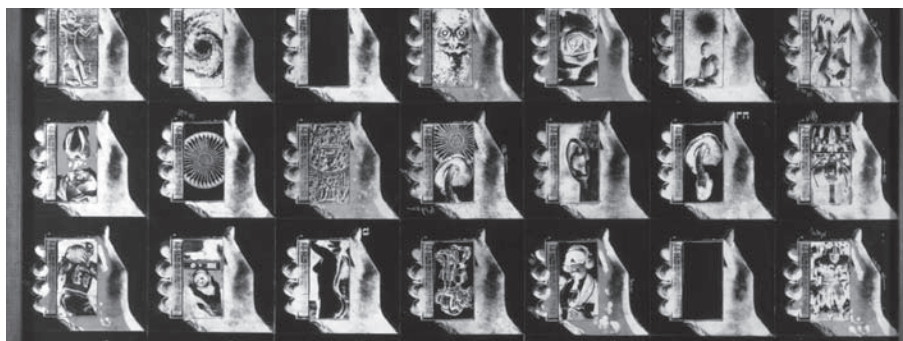
art



Richard Renaldi
Yossi Milo Gallery
Thurs., Jan. 25,
6-8 p.m.



Donald Judd & Josef Albers
PaceWildenstein
57th Street
Fri., Jan. 26, 6-8
p.m.



COURTESY OF WALLACE BERMAN

The Beat Goes On

Berman's art resurfaces at NYU

BY MAX FOXMAN & ALEX GARTENFELD

With Terence Koh coming regularly for \$100,000, the thumbbed-over collages and Hebrew woodcuts of beat poet and conceptual artist Wallace Berman might seem precious. But in 1957, the Los Angeles Police Department raided Berman's first solo exhibition for the allegedly pornographic content of the first issue of his periodical *Semina*. Berman vowed revenge, moved to San Francisco, and never again exhibited in a private gallery.

His work only intensified. Returning with his wife to Topanga Canyon, northwest of Los Angeles, Berman attracted a collection of beat artists and celebrities. His work grew until his untimely death in an auto accident in 1976.

Before 1992, when the Amsterdam Institute of Contemporary Art put out its book, *Wallace Berman: Support the Revolution*, little was known about him—much of hand-crafted works had disintegrated or was disregarded.

"I look at him as one of those freaky, marginal West Coast artists," said Carlo McCormick, senior editor of *Paper Magazine* and frequent *Artforum* contributor. "Everything that happened in LA took a long time to get to the East Coast," McCormick said. The work of eclectic, mixed-media artists like Berman, he explained, was "buried by Minimalism." However, with a shift toward ephemerality and collage in the contemporary avant-garde and the establishment of Los Angeles as an art world hub, Berman's work once again looks fresh.

"Semina Culture: Wallace Berman and His Circle," which first appeared in Los An-

geles, was curated by Michael Duncan and Kristine McKenna, and opened at NYU's Grey Gallery last Thursday. The exhibit presents a network of sculptures, drawings, paintings, and collages, grouped by artist and linked by the often magnificent photographs taken by Berman himself. Though the sequencing presents a perhaps over-simplified concept of the artists' interaction and interdependence, it delicately undertakes the task of unearthing sadly overlooked artists including Loree Foxx and Joan Brown.

Recent years have seen an explosion in independent publishing, mostly in the form of lower-distribution art and lifestyle magazines. The canon was explored in the recently closed "Megazines" exhibit at the Visionaire Gallery, where viewers could view and purchase rare copies of some of the world's most influential independent magazines.

Scott Meriam, co-curator of the "Megazines" exhibition, was entirely unaware of Berman's work. His exhibition, co-curated with Kyra Griffin and Dominic Sidhu, tracked independent publishing to the surrealist art journals of the 1920s. Meriam noted *View*, one of the first journals to publish the works of Salvador Dalí. The exhibition traced the development of magazines through downtown New York, noting the complex overlap of influences. Meriam noted specifically the way in which contemporary magazines like *Fantastic Man* or *Purple* subtly quote a 1930s men's magazine, *Bachelor*, or old editions of *Interview*.

The exhibition featured those magazines that left "an indelible impression on publishing," in the words of Meriam, rather than "the ones that sort of fester in their own world, because it doesn't matter if you're just sitting in nowhere."

But the austere layouts of magazines like *V* are not so different from the home-produced editions. Fleur Cowles, founder of *Flair Magazine*, originally addressed each issue of her magazine with a personal message to the subscriber. *All American Magazine*, founded by fashion-photographer Bruce Weber, was a journalistic outlet for his photography. "Each magazine is obviously reflective of the publisher's lifestyle and aesthetic," Meriam said.

The NYU exhibition opens to intensely private publication. In a 1992 interview, beat poet Michael McClure explained, "Seminas are a form of love structure that Wallace made, drawing friends together." Berman and his friends put together the magazine, and each subscriber was personally chosen.

"It's hard to say who Berman is informing, because everyone is looking at everyone," McCormick said. Just as young publishers are looking at old editions, Los Angeles is being re-examined because of a generation of strong visual artists looking at their history. The influence of Berman is clear in the work of recently hot George Herms (also featured here).

The politics of *Semina* were unmistakable. "It's un-American," McClure said, adding that it's against "the Korean War, the grey flannel suits." Berman's *Semina*, McClure concluded, wasn't just a secular publication. "It's a magazine of the spirit." ■

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Laying It On Thick



BON

SIMPLE DONE RIGHT: Bon described his unique style as “classy, but with a touch of street.” The street look gets wise here with baggy jeans tucked into clean white Keds. But the centerpiece is the gray wool coat, which has enough details—chunky, gold zippers and large sweater-style hemming in a different and bold shade—for everyone on the block. You can afford to add a few more pieces to this sparsely-layered look, so why not try topping it off with a retro throwback. Fedora, anyone?

Sick of winter's blase palette and drab sweaters? The Eye takes it to the streets to prove that winter is not all about jackets and coats ... when layered over sweaters and skirts, the look becomes instantly chic.

DRESS TO IMPRESS: The hoodie-blazer combination may not be new, but Corey takes it to the next level with four layers in varying hues of blue. For ultimate winter warmth, play with necklines—a collared polo in royal blue pops underneath a navy v-neck sweater, which becomes casual again with a light blue hoodie, which is finally dressed up by a charcoal-blue button-down. Whew! Lest you think the tailored pants make the outfit too serious, add a kooky winter hat (which Corey purchased from a street vendor) for a look you can wear anywhere.



COREY



JEREMIAH

PRINTS IN PROPORTION: Don't be afraid to mix patterns and colors, as long as you pay attention to proportions. Jeremiah's look, which he described as “fresh, but formal,” pairs a skinny black-and-Technicolor-striped tie with a soft, yellow-plaid blazer. To avoid looking like walking wallpaper, finish it off with a pair of simple pants, like these J. Lindbergh straight-leg trousers.



HEATHER

SUMMER SOLSTICE: To transition a light summer frock like this Derek Lam dress into winter wear, pair it with tights and one of this winter's most ubiquitous trends, the ankle boot. Cover up your shoulders with a bold, unexpected piece, such as a waist-length military jacket that instantly makes over girly silk into winter warrior fiber. A thick, heavy wool pea coat will be sure to keep you as warm as the summer temperatures you've been dreaming of.



JOANNA

BEYOND BASIC BLACK: This California-girl-in-New-York-.City look struts boldly past the standard-issue Manhattan black. A funky, flowered dress, which Heather picked up from a vintage store in California, takes an urban twist with a chunky, military-inspired black coat and simple brown boots. If you're bold enough, top off the outfit with an oversized print bag.

COMPILED BY XIYIN TANG
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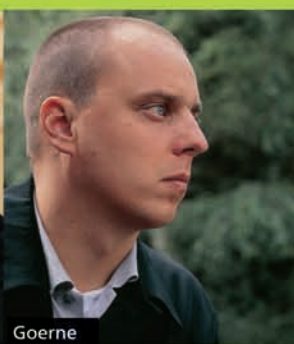
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