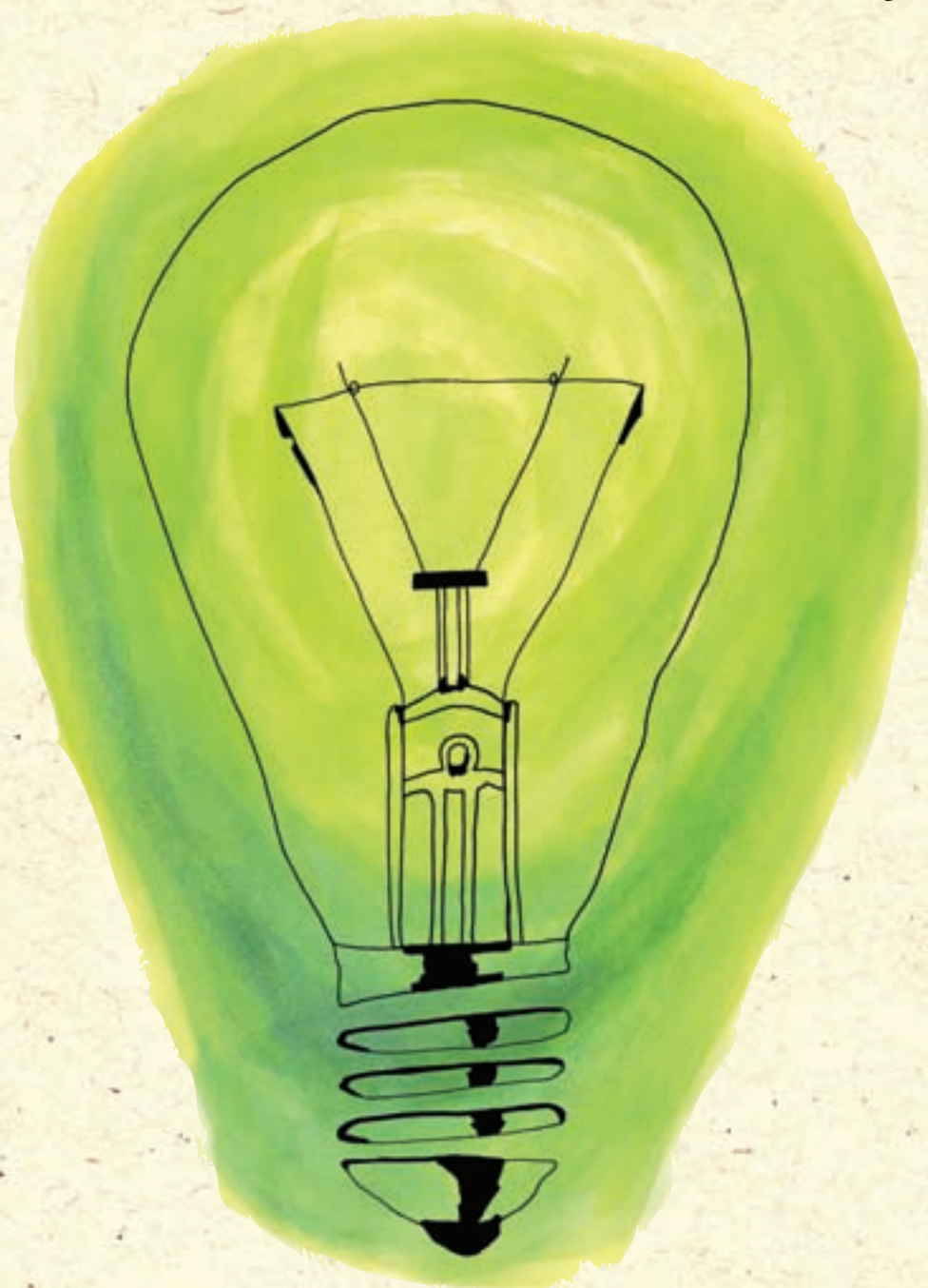


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the
eye

The Iliad and the IPO

By Derek Turner





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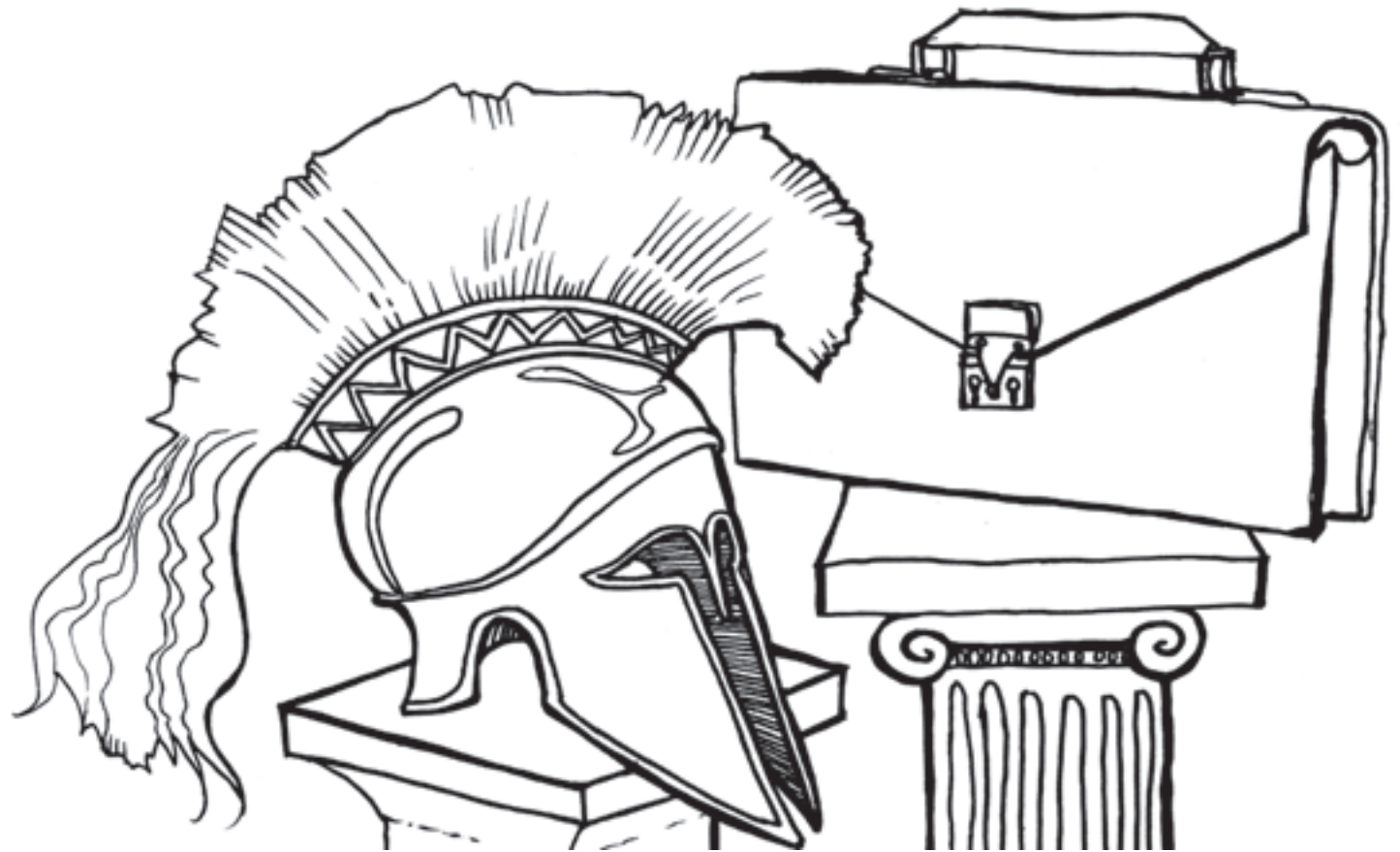
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THE ILIAD AND THE IPO

The case for entrepreneurship—and how
Columbia College neglects it, pg. 07

by *Derek Turner*
cover by *Thuto Durkac Somo*

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

I'll admit it. The word "entrepreneurship" makes me cringe a little bit.

The word, for me, is loaded with all the accoutrements of the 1 percent: ruthless capitalism, robber barons, and Rockefeller arrogance. Perhaps this is because I was raised in a fairly conservative community, and am still holding on to reactionary liberalism. Perhaps it's because, as a recipient of financial aid, I resent those who can even entertain the thought of a risky financial endeavor, with mom and dad providing a safety net in case of failure. Perhaps it's because I had my nose pierced for a while, and that's what girls with their noses pierced are supposed to think.

Who knows. But any concept denoting a money-making venture seems, to me, inherently attached to problems we discuss ad nauseum in the second semester of Contemporary Civilizations (Marx, I hear ya, bro).

While working with Derek Turner on this week's cover story, I fought this instinctive repulsion tooth and nail in the name of open-mindedness. And in the process, I learned that entrepreneurship can mean things that aren't simply greed.

One of the most important documents I read during this time was a blog post called "Why I Became an Entrepreneur," by Matt Mireles, a 2008 GS grad who started

a company called SpeakerText.

His story is pretty fascinating. Bored, he dropped out of Berkeley to work as an EMT and forest fire fighter. After a while, he enrolled at Columbia and found himself deeply in debt.

"It's hilarious to consider now, but during that period I actually wanted to be an investment banker. ... All the smart Columbia kids were doing it, after all," he writes.

His only formal professional training was in journalism. The thing that pushed him to consider starting his own business? Freedom—to try new things, to explore, and pay off his loans at the same time.

"Fuck banking. Fuck journalism. Fuck everything else. This is what I was born for, I thought."

Mireles, I learned, was a bit of a punk, and definitely not the entrepreneur I had in mind: the precocious kid with the safety net who could afford to try new things. There are more and more people like Mireles changing business and non-profits every day, according to Turner.

The meaning of entrepreneurship is changing rapidly—maybe my mindset should, too.

Amanda Cormier
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BY THE NUMBERS

CREATIVE WAYS TO GET A FREE MEAL

BY LIANA GERGELY
ILLUSTRATION BY CINDY PAN

It's Thursday. You've had a long week of papers and bipolar weather. You're hungry, but don't want to break the bank. Lucky for you, eating at Columbia doesn't have to require dining dollars, or an ATM machine. Laura Booth examines cheaper bar menus in this issue, which inspired us to examine money-saving tactics right here in Morningside. Who says there's no such thing as a free lunch?

1

Sign up for every club—including the Kingsmen and that Bollywood dancing group. You'll get an overflowing inbox of emails from clubs that you have no interest in, other than their promise of free food. Go to all the different meetings. Bring your Tupperware. Repeat. Every week.

2


Given that every overachiever at Columbia seems to have five majors and three minors, no one will find it suspicious that you're attending program planning meetings for Philosophy, English, Physics, Theater, and Political Science all in the same week. And that's only at Barnard. Do the same thing across the street.

3

While enjoying your overachiever's feast, start flirting with the guy that sells Nuts4Nuts on 116th and Broadway. Compliment him on the sweet aroma of roasted almonds, his sizzling nature, and his reliability for showing up every day. While you bat your eyelashes, gather some peanuts, walnuts, and almonds and put them in your bag.

4

Barnard SGA will give you free cake if it's your birthday. Pretend to be born in every single month. Change up your hair and outfit so they don't get suspicious.



POP QUIZ

THE P/D/F DEBATE

BY MARGARET BOYKIN

It's the time of the year again—the last day to decide if you will pass/fail or drop that pesky Calc class is next week on Nov. 17th, and Eyesites knows it can be a tough choice. We've come up with a handy checklist to help make your decision easy.

- Y

N

☐

☐

You did the reading once, in September, but are now using the main text as a doorjamb/lunch tray.
- Y

N

☐

☐

You pay attention in this class ... when the nasal sound of your own snoring jars you from a deep sleep.
- Y

N

☐

☐

When making plans with friends, you often schedule activities that overlap with the 75 minutes of this class—it's been so long since you've attended, you've sort of forgotten when it even meets.
- Y

N

☐

☐

You don't bring a notebook to class—instead, that time period, if not used for naps, is used for to-do lists, snacking, and trying to see how long you can stay aware of your own blinking.
- Y

N

☐

☐

You got a 70 percent on the midterm and contemplated going out for a celebratory drink.
- Y

N

☐

☐

When you do attend class, you frequently have the commiserating “I mean, I didn't even do the work, am I right?” conversation with the girl next to you ... except, you're beginning to notice she's always trying to hide something—wait, is that the problem set?—under her iPad.
- Y

N

☐

☐

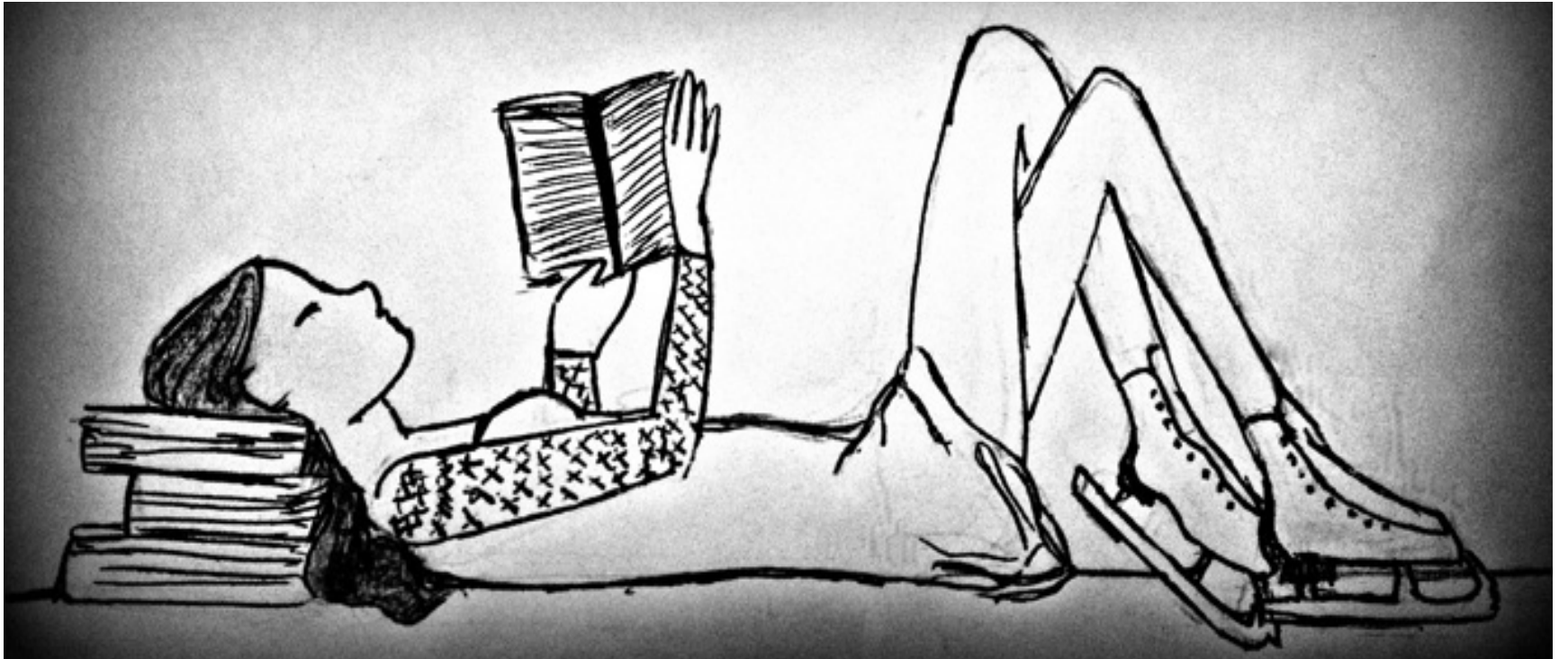
Your professor once waved at you outside of class, but you didn't recognize him in time to respond—you were too busy looking over your shoulder wondering who this crazy old man was dancing for.

TALLY YOUR SCORE

If you checked **“Yes”** for **less than 3**, you're golden. Look at this little genius! Keep it up.

If you checked **“Yes”** for **3–5** of these boxes, we advise P/D/F. It's not worth the risk.

If you checked **“Yes”** for **more than 5** of these boxes it's time to drop it like it's hot. Get out of there while you still can.



Skater Girl

from gold medals to graduation

BY ALLIE CARIERI

ILLUSTRATION BY NINO REKHVIASHVILI

Alexandra Cohen's resume probably does not resemble yours: she's a 2006 Olympic Silver Medalist in figure skating, a three-time World Championship medalist, the 2003 Grand Prix Final Champion, and the 2006 U.S. Champion. You may have one thing in common, though: Cohen is a student at Columbia.

Sitting in your philosophy class or next to you in Butler are Columbians who had professional athletic and artistic careers long before they came to campus. Alexandra Cohen, a GS student better known in the figure skating world as Sasha Cohen, is just one of many. Some, like Kristine Musademba, a freshman in the College and former competitive skater, and Jen Barrer-Gall, a GS student and ballerina, made the choice to trade in successful careers for an Ivy League education. Musademba competed locally, nationally, and internationally until the 2011 Grand Prix in China, Barrer-Gall joined the Orlando Ballet's Studio Company for two seasons, and Cohen achieved international fame five years ago as an Olympic medalist.

For Cohen and Musademba, coming to college was the necessary next step after extremely competitive athletic schedules. "I just needed a break," says Musademba. Cohen's decision centered around a desire for normalcy, which she thought she could find at college. "I've been in the spotlight for my whole life, and now I can just be normal, and have people like me for who I am without this preconceived notion of who I am." For this reason, Cohen has taken to using her full name at Columbia, rather than Sasha.

Ending a dance career isn't always a conscious choice. Barrer-Galle was forced to cut her dance career short after she was injured during her second season with Orlando Ballet's Studio Company. "After the injury, I was ready for a change," Barrer-Gall says. "As much as sometimes I would want to get better and audition, something inside made me want to transition to something else."

"I WAS SO FOCUSED ON SKATING THAT I DIDN'T SEE THE ROAD NOT TAKEN."

Before coming to college, their focus was not on school or social life, but on training. Cohen did not even experience high school—she started homeschooling in 7th grade, Barrer-Gall graduated a semester early from high school, and though Musademba did have somewhat of a normal school life, she missed out as well. "I rarely went out on Friday nights because I would have to skate the next morning," she says. For Cohen, though, her breaking point was missing the pivotal moment of every teenager's high school career—prom. It was then she realized how much skating had taken over her life. "I was so focused on skating that I didn't see the road not taken," she says.

During their athletic careers, their schedules were largely predetermined by coaches. College has given them the shock of newly-found free time. Training, coaching, and traveling have been replaced with papers, lectures, and readings. "It is hard, since I'm a very compulsive person, and my days were scheduled to the hour," Barrer-

Gall says. "I was used to being in a studio from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., but now it's hard when it's not spelled out for you."

"It was very hard at times [skating], but at the same time, I think that having that sort of time pressure to get things done when you have practice the next morning is helpful," Musademba says. "There is no time to procrastinate."

To ease the transition into collegiate life, Barrer-Gall and Cohen started as part-time students. "Being able to go part-time made the transition easier," Barrer-Gall says. "I got to gradually work up to being a full-time college student."

Cohen, Barrer-Gall, and Musademba say they are happy to have a fresh start, and not simply be known by their athletic and artistic careers. Rigorous practice schedules have been replaced with new activities and interests. Cohen, for example, has found a love for economics, and Musademba is taking this opportunity to explore soccer, Spectator, model congress, and debate.

While all three women are happy to leave professional careers in the past, they are still active in their respective activities. Cohen skates at rinks in the city on weekends, Barrer-Gall teaches class for Columbia Ballet Collaborative, and Musademba says she wants to try skating without the pressure of competition.

For these women, school isn't about stressing over papers or projects—it's been a break. "It's been really sort of relaxing, and it's so weird to be in normal situations where skating doesn't come into account, because in high school I was always 'the skater girl,' but here it's definitely a fresh start," Musademba says. "It's cool because I'm figuring out who Kristine is without skating." ●

Koy to the World

comedian jo koy talks about chelsea handler and his big break

BY LIANA GERGELY
PHOTO COURTESY OF FRANK PUBLICITY

Jo Koy, born Joseph Herbert, is making a splash in the comedy scene. In addition to his blossoming stand-up career, he is a weekly panelist on Chelsea Lately and has performed on the Tonight Show, Jimmy Kimmel Live, BET's ComicView, along with various specials for VH1 and Comedy Central. He is performing at the New York Comedy Festival on Nov. 13. He joked around with The Eye about doing comedy with celebrities, his clumsy son, and having his own sitcom someday.

Why did you change your name? Where did it come from? Do people ever butcher it?

They butcher it all the time—they call me Joy Koy. Not “Joy,” just “Jo.” I got the nickname from my aunt when I started doing stand-up 19 years ago. You get five minutes at a coffee house. My real name is Joseph Herbert, and the emcee would always make fun of my last name—Joseph Herbert, Sherbert. So the first five minutes I was onstage, I would be defending my name and trying to explain it. I don't want to talk about my name the whole time I'm onstage.

You're a panelist on *Chelsea Lately*. What is that like? What is she like?

I love Chelsea. About five or six years ago, I was introduced to her. I was blown away. She was so good onstage, and it was amazing to see the whole progression of her career—from the stage and struggling to being one of the most powerful women in Hollywood. She was like, “I want you to be on the show,” and, of course I want to be on the damn show! The reason the panel has good chemistry is because we're all friends with Chelsea, and she is very comfortable when she makes fun of people.

What kind of things do you discuss on the panel?

My favorite panel joke that I did was about Lady Gaga being a hermaphrodite. And Chelsea laughed, and once you make Chelsea laugh really, really hard, you know you got it.

What makes you laugh?

I like looking at my son go through life. It's kind of funny how he lives and does things, and he makes me laugh, and then I have to go up onstage and talk about it. He brings me back to when I was a kid, and it makes me wonder, “Did I do stupid shit like that?” He's my inspiration for comedy. I walk around with a pen and a pad.

What else inspires your comedy? You often make fun of your mom ...

I like to keep it more personal—that's why I talk about my mom and I talk about my son. It's more original that way. In this day and age, so many

comedians dance around the same topic, but with personal stories, at least you know it's real. I'm also inspired by the family stories of Eddie Murphy and Bill Cosby, and so, subliminally, it took on my whole writing style.

“THE NEXT DAY AT WELLS FARGO, EVERYONE THAT WAS MAKING A DEPOSIT WAS LIKE, “WEREN'T YOU ON THE TONIGHT SHOW YESTERDAY?”

Do you write your jokes beforehand? Do you improv?

I always ad lib. Every show is different from the previous one. I always gotta try something new out there—I don't like to sit on the same routine for years. Towards the end of the show, I always go into the audience and mess around with them—it keeps me sharp.

What is a specific joke or routine that you have really enjoyed making?

My jokes are really jokey-jokes. They are more stories and act-outs. My favorite is probably of my mom playing the Wii when it first came out. I got ahold of one for my mom when everyone was wanting a Wii but there were not many to buy. And she was like a little kid—could not stop playing it. All she said was, “Let's play some more Wii,” and it was so funny to see my mom be a 60-something-year-old who can't put the controller down. It was a joke the way that it was written, but it actually happened. Everywhere I go now, people say to me, “Game over” ... or they bring their Wii controller and have me sign it.

You had a very significant turning point in your career when you got a standing ovation on the *Tonight Show*. What was that like?

It was crazy. I went in with the attitude of I'm going to have some really good videos to send the comedy club now—because nothing is more legit than sending a video from the *Tonight Show*. But the standing ovation changed my life. It became the buzz of town. It was so crazy. I literally had three jobs at the time ... working at Wells Fargo, Nordstrom Rack, and doing a catering service on a yacht. My son was just born, and I was just trying to make ends meet without jeopardizing my stand-up career. When I did the *Tonight Show*, I didn't know how many people watch it. The next day at Wells Fargo, everyone that was making a deposit was like, “Weren't you on the *Tonight Show* yesterday?”

What's it like now making people laugh as your full-time job?

I enjoy it so much—my addiction is the instant gratification of the applause or a roaring laugh. When I'm backstage, I can't wait to get onstage. It's like a dare game, where the people in the audience are thinking, “Make me laugh,” and I win...every time.

What do you see in your future?

Sitcom. That's my ultimate goal. To have that TV show. I want to reach out to every household. I want to be that Ray Romano, that Larry David. I love stand-up. I'll do it for free....I don't care. But I want to bring my comedy to the small screen. A lot of kids went out on the weekend, and I enjoyed *Saturday Night Live* and *Seinfeld*. I can't get enough of the sitcom. It's time to bring that back. ●



Party or Performance Art?

going out with brooklyn art collective “cheryl”

BY CAROLINE CHEN

ILLUSTRATION BY CINDY PAN

A giant, toxic green cardboard cutout of Prell shampoo lays askew next to a white mannequin dressed in a stark black and white outfit, holding what seems like a chartreuse-colored bar of soap. To my left I spot two women with the same toxic green color smeared across their faces. One has marked up her cheeks and nose with dotted lines and circles, reminiscent of a plastic surgery patient. Her friend's fingers are covered in a miscellaneous mix of fake nails, with a Chinese finger trap hanging off her thumbnail.

There is fake blood galore, and shredded breast implants hanging precariously from peoples' chests. A guy dressed in a tacky '70s button up has gobs of gauze sprouting from the pseudo-infected cuts on his face, posing as the zombie victim of a bad shave job. As I turn around, I see a caricature head with menacing eyebrows and a crackled green facemask bobbing erratically to the fast electro beat of the music.

This was hardly even a fraction of the bizarre costumes pulsing across the dance floor at Cherylween, an annual Halloween party hosted by Cheryl, a Brooklyn-based performance art collective. Themed “Prellraiser,” the organizers of Cheryl encouraged their guests to “look your best by looking your worst,” suggesting, “eyebrow threading, vajazzling, anal bleaching, urine face wash, lip venom, rib removal, Latisse, permanent

makeup, Henna n' Placenta, Brazilian waxes, fit-flops, Rejuvenique, sunperms.”

It was a less choreographed, more drunken and more eclectic version of Cherylween's promotional video for the event, which featured a group wearing leather outfits and green masks, roughly referencing the British horror franchise “Hellraiser.” The video of the Cheryls pirouetting and taking goopy green shots of Prell shampoo streamed throughout the night as the backdrop to the dance party.

Cheryl is the opposite of a commercially glamorous, sexy party scene, but it's alluring in its own odd and grotesque way. Here, superficial images have no value, and anyone can be anything for just one night.

I met up with Nick Schiarizzi, resident DJ and one of the four founders of Cheryl, days before the event, not really knowing what to expect. Dressed in shades of gray, Schiarizzi seemed like an average young professional living in Brooklyn, but in Cheryl's videos, he wears a black cat mask and prances wildly to patchy choreography in a whirl of cheap glitter and fake hair extensions.

**THERE IS FAKE BLOOD GALORE,
AND SHREDDED BREAST IMPLANTS
HANGING PRECARIOUSLY
FROM PEOPLES' CHESTS.**

Three years ago, Schiarizzi and three friends wanted to work in nightlife in Park Slope, moving away from the livelier scene of Williamsburg. Starting out in a small dive bar, Schiarizzi recounted how each event became themed, eventually evolving into a cycle of performance videos and unusual parties. Cheryl now collaborates with museums, such as the MoMA and the Whitney, and tours in Europe, spreading eccentricities and oddities to be enjoyed on an international level.

“We're trying to kind of use a night club as a space for people to be creative,” Schiarizzi says. “It's almost like going to an art gallery or some sort of performance art exhibition, but our kind of art is costumes and dancing. We set up the guidelines for people. This is the theme and this is the space, where everything else is up to them. We kind of called it ‘guided large-scale creativity.’”

Schiarizzi mentions the regular comparison of Cheryl to the performance art antics of pop music icon Lady Gaga, which he brushes off, emphasizing that the intentions of Cheryl are not meant to be taken seriously.

“We set the tone in being crazy, but not being too cool about everything. We've been doing it as an outlet that makes us laugh,” he says.

The theme of this year's Cherylween rejects the physical ideals of the beauty industry, taking products and abusing them liberally to reveal the real horror of artificial beauty. Yet to analyze the message of Cheryl events and videos too much would contradict the nonchalant and not-to-be-taken-seriously attitudes of the collective itself.

In fact, the parties and videos hosted and produced by Cheryl all mock the humorless tone of performance art and the stark aesthetics of modern visual art. The cheap costumes and array of guilty pleasure and electro music are all hastily assembled, in complete opposition to often calculated and rigid works of modern art.

As a DJ, Schiarizzi takes on the same casual spirit when selecting music for events.

“I play a lot of music that would be considered not cool, making fun of it and not really being worried about what people are thinking,” he says. “The music we play is conducive to putting anybody in that space, even if they don't recognize it, and make it something they can move to.”

Although to the typical outsider, Cheryl seems like just another wild dance party, for some, the event becomes an escapist outlet of expression.

“There are a lot of creative people and there are a lot of people who get creative coming into the party,” says Schiarizzi. “You have a night life event, where people are doing things they would not usually do.” ●



The Iliad and the IPO



the case for entrepreneurship—
and how columbia college neglects it

by derek turner
illustration by cindy pan
graphics by cathi choi and allie carieri

My father is an entrepreneur. As a child, when asked what my dad's line of work was, I would make use of that word, the most mysterious in my 5th grade vocabulary. Its meaning was nearly as ambiguous to me as my conception of what my father actually did. From my young perspective, entrepreneurship was perceived somewhat negatively—it wasn't working for a big company, it wasn't having a particular job, and it certainly wasn't as cool to my elementary mind as the doctors, lawyers, and big business people who parented my friends.

Today, I have a firmer (and more flattering) grasp on entrepreneurship, but it remains a word with which many are either uncomfortable or too comfortable. To some it

means joblessness, desperation, and an inability to swallow the necessary pride to work for someone else. To others, it's an ambiguous catchall for the unconventional—creating jobs, being innovative, and getting on the fast track to becoming a captain of industry.

While it can lend itself to either of those definitions, entrepreneurship stands somewhere in between. Many students never gain a clear understanding of entrepreneurship while they are here, though the field aligns in many ways with their interests and strengths. And as a result, most Columbia students do not explore a career path that is compatible with the education we receive.

Entrepreneurship, according to entrepreneurs

To those who actually engage in entrepreneurship, the word means the practice of building an organization that addresses a problem or vacancy in society. This can include non-profits and for-profits, Internet startups and food trucks, and two- to 2000-person companies.

“Entrepreneurship doesn't always mean business, and startup doesn't always mean tech,” Abigail Lewis, the program director for the Barnard Athena Center's Athena Scholars Program and CC '96, says. The Athena Center addresses the topic not just as for-profit, but also explores social entrepreneurship.

The common thread for all forms of entrepreneurship is a startup's risky inception—entrepreneurs see risk and charge ahead into it, convinced that though the resources needed may not be immediately available, what's needed will be there when the time comes.

Because of the wide range of entrepreneurial applications, it's frequently thought of more as a mindset. Chris Wiggins CC '93, a professor of Applied Mathematics at Columbia Engineering and cofounder of hackNY, a tech initiative, sees entrepreneurship as a broader term than most people assume. “Entrepreneurship is not limited to profit, but identifying a problem that multiple people have and feeling a drive to solve the problem.” Through speaking with several entrepreneurs, I found that they described their way of thinking of the world as one that revolves around problems and solutions.

Important to the process of critical problem solving, they say, is communicating effectively. “Successful entrepreneurs take a complex idea and communicate it clearly,” according to Wiggins. Entrepreneurs rely on their communication skills to convince people to work for them, investors to put money down, or individuals to try their services. Whether she is promoting a nonprofit or selling a product, an entrepreneur's mind must be able to grasp how ideas are best conveyed.

In order to enter an industry with a new organization, an entrepreneur must educate himself quickly, so that the services provided will actually solve the identified problem. Beyond that, the frequency of industry changes necessitates the ability to swiftly acquire working knowledge in rapidly-changing environments.

“Having the analytical thinking ability, and being able to learn quickly and think on your feet is important for being an entrepreneur,” Eileen Lee, CC '05, says, Lee serves as COO for Venture for America, a program that places recent gradu-

ates in startup businesses in economically struggling cities. (Some disclosure: I am applying to be a Venture for America fellow.)

Entrepreneurship is not the first role where we've seen characteristics like these valued and developed. The liberal arts—the guiding philosophy for a Columbia College education—places great importance on developing precisely these attributes.

Liberal minds

Though often referred to in the abstract, the liberal arts and their study have been considered the ideal framework for mental development for centuries. The underlying educational philosophy contends that critical writing and discussion not only educates a mind, but also develops it. It was in this spirit that the Core Curriculum was born.

Despite the common complaints about the Core, one cannot deny that it forces Columbia undergraduates to think in disciplines—Neo-Platonic philosophy, for instance—that they may not have selected on their own. The point is not topical knowledge, but mental fitness—for there is no way that Columbia could teach every piece of information necessary for a successful life. David Soloff, CC '91, cofounder and CEO of Metamarkets, points to his Core education as a significant skill builder underpinning his entrepreneurial history.

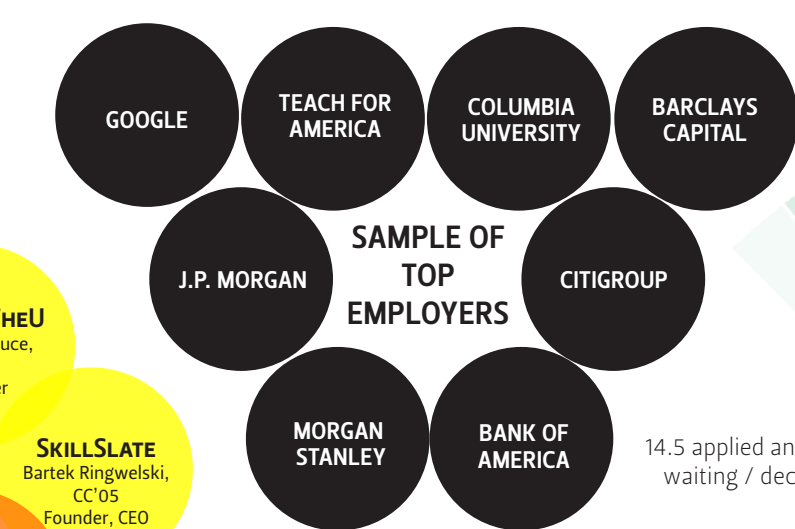
“A student of the Core becomes adept at making compelling arguments, stories, and [understanding] how people do different things,” he says. “In some ways it's not fully baked for a

“THE SKILLS YOU GET IN A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION, LIKE CRITICAL ANALYSIS, LEAD TO BETTER INNOVATIVE THINKING.”

specific field or endeavor.”

The liberal arts ideal is to create, through discussion, reading, and writing, individuals who are, above all, rigorous critical thinkers. With this one skill, students should be able to successfully encounter and overcome any of life's challenges. This philosophy has been tested for centuries, and the reason places like Columbia perpetuate it is that it has been shown as the best soil for world-changing ideas.

Despite the apparent rewards of such a philosophy, Columbia students who have embraced the value of this type of education have generally avoided entrepreneurship, an occupation that promises to put a critical thinker to the test. According to CCE survey results from the class of 2010, more than 45 percent of graduating seniors entered the financial services, education, consulting, research, or legal industries, while only 1.6 percent was to be self-employed. Lewis sees entrepreneurship as a place for liberal arts graduates. “The skills you get in a liberal arts education, like



COLUMBIA ENTREPRENEURSHIP

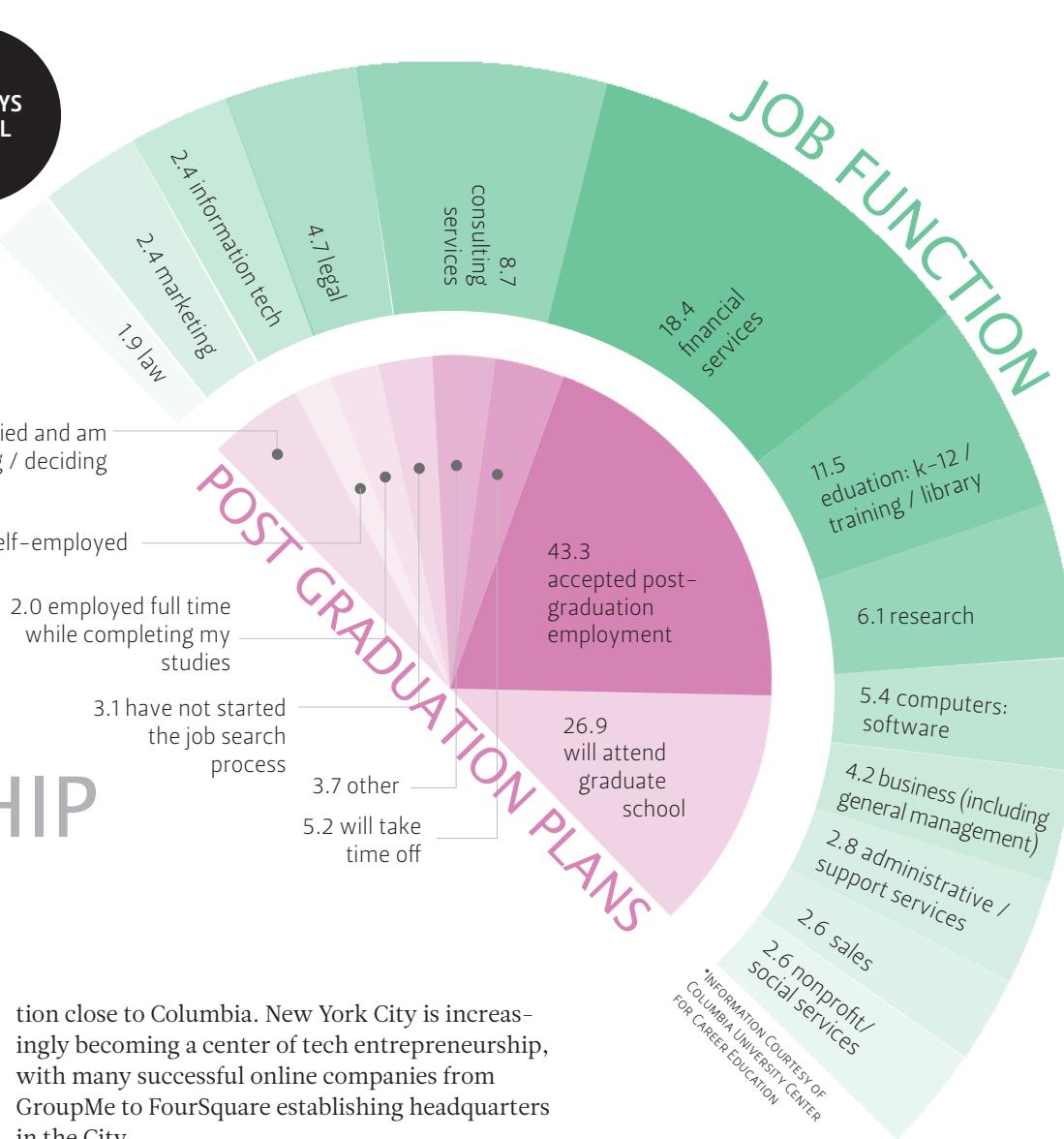
These companies also let money speak for them in the form of huge entry-level salaries. The CCE survey reveals that 33 percent of last year's graduates entered jobs with a base (read: pre-bonus) salary of more than \$60,000. Given the presence of student debt and the attractiveness of immediate financial stability, the salaries offered by consulting and banking firms are hard to pass up.

The promise of an interdisciplinary job attracts the swaths of students who are not yet ready to specialize in an industry. Working for a consulting firm or an investment bank, we are told, means developing a wide range of skills that can be applied to whatever industry we eventually settle on. So, while getting paid well, we can defer deciding what we want to make our life's work.

Despite these compelling reasons for more of a mainstream track, the entrepreneurs I spoke to highlighted why their field provides benefits that other routes don't—and not just for the individual, but for society at large.

The economy continues to struggle, perpetuating a dearth of jobs for recent graduates—9.4 percent of college graduates under the age of 24 are unemployed. Amidst a discussion on how to increase employment, the Kauffman Foundation, a non-profit that encourages entrepreneurship, has released a report indicating that all of the net job creation in the past generation is attributable to small businesses and entrepreneurship.

According to the report, startups add an average of 3 million jobs each year, compared with 1 million net jobs lost from big companies. “We need to get more top students from schools like Columbia to head to early stage companies if we want to improve and re-develop our economy,” Andrew Yang, Law '99 and founder of Venture for America, says. There are already movements in this direc-



tion close to Columbia. New York City is increasingly becoming a center of tech entrepreneurship, with many successful online companies from GroupMe to FourSquare establishing headquarters in the City.

Entrepreneurship is a pursuit that makes full use of the valuable liberal arts mind, it creates jobs in a terrible economy, but it's up against some major recruiting competition. What can Columbia College do as an institution to promote entrepreneurship among undergraduates?

Integrating ingenuity

One proposal for fostering entrepreneurship is a curricular change. Some point to the example of Columbia Engineering (formerly SEAS), which has a minor in entrepreneurship, and suggest that Columbia College either incorporate the minor or offer its own entrepreneurship classes. Jack McGourty, associate dean for undergraduate studies, introduced the minor to the engineering school in 2008 with the goal of empowering engineering students to apply their technical skill to the creation of new ventures. The classes taught in the minor echo that sentiment, with most of them offering specific business skills that would be required by an engineer.

Barnard also offers classes in entrepreneurship, particularly social entrepreneurship. These courses and those at SEAS are open to Columbia College students; Barnard's social entrepreneurship course is taken by many CC students. In this indirect way, CC students have opportunities to be exposed to formalized entrepreneurship training, but skepticism remains about the effectiveness of curricular training in entrepreneurship.

Liberal arts purists complain that having entrepreneurship classes would be a step towards

CONSULTING, BANKING, OR GRADUATE SCHOOL. THEY ARE THE HOLY TRINITY OF POST-GRADUATION OCCUPATIONS FOR AN IVY LEAGUE STUDENT.

pre-professionalism. The community is already sensitive to this idea, which showed when Columbia College introduced the special Business concentration and the Financial Economics major. To the critics, teaching a professional skill related to entrepreneurship would not produce the intellectual vigor of more traditional liberal arts classes.

Other critiques come from entrepreneurs themselves, who question whether entrepreneurship can even be taught in a classroom setting. Many of them told me that in their experience, success is achieved by going out in the world—they “just do it.”

“My opinion is that you can't really reach what we're doing. I'm learning more doing this than anything in business school,” Zach Sims, a senior in CC, says about his own entrepreneurial endeavors. These include working for GroupMe and founding Codecademy, a website which teaches its users how to code and recently raised \$2.5 million

in funding.

Even students who have declared the entrepreneurship minor do not see it as a lynchpin in whether or not they will become entrepreneurs. For those decisions, they look to their experiences in the entrepreneurial world, not the lessons learned in the classroom. Brian Watson, senior in SEAS and VP of Networking for the Columbia Organization for Rising Entrepreneurs, says, “It’s accepted that the best way to learn [entrepreneurship] is through doing. Formal education can give you a skill set to make you comfortable, but the training doesn’t mean anything until you’ve gone out and done it.”

NYU, a school that has made a name for itself in the New York entrepreneurial community, has found a middle ground between teaching entrepreneurship and leaving it to the students. One of the most popular classes at the school is called Ready, FIRE! Aim, taught by Lawrence Lenihan, a successful entrepreneur, venture capitalist, and founder of Pequot Ventures and FirstMark Capital.

In addition to his own lectures, Lenihan brings in experienced entrepreneurs from various industries to speak. While principles of entrepreneurship are the subject of lectures, the class relies on professionals sharing from their experiences. To complement these, the assignments for the class involve hands-on challenges and exposure to real entrepreneurial challenges. If Columbia College was determined to go the route of offering courses, this would seem the most natural path.

Outside the administration?

Entrepreneurship has already seen some success among undergraduates, despite a lack of formal administrative assistance or support.

In 2010, Professor Wiggins of Columbia Engineering co-founded hackNY with a colleague at NYU. Dedicated, according to Wiggins, to “giving a taste of startups and entrepreneurship,” hackNY organizes “hackathons” in which students get together for 24 hours of coding. Students create new programs and, potentially, the foundations of new businesses. Additionally, it supports the hackNY Fellows program, a summer internship for students to meet experienced entrepreneurs and other like-minded students. In these community settings, the mutual encouragement provides the positive encouragement of entrepreneurship that may be lacking in typical academic environments.

The student-led Application Development Initiative also provides a platform and community for students at Columbia to explore the types of programs they can create and, if possible, turn into businesses. According to their website, their goal is “to nurture student creativity and technological aptitude by creating a communal resource for developers of all talents and interests.”

One of the most effective examples of how Columbia College is already fostering entrepreneurship arose from students and is perpetuated by alumni. The Columbia Venture Community began as an unofficial group of Columbia-affiliated individuals generally interested in entrepreneurship. “We deliberately wanted a group that spanned across every school and across students, faculty, and alumni, because of how nascent the entrepre-

neurial community was back then and we wanted to leverage the benefits of wide access across schools,” David Whittemore, CC ’06 and current president of CVC, says.

With more than 2,000 members, it has become a central hub for startup-minded Columbia alumni and students. CVC falls into the experiential school of thought regarding the best way for CC students to become entrepreneurs. “We try to support every life cycle of an entrepreneur: from students learning about it as a field, to helping people as they start their businesses, to having experienced entrepreneurs share their expertise,” Whittemore says.

CVC actually assisted one of the most dramatic recent examples of entrepreneurship in Columbia College. Sims is currently on a leave of absence to advance Codecademy, which he started with Ryan Bubinski, CC ’11, in June of this year, while at Y Combinator, a prestigious startup incubator in Silicon Valley. At the beginning of his time at Columbia, Sims met some key people through CVC who ended up giving him resources for navigating through the burgeoning tech-startup world of New York.

After working for GroupMe, a group texting application created by Jared Hecht, CC ’09, and recently purchased by Skype for \$85 million, Sims began pursuing his own entrepreneurial interests. While he had been interested in entrepreneurship when he came to Columbia, the implementation of his plans was enhanced by the CVC. According to Sims, it was through CVC that he connected with Columbia alumni who helped him break into the New York startup scene.

“WHY DON’T WE SUBJECT MCKINSEY TO THE KIND OF SKEPTICISM THAT ST. AUGUSTINE RECEIVES?”

Fostering entrepreneurship

In many ways, Sims serves as a model for what Columbia College could do for its students when it comes to entrepreneurship. The school cannot possibly create passion or make entrepreneurs. It can, however, provide as many resources as possible to expose students to the prospect of entrepreneurship, and the tools to make an entrance into the startup world as smooth as possible.

So what can Columbia College do to better foster the entrepreneurial spirit? It needs to step back where it’s hindering and stock up where it’s lacking.

When it comes to alumni and students who want to come together to pursue entrepreneurship, Columbia can come to their aid, not make it difficult to use resources in bringing people together. For example, Columbia Venture Community was initially met with chilliness by the administration. “Now that they see what we’re doing, they’ve been really helpful and have reached out multiple times to support us,” according to Whittemore.

The Center for Career Education could do

both—it should beef up on its familiarity with entrepreneurial activity in the city so that its representatives can present entrepreneurship as an exciting, stimulating career choice. Their silence about working in the startup world contributes to the perception that it is a significantly less legitimate choice than the banking options they tout so freely. “People need to realize that entrepreneurship can be non-profit or human rights. It doesn’t have to be profit-generating online applications,” Julia Miller, a Barnard senior, blogger for Barnard’s Entrepreneurship House, and The Eye’s View From Here Editor, says.

A big step for CCE would be for it to support organizations that are promoting entrepreneurship as a post-graduation path—the most notable of which is Venture for America. Started this summer by Yang, VFA seeks to facilitate relationships between limited-resource startups and ambitious graduates in a style similar to Teach for America. “The goal is to funnel a new generation of talent into the start-up ecosystem to both support current companies and, over time, create new ones,” Yang says. Acting as a recruiter, trainer, and educator, VFA attempts to overcome the advantages held by more established industries. It is a promising model—part of the reason why I myself am applying.

Columbia College could make a much bigger effort to publicize and promote alumni who have successfully navigated the startup world. By publicly praising such individuals, it would contribute to a culture that values innovators of industry just as much as public intellectuals, bankers, and politicians who graduated from this school. “Columbia Engineering highlights people who get patents—that should happen for entrepreneurs,” Frank Pinto, senior in SEAS and president of CORE, points out. Highlighting such alumni would go a long way in making entrepreneurship a common consideration for students on their way out of Columbia.

On a holistic level, though, there needs to be much more of an effort to foster discussion among students about how our ideals of interdisciplinary learning and critical thought in the classroom can be transferred to the rest of our lives. There should be real conversation about what it means to be critical thinker in one’s relationships, roles, and career, not just how it might enhance a midterm essay. If the liberal arts really live up to the hype, then they can be applicable to much more of our lives than they are currently.

We would never accept a majority of classmates in CC accepting a dominant opinion without criticism. Why don’t we challenge our peers who overwhelmingly choose between two careers? For that matter, why don’t we subject McKinsey to the kind of skepticism that St. Augustine receives?

To a certain extent, we need not promote entrepreneurship as much as the successful transition of critiquing books to investigating careers. If we are as intellectually honest with ourselves in our professional journeys, I am confident that, like the diverging opinions of freshmen in Lit Hum, our career choices can be as diverse as our senior class.

“You can come into work every day, have fun with your friends, make something that people use, and change the world,” Sims says. ●



Bars & Brasseries

high-end restaurants indulge frugal customers

BY LAURA BOOTH
PHOTO BY EMILIA SHAFFER-DEL VALLE

As the 99 percent continue to chant downtown, some of New York's most expensive restaurants have begun to adjust their prices to the economic climate. Less expensive bar or "lounge" menus have been added to bastions of culinary excellence that were formerly impenetrable to frugal diners, from Michelin-starred Le Bernardin, arguably the best restaurant in New York, to Veritas, with its world-famous wine selection.

But this trend might not be simply a reaction to the current economic situation. Restaurant owners argue that cheaper bar menus are a trend in modern dining rather than an attempt to attract a wider clientele during bad economic times. "The Lounge menu has been in the works for a long time," Eric Ripert, chef and co-owner of Le Bernardin, says. "The restaurant cannot be redone every year—it's a very expensive thing—so the timing was right to redo the restaurant, and the addition of the Lounge was a product of that."

Diners at Le Bernardin have been increasingly younger, and Ripert adds that for this reason attracting younger aficionados of food was not one of their primary concerns—but perhaps keeping them is. A less formal, quicker dining experience seems to cater directly to younger diners.

Ripert insists that the impulse to add bar fare isn't about expense—Le Bernardin is located in the theatre district—it's about creating a quicker, easier experience for diners who want an upscale atmosphere, but aren't willing to commit to a two hour meal.

"We are in the theatre district, so a lot of people would want to stop in to have a cocktail or some wine, but they couldn't because we didn't have an infrastructure for that," he says. "When we redid the restaurant, we wanted to amend the experience so that they could have something pleasing and comfortable after work or before going to a show, so that they could have a cocktail, or eat a little bit while waiting for their party."

"WE ARE IN THE THEATRE DISTRICT, SO A LOT OF PEOPLE WOULD WANT TO STOP IN TO HAVE A COCKTAIL OR SOME WINE, BUT THEY COULDN'T BECAUSE WE DIDN'T HAVE AN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THAT."

The Lounge at Le Bernardin is faithful to the atmosphere of the restaurant's more formal and newly remodeled dining room. The new decor maintains the ornate elegance of the original, but with more light, metallic accents and a 24 foot stormy sea painting by Brooklyn artist Ran Ortner. Though, the lounge does not take reservations or require jackets, being seated on stools doesn't change the upscale vibe or the excellent service. The Lounge at Le Bernardin is not simply a cheaper

version of the Le Bernardin experience, but a different sort of high-end experience altogether.

At Benoit, an upmarket French bistro-style restaurant four blocks uptown from Le Bernardin, the scenario is the same. Though Benoit's bar menu was not the result of a remodel, it premiered with the opening of the restaurant in 2008 and has been a flourishing facet of the restaurant's options ever since. Though there is something more of an emphasis on casualness in Benoit's bar than in Le Bernardin's Lounge, diners there are treated to essentially the same menu and same atmosphere as more formal diners. Benoit is perhaps exemplary of restaurant owners understanding the success of certain formulas. The bar-menu model used at Benoit has already proven successful at other restaurants. New York Magazine food critic Adam Platt complained in a 2008 review, "Is there room for one more cookie-cutter French brasserie in this brasserie-addled town?" It would seem that bar menu and brasserie are golden words when it comes to midtown upscale dining.

Both Benoit's and Le Bernardin's staffs emphasized one major difference between their respective alternative and traditional menus: the alternative menus were designed with accessibility and swiftness in mind. Of their bar, Benoit's staff says, "People like that it's more accessible. It's a quicker, more laid back option, with affordable prices and the same quality food." Similarly, Ripert says he has found that Le Bernardin is now "able to serve people making last minute decisions to come in" in a way that was previously impossible.

In this way, Ripert and Benoit's proprietor, along with their savvy bar-endorsing counterparts, seem to have successfully adapted to the changing nature of the restaurant business. The bar menus have been extremely popular with patrons, and Ripert says the new bar menu is "of course" here to stay, not because of the revenue it brings, but because it caters to the people. ●

Untested Development

should mitchell hurwitz leave the bluth family alone?

BY ANNELIESE COOPER

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHANIE MANNHEIM

“No, I don’t see it as a series,” acclaimed director Ron Howard says in the final moments of *Arrested Development*—a surprise cameo that is a typically tongue-in-cheek move for the show he narrated through three seasons.

He pauses, fingers tapping. Then: “Maybe a movie?” This hanging question has gone on to haunt diehard fans and entertainment news outlets alike since the show’s 2006 cancellation, through an agonizing five years of will-they-won’t-they pre-production turmoil with enough ups and downs to inspire its own Lifetime miniseries. Now, though, the drama seems to have finally reached a happy ending: during a “Bluth Family Reunion” event at this year’s New Yorker Festival, series creator Mitchell Hurwitz confirmed that the movie is officially, reliably on track to be released sometime in the next two years—with an additional 10-episode ramp-up series to boot.

Though the announcement was surely greeted with celebratory chicken dances across the globe, it’s debatable whether a successful follow-up to *Arrested Development* is even possible after such extensive build-up—whether fans might find themselves valuing the suspense of the process more than any feasible end product. In short, would an *Arrested Development* film go the way of *South Park: Bigger, Longer, Uncut*, or *Exiled: A Law & Order Movie*?

Although it may be a blasphemous inquiry for Bluth devotees, it’s actually a question well worth posing, given the fraught history of time-lapsed remakes across the board, and especially the fraught history of the show itself. After all, Hurwitz did, in fact, receive an offer from Showtime to continue the series in 2006—for two additional 12-episode seasons, inspiring industry gossip and a bidding war with ABC for months after the official cancellation—but he ultimately turned them all down. As the San Francisco Chronicle reported, he decided that the best thing he could do for this show he loved was end it—a sentiment perhaps best summed up by leading man Jason Bateman in the same article: “I’m so proud of it and so like it as a TV fan that I’m happy we’re not going to get a chance to screw it up.”

Though Bateman has since changed his tune, publicly championing the revival, his words aren’t without merit: there is a sense in which, plainly put, more time spent with a certain premise only means more of a chance to watch it turn sour. A potential point of comparison is NBC’s comedy juggernaut *The Office*—which is stretching on into its eighth season, even after star Steve Carell’s departure—in contrast to its British original, which ran for only 12 episodes and a Christmas special, a premeditated choice

by creator Ricky Gervais. As Gervais mused on the American *Office*’s longevity in a January CNN interview, “It can survive. Whether it should or not, I don’t know.” Especially when it comes to comedy, you run the risk of killing the joke.

This line of reasoning holds particularly true for *Arrested Development*, which thrived, even in its comparatively short three seasons, by riffing on entanglements of recurring themes and punchlines. For example, a recent New York Magazine article entitled “Please, Mitchell Hurwitz, Pack the ‘Arrested Development’ Movie With Jokes Only We Understand” lovingly lists phrases like “club sauce,” “lighter fluid,” and “teaching lessons,” words that may mean little to the average citizen, but are likely to send any *Arrested Development* fan into hysterics—precisely because they call to mind not one joke, but rather seven or eight clever permutations thereof. Indeed, one of the most satisfying, fan-hooking features of the show is the craftsmanship with which these premises and plotlines are interwoven, so as to inspire—even require—incessant reviewing to truly appreciate them in their series-spanning entirety. With such delightfully rich fare to rewatch, and, moreover, with so many jokes stretched just to the point of breaking, there’s a sense in which it seems safer—even more responsible, as Bateman alluded—to simply be satisfied with what we’ve got.

Because, as media consumers (or, really, sentient beings) in this Age of the Sequel, we all know that frustrating pain: the cringe of watching characters you love puppeted through ridiculous, hackneyed throwbackery, buoyed only by catchphrases and nostalgia. This is how figures like Captain Jack Sparrow go from rockstar-aping slices of comedic genius to self-perpetuating profit machines, stuck parroting iterations of the same tired one-liner in film after pointless film (“But why is the rum gone?” “The rum, is it gone?” “But where’s the rum?” “Don’t let her near the rum—it’ll be gone!”—on and on until we weep). It’s a pitfall that’s perilously difficult to avoid—one stumbled on at least in part by even the greatest of filmmakers (see: Soderbergh and the *Ocean*’s trilogy) and the strongest of franchises (because, let’s face it, by *Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*, even the diehard lightsaber-swingers had probably had enough).

This trend gets especially worrisome when considering the medium shift—from canceled cult television series to triumphant film comeback—*Arrested Development* is attempting the leap. For example, *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me* (1992), David Lynch’s sequel-turned-prequel for his 1990–91 cult hit TV series, was a box office bomb that alienated those new to the show with its obtuseness and frustrated many former fans with its inability to bring anything new to bear. As New York Times critic Vincent Canby opined,



THOUGH THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS SURELY GREETED WITH CELEBRATORY CHICKEN DANCES ACROSS THE GLOBE, IT’S DEBATABLE WHETHER A SUCCESSFUL FOLLOW-UP TO ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT IS EVEN POSSIBLE AFTER SUCH EXTENSIVE BUILD-UP.

“even Mr. Lynch’s eccentric touches become boring”—which, as any passing Lynch viewer knows, would take a fairly serious oversaturation to achieve. Also important to consider is the let-down felt by devotees of Joss Whedon’s 14-episode cult hit *Firefly*, when its movie follow-up, *Serenity* (2005), came out three years after the show’s abrupt cancellation. As Garth Franklin of Dark Horizons noted, the film “lacks that human spark and freshness that made the series distinctive and appealing”—a sentiment echoed throughout fan criticism.

Perhaps, though, Hurwitz’s show has a leg up



on these more dicey cases: because the creators are allowed both a mini-season and a movie, they'll have the screentime to develop some entirely new scenarios for the Bluth family. In this way, the cancellation gap might even be considered an advantage. As Hurwitz described at the announcement, "Where everyone's been for five years became a big part of the story. So, in working on the screenplay, I found even if I just gave five minutes per character to that backstory, we were halfway through the movie before the characters got together." By making narrative

use of its time off, the new season (which, at least in theory, promises "almost one character per episode") saves the writers from sacrificing or awkwardly shoe-horning crucial backstory—and, more importantly, from the staleness and continuity problems that may have resulted from simply continuing the series back in 2006.

Moreover, all this talk of cancellation juxtaposed with the present-day surge of revivalist fandom raises the question: where were all these eager viewers when the show needed them most? Though speculative answers range from "watching *The Sopranos*" to "in fifth grade," it's ultimately unclear whether it would have made much difference. Indeed, one has to wonder whether, in the

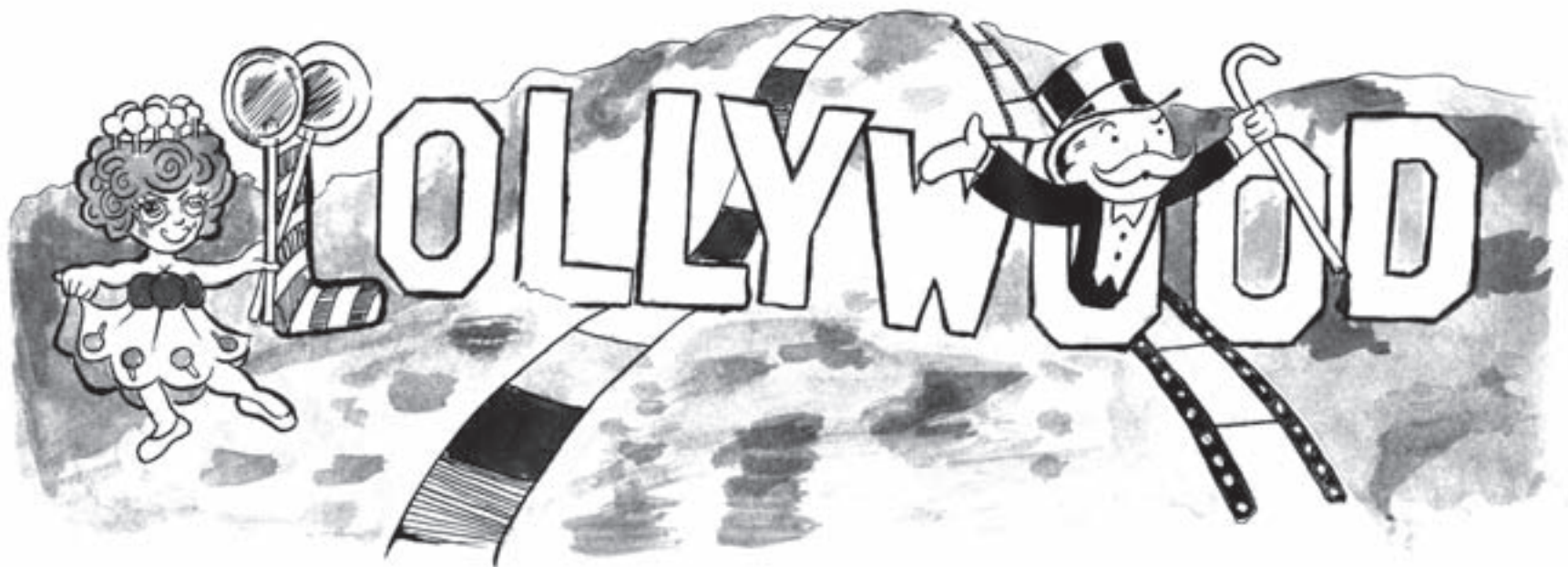
end, *Arrested Development* was simply ahead of its time—from its plots based on densely-packed wordplay, to its constant knowing genre perversions (e.g., the customary use of a pre-credits preview to play out jokes that will not, in fact, be "on the next *Arrested Development*"). Whereas in 2004, it was aired alongside comparatively tame sitcoms like *Malcolm in the Middle*, today, one might note its streak of self-parody in the incessantly meta fare of *Community* and its love of wordplay (witness the in-show headline "Bob Loblaw Lobs Law Bomb"), echoed in *30 Rock*'s film title gaffe, "The Rural Juror." Perhaps now that the show's influence has had some time to soak into the soil, the comedy climate is far more conducive to its particular brand of humor and liable to accept it on a large (and profitable) scale—making this the ideal time, for both fans and financiers, to attempt some form of continuation.

On the other hand, it's possible that, faced with such an influx of *Arrested Development*-esque programming, its brand of humor might seem plain or even stale—such that the show's prescience might ultimately result in an unsolvable case of bad timing. This concern seems especially pressing, given that Hurwitz's penchant for self-satire grew exponentially through the show's last two seasons—down, even, to narrator Howard introducing a flashback with a somewhat jarring call-out to the fanbase: "Devo-tees will remember..." With so many sitcoms adopting a self-referential spin, one wonders if the revival might result in a shoe-gazing spiral of Kafka—or, rather, Kaufman-esque proportions, à la *Synecdoche, New York*.

Though it's a worthwhile concern, if there's anyone to bank on for a decent meta-movie premise, it's these masters. Hurwitz and Co. have proven many times over that they can make even the most explicitly meta-media satisfying—clever, biting, and well worth a viewer's time. An example that seems especially relevant is the series' fifth to last episode, "S.O.B.s" (or, "Save Our Bluths"), an intentionally gimmick-packed farce that addressed the show's cancellation head-on, including a cleverly placed plea from Howard: "Please, tell your friends about this show."

Well, tell they did, and though perhaps it wasn't enough to keep *Arrested Development* alive five years ago, the fans' devotion, at long last, seems to have paid off. However, as Hurwitz and his team promise to move forward, there remains always that risk that, despite its creator's best intentions, we'll have to watch these beloved characters slog their way through subpar plotting or meta mire. Do fans really want anything less than stellar clouding their appreciation of the yet unmarred *Arrested Development* canon?

Still, the counterargument that a bad episode of *Arrested Development* is better than a halfway decent episode of most anything else will always stand—that a movie is a risk worth taking if we'll have one more of Tobias's brilliant double entendres to quote. Ultimately, it seems fans will just have to cross their fingers and hope that, on the eve of the new season's release, Hurwitz doesn't find himself suddenly slack-faced, letting loose that now-legendary mumble: "I've made a huge mistake." ●



Board Game Blockbusters

has hollywood finally run out of ideas?

BY RIKKI NOVETSKY

ILLUSTRATION BY DARYL SEITCHIK

The lights dim. The movie begins. Two rosy-cheeked children donning candy-striped turtle-necks embark on a winding path constructed of rainbow-colored bricks. Traveling through Candy Cane Forest, their eyes twinkle when they meet the enchanting Queen Frostine; their mouths water when they receive peanut brittle from the endearing Gramma Nutt, finally the children face some serious trouble when they encounter the villainous Lord Licorice.

Frightened? You should be: This is the future of Hollywood.

Battleship, set to be released in 2012, starring Rihanna and Liam Neeson, adds a twist to the expected naval adventure film—an alien invasion. *Monopoly*, which already lured in Ridley Scott as producer, will be a satire about real estate tycoons. And yes, Universal Pictures is in talks to produce a Candy Land adaptation, but don't expect Queen Frostine or Gramma Nutt to make cameos this time around. Universal plans to give the film a darker, *Lord of the Rings*-esque slant.

Movie producers are starting to think outside of the board game box. Making it painfully obvious that Hollywood may have finally run out of ideas, screenwriters are finding inspiration in games designed for children. The rumors circulating about a Candy Land movie suggest a record low point for inspiration and sophistication in the film industry.

Screenwriters hit the jackpot with the board game script framework. Board games provide an already solid framework that includes both

characters and a setting, and lacks a plot. This leaves just enough room for creativity, and perhaps even a plot twist that the most nostalgic of board gamers will not see coming.

Professor David McKenna, who teaches classes on script analysis and screenwriting and served as a script consultant for companies such as Focus Features, HBO, and 20th Century Fox, wants to take the blame away from the writers. He explains that decisions about scripts come from “film companies and film producers who are looking to generate as much income as possible.” Because of this rather unfortunate fact, there is a tension between film's twin goals of quality and profit. “The problem with movies as business is that they're art,” McKenna continues. “And the problem with movies as an art is that they're a business.”

“ACTION MOVIES ARE APPRECIATED BY VIEWERS IN INDIA AND INDIANA ALIKE. YOU HAVE NO NEED FOR CULTURAL TRANSLATION, AND A BOARD GAME PROVIDES THAT OPTION.”

The trend includes too many marketing benefits to ignore, and big-time producers are steering away from sensitive subjects, instead capitalizing on brand recognition that will potentially boost ticket sales. “Movie produc-

ers make movies for international audiences to generate more revenue. They need material that is not exclusively culturally tied to the U.S.,” McKenna says. “Action movies are appreciated by viewers in India and Indiana alike. You have no need for cultural translation, and a board game provides that option.”

Of course, Hasbro—the second largest game company in the world—supports the production of these movies. The company has reported revenue growth in the second and third quarters of 2011, and the board game movie trend is sure to help already rocketing sales. With film releases, Hasbro will be able to add movie-edition games as a new marketing option. In fact, Hasbro recently just signed a deal with Sony Pictures to produce a film version of the popular strategy game Risk. “The strategic thinking and the tactical gambles that players must take in the game are what make Risk a classic, thoroughly engaging game,” Hasbro's Brian Goldner said in a press release. “Those elements translated into an action-packed, thrilling story are what will make this a uniquely exciting movie.”

The boardgame movie trend, however, has been disparaged by big names in Hollywood. James Cameron, director of the wildly successful films *Titanic* and *Avatar*, claims that the trend reflects a larger problem in the movie-making community. “We have a story crisis,” he says in an interview with German website Spiegel Online. “This is pure desperation ... Battleship. This degrades the cinema.”

Despite Hollywood's lack of originality these days, Professor McKenna remains optimistic. “You can make a movie about anything,” he explains. “If it's a good movie, I'll go see it.” ●

A Hitchhiker's Guide

catching a ride in israel

BY RIKKI NOVETSKY

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHANIE MANNHEIM

Probably the craziest thing I did last year was get into a black car filled with machine guns.

It made sense at the time. All I wanted was a ride, and in the tough market of Israeli hitchhiking, you play the cards you are dealt. In an odd twist of fate, the car ended up being backup security for a top Israeli politician who was visiting the area. In retrospect, their level of security remains unclear to me: Picking up strangers off the side of the road seems less than secure.

Last year I spent my gap year in Israel, and hitchhiking didn't bear the bad aftertaste it has in the States. When I wasn't riding with strangers, I spent my year living in Migdal Oz, a small kibbutz in the West Bank. Needless to say, the year was filled with bizarre experiences and culture shocks. Eventually, crossing paths with herds of sheep or being prevented from crossing the road by large army vehicles became routine.

"Trempling" is Hebrew for hitchhiking—a rich art form that takes time and focus to perfect. I learned how to point my finger in the right direction and make all sorts of snap judgments; after all, hitchhiking in one of the most politically contested territories on earth has the potential to become a dangerous endeavor. Despite the fact that hitchhiking offended all of my homegrown American maxims and careful injunctions from my parents, my Israeli friends taught me how to laugh it off.

And before I knew it, I was addicted. I began to curse those who didn't stop for me, just like the regulars. Once, I jeered at those waiting on the side of the road after I had successfully enticed a driver to pick me up; a moment of schadenfreude for the Israeli pedestrian set.

I often waited for these tremps at a major junction that was filled with Israelis and Palestinians alike. Of course it was difficult for me not to stare at the girls my age standing nearby, draped either in black hijabs or, alternatively, wearing Israeli army uniforms and carrying weapons. Hardly the costumes I was used to.

Transportation, in an area where not everyone can afford cars, is negotiating with a foreign culture. The ride carries a set of rules, a peculiar rubric unto itself—once in a tremp, one must act invisible: no talking, and no noisy texting. At the same time, picking someone up is not a form of exchange in an economy of goods and services. Rather, tremps provide a social service developed by settlers who feel isolated from other Israelis. For those who choose to live in such controversial territory, a

sense of loneliness, in fact, breeds helpfulness and kindness, altruistic favors that bring you from point A to point B.

Needless to say it was difficult to develop friendships in the silence. Though I traveled in hundreds of stranger-driven cars over the course of a year, they were lonely rides, and the driver never breaks character.

What I did do was people-watch.

By the end of a ride, I made sure to notice and record the driver's clothing, the family

members sitting by my side, the cleanliness of the car—anything available to me in that one opportunity to observe. The result was a compilation of characters and types: In those rides, I expanded my knowledge of Israeli society and the subcultures of Israeli settlers yet unknown to me. I saw hundreds of different types of people, each with a story, each replacing my preconceived notions that all settlers look like the pictures published in the New York Times. Though I never saw any of my anonymous drivers again, just getting a glimpse into the life of another person made me feel that I had something of value to bring back.

Indeed, tremping made Israel feel more like home. It quickly became a country that I feel deeply connected to, even though I only lived there for one year. As I progress and create a life here in New York City, my gap year feels more and more like a dream. Sometimes, when I see a car pass, I am tempted to stick my figure out imagining that it will stop for me. But it doesn't. And if it did, I would be too scared to get in, anyway. ●

**FOR THOSE WHO
CHOOSE TO LIVE IN SUCH
CONTROVERSIAL TERRITORY,
A SENSE OF LONELINESS, IN
FACT, BREEDS HELPFULNESS
AND KINDNESS, ALTRUISTIC
FAVORS THAT BRING YOU
FROM POINT
A TO POINT B.**

