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the eye

In Defense of Open Access

academic publishing in the 21st century

by Gabe Schubiner

experimenting with relationships ∞ a new underground music scene ∞ tia cibani brightens up nyc

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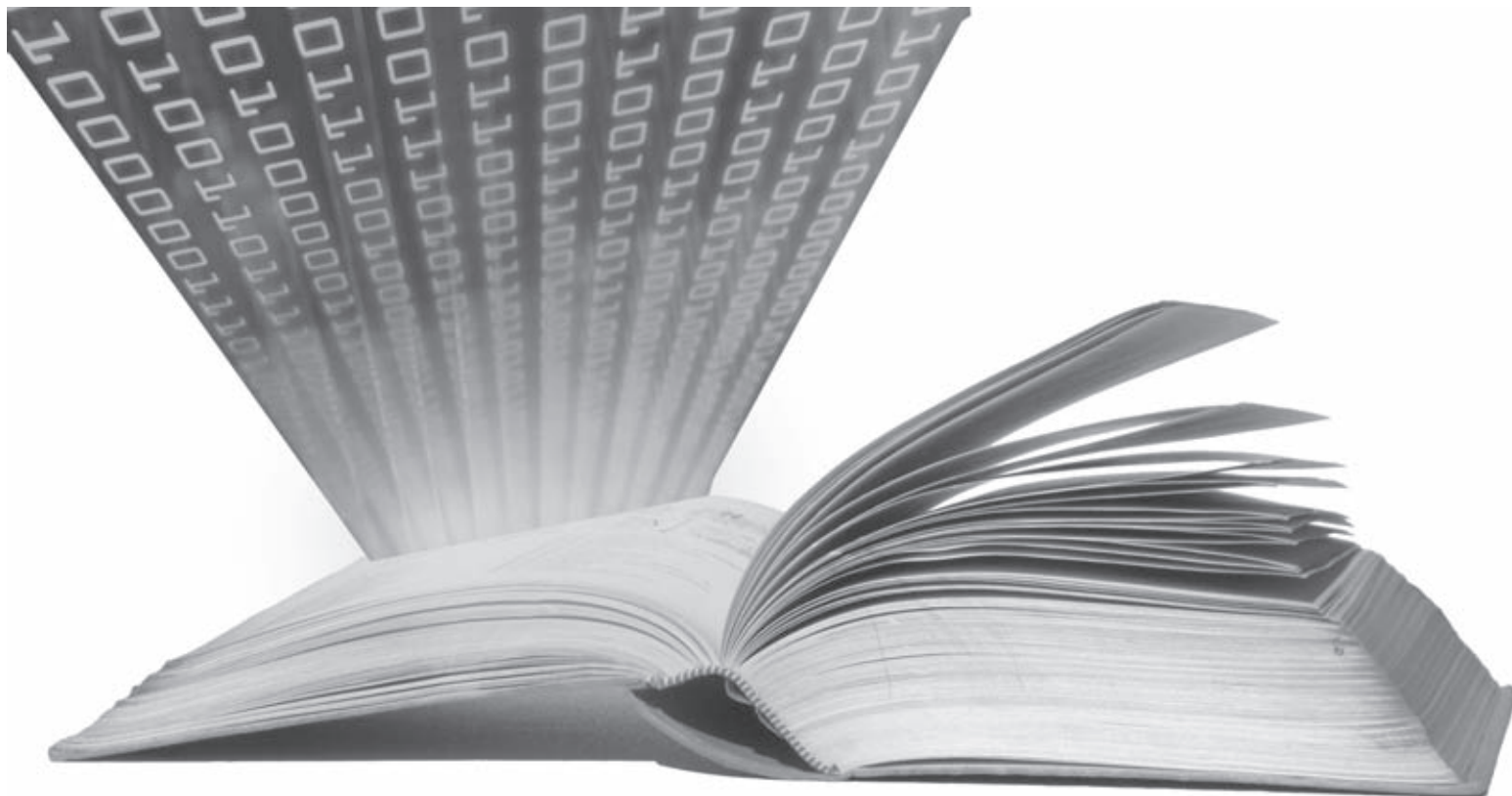
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OPEN(ING) ACCESS

Gabe Schubiner argues for an academic publishing model that fits the 21st century, pg. 07.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

It seems like the tired refrain of our age: The Internet is changing things. It's killing newspapers, upending politics, revolutionizing communication—you know, all that stuff. But according to the national group Students for Free Culture, it's not nearly living up to its potential.

On the group's Web site, in a section labeled "Manifesto," there's the following bold prediction: "Through the democratizing power of digital technology and the Internet, we can place the tools of creation and distribution, communication and collaboration, teaching and learning into the hands of the common person—and with a truly active, connected, informed citizenry, injustice and oppression will slowly but surely vanish from the earth." It's a suspiciously grand statement, though its words go together so well: there's that appeal to democracy early on, the expression of faith in the panacean potential of the common person, the all-important embrace of technology. Like many other starry-eyed proclamations written or uttered by college students, though, this one seems a bit too incredible. I'll believe that the Internet can create virtual communities,

sure, but eradicate injustice? Annihilate oppression? Really?

This week, the *Eye* is opening its pages to Gabe Schubiner, the treasurer of Free Culture at Columbia, to bring this conversation about open access down to earth. His case for a freer flow of information is compelling: As libraries worry over stocking more—and more expensive—copies of scholarly journals, technology has the ability to make communication almost completely costless, allowing students and scholars to share information and collaborate in novel, exciting ways. As Schubiner's article makes clear, achieving this goal will not be effortless—publishers, for instance, aren't too excited about the prospect of going out of business.

The Internet may present the perfect opportunity for collegiate utopians to roll out their sunniest visions for the future, but getting there will be a true challenge, requiring not just emphatic declarations, but substantive arguments. Our cover story this week, while guided by a healthy idealism, is also rooted firmly in reality.

—Thomas Rhiel

Submit your creative writing to the *Eye*.

We are now accepting short stories, narrative non-fiction, and humorous essays. For more information, e-mail eye@columbiaspectator.com.

At the Crossroads

TEXT AND PHOTO BY RAJIV LALLA

I live next to Amman's Third Circle: my humble apartment sits in a neighborhood of primarily affluent physicians, flanked by two of Amman's finest hotels, and adjacent to one of the foremost women's health clinics in the world: not exactly a bad neighborhood.

So last week, when I was walking the quarter-kilometer from Third Circle back to my apartment, I was neither surprised nor nervous when the guard (in Arabic, *haras*) of a neighboring building invited me in for coffee. Typical Arab hospitality, I thought. I accepted his offer, entered the building, and followed the guard downstairs into the kitchen. Later, as we sipped our coffee, the guard told me a little about himself: Egyptian, had two children, and returning to see his family in Egypt in two days.

Soon, he started using vocabulary I didn't understand. Unwilling to forgo my dignity as an Arabic speaker and admit that I didn't understand something, I resorted to making a deep, guttural, almost grunting sound (the universal symbol for affirmation in Jordanian Arabic). He then gestured to his crotch, and, in broken English, began asking me my thoughts on sex, presumably with him. I knew this was my cue to leave—after me first asking, then forcefully telling (and threateningly gesturing), he unlocked the door and let me out. This may sound like the beginning of a horror movie (or porno), but being solicited in this way is not an uncommon experience for an American living in Jordan. A friend of mine was riding a taxi and had a cab driver grab his hand, and put it on the cab driver's crotch. Another friend was asked if he was American, then shown gay pornography on a cell phone.

All of these are somewhat symptomatic of the limbo-like status suffered by gays here in Jordan. This behavior may seem odd to an outsider to the Middle East, or even to an average Jordanian. However, being an American, one gains a unique perspective on the status of gays in Jordan—otherwise closeted individuals see, because of common perceptions and media portrayals of America, a potential ally. Unable to express their sexual preference to fellow Jordanians, they do so around individuals who they think will be more open to it—of course, their perception of such individuals is characterized by *Friends*, *Baywatch*, and *Will and Grace*.

While being gay isn't in itself illegal in Jordan, the few bars and restaurants known as gay hang-outs are routinely shut down for such violations as public displays of affection. And even though Jordan is probably the most pro-Western country in the Middle East, initiatives such as gay marriage, accepted in Europe and controversial in the



US, aren't even on the radar here.

A conversation with one of the most prominent individuals in Amman's gay community was revealing. When it comes to gays and lesbians in Jordan, it is the small victories that count. It could be finding a place for a single gay child, disowned by their family, to live. Or on a grander scale, stopping the tribal honor killings committed against openly gay individuals.

The experience of gays in Jordan represents a sort of microcosm in the clash between modernity and antiquity shaping both Jordan and the wider region. While it is easy for individuals in government and civil society organizations to espouse political and social reforms, one must also remember that customs in the region are rooted in thousands of years of tradition (in comparison to the 200 and change years of the United States). The same tribes, with the same customs and decision-making processes, exist now as they existed 500 years ago.

As such, advocating radical (albeit necessary) reform can be both politically difficult and socially intractable. Given the prevalence of both Islamic fundamentalists and tribal leaders in government, activists face a significant challenge in passing measures that will significantly alter the status quo. As an outsider, at the crossroads of revolution and tradition, it is easy to experience the effects of cultural phenomena and government policies in action. It would be much harder to live through some of them.

Rajiv Lalla is a Columbia College junior studying abroad in Jordan.

EDITORS' TEN

What We're Into This Week

1. The weather: Despite the fact that I should be stressed out from all the work I have to do, I've been feeling giddily happy all week because of the occasional sunshine.

—Yin Yin Lu, books editor

2. West Side Story: I can't stop talking about it. I can't stop singing it. I can't stop watching old YouTube videos to learn the choreography. I think I am officially obsessed.

—Ruthie Fierberg, theater editor

3. Electronic lyricism: This week, my friend Pete Martin, a junior at Yale, e-mailed me his brilliant one-line poem: "All the things I thought I liked are things I liked to think."

—Raphael Pope-Sussman, deputy features editor

4. Lex Luthor needs a bailout: The latest video from funnyordie.com features Jon Hamm (aka Don Draper of *Mad Men*) as Superman villain Lex Luthor asking Obama for a \$100 billion bailout for his company after Superman ruined his real estate plans, giving new meaning to the phrase "toxic assets."

—Peter Labuza, film editor

5. The Topshop opening: I'm excited about it, but also terribly afraid of the potentially riot-inducing lines. Perhaps I'll just stick to the Web site for a while.

—Rebecca Pattiz, music editor

6. The Cobrasnake: I could definitely spend time on Mark Hunter's photoblog. For someone who loves to people-watch, it's like going to the candy store.

—Helen Werbe, style editor

7. Governor Paterson's all-time low approval ratings: Last week the 1 train stopped at 96th street. The conductor explained that even though the 1 wouldn't be going any further, passengers were welcome to take the 3 to East 145th Street, where they could get a FREE bus transfer ticket to come back downtown. Evidently I'm not the only one who is pissed off.

—Carla Vass, eyesites editor

8. dayswithmyfather.com: Photographer Phillip Toledano presents a moving tribute to his not-quite-centenarian father. This may be the most beautiful Web site I have ever seen.

—Thomas Rhiel, editor-in-chief

9. North & South: Elizabeth Gaskell's novel is also a BBC four-part miniseries starring Richard Armitage and Daniela Denby-Ashe. Watch it on YouTube, or be a good person and buy the series.

—Melanie Jones, managing features editor

10. DJ Earworm: Who else can mash-up the top 25 songs of 2008 and make it not only bearable but enjoyable? Check him out at www.djearworm.com

—Zach Dyer, interview editor

COMPILED BY CARLA VASS

The Couples Lab

exploring the effects of stress on relationships

BY JIA AHMAD

PHOTO BY STEFIE GAN

The notion that married couples are happier, wealthier, and live longer than others has long fallen on the ears of frustrated singles everywhere. The aforementioned will be dismayed to note that this idea isn't a propagandist scheme concocted by the capitalists behind match.com. Psychological studies indicate that people in long-term, intimate relationships actually do exhibit better health than the rest of the population.

What are the underlying causes for that sustained health and satisfaction? What concrete behaviors in relationships contribute to this outcome? Studies done on these subjects haven't been conclusive, as the evidence is scattered and reproducing the nature of social relationships can be methodologically difficult in the laboratory. Still, the psychological researchers at Columbia's Couples Lab are invested in further exploring these very questions. The director of the lab, Professor Niall Bolger, inaugurated the first Couple's Lab at New York University 10 years ago with his colleague,

Professor Patrick Shrout. Upon Bolger's arrival at Columbia four years ago, he established a correlate program here that often collaborates with the NYU project.

"Most people think of psychology as the study of individuals, referring to processes that go on inside the head," Bolger explains, "But if you think about it, the smallest social unit is the dyad. I like [the study of couples] because it's social, but it's also psychological because we're interested in what these couples are thinking and feeling."

One particular aspect of dyadic relationships that the lab endeavors to study is the way in which couples deal with stress and offer support. It's difficult—and ethically questionable—to reproduce certain social conditions in laboratories, but these researchers have come up with creative methods in order to analyze similar processes without violating medical code.

In a study conducted in concert with the NYU lab, psychologists examined couples' responses to a specific, scheduled event: the bar exam. For several months while one individual in the couple was preparing for the exam, both filled out daily diaries or questionnaires regarding their mood,

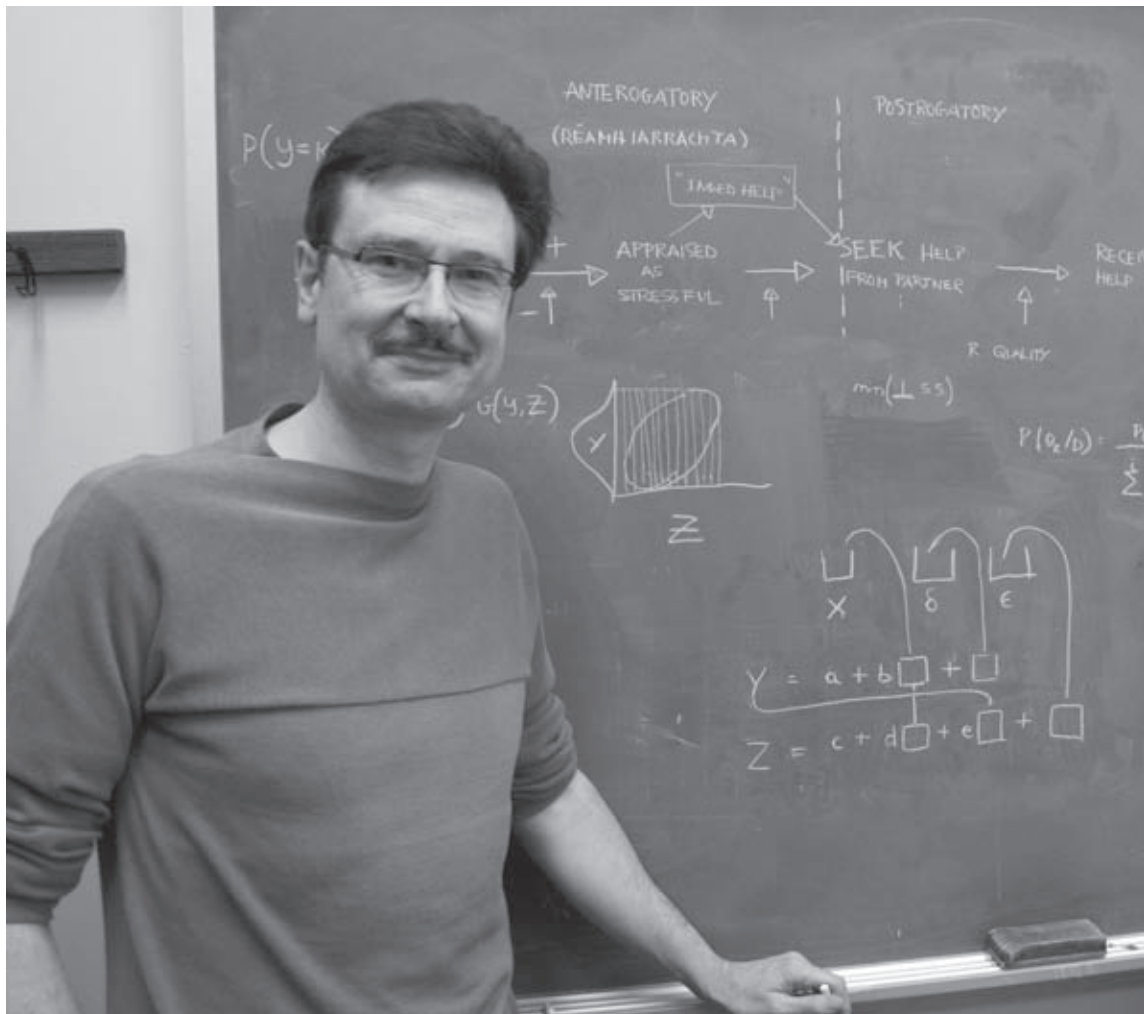
stress level, how supported they felt by their partner, and how much they thought they were supporting their partner. Another study, conducted by Christine Paprocki, has a similar diary design but also incorporates videotaped discussion. After speaking with their partners about a personal problem (such as losing weight, getting a job, etc.), study participants watched the videos and responded to questions pertaining to their mood and sense of feeling supported.

While not all of the results of these studies have been analyzed and published, Bolger, Paprocki, and Gertrude Stadler, a postdoc working with the lab, shared some of their more interesting observations. Surprisingly, many stressed members of the couples reported feeling best on days when they didn't report receipt of support at all. Although the other partner may have reported providing support, the recipient didn't interpret the events or behaviors of the day as out of the ordinary. This sort of "invisible support" came in a variety of forms, and could even be as simple as spending time together taking a walk or watching television.

While individuals certainly exhibit a variety of responses to particular behaviors, researchers often found that instructed support, in which providers of support made obvious their attempts to comfort the stressed member of the dyad, were often less successful, possibly because they highlighted the already troubling fact that something was amiss.

In order to be able to offer skilled support, couples must be adept at reading each other, which is why researchers at the Couples Lab also examine empathy. According to Bolger, empathy is the critical link in effective social support interactions. Jamil Zaki, a graduate student who works with Professors Bolger and Ochsner, is particularly interested in this field of study. He recently published a joint paper with them exploring the relationship between the ability to share an emotion and the ability to empathize with it. The study suggests that the capacity for empathy is fundamentally interpersonal—in other words, insight into the sources of a person's conditions (which might be clear in close relationships) is integral to empathic accuracy.

In the future, the lab hopes to fund projects examining the importance of social networks in sustaining health interventions. Bolger argues that it's important to continue approaching these subjects through a multidisciplinary, nuanced lens that incorporates both the sociological and the psychological. "Close friends, partners: these intimate relationships are the fundamental parts of people's lives," he says. "What's going on in these relationships has an impact on health and well-being." ■



Professor Niall Bolger, the director of the Couples Lab

OMG: The Rise of Gossip Girl and The Fall of Language

BY JOSEPHINE RUIZ-HEALY
ILLUSTRATION BY OLIVIA SHIH

"IDK. My BFF Jill!" As my friends and I mocked the catchy phrase from last year's Cingular Wireless commercial, we found ourselves mimicking language that was a pretty accurate reflection of our own culture. There's "JW" (that's "just wondering" for all you non-texting, Facebook messenger-illiterate fools). Or how about "STFU" (shut the fuck up)? Why does our generation use these fragments of words so often?

I often find myself engaged in the type of meaningful conversation that only comes after doing a Lit Hum reading when suddenly my friend will use the phrase, "LOL" after mentioning the awkward sex scene between Shamhat and Enkidu in *The Epic of Gilgamesh*.

Is it that much harder to say, "Yeah, I laughed out loud"? These acronyms seem to reflect the nature of our culture, which is most markedly characterized by a somewhat repulsive laziness.

Growing up, I reveled in Jane Austen's descriptive rhetoric in *Pride and Prejudice*. I longed for the day when my very own Mr. Darcy would leave me befuddled after using such illustrious language and intricate metaphors that I could barely understand that what he was trying to say was, "I love you." Nowadays, however, I feel that the next best thing I can hope for is a good ol' "ILU." Was I naive to believe that once I arrived at this splendid Ivy-League institution of ours that I would replace annotations like "WTF" with "How absurd, a true travesty"?

Perhaps it's an age thing. As part of almost any school vacation, encounters with grandparents reveal experiences foreign to us but all too familiar to the days of their youth. Fittingly, my grandmother's focus of choice this year was her coming of age during the Depression, and how she had to endure five-mile hikes to her neighborhood school in Minnesota. I can only speak on behalf of myself, but my childhood trek to school consisted of little more than a walk to the corner of my front lawn to wait for the school bus.

But I think the true reason for this obsessive abbreviation comes from the influx of technology that has forced our society to react to such modernity by craving more. The more technology we have, the easier our lives should be—yet we thirst for even more in a world that is growing increasingly complex instead of becoming easier to manage.

Take the GPS for example, an acronym for Global Positioning System (but you already knew that). It started as a device for pinpointing different locations, but later began to be inserted in cars. While scientists and engineers (and the

powers-that-be at Mac) were at it, they figured: why not put into cell phones? And there you have it—a map and a compass, all inside a handy iPhone. At the risk of sounding old-fashioned, I wonder what ever happened to road trips where men refused to ask for directions and relied only on intuition and oversized maps of the nation's interstate highways.

Some of my best stories involve being lost in the middle of the Texan plains en route to tennis tournaments in places like Tyler, Texas—the hometown of the crazy family in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Never can one appreciate the true vagueness of the human explanatory power as when asking for directions. My poor mother, exasperated, would ask how to reach I-35, and would be enlightened with the following: "Ok, you go down that ol' dirt road down a-ways, then reach the other dirt road where y'all will see some of the state's finest cattle, where y'all will see the signs for the 4M Ranch, and then y'all will keep on aimin' down till the end of the property." Useless? Yes. Worth missing? You have to be kidding me.

More than just GPS, new technology shapes social interactions from Facebook and texting to

the television shows we watch. These mediums often serve as venues for our generation to exhibit our modified form of speech. In the television series *Gossip Girl*, a show that portrays the lives of Manhattan's Upper East Side "elite," queen bees Serena Van der Woodsen and Blair Waldorf refer to each other as "S" and "B," nicknames now creeping into photo albums on Facebook. I often find photo tags that read "Little J and P" instead of Jonathan and Paul. Now, in addition to being lazy, we get to be unoriginal, following in the footsteps of the stars of *Gossip Girl*, or GG, to identify one another.

It could not always have been this way. Along with stories of the Depression, my grandmother talks about summers spent in Minnesota playing charades, doing crosswords for fun, and reading while nestled in her favorite oak tree. Perhaps it is possible to escape the encroachment of technology by just turning it off and making an effort to pursue simpler times. But as far as I can tell, at least while I'm at Columbia, my definition of fun will continue to include Long Island Iced Teas at Canon's or 1020, all planned via Blackberry and iPhone. WTF? ●



Art of the Moment

the eye interviews moma's glenn lowry

BY MEREDITH PERRY

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LATTICE GROUP

Founded by the daughter-in-law of John D. Rockefeller only nine days after the beginning of the Great Depression, New York City's Museum of Modern Art has survived the most difficult economic times in American history. It continues to face those challenges today. Meredith Perry chats with Glenn Lowry, the executive director, about running MoMA in a time of economic hardship and the trajectory of the museum toward a younger engaged audience.

Many people would list MoMA as one of the most essentially New York institutions. How do you see the museum's role in New York City?

The museum has been very fortunate because over the years it's built up a remarkable collection of modern and contemporary art, and I see the museum as a major civic center around which people can coalesce to look at, think about, and talk about art.

The museum opened within two weeks of Black Tuesday and has survived to this day. Now that Wall Street is facing the greatest recession since then, does anything change for museum?

There's no way to ignore the impact of what's happening today. It's now just a reality we're living with, so it means being very careful with what we do. But we are committed to presenting a program that is as robust as it was a year ago, and I hope we will be able to do that. We have to make every dollar go farther, and it's harder to raise every dollar, but that's a kind of internal problem. From the point of view of our audience, I hope that we will be able to carry on our mission, more or less, as it's always been.

How does the acquisition of pieces change for MoMA?

What certainly is true about the current state is that there is less money available to acquire works of art, but at the same time, the cost of buying art has gone down significantly, so there's a bit of a trade-off taking place. The issue for all of us is that the cost of producing exhibitions is just very expensive, so finding the funding to do that is a bit complicated.

Raising the price of admission to \$20 is something that you have been criticized for during your time as director. Do you think that this has changed the accessibility of the museum to the general public?

We thought about it a great deal and did a lot of surveying our audience and of potential audiences for the museum. What we realized is that given the scale of our operation, the number of exhibitions we were producing, that \$20 was not unreasonable, and more importantly it was the minimum admission price that we could afford and still have a balanced budget.



It wasn't that we were looking to raise our admission to the highest possible number; we were looking to keep it at the lowest possible number. To keep the museum open costs about \$50 a visitor, and our trustees were able to find ways, through our endowment and other means of fundraising, to essentially subsidize \$30 of that 50, but it was the balance that we couldn't find, which is why we raised our admission to \$20. At the same time, we extended our program of free admission and discounted admission to a much broader range of people and a much broader range of times, so that in fact when you look at what the average visitor pays, it's something like 7 1/2 dollars—it's less than 50 percent of the full adult admission price.

I SEE THE MUSEUM AS A MAJOR CIVIC CENTER AROUND WHICH PEOPLE CAN COALESCE TO LOOK AT, THINK ABOUT, AND TALK ABOUT ART.

Do you think that it's possible to define a typical MoMA visitor? Do you have a certain demographic?

It would have been possible 15 or 20 years ago to define a typical MOMA visitor. She would have been 55 years or old, she would have come from a fairly affluent background, and she would have had at least a B.A. ... Today, it's more complicated. ... The average age of our visitors has dropped to something like 35.

The average income has dropped as well, although the majority of our visitors still have a university degree.

Young people often experience modern art differently than do people from older generations. Do you see modern art as more of a young person's field of interest?

I absolutely do. I think one of the reasons that a place like The Museum of Modern Art has become such a popular place to be is that it naturally attracts a younger audience because it's an audience that actually is eager to see what its peers are doing, and more importantly, understands the material much more quickly. And for those of us who are older, we feed off that energy, we feed off your enthusiasm. We feed off the fact that you see things that we don't. And that's a powerful force, and it's one of the reasons that we are so committed at the museum to contemporary art. It's the art of our moment, which means it's the art of your moment.

Do young people working at MoMA bring a different perspective to the workplace than older employees do? How do you see the future of MoMA as a new generation enters the work force?

I absolutely think younger people bring different perspectives and different expectations, and I think that's essential. And I think if we're an intelligent institution, we will constantly regenerate ourselves by not only attracting a more youthful public, but by attracting a more youthful staff. And that staff will actually change what we're interested in. That's critical. It's a kind of constantly iterative process that happens over years and years and years, but its impact is deep and profound. ●



DOES INFORMATION WANT TO BE FREE?



In Defense of Open Access

by Gabe Schubiner

P

rint publications have been the currency of academia since time immemorial, but the cheap, instant distribution network of the Internet has thrown the publishing world into turmoil. In an environment where research is done at an unprecedented rate, new models for publishing academic works are being explored.

In most traditional journals, the submitting author cedes his copyright, giving the publisher the right to print and sell the material. Recently, a number of journals have sprung up offering free access to anyone with an Internet connection. These “open access” publications undergo the same process of peer review as traditional journals, but they are primarily distributed digitally. Funded by grants, advertising, or publication fees, these journals strive to bring the products of scholarly labor to a broader audience.

Major academic publishers like Elsevier and Blackwell argue the traditional model is necessary to ensure the quality of academic publications. In a statement to the British House of Commons, which held an inquiry into open-access publishing, Blackwell writes: “The author-pays [for submission] model could encourage high rates of acceptance in peer-reviewed journals, as only accepted papers will generate revenues for journals and societies/publishers. On the other hand, the subscription-based model favours rejection.”

Yet the traditional model also depends on the volume of publication. The more articles a journal accepts, the more material it has to sell to libraries.

Richard Nash, an open-access advocate who spent much of the last decade running independent publisher Soft Skull Press, is critical of the notion that open access means lower quality. “The problem of the 20th century was one of supply,” says Nash. But in the 21st century, “supply has increased enormously... the demand couldn’t possibly keep up.” This increase in supply means

there’s no shortage of articles from which author fee-based open journals can choose.

The old method of publication made sense when major academic presses bore the tremendous costs of reviewing, editing, and distributing print journals. But it must be rethought in a world where digital communication pushes the cost of distribution ever lower. Why should the institutions that facilitate research be forced to buy it back from publishers for use by students, faculty, and researchers? Buying back academic works is not cheap.

And as digital scholarship becomes ubiquitous, the justification for such high access fees is evaporating. Publishers add value to academic works through peer review, but this service does not need to be tied to costly subscriptions. Open-access journals are growing—some are even well established—yet traditional journals remain the gold standard of academic publication. If, however, the universities responsible for producing research were to embrace open models, they would spur the growth of open-access publication.

As a major center of research, Columbia should be in the vanguard of this movement. Our library system has an annual budget of more than \$20 million—one of the largest in the country—yet still struggles to maintain subscriptions to increasingly expensive periodicals. With the average price of periodicals up 200 percent in the past two decades, this “serials crisis” is threatening libraries across the world.

In the face of these rising prices, libraries are forced to cut back on their acquisitions of new materials. English professor Jenny Davidson notes, “The rising cost of scientific publications has resulted in libraries buying fewer humanities books.” And as libraries cut back on these publications, publishers “raise the price of the humanities books, since they are selling fewer

copies.” The current publishing paradigm, then, is failing at its essential mission—rather than increasing access, it’s restricting it. The paradigm needs to be changed.

In early 2008, the National Institutes of Health announced that “final peer-reviewed manuscripts arising from NIH funds must be submitted to PubMed Central”—an NIH hosted open-access archive of biomedical and life sciences publications. As the NIH sponsors more than a quarter of all biomedical research done in the United States, the move has had a significant impact on scientific, technological, and medical publications, which include the ten most expensive academic journal subscriptions.

But a bill brought before Congress by Rep. John Conyers, Jr. (D-Mich.)—the Fair Copyright in Research Works Act—aims to reverse this policy, which Conyers claims will damage the commercial market in academic publishing.

At this crucial point, Columbia must join other American universities and stand up for its academic interests by supporting open access.

Last year, Harvard’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences took the bold step of unanimously adopting a resolution that requires all faculty publications to be placed in an open university repository. This March, the faculty at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology passed a similar resolution. Under these resolutions, the universities receive noncommercial licenses, meaning they cannot draw profit from articles, but researchers can opt out in order to publish in journals that require exclusive rights.

“THE PROBLEM OF THE 20TH CENTURY WAS ONE OF SUPPLY,” SAYS NASH. BUT IN THE 21ST CENTURY, “SUPPLY HAS INCREASED ENORMOUSLY ... THE DEMAND COULDN’T POSSIBLY KEEP UP.”

AS DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP BECOMES UBIQUITOUS, THE JUSTIFICATION FOR SUCH HIGH ACCESS FEES IS EVAPORATING.

At Columbia there have been a number of efforts to make University-affiliated research available to the general public. In acknowledgement of the changing publishing landscape, the University Senate released a statement in 2005 urging the University community to “advance new models for scholarly publishing that will promote open access, helping to reshape the marketplace in which scholarly ideas circulate... [while] remaining alert to efforts by publishers to impose barriers on access to the fruits of scholarly research.”

Since then, Columbia University Libraries has strived to draw attention to the advantages of open access. The Libraries’ Scholarly Communication Program has been hosting a lecture series titled “Research without Borders” about the influence of open-access policies on research, information science, and libraries, and has been working with on-campus journals to discuss publishing possibilities for student journals.

Kenny Crews, director of the Libraries’ Copyright Advisory Office, believes that the libraries have “a core mission of facilitating access to information. In that spirit, we need to foster the creation of easily accessible resources.”

One such resource is Columbia’s Academic Commons, a repository hosted by the Center for Digital Research and Scholarship. This repository could change the way Columbia’s scholars work, but Columbia’s lack of a comprehensive open-access policy means the commons must solicit submissions from individual faculty members, limiting its scope. Doctoral dissertations—which represent a substantial amount of research—are currently hosted through the ProQuest database, rendering a profusion of University-funded scholarship inaccessible to non-subscribers.

Rebecca Kennison, the director of CDRS, writes in an e-mail that Columbia could clarify its support for open-access publication by earmarking funds “explicitly to support publication, as some of our peer institutions have done.” Because open-access journals often require publication fees, University funding would help support researchers who want to publish open access. Under a model offered by Davidson, the University could provide grants “to support publishing costs for a given number of researchers per year.” A competitive grant program would add prestige to open-access publication, and affirm that the University values making its research available.

After the strong precedents set by Harvard and MIT, a serious commitment from Columbia would

further the growth of open access. Indeed, if the trend in academic publication continues toward greater openness, institutions without such policies may be seen as antagonistic to the academic community.

Open access is not merely a practical or economic issue—it’s rooted in the core principles of the academic community. At Harvard, the faculty acknowledges that because “the goal of university research is the creation, dissemination, and preservation of knowledge. ... It is an essential part of our duties ... to distribute the fruits of our scholarship as widely as possible.”

Saskia Sassen, a prominent urban sociologist at Columbia and a member of the Committee on Global Thought, sees open access as the logical next step for the intellectual community: “Open access is the format of the future. In a way the public library, or a university’s library in its origin was the equivalent of open access today.” As the horizons of community have expanded, she writes, the limits on information have fallen away. “Today,” she says, “the community can be a... space that can cut across the world. And open access to online material is its ‘library’.”

The benefits of this “library” lie not only in its ability to disseminate information more widely but also in its ability to promote a global academic dialogue necessary to produce new research. In sociology especially, “this engagement is critical because the process of making knowledge—the research questions, the objects of study, interpretation—[is] deeply imbricated with the particularities of different political and economic systems,” Sassen says. “[Open access] is one way of engaging the researchers in my field across the world.”

Jonah Bossewitch, a doctoral student at the Columbia Journalism School and a staff member of the Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning, takes the argument one step further. According to Bossewitch, sharing research is almost more important than the work itself: Without being distributed, it can’t be called scholarship.

Bossewitch envisions extending open access to the raw materials from which researchers draw their conclusions. Currently, the academic community must trust the peer-review process to verify results. But, as he points out, “How can anyone trust the results of research done using

data not visible to the public, or the results of a computer simulation without being able to view the program code that generates the results?” This broad lack of accountability has the potential to seriously undermine the credibility of research.

Columbia Libraries recognizes the challenge expanding access will pose in the coming years, and is working on a number of projects—like the creation of a viable long-term data archive—to make provisions for these demands. “It makes sense for the university to be involved in this endeavor, which will protect its own intellectual property investment, since, unlike publications, data belong to the university,” writes Kennison.

But while the libraries do their best to prepare, Kennison notes, real change must come from researchers themselves: “This issue should optimally be driven by the producers of the scholarship ... it’s critical that this be seen as important to the entire university community and not merely to the libraries.”

For the time being, however, scholars face significant obstacles to publishing open access. Chris Anderson, a future faculty member at the College of Staten Island, recently completed his doctoral thesis at the Columbia Journalism School. Anderson says he’s received mixed advice about whether to place the dissertation online. While he knows that online hosting will allow his work to be “read and cited exponentially more,” senior colleagues counsel that it will hurt his chances to publish in respected traditional journals. And when it’s time for Anderson to stand before a tenure committee, publication in these journals will be a primary factor in determining his academic future.

The Internet is thoroughly changing the publishing landscape, as it has changed so many others. Traditional publications still play a major role in academia and Columbia need not unnecessarily alienate these journals. But as Columbia moves forward into Academia 2.0, it must—as a preeminent producer of knowledge and information—accept that it has the power to help usher in an age of greater accountability and creativity in research. The University has the opportunity to be a pioneer in expanding access to materials traditionally restricted to the cloistered world of academics. Open access is not altruism. It is participating in the evolving academic culture, where access to information is not just convention—it’s indispensable. ■

Survival of the Artist

amidst an economic crisis, contemporary art leaves the decadent behind

BY DIANA GREENWALD

ILLUSTRATION BY REBEKAH KIM

Bergamot Station in Santa Monica, Calif. is a complex of contemporary art galleries. Like Tribeca or the Meatpacking District, it's a former commercial area that has been converted into a trendy hot-spot during the past 15 years. Over winter break, I was wandering through the galleries and saw a shocking number of pieces priced at five figures. There was little evidence of a financial crisis. In fact, there seemed to be almost a denial of it.

But in the entryway to one of the Bergamot Station galleries, dozens of small rectangular pieces of paper painted with bright colors had been placed on the wall with thumbtacks. Above this display, a sign identified the work as "Recession-Proof Art, \$300 each." The installation was not only charming, but also posed an interesting question: Can contemporary art survive a recession? The answer—yes, but not without undergoing a significant and likely difficult transformation.

Prior to this past autumn, art was selling at auction and in galleries for unprecedented prices. In November 2006, for example, Christie's set a record for the biggest auction in history—\$491 million of impressionist and modern art sold in one night.

Money also flooded the contemporary art market. Perhaps the most poignant example of this is British artist Damien Hirst's "For the Love of God," a diamond-encrusted platinum skull that sold at his London gallery for \$100 million. Esther Kim, a third-year art history Ph.D. student in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) and former co-owner of a New York contemporary art gallery, describes Hirst's work as something that will be "important [in art history] as a memory of excess." It represents a point of consumption that "you can only go down from." Furthermore, it embodies an era in contemporary art when much of the work created seemed not only meaningless, but excessive and flamboyant to anyone outside of the small and exclusive world centered around Chelsea galleries. It is symbolic of a market spun out of control and pushed to unreasonable heights that could not be sustained.

Today, that the art market is going down—or already has—is not a question. This past autumn, prices at the major impressionist, modern, and contemporary art auctions were the lowest they have been in a decade. Contemporary art has been hit particularly hard. Chelsea galleries are closing, publications created in the midst of the art-boom are faltering, and jobs linked to the industry are rapidly disappearing. As private money has evaporated, it is now unclear where funding for contemporary art will come from—or how it will be funded at all.



Kim believes that money will now need to come from public sources. She thinks the art world will join a national movement "towards government support," beginning with the rush for bailout money that has swept up many institutions. Jonathan Neil, a doctoral candidate in art history in GSAS and co-founder of the private curatorial firm Boyd Level, has a different vision of the future of contemporary art. He believes that the chance of government support being truly substantial is ultimately a "fantasy." Therefore, the sources of funds will not simply change, but almost completely disappear. Artists will be forced to adapt, to create works on a shoestring budget.

Neil cited the recent project of artist Jeremy Deller to illustrate his point. Deller created a space at the New Museum that was explicitly meant to encourage visitors to discuss the war in Iraq. He filled the room with artifacts from the front lines—like the ruins of a car blown up in an attack from the streets of Baghdad—and arranged for guest experts to be in-residence in the gallery.

TODAY, THAT THE ART MARKET IS GOING DOWN—OR ALREADY HAS—IS NOT A QUESTION.

This work, according to Neil, is an indication that economic constraints could be a catalyst for "contemporary art to move into the 'art-as-education' mode." He believes these hard times will allow artists and others in the art world to focus not on selling art, but on educating themselves and

the public about it. In essence, it seems that now is contemporary art's opportunity to prove its relevance—to show the public why it's important and deserves to survive this crisis. This is a time when the contemporary art world will need to abandon the excess of Hirst's diamond-covered skull, and support pieces that are not only more inexpensive, but are also meaningful to an audience outside of a relatively small and incredibly wealthy group of collectors and those who serve them.

This move towards general relevance has been expedited by the current economic situation. "A lot of the people will leave the contemporary art market. People drawn to the glitz and glamour and the people who weren't sure they believed in art have gone away," Kim says. As a result of this stripping away of those people who were in the industry for what can be seen as the wrong reasons, "the art world will be a better place," she adds. Art can no longer be created and marketed merely as an attempt to capitalize on inflated prices, but the artist and those who support her must be truly committed. She must present something that she believes is meaningful and important.

Walking into a Chelsea gallery a few months ago, I saw a gigantic plastic tractor that looked like a blown-up version of a toy I played with in 1992. I had to skim a single-spaced typed page produced by the gallery to understand "the point" of the piece I was looking at. Art should not need explanations to make it meaningful. With luck, pieces like the inflated Tonka truck—pieces that seem irrelevant and inaccessible even to an art enthusiast and art history major—will not survive the financial crisis. Instead, what will survive, to return to Neil's "art-as-education" phrase, are pieces that, without a three-page typed explanation, elicit meaningful thought about the world we live in. ●

Underground Talent

musicians try to make it big in the city's subway system

BY CATHERINE RICE

PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMNYINTERACTIVE.COM
AND VAGABONDJOURNEY.COM

The subway generally isn't a place associated with culture—it's usually a means to an end rather than a destination. The time it takes to go from point A to point B is seemingly unimportant, so much so that commuters become dormant, simply waiting until they can go above ground and back to "real" life.

But for subway musicians, the underground stations are venues. During busy New Yorkers' traveling time, musicians thrive in the largely overlooked halls of Grand Central, Penn Station, and 116th and Broadway. Positioned at 25 different locations throughout the New York Transit System, these musicians work to create an enjoyable trip for the bustling commuter, provide entertainment for the common city dweller, and give a taste of New York to the uninitiated tourist.

Subway musicians fall into two general groups: those who are a part of Music Under New York (MUNY), a branch of Arts for Transit sponsored by the MTA, and those who aren't. Potential MUNY musicians audition for a spot on the roster, earning the right to a designated station, a performance schedule, networking for gigs, and a banner identifying them. Musicians who are not part of MUNY cannot get permits and as a result are subject to expulsion by the police.

MUNY is the path to success in New York's

subway system. As Lydia Bradshaw, manager of MUNY, says, "We provide a venue for the musicians. It's not about getting out of the subway. You can't beat the audience ... you're reaching so many people. Playing in a subway is just great." The relationship between the musicians and the audience is symbiotic—not only are the musicians reaching a huge audience, but as Bradshaw says, "We want the subway to be a nice environment for commuters to pass through."

But wait a second—"Playing in a subway is just great"? Aren't subway musicians struggling to make ends meet? Isn't the life of any musician, let alone a subway musician, strenuous, especially in the current economy? I set out to find out the truth about these people: who are they, and how do they make it big underground?

These questions are reminiscent of an investigation conducted by *The Washington Post* in 2007. During that experiment, famed violinist Joshua Bell performed in a Washington D.C. subway for 43 minutes. In that time, only 7 people stopped for more than a minute, and only 27 gave money for a total of \$32—out of the 1070 people who rushed by. According to the *Post*, the experiment raised the question, "In a banal setting ... at an inconvenient time ... would beauty transcend?" Although not every subway musician is on par with Joshua Bell, the question still pertains to the arguably more cultured population of New Yorkers.

Tracking down and interviewing subway musicians is surprisingly difficult. The first two musicians I speak with don't speak English, and don't look too thrilled by my attempts to speak Spanish.

A guitarist who asks to meet later—at his house no less—never shows up at Starbucks (where I re-routed him), and never calls me back. A violin student from Manhattan School of Music playing Bach sonatas at 116th and Broadway flat out ignores me.

Finally, I make my way down to 34th Street and encounter a MUNY band called Floyd Lee and the Mississippi Delta Blues. Lee is an old black man with a silver beard, droopy eyes and a top hat. His back-up guitarist, Tadaaki Ilkemasu, is young, thin, and wears a leather jacket. They're nestled in an alcove, halfway between the platforms for the 1 and the ACE trains: an ideal location. As I approach, the pungent scent of alcohol grows stronger and stronger.

The group's percussionist, Andy Smith, tells me about Lee and his legacy with MUNY. Born in 1933, Lee was one of the original musicians who founded MUNY in 1985, and since then he's been

"WE PROVIDE A VENUE FOR THE MUSICIANS. IT'S NOT ABOUT GETTING OUT OF THE SUBWAY."

a judge on the audition panel. "When Floyd was a kid he got a different kind of musical training, on the front porch of his house from his father, Guitar Floyd, down south in Mississippi," says Smith. As he places copies of the band's CDs and DVDs in front of Lee, whose real name is Ted Williams, Smith continues: "The reason he likes having me around is because he usually makes more money with a drummer than without."

Smith, dressed in a suit, has had an unusual career, as far as subway musicians go. "I'm one of the only white collar musicians around," he says. "Music has been a hobby of mine for about three quarters of my life, it's a side thing—I haven't been making much of a living in music." Instead, he works in computers at Standard & Poor's. "Most of the musicians don't have steady jobs, but Floyd does it for a living," he says wistfully.

Floyd Lee's position as a subway musician is desirable compared to others. He's internationally renowned, having performed at Moscow's first blues festival as well as in North Korea and Japan. The group's record income was \$80 for each musician over three to four hours. "You have to be in the right place at the right time or you won't make anything," says Smith, which means Herald Square, Grand Central or Penn Station at rush hour, or the Friday before Thanksgiving and Christmas. "The hard economic times are hitting these guys as well—people don't willingly give up a buck or two," he explains.

Although Floyd Lee's configuration of two guitarists, a drummer and sometimes a vocalist is somewhat conventional, unusual and progressive groups representing uncommon genres, instruments, and styles also play underground. The roster of about 100 musicians and 125 weekly performances is endless in its variety and exoticism. When asked what the panel of 25 judges—composed of musicians, music professionals and transit representatives—is looking for, Bradshaw says, "We





look for quality, variety and appropriateness for the subway environment. We're always looking for music that reflects the people of New York City."

After experiencing the blues, I make my way up to Columbus Circle and encounter Professor Eduardo Alvarado, an old man with slicked back grey hair and a navy blue suit. He hunches over his keyboard and plays popular melodies over a recorded accompaniment with uncanny spirit and a slightly sinister charm. The highlight of his act is the four dancing dolls haphazardly taped onto the keyboard. They dance and sway with the push of a button, and Alvarado has to push these buttons every two minutes while playing his keyboard to keep them going—a difficult task indeed.

THE HIGHLIGHT OF HIS ACT IS THE DANCING DOLLS HAPHAZARDLY TAPED ONTO THE KEYBOARD.

At 34th Street I briefly speak to MUNY musician Kahn Hightower, a self-proclaimed "singer/songwriter/producer/entertainer" who sings for half an hour straight. I listen to his highly theatrical voice and watch his disco dance moves, as his curly-haired 7-year-old daughter waits patiently on a chair beside him. When he finally stops, he says, "We've just done a documentary, baby, the two of us, that is," pointing to his beaming daughter, "and we don't want to spread ourselves too thin." Apparently, these musicians are getting more publicity than you'd think.

As I continue through the station, I hear a lustrous, deep voice coming from around the corner. The singer wears a MUNY t-shirt and moves her hands in the air like a diva to help her hit pitches. Her name is Shaquene Felder, and after singing some Rihanna and Christina Aguilera, she notices the large crowd and says, "You all are still standing here, so I guess I better keep singing!"

Felder has been singing in the NYC subways for almost 10 years. She started when she was a 14-year-old student at Talent Unlimited High School and joined MUNY right after her father did. She says it didn't make much of a difference to her whether her singing was legal or not since the cops never bothered her. Over the years people have offered her gigs and asked her to perform at weddings and shows, and to record for independent labels.

Felder says that singing in the subway has become familiar, just like any other job. "It's like one big family down there, especially when you see someone every day. Whenever I make money, when I'm done and I see somebody, I usually drop a dollar in their basket, keeping the flow going, supporting each other," she elaborates.

Felder also produces, composes, and does sound mixing. She's grateful for the opportunity to play in subways: "It helps. I don't have a regular job, this is my job, five days a week for five hours each day, it helps, it really does," she says. Felder usually makes about \$130 in four hours, but for her, money is second to music. "Music is the way of the world," she says. "We need to try and keep real music alive."

Unfortunately, not all subway musicians are as optimistic as Andy Smith and Shaquene Felder. On the platform of the Lincoln Center station at 66th, a saxophonist and flautist named Martin Jennings plays classical music and popular

tunes. Jennings is not a MUNY musician because he found the permit unnecessary. He fought for his right to play at 66th street after a series of summonses. "I consider MUNY to be an unhelpful way of trying to reduce us and take power over us," he says in an e-mail. Instead, Jennings prefers to remain independent and finds Lincoln Center concert-goers to be the most attentive and appreciative audience. "My best times have been when I play famous opera themes after the Met comes out. The audience ... appreciates a sense of humor and pleasure when they are fresh from beholding the high class quality of the Grand Show," he writes.

Jennings unfortunately thinks that his subway platform venue is not ideal: "The noise and dirt are horrible. Sometimes I can reach the ethereal plane of true quality and other times the grubby, grimy low-down of subway crudeness defeats my efforts!" He has also been severely affected by the recession and is forced to play more hours than he would like, "wasting a lot of time on people who don't care about me." His bitterness towards money is very pronounced in his e-mail. As he puts it, "Money messes up all of our lives really because it is the answer to our dreams if we can ever get enough of it, but we never really ever do!"

What really stands out about subway musicians—and by extension, all musicians—is that their vocation is a selfless one. While working to earn a living, they are trying to please their audiences by sharing something beautiful. Although some commuters may not appreciate a particular song or set, these musicians always find a way to connect with their commuter-listeners, evoking pity, sympathy, curiosity, or just plain awe. ●

Caught in the Web

how the television industry is turning students into internet pirates

BY CAITLYN MCGINN

ILLUSTRATION BY MEREDITH PERRY

Although I'm heading to England for the next academic year, I'm not worried about the culture shock, the infamously awful English cuisine, or even, really, leaving my family behind. No, what most concerns me is the possibility of missing the final season of *Lost*. At least I know that I have several means at my disposal for catching up: iTunes, American pubs, and, most importantly, illegal streaming.

To be tech-savvy is to know that there are dozens of ways to watch and interact with your favorite television shows on everything from MP3 players to high-tech cell phones. But the most widespread and, arguably, most influential TV innovation is streaming media.

According to PCMag.com, streaming media is a "one-way video transmission over a data network ... played shortly after only a small amount [of data] is received." The user doesn't have to download the video to his or her computer—the data flows from the web site to the computer as the program is being watched. And, depending on the web site, streaming video is much faster than downloading. Combine this with the typical college student's lack of time, money, or even a television, and this technology creates a tempting monster—illegal online TV viewing.

Although several network sites offer legal methods of streaming, online TV watching crosses the legal boundary when the viewer visits a Web

site that streams a show for free but doesn't own the show or have an agreement with its original distributors. Platforms like YouTube and Megavideo have made illegal TV streaming so ubiquitous that network vigilantes can hardly dish out legal threats to all the users who upload their favorite shows.

This isn't the first time digital media has escaped the grasp of the law: remember the legal blizzard that emerged out of the Napster music piracy fiasco? If illegal TV watching continues down a similar path, infringers will be at high risk as the targets of high-profile lawsuits. But much like former Napster users, students seem indifferent to the prospect of reproach. A nonchalant, anonymous Barnard sophomore explains, "I guess there could be consequences, but none have affected me yet. Knock on wood."

In fact, some students are taking a more defensive stance, arguing that networks are leaving them with no other options. Elizabeth LaBerge, a Barnard sophomore, comments, "If the networks would put the shows I watch online, then I wouldn't have to watch them illegally. I'm willing to sit through commercials or product placement, but if they don't even show repeats later in the week, then it's their own fault I don't watch."

An anonymous CC senior admits that peer pressure influenced her to start watching TV illegally. "I started using it during high school when all my friends were talking about *Freaks and Geeks* and I had no idea what it was," she says. Hannah Bachman, a Barnard sophomore, has a more utilitarian explanation: "I started when I got to college last year and all of a sudden had no TV." Even though they knowingly stream, most students I interview acknowledge that they would use legal sites if

those sites promptly posted the shows they watch. As Kara Freewind, a Barnard sophomore, says, "If there were more legal streaming sites I would definitely use them. Image quality is usually better, though the advertisements are annoying."

So why are networks so unwilling fulfill these poor college students' wishes?

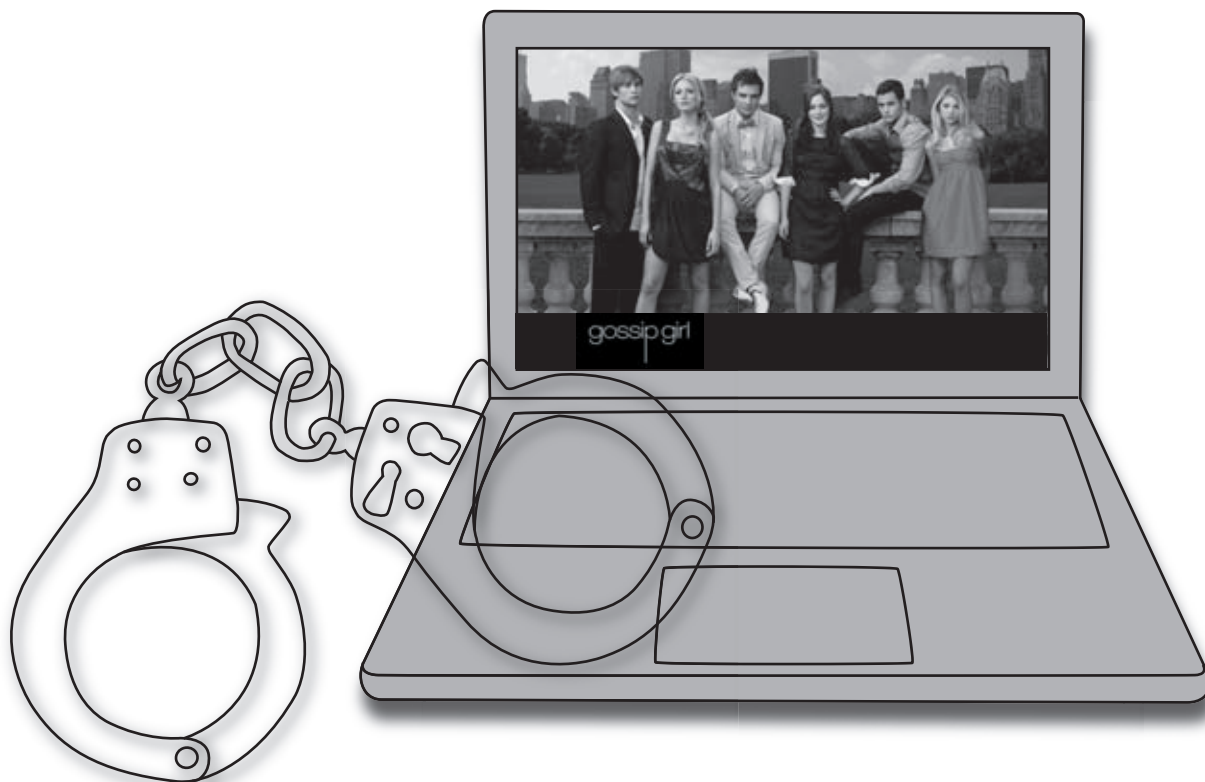
ILLEGAL ONLINE TV WATCHING IS A TEMPTING MONSTER—CAN STUDENTS RESIST?

From a business standpoint, streaming video is a big problem. Networks still haven't learned how to make money from it. In theory, when people watch television shows live on their TV sets, they have to watch commercials—which, along with product placement, are the most fundamental ways networks make money. Earlier this year, Reuters online predicted that a 30-second spot during the 2009 Super Bowl would make a network \$3 million. But earnings go down the figurative drain when viewers start streaming video and using digital recording devices like TiVo—by speeding through the commercials, viewers are discouraging companies from buying commercial time. Only recently have networks begun to use streaming video to their advantage by placing short commercials during each episode. Illegal shows, of course, have no commercials at all.

Even the most sympathetic students don't worry about the fate of some faceless company's finances when they can't watch the latest episode of *Gossip Girl* whenever they want. Perhaps illegal streaming is just a logical extension of television's universally accessible nature—if students can watch Blair and Chuck squabble anywhere from JJ's Place to their floor lounge, why shouldn't they also be able to watch from the comfort of their own desk chairs? "I think that we pay a set amount of money each month for cable, and that enables us to watch TV. We also pay a set bill each month for internet, which should therefore allow us to do the same thing," reasons Nancy Monaco, a Barnard first year.

In the end, most students agree that there isn't a stigma attached to the illegal act because it seems to be a necessary evil. Our busy lives and the unsympathetic networks thwart our attempts to watch television shows in the often-limited formats in which they are offered legally online.

Of course, maybe we should all stop worrying about when and how to watch TV, and instead adopt the perspective of Benjamin Weiner, a CC sophomore. "I don't feel like I have a right to watch TV period, illegal or otherwise," he says, "because it probably means I'm neglecting a whole lot of work." ●



India-Inspired Threads Brighten NYC

tia cibani of ports 1961 adds color to the city

BY ALEXANDRA OWENS

PHOTO COURTESY OF PORTS 1961

The jet set has new reason to celebrate, thanks to the creative director of Ports 1961, Tia Cibani. Although Canadian sportswear brand Ports International has been an industry mainstay for many years, Cibani just launched her line in 2004. Her fresh take on romanticism offers an ethnic twist, giving both the label and catwalk something entirely different. Influenced by specific people, cultures, times and places—from Scotland to Tanzania—she defines luxury on her own terms. Cibani explains her vision after her packed show at the most recent New York Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week, saying, “Really it was a journey to India ... I’ve always dreamed about doing an India-themed collection and it just felt right in September because it’s such a joyous, colorful culture. I just felt like it made sense at the time when everyone was doing gloomy to give something that has pop and playfulness and shine.”

Though Ports 1961’s success is due largely to Cibani’s great creativity, it can also be attributed to her restraint. She is able to give a collection huge personality without making it over the top. By adding international details to classic yet modern shapes, the pieces become pleasingly balanced. Metal thread, natural horn buttons, and exotic fabrics are just a few of the additions she and her team have used to turn the last collection into something unique. Such

a forward-thinking attitude fits perfectly into New York City’s young, diverse character. Cibani reflects, “I think New York wants color, wants shine, wants to be feminine and flirty. And I think there are aspects of tailoring, balancing all that softness and all that color, that bring it to urban life, to city life. It’s not like a resort collection. It’s really actually very real, but it’s just balanced between soft and colorful and structured and masculine and serious.” When looking at Ports 1961’s flowing, earth-toned frocks, one thinks downtown cool—not poolside chic.

“I THINK NEW YORK WANTS COLOR, WANTS SHINE, WANTS TO BE FEMININE AND FLIRTY.”

It comes as little surprise then that Ports 1961’s newest boutique has found a comfortable home in the Meatpacking District. Highly involved in the store’s design, Cibani was determined to make the space reflect her line’s international character. Perhaps its best feature is that soon, along with the clothing, there will be exotic trinkets that customers can buy. “I will personally be shopping for it—little special finds from India, from Argentina, from Iceland,” Cibani explains. “I’ll bring them back with me. And they’re things that I would love to buy for myself and I will probably buy another six and sell them in the store just as a special, personal touch ... a blanket from Argentina, a piece of crystal from Prague and so on.” Even with incredibly chic neighbors such as Yigal Azrouël and Alexander McQueen, her shop is quickly becoming the highlight of the block.

Considering the popularity and critical acclaim Ports 1961 is currently enjoying, Cibani clearly is doing something right. Since 2004, socialites and stars like Nicky Hilton, Olivia Palermo, Debra Messing and Sienna Miller have begun to covet and flaunt the label’s chunky sweaters, delicate skirts and wooden accessories. Top magazines like *Vogue* and *W* also regularly feature Cibani’s work in editorial spreads, and various stores have picked up the line. Ports 1961 is well on its way to becoming a lasting name. And with Cibani’s talent and optimism, there’s nowhere to go but up. She muses, “I live really in the present because I don’t calculate what I should do for what. I do what I feel is right for me today and I base it a lot on what has happened ... I think if you work well with your instincts at that moment, there’s no wrong in what could be in the future because it’s from the heart. It’s real.”



On the Lookout: Lady GaGa

BY CLARA YOO

PHOTO COURTESY OF MUSIC.COM



Madonna gained notoriety in the '80s for her risqué appearance and behavior, going against the social and sexual norms of the time. Now there’s Lady GaGa, another racy performer who’s quickly moving up in the pop charts. A native New Yorker, GaGa is gaining international fame thanks to her hit singles, “Just Dance” and “Poker Face.”

Just like the reigning Queen of Pop herself, Lady GaGa stands out for her provocative style. One can hardly ignore her platinum blonde hair and her pantless ensembles. A “normal” outfit for the singer? A bright-colored leotard and a pair of stiletto heels. Thanks to GaGa’s bold fashion choices, what may have seemed like a fashion faux-pas has become the mainstream in pop culture. Many singers, such as Beyoncé and Britney Spears, are now wearing GaGa-inspired costumes for their shows and music videos. Lady GaGa’s long, straight, banded platinum blonde hair was most recently mimicked by Nicole Richie on the cover of this month’s *BlackBook*.

Lady GaGa, it seems, has become an icon whose style is instantly recognizable and unique. Her crazy flair, which risks placing the singer on worst-dressed lists, has been deemed cool. While maintaining her originality, Lady GaGa isn’t afraid to go against the fashion norms, sometimes tying a large bow in her hair or wearing dark red lipstick. When she wears her unusual outfits, she walks powerfully, with her head held up high—Lady GaGa is confident, and she never apologizes for her eccentricity.

As an entertainer, Lady GaGa commands the stage. GaGa’s performances are as unpredictable as her style. For live shows, the singer opts to alter her songs to make them sound unique. Her bluesy performance of “Poker Face” for radio show *The Cherry House* is now a YouTube classic. By keeping her fans guessing, Lady GaGa has created a mysterious persona that the public is eager to get to know.

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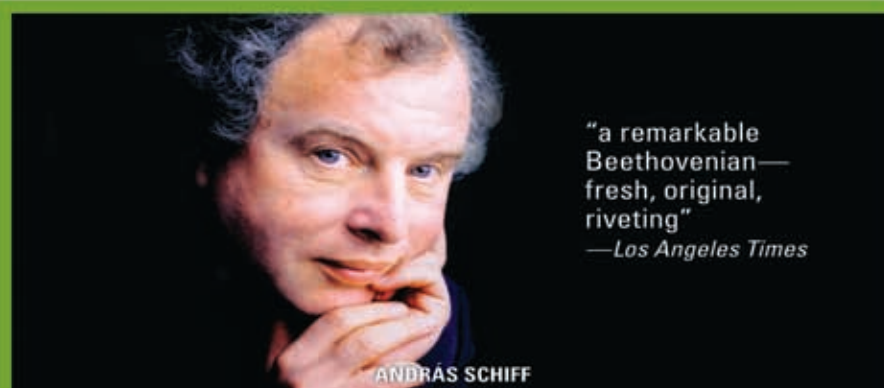


Tuesday, **April 14** at 7:30 PM
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JONATHAN BISS, Piano

Noted for his prodigious technique and artistic maturity, "Biss is an engaging player whose Mozart has clarity and precision, but also heart" (*New York Times*). On the program are works by Mozart, György Kurtág, Schubert, and Chopin.

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ANDRÁS SCHIFF, Piano

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