

THE UNDERGRADUATE MAGAZINE OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, EST. 1890

THE BLUE AND WHITE

Vol. XIV No. V

February 2008




PROFESSIONS OF LOVE

Married Columbia Faculty, The Cult of Margaret Vandenburg,
Professor Trades, Staff Personals, Does Writing Get You Laid?
and Our Men Worth Rhyming For

BONUS PULL-OUT: Morningside Heights Celebrity Sightings!

ALSO: MANHATTANVILLE, VIDEOGAME EXHIBITION, DON QUIJOTE



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THE BLUE AND WHITE

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BLUE BOOK

Petition for the Peaceful Transfer of Power

Describing that Ms. Walsh has become a slave to her Art Historical pursuits (and some might say victim of Postmodernist Pyrexia) and that she finds more comfort in the Avery stacks than the recent resumption of Whiskey at the Weekly Meetings;

Remembering that Ms. Phillips has milked the collected works of Virginia Woolf for all the comfort they can provide, and is now wholly without Activities, Friends, or Purpose;

Concluding that a Regime Change is in order such that both Parties may relinquish or shoulder all responsibility for their mutual betterment;

Proclaiming triumphantly that Ms. Phillips, a heretofore insignificant City Reporter of diminutive stature, will assume the awesome powers of the Editor-in-Chiefship!

(*Provided* that the following Terms and Conditions are met):

1. That Ms. Phillips shall continue the tradition of castration that Ms. Walsh started, such that by the year 2010 the Staff will be entirely female;
2. That the Misses Phillips, Reedy, Weiner, and Goldfield shall not blithely disregard the Midwestern wholesomeness that Ms. Walsh's tenure occasioned, in favor of a Northeastern liberal bias that this Publication really doesn't need;
3. That Ms. Phillips shall overcome her Shyness, to the point whereat she can address the Staff in face-to-face interactions, rather than relying on E-mail from her hiding spot in the hallway;

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.



Taylor Walsh
Editor-in-Chief
2007-2008



Anna Phillips
Editor-in-Chief
2008-2009

M.A.S.H.

Hometown 5th grade M.A.S.H. rules apply. Fruit roll-ups not included.

SPOUSE

The Butler Marxist
Robert Kraft
Margaret Vandenburg
Jonathan Taylor Thomas

PROFESSION

St. A.'s private chef
Old Dominion Foundation Professor in the Humanities and Chair of the Department
Waitress at Swish
Music Hum instructor

TRANSPORTATION

The CAVA ambulance
Segway Personal Transporter
Rolls Royce
Roller shoes

NEIGHBORHOOD OF RESIDENCY

Staten Island
Yonkers
The Living Learning Center
Manhattanville

VICE

Giuliani supporter
Columbia football fan
Masturbating in Butler
1020

HONEYMOON

Lerner Pub (2 IDs to drink)
Cancun, sponsored by ΣΔΤ
CQA Lounge
COÖP Boating Trip

BRUNCH SPOT

Ollie's
Blue Java Express
Miss Mamie's Spoonbread Too
Lerner 4th floor vending machine

REVELATION OF THE MONTH

Take heart, young Columbian: Your days of toil are numbered, and the Elysian Fields of alumni-hood will soon admit you to their glories.

In addition to light-blue throw-blankets and a rented room in the Princeton Club, Alma offers the very world to her children. The "Alumni Travel Study Program" provides many former pupils the chance to explore the varied nuances of humanity's reach.

According to the program's website, the only sold-out tour is, remarkably, "Around the World By Private Jet," a "special luxurious" voyage from Machu Picchu to Petra by way of the Great Barrier Reef, Angkor Wat, the Serengeti and a few other minor locales such as the Great Pyramids, which carries a no-frills price tag of \$49,950.



That sum echoes another figure dear to Alma's heart: the average cost of attending Columbia this year is \$49,699.

BY THE NUMBERS

Study Abroad Program Locations for the 2008-09 Academic Year

	Females	Males
Argentina:	12	2
France:	30	11
Spain:	16	7
Denmark:	6	0
China:	1	3
Egypt:	0	3
South Africa:	5	1
Israel:	4	1

Source: Columbia Study Abroad website



CULPA MATCHING

Can you guess which sublime selection matches the professor's review on "Columbia's underground listing of professor ability"?

1. Rosalind Krauss, art history

2. Gayatri Spivak, University Professor

3. Don Melnick, environmental biology

4. Akeel Bilgrami, philosophy

5. Eric Foner, history

6. Jack McGourty, engineering

A. This guy was a good teacher. He knew a lot of stuff and talked good. We read good books. Now I know many more things and I had fun in the class.

B. Each of her lectures brings me to an intellectual orgasm.

C. Yes, he still rhetorically pimp-slaps anyone making a shallow or just-plain-wrong comment, and I must thank him for that.

D. She has a rotator cuff problem that makes it impossible for her to open doors, so she just stands in front of doors until someone comes by and opens them.

E. He always wakes up at Three in the morning (which he is very proud of). He likes to do Yoga.

F. It's not so much that _____'s handsome so much as that he has the most intricately designed and meticulously kept facial hair in the history of evolution.



B BLUE NOTES

Deep under Barnard's Sulzberger Hall, there is a small, humid, yellow room. It contains two elliptical machines, two stationary bikes, two Treadmills, and a scattered cornucopia of strength training equipment. The price of admission to this fitness nirvana is attendance at a 50-minute Weight Room Orientation session.

At ten minutes to 8 p.m., girls began to file in. Though the gym rules mandate that students come dressed to work out, most wore ballerina flats. Two donned headphones. Tavius, the fitness instructor, passed out a ten-page manual that included acronyms designed for achieving the best of all possible workouts: R.I.C.E., (Rest, Ice Compression, Elevation), F.I.T.T., (Frequency, Intensity, Time, Type), as well as a bibliography of such scholarly standbys as *Sport Stretch*, 2nd edition.

Tavius began his *tour de sport* in the Treadmill corner. "When you're on the Treadmill, and you want

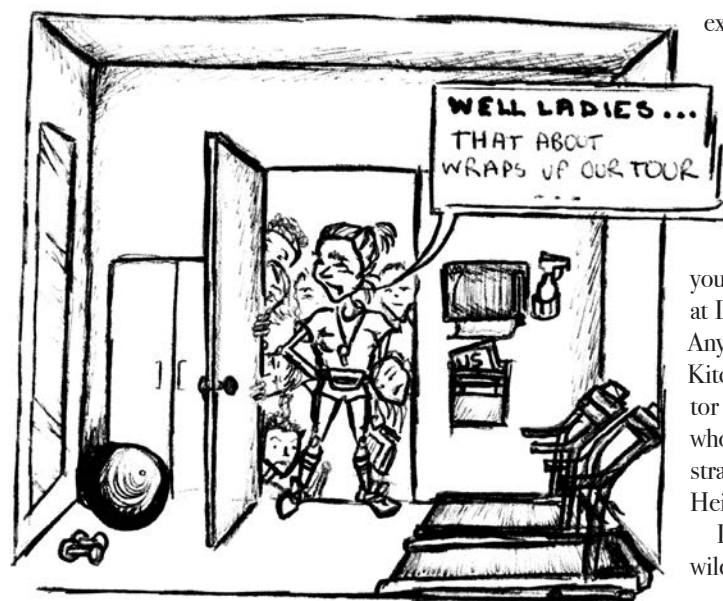
to get off, you have to straddle it," he explained. One pony-tailed first-year raised her eyebrows and smirked at a friend.

The focus shifted to the strength training machines. Tavius mounted the Gravatron, a contraption apparently designed for dips and pull-ups, and pulled from the id of Leopold von Sacher Masoch. "Be careful when getting off," Tavius warned, this time with no response.

At around 45 minutes into the session, after Tavius had painstakingly made a jocular remark about every piece of fitness equipment, the group welcomed a Barnard upperclassman from the *Fit Bear News*, the official publication of the Barnard weight room. "If you're a person who just can't get enough of the freaking dumbbells, we want you to write for us!"

But for now, the group *had* had enough of the freaking dumbbells. After the promised designated weight room ID card stickers were doled out to the Orientation graduates, a stampede of ballerina flats exited the small room, leaving a trail of weight room manuals in their wake.

—Juli N. Weiner



I've developed a litmus test for friendship. It's called the Toast Test, and it goes like this: Anyone you meet at Columbia who suggests dinner at Deluxe is probably not worth your time. Anyone willing to trudge up to Max Soha or Kitchenette probably is. But the best indicator of a best friend is Toast, the hapless but wholly satisfying dive bar and restaurant that straddles the border between Morningside Heights and Harlem at 3157 Broadway.

If a friend is willing to journey to the wilds of Broadway and Tiemann Place for a

good beer and burger, that's a keeper.

But last month, an unexpected variable popped up and skewed my science. The owners of Toast opened up a second restaurant, also called Toast, in the space that Carne used to occupy, at 2737 Broadway. I was skeptical. After all, who would choose to walk down to soulless 105th for the Toast experience when they could walk uptown for a slice of Harlem heaven?

The new Toast is fine—but it seems to be suffering from an identity crisis. The décor is hodgepodge, with black-and-white photos of cowboys tacked up next to impressionistic paintings and cheesy signs bearing beer logos, and the big dining room doesn't feel airy, just empty.

The menu offers all of the Toast mainstays (including the delectable "French Burger," served with a dollop of goat cheese) with a few notable additions: lamb, duck, and a salmon burger. Portions seem to be smaller, especially when it comes to salads, and all of the food is served on china (at the old Toast, sandwiches are wrapped in paper and served in baskets). Clearly, *nouveau* Toast is after a classier clientele.

As I was eating, I spotted four couples over the age of 50. And while the restaurant is offering promotions to entice the college crowd (half-off bottles of wine on Wednesday nights, for example), I'd rather dine uptown, with good friends, under the rattle of the elevated one train.

—Kate Linthicum



Illustrations by Alexandra Voite

Did you know that the empty pedestal currently called the sundial used to be topped with a large granite sphere? Do you care? Well, the folks at www.morningside-heights.net care a great deal—they've even offered an estimate for the cost of a replacement sphere (\$30,000-\$50,000).

Skeletal but comprehensive, the local upstart website is replete with listings of the best places to shop and eat, with frank commentary from the creators: Le Monde completely sucks. It is pretentious and expensive, and they simply don't know how to cook. It also gives an overview of civic issues—suggestions from the banal (get better trashcans) to the bizarre (gild Alma Mater in gold). Also, it hasn't been updated since 2003.

The site was the brainchild of Columbia graduate and Morningside Heights zealot Ian Fletcher, who launched it in 1996 with help from Barbara Hohol and Jack Arbo, long-time leaders of the Morningside Heights Block Association. Ian has since moved away from the area and the website has passed into semi-dormancy. Hohol is holding out for revival, though. "We get an enormous amount of hits per day," she said of the website, though she didn't offer exact figures. "We would really love for it to continue. Who we need is another Ian with the passion and enthusiasm for Morningside Heights," Barbara lamented in hour three of our interview, eyeing me suggestively.

Hohol is a bit of an odd duck. In the 1950s, she attended Barnard, then GS, where she was a "radio major with an academics minor." She currently lives with her cats Mischief and Gutter Rat (recently renamed due to an incident involving a pound of cheddar), in a very cozy Morningside apartment decorated with Native American artifacts. She plans to travel to Papua New Guinea, Iceland, Alaska, New Zealand, and China.

But Hohol is a Morningsider at heart, and though her passion for community action has waned—as has the site—her love of the place has not. "It's changed drastically in the past 40 years," she said, though she's nostalgic for the M[']side of yore. "I miss it," Hohol added. "It was filthy."

—Tony Gong

Campus Characters

You might not know the following figures—but you should. In *Campus Characters*, THE BLUE AND WHITE introduces you to a handful of Columbians who are up to interesting and extraordinary things, and whose stories beg to be shared. If you'd like to suggest a Campus Character, send us an e-mail at theblueandwhite@columbia.edu.

SAM RENNEBOHM

There's a Seahawks-Packers game on TV at a Seattle pub, and things are not going well for the home team. Sam Rennebohm, GS '09, watches quietly, his 6'2" frame tensing up during a fast-breaking play, his fists pounding the table softly in frustration when it fizzles. During a commercial break, conversation turns to Columbia's end of fall semester's hunger strike.

"So the cats just didn't eat for ten days? What made them so righteous that they didn't eat?" That's Will, Rennebohm's friend since elementary school.

"It wasn't so much about them being righteous," Rennebohm replies. He then explains the events building up to the strike, methodically describing the offences that brought about the action in the first place. Finally, Will nods in agreement and turns back to the game.

I'd seen Rennebohm do the same thing two months earlier. That November night he had been standing at the sundial, commanding the attention of hundreds of people. The crowd stood silently as he explained what concessions had been made in the strike, how the negotiations were going and what supporters

could do to help.

Unlike the fiery haranguer that followed, Rennebohm, the son of a minister and a social worker, used no inflated rhetoric to tell the story. He never even raised his voice.



Illustrations by Maxine Keyes

Rennebohm is a communicator. As a ROOTed facilitator—and the only straight white male one, at that—he's usually the one explaining ground rules and facilitating discussions. During the strike, besides serving as a spokesman and running the vigils, he moderated negotiations between the hunger strikers and administrators, sitting quietly a little back from the table and stepping in only to keep the agenda on track. Last summer, he helped the Office of Multicultural Affairs revise Under1Roof, the two-year-old diversity education program for first-years.

Rennebohm, a Race and Ethnic Studies major, has theories as to why more white people don't join ROOTed and other "race things": People know how white people aren't supposed to behave, he explains, but there aren't many models of how they should, making it hard to pin down positive ways to participate.

"It can be difficult for a white person to be part of a group of people who are bringing up white privilege a lot," he concedes.

At his large public high school, most of the students were black, but most of the AP classes were filled with white kids, giving rise to a tacit social segregation that no one knew how to break. Rennebohm, who played defensive end for the racially mixed football team, didn't feel bound by that barrier and worked with his high school's ROOTed equivalent. When he came to Columbia after a year of volunteering in a township in South Africa, ROOTed seemed like a natural fit. Movements like Stop Hate on Columbia's Campus (SHOCC) and the hunger strike followed.

After having heard Rennebohm explain the hunger strike to Will, I probed him further over coffee (for me) and tea (for him) at a Seattle hangout. He had been very involved in the plan's early stages, and he explained the idea of a hunger strike differently from how I'd heard it bandied about in the heady days of the event itself.

"I think the idea of [fasting is] doing something

where you put yourself as kind of a place where your body is a site of contemplation and thoughts, that I recognize that these problems exist on our campus, with our university and administration, but also because I'm part of this campus, exist within me," he says slowly, his Yankees hat turned slightly askew, his long body hunched over a bar stool.

"So the most immediate thing I can do or any individual can do in any situation is begin with the self, and understand our own engagement."

I then ask Rennebohm whether or not he considers himself an activist. He smiles.

"No...no. No. I guess it kind of comes down to semantics, but...no."

Instead, you might call Rennebohm the spiritual center of the hunger strike—after all, he does want to go to seminary after graduation, to become a minister like his father. After that, plans get fuzzy.

"That's for God to know, and me to find out."

—*Lydia DePillis*

ABBY BROBERG

Abby Broberg, CC '08, is a quirky girl. She makes enormous handmade valentines. She greets friends with pokes in the belly button. She welcomed this BLUE AND WHITE reporter by donning a blue and white sweater. A sweater plastered with big deer silhouettes, no less; a sweater that wouldn't look an inch out of place on Juno MacGuff.

Indeed, there is a telling resemblance between Broberg and this goofily-named movie character; Broberg's post-adolescent absurdity is very current. As a sophomore, she founded a theater festival. Inexplicably called *Egg and Peacock*, it features ten plays that are written, staged, and performed in twenty-four hours. The festival's parent organization is the King's Crown Shakespeare Troupe, which Broberg calls an exercise in "wild, sometimes drunken Shakespeare."

On the occasional first Monday of the month, Broberg appears as "Miss Geneva Convention" in an amateur burlesque revue at the Galápagos Art Space in Williamsburg. But how does this quiet-voiced girl transform into a tassel-twizzling dame? Ever since she was a shy Texas kid, she's turned to acting to help draw her out of her shell. In recent years she has focused almost exclusively on producing.

But she sees her role as a producer as more than just wringing the sponsor's arm for vouchers and grants. She wants to support her actors and stagehands, who

she says often feel adrift in a city and a school where niches are difficult to snuggle into. "Every single person at this school wants someone to rehash their experiences with," she said. She empathizes with the anonymous freshman who goes "to a meeting and if you don't have exactly the same interests or the time to contribute then you don't really ever see those people again." So she has created a setting where a kid with an idea "could just go in and say, 'wouldn't it be neat if we did this on stage?'"

After she graduates this spring, Broberg hopes to teach high school English like one of her mentors, a "sweet, bald man who would never raise his voice above 10 decibels." But until then, *Egg and Peacock* is her focus. At auditions, directors are asked questions like, "how would you convey the presence of a non-specific, non-Judeo-Christian god?" The goal is to exorcise rote, prepared answers from the creative process, and reward spontaneous creativity instead. She never misses KCST's Wednesday evening "office hours" at La Negrita, where she helps company players get back in the zing-and-dazzle zone.

Abby's favorite movie, the documentary on the making of *Labyrinth*, is an indication of her taste for the peculiar. The 1986 film, which was directed by Jim Henson, features David Bowie cavorting with a panoply of puppets. It is typically rented by '80s babies eager for ironic, retro pleasure, but Broberg appreciates the film from a backstage perspective. Her favorite scene, which features hundreds of chattering puppet heads, is the model for the creative collaboration she seeks. She wants a free exchange of ideas—ideas which may be flimsy or half-formed on their own, but which can be melded together to form something bigger, something complex and stunning.

"It's hundreds of people [solving] problems about how they were going to tell a story," she said. "It's one of those moments when you think you're just living an ironic thing, and then something really genuine surprises you."

—*Alexandra Muhler*



Columbia Spectators

How the Urban Studies Department is Reacting—or Not—to Manhattanville
BY ANNA PHILLIPS

Manhattanville—it has been endlessly argued over, voted on, even starved for. Now the issue is finally resolved, and the construction crews are breaking ground this summer. There remains the small matter of a few business owners who refuse to relocate, but they will likely go peacefully, and with adequate compensation.

But before Manhattanville-the-problem is laid to rest, it seems appropriate to devote some space to the voices that were not heard in the debate: the professors. There are all manner of academics at Columbia—specialists in urban planning, political science, history, architecture, and economics—who could opine on Columbia’s expansion and haven’t yet done so publicly. Mostly, they support the expansion and the University’s way of going about it. Some feel slightly bruised that they were never consulted and some simply opted out. What follows are some of their voices—what they would have done differently had anyone asked, and what they envision for the future.

ESTER FUCHS

Any discussion of Urban Studies professors’ involvement in town and gown affairs ought to begin with Ester Fuchs. Before she left Columbia in 2002 to work as a special advisor to Mayor Bloomberg for four years, she had been the chair of the Urban Studies Program at Barnard and Columbia, and founding director of Columbia’s Center for Urban Research and Policy. She ran the New York City area studies research program and helped members of the Harlem community write the Empowerment Zone proposal. “So,” she breathed, having just exhaled her resume for me, “I’ve done a lot of work in this field.”

But when Columbia began laying plans to expand into Manhattanville, Fuchs was down at City Hall. When she returned to the campus in 2006, “a lot of structural elements were put into place,” she says, some of which she would have done differently. “I

wouldn’t have created an LDC,” she says, referring to the Local Development Corporation—a group of West Harlem residents and business owners—with which the University has agreed to negotiate a Community Benefits Agreement. The LDC, she says, emerged for political reasons, but its membership was too narrow for it to be an effective negotiating body.

She’s clearly frustrated with the way negotiations have gone, and becomes positively animated when discussing a certain contingent of students who see Columbia’s expansion as a moral, rather than political or legal issue.

Last November, amid the confusion of the hunger strike and sporadic Manhattanville protests, Global Solutions—a student group that organizes discussion panels—invited Fuchs and two other professors to speak about Manhattanville. The conversation quickly became tense; Fuchs’ fervent defense of the University’s policies garnered disdain from the crowd of students that largely opposed these policies.

Unlike most of those in attendance at the panel, Fuchs recalls it fondly. She says she was thrilled to see students taking initiative, but can’t understand why urban studies faculty members haven’t done the same.

“They haven’t done one forum—I find that to be very surprising,” she says. “I’m not sure why the Urban Studies Program, the Center for Urban Research and Policy, any of these academic organizations have not gotten more engaged in this discussion for students.”

“I don’t want to sound like ‘Oh, I was so great,’” she says, “but I built this and the capacity was here to do this kind of work.”

KENNETH JACKSON

“In the long scope of New York, Manhattanville’s not small, but it’s not big,” says Professor Jackson, the Jacques Barzun Professor of History and Columbia’s resident New York City scholar.

The Manhattanville expansion’s



historical weight doesn't have the heft of the Hudson Yards development, Atlantic Yards, or the development of the Trump buildings and the World Trade Center. There's less gloss, less money, less space to go to the mattresses over. Perhaps because he is a scholar of the city—the ever-mutable, ever-shifting city—Jackson sees Columbia's expansion holistically.

"I'm a believer in change," he says. "Just because something has been something else, there's no reason for that to stay."

Like most of the professors interviewed for this article, Jackson isn't particularly interested in being consulted by Columbia administrators on Manhattanville's development; he'd rather leave that to them. Manhattanville isn't "a hot topic" among the faculty, he said.

But he is concerned about how the new campus will look.

"I can't stand the new big boxes down at NYU," he says, acknowledging that with Manhattanville's short buildings and its proximity to the viaduct, creating an attractive campus will pose a significant challenge. "Whatever else Manhattanville is right now, it's not attractive. It's not a landscape anyone would find beautiful."

As to the moral quandary the expansion presents, Jackson falls largely on the University's side. In December he was scheduled to be part of a panel assembled by the CCSC's Committee on Manhattanville (the event fell apart after only Jackson and sociology professor Saskia Sassen agreed to participate) and, he says, if he had spoken at the panel he would "have probably come out marginally for it...But the University has a moral obligation to be more than just a market operator...But Columbia can't solve Harlem's problems."

Ultimately, for all his waffling, Jackson comes down on the side of history. "The area is significantly going to change because the city's changing," he says. "Density is good—if you want to go fishing, then go to Vermont."

HILARY BALLON

Several years ago, before Columbia had a website and a party line devoted to Manhattanville, Bollinger established a Manhattanville committee composed of about 40 faculty members. Among them

was Ballon, an architectural historian known for her perfectly coiffed hair, regal demeanor, and her recent book on Robert Moses. The committee met a handful of times, Ballon said, and viewed presentations by Renzo Piano, among other architects. There was the occasional Q & A, but eventually the committee dispersed and from then on, any collaboration between academics and the administration was minimal.

For Ballon, this posed a problem—not because she wanted to be consulted on the technical aspects of the plan, but because professors were not being asked for input regarding "what this new campus would be like and whom it would serve."

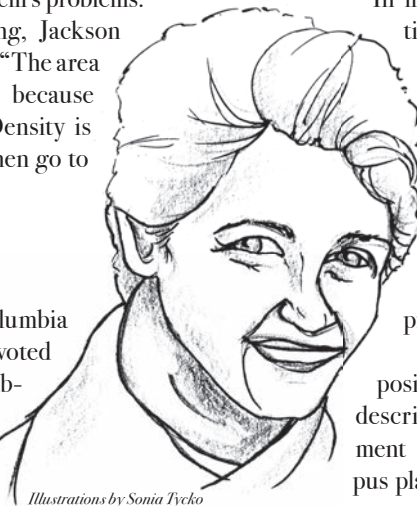
"Eminent domain may not touch my life and ULURP [Uniform Land Use Review Process] may not touch my life, but how this space is used—that could have an impact," she says.

More concretely, Ballon approached administrators about possibly relocating the Wallach Art Gallery to 125th Street, a move that would enliven street life and give the gallery a public face, perhaps even some visitors. "People would repeatedly nod their heads and say that sounds like a good idea," Ballon says. "But each time we tried to be a part of the process of consultation...that conversation never got off the ground."

One would suspect that as a Moses scholar, Ballon would be staunchly pro-expansion, and she doesn't disappoint. She's irritated when protestors claim alliance with Jane Jacobs and put the University in the Moses camp. But her trouble with this isn't in the comparison of Columbia to Robert Moses—which might be justified—but rather the vilification of both the project and the man.

"In my view, there aren't great injustices here, there aren't people who are being dramatically harmed," she says. "I see the University agreeing to contribute to public education, provide jobs, do a number of things for the community, and I imagine it wasn't easy to determine what were the right kinds of things to offer and precisely who to negotiate with."

Recently, Ballon was offered a position at NYU, and given the job description—overseeing the development of academic programs and campus planning at the new campus in Abu



Illustrations by Sonia Tycko

Dhabi—it's no surprise that she has accepted. It's an important step for her, but it's also slightly worrying that just as Columbia has decided to break ground on a new campus, the University's resident arbiter of good architectural taste has left.

SHARYN O'HALLORAN

Of all Columbia's professors, O'Halloran is probably the most involved in the expansion. A political science professor, she has given over 20 Manhattanville presentations to different faculty groups, chairs the University Senate subcommittee of external relations (read: Columbia and Harlem's relationship), and works with community and elected officials to improve said relationship.

It's not surprising that she's so involved—it's a \$7 billion project that will transform the University and she's one of the youngest academics around, so she'll see it come to fruition. But the extent of her involvement is a rarity.

O'Halloran disputes the notion that faculty haven't invested themselves in the project. Bollinger has set up 12 advisory committees to elicit professors' feedback through multiple channels, she says. "The faculty isn't shy. If there really are concerns that they have, they will express them."

This is certainly true for her—she's been making recommendations on the design since its early stages. "It's not that we were fundamentally altering or approving buildings," she explains. "What we didn't want is what it looks like on Amsterdam at two in the morning"—empty of street life and vaguely menacing.

"Most faculty are very supportive of the expansion, but they want to see it done well. They want to be proud of the institution to which they belong." She's right—most faculty members are supportive—but few are quite as enthusiastic about the idea as she is. O'Halloran burns the shoe leather—she goes to Community Board 9 meetings and West Harlem LDC meetings to get an idea of what issues matter to West Harlem residents. She's the University's eyes and ears but, "in no way do I set policy," she clarifies.

In her urban policy class, O'Halloran talks about Manhattanville as a case study for urban expansion, and believes other professors should bring it into the classroom more. But she's cautious about it. "Professors should not use our classrooms to pursue a particular policy position," she says.

SASKIA SASSEN

Sassen's spacious office on the fourth floor of Fayerweather is still jammed with dozens of boxes. She's been here for several months, but jets around the world so much that she hasn't had time to unpack.

She speaks slowly, deliberately, in a light Scandinavian accent, holding up a finger to emphasize points.

"A lot has been said about the fact that a city like New York needs dynamic economic development. The public purse is tight, and it's suffering," she begins, intending to complicate this. Sassen sees Columbia's expansion differently than many urban studies professors, especially Fuchs. And she's more willing to talk about it as a moral issue.

Columbia, she says, is a powerful actor that can escape the "killer logic" of the market economy because it's such a wealthy university. And with great power comes great responsibility. The University cannot turn Manhattanville into a prosperous neighborhood, but it "can do something to improve the situation of the residents."

The University is full of researchers who have documented the shadow effects of gentrification, she says. "You would expect at some point that they would use some of the brainpower of the University to figure out a better formula for expansion." The formula Sassen wants is one that "does not alienate the community," and unlike many of her peers, she doesn't accept that gentrification, while inevitable, has to have the deleterious effects on the poor that it usually does.

Sassen believes that Columbia is underutilizing its academics with urban planning and architecture expertise. Like Fuchs, Sassen participated in a student-organized panel on Manhattanville and says that while she talks to students about the expansion, there's practically no discussion of it within the sociology department.

For all her concern about changing the way Columbia is going about its expansion, she's not particularly well versed in the minutia of the expansion itself. No matter, she says. "Even if I do not know the details of the process, there are big shapes that show a picture of the University." There are different ways of gentrifying a neighborhood, and Columbia has to find a better one.

"It's a puzzle, hence, there is a solution. I'm just amazed that Columbia has again failed to use its

brainpower to find what is the puzzle and how to solve it...When we invade a community, we owe them something.”

ELLIOTT SCLAR

“I think the expansion is a good project, but the University made a lot of mistakes I could have told them not to make.”

This is Elliott Sclar, an economist and urban planner at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation. Propped up against one wall of his office are large panels displaying a photo taken in 1983 of the Upper West Side. Outside of his office and around the corner is a ten foot long map of West Harlem. Sclar has written about urbanization on a global scale, but he’s also done a lot of work in New York, helping community boards with rezoning and special districts.

“It isn’t that they [the administration] wouldn’t have welcomed my advice, but they never asked for it,” he continues. Columbia “is like feudalism, with a lot of fiefdoms. You reach out to the people around you.”

In the course of the interview, Sclar says repeatedly that, were he a consultant, he could have done things better, mainly in terms of getting the West Harlem community and church leadership more involved earlier in the process. The administrators “mean to

be good neighbors,” he shakes his head, “but those are things they’re not trained to do.”


Sclar should know—he does the training. Amanda Burden, director of New York City’s Department of City Planning and chair of the Planning Commission (which okayed Columbia’s expansion) was his student. “It either shows what a good professor I was, or what a bad one I was, depending on your point of view,” he says.

Expansion, Sclar says, is an “urgent issue” for Columbia. And he agrees with just about every urban studies professor on the belief that if Columbia doesn’t expand into West Harlem, a different—and less tractable—developer will. “The secondary displacement that everyone is concerned about is going to happen,” he says, “even if Columbia turns around tomorrow and says, ‘We’re not going to move.’”

The main point of contention—the battle over whether eminent domain should remain on the table or not—has split his department, Sclar says. He favors the use of eminent domain for public works and is happy to hear that it wouldn’t be used against residents.

I ask why he didn’t approach the administration with his thoughts—“People ask, ‘Why didn’t you volunteer?’” he says. “I assumed they knew what they were doing.”♦

—Lydia DePillis contributed to this article



*We cordially invite you to join us in celebration of
The Bwog’s second birthday at
La Negrita
Friday, the twenty-second of February
at ten o’clock in the evening
999 Columbus Avenue (at W. 109th Street)
New York, NY*

The Bwog...it’s turning two!

Tenured Ever After

For married professors, love is never having to say you're unpublished

BY HANNAH GOLDFIELD

You may have seen them walking together down low steps, just a hair's length closer than the average pair of professional colleagues. Maybe you sat next to them at Brownie's, the architecture school's classy alternative to Ferris Booth, as they nibbled on croissants and talked dryly of the Frankfurt School, or maybe, they even taught one of your classes together. Married professors: they're everywhere on Columbia's campus—there's more love in Morningside Heights than you'd think.

An informal investigation yielded about a dozen married professor couples, in a broad range of departments, as well as a pair or two of lovebirds rumored to be “shacking up” together. Getting face time with these power couples proved to be very difficult. As any undergrad is well aware, it is hard enough to pin down one professor for a meeting, so busy is the academic life. Getting two in the same room at the same time is near impossible.

Philosophy professors Philip and Patricia Kitcher are on leave together in Berlin. Professor Janaki Bakhle (history) is on leave as well and her husband, Professor Nicholas Dirks (Vice President for Arts and Sciences, Franz Boas Professor of Anthropology, and Professor of History) was in Davos, Switzerland when I requested a sit-down. Professors Andrew (English and American Studies) and Dawn Delbanco (art history) politely declined to be interviewed.

But the ones who were in the country and willing to talk offered an interesting window into the academic family. Professors Marianne Hirsch (English and women's studies) and Leo Spitzer (history) have been together since the 1970s, when they were both teaching at Dartmouth. The first sparks of their romance flew as they worked side by side in 1978 on a committee for equal access admission for women

there. They've been working closely together ever since, writing books—*Ghosts of Home: The Afterlife of Czernowitz in Jewish Memory* is their current project—and even co-teaching classes, though they are less than vocal about their nuptials in that context. A student who took their seminar “Voice of the Witness: History, Literature, and Law” last semester had no idea they were married, assuming that that they just had a “really close professional relationship,” until a classmate told him otherwise.

Students in one of English professor Michael Golston's poetry seminars, however, figured out for themselves that he was hitched to someone in the room. Professor Golston and Spanish lecturer Cherrymae Golston have been married since 1985, and when Mrs. Golston decided to audit her husband's class one semester, their relationship proved difficult to hide. “One day he got a splinter,” she said, laughing, “and he asked me if I had tweezers. Everybody thought that was a little weird.” Despite their rouse being up, they enjoyed the experience. “He's really good at what he does,” said the female Golston. “I was just another student. I wrote papers, even.”

“I graded ‘em,” chimed her husband.

Though the Golstons go so far as to share an office, and philosophy professor Carol Rovane has been known to substitute-teach for her philosophy professor husband Akeel Bilgrami, other professor couples exist in entirely separate academic realms and even on different campuses. Genetics professor Ginny Papaioannou teaches and researches at the Columbia Medical School, more than 50 blocks north of the office of Professor Simon Schama (history and art history), her husband of 23 years. They met at the University of Cambridge and have moved

together institutionally ever since—first to Oxford, then to Tufts (Papaioannou) and Harvard (Schama) respectively, landing finally at Columbia. “I followed him to Boston and he followed me to New York,” she said. “It was my turn.”

Unlike Professors Spitzer and Hirsch and the Golstons, their paths never cross during a typical workday, and they don’t share a commute. Papaioannou spends her time managing a mouse lab, while Schama does a lot of traveling and, at the moment, documentary filmmaking with PBS.

“Columbia is big enough that we could pretend that we’re not at the same institution,” she said. That said, they are very glad to be at the same institution. “We take a lot of pride in being part of this university,” Papaioannou said. “It’s been good to us and we try to be good to it.” Their institutional loyalty is a family affair: their son Gabriel is a CC senior studying architecture and their daughter Chloe is studying at Cambridge after graduating from Harvard.

Of course, not all apples fall so close to the academic tree. Professors Hirsch and Spitzer have three sons, none of whom went to Dartmouth, where they grew up, and none who have shown any interest in professional academia; they work in computer networking, politics, and television. The Golstons’ daughter, who is a Wesleyan student studying abroad in India, where she’s focusing on South Indian dance and voice, aspires to be a pastry chef.

All three professor-pairs seem to make a point of stoking the romantic fire. During our interview, Hirsch and Spitzer, who exude the warm glow of a couple aging well together, each turned to the other, deferent, before answering a question. The Golstons have a Wednesday night ritual: at 8 p.m., after his seminar lets out, they meet for a drink in the neighborhood (location undisclosed). Papaioannou spoke lovingly of her husband and avows that “the marriage comes before the

institution.” Because Schama works with the BBC, they keep two apartments, one in New York and one in London, and spend as much time together as possible. Papaioannou denies any sense of competition. “I’m just immensely proud of him,” she said, and for his part she explained that he takes an interest in her work, describing him as a “scientifically educated layperson.” “I don’t expect him to know molecular details, but he knows the process and the political surroundings.” He defers to her completely in matters of fashion, however. “This morning he asked me what to wear on today’s shoot.”

When asked if they could imagine being married to someone who wasn’t a professor, someone who worked—God forbid—a nine-to-five job, the answer seemed to be a resounding no. Professor Golston admitted that he’d never even dated anyone who worked within standard office hours. They all appear to revel in the academic lifestyle and the temporal and intellectual freedom it allows them. Professor Papaioannou thinks it would be difficult to be married to someone in another profession. “Our work life is our life,” she said. “We don’t put it down at 5 p.m.” The other two couples are a little wary of this idea, and careful to maintain a life apart from Columbia and academia. Professors Hirsch and Spitzer appreciate that living in New York makes it easy for them to have friends who aren’t academics. The Golstons rely on their 13-year-old son and dog to pull them away from their desks.

Undoubtedly, it takes a certain kind to be a full-time academic, and what emerges from these sundry love stories is that if you are that kind, you’re probably going to want to tie the knot with one of your breed. But, European pied-à-terres and dawn-to-dusk intellectualism aside—not to mention those weird vacations they call sabbaticals—a marriage is a marriage is a marriage. Professors...they’re just like us!♦



Illustrated by Shaina Rubin

Are You There, Gertrude Stein? It's Me, Margaret Vandenberg.

A Barnard Professor and Her Devoted Following

BY ANNA PHILLIPS

Last year, before Margaret Vandenberg arrived on the first day of her postmodernism class, several girls walked to the front of the room and, unprompted, placed a small podium on top of the desk. Moments later, MV strolled in, her tall, lanky frame drawing all eyes upward. “Thanks girls,” she said, her voice low and dulcet.

The same scenario would play out the following fall in Vandenberg’s modernism class with what appeared to be the same clique of girls, all of whom were equally willing to perform small, unasked favors.

As Vandenberg launched into the day’s lecture, the class became hypnotized; she dropped smart bombs like “vagina dentata,” “gender binary,” and “castration anxiety.” There was Freud, Jung, Stein, Cixous, Kristeva, Lacan, and Derrida. The *To the Lighthouse* taught in Lit Hum was re-spun into a tale of androgyny, and Hemingway suddenly became radical, rather than terse and sexist. The students’ souls swooned at their first introduction to theory, and when class ended, they stumbled clumsily out of the classroom, as though drifting out of an opium den.

At Barnard, Vandenberg is modernism. Her class is one of the school’s most popular, and she’s known for being encircled by a bevy of adoring students, almost all of whom are Barnard women and English majors. They look forward to her office hours, trade stories about her outside of class, and occasionally argue from her point of view in other English classes.

In Vandenberg’s class, they sit straight-backed and alert, notebooks open, laptops humming, copying down everything she says, verbatim. “Modernism is reading literature through your genitals,” two girls in the front scribbled into their notebooks “Mary Gordon hates Hemingway.”

Margaret Vandenberg is not the subject of a Facebook group. Her followers haven’t formed a cohesive organization. They don’t have a meeting place or a

shrine (so they say). If one of Vandenberg’s acolytes were captured and roughly questioned, she’d only be able to release a few names; she wouldn’t know the devotee hierarchy. And yet, if you talk to one, she’ll direct you to another, who’ll direct you to another, and so on.

Vandenburgianism is orally communicable. “A bunch of people I knew—mostly Barnard women—sung her praises,” said Bari Weiss CC ’07, who considers herself several steps removed from the true believers. They said “she was a prophet, a genius, a rock star. The genius thing was definitely repeated over and over.”

“When I go to meet with her, my friends joke, ‘Did you get dressed up?’” said an enamored student, who wished to remain anonymous since she’s still in Vandenberg’s class. “I have a weird admirer crush. Other people feel that way—it’s not my own personal crush.”

“There’s always a line out the door for her office hours,” another devotee said. Somewhat miraculously, Vandenberg attained the popularity that Jeffrey Sachs could have if anyone liked him; and as she steps over bodies to get to her office door, she’s either vaguely aware of it, or extremely modest.

“I’ve heard it, but when you teach you’re sort of in a bubble. You don’t really know what’s going on,” Vandenberg said, pointing to Professor Dennis Dalton as someone with a following. “He’s kind of the king of Barnard pedagogy.”

If Dalton is the king, then Vandenberg is the pedagogical queen. Her admirers rave about her qualities as a teacher, how she makes theory political and important, and how she truly listens to what students have to say. And yet, only a fraction of her popularity is based on her prowess as a teacher. The rest, they say, is due to her aura, her mystique.

“Anyone who doesn’t tell you things is mysterious,” said Julia Turshen, BC ’07. “I think the way she handles herself as a person—it’s sort of

her whole belief of getting past these small logical facts of human beings and addressing things that are more interesting.” But if Vandenburg can get past those quotidian trivialities, most of her admirers can’t.

“Basically everyone I knew in the class just wanted to know every detail about her life,” Weiss said. “They want to know if she takes the stuff she teaches to heart, if she is actually breaking out of ‘the binary’ in her life.”

That is where Vandenburg the professor ends, and Vandenburg the writer begins. One author biography describes her like this: “Despite these academic proclivities, her real vocation is writing lesbian fiction, whatever that is.” While she was working on her dissertation at Columbia in the early ‘90s, Vandenburg wrote a chapter for a book about lesbian home life called *Chasing the American Dyke Dream: Homestretch* that was published in 1998. Her essay, “Home-phobia,” is about how lesbians simultaneously disrupt the Oedipal “home” construct and are forcefully rejected by their formerly loving parents, leading to a general inability to create a “home” with another woman.

One of the more colorful passages reads: “I’ve lost count of how many homes I have set up only to wreck. Over and over again, I beat home to the draw, shooting it square between the eyes before it even has time to reach for its holster. And then I stand, smoking pistol in hand, watching yet another perfectly beautiful, perfectly wonderful, absolutely fed-up lover ride into the sunset and out of my life.”

Good-bye, mystique. In 2001, Vandenburg published a novel, *An American in Paris*. There are copies in both Barnard and the Butler stacks, but you can have your own used one for just 87¢ on amazon.com. Some of her devotees have read this book in part, but almost none in its entirety. Some have said that

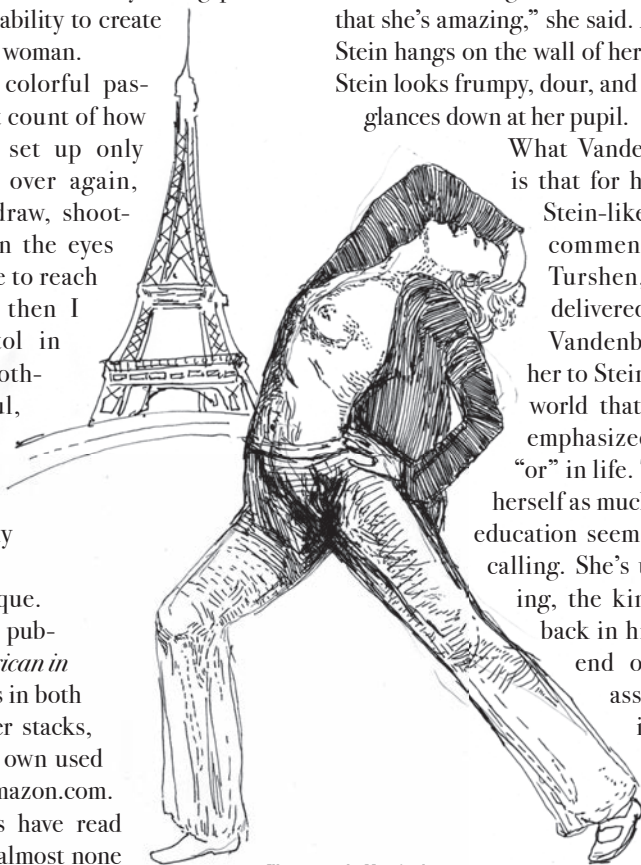
it makes them uncomfortable.

The book, as Vandenburg describes it, is an historical look at 1920s Paris, with particular focus on its Sapphic side. The main character, Henrietta Adams, travels to Paris, where she writes dispatches on the modernist art movement for an American magazine. She meets Gertrude Stein, has tea with Pablo Picasso and Ernest Hemingway, and is accidentally seduced (but how was she to know!) by Djuna Barnes’s notoriously philandering lover, Thelma Wood. Thelma, of course, pins Henri to a metal wheel and erotically, and confusingly, spins her about for several pages. “The new kick, in those days, was to listen to the noble promptings of your inner woman,” Henri writes. “Mine wore leather and liked to be spanked.”

Gertrude Stein figures prominently in the book—which ends with Stein awkwardly inviting Henrietta onto her lap. It’s no surprise: Vandenburg is a true devotee’s devotee.

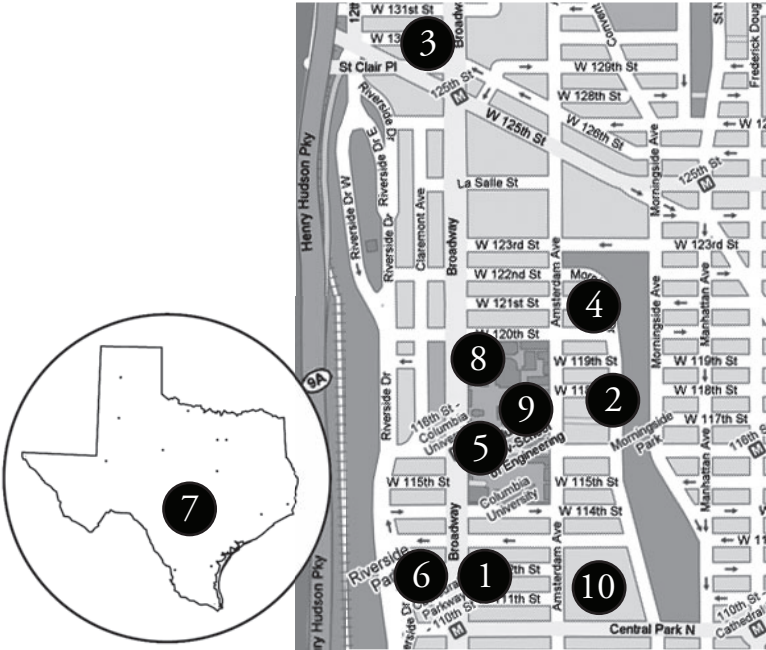
“I do revere—I mean, you talk about mystiques—I have a real thing for Gertrude Stein, I just think that she’s amazing,” she said. A portrait of Gertrude Stein hangs on the wall of her office above her desk. Stein looks frumpy, dour, and deep in thought as she glances down at her pupil.

What Vandenburg may not know is that for her followers, she is a Stein-like figure. At Barnard’s commencement last year, Turshen, the salutatorian, delivered a speech about how Vandenburg had introduced her to Stein and opened up a new world that broke binaries, that emphasized the “and” not the “or” in life. Though she considers herself as much a writer as a teacher, education seems to be Vandenburg’s calling. She’s unfailingly encouraging, the kind of mentor you left back in high school, and at the end of our interview she assures me I’ll make it in journalism. I leave her office wishing I’d put more thought into my outfit. I’m among the converted.♦



Illustrations by Nora Rodriguez

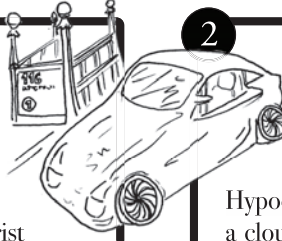
Morningside Star Map



1

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak
2840 Broadway
February 8, 2008 @ 10 a.m.

Saw the famous post-colonial-ethical-deconstructive-syncretist theorist sampling all the cheeses at Westside Market, clearly not intending to buy any. She tried one of everything, and she didn't even use a toothpick—gross! Eventually she checked out with a bottle of Diet Coke and a pack of mint Orbit. Seemed annoyed when I yelled “GAYATRI!” and wouldn't make eye contact, but she looked fab.



2

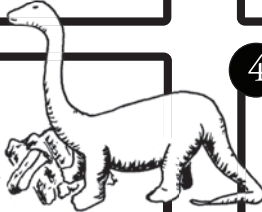
Kenneth T. Jackson
Amsterdam Avenue and 118th Street
February 7, 2008 @ 8:30 a.m.

Hypocrisy alert! Just saw KTJ emerging from a cloud of fumes after parking his red sports car with Jersey plates in the faculty garage. He popped the collar on his seersucker suit and slunk off to the nearest subway station where, five minutes later, he emerged, blinking into the sunlight. “G’ornin’ pedestrians,” he drawled, “just enjoying this fine public transportation system we have here.”

3

The Bollingers
646 West 131st Street
February 3, 2008 @ 8:30 p.m.

Spotted: Prez and Lady Bo sharing a romantic dinner at Dinosaur B-B-Q (they had the ribs). We finished our dinners at the same time and I saw them leave, smiling beatifically at the locals like foreign heads of state. As Lee C. hailed a cab for the seven block journey back to their townhouse, he turned to the Mrs. and said: “Someday, dearest, this will all be ours.”



4

Oliver Sacks and David Helfand
120th and Amsterdam Avenue
February 9, 2008 @ 10 a.m.

Just saw Sacks and Helfand having their beards trimmed in Aris Beauty Salon. “Should I go for the chin curtain or the extended goatee?” Helfand asked. Sacks was busy giving someone a scalp massage. “Crystal, what do you think?” Helfand persisted, addressing the beautician. Crystal and her five-inch fingernails were partial to a soul patch.

5

James, Jill, and Michael Shapiro

Intersection of Broadway and 116th Street
February 8, 2008 @ 7 p.m.

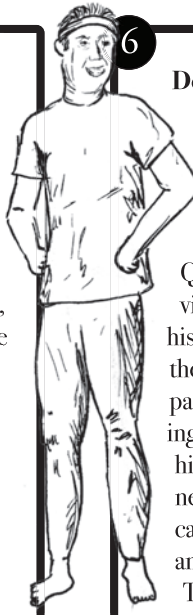
Spotted: the incredible Shapiro triplets, loaded down with luggage, waiting for the M60 to LaGuardia – one can only assume for a family reunion. “I like your new office,” said Michael, smiling wryly. He must have touched on a sore subject, because Jill slapped him in the face.

“Hey,” Jim intervened, “cut it out!”

“But he started it,” she whined.

I tried to catch more, but the M60 pulled.

¡Vamonos amigos!



6

Dean Austin Quigley

2831 Broadway
February 10, 2008 @ 2 p.m.

I was trying on striped gold bodysuits in American Apparel when Dean Austin Quigley walked in! Metallic swimsuits and vintage-stock sunglasses didn't seem like his scene, but he totally made his way over to the unisex leggings rack and grabbed a few pairs (size medium). I listened in him gossiping with the salesgirl—turns out he's reliving his RSC days with a part in a new play, and needs the tights to get into character. He came out to model in the full-length mirror, and I told him he looked great!

Total white lie though.

7

University Professor Emeritus Jacques Barzun

666 Hildebrand
San Antonio, TX
February 6, 2008 @
1:30 p.m.

When I came in to clean the house yesterday, Jacques wasn't in the den like usual, so I checked out by the pool. He was taking a nap.



8

Simon Schama

522 Fayerweather Hall
February 5, 2008 @ 11 a.m.

Stopped by Fayerweather to chat with my dissertation adviser, and whoa, there was Schama... in his office! I took two seminars with the man and was sure that he headed straight for JFK in a Columbia-hired private car the minute the class was over. Students were lined up outside the door, but none were going in—Schama was on the phone, in his best PBS-announcer voice, talking to what sounded like his travel agent.

9

Jack McGourty

Low Library Steps
February 11, 2008 @ 3:15 p.m.

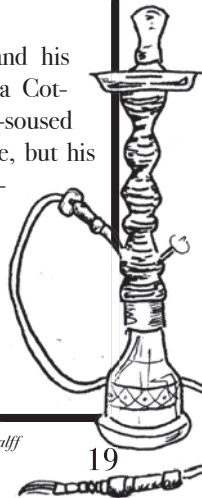
Saw Jack McGourty, wearing Birkenstocks in February and his signature hemp choker, smoking hookah on the steps with a bunch of Turkish undergrads. They debated flavors before lighting up, the kids advocating the simple anise version, McGourty pushing for slammin' sour apple. The negotiations were pretty quiet but I think Dean McGourty won out. “So friends,” Jack inquired to no one in particular, “have you all completed your science requirements?”

10

Robert Thurman

1038 Amsterdam Avenue
February 2, 2008 @ 8 p.m.

Saw Buddhistologist Bob Thurman and his daughter Uma supping at Columbia Cottage. Tenzin Bob had already be-soused himself with two carafes of box wine, but his thirst had not slacked. His ascot flying, he gestured obstreperously and shouted—first in Chinese, then in a very slow English—at the frightened wait staff, demanding more wine. Overwhelmed by the situation, Uma averted her icy gaze. She's super tall.



Interleague Play

Columbia Loses Free Agents and Big Stars in Academic Draft

BY ANDREW FLYNN

Mark Slouka was looking good: a New York writer with a *New York Times* Notable Novel and a nice job at Columbia teaching creative writing. But there was one obstacle on the road to glory: the notoriously easy ravages of arts tenure. But it seemed Slouka was prepared for a fight that played out a little like this—

Slouka: Tenure me! The University: denied!
Slouka: What the hell? Alan Brinkley: Boo artists! No tenure! Slouka: I'm appealing this. The University: Denied! Slouka: Screw you guys.

Slouka to Chicago. The University...loses!

Now the secret's out—though those in the know should have seen this coming a long way off. Columbia is going down the crapper, and Slouka wasn't the end of it, though he wasn't the first of it either. Of course, not everybody is with me on this one, but, so far as I can see, there are exactly two ways to build departments and Columbia is failing at both of them.

There is the subtle method: stoke the farm team. Get the new hotness, and keep it in place. And this is where recent events have been particularly dismaying. Owen Gutfreund is obviously a miserable loss—an up-and-comer with lots of potential and a good team player. When you combine this with the loss of Hillary Ballon, though, you just want to shake your head in disgust. And Abu El-Haj? Really? Massad is certainly a wild-card—his output is original, but his controversial rhetoric threatens to focus a bigger outsider spotlight on a department that is urgently in need of stability right now. Needless to say, an Abu El-Haj pick over Massad was a risky move, but a Massad departure will register as nothing on the politically charged scale of Yale's mysterious dropping of Graeber or Boulder's Churchill fight.

But if you're like me, you like homeruns, slam dunks, and superdons: the "great man" method. Columbia's moves on the offense and the

defense here make me want to go punch a hole in the bathroom wall. There are those deals where it's impossible even to glimpse the threads of rationality running beneath the surface through no fault of the University's—Bertrand Russell's abortive attempt to move to CUNY is paradigmatic here. One can't help but imagine an émigré Nabokov languishing in the bowels of the city while Columbia acquired those groomed professionals Arthur Prudden Coleman and Elliot Van Kirk Dobbie. But, alack, who would not pine for Van Kirk Dobbie?

We can of course cite contemporary models—the West-Summers tiff at Harvard is often noted, though I still think the vote's out on whether Princeton's Religion Department is any better, or Harvard's African-American Studies any worse. But, for all the mucky-muck savants jet-setting across Europe for three-quarters of their tenure, for all the Havel hysteria and Sacks insanity, we've still been hemorrhaging power players for a decade. Remember when Raymond Geuss taught aesthetics? Remember when Franco Moretti taught Trilling's survey? Where is that course now? Remember when Louis Menand taught intellectual history? No, no, you don't—for Harvard is sly and indefatigable, and it stole him away before we Lions had the chance to join Menand's metaphysical club.

And torts-fans should remember Waldron's flight to NYU—a shining symbol for all that is wrong with our university and all that is right with theirs. For Waldron is the at the apex of a decade-long exodus of those academicians most central to the liberal imagination: the political philosophers. He's also at the apex of NYU's philosopher buyout, a move that's shot our rivals from zero to hero in less than sixty seconds. The bottom line: money can buy happiness, and we Columbia fans are gonna be unhappy for a very long time. ♦



Illustrated by Shaina Rubin

TOLD BETWEEN PUFFS

In which our hero completes his Hollywood sojourn

Last time, on *Viva La Verily*: Tom Cruise keeps a manslave in his attic; Mike Myers learns a Veritas family secret; and a very pink birthday invitation sits poised between Verily's fingertips.

This last item, announcing the Sweet 16 celebration, in the Hollywood Hills, of his nieces Kayla and Kristal Veritas— names VV shudders even to form in his mind; rather like Nabokov's, Verily's synesthesia assigns colors to words, and "Kayla" and "Kristal" have become, respectably, the bruised yellow skin and swollen magenta sores of a dead lady-of-the-night in Saigon during the rapacious events of... but Verily digresses. 'Nam will wait for another day—is still poised between the moist fingers of our hero, who has indeed chartered a Los Angeles-bound jet. Why did he do it?

The bonds of interbreeding, Verily supposes; the stuff running through the veins of the vast Veritas clan is sludgier than water. Vincent Veritas, unfortunately a.k.a. Vic (K. & K.'s father), is much more than a distant cousin to VV: he's a five-eighths brother (and don't you think too hard about that nasty piece of eugenics).

A certain guilt may be a second reason. The mother of Vic's children, Bijou Harganian-Veritas, caused Verily's hasty, unannounced retreat from Vic's manse six years ago. Verily was brooding in the "breakfast nook" when he stumbled upon a \$4,800 receipt, charged on Mrs. Harganian-Veritas' line of credit, for the so-called Selfish Goddess Treatment: facial, mud soak, manicure, pedicure, wax-induced hair removal, laser-induced hair removal, botulism injections, and something with the noxious name of "anal bleaching." He had not been in touch since.

Verily himself can be an avid personal groomer, but he was going through his feverish indoctrination into the writings of Gramsci, and this concentrated torrent of materialism sent him packing, without a word, on the next Guamward-bound boat.

To make amends with blood relations— yes, that's



what brings Verily back, to atone for those strange times. He's over the whole Communist thing, of course, and *c'est un bon chose!* A Sweet 16 is a whirling phantasmagoria of exotic, profligate boondoggles—white chocolate fountains and dromedaries and *danseuses du ventre* and falconers in sequined sweaters and, on top of it all, a giant helicopter in position on its -pad.

Verily pressed through the hormonal crowd and found Vic, hair moussed, clothes impeccably crisp, in the solarium, spitting into his cellular telephone. "You get those camera crews over here right now, or so help me Jesus I'll... Oh, Verily, pleased as punch you could make it. Get yourself a drink—I'll be out there soon. I'm trying to deal with these *My Super Sweet 16* people. They promised us the season opener, but now Scout Willis apparently wants it, and Ashton Kutcher's relentless—my girls won't leave their rooms, they're crying so hard, and who can blame them? Can you believe these MTV people?"

Verily panicked. The name MTV— quick breath— brings to mind one night, during VV's film consultancy days, when Ashton Kutcher and his merry pranksters convinced a soused Verily to sign a contract to appear on a show called *A Shot At Love*, which they told him would be an emotionally-sensitive radio drama set in 1920s. When Verily discovered the show for the omnisexual debauch it was, and reneged, Kutcher gleefully pointed out a clause in the contract, stipulating a \$100,000 withdrawal fine, with possible prison sentence. MTV's proverbial attack dogs had been scouring both coasts for months.

Verily ran for the helipad. "I am Vic's brother," Verily Veritas announced to the pilot, "and he gave the word to go on ahead to wherever it is you're going. He's busy with a television deal, and the ladies became busy at the last minute..." Verily paused. "Anal bleaching."

The pilot nodded his head in understanding, and took off, Verily gripping the seat for dear life, his pompadour bobbing in the wind.

—Verily Veritas

Will Writing Get You Laid?

AFFIRMATIVE

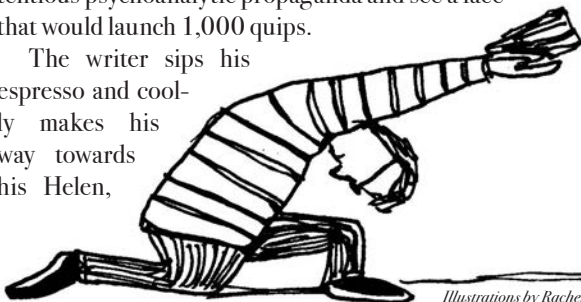
For a certain moderately attractive, passably charming population of the creative underclass, the largest impediment to the successful seduction of Max Café's most eligible is not the absence of wealth, sexual prowess or good news from Farrar, Strauss and Giroux. Rather, it's the burden of standards.

The writer, more accustomed to falling asleep with *Abelard or Heloise* than with Alex or Heather, has constructed in his mind an impregnable (pun, as always, intended) Camelot of romantic standards with its origin in undying, fictional love. Rather, he retreats home alone—so utterly alone in his thoughts and his blog—than in the company of anyone lesser than the women captivating the hearts of his post modern heroes.

Alas, the metaphorical pen is mightier than the double-edged sword. What the cleverest among us have learned to do has been to capitalize on the impossible standards of literary loves past by imparting their characteristics to modern conquests. Fiction, when co-opted for the basest, most phallic of desires, is not a fallacy. Fictionalization combines the writer's penchant for crippling narcissism and near-debilitating delusion and uses them to transform the sexually undesirable and the emotionally arrested into amalgamations of the heroines and goddesses whose presence haunts our under-appreciated prose. The heart is, indeed, a lonely hunter.

A quick glance around a theoretical Saturday night at Max Café reveals a vulnerable, wholly unremarkable patron: copies of Žižek in hand, whimsical accessories scattered about a plush couch—the cynical realist would just as soon return empty-handed, empty-bedded, back to East Campus. However, the writer is able to look past an ill-fitting t-shirt and pretentious psychoanalytic propaganda and see a face that would launch 1,000 quips.

The writer sips his espresso and coolly makes his way towards his Helen,



Illustrations by Rachel Lindsay

who has removed the chocolate-covered fork from between her over-glossed lips and has begun to eye him with contempt. The poetry of Petrarch clouds his judgment, his eyesight; this insecure sophomore was not born a Lady Laura, she has become one. Small talk commences—she makes sloppy allusions to Lacan, the writer drowns her out by imagining the scene scored to “Astral Weeks.” Suddenly, everything is beautiful and significant.

Back in an East Campus high rise, the night soaked in prosecco and her nauseating perfume, a lesser man would have given up by now—her thinly-concealed racism and even more thinly-concealed skin problems would have repulsed him to a point beyond the desire to satiate the needs of his body.

Instead, the writer quietly notes her insufferable ramblings, to be used later as dialogue in his chronically unfinished play, *One of the Guise: A Play About Misery*. Meanwhile, the grotesque creature whose shoulders he's suddenly found himself massaging can instead be understood as some sort of misunderstood monstrosity, that only the writer has the sensitivity and the humanity to sleep with.

And so by reinventing—though the romantics and feminists among us might say reifying—his subject, the writer can conceive of an entirely new and self-sustaining reality in which flaws are simply occasions to revert back to his perfect, masturbatory literary caprice. As the pillars of attractiveness, intelligence, kindness, and politeness slowly crumble after her every word, her every burp, the stronghold of his delusional fantasies gain its footing.

It is not the writing that gets the writer laid—though it certainly would

be if people spent more time reading the

Columbia Journal of Literary Criticism.

It is the inherent characteristics of the writer that predispose him to want to write.

—Nymphadora Levy



NEGATIVE

One evening, Mark Strand, former U.S. Poet Laureate and current Columbia English professor, gave a reading of his work. When the reading ended, he exited the establishment in which it had taken place. As he walked through the parking lot, a woman from the reading approached him. She was a great admirer of his, she said, and she would be honored if he would enter her car, come to her house, and allow her to fellate him. "I really want to give you a blowjob."

"Thank you," he said. "But what's in it for me?"

Let it be said that this story is apocryphal, told to me by an aspiring poetess of ill repute; yet, still, I find it truly illuminating, scribbling away here under my ceiling's fluorescence. Is there an occupation less likely to land its practitioner in the sack, than writing? Mark Strand is the rare man whose writing earns him celebrity and sex appeal, but let's not pretend his craggy good looks didn't factor into the young lady's parking lot proposition, and, in any event, excellence at any craft will bring mates calling.

I know because every Friday night Will Shortz receives a phone call. He picks up the receiver, and there is heavy breathing on the other end. Shortz asks who it is, but there is only more breathing. Shortz, a shy man, grows flustered, makes a limp threat to call the authorities, and hangs up. Then the person on the other end of the line sobs softly into his *New York Times Magazine*. I know because this person is me. I am a pathetic man who spends his days writing, and I want be sodomized by the world's greatest crossword puzzler. And I am not the only one.

I will ask again: is there an endeavor less likely to land its practitioner *in coitu*, than writing? When I was younger, I wanted to be an astronaut, or a scuba diver. Why not both? I could have been a physical specimen, bronzed and beautiful, making zero-gravity love in the hollows of coral reefs. But I am a writer, sal-

low and weak. Not that I would know, but I imagine an attempt at the missionary position would liquefy my mushy abdomen, and a woman's gyrations on top would crush my feeble pelvis.

Writing, more than any art, requires solitude, introspection, and imagination. As to the first, we know that no people means no intercourse, but I feel the latter two are an even greater impediment to successful sex. When our semi-fictional Mr. Strand made his quip, it could have been the woman's forwardness, or physical repulsiveness, that turned him off, but I suspect it was mostly the admirable knowledge that receiving a BJ from a stranger would be unfulfilling. Introspection unearths these kinds of pesky revelations—that honesty is admirable, that life is too short for selfishness, that promiscuity is self-destructive. (And even if it isn't, good luck parlaying your stupid sci-fi novella into sex with the Scarlett Johnson look-alike at the other end of the bar.)

Still, it is my imagination I fear the most. How can the women of the world—their veiny breasts and yellow-purplish eye-bags and gelatinous calves—compete with the Lauras and Beatrices and Will Shortzes of my mind's eye? I write about my imaginary loves, but they do not come out right on the page; if they ever do, I will weep for their nonexistence. Half-ass your craft, aspiring writers, and you may yet live to play in other people's orifices. Devote yourselves fully, and enter a lonely, strange world where failure means misery; and great success means turning down no-strings-attached blowjobs. Do the math, and don't do the writing.

—Eugenio Rubicon



Personal Ads

True love may be foreign to The Blue and White, but the quest for it is not. Here we confess our hearts' desires for the benefits of Columbia's love-starved fops, aging professors, and resident perverts for whom the night has not yet been taken. The ads are followed by our Lerner mail box numbers. Should particularly poignant responses find their way into our boxes (and hearts), you may find them printed in the next issue.

SEEKING MEN

HalfJew seeks pork. (3884)

Get a subscription to 19 years of daddy issues. (5211)

Cyclist suggests you bring helmet, kneepads. (2153)

Another haiku
I guess I'm not that pretty
We'll turn the lights off (1991)

Buffalo buffalo Buffalo buffalo buffalo buffalo Buffalo buffalo. (5128)

We broke up like, last week, and now, I mean, I saw he's already dating some girl, and...and (Pause). I'm just so glad you're here. (2184)

Abstract theorist seeks something rock hard. (6570)

My collar isn't the only thing that's popped. (2166)

I need a date!!
Sent from my iPhone (8308)

Cynic looking for someone to confirm that no one will ever love me the way I want to be loved. (3884)

Hello hello, this is Katie Reedy. I really need a personal. (5128)

Confused? Let this Asian girl be your last stop. (4177)

Barnard student seeking larger endowment. (4421)

You can wear the pants in this relationship, because I don't own any. (5211)

Condé intern looking to get Nasté. (6201)

I passed physics for poets, but I still need to take sex for virgins. (4328)

Straphanger seeks South Ferry resident to go all the way with her. (6298)

Bleary-eyed in the *Spectator* office, we sat at opposite computer consoles. We downed Red Bull and Ham-Del at four in the morning, our fingers numb from typing. Your eyes met mine, and at that moment, I realized: you'll do. (3296)

SEEKING WOMEN

They call me the freshman fifteen, because I'll make you feel insecure and unattractive. (1270)

Sagittarius for vagittarius. (4824)

CML seeks SWF w/ T&A (for BJ?) w/o STDs. LOL. (4576)

My dad's in oil. You could be too. (1373)

DC native looking for below-the-Beltway traffic. (7015)

Let's take this Gchat off the record. (2480)

BDSM MFA candidate hankering for love. The safe

word is “denouement.” (4214)

Blogger? I hardly know her! (6747)

Me: rising editor-in-chief of campus publication. You: first-year stunned senseless by power. It’s tradition! (4824)

I’ll pretend to be straight if you’ll pretend to be attractive (1270)

Center for Disease Control and Prevention? You bet I did. (6747)

Ambitious ’09 student leader hoping you’ll tap that. (2067)

As Sophocles once said: “Do me.” (1373)

You wear a bowtie too? SWANKFEST. (3465)

Varsity Show audience member guarantees a longer, better performance. (8342)

I don’t own any Velvet Underground albums. (6747)

Baby, I didn’t mean it. Yes, I said you were cold, but just because you let me spend too much time alone. I love you—that should be clear—you just don’t always make sense. Still, from the moment I saw you, I knew I wanted to be inside you. Lerner Hall, please write. (3112)

Cunning linguist seeks... friendship. (4824)

Nice Jewish boy seeks girl to bring home to, be his mother. (1909)

You: Ph.D. in philosophy. Me: Eager undergrad in the tweed jacket. I only need a minute and a half of your office hours. (5831)

WHATEVER I CAN GET

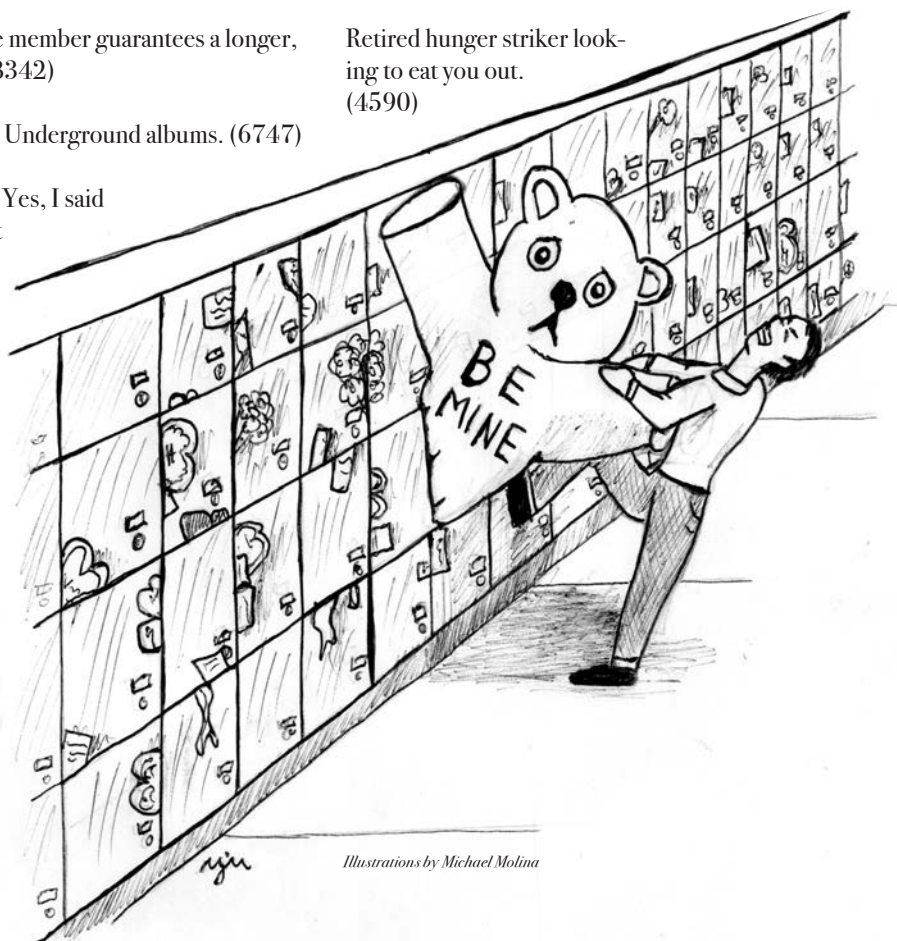
Tenured professor who doesn’t give a fuck, wants to fuck. (4276)

You might have seen me at Hungarian. I was the one reading critical theory with the intense look on my face. (3445)

There are two things money can’t buy: goods and services. (6773)

Simple professor seeks someone to exhibit all the signs of a cruel and petty dictator. (2631)

Retired hunger striker looking to eat you out. (4590)



Illustrations by Michael Molina



DIGITALIA COLUMBIANA

These excerpts were culled from documents left on Columbia's lab computers. We encourage our readers to submit their own digitalia finds to us, via e-mail, at theblueandwhite@columbia.edu.

The only good things about leaving Boston are Annie's dumplings and not having to go to Dr. Mrs. Fuckface, who made me paint my feelings.



Whether learning the ledger, la neige or solfège,
He pledged to create with his well-earned knowl-
edge—

Not to store it in jars on a dusty ol' ledge.

No wonder he felt hedged in in college!

Go West, young man, go West!



What is subprime?

- subprime lending: practice of making loans to bor-
rowers who do not qualify for the best market invest-
ment rates because of their deficient credit history

subprime mortgage crisis: people are unable to repay
the loan

- default, value of the mortgage back securities keep
decreasing, lose a lot of money;



Mathematics is now part of my DNA.



People want to watch beating, destroying, explosion
something like that. That's why people go to a movie
theater. There is no more reason.



My body's sweaty and I'm breathing pretty heavy.
I take off all my clothes except for my boxers and
untuck my stomach from the elastic. It jiggles and I

slap it and move around like a sumo wrestler. Kids
call me the sumo wrestler at school. It used to bother
me, but now I think it's kinda cool. It means they
know I could kick their asses.



IF EVERYONE LIVED LIKE YOU, WE WOULD
NEED 4.3 PLANETS.



Of all of the ways Paul could have described Satan,
why do you think he labels him here as "the ruler of
the kingdom of the air?"



PBPFBD



All these drug dealers keep shooting me and I can't
keep up with them and more and more show up and
then I end up on the ground with my blood every-
where. I shout, "Fuck you fuck shit" at the screen and
throw my controller but it doesn't go very far because
it's attached to the box.



Understanding that it could be you or I born into the
home of a smack dealer, a hustler or a prostitute is
only the beginning.



A grisly account of the General's rise to prominence
and resurrection as monstrous cyborg is given. Now

that they are hurt, there is no telling what they will do. If ever there was a time for more executive power, it is now.



A. Diffuse, “big picture” question: Why do people err when they attempt to predict their hedonic reactions to future events ranging in intensity level?



I slip my hand into my boxers and grab my dick, tugging on it like Shane showed me last summer. It gets hard, but that’s it.



It is a time where people are unable to speak their feelings or the truth. It is a time where people cannot love properly, or provide for themselves properly. They have lost all that they once knew, gone with their suitcases that “have been stolen on the way.”



The author is saddened by the loss of Arabs.



This also provides for those “teacher’s pets” to be in close quarters with misfits, bullies, ghetto-fab cliques, heavy drug users, cheerleaders, theatre junkies, jocks, artists, and loners. This is why I looooved my high school experience- so much to choose from!



I used to play soccer. There’s a team at my school, but I’m too fat to play on it.



She could feel Mrs. Cranston’s indictment of her whole family every time she glanced at her watch or offered Tory another cup of water from the fountain.



In a way, these thick and lucid columns seem to serve as masculine guards full of vitality intimidating visitors to maintain harmony and peace. Moreover, black square

base is present on the bottom of every column, which makes columns look as if they are wearing black boots!



Rose doesn’t like high class which require strict law and formality, so she doesn’t want to marry with noble son, but she has to, and she try to kill herself. However, Jack rescues her dramatically, and their fatality is begun.



Her underwear is shiny and the color of cream and it makes her butt look like a full moon. It stops me.



1. How often do you eat animal based products? (beef, pork, chicken, fish, eggs, dairy products)?
Very Often



She’s small and round like a dumpling, and she looks full, and squishy. And when she is makes my dumpings, she’s smells like them too. I imagine her as a dumpling, and that I’m making her. I get to pinch her all over and slap her in my hand. I push myself against the cabinets that I’m leaning against, and feel a tightness in the middle.



It will take me a year, or ten, to get used to, but it has just been so awesome to see the polarized town residents fight through referendum after referendum and board meeting after board meeting to get this thing done!



In its vibrance, families were full of character, love, and a flavor of which downtown Manhattan is deficient in.



It’s what cities look like in space, I bet, a place where cars can fly and dogs are robots. But the cars don’t fly in Hong Kong, and I don’t have a robot dog, or even a regular dog, and I hate it here.

The Artist in His Parents' Basement

Queens museum examines cultural merits of videogames

Digital Play

The Museum of the Moving Image

Entrance at 35th Avenue at the corner of 36th Street in Astoria, Queens

On weekdays, take the R or V to Steinway; on weekends, use the R or G

“Behind the Screen,” the main exhibition at the Museum of the Moving Image, is a comprehensive tour of the moving image’s history, from the camera obscuras and zoetropes of centuries past to the latest in digital technology. In one large corner of the two-floor exhibition, there are video games. I was surprised to see games accorded a place in the history of the moving image, right next to film and television. Although the gaming industry is a \$20 billion a year cultural juggernaut, it’s still struggling for respect as an art form—a respect that in most quarters seems many years off.

In 1989, The Museum of the Moving Image mounted “Hot Circuits,” the world’s first museum exhibition about video games, and it has put on several since. “Digital Play” is its latest, an exhibition that pairs old and new games with similar themes. But even here, in a place obviously devoted to gaming, it was strange to see games un-quarantined.

In late 2005, Roger Ebert declared “games will never be art.” He later backtracked a bit and said that games will never be “high art,” but his essential argument remained the same. High art, which has traditionally comes about when a creator imposes his vision on an audience, disqualifies games, which depend on interactive participation. Ebert annoyed the gaming community, but his comments were more thoughtful and temperate than most.

Several weeks ago, Fox News pilloried *Mass Effect*—a story-heavy science-fiction game that makes

a concerted and admirable attempt to develop its characters—for its “explicit full frontal sex scenes.” While there are sex scenes in the game, they are of the relatively harmless, PG-13, Kate Winslet’s-boob-in-*Titanic* variety, not hardcore porn. One self-styled “psychology expert” who was interviewed on the show, a radio host named Cooper Lawrence who admitted that she had never played *Mass Effect*, launched into a tirade about how the game was turning teenage boys into perverted, woman-objectifying monsters. When offended gamers went on Amazon and posted negative reviews on the comments page for Lawrence’s new book (about hypercompetitive, type-A women), she sat down and actually played the game, and retracted her statements. “I’ve seen episodes of ‘Lost’ that are more sexually explicit,” Lawrence later told the *New York Times*.

The Museum of the Moving Image doesn’t engage with this debate. Its exhibit is not about gaming’s awkward attempts to establish itself as a legitimate art form or about the mainstream media’s brazen disinterest in the medium—it’s simply an historical survey of interesting and popular games. Just as the *Oxford English Dictionary* chronicles not “proper” English but the language’s actual usage, the MoMI’s approach to visual media suggests that the exhibition is not so much a recognition that games are art as a recognition that lots of people are playing these things.

If you visit the museum for the games, start upstairs at the video game corner in “Behind the Screen,” where you’ll find jewels from the earliest days of gaming. The highlight for game historians will be the bulbous green retro-sci-fi cabinet of *Computer Space*, the financially unsuccessful space shooter Nolan Bushnell made the year before he hit paydirt with *Pong*. The game isn’t playable, but almost everything else is.

There are classics like *Asteroids* (fly around, shoot the asteroids, don't get shot by UFOs), *Super Breakout* (hit a ball to break walls of blocks), and an Apple II running an old-school text adventure, where players navigate a world of words by typing in commands like "ENTER FOREST" and "KILL DRAGON."

Next, head down to "Digital Play," on the MoMI's first floor. Most of the games are organized in the aforementioned old-new pairing. *NBA Jam*, the 1993 two-on-two basketball game famous for its fast-paced play and ridiculous dunks, sits next to *NBA Street v.3*, its technologically advanced but similarly unrealistic successor. Some of these pairings are inspired: *Karate Champ*, an early one-on-one fighting game that does its best to simulate a real martial arts competition, sits next to *Mortal Kombat*, where punching buckets of blood out of an enemy's face and ripping out his spine is the key to victory. But some are lazy: the original *Donkey Kong* and drumming game *Donkey Konga* don't have anything in common other than the titular simian. And many games aren't paired at all. We ♥ *Katamari*, a gaming cult phenomenon about rolling up random crap with a sticky ball, has a big screen display all to itself.

"Digital Play" as a whole is a rather unfocused mishmash, but its curators have good gaming taste, and it did make me think. If the three-story building in Astoria were—if it were a video game museum—what would I put in it, and what would I leave out? And what purpose would it serve?

Although a comprehensive Video Game Museum already exists online (www.vgmuseum.com), and the easiest way for up-and-coming game designers to display their creations is on the web, one thing the Internet can never replicate is the physical experience of playing an old arcade game in its original cabinet, and reliving the pre-digital, pre-cyberspace pleasures of *Asteroids* and *Donkey Kong* was the most fun and educational part of the MoMI's gaming offerings. New games do have a

place in a games museum, but they need a context and a clever thematic thread, something "Digital Play" lacks.

But with a decent idea and a decent budget, interesting games shouldn't be so hard to come by. Recent popular games like *Gears of War* and *Crackdown* have brought co-operative multiplayer games back into vogue, so why not curate an exhibition about the history of those games, with offerings like the tough-as-nails two-Rambos-kill-aliens shooter *Contra* and the little-played *Adventures of Cookie & Cream* (about a pair of bunnies who work together to find their planet's missing moon)?

And what about that high art question? Although gaming may one day have its *War and Peace* or *Seven Samurai*, right

now the medium is still mostly about solving logic puzzles and killing bad guys. *Bioshock*, a horror game set in an undersea Art Deco dystopia, name-checks Ayn Rand and raises interesting meta-questions about why people play games, and what they are willing to do to

complete them. It's been anointed a sort of video game *Citizen Kane* in some circles. In between brilliant glimmers, the game is mostly about maiming zombies, but *Bioshock* is a promising sign that when video games figure out how to use their interactivity—when they embrace the very thing that makes them games—they will catapult themselves into the high art canon. And while a game museum may not be able to refute Ebert in his lifetime, it could at least refute the Cooper Lawrences of the world today.

Showing the obvious value of old games, and the hidden value of new ones, is where a videogame museum would do the most good. Those who would scoff that they are not art should at least acknowledge that they're a cultural force. And besides, a museum that gets gamers off the couch, even if it's just to play different games, might not be such a bad thing.

—Paul Barndt

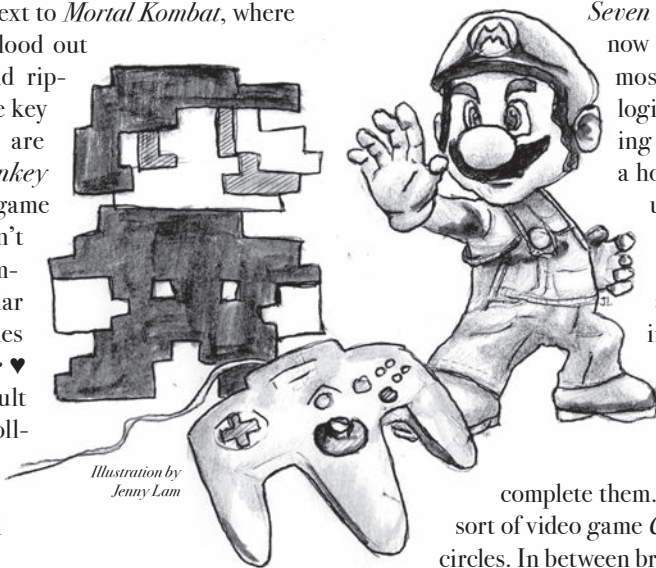


Illustration by Jenny Lam

Cervantes *Resucitado*

El Quijote
Repertorio Español
Closes May 15, 2008

It was fitting that we were late for the theater. My friends and I had decided to warm up our Spanish on the subway ride down, and a lack of punctuality had seeped in with our change of tongue. We blamed it on the Ecuadorian—the only native speaker in our party—and joked that the play would probably start late anyway. We slopped through the last few puddles on 27th Street, and almost simultaneously cried out—¡*Allí está!*—as we spotted the red awning set back from the curb.

We entered a humble building next to a deli and some apartments. It's called the Gramercy Arts Theater and houses Repertorio Español, a Spanish-language company that, based on the production of *El Quijote* I attended, puts on a damn good show. We had arrived just before curtain, so the ticket vendor handed us upgraded tickets and sent us into the lobby. A woman was selling plastic cups of wine and headphones to listen to the English interpreter—*para los que no hablan español*, she explained.

Inside the theater, an audience of about 25 people—most sin earphones—chatted, English and Spanish mingling. The woman sitting behind me was talking to the usher in Spanish and translating for her bling-laden friends, who were trying to turn on the headphones. Two blonde women with quilted bags complained (in English) that they didn't have enough language practice. The couple across the aisle flirted, moving back and forth between two tongues.

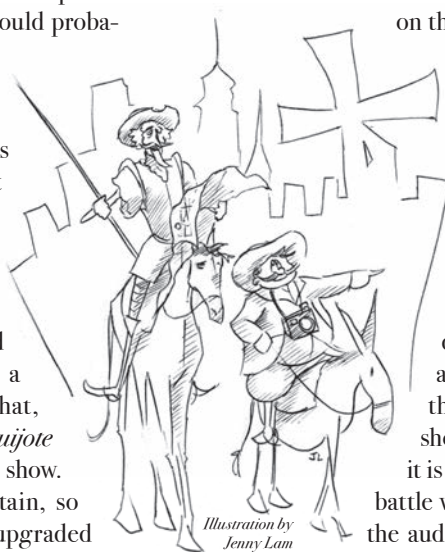
The show featured a set of stories based on the Cervantes text that literally swirled across the stage: French maids, a giant, elves, gladiators, and angels engaged Quijote—and a constantly munching Sancho Panza—in battle or discourse. The play, written by Colombian Santiago Garcia, strayed from interpretations of some of the better-known sections of the

novel—the windmills were barely mentioned—and focused on the trials and tribulations of Quijote's fat friend. Sancho is constantly frustrated. He eventually separates from his master de la Mancha, goes off to rule an island, endures all manner of tribulations, and meets Quijote again before a bitter conclusion: bringing his lord home in a wooden cage.

The special effects were cartoonish—fights were enhanced with sound effects as people got bopped on the head—and men on stilts, princess-whores, and human puppets evoked a carnival. The environment juxtaposed well with the profoundly crazy musings of Quijote and the rustic wisdom of his sidekick, played by Cuban Ricardo Barber and Venezuelan Fernando Then, respectively. The bickering duo often seemed to forget the attacking wizards and lions as they debated whether Quijote should continue eating, or whether it is ethical for a knight to engage in battle with a civilian. The humor made the audience laugh out loud, including those using headphones. During one of Quijote's particularly wild moments, an English-speaker sitting behind me exclaimed, "Man! He crazy!"

But it was during Quijote's last speech, as he was being rolled away in the cage, that the importance of all that burlesque and revelry shone through. The contrast between the color and exaggeration of most of the play and the solemn procession of the last scene startled the audience—a transition that evoked the novel's tragic end. The importance of hearing the text in Spanish came through as well, as Sancho and Quijote traded proverbs and Quijote addressed the stars—*señoras, no lloren*. He told them not to cry with such sincerity that I almost did. Soon his cage was rolled away by men dressed in black, and everyone in the house—even those not captivated by the Spanish—remained seated, lost in thought, after the curtain dropped.

—Anna Louise Corke



Welcome to the Jungle

When the wonders of nepotism scored me a full-time, paying summer job on a major network television show, I thought I'd moved one step closer to my dream career as a sophisticated, mature, and hopefully not-picketing television writer. But I quickly realized that the entertainment industry is not—shockingly—as glamorous and comical as *30 Rock* led me to believe. I had entered a war zone.

My descent into entertainment disillusionment began with the interview. That's when I learned that a puzzlingly low number of Production Assistants from the company's previous production had chosen to return to the studio. When I started work the following week, this phenomenon was immediately explained. I was thrust into an office with five bloodthirsty twenty-somethings who shamelessly assigned each other blame for the production's "bumps." Bumps, such as the padlock that mysteriously appeared on the office door overnight ("Well, Matt was the last one out") and a lack of soda in the fridge after I'd returned from an eight-hour delivery trip ("Why isn't there any, Matt?"). Within a week, I found myself unsuccessfully explaining that the tech guy's detainment for suspected terrorism was not my fault.

My boss—commonly referred to as Hitler, as well as by a word that rhymes with bunt—explained that I really had only one duty: "You do whatever we ask, and you don't say no." Little did I know that I would not say no to working 12 hours without a bathroom break, to explaining to a producer why pilot DVDs my boss had been giving away recklessly for months were missing, and to breaking nearly a dozen laws.

Perhaps my most daunting task was assisting the victims of set accidents. One day the show's construction head burst into our office and exclaimed, "Someone's shot themselves through the foot with a nail gun! We

need a PA to take them to the hospital." Mulling this over, the head PA asked, "Can't we just take care of that here?" When the set builder, nail protruding through his construction boot, was hoisted upstairs for her to see, she decided that perhaps, no, this was not something that we could just take care of here.

By that point, the staff was like a dysfunctional family: the only thing keeping us together was the Friday in-office margarita party, and even that was not working so well. PAs dropped like flies. I resolved to remain at the show until the bitter end. Luckily, I didn't have to hold out for long. In July, a steam pipe exploded on Lexington Avenue, just, coincidentally, after I'd been ordered to pick up a package on the Upper East Side. Running down Park Avenue through a crowd of screaming, debris-covered pedestrians, I decided to call the office.

"There's been an explosion!"

"Have you picked up the package?"

"I'm not sure if that building's still standing."

My boss sighed in disappointment. "So, you haven't picked up the package?"

After finally returning to the office that day, relieved and exhausted, I stumbled to my desk and announced "I'm alive!"

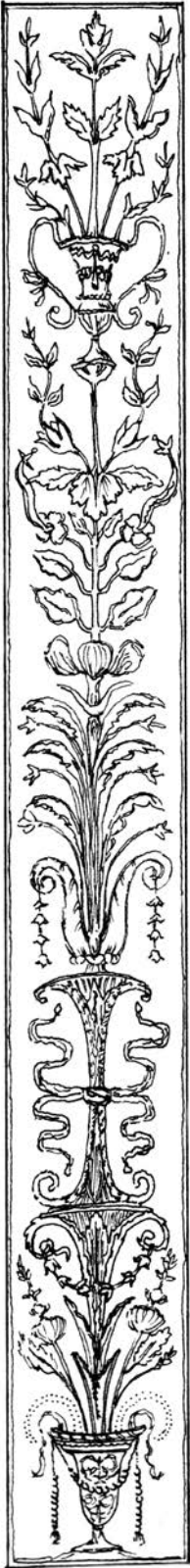
"Shut up," a fellow PA responded. "The show's been cancelled."

This rough introduction to "the industry" has not been for naught. My deflowering led to some much-needed introspection, and I've decided that killing myself for the sake of a weekly rom-com is not a worthy calling. Thanks to the writers' strike and the consequential dearth of new programming, the show will in fact air and thus, I cannot divulge its title. What I can say is that I have most likely been forever driven from the "jungle" of television production.



Illustration by Rachel Lindsay

—Matthew Shields



MEASURE FOR MEASURE

THE TOP 100 GUYS I'D GO GAY FOR

Paul Newman, Steve McQueen, Cary Grant
John Locke, J.S. Mill, Immanuel Kant

John Edwards, Joe Biden, Barack Obama
Jeffrey Sachs, Achille Varzi, Simon Schama

Tennessee Williams, Tom Stoppard, Samuel Beckett
Henry the Eighth, Edward the First, Elizabeth the Second

Ludwig Wittgenstein, John Maynard Keynes, Richard Rorty
Stephen Fry, Rowan Atkinson, Hugh Laurie

Jeff Bridges, John Turturro, Steve Buscemi,
John Goodman, Jon Lovitz, Eugene Levy

Jason Bateman, Will Arnett, Michael Cera
Vaclav Havel, Boris Pasternak, Milan Kundera

Win Butler, Spencer Krug, Jens Lekman
Owen Wilson, Luke Wilson, Gene Hackman

Crick but not Watson
Holmes but not Watson

Jonathan Franzen, John Updike, Kazuo Ishiguro
Kemal Atatürk, Che, Jawaharlal Nehru

Jack Kerouac, Allan Ginsberg, Edgar Allan Poe
William S. Burroughs, Ralph Emerson, Henry David Thoreau

John C. Reilly, Jon Brion, Philip Seymour Hoffman
Steve Allan, Lenny Bruce, Andy Kaufman

Epictetus, Erasmus, Alcibiades
Herodotus, Odysseus, Diocles

Jean-Paul Sartre, Friedrich Nietzsche, Søren Kierkegaard
Tim Curry, Chris O'Donnell, Peter Sarsgaard

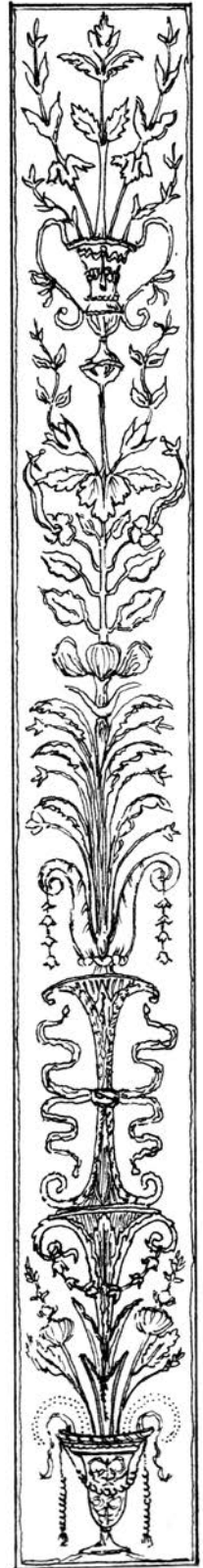
John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Bill Clinton
Teddy Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln

Robert Redford, Harrison Ford, Jeremy Irons
Saul Bellow, Allan Bloom, Lord Byron

Sam Neill, Jeff Goldblum, William H. Macy
Flash Gordon, The Tick, Dick Tracy

Stephen Colbert, Jon Stewart, Richard Gere
Christian Bale, Christopher Walken, myself in the mirror.

—Brendan Ballou





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CAMPUS GOSSIP

Subject: PSYC X1001.004-Class Cancellation

Dearest Students-

I sincerely regret that I will need to cancel class tomorrow. On Sunday night I pulled my back at a Superbowl party while jumping up and down in total disgust over the Patriots' pathetic loss to the Giants (true story). I'm stuck in Boston (a city in mourning) lying on my back for one more day. Congrats to all Giants fans, they played an awesome game!

Sincerely,
[Redacted]

(This message is associated with INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY)



From Winnie Varghese, the Episcopalian Chaplain, to the Canterbury-following students of its email list:

"I leave for Quito, Ecuador, Saturday at 5.30 a.m. for the meeting of the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church. Quito is 9,300 feet above sea level. We will need your prayers."



A *B&W* editor recently encountered a crowd of about ten girls gathered outside Famous Famiglia Pizza on 110th and Broadway. Eager to join, the editor noticed two cameramen and zaftig Sherri Shepherd, co-host of *The View*.

"I wasn't happy with that take," the Star Jones replacement declared. She was met with vigorous agreement from the cameramen and blind admiration from the impromptu audience, which she did her best to ignore. She commenced one more take, "New Yorkers LOVE their pizza. So I came here to learn

how to [*claps hands*] roll the dough!" She then flung herself dramatically into the pizzeria.

She repeated her credo five times or so, each time telling the cameramen, "I just don't know. I don't know if that was it." They nodded assuredly, and when she finally was happy with a take, the younger of the two declared, "That was money!" The crowd dispersed, and Ms. Shepherd and her crew hopped into an idling black car.



Overheard at a hair salon on Hester Street in Chinatown:

Hipster: "So I want it to stay kind of shaggy like this, but still have some shape."

Barber: "So, maybe a little bit preppy."

Hipster: "Well, not so much preppy as Brooklyn. More Williamsburg than the Lower East Side, more Greenpoint than Williamsburg."

We shudder to think what the Morningside Heights would be.



SUBSTANDARD DEVIATIONS

The following email has not been truncated or edited in any way:

"Subject: STAT W1001.001

You may find the following link from Wikipedia helpful.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Correlation_is_not_causation

(This message is associated with INTRO TO STATISTICAL REASONING)"



BACK FROM VACATION... AND YET, NOT SO

Painting professor Elsie Hill warned her students against amorous advances: "The problem with a professor hooking up with his students is that someone will get jealous!"

Over in Schermerhorn, Byzantine art professor Holger Klein was asked which Democratic presidential candidate he preferred: "Well, it depends... Because sometimes I feel black, and sometimes I feel female."

Klein is neither black nor female.

Meanwhile, Bernie Salanie was boring students to tears. After the eleventh student left his Microeconomics lecture one late afternoon, the laissez-faire Frenchman looked a fleeing student square in the face as he made a dash for the door:

Salanie: "Why is everyone leaving today?" (Student shrugs and beats a hasty retreat.) Other student: "Maybe you should shut the door." Salanie, wistfully: "No, I believe in free markets... open doors."

And finally, a stunning display of fear and self-loathing up at the School of Social Work, where a Finnish graduate student disabused him of any illusions about his qualifications for teaching "Introduction to Statistical Reasoning."

"Do not call me Professor [*crosses out* 'PROFESSOR,' *which was written on blackboard*], as I am not a professor. This is inaccurate. Do not call me Doctor [*crosses out* 'DR.,' *same deal*], as I have not yet earned my doctorate. This is a sore subject. If you must call me by a title, you may call me 'Teacher' [*writes* 'TEACHER' *on board*]... though that is unwieldy."



NORTHROP HUMANITIES

Art Hum teacher: "So what do you all consider a masterpiece?"

(long pause)

Art Hum teacher: "Is the Mona Lisa a masterpiece?" (lengthy pause)

Random student: "Yo, she ugly!"

Art Hum teacher: "Any other... opinions?"

Jeffrey Hunter Northrop II, famed for autoportraits of his abdominal muscles: "I mean yes, she is ugly, but could the painting still be a masterpiece?"



With the mad-rush for course books, the staff of Book Culture (née Labyrinth) has been taking to the bottle. It takes a regular bibliophile—such as a *B&W* editor—to catch these shop-girls and -boys in their mating rituals. The following scene transpired earlier this month:

Drunk Male Cashier, to editor: Have you found everything you needed?

B&W editor replies in the affirmative.

Female Cashier (nursing a Brooklyn Lager): Oh you're so polite to customers.

DMC: That's because they don't like Billy Collins.

FC: Whatever, Billy Collins wrote some amazing poems with beautiful complex imagery.

DMC: Yeah, I'm not so sure about that "beautiful, complex imagery."

FC: Oh, so you've read every poem he's ever written?

DMC: I've read three of his poems—

FC: Oh, so you're an expert—

DMC: —and they all suck.

FC: Whatever, just because it's not Ulysses...



Overheard at a meeting of the editorial board of the Columbia Journal of Politics and Society:

"Obama is the argument!"



Love... it's a girl thing!