

cornard bulletin



students hear voices from chiapas
RAS don't just forward messages
braces hip-hop rascal
take a walk through MARLENE
good, bad, and ugly theater
apply for the general editorial board

letter from the editors

apply for a position on the 2001
bulletin editorial board.
see application on back page.

It's strange to find real truth in truisms. Of all of the various platitudes that are thrown about everyday, all of the cliches, there seems to be particular truth in the one that says, "time flies when you're having fun." Or maybe not just when you're having fun, necessarily. Time certainly has flown over this past semester. Knowing that this is the second-to-last letter from the editors of this semester is the kind of thing that induces both great anticipation and a sense of impending doom. Yes, Thanksgiving break and the end of school work are right around the corner, but so are FINALS! Ahhhhh! How did that happen? How have we come to this point already?

When you measure your life in issues of the *bulletin*, like you tend to do when you work here, things can go by very quickly indeed. But we also get to look back at all of the work we've done over the past year, and feel an amazing sense of accomplishment at all we've created in the past two semesters. We have a bulletin board in our office that boasts the cover of every issue of the *bulletin* from the year 2000. Seeing all of the work that went into those issues, all piled together and lined up, is a bit overwhelming. And now it's almost time to step down, and let the next set of movers and shakers step up.

It's crazy to think about all of the changes that the next editor-in-chief might bring to this paper. We certainly seem to have had an impact on the community around us, considering the floods of email we get everyday, giving

us feedback on what we've published. It's so hard to speculate what the next fearless leader of this intrepid paper might bring to it. One thing is for sure, however: I really can't wait to see what's in store for the *bulletin* over the next year.

There are going to be some serious changes, with lots of board members graduating, going abroad, and moving on. And now it's up to you to step up and fill the enormous shoes that will be left behind by our dynamic and ultra-talented team of editors and staff. I hope that many of you will take this challenge, that you'll have the courage to stick your neck out and make a little noise in the coming year. It's strange to think about planning for next semester already, but I encourage *anyone* who's interested in working with us to fill out and application and get it in to us ASAP. You can make such a difference in the campus community with the *bulletin*, and I hope that everyone who is interested takes the time to send in an application. We want you, Barnard. We want to reflect everything that Barnard is—if you think you're up to that challenge, you're our woman. So come on.

Jy and B

contributors

Jessica Marcy is a senior and is the *bulletin* arts editor. She is a Latin American studies major is from Washington, D.C.

Her interests include art, travelling, and learning about different cultures. Last summer, Jessica participated in the Camino de Santiago, a pilgrimage walk across northern Spain. After graduating from Barnard, Jessica hopes to do more travelling and possibly work in another country.

Odelia Avadi is a junior and is the *bulletin's* commentary editor. She is a biology major and is from Cliffside Park, New Jersey, approximately ten minutes away from the Barnard campus. Odelia has a unique talent of writing backwards - she can write just as quickly backwards as she can forward.

Junior Anjali George is the *bulletin* music editor and is an anthropology major. She is from Montville, New Jersey and decided to come to Barnard to get away from the suburbs.

This week, Anjali writes about the Forum on Migration for news.

barnardbulletin

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Bullet Through the Apple copyright Harold & Esther Edgerton Foundation, 2000, courtesy of Palm Press, Inc.

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forum on migration addresses the implications of the writer as migrant

by Anjali George

This past Thursday, the Barnard Forum on Migration's latest discussion "Citizen of the World or Migrant?: The Writer Relocates" featured internationally acclaimed writers Peter Carey, Gita Mehta, and Edmond White. The discussion was mediated by Leonard Lopate, host of WNYC's New York & Company, who has interviewed the likes of John Updike, Bill Bradley, and Francis Ford Coppola amongst others.

The discussion began with a meditation on the terms of endearment with which each of these travelling writers most identified. Lopate offered the choices of immigrant, expatriate, or exile. White readily selected the accolade of "expatriate" and his criticisms of American culture and the American publishing business that came later in the discussion clearly reflected this strong identification.

White was born in Cincinnati, but lived 11 of his adult years in France. Immersing himself in the culture of Paris—reading, thinking, and breathing in French—White found his perspective and his writing style dramatically affected by his stay. "I turned myself into a French person," he said. His exposition picked up speed and the language was stripped down, "emitting clear and simple signals."

None of the panelists claimed to be "citizens of the world," their ties to the local and the homestead too strong a presence to transcend entirely. However, Mehta did comment on the ways in which

the Internet has lent itself to the sense that one has, "no particular place or home."

Mehta herself lives in a perpetual leap between homes in New York City, London, and India, so she, like White, had something to say about the trans-

muting of international experience into the English language and vice versa. On writing about India in English, which Indian authors have grappled with and engaged in ever since England's long occupation, Mehta discussed the collision of the austerity of the Eng-

lish language with the "over-ripeness of India—the spice, heat, and dust of it." Lost in ornament and description, very few authors writing about India, according to Mehta, are capable of retaining the simplicity of the English language, and more difficult yet, at capturing its knack for irony. However, one gets the sense that her perspective was not entirely skewed. She might feel the English language has something to benefit from the wealth of content at one's disposal when dealing with a culture as ancient and fecund with mythology and history as "India or China."

The discussion moved on to the relationship between the imaginings of home and the imaginings of a foreign land and how those imaginings are affected by

migration. Born and brought up in Australia, now a professor at Columbia University and a father of two American children, Peter Carey cites nostalgia as a driving force in his work, despite, and yet probably because of his 10 year residency in America.

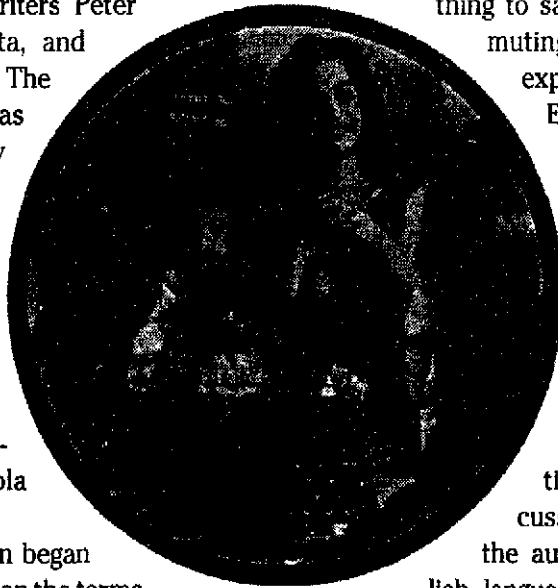
He illustrated this in an anecdote about his attempt to write a book about America—aptly and derisively referred to as "a book about litigation." It's unclear whether this book was ever completed, because what happened instead was a reversion to Australia as the subject of meditation. After going to an exhibition at the Met, therein delighting in the portrait of a famous Australian convict, Carey tossed the American book on the backburner and took the reigns of his inspiration and excitement for the Australian convict by writing his 1997 novel, *Jack Maggs*.

Nostalgia does not exactly apply to White's relationship with America in his writing and thinking of his home country. In France, he began to understand what

Mehta discussed the collision of the austerity of the English language with the "over-ripeness of India—the spice, heat, and dust of it."

the French meant by American superficiality. Though he cannot claim to be much more than a "petty bourgeois poseur," despite his attempt to "turn into a French person," his sojourn instilled in him an objective distancing between himself and America as "object of study." America's reputation for superficiality originates from its deep, permeating equation of culture and commodity. Both White and Mehta had much to say on the "drowning" effect of a mass-produced culture on the process of writing and the reception of writers.

White talked << page 7 >>



bioessentials

THE DEADLINE FOR PAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES FOR ALL STUDENTS ENROLLING IN THE SPRING 2001 SEMESTER is December 1, 2000.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: All F-1 international students who are leaving the U.S. during winter break must see Dean Yu for re-authorization of your I-20 forms. Call x42024 to schedule an appointment or to find out her drop-in times. F-1 students graduating in February should make an appointment with Dean Yu to discuss post-completion details including work permission.

BEINECKE SCHOLARSHIPS: Juniors planning to attend graduate school in the arts, humanities, or social sciences are eligible for this highly competitive award. Applicants must have an exceptionally strong academic record and a history of receiving financial aid as undergraduates. Each Beinecke Scholar receives \$10,000 to help defray graduate tuition and a letter of recommendation from the Columbia School of International and Public Affairs. For more information, call x42024.

GLAMOROUS AND GRACEFUL PETITION: This annual competition recognizes the exceptional academic excellence of female college juniors from across the country. Winners receive \$1000, coverage in the October 2001 issue, and the opportunity to meet with top professionals in their field. For additional information and applications, contact Dean Runsdorf at x42024.

JUNIORS INTERESTED IN APPLYING TO THE JOINT AB/MIA PROGRAM WITH THE COLUMBIA SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS are encouraged to speak with Dean Runsdorf. For appointments, call x42024.

BIOSPHERE: The Columbia Earth Institute has established the

Earth Institute Scholars for academically exceptional Columbia and Barnard students who are interested in attending this spring's Earth or Universe Semester. Selected scholars will receive full tuition scholarships and \$1,000 travel stipends. Contact Sandra Crook, Assistant Director of Student Admissions, at x42024-8144 or kcrook@bio2.edu.

STUDENTS APPLYING TO GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS: If you have any deadlines in late December or early January, please notify Lillian Appel at x42024 (for graduate schools) or Jayma Abdo at x47599 (for professional schools) by Wednesday, December 13. You must make sure all your recommendations are in your file and we have your envelopes by that date. Our office will be closed from December 23 until January 3, so we need to mail your recommendations by December 22 if we are to meet these deadlines.

PHYSICS HELP ROOM: For students taking any Columbia physics courses, the Physics Help Room is available at the Columbia Physics Help Room, 607 West 125th St., from 1-6pm. For help with homework, quizzes, and lab assignments, Prof. Reshmi Khosla is available in the help room Monday from 1-6pm, Tuesday from 1-5pm, Wednesday from 1-6pm, Thursday from 1-5pm, and Friday from 1-6pm. For more information, contact Reshmi Khosla at x42024-2222 or rkhosla@bio2.edu.

STUDENTS WHO WILL BE ON STUDY LEAVES IN THE SPRING: Please complete the appropriate study leave forms and submit them to Dean Alperstein by Monday, December 4, at the latest. If you have not heard from your chosen program or institution by the 4th, you may have an extension of this deadline. Please be sure to secure all other approvals (including financial aid clearance) before requesting Dean Alperstein's approval. These forms can also be printed from our website at www.barnard.edu/dos/study_abroad/b4leaving.html.

barnard events calendar

November 30
Barnard Forum on Migration presents *Survivors of the Middle Passage: Autobiographical Accounts by Enslaved Africans in British America*. A presentation by Jerome Handler, author and senior fellow at the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities. 5:30pm in the Sulzberger Parlor, 3rd floor, Barnard Hall. For information, call Sari Globerman at x49011.

December 1
World Aids Day

December 2
The Medieval and Renaissance Conference. 9am-6pm in Barnard Hall. An interdisciplinary conference exploring the meaning and impact

of a public performance from the Middle Ages to the Early Modern period. Registration required. For information, call the Postlewate at x42053 or email postlew@barnard.edu.

December 6
Man. A play produced by our Barnard theatre group. Presented as part of the Medieval and Renais-

sance Conference. 8pm in the Minor Latham Playhouse, Milbank Hall. For reservations and further information, call the Theatre Department at x42080.

December 6
Lunchtime Mind Openers Series presents *Love, Work and Play*. Noon in the Altschul Atrium.

Barnard hears voices from Chiapas

by Jessica Marcy

The Student Initiated Action Fund, a fund dedicated to providing resources to students to organize and host their own events, had its inauguration Tuesday, November 14, with the presentation *Voices from Chiapas: Indigenous Life and Resistance in Southern Mexico*.

Organized by members of the Chiapas Delegation, the presentation held in Sulzberger Hall combined students' eyewitness accounts, photographs, and student lead discussions about the current situation of protest in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas. Students explained the relationship between Chiapas and broader political events within Mexico and the international community.

Furthermore, the presentation that began with an introduction by the director of Barnard's Center of Research for Women, Janet Jacobson, sought to give special attention to the significant role of women within the Zapatista movement.

Students addressed women's special situation of suffering and hardship within the Chiapas region as well.

With the mission of sending students to act as international rights observers in this "low level, non declared war,"

the Barnard-Columbia Chiapas Delegation is a fairly new student organization. The various students that spoke on Tuesday were part of the Delegation's second trip to Chiapas that occurred during the summer of 2000

One of the thirteen students sent to Chiapas, senior Rebecca Letz began the student presentation by reading a type of free-form poetry. With the constant repetition of the words "I miss," Letz spoke of her experience by describing such things as the food, the modesty of the women, and the continuous sense of time

After Letz's reading, other student organizers began to describe the initial action that began the conflict in Chiapas the EZLN (Zapatista National Liberation Army) occupation of the colonial city of San Cristobal de las Casas and five other towns in the surrounding Chiapas highlands on January 1, 1994. Thus, students of the Chiapas Delegation successfully wove together their own personal experiences of the situation with that of Chiapas's history and politics.

Occurring on the same day as the inauguration of NATO (North American Free Trade Agreement), the EZLN's occupation was an attempt to send a message to the Mexican government as well as to the international community about the extreme injustices in Chiapas, one of the

effects of globalization and increased economic integration, but also the historical injustices produced from the last 500 years since the Spanish Conquest that has produced marginalized indigenous communities.

After mentioning the events since the EZLN's actions in 1994 that has created a complete military zone where the military deploys one third of its troops, the students continued to describe their personal experiences last summer. Led by Barnard graduate Jennie Pasqueraella, who participated on the first Barnard-Columbia trip to Chiapas, the student group arrived in Mexico City to begin their journey. Over the next few days, they heard talks by a variety of activists, intellectuals, and academics. Next, the

courtesy of Mark Connelly



a female Zapatista in Chiapas, Mexico

students took a bus ride to San Cristobal, Chiapas, to enter one of three communities to act as international human rights observers.

Describing his experience as an international observer, Columbia sophomore Charlie Homans talked of his time in Patria Nueva, a community that has declared its autonomy from the Mexican government. "It's not so much a war as it is a desperate protest," said Homans. "Our work didn't really consist of much beyond sitting around watching what was going on, which includ-

ed taking testimony from the residents of Patria Nueva and documenting military presence in the area." However, he also described the crucial presence of international observers and the need for support from the international community.

two poorest states in Mexico. Though Chiapas often appears to be fairly isolated and disconnected from the larger Mexican State, this region suffers the decisions of the Mexican government. In implementing policies that promote industrial development and foreign companies in the country, the Mexican government has produced deleterious effects for Mexico's indigenous communities.

For instance, over the past 10 years, the purchasing power of Mexico's poorest citizens has reduced by 40%. The EZLN's stance protests not only the present

ed taking testimony from the residents of Patria Nueva and documenting military presence in the area." However, he also described the crucial presence of international observers and the need for support from the international community.

Amidst the display of student photographs showing daily life in Chiapas, Letz told a variety of stories that accompanied the photographs. Other students made personal comments, stating their surprise to find Chiapas to be a beautiful and tranquil place. Later, students focused discussion on the role of women



a weekly weighing of Barnard news

This week was full of student run plays: King's Crown One Acts and Barely Legal Production's *Dreams of Self at Seventeen*. Months of hard work were rewarded with high attendance.



The Great American Smoke-Out was celebrated Thursday on campus. Instead of smoking, students transferred their oral fixations to increased cell phone use.



Thanksgiving break is rapidly approaching. Students head home to hang out with friends from high school who will share what it is like to have a "real" co-ed college education.



Recent graduates displayed their artwork in the Postcrypt Gallery Friday night. See, there is life after college.



= we love it



= we hate it

This week's total . . .



<< page 4 >> about Europe's national press and government support of art versus the privatized, money-making publishing houses of the United States.

According to both White and Mehta, the American system has propagated a new sensibility in the market that demands of writers quantity rather than quality in order to build important reputations. White lamented in his talk for the good old days in France where people are more inclined to read "difficult books and can appreciate a writer who has only written a couple of books." Mehta spoke about her disheartenment at watching the churning publishing companies create a

market for unserious, pedestrian books. "Writing is a private business. People forget how deeply personal and dangerous the act of writing is."

Towards the end of the discussion Lopate asked the panelists why they think New York City has become the writers' mecca as Paris was once. Mehta believes it is because of New York City's and America's spirit of possibility and its burgeoning curiosity. White thinks it is the stimulating environment that brings youths to New York City. "Young writers need to go to a big city. Older novelists need to get away—they need to be bored."

Lopate closed out the forum with

questions from the audience. One audience member asked the panelists to address the relationship between international writers and local writers. Peter Carey responded with a playfully self-effacing statement: "People like us are freaks." He insisted that his being internationally acclaimed does not make his works any better than local Australian writers, but rather useful in a different way, a way in which his works can be understood fruitfully by a wide variety of people. Dare we say, universally?

Anjali George is a Barnard junior and bulletin music editor.

in Chiapas. They spoke about the "hope for a more progressive future" for women's roles, mentioning a number of women in the top echelon of the EZLN movement.

After the student portion of the presentation, Elvira and Hortensia Colorado, the founders of the Coatlicue Theater Company, performed a dramatic storytelling. Having organized many storytelling workshops with communities in resistance, the Colorado sisters emphasized their belief in the "healing power" of storytelling. In their performance, the Colorado sisters acted as two dead people who come back to earth haunted by "bad memories" of "45 dead little Indians," a

reference to an earlier massacre in Chiapas by the PRI military. Their dramatic performance mentioned "the crime of being hungry" and "the crime of being poor." They also urged students to participate in a demonstration for a resolution to the tension in Chiapas at the Council of Mexico, Friday, December 1st at 5:30 pm.

The presentation's focus was to raise the consciousness of the Barnard-Columbia community. "It is the duty of every American to spend at least a little time in a place like Chiapas," said Homans. He emphasized the need for students to recognize the US indirect involvement in Chiapas, a theme that was not heavily covered in the presentation.

Homans said, "Being at a military roadblock and looking into the hum-vee mounted machine gun that you paid for yourself through your taxes [the US sends military aid to Mexico under the premise of using it for the drug war, after which it is quickly rerouted to Chiapas] is an important connection to make." Homans then went on to state, "I find it incredibly impressive that a poorly armed guerrilla army without backing from any other country could successfully cause as much trouble in this era of world history as the Zapatistas have."

Jessica Marcy is a Barnard senior and bulletin arts editor

resident assistants provide

by Theo Togle

Residential assistants, RAs as we like to call them, are truly commendable for all they give to the Barnard community. Though we take them for granted, they are an indispensable part of campus life. Who hasn't come to an RA with a personal crisis, ranging from where to get birth control to how to plan for classes next semester? To be an RA requires dedication, patience, and above all, love for students and the school. The process to become a residential assistant can be quite tedious, but is ultimately rewarding for those who make the final cut, and the benefits of being an RA outweigh any problems that come along with the job.

What does it take to be an RA? For most of us, when we think of becoming an RA, the first thought is getting free housing, in a single room much nicer and more private than cramped triples in Sulzberger. What we don't think about is the amount of time and devotion RAs must put in every day for an entire year. Being an RA requires actual work, and the selection process is designed to find those that are truly serious about the position.

The selection process begins towards the end of first semester, when applications from prospective RAs are taken and read over by people like Annie Aversa, the Associate Director for Residential Life. In this application, candidates fill out their interests and preferences;

whether or not they want to be First Year Focus RAs, etc. Information sessions, held during the first week of December, give interested students the lowdown on RA life, and either convince or deter students to fill out the application.

Once all applications have been received, the group process selection begins. Candidates are placed in groups

and the committee look for in potential RAs? It has nothing to do with whether you've been a camp counselor before, or had previous leadership and group building experience. Though these things can help, the directors of Residential Life look beyond accomplishments to the actual personality and qualities of a candidate. "We look for people who are committed to helping students, people who are into making the campus experience positive for others. We look for things we can't teach people—personal traits." Aversa said, "If someone doesn't know exactly how to deal with certain situations that may come up, that's ok—that's something we can teach them how to handle. But positive traits, you either have them or you don't. That is what we notice."



First-Year Focus RAs strikin' a pose

of 8-9 people, and the selection committee gives them certain tasks to complete. These tasks involve problem-solving situations such as stories with problems that the group must find some way to resolve. As the groups work on tasks, they are watched by area directors, who record the individual performance of a candidate. Group and individual interviews are next, allowing candidates two opportunities to talk with directors about their goals and their desire to become an RA. From there, the committee makes a decision, and the selected few become official residential assistants.

So what exactly do those observers

Though this process can seem intimidating, it is very rewarding for those who emerge successful to know they are qualified to be RAs. It is also a great way for potential RAs to meet other dynamic women.

Senior Nalini Saxena, an RA for upperclass students, said that applying to be an RA was not as hard as she expected. "While it was selective, I don't think I would call the process difficult. It was challenging, and there were a lot of other people who were interested. There was a lot of energy in the group I was in, and I thought the process wasn't bad. It wasn't hard to act naturally even though people were watching you."

Once a candidate makes the transition from regular student to actual RA is

more than just programs

when the real work comes in. The time commitment for an RA is substantial, and entails much more than simply waiting for your residents to come to you with a problem. First Year Focus RA Michelle Bryant, currently a sophomore, said, "The 'RA part' is actually easy—I leave the door open so they can come in to talk or just hang out. It's the programming part that takes time. All RAs have to participate in one community building and one educational program each month. All of us must be in a heritage month committee. I'm on this month's committee for Native American Heritage Month."

Besides participating in the program planning committees, RAs have weekly meetings with the Area Directors, upperclassmen who are in charge of clusters of dorms. There is one AD for the 600's, another for all of Plimpton, Elliott, and 110th Street dorms, an AD for the non first-year section of the Quad, and a final AD for the First Year Focus section of the Quad. Biweekly, RAs meet one-on-one with their Area Director, ensuring that things are going smoothly for everyone involved.

For FYF residential assistants, much more time is required for them to stick around the dorms than upper class RAs. This is because by the time students have reached their junior and senior year, they really don't need as much guidance from RAs and have pretty much figured the system out for themselves. But for first-years that have just come to Barnard, support networks are essential to ease the transition from

home life to dorm life. RAs are there to give advice, but never in an overbearing way. They leave students room to make their own decisions, never intervening unless a student's life may be in real danger. For example, in cases where underage students have consumed alcohol, the RA policy is this, according to one FYF RA: "Our domain is what happens in our halls. While we cannot monitor what students do off campus, if we find any substances in the hall, we have to respond." This means filling out incident reports to the Area Director, who refers the case to ASAP, the Alcohol Substance Awareness Program. Though it can be a stressful incident for both the RA and the student, situations like this must be handled for the well-being of the entire Barnard community.

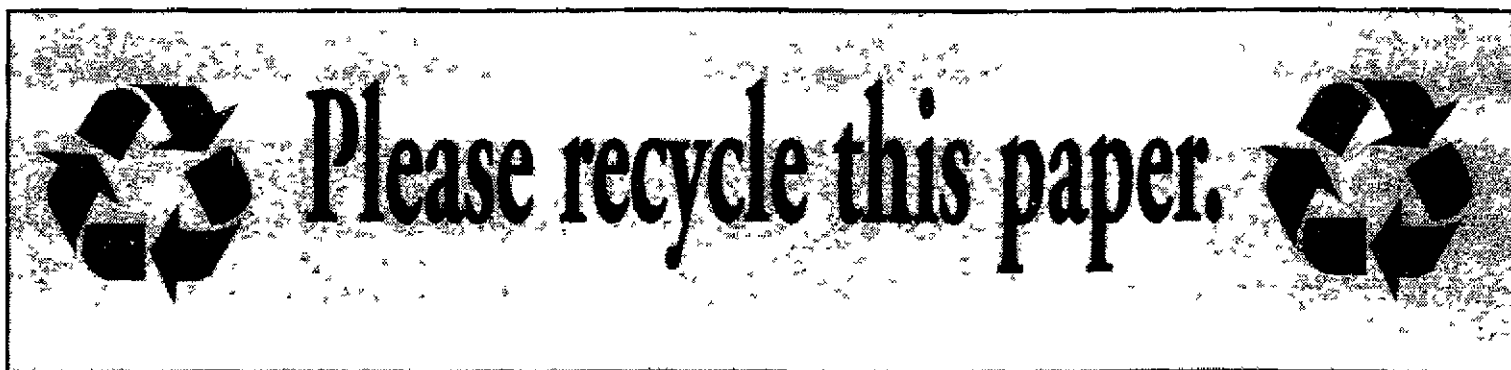
This is not to say that RAs in the upperclass dorms are free from any responsibility; they have different issues of importance than the first-year dorm RAs. Their role is more that of a mediator between students and the Residential Life Office; they fill out reports to the facilities office and other dorm issues for students who do not have the time or resources to do it themselves. Since dorms like Plimpton are off the main campus, it is a different experience for RAs assigned to them. This more independent setting requires a different approach than that in Quad. For RAs who are up to it, being an RA for upperclassmen has its own set of rewards. In fact, according to Aversa, many of the Plimpton RAs, once there, have been reluctant to leave. Its separation from

the main campus gives Plimpton residents a sense of community they never want to part from.

RAs, as a whole, are caring, dedicated women who strive to make the community better for everyone. Their influence goes far, and some even encourage others to become RAs through example. One of Bryant's main reasons for becoming an RA was just that: "My RA last year was really cool. She always made us feel good about going to Barnard and being here. She made the transition from home to school so much easier. That's why I wanted to be a First Year Focus RA, and would love to do it again. It's the main group . . . on campus where you can really make a difference." For many RAs, the experience was so great that they keep coming back for more. Saxena is in her second year of being an RA, and has been on the same floor in Hewitt the entire time: "I had an amazing time last year with my residents. The sense of community and what I learned from them was wonderful. That's why I did it again this year."

With all of the effort put in by these remarkable women, it's a wonder that residents don't call on them more often. They are always able and willing to help students with any problem, and are there to be friends and mentors. Next time you're faced with any situation, or are simply bored and looking to talk, try walking by your RA's room. Chances are, her door will be open, and a caring friend will be right inside.

Thea Tagle is a Barnard first year.



wellwoman: quitting smoking

Q I am considering giving up smoking again. What is the best way to stop smoking for good?

A Quitting is hard. It often takes two, three, or more tries before succeeding. Nevertheless, there are proven methods that when used together will increase your chances of quitting "for good."

1. Studies show that almost everybody benefits from nicotine replacement therapy which can be delivered through

a skin patch, chewing gum, or a nasal spray.

2. Learn to recognize smoking triggers being around other smokers, drinking alcoholic beverages, being under stress, getting into arguments or feeling depressed.

3. Be good to yourself—eat, sleep (change is easier when well rested); drink lots of water; drink a couple of ounces of juice every few hours (helps blood sugar); don't drink alcohol (it affects judgement); take warm showers (helps relieve tension); and remember to

focus on the present. Make your choices one urge at a time.

4. Don't forget to reward yourself for a job well done.

5. Get support from people around you. There's help available through a smoking cessation program in Student Health Services. Clinicians can prescribe medications to help for smoking cessation which can double your long-term success rate.

You can quit! We're here for you, for more info call Well-Woman office (43063) or Student Health Services (42091).

"Well-Woman" is a weekly feature in the bulletin. The responses, written by the Well-Women Peer Educators, answer questions from members of the Barnard community. Questions may be submitted to the Well-Woman Office, 135 Hewitt. The information provided is for informational purposes only. Please take issues or medical concerns to your healthcare provider.

digital divas: i need help with my computer

A bi-weekly column by RCAs—write to resnet@barnard.edu with column suggestions. This week's Digital Diva is Aline Avzaradel.

Just what exactly happens after you call the Help-Desk with a computer problem? Do you wonder when you will receive a phone call from a Residential Computing Assistant? To get the answer to these questions and also to find out the different ways to go about requesting the help of an RCA, read on.

There are a total of 18 RCAs spread across the different residence halls (Elliot, Plimpton, 600, 610, 620 and the Quad). When we receive a call from a student, a ticket is entered into a database system called Helptrac. One of the two Graduate Assistants assigns the ticket to a particular RCA based upon residence halls. When the RCAs check Helptrac and see a ticket assigned to them, they then call the user to set up an appointment. This process can take anywhere from two days to one week depending on how busy we are (we are especially busy at the beginning of the semester and so it might take a little longer for an RCA to get in contact with you).

What should you do once you get a call from an RCA? The first thing to do is to answer the call right away. If we call a student three times and she does

not call us back, we close the ticket. Second, make sure you have all the documentation and disks that came with your computer out and ready by the time the RCA comes over. Finally, once the RCA arrives do not panic if something goes wrong. We are well trained and know how to deal with a computer emergency!

If you ever want the help of an RCA there are several ways to let us know about your problem. You can call the Help-Desk at x47172 and speak to a help-desk technician or you may leave a message on the phone mail at any time. Be sure to include the following information: full name (spell it if necessary and do it slowly!), residence hall name and room number, class year, user name (i.e. aa307) and a brief description of your problem. You may also e-mail the Help-Desk at help@barnard.edu and include in your email all the information listed above. If you have a laptop, you can bring it to the Learning Computer Lab Mon-Fri 9:30AM to 5:00PM. Be sure to call before you come to find out when there will be someone available to assist you. We're here to help, so don't hesitate to be in touch.

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artspicks

for the week of november 22

art

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100 pictures of Jewish
Art, covering topics
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At Bonakdar Jancou
Gallery (521 West 21
Street)

Olafur Eliasson's mind-
bending disruption of
the gallery space that
has a rare logic and a
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metry.

theatre

The Tale of The Allergist's Wife

By Charles Busch

At Barrymore Theatre
(Broadway and 47
Street). For more info
call 581-1212.

This show is full of char-
acters with guilt-edged
insecurities.

Red Roses and Petrol touching and complex

by Jessica Marcy

With the soft crooning of Elvis asking "Are you lonesome tonight?" I sat comfortably observing the stage decorated like a cozy, middle-class Irish home. The entire setting made one feel at home. The sofa seemed comfy, the multiple books looked inviting, the fireplace offered a warm gathering place, the various photos displayed smiles of days past (an adolescent girl shining as the star of a play, a family with little children gathered together in celebration). Little did I know that in this setting of superficial peace and happy family life, I was about to be drawn into the emotional complexities of a family with its fair share of dark secrets in the remarkable play by Joseph O'Connor, *Red Roses and Petrol*.

Written by this best selling author (he has produced eight Irish number one best-selling novels) and brother of Sinead O'Connor, *Red Roses and Petrol* is the story of a family coping with the sudden death of

father and husband, Edna Doyle. Moreover, it is the story of confronting the emotional baggage created by a figure who often caused pain and embarrassment, sometimes expressed tenderness and love, and immensely shaped the remaining four characters' lives, for better or worse. On a superficial level, the story is simple: an Irish professor of literature dies and his wife and three chil-

dren must cope. Edna's son, Jimmy, and one of his two daughters, Catherine, fly in from London and New York to meet their mother and other sister, Medbh. The funeral must be arranged and a reception with all of the supplies must be planned. After the family is gathered and no one shows up for the funeral reception, all of the dark secrets from the past begin to emerge to create an emotional roller coaster ride of intrigue.

What is incredible is O'Connor's combination of wit, humanity, tragedy, and emotional truth that creates a plot so realistic the viewer feels like O'Con-



*emotional complexities and dark secrets
make red roses and petrol riveting*

nor is talking about his own family or a family of a close friend. O'Connor has justly been the recipient of a long list of honors such as the Hennessy First Fiction Award, the New Irish Writer of the Year Award, Miramax Best Screenplay Prize, and Best Stage Play of the Year by the Project Arts Center. These awards are indeed a result of O'Connor's ability to capture the complexity and "grayness" of life. While O'Connor delves

into the heart ache and pain caused by Edna when he beats his son Jimmy out of frustration or when he causes his daughters shame by being seen with a female student their own age and inspiring an onslaught of rumors, he also shows the humanity of Edna. He shows that things are not always what they seem. Some times people have good-hearted

<< page 17 >>

Strictly Personal full of shallow characters, hackneyed plot lines



the cast of *strictly personal* attempts to delve into the NYC dating scene

Kristin Carlson and Abby Clay

If you are into snorting, growling, E-Z-Cheez, and sex talk, you will certainly enjoy a play that attempts to get *Strictly Personal*. This intimate peek into the portal of New York City's dating scene lends itself to light laughter and enjoyment. The most amusing parts of the play were the subtle nuances that only a true New Yorker would understand—descriptions of torrid affairs with Staten Island Ferry captains and a D'Ag bag boy. Coupled with the humorous and convincing acting of the mother and lead divorcee Lori, these comical references manage to hold the viewers' attention.

You may rightly read the preceding sentence as a mild hit, in direct correlation with the scanty strength of the play's impact. Although we got a few laughs out of the repeated New York jokes as well as the physical humor of the show (think robust nasal inhalations and excessive spurting of yellow dairy-substitute products from a can), these factors hardly disguised the lack of depth in plot as well as characters. With the exception of the aforementioned

characters of Lori and the mother, the remaining seven personalities were so shallow, if they could be converted into bathtub water they would fail to splash even your big toe.

In illustration, allow us to describe for you several of the clichés the playwright attempted to pass off as real New Yorkers. Let us begin with Mike, the tomboy, who only becomes a "true woman" after being consumed by the throes of passion. At first appearance, Mike might easily have been a man, wearing overalls, work boots, a backwards cap, and playing poker with the boys while slamming back a few cold brewskis. Miraculously, what the play names love (read: first night hook-up) performs a complete personality sex change when Mike shacks up with a random bouncer, unleashing upon him the powerful seduction of head-to-toe denim in all its glory. Mike disappears for the remainder of the first act, and returns only for a short cameo in the second half sporting a short red dress and spike heels, professing the fantastic nature of romance in general. We experienced a certain level of discomfort when presented with

<< page 17 >>

artspicks

...continued

Highway to Tomorrow
By Elevator Repair Service

At Here (145 Sixth Avenue). For more info call 647-0202.

A tragedy that provokes laughter.

film

Suzhou River

At the Film Forum (209 West Houston Street Between Sixth Ave and Varick Street). For more info call 727-8110. Through November 21.

Written and directed by Lou Ze. An East-West fusion. A movie of seductive surfaces with tons of glamour.

Revolution in the Revolution

At Walter Reade Theater (70 Lincoln Center Plaza, at 65 Street, above Alice Tully Hall). For more info call 875-5600. November 10 through 30.

music picks

for the week of november 29

november 29

Dan Hicks and the Hot Licks

At Village Underground (130 W. 3 Street). For more information, call 777-7745.

A San Francisco folk musician who has been around since the '60s, Dan Hicks acoustic guitar playing ability shines live.

december 1

Brooklyn Funk Essentials

At SOB's (204 Varick at Houston). For more information, call 243-4940.

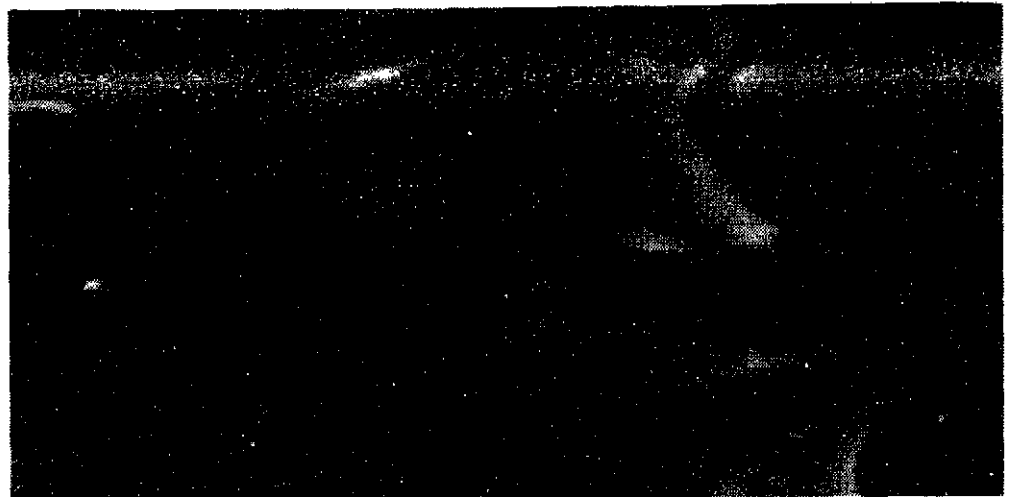
These long time masters of funk and soul are reuniting with all original members for a final show.

december 2

k.d. lang

At the Beacon Theater (Broadway at 74 Street) For more info, call 496-7070.

Blaze Battle a



By Courtney E. Martin

The Blaze Battle, touted by TMV/Shine media as the MC World Championship, at Hammerstein Ballroom on Thursday November 2 was, to put it mildly, a fiasco.

Perhaps because of the chaos surrounding the sponsor itself—*Blaze* magazine, one of the founding hip hop publications went under before the battle was scheduled—the battle became less about the words of the competing emcee's and more about their fists and crews.

Before the battle started things were pleasant. KRS One performed a typically delicious set and then, in the cherry on top of the night, Doug E Fresh and Slick Rick surprised the crowd with "La Di Da Di," a classic hit for anyone who loves hip hop. The old veteran, Slick Rick, walked on stage with a diamond eye patch and pleated dockers...need more be said? The Bad Boy crew, lead by the temperamental Shyne, also performed.

After this diverse warm up, the Battle was ready to begin. The structure was fairly simple. There were three rounds, each consisting of two emcees—who have won battles in their respective towns previously—going up against each other in what was supposed to be sixty seconds of free style rhymes with the background of Tony Touch spinning them some lovely beats. At the end of the 120 seconds,

each emcee got a turn at the ol' applause meter with the crowd.

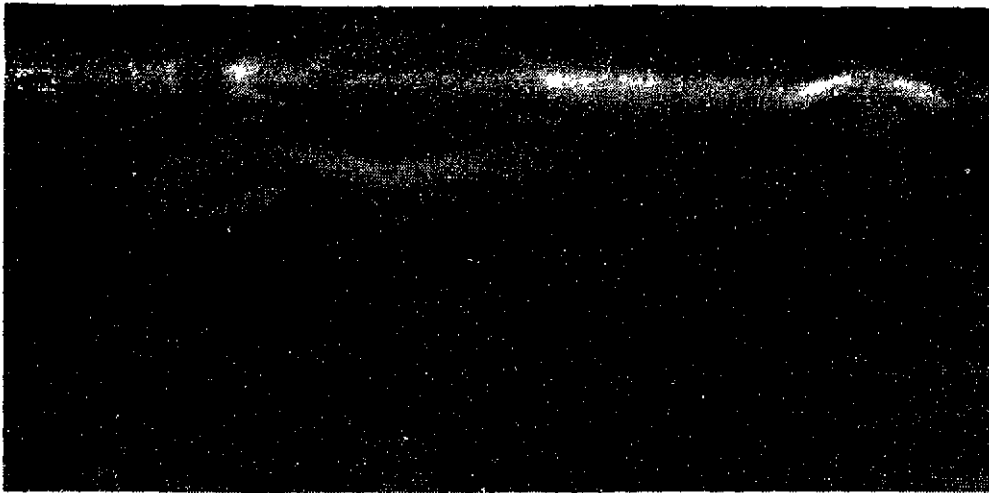
The first fiasco of the night was that it was clear that the mediocre emcees in abundance were kicking strictly written rhymes. There is no hard and fast way of knowing, however, so host of the night and legendary hip hop artist himself, KRS One just had to smile and keep bringing out the next contenders. While there was no official way to pick out the fakers, it was pretty obvious when one amateur emcee dissing his opponent made fun of articles of clothing that he wasn't even wearing. Whoops. The lack of talent on stage—besides the champion, Eyedea from Atmosphere—was not the only disarming element of the night.

There were, count 'em, three fights throughout the course of the night. The first was an almost-brawl between the Bad Boy crew, a Puff Daddy owned company, and some obscure group of militant hip hop heads in army helmets who supported one of the emcees named F.O.D.

After that slight skirmish was quieted by security, things settled down for a little while. Until, of course, one of the female emcees who couldn't even keep a flow for longer than ten seconds, stage dived straight into a woman in the crowd who was heckling her, and thus commenced brawl number two. Disappointingly, there were two women in the battle and both of them were embarrassing.

In the end, the F.O.D. crew, feeling

bizarre fiasco



disillusioned because their emcee flopped on stage, started a real, shoes-flying, chairs-crashing-on-the-floor brawl with fans of another emcee, Shell. At this point, KRS One reminded the crowd poignantly that the whole concept of an emcee battle was that it was nonviolent. Real hip hop heads, he explained like a grand daddy full of wisdom, used words instead of fists. The point was apparently a little too complex for the numskulls in the crowd who had been hearing bad written rhymes all night and cheering them like they were golden.

As if the whole night wasn't embarrassing enough, it was recorded for all prosperity by HBO and will be airing repeatedly through out November and December. The only redeeming thing about the night is that returning champion Eyedea won. This nonviolent, young kid from Minnesota held his own despite the fists flying and the written, tired rhymes spitting. He walked away with a platinum silver champion jacket, and most importantly, his pride.

Courtney E. Martin is a Barnard junior and bulletin nyc living co-editor.

music picks

...continued

This rockin' songstress is back to promote her latest album, the techno influenced *Invincible Summers*.

december 2

Insane Clown Posse

At Hammerstein Ballroom (311 W. 34 Street). For more information, call 564-4882.

Find out why these rappers have such a scandalous reputation yet one of the best live shows.

december 5

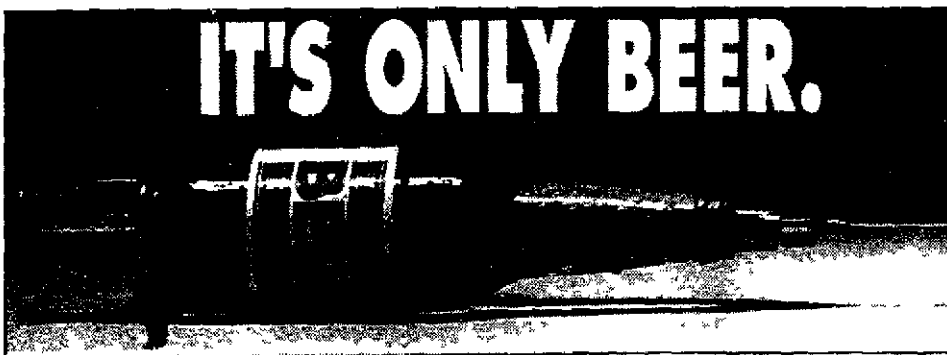
Velvet Acid Christ

At Limelight (47 W. 20 Street at 6th Ave). For more information, call 807-7059.

Known for their pounding electronic/industrial sound, Velvet Acid Christ also present many social issues in their intense lyrics.

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albumreview

Elliott's latest doesn't live up to cover art

What attracted me first to Elliott's latest release was the cover of *Take a Look*, featuring a man jumping down from a mountain to the sea.

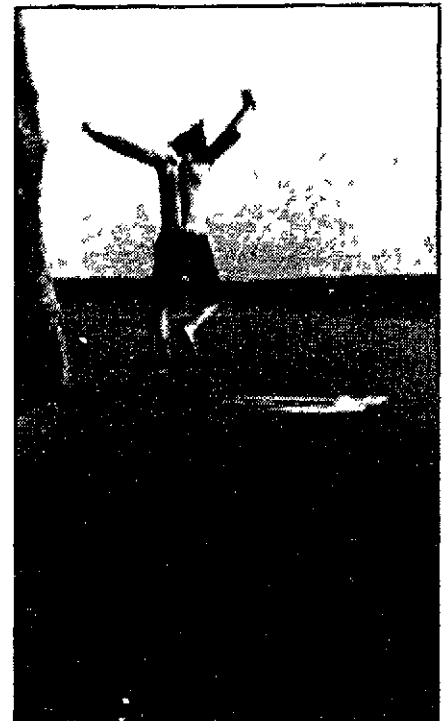
Well, unfortunately it turns out that the music isn't as reckless and rocking as the cover might suggest.

If my mother heard this music, she would probably say that they don't really know what they're doing, that they're just screaming and it seemed to be a mess. She would be right. The six songs in this CD are hard rock ballads. They are full of heavy rhythms that take on more importance than lyrics. When the first song came out from my Stereo, I didn't react very receptively. "What were they singing?" All I heard was drums, guitars etc. clashing, and could not make out the words.

The first three songs are definitely hard rock. In the fourth one, "Halfway Pretty", Elliott cooled down and "Halfway Pretty" turned out to be a halfway peaceful song, compared to the first three songs. The fifth one is called "Lost Instrumental" and is totally instrumental as the title so observantly suggests. The sixth one is a slight variation on the fourth one.

Listen, even if I were a hard rock fan, I wouldn't spend my money on this CD. First of all, there aren't enough songs on the album. Secondly, although the songs are hard rock ballads, I just couldn't move, sing, or dance to it. They failed the blind test, they just didn't move or energize me.

—Tania Lee



Gatecrasher Global Sound System a solid techno compilation

Gatecrasher Global Sound System is an attempt to weave techno and electronica from all over the world into a harmonious, united double-CD compilation, and, for the most part, it succeeds. The first CD is dreamy and ethereal and features mainstream artists such as Moby and BT as well as lesser known but equally adept musicians such as Planisphere and Human Movement. The music is blended together in an irresistible delirium and inspires with twirling guitars and pounding beats. By far the

best cut is a remix of BT's "Dreaming," which is a haunting, longing track featuring a female vocalist whose voice scours the soul for recognition.

The second CD is darker and opens with "Dido" by Aria, which features low strings against a mournful background of falling rain before spiraling into oblivion. It's nice to hear emotion coming through in a genre where most of the music features machines and computers, and vocalists are rare. The songs on the second CD have a more industrial feel to

them and contrast nicely with the first CD.

The one dislike I have with this album is that there are over 33 artists featured, leaving one a bit dizzy after taking in all the music. Perhaps a few cuts could have produced a more solid effort. However, techno compilations are infamous for their length and amount of artists/DJs, and this one succeeds as an impressive yet mellow album

—Roz Eggebroten

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<< page 12 >> motives which, for certain reasons, must be held secret. Furthermore, O'Connor expresses the love amongst all of the characters, despite the resentment and bitterness that has hardened some of them. The interaction of characters, powerful scenes, and comedic one liners are all strengths of O'Connor's writing.

Combined with the wonderful writing, fabulous acting helps to fully bring the play to life. *Red Roses and Petrol* describes the lives of Moya Doyle (the even-tempered and good natured mother), Medbh Doyle (the smart, sassy, and loving youngest daughter), Catherine Doyle (the rigid and slightly controlling

eldest), and Johnny Doyle (the wildest with his fair share of problems). In the midst of this family reunion, Tom Ivers, the stiff and not-so-bright boyfriend of Catherine, is also present who offers a fair share of comedic relief. Tom acts as a connection to the audience because both are non-active participants who are slowly dragged into the middle of the emotional complexity. Both are passive observers to many awkward and painful family discussions.

Then, there is Edna Doyle, the father who is described by Catherine as being many different people. Played by Frank McCourt, Pulitzer Prize winning author of *Angela's Ashes*, Edna Doyle appears

on a series of homemade videos. Remaining after his death, the videos help to connect the story and, finally, expose the real theme of the play: love comes in many forms.

Showing at the Irish Arts Center, *Red Roses & Petrol* is by far the most powerful and complex play I have seen in a long time. It's also the funniest. In realizing why nobody shows up for the funeral reception and why the children are more like their parents than they could imagine, you too will surely be on the edge of your seat in this gem of a play.

Jessica Marcy is a Barnard senior and bulletin arts editor.

<< page 13 >> the concept that love is equated with a change of life and a change of self, and that a change of self—in this case a 180 switch in gender identity—is a change for the better. Personally, we preferred the Levis.

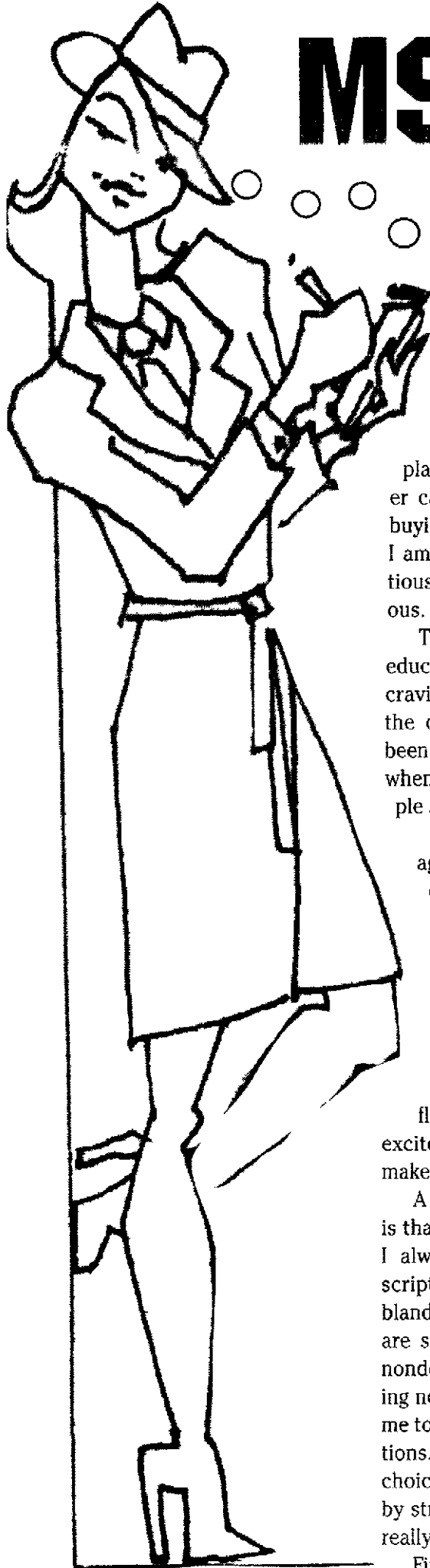
Continuing on the theme of shallow female characters, Billie, the dumb blonde, plays Mike's opposite extreme. She giggles about numerous one-nighters with extremely sketchy men. Even in serious conversation with her female friends, Billie's facetiously oblivious exterior remains frozen, making us ask the question: Is there any real person whose brain is actually smaller than an acorn? Answer: no. Verdict: character development is in the great black hole of suckiness. Initially, Billie defines a relationship as a free drink from the bar or a sexual tryst over the waters of the Hudson. Of course, this all changes when she, too, finds "love" through none other than the personal ads in *New York* magazine. The overwhelming surge of romantic emotion that gushes over Billie after her first "real date" with her modern-day knight-in-shining-um, sweatpants, instantly changes her into a one-guy girl. Again, the play presents the idea that love leads to dramatic alteration in the very foundations of the personal aura. Billie's date left us wondering what exactly the play intended to project through its repeatedly casual definition of love.

Let us not deceive you into believing that this trend of shal-

low character development halted at the gender barrier. On the contrary, it continued quite effectively into the male spectrum, namely Freddie: the overweight object of beautiful, skinny, and did we mention dumb, Billie's affections. Freddie, or rather Teddy, as Billie tenderly christens her squeezably soft hunk of love, lacks self-confidence until he, too, is bitten by the love bug. Fantastically, one movie with Billie, merely one shared tub of buttered popcorn, and Freddie is telling off his friends left and right. No longer do the tiresome fat jokes, which stopped being funny after the first six...teen uses, crumple Freddie's poor big heart. Once zapped by the lightening of love—courtesy of the *New York* personals—Freddie proclaims that big is beautiful. Still, the three-dimensional quality of his character did not extend beyond what his eating habits provided. Missing was the solo violin during the touching, oops, we meant cheesy, speech that culminated in Freddie's declaration: "I am lovable!"

If you can withstand the over-simplification of love, obsession with sex, and soap-operatic personality reversals of *Strictly Personal*, you will enjoy the smooth scene transitions, engaging set and lighting display, and musical interludes—featuring our "personal" favorite, "If you like Pina Coladas..."

Kristin Carlson and Abby Clay are Barnard sophomores.



Kate O'Shea

MS MANHATTAN

finds her mundane mystique

Have you ever busted out that dance you do in front of your dorm room mirror for the mysterious faces of a crowded bar? Is a trip to Rite-Aid prone with potential, ample reason to play a coy smile in response to whatever card is thrown at you from the man buying Rogaine to your left? Say yes, and I am like you—bright, young, and ambitious. I am unattached and boldly curious. Bluntly, I am awaiting discovery.

Though I moved to New York first for education, and second to explore itchy cravings and callings, I've come to revel in the other side of things. Now that I've been here a while, I know I like it best when curiosity comes my way. I want people seeking me out.

I was told, at perhaps too young an age, that Marilyn Monroe was discovered at a drug store and Pamela Anderson Lee at a football game. I imagine Hitchcock found his women in the most unlikely places. Granted, I flaunt neither moles nor hilly cleavage, but still I have a vision of my discovery. And while it may not end in stars and flash bulbs, it has its own version of excitement. It's built of the stuff that makes strangers strange.

A feature of New York that flatters me is that all people are exotic here. At home I always thought myself rather nondescript. But in this city of global beauty, my bland complexion and mundane tresses are suddenly quite compelling. My once nondescript appearance is now an intriguing novelty, while simultaneously allowing me to take a chameleon-approach to situations. This pairing has allowed me some choice interactions, "discoveries" made by strangers, of qualities I'm not so sure I really possess.

First there is the ephemeral beauty.

The fragile boy I shy away from, afraid to break his still and perfect grace. But he grows curious, spurred by some unknown volition, and decides to discover me instead. Several cliché and creepy comments later I am armed with the information that he goes by "Cosmos Moses" and that in a world where "we're all just playing games," his is to splurge fantastic stories with a lisp and lazy eyes. I've enough insight to understand that he thinks I can provide him with a quick fix, I'm delighted to learn he thinks I deal drugs. Just call me Shorty the Pimp!

Then there is the squad of twelve-year-olds parading through campus in classic brown badges. A nearsighted troop leader swears I am her missing Girl Scout, shouting that I wear my smile at all times and remember my sash tomorrow.

And an academic mistakes me for inspiration one day, interesting as I am in my navy blue turtleneck sweater. He corners me at Hungarian Pastry shop, asking remote and steamy questions. After several words leak from my mouth, he decides I embody pure, unadulterated wisdom. "Truth incarnate," he sighs under thickening black glasses. He uses me for several days, employing my modest commentaries for material in his fiction. If you ever read a character that resembles me, you've got it wrong. This guy was intrigued with a girl that only exists in my most uncharacteristic moments. So refreshing to have someone tell me who I am.

This is not a city of mistaken identity; there is no need to wear your persona on your sleeve. It is a place where we are always defining and redefining each other, projecting and extrapolating the most remarkably inventive characters. Though I may never make a stage debut, I'm content to count on daily dramas, sightings, and discoveries for now.

a world within walking distance discovering Harlem

By Diana Owen

A few weeks ago I went jogging uptown, running north on Riverside Drive, turning on what I think was 130th Street, and heading back down Broadway. My friends thought I was crazy when I told them. They laughed at the spectacle I must have been. With perky ponytail and pink Barnard T-shirt, I was the image of wholesomeness in an allegedly rough neighborhood. I wasn't fazed by the experience. Sure, Broadway past 120th Street isn't pretty, but it was bustling enough that afternoon to feel reasonably safe.

Harlem has been a source of negative press to such an extent that many people think of it only as a drug-infested war zone. Barnard is just a few minutes' walk from Harlem, but most make a point of avoiding it. As females, we are constantly being reminded by parents and peers to never go past 125 Street and to stay away from Morningside Drive.

Harlem's reputation as a crime spot is not entirely unwarranted. The district continues to struggle with gang violence and drug dealing. But when approached with common sense and basic street smarts, Harlem is a neighborhood deserving of our exploration.

This past Saturday I ventured into Harlem with an assignment: to investigate the positive. Wandering along 125th Street (also called Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard), I found a lively thoroughfare of restaurants, clothing stores, museums, and theaters. I could smell the fried food and hear B.B. King blasting from the jukebox several feet from the "old fashion' but good" M&G Soul Food Diner at 125th and Morningside Drive. I stopped in to get something to drink and continued along to the new Harlem Mall (125th Street and Frederick Douglass Boulevard) which houses several movie theaters, a giant HMV Record Store, and a Modell's Sporting Goods. I was most delighted to see the inexpensive chain store, Old Navy. Did

you even know that there's an Old Navy within walking distance from our campus? I, for one, was ecstatic over this discovery and had to restrain myself from wasting precious time on a shopping spree.

My next destination was the famed Apollo Theater, less than a block down. The most important venue in black show business from the 1930s through the 1970s, the Apollo became a mecca for jazz bands and hosted the debut concerts of such greats as Ella Fitzgerald and Stevie



the apollo theater is just one of harlem's numerous attractions

Wonder. During the '70s the Apollo steadily went bankrupt, forcing its closure in 1977. It was declared a national historic landmark in 1983, and in 1991 was adopted by a nonprofit organization. Since then the Apollo has been rejuvenated, packing in the audiences every Wednesday "Amateur Night," and hosting big stars on weekends.

This coming Saturday's performers at the Apollo include rappers Ja-Rule and Mystikal (do the song titles "Holla Holla" and "Shake Your Ass" ring a bell?), playing two shows at 7 and 11 PM. Tickets are available at the Apollo Box Office (212-531-5305) and all Ticketmaster outlets.

The Apollo also hosts dances, poetry readings, and plays. On Tuesday night, Great New York Writers in Great New York Places presented Harlem Renaissance Writers, with celebrity guests reading selections by Langston Hughes, James Weldon Johnson, and Zora Neale Hurston (yes, a Barnard alumna!)

I continued along 125th to the Studio

Museum in Harlem, one block east of the Apollo (between Adam Clayton Powell Jr. and Malcolm X boulevards). Featuring exhibitions on African, Caribbean, and African-American art, the Studio Museum offers free admission but visitors are encouraged to give donations by clerks at the entrance.

I was most fascinated by Whitfield Lovell's "Whispers from the Walls" exhibit, an interpretive artwork based on a historical event. Lovell has created a cabin enclosed by a dirt yard and rumpled clothes, with antique furniture and knickknacks inside. The setting is inspired by the forced removal of an African-American community in 1921 due to its proximity to a women's college in Denton, Texas. Lovell's wood paintings on the walls of the interior are based on photographs of black Texans of the period. These paintings, along with quiet blues music coming from the old record player and the layers of rumpled clothes in the yard, create a truly haunting

scene.

While at the museum, I had the opportunity to speak with the security guard, G. Dickerson, about safety issues in Harlem. "Maybe you wouldn't want to walk alone at night," he said. "But it's never dangerous during the day. And there are quite a few interesting things to look at." In fact, Dickerson, a lifetime resident of Harlem, claimed that the neighborhood is safer than a number of other Manhattan districts which, he asserts, have more severe drug problems than Harlem does. "Washington Heights and Spanish Harlem are more dangerous than Harlem could ever be," he said.

Having seen enough of the main drag, I walked up Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd and headed east on the more mellow 126th Street. Tucked into a row of brownstones on a quiet residential block is the Black Fashion Museum, famous for its 3,000-piece collection, including all the costumes from *The Wiz*. To my disappointment, the

<< page 23 >>

the Flatiron Building: an nyc architectural landmark

by Allison Baker

The Flatiron Building, resplendent in its triangular glory, is one of New York's most important architectural landmarks. Built by Daniel Burnham, the leading architect of the Chicago Architecture firm, Daniel Burnham & Co.—a firm very influential in the origin of the modern skyscraper, the Flatiron Building was the tallest building in the world at the time of completion. To imagine that a building that measures 285 feet or 22 stories stood as a towering testament to the advancement of modernity is to imagine the world on a different scale. Today, the Flatiron is dwarfed by its neighbors, not to mention the record holding Petronas Towers in Malaysia, which stands at 88 stories, soon to be surpassed in Chicago by a 112 story giant whose construction begins in April.

Another interesting fact is that the building was conceived as an effort to try and draw businesses to the mainly residential and retail-oriented neighborhood, the very same neighborhood that is filled predominantly by businesses today.

The Flatiron's unusual triangular plan is in part an adaptation to the awkward space of the intersection of Broadway and Fifth Avenue, and at the time of construction was the source of much skeptical commentary. People thought that the accelerated wind pattern created by the building's shape would knock it down. The Flatiron has stood up to the high-speed winds, but the unusual eddies produced by the building's shape have left New York with a sort of cultural fable. It is said that the strong wind pattern caused the skirts of women walking on 23rd Street to blow up, and throngs of young men would sup-

posedly gather to ogle over their bare legs. In an effort to disperse the peeping toms, the police would say "23-ski-doo." Although this usage has passed out of American English, the word "scram" is supposed to be its modern descendant.

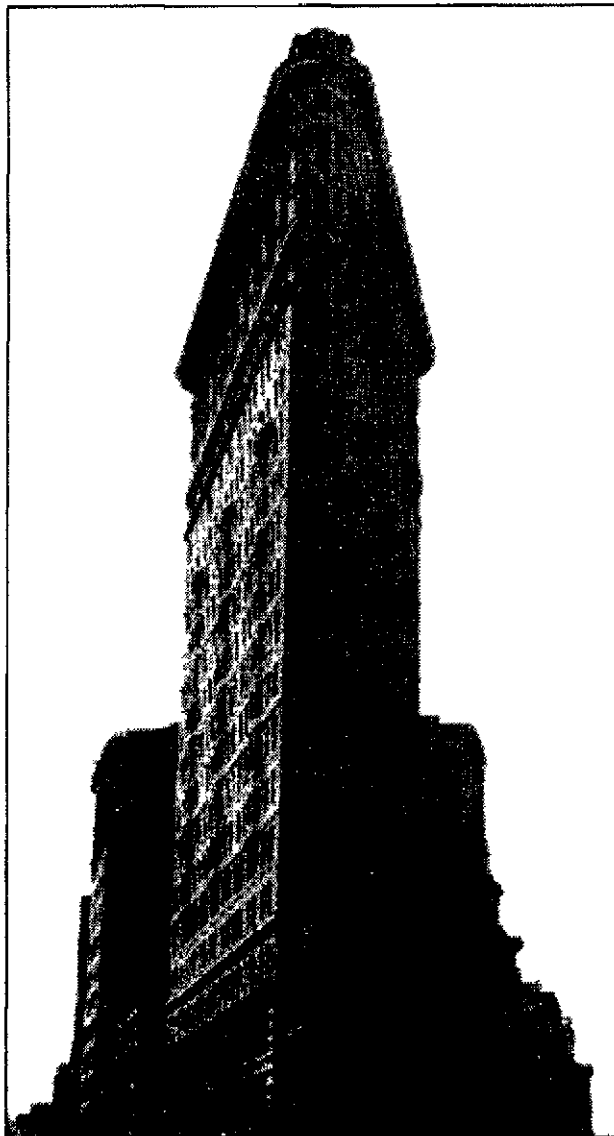
The Flatiron is sometimes incorrectly thought to have been the first steel skeleton building. However, dozens of other steel-framed buildings were built in New York in the 1890's. The building's design is in part a response to the architectural trends at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago and combines elements of French and Italian Renaissance style.

The building's 22 stories are divided like a Classical Greek column and are made up of stone and terracotta panels designed to simulate rustication (masonry constructed with conspicuous, often beveled points is referred to as rusticated). Undulating bays break up the midsection and give the building the appearance of some palazzo stretched to a great height. For years it was thought that the Flatiron was a dark gray color, but a 1991 cleaning and restoration revealed that the building was actually a much lighter color.

The Flatiron is only six feet wide at the apex of the triangle on 5th Ave and contains a small metal and glass extension for display, known as a cowcatcher (after the feature on the front of steam locomotives). Today, a Citibank is housed inside the display.

The building fascinated artists and was immortalized in a photograph by Alfred Stieglitz. It continues to be a source of inspiration for New York artists and passerbys alike.

Allison Baker is a Barnard junior and bulletin copy-editor.



the flatiron building, named for its shape

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Renata's rambblings

By Renata Bystritsky

I am beginning to think America has been listening to far too many songs that contain lyrics of a long-suffering lover who is enamored of an utter dolt. It is the only explanation I can come up with for the results of the laughingstock that is the United States presidential election.

I am not even going to bring up the fact that Gore is a wooden, boring kiss-up with a stick up his you-know-what. Nor will I focus too intensely on the fact that, just a few months ago, George W. Bush was brought to his knees by a question as wicked, tricky and unexpected as "Who is the President of Chechnya?" After all, potential leaders of the free world probably don't have enough time in their life either to find their REAL personality or to read the paper once in a while.

Does anyone remember fourth grade? Do you remember the smart kids who seemed to know all the answers, but sat quietly, knowing that any attempt to guide the crowd would result in the crowd's complete, and sometimes violent, rejection of them? And do you also remember the class clown—the idiot who passed his tests only because the teacher loved his funny antics—who cracked everyone up so much with his rampant,

blatant stupidity that he was everyone's best friend? (Of course, it would stand to reason that he would be a desirable commodity. Without fools, we would have to start re-examining our own intellects, and God forbid we actually do that.)

Yes...let's return to fourth grade. To the social structure encompassed

so neatly in that thirty-person class. Whoever thought that the teacher presiding was dead wrong? In elementary school, the innate tendencies of society are outlined clearly—more clearly than they are in the convoluted interpretations of most political analysts.

We had the graduating fifth-grader's little friend, whom we all adored for his proximity to "the power." We had the joke-cracking (adjust that to "crack-smoking" for the kid's real-life, adult, presidential-candidate analogue) class clown whom I have already spoken of. We had a few hangers-on, those were the sycophants who gained popularity by virtue of their contacts. (Oh, yes, the "good old boy" system was alive and well in fourth grade). We also had the faculty member's privileged little kid. And then, we had the geeks. No one likes a geek. They look funny, more funny, and they are of above-average intelligence (and, boy oh boy, that last one is the KICKER!).

People don't identify with creatures of superior intelligence. Why would we give power to someone who might know what to do with it? No, it would be far better to vote a total schmuck into office, that way, as we complain about our country tumbling full-speed to Hell, we can feel a smug little sense of superiority over the president himself. And that little flush of self-satisfaction is supposed to justify a conscious decision to make America just a little bit funnier to the rest of the world.

I am writing this before the results are in, and, frankly, I am not sure if they will EVER go uncontested by one party or another. We are about to become a nation headed by a man who is affectionately

nicknamed "Dubya"—unless, of course, he is bested by the desperate tricks of a hysterical idealist. We are either going to get the over-

privileged, under-talented waste of flesh, or we are going to get the wooden ventriloquist's dummy, who STILL looks like he is not quite sure

what he is doing with a presidential nomination, for all of his jerky machinations.

Hillary may have made a big show of kissing everyone's rear while presenting the nation with her own, but at least that woman has got a working cerebrum.

This election has been ludicrous from start to finish. Since the results of the primaries first came in, people have been laughing and theatrically rolling their eyes. Many regular voters didn't even show up to the booths this year. There was simply no one to vote for. Unfortunate though it was, a vote for Nader really was regarded as a vote for Bush—although I find a silver lining in the fact that this did not really apply to the Barnard community.

It is no wonder the candidates were so evenly matched. Most people I know would be hard-pressed to figure out which of the two is worse.

We are stuck between a rock and a hard place. Or, should I say, between a dummy and a mannequin. Either way, by the time these long-awaited results come in, we are going to resume our descent into idiocy. From the dirty old man in the Oval Office to his painfully late-bleached wife, to the face between morons to take his place, it has been a bumpy ride. Let's hope we make it in one piece.

Renata Bystritsky is a Barnard sophomore and bulletin columnist.

in love with fools



letters to the editors

reactions to renata's ramblings

To the Editors,

As a learning disabled sophomore at Barnard, I was offended by Renata Bystritsky's article "Has the World Gone Mad?" in the November 15th issue of the Bulletin. Ms. Bystritsky's opinions demonstrate not only a lack of sensitivity to the difficulties faced by learning disabled students, but a completely uninformed view-point.

For starters, Ms. Bystritsky categorizes learning disabilities with mental illnesses, which they are not. Learning disabilities (LDs) such as ADD (attention deficit disorder) and dyslexia are increasingly being referred to as "learning differences." This terminology is supposed to denote that LDs are not malfunctions of the brain, but different ways of processing information—ways to which information taught in classroom settings is often not conducive.

Ms. Bystritsky then goes on to describe "a lot of 'disabled' kids who are gleefully cackling as they pop pills to avoid homework," saying that these students are "too lazy to care." From where exactly does Ms. Bystritsky know these students? I'd be very interested in asking them just how they manage to avoid doing their assignments based on the fact that they're on medication. Medicated or not, LD students are among the hardest working, particularly at a school such as Barnard, where the rigorous academic demands place incredible pressure on all the students, let alone those of us who constantly worry about being able to finish exams on time and making up the notes that

we've missed from zoning out often and uncontrollably during class.

In high-school, when I was diagnosed with ADD and several information processing disorders, I was mortified. I'd always known that something was off, that things were way more difficult than they should have been for me. Still, I was ashamed of being LD, and tried to hide it from my friends. It's taken me years to become comfortable with the fact that I have to take Ritalin in order to get anything out of most lectures, and that I have to go to office hours constantly in order to fill gaps in my notes from "black-outs" (where I zone out for 20 minutes at a time, only realizing that I've been gone when I suddenly find myself in class, having missed half the lecture.) I also have to deal with the fact that no matter how hard I try there are some things that never will make any sense to me, such as biological systems, patterns within groups of objects, and any task that involves following a series of directions, such as rugby plays.

I do my best. I'm ambitious, hard working, and I'm about to declare 2 majors. Overall, I find myself in a comfortable place right now—for the first time, I feel that I can do great things, despite the fact that being LD is a critical and undeniable part of my life. People like Ms. Bystritsky, through their insensitive and ignorant views, completely undermine the struggles that students with learning disabilities undergo, as well as their accomplishments.

— Ilana Garon, Barnard class of 2003

To the Editors,

I was disturbed by Renata Bystritsky's article about mental illness, "has the world gone mad?" (15 November).

She did make some good points: There are many people who take medication as a quick fix for psychological problems; there are many parents who put their difficult children on medication because they cannot, or do not want to, deal with them, and there are doctors who are quick to prescribe drugs whose medical benefits are known. But any good points she made were over-

shadowed by her display of ignorance about psychological disorders.

Saying that mental illnesses a fad, that therapy only serves to allow patients to "prattle on about themselves," and that people with mental illnesses should just deal with it themselves is insulting, stupid and irresponsible. She admits that mental illnesses are real, but then shows that she doesn't really believe it by implying that mentally ill people are lazy and self-indulgent and just looking for a way to avoid their responsibilities. If she really doesn't take these illnesses seriously and thinks

they are merely an attempt to be fashionable, she seems not to have learned much from her psychology class. Mind over matter does not work if there is something chemically wrong with your brain. It is very easy to write an article when all you do is regurgitate other people's opinions, especially if you hide your lack of thought and knowledge behind being a "controversial writer." Perhaps she should do a little more preparation before writing her piece in the future.

— Rachel Harrison, Barnard Class of 2001.

<< page 19 >> museum was closed, but is open weekdays.

Open every day, however, is the famed Sylvia's restaurant, at the corner of 126th Street and Malcolm X Boulevard. A forty year-old institution, the restaurant is run by Sylvia herself, the self-proclaimed "Queen of Soul Food." Sylvia's is always packed with tourists, residents, and celebrities alike. Sylvia spreads her soul food secrets by selling hush puppy and gravy mixes, "sassy" dressing, spices, and a cookbook. Waiter Shawn Bearsall called the banana pudding his favorite, but said that diners flock to eat the barbecue ribs.

Soul food aside, I also discussed Harlem conditions with Bearsall and other waiters, Rashiem Youmans and Bambo Jallow. "I think what Harlem is trying to do is become more of a tourist area," said Bearsall.

The waiters' favorite places to go in Harlem include the Harlem Mall and Amateur Night at the Apollo. "125th Street is just nice to walk around," said Bearsall. "People go there to hang out and stuff."

The waiters shared a generally positive attitude toward their neighborhood. "Harlem is what you can say is up-and-rising," Bearsall said.

Bearsall is right. Since the 1980s pri-

vate community organizations and the city administration have made an effort to halt crime and unemployment and renovate dilapidated buildings and houses.

Safety is still an issue, but the chances of getting raped or killed while walking down 125th Street in broad daylight are slim. As Dickerson said, Harlem is safe during the day, and there are so many things to see in this neighborhood. Undoubtedly, I saw a number of interesting sites and Harlem and there are a lot more I hope to see on my next visit.

Diana Owen is a Barnard first-year and bulletin copy-editor.

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barnard**bulletin** 2001 staff application

deadline for submission: monday, december 4

The 2001 editorial board and staff will be chosen at 7pm on monday, december 4. Select applicants will be contact ed after this date.

mandatory meeting for all selected applicants monday, december 11

experience is recommended, but not necessary. all Barnard students are encouraged to apply for any of the following positions:



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features editor nyc living editor music editor
arts editor commentary editor web manager
photography editor art director layout staff
photographer copy editor office manager
ad manager business manager staff artist

the *bulletin* welcomes creativity, and any ideas you might have for the creation of new positions are welcome. candidates selected are expected to hold their positions through the spring and fall semesters of 2001. next official *bulletin* staff selection will be held in december, 2001.

to apply: answer the questions below on a separate sheet of paper, attach pertinent samples of your work (writing, photography, layout, whatever), and a letter explaining why you're applying for a position at the *bulletin*, and what you envision for it in the upcoming year. Applications may be emailed to bulletin@barnard.edu or dropped off at the office, 128 LL McIntosh, by noon on friday, december 1.

- name, class, phone number, McIntosh box, and position(s) you're applying for
- have you ever worked for the *bulletin* before? if so, what did you do, and how often?
- do you have past newspaper, magazine, or publication experience? if so, please list.
- what is your level of familiarity with computers? pc/mac experience? any Quark Xpress experience?
- what other extracurricular activities are you involved in? how much time do you devote to them each week?
- would you be willing to accept another position? if so, please list which one(s).
- name three things about yourself you find genuinely interesting, and think we would, too.
- in your letter explaining your interest in the *bulletin*, please include the following: what would your goals be, and how would you accomplish them? what do you see as the *bulletin's* role on campus? what changes would you like to make? please be candid and detailed.

email bulletin@barnard.edu or call christy at x31483 with ANY questions you might have.