



# The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper

"The Pulse  
of the  
Student  
Body"

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## Vivian Truong Is National Finalist in Scholastic Art and Writing Awards

By CHRIS LEE

Senior Vivian Truong was a finalist for writing in this year's annual Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. According to Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman, Truong is the first national finalist from Stuyvesant in the competition.

The Scholastic Art and Writing Awards is held each year for middle school and high school students. "Everyone except high school seniors submit individual pieces, like a short story or a personal essay. The seniors submit a portfolio, which consists of a maximum of eight works," Truong said. "They compete for the National Portfolio Gold Award."

About 100,000 works of art and writing were submitted in all categories: art, writing and photography. According to Truong, 5,400 of them were portfolios.

Truong submitted a collection of poems, short stories and

essays. "Most of them were strongly grounded in personal experiences, and even the fiction pieces reflected my own encounters and relationships with people I see every day," Truong said. "The pieces ranged from a short story about a mother-daughter relationship to a memoir about my experience as part of the fencing team to a poem about how I felt being called quiet as an Asian-American."

Grossman believes that Truong's success in the competition was well-deserved. "She's a sensational writer," Grossman said. "[I'm] thrilled that she's been recognized for it."

On the regional level, seniors Mark Chiusano, Ezra Glenn and Katherine Wycisk, juniors Eunju Namkung, Georgia Stasinopoulos and Jenny Ye, and sophomores Clio Contogenis and Cassie Moy were recognized with various

*continued on page 5*

## Three Students Advance to USABO Finals

By PAULINA KARPIS

Senior Alice Pang and juniors Alexandra Hanin and Judy Baek will participate in the USA Biology Olympiad (USABO) National Finals from Monday, June 2 to Saturday, June 14 at George Mason University in West Virginia. Stuyvesant is the only school in America with more than two finalists.

The USABO began in February with an open exam given to interested high school students nationwide. The top 10 percent or the top 500 Open Exam participants—including 13 Stuyvesant students—advanced to the semifinals.

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## Chemistry Teacher Dalia Bugaris Passes Away

By MASHA GINDLER and ALEXANDER SHIN

Chemistry teacher Dalia Bugaris, who taught at Stuyvesant for 29 years, passed away from lung cancer complications on Saturday, May 3.

Bugaris battled lung cancer several years ago. When the cancer returned in the fall of 2007, she went on medical leave two weeks into the semester.

Bugaris is remembered by other teachers for her dedication to the school. "Stuy was a major part of her life," chemistry teacher Daisy Furth said. "She lived to teach."

"She was, I felt, a wonderful educator and colleague," music teacher and chorus conductor Holly Hall said. "She cared greatly for her students and [their] achievements, even the ones outside of chemistry."

"She stayed late [at school]," Principal Stanley Teitel said. "She would stay if she had to until six or seven [...] and she was extremely well organized."

According to chemistry teacher Dr. Steven O'Malley, Bugaris also had a close relationship with her students. She had a "genuine interest in her students," O'Malley said. "Her students responded well to her."

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## Standardized English Essay for Sophomores

By ASHLEY SEENAUTH

In response to yearly goals set for the English Department, all sophomores will be given an in-class practice regents essay on Friday, June 6.

The primary goal for the English Department written in the Spring 2008 Goals and Objectives template <what is this template exactly? Who puts it together/ writes it? is "to improve writing instruction (including grammar) for sophomores."

"I am not at all pleased with PSAT results on writing," Principal Stanley Teitel said. "I can't wait for the next PSAT to make my assessment. If we do something in June, then I can do something earlier."

"There's a move in the Department of Education towards something they're calling data driven instruction and in part this is our attempt to comply with that," Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman said.

The essay will be used to quantifiably measure progress in student writing ability. Grossman said, "It will measure

across the courses how students do. It's a way of diagnosing what skills students need to work on holistically."

"We are looking to measure [...] patterns in what students do well on and areas of improvement so we know how to adjust our instruction and patterns among teachers," Grossman said.

The same essay will be given to all students. It will be modeled on a Regents Task IV essay, the "Critical Lens Essay." Students will be asked to draw connections between any two works of literature that they have read. It is highly likely that the essay topic will be taken from an old English Regents exam.

Sophomore Daniel Cho said, "I don't think it would be a problem, but since teachers use different books at different times, I'm not sure if a uniform topic would be fair."

The essay will be given in-class to ensure that students take it seriously. "It doesn't have any value otherwise," Grossman said.

Beyond student assessment, data collected from essay scores

will be used to assess teachers. "I wanted Mr. Grossman to make an assessment of how things are going on with the teachers in the classroom," Teitel said.

"By looking at these essays, we can say 'What's one teacher doing that's successful?' How can we spread these practices throughout the department?" Grossman said.

The essays will be graded by a small committee of English teachers after the school year comes to an end. Each English teacher will have the additional option of grading their own students' essays and factoring it into the semester grade. How can they factor it into the semester grade if the grading happens "after the school year comes to an end"? Also, how much weight will the essay have in the final grade?

Grossman said, "Really it's a diagnostic for us. Nothing is going to happen to any student as a result of his or her performance on it."

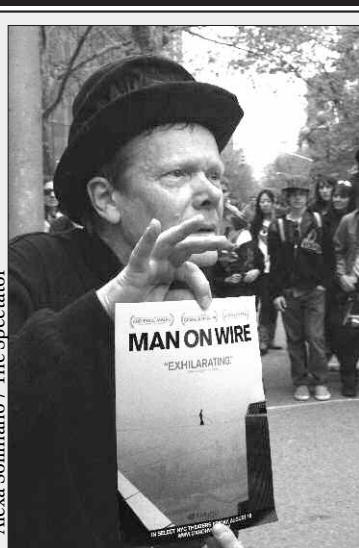
Sophomore Angela Chu said "I find it kind of pointless and very subjective. How do you

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## Tribeca Coverage

### See pages 10-11

Alexa Solimano / The Spectator



### Opinions

Article on page 7.

### AP World History: Asking for Progress

AP World History leaves students confused about whether they're really in an AP class.



### Arts and Entertainment

Article on page 8.

### From Rice to Rugelach

The International Food Festival offered delicious ethnic cuisines, cheap prices and long lines.

# Junior Caucus Creates First Ever Career Day



The first-ever Career Day, held in the school cafeteria on Monday, April 28, gave students an opportunity to explore different jobs through speeches made by professionals in those fields.

**By EILEEN CHANG**

Junior class President Philip Kim and Vice President Jenny Han coordinated the first ever Career Day, where speakers from various professional fields discussed their careers with Stuyvesant students. It took place after school in the student cafeteria on Monday, April 28.

The event was designed to "help students find a general notion of what they might be interested in for the future," Kim said.

The speakers included United Nations (UN) Human Resources Representative Nelly Keita, UN Deputy John Washburn, accountant Daniel Zica, NY1 reporter Roger Clark, and curator of The American Museum of Natural History and former National Aeronautics and Space Administration worker Mordecai-Mark Mac Low.

To advertise the event, Kim and Han distributed fliers on the Tribeca Bridge, posted flyers on school bulletins, made a Public Address announcement during

homeroom and created a Facebook event.

According to health teacher and Coordinator of Student Affairs Lisa Weinwurm, Brooklyn Technical High School and several other high schools host annual Career Days.

"We became inspired to organize one at Stuy too," Han said.

Initially, only juniors were invited to attend Career Day. According to Han, the senior caucus declined to participate because a large majority of the seniors have already decided their majors and future career plans.

Career Day was extended to the entire student body because "we thought it could benefit everybody because anybody could learn from this experience," Han said.

Raffles, free refreshments and pizza were distributed to the attending students. A portion of the expenses were paid for by funds raised from the junior caucus' Valentine's Day candy sales.

A raffle number was distributed to each student in their fliers. The prizes included gift cards to Starbucks, Jamba Juice and the Regal Battery Park Stadium 11 movie theater.

According to Han, not many students attended. "I expected a lot more people to show up for this event [but] it was understandable because it was held on

the first day back from break and [chorus teacher Holly] Hall called sectionals that day," she said. Sectionals are chorus rehearsals held after school. Hall requires all her students to attend sectionals.

Some students did not attend because of Advanced Placement (AP) tutoring held after school.

the Internet, television shows, and people around me."

Students who attended the event responded positively.

"[Career Day] helped me become more aware of paths I never considered before" junior Naomi Chun said. "I always wanted to be a news reporter when I was young so it was interesting to see that presented."

"It got me thinking about my options [...] I now realize that college is not so far away and I need to start taking things seriously," sophomore Tasfia Nayem said.

Junior Caroline Sagalchik said, "It was a great opportunity to gain insight in some fields of work [but] there was clearly a lack of attendance [and the] speakers focused too much on general idea."

"This event is something everyone can learn from [so] if Phil and I are elected next year for senior caucus, we will work on a better Career Day and get more people to attend," Han said.

Kim and Han hope to accomplish this by rallying more participation from the student body, collaborating with more Student Union members and Stuyvesant organizations such as ARISTA. Han said, "[We] think that it should become a future Stuy tradition."

**"[Career Day] helped me become more aware of paths I never considered before"**

**—Naomi Chun, junior.**

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**157**

Number of teachers at Stuyvesant

**105**

Number of male faculty members at Stuyvesant

**83**

Number of female faculty members at Stuyvesant

**14**

Number of Stuyvesant teachers who have doctorate degrees

# GreenStuy Hosts Cartridge Drive

By SEONG IM HONG  
and KRISTY ZHEN

GreenStuy, a Stuyvesant environmental club, has been hosting an ink and toner cartridge drive since Monday, April 14. Used ink cartridges are collected in a box near the second floor bridge entrance. The drive will last until Friday, May 30.

**"The student body is environmentally conscious. [But] it could be much better"**  
—James Matyszczyk, junior.

According to their online club description, GreenStuy's objective is to raise awareness about global warming, animal rights, energy sufficiency, and, above all, sustainability through recycling, volunteering, education and creative planning.

GreenStuy is collecting used ink and toner cartridges from the school and from students who bring cartridges from home.

"We're collecting cartridges that will otherwise be disposed [and] sent to landfills," junior and president of GreenStuy Marcella Rodriguez said.

"Since cartridges continually come, we will have [a drive] every two to three months," Rodriguez said.

The empty cartridges are sent to Funding Factory, a company started to help groups raise money through recycling. Funding Factory recycles the cartridges and gives money back to GreenStuy to use for future projects.

GreenStuy will use the money from The Funding Factory to organize a school-

wide cleanup and a plant sale, which will take place next week. The profits from the plant sale will be used to adopt pandas from the World Wildlife Fund.

GreenStuy hopes to collaborate with a school service club to host a clean up, which will include sorting recycling bins and cleaning the fifth floor cafeteria.

To advertise the drive, Rodriguez posted fliers in school, announced it in the school website and made a Public Address announcement.

According to Rodriguez, GreenStuy has collected about 40 cartridges from students.

"We still have room for improvement," Rodriguez said. "We're hoping for perhaps 20 or 40 more cartridges."

GreenStuy has also been working in conjunction with The Stuyvesant Environmental Club (SEC) to collect cartridges. During the beginning of the drive, the SEC exchanged ink and toner cartridges for baked goods.

Physical education teacher and Assistant Program Chairperson Larry Barth began recycling toner cartridges approximately a year and a half ago.

"People call down for new toner cartridges and I store [the old ones] in a room on the 10th floor," Barth said. "When there is enough to fill a box, the cartridges are sent to E-Cycle Environmental."

E-Cycle Environmental recycles and disposes used electronic equipment. Money is given in return for recycled cartridges. The Stuyvesant Technology Department uses the money to purchase new equipment. "We're recycling [...] to get the most money for the school," Barth said.

Recycling bins, used to collect plastic and paper, are placed on each floor with the exception of the first and 10th. However, according to Principal Stanley Teitel, the recycling bins are rarely used for its purpose. "We tend to use them for trash," Teitel said. "We don't seem to pay attention [to recycling]."

"Virtually nothing's being recycled," Rodriguez said.

# Standardized English Essay for Sophomores

*continued from page 1*  
evaluate someone's skills in English?"

English teacher Emily Moore has contrasting feelings about the essay. "I don't like the emphasis on using classroom time for test preparation. I would rather use those days to discuss a novel or to

strengthen students' theses," Moore said. "On the other hand, I do think that timed reading and writing is becoming increasingly important because of tests like the Regents and SATs. In that sense, it's a valid thing to do well."

"I don't know whether it will prove valuable or not. I'm willing to see," Grossman said.

## ADVERTISEMENTS

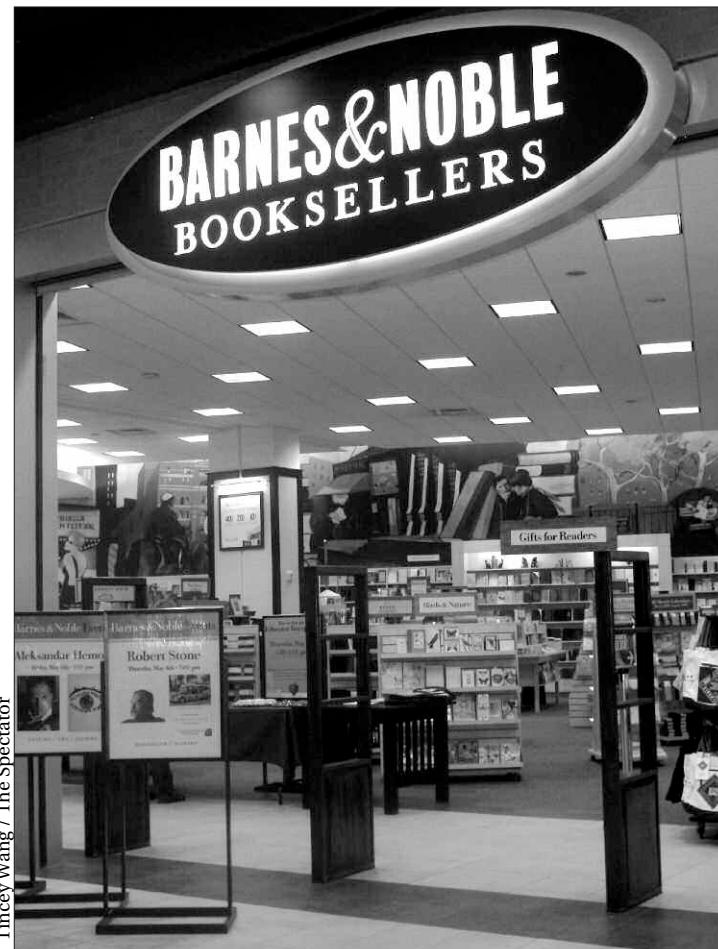
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# Barnes and Noble Hosts Open Mic



Tincey Wang / The Spectator

Barnes and Noble, located just a few blocks away from Stuy, hosted an open mic event that many Stuyvesant students participated in.

By MICHAEL ARDELJAN

The Tribeca branch of Barnes & Noble hosted a Stuyvesant open mic event from 3:00 to 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 8. English teacher Holly Weiss's junior poetry class and two other Stuyvesant students participated in the event.

Open mic is a scheduled event where students read or perform their work during an allotted time frame. The open mic held at Barnes and Noble was not affiliated with the Stuyvesant Open Mic that is held in the library.

The event was coordinated in conjunction with the Parents' Association (PA) book

fundraiser, where 10 percent of the gross sales from SAT and ACT preparation book purchases were donated to the PA. The fundraiser took place on Tuesday, April 8 to Thursday, April 10.

Twelve students read either poetry or prose. English teachers Annie Thoms, Vito Bonsignore, Jonathan Weil, Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman and friends of the participating students attended the event.

"[The event] was a great way for some of our writers' voices to be heard and it was nice to bring the Stuy writing community into the public eye," Weiss said.

"It was a really nice experience, because students got to read stuff they [have] been working on, and in a more public environment," junior Sammy Sussman said.

"I was really impressed with both the quality of the writing that I heard and with the spirit of the community and fun that I felt," Grossman said.

Barnes & Noble Relations Manager Carolyn Hughes offered PA Fundraising co-chair Dave Gibson to host an open mic at Barnes and Noble during the days of the book fundraiser.

According to Parent Coordinator Harvey Blumm, Barnes & Noble is trying to build its relationship with the Tribeca community.

Barnes & Noble also hosted a PA fundraiser from Wednesday, December 12 to Friday, December 14, where the PA earned 10 to 15 percent of all gross sales, and hosted a Stuyvesant and Learning Leaders sponsored holiday gift wrapping event from Monday, December 17 to Monday, December 24.

"Part of my role as parent coordinator is to connect Stuyvesant to community resources," Blumm said. "Building up a relationship with local companies, such as Barnes & Noble, is a great way to do that."

"B&N is a socially proactive company committed to literacy and to helping schools raise much needed funds," Gibson said in the December issue of The Spectator.

Due to the success of the event, the English department hopes to hold more open mics at Barnes & Noble in the future.

"We are hoping, and there have been talks, about having readings, book fairs in the fall and spring of next year," Hughes wrote in an e-mail interview. "I would be delighted if that happened as Stuyvesant has one of the most dynamic student bodies in the city."

# Inquiry Team Shifts Focus to English Aptitude

By KAITLYN KWAN  
and ROBERT COLGAN

The Inquiry Team, a group of teachers and administrators who have been investigating poorly-performing students since September, changed its focus at the start of the spring term to a new group of students. It informed the Department of Education (DOE) of the change on Wednesday, April 30.

An Inquiry Team, mandated by the DOE for all New York City public schools, consists of faculty from different departments. The original purpose of the team was to examine students who were not succeeding, determine why, and then apply the findings to the entire student population.

Previously, the team worked with 29 sophomores who had averages between 75 and 80 during freshman year.

"We tried to look at why they would be in this situation and we just couldn't find anything," Principal Stanley Teitel said. "We stopped and had to say to ourselves, we have to rethink this."

Teitel said the team changed its focus away from examining the students' GPAs because "we couldn't find a common thread."

According to guidance counselor Jeremy Wang, who is the team's data specialist, the group's focus has shifted towards English aptitude.

"English reading is actually the base of all learning," Wang said. "[Students won't have] a good understanding without good comprehension in the English language. Sooner or later, students will run into some difficulties."

"Part of our goal is to look at a population of students who are considered outside the sphere of success,"

English teacher Kelly McMahon said.

For the new investigation, Wang said the Inquiry Team selected roughly 25 new students, who are all enrolled in Sophomore Expository Writing Seminar, a class that focuses on writing.

The Inquiry Team has been focusing on data about specific skill areas, such as the students' scores on the English Language Arts test taken in eighth grade, the verbal portion of the Specialized High Schools Admissions Test and PSAT writing scores, rather than their GPAs. Personal data, like languages spoken at home, is also being studied.

"We'd like to see if there's something we can do to help improve writing and then, of course, we will institute that in freshman composition, which is what everybody takes," Teitel said.

# Teacher Feature: The Grand Duke of Stuyvesant Physics

BY JENNY YE

If you're taking chemistry, then you might know of theoretical physicist Wolfgang Pauli by learning about the Pauli Exclusion Principle. Simply put, it states that no two electrons can occupy the same quantum state. But you probably don't know his reputation for accidentally breaking experimental equipment. Though he was not at the site of the accident, Pauli was blamed for ruining an expensive piece of equipment at the University of Göttingen in Germany. Such has been deemed the "Pauli effect," which physics teacher Ulugbek Akhmedov uses to teach students about the apparently volatile combination of theoretical physicists (like Pauli) and technical equipment.

According to the "grand duke" (the English translation of Ulugbek from Uzbek), anecdotes and stories are an attempt to "show the human side of physics," Akhmedov said.

Akhmedov grew up in Uzbekistan in a family of teachers. His father, a physics teacher, helped foster his interest in physics and mathematics. Akhmedov went on to pursue physics at Tashkent State University of Uzbekistan. As a student, he was interested in how computers worked and researched ways to improve their efficiency. Akhmedov also dabbled with space travel research and graduated with a bachelor's degree in physics in 1993.

After college, Akhmedov found work in assembling electric devices and consumer products. However, having tutored

students throughout college and onward, Akhmedov discovered his passion for teaching. "I realized that I can teach, and that students understand when I try to explain things," Akhmedov said.

Akhmedov moved to New York in 2000 after "most of [his] friends moved in the late 90s," he said. He took on his first teaching job at Evander Childs High School in the Bronx in 2002. Since then, Akhmedov has taught at Baruch College Campus High School in lower Manhattan and began teaching

**"I realized that I can teach, and that students understand when I try to explain things."**  
**—Ulugbek Akhmedov, physics teacher**

at Stuyvesant in 2006. Besides physics, Akhmedov also teaches the Introductory Astronomy elective and Physics Intel Research.

He has become very comfortable with teaching high school students, with whom he

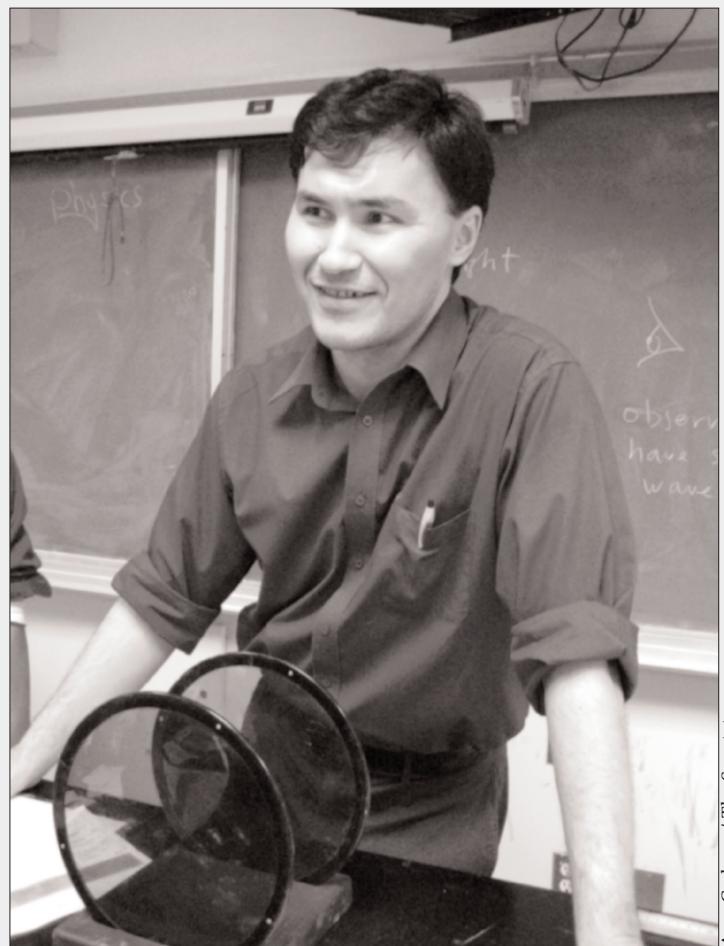
can "interact with more or less on an adult level," Akhmedov said. He strives to make physics more accessible and understandable. "I see that many students are interested in physics, but fear that it is hard and unlearnable. I constantly learn and try to improve on how I deliver the material," Akhmedov said.

Akhmedov's teaching style has struck a chord with his students. "He knows that physics concepts are not easy to understand, and he is very patient in his teaching," junior Ke Jiang said, a former student in Akhmedov's Astronomy class.

Besides teaching, Akhmedov is dedicated to helping students with scientific research. As the teacher of the Physics Intel Research class, Akhmedov wants "to see more students joining and winning competitions like [the] Intel [Science Talent Research] and [the] Siemens [Competition]." He sees research as a great opportunity for students to pursue possible scientific interests. "If students are interested in science, they have to find something that will drive them," he said.

Senior Alice Fok, who took the Intel Research class, said Akhmedov "kept [her] on schedule, and gave the class maximum exposure to science competitions."

Akhmedov does research as well, channeling his passion for physics into researching sustainable energy. He is currently "looking for a way to get energy in a friendlier way" with his brother, who runs Centaurus Technologies and Innovations Incorporated. Akhmedov hopes



Physics teacher, Ulugbek Akhmedov, grew up in Uzbekistan where he developed an interest in physics, mathematics, and teaching students.

to "bring us to the point where buildings will be energy sustainable," meaning that energy will be replenishable and will not cause long-term harm to the environment. The pair is working on developing an efficient natural lighting mechanism for houses and buildings.

Akhmedov's confidence in physics keeps him dedicated to his work, both in the classroom and out. "Physics, which comes

from the ancient Greek word 'physika' for nature, is the most fundamental part of human knowledge about nature, and understanding it [...] will improve the quality of our lives," Akhmedov said. He hopes to help his students "learn physics in broader and deeper ways and retain this information for years to come, if not for life," he said.

## Reflections for Dalia Bulgaris

### Thank you...

... Ms. Bulgaris for the Chemistry & (covalent) bonding you have taught us about science and about life. It was in your class that we fostered our friendship, alone that still grows to this day, and we owe it to you. We will always remember your smile from when

we sang Chemistry carols around Christmas time. You will be missed.

—Bemise and friends ('03)

### It is rare...

... that you find a teacher that leaves an everlasting impact on your life; one that you know you will never forget. I am thankful, that I have found such a teacher, but sadly she was taken away too quickly. Ms. Bulgaris was more than just a teacher: she was a mentor, a remarkable human being and a "grandmother," to her students. Ms. Bulgaris was one of the kindest individuals that I have ever met in my life. She always cared about the well-being of her students, as she paid attention to the smallest details. She was one of those teachers that actually read your absence note, because she wanted to know why you were out. She wanted to make sure you were feeling well and she always offered help of all sorts. Her kindness transcended into the classroom. She never yelled at her students, even when she knew they were not giving her the attention that she deserved. She always gave that extra weekend before collecting assignments. She was just a perfect teacher: caring, knowledgeable, helpful, and pleasant to be around. There are so many memories that stick in my mind from her class. Those wonderful smiley faces that were put on your homeworks that made you quite

### Ms. Bulgaris was...

... one of the best teachers I've ever had. She was kind, generous, dedicated, and inspirational. She encouraged all of us to do our best. She even encouraged the students that couldn't tell propane from methyl ethyl ether to at least try their best. What I will remember most about her is her smile; I have never met anyone with a more heart-warming smile.

I had Ms. Bulgaris second term sophomore year. I was very tired and stressed during that time, so one day I decided to stay home from school. When I came back to school the next day, one of my friends told me that I had missed Ms. Bulgaris' birthday. The entire class sang happy birthday to her, and I was deves-

tated to hear that I had missed such a joyous event. It's been almost a year, and I am still upset that I never got to sing happy birthday to her. I know it's a little late, but...

Happy birthday to you,  
Happy birthday to you,  
Happy birthday dear Ms. Bulgaris,  
Happy birthday to you.  
—Jacob Rath ('09)

### Friends and colleagues...

...of the Biology Department fondly remember Ms. Bulgaris as a truly dedicated professional who not only mentored and loved her students but was challenged by her role as a chemistry teacher.

We will always be reminded of the warm friendships we share her endearing smile and for the lady-in-scholar she exemplified.

Elizabeth Fong, Chairperson  
Biology Department Staff

—Allen Granzberg ('09)

Amy Cretore / The Spectator

# Record Number of USAMO Qualifiers

By MAO HU and CHRISTOPHER NATOLI

Ten Stuyvesant students qualified for the United States of America Mathematical Olympiad (USAMO) examination, which took place from Tuesday, April 29 to Wednesday, April 30. This is the most qualifiers Stuyvesant has ever had.

USAMO is open to all high school students in the United States and Canada. Approximately 500 top scoring American Mathematics Competition and American Invitational Mathematics Examination participants are eligible to take the USAMO.

"Participating in the USAMO is a very prestigious thing," senior and USAMO qualifier Danny Yuan said.

The nine hour examination consisted of six proof based questions that involved algebra, geometry, counting inequalities and number theory.

"Most won't answer all six questions," head coach of the Math team and mathematics teacher Jim Cocoros said. "The way of thinking is more abstract to them than they're used to."

According to Cocoros, abstract math is theoretical and proof-based. Abstract math questions do not require definite answers but generalizations.

"Many of the problems ask you to prove things that seem intuitively true, but are quite hard to recognize," junior and

USAMO qualifier Benjamin Hirsch said.

Stuyvesant tied for second place with Montgomery Blair High School in Maryland for the highest number of qualifiers. Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire had the most, with 17 qualifiers.

**"Not only are they brilliant, but they're creative mathematicians who I am sure will do wonderful things for mathematics in the future."**  
—Maryann Ferrara, Assistant Principal Mathematics

The record number of Stuyvesant qualifiers was partly due to increased practice with more material and access to online resources.

USAMO winners, honorable mentions, the top 15 scoring non-seniors and the top 30 scor-

ing ninth graders will be invited to a two day Olympiad Awards Ceremony in Washington, D.C., sponsored by the Mathematical Association of America, the Akamai Foundation, the Microsoft Corporation and the Matilda Wilson Foundation.

These students will then attend the Mathematical Olympiad Summer Program (MOSP), a three week program held at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, to train for the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO).

The top 12 USAMO scorers are eligible to take a Team Selection Test.

Only the top scorers on the Team Selection test will be selected for the IMO U.S. team, which consists of six members and two alternates.

The IMO is a world championship mathematics competition where high school teams from over 90 countries compete.

The 2008 IMO will be held in Madrid, Spain from Thursday, July 10 to Tuesday, July 22.

"Math isn't only about numbers, computations or obscure formulas," senior and USAMO qualifier Artur Dmowski said. "It's about abstract ways of thinking [...] that's what makes math especially appealing."

"Not only are they brilliant, but they're creative mathematicians who I am sure will do wonderful things for mathematics in the future," Assistant Principal Mathematics Maryann Ferrara said.

## Chemistry Teacher Dalia Bugaris Passes Away

*continued from page 1*

Students in her Regents chemistry class appreciated her style of teaching. "She was always so kind and patient. I remember when she brought in chocolate for the class on special holidays like Valentine's [Day]," junior Somi Kim said.

"I got the feeling that she really loved what she did. She would teach us with great focus and attention," junior Charles Kuang said. "She was one of the sweetest teachers I ever had. She was very lenient and easy to approach."

Bugaris, along with history teacher Reuben Stern, was hon-

ored at the Naturalization Ceremony held at Stuyvesant on Wednesday, February 27 for being a naturalized immigrant who had provided service to the nation through education.

While Bugaris was very committed to the school and her students, she had outside interests in the arts. "She enjoyed music, especially ballet," Furth said.

Bugaris was involved in Stuyvesant's music community. "She was supportive of the music program. She always attended the concerts. She loved hearing the students express themselves musically and artistically," Hall said.

Respects were paid on Tuesday, May 6 at the Gannon Funeral Home. "We went to the service [...] and various people spoke," Teitel said. "I spoke, and so did [Assistant Principal Biology Elizabeth] Fong and Ms. Hall."

Bugaris will be missed by students and teachers. "Hearing about her death was really hard. I remember her class as something really fun and hearing that such a kind person had passed away was painful," Kim said.

"She was an outstanding member of our faculty and we will miss her," Assistant Principal Physics and Chemistry Scott Thomas said.

## Vivian Truong Is National Finalist in Scholastic Art and Writing Awards

*continued from page 1*

Gold and Silver Key Awards. "I feel so honored to have had my work chosen for recognition, especially since there are so many talented writers in the New York area alone," Wycisk said.

There were five finalists for writing. Truong won 1,000 dollars for being best in the region, and won 10,000 dollars for the National Portfolio Gold Award, which was also awarded to 11 other finalists.

"The money is going to be a big help for my family because I'm going to Brown and the financial aid was really disappointing," Truong said.

Not only did being a finalist bring Truong money, but it also

confirmed her belief in her talent as a writer. "I want to be published one day and being a writer is really not the best job in terms of financial stability," Truong said. "[But] if these big literary buffs who are judging this contest appreciate my writing now, then after five or 10 or 15 years, I will have worked harder, written more, written better."

Truong believes that Stuyvesant has contributed to her success in the contest. "[All of my English teachers] really pushed and encouraged me to write," Truong said.

"Becoming a finalist [...] felt really amazing," Truong said. "I'm really fortunate to be surrounded by motivated peers and inspiring teachers."

## Three Students Advance to USABO Finals

*continued from page 1*

The semifinal exam, which consisted of multiple choice, true or false questions and a short answer section, was administered in mid-March. "The test was insanely long. We started after school and I left Pang, Hanin and Baek are three of the 20 people who advanced to the USABO National Finals.

"I'm really honored to be a finalist," Baek said. "A lot of my friends and classmates, who are amazing in biology, [took] the test. I really wasn't sure if I could make it in."

"We're very proud of them," Fong said. "We know how many hours of work they put in."

"It's an absolute joy for me to work with them," Bierig said. "To get such results is very exciting."

During the National Finals, which Fong describes as "Biology Olympiad Boot camp," Pang, Hanin and Baek will work with leading biologists and participate in two



Juniors Judy Baek, Alexandra Hanin, and Alice Pang will compete for the international Bio Olympiad Team.

weeks of intensive theoretical and practical tutorials.

At the end of the two weeks, the 20 finalists will compete for one of the four places on the United States team by taking two exams.

The four members of the United States team will participate in the International Biology Olympiad the week of Saturday, July 13 in Mumbai, India.

## Fund for Valerie Piro Created

By ZOE WU and KRISTY ZHEN

Stuyvesant created a fund for junior Valerie Piro to help her family cover the cost of medical expenses. Piro suffered a spinal cord injury that temporarily left her paralyzed from the waist down in a Saturday, January 12 car accident.

Girls' Indoor Track assistant coach Erin Taylor was driving Valerie Piro and six other race-walkers to the Dartmouth Relays in New Hampshire when her van swerved off the road, was airborne for a few seconds and rolled over twice.

Piro is currently at the New York University Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine

undergoing rehabilitation and physical therapy "to condition her to make her stronger," said Alfred Piro, father of Valerie Piro.

Shortly after the accident, Principal Stanley Teitel received e-mails from several parents asking him what they could do to help the Piro family. Last month, "the Parents Association asked me about [a fund] and said they wanted to do something about it," Alfred Piro said.

The fund was set-up the week after spring break.

Faculty members were informed first by way of notices in their mailboxes on Monday, April 28 and Tuesday, April 29.

"Then, we posted it [online] for the greater community,"

Teitel said. "I know people have given checks already."

In about a month, Teitel said he is going to "make a closing date" and then write a check from Stuyvesant High School to the Piro family.

According to Alfred Piro, most of his daughter's medical expenses will be covered by insurance. He said the fund will probably cover more of what "Valerie needs," like a ramp for their house, glider for stairs, bathroom adjustments, multiple wheelchairs, rehabilitation equipment and any type of therapy or care that she'll need after she gets released from the hospital to further her recovery.

The race-walking team will be active in raising money for

the fund. The team plans on holding bake sales, and designing and selling t-shirts. "It will help Valerie a lot. I'm doing all I can. I'm sure every other girl on the team is doing all they can," senior and co-captain of the race-walking team Huili Zhu said. "It's just no matter how much we help her, it's still going to be a great cost [to her family]."

"[The fund] will be a great help to the Piro family," senior and co-captain of the race-walking team Nina Yang said. "I am definitely going to contribute and I think a lot of people will contribute."

The Piro family has received other forms of support. "We have been visiting her intermit-

tently throughout since the accident in January," Zhu said. "It's important that we go visit her frequently and talk to her." Alfred Piro believes the visits his daughter receives from friends, teammates and teachers help her maintain a positive attitude.

"We appreciate all the support we've gotten from the school, administration, Parents Association and individual parents," Alfred Piro said.

Those who want to donate to the fund should write checks payable to Stuyvesant High School with "Valerie Piro Fund" written on the memo line and send the checks to Stanley Teitel, Stuyvesant H.S., 345 Chambers Street, NYC 10282.

# Editorials

## STAFF EDITORIAL

# Bringing Down the Club

Pro Scientia Atque Sapientia—for knowledge and wisdom. Stuyvesant exists to educate, and we, the students, come to learn. But Stuyvesant is more than just a school. We're a community, and there's more to be gained at our school than a classroom education.

Clubs encourage students to pursue their own interests independently and are essential to the school's culture.

Stuyvesant's current conventions concerning clubs allow students to run meetings without faculty advisors present. However, because of the recent track team accident and a lawsuit against the school, a new club-safety policy is currently in the works that requires teachers to supervise club meetings.

We understand that it is the administration's duty to keep us safe, but safety is rarely a problem at Stuyvesant. The track team accident cannot be used to justify a new policy for regular club meetings: classrooms are safer than highways. Furthermore, an adult, though an uncertified teacher, did supervise the team—and wasn't able to prevent the accident. Similarly, a few students, supervised by certified teachers, were injured during SING! rehearsals. Teachers can't always prevent accidents from happening.

The safety policy will also create problems of its own.

There are twice as many clubs as teachers at Stuyvesant. Aside from this teacher shortage, faculty advisors will not be paid for supervising clubs after school. Many teachers may not want to become faculty advisors if they aren't paid for their time. It will also be harder for clubs to meet if they have to depend on their faculty advisor's schedule.

The safety policy also makes teachers assume liability for the clubs they advise. Legal risks will discourage teachers from becoming faculty advisors. Many teachers have signed a petition against the safety policy, demanding that the school—not teachers—be held liable for students' safety.

Many clubs, like the Gay Lesbian and Straight Spectrum (GLASS), need peer-to-peer confidentiality—something that would be sacrificed if faculty members were at every meeting. This policy will only make us less independent, not safer.

Clubs hold our school together as a community. For clubs to thrive, we need a balance between safety and student independence—and the current balance works. Although the administration has our best interests in mind, the new safety policy will hurt more than help.

## AD SPACE DONATED BY THE SPECTATOR

The Stuyvesant Composers' Forum will be holding a benefit concert on Friday, June 6 at 6 p.m. in the theater to raise funds for both Valerie Piro and the Cyclone relief in Burma. All the pieces played will be student written works, ranging from jazz to singer-songwriter to classical in nature. Admission will be free, but there will be a raffle and a donations box. All proceeds will go directly to the two charities.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Re: The Truth about Turnitin

This letter is to respond to "The Truth about Turnitin," an editorial by Emma Ziegellaub Eichler that appeared in The Spectator on April 18th, 2008.

As English teachers, we are committed to honoring honest work. We have chosen our careers because we enjoy young people, and because we hope to help our students grow into expressive, fully literate, morally responsible citizens. Because of these commitments, we view plagiarism as an ethical issue. When students present work that is not their own, they sacrifice their personal integrity and forfeit the opportunity to learn from our assignments and instruction.

"Instead of trying to catch students after they plagiarize, teachers should stop plagiarism before it starts," writes Ziegellaub Eichler. In fact, all of us work tremendously hard in order to create assignments that are difficult to plagiarize, assignments that will help to develop student writing, reasoning, and creativity, yet every single one of us encounters plagiarism every single semester, and each case requires us to spend an enormous amount of energy locating, discussing, and confronting such academic dishonesty. Additionally, many of us feel that the emotional costs of pla-

giarism—disappointment, the feeling of being lied to, the sense that all our efforts have been in vain—are even more troubling than the actual time that such cheating costs us.

The real problem is not Turnitin; the real problem is Stuyvesant's culture of cheating, a culture that creates an atmosphere of distrust that all of us suffer from, and one that tempts students to cheat in order to keep up. We view Turnitin as a protective measure, one that will deter some would-be plagiarists and reward the vast majority of students who are working honestly by punishing the few whose plagiarism contributes to the culture of suspicion that Ziegellaub Eichler so rightly rejects.

On a more technical note, one of the copyright cases Ziegellaub Eichler mentions was dismissed in March due in part to the notion of "transformative use"; the court reasoned that because Turnitin simply compares texts, rather than publishing or selling them, the copyright argument is irrelevant. On a more local level, Stuyvesant's mathematics and science departments have been using the software for several years without student comment. It is therefore questionable as to why its use in the English depart-

ment would now raise such objections.

There is also a factual error in Ziegellaub Eichler's description of the originality report as solely numeric. Reports are narrative as well. Teachers have the opportunity to see and interpret student work when placed next to matching texts, thus allowing them to distinguish between properly quoted and blatantly stolen material. Should questions arise, students may view these originality reports, further preventing false accusations.

Citing Princeton's use of an Honor Code, Ziegellaub Eichler argues that "if a respected Ivy League school can trust its students to do what's right and not plagiarize, we should follow their example and do the same." In fact, Princeton's Honor Code is twofold; students pledge not to cheat, and to turn in anyone they discover cheating, thus taking responsibility for both themselves and for the members of their community. As teachers, we support such efforts to create a more ethical academic community. Turnitin is one of those efforts.

Sincerely,  
Emily Moore, Megan Breslin,  
Annie Thoms and Jennifer Choi  
English Teachers

## The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



*"The Pulse of the Student Body"*

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## The Spectator

We are compiling an archive of past issues.

We are looking for issues published before 1995.

Please send any newspapers to:

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### Do you want to reflect on an article? Or speak your mind?

Write a letter to the editor and e-mail it to [letters@stuyspectator.com](mailto:letters@stuyspectator.com) or drop it in The Spectator box in the second-floor mail room.

### FOR THE RECORD

- In Issue 14, Priscilla Odimah's and Albert Monina's names were misspelled in "Election 2008: Primary Participants."
- Katerina Patouri's name was misspelled in "Stuy's Free Hugs Club Gives More Than Just Hugs."
- Lucia Hsiao's name was misspelled in "Race-walkers Recover after Car Accident and Coach Faces Lawsuits."
- There was no byline for "A Clean (STC) Slate." The article was written by Clio Contogenis and Hayward Leach.
- Frederick Douglass Academy's and writer Jack Greisman's names were misspelled in "Stuy Lax Takes a Promising Start."
- Sadman Islam's name was misspelled in the photo credit for "Athletics for the Athletes."

## Not Quite There: The Struggle for APs



By LEENA MANCHERIL

denied acceptance because the cutoff grades have not been updated on the website for years. "The minimum average fluctuates every year, depending on the students' overall performance and the number of seats available for the class," Assistant Principal Technology Edward Wong said. "It's the department's responsibility to notify us when there is a change, but we're usually too busy to get around to updating the website." Teachers may have longer to-do lists than the rest of us, but it is their responsibility to notify the rest of the school community when AP admission requirements change. Students will still be rejected from AP courses, but at least they will know that it was because they fell short of expectations—not because the school policy was changed without notice.

When it comes to academics, our school has to work as a team. A website run by the administration gives students an overview of the classes Stuy offers, but students also need to research information themselves in order to be prepared for future classes. Hypothetically, this seems like a perfect way to handle competitive Stuyvesant students. However, it's more problematic practice.

When registering for classes, the school website offers misleading information concerning requirements for AP classes. Students who believe they are eligible for a class are often

disappointment of rejection. In any case, the goal should not be making the cutoff by one point.

### The school Web site offers misleading information in terms of the requirements for AP classes.

Students should try their hardest, and not just aim for the minimum grade.

Taking responsibility and thinking about the effects of actions taken can make student life at Stuy less worrisome. However, it is still the administration's job to improve the course registration process. Delayed notifications, misleading information and ignored requirements negatively impact our school as a whole. A small move toward better communication can go a long way toward improving life at Stuy.

## AP Hogs

By NAZIAT ZAMAN

In the past two weeks, one thing that has been on everyone's mind at Stuyvesant is the selection of Advanced Placement (AP) courses for the following semester. At the time of registration, choices from the school's website look enticing, and most students select as many APs as they can fit into their schedules. However, students don't always stop to think about issues such as the workload and personal interest.

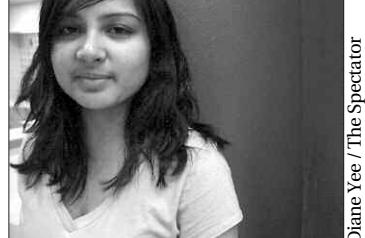
When selecting APs, students must ask themselves why they are taking an AP class. Students fill up their schedules with APs, which prevents others from taking APs that they actually care about.

Students who want an edge view take multiple APs as a way to make themselves look better in the eyes of college admissions officers. So when the option to take one arises, they immediately sign up, even if they're not particularly excited about that course. This greed results in less of an opportunity for students who want to take the class and actually intend to continue that field for college.

"I know people who say that they 'want to' take like six AP classes, but it's so obvious that they're just doing it so they can put it on a college application, which I find completely annoying because later on they end up complaining about how much work they have," junior Michelle Urman said. Urman said she abstained from signing up for senior AP English in an attempt to allow other English-loving students a chance at taking the course next year. Though there are some students who are considerate of their peers, the issue of these AP hogs still remains

**Students are cheated out of the chance to take an elective or AP that they're genuinely interested in.**

only those who are both qualified and motivated are selected. This would deter those who load up on courses just to fill up their schedules, as they would probably be too lazy to take that extra step. If the course is in such high demand that twice the available seats are requested, a teacher recommendation should be necessary. This will cause some extra work, but such a system would be fair to the entire student body at Stuyvesant.

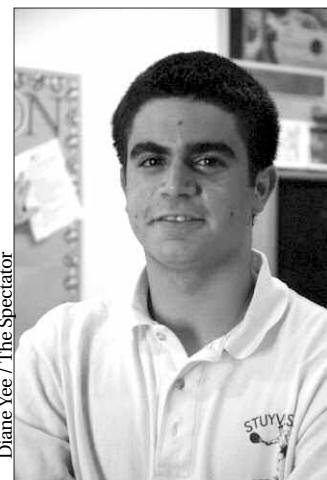


Diane Yee / The Spectator

apparent at Stuyvesant.

In conjunction with the current grades-based system, students should write a brief paragraph that expresses their genuine interest in taking certain AP courses. This can be read by whoever is teaching the course, and will ensure that

## AP World History: Asking for Progress



By LUC COHEN

"Why aren't you in the AP?" my history teacher asked me after reading an essay I had written.

"Isn't this an AP?" I responded. I was somewhat confused. After all, the class was called Advanced Placement (AP) World History. m

Last spring, the social studies department rationalized that since the sophomore World History curriculum was already more challenging than that of the Regents and similar to that of the AP, making the course an AP would benefit students by giving them an opportunity to earn college credit without significantly altering the way the course was taught.

Unfortunately, the course has not turned out to be as rigorous as an AP should be. Consequently, many students do not feel ready to take the AP World History Exam, as illustrated by the fact that only 328 out of 657 eligible students registered to take it. Nonetheless, there are many steps the social studies department can take to improve the course for next year.

Instead of relying too heavily on multiple choice tests like they do now, AP World teachers should also assess students with essays. One must write three essays on the AP World Exam, and they count for half of its

## A Closer Relationship



By JENNY HU

Everyone experiences the pain of losing someone eventually. The Stuyvesant community recently lost English teacher Lynne Evans. For me, it seemed unreal that she could be there one day, and gone the next.

Her death should have affected me deeply, but I couldn't feel much beyond the initial shock. I was sad over losing a teacher, but I didn't really know Ms. Evans as a person. She was just another teacher I saw for 40 minutes every day of the week.

News of her death spread quickly, but I doubted if many people actually knew Ms. Evans as a person—rather than just a

teacher. It was disheartening to realize that her death would have had a bigger impact on me if she had taught the entire term. Her death showed me how far apart students and teachers really are.

Maintaining relationships with teachers has never been a top priority for me. There is not much time for students to stay after class and have nice chats with teachers about their lives. I don't blame the teachers for not reaching out to students; they have tests to grade, lesson plans to work out and lives of their own. But if both students and teachers made an effort to share more, talk more or even smile more, it would make for a better and friendlier atmosphere.

Looking back on the few short weeks I knew Ms. Evans, my biggest regret was not getting to know her more. She always made an effort to connect with students and was unerringly polite. A teacher who truly cares about students is rare and should be treasured. I never got the chance to thank her for being so caring and calm no matter what the occasion, and never appreciated her fully until she was gone. In the words of Ms. Evans, Thank you for your attention, ladies and gentlemen.

**The Social Studies Department needs to reconsider making the AP World History course mandatory.**

grade. I have only written one essay in history this year, which leaves me unprepared for this section of the test. This is unacceptable as the class should familiarize students for the format of the exam. Critical feedback on essays written in or out of class would help students succeed on the exam's essay section.

Part of an AP class is teaching in accordance with the AP curriculum. However, Stuyvesant's AP World classes are disproportionately Eurocentric. Twenty-two of the 37 chapters in the current textbook used by AP World classes, "World History: Perspectives on the Past," focus exclusively on Europe.

m

In contrast, test prep review books indicate that European history makes up a comparatively small part of the material covered by the AP curriculum. Only seven of the 34 chapters in "Barron's AP World History" describe events in the history of Europe. As a result, many topics covered in depth by "Barron's," such as the Atlantic Slave Trade, are hardly mentioned in class.

m

In addition, failure to comply with the AP curriculum has resulted in too much time being spent on topics that will not be included on the AP exam. Intricate details of a topic such as the Russian Revolution, which are covered in depth in AP World Classes, are not even mentioned by "Barron's." While these topics may be important, excessive focus on them detracts from the ability of the course to prepare students for the exam.

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While changes need to be made, teachers should avoid merely teaching to the test. Although the course is meant to prepare students for the AP exam, its primary purpose is to ensure a positive learning experience. The creativity of both teachers and students must not be stifled just so students can score high on the test. A middle ground must be found—assigning more essays and reducing the amount of Western bias will both increase test preparation and

students' lack of motivation. This in turn is not fair to the others who are taking the exam and want to learn at the AP level. To solve this problem, AP World History should remain as an option alongside AP European History, but a non-AP history course should be available to sophomores as well. This was not an entirely failed experiment, but it should not be forced upon the students.

The teachers of AP World History taught the material well, facilitated interesting discussions and assigned creative and fun projects. Nevertheless, I do not feel as if this course did everything within its capacity to prepare me for the AP exam. Stuyvesant's social studies department has indeed learned the hard way that sticking two letters in front of a course's name does not make it more challenging.

# Arts & Entertainment

## A Supercalafradgelistic Show

By JENNY CHE

The One-Acts Festival was moved from the fall to the spring last school year to prevent a conflict with the fall musical, but was reinstated to its usual time this year (a clash with the spring comedy created just as severe a problem). Now, the Stuyvesant Theater Community (STC) has decided to have two One-Acts Festivals each year, one in the fall and one in the spring.

"All year underclassmen have had opportunities to view shows and work on backstage crews," junior and STC Slate Financial Coordinator Dylan Tramontin said. "The One-Acts offer them a chance to finally dive in and direct or act in a smaller, less intimidating environment."

The One-Acts were initiated to encourage a wider scope of participants. This year, that goal has been achieved like never before—a conglomerate of newbies and theater veterans are involved in this spring's One-Acts Festival. "Those who saw the fall One-Acts when it was too late to get involved can join in now," junior and STC Slate Productions Coordinator J.J. Russo said.

This spring's One-Acts Festival has already seen increased student participation. "We had 14 plays submitted this year," Tramontin said. "I've never heard of a larger turnout."

The One-Acts Festival's producers, junior Amy Crehore and freshman Ben Garner, are both new to the position. Crehore directed "Brenda and Jerry" with junior Gaby Flamm for the One-Acts this past fall. Crehore is hesitant, however, to direct again. "I didn't feel too confident with my directing skills, but I knew I had to be part of it again," Crehore said.

This is also the first directing experience for three of the One-Acts directors, although few are new to the STC. Juniors Daniel Goldstern and Jonah Meyerson are directing "Line Leader," a comedy about the universal struggle to find a niche in society. The two had watched a rendition of the play by the Whitest Kids U'Know, an independent sketch comedy group, before deciding that "the topic would be relevant to the Stuy community," Goldstern said.

Although this is their first

time directing, both Goldstern and Meyerson helped write the Junior SING! script. "I had a great time doing it," Goldstern said. "It enabled me to interact with the actors much more than I would have otherwise."

Junior Boris Jacobson is directing "Exodus: A Blasphemous Tale of Biblical Proportions," an original play written by sophomore Wes Schierenbeck. The play is a humorous portrayal of the biblical exodus, centering on three Jews who missed the chance to leave Egypt and must remain slaves there for the rest of their

allow it."

Meanwhile, "The Closet," an original play written and directed by freshman Miryam Coppersmith, brings a darker side to the One-Acts. "The Closet" depicts the struggle of a Jewish pianist who is hiding in a nuclear physicist's apartment during the Holocaust. Coppersmith wanted to write a piece that would link art and science when she noticed that "no one had really ever connected the two events of the Holocaust and the making of the A-Bomb together in a way that shows the parallels between the two,"

Coppersmith said. "I'm looking for people to enjoy it and for it to change the way some people think about the Holocaust."

"English Made Simple," directed by seniors Caroline Brickman—who directed "Group" during last fall's One-Acts—and Ezra Glenn, centers on a young couple who reveal that they knew each other from a previous encounter, and were even involved romantically. At the same time, a scientist is on stage, psychoanalyzing the couple's words and explaining the real meaning of their words.

Another stray from the typical One-Acts Festival play is "The Sermon," directed by junior Jos Diaz. "The Sermon," a monologue, is a unique addition to the festival

"I have never seen a monologue done in the One-Acts," Tramontin said. "I would usually doubt how entertaining a monologue could be to an audience of high school students, but I have complete faith in Jos to pull it off."

Schierenbeck was originally going to direct "Exodus," but his failure to pass a majority of his classes resulted in his removal from the One-Acts Festival. Jennifer Choi, English teacher and the show's faculty advisor, would have been forced to pull the play, but Schierenbeck wanted the show to be performed, even if "Exodus" would be directed by Jacobson instead of himself.

He wasn't meeting the standards for being able to participate in extracurriculars," Russo said. "James [Dennin, STC Slate Studio Coordinator] tried talking to Ms. Damesek but she wouldn't

live."



lives.

According to Schierenbeck, inspiration for "Exodus" came from a dream. "The way I get ideas for things is by blacking out," Schierenbeck said. "I actually passed out from fever, and dreamt this while my dad was watching Charlton Heston's 'Exodus'."

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## From Rice to Rugelach



Rebecca Steinberg / The Spectator

The International Food Festival featured diverse ethnic cuisines at low prices.

By SAHIL GOSWAMI  
and LEILI SABER

Although the 2008 International Food Festival's popularity caused tedious lines, the food certainly would have made Emeril say "BAM!". With dishes ranging from kimchi to rugelach, as well as endless rice platters, this year's International Food Festival lived up to its eclectic standards.

"The festival is the main event for the language classes to get money," Italian teacher Vito Recchia said. Students are asked by their foreign language teachers to bring either homemade or store-bought food, usually from the country whose language they are studying. The festival was representative of the World Languages department, offering food from Korea, China, Spain, Italy, Germany, Greece and Israel, to name a few.

The biggest attraction of the festival was the low price. At each station of ethnic food, students could purchase a plate for two dollars and fill it with as much food as they liked. The cheap prices seemed to be a little too attractive. Large crowds formed outside of the cafeteria long before the festival began, and limited seating quickly became a problem. Most, however, seemed perfectly fine with consuming their exotic platters standing up.

The cafeteria was arranged into one large wraparound buffet. The most popular tables tended to be the Asian tables—the Korean table was especially enticing. "The Korean table was absolutely incredible. It tastes just like my mom makes it," sophomore Soo Kim said. The line to reach the Korean table's kimchi and rice platters never seemed to decline. A delicious pickled green vegetable dish impressed connoisseurs willing to overlook any misgivings its appearance may have incited.

Despite an array of exciting offerings, the Jewish table saw few visitors. The desserts were the highlight of the table,

namely the rugelach, a traditional Jewish knot-shaped cookie.

The Italian table, which was appropriately starch-centric, offered fewer, but higher quality foods. Dishes like the bruschetta and homemade focaccia helped the Italian table sell nearly all of its food before any of the other tables.

The Spanish section stretched for about three or four tables, but most of the food was repetitive and similar. Bland tasting rice and beans dominated, only to be followed by overly sweet flans. The Spanish wedding cookies (butter cookies dusted with powder sugar), however, melted in your mouth and had many customers making multiple trips to the table.

The Chinese section's fried rice also brought many visitors back for seconds and thirds—the rice was scrumptious, no matter which platter you served yourself from. The fried dumplings were also noteworthy, despite the oily consistency of some. The steamed dumplings, however, tasted congealed and probably weren't meant to be served at room temperature.

Another popular section was the Japanese tables. Like the Spanish and Chinese tables, the Japanese table was also rice-dominated. Most of the table showcased sushi and a sticky rice dotted with sesame seeds. The sushi consisted mostly of California rolls—avocado, crab meat and cucumber. They would have tasted better had it not been for the thick layer of rice overwhelming the flavor of the filling.

The International Food Festival's seemingly endless dishes can accommodate even the pickiest eaters, but the cheap price seems to be the festival's most popular aspect. "I love that I can pay two dollars, buy a plate, and pile it with all the food I want to eat," senior Kelvin Yeung said. "I didn't even eat lunch today in anticipation of this. It's definitely the thing I get most excited for every year."

# Arts & Entertainment

## Under the Slushpile: Look out for The Kills

By LYDIA BOOZ

If The Kills were any other band, headlines like "Guitarist Engaged to Kate Moss" wouldn't matter. The publicity would perhaps net an extra thousand records sales, but such news would be a sideline to their music. The Kills, however, are a different breed.

The duo, vocalist Alison "VV" Mosshart and Jamie "Hotel" Hince, believe their music is a reflection of every

**"If it is The Kills intention to strip the music down to its skin and bones, they have neglected to grant the listener a glimpse at the heart which lurks beneath it. Maybe it's not there."**

facet of their creativity. When the two record an album, they



head to the studio armed with journals, sketch books and photographs. To maintain the integrity of their musical identity, The Kills must preserve the creativity that propels them. This is why, at least for this band, tabloid headlines really do matter. For two people who

have maintained a staunch anti-industry stance, Hince's intimate involvement with supermodel Kate Moss is an artistically compromising act. Party on, but the music won't be as good.

The near-palpable sexual tension in their previous

albums made The Kills fun to listen to. However, in *Midnight Boom*, their latest album, this dynamic has been supplemented by apathetic detachment—a result of their increasing commercial success. In the opening song "U.R.A. Fever," jarring dial tones and heavy beats

from their drum machine set the momentum. For someone in love, Hince still sounds awfully cynical: "Go ahead and have her/ Go ahead and leave her/ You only had her when you were a fever." This song is one of the strongest and most defined of the album. Another is "Last Day of Magic," and its stripped down rock elements carry the weight of the song's lonely lyrics.

The Kills have always pushed towards a stark sound. Each album has produced darker and more elemental tracks. Yet in *Midnight Boom*, the minimalism approaches hollowness. If The Kills intend to strip their music down to its skin and bones, they have neglected to grant listeners a glimpse at their music's heart. Maybe it's not there.

It's not that "VV" or "Hotel" have tried too hard or not hard enough. As they absorb more and more of the industry, they have allowed themselves to lose their only defining factor: the intimacy of their internal creative connections. This makes the record more mainstream, but less substantive. Thus, this record won't necessarily change your life, but it will entertain you for 34 minutes.

## Sri Lankan Reggae Sensation

By JAMAL ALOKASHEH  
and DANIEL FLEISHMAN

With his long hair, easy presence and Jamaican accent, junior Dimitri Wijisinghe could easily be mistaken for a native of the Caribbean. But this aspiring reggae artist hails from an island on the other side of the world—Sri Lanka.

Born to Sri Lankan parents in Brooklyn, New York, Wijisinghe was raised in Flatbush, a predominantly Caribbean neighborhood. He would listen to his father's old records, growing up on reggae staples such as Bob Marley and Dennis Brown. Drawing inspiration from his musical heroes, he began writing his own songs in seventh grade.

Now, only four years later, Wijisinghe's career has begun to take off. The aspiring reggae artist regularly performs in such venues as Carlito's Café, Tell Astoria and the Everything Goes Book Café. He has recently finished compiling his first album, "The Revolution," which he will soon release independently as an unsigned artist, paying for the full cost out of his own pocket.

"The album is a collection of positive vibes," Wijisinghe said. "Some songs protest social issues, some just give thanks to Jah, some are just dancehall songs you can move to. But the message is to stay positive and live righteously."

Wijisinghe can easily recall the first time he played in front of a live audience at Carlito's Café in Harlem. "The club owners had had some reggae at the club before, and they knew a thing or two about reggae," Wijisinghe said. "I was second on the list, so I was pretty ner-

vous, but I just went up on stage and started talking to the crowd. There were a couple of drunk guys in the front who kept randomly shouting 'Jah Rastafari!' at the beginning but, all things considered, I think it helped build the vibe."

At the beginning of Wijisinghe's career, his songs usually dealt with his Christian faith. However, the strong Rastafarian presence in his community eventually led him towards learning more about the religion, which considers former Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie "Jah/Jah Rastafari" or God. The religion's messages of peace and equality began to attract Wijisinghe. In ninth grade, he decided to convert to Rastafarianism, but his Christian father and Buddhist mother initially disapproved.

"You could hear my parents' yells from miles away," Wijisinghe said. "Naturally, my parents disagreed with my conversion but [eventually] accepted it as a part of who I am."

Wijisinghe doesn't record at a studio, but instead composes his music using "Reason" (a music mixing and recording program), a microphone, his piano and his laptop. His use of the computer and the keyboard represents a new wave of reggae that embraces the use of modern technology to make music. His songs are mostly based on his political views and Rastafarian faith. Wijisinghe expresses ideas of pacifism and tolerance as well as his love and devotion to Jah: "It's always black and white/or right and wrong/till we all kill each other and there's no one left around."

"Reggae has always been very politically and socially conscious," Wijisinghe said. "That's



Diane Yee / The Spectator

Junior Dimitri Wijisinghe, of Sri Lankan origin, is an aspiring reggae artist who has begun to build his career by performing at venues such as Carlito's Café in Harlem.

one of the things that first drew me to it."

Wijisinghe has found it somewhat difficult to share his passion for reggae with other Stuyvesant students. "Most of the people I talk to don't really listen to reggae, and some of them don't even know that

albums made The Kills fun to listen to. However, in *Midnight Boom*, their latest album, this dynamic has been supplemented by apathetic detachment—a result of their increasing commercial success. In the opening song "U.R.A. Fever," jarring dial tones and heavy beats

student performances, such as the recent St. Jude Children's Hospital Fundraiser.

Wijisinghe desires to reach out to those who don't typically listen to reggae, largely based on his frustration with the media's portrayals of the genre. "I feel that reggae has been excessively associated with just ganja [marijuana] and just Jamaican people," Wijisinghe said. "I want to show the world that [reggae] is for all people, from all races and all walks of life."

Wijisinghe, however, has no

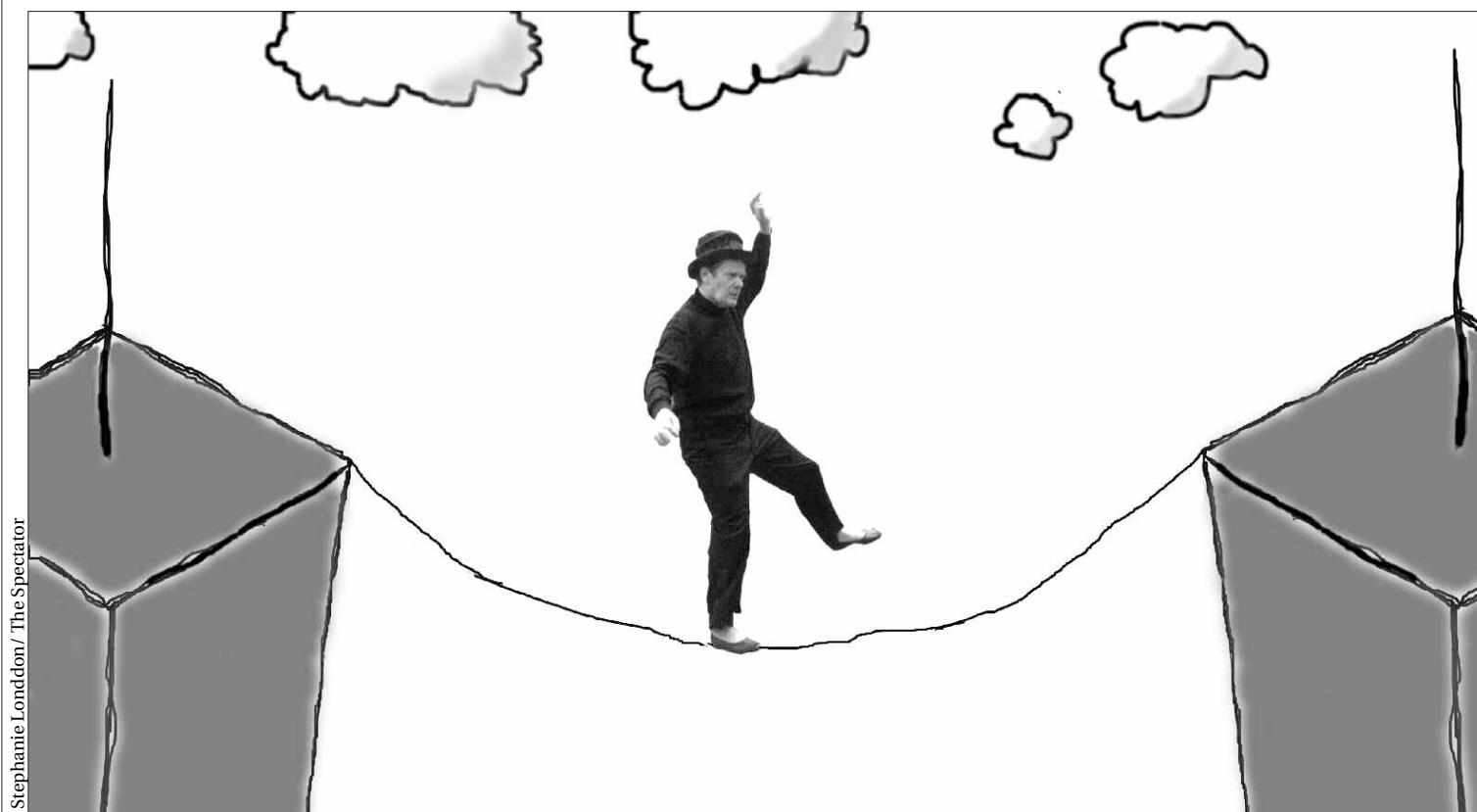
**"Someone came up to me [after one performance] and was like 'Yo, that song was mad hot—what language was it in?'"**  
—Dmitri Wijisinghe, junior and reggae artist

intentions of compromising his values for the sake of going mainstream. "[Going mainstream] doesn't mean, however, that I will adjust my message to fit the commercial market," he said.

The idea of a Sri Lankan Bob Marley hopeful may be odd to some, but Wijisinghe's ideas about music transcend racial boundaries. "At the end of the day, if you're a musician, it's all about your music," he said.

# Arts & Entertainment

## Walking The Line



Stephanie Loddon/The Spectator

**By JAMES DENNIN AND SEAN GORDON-LOEGL**

To some, color coded security warnings seem ridiculous—but they keep us safe, right? In an age of heightened security, it's difficult to imagine a time when one did not have to remove one's shoes before stepping on a plane—or a time when a group of foreigners could smuggle over a ton of equipment to the top of the tallest building in the country and orchestrate an early morning tightrope walk.

Such is the context of James Marsh's new film "Man on

Wire," which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival. The movie revolves around Philippe Petit's legendary walk between the World Trade Center (WTC) on a 450 pound wire. The movie includes details about Petit's long journey from the streets of Paris to a tightrope above the streets of Manhattan.

The film does an incredible job of transporting the viewer back in time. Grainy, black and white shots and footage of events like Nixon's impeachment takes us back to 1974.

Petit's spirit shines throughout the movie. His

relentless—and often reckless—pursuit of his dream drives the film. After the screening, when Petit announced that he planned to tightrope-walk across ancient ruins on Easter Island, the audience had no doubt that he would accomplish this feat—even though he's nearly 60 years old. The film preserves Petit's youth with humorous anecdotes, like his story of stealing the wallet of a policeman who forced him down from a wire across a busy Australian highway.

"Man on Wire" also makes great use of the photographs

that Petit's team of co-conspirators took of his walk. Although there is no actual footage of the walk, the documentary conveys the incredible gravity of Petit's feat and the wonder of those watching below. The images of Petit lying down on the wire facing the sky are stunning.

While Petit's story is the film's core, the movie also has a greater message about how New York has changed. A police report about the tight rope walk consisted of three words: "Man on Wire." Charges were dropped when Petit agreed to juggle for the cameras.

A government may limit some freedoms for security's sake, but, as we sign away our freedoms, we must question what is lost. Nowadays, street performers require a permit. "Man on Wire" documents an extraordinary event, but, more importantly, it is a portrait of an older New York.

The film uses its narrative scenes to great effect, transporting the viewer back to Petit's childhood and moments of revelation. Petit describes reading about the Twin Towers for the first time while waiting for a dentist appointment. The actor portraying Petit smiles, and in a humorous moment draws a line connecting the top of the two buildings, and then dashes out. Petit said, "[I] had a toothache for a week, but I had my dream."

He has since made many tight rope walks--often with the consent of the authorities. Since his walk at the WTC, he has performed in Washington Square, at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, and at the Eiffel Tower. He is unconcerned with risk. "If I die, what a beautiful death to die in the pursuit of your passion," he said.

When Petit was doing his walk, he stopped for a moment and lay down. He thought to himself, "This is an image which I will never see ever again." Watching this film is a rather similar experience, because, in its vivid and entrancing narrative style, we see New York frozen in time. Watching this film is also somewhat sad. We will never see our city as it was in this film.

## The Caller

**By JAMES DENNIN**

For centuries, great philosophers and common men alike have pondered the question "What would you do if you knew you only had a week to live?" Would you run? Would you spend it with the people you love? Would you make amends for all of your transgressions? Would you party like there's no tomorrow? What if you still had some business left to take care of?

These are the questions posed by Richard Ledes's new psychological thriller, "The Caller," which won the Tribeca Film Festival's narrative competition for films set in New York.

Frank Langella plays a wealthy business executive who, troubled by his conscience, decides to reveal his business's questionable practices. When his would-be employers inform him that he has two weeks to live, he enlists the aid of a private detective played by Elliott Gould.

At first, we see what seem to be the bare elements of an archetypal mystery story. However, there is a great deal more beneath the surface. For one, Gould does not come across as a typical action hero. Slightly overweight and just a hair away from retirement, he spends far more time watching birds than he does pursuing leads. He accepts the case because he is offered an exorbitant pay increase, but we are

soon forced to question whether there is a case at all.

Gould's role in the film, from the start, is shrouded in mystery. Langella hires Gould to tail him, offering directions through cellphone calls while disguising his voice. For awhile, Gould takes Langella's directions without question, following his subject through the streets of Manhattan, dutifully taking notes on how Langella greets his mother and the way he puts out his cigarettes.

The plot has a series of twists which all seem to suggest how we are inextricably linked to our past. While the film is characterized by many of the elements of a typical detective story—a surprise ending, a sensuous and mysterious heroine and a climactic chase—it is ultimately about a search for self, rather than a search for a murderer. Langella and Gould find themselves connected, and the film is far more satisfying than a whodunit.

The film is enhanced by its beautiful depictions of New York. At times, it seems as if the film is a tribute to the detective films of the 1940s. However, Ledes sets his film during the spring, a time when the city is rather youthful and full of color. This separates "The Caller" from its ancestors in the noir genre. Few film makers other than Woody Allen can claim to possess Ledes's talent for evoking mood from a city's streets. The scenes of Langella

sauntering down the West End with his surrogate daughter, Gould watching birds in Riverside Park, and a thrilling boat chase on the Hudson are all important to the film's success.

In the end, "The Caller" is a character study as much as a thriller. Its writers (Ledes and Alain-Didier Weil) place their characters in a number of situations as unfamiliar to their characters as they are to the audience. It's hard to imagine being so out of one's element, and such writing raises this film above the pack. Langella and Gould are also spot-on performers, who play their roles with a sense of bewilderment—even when they are in control of the movie's events. The film is also unique in that there is no puppet master, despite the heavy amounts of deception.

The film is sophisticated, sometimes overly so. There is an abundance of historical and cultural references, and Gould speaks a good deal of laughable French. It's easy to get lost in the nuances, but intelligent movie goers will find reward in this exciting and beautifully shot film. However, there are times when the dialogue dissipates and we grow weary of Gould's tireless pursuit. At this point, it's easy to sit back and enjoy this worthy portrait of New York. Even at its lowest points, you can no doubt find an endless amount of satisfaction in looking for your house.

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## Cartoons

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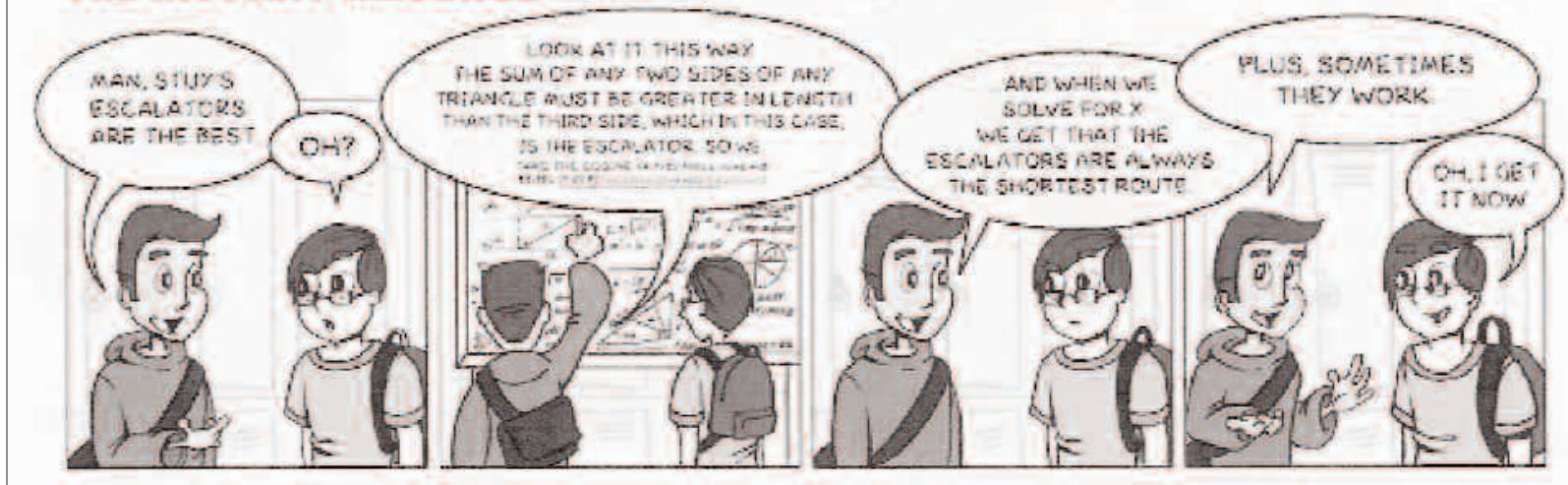
by Zoe Wu



### THE INSTANT MESSAGE

ROBERT VINLUAN  
AND KIRAN SURY

"They don't teach you this stuff in MQ5"



### "METAMORPHOSIS"

By Adam Bonner



**Girls' Ultimate Frisbee***continued from page 16*

Sticky Fingers did not participate in any national tournaments. Instead, they played and easily defeated the only other New York City high school with a girls' Ultimate Frisbee team: Beacon High School. Even with the lack of competition, they continued to "work really hard" and "practice every week whether it was raining, snowing or icy," junior and co-captain Nicole Lau said. Because 15 players this year were rookies that had never played the game before, such commitment was needed to train them.

"Basically everyone who join[ed] the team ha[d] never played ultimate before," senior and co-captain Natasha Mishchenko said. The Sticky Fingers spent two hours every Tuesday and Thursday and four hours every Saturday doing "plyometrics, throwing, disc drills, and scrimmaging," Mishchenko said. Plyometric exercise involves the rapid and continuous contraction of muscle to improve strength and reflexes. She said their practice regimen also included "track

**workouts [and] running stairs in school."**

These vigorous workouts were to prepare the team for intense out-of-state competitions, where the level of competition can be significantly higher. "College teams often have more experience," sophomore Amy Lin said. "Sometimes, there are entire towns devoted to Ultimate." Frisbee is much more popular in other cities, such as Amherst, Massachusetts.

Members of the high school teams they do play in out-of-state competitions often "start playing in middle school," Grace Lin said. She said these teams "are coached by some of the best Ultimate players around."

A major disadvantage for the Sticky Fingers is that these teams "have grass to practice on. Whereas in New York, we have to travel pretty far to find a nice field," junior Angel Li said.

"The only piece of grass around Stuy is Battery [Park], and it's usually too crowded to do anything productive," Grace Lin said. "We have to travel to Prospect Park." Team members said it takes them slightly more

than 30 minutes to reach this destination.

Despite all these challenges, Mishchenko said the Sticky Fingers "still match up well against those teams."

All the preparation and practice has kept the team competitive. In a game against Bucknell College at the Spring Phling, a college tournament at Penn State on the weekend of Saturday, April 5, the team "was down at the half 7-3 and came back to win the game 13-9," Lau said. "This game really gave us a boost and showed the college teams not to underestimate us. We were seeded last, 10th, at that tournament and the fact that we got third place surprised many people."

The following week, the team flew to Georgia for the Paideia Cup, which "was with some of the best high school teams in the country," Amy Lin said. They came in fifth.

Although the team has to travel out-of-state in order to play competitive games, Ultimate's popularity at Stuyvesant is increasing. "The girls' team has doubled in size from two years ago to 27 play-

ers," Lau said. However, it is still not accepted by the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL). This is seen as a benefit by many team members.

"PSAL has so many rules and restriction and it is just a hassle, so it is great to not have to deal with them," junior Michelle Ma said. "I don't really have a problem with us not being a PSAL team."

Lau echoed this sentiment. "We have an awesome coach and great support from our families," Lau said. She said it "allows us a lot more freedom and gives us more of an opportunity to compete in out-of-state tournaments."

The lack of PSAL acceptance, however, does have drawbacks, namely lack of school funding. "We have to sell candy and have bake sales to raise money," Li said. Overall, they are successful in fundraising, often raising just enough money to fund their out-of-state trips. Nonetheless, they need to fundraise year round in order to finance all their expenses.

The team believes this affects its performance. "Because we don't have the

money, we can't go to all the tournaments we want," Mishchenko said. "Sometimes, we can't bring our entire team to tournaments because we have to fly and it costs too much."

Another drawback is the lack of respect the team gets from the rest of the Stuyvesant population. "Many people don't consider Ultimate a real sport so we don't get much support from the school," Grace Lin said.

To combat this, the boys' and girls' Frisbee teams encourage each other by going to each others' games, cheering each other on and playing recreational games together. "The members of the boys' and girls' Ultimate teams are very close partly because of the fact that we are not part of the PSAL," Grace Lin said. "We support each other because we know that nobody else will."

Members of the Sticky Fingers believe that Ultimate is a legitimate sport. Amy Lin said, "Ultimate is discipline, tolerance and integrity wrapped up conveniently in a 175-gram disc."

**Girls' Fencing****Untouchables End Season Untouched***continued from page 16*

Truong, who lost both her A2 matches 5-3, said that the victory wasn't as dominating as the score suggests, as shown by the tightness of the A and C matches. "It was kind of challenging," she said. "But we all expected to win because we worked really hard."

Senior and C1 fencer Malika Rakhmankulova suffered an injury during the 7-2 semifinal victory over Townsend Harris, but insisted on playing in the finals. "As a senior, she said to me she wanted to play her last match in high school, so I put her in," Winston said. Rakhmankulova lost both her C1 matches by the close score of 5-3.

Although the Untouchables ended the season undefeated, there are a few other schools in the city that posed a challenge. "There's very tough competition from Cardozo, Brooklyn Tech and Tottenville," said Winston, who also coaches Stuyvesant's boys' varsity fencing team.

"The best competitor is Brooklyn Tech because they fence outside of school and get coached by professional fencers," Truong said. Brooklyn Tech and Tottenville tied for first place in the Brooklyn/Staten Island Division with records of 7-1.

Truong won ten of eleven matches with 53 touches in the

regular season and holds an E rank in the United States Fencing Association (USFA). Ranks from A-E are given out to USFA members across the country based on their success in tournaments throughout the country. Since most members are unranked, a rank of E is considered exemplary.

"Vivian's not only a solid fencer but she's the captain," Winston said. She helps runs the team, keeps the team's spirit up with gatherings outside of school, and she's really essential as the team leader."

Sophomore Nzingha Prescod, who fences in Stuyvesant's A1 position, was 6-0 in regular season competition and 5-0 in playoff matches. In the finals, she won both of her A1 matches by a score of 5-0. She holds an A rank in the USFA and won a gold medal at the 2008 Cadet World Championships in Sicily in April.

Although seniors like Hsiao, Truong, and Rakhmankulova will no longer be with the team next year, Winston expects returning players like Prescod and Ng to lead the team to success.

"We love winning but after the game, but I'm already thinking about how next year is going to be," Winston said. "The team has a lot of talent, and next year looks promising."

**Golf****Swingers Right On Course***continued from page 16*

the playoffs against Benjamin Cardozo High School, who ended up winning the championships. Unlike any of the other three semifinal teams from last year, all five players from Stuyvesant's team are returning

this year.

Nieves said that he is proud of his team's depth. "I'm confident that it will take us far," he said. With their fast start, the Swingers have their eyes on the city championship. Meyer said, "We have a good shot to win the whole thing."

**Boys' Handball****Dragons Ready to Fight Fire**

By YIFENG ZHAO

The Dragons, the boys' varsity handball team, have begun their season this year with the hopes of bouncing back strong from a stunning defeat they endured in last season's playoffs. In a season in which the team had expected to win the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) championships, Stuyvesant lost in an upset to Bronx High School of Science in the second round of the 2007 PSAL handball playoffs, in which the Dragons were eliminated from further playoff contention. "This year, we're much better, in terms of our talent level," history teacher and coach Robert Sandler said.

So far, the Dragons have been taking advantage of their weak Manhattan Division II, as evident in their current undefeated record of 8-0 within league play.

Senior and co-captain Michael Wu, who has been a

**"I expect us to win the whole city this year."**  
—Robert Sandler, coach



Tina Khiani/The Spectator  
The boys' varsity handball team, the Dragons, currently holds an undefeated record of 8-0.

tions of first and second singles, respectively.

"It's hard to [stay in shape with a weak division]. Sometimes I wish the PSAL would have divisions like they do at colleges, but we have scrimmages. We scrimmaged against Brooklyn Tech and I sometimes have players who are better and players who are older come play with us at Central Park," Sandler said. Sandler occasionally even gets involved himself, and practices with the players—working on drills.

Recently, senior Alex Tam and senior and co-captain Nelson Chiu, who play first doubles on the team, won first place at the third Annual Handball Invitational Tournament this season, in the doubles division.

"We definitely proved that we're there this year," Chiu said.

Although last year's early exit from the playoffs was disappointing, the team has learned from that experience. "It's been a year so a lot of us have been more mentally prepared [for the playoffs]," Wu said. Though Sandler cited the problem of new players who do not consistently attend practice, many of the senior Dragons still hold very high expectations for the playoffs. The graduating class of 2008 has had very successful careers at Stuyvesant, helping the team to a 33-game regular season winning streak and an overall record of 41-1 dating back to the 2005 season.

"We're probably the team to beat this year," Wu said.

Sandler agrees. "I expect us to win the whole city this year," he said.

# Sports

## Girls' Lacrosse

By ALAN TSE

When they started practicing right after February break, many members of the new girls' varsity lacrosse team had barely played the game. But with the help of a rigorous practice schedule, the Huskies are getting better with every game.

Since it is their first season, the Huskies are being given developmental status, meaning the results of their games do not factor into the records of their opponents. In addition, no matter what its record is, Stuyvesant cannot make the playoffs. This season, their goal is purely to develop. "As a developmental team, our first year is not about winning," senior and co-captain Jennifer Liu wrote in an e-mail interview. "It is about learning from our experiences and growing as a team."

Since lacrosse is a new sport to many players on the team, they practice five or six days a week. "We want to prove to the other schools that we're just as good," junior Anna Zhang said. "We work just as hard, maybe harder."

The Huskies participated in the Mayor's Cup Lacrosse Jamboree at Randall's Island on Sunday, April 6, a round-robin tournament in which they played five 25-minute games. Despite losing the first four, the Huskies were able to win their

last game 3-2 against A. Philip Randolph High School. "We progressed through the five games, learning more and more about strategizing and finally winning our last game," senior and co-captain Stephanie Hon said.

Freshman Seung Gee Kim, a defender who helped the Huskies by bringing numerous ground balls up the field, was selected as a member of the Mayor's Cup All-Star team. All the coaches came together to choose one or two players from each school for the all-star team. "Kim was nominated because of her fierce aggressive defense and her ability to bring up the ball from the defensive side of the field to the offensive end," coach Holly Younglove wrote in an e-mail interview. "She has great energy and has proven to be a key asset to the defense with her hustle and communication."

Like many other Stuyvesant players, however, Kim has had little prior experience with lacrosse. "The first time I saw a lacrosse stick was at camp last summer, but I never actually played with one until this season," she said.

In addition to practicing and improving their play, new teammates must bond with each other in order to succeed on the field. To promote team bonding, the Huskies watched a professional men's lacrosse game together at Madison

Square Garden on Friday, April 18. For many of the players, it was a good learning experience. "The whole team got to learn a few things," Kim said. "Whenever she could, our coach pointed out special defenses and plays."

As a result of watching the game together, "We're definitely more of a team than before," Hon said.

The Huskies are currently 1-1 in Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) competition. They started off the regular season with a 3-2 victory over Queens High School of Teaching (QHST) and an 11-3 loss to Cardozo High School, which has a 5-2 record, ranking them third in the PSAL. Member of the Huskies are proud of their performance in these two games. "We beat QHST who's been playing for several years, and when we played Cardozo's B team, for the first half of the game, the score was close," Hon said.

Younglove was also impressed by her team's performance. "They have really come a long way in short period of time with the game of lacrosse," she said. She believes that the Huskies' rapid improvement will carry over to next season, when they will be eligible to compete for a playoff spot. She said, "With only two seniors on the team, Stuy will be a team to be reckoned with next year."



## Boys' and Girls' Tennis

### Boys' and Girls' Tennis Make Playoffs



Jack Greisman/The Spectator

Both the boys' and girls' tennis teams had successful seasons, with the Ponstars and the Lobsters competing in the playoffs on April 16.

By JOHN CONNUCK

Both the boys' and girls' tennis teams clinched spots in the playoffs this past Wednesday, April 16. It was certainly a welcome achievement as both teams begin to wrap up their seasons.

After winning all five matches in their Wednesday game against Bard High School, the girls' tennis team, the Lobsters, came away with an undefeated record of 8-0 and a guaranteed seed in the playoffs. "It's impossible not to win in this division," senior and captain Jane Lin said. Lin refers to the relatively weak Bronx/Manhattan A Division of the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) in which Stuyvesant competes. In their final regular season game, the Lobsters defeated Hunter College High School on Thursday, May 1, in a close match by the score of 3-2—ending their regular season undefeated and at the top of their division. Currently, there are several injured players on the team, including Lin, forcing

Stuyvesant to substitute two sophomore in the playoff-clinching match on Wednesday, April 16. The Lobsters are awaiting their first playoff matchup.

The boys' team, the Smokin' Aces, also saw success that Wednesday—gaining a playoff spot and improving their record to 6-4. The boys ended their regular season with a 4-1 loss to Hunter College High School, but still finished with a 7-5 overall record. "The regular season ended very well for us because the Bronx Science team forfeited their match, giving us a win. It gave us a 7-5 record on the season, which gave us a higher ranking in the playoffs," senior and captain Sam Alperin said.

The Smokin' Aces ranked fourth out of seven teams in the Bronx/Manhattan A Division. Stuyvesant won their first round playoff game 3-2 against Tottenville High School on Thursday, May 8. They advanced to compete in a second round matchup against the Judges of Benjamin Cardozo High School on Monday, May 12.

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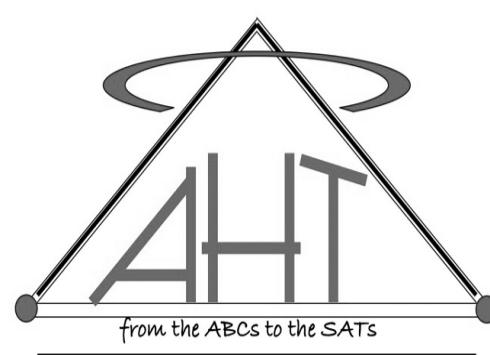
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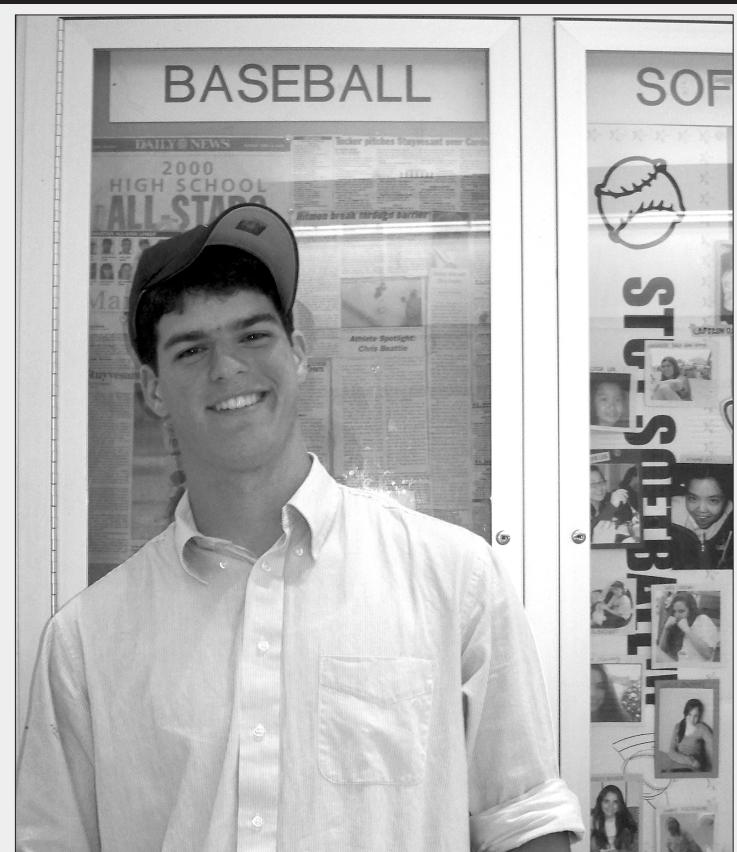
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## Athlete Spotlight: Scott Ritter 'The Stopper' Keeps Going



Senior Scott Ritter, co-captain of the boys' varsity baseball team, plans to play club baseball during his freshman year at Northwestern University.

**By SHAFIR UDDIN  
with additional reporting by  
CHRISTOPHER AVERY ZHAO**

At the age of five, Scott Ritter would play catch with his father and brother in the park. Within 12 years, Ritter would earn the starting catcher job for the Stuyvesant Hitmen, the boys' varsity baseball team, during his junior year.

Ritter, co-captain of the Hitmen, has been playing America's favorite pastime for just about his whole life. He

received his first glove at the age of five, from one of his brother's friends. "My dad and my brother were playing catch, and one of my brother's friends had used up his glove and had given it to me," Ritter said. "That was my first mitt—I grew up using it."

Ritter had played baseball in his local little league for six years. In little league, he was both a pitcher and catcher, although he preferred pitching. When he was about nine or 10, however, he went to a baseball camp where he played catcher a

majority of the time. "That's when I fell in love with it," he said. He believes his personality is well suited for the unique and relatively unpopular position. "Who else would sit behind the plate while someone throws you 90 mile per hour fastballs?" He also enjoys the pressure and responsibility that comes with the position. "The catcher's in charge of the game," he said. "I love that feeling. Everything rests on you: you're the stopper."

Ritter continued to play catcher and enjoy the game overall, so the decision to play baseball in high school was a no-brainer. "When I was looking for high schools throughout the city, I was looking for a school with a baseball team. I doubt I would have gone to a school without a team, because that was important for me," Ritter said. When it came time to choose a high school, Stuyvesant was a place where he could see himself fit in.

During his freshman year, he instinctively tried out for the junior varsity baseball team. "It was hardly even a decision for me. The only question was what position would I play?" Ritter said.

Ritter, along with junior Zachary Karson, senior Mark Chiusano and senior Brian Schatz, was given the position of co-captain earlier this spring. "We picked guys that have shown leadership. Someone that's always there, and can tell the younger classmen what they need to do," head coach John Carles said.

"It's an honor to be a cap-

tain, although it also means taking on many responsibilities, taking care of the entire team," Ritter said.

Responsibilities for being captain include demonstrating leadership, being ready for practice everyday and being available to underclassmen for advice.

As a captain, Scott is known to be a leader on the field. "Scott is the kind of guy that will be coolheaded and talk to the guys after a poor outing," Carles said.

"Scott is just a natural leader," Karson said. "Even when he's down, he keeps everyone in good spirits. He has a passion for the game that you just have to respect."

Despite being a captain, Scott considers his teammates as peers and describes his relationship with them as mutual. "I also get advice from teammates. Once I had a teammate come up to me and say, 'You know Scott, you might be able to improve your throw,'" Ritter said. "We then watched some tape and went over my throw."

When the time came to apply to college, Ritter applied to eight different schools. "At the end of [my college] process, there were three schools: New York University (NYU), Northwestern University and the University of Southern California (USC)."

Because he wanted to get out of the city, Ritter's choice was mainly between USC and Northwestern. In the end, he decided to attend Northwestern along with his fellow captain, Schatz. "I just liked the atmo-

sphere at Northwestern better. I felt that if I were going to Northwestern, I would have more of an opportunity to play baseball than at USC," Ritter said.

At Northwestern University, Ritter plans to major in film. He also is planning to play club baseball during his freshman year in college, and possibly try out for the Division I varsity team his sophomore year.

For the moment, however, his focus is on the Hitmen's current season. Despite starting off the season 6-0, the Hitmen have gone on an eight game slide. It has been a tough season for Ritter, who was diagnosed with elbow tendonitis in the middle of the year. As a result, he couldn't play catcher and has been forced to play designated hitter, which he has been somewhat disappointed about. "You want it to be a good year, but then the season kind of vanishes in a way," he said.

The Hitmen have two games remaining in the season against Beacon High School, who Ritter described as their division rival. They must win both of them in order to make the playoffs.

According to Ritter, the Hitmen have not gotten the big hits they needed this year. The team is counting on Ritter, who hit a game winning double to clinch a playoff spot for the Hitmen last season. Ritter is confident that he, as well as the rest of the team, will be able to come through.

"We get stuff done when we need to get stuff done," he said.

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# THE SPECTATOR SPORTS

## Golf

### Swingers Right On Course



By AARON GHITELMAN

With six victories and the first hole-in-one in the team's recent history, the month of April was a successful one for Stuyvesant's undefeated golf team, the Swingers, who now stand at 8-0. Each of their competitions is made up of five individual matches. Of these 40 total individual matches, Stuyvesant has lost only one.

The week of Monday, April 14 was especially triumphant for them. Junior Charles Kuang nailed the team's first hole-in-one in recent history on Tuesday, April 15. Two days later, on Thursday, April 17 the team defeated its chief rival, the Bronx High School of Science, in all five matches.

Kuang's hole-in-one came on the third hole of a match with Riverdale Kingsbridge

Academy. "I was really surprised," Kuang said. "I didn't think it would be a hole in one." According to the New York Times, the odds of getting a hole-in-one are less than one in 3,000.

The Swingers returned to Van Cortland to face an undefeated Bronx Science that Thursday, April 17th. While the Swingers won all five matches, there was much tension. Besides sophomore Cody Levine's 5-1 victory, every other match came down to the last two holes. Senior and captain Frederick Meyer improved his record to two wins, one loss and one tie. The other three players, senior Josh Clemente, junior Alex Robinson and sophomore Alex Shin, all maintained their perfect records.

First year coach and English teacher Emilio Nieves said, "We hung in there and won the match and that's all that counts." Nieves was particularly pleased with the performances of Robinson, who he said is "tough to beat, he hangs in there with anyone," and Meyer, who he said "has shown a lot of heart."

"My opponent played very well," Meyer said. "It was a very tight match, but I pulled through in the end and won a really big victory."

Last season, the Swingers came within a shot of forcing a tiebreaker in the semifinals of

*continued on page 13*

## Girls' Fencing

### Untouchables End Season Untouched



Lucia Hsiao / The Spectator

The girls' fencing team, the Untouchables, won the Public Schools Athletic League city championship last year and currently hold an undefeated 6-0 record.

By HOWARD LAM

The Untouchables, Stuyvesant's girls' fencing team, won the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) city championships on Friday, May 2nd with a 6-3 victory over Brooklyn Technical High School. This is the second year in a row in which Stuyvesant has finished the season in first place of the Manhattan

Division with an 8-0 record and assumed the title of City Champions.

"I wasn't worried," coach Joel Winston said, indicating that this year's starting lineup differed from last year's championship team by only one fencer. "We put a lot of heart into the season and it feels great when it pays off."

During the match, each team won half of the A, or high-

est level matches, as well as half of the C, or lowest level matches. This made the B, or middle level matches, the deciding factor. "We just totally dominated the B matches," Winston said. Junior Megan Ng won both her B1 matches 5-4, while senior Jenny Hsiao won her B2 matches 5-4 and 5-0, respectively.

Senior and captain Vivian

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## Girls' Ultimate Frisbee

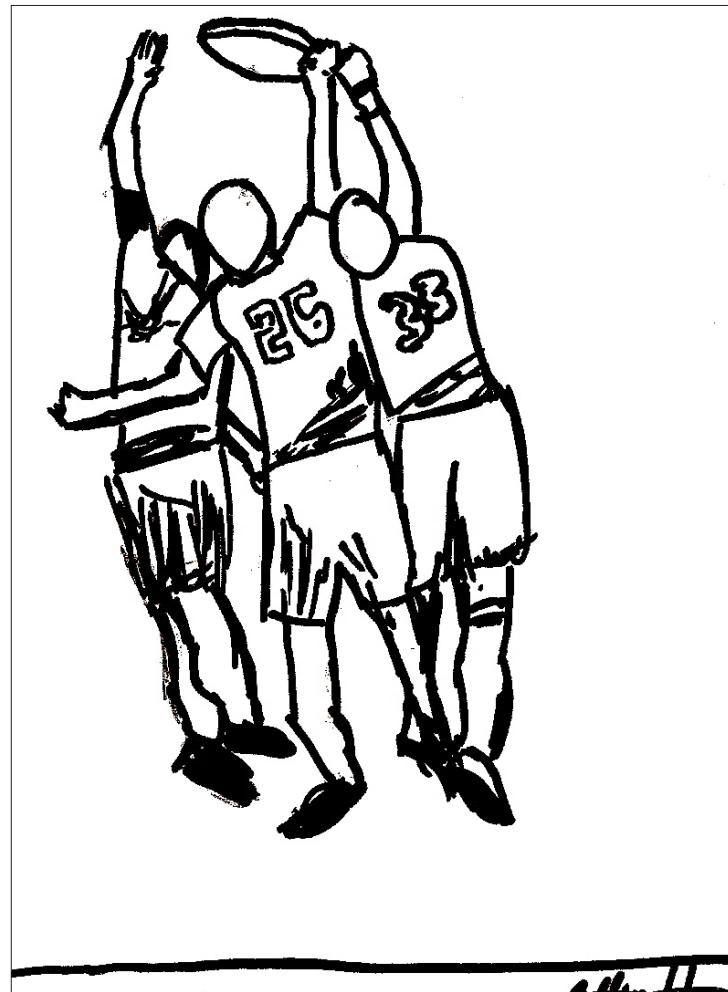
### Proving Themselves in an Unsupported Sport

By WHITNEY KO

Although some doubt their sport's legitimacy, members of the Sticky Fingers, Stuyvesant's girls' Ultimate Frisbee Team, practice intensely and strive for success in high-level tournaments. After finishing last year with a first-place win at the St. Johnsbury Invitational in St. Johnsbury, Vermont, the Sticky Fingers had high expectations going into the 2007-2008 season. Despite losing six seniors to graduation last spring, junior and co-captain Grace Lin is confident in her current team's ability. "We [can] fill the void," she said.

In September, the Sticky Fingers beat college teams in the New York Metro Sectionals Tournament and "almost became the first high school team [to qualify for] the Metro East Regionals," Grace Lin said. Stuyvesant was tied with a Yale University club team for the final qualifying spot. The Yale club team moved on to make the tournament, but members of the Sticky Fingers don't understand why Yale was chosen over them.

They find out about college-level tournaments through individual players' online memberships to the Ultimate Players Association. High school teams normally are not invited to college tournaments.



However, their coach is able to use his connections as an alumnus of Pennsylvania State University's Frisbee program to

get them invitations.  
For the next six months, the

*continued on page 13*

## Cricket: As American as Apple Pie



Sadman Islam / The Spectator

By AARON GHITELMAN

Last spring, the Public Schools' Athletic League (PSAL) added cricket to their list of commissioned sports. This was a great and groundbreaking decision since New York is now the first city to officially sponsor high school cricket.

But not everybody agrees this was a positive addition. On the sports blog [pologrounds.blogspot.com](http://pologrounds.blogspot.com), a blogger with the pseudonym Mel Ott wrote, "Cricket is a niche sport that will never gain widespread popularity. Why are city schools fielding cricket teams for a small group of players? If anything, American sports and sporting culture should be encouraged." Not only is cricket popular, but it qualifies as a truly American sport.

The popularity of cricket both at Stuyvesant and in New York City is indisputable. Since the winter of 2005, Stuyvesant has had an active cricket club. Every year when Battery park is open, I have seen kids playing with the flat cricket bat.

As for the rest of the city, cricket has a dedicated following, and its popularity is growing. On any given weekend, about 100 men flock to the Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx to play cricket.

Now, the question of whether cricket is American is tricky. However, it should not matter whether a sport is 'American' or not. Nonetheless, something about the sport is inherently patriotic. When our founding fathers were deciding what to call the new post George Washington would hold as head-of-state, John Adams proposed the word 'President.' Adams rationalized that since the leaders of cricket clubs were called Presidents, the same name should be given to the leader of our new nation. In addition, it is recorded that Washington himself played cricket once. If a sport is good enough for the founding fathers, it's good enough for me.

Cricket in New York also represents the true spirit of our nation since it is played almost exclusively by first and second generation immigrants. The American spirit is displayed not only by the acceptance of new immigrants, but also by the integration of their ideas and traditions into our culture. To reject cricket would be to violate all that America stands for.

As the smooth and successful start of Stuyvesant's cricket season has shown, cricket is here to stay—in our school, our city and our country.