



The Spectator

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*"The Pulse
of the
Student
Body"*

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To The Stuyvesant Community

Over 600 Parents Attend First Camp Stuy for Parents



Lucia Hsiao / The Spectator

As an experimental program, Assistant Principal Guidance Eleanor Archie organized a Camp Stuy for the parents of incoming freshmen this year, with Big Sib coming in to speak to parents.

By PEI XIONG LIU

Stuyvesant hosted its first orientation program for parents of incoming freshmen on Wednesday, August 29, a day after students attended the annual Camp Stuy.

Assistant Principal Guidance Eleanor Archie organized the event. "I really thought the parents needed to know what Stuyvesant was all about. Just as the child is transitioning, so is the parent," she said. "I thought it would be really nice to help them with the transition to Stuy."

The turnout was "much bigger than we expected," said Parents' Association Co-President Paola de Kock.

"If the parents are involved from the very beginning, the students have an easier time," she said. "They're more likely to stay on target, stay on task, get through the four years in the best possible way."

The orientation program consisted of two sessions. Parents with children in homerooms 1A to 1L met in the morning session from 7:45 a.m. to 12 p.m. and the rest of the parents met in the afternoon session from 12:45 p.m. to 5 p.m. Breakfast and lunch were provided.

Each session included two parts. During Part One, parents listened to presentations in the Murray Kahn Theatre. Principal Stanley Teitel greeted parents. Assistant principals then gave

overviews of their respective departments.

The other speakers were Parent Coordinator Harvey Blumm, Parents' Association Co-Presidents Paolo de Kock and Leo Yu Wan Lee, Big Sib Chairs, Student Union representatives, Department of Education Director of Mental Health Scott Bloom, Health Coordinator for the Integrated Service Center of Manhattan Fred Caesar, parent of former student Sue Schneider, Youth Counsel League Director Janet Johnson, Individualized Educational Plan specialist Jeanne Schultz, Princeton Review representative David Carroll and Alec Klein ('85).

Some Big Sibs said the the-

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Scanners to Be Implemented During Lunch Periods

By KRISTEN KIM

The ID scanners used in the morning as students come into school will now also be implemented during lunch periods.

"They may not be ready the first day, but before the first week is out, I'm sure they'll be in place," Principal Stanley Teitel said.

Each student's lunch period will now end at the end of his or her assigned period, excluding the four minutes allotted for getting to the next class. Thus, if a student returns to school during the passing period, he or she will be marked late, although his or her next class would not have actually started. However, stu-

dents will now be allowed to leave the school for lunch during passing.

"I can only give you the four minutes on one side or the other," Teitel said. "I chose to give you the four minutes at the beginning of the period."

Teitel distributed a letter to all staff members and the Student Union (SU) June 13, 2007 to inform them of his plan, but did not tell students and parents about the decision.

"The SU has always been against the scanners since it was first posed a couple of years ago," senior and SU President Jamila Ma said. "We told the

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Features

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From Counselors to College Stuyvesant Parents Go to Camp Stuy

Parents' Camp Stuy thwarts efforts of Camp Stuy to alleviate incoming freshmen's stress.

Sean Gordon-Loeb / The Spectator



Arts & Entertainment

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Time Warp: Alec Klein Returns to Stuyvesant



Sam Gerstenzang / The Spectator

The Spectator speaks to Alec Klein ('85) about his book, "A Class Apart."

New Locker Policy Instated

By EILEEN CHANG

A new locker policy, introduced last spring, is now effective this school year. According to the policy, students purchase the combination to their locker from Stuyvesant for 11 dollars.

Juniors were given the chance to select their locker number through the student tools section of the official Stuyvesant Web site. Students in other grades were assigned lockers randomly.

Principal Stanley Teitel met with Student Union (SU) representatives in June to discuss letting juniors choose their own lockers.

"All [the administration] wants to know is who is in what lock," said senior and SU President Jamila Ma. "If that's all they want to know, why not let students have a choice where their lockers are?"

The administration and the SU decided that since the plan was newly proposed, it would be too difficult to let the entire student body choose lockers the first year.

The junior class was chosen by seniority. "The problem with the senior class is that the senior bar makes it more complicated. We didn't want it to be that the person with fastest computer gets the best locker," said Ma. "We couldn't get the seniors so we picked the junior class."

Ma said the SU doesn't like that all the locks have keyholes, as Teitel had promised there would be no keyholes on the locks. She said, "It's definitely something we have to talk to [Teitel] about because he said it wouldn't happen and it did."

Assistant Principal Technology Edward Wong cre-

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Political Primer for Freshmen

By GUI BESSA and JACOB NEWMAN

As an incoming freshman who has just finished a Camp Stuy crash-course on Stuyvesant, you probably think you have Stuy figured out.

However, you're not ready to walk these halls just yet. There are many deeper conflicts and ongoing struggles rooted beneath the foundation of this ten-story building. This guide aims to inform you of the issues that have been affecting students over the last few years, many of which frequently make our headlines.

The Student Union

Recently, Stuyvesant has undergone many substantive changes. While the Student

Union (SU)—our student government—is not as popular or as strong an advocate for students as it once was, it is still responsible for planning dances, college trips and funding student clubs and pubs. It is located behind the senior bar, which is a traditional hang out exclusively for seniors, on the second floor along with The Spectator and Big Sib offices.

Coordinators of Student Affairs

In the past few years, the SU engaged in contentious negotiations with the school administration over the right to choose the Coordinator of Student Affairs (COSA), the faculty advisor and advocate for the SU. Principal Stanley Teitelulti-

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Thomas Chosen as Interim AP Chemistry and Physics

By LEE TSAI and KRISTY ZHEN

Two separate assistant principals will once again head the chemistry and physics department and the biology department. Principal Stanley Teitel asked physics teacher Scott Thomas if he would assume the role of Interim Acting Assistant Principal (AP) Chemistry and Physics in June 2007.

"I have asked Thomas to take over the position of chemistry and physics because we are required by regulation to run a Chancellor's Regulation 30 (C-30)," said Teitel. The position was left vacant when Former AP Chemistry and Physics Olga Livanis became principal at NEST+m, a school in lower Manhattan, in the fall of last year. Under the C-30 regula-

tions, as Teitel, with the help of a committee of parents, faculty and students, looks for a permanent AP, he must fill the vacant position.

Also under C-30 regulations, Teitel does not need a committee to choose an interim AP. "I'm allowed to appoint an interim acting person. This is what I've done," he said.

AP Biology Elizabeth Fong, who had been in charge of the chemistry and physics department along with the biology department as AP Science, is now fulfilling her former position.

Stuyvesant will continue its search for an AP for the chemistry and physics department. Teitel said the school will post a vacancy notice on the Department of Education (DOE)

Web site for 15 days, as directed by the C-30, "For anybody who's still interested. And then that's it."

Teitel will review submitted applications and pass them over to the committee, which will interview the candidates. The committee will then recommend applicants using a ranking system. "The ultimate decision, though, is mine," said Teitel. According to Teitel, many of the applications came from junior high science teachers who are qualified to be APs. He said the qualifications include a degree in education, state certification and at least three years of teaching experience. Since a teaching certificate covers grade seven to grade 12, Teitel emph-

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Thomas Chosen as Interim AP Chemistry and Physics

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sized that "at the minimum, [he] would be looking for somebody with a high school [teaching] background in chemistry and physics."

Teitel said the search for a permanent AP has taken over a year because "if I'm going to have an assistant principal, I want to know, not only can they evaluate the lesson at large, but ensure that the subject material is being taught correctly."

Moreover, Stuyvesant is looking for somebody who has a background in both chemistry and physics. "But not everybody brings that to the table, of course," said Teitel. Thomas had originally applied for the permanent position. "I applied for the position in the spring when it was posted on the New York City [DOE] Career Opportunities Web site," he said. Prior to applying, Thomas received the required NYC Certificate of Eligibility for Supervision in the Physical Sciences.

Thomas worked as an engineer until he began teaching at Dewitt Clinton High School in 2002. After one year at the Urban Assembly School of

Design and Construction, he came to Stuyvesant in the fall of 2005.

As the Interim Acting AP, Thomas is responsible for implementing Teitel's policies, ensuring that the students are being taught the material correctly and the teachers are getting the support they need, and observing classroom instruction and overall structure. "I look forward to working with teachers to improve instruction," he said.

Thomas has already started acting on his new role by working closely with Fong and department staff in hiring five new physics and chemistry teachers.

Due to his new commitments, Thomas will only teach one course, Regents Physics. While he will help out with the Intel Science Talent Research program, Thomas will not, as he has in the past, teach Advanced Placement Physics or Plasma Physics.

Though the vacancy left by former AP Chemistry and Physics Dr. Olga Livanis has been filled, Coordinator of Mathematics Maryann Ferrara will remain at her post, filling in for former AP Mathematics Danny Jaye.

New Locker Policy Instated



Ezra Glenn / The Spectator

Over the summer, the administration repaired and put locks on all of the 2,911 lockers in the building in preparation for the new locker policy.

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ated the locker selection application, which was open the week of August 8. Students were informed of the selection process through a posting on the school Web site.

The selection process was on a first-come, first-serve basis. Juniors who did not participate were randomly assigned lockers.

"Within two days, out of the 800 lockers we have, 600 were already spoken for," said Teitel. "I'm guessing the other 200 [students] were either out of the country and had no idea or their attitude was wherever my locker is, that's where it is."

Junior Christina Moll said, "I like the freedom to choose lockers on our own personal interests but I had trouble figuring out their locations just based on numbers. I wish there was a map on the Web site."

The lockers were distributed by grade. Seniors were assigned lockers on the first and second floors, while juniors were allowed to choose lockers on the third and fourth floors and part of the fifth floor. Sophomores received the rest of the fifth floor, in addition to the sixth and the seventh floors.

Freshmen lockers are located on the eighth and ninth floors. Due to the limited num-

Over 600 Parents Attend First Camp Stuy for Parents

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atre presentation was exhausting for parents. "The adolescent support session, according to many parents, wasn't as useful and insightful," said senior and Big Sib Michelle Lee. "It was too long."

"If the parents are involved from the very beginning, the students have an easier time."

—Paola de Kock,
Parents' Association
Co-President

After each session, Klein held a book signing in the school library for his book, "Class Apart: Prodigies, Pressure, and Passion Inside One of America's Best High Schools."

During Part Two, parents visited homerooms to meet their child's Big Sibs, their guidance counselors, parents of

current students and SPARK counselor Angel Colon.

Kock said that it would be beneficial for parents with children in the same homeroom to meet each other. "You can find out things from other parents more readily than navigating all the literature," she said.

Big Sibs answered parents' questions. According to Lee, question topics ranged from academics to school safety, including questions like, "Do you guys have a social life?"

Senior and Big Sib Arianna Demas said, "The parents asked a lot of questions that the kids wouldn't have, like about the technical things."

Kock said, "Lots of parents really have no idea what the requirements are for various things like Advance Placement courses or what tests you should be taking and when."

Guidance counselors visited their homerooms to discuss academics, course requirements, tests, grading and report cards.

Some parents were surprised by Stuyvesant's grading policy, which increases in increments of fives up to 88. Parent Leya Levin said, "I think the points should just go one by

one."

A discussion was also held about the recent restructuring of the guidance department.

In every homeroom, a raffle was held for a copy of Princeton Review's "The Best 361 Colleges." All parents received

"The adolescent support session, according to many parents, wasn't as useful and insightful."

—Michelle Lee,
senior and Big Sib

an "I'm a Proud Stuyvesant High School Parent" keychain.

Most parents said that they found the program informative. "I hear from the rumors [that] Stuy is very formal and that they care only about the academics," said Levin. "We learned that the school actually cares of the psychological condition of the children."

Scanners to be

Implemented During Lunch Periods

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administration that we are fully against this."

The scanners were first introduced on March 24, 2006. Students wary of the implementation of the scanners since it would limit their freedom and invade their privacy threatened to protest on April 4, 2006. The protest would consist of a slowdown in the morning and a march to City Hall.

"I never understood from the SU how this invades your privacy," Teitel said. "All it does for me is tell me as the principal who's not in the building in every given period. I now know that I have to worry about you because you're not in the building with me where I can protect you. You're now in the streets. That's a problem."

To resolve the dispute, the SU and the administration agreed to a compromise that included the guarantee that scanners would only be used in the morning and not during lunch periods.

"We had an agreement last year between the SU and the administration that the scanners would only be used in the morning," former SU President George Zisiadis ('07) said. "What happened was that Mr. Teitel came out of the blue and said that we'll put it in anyways [for lunch]."

In exchange for the use of the scanners during lunch, the administration agreed to consider allowing students to leave school during their free periods. But this proposal was rejected.

"It turned out that, apparently, the scanners couldn't be configured to let students out during their free periods," Zisiadis said.

The SU also approached the administration at the end of the 2006-2007 school year with a

proposal to open up the third, seventh, eighth and ninth floors for students, but this idea was also rejected. The administration feared that students would cause too much noise and create too much of a mess.

"It wasn't a crazy demand," Zisiadis said. "It was a feasible plan for student space. [The SU] tried giving something back to the students [and] tried to work something out, and that didn't happen."

"What's the point of having a Student Union if the administrators are just [going to] overrule them all the time?" junior Paul Park said.

The scanners will provide instant information for the administration on the number of students both outside and inside Stuyvesant. They will also inform teachers if students are exploiting their lunch privileges to skip classes.

"[The scanners] certainly help the administration to be more aware of where the kids are, like who's around and unaccounted for," Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman said. "There is a value in knowing where everybody is."

But, said Ma, "There is such a small percentage of students that [skip classes], and it's unnecessary to put [the scanners] in use for the whole student body," Ma said. "I'm sure that there is another way to put students into class."

Many students already find the scanners a hassle. "It's just another annoying procedure," junior Zak Shtulberg said.

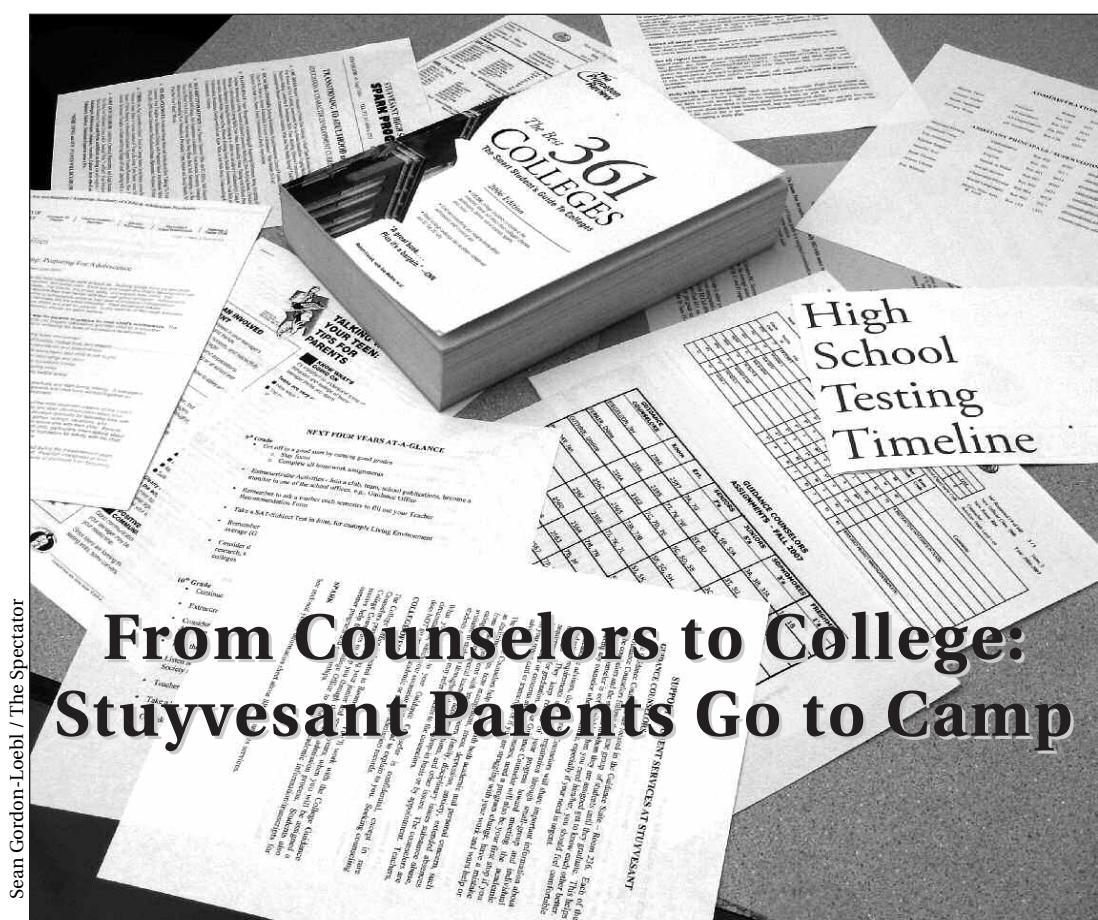
But others find it to be almost the same as a normal day. "We already have to take our ID cards out to show them that it's our lunch period," Park said. "It'll take about the same amount of time for the guards to check as swiping."

"Even though I envy the juniors for being able to choose their own lockers, I'm grateful I won't get my stuff stolen."

—Ruthia Chen,
sophomore

shelves, took four-and-a-half weeks. "The repairs needed to be done. It was long overdue," he said. "It should not have to be done for years."

"It does take work to lock all these lockers. It isn't a ten-minute job to put on 2900-plus locks," said Teitel. "I don't mind doing the work or at least having personnel do it but the benefit has to be that you guys don't get ripped off."



From Counselors to College: Stuyvesant Parents Go to Camp

At Camp Stuy for Parents, an experiment instituted by Assistant Principal of Guidance Eleanor Archie, parents were given folders of information regarding test taking and school policies, as well as calendars and sample report cards and transcripts.

**By SUSANNAH GRUDER
with additional reporting by
STEPHANIE BARTOLOMÉ,
DANIELLE OBERDIER
and SNIGDHA SUR**

Twenty-three families left Stuyvesant High School on Wednesday, August 29 with significantly heavier loads than those with which they had arrived. These parents of the incoming freshman class of 2011, who had won the raffle in their respective homerooms, toted home their prize: the Princeton Review's hefty "The Best 361 Colleges: The Smart Student's Guide to Colleges." The raffle was one of the events at Parents' Camp Stuy, held for the first time that day.

But why is a college guide being given to parents whose children haven't even entered high school yet?

"[Assistant Principal Guidance Eleanor Archie] had only 23, so how do you give

Coming into Stuyvesant and talking about college

[...] gives too much pressure. But what you do as a freshman affects your GPA."

—Suet Mei Chan,
SLT organizer

them out freely?" said Senior Student Leadership Team organizer Suet Mei Chan. Chan is also the mother of a Stuyvesant senior and helped Archie organize the event. She believes it's important to bring college into the picture for freshmen, but only to a certain extent.

"Coming into Stuyvesant and talking about college upfront [...] gives too much pressure. But what you do as a freshman affects your GPA," she said.

For many parents, college was the last thing on their minds as they entered the building at either 7:30 a.m. for the morning session or 12:30 p.m. for the afternoon session. Parents' Association (PA) volunteer and parent of both a freshman and a senior Diane Temkin said, "High school should be about high school, not about college."

Though Archie said college

was "not the main emphasis," much of what was offered to the parents concerned grades, standardized tests and the college process. Aside from the raffled college guides, one of the seven speakers was Princeton Review representative and premier tutor Ed Carroll, who offered the parents information about these tests and how to prepare for them with Princeton Review classes.

A Princeton Review "High School Testing Timeline" pamphlet was also given to each family, which detailed testing options by grade. Carroll said Stuyvesant and the Princeton Review have had a relationship since 2001.

"I like dealing with them," said Archie.

But college wasn't the only thing on the agenda. The presentation, held in the Murray Kahn Theatre, included six other speakers, many of whom dealt with students' well-being. Director of Mental Health for the Department of Education Scott Bloom made an appearance, and a folder distributed to each family contained tips on dealing with "your changing adolescent."

Archie said the overall reaction to Parents' Camp Stuy was positive. "I had parents thanking me," she said. "The parents got a kick out of seeing the kids' program cards."

However, many parents' attention spans began to wane during the lengthy theater presentation, keeping them from meeting with their student's guidance counselor and Big Sibs.

The four-hour event included a breakfast for parents who attended the first session and a luncheon for those who attended in the afternoon, a two-and-a-half-hour presentation in the theater that included speeches from administrators and seven hired speakers and a one-and-a-half-hour session with their student's Big Sibs, guidance counselor and SPARK representatives in a classroom.

Milton Meyers, parent of a freshman, walked out before the end of the theater presentation.

"I was upset that I had been there listening to them [...] it was kind of redundant," said Meyers. "I was looking forward to getting to my daughter's class."

In addition to the speaker on mental health, there were four speeches on how to deal with students with learning disorders. PA Co-President Leo Yu Wan Lee spoke about his son's

struggle with Attention Deficit Disorder and former Stuyvesant parent Sue Schneider spoke about the discovery of her daughter's dyslexia. Both families realized their children's disorders only when their students entered high school, and thus hoped to inform parents of potential obstacles high-schoolers face.

Chan said that the event would "teach parenting skills as well." Aside from containing further information about students' mental health, the distributed folders contained handouts concerning drug prevention treatment and what to do "if your teen gets into a fight."

The Stuyvesant community is far from alone in trying to help parents deal with high school. In "High Stakes High School: A Guide for the

"High school should be about high school, not about college."
—Diane Temkin,
PA volunteer
and parent of
freshman and senior

Perplexed Parent," a book published by Kaplan Test Prep, Allison Zmuda, Mary Tomaino and Jeanetta Miller hope to help parents "understand the consequences of high stakes state exams," "communicate effectively with your teen's school" and "get information on your state's high school testing requirements."

It seems that as high school continues to evolve, so will parents.

"There are two types of parents," said Chan. "The helicopter parent, who provides everything, and the disconnected parent, who just says 'goodbye' and walks away."

Though schools may present parents with ideas regarding college, grades or even parenting, it's the parents who have the last word.

"[Stuyvesant is] an absolutely different environment over all so it's going to be difficult," said Gleb and Ella Forman, parents of a freshman. "It's normal for all parents to worry about all aspects of their child's life."

The Admissions Complication: Parents Using Incentives to Get Kids Into Stuy

By ANDREW CHOW
and DIANA POON

on myself, partly because all my friends were aiming for Stuy as well."

Instead of personal achievement serving as their sole motivation like Ye, other students are taking the SHHSAT to please their parents. "I'm taking the test to make my parents happy," said Lin. "They've always made me happy."

This generous attitude is not reflected in eighth grader Caroline Man's motive. "My dad would kill me [otherwise]," she said.

Freshman Ariel Eisenstadt, who attended Kaplan prep classes, was urged by his father to get into Stuy "every time we drove by the school when I was younger," he said.

"There was no pressure put on anyone to go to a science high school [30 years ago]. If you didn't get in to Stuy, it wasn't a big deal."

—Dr. Margaret Chin,
Hunter College sociology
professor and 1980
Stuyvesant alum

Prep school teacher and Class of 1984 Bronx High School of Science alum Victor Gong said, "Of course they're doing it for their parents. The test hasn't changed much since I've taken it, but the standards have definitely gone down. Students these days haven't learned to reach farther than what they have now."

Nowadays, students all over the city rush to assorted preparation courses to prepare for the SHHSAT. Parents pour out vast amounts of time, money and energy in the name of preparation.

Sophomore Ruozhou Ye's experience leading up to the test was similar to that of many other students in Stuy. Ye was sent to the CTY Master Prep Courses in Flushing a little less than two years before the exam. The entire summer before the test was spent preparing Monday through Friday for three and a half hours a day. "In the end, my parents said that they really didn't care where I ended up for high school," he said. "But I put a lot of pressure

on myself, partly because all my friends were aiming for Stuy as well."

Summer SHHSAT classes seem to have become the new price to pay for admission to Stuyvesant, let alone any Specialized High School. "At first it was my parents who wanted me to go [to Stuy]," Garner said. "They started it. I just want to do well."

Bologna Resigns as COSA

By PRAMEET KUMAR

Physical education teacher Peter Bologna resigned as Coordinator of Student Affairs (COSA) to devote more time to coaching the girls' bowling and boys' swim teams. Health teacher Lisa Weinwurm will now be the sole COSA.

"I felt I had to make a choice, either continue coaching or continue being a COSA," Bologna said. "I wasn't putting 100 percent in everything I was doing."

According to Bologna, the responsibilities of coaching conflicted with the duties of the COSA. "The coach's job is demanding. Five days a week and two-and-a-half hours a day."

The COSA's responsibilities include overseeing student

activities and facilitating communication between students and the administration.

"[Weinwurm] carried most of the important responsibilities last year, anyway," Teitel said. She assumed most of the COSA's duties when Bologna was busy coaching.

"She really took control of the COSA position and the SU and she did a great job when I wasn't around," Bologna said. "I firmly believe that the kids respect her and she will do a great job."

"I liked having Mr. Bologna as a COSA," Student Union President Jamila Ma said. "He was a really good person to work with, so I was sad to see him go. But Ms. Weinwurm has gained a lot of experience this year, so I think that it'll be a productive year."

Stuyvesant Hosts Summer Health Classes for the First Time

By CORINNE MERDEGIA

Stuyvesant hosted health classes for rising juniors this summer to spend less of the school budget.

According to Principal Stanley Teitel, the school is saving money because by accommodating students during the summer, a third health teacher does not have to be hired for the school year.

Students are not permitted to take an extra elective to fill the free period they have by taking summer health classes.

"The savings is that I didn't have to hire a teacher," said Teitel. "If I then have to hire another teacher to fill the elective, then I might as well let you [take health] when you do it."

Students were notified of the program in June via a posting on the school Web site. Junior Lily Liang, who opted to take the class, said "[getting] the class over with in the summer will help open the heavy schedule she has during the school year."

Approximately 100 students attended the program, which

ran from July 5 through August 19.

Ann Branca, a teacher at the High School for Environmental Science, taught three 90-minute classes per day. Branca has 12 years of experience teaching health.

"I applied to work summer school with the Department of Education (DOE) and I received a phone call from [Assistant Principal Guidance Eleanor] Archie asking if I would be interested," said Branca. "Teaching at Stuy has always been a dream to me and I do hope one day to work alongside the excellent staff and students again soon."

Juniors enjoyed the classes offered at Stuyvesant. "I liked the class," said Liang. "Branca was a fun teacher. She didn't make us run through textbooks and answer questions like in a regular class. She told us real stories we could relate to."

Junior Lerie Palmaira agreed. She said, "[The classes] were fun and the teacher taught so that you would actually remember what she was teaching us."

Classes were held on the fifth floor. Liang said, "In my class, there were like 40 people. We had to drag chairs from the other rooms into our classroom, but somehow it didn't feel that crowded."

Summer health students were primarily from Stuyvesant. There were also students from the High School of Art and Design and the Humanities High School. However, they used Stuyvesant books and followed our school health curriculum.

At the end of the program, students took a 50-question departmental final administered previously.

According to Teitel, Stuyvesant may or may not host summer health classes next year depending on the school budget and how many health classes there are.

Other schools hold classes during the summer on a regular basis. Bronx High School of Science, for example, offers freshman optional art and music classes during the summer to lighten their workload.

Science Class Time Increased

By PRAMEET KUMAR

Class time for science courses has been increased from six periods a week to seven. This added class time is a result of Principal Stanley Teitel's dissatisfaction with last year's Regents grades.

Students taking science Regents fell far short of Principal Stanley Teitel's "90-90" goal—for 90 percent of students to score at least 90 percent.

"[Science teachers] are

telling me the reasons the numbers aren't going up is because we just don't have the time to cover the material," Teitel said.

Science classes previously had four periods of instructional time and two periods of laboratory experience, compared to the five periods of instructional time that most subjects have.

Only 61 percent of students taking Living Environment, 21 percent taking chemistry and 47 percent taking physics scored at least 90 percent on their respective Regents examinations.

Math B Regents scores also failed to meet the "90-90" goal.

In other subjects, such as all foreign languages, 100 percent of students scored at least 90 percent.

"Remember that Stuyvesant is a math and science high school," Teitel said. "But the two areas in which we're doing the worst are science and math."

Five new science teachers have been hired to handle the additional workload.

46

number of students who took health over the summer

833

number of students in the Stuyvesant Class of 2011

B

2,911

number of lockers in Stuyvesant High School

R

14,000

number of dollars spent by the Parents' Association for Parents' Camp Stuy

S

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Political Primer for Freshmen



Lily Schwarzbaum / The Spectator

Incoming students walk up the stairs to enter the bridge entrance of Stuyvesant, one of the specialized high schools that require a qualifying score for admissions.

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mately chose health teacher Lisa Weinwurm and physical education teacher Peter Bologna despite the students' request to ignore the regulations and renew the term of social studies teacher and then-COSA Matthew Polazzo.

Last year, the repercussions of Teitel's decision were evident—several SU members were unwilling to cooperate with the new COSAs and infighting brought productivity to a stand-still. Fortunately, the relationship between Weinwurm and the students involved in the student government improved substantially over the course of the year. SU President Jamila Ma and Vice President James Kim, who were elected in June, will pick up where the former SU representatives left off.

Student Privileges

In the last few years, the administration has curtailed privileges previously granted to students. Students were once able to leave school premises for free periods as well as lunch. Teitel barred students from leaving during free periods, citing Department of Education regulations. Last year, when the SU found no legal stipulation against it, Teitel claimed it was technically unfeasible.

Further administrative policies have restricted students to using only the first, second and fifth floors during free periods. The administration has also been a strong

proponent of increasing security, installing 32 cameras on various floors of the school and expanding the use of ID scanners. The scanners have been mandatory for all students to use for school attendance by scanning in the morning since Thursday, March 30, 2006. Now, students must scan in and out during lunch starting this year.

However, many of the privileges that Stuy students take for granted are not typical of the average New York City public school, as many of the new security measures are standard throughout the public school system.

Along with ID scanners, the administration has put an end to the Stuy tradition of students choosing their own lockers. Students are now required to register their assigned locker online and buy their lock from the school for 11 dollars. This will allow administrators to know which lockers are being used by which students.

Teitel implemented this system to prevent theft and detect illegal contraband in student lockers. Students will be held responsible for any illegal materials found in the locker for which they are registered, even if the contraband found is not theirs. The administration will be able to open suspicious lockers without notifying students.

The SU has worked with the administration to initiate a trial program in order to allow juniors to choose their lockers through the Stuyvesant website. Should this system work, it may be expanded in future years to allow all students to choose their lockers.

Possible Racial Bias in Specialized High School Institute

By ALEXANDER SHIN

The racially biased admission policy of the Specialized High School Institute (SHSI), a free test-prep program for minorities underrepresented in Specialized High Schools, may be violating federal law, according to a recent Supreme Court case ruling.

The June 28 ruling limits the use of race as a factor in public school admissions by rejecting the use of school diversity plans that take into account students' race. Currently, the ruling affects the two school districts of Louisville, Kentucky and Seattle, Washington.

SHSI is a DOE-run service to prepare students for the Specialized High School Exam. The year-long course, held at Stuyvesant and several other schools, provides free tutoring for 4,000 sixth graders with the goal of increasing the number of minority students at Specialized High Schools.

Stuyvesant and the other specialized high schools, however, are not affiliated with the program. Principal Stanley Teitel said, "I'm simply told that the program is here, make space."

To qualify for the SHSI, Asian and white students have to be eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and thus must have an annual family income below \$37,000. Black and Latino students do not have these restrictions.

"Race is not the only criteria for being admitted," Teitel said. "Other criteria have to do with financial background and the language that's spoken at home."

Teitel joined the SHSI as an assistant director when it first opened in 1995. He is no longer with the program.

"We're an exam school. Why one group of student get in and why another group of students don't, it's hard to answer," said Teitel. "I'm not in favor of changing the entrance criteria to Stuyvesant High School."

Parent Coordinator Harvey Blumm does not support the Supreme Court ruling. "The ruling is naïve. It pretends that we're race-blind," he said. "Nowadays, minority kids are facing a whole lot of obstacles. By doing this affirmative action, we're taking away from them."

Blumm said, "Every school should have a chance to have a select number

of their top students guaranteed for [SHSI]. Then, there would be a reasonable amount of racial balance, because kids could be divided racially from the towns. Like, a Riverdale school could send five white kids, a Bushwick school could send five black kids and a South Bronx school could send five Latinos."

The New York Post published an article by Charles Bennett titled "Race-Bias Flap in Elite-HS Test Prep" on July 16, 2007.

Although the test-prep course was designed to avoid race-based lawsuits, the Supreme Court ruling and the Post's article have put pressure on the Institute.

Department of Education (DOE) spokesman Andrew Jacob said in light of the ruling, the DOE will review the SHSI admission policy. "We haven't

"Race is not the only criteria for being admitted."
—Stanley Teitel, principal

decided yet on how to change our admission policy," he said.

The DOE expanded the number of Specialized High Schools in 2002 to include the High School of American Studies at Lehman College, High School for Math, Science and Engineering at City College, and the Queens High School for the Sciences at York College. Staten Island Technical High School became a Specialized High School In 2005.

Jacob said the eight schools that currently base admission on the Specialized High School Exam do so to give "underrepresented students more opportunities to qualify for Specialized High Schools."

Schools have become less diverse since the program began.

At Stuyvesant, the percentage of black students was 4.4 percent in 1995. In 2005, it was 2.6 percent.

At the three original Specialized High Schools, Asian enrollment has increased over the last decade to well over the majority.

Teitel said admission to Stuyvesant is "gender, race and ethnically blind."

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Editorials and Opinions

STAFF EDITORIAL

What Am I Reading?

In this space, The Spectator publishes staff editorials, which are commentaries on current issues affecting the Stuyvesant community. Discussions are conducted by a Staff Editorial Manager, whose sole responsibility is to oversee the writing of these editorials. The Editorial Board consists of a group of 26 editors, including the Editor in Chief, Managing Editor and Department Editors from 12 departments, both writing and non-writing, who contribute to the development of the editorial opinion. The points made during discussion are incorporated into articles written by members of the Editorial Board. Staff editorials do not have a byline because they are the collective opinion of the Editorial Board.

A Breach of Trust

ID scanners. Assigned locks and lockers. Coordinators of Student Affairs. Hallway restrictions.

Despite the students' objections to these impositions and our numerous staff editorials condemning the administration's policies and lack of communication with students, almost everything administrators have wanted has come to pass.

The few exceptions to this rule are cases when the students have threatened massive action, such as the defeat of the proposed college office/Studen Union (SU) space switch in March 2006 and, just a few weeks later, the defeat of the proposal to use ID scanners throughout the day. Both student victories were accomplished by threatening a student walkout.

But only two years after it was mutually agreed upon that scanners would not be used throughout the day, administrators have decided to require their use for students going out to lunch. There may not have been a legal document, but in breaching an agreement with the student body, administrators have lost our trust.

Why are they allowed to get away with this?

No one is holding the administration accountable for its actions. The faculty has shown little or no resistance to any of the administration's policies, the parents seem to be either ignorant of or indifferent to the erosion of student rights at Stuyvesant

and the students have displayed no desire to take radical action to change the situation.

This hasn't always been the case. In February 2003, SU members handed out pamphlets to protest a new hallway restriction proposal that would have denied students the right to "sit or congregate in the hallways" ("Hallway Restrictions Stir Student Passions," February 13, 2003). Students then organized a sit-in to protest the proposal. Though some thought the sit-in was ineffective, including Principal Stanley Teitel and several students, it demonstrated the unity of organized student action.

Students have also held governments outside the school accountable through action. In 2002, students from Stuyvesant and City University of New York marched on City Hall to protest school budget cuts. A year later, more than a hundred Stuyvesant students walked out of school to join an anti-war protest in Union Square.

If we wish to alleviate our current situation, we must hold our government to their word. The student body must unite—by communicating not only with parents but also with each other—or the administration will continue to erode our rights.

Stuyvesant students have done it before. It is now up to us to hold the administration accountable.

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.

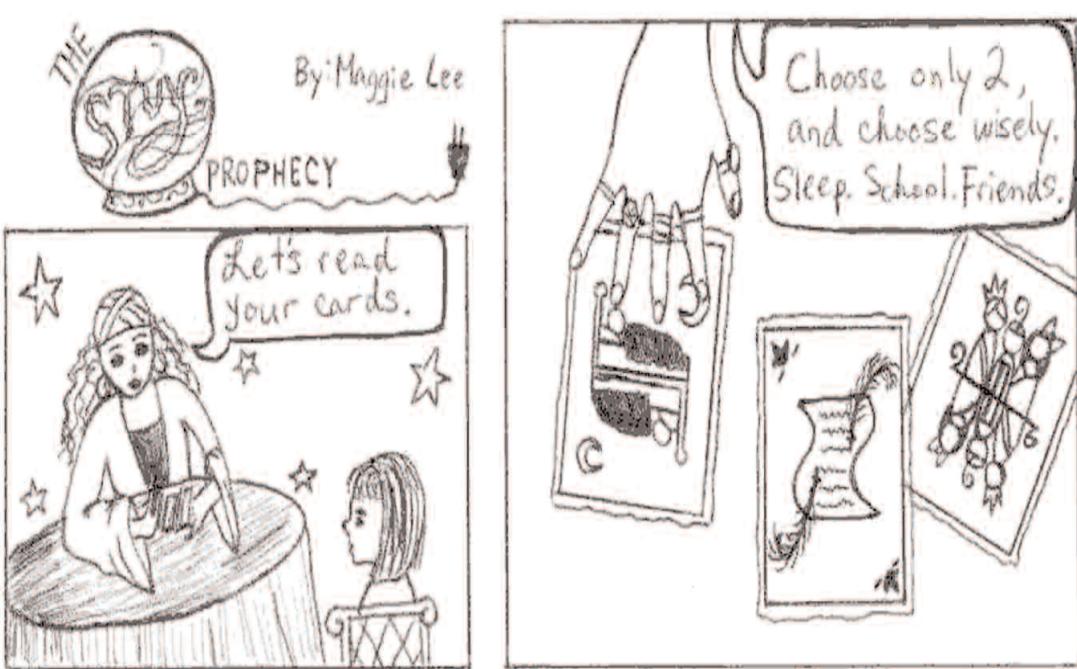
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FOR THE RECORD

- In Issue 16, it was misstated that senior Marta Bralic and junior Samantha Whitmore hung up and distributed "Truth" posters in "Low Turnout and Campaign Violations Taint Primaries." They distributed and hung "Secret" posters.
- In "Alumnus Profile: Telly Leung, Broadway Star," it was misstated that Leung's first Broadway show was "Miss Saigon." His first Broadway show was "Flower Drum Song."



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A Letter to the Incoming Class

Welcome to Stuyvesant High School, freshmen.

First of all, the most important point I can make is this: the school isn't great because of great teachers who teach great subjects under a great administration. This school is great because of its great students who get great grades on some great tests. Or menial tests (think Regents).

At this moment, you're probably in eight courses and will probably get about 30 or so pounds of textbooks to hold in your colossal schoolbag five days a week. And you probably won't understand the A/B gym cycles until your second month of high school.

Academics here can be brutal because of their war of attrition on students. There's a saying here at Stuyvesant. You can only get two of the following three things: grades, social life and sleep. You have to learn that not all 15 hours of homework you will be assigned tonight needs to be done—at most, 30 to 45 minutes of it needs to be done to do well. You need to learn that you might not get eight hours of sleep every day, but with time management, you won't need to sell your soul to the coffee guy on Chambers Street.

But academics are a small portion of your high school education. There are also the extracurricular activities that will shape you and introduce you to some great friends. Maybe you will learn the fine art of speech and debate by joining one of the most tightly-knit student groups, located on the sixth floor. Maybe your rendition of "Happy Birthday" will win you a spot on this year's musical. How about competing in a track meet (or a math meet!)? Or writing for the glorious publication you are reading right now? And let's not forget SING!, one of the biggest events here at Stuyvesant. Though you may learn a thing or two from Shakespeare or your SAT II review book, you will learn a whole lot more from the teenagers you will encounter after the last bell rings.

Now that we have covered the two major components, let's talk about some less pressing issues. Lockers. You'll hate yours; it's on the 10th floor. Life sucks, get used to it. Of course, you could try to steal a locker on the lower floors, but with the administration's new locker plan, I'm not so sure your attempt will be effective.

Of course, your locker's location reflects your status in this school. The closer you are to the entrance, the higher up you are in the high school food chain. If you were a sophomore and Asian (that is to say, Oriental Asian) perchance, you'd probably find a spot on the sixth floor bar (that weird-looking structure by the gym). If you are a senior, you get the prime second floor—the Asians are in the atrium overlooking the pool and the whites get the prominent bar in front of the Student Union offices.

By the way, did my brashness upset you? Well, get used to it. At Stuyvesant, many students are too smart-mouthed to be politically correct. There have been complaints about the lack of integration in this school, but seriously, this is high school.

There is only one thing important in high school: drama. Your best friend just slept with your girlfriend. The administration is taking away your rights (what a surprise). Your friend burned your chemistry homework with the Bunsen burner.

Finally, I want to talk about teachers. Remember, in all of the departments, there is a range from amazing to just plain abysmal, the former more likely found in the harder classes (go figure). And there is a large amount of red tape in this school due to the large student population and the inadequacy of the guidance department, so if you have problems with your teacher or class, good luck.

Stuyvesant is what it is because of the stu-

Though you may learn a thing or two from Shakespeare or your SAT II review book, you will learn a whole lot more from the teenagers you will encounter after the last bell rings.

dents: the Asian freshman fashionista who loves Ecko Red and Urban Outfitters as much as she loves writing; the black sophomore journalist who sews costumes for theater productions; the brown junior football star who takes kickboxing class and multivariate calculus; the white senior student with the 98 average and the marijuana addiction. All of these people will find success at Stuyvesant, as will you.

Just kick back, read up on your Nietzsche and take it one day at a time. Pretty soon, you'll see yourself walking down the stage of Avery Fisher Hall, graduating with the rest of the Class of 2012. Good luck! You're going to need it.

42,
Victor Zapana

Can You Hear Me Now?



Jacob Newman / The Spectator

By GEORGIA STASINOPoulos

Don't shake your head at me; I know you have one with you, right now.

Whether you hurriedly stowed it out of sight as you crossed the bridge, or simply stored it in your locker to wait until your lunch period, the guilt on your face makes it obvious. You have flouted school rules on the first week of the new term and brought your cell phone with you.

Last year, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Schools Chancellor Joel Klein imposed New York City's school cell phone ban, following numerous complaints that students were abusing the privilege to carry a cell phone and using them to cheat on tests, take inappropriate pictures and play games during class.

The logic behind Bloomberg and Klein's consistent defense of the ban is that removing cell phones from classrooms prevents students from cheating on tests, taking inappropriate pictures and playing games in class, thereby allowing students to focus on their education.

Any day now, we expect high schools will be flooded with students bearing 100 averages as testament to this remarkable plan.

But if that doesn't convince you that it is a brilliant idea, just think of the money spent on the cell phone ban. With an ever-growing budget that needs to support lawsuits, random screen tests and defensive press time, the money wasted on one silly, avoidable ban means money that can't be spent on not-so-silly, not-so-avoidable

After all, in most democracies, there is strength in numbers once the minority runs out of ways to defend their faltering position.

drug screenings, metal detectors, ID scanners and heavy textbooks.

Standing in the way of this utopian future are the over-concerned parents who have consistently raised a war cry against the ban, opposing any reform that would improve the well-being and education of their children.

This summer was no exception to the resistance, marking the city council's first attempt to pass a bill that would allow students to use cell phones when traveling to and from school. Once within school grounds, the bill proposed that students be required to store their cell phones in a school-prescribed area until the end of the school day.

Naturally, Bloomberg—recognizing how hazardous to a student's education it would be to use a cell phone outside of school—vetoed the bill, despite the 46 of 48 city council members in favor of it.

The city council's 46-strong majority—all supporters of the new resolution—is expected to override the veto soon. After all, in most democracies, there is strength in numbers once the minority runs out of ways to defend their faltering position. Negotiation and compromise worked in ancient Greece; now, they're just old school.

Though we expect a turn of events within the first weeks of the new term, for now, it remains cell phones away and smiles out at school. Which may not be so terrible. After all, we are considered some of the brightest kids in the city—we certainly don't need cell phones to talk to each other. Telepathy is always preferable.

Wake Me Up When Summer Ends



Diane Yee / The Spectator

**Law course at Harvard: \$8,500.
Business classes at Columbia: \$3,000.
Experiment in International Living program in a foreign country: \$4,000. A summer job that sucks: priceless.**

mindlessly inputting complaints in a computer or handing out flyers in the sweltering heat.

There are so many other ways to spend a summer vacation, but with Stuyvesant students, summer never starts. Most don't spend their precious two months away from school relaxing or having fun. Instead, they find ways to impress colleges with more hard work.

In our Stuy careers, every single thing we participate in is done for one purpose and one purpose only: to look good on a college application.

Everyone wants to get into a

pre-college program at a prestigious institution, but why doesn't working in a library look good? Why isn't working in an office, tutoring program, or a library just as good as studying at Harvard?

In fact, neither is explicitly better than the other. A college program educates a student academically, while a job—yes, even a miserable job like mine—gives a person practical skills and the ability to tolerate adverse working conditions.

I won't deny that I hated my unpaid internship a lot, but I learned things that cannot be learned in a college-level class. There are those who spend their summer sitting in a classroom every day and learn nothing, and there are those who spend their summer throwing themselves out there and learning about life.

My job may have been physically unrewarding, and at times, I wanted to shoot myself, but it was ultimately fulfilling. I learned how an office environment worked. I made some friends. I met some politicians. I did my share of community service and volunteer work, and for once, I felt proud of myself. A summer class could never do that. Besides, an internship is relatively easy on the wallet.

**The Spectator
Web site is up!**

**Check it out at
www.stuyspectator.com**

Arts & Entertainment

Time Warp: Alec Klein Returns to Stuyvesant



Alec Klein ('85) came to Stuyvesant to read from his new book, "A Class Apart," which explores the lives of students at Stuyvesant.

**By IVANA NG
and SNIGDHA SUR**

Washington Post reporter and author Alec Klein ('85) thought he had moved on after graduating from Stuyvesant High School. He was wrong.

Klein, who wrote the award-winning book "Stealing Time: Steve Case, Jerry Levin, and the Collapse of AOL Time Warner," was asked to speak at a panel on corporate scandals hosted at Stuyvesant in 2004. The visit to the school, after 19 years, inspired him to become a teenager again and spend the Spring 2006 semester at his alma mater to document what makes it unique—its exceptional students—and its idiosyncrasies.

The end result is the book "A Class Apart: Prodigies, Pressure and Passion Inside One of America's High Schools," which Klein hopes will spur public policy debates on what the nation

should do with its gifted kids and encourage other schools to inspire their students. Simon & Schuster, the publisher, has already nominated the book for the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize.

The Spectator spoke to Klein about what he found within our doors and the challenges in writing the story.

The Spectator: Tell us about how the idea came to you to write this book.

Alec Klein: There are not a lot of schools like it. [...] But at the same time, Stuyvesant also is the universal story of high school. Just going through adolescence, all the pressure you go through, the parental pressure, dealing with all the things teenagers deal with. [...] While there's a lot of attention paid to what's wrong with education in America, there should also be attention paid to what's right with education in

America, and I think that Stuyvesant is a part of that answer. [...] Several Stuyvesant graduates have gone on to greatness. You've got four Nobel laureates, and you have people who've created big industries, like the guy who created Home Depot. [...] There's a lot of focus today on students who are struggling. What about you guys? The gifted students. [...] So going back to Stuyvesant was also a good lesson to just [find out] what other schools could do to improve themselves and to help their students.

TS: What do you think other schools can learn from our school?

AK: You are constantly reminded that you are the best. [...] I believe it's good to be told that, it's good to get positively reinforced. [...] The second thing is to get their parents involved. [...] Finally, the third element [...] is the freedom. At least when I was at Stuyvesant last year, it seemed the school allowed the students to make the school their own. [...] People hung out all hours of the day. [...] It's a great thing when you can feel good about going to school and being there.

TS: How did you narrow it down—since Stuyvesant students have such a wide gamut of talents—to four main kids?

AK: I let it happen organically. [...] For instance, in the case of Romeo, I just met him by accident when he was in the math department office. [...] Another case, a little bit more obvious, someone like Milo, who at the time was 10 years old. [...] When you get to talk to him, you realize he's this genius, a true prodigy. [...] There is no way you can get everybody in there, but you want to try to include as many different students as you can. There were a lot of students beyond the main four characters who are brought into the story. You have Danny Zhu and the math competition. All the kids who were involved in SING!. Students involved in The Spectator. Student government. I tried to be inclusive and to describe as much as I could about the school. But at the same time, I know that it's hard for a reader to follow a bajillion characters at once so I needed to somehow narrow the focus. I let that happen based on what I was

hearing. [...] I naturally gravitated to those who had something to say.

TS: What was the biggest challenge in writing this story?

AK: It's hard in different ways. You want to gain the trust of the individual you are writing about. [...] It's also a challenge writing about your own high school because you're not going to make everybody happy. [...] The book deals with cheating. It deals with parental pressure. It deals with sex. It deals with drugs. It deals with a lot of issues that, frankly, the administration perhaps would not want me to focus on too much. [...] I tried to put aside what people wanted and tried to tell the story as I saw it. [...] In some cases, the issues that came up were very sensitive. Jane being a heroin addict, that's a tough issue. [...] I needed to [...] be compassionate about the fact that I was writing about students, children, young adults, which is different than, say, a public figure who is held accountable for their actions.

TS: You speak of Stuyvesant English teachers Frank McCourt and Dr. Bindman in the book. How did they influence you?

AK: Dr. Bindman [...] was just this wonderful teacher because he was so positive. [...] One of the greatest compliments for me was that I had written a story for the Caliper. It was called "Real Women Don't Eat Three Eggs" [...] Apparently, Mr. McCourt liked it enough that he read it to some of his classes. [...] To me, it meant the world to hear that. [...] I actually used to be better at math when I entered Stuyvesant. [...] But I had such good English teachers who encouraged me that I naturally started to gravitate towards that.

TS: When did you realize you wanted to be a writer?

AK: There was no plan. [...] My father is a writer as well. I think that that's had a real influence on me. When I was growing up, he was the editor of the New York Times magazine. I got to spend a lot of time hanging out in his office and hearing what was going on. [...] I think I wanted to write in part to get his attention. [...] Once I started to write for the school paper, once my play was chosen for SING!, I

was sort of on my way. I was kind of addicted to it. [...] I pretty much haven't stopped writing since then.

TS: What was your first impression of the school when you visited after 20 years?

AK: First of all, it was tiring. Keeping up with you guys, oh my goodness. The schedules are intense. [...] I would try to keep up with you and go back and transcribe my notes until two, three, four o'clock in the morning. I'd actually be e-mailing students at these odd hours but then I'd be getting e-mails back too, or IM. People would be up IM-ing at like ridiculous hours because you're all always up. I felt I was back in high school. [...] The longer that I was doing it, I talk about this in the book, the more that I began to see things through your eyes.

TS: As Stuy students, we're going to be very critical about how you represent the students because we know them personally. What steps did you take to get to know your subjects?

AK: I spent a lot of time with them but I also talked to their parents, their friends, their teachers. [...] When it comes to opinions about things, there's going to be some difference of opinion about whether a person is X, Y or Z. I tried to gather as much information, I spent a long time with these people. I could only write what I knew.

TS: What do you hope Stuy students will take away from the book?

AK: Maybe they'll learn something about the teachers and administrators who they may not know that much about. When you're at Stuyvesant, you take for granted you're there on some level. [...] Hopefully they'll realize they are in a special place and to make the most of it. Hopefully, you'll get to talking about some of the things that are not so great about the school. Whether it is the racial divisions or the cheating issue or the parental pressure and competition. [...] I hope they also like the story and find it interesting.

Alec Klein will be reading from his book and signing books in the Murray Kahn Theater on September 17 at 6 p.m.

Unearthed from the Slush Pile: A Trip to the Pharcyde

By HARRY BARTLE

Fatlip, one of the four hysterical emcees who make up The Pharcyde, rhymes about transvestites in the West Coast rap group's debut album, "Bizarre Ride II The Pharcyde." During this song, titled "Oh Sh*t!", Pharcyde rapper Imani also discusses the time he "accidentally" slept with his friend's mom, only to be caught in the act by his startled and (justifiably) angry friend. These wacky, raunchy topics make The Pharcyde's brand of rap irresistibly fun.

"Bizarre Ride," released in 1992, has all the makings of a hip-hop classic. The rhyme-styles on this CD are unlike those found in other hip-hop records. Instead of rapping in the signature hip-hop monotone, each member is constantly switching up his flow—rhyming to the beat in a mesmerizing, melodic way. It's

not quite singing, it's not really rapping, and it's definitely not R&B. The Pharcyde's style is refreshing—especially amid a current Dark Age of contemporary pop music.

The rappers' flow is extremely captivating. The opening verse on the album's main single, "Passin' Me By," is a perfect example: When Imani wails on the beat in a super high-pitch, he sends chills down your spine. And in "Otha Fish," one of the best songs on the album, Slimkid's Sam Cooke impression over a swirling, jazzy beat works surprisingly well.

The Pharcyde's most distinctive trait is the members' voices. Imani and Slimkid both rhyme in incredibly high-pitched voices, as if they had inhaled helium. Moreover, all four emcees—Booty Brown, Slimkid 3, Imani and Fatlip—are consistently razor-sharp with

their hilarious anecdotes and memorable verses. For most of the CD, the four rappers are clowning around, chanting, harmonizing and just bugging out.

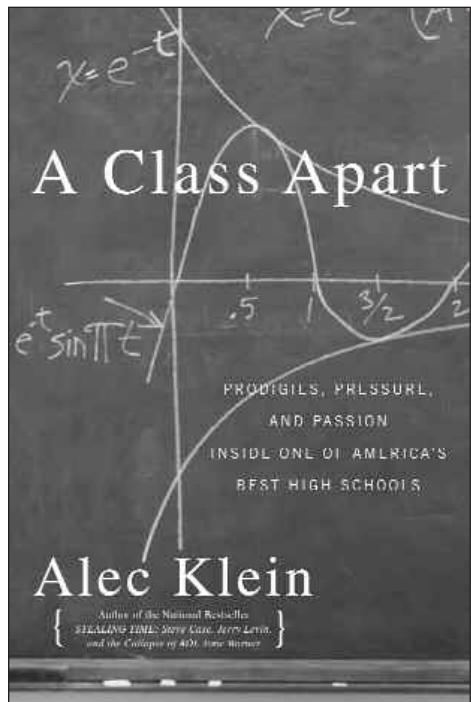
The production is tight throughout the entire record, too. J-Swift, the producer of "Bizarre Ride," crafts innovative beats from a plethora of fantastic samples and instrumental music. In "Passin' Me By" alone, he uses samples from Quincy Jones, James Brown and Jimi Hendrix.

"Bizarre Ride" is a record on which your favorite song changes every time you listen to it—because it's just that good. I daresay this album is single-handedly responsible for the entire West Coast alternative rap phenomenon. Those who enjoy listening to rap groups like Jurassic 5 and Blacklicious should look to The Pharcyde.



Arts & Entertainment

Book Review: A Class Apart



Courtesy of Simon and Schuster

By IVANA NG

Finally, there is a journalist who isn't out to get us. Washington Post reporter Alec Klein ('85) in his book "A Class Apart," nationally released August 21, 2007, follows the lives of some of Stuyvesant's intriguing characters as they worry about grades, college, drugs, love, administrative policies and math. Though overly nostalgic at times, the book offers some fascinating perspectives on our school, its place in American public education and, of course, its amazing students and faculty.

The book explores the school during the Spring 2006 semester, which was an eventful one. The arrival of ID scanners, which many students felt symbolized an erosion of trust in students, the excitement of SING!, the Cuddle Puddle controversy, the deaths of sophomore April Lao and junior Kevin Kwan—through these events, Klein analyzes both the disparate emotions and vulnerability of Stuyvesant students.

Of Stuyvesant's approximately 3,000 students, Klein focuses on four, though other stories and opinions are interwoven

throughout. Do these students—Romeo Alexander ('07), an ambitious Harvard-bound athlete; Milo Beckman, a 10-year-old boy genius in math; Mariya Goldman, a sophomore in love whose Ukrainian parents want her to live the American Dream; Jane ('06), a drug addict whose poetry displays a rare depth and maturity—represent our multifaceted student body? It's hard to say, but "A Class Apart" shows they are also typical teenagers, complex and forthright.

Klein declares that Romeo, the football team captain, is an anomaly: unlike your typical jock, he is also a "math whiz." But to us, it doesn't seem paradoxical. After all, Stuyvesant students took a grueling entrance exam for a school specialized in math and science. But in other high schools, Romeo could be the archetypical role model for student athletes. As we read the intimate details of his life, thoughts and desires, we discover that even as a child, Romeo learned from his parents to push himself to do better—something to which all Stuyvesant students can relate.

Klein's astonishment at the coexistence of athleticism, beauty and brains at a math and science school, however, is excessive and gets old fast. When Becky Cooper ('06) delivers a cheesy science joke, Klein writes, "Becky can get away with such a typical Stuyvesant joke because she's not only a nerd. She also happens to be a beautiful cheerleader whom many of the boys love. So she can be forgiven for going Harvard." Needing to be "forgiven" for being both beautiful and brainy is ridiculous.

But when Klein relates the academic world to another, more physically demanding world, "A Class Apart" becomes an interesting, though somewhat exaggerated, portrayal of our school, and makes high school life look exhilarating. He likens senior and math whiz Danny Zhu's victory at the annual New York State Mathematics League contest to a grueling athletic competition. Klein also describes students getting upset over near-perfect test scores with equal intensity, and calls the sale of escalator keys a "black market."

Students and faculty alike say the stu-

dents make Stuyvesant what it is, but Klein shows that Stuyvesant's teachers are just as remarkable. Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman, for example, sees potential in Jane's poetry and her insight in his English class, and tries to guide her back from her addiction. At the same time, he serves in the principal's "kitchen cabinet," affecting administrative policy.

"A Class Apart" also features former Assistant Principal Mathematics Danny Jaye, school aide and former unofficial math research teacher Jan Siwanowicz, student social studies teacher Jennifer Lee, social studies teacher and former Coordinator of Student Affairs Matt Polazzo and Principal Stanley Teitel—all of whom interact in unlikely ways.

Jaye, a passionate advocate for the downtrodden, breaks rules by employing Siwanowicz as a math teacher even though the college dropout is unlicensed. He also butts heads with Assistant

Throughout the book, it is difficult to follow one character's story without meeting a handful of other equally fascinating people.

Lee's story is riveting, too. Her father had left Korea to find success in America but did not find it in his business endeavors. Like many immigrant parents, he transferred his hopes to his daughter. As a child, Lee studied hard in the hopes of attending Stuyvesant, but ended up at the Bronx High School of Science. Wishing to not disappoint her parents again, Lee applied to Columbia's Teacher College, through which she came to Stuyvesant.

"A Class Apart" expertly weaves these stories together, emphasizing the interactions between students and faculty—though the stitches aren't always so smooth. Klein's writing style can be disjointed and stale. The transitions between different threads are similar: one character experiences an emotion, then another character feels the same in an entirely different situation. Case in point: Lee, realizing she must consider other schools if she isn't offered a job at Stuyvesant, says, "I'm going to surrender." In the next paragraph, Klein writes, "Romeo is surrendering as well. He's giving up on his bet [...]." Sometimes it works; sometimes it doesn't.

The book excels, though, in exploring trends in public education. Klein poses tough questions: What do we do with gifted students—should they be placed into selective schools like Stuyvesant, where they can be challenged, or should they be left in their neighborhood schools as role models for the less diligent? Is the specialized high school exam fair in creating a meritocracy—or does it discriminate against blacks and Hispanics and favor those who can afford elite prep schools?

Klein lays out the facts, leaving readers to form their own answers. Despite the unpopularity of elite entrance exam schools, Klein hopes other schools can learn from Stuyvesant (see Q&A).

"A Class Apart" is a time capsule: the story Klein captured only a year ago is a thing of the past, but is also a lasting picture of the Stuyvesant community. Let's hope his optimistic account of Stuyvesant remains a perennial one.

Students and teachers alike often say that it is the students who make Stuyvesant special. In "A Class Apart," Klein makes it known that Stuy's teachers are just as remarkable.

Principal Organization Randi Damesek, who, though notorious for strict discipline, according to several sources in the book, is a caring and sensitive administrator. Jaye is also a close friend of Teitel ("such is their mutual admiration"), and Klein depicts the ups and down of their relationship poignantly.

That Jaye is connected to so many people—even Lee, who, with Jaye's help, hopes to secure a permanent teaching position at Stuyvesant—is astonishing.

Absinthe and La Vie, Adult Circuses, at Spiegeltent

By JAMES DENNIN

The Spiegeltent, a traveling entertainment venue, pitched its tent on South Street Seaport in July, beginning its second-year stay in New York City. The "mirror tent" conjures 1920s vaudeville in the returning adult circus "Absinthe," which has a new cast this year. "La Vie," a Canadian import, also joins the camp.

Vallejo Gantner, the producer who brought Spiegeltent to New York, first encountered the Spiegeltent in Adelaide, Australia. "I was intrigued by how such an old space could feel so substantial. It was unlike any venue, [...] like seeing a show in a beautiful antique," he said.

For "Absinthe," Gantner wanted acts that were both "beautiful and alien." The new cast contains artists from all over the world, including Las Vegas, Montreal, Vienna, Paris and England. There is a trapeze act that is acrobatic yet sexual and a singer who carries the show in a strangely flamboyant fashion. This otherworldliness unites the performances.

In the show's first few minutes, an emcee welcomes the audience to "the intoxicating world of 'Absinthe,'" and a beautiful acrobat bathed in green light descends from the ceiling. The show also features a bizarre transvestite cabaret singer, and the vulgar and outlandish "Gazillionaire," who accidentally

kills his assistant when he tries to shoot an apple off the top of her head blindfolded.

Some of the acts are cheap and comic—one duo claiming to be from Cirque du Soleil botches simple gymnastics moves—but the vast majority of the acts in "Absinthe" are more sophisticated than anything at a typical circus. Acrobats use the trapeze as a medium for dance, and, in beautiful and sexual routines, they seem to fall in love with each other as they fly through the air.

The artists are bold, and they tend to use their abilities to create inventive routines. A juggler, for example, tap-dances in rollerblades and stripteases to reveal his outlandish latex evening gown. He then puts on stiletto heels and mounts a pogo stick before finally juggling knives. And the daring and beautiful Julie Atlas Muz, who performs with a large balloon, dances to the classic "Moon River," before opening one end of the balloon, disrobing and stepping inside.

For something subtler, The Seven Fingers, from Montreal, present the theatrical circus "La Vie." Unlike "Absinthe," which uses only pre-recorded music, "La Vie" has a disc jockey, which adds character to the circus's marvelous soundtrack.

The show begins with a wayward protagonist falling from the ceiling. A French emcee, known as "The Prince of Lies,"

informs the acrobat that he and the audience are dead.

The show's acts are inspired by the demise of its characters. A corrupt airline CEO, for example, performs an act suggestive of a plane crash, and a mental patient escapes from a strait-jacket and tries to break out of her cell in dazzling feats of contortionism.

"La Vie," might not be as entertaining as "Absinthe," but it is sophisticated. In "Absinthe," the occasional performer seems to abuse the sexuality of his or her performance, while "La Vie" is always dignified.

Unlike last year, which saw a variety of touring acts, the Spiegeltent's theatrical offerings this year are somewhat limited. Nevertheless, even though the tent plays host primarily to "Absinthe" and "La Vie," a rotating lineup of performers in the former makes the tent well worth multiple visits.

"Absinthe" performs Tuesday through Sunday, Tickets cost \$69.

"La Vie" performs Mondays and Wednesdays through Sunday. Tickets cost \$35 to \$55.

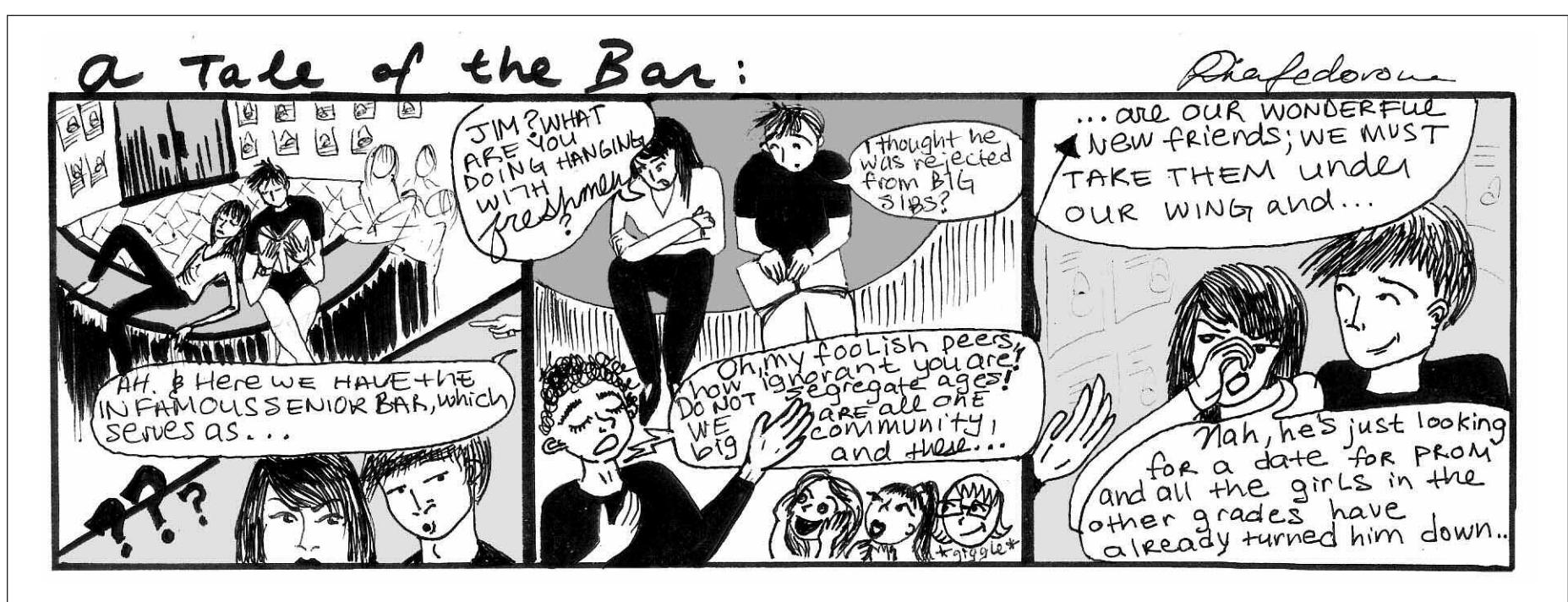
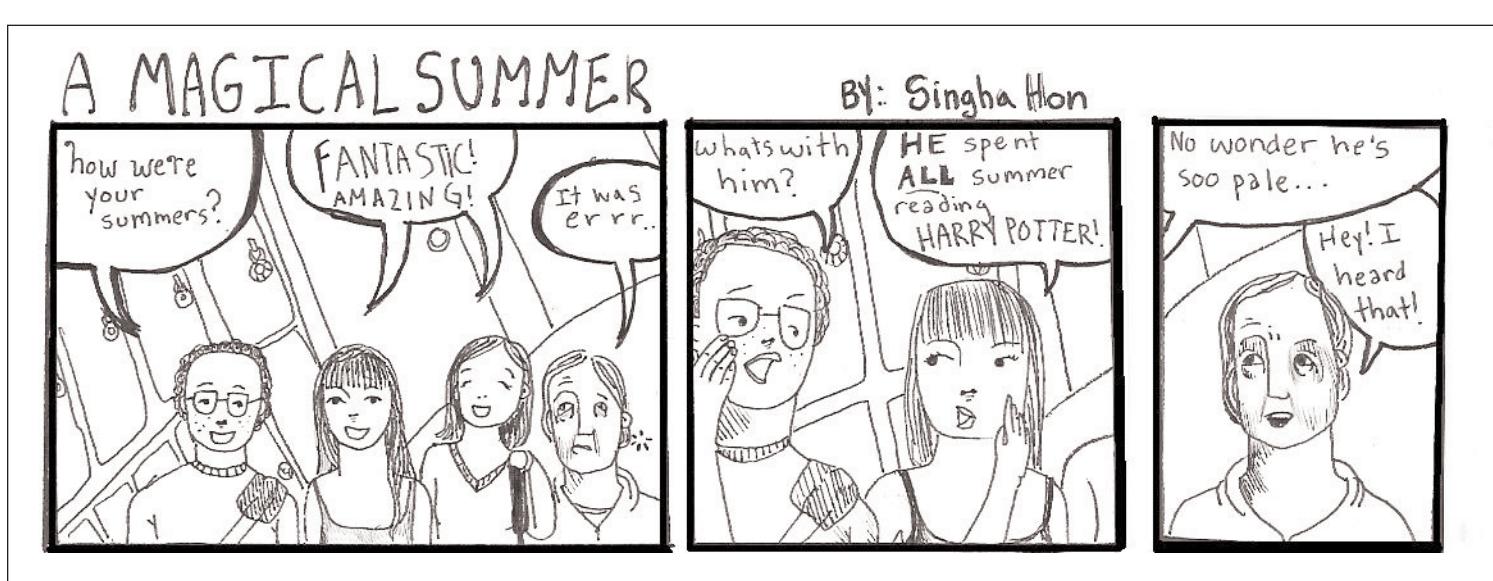
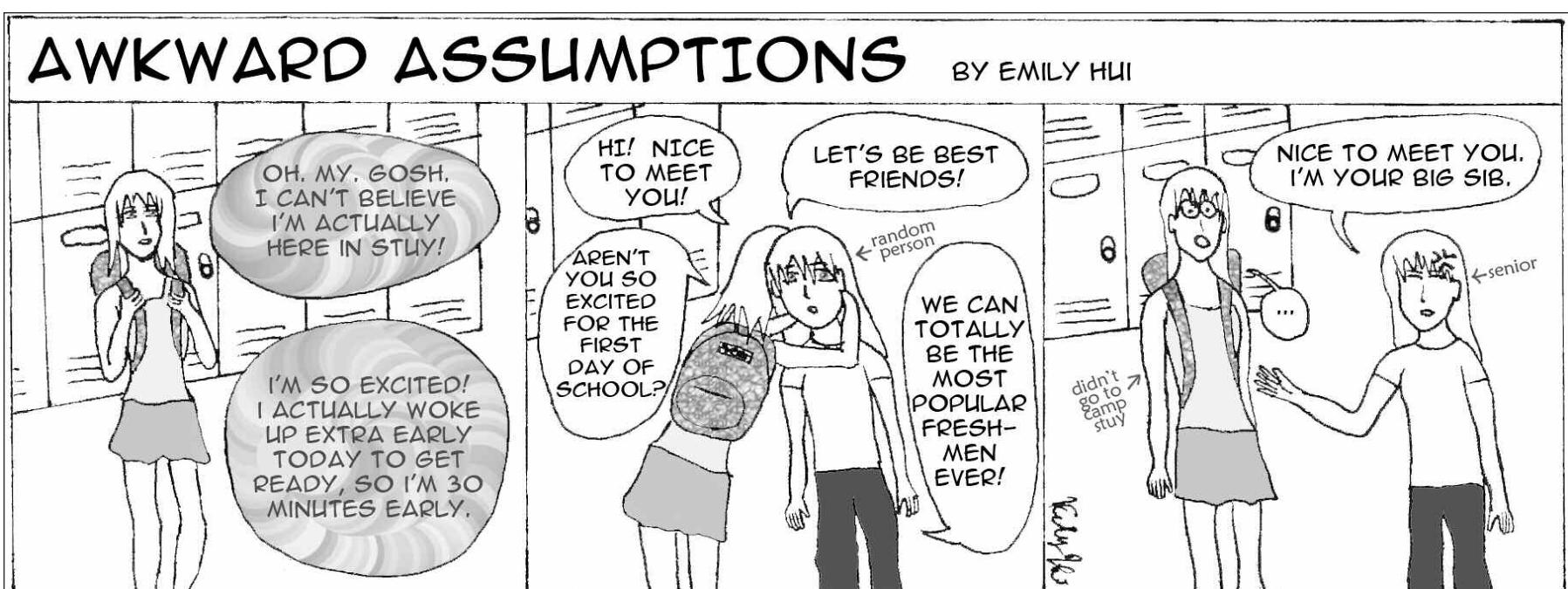
The Spiegeltent is in town until September 30. Pier 17, South Street Seaport www.spiegelworld.com (212) 279-4200



Lily Schwarzbaum / The Spectator

Spiegeltent, a traveling acrobatic and musical show reminiscent of Vaudeville, returned to South Street Seaport for part of the summer for the second year in a row.

Cartoons



Sports

Boys' Varsity Soccer

New, Yet Experienced Coach Brings Positive Energy to Ballerz

continued from page 12

soccer and need help getting their positions right," said Levy. "He's helping them mold into better soccer players."

"Their ability to think through strategy within the game is going to help them, their ability to figure out when and where to perform a certain fundamental strategy," said Goldstein. "I've been very impressed with their ability to make decisions. Based upon what I've seen so far, their willingness to succeed and their ability to process, execute and implement strategy, I think we really need to set our sights on making the [Public Schools Athletic League] finals."

Achieving that goal may be difficult, however, according to senior Nedal Darwish. "Our biggest challenge will be defeating our rival, [Martin Luther

King, Jr. (MLK) High School]," said Darwish. "I think we can match up a bit, definitely more than last year."

"Based upon what I've seen so far, their willingness to succeed and their ability to process, execute and implement strategy, I think we really need to set our sights on making the PSAL finals."

—Adam Goldstein,
coach of the
Stuyvesant Ballerz

The National Soccer Coaches Association of America ranked the MLK Knights third in the nation in November 2006 when they became city champions. The Knights scored 11 total

goals against Stuyvesant and allowed none.

The team's first chance to defeat MLK will be their first game of the year on Tuesday, September 11 at East River Park.

Before then, Goldstein will need to make some difficult choices, including "[figuring] out who to play because we have that much depth," said Goldstein.

Part of the team's depth is due to senior and defender Matt Konigsberg and senior and midfielder Alex Stergiou, who together took 34 shots on goal and scored eight goals last year. Both were not in town for pre-season training but will soon join the team for practice.

"When they come back, they are going to continue to raise the bar," said Goldstein. "So many players are eager to be a part of this and you can feel the energy."

Boys' Football

Peglegs No Longer Homeless

continued from page 12

program since they were freshmen and are ready to take their positions as starters on the varsity team," said Sacks.

One of those players ready to start is senior Shafi Alam, who started as quarterback last year, passing for 578 yards and five touchdowns in nine games. He completed 49 out of 95 passes in 2006.

Plamm said, "There were many juniors starting last year. With the experience, we've only gotten better. We have better size at the offensive line this year. We have the advantage with familiarity of the offense and defense. We're starting right where we left off last year, and building from there."

The Peglegs are preparing for the upcoming season with

preseason practices up to six times a week at Pier 40.

The team's first game will be

Issues such as locker room usage, security, goal posts and field lining were the major obstacles that prevented Pier 40 from serving as the Peglegs' home field in the past.

played against John Adams High School at Pier 40 on Friday, September 7 at 6 p.m.

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- 2) College Application Essays: Mon 7-9pm

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- 2) Math Olympiad: 9/15 Start. Saturday 6-9pm
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S P O R T S

Boys' Football

Peglegs No Longer Homeless



Sean Gordon-Loeb / The Spectator

For the fall 2007 Season, the Stuyvesant football team, the Peglegs, will be using the Pier 40 sports facilities as its home field for games and practices.

**By DAVID DEGUZMAN
and MELISSA LOK**

Although Stuyvesant is considered one of the most privileged high schools in the city, many of our athletes can attest to one major disadvantage: the lack of a home field.

Many of the Stuyvesant's outdoor teams, such as the Peglegs, the boys' varsity and junior varsity football team, suffer from being located in a city that lacks space for sports fields.

Through the efforts of Assistant Principal Physical Education and Health Martha Singer and Peglegs head coach Brian Sacks, the Peglegs landed Pier 40 as their home field.

According to Singer, many meetings took place between her, Sacks, Pier 40 officials and the commissioner of football representing the Public Schools Athletics League (PSAL), Alan Arbuse, before an agreement took place prior to this year's spring vacation.

Issues such as locker room usage, security, goal posts and

field lining were the major obstacles that prevented Pier 40 from serving as the Peglegs' home field in the past. "We have been trying for a while, but it was hard to get the pieces together," said Singer.

In the end, the only concession that Stuyvesant had to make was to pay for the marking of the boundaries of the football field, according to Singer. "I don't see any downside to it," she said.

In addition to the benefits a home field will provide for the team, Singer said that this move will help save Pier 40 from being redeveloped. Last fall, Hudson River Park Trust, the organization that operates Pier 40, asked for proposals to redevelop Pier 40. One of those proposals included tearing down the 14-acre pier structure to develop an entertainment complex.

Since the proposal was announced last December, efforts have been made by not only Stuyvesant High School but also by downtown residents and youth sports organizations to

rally support against transforming the two-story structure into a performing arts center. A decision has yet to be made by the Hudson River Park Trust regarding the redevelopment of Pier 40.

"We've always wanted a home field for any activity. [Pier 40] is good for the community, athletes and children," said Singer.

Sacks believes having Pier 40 as a home field will encourage fans to come watch football games and will also help recruit new players.

"We're hoping that people get interested. Watching the game and being interested will hopefully translate into their participation next year," said Sacks.

Senior and captain Alex Plamm said, "I can't really think of any negatives. We've wanted this for so long that we can't see anything bad, no matter what angle we look at it from."

In the past, very few fans were able to attend games since they were played at locations inconvenient for fans to get to, like Brooklyn Technical High School's field, where the Peglegs played home games at last season.

Though fan support has often been lacking, it can play a significant role in boosting team morale. "Traveling to other teams' home fields, they always have a packed house. It's a true home-field advantage," said Plamm. "We'd like to have that in more games than just [at] homecoming."

"It really lifts your spirit to have fan support. You play that much harder. No one wants to disappoint the home crowd," Plamm said.

Dealing with the loss of last year's senior players, however, has diminished some of the excitement of the new home field. Gone from the team are 20 seniors, including running back and linebacker Aaron Landman ('07), who scored six touchdowns and rushed for 762 yards last year. The team finished the 2006 season with a 5-5 record.

While nearly half of last year's 46-member team has left, Sacks is confident the Peglegs are ready to play. "We have players that have been in the

continued on page 11

Boys' Varsity Soccer

New, Yet Experienced Coach Brings Positive Energy to Ballerz

By DAVID DEGUZMAN

Adam Goldstein, the new coach of the Stuyvesant Ballerz, the boys' varsity soccer team, had a problem with how the team name ended with a 'z.' He said, "It's spelled with an 's' and it's a silly name to begin with."

While Goldstein has yet to succeed in changing the spelling of the team name, team members are now in better shape and more prepared for this year after two weeks of pre-season training in late August. Goldstein has had the team practice plays and tactics through various drills and scrimmages. The team has also worked on conditioning.

The two-hour long practices at the Parade Grounds in Prospect Park, Brooklyn have been the first positive step for the team since last year's second round playoff loss to Francis Lewis High School, 3-0.

"I think we're really looking forward to a new and better coach. This coach is going to put us in line and hopefully we can play against the better teams this year that we couldn't [beat] last year," said junior Dylan Levy.

This is the first year Goldstein is working with the Ballerz. But many players have already seen an improvement from last year, when former coach James Herlihy left mid-season due to a family emergency. "[Goldstein] knows a lot

more about soccer," said Levy. "Compared to Herlihy last year, he has a better grip on the team. Our coach last year was [loose]."

Goldstein's credentials are impressive as well. For the past six years, he has been coaching on the local and regional level, working with two club teams, the Brooklyn Patriots and most recently, the Metropolitan Oval Brooklyn Knights. Seven years ago, he created a middle school soccer program at M.S. 51 while teaching there. "[It was] the only [middle] school in the city with a team at the time," said Goldstein.

He continues to set up academies and clinics for six- to eight-year-olds throughout the city under the Classic Soccer Education program.

Goldstein was also coaching director and camps director for the Brooklyn Patriots. "I was responsible for the creation of new teams and the development of incoming travel soccer players," said Goldstein. He also played soccer for Oceanside High School on Long Island and continued the sport while attending State University of New York College at Oneonta.

But what has been more impressive, according to Goldstein, is how quickly players respond to his instructions. "He's really helping the players who don't know much about

continued on page 11



Offering a Window

ing out in the fall.

You could almost hear the announcer say in a voice deep with drama and anticipation, "Coming to arenas near you, it's the movie you've all been waiting for: Tim Donaghy is an unassuming NBA referee, until a gambling scandal lands his world into chaos; Michael Vick is the star NFL quarterback, until a dog fighting charge has him fighting for his freedom; Barry Bonds is the home run king, until his reign is questioned."

The announcer could have gone even further and mentioned the widespread doping in the Tour de France.

The events of the summer

seem much more suited to fiction than truth—you can't make this stuff up. As Dave Sheinin asked in the Washington Post, if sports truly offer a window into our nation's soul, do we really want to look inside it right now?

But there were sports scandals even in earlier eras. In the 1800s, professional rowing was the most popular athletic endeavor in California, with nine rowing clubs in San Francisco alone.

As the sport grew in prestige, it began to develop a dark side characterized by betting, death threats and unfair officiating. It became nearly impossible for a visiting team to win since the home crowd would employ

unsportsmanlike tactics such as damaging equipment and brutally intimidating participants.

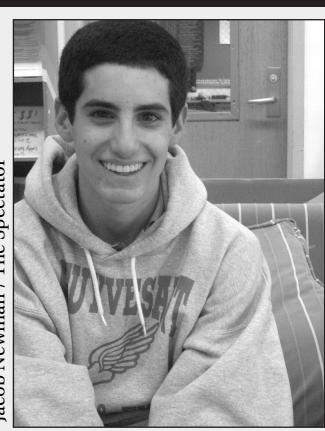
Scandals were rampant even in the ancient Olympics. In 388 BCE, the boxer Eupolus bribed his opponents to take falls. The uncomfortable topic of free agency was even broached when the sprint champion Astylos abandoned his Italian home to compete for another city-state.

What does the public expect of these athletes, then, from classical times onwards? We shower them with myrrh and frankincense, olive oil and wreaths, fame and fortune. Yet we are so surprised when scandals erupt. We want them to

win, but shudder at the lengths they go to do so. History professor Donald Kyle wrote that sports "were similar to war . . . [athletes] wanted to win so badly, and [they] feared losing so much."

What we are willing to do to win says an awful lot about our society. In a world where real war itself is an immediate concern, however, perhaps sports scandals should be put into perspective.

These scandals are distressing, but they shouldn't consume the public imagination. Scandals have happened before and will happen again.



By MARK CHIUSANO

This summer was like a coming attraction for a new blockbuster sports movie com-

Jacob Newman / The Spectator