



# The Spectator

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"The pulse  
of the  
student  
body."

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To The Stuyvesant Community

## Grades Inflate Competition at Stuy

By RITU MOONDRA

"You only got a 98?" asked several signs around school advertising ARISTA's tutoring services. Although most students responded by rolling their eyes at the exaggeration, many members of the Stuyvesant community agree that high standards coupled with grade inflation have intensified competition in school.

"I have a strong feeling that grades are inflated at Stuyvesant," said Spanish teacher Milton Diaz. According to Diaz, grade inflation is not limited to a single department or area of the school, but is instead present in every department.

Junior Ethan Cahn agrees with the former part of this sentiment, but believes that inflation is especially rampant in the English department. "Excluding the Advanced Placement classes, the English courses are by far the best when it comes to giving high grades to students."

Junior Connie Desarden has a different opinion. "The Foreign Language Department definitely inflates grades the most," she said.

Senior Sonja Moore considered social studies and math grades. "Grade inflation is present in the history department more so than in the math department. The rumor of inflation in the math department is just that, a rumor. My math teachers have, for the most part, given me accurate and justifiable grades."

When asked who or what could be blamed for the inflation, however, not every student pointed to a single department.

"I think it depends on the teacher," said sophomore Allison Petrosino. "A lot of people think that all the English teachers are easy, or give really high grades, but there are a couple of teachers in the English department with whom I definitely wouldn't want to have a class."

"Different teachers have different policies," said freshman Lingji Hon. "I know about a science teacher who said he gave E's to all his students for the first marking period because he was too lazy to actually grade them."

Physics teacher Apparao Sunkara believes that grades are not inflated when it comes to the chemistry and physics department.

"In fact, many students received relatively low grades

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## Tribeca Film Festival



Naomi Gordon-Loeb / The Spectator

## Jesus Christ a Celebrity and Martin Scorsese a Music Man: It's All in a Day's Work at the TriBeCa Panels

By DON JOHN

For three years, the TriBeCa Film Festival has managed to draw people en masse to fill the recently subdued Lower Manhattan neighborhood. The allure of the Festival lies in its omnifarious selections and venues. The panel discussion has become the well-attended but low key event of the Festival.

Of the panels offered at the Festival, one of the most high-profile and controversial, in light of recent Hollywood ventures, was "Jesus as a Celebrity." "Christianity was born in Palestine. It settled in Europe and became an institution. It came to America and became an industry." Therein lies the premise of the panel as stated

by Dr. Richard Fox, one of four guests who headlined the discussion, which was moderated by Peter Jennings.

Jennings and the four guests walked onto the stage amid a generous round of applause from the audience. The panel consisted of Fox, former lecturer at Yale University and author of *Jesus in America*; Norman Jewison, co-writer and director of *Jesus Christ Superstar*; Dr. Marvin Meyer, published author and professor of Christian Studies at Chapman University; and Barbara De Fina, producer of *The Last Temptation of Christ*.

The mix of religion and movies can be seen as a risky Hollywood gambit used to provoke and pique the interests of throngs of outraged and

## New Food Regulations In Place

By EUGENE THEODORE

*The New York Times*. AM New York. Old tests and homework. Gum wrappers. Soda bottles and food wrappers. All are a common sight by the end of the day as they litter the halls of Stuyvesant. In an effort to keep the building clean and rodent-free, the administration will no longer allow students to bring any form of food or drink into the building except for bottles of water.

The School Tone Committee addressed the issue of litter during the April 1 School Leadership Team (SLT) meeting. Student Union President and senior Mike Litwack attributes the sanitary problem to paper: Newspapers, free or otherwise, are often left discarded on the floors of the school. Though the administration's reply was that publications could stop being delivered and/or distributed within the school until students learn to pick up after themselves, no conclusive decision has been reached.

At the meeting, Principal Stanley Teitel agreed not to take any drastic measures. It was mutually decided that students would not be allowed to bring food into the building when returning from their lunch periods. Parents lobbied heavily to ensure that the students' privilege of leaving and reentering the school building at any point during their lunch period would be kept.

According to Litwack, even

this step may be too lenient on the student body. Food continues to enter the building or be left around, thus compelling the administration to prohibit all food from being allowed into the school building.

This new regulation may place a burden on student groups within the school.

According to junior David Louie, there is a sizable number of students who have "chorus-lunch," a chorus period that doubles as a lunch period. Many of these students rush to the cafeteria for lunch before going to chorus, taking food out of the lunchroom to go downstairs. Though the administration has argued that the food leftovers and trays can be found on floors and should not be allowed out of the lunchroom, many students would have to go without lunch if they were not allowed to carry food throughout the building.

Despite this reasoning, the new policy of keeping food only in the lunchroom has not been readily enforced.

"The policy hasn't really affected us. We tell the teachers in the cafeteria that we have chorus lunch, and they still let us go downstairs," Louie said. "Besides, I don't think we are the ones making the mess."

Teitel said, "Originally, students bringing in food were told to go to the cafeteria and eat... But no one listens." According to him, this creates a mess on school property.

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## A Day of Silence With a Deafening Voice



Naomi Gordon-Loeb / The Spectator

By ROBIN LIPP

Wednesday, April 21 marked the third annual Day of Silence, a day of silent protest against the harassment and discrimination faced by gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.

"It's a protest against the way that closeted GLBT [gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender] people have to live their lives, in silence," said senior Gus Weinstein.

Students who chose to participate or support the Day of Silence sought to draw attention to the many problems that confront people of different sexual orientations. Each participant had his or her own reasons for contributing to the silence and each felt strongly about the day's purpose.

"It's important to continue fighting against prejudice...by participating in the Day of Silence, we can support the effort to gain rights for everyone, regardless of their sexual

orientation," said sophomore Olivia Lau.

Fighting for the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people was not the only reason people participated. Others felt that the importance of the day was simply in bringing about a sense of awareness.

"I chose to participate in the Day of Silence because... queer students and their allies across the country are harassed regularly and forced to remain silent about part of who they are every day," said senior Andrea Gentile.

"The reason [I chose to participate] was to increase awareness and visibility for GLBT students," said freshman Max Feasley.

In the end, most students who participated agreed that the day provided a chance to respect a worthy cause.

Some feel that Stuyvesant still lacks a basic respect for GLBT students. "Even in Stuy

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# A Day of Silence With a Deafening Voice



Chemistry teacher Sasha Alcott performs at the Breaking the Silence rally in Union Square as students from Stuyvesant and other schools look on.

Naomi Gordon-Loeb / The Spectator

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there are a lot of people who can't be open about who they are because society has forced these people to be ashamed of what they are," said President of the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Spectrum Roman Goldin.

"In our school [discrimination] comes more often in less direct forms: homophobic jokes, comments about how 'gay' something is. This environment sometimes makes people afraid to talk about their sexuality," said Gentile.

"I feel that our school is more politically conscious...than other schools, but everywhere there's something to be done," said Weinstein.

Some participants in the Day of Silence felt that students and even a few teachers do not take the day seriously. "A teacher told me something like... 'Why don't we have a day for people who don't like cookies?'" said Weinstein.

"Many of my friends tried to make me talk...but my boyfriend crossed the line when he ripped

the sticker off my shirt," said Lau.

On the other hand, the school administration has tried to show an increased sensitivity to Day of Silence participants. The school sent a letter to teachers explaining the Day of Silence and what they could do to properly respect it.

"The letter said, basically, that some students would be observing the Day of Silence and we should respect it.... It also gave some background information on the Day of Silence," said English teacher Jennie Chan.

When asked if any students in her classes participated in the Day of Silence, Chan said, "As a matter of fact, many did...I gave them the choice about what we should do in class. Either we could respect it completely and work silently, have a discussion on homosexuality in America, or continue with...the usual lesson. The class chose to have a discussion on homosexuality and one of the students actually broke her silence to make a point during the discussion."

Many students seemed to note that this year's Day of Silence was well-received.

"Some teachers actually commended me on participating," said Lau.

"[The Day of Silence] was really good this year because all the teachers got letters telling them what it was and how to respect it," said Goldin.

Even students who did not participate in the silence had opinions on the significance of the day. "I support the Day of Silence...Pretty much every-

where GLBT people are treated differently...People don't want to talk about this stuff, but we should find a way to talk about these problems and address them," said senior James Ng.

After remaining silent for the entire school day, students gathered in Union Square Park for the Breaking of the Silence ceremony. Students from different schools from across the city had the opportunity to get together in support of the Day of Silence and break their silence with a resounding yell.

Singing, poetry, and free food followed the Breaking of the Silence. Students felt free to socialize, whether talking about their Day of Silence experience or just trying to make friends. The spirit of unity was powerful and the atmosphere was full of respect.

"The purpose [of the Day of Silence] is to show awareness and to show that queer people and their allies do exist...we have a voice and it should be heard," said Goldin.

**"I feel that our school is more politically conscious...than other schools, but everywhere there's something to be done."**  
– Gus Weinstein, senior

## The Hiring and Firing of Teachers at Stuyvesant

By VICTOR ZAPANA

Tenure is a subject typically debated at the university level, remaining under the radar at most high schools. However, the pros and cons of the tenure system at Stuyvesant have become a subject of discussion for both teachers and students.

According to Spanish teacher Dr. Patrick Niglio, a teacher who has taught at Stuyvesant for three years is granted traveling tenure status. This status, negotiated in association with the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), provides teachers with extra "protection" from being fired.

However, some believe that the protection afforded teachers with tenure may inhibit the school's ability to let go teachers considered not up to par. "My sister, who was in [Bronx High School of Science], had a chemistry teacher who taught absolutely nothing. There were many complaints about the teachers from both the students and the parents, but because he was in the school for a long time, they were hesitant to fire him in the beginning," said freshman Lisa Trent. "The number of years should not matter. The students deserve to have a proper teacher."

"It is far too difficult to get rid of incompetent teachers in this school... in the first few years, I thought I would lose my job. The school is more likely to fire teachers with little or no tenure," said social studies teacher Deborah White.

Others argue that tenure provides a necessary security for teachers.

"I believe tenure is neces-

sary. For instance, one of my professors comes from a third-world country with a school system that has no tenure. Every time the government changed, the school system changed with new teachers. The lack of stability was great, and was bad for a school system," said biology teacher Carol Ann Held.

Without tenure, teachers are more easily "excessed," a euphemism for being fired due to budgetary concerns.

"I started teaching in Stuyvesant in 1974. However, due to budget reasons, I was excessed from the school in 1976," said Assistant Principal of Mathematics Danny Jaye.

"I was teaching at Midwood High School before I came to Stuy," said social studies teacher Phil Scandura. "However, Midwood excessed me after five years, so I came to Stuyvesant because I needed a job."

As a result of tenure being given to teachers with at least three years experience at a school, seniority is interlocked with tenure in the minds of faculty and students. Some consider seniority to be a faulty measure of competence.

"I disagree with some of the ideas of the seniority system here at Stuyvesant. The seniority system is based on time instead of merit. Teachers should be hired based on how well they can teach the job that's open, not by how long they've been teaching," said White.

"The teacher must have a desire to teach and must have

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## Summer Internship Possibilities for Stuyvesant Students

By IMAN HASSAN

As June rapidly approaches, Stuyvesant students are making plans for their summer activities. Many students are busy searching for summer jobs as the end of the school year comes nearer. For those who are still not sure how they will spend their summer, information about internships and job opportunities that is available within the school can help speed up their search.

Stuyvesant students who are planning to spend this summer at home, sleeping until 12 P.M. and hanging out with friends, are not advised to do so, according to Guidance Social Worker John Mui. Students should "get involved in something," he said.

That is exactly what senior Deluware Ahmed will do. She plans to attend a one-month long creative writing scholarship program at Columbia University in order to improve her writing skills before she enters college next year.

Staying involved in a summer activity over a substantial period of time can be very rewarding for participants. Mui believes that colleges appreciate such an activity more than numerous, separate volunteer jobs. To them, longevity rather than quantity can show a degree of passion, dedication, and commitment. In addition, colleges appreciate hands-on summer activities. "Volunteering for the Red Cross is great, but how much do you get to work with people and patients?" said Mui.

Colleges also want to see students take on summer activities in a career field they plan to pursue. This summer, sophomore Roslyn Caceres is looking to work in the pharmaceutical field at either Mount Sinai Hospital as a pharmaceutical technician or at her local pharmacy. These summer jobs point towards an interest in pharmacology.

Caceres was able to secure

her summer plans through the help of her family and others in her community. For students who aren't able to do so, there are other ways of finding a place to work. Stuyvesant doesn't have a central location that deals with internships and jobs, but the library does have a summer program folder that students can look into. In addition, summer opportunities are posted outside the guidance office. Also, the June edition of the College Bulletin often has a list of available internship positions.

Internships and summer research opportunities are sometimes sent to individual

**Employers are eager to hire someone from Stuyvesant because they expect to get a certain quality of student.**

departments. The biology department recently received a mailing from the Columbia Science Genome Project about an internship, which students like sophomore Jonathan Pomboza are taking advantage of. Pomboza said he hopes to "work alongside scientists in a laboratory."

Many students have found their summer internship or job by simply asking friends and classmates. That is how sophomore Elizabeth Collins-Wildman found out about the New York State Summer Program of the Arts at SUNY Brockport, which she will attend this summer.

Word of mouth is also how Junior Tayyba Anwar found a mentor to work with over the summer for her Intel project. A senior in her chemistry class recommended his previous mentor. Anwar says she hopes to explore psychology and long

and short term memory over the summer.

"I feel relieved that I have something to do this summer and I'm really excited because the topic sounds interesting," Anwar said.

According to Mui, students who do not yet have plans for the summers should ask what their friends are doing in order to get some ideas.

Junior Marissa Galizia searched for her summer apprenticeship on the Internet. She found an internship at the New Victory Theater by typing "art internships for high school students" into a search engine.

Galizia plans to work in the Marketing and Public Relations Department of the New Victory Theater. In this eight-week apprenticeship, she will have the opportunity to interact with professionals in the arts and receive hands-on experience.

Education Associate at the New Victory Theater, David Kilpatrick shared his thoughts on the type of apprentice the theater is looking for.

"We're all about giving young professionals a chance to learn about theater," he said. "We look for students who are eager to hire for eight to 15 week apprenticeships to learn about theater, city history, and technical production."

According to Mui, Stuyvesant students are in demand. He says that employers are eager to hire someone from Stuyvesant because they expect to get a certain quality of student. But Mui also says it is up to the student to take the initiative.

Stuyvesant students who have not yet committed themselves to a summer activity are encouraged to do so. Assistant Principal of Pupil Personnel Services Eleanor Archie said, "I think it is important for students to get involved in the community, get an internship or even a job. Colleges are looking for involvement, and summer is the perfect time."



# Fast Times at Stuy High

By ERICA ANDERSON

Rainbows, shooting stars, and one large white limousine parked outside—it may not sound like the Stuyvesant that students know, but that is how ads that promoted the TriBeCa Film Festival depicted it.

In colorful ‘70s-style font, the sign reads “Fast Times at Stuyvesant High,” a parody of the 1982 cult favorite *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*. Less prominently, the tag line reads: “When a classroom becomes a screening room, a new kind of education begins.” As the slogan implies, films were shown in the Murray Kahn Theater as part of the weeklong festival, which ended May 9.

The meaning of the posters has caused confusion among some students. “I think it’s cool to see posters about our school all over the place, but a lot of my friends were really confused about what they had to do with,” said freshman Liana Passantino.

Senior Daniel Jaouen asked, “Isn’t it some sort of movie about Stuyvesant?”

The ads have inspired varied reactions and discussions, both by students and on the Internet. On eBay (*www.eBay.com*), an online auction site, a version of the banner was sold for \$49.99. The seller attested that prints of the design of various sizes were being sold from \$110 to \$250.

Gothamist, a “website about New York” (*www.gothamist.com*) run by Stuyvesant alumni, has responded to the ads by creating a forum in which the poster is discussed. Though some posters accuse the ad of “asyn-

chronous graphic design,” most were happy to see Stuy being recognized as a host of the festival. Comments on the lack of “Asian flava” in the posters prompted a serious discussion about Stuy’s racial dynamics, mirroring current student debates.

“It’s funny how fakely diverse they made it. Are there even any Asians [on the poster]? That is extreme false advertising,” said sophomore Emily Hoffman.

Principal Stanley Teitel was pleased with the advertisements. “I like the ads. I thought it was very nice. I think most of

the kids like seeing their school all over the city.”

Not just all over the city, but the ad was also featured on a 24’ x 60’ billboard on the Stuyvesant building. The Friends of Stuyvesant organization brought up the idea of using the side

of the building as a place for advertisements. American Express, who sponsors the TriBeCa Film Festival, has been allowed to rent the space on the condition that each ad includes something about Stuyvesant’s centennial. The money raised will go towards centennial celebration expenses.

All in all, the ads have been met with a largely positive response. “I do understand that some of these banners around the city have disappeared from bus stops. I don’t know who’s been taking them, but I certainly cannot condone the theft of posters. I’ve heard some rumors about where they may wind up next year, in dorm rooms and things of that nature,” said Teitel.

“I do understand that some of these banners around the city have disappeared from bus stops.... I’ve heard some rumors about where they may wind up next year, in dorm rooms”  
– Principal Stanley Teitel

# Stuyvesant Expands Options for Students

By EUGENE THEODORE

Despite recent budget cuts and teachers’ retirements, students’ clamor for elective classes led many departments to offer new electives for fall 2004. Ranging from math to foreign language, the new courses come in a variety of fields.

The math department will be unveiling its new Linear Algebra course, which will be taught by Joe Stern. This one-term fall elective can be followed up with Stern’s Advanced Euclidian Geometry class in the spring. According to Assistant Principal of Mathematics Danny Jaye, “[Linear Algebra] was a course that lay dormant.” Originally offered to students as part of a New York University (NYU) math program for which students would receive college credit, Stuyvesant’s math department will now be able to “do it in-house rather than at NYU.” College credit will still be given for those who complete the course successfully.

The English and history departments will launch the American Studies course in the fall for interested juniors. Though it was offered last year, there was not enough demand to schedule the course. This year, the departments expect enough students for at least one or two classes. It will be modeled after the Freshman Humanities course, with Early and Late American Literature classes taught back-to-back with American History 1 and 2, respectively. Hugh Francis will teach the English courses while Debra Plafker will teach American history, but the two teachers will coordinate projects, tests, and homework.

Additionally, the English department will now offer African Studies, to be taught by Colette Brown. This course will focus on the development of African culture and writing, as well as its influence on today’s writing.

The foreign language department has two new lan-

guages for the upcoming school year, provided that there is enough interest for them. Arabic, which members of the student body have petitioned the school to offer, is on the program syllabus. Assistant Principal of Foreign Language Dr. Rolf Schwägermann will find an Arabic teacher if 20 or more students sign up for the class. It will constitute a beginner’s Arabic curriculum, including reading, writing, and cultural aspects.

The other language course to be offered is Classical Greek, which will be taught by Latin teacher Dr. Susan Brockman. According to Brockman, the class will learn the basic Greek alphabet as well as the “basic forms for nouns and indicative verbs,” adjectives, and will read Greek texts. The class is a “dormant” course first offered in the 2000-2001 school year, which will be offered again only if there

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# Gaga Comes to Stuyvesant

By JULLIARD LIN

A new club has emerged at Stuyvesant this spring, a time usually characterized by AP- and finals-related stress. Many have seen the signs covering the escalators and walls, and pondered the meaning of the single word printed on them: “GAGA!”

Gaga is an Israeli form of the popular game dodgeball. Players hit a ball with their fists along the floor in the ring, an area enclosed by surfaces from which the ball can bounce off. A player is eliminated when he is hit below the knee by the ball.

Sophomore and Vice President of the Gaga club Ben Levine first came across the game at summer camp a few years ago. “It’s a really popular and addictive game,” said Levine.

“A lot of people have

played it. They just don’t know the actual name,” said sophomore and Gaga President Nathan Buch. “They’ll come in and see it and go, ‘Oh, I’ve

“It’s a really popular and addictive game.”  
–Ben Levine, sophomore

played that before, but I never knew what it was called.’ It’s definitely worth it to stop by and check it out.”

According to Buch, Gaga is a different kind of club because

“it’s not people standing around and talking, and it’s not quite a team sport. Every person plays for himself.”

Currently, the club has about 80 official members. The Gaga Club is open to interested participants, although Gaga becomes difficult to play if there are too many players. Meetings are held in a classroom rather than a larger space, and desks are simply turned and moved to the sides to create the ring. Attendance is not mandatory for the Thursday meetings and there usually is not an excess of people playing in one ring. Anyone can walk in and join a game.

Gaga is competitive, but very simple to learn. Club members and sophomores Eli Mlyn and Eugene Podborits agree. They said, “It’s a good game.”

# Speech and Debate Team Takes First as State Champions

By REVAZ SURGULADZE

Exhausting afterschool practices. Weekends and off-days spent at school doing exercises to refine their skills. Long bus rides to grueling competitions. From their meticulous preparation, some would think that these students are members of a varsity, first division sports team—until seeing them in their ‘competition gear’ of suits and dress shoes.

Months of preparation paid off for the Stuyvesant Speech and Debate Team on April 24, 2003, as the team clinched first place at the State Speech and Debate Championship.

The Speech and Debate Team, which is divided up into three categories—Lincoln-Douglas debate, policy debate, and speech (which has seven subcategories)—placed among the top five in each category. The Speech team placed in first, while the policy debate and Lincoln-Douglas debate teams placed fourth and fifth, respectively.

According to Forensics Director Julie Sheinman, the team also had several individual speakers—from a total of 150 participants—who placed first in their respective field of competition. Freshman Sophie Novac

placed first in novice Lincoln Douglas debate. Sophomore Jackie Hsieh received first place in Junior Varsity Prose Poetry, while junior Nick Palmucci placed first in Varsity Extemporaneous Speaking. Senior Dina Magaril won for Humorous Interpretation.

“The best feeling was hearing the Stuyvesant team cheering when they announced the winner,” said Hsieh. She credits the team spirit and individual efforts for the team’s victory. “Each individual on the team made a difference. If even two people had not done as well as they did, the team wouldn’t have won.”

Magaril agreed, saying, “It was really awesome. We weren’t sure we were going to win because we have three seniors, but we did. Everyone tried their hardest.”

Sheinman commented on the team’s determination and enthusiasm. “Our kids are here several afternoons a week,” said Sheinman. “They even give up their weekends. They just love competing. They love the excitement to it.”

Sheinman went on to commend the solidarity of the team. “I am most proud of the team structure,” she said. “Teammates help each other succeed. If you’re a freshman or a sophomore, you are coached by an upper-classman. So the team is self-perpetuating.”

Senior Charlotte Stewart-Sloan, a member of the policy team, felt the team’s structure of students helping each other helped the team feel a sense of accomplishment.

“I am so proud that we worked hard and it paid off,” she said. “On policy we did a lot of

“The best feeling was hearing the Stuyvesant team cheering when they announced the winner.”  
– Jackie Hsieh, sophomore

# Grades Inflate Competition at Stuy

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last term,” he said. “This was due to a lack of preparation time available for students to study for the final, where most students scored between a 70 and a 75. Since the final wasn’t curved, the students still received a low grade.”

Sophomore Kavitha Davidson, whose current average is in the high 90s, thinks that when it comes to grades, it is simply the luck of the draw, and in the end, the game proves to be a fair one.

“Sure, there’s a lot of grade inflation, but the number of ridiculously tough teachers you get makes up for that,” said Davidson.

Although Davidson and others don’t dare complain about any inflated grades, they agree that if students consistently end up benefiting from inflation, it can impede their learning process.

“Even though it looks good on the transcript, it really doesn’t help you in the long run,” said Desarden.



# Stuyvesant Expands Options for Students

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is enough demand for the class. The Biology Department is introducing Living Environment Molecular, the first Regents biology course for juniors at Stuyvesant. This course is for students who have not taken biology in middle school and have taken physics in their freshman year. The Chemistry and Physics Department will be making a number of changes to its course outline for next year. Analytic Chemistry will be offered both terms and will be taught by Sasha Alcott. Additionally, Dr. Zhen-Chuan Li will be teaching the Physical Chemistry course. Students who take it will be offered college credit; however, due to time constraints, students will have to attend two, one-and-a-half hour sessions after school each week. Finally, the Organic Chemistry class will no longer be taught by Christopher Smith but by Samantha Daves.

The Chemistry and Physics Department will no longer offer Physics of Sports which had been taught by Julia Nolen and Dr. Gregor Winkel. In its place, Nolen will teach two engineering courses, Engineering: Statics in the fall and Engineering: Dynamics in the spring term. Students who wish to take this class must have calculus as a co- or pre-requisite due to the “complex mathematics of the

course,” according to Nolen. Also, candidates must have a math and physics average exceeding 90. Aside from the mathematical aspects, the course will also have a project orientation: Nolen will have her students build a “hovercraft.” A final physics elective, to be offered only in the Fall, is Project Physics. John Avallone will prepare students for Stuyvesant’s Physics Olympiad. Classwork will consist mainly of building projects and labs. Assistant Principal of Physics and Chemistry Dr. Olga Livanis encourages all students interested to select this as an elective.

The technology department will once again be introducing its Jewelry Making class, although it will no longer fulfill the five-tech requirement. The class was last offered during the 2002-2003 academic year.

Lastly, the Music and Fine Arts Department will be re-introducing its Opera Studies class next Fall, taught by Holly Hall. It was not offered this term due to a lower demand than usual and because of Hall’s time constraints. Hall is also looking into the prospect of teaching an Advanced Opera Studies class in the Spring as a follow up for those who show further interest in the subject. Now all that remains is for students to select these electives and fill up the rosters. All of these classes are tentative, pending the number of students registering for them.

**New and previously ‘dormant’ classes are available in all subjects to students signing up for the fall term.**

# New Food Regulations in Place

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However, when one looks at the piles of garbage the custodial staff amass on each floor at the end of the day, it is apparent that it is mainly comprised not of food, but papers: newspapers, scrap paper, and so forth. This new policy means that those students who bring lunch to school will no longer be able to do so. The alternatives are for students to pay for school lunch—which has recently been increased by 50%—or go outside for lunch and pay even more for a meal. As the school store sells both snacks and drinks, the administration is contemplating the possibility of taking measures to restrict the school store’s hours and service. Bake sales might also come under closer administrative scrutiny

because they seem to be an additional problem for the students’ carelessness and the administration’s increasing restrictions has now forced the majority of students into a corner.

todial staff. Candy sales, which many members of the faculty find disruptive, are also being reconsidered. The combination of stu-

Though bringing food into the building is off-limits, many students have come up with their own methods of continuing what for many can be a daily routine. Junior Anne Mohan brings to light this point when she said in response to the new policy, “There’s still our backpacks. I mean, they’re not going to search our bags or pat us down.”

# The Hiring and Firing of Teachers at Stuyvesant

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an attitude that would help kids in succeeding. The teacher should not make the class environment so tense, and should convey the information to students effectively. Teachers who have taught for a long time might not always be the best person to be teaching,” said sophomore William Hon. The process of firing a faculty member is designed to be fair, to those with or without tenure. According to Scandura, the chairperson will arrange a time with the educator to rate his or her ability to teach. The rating will be included in a principal’s report to the teacher. It is either satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U). If the teacher receives an S, he is allowed to come back next year. If he receives a U, the chairperson

tries to help the teacher out by checking up on the teacher. If the teachers get three Us in a row, the principal can ask the teacher to leave. “There are certain rules and regulations from the union

**“It is far too difficult to get rid of incompetent teachers in this school.”**  
– Deborah White, social studies teacher

[UFT] that protect an individual. There are certain procedures done to make [the process of firing a teacher] fair,” said

Assistent Principal of Fine Arts and Music Dr. Raymond Wheeler. Hiring teachers is another seniority-related issue under discussion. “There should be a balance between teachers with older seniority and new faces. We need qualified people, but new people are needed just the same, to bring fresh new perspectives. They need a chance, and [the school system] needs to be fair for both sides,” said art teacher Amy Cappell. “My policy is to find the best person possible and try to bring them into the department, regardless of seniority. I don’t treat anyone differently because of seniority status,” said Jaye. This year, the SLT voted on changing the process for hiring teachers in favor of less dependence on seniority. The proposal was rejected.

President & Executive Vice President:  
Sheikh Shuvo & Tina Thomas

## ARISTA Elections

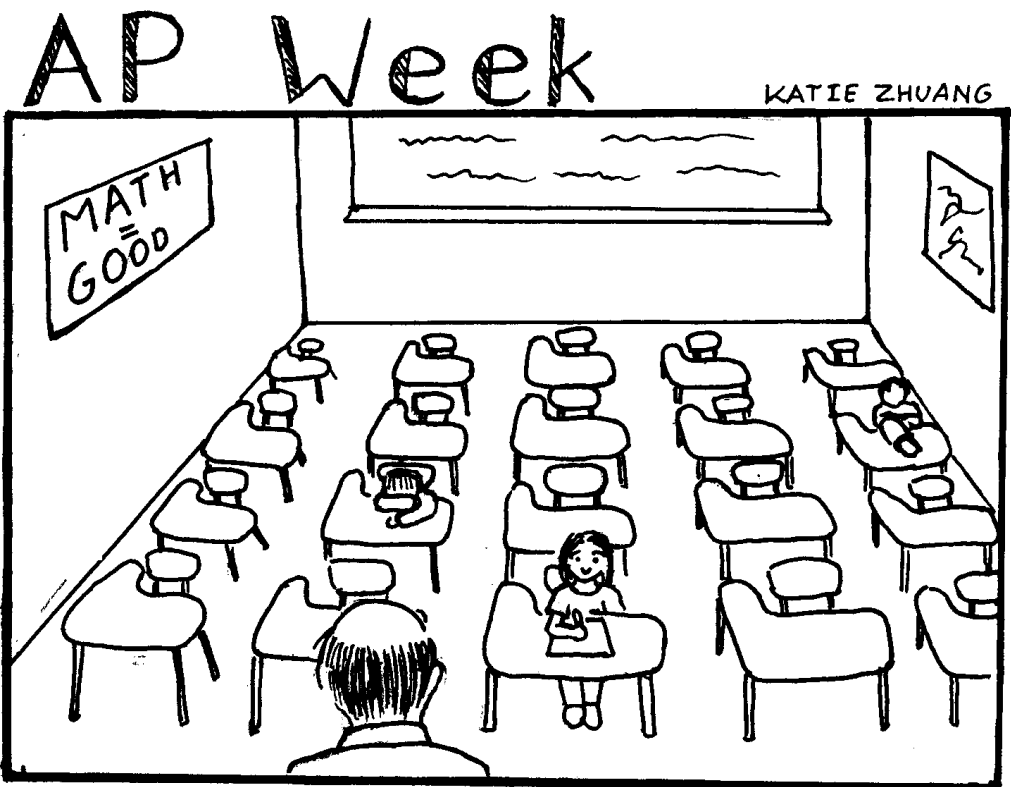
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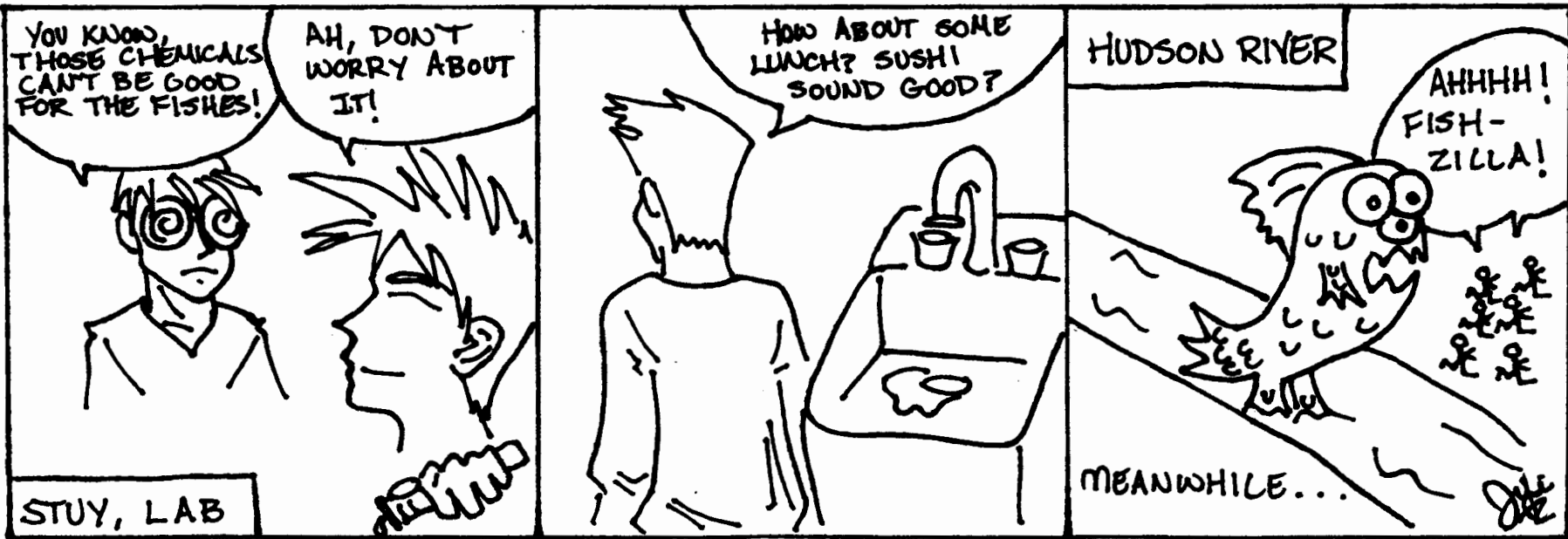
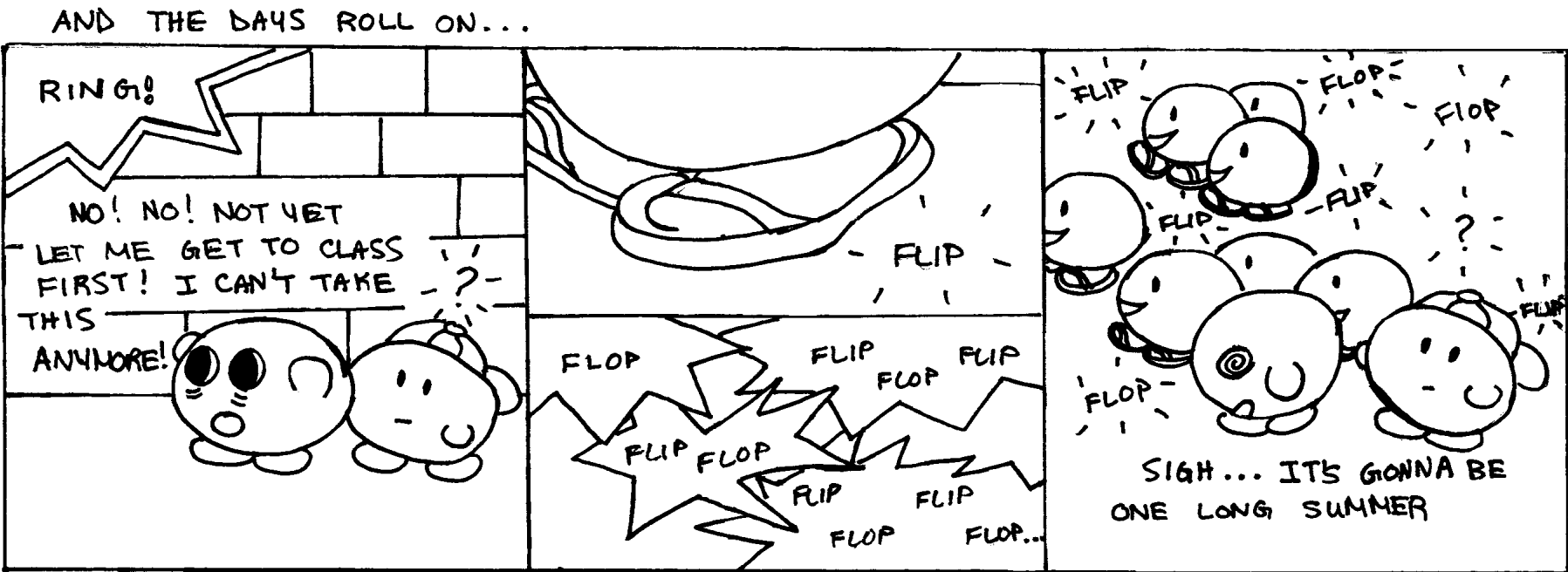
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Emi G. Suzuki



Cartoons



"ZZZZZZ..." by Chloe Mauro



CAFFEINE PILLS BY JOHN LIU









## Working up a Sweat in Gym

By TAHIA WARDA

Taking gym at Stuy, or at most other public high schools, is like the BBC show *Ready Steady Cook*. On this show, chefs create meals and dishes by randomly picking ingredients out of a bag. Grab-bag meals, so to speak.

At Stuy, we have a grab-bag gym. Physical Education classes consist of a group of students with various athletic abilities and interests tossed together. Since all students are required to take gym, and because gym electives are only available to juniors, seniors, and swimmers, the classes are rather eclectic.

This leads to a problem. A gym teacher has to organize periods, lessons, and sports in such a way that the entire class can enjoy and benefit from the experience. Nobody could tailor the class to suit each student's individual athletic needs. Ability can range from that of the star of the Stuyvesant swim team to that of the computer addict.

How do gym teachers get around this problem? They compromise and find a median of difficulty at which to teach their classes. The median usually bends towards the low end of

the spectrum, as it's more important for students to be safe than challenged when the work is physical. Yet even with this solution, some students may be bored to death, and some may still be struggling.

At this school we have multitudes of accelerated courses in all our academic subjects. Because we're such a large school, we recognize the different intellectual backgrounds and levels brought together here, and design classes accordingly.

But the way our gym classes are currently run is analogous to mixing MQ1 and calculus (and all the math classes in between), calling it Mathematical Education, and putting one teacher in charge of 40 students. Could the teacher do the class justice? Would the students get anything out of the class? I doubt it.

The idea of having accelerated gym classes at first may seem ridiculous. Would students 'test in' for gym placement? Of course not! The last thing Stuyvesant needs is more stress.

However, Stuy could give all students the option of choosing to take a more challenging gym

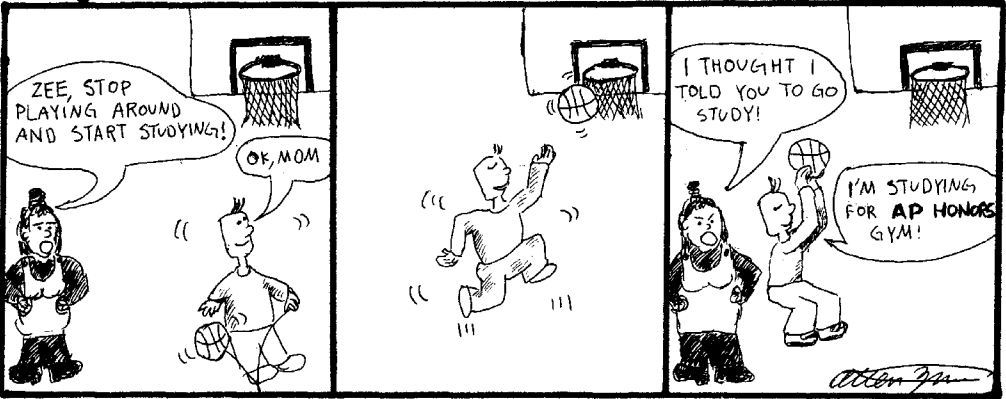
class. Call it 'accelerated' gym or just 'more exercise'. Generally, people know their own athletic prowess, and they know how hard they are capable of working or how hard they want to work. This class would be an option for anyone who wanted an extra challenge, whether talented or just looking for a daily workout. Likewise, those uninterested in a more difficult gym class could remain in regular gym, regardless of skill level.

Considering how unhealthy most teenagers are, and how little exercise time we have (being all busy with studying and last minute homework and what-not), perhaps everyone should be taking 'accelerated' P.E. But until the option exists, that is wishful thinking.

This is a class we all have to take, in the end. We're all programmed for gym—it's a requirement. We might as well make the most of it, and if our 'most' is on a higher level than the 'most' made available in Stuy gym classes, new classes should be opened up.

From grab-bag gym, to gourmet gym. Now that's appetizing.

Zerega by Allen Zhang



## Extreme Stress for Sale! Only \$82!

By DAILIN

Phase I: Cramming a year's worth of knowledge into several all-nighters.

Phase II: Taking the AP Exam and thinking in your head: "Crap, I only have 10 minutes left! Where did the other 170 minutes go?"

Phase III: Coming out of the exam room and being badgered with questions. "What'd you get for the question with the blah and the blah?" Going home and having your parents ask: "How did you do? Did I pay \$82 for nothing?"

These are the three major phases of the stressful AP Season that we all know and hate, the season decorated with pots of coffee, cramming until daybreak, and zoning out on the train.

Gladly, the end has come. No more cramming, no more overdosing on coffee, and no more thinking about the AP exam. Right?

Actually, NO! We're fading into Phase III of the AP season. The "Let's talk about all the questions and try to predict how well we did on the test and see if we'll get our money's worth" phase.

Everyone has disregarded the AP rule that says "You are not to discuss the multiple choice section of this exam with anyone. The failure to do so will result in..." The leftover stress and shock of the AP exams have veered us all into the turmoil of trying to recall questions and estimating our grades.

But while Phase III of the AP season might be somewhat

calming, it can't completely soothe the latent fears we have about testing poorly. These fears are only calmed when we receive our scores in late July.

The ETS's evil method to bring everyone's summer fantasies crashing into reality is successful every year. In the middle of the serene vacation, they will kindly proceed to whack us in the face with a letter. After spending a whole summer enjoying ourselves, the ETS will force us to curiously and dreadfully tear open the envelope. This envelope, so thin yet so attention-grabbing, will contain a simple number between 1 and 5.

The grade will tell us whether or not we've wasted \$82 and three hours of our lives, not to mention all the missed hours of sleep.

With a 5, not only can we get two months of pure freedom, but we also get the full satisfaction of achievement, and proof that we did indeed learn something over the course of the year. The \$82 and three hours just bought a basket of happiness. Of course, getting a poor grade might ruin your summer day. But why worry about that until it happens?

Besides being stressful, AP Season is horribly expensive. "AP week—the best way to kill yourself with \$400" was junior Eddie Lei's away message for two tedious weeks. We often ask ourselves why, year after year, students pay such a high price to take APs. While students with free and reduced lunch have to pay only a quarter of the regular amount, the rest of us are stuck

with paying \$82.

The AP fee has been increasing steadily over the past couple of years. Who knows how much it's going to be next year?

The price is, of course, yet another motivation for us to do well on the exam and stress over it after it's done. Our parents don't want their money to be wasted; thus we feel compelled to get that 5 for the AP exam to count toward our college credits and save \$1,000 of tuition.

The ETS is a greedy slave driver. Why give them satisfaction by obsessing over the exam after it's over?

While getting the post-AP shock out of our minds, keep in mind that this is a silly test that should not induce fear. This score is not required for most college applications and does not get sent to the college of our choice unless we submit it ourselves. They don't matter on our college application, and will not matter until we've chosen a college to attend and start applying for placement freshman year.

Phase III of the AP Season is completely unnecessary. Freaking out over which question you got right and which you got wrong will not help in any way other than cause you to grow gray hair.

The expensive and stressful AP exams are not worth stressing over after they are finished. The College Board has taken enough from us. Let's not give them the satisfaction of overrating AP exams. Go out and enjoy the sun!

## Another Kind of All-Nighter

### Junior Ramblings

Did I want to go to my first SING! Cast Party? Yes.

Did I get to 437 Washington Street? Yes.

Did I enter the establishment? No.

Where did I go?

So I leave Stuy on the night of April 17 to go to the cast party. It's 12:26 A.M. I am walking up Greenwich Street with Tropical Fantasy Pineapple soda and Stella D'oro Swiss Fudge Cookies.

As I bite down on a cookie I contemplate the swarm of fellow Stuyvesantians before me. There is a swarm of us to my right. And yet another swarm behind. There would be a swarm on my left as well, but there's a building there.

Everyone's headed to the cast party. Everyone makes a left on Vestry and a right on Washington and (would you believe it) there's a really enormous swarm of Stuyvesantians here. We all walk up to big, scary, bearded, hat-wearing bouncer guarding the cast party and he looks at us and says, "No one else. It's packed."

Well.

Five minutes later I'm sitting on a stoop across the street downing some the pineapple soda and eating the package of cookies, one nibble at a time. We're just sitting there. A fellow would-be partier looks at me and says, "Let's go."

I go. We go. Lots of us go. A swarm of nearly 20. Back up Vestry, back down Greenwich. Back to Chambers, by which time the 20 has been diminished to four aimless Stuyvesantians. We pass by McDonald's. It's open. Why? It's 1:30 A.M. Oh well.

We say hello to the glorified Borough of Manhattan Community College. By "say hello," I mean "walk by." Crossing West Street is fun. There are no cars. None at all. What time is it again?

Now my three companions go to Battery Park. I go do something else. We meet at the second grassy knoll. We sit down. We have plastic Coca-Cola cups from Morgan's, and more pineapple soda. We bought Swedish Fish at the Gourmet Deli.

Two of us take a walk around the knoll. We talk. We realize we might be here a

while. We return to the others. Two of us plop on a bench. Two of us plop on the floor. Four of us kill the pineapple soda. My head hurts.

That soda wants to come out. Seeing as its 3:00 A.M. and home is out of the question, I go to the third grassy knoll. Unbuckle. Unzip. Drop. Relieve. Shake. Tuck. Pull up. Zip. Buckle. Walk back.

I go to Gourmet. I buy a bag of pita bread and a bottle of Evian. My headache goes away. My stomach fills up a little. The pita and the water roll onto the ground. I follow suit.

Laying there, I look up at the night. Nice shiny stars fill the sky in the same way that the four of us fill the park. A random man walks by us. My buddy squints. "Who is that guy?" The guy looks down at us and says, "Don't worry."

But I worry. It's 3:45 A.M. I yawn. I climb onto a bench. I close my eyes. My head still hurts.

I wake up. It's 6:00 A.M. It's light out. I'm shivering. It's cold. It's supposed to be 70 degrees today, but obviously, not yet. I put on my jacket. I am still cold. The four of us go to McDonald's. Would you believe that they are still open?

We buy apple pies and hot chocolate. Sleeping is done. On tables. On chairs. Two hours later we wake up for a second time. We leave. It is still cold. I am still sleepy.

My fellow journey people go home. I, on the other hand, have to be at Stuy at 10:00 A.M. to work on *The Spectator*. So I go to Starbucks. I find a table, lay my head down, and fall asleep. I wake up. I look to my right. Somebody else is sleeping over there. An odd looking fellow, if I may say so myself.

It is 9:36 A.M. Time to leave Starbucks. I stumble up Chambers for the third time since the seniors won SING! the night before. Lo and behold, I see an acquaintance of mine. He approaches me in a shady manner. I inquire where he was the night before. "At the cast party, of course," he replies.

I look at him. I ask him, "Where did you sleep?" "Starbucks," he tells me.

— William Aibinder





Arts & Entertainment

Violent Orange: The Man-Eating Citrus Fruit

By ATRISH BAGCHI

The Battle of the Bands at Stuyvesant last year was both an organizational and commercial failure. The Violent Orange, comprised of the current seniors Matt Namer and Greg Longo as well as Frances Scaloy (who does not attend Stuy) was one of only two bands to perform (HongKongathon was also there). As only a handful of students attended, the legitimacy of the event was even put into question; a few members of the faculty even complained about the excessive volume of students in the lobby. However, the Violent Orange has been prompt in rebounding from this humiliating low point.

The band has played in more successful events, such as the Band Showcase at Stuy, and the Talent Show at Stuy, on March 7 and April 28, 2003, respectively. The band has also played in a multitude of events outside of school, including CBGB's, one of the most lauded underground rock venues (notable for launching the careers of The Ramones and Blondie) on September 7, 2003. They also played at the Amnesty

International Benefit Concert at the Knitting Factory on June 21, 2003, and had a recent gig at Continental on April 10, 2004.

The Violent Orange boasts a considerable aptitude for songwriting that exemplifies the band's coming to terms with its own sound. Since its foundation, The Violent Orange has gone through phases of experimentation. Vocalist and bass guitarist Namer, and lead and rhythm guitarist Longo have known each other since their freshman year at Stuyvesant and formulated the band together. During Longo and Namer's sophomore year, their first drummer regularly missed rehearsals. This prompted the band to recruit Scaloy, who perfectly complemented the band's dark sound with her own explosive drumming, being influenced by both the Smashing Pumpkins and Nine Inch Nails.

The band's sound was initially less metallic, and more progressive—considerably influenced by one of the most prominent progressive rock bands ever, Pink Floyd. The Violent Orange also had a fourth member, current Stuy senior and keyboardist Jake Haskell. However,

the band then took an alternate route. "We...decided we would just do rock," commented Longo. This prompted Haskell's departure from the band.

The band's overall sound is analogous to many metal bands today, except that the Violent Orange has a keen sense of contrast. The song structures allow for periods of relatively soft chords with Namer's jaded voice singing in the background. These periods subsequently go into heavy, head-banger-friendly guitar riffs. Often during these heavier periods, Longo indulges in Jimi Hendrix-esque guitar antics that (especially when seen live) parallel those of only the best contemporary bands. More than anything, they are what set the Violent Orange apart.

Just as beguiling is Namer's voice, which can be considered less banshee-like than Chris Cornell's (the vocalist from Soundgarden), but more immediate than Brandon Boyd's (the vocalist from Incubus). He offers vocal histrionics without being grating, coolly capturing a state of unfeeling. This works well, as most of the Violent Orange's lyrics convey his boredom with his reality. This is evi-



The Violent Orange performs at a March 7, 2003 gig.

Courtesy of www.nycorenegades.com

dent in the piece "Wine Sky," in which Namer croons "And now it finally seems space is coming back now / same exact planets / with all the same life forms / and when there's no life left for me/ time will suspend...until I am born again." Often, the heavier parts of their songs emanate the ubiquitous anxiety of metal today. This is especially evident

in the lyric "The sky is falling / watch it die" from the song "Dissolution."

The Violent Orange is indeed promising; the few sophomoric elements of their style are nothing to dwell on, given their songwriting prowess and earnest moody melodies. Never has teen angst looked so professional.

Spring Comedy: "ZAP!" to It!



Tracey Hsu / The Spectator

Students rehearse for this year's Spring Comedy, "ZAP!"

By MAREK MERY

This year, Stuy's Spring Comedy promises a funnier, bigger, and better show than ever. Stuy's thespians will perform Paul Fleischman's "ZAP!," a comedy featuring not one, but seven, shows all together. A cast of 30 students will be directed by senior Haitham Jendoubi, and sophomores Deke Hill and Maxine Speier.

"ZAP!," though not being published until next year, will be performed in mid-May at Stuy. The comedy describes a theater company's battle against television by performing seven plays at once (the viewer can "ZAP!" between them), thereby hoping to edge away from bankruptcy. Fleischman wrote, "'ZAP!' shows the results [of the seven plays] on opening night. One play is real—Shakespeare's 'Richard III.' The others are comedic cousins of well known genres."

Fleischman was inspired to write a play of many genres after observing the lack of variety in school plays. He describes high school theater in the introduction to his play. "Like Pepsi or Coke paying to be a school's sole soft drink, *Grease* and "Romeo and Juliet" had captured the drama departments. They and one or two others seemed to be in eternal rotation, like the seasons," he wrote. Though this lack of variety isn't as pertinent to Stuy, "ZAP!"'s comedic blend of variety will spice up Stuy theater life.

The comedy "zaps"

between a mystery set that is described by Fleischman as "strongly reminiscent of Agatha Christie"; a Russian drama based on the plays of Anton Chekhov; a set in 1965 New York; one down-home American South play; one "performance art monologue"; and one "avant-garde play", as Fleischman calls them; and finally, Shakespeare's famed drama, "Richard III."

"['ZAP!'] would suit high schools, which like huge casts," wrote Fleischman. The comedy features a cast of 30 led by a slate of five, including producers and sophomores Liz Livingstone and Alyson Stevens. The cast is fronted by many returning actors, including sophomore Elizabeth London as Mrs. Hardwicke from the English mystery, junior Nick Lerangis as Inspector Swift, and senior Ilya Khodosh in the Russian play.

The show is off to a good start. The cast has been organized, and rehearsals have been held daily. The show is sure to boast a creative, colorful set, as well as a brilliant tech crew.

The play is debuting at Stuy before any bookstore because, Fleischman said, "The performance at Stuyvesant will guide me in seeing what works and what doesn't before I submit the final manuscript to the publisher." With a witty cast and around 30 costumes, "ZAP!" is bound to be an exciting must-see show at Stuy later this month.

By KATHY WANG

How much is that smoothie in the window? \$3.91, apparently. Welcome to Tropical Smoothie Café & Deli, the new kid on the block in terms of Chambers Street's food venues. Snuggled in between McDonald's and the "Hole-in-the-Wall," the recently opened Tropical Smoothie offers something for everyone.

From wraps to subs, salads to "tortizzas" (specialty pizzas), Tropical Smoothie contains everything you could want for a satisfying yet inexpensive meal. The list of smoothies is as long as your daily to-do list, and there are six types of smoothies available: Low-Fat Smoothies, Dessert Smoothies, Power Smoothies, "Smart" Smoothies, Meal Replacement Smoothies, and even Weight Gain Smoothies. With colorful names like Paradise Point and Tidal Wave, the fruity smoothies range in flavor from the typical strawberry and banana, to the exotic pineapple and coconut. There are even coffee- and peanut butter-flavored smoothies available on the Meal Replacement, Dessert, and Weight Gain lists.

After the smoothies, the gourmet wraps are probably the next best thing. Warm and juicy, the wraps are made fresh and are absolutely delicious. The King Caesar (chicken breast strips, romaine lettuce, tomatoes, Parmesan cheese, and Caesar dressing in a garlic herb tortilla) is their bestselling wrap and is recommended for first-timers. For those wanting a more "tropical" experience, the Blazin' Barbecue (which includes pineapples) and the Chicken Mango Habanero are

good choices. Health nuts can also rejoice—vegetarians can order the Veggie Veggie, composed of southwestern rice, black beans, corn, asparagus, onions, lettuce, tomatoes, cheese, and a light olive oil vinaigrette.

The tortizzas are especially yummy—melted cheese and not-your-average canned marinara sauce on a thin 12-inch tortilla made right in front of your eyes. Sandwiches and Cuban subs, many of which contain the same ingredients but with different breads, and crisp salads

getting it in your hands, since all the food is made to order (the only downside to being freshly-made). While you wait, though, take in the Caribbean-like décor and TVs set to MTV, bringing us to another downside—the noise level at Tropical Smoothie is worsened by the constant construction clamoring on the streets.

The atmosphere at Tropical Smoothie is made complete with a friendly staff, eagerly handing out menus and answering the questions only Stuy students would ask—"How is it that you already have a 'Number one Selling Smoothie' when you've only been open for two days, and when you printed the menus, you technically

Tropical Smoothie Café & Deli, the new kid on the block in terms of Chambers Street's food venues.

are also available. Breakfast, in the form of bagels, wraps, and assorted pastries, is also served, for those grabbing something to eat after a sleepless night.

Prices are decent, starting at \$2.99 for a grilled cheese sandwich to a little more than \$5.00 for the more filling wraps and salads. Smoothie prices range from just under \$4.00 to \$5.99. However, if you're not all that hungry, sharing a smoothie or a wrap with a friend provides an excellent way to get the best bang for your buck. Since the portion sizes are huge (smoothies are only available in one size, equal to about a double venté from Starbucks), splitting the food will actually make your lunch or snack quite cheap.

A piece of advice: Get there early for lunch, for the small place can get packed and fill up quickly. Lines can become unpleasantly long, and there are not enough seats. In addition, there's quite a wait between ordering your food and actually

hadn't been open at all?" It turns out Tropical Smoothie has over 120 stores nationwide, and the one on Chambers Street is one of the first in the Northeast. There are even two stores in India.

As expected, new-restaurant mistakes are still being made, though, like forgetting the cheesecake in the Strawberry Cheesecake Smoothie. But when a blunder is made, just tell someone and he or she will be happy to correct the problem by refunding your money or giving you a free replacement for your order.

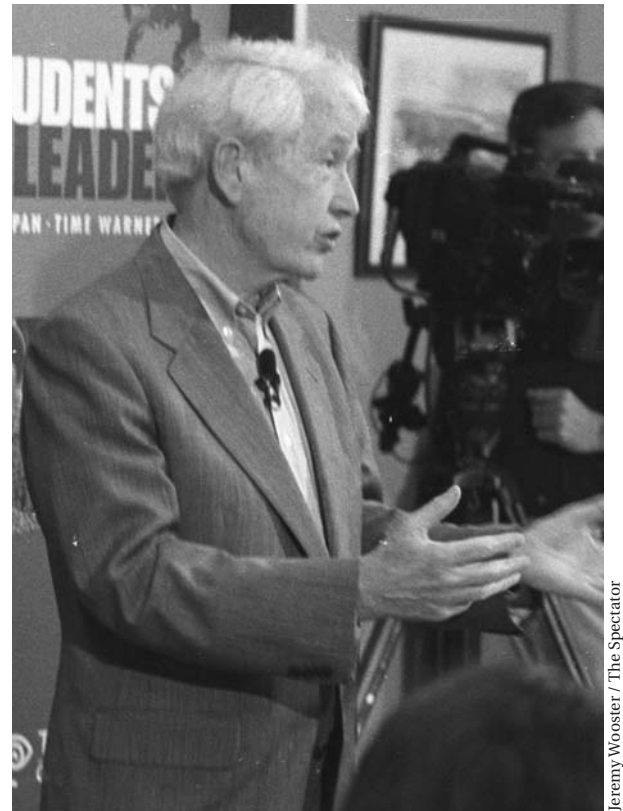
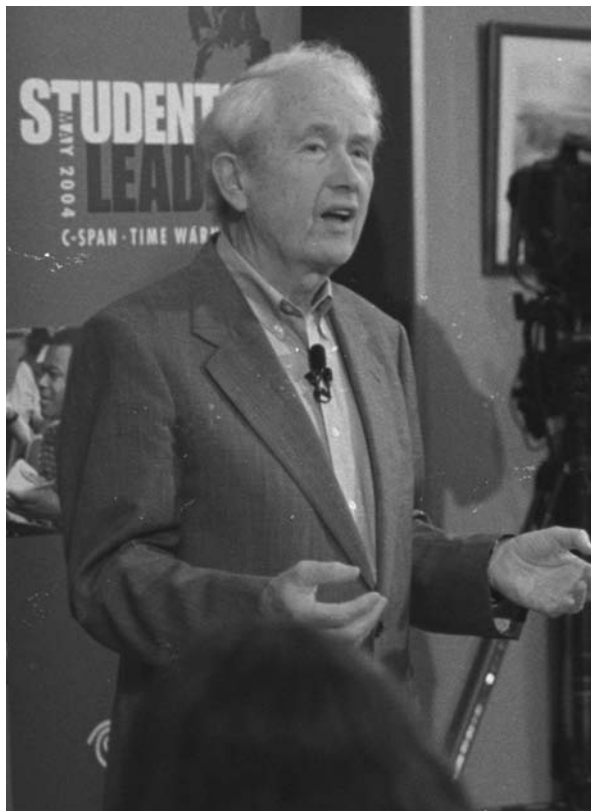
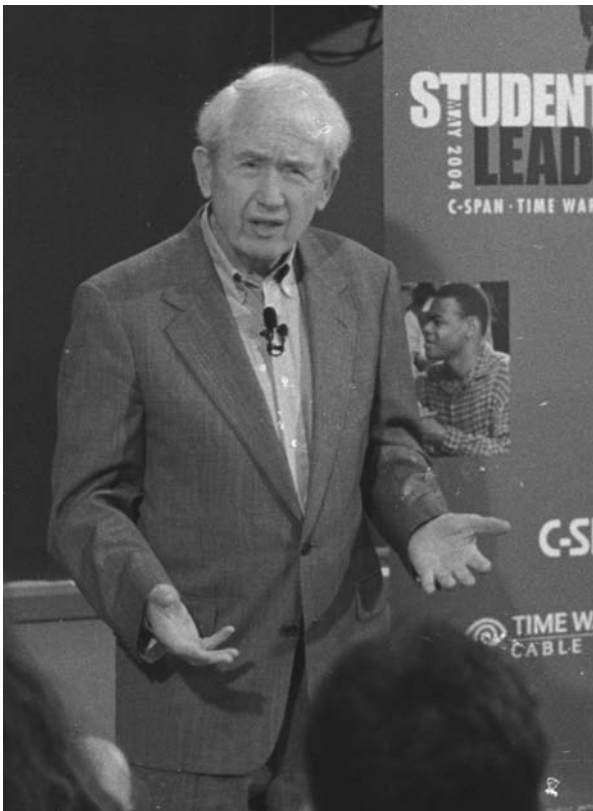
Looks like Subway will be having just a little more competition now.

Tropical Smoothie  
Café & Deli  
165 Chambers Street  
Between West Broadway and  
Greenwich Street  
(212)732-2230



## Arts & Entertainment

### Frank McCourt Presents As a Part of the “Students as Leaders” Series



Jeremy Wooster / The Spectator

On Monday, May 17, Frank McCourt, author and former Stuyvesant teacher, came to speak and answer questions as part of a series run by C-SPAN called “Students as Leaders.” McCourt told the story of his learning to teach and then shared some of his experiences as an author to a freshman composition class taught by Annie Thoms. The show aired on C-SPAN 2 the morning following the filming, and has been re-run on CSPAN many times since.



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# Arts & Entertainment

## Special Ed, Puppy Love, Nuyorican Poets: Stuy Joins the Festivities

By **PERRI OSATTIN**

The third annual TriBeCa Film Festival made a point of involving the TriBeCa community, including Stuyvesant, in its festivities. Not only was the Murray Kahn Theater used to hold panel discussions and Stuyvesant used in advertisements, but some Stuy’s own students were invited to participate in the Festival for the first time in its short history.

Five-period technology teacher Elka Gould’s video production students contributed two short films to the Festival through the “Youth Behind the Camera” program. Gould was “amazed at the sophistication of one group’s work,” leading her to recommend their films to the Festival, which made inquiries regarding students accomplished in the performing arts. Juniors Dakota Straub, Amanda Baker, Stephanie Spano, Tina Thomas, and Katie Shelly created a documentary called *SP.ED.@Stuy*, in which the Stuy special education class is documented in its classroom, the gymnasium, and the cafeteria. There is commentary from the students and from special education teacher Carol Belle and advisor Neil Coffina. According to Gould, the film “opened up a new world for most students at Stuy. That’s what documentary is all about.”

The untitled second film is “more light hearted” and is a “narrative about young love.” A girl portrayed by Shelly has a crush on a boy whose locker is near hers. When he drops a picture of himself, she takes it and puts it into her locker. Later,

she discovers that the same boy has pictures of her in his locker, causing her to believe that he’s a stalker and to be disgusted by him. Gould was particularly impressed by the group’s “great technical skills” in this film. Overall, Gould says the TriBeCa Film Festival was “gracious and appreciative” regarding the treatment of her students and their work.

Senior Ed Chen and junior Naomi Gordon-Loebl presented original pieces of poetry in front of Federal Hall and on the main stage of the Festival’s street fair on Greenwich Street as part of the “Declare Yourself” program. They were referred by English teacher Emily Moore. The poems were primarily “related to identity” and other issues that play a role in adolescence, according to Chen. Both Chen and Gordon-Loebl have performed their work before, sometimes in competitions and other times merely to express themselves. In addition, they both got their start at the Nuyorican Poets’ Café.

The casts of two of Stuy’s 2003-2004 theater productions, “You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown” and “Macbeth,” were invited to perform, as well, rounding out Stuy’s prominent presence at the festival.

These Stuyvesant students were able to take advantage of a wonderful opportunity to share their considerable talents and culturally enrich the TriBeCa community at this Festival. Hopefully, this year’s participation will lead to a continued affiliation with the TriBeCa Film Festival.

## TriBeCa Film Festival, a Love Letter to Downtown New York

By **JANE SUSSMAN**

The third annual TriBeCa Film Festival, which ran from May 1 through May 9, brought with it a slew of people, events, food, money, and of course, films.

The TriBeCa Film Festival was co-founded by Robert DeNiro and Jane Rosenthal as a way to bring business back to and revitalize the downtown area after the September 11 attacks. The idea was that with the influx of celebrities and cultural events, TriBeCa would receive a flood of tourists and New Yorkers for the duration of the festival who would buy food and other merchandise from local restaurants and stores. This would boost the economy in the downtown area, and help out the restaurants and stores impacted by September 11.

“The community has embraced it and hopefully the merchants and restaurateurs are happy,” said Rosenthal, regarding the success of the film festival. The difference between the TriBeCa Film Festival and other film festivals—such as Cannes or Sundance—is that the TriBeCa Film Festival is less about the “cultural” movies and more about just bringing people together to see some good films. Festivals like Sundance have a reputation for screening small, obscure, low-budget independent films. The audience targeted by those films is generally the intellectual elite, who sub-

scribe to the idea of the “artsy” genre, and more exploratory, creative films. While the TriBeCa Film Festival has these films in mind, it is not just a venue for independent films, but reaches out to the community with a variety of films that everyone can enjoy.

The TriBeCa Film Festival had a spectrum of screenings—from the old school West Side Story to the new, mainstream, teeny-bopper flick *New York Minute*, to the artsy *Stage Beauty*, to the series finale of *Friends*. This film festival did not discriminate based on how “indie” or cultural a film was, but offered something everyone could find entertaining. Stuyvesant was the home of many of the film festival’s events, including a Martin Scorsese panel discussion and the premiere of *Stage Beauty*. A handful of Stuy students participated artistically in the festival, as well. (See adjacent article.)

The film festival proved to not only be a fun, film-filled event, but also a uniting event bringing New Yorkers, “regular Joes,” Stuy students, and celebrities alike together. Hollywood actor Jason Behr, while describing the spirit of the film *Stage Beauty*, said that, “[This film was very independent], not a lot of money, not a lot of time, but a lot of heart.” He just might have been talking about the TriBeCa Film Festival itself.



# TriBeCa Film Festival



Photos By  
Naomi Gordon-Loebl



TriBeCa Film Festival





# Arts & Entertainment

## Jesus Christ a Celebrity and Martin Scorsese a Music Man: It's All in a Day's Work at the TriBeCa Panels

intrigued moviegoers. During the question and answer session of the panel, Jennings was asked about his views on the meeting of media and religion. Jennings, senior editor of ABC's *World News Tonight* and host of two three-hour specials ("The Search for Jesus" and "Jesus and Paul—the Word and the Witness") replied that, as a journalist, religion has been very pronounced in his career and he often covered it for over 40 years.

After a brief history of Jesus in film, which ended with Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*, Jennings began his discussion with a simple and nonchalantly-stated question: "What did Jesus look like?" The query elicited a plethora of adjectives from the panel members: "passionate," "charismatic," "intent," and "burly." Common ground was reached with a somewhat trite answer, in which Jesus was compared to a Rorschach inkblot and was therefore designated as open to interpretation. The panelists argued with slight jabs and retorts, and discussed how the on-screen violence in *The Passion of the Christ* demystified

the description in the Bible. Jewison described *The Passion* as a crude film and stated that violence was the key to the film's success. This led to a brief discussion about violence in society and its attractiveness to the masses.

The panel addressed its title topic more directly toward the end of the discussion. It was determined that the view of Jesus has not changed completely over time. In today's society, Jesus is looked upon as an abstract but commercially viable

Film director Martin Scorsese's panel discussion, "TriBeCa Talks: Scorsese and Music," had more of a celebrity feel to it than did Jennings's. The first round of applause came not after Scorsese made his way on stage, but as singer Tony Bennet

some of the music. Scorsese has also been influenced by swing music and opera.

Film clips were shown during the presentation to illustrate Scorsese's ability to expertly weave music into his movies, including *Mean Streets*, *Raging Bull*, and *Casino*. Scorsese supposedly never uses "sentimental" music in his films because he feels that nostalgia is "trying to get close to something that was never there." His music is not time-specific, either—it never seems to be dated.

Part of the reason Scorsese is so passionate about music is because he views it as a powerful force that can conjure up images and feelings on its own. Nevertheless, he has had to decrease the amount of music that he listens to himself for each of his films, and has begun to pick and choose which music he will listen to. After all, he has become one of Hollywood's busiest and most accomplished directors.

Some words of wisdom from the "music man" himself: "The loud stuff has to calm down."

The mix of religion and movies can be seen as a risky Hollywood gambit used to provoke and pique the interests of throngs of outraged and intrigued moviegoers.

Analysis and interpretation of the Bible was discussed as well. Without primary sources, we bring more of our own prejudices and biases to the table. Supposedly, over analysis leads to a "pseudo-Messianic" complex in which we create our own sense of God, as opposed to the God described in the Bible. This idea can only be viewed as ironic at a panel discussion dedicated to dissecting Jesus's story.

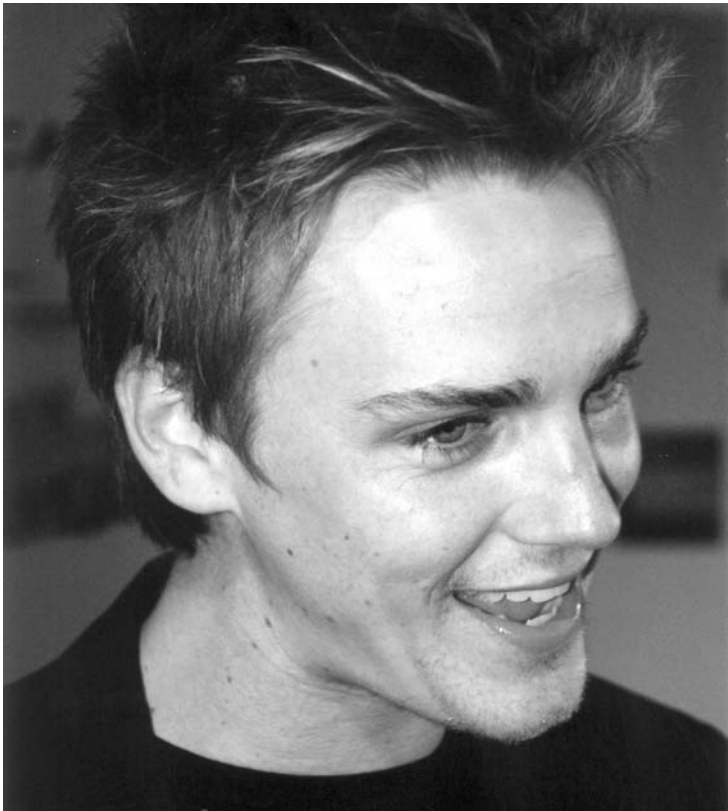
idea, a celebrity that serves to draw moviegoers, whereas in Biblical times Jesus was a religious celebrity, drawing crowds of followers seeking to be saved on the proper path.

The panel was thought-provoking, shedding new light on a topic that has been discussed nonstop since the release of *The Passion*. It succeeded in being part of the intellectual portion of the TriBeCa Film Festival.

took his seat in the audience.

According to Scorsese, his personal interest in music and movies began when he received his first album, a Tchaikovsky record. His love of the classical was evident as he discussed his interest in Aaron Copland's score for *Of Mice and Men*. Scorsese's first experimental film, in terms of music, was *Blackboard Jungle*, for which Bill Haley and the Comets provided

## TriBeCa Film Festival





# STUVESANT SPORTS SCOREBOARD

5/7/04 – Playoffs	
Stuyvesant	5
McKee / SI Tech	0

5/13/04 – Playoffs	
Benjamin Cardozo	5
Stuyvesant	0

Boys and Girls	5
Stuyvesant	0



Sports

Surging Hitmen Target Division Title

*continued from page 16*

pitching staff has dominated the majority of their competition. Aside from a rough outing against perennial powerhouse George Washington High School, Becker has been very effective (seven runs in 27 innings against other opponents), and he is third in the division with 32 strikeouts.

Complementing the hard-throwing Becker has been Young, the team's leader in ERA (2.10, second in the division for anyone who has pitched over 10 innings). Becker thinks the best is still to come from Young. He said, "Nat is a much better pitcher than anyone else knows, and he will show the league what he has by the end of the season." Even the team's number three starter, senior Evan Meyerson, is tied for second in the division lead with three victories.

While the team's defense struggled at the start of the season, it has significantly improved and is now one of the Hitmen's greatest strengths. Notable among the team's standout defensive performers are Lainas and sophomore catcher James Wendt. Creed said, "Ground balls hit to James [Lainas] are automatic outs, and

many of his acrobatic 'web gems' have killed potential rallies. With regards to Wendt, his play has been rock-solid, and it seems like he throws out a runner every game."

Despite the overall success, the Hitmen have been plagued by inconsistent offensive production. In losses against George Washington and Martin Luther

**"We now control our own destiny, which is the position every team wants to be in."**  
– Ben Creed, junior

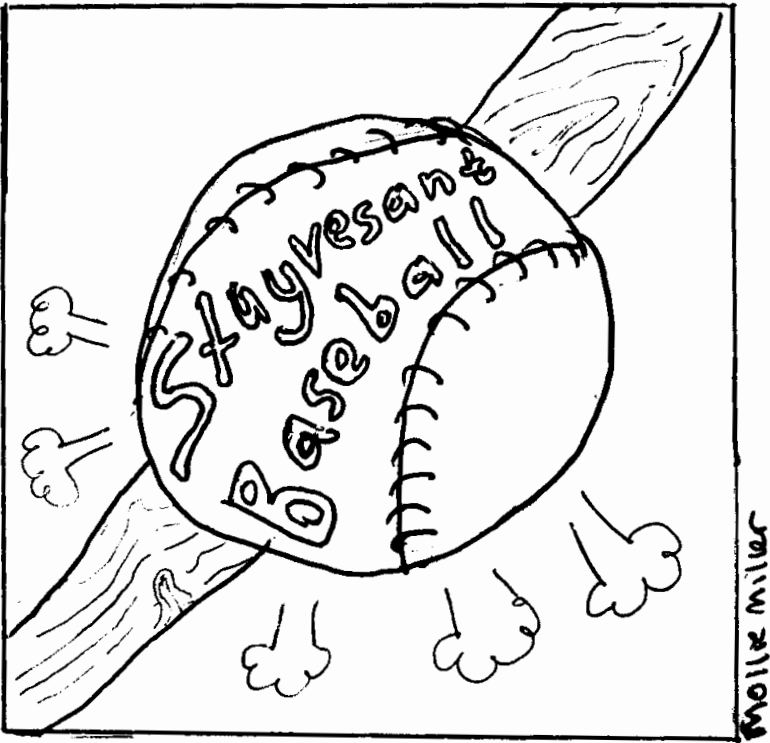
King Jr., the Hitmen managed to score one run. As he explained, Coach Matt Hahn has seemingly tried everything to cure the team's offensive woes. "At practice we work off the tees, we do some soft toss, we have live batting practice, it just seems like we have hit a wall. The mission now is to get over the wall."

In his attempt to generate more runs, Hahn has even

revamped the team's lineup. Though senior and second baseman Stephan Donk is among the division leaders with a .500 on-base percentage, Hahn has recently rotated senior Charlie O'Reilly into the lineup. Hahn said, "I would like to have something steady at second base, but right now it's a situational thing. Stephan offers tremendous speed, but Charlie has great hitting power. The team will just ride the hot bat."

Despite the team's struggle to manufacture runs as a whole, certain individuals have been very productive throughout the season. Lainas is tied for second in the division with 16 RBIs and he leads the division with 14 stolen bases. Senior and outfielder Doug Gochfeld is ninth in the division with 11 RBIs, tied for sixth in the division with 13 runs scored, and tied for second in the division with 12 stolen bases. Lastly, junior and baseman Jonah Miller is tied for ninth in the division with 11 RBI's and he is tied for 13th in the division with 10 runs scored.

Considering that they presently are in first place in the Manhattan West A division, the Hitmen, with only two remaining games (both against last-place Park West), appear in prime position to capture the



division title.

When asked if the team could win the division, Hahn said, "Yes, as long as we remain focused and respect our opponents."

An even more confident Becker said, "We hit a little rough spot for a short time, but

right now the team is coming around. If we sweep Beacon this week, we will take the division decisively. Following the sweep of Beacon last week, we will take the division decisively. I truly believe this team will make a run deep into the playoffs."

Ponstars Continue to Dominate

*continued from page 16*

to keep in mind the possibility of playing incredibly talented teams where it can go either way."

Junior Ilya Tsinis echoed this sentiment. He said, "We have one goal, the championship. We don't want to settle for anything less. The team obviously realizes that there are a lot of obstacles in the way, but we have a lot going for us this year."

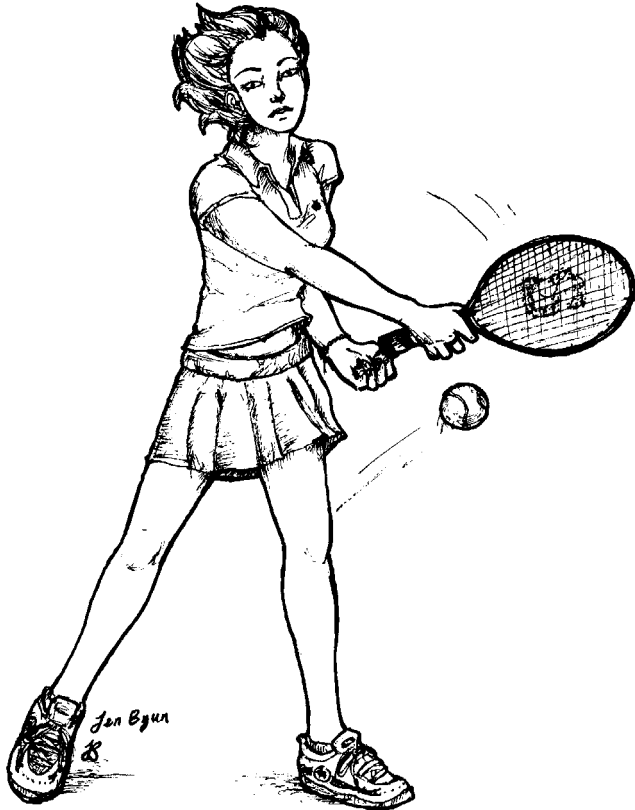
One of the obstacles is 15-time PSAL city champion Benjamin Cardozo High School, whom they will play in their

next playoff match, the semifinals. "We would be heavy underdogs in that match, but I think our team is capable of pulling off an upset," said Pon.

Gottheil, however, was less optimistic. "As for playoff expectations, I think we expect no less than a semifinal finish, probably even final."

As for the future, the Ponstars can only foresee an uphill struggle. Still, optimism and zeal remain prominent. "We're hoping to be at our peak when the important matches come our way, and I think we're more than ready," said Sharma. "We're hungry to win."

**"I think our team is capable of pulling off an upset."**  
– Timothy Pon, coach



Red Hot Mimbas

By HUI WANG

Hunter College High School. Beacon School. Staten Island Technical High School. The Stuyvesant girls' soccer team, the Mimbas, have defeated all three in a matter of two short weeks. The Mimbas, slowly approaching the end of the regular season, are red hot and unstoppable after they crushed the most competitive teams in the city.

With Fern as center midfielder and leading the Mimbas, the girls faced their long-time rival, the Staten Island Tech Seagulls in late April for a game. The Mimbas were down 3-0 at half-time but were able to come from behind during the last half hour of the game to tie the score.

"During the second half, I think S.I. Tech was getting very comfortable. But we kept playing like crazy and hammered away three goals. It was definitely a turning point game because we proved that we belonged on the field and we can play right up there with the best team in the city. During half-time, coach told us to shake it off and not to give up. And we did just that," said junior defenseman Katie Shelly.

Following the S.I. Tech game, the Mimbas started playing aggressively and with newfound confidence. They were able to win the next game against Beacon, which is ranked third in the Manhattan/Bronx A division. The Mimbas were able to completely demolish them at

the East River Park A on May 7, with a final score of 4-0. Key goals came from Fern and fresh-

**"Of my three years as a Mimba, this one looks the best for the championship."**  
– Katie Shelly, junior

men offensive wing-midfielder Cailey Simmons.

In addition to Simmons, freshmen Sabrina Baum, Dara

Frank and Alison Lochner continue to make progress as the season goes on. Two out of the four have become regular starters for the Mimbas while all four have made tremendous improvements and contributed greatly to the team's success.

The rookies aren't the only players making great progress. Stuyvesant arguably has the strongest middle line in the city. The Mimbas' defense is impenetrable, composed of some of the best players for sweeper, stopper, and other defensive positions. Sophomore goalkeeper Alix Schneider has allowed only two goals for the 2004 season, while saving 43. Schneider, along with Shelly, sweeper and junior Claire Hsu, and other Mimbas have perfected the

team's defensive line and thrived under the guidance and mentorship of coach Philip Fisher.

"It's his dedication that has allowed us to be at the level that we are right now. He sacrifices his weekend so we can play the best competition out there," said Fern.

With only three games left in the regular season, the girls hope to advance into the city championship game under the guidance of Fisher and capture the title.

"We're all such characters on the team and we're really excited about playoff possibilities. We go through some tough times but that always brings us closer," said Shelly. "Of my three years as a Mimba, this one looks the best for the championship."



# Athlete Spotlight: William Becker

continued from page 16

junior, and was named the Outstanding Senior this year. He was not too bad a pitcher either. Last year he won the Pitcher of the Year award, and was named part of the All-Manhattan Team by the New York *Daily News*.

Through his strong determination and focus, Becker has improved each year as a swimmer and as a baseball player. According to swimming coach Silvana Choy, “He has a tireless work ethic and has been extremely dedicated and committed to the team. He is extremely focused and when he sets a goal, he gives a hundred percent to work and achieves that goal.”

In his senior year he reached his goals by setting career bests of 1:50.65 in the 200-yard individual freestyle and 50.23 in the 100-yard individual styling, placing second and fifth, respectively, at the Open Championships. There he anchored the 200-yard freestyle relay and the 400-yard freestyle relay, of which both set new PSAL records. Both relay teams qualified for the State Championships in Long Island on March 5 and 6.

On the baseball diamond he has been a dominant pitcher the past three seasons, all the while finding ways to improve his game. He was the number two starter in the rotation as a sophomore with a 4-1 record and an ERA of 3.03.

Becker’s coming out party came in his junior year when he placed himself among the elite athletes in the city. He posted a 5-1 record with a

remarkable ERA of 1.52 as the ace of the pitching staff.

This year he has become more of an all-around player, starting both at third base and in the outfield when not pitching. His bat has become crucial to the team’s success as he elevated his game with a career-high batting average of .300. As an everyday player he is more important to the team than ever.

Baseball coach Matt Hahn is expecting even better pitching from the hard throwing right-hander, “Last spring he

“He is a huge part of the team’s success, and he has been a strong captain and leader for the team.”  
– Silvana Choy, coach

was throwing the ball at 84 miles per hour. Hopefully he can get it up to 88 miles per hour this season.”

Hahn said, “Billy is very important to the team, when we have tough games, he is the one getting the ball, and he makes the whole team feel like they can win that game.”

In a game against Park West on May 18, Becker struck out 13 en route to his first career no-hitter. He was one batter away from a perfect game, giving up a walk in the fifth inning.

Next year Becker will be attending the Coast Guard Academy where he will be a

member of both the baseball and swimming teams. Although he attests that he is a better swimmer, he believes that his “ceiling is higher in baseball. Right now, I throw in the mid-80s consistently, and hopefully by the end of college, I will be able to throw in the 90s consistently.”

Hahn said that Becker “has a lethal fastball, and he has improved his curveball, which should balance out his arsenal.” This lethal fastball was the reason Becker was third in the division in strikeouts with 50 in just 33 innings in his junior year.

As a captain, Becker has been able to keep both of his teams on top. According to his Hitmen teammate, junior Simon Lee, Becker, “through his actions and his words, creates an environment both on and off the field that has brought a small group of seniors and a large group of juniors together into a single competitive team.” Becker’s competitive nature and strong work ethic sets a perfect example for his teammates and are a testament to his success.

“He is a huge part of the team’s success, and he has been a strong captain and leader for the team,” said Choy.

Hahn agrees that Becker is a great leader and said, “Billy makes the other players around him better with his confidence in not only his own performance but his teammates’ as well.” Although both the Pirates and the Hitmen will miss Becker next season, he has left a winning attitude that should remain with the teams for seasons to come.

# Boys’ Volleyball Prepares for Playoffs

By LIZ LIVINGSTONE

It’s 80 degrees outside and feels like almost 100 in the gym. The boys’ volleyball team, the Men of Steel, are running through drill after drill as their coach walks around, giving them all pointers on their bumping, setting, spiking, and blocking. Every player is sweaty and tired, but that’s what this team does every day.

Beginning their season with a roster filled with rookies, the team had to rebuild from the ground up and has succeeded, finishing strong with a 9-1 record.

“I knew I was working with new players,” said Coach Stanislaw K a p s .

“They’ve all been working so hard, but we’re doing well.”

With only two seniors, Robert Poon and captain Jonathan Kim, the team was able to win the Manhattan VIII division. Their only loss came against Park West on May 4, breaking a long-running undefeated streak that has lasted nearly four seasons.

Following the conclusion of their regular season, the team began preparing for the playoffs which started on Saturday, May 15, at Hunter College with a field of 15 teams.

The team has not set any specific playoff goals—it just wants to do its best.

“I’ll take what I’ll get,” said

Kaps. “We’ll take it one round at a time.”

The team has learned a lot this season, but still has some weaknesses. It lacks depth in great offensive players or hitters, but still managed to out-play its opponents.

The team still has a lot of potential for next season with a strong underclass of returning players. Because much of the team was new this year, it had to not only build new players, but a new team.

“We didn’t have much chemistry at the beginning,” said junior middle hitter Chong Lee. “No one really knew one another, but once we broke the ice, it all fell into place.”

Each game has only gotten easier with time

and experience. The starters—Kim, Poon, Lee, freshman Peter Chuang, sophomore Leon Rafailov, junior Igor Radovitskiy, and junior Mark Stonehill—have grown accustomed to playing with each other and the bench players have filled their roles adequately.

Kim leads the team in aces with 29, digs with 47, and kills with 60. Poon recorded 54 service points during the season. Chaung contributed 151 assists while Lee recorded an impressive 25 blocks.

“We’re a good bunch of guys with one goal, to win and we’ll give it our best shots,” said Lee.

The team has not set any specific playoff goals—it just wants to do its best.

# A Club Only by Designation

By JESSE ROSENTHAL

On Sunday, May 9 at 7 A.M., while the rest of us were either still sleeping or running around wildly for a last-minute Mother’s Day gift, the Flying Dutchman, Stuyvesant’s resident club hockey team, squared off against a house team from Chelsea Piers. A few hours later as we groggily rubbed the sleep from our eyes and lumbered over to present our bouquet of flowers, the Dutchmen were collecting their fourth win of the season, decimating their foe 9-1 and improving their record to 4-1. Founded in 1998, the hockey team has been competing in both a winter and a spring league at the Chelsea Piers SkyRink.

Stuyvesant does not have an ice hockey team. There is no citywide tournament to compete in and no sponsorship from the PSAL. The squad appears under the club/pub directory on the Stuyvesant home page ([www.stuy.edu](http://www.stuy.edu)) and is not taken seriously. They are given some money from the Student Union, receive some donations from the Parents’ and Alumni Associations, and they spend an additional \$1500 of their own money every year. They generally practice on Saturdays and play at the crack of dawn on Sundays. They buy their own equipment which includes sticks, skates, and pads. Despite the adversity these players face, they are a perennial contender in the spring and winter leagues they play in.

The spring league is generally more relaxed than the winter league, as there are fewer games and fewer teams. “If we do well in the spring season then we can get some confidence going into the winter season,” said junior goalkeeper Josh Weinstein. While there are only three school teams in the league (Bronx High School of

Despite the adversity these players face, they are a perennial contender in the spring and winter leagues they play in.

Science, Brooklyn Technical High School, and Stuyvesant), Stuyvesant is the only one of the three that tries to limit the team to only Stuyvesant students. As the league is run by Chelsea Piers, the only eligibility requirement is that players must be in high school; which school they attend is of little to no importance. The rest of the teams are house teams, a conglomerate of high school students from around the city who gather on the ice.

All eyes look forward to next winter when, during the course of their 17-game season, the Dutchman take on their rival, Brooklyn Tech, in a rematch of last year’s semifinals. In a his-

toric game, Brooklyn Tech defeated Stuyvesant 3-2 in overtime, before going on to devour Bronx Science 10-1 in the finals. Stuy won the consolation game and received third place, but is now hungry for a rematch.

When Stuyvesant does face off against Brooklyn Tech next winter, they will be doing so without the dominant force of four-year starting defenseman and captain Phil Pilmar, who will be graduating next year. However, Pilmar remains confident about the squad this year, and said about aggressive freshmen wingers Aaron Landman and Max Gelb. “Everyone contributes now and in the future they’ll contribute even more,” he said.

Two years removed from winning the winter league championship in a tight match against Brooklyn Tech (3-2 in overtime, this time in Stuy’s favor), the players look forward to next year. Although they will sorely miss Pilmar’s leadership and skill on the ice, he is the only senior graduating and gives way to current assistant captains, junior forwards Paul Strenk and Matt Ginther.

The group has much to look forward to. Next year it might compete in a tournament in Philadelphia during Thanksgiving break, but the team still has two more regular season games before it enters the playoffs in the spring league. One thing is certain. These players may be a club by name, but form a team at heart.

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S P O R T S

Girls' Team Names Not the Same

By LIZ LIVINGSTONE

Stuy's boys' volleyball team has a macho team name, the Men of Steel, while the girls' volleyball team has the name Vixens, meaning a female fox or shrewish woman. Stuy's boys' baseball team is the Hitmen, while the girls' softball team is named the Peaches.

Who cares? Some students at Stuy do. "I think naming teams like this is sexist," said junior Nick Lerangis, who is on Stuy's football team, the Peglegs. "It makes it seem like the girls' teams care less or are less competitive."

Half of the 12 all-girl teams at Stuyvesant are arguably sexist. These teams are the Peaches, Vixens, Furies (handball), Penguins (swimming), Mimbas (soccer), and Felines (gymnastics).

The Peaches, for instance, strikes no fear in any heart. Did the team adopt it because it felt a pressure to have a more feminine name? No.

During the 2001 season, the seniors on the team decided to change their name to the Peaches, inspired by the Rockford Peaches from *A League of Their Own*, a movie about an all-women's softball league during World War II. Now, the Peaches are looking for a new name. Are they changing it to be more gender-neutral and less sexist? Still, no. They just want a name that the entire team can feel attached to.

"I don't think that a name

translates into how we play," said senior and captain Danielle Sandella. "I think stereotypes come from other places than names."

Because the school allows sports teams to shift from the universal school name, the Peglegs, other girls' teams also chose feminine names for themselves.

"If the school, or someone other than the teams themselves, assigned the names, then it would seem sexist, but the teams

do name themselves," said Sandella. "So it's not about anyone being sexist, it's about the preference of the players."

Across the country, many high school, college, and professional teams have changed sexist, violent, or racist team names. Many women's teams have taken the word "Lady" or the "-ette" suffix off their names. Other teams have dumped offensive or demeaning names or logos such as confederate symbols, racist references or violent themes. One recent example is Syracuse University who changed their team names from the Orangemen and Orangewomen to the more universally accepted Orange.

At Stuy, however, this is not

the case and some Stuy athletes support feminine names.

"Our name needs to be more than us being butch girls," said junior tennis player Lauren Thomas. "We bring a grace and elegance to our sport and [we] want our names to reflect that."

Senior Maddie Gray, captain of the girls' tennis team, agreed. "Girls are more oriented towards team spirit, so they choose names that they can unify behind," she said.

A lot of other people at Stuy feel that team names aren't even worth arguing over.

Girls' tennis team coach Howard Barbin feels the same way. "A team's name isn't relevant," he said. "You could be called the Creampuffs and be 10-0."

One can never satisfy everyone's complaints on this subject. However, the greater issues of equal respect for female athletes shouldn't be lost in the swirl of less significant issues. People should try to think about the greater problems female teams and athletes face: an unfair ratio of the number of girls' teams to boys' teams at Stuy (19 boys' teams, 12 girls' teams, and 3 co-ed teams), less attendance at women's sports games, and lower pay in the pros.

For now, the important thing is that each Stuy team is happy with its own name and focuses on its sport. And what's really in a name anyway?

Athlete Spotlight: William Becker



Anna Wiener/The Spectator

By TODD SCHER

Billy Becker is the definition of a two-sport athlete. He led the Pirates to four straight PSAL swimming championships, and he has also been one of the best pitchers on the Hitmen staff for the last three years. Not only is Becker an amazing athlete, but he is a strong leader. As captain of both the swimming and baseball teams, Becker is vocal and one who leads by example.

When asked what his

favorite sport is, Becker said, "I do not like baseball or swimming more than the other. On the high school level I am better at swimming than I am at baseball."

His numerous awards and accolades as a swimmer are indicative of the fact that swimming is his number one sport. He was named Co-Rookie of the Year as a freshman, won the award for Outstanding Achievement as a

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Surging Hitmen Target Division Title

By DAVID FELTON

"Obviously we would prefer to be 14-0 right now instead of 11-3, but I don't think anyone expected to go undefeated. The bottom line is that we now control our own destiny, which is the position every team wants to be in." These words of junior first baseman and catcher Ben Creed reflect the generally positive feelings of the Stuyvesant boys' baseball team, the Hitmen, regarding the 11-3 start to their season. The Hitmen currently sit atop the Manhattan West A division with rivals Martin Luther King, Jr. High School and Beacon School in

second and third place, respectively.

The Hitmen were able to separate themselves from the rest of the division by sweeping Beacon and defeating Norman Thomas High School in successive games last week. Prior to the first match-up with Beacon, both teams were tied for first place in the division with records of 8-3, and the contests between the two would, in all probability, determine the division champion.

The enormous pressure and significant playoff implications of the games against Beacon did not faze the resilient Hitmen, as they defeated Beacon 3-2 and 4-

1 in their contests. In the first match-up, the combination of overpowering pitching from captain and senior Billy Becker (2 earned runs and 7 strikeouts in 7 innings), the stellar play of senior and shortstop James Lainas, and untimely fielding errors from Beacon, all led to Stuyvesant victory. In the second battle, an epic performance from junior and pitcher Nat Young (1 earned run in 7 innings) enabled the Hitmen to be triumphant.

The primary reason for the team's success has been fantastic pitching. Led by Becker, the

continued on page 14

Ponstars Continue to Dominate

By KRISTEN NG

As the boys' tennis season rages on, the ever-enthusiastic Ponstars continue to achieve success time and time again. Finishing the season with a perfect 10-0 record, the Ponstars have the ability to make its championship dreams a reality.

Coming off last season when rival Hunter High School thwarted their goals of a division championship, the Ponstars were more than eager to capture the title that they believed was rightfully theirs. Along with attaining their goal, they avenged last year's losses to Hunter by beating them twice this year with scores of 3-2 and 4-1.

The team is more than pleased with their regular season performance. They are seeded third in the PSAL city tournament, holding fast on the tails of heavy-hitting schools Benjamin Cardozo High School and Brooklyn Technical High School.

Being seeded third both met and exceeded the Ponstars' expectations. "We were happy to finish 10-0, but not surprised," said junior Rajal Sharma.

"We pretty much fulfilled our expectations," said sophomore and singles starter Daniel Ostrometsky. He said, "I think most of us expected to do very well. I don't know if we had thought of a perfect season, but

that's even better. We just exceeded our goals."

The onset of the playoffs have brought with it success, anticipation, and new goals for the future. Already, new PSAL rules have presented the Ponstars with an unfortunate setback, affecting the starting lineup. The rule requires all starters to compete in at least half of the regular season matches in order to play in the playoffs. In the Ponstars' case, the number of required matches is five. One match short of the requirement, doubles starter and sophomore Remi Gottheil was deemed ineligible to compete.

Despite having to put Gottheil on the bench, the team is still confident in its abilities. "I think we can still win because we have excellent reserves," said Coach Timothy Pon. Unlike last year, when injuries took two key starters out of commission, everyone is healthy and playing at or beyond its potential. Even with the absence of first singles player senior Magdy ElMihdawy, the Ponstars were able to emerge victorious over McKee / Staten Island Technical High School in the first round of the playoffs.

The team admits, however, that the road to the top won't be easy. Ostrometsky said, "Our goal is obviously to go all the way in the playoffs, but we have

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Julie Gaymin/The Spectator

The Hitmen line up to greet the opposing team after a game.