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Student
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New DOE Policy Penalizes Saving

By ELINA BYSTRITSKAYA,
ANTHONY CHAN
and GEORGIANA YANG

The Department of Education (DOE) issued a new policy stating that any money rolled over from this year's school budget to next year's budget will be taxed at a rate of 50 percent. In the past, there were no taxes on any money saved by the school.

Principals around the city were notified on Wednesday, February 23 in a weekly e-mail from New York City Public School Chancellor Cathleen Black. The principals have until Friday, March 18, to decide whether to spend the money or have it roll over.

Principal Stanley Teitel has not finalized his decisions yet, but he plans to roll over the money despite the high tax rate. To make up for the lost funds, an estimated \$375,000 this year, Teitel is considering using a student's grade to limit the number of elective courses

he can take. The upperclassmen will be able to take two electives, but underclassmen may only take one elective per semester, excluding mandatory requirements for graduation. Seniors' classes will not be limited. Seniors will still be able to take nine instructional classes, excluding lunch.

"It would not affect those who choose to go into a profession that fits in the categories of core classes. However, those who want to experience ideas and knowledge outside that limited pool would be greatly affected [by the elective restrictions]," senior Michael Lavina said. "It is fair to give the upperclassmen more choices than the underclassmen because you need to establish a base foundation before you can explore newer topics."

"The point of electives is to broaden your knowledge and limiting how many we can

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Guest Speakers Visit During Respect for All Week



(left to right): Angel Colon, Shannon Taylor, Warren Donin, Larry Shaw, Judge Deborah Dowling, and Eleanor Archie.

By EMMA LICHTENSTEIN
with additional reporting by
PHILLIP GODZIN

Seven guest speakers visited Stuyvesant as part of Respect for All Week, a Department of Education initiative started in 2007 to combat all forms of intolerance prevalent in schools.

The speakers, who were invited by SPARK faculty adviser Angel Colon and selected by a panel of students and teachers, visited from Monday, February 14 to Friday, February 18 in Lecture Hall A. Their presentations for Respect for All Week, formerly known as Diversity Week, focused on the issue of bullying based on sexuality, race, and academic competitiveness.

"Last year, [Respect for All Week] wasn't something that was promoted in advance, so we didn't have a lot of time to prepare," Colon said. "This year, we

had an option of guest speakers, and the student population was interested in hearing speakers from every different part of the community."

Dr. Randi Herman, Vice President of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators and co-founder of the Respect for All initiative, spoke on Monday about the program's agenda. "It's not just the week that's important, it's the concept of respect for others and yourself. The week just illustrates the how-to's of respect and how-not-to's of bullying," she said.

She showed the 2003 documentary "Let's Get Real," which contained testimonies from bullied middle and high school students, as well as interviews with the bullies themselves. "Bullies are made, not born, and there are effective ways to deal with them," Herman said. "I'm hoping that students will consider advocating

for the victim of bullying, rather than doing nothing or just walking away."

Tuesday's presentation, with representatives from the Live Out Loud and Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) in attendance, focused on the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community. This assembly had the largest turnout, with over 200 students attending. The presentation also included a No Name-Calling portion, in an attempt to combat negative terminology and stigma associated with the LGBT community. Ryan Carlino, Community Initiatives Public Ally of GLSEN, provided statistics from the organization's National School Climate Survey and encouraged students to discuss their experiences with bullying.

Sophomore and Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Spectrum (GLASS) member Stanley Chang said, "A lot of the GLASS members noticed that some of the students in the audience were the bullies in our school, and I specifically recognized my bully. Now that those students have been exposed to the issue, they are more aware of what they're doing and how their words can affect people in negative ways."

Guidance counselor Meredith Negrin said, "People seemed very engaged and interested in what the speakers had to say. Their presentation especially resonated with me because I had just dealt with a few cases of cyberbullying, and it's good to know that something is being done

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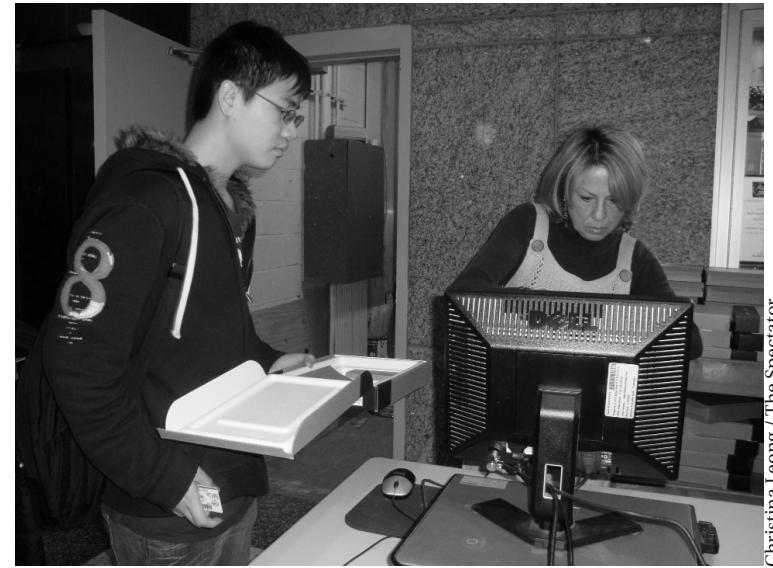
E-Readers Distributed to Freshmen

By NABANITA HOSSAIN
and EUGENIA SANCHEZ

In the past, teachers have managed to educate students using only a blackboard and a few pieces of chalk. Over the last several years, however, educators have begun to integrate technology into the classrooms. At Stuyvesant, teachers use NYLearn and eChalk to assign homework, assistant principals apply for grants through the Internet to buy microscopes for research, and the number of interactive SMART Boards in schools is on the rise.

This year, Stuyvesant will be using the Amazon Kindle, an electronic reader, in its classrooms as part of a pilot project including Amazon, International Business Machines Corporation (IBM), the City University of New York (CUNY), and the Department of Education (DOE). The purpose of the project is to study how replacing textbooks with electronic books affects students.

CUNY representative Burt Sacks contacted Teitel earlier in



A student scans out a Kindle to borrow from the school.

Christina Leong / The Spectator

the school year to inform him that IBM had proposed that CUNY use e-readers in classrooms. Sacks asked if Stuyvesant would be willing to be a test group.

"The main goal is to see what technology we can really use in the classroom. As an extra gift,

we might be able to get rid of textbooks," Principal Stanley Teitel said.

At a meeting between Teitel and members of IBM, CUNY, and the DOE on Friday, Septem-

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Controversial Video Causes Major Stir

By EMMA LICHTENSTEIN
and ANIKA RASTGIR

A racially and sexually inflammatory video was posted online by four Stuyvesant juniors, and one student from another high school, on Saturday, February 26. The five students, all of whom are white and male, filmed themselves rapping to the camera in one of their bedrooms. The video was sent as a Facebook inbox message to a junior African-American student. This student then posted the video onto her Facebook wall, where former Stuyvesant student and current Bard College sophomore Alexis Marie Wint, who is Facebook friends with the recipient of the video, noticed it. She contacted Principal Stanley Teitel via e-mail to voice her concerns. When she did not receive a reply, she posted the video onto her Tumblr page and on YouTube on Sunday, February 27, when it spread not only to the Stuyvesant community, but to the general public.

On Monday, February 28, the four Stuyvesant students each had separate meetings with their families and the administration. Each received a five-day superintendent's suspension, which is given in emergency situations when it is considered a risk for a student to be at school until a suspension hearing. Since then, none of the four students has been admitted into the school building without a parent or guardian. The case is currently being investigated by the Department of Education (DOE), and each student will have an individual court hearing on Thursday, March 10. The video is in the process of being transcribed and disciplinary measures will be taken according to the severity of each student's comments.

The students face a variety of disciplinary actions depending on the DOE's evaluation of the serious-

ness of the video. Chancellor's Regulation A-832 prohibits biased-based harassment, intimidation or bullying in any verbal, physical, written, or electronic form. According to the Citywide Standards of Intervention and Discipline B23, if the students are disciplined for using slurs based on race and gender, they can face a superintendent's suspension, which is a continued suspension for a fixed period of 6-10 school days. If the infraction is severe, the superintendent may extend the suspension for 30-90 school days.

They may be prosecuted under regulation B40, which is engaging in intimidating and bullying behavior through electronic communication. This includes using slurs based on gender and race. Depending on the severity of the actions, they might only have a parent conference and face in-school disciplinary actions, or they may face the highest level of punishment, which is a one year suspension. Since they did not turn seventeen prior to the beginning of the school year, they cannot be expelled from school.

The four students who posted the video did not respond when asked to comment for this article.

The student who received the original post, who is free to attend classes, is considering transferring out of Stuyvesant. "Everyone thinks that this is a joke, but it wasn't. I didn't think it was funny and I was really hurt," she said in an e-mail interview. "The only person I feel bad for is [one of the boys] because I know he's not a bad person and he apologized before this whole thing blew up. I feel really bad, but it's time the school got called out for the racism."

Wint had left Stuyvesant after her junior year. Her "grades suffered and [she blames] racism in the

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Arts & Entertainment



SING!

Scoreboard and reviews inside.

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News

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ber 24, four freshmen students, Benjamin Attal, Corey Brown, Ruihan Zhao, and Alexandra Gruzinova, were asked to look at many different e-readers, including Barnes and Noble's Nook, Apple's iPad, Google's Entourage, and Amazon's Kindle. The students, who were randomly selected by their social studies teachers, did not receive Kindles as part of the pilot project. "The Kindle seemed like the most obvious choice, because it was both interactive and easy to use," Brown said. "It was the only one that looked like a real page, and it lets you take notes and highlight important information. We wanted to be able to feel like we were looking at a real textbook," he said.

In an introductory training presentation on Thursday, February 3, 100 freshmen were presented with Kindles, which they will use solely for the spring term. Each e-reader contains textbooks from Living Environment, Global Studies, and Geometry classes. While students are not permitted to purchase additional texts for the Kindles, they are able to download free material such as historical documents, research papers, and games using the Kindle's Internet access.

The 100 students randomly selected by Assistant Principal Technology Edward Wong are ei-

E-Readers Distributed to Freshmen

ther from Dr. Daniel Piloff's Living Environment class, Brenda Garcia's Global History class, or May Herrera's Geometry class. The assistant principals of the Mathematics, Social Studies, and Biology Departments selected these classes for the project.

Assistant Principal Mathematics Maryann Ferrara said she selected Herrera, because "I needed a teacher with exactly three geometry classes, so

said.

"One benefit of having Kindles is that students can take out their Kindles during class and do problems from the textbook [on the Kindle]. It's nice to have a textbook in class, because math classes don't usually use them in class," Herrera said. "[One] difficulty is that the textbook [on the Kindle] is different from the other textbook [used last term]. The old textbook had a variety of problems at different levels, and had many higher-level [math] problems. This textbook just has many basic problems."

Assistant Principal Biology Elizabeth Fong picked Piloff, because "he is very versatile with electronic handheld devices," she said. "He is very cooperative and has a practical, in-depth knowledge about computers and electronics."

"I'm having the students use the Kindles much more than I've ever had past classes use textbooks, because the textbooks were simply too heavy to ask students to bring to class everyday," Piloff said. He has set up a New York Times Web page for the Kindles so his students can download, read, and discuss articles. "Where the Kindle really shines is in offering improved data availability, not only because it can be carried around easily and thus read on the bus and subway, but also because it can access the Internet," he said.

Garcia was chosen to use the

Kindles in her class, because she uses many primary sources and documents in her classroom that could be downloaded with the Kindle. However, the new textbooks have caused complications for Garcia, because she usually uses the textbook, MacDougal's Patterns of Interaction, in the classroom. However, the Kindles only contain Glencoe's World History: Modern Times. The book, Patterns of Interaction, was available electronically, but the publisher was not willing to work with Kindle on the project.

"There is great potential for the class and it is a good idea, but I haven't had time to gather materials and convert them," Garcia said. "There is a wealth of documents and handouts for me to use that are available, but they have not been edited for students and thus I have few opportunities to use them."

Students are ambivalent about the introduction of Kindles into the classroom.

Freshman Tiffany Oei, who received a Kindle this term, said, "Kindles are often a hassle to use, because it's really hard to go through different sections, but they're still worth it, because they're so much easier and lighter to take to class."

"The more advanced technology will help me form better learning habits and study techniques," said freshman Robert Melamed, who also received a Kindle.

While Kindles are now used in over 10,000 universities, Stuyvesant High School is the first public high school in the country to test them in the classroom.

"If this is the way we're going, I would envision that you would get a brand new [Kindle] as a freshman and you would keep the device for four years," Teitel said. He also mentioned that using Kindles would help conserve paper. "Now, we're going to be able to send documents to the students."

While IBM financed the initial costs for the devices and cases, it is questionable whether this school can afford to continue replacing textbooks with e-readers. Each Kindle costs approximately \$380, and each electronic textbook costs about \$70. "I can't afford to really pay a tremendous amount of money, because I still have to buy the Kindles," Teitel said. "When I buy the textbooks, I get four or five years out of that book. I can't afford to pay [for] eight hundred electronic books each year," he said.

Ultimately, the main goals for the Kindle pilot project are to make classrooms environmentally friendly and to incorporate technology into the public school system. "We're going green," Teitel said, "and we're making it easy for students, because if all your textbooks are carried in your Kindle, you can use them anywhere."

"The more advanced technology will help me form better learning habits and study techniques."
—Robert Melamed, freshman

I started from there. I thought that since this was her first year here, she wouldn't be attached to one specific textbook and she wouldn't mind trying a new [electronic] textbook," Ferrara

said.

JSA Team Succeeds at Winter Congress

In order to get familiar with the issues pertaining to the bills, members conducted research to support their arguments and created PowerPoint presentations, which were critiqued by their peers and then revised.

During the convention, each bill submitted and accepted by the JSA Northeast State cabinet was assigned to one of nine House committees. After passing the House committee, the bill entered one of nine smaller Senate committees. About a thousand students from schools in the northeast gathered to form these committees, which consisted of roughly 30 to 50 students.

During each debate, the writer of the bill acted as the main proponent speaker. After he or she had spoken, any delegate in the committee could act as the main opposition speaker. The debate then followed a pro-con pattern, allowing any delegate in the same committee to speak on any given bill.

At the end of each debate, the committee voted on whether the bill should be passed. If a three-fourths majority was met, then the bill underwent a similar process in one of the three full Houses and later the three full Senates, which gathered on Sunday. Each full House or full Senate was made up of 3 committees. After passing the full Senate, the bill became a law.

Out of thirteen total laws passed, two were proposed by Stuyvesant's JSA. One of these, a resolution mandating that the United States establish formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan, was sponsored by junior and JSA Vice President Isidore "Izzy" Hechkoff and sophomore Werner Zhanay. The other, which was a bill to open relations with Cuba, was sponsored by sophomores Alex Argyriou and Alfred Tsai. The other, which was a bill to open relations with Cuba, was sponsored by sophomores Werner Zhanay and Alex Argyriou.

nated the Best Speaker Award on either day of the convention. Freshman David Cahn won one award on each day of the convention, one from a committee and one from the full Senate, while his twin brother, freshman Jack Cahn, won one award.

The Best Speaker Award, the only award given out at JSA con-

"We had the most bills chosen, which means that we were in a great position going in. But at the same time, not a single member of our chapter had ever been to Winter Congress before"
—Izzy Hechkoff, junior and Vice President of JSA

ventions, was awarded to speakers who spoke the most persuasively and fluently. At Winter Congress, only one delegate from each committee, House, or Senate received an award. 24 out of nearly 1000 participants gar-

Courtesy of Izzy Hechkoff



The Stuyvesant Junior State of America team attended the JSA Northeast State Winter Congress, where they met all expectations and garnered three Best Speaker Awards.

By EDRIC HUANG

Congressional debates and law enactment are often regarded as impersonal processes performed solely by elected senators and congressional representatives. However, for students on Stuyvesant's Junior State of America (JSA) team, this is no longer the case.

Twenty-three Stuyvesant students attended the 2011 JSA Northeast State Winter Congress, an overnight convention held at Washington D.C. from Friday, February 11, to Sunday, February 13. Consisting of mostly freshmen, sophomores, and some juniors, the Stuyvesant JSA team went on to pass two laws in this mock congressional session.

Winter Congress, which is the second of JSA's three major annual conventions, involves a number of debates and mock trials that give students, who are referred to as delegates, the opportunity to discuss today's most controversial issues. Delegates debate whether to pass

student-written bills in an imitation of the actual American legislative process.

In preparation for Winter Congress this year, the first year the team attended the convention, Stuyvesant's JSA team submitted 15 bills, nine of which were accepted for debate at Winter Congress. The bills that were submitted included a bill limiting unemployment benefits, sponsored by freshmen Amy Wang and Amy Xu, and a bill promoting the institution of a nationwide smoking ban, sponsored by sophomores David Mui and Derek Li.

One of the requirements of Stuyvesant's JSA team is that every student has to write a bill, not just the most qualified. Senior and JSA President Brendan Huang enforces this policy because it makes the team "learn more about what's happening in the United States and in United States politics," he said.

Upon acceptance of the bills, each group, which consisted of two to three delegates, prepared for the competition.

Tsai believes that though the awards are important, they are not the team's main goal. "A lot of our strong delegates, they happened to be House chairs or Senate chairs, so they couldn't debate," Tsai said. "We did have a lot of first time speakers, so our primary objective wasn't about winning Best Speaker gavels necessarily. It was about exposing members to JSA and our legislative environment."

Stuyvesant's JSA chapter's future goals include attending frequent mini conventions within the Empire Constitutional Region (ECR), which is comprised of schools from New York and Connecticut. The team also plans on hosting a mini-convention at Stuyvesant on Sunday March 27 and creating a presentation for the Chapter of the Year Award at Spring State.

"JSA is being able to get up on stage and debate your bill. Winning and losing, it's not as big as a big of a factor," Huang said. "We really shouldn't gauge performance by how many awards they win, because everyone did well. Practically every group that submitted bills to Winter Congress, they were able to debate it. In a sense everybody wins, so I couldn't expect any better."

Math Team Continues Success at the HMMT



20 Stuyvesant students participated in a competition at MIT with the New York City Math Team.

By JOHN YUEN

At the Harvard-MIT Mathematics Tournament (HMMT), held on February 12, the New York City Math A team placed eighth overall, and two underclassmen from Stuyvesant placed among the top ten in the individual round. The New York City Math Team, composed of 32 students, 20 of whom are from Stuyvesant, traveled to Boston to compete in the HMMT. Stuyvesant students have been participating in this competition since 2007. This year, the event was hosted at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Stuyvesant math teacher and NYC Math Team head coach James Cocoros formed four teams, composed of the strongest math students from various high schools throughout the five boroughs to represent New York City at the HMMT. The teams are named Murph and the Magictones, Party Posse, Autobahn, and Dangerkitty.

The competition consists of three sections: the Individual Round, the Team Round, and the Guts Round. The Individual Round consists of six individual

tests where students must choose to take two of four Subject tests: Combinatorics, Calculus, Geometry, and Algebra. The two-team events, comprised of the Team Round and Guts Round, are the main events at the tournament.

There are two test versions available in the Team Round. Each team can choose to take either the "A team test" or the "B team test." The A team test is mostly composed of challenging proof-oriented problems. The B team test has simpler proofs and short answer questions. The B team test is worth roughly 50 percent of the A team exam.

Murph and the Magictones, the NYC A team, tied for second in the Guts round this year and the Party Posse placed fourth. The Guts Round is an eighty-minute team event with 36 short-answer questions on an assortment of subjects, of varying difficulty and point value. Murph and the Magictones placed eighth overall at the competition. NYC A team member and senior Taylor Sutton received the highest individual score from the NYC Math Team, placing sixth in the Algebra/Calculus Subject Test. The B team, also known as the Party

Posse, placed eleventh overall.

Several underclassmen performed particularly well. Freshman Richard Yip from Party Posse placed seventh in the Algebra/Geometry Subject Test. "[I] just worked hard," Yip said. "Make sure you're dedicated to [the competition]. If you do that, you're good."

Another underclassman who ranked among the top ten in the Individual Round was Sophomore David Lu. Lu placed fifth in the Algebra/Combinatorics Subject Test. When asked what he attributes his success to, Lu cited competition as a motivation for high performance. "There are people I want to beat on the math team and I do some practicing," Lu said. Lu is part of the C team, Autobahn.

"The underclassmen are really strong and really deep," Cocoros said. "Within New York City, Stuyvesant definitely is lucky to have depth of talent that we have and this year's freshmen are unbelievable."

Cocoros is continually impressed by the performance of the math team. "The talent group that Stuyvesant is able to attract really puts us on par with the best groups in the world," Cocoros said. "There really is a world class group of talent, [and] these events confirm that."

He believes that the students still need to keep working hard in order to maintain their success. "Unlike from two decades ago, the amount of preparation material that's out there...on the internet on how to problem-solve - more kids have access to that," Cocoros said. "If the kids here want to stay at the top, it requires a lot more work and diligence than it used to, which in the end is ultimately a good thing."

Cocoros hopes to bring this mentality to the final and biggest mathematics competition at the American Regions Mathematics League in June.

New DOE Policy Penalizes Saving

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take is completely defeating this purpose," sophomore Alisa Emag said.

The school will face budget cuts which might lead to the removal of electives. "I thought we were rolling over quite a bit, which would have insulated us from many major cuts," Teitel said. "Now, because half of it is going to be taken away from me, it may not be enough. We still may have to face a cut, no matter what we do."

Organizations, such as the Parents' Association, may have

frugal and saved money, were now being, the way I saw it, penalized," Teitel said.

Blumm agreed. "Principals are trying to conserve resources with the future of the school in mind," he said. "Smart saving has helped [Teitel] in the past, when our budget was slashed during the year and out of the blue."

Despite the ultimatum given by this policy, Teitel still believes strongly in not spending the money frivolously, choosing to buy student desks, new textbooks, and computers only if needed. He is persistent in letting most of the money roll over. "I look at it as to be as frugal as I can and not spend what I don't need to spend," he said.

Teitel is still uncertain of how this policy will affect the upcoming school year. "Until I see a budget, I can't even begin to think about what effect this may have on the student body," he said.

Students hope that the policy will not affect extracurricular activities. Freshman Glib Dolotov said, "If [the tax] money goes to only failing schools and we get none of the money back as funding or services, I'll be, to say the least, disappointed, as we will probably have to give up a lot in terms of extracurricular activities and not receive anything in return."

"When people come back every day knowing that they don't have only excellent academics to look forward to, but a thriving club, publication, or team, it makes the experience of being a student much more worthwhile and much less

"It was very unfair that schools that had done the right thing, been frugal and saved money, were now being, the way I saw it, penalized"

—Stanley Teitel, Principal

to step in to reduce the impact that the new policy will have on the school. "The role of the [Parents' Association] as a contributor to our school's finances will be even greater," Parent Coordinator Harvey Blumm said. "They do a very good job at fundraising, and help keep classes and programs from being cut."

The Alumni Association will also be open to providing additional funding. "We are assisting Stuyvesant High School as much as possible financially and we will be happy to continue to do so in the future," Henry Grossberg, Executive Director of the Alumni Association.

This policy was implemented, because more than 4,000 teachers were laid off last year, according to The New York Times article "Penalty for New York City Principals who Save," published on Thursday, February 17. The tax on school funds will go into a fund that will help prevent further cuts.

"Funding teachers is important," sophomore Amy You said. "But instead of taxing the school, [the DOE] should find other sources for this money, especially since we really need the money for clubs like Speech and Debate."

Other students noted the necessity of the high tax rate. "While we as students want our sports, extracurriculars, and electives, I would be willing to sacrifice those if it's a matter of our teachers staying employed," senior Monil Shah said.

Like many other principals around the city, Teitel wrote a letter of protest to Black. "It was very unfair that schools that had done the right thing, been

"When people come back every day knowing that they don't have only excellent academics to look forward to, but a thriving club, publication, or team, it makes the experience of being a student much more worthwhile and much less

stressful."

—Oren Bukspan, Student Union President and senior

Guest Speakers Visit During Respect for All Week

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about it."

"I gave the students some practical strategies they can employ for confronting LGBT bullying to make Stuyvesant respectful and inclusive of all students, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression," Carlino said. "I hope students learned more about the prevalence of anti-LGBT bullying and will utilize some of the tips I provided."

The topic of Thursday's presentation was social respect and diversity. Brooklyn Supreme Court Justice Deborah Dowling, who spoke during Respect for All Week last year, presented a history of court cases that resulted from racial differences and encouraged students to respect each other regardless of background or cultural differences.

"The line between what is appropriate and inappropriate often gets blurred because as young people, what you may think is just a joke may invade someone's personal space or human rights," Dowling said. "It's easy to engage in racial stereotypes when you have no experience with a person's culture."

Executive Director of Blacks and Jews in Conversation Shan-

non Taylor also addressed racial stereotypes with the help of professional stand-up comedian Larry Shaw.

"[The presentation] was meant to curb hostility and misunderstandings, because many people don't realize that what they say is hurtful and that they can be targets of these stereotypes themselves, somewhere down the road," Taylor said. "I asked students if they liked humor that was funny or insulting, communication that was sensitive or joking, because whatever form they give, they will get."

"Jokes that most people would find funny and may seem harmless actually do cause harm," junior Swara Saraiya said. "I learned to be more careful with what I say, because a simple remark that everyone thinks is funny may still perpetuate and fuel racism."

Phuong Nguyen, Stuyvesant's mental health counselor and a social worker from the Youth Counseling League, discussed the differences between healthy and unhealthy competition during Friday's presentation. "It's no secret that Stuyvesant is a competitive environment, and it appears to affect most students in a daily, if not moment to moment, basis when so much of student time and energy is focused on test scores and grades," Nguyen

said. "Students need to make sure they develop a well rounded life so that if they are having difficulty in one area, they don't feel like it's the end of the world."

The guest speakers hope that the discourse fostered by Respect for All Week will improve students' lives. "The only way to really change is through dialogue," Dowling said. "[Respect for All] plants the seed and lays the foundation, so people can be more perceptive of the outcome of their actions if they are confronted with these kinds of situations. It will certainly have an impact in the future."

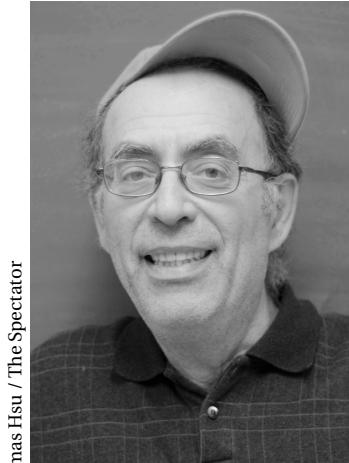
Students and faculty plan to expand the program to make a greater impact on the Stuyvesant community. "Next year, there should be more stakeholders, as far as more students, teachers, and clubs that can do things during or after school," Negrin said. "That way, many people can reap the benefits of Respect for All."

In this vein, Colon hopes to better Respect for All Week for next year. "Respect for all is every day," Colon said. "With more school involvement, open-mindedness and awareness, we will hope to see improvements and break down the negative anti-social behaviors that contribute to discrimination."

stressful," senior and Student Union President Oren Bukspan said. "It would be unfortunate if any policy cut into that aspect of Stuyvesant."

News

Donin Receives Teacher of the Year Award



Thomas Hsu / The Spectator

History teacher Warren Donin received the Teacher of the Year Award from the Association of Orthodox Jewish Teachers.

By BERNICE CHAN
and ANNIE CHAU

Social studies teacher Warren Donin won the Teacher of the Year award from the Association of Orthodox Jewish Teachers of the New York City Public Schools (AOJT).

Every year, AOJT bestows the award on one teacher in the New

York City public school system who has either fostered a better understanding of Judaism or brought innovation, creativity, and a high quality of instruction into the classroom. According to the AOJT Web site, the recipients of these awards do not have to be Jewish, but they must be educational leaders who "have shown sensitivity to the needs of Jewish personnel and Jewish students."

Donin said he was "humbled and flattered" when he was informed of his achievement in an official e-mail sent on Monday, January 3. "It brushed me because I really never won anything through teaching," said Donin, who currently teaches United States History and Prejudice and Persecution and has spent 31 of his 42 years in the New York Public school system teaching at Stuyvesant.

He was nominated for the award by committee members of the AOJT who he had worked with for several years. When AOJT asked Donin's colleague, social studies teacher Michael Waxman, for his input on the nomination, Waxman expressed his support.

"The organization and Jewish community at large recognizes his steadfast and unwavering dedication to fostering a warm and friendly environment in which both Jews and non-Jews can learn more about Judaism," said Waxman, who won the award in 2007. He is the only Stuyvesant teacher aside from Donin to have received it.

Donin founded Club Moshiach, Stuyvesant's chapter of the Jewish Student Union, in 2006. The club meets every Tuesday and is open to all students, not just those of the Jewish faith. Its mission is to preserve the culture, history, and religion of Stuyvesant's Jewish youth and to encourage them to live an active Jewish lifestyle. It focuses on providing students with a deeper involvement in the Jewish community by educating them in school about issues of Jewish pride, identity, and connection to Israel.

"We reconnect [the students] to their Jewish roots by informing them of religious holidays, religious customs, and their responsibilities toward one another," Donin said.

In addition, Donin is an active member of Not Just Blacks and Jews in Conversation, an organization that has been bringing members of the legal system as guest speakers to high schools and colleges across the country for the past 16 years. Since Donin first invited individuals to speak 15 years ago, the organization has increased its involvement in the Stuyvesant community, and people now visit monthly to discuss issues of race, ethnicity, gender bias, and law. The organization has brought a wide variety of speakers to Stuyvesant, including candidates for political office, such as mayoral candidate Anthony Weiner and judges Deborah Dowling, Eileen Natelson, and Shannon Taylor. They "promote cultural understanding and foster the sense of tolerance we should have for one another," Donin said.

Donin has also trained over 50 student teachers, including social studies teachers Josina Dunkel and Debra Plafker.

"I'm very thankful for his mentoring and how fundamental he was in my education," Dunkel said. "He made me the

teacher that I am."

In addition to his work outside the classroom, Donin plays a unique role in the classroom. Students feel that Donin has had a great impact on their studies in history.

"He's so passionate about the subject he teaches, and that gets everyone in the class participating," senior Eric Kiss said.

Students noted, in particular, the way Donin uses student-drawn cartoons and animations to stimulate discussions, encourages students to learn history beyond the limited scope of the curriculum, and leads the class with unwavering enthusiasm.

Junior Patricia Cheng agreed. "He makes his lessons interesting, and you can really tell he wants us to learn," she said.

Donin will receive the award on Sunday, March 27 at a luncheon hosted by the AOJT at the Renaissance Ballroom in Borough Park, Brooklyn.

"He won because of his years of dedicated service to students and his ability to engage students in history," Assistant Principal Social Studies Jennifer Suri said. "Kids love him."

Controversial Video Causes Major Stir

continued from page 1

school," according to an interview she gave to Fox News. She claimed she wanted to "receive a more fulfilling education at an early college, in addition to escaping the many acts of overt as well as latent racism," Wint said in her online public statement.

"You kids are so foolish! Do you not know what putting something like this on the Internet in 2011 means for your future?" Wint commented via Facebook. "I am the person that is going to make sure this haunts you for the rest of your life. I am the person who is going to follow this out until everyone involved is disciplined in some way shape or form. I am the person who is going to make sure Stuy changes." The video and its accompanying comments have since been removed from Facebook.

"They decided to make the video as a joke, which is why some of the people in the video made negative comments about their own race. Although the comments in the video were irresponsible, they were not meant to be malicious," said junior Nick Ryba, a friend of the students who posted the video. "These four students aren't racist. They have friends of every race."

"Wint's claim that racism at the school was bad enough to compromise her grades is self-righteous and absurd," senior Huei Lin said. "If she had not intervened, some kids would probably have gotten a few laughs out of the video and that would have been the end of it."

Other students sympathize with Wint's experiences. "Generations of Stuyvesant students have been faced with this kind of difficulty, not to this extent, of course, but they have been persecuted, because of their race. Some of them eventually left because of that, so what [Black Student League (BSL)] has been trying to do is fight this whole stigma of, 'Black students are this,' 'Black students are that,' and get away from all the racial stereotypes," senior and Black Student League President Randy Arthur said.

"Reporting it to the faculty was the right thing to do because saying things like that was completely out of line," Arthur said. "Those statements are hurtful and racist and I don't think they belong in anyone's mouth. They definitely don't belong [at] this school."

The incident has since been picked up by the media. Fox News covered the event and interviewed

several students. "I'm upset about what Fox did to Stuyvesant. The tone was, 'Look at what this supposedly elite school really is.' It isn't. When I denounced the video on Fox, I made sure to say that it wasn't a real issue," junior Jonathan Lessinger said, who was interviewed by Fox News. "It was a tiny percentage of the student body acting stupidly."

"I respect that [Wint] was trying to draw awareness to the issue of racism in high school, but she had no idea what she was doing and handled it horribly. This incident says nothing about the Stuyvesant community and the reaction against us is uncalled for and unfair," sophomore Jake Soiffer said.

Junior Andzelika Dechnik said, "I don't think they should have recorded such a video in the first place. I think it's fair that it was brought to the attention of Mr. Teitel but I don't think it was necessary for it to get so public."

"The kids in the video are irresponsibly throwing around inflammatory remarks in a despicable, juvenile way and they should have known that posting their video would lead to wider exposure and offend some people," Lin said. "But these kids are not at all representative of the student body and I think it's disgusting the way the media immediately labeled Stuyvesant as a school overrun with racism and bigotry."

"In the past, when something like this came up, the faculty didn't do much about it," Arthur said. "It was pretty much just a slap on the wrist and they shoved it under the doormat. Now that it's bringing so much attention, I think that something will finally get done."

The Chancellor's Regulation mandates that certain follow-up actions must be taken: the school must post Respect for All posters in accessible locations, distribute the Respect for All brochure to students and parents annually, designate Respect for All staff members, train staff members on how to deal with biased-based bullying, and make students aware that retaliation to such incidents is prohibited.

As a result of this incident, the school has asked the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to provide guidance and training. English teacher Annie Thoms and Mathematics and Computer Science teacher Ashvin Jaishankar, along with 26 students, have been chosen to attend workshops on three successive Wednesdays.

"We want to educate the students about being careful with what

they say and what context they say it in. The video strikes me as being more about ignorance than racism. The reality is that you may not have meant to be hurtful, but the problem is how people perceive it. This is the issue that I hope gets addressed in the workshops," Jaishankar said. "It's also kind of disconcerting that the people working for Respect for All worked so hard and this incident on the heel of it makes them wonder if the students didn't hear its importance. It's supposed to help us understand the prides and joys of people and why we should recognize them."

"Stuyvesant is committed to ensuring that all students are treated with respect and that they are educated in a safe, secure and bias-free environment. We want you to know that we are taking this matter seriously and will take all necessary and appropriate disciplinary and follow-up action," Teitel said in a letter sent out to students and parents. He urged students to exercise judgment in their communications regarding the incident, as on-line postings may worsen the situation.

Teitel declined to comment on the situation any further, because the investigation is ongoing and the court hearings are pending.

In order to move forward and improve conditions in the school, School Prevention of Addiction through Rehabilitation and Knowledge (SPARK) counselor Angel Colon plans to post more information about diversity, cyber-bullying and racism around the school. Information can already be found on the second, fifth and seventh floors. He also plans to visit middle schools around the city along with students from the Black Student League (BSL) to encourage students to apply to Stuyvesant and answer their questions about diversity and racism issues in the school.

Colon realizes that "there's going to be a lot to repair in this. A lot of damage was done," he said. "Everyone should have an equal opportunity in terms of everything Stuyvesant has to offer. We should be supporting one another, not hurting each other." He hopes that the initiatives, most of which were planned before the video was posted, will help students ask themselves "questions on where [they] stand in terms of [their] acceptance and in terms of diversity and friendships with other cultures," he said.

First Floor Door Broken During SING! Practice

By DEVON VARRICHIONE
with additional reporting by
SABID MANICK
and NICOLE ZHAO

An all-day practice for SING! was ended early on Friday, February 25, after a student, who requested anonymity, damaged one of the doors of Stuyvesant's first floor main entrance. The senior, who found herself locked out of the school after returning from a lunch break at approximately 1:30 p.m., kicked at one of the doors and broke the safety glass. As a result, all students in the building at the time were asked to leave for the day. Senior SING! faculty adviser and math teacher Melissa Protass made the decision to vacate the school.

"I learned [that the glass had been broken] from a custodian coming back from lunch. Any time the custodians are upset with us after hours they can tell us to leave," Protass said. "I asked [the custodians] if they wanted me to send the kids home, and they said yes."

The individual who kicked the door was not immediately identified. "The security guard on duty asked me if I wanted them to look at the videotape and arrest the person who did it. I told them an arrest wouldn't be necessary, but I did think she should be disciplined in some way," Protass said.

The senior said that the incident was accidental. "In hopes of someone else noticing a bunch of girls outside, I kicked the door. I had no idea how fragile that piece of glass was," she said. "It was just a spur-of-the-moment thing. I never intended to do it, and I feel terribly about it. I admitted to doing it soon after. I really did not want to break anything."

"I don't think she meant to break the glass, but I don't think you can qualify it as an accident," Protass said. "There is a doorbell. I was sitting in the lobby. Why are we kicking any glass at all? It's just a bad decision [...] There should be consequences."

Protass and Coordinator of Student Affairs Lisa Weinwurm, who declined to comment, decided to cut the senior from SING!. She will also be required to pay for the cost of replacing the glass and perform community service around Stuyvesant, though the specifics have not yet been decided.

A member of the custodial staff, who requested anonymity, confirmed that a new safety glass has been installed.

Many students expressed annoyance at having their practice time cut short. Junior SING! Band Director Jonathan Lessinger said, "I was set up with the band in the cafeteria, and there were a few dance crews there, and suddenly Mr. Jaishankar walked in and told us we had to leave. Everyone had to end rehearsal two hours early. Our already limited time was further shortened by this act of carelessness."

"We understand that it is the school's policy to comply if the custodians want us out, but it was really annoying to lose the three remaining hours. Overall, however, I think that we made up for it by just working harder during other practices," Junior SING! Producer Connor Justice said.

Other students did not believe the punishment the senior received was justified. "I understand where the administration is coming from, but they made her pay for the door, so wasn't that enough already? They didn't need to cut her from SING!," senior Eileen Lam said. "It's not like she intended to damage the school property, and without intent, then it's just an accident. It's really not right to kick her out basically the week before SING! after all this time we've spent together."

The producers of Senior SING! declined to comment.

Principal Stanley Teitel said the matter was settled. "Restitution was made and she'll be doing community service. That's enough," he said.

Features

The Evolution of SING!

By ARIELLE GERBER

For 38 years, SING! has been an honored tradition at Stuyvesant, one which is considered by many to be essential to the Stuyvesant experience. However, no tradition can continue for years without undergoing some form of change. Over the years, the production has expanded from a small show to one that involves over a thousand students, annually. Inside jokes and external references have come in and out of fashion, as have heckling and poking fun at the SING! themes of other grades. New dance crews, such as Step and Hip-hop, have become standard, as have song parodies and pop-culture references. One of the most significant trends can be seen in the SING! themes themselves, which, over time, have migrated from the realistic and gritty to the fantastic and ridiculous. Below, a look at select SING! themes that highlight this transition.

1985: Realism Reigns

The SING!s of this year were closer to social commentary than goofy fun. "Senior SING! Behind the Mask," centered around a tour of New York City given to two narrow-minded boys from Buffalo by two Stuyvesant girls. The tour featured "gritty" sights such as drunks, break dancers, and rappers, sights not often seen in a tourism guide. "Junior

SING!: Mistofoles Misfits," tackled teenage acceptance issues as well as the threat of nuclear war, which still loomed over the nation towards the end of the Cold War, when these productions were put on. "Soph-Frosh SING!: A Murderous Affair," was a less-serious subway murder mystery, but it was still a grounded and cohesive theme. The SING! performances were tied together at the end, when the three casts came together to sing "We Are The World."

1989: A Healthy Dose of Fun

SING! themes this year were less realistic and serious than the themes of the past, but they had not yet begun to stray towards randomness. "Junior SING!: Quest for Time," transported Stuyvesant students back in time to the Wild West, where they met train robber Jesse James and company. The notably sillier "Soph-Frosh SING!: Spells, Scrolls, and Crystal Balls," centered around a Gypsy-themed competition between couples for a set of magical scrolls. Senior SING!, however, was closer to the gritty and serious themes of the past, telling the tale of the intertwining lives of several psychiatric patients and their psychiatrist, who was insane herself. This SING! had unrealistic and fantastical elements, such as a dramatic graveyard scene, complete with ghostly faces swirling through the background, but it

explained these with the psychiatric troubles faced by the characters.

1996: The Future Lies in the Past

1996 was the year of the historical SING! themes, as productions transported viewers to various historical eras. Senior SING!, set in the Middle Ages, was a tale of kidnapping and rescue, featuring princesses, castles, and evil wizards. While not realistic, per se, it still remained true to

No tradition can continue for years without undergoing some form of change.

fantasy elements commonly associated with that time period. Soph-Frosh SING! was a tale of the rise and fall of a corrupt leader, set in the fictional Ancient Romanesque land of Piggus. Junior SING! was another Western, depicting a newcomer's journey through a western town

and his quest for love and self-discovery. This SING! drifted farther towards the current trend of common storylines that could be applied to any other theme, but it was still a self-contained, cohesive story.

2002: Historical Humor and Hyperbole

Historical themes continued this year, but the premises were more far-fetched than in previous years. Senior SING! depicted the struggles of a 1980s bowling alley that holds a tournament to replace money lost through a burglary. While not straying too far from reality, the production took a lighter attitude than previous SING!s and was closer to a sitcom than a drama. Junior SING!, which was once again a western, centered this time on a sheriff's attempt to root out a thieving, murdering prostitute, through a hoe-down. Soph-Frosh SING! was a drama of murder and betrayal, set in the Victorian era as food moguls from the soup, cracker, and sausage industries competed for a monopoly over the food industry as a whole. The Victorian murder drama was well-received, but the food-centric plot was criticized as a little too ridiculous, showing that focus on realism had not yet completely vanished.

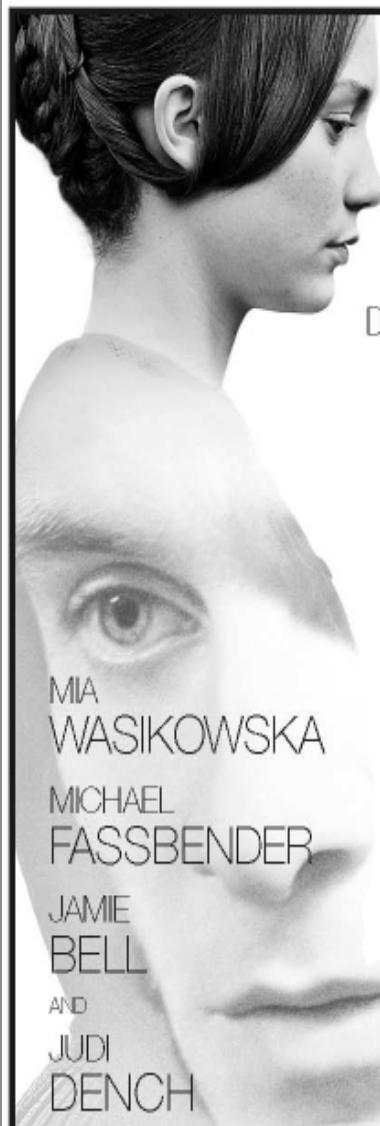
2008: The Rise of Random

Wacky and unrealistic themes

had made their full emergence by this point. Soph-Frosh SING!, with the theme of Clowns in Space, revolved around a cast of characters that seemed to have nothing to do with each other. The characters included clowns, nerds, hillbillies, and a couple of racial stereotypes loaded aboard a spaceship together. When the spaceship crash-landed on a foreign planet, the characters had to deal with the difficulties presented by the inhabitants of the planet and their deities. On the other side of the spectrum was Senior SING!, which took viewers inside the human body to witness a battle between the organs and an evil invading virus. While the story was by no means realistic, the characters were still very clearly related to each other. Junior SING! found a middle ground between the two with a board game theme, which pulled characters from unrelated board games, including Monopoly and Candyland, into one imaginary board game universe. The combination of unrelated characters who fall under one unified theme has since become a common feature of SING! scripts.

It is inevitable that a tradition as central to the Stuyvesant experience as SING! will change and evolve over time. As new students come in each year, they will bring their own spin on the traditional SING! format, leading to a production as unique as the students crafting it.

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Features

Someday This Generation

By MADHURIMA CHOWDHURY, REBECCA GAEBLER and BEBE LEGARDEUR

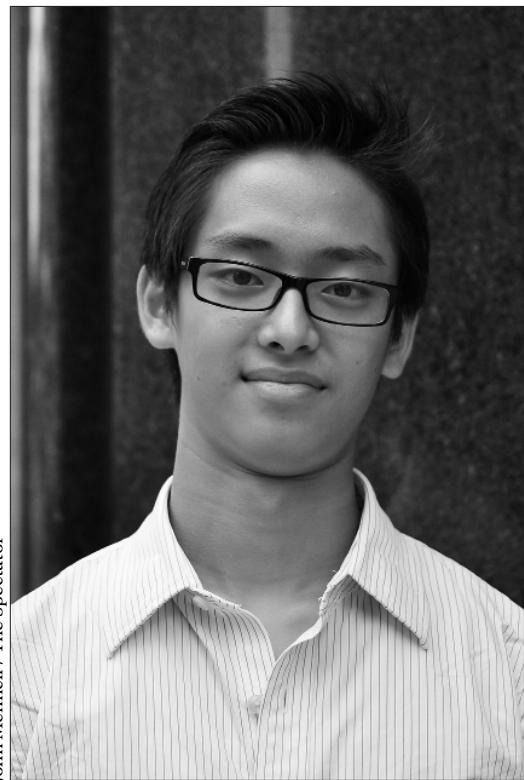
While some students en-

joyed the sun and some recreation during last year's spring and summer vacations, five Stuyvesant seniors, James Thompson, Mao Hu, Milo Beckman, Joseph Park, and

Dmitri Teplov, worked diligently on their research projects for this year's Intel Science Talent Search., which is America's oldest pre-college science and math competition, requiring

students to submit original research to be reviewed by professional scientists. Their projects dealt with various topics, ranging from protein crystals to supermarket navigation to the

genetics of worms. Their hard work paid off when they were each announced as a semifinalist of the esteemed competition, winning \$1000 for their achievements.



John Mennell / The Spectator

Joseph Park, Mathematics Intel Semifinalist.

Joseph Park

Improved Upper Bounds for the Steiner Ratio

Senior Joseph Park, who worked in the field of applied mathematics, did a project in which he developed tools that allow a user to minimize the distance traveled by finding the most direct route. His work focused on improving the upper bound for the Steiner Ratio, which is the ratio between the highest and lowest solutions for a certain problem. "My program would, for example, help people figure out the quickest way to get to a company's headquarters," he said. It not only achieves better results, but can also include an infinite number of points involved.

Starting the project on the

Steiner Ratio was a bit serendipitous. Park did not intend to enter the Intel competition, and only did so after he became interested in the topic, almost by chance. "I came across an fascinating geometry question in a Princeton Mathematics Competition involving the Steiner Ratio," Park said. He solved the problem and was inspired to research further.

There were times during the process that Park was stumped. Unlike a science project, where an experiment is designed to test a hypothesis, in "math research, you may find yourself not knowing what direction to go in," Park said. After hours of mistakes and revising his method, Park ultimately finished his paper, putting final touches on it in his senior year.

Park encourages other

students to follow their interests and undertake a research project. "A lot of kids are hesitant about starting math research projects because you don't know exactly or what you will end up proving," Park said. "I know I was." Despite some hesitation, he decided to pursue his interest. Initially, his objective was to "get a research paper out there," but the result was much more than he expected.

Park credits his involvement with the math team for his success because it increased his interest in the subject and drove him to participate in math competitions. In college, he hopes to continue this interest in using math for practical ends by studying applied biomaterial engineering.

Mao Hu

Characterization of the egl-42 Gene in the Nematode Worm C. elegans

Mao Hu's interest in human psychology and neurobiology led him to an organism without a true brain of its own: a worm.

For Hu's project, he investigated the egl-42 gene, which controls neurons that release a hormone known as serotonin, which modulates egg-laying behavior in *C. elegans*, and mediates many fundamental behaviors, such as appetite and sleep in humans.

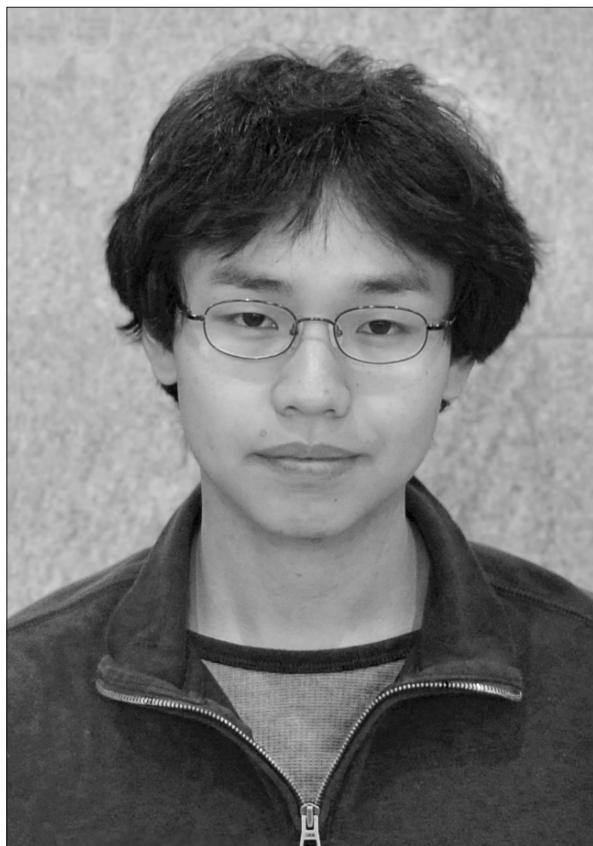
"The egg-laying behavior in the nematode worm *C. elegans* is a model for serotonin signaling, and when the egl-42 gene is mutated, it causes a specific failure to release serotonin in neurons that cause

egg-laying," Hu said. "Therefore, understanding the egl-42 gene leads to understanding of the factors that regulate serotonin release."

Hu chose this as the topic for his Intel project because it gave him the opportunity to study a hormone with a large role in the functioning of the human brain.

"I find neurobiology and the study of how people think and behave fascinating," he said.

For Hu, the pleasure of studying a topic that interested him was augmented by working in an environment of like-minded individuals. "Working in a lab with real scientists, getting lunch with them, hanging out and talking about science and the projects we're working on and all sorts of other things—it's just fun," Hu said.



John Mennell / The Spectator

Mao Hu, Biology Intel Semifinalist.



John Mennell / The Spectator

James Thomson, Biology and Computer Science Intel Semifinalist.

James Thompson

Shape Detection System for the Screening of 2-D Membrane Protein Crystals

Senior James Thompson intertwined crystals with computers to create a computer system that is able to "search large numbers of images from an electron microscope to detect crystals of protein based on their shape," Thompson said.

Thompson worked at a lab with a New York University professor, who grew flat crystals of protein molecules in artificial membranes, a process called protein crystallization. This process is used to study the structure of the membranes of many different types of proteins that are often the targets of drugs to treat diseases. The problem with this process is

that it is difficult to form the proteins correctly, and scientists often have to rely on trial and error.

According to Thompson, this means scientists have to look "at thousands of images by eye, which is really hard and boring."

Thompson went to the lab three days a week for all of last summer and tested his program with images from old crystal screenings. To complete his project, Thompson had to learn new programming languages.

"I learned the Python programming language as well as an image-processing library called openCV," Thompson said.

With Thompson's program, a computer can now find the crystals for the researcher, making crystallography much more efficient.

To complete his project, Thompson had to learn new programming languages.

Features

Will Rule the Population



John Menell / The Spectator

Milo Beckman, Mathematics Intel Semifinalist.

Milo Beckman

The Supermarket Theorem

For his project, Senior Milo Beckman learned the best way to travel through a supermarket. He first found out about the Science Talent Search when he was invited to the Intel Math Research class, which is taught by computer science teacher Peter Brooks.

Beckman's idea was inspired by the famous Art Gallery Problem. "The Art Gallery Problem is a classic problem in computational geometry which asks how many cameras may be necessary to guard an art gallery in the shape of an n-sided polygon such that every point is visible to some camera," Beckman said.

After seeing the unique solution for the Art Gallery Problem using graph theory, Beckman decided to apply the concept of the problem to a different situation to see what the outcome would be. Beckman took a two-dimensional floor plan of a supermarket and devised a method to locate any item in the store using the shortest route.

"We want to find a path such that any point inside the supermarket is visible

to some point on the path," Beckman said. "More importantly, we wish to know how [short] this shortest path can ever be, in relation to the perimeter of the supermarket."

After the first months of work, Beckman had completed most of the proof. "After that, the work on the problem was just patching up holes in the proof and finding more holes in the patches," Beckman said. Over the summer, he worked with another friend to fix most of the issues. Weeks before submitting the paper, a New York University Courant Institute mentor helped him finish.

"It came out exactly as I had hoped it would," Beckman said. "It was a complete and impressive piece of work."

Not only did he earn the monetary prize, he also gained valuable experience. "The biggest thing I got out of participating in the Intel Competition was completing a solid piece of work in a field I'm interested in," Beckman said. "I've worked on similar problems and proved results of similar level in the past, but this was the first time I'd actually gotten a presentable product out of it."

Dmitri Teplov

Target RNA Binding and Crystallization of the Quaking Posttranscriptional Regulator

Imagine starting a rigorous project with a bump in the road before even taking your first step. Senior Dmitri Teplov began the journey to completing an Intel project a couple of steps behind everyone else, having started work on the project in his second semester of Junior year.

"Since many of the people in the [Intel] class had already spent a semester in it working on their projects when I joined, I had to exert myself to catch up," Teplov said. "At one point, I had to write the entire 20-page first draft of my paper virtually overnight."

Initially, Teplov had no plans to enter the Science Talent Search until he enrolled in the Intel research class. He started the project during the spring break of his junior year and spent the entire summer working at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center's laboratory complex, where both of his parents work. By the time he submitted his work to STS, he had worked on the project for over a half a year.

"Although my study didn't reach completion before I submitted it, I am set on continuing my work independently, just as I had before entering the Intel STS," Teplov said.

His study deals with figuring out the three-dimensional molecular structure of a RNA-binding protein that prevents the nervous system from degenerating. According to Teplov, the reduction of the protein's expression has been linked to numerous neurological disorders.

"As with all pharmaceutical drugs or treatment plans involving proteins in the human body,

a 3-D structure is required for a more complete understanding of their molecular arrangement and in-detail functionality, which is what I worked on throughout my research," Teplov said.

He first became interested in the Intel competition when one of his long-time friends, who worked in the same laboratory, submitted a similar project and became a finalist.

"His accomplishment was the first time Intel came to my attention, and probably the main inspiration for my entering the competition," Teplov said.

Since he worked in the laboratory before beginning his Intel project, Teplov was familiar with the RNA-binding protein.

"The project itself was something no one else at the lab wanted to do, so it was delegated to me in order to make something of it, which I tried, to the best of my abilities," Teplov said.

Though he mostly worked in the laboratory and at home, Teplov still found the Intel class to be useful for getting ideas from his peers and Intel Senior Research teacher Dr. Jonathan Gastel.

"I generally [attended] the Intel class in to get ideas and constructive feedback on work I had already done, which neither my parents nor the lab could provide, so I owe a huge portion of my success to my friends and their criticism, and of course, Dr. Gastel himself," Teplov said.

Despite the help from others, the limited time, work from school and work for the Intel project took a toll on Teplov.

"There were certainly moments when I felt completely bogged down with both schoolwork and the research, and unable to meet the rigorous deadlines imposed by the class," Teplov said.

However, Teplov learned to manage his time and put as much effort into his project as he could.

"When working on any project of a caliber of my own, there comes a point when one just feels the urge to get it done for the sake of getting it done," Teplov said. "It's a pivotal moment where I had to pull my stuff together and make a final effort on polishing the project off to the very best extent that I could, instead of ducking out and making a haphazardly done job of it."

The hard work paid off in the end, when he was named a semifinalist. Dmitri was more surprised about his achievement than the other Stuyvesant semifinalists because he checked the results much later.

"Anyone would agree that it feels good to gain some recognition for something one puts a ton of work into," Teplov said.

As these seniors will be graduating in three months, a handful of juniors have begun their journeys hoping to achieve at least the same success as these five semifinalists.

"I suggest that [future Intel STS applicants] start well ahead of time as I had, and gather plenty of viable data for their project prior to entry in the STS, even if they aren't exactly sure how to apply it or put it together," Teplov said. "Dr. Gastel is extremely intelligent and helpful in giving ideas for what to do next, but it would definitely be a safe bet to know what to write about and the concepts behind it before even enrolling in the class."

Juggling schoolwork and doing the project can be hard but Thompson, Hu, Beckman, Park, and Teplov have shown that it is possible.

"What it boils down is simply honest, hard work, and more importantly, ideas of one's own," Teplov said.



Dmitri Teplov, Biology Intel Semifinalist.

Joann Lee / The Spectator

Features

Just Staying Home: An Alternative to the All-Nighter?

By TEN-YOUNG GUH

Whether due to mix of a long commute, an extracurricular activity and plenty of homework, or simply procrastination, Stuyvesant students often spend hours up late, either sleeping far less than the recommended nine hours or not sleeping at all. Most find enjoying the next day at school more difficult than usual. Some wish to stay home, if only their teachers and parents allowed them.

"There's a certain point in the semester [when] you can't take it anymore," junior Calixta Lee said. "If you don't take a [day off], you're just going to get sick."

Lee is among the few who in fact stay home rather than limp through classes. She believes that coming to school with compromised health and mental alertness would not only overwork the body but also cause the student's grade to suffer. Her parents agree staying up late will lead to weakened physical health. Despite parental approval, Lee still随 withholds the reason for her absence from her teachers. Given students' lack of sleep, Lee believes that the faculty should empathize more with them. "Teachers should understand that sometimes, we are just too overwhelmed with the stress and school," Lee said.

Fortunately, some teachers do understand the pressure that students have to face daily. Senior Grace Zhou notes the com-

passion of certain teachers during the day before an SAT test. "Most teachers knew that it was SAT. I think they understand as well, but I had my parents write a note stating that I was at home studying. They signed my note without questioning it. It's interesting, because I had teachers asking us the week before how many of us would be out Friday when there is [an] SAT coming up, and students would raise their hands, and the teacher would then plan their lesson accordingly," Zhou said.

Junior Frankie Choi also believes that the benefit of staying at home and resting outweighs the disadvantages of missing a day of school. "It is justifiable, because I don't think that students can actually go to school five days a week for seven hours," junior Frankie Choi said. He has stayed home a couple of days since the beginning of the school year. The first time was during this past winter recess, which he admittedly said he did not inform his mom. However, the day preceding Chinese New Year he asked his mother for permission to stay home because he felt that he had too much homework and wanted to take a day to finish it. Surprisingly, his mother complied. "I don't think it's that common, because the majority of our school are Asians, and I know that a lot of Asian parents are very strict," Choi said.

"[Faculty] should allow it if parents allow it," Choi said. De-

spite this, he wrote on his absence note that he had a "raging headache." Although Choi had to make up for all the work he missed during his absence he felt that it was worth it "because I was able to sleep approximately six more hours than I would if I had gone to school. As a result, I was refreshed and was able to get my work done," Choi said.

Junior Jeremy Cohen had 13 absences last term, typically on Mondays, due to illness or lack of sleep. Cohen participated in multiple school plays and had to balance rehearsals with schoolwork.

"I did it last term too much," Cohen said. "I wouldn't encourage it, but your health should come first."

Many parents realize that their children are under a lot of stress and need to relax. They care about their children's health and some even encourage their children to stay home. "My parents fully support my staying home. In fact, I'm the one who never wants to stay home. I do sports, a lot of extracurriculars, and just an insane amount of activities in general. Plus with APs, they think I'm going to buckle under the stress, so they encourage me to stay home once in a while, and by once in a while, [...] whenever I want to," junior Cecelia Shao said.

Lee believes "mental health day" absences are not very prevalent at Stuyvesant due to the overall diligence of Stuyvesant students. "They know that for

every day they're absent, they're going to miss a lot of work," she said. "They have a lot of catching up to do at home."

However, Cohen simply believes that some students simply can tolerate less sleep than other students can. While he needs at least seven hours, his own friends "can sleep three hours and then be fine," Cohen said.

Health and physical education teacher Rhonda Rosenthal emphasizes the importance of sleep. "It's very important [that] people really should learn what sleep is about, and very often, sleep gets used against being awake, and sometimes it's used to make up for the things people wouldn't do when they were awake," Rosenthal said. "The physiological basis for sleep is restorative, so we need to sleep in order for all the cells to do well in the body, for regenerative processes to take hold."

She believes that illness is a legitimate reason to stay home but she questions whether students are actually managing their time well enough to ensure time for sleep. "I see that there are students who get enough work. Is something interfering with them doing their work? Do they not know how to manage their time in a way that makes them up late at night when they really don't need to be? Are there other things that are affecting them, such as they have worries and concerns that could affect them too?" Rosenthal said. Stu-

dents have to discern what their priorities are. If participating in an extracurricular activity affects schoolwork and sacrifices sleep, then a decision has to be made.

Junior Jun Chen is an example of a student who is able to manage his time well and has never taken a day off from school to work, study, or sleep. He likes to be organized and uses his time resourcefully. "I try to find summer internships, and whenever I have free time, I take SAT practice tests, usually during weekends. I do my work efficiently, since I usually turn off the computer, and I immediately start homework when I get home from afterschool activities," Jun said. He believes that staying home to rest is not productive and that people have to learn to make the best out of their situation. He advises his peers "to try to focus and avoid anything or anyone who distracts you, basically step up the game and accept the responsibility. You do whatever homework teachers give, [and] study for mandatory tests," Chen said.

Health is important and students should take the time to refresh their mind and bodies. However, good management of time can help prevent fatigue and the need to take a "mental health day." There are three basic steps to get a good night of sleep: 1. Sign off Facebook, 2. Turn off the television, 3. Hit the hay.

Taping it Together

wallets at Stuyvesant. She has sold an estimated 30 wallets, and made from 50 to 60 wallets in total. Her wallets are made with two inner sections for pockets, unlike conventional store-bought wallets that typically come with a coin pouch or extra pockets for business or identification cards. However, this does not bother O'Grady's customers, who are more interested in the wallets' other merits. For many of the students, the wallets' designs are the real appeal.

"I have an appreciation for creative art, and Hannah's wallet was definitely a curio that I wanted to have," senior Shelley Li said. "The designs and colors of the duct tape are what attracted me to buy them, and I like homemade accessories."

O'Grady uses 14 different types of duct tape, varying in color and pattern. Simple designs like stripes and animals are transformed by her meticulous attention to detail. One of her favorite wallets is embellished with a zebra shaped entirely out of strips of tape. Each of its stripes were cut out differently and lined up neatly at varying angles to create a realistic image of a zebra in motion. A wallet like this can be purchased from O'Grady for \$10.

For two extra dollars, O'Grady will make a personalized wallet, tailored to the buyer's interests

and tastes. She is most proud of her customized wallets because she "can include really personal elements and inside jokes," O'Grady said. "I was making a wallet for my friend and I thought

"Hannah's wallet is eye-catching. I never forget it anywhere, because it's so memorable."

—Daniel Frankel, senior

about what she likes. She's on costume crew, so I gave her wallet a spool of thread, a needle, and a pair of scissors. It's easier to make a pleasing wallet when you know who your customer is."

"Each wallet is unique and re-

flects something about the owner. People's faces literally light up when she hands over the finished product," said senior Audrey Fleischner, whose wallet O'Grady custom made with brightly colored petals.

Along with having creative designs, O'Grady's wallets are thin and compact, while still being able to store a multitude of items. Customers have also noted their durability.

"I have had it for about a month and a half," junior Cecilia Shao said. "It's still in great shape, which says something about its durability because I leave everything from all my receipts and my ten different cards and coins and bills in my wallet."

For O'Grady, profit is not the main motivation. Instead, she sees wallet making as a way for her to channel her creativity. However, finding the time to make them often poses a challenge. It takes her only 15 to 20 minutes to create the basic structure of the wallet, but depending on the complexity of the design, it can take her over an hour to decorate it.

Regardless, she still hopes to keep making wallets, either as a hobby or as a business. "I'd like to think that in college, I'll still have time to make them," she said. "I have so many ideas with no chance to carry them out."



Senior Hannah O'Grady makes and sells duct tape wallets.

By YING YU SITU

For rushed Stuyvesant students, hastily cramming ID cards and spare change into pockets is a common morning occurrence. Such was the case for senior Daniel Frankel until he made the switch to one of senior Hannah O'Grady's handmade duct tape wallets.

"I never really used wallets before purchasing Hannah's, and I would just use my back pockets instead," Frankel said. "Hannah's wallet is eye-catching. I never

forget it anywhere, because it's so memorable."

O'Grady first started making wallets when she was eight years old. "A babysitter came over, and she couldn't figure out what to do with [my brother and me]. There was a roll of duct tape lying around, so she taught us how to make duct tape wallets," O'Grady said.

In the seventh grade, she started a business that lasted throughout her middle school years. However, it was not until last year that she started selling

750

145

8

8

85

24

Number of SING! t-shirts ordered

Number of SING! sweatshirts ordered

Number of times juniors have won SING!

Number of times soph-frosh SING! has beaten junior SING!

Number of applicants for SING! judge

Total number of SING! judges

Thanks to: Tammuz Huberman, Eli Rosenberg and Reema Panjwani

Humor

These articles are works of fiction. All quotes are libel and slander.

Soph-Frosh SING! Nominated for Tony Award

By JAMES FRIER

The American Theater Wing announced its nominations for the 65th annual Antoinette Perry Awards for Excellence in Theater, also known as the Tony Awards, on Sunday, March 6. Among the esteemed nominees was Stuyvesant High School's Soph-Frosh SING! 2011, a controversial powerhouse of a drama that premiered on Wednesday, March 2.

The production, part of Stuyvesant's annual SING! competition, has been hailed as a groundbreaking work of theater, the likes of which have not been seen since the days of William Shakespeare. "I left the theater feeling like I had just climbed a mountain. It was an ordeal, but a very rewarding experience overall. I initially believed the individual scenes to be pointless and irrelevant, but I soon recognized the underlying existential conflicts. The play is not about finding a theme for SING!, but rather, about finding meaning in one's existence in a post-9/11 urban dystopia," theater critic Ben Brantley said. "I haven't seen a show this deep since Hamlet on Ice."

The play does away with traditional plot structure, instead presenting a stream of consciousness style hodgepodge of seemingly unrelated scenes. It also makes numerous references to its predecessors in the SING! competition, cleverly alluding to other works of drama. Though some critics call this technique "stealing," others praised the show's clever use of homage and called the show "meta-theater."

While the average theater-goer might not appreciate such a radical, avant-garde technique, the more experienced drama connoisseur will recognize the seemingly poorly-crafted plot as a pointed com-

mentary on the conventions of modern theater and a meditation on the disconnectedness of American culture.

"I thought I kind of knew what was going on at one point, but then, bam, new scene, and I have no idea what's happening," senior and audience member Michael Chen said. "When what appeared to be a Klansmen walked onto the stage, I completely lost it." The musical accompaniment amplified the intensity of the script, underscoring emotionally tense moments with a highly experimental collection of sounds that push the boundaries of the definition of "music." The band's sound has been compared to the work of celebrated and controversial composers John Cage and Philip Glass, both of whom contributed to radical advances in music through the use of atonal noise and dissonance.

Similar in style to the band were the various dance crews, whose brave artistic decisions contributed greatly to the quality of the play. The arrhythmic movements and strongly interpretive choreography, reminiscent of the work of Diaghilev, provide a striking commentary on the nature of the theatrical experience. The dances seem to taunt the audience, testing the bond between performer and viewer.

Viewers seem divided in opinion about the production, with some recognizing its artistic merits, and others passing it off as just another lackluster Soph-Frosh SING!. "That play had less depth than a T-Pain song," junior Brian Walsh said.

Despite the controversy it has generated, the show is regarded by critics as a favorite to win a Tony at the ceremonies in June.

Respect for All Week Commemorated with Celebratory Rap Video

By JAMES FRIER
and ELI ROSENBERG

To commemorate the end of Respect For All Week in New York City public schools, a group of five students released a rap video titled "We Respect" on Friday, February 18. Filmed from a webcam in the bedroom of one of the students, the video has struck a chord with online audiences. Underground rap producer Lil' X, after viewing the video on Facebook, pushed it into prominence.

"It's great to see that the Stuyvesant community cares so much about acceptance and diversity," Principal Stanley Teitel said. "It really seems as if Respect for All Week has taught the students what the racial makeup of our school cannot: that not only do minorities exist, but they must be treated with civility, too."

The rap contains lyrics about respecting others and ending prejudice and racism. "What you gonna do / When you see discrimination? / Run and tell a teacher / Help save the nation," the video proclaims. The video was produced by Stuyvesant juniors, who, after hearing the morning announcement about Respect for All Week had the sudden urge to rap about the issues at hand.

The video has gained the attention of the media, who have praised the efforts of the school, which they claim fosters an environment "conducive to respect and acceptance." Reporters from media outlets around the country have come to interview Stuyvesant students, who were hailed as "not only some of the brightest, but most tolerant students in the country" by Lil' X.

New York City Schools Chancellor Cathie Black visited the school on Friday, March 4th, and presented the students who produced the rap with the highest award the Depart-



"Actor" and Maverick Thespian George Kaiser.

Harry Popick / The Spectator

ment of Education has to offer: a signed photograph of Chancellor Black and a lifelong 50 percent discount at any school cafeteria.

The video is also becoming very popular amongst students nationwide. The YouTube video currently has over 20,000 views, and its official Twitter page has over 10,000 followers. With posts like "Gay is okay" and "Don't forget to not use violent racial slurs today!" the page is a breeding ground for civil equal-

ity, and anti-racist sentiments are becoming increasingly popular in American schools. "The rap, with its smooth flow and dirty beats, has students all over the country hopping on the Respect for All bandwagon," Black said.

"This is the biggest thing for equality in this school since Stuyvesant became coeducational in 1969," Teitel said. "I am really proud of these kids for standing up for all that's good in this world."

Programming Office Relocates to Siberia

By JAMES FRIER
and ELI ROSENBERG
with additional reporting by
JOSEPH L. STEELE

Due to the recent influx of students seeking program changes, the programming office has, as of Friday, February 25, moved their base of operations from room 239 to a clandestine bunker in the Zheleznogorsk region of northern Siberia.

Rodney Lyons, a new spokesman for the office, said that the move is intended to make the already elusive program changes "exponentially more difficult to attain than was previously thought possible."

The office's new headquarters is located in a section of desolate tundra previously inhabited only by the indigenous Tatar peoples of Siberia, and is reinforced by four-foot-thick, lead-lined concrete walls, which can withstand a nuclear

Rodney Lyons, a spokesman for the office said that the move is intended to make the already elusive program changes "exponentially more difficult to attain than was previously thought possible."

assault. The fortress-like building also features a state-of-the-art security system with the lunch voiding capacity of five Mr. Tillmans, and is also guarded by five of Stuyvesant's elite school security officers.

"The exact location of the [inaccessible fortress] is classified" Lyons said, "meaning that any student seeking even the simplest of program changes will have to trek through miles of arctic wilderness."

If any student manages to locate the building and survive, he or she will then be made to wait on a line that rivals those at Terry's during seventh period, only to be told by a grumpy bureaucrat that they must travel back to Stuyvesant, and get the signature of their guidance counselor before they can make even the simplest of program changes.

The land, formerly a Soviet nuclear testing ground, was purchased by the school administration from the Russian

government following requests from the programming office staff for a more "secure environment in which to conduct [their clandestine] affairs," Assistant Principal Technology Edward Wong said.

"Our staff has been very happy since we've made the move out here. The only regular visitors we have are polar bears, who, unlike students, aren't always bugging us to give them a lunch period, or get them out of the freshman algebra class we mistakenly programmed them for" Wong said. "In fact, the Staff has not made a single program change since we relocated, so things have more or less stayed the same."

However, the programming officers now have time to pursue their other passions, which were previously hindered by their obligation to make up excuses as to why they couldn't help students. These activities include heated matches of soli-

taire and a game in which they compete to give one student the worst possible schedule, often utilizing midday frees, the absence of a lunch period, large floor differences between consecutive classes and the legendary 11th Period.

The office is just beginning to reap the benefits of its new location. With its productivity growing closer to an astounding zero percent every day, the office looks forward to a future of skiing, snow-shoeing, and seal hunting while their new computer handles all actual programming. "In fact," said Lyons, "the only students we've seen since the move have been those kids in Polar Bear Gym."

The office is optimistic about their future in the frigid wasteland. "This is just the beginning," Wong said. "Now we just need to work on getting the guidance office to move out here as well."

Editorials

STAFF EDITORIAL

Crisis of Community

The factory bell sounds. Under the harsh fluorescent lights, an assembly line jerks into action, filling thousands of identical molds. There is no craftsmanship nor individuality on display; the final product will do its job, and do it well, but consumers will soon grow tired of seeing the same thing over and over, material molded into a shape it wouldn't have become naturally. At the end of the day, most of the workers leave, knowing nothing about what they have just made. As the lights go out, the products lie, abandoned in their boxes, about to be sent into a world they have not been crafted for. Unless change comes soon, this is what Stuyvesant High School will become.

The administration speaks as if this were not the case. Stuyvesant is famous for being a math and science school, but prospective students are told that it fosters all academic interests and offers guidance within a tight-knit community, despite the school's size. Stuyvesant's mission statement, written by the Student Leadership Team, acknowledges that "Stuyvesant is deeply rooted in Math, Science, and Technology," but also claims that the school is an "environment which will nurture and enhance the special academic talents of the students." However, with the impending implementation of new graduation requirements, downsizing of community-building activities like SING! and the growing distance between students and their guidance counselors, it is clear that not all the "special academic talents of students" are being accommodated.

In order for students to explore their individuality, they must have a consistent place in a cohesive community. Homeroom is supposed to be central to this idea, providing us with a class filled with the same people for four years so we can build strong relationships. However, because homeroom only takes place once a week, or sometimes every other week, students do not take this time seriously, instead treating it only as a ten-minute period in which to receive paperwork. Unless critical information is handed out, like new schedules, many students don't even bother to show up, instead choosing to relax elsewhere with friends. Few pupils appreciate that homeroom is one of the few places to find consistency in their chaotic lives, because the administration has taken few steps to make homeroom more of a community.

Similarly, the Big Sibs program, integral to incorporating new students into Stuyvesant, is not receiving the administrative support it should. The only time for Big Sibs to interact with their Little Sibs is during homeroom, but with badly planned homerooms, contact between the two groups is limited. When documents are distributed, Big Sibs have to split their time between their own homeroom and that of their Little Sibs. Starting this year, only a few Big Sibs are allowed in their freshman homerooms every week, due to complaints from teachers that they do not attend their own homerooms. Even the most devoted Big Sibs have little opportunity to do their jobs: help their Little Sibs feel included, secure, and enthusiastic about going to Stuyvesant.

Not only have freshmen lost this chance to get to know upper-classmen within a support system, but the student body as a whole is almost a stranger to its guidance counselors. Especially in a school infamous for its stress levels, it is important to have a constant, supportive adult whom one can trust. However, as with the Big Sibs

program, lack of contact between the two groups has diminished the system's effectiveness. As it stands, guidance counselors only schedule interaction with specific students during SSR interviews, supposedly because there are too many students to make actual guidance more personal.

Especially in the case of the SSR, guidance counselors require nuanced knowledge of each individual student. However, with SSR conferences of less than a period, and no other time established for one-on-one contact – or even group contact – how can guidance counselors provide a reasonable in-depth view of an incredibly varied group of teenagers? When it comes to personal relationships with the person who informs college about students' identities beyond the Stuyvesant mold, the current system is useless.

Of course, in order to be a student outside of the Stuyvesant mold, opportunities are needed to break free. SING!, traditionally the biggest school-wide event of the year, is the prime example of this, but recent actions by the administration have proven its lack of support for this activity in lieu of strict academics.

For the majority of SING!'s history, students have had a month or more of school-supported time for preparation, including time after school to rehearse. In recent years, however, the allotted time for SING! preparation has been dropping: last year, we were allowed only five weeks. This year, it has dropped to three. The administration says that this is so no one is kicked out at the last minute due to low grades in the first marking period, which are often caused by putting SING! before schoolwork. It is true that many students' grades suffer due to SING!, but cutting preparation time only increases the ill effects: those involved have to stay after school for hours every school day, and come into school during weekends and vacations. The administration prefers they prepare during vacation because this doesn't interfere with their schoolwork, but it becomes difficult to coordinate rehearsals with different students having outside commitments during this time. Sure, students will only be overstressed for three school weeks, but those three weeks are much more intense and laborious than they need to be.

SING! has become an extreme trial to take part in, and this onus provides hugely discouraging to students who would otherwise enjoy SING! as the creative and communal outlet it is. Further restrictions of creativity, such as censorship of scripts with little chance for appeal, prove the administration's aim is not to encourage and enjoy SING! as a relevant part of the Stuyvesant community, but to create another factory-style ordeal to slog through.

At a school that prides itself on excellence, offering fewer classroom options for a sizable portion of the student body is inexcusable. As the mission statement states, Stuyvesant is supposed to be a math and science school. Even so, colleges stress that the best student is one who is well-rounded. Based on the currently offered courses, Stuyvesant is not amenable to well-rounded students who enjoy arts and humanities alongside math and science.

This disparity is apparent in the English Department. While math oriented students are able to take higher-level Honors classes from freshman year, the earliest anyone with a passion for English can be in a class full of equally motivated peers is a junior AP class. Electives are notoriously hard to get into because they are among

the most popular in the school. Music and the Fine Arts also suffer from a lack of electives beyond freshman year. The only chance for studying music theory is an AP class, which is daunting to most sophomores. AP Art History is not offered, and beloved electives like Watercoloring are in danger of being cut. Meanwhile, ten APs are offered in the math and sciences, and their countless electives are unlikely to be eliminated any time soon.

The decisive factor for many students who come to Stuyvesant is the plethora of advertised opportunities offered for all types of students. They know they will receive a solid education, but can also work seriously in studies such as photography, ceramics, and, as SING! is supposed to show, theater. This has previously given us an edge over similar schools, like Bronx Science. However, this distinction will be hindered by new graduation requirements for the class of 2015, which will make a fourth year of math mandatory, eliminate the 5-Tech requirement, and phase out classes such as Ceramics and Advanced Woodworking.

These new requirements do not cater to those who are artistically inclined. In foisting these policies upon us, Principal Teitel is blatantly ignoring a large percentage of the student population that does not see its future in engineering or physics. Not only will these new requirements force students to take courses they are not interested in, ultimately leading to lower grades and greater stress, they will also will reduce options for learning. The purpose of high school is to discover one's interests, and one of the best aspects of Stuyvesant used to be the variety of courses and types of students, but this new curriculum will only succeed in stamping out what makes this school special.

Fixing these issues will not only result in greater student happiness, but an improved image for the school. Revitalizing homeroom is essential to rebuilding Stuyvesant's community. With meetings scheduled weekly or even daily instead of biweekly, and including activities led by guidance counselors and Big Sibs, homeroom would give students the chance to make lasting friendships and gain something meaningful. The relationships and skills built in these revamped homerooms would go a long way toward building a stronger school community that understands the differences among its members. Most importantly, the administration must understand that qualitative activities—participation in SING!, a penchant for humanities, or a love for the arts—are just as important to some students as robotics or working in a lab are to others, and involve just as much effort.

There is a reason why hand-crafted items are valued above factory-produced replicas, and the same is true for people. We need a richer high school experience, with chances to explore varied areas of interest. If we cannot be secure in our school community, how will we fit into the global community, let alone the global marketplace, which relies on more than the ability to derive equations? In effect, we are a nerd school: Stuyvesant students take pride in their abilities and talents, even beyond math and science, and the school should make an effort to encourage this, not hinder it. A smart kid is a smart kid, whether in math or history. The academic world won't look down on us if we place everyone on equal footing.

The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



"The Pulse
of the
Student
Body"

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The Spectator

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The Spectator will now accept unsolicited Op-Ed pieces written by outside students, faculty, and alumni. These columns, if selected, will be published in The Spectator's Opinions section. Recommended length is 700 words. Articles should address school related topics or items of student interest. Columns can be e-mailed to specreaderopinions@gmail.com.

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

Write a letter to the editor and e-mail it to letters@stuspectator.com or drop it in The Spectator box in the second-floor mail room.

FOR THE RECORD

- Marsha Kononenko's name was misspelled in "A Tradition in Need of a Spark."
- Cheng Xing's name was misspelled in "Science Olympiad Team Qualifies for States."
- The actor on the far right of the picture in "The Marriage of Bette and Boo: Snapshots of a Broken Family" is freshman Andrei Talaba.
- "Machine learning techniques" are incorrectly identified as "machine based warning techniques" in "Alumnus Zach Frankel wins Rhodes Scholarship."

Opinions

The Solomon Column: We Shall Overcome



Mostafa Elmahdy / The Spectator

By DANIEL SOLOMON

As Black History Month draws to a close, many of us have had a much-needed refresher course on the saga of the Civil Rights Movement. On television, hour-long specials have explored the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: his non-violent teachings, his tenacious fight against discrimination, and his martyrdom at the hands of an assassin. Radio programs have recounted the 1963 March on Washington, replete with recordings and reminiscences from the protest. At Stuyvesant, we have listened to the Black National Anthem over the loudspeaker and discussed the struggle to end segregation in our classrooms. However, on most of these occasions, the battle for social justice has been treated as if it were a thing of the past, as if it were won eons ago.

Unfortunately, racial inequality persists—and it is felt acutely in material matters. During the recession, people of

color have suffered far higher rates of unemployment than have whites, have been dragged into the depths of poverty in larger numbers, and have seen many of the economic gains they made over the last decade wiped out. Even before hard times hit, blacks and Latinos were in a tenuous socioeconomic position, facing a job market that was difficult to navigate and educational inequities that prevented many from climbing into the middle class. Some have foolishly chalked up their ails to laziness, while others have denied that their problems are real; both views are wrong.

The ranks of the marginalized have grown considerably over the past 30 years, swelled not only by minorities, but also by working poor and middle class whites. These people have seen their standard of living erode, their pensions shrink, their jobs shipped overseas, and their entire way of life change dramatically. Until the credit bubble burst, they were

able to maintain the illusion of financial security, piling up debt to sustain regular household spending, mortgaging their modest homes to send their children to college, and putting everyday purchases on plastic. Many were content to blame their troubles on immigrants from Mexico, the urban elite, or Washington. Whenever they felt uneasy about their position in society, they would look to the ghettos and barrios throughout the nation and have a derisive chuckle at the expense of the African-American or the Hispanic, mocking his different speech, mannerisms, and economic station. This hate has historical roots: rich Southern planters pitted indigent white farmers against black sharecroppers and factory owners stoked conflict between European immigrants and the ex-slaves who found their way North.

Then as now, it is only tribalistic instinct that stops the rowdy inner-city youth and the staid blue-collar father from joining together to fight their shared enemies: corporatism masquerading as capitalism and a new fascism wrapped in the flag. Indeed, income inequality is at its highest point since the height of the Gilded Age with the top one percent taking home 24 percent of the nation's annual earnings, a rate more similar to that of Argentina than to those of Western European countries. This obscene concentration of wealth has placed even more power in the hands of giant corporations, which look out for their own interests without any regard for

the greater good. Accordingly, these companies have poured millions into political campaigns to elect their hacks and

governorships and legislatures throughout the Union. They have already begun to advance their war on working families and a retrogressive agenda designed to bring the United States back to the 1890s, before basic workers' rights were recognized, before the social safety net was created, and before a progressive income tax existed. In one of the most alarming moves, Governor Scott Walker of Wisconsin has tried to ram through a budget bill that would strip public sector unions of their collective bargaining rights and cut the pensions and health-care benefits of civil servants.

This shot across the bow has proved to be a bridge too far. Tens of thousands of protesters have converged on the State Capitol in Madison, making their presence known with shrieks of "Kill the bill," shouts of "Freedom, Democracy, Unions," and sing-alongs of "We Shall Overcome." Workers have turned out in other states as well, raising their voices in objection and fighting for a better future. The crowds are heterogeneous ones; black, brown, and white citizens stand together in shows of unity, surmounting the racial enmity that politicians have played upon for years, in scenes that would have made Dr. King smile. That was the cause of his life, creating a society where men would not see color, but commonality. In the end, the March on Madison and the March on Washington, rallies for economic opportunity and displays of people power, are really the same thing: movements for social justice.

Then as now, it is only tribalistic instinct that stops the rowdy inner-city youth and the staid blue-collar father from joining together to fight their shared enemies: corporatism masquerading as capitalism and a new fascism wrapped in the flag.

make the government do big business's bidding.

These corporate cronies prevailed in a number of contests last November, capturing

An Offer You Can't Refuse



Sofia Pidzraiio / The Spectator

By ADAM SCHORIN

Since the start of the school year, the Stuyvesant Administration has focused an unnecessary amount of energy and resources on cracking down on marijuana abuse in and around the school building. Students found smoking in the bathrooms, on the bridge stairs, or around the alcove have had their ID cards confiscated and the police have even come to the school to search or interrogate suspected smokers. In wasting time to deal with the marijuana madness, the administration has allowed another serious health threat to endanger the lives and minds of students: fast food. Fast food poses a greater threat to the health of the student body than does smoking weed, and the school must take steps to address this issue.

In the cafeteria and at nearby lunch hotspots, such as Terry's,

McDonald's, and Subway, fat-filled foods like pizza, French fries, and tuna melts are some of the cheapest options available to a student with a small allowance. Two-or-three-dollar pizza bagels are consumed in extreme quantities while the seven-dollar salads are rarely chosen from the menu. At Subway, a 6-inch veggie-patty sub is more expensive than a foot-

are limited to a slice of pizza and fried chicken. For those who are willing to pay the full \$1.50 for a cafeteria lunch, there is an optional fruit stand at the end of the lunch line. Piled on the stand are bag-sealed, dry, browning apple slices with a long past expiration date, which seem about as healthy as the rest. Though this is a start, Stuyvesant has clearly only scratched the surface of this pernicious health issue.

Just two blocks away, students frequent another cheap high-fat establishment: McDonald's, the godfather of the fast-food empire, appeals to its student consumers with uniformly cheap prices and calorically overwhelming menu items, such as the Big Mac, McFlurry, and McGriddle. Each one contains over 25 grams of fat per serving. These cut-rate concoctions, as well as those on the renowned Dollar Menu, show clearly why fast food makes an offer that is hard to refuse.

It's like a twisted MasterCard ad. Deep-fried onion rings? \$1. A pizza bagel? \$1.99. And a fruit salad? \$5.50. But shouldn't a healthy future be priceless? With only a small incentive to purchase more expensive, albeit healthier meals, the obesity rate among young adults is bound to skyrocket.

If Stuyvesant wants to curtail unhealthy habits among its students, it should first focus on healthier breakfast and lunch options instead of simply removing options that are most obviously harmful. By offering advantage cards that provide

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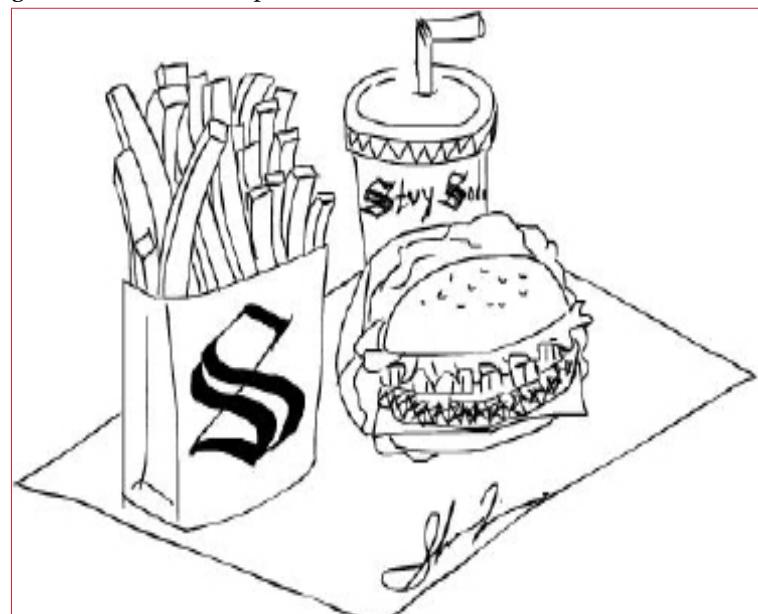
long 1140-calorie Chicken & Bacon Ranch sandwich.

Though the lunch room took a small step forward when it took "dollar fries" off the menu, it still has a long way to go in combating fast food. Now the available "dollar lunch" choices

discounts for foods that are low in fat and high in nutritional

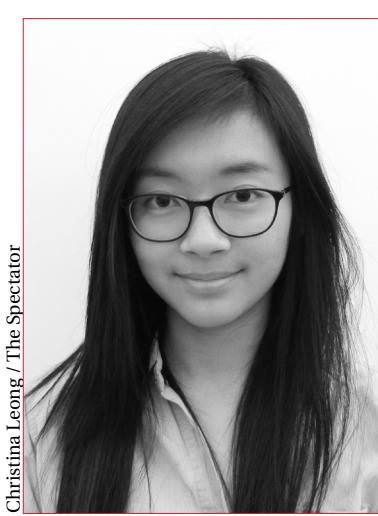
Stuyvesant has clearly only scratched the surface of a pernicious health issue.

value, the administration would give students a cheap alterna-



Shannon Zin / The Spectator

Opinions



Christina Leong / The Spectator

By EVA LI

As I take the subway, walk to school, or even do something as simple as watch television or go on the internet, my mind is overwhelmed with the amount of advertisements, movies or commercials that mainly include Caucasians. Not only is that insulting to those who aren't Caucasian, but it gives off a sense of superiority. To add salt to the wound, not officially commemorating Lunar New Year, an important holiday for many Asian-Americans, also seems to stress American superiority. These are just two practices that contribute to the overall lack of ability to express one's ethnicity in America.

I moved to the United States from China when I was two and a half years old, knowing only

Mandarin. However, as soon as I was placed in the New York educational system, both my parents and the school began to stress learning English as fast as my ability would allow. Soon, I knew enough English to shed my supplementary English classes. However, along the way, I forgot the majority of my Chinese and began to favor speaking English more. I started to watch American television shows, make American friends, and eat American food.

The impact of this acculturation was not felt until my high school years. Ironically enough, I was placed into the native Mandarin class at Stuyvesant. At the beginning of my junior year, we were taught about the holidays and cultural activities that go on in China throughout the year. As my teacher taught us in Chinese, I sat frozen in class, partly because I cannot understand Chinese too well, and partly because I started to wonder why I did not know all of this in the first place. Was my primary culture subconsciously substituted with another one, just because I had moved to a different country?

Every time I go back to my hometown, Shanghai, I feel more at home than I do anywhere else. However, because I was brought up in America, the language barrier and cultural differences are stifling. It's difficult to communicate clearly with my relatives in Shanghai, and it saddens me to

see that they have to try so hard in order to get a message across to me, which makes me feel like I'm disappointing them every time there's a miscommunication. They also try to accommodate my tastes, but this is very difficult for them, because much of what I prefer cannot be eas-

considered Shanghai a sanctuary for me, but it feels, at times, as if I am not even welcome there.

The lack of freedom to express my Chinese culture and the inability to connect to those back home leaves me in a difficult state of mind—am I Chinese or American? And if I am considered Chinese-American, am I not in an uncomfortable standstill between two distinct cultures? The term "Chinese-American" implies a 50/50 divide in my ethnicity, which is simply not the case if there is no ease of celebrating where I've come from. If I don't feel accepted in America, where the Western style of life is primarily celebrated, and if I don't feel accepted in China, where I falter in my Asian side, I am left hopelessly confused.

Ethnicity is a large part of what makes people who they are, and expresses a lot about where we have come from. It gives people a deeper connection with their ancestors, relatives, and immediate family, along with people from their country. It is a shame to abandon all of that, and an insult to one's heritage.

Ideally, one would search for a balance between the two, where both sides meet in a new form of identity. To do that, one must embrace both sides wholly and not shut out another, like what I did when I started preferring my American side. The media should also do its part by including more

than just a token few people of all races in ads, TV shows, and magazine spreads. Establishing one's racial character should begin with a welcoming, supportive environment. There are many ways to keep one's culture alive, such as taking up one's ethnic language, talking to one's grandparents, or

Was my primary culture subconsciously substituted with another one, just because I had moved to a different country?

ily found in China. For example, it would be very difficult to find anything I'd want to eat in China, as I am accustomed to food back in America, so dinner during visits became a constant challenge. It's upsetting because I've always

finding out more about ancestors. Perhaps, if people can learn how to establish a balance between their American side and ethnic side, and if everyone would start to embrace people of all cultures, one day I can proudly call myself a Chinese-American.



Mark Zhang / The Spectator

By TIFFANY PHAN

What does your childhood remind you of? Does it remind you of waking up every Saturday morning to pancakes and cartoons on TV, sleeping over at a friend's house and telling each other scary stories, or finger painting on a quaint afternoon? Childhood is considered the embodiment of innocent laughter and pure-hearted fun. For Sophia and Louisa (Lulu) Chua however, childhood was a monotonous, endless cycle of school, Mandarin lessons, countless restrictions on their social lives, and mind-numbing hours of piano or violin practice (including weekends and all vacations) in a despotic household ruled by their fierce mother, Amy Chua.

In her book "Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother," excerpted in the Wall Street Journal article "Why Chinese Mothers Are Superior," published on January 8, 2011, Chua describes the extensive restrictions she imposed upon her daughters' freedom when they were young. The most controversial and enraging aspect of her parenting is not how Chua condescendingly establishes clear distinctions between "Chinese" and "Western" styles of parenting, but the way she treats

Parenting Prospects from a Tiger Mom

her children. Once, Chua cruelly ripped up her daughters' handmade birthday cards, claiming that she "deserved better." She even denied her seven-year-old food, water, and even the right to go to the bathroom, until she was able to play a piano piece correctly.

At face value, Chua's parenting techniques may appear to be absurd. However, there's more than meets the eye to Chua and her firm methodology. While many people who opposed her have not read her book, my own opinion of her and her choice of parenting changed after finishing and absorbing the content of it.

Parenting is complex and differences in parenting styles are

her daughters one of the key secrets to success: that you have to work painstakingly hard in order to achieve something great, even if you're constantly put down. Chua was brought up the traditional Chinese way; her parents valued success and hard work, and as a result they did not sugar-coat the truth, which is how she, too, tried to raise her daughters. It prepares them for the cut-throat reality of the world. Imposing strict policies does have its perks. Being successful in certain activities appeases children, thereby making the activity fun and desired, which can readily improve one's self-worth. After all, her two daughters performed at Carnegie Hall during their early music careers, with one now a blossoming pianist and the other a budding tennis star. It was her strict "Tiger Mom" techniques, rather than more lax parenting methods, that produced such favorable results.

Chua may seem cruel and even selfish because she was indisputably stifling her daughters' own individual freedoms and interests. However, she did this because she believed that it was the best choice for their well-being. Chua fails to recognize values such as doing one's best for self-satisfaction, sociability and individuality, but these values pertain to another type of parenting.

While Chua's values aren't incorrect, her methods of carrying them out are radical and extreme. She is insensitive to her daughters' emotional and physical states. An obsession with raising the perfect "Chinese" children brings her to the point where her actions border on neglect and abuse. It is surprising that her daughters are so successful today. Such a harsh upbringing could foster a rather withheld and even traumatized personality upon reaching adulthood. Her daughters did not end up hating her, because ultimately they felt that their success was due to her strict methods. However, Chua is lucky that her daughters happened to

Parenting is complex and differences in parenting styles are merely about a clash of values.

It is not a fight between right and wrong, because no parenting method is perfect.

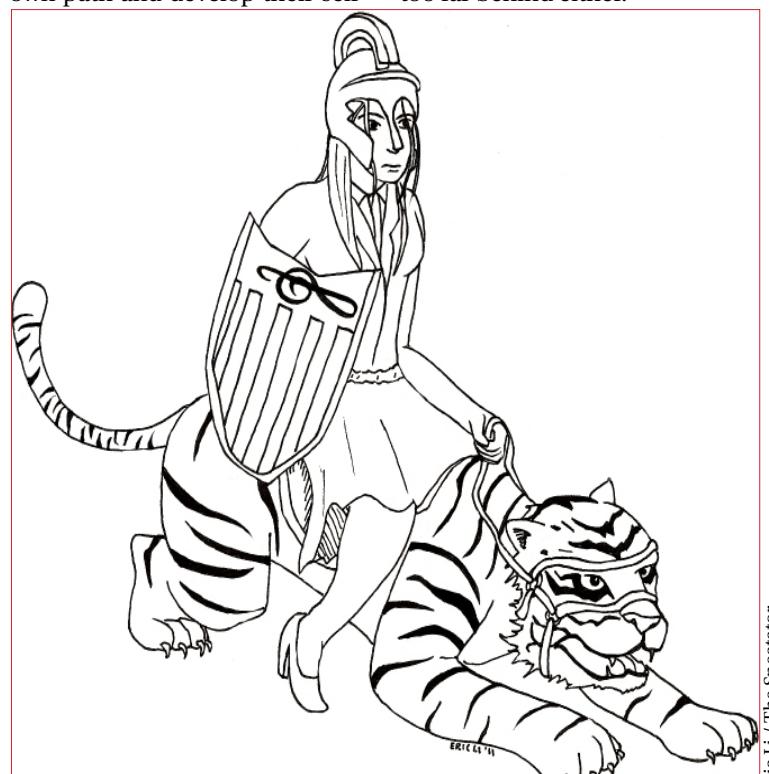
oftentimes merely a clash of values. It is not a fight between right and wrong. Amy Chua teaches

turn out the way she intended.

Chua is not blind in her actions; she realizes that she has made mistakes. Though she tries to convince people that the "Chinese" way of parenting is better than the "Western," she does not force her ways onto anyone. Her book is simply an account of what happens when you take the strict path. She realized the several flaws in her technique following an incident where her 13-year old daughter Lulu outwardly rebelled and yelled "I HATE YOU!" in a restaurant while vacationing in Moscow. This wake-up call not only drove Chua to tears but also led her to allow her daughter to quit the violin, start playing tennis, and even begin making her own choices. At the end of the memoir, she admits that the Chinese way does require adjustments, and concludes that it is best to follow the Chinese method of parenting until the children are 18 years, and then follow Western ideology, so that can walk their own path and develop their self-

interests.

I know that I, along with plenty of other kids heading toward adulthood, have second-guessed my upbringing, and as shocking as it may be, I feel a bit of regret for the lack of an Amy Chua figure in my childhood that could have brought me more success. However, once I think about living a life like Sophia and Lulu, I begin to regain my senses and conclude that I'm probably happier now than I would be under Chua's parenting. Still, it is undoubtedly true that most of our parents are more experienced and know better than we do. Any parents who fully commit themselves to their children's well-being—without being physically or psychologically damaging—are good parents. Her daughters turned out happy and successful. For that Chua shouldn't be shunned for her unconventional methods. Lenient and docile Rabbit Mothers might be great parents, but stricter Tiger Mothers don't fall too far behind either.

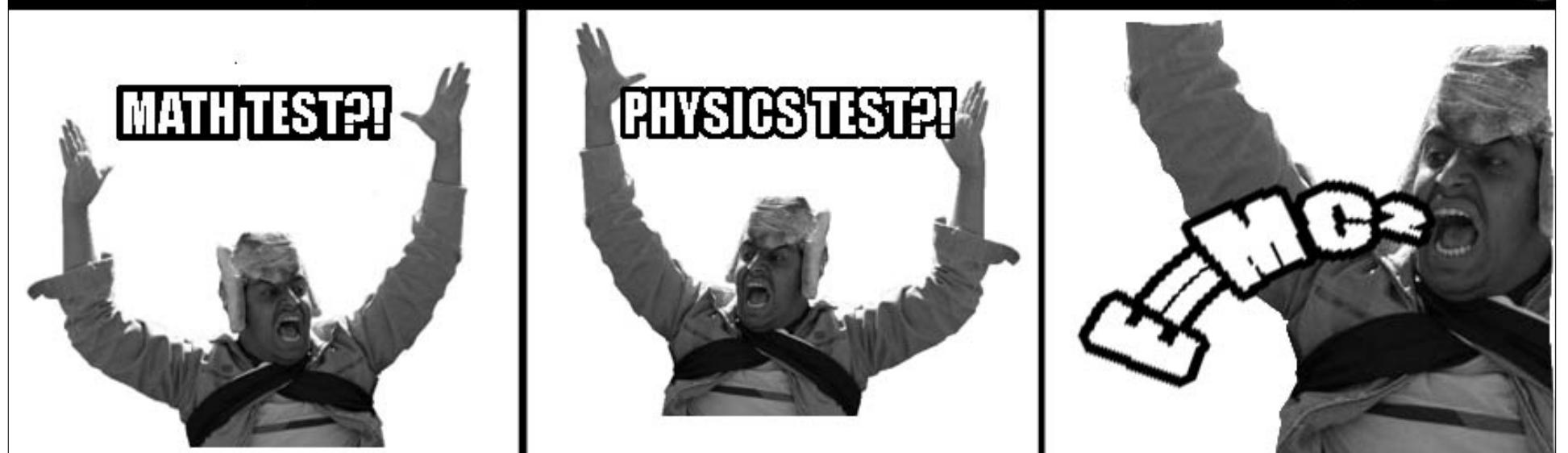


Eric Li / The Spectator

Cartoons

TEST WHAT TEST?

Jasmine Kyon/William Chang



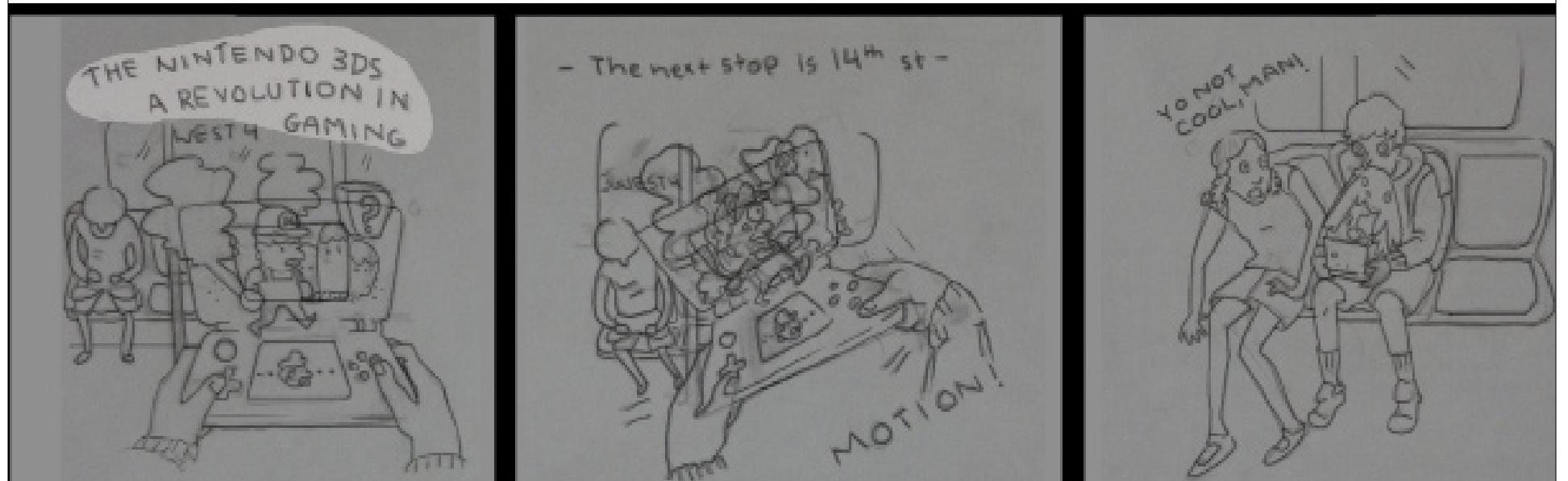
WRONG FORECAST

MICHELLE GUO



A Revolution in Commute

- Katherine Chi



Arts and Entertainment

Of Ravens, Rats, and Unicycles: Stuyvesant's Music Scene



Eric Li / The Spectator

By CHRISTIA ZHENG

Stuyvesant, with its math and science reputation, is often considered a school bereft of artistic students. Contrary to popular belief, Stuyvesant is home to many talented, young musicians who write their own songs, perform at local gigs, and hope to hit it big.

Ravens and Chimes

Aside from being a substitute teacher at Stuyvesant, Asher Lack ('01) is an aspiring lyricist/guitarist and lead singer for Ravens and Chimes, an indie band formed in 2005. Consisting of a guitar, keyboard, piano, bass, and

drums, the folksy band features a combination of psychedelic beats and enchantingly haunting vocals, creating a unique sound.

The members first met in a haunted house after being forced to ride in the same trolley. What should have been a horrifying trip instead developed into a grassroots musical phenomenon. The band's original single "Division Street," for example, which debuted on its YouTube channel, recently went viral in the Stuyvesant community. A concern for the band, however, is reaching an appropriate audience. "We get fan mail saying, 'How did I just hear this song?' and I just wish they had heard

it sooner. What matters is that everyone who would like the album hears it."

For Lack, writing songs is a complex process that involves the unraveling of a small idea. "It's like untying a knot. It starts with a picture, which gets much deeper, into a bigger picture. It's almost like you're untangling the confusion of a central thing," he said.

The band, which released its first album in 2007, is currently signed with Reichenbach Falls: Grey Rock/Better Looking Records and is a member of the music organizations American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers and Rough Trade. It is currently planning more concerts and tours in the days to come. More information regarding the band can be found on its site, www.ravensandchimes.com.

Man on Unicycle

Ever since an incident at a pizza parlor in which the band spotted a man walking his dog while riding a unicycle, the whimsically experimental progressive rock group has gone by the name Man on Unicycle.

The band, consisting of Stuyvesant sophomores James Kogan and Shinnosuke Takahashi and Edward R. Murrow High School sophomores Matt Genkin and Ilan Ballzackman, play guitar, drums, keyboard, and guitar, respectively. Associating itself with the progressive and alternative genres, their influences include The Mars Volta, Led Zeppelin, and Red Hot Chili Peppers, among other groups.

The lyrics, such as "marijuana, crack-cocaine; blue cheese pizza in the rain," tend to utilize wild references and are often infused with absurd rhymes Kogan refers to as "arbitrary and spontaneous flashes of genius." He added that, when at a loss,

the band resorts to shamelessly "borrowing" from pop culture.

Ultimately, Kogan hopes that his band will stay together and play at more gigs, spreading their sound from ear to ear. Their next show will be held on Friday, March 18, at 10 p.m. at club Goodbye Blue Monday. Information concerning the band's performance dates, pictures and videos of past performances can be found on the group's Facebook page.

And the Rats Grew Wilder

And The Rats Grew Wilder's music is a hard-hitting mix of melodic metal, hard rock, and the soulful conviction of blues. The band derives its name from a line in the poem "Bag of Mice," by Nick Flynn, which reads, "And the mice grew wilder." Members include Stuyvesant junior Michael Hubbs and sophomore Jacob Soiffer, Brooklyn Technical High School sophomore Thomas Sible and St. Edmund Preparatory High School freshman Eric Deptula, who play guitar, drums, bass and guitar, respectively. After meeting at the Gowanus Music Club, the four members, whose diverse music influences include Green Day, Metallica, Romani guitarist Django Reinhardt and gypsy jazz, quickly became friends. "Sooner or later, our styles meshed and we picked up each other's musical tastes," Soiffer said.

Hubbs, the band's lyricist, guitarist, and lead singer, said that its songs and lyrics address a variety of political issues, as heard in the song "Kristallnacht," whose lyrics refer to the titular Night of Broken Glass, in which a series of anti-Semitic attacks and riots were committed in Nazi Germany.

A lot has changed for the band since its founding. From only playing in a dimly lit basement, the band has extended its

reach to venues including the Bell House, South Paw and Jacob's own porch. "Our goal is to become a relatively well-known indie band, and to book and play gigs regularly," Hubbs said. "And, of course, to make a little money," he added with a chuckle.

The band members urge oth-

ers who are passionate about music to take initiative and pursue their ambitions. "It doesn't take much more than setting out to find other people who play instruments and like the same music as you do," Kogan said. Exceeding the expectations of the Stuyvesant standard, these talented musicians continue to push boundaries to let their music be heard.

ers who are passionate about music to take initiative and pursue their ambitions. "It doesn't take much more than setting out to find other people who play instruments and like the same music as you do," Kogan said. Exceeding the expectations of the Stuyvesant standard, these talented musicians continue to push boundaries to let their music be heard.

It Takes a (Cinema) Village

By BEN KOATZ

Twelve-dollar matinees. IMAX tickets for \$18.50. Eight bucks for a medium soda. Movie theater prices, both at the concession stand and the box office, are skyrocketing. For most Stuyvesant students, a night out at the movies is quickly becoming unaffordable. Rental sites, like Netflix and Blockbuster, or even illegally downloaded "torrents" relieve some of the financial strain, but waiting for and watching DVDs is not the same as being immersed in the atmosphere of a dark movie theater. And what about critically acclaimed independent films? It is absurd that "Justin Bieber: Never Say Never" is played eight times a day at your local theater, but brilliant, award-winning foreign films, like Australian director Bruce Beresford's "Mao's Last Dancer," are nowhere to be found. Where did intimate customer service go, and when did we start accepting movie-going as an expensive, monotonous experience?

Cinema Village never did. Part of a trio of independently operated theaters, including one in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn (Alpine Cinemas) and Forest Hills, Queens (Cinemart Cinemas), Cinema Village, located on 12th Street between University Place and Fifth Avenue, is truly a one-of-a-kind theater. It was built in an abandoned fire station in

1963, with homely auditoriums worked into the nooks and crannies of the original architecture.

Cinema Village began as a repertory theater, screening movies that had already finished their normal runs at other cinemas. After this became a moot business model—thanks to the advent of the VCR and other home movie-viewing equipment—it transformed into the haven for independent and foreign films that it is today. Conveniently located less than eight blocks away from the New York University Film School and a 10-minute ride subway ride away from Stuyvesant, Cinema Village not only shows an eclectic mix of "foreign [...] high class movies" as Hassan Rao, co-manager of the theater, said, but also screens them at cheap prices.

At \$8 a ticket—with valid student ID—and only \$3.50 for a medium soda, Cinema Village is almost too good to be true. "If we raise our prices, customers will not come," said Rao, whose views stand in stark contrast with the growing trend of rising ticket prices across the country. "It really doesn't matter," he continued. "We make enough."

Besides providing inexpensive entertainment, Cinema Village also finds great films that have slipped past the media's notice. "[It takes] care of the customers first," janitor Michael Lyons said. "It's a nice friendly environment, always clean and on

key." The whole theater exudes a sense of togetherness bred by its individuality, a feeling furthered by the enthusiasm of its employees and the dedication of its patrons.

Right in the center of a progressive Greenwich Village community, but with the added

Besides providing inexpensive entertainment, Cinema Village also finds great films that have slipped past the media's notice.

youthfulness of the nearby college campus, Cinema Village tries to cater to all. John Bylander, a 29-year-old Upper West Side resident, said, "I like that it's small, and near busy streets, but not on a busy street."

It is that kind of dichotomy—a

for-profit movie theater that has to accommodate low-income seniors and students, without the benefit of lucrative blockbuster films—that really defines Cinema Village. Replete with special screenings, after-midnight Halloween specials and even—as in the case of their current showings of the Matthew Porterfield drama "Putty Hill"—Q&A sessions with producers and directors after the show, the theater lures audiences with interesting and unique activities. The venue is even rented out three to four times a year so that movie crews and NYU film majors can shoot for cheap.

But there must be other factors keeping some customers loyal to the theater for, in some cases, more than 10 years. Perhaps it is that, as Bylander pointed out, the movies at Cinema Village "forced me to contemplate things in a more focused way. It makes me want to go [to the movies] more." Most likely, however, it is a combination of that sentiment and the fact that many movies shown there are award-winners that are hard to find anywhere else in New York City.

With stacks of *The Village Voice* and *The Onion* sitting around to complement its independent movie repertoire, the theater definitely has an underground, hipster vibe. "The movies [here] tend to have more heart," said Stuyvesant junior



Emily Ko / The Spectator

Brendan Carroll, who has visited the theater twice. "[They have] something more personal than the big blockbusters." In truth, with the market flooded by big-time productions and cookie-cutter Hollywood spectacles, maybe a small, intimate, independent theater is just what we need. "If you have too many big Hollywood producers [...] it's bad for the independent filmmaker, and that's bad for the movie industry as a whole," Carroll said. Cinema Village helps assure that the makers of indie films are never forgotten, and \$8 seems a small price to pay to support their work—and be entertained while you do.

Arts and Entertainment

Rearranging Movies Frame by Frame

David Flomenbaum / The Spectator



Christian Marclay's video "The Clock" was shown at the Paula Cooper Gallery.

**By JAMES KOGAN
and EMRE TETIK**

Today's mainstream movies have become almost formulaic—you know, the little pyramid: your standard beginning, rising action, climax, falling action, end—and no amount of special effects or plot twists can spice up this overused format. Not that such a practice is wrong, but seldom do we notice the multitude of films that eschew conventional narrative structure and still manage to maintain its emotional appeal. Once we become comfortable with the breaking of such conventions, a whole new realm of works suddenly becomes accessible. Enter the beauty of the film-collage.

"The Clock," a film installation which ran from Friday, January 21 through Saturday, February 19 at the Paula Cooper gallery on 465 West 23rd Street in Chelsea, consists of hundreds of snippets of scenes in which a clock or watch is shown, all taken from preexisting movies. The scenes are played in chronological order based on the times shown on the clock faces. With a 24-hour running time, the film is paced such that the time shown in each scene corresponds with the time in real life.

The film is the brainchild of Christian Marclay, an American artist whose works often blur the boundaries between various disciplines of art, most notably film and music. A master of mixing and sampling, he has worked on projects as a composer in which he toyed with the recordings of artists like Jimi Hendrix, Louis Armstrong, and Johann Strauss and assembled hectic hodgepodges of sound. He has also worked quite a bit with turntables, scratching and creating noise music. "The Clock," an excitingly unconventional patchwork of film, has Marclay's artistic signature written all over it.

Due to its long running time and apparent lack of narrative, it seems as though the film could barely keep one's attention for long. However, the editing is so skillful, with such attention paid to detail that the thousands of stories play out as one coherent narrative. Some of the scenes in the film, which range from James Bond spy thrillers to dramas like "Lolita" (1962), have more than just a common time of day. Some of them are spliced together with comedic, ironic, or dramatic effects, such as when there is a clip of an innocent young child drinking milk from a glass bottle, and then the film cuts to an angst-ridden, teenaged James Dean as he takes a long sip from a similar bottle of milk in "Rebel Without a Cause" (1955). This seamless storytelling puts the audience in the lives of various people going about their day. There are lovers reluctantly parting, nervous doctors carrying out their first operations, and teenage girls returning home after boisterous nights, action heroes hanging for their

lives from gigantic clock towers. Despite the ethereal nature of the theme, "The Clock" presents relatable emotions of the human experience with respect to timing, whether it is anxiety when a character struggles to meet a deadline, or even the simplest gesture of asking someone to check his or her watch. The whole 24-hour mass of film strikes a comfortingly compassionate chord, showcasing snapshots of our lives, hashed together with the

"The Clock" magically entraps us—the audience as well as the actors—in the lucid presence of the time using only a collection of 10-second "bursts" of film.

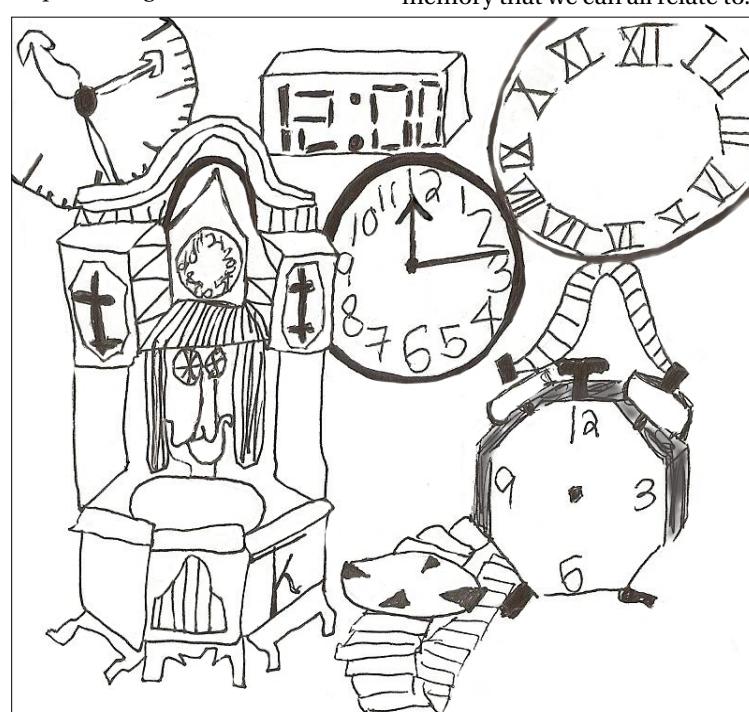
lives of those who live around us. Stuyvesant video production teacher Elka Gould sang high praise for "The Clock." Making use of production and editing techniques that she also teaches to her class, the work "is a perfect example about deconstructing the film and understanding its elements," she said. "The obvious structure in this mammoth production is the use of clips that surround events that deal with time: a train to catch, waiting in anticipation, boredom—we're all tied together by time. The artist weaves it all together like a quilt using the rich moments

of other director's work. That's what makes it so beautiful."

Though "The Clock" is a great movie in these respects, it is not the only one to smash the conventions of cinema by rejecting typical narrative structure to create a unique experience. Andy Warhol, known mainly for his iconic Campbell soup can and Marilyn Monroe silkscreen prints from the 1960s, has a large body of film work, including the experimental "Chelsea Girls" (1966), which follows the activities of various superstars and guests at the Chelsea Hotel. Presented in split-screen with one side in color and the other in black and white, it has no linear plotline. It simply shows juxtaposed clips of the lives of the guests at the hotel during its running time of three and a half hours to create a contrast between different celebrities—including German model Nico and Warhol superstar Edie Sedgwick—and their lifestyles.

Another director who toys with typical plotlines and a collage-like filming style is Harmony Korine. He achieved fame and notoriety with his controversial script for the 1995 film "Kids" and is known for making use of found footage and stringing together vignettes telling different stories that are related by common themes he deals with, such as moral vacuousness among youths and the lives of mentally ill people with behavioral disorders. His video triptych "The Diary of Anne Frank Part II," which was first screened in 1997, shows footage of residents in a neglected Middle American town as they lead lives of apathy and find odd and often lurid ways to pass the time. The film installation piles on clip after clip of the town, forcing the audience to face the nihilism of the town's youth and other inhabitants.

Along with these films, "The Clock" creates an experience that is both visceral and thought-provoking. Not only can we relate to the characters we see on screen, but we are also left with the captivating familiarity of the true nature of time; how can a force so powerful be as intangible as we perceive? Christian Marclay's "The Clock" magically entraps us—the audience as well as the actors—in the lucid presence of the time using only a collection of 10-second "bursts" of film. To think that a film can prove so immensely captivating without giving us a plot, characters, a tangible setting, or any of the traditional elements we expect when we walk into a theater, seems miraculous. As Ms. Gould said, "It's really beyond the narrative. It's a visual experience with pieces of memory that we can all relate to."



Tamara Kahan / The Spectator

Bliss in a Bowl



Yorganic, 275 Greenwich Street.

By JENNY FUNG

With Valentine's Day a mere memory, have your love handles come to stay? Some may have decided to celebrate the holiday with a romantic comedy marathon and a carton of chocolate ice cream, but the best way to mend a broken heart—literally—is by eating heart-healthy veggies and nutrient-rich fruits, ingredients in almost every item on Yorganic's menu.

Situated across from Whole Foods at 275 Greenwich Street, Yorganic attracts its customers with its bright green decor and energetic atmosphere. The shop is not very large, having no tables or chairs, just a counter for coffee add-ins. It is best to order takeout, but if you do not mind standing while enjoying your food, you can eat while admiring the neatly stocked shelves, filled with sandwiches, Japanese green tea, homemade granola bars, omega-3 supplements, and fruit cups. Its green walls match the tray of wheat-grass sitting atop the counter, ready to be turned into a healing juice elixir.

Though its name gives the impression of yet another Pinkberry imitation, its mission is not just to serve good frozen yogurt, but to serve a variety of tasty organic products. "We want to give people the option to eat healthy and good foods. We try to use organic and local produce as much as possible," co-founder Bo Kim said.

Started in 2007, Kim opened his first shop at Hanover Square in the Financial District. Since then, the business has flourished and the founders have opened up another branch in TriBeCa in order to allow more people to access their wholesome and delicious food.

A dish that reflects Yorganic's core value of good taste and nutrition is the Bliss Bowl. According to chef and co-founder Shawn Reilly, a Bliss Bowl is a cross between a salad bar and Bibimbap, a popular Korean dish that consists of a bowl of white rice topped with seasoned vegetables, meat, egg, and chili pepper sauce. Bliss Bowls (\$6.95) are custom-made, allowing customers to design their own dishes by choosing from one of six bases: white or brown rice, rice or vermicelli noodles, romaine lettuce, or spinach. From there, you can choose four basic toppings, the most popular of which are organic vegetables, nuts, cheese, and egg. For an extra dollar or two, you can add one of the delectable premium toppings, which include shiitake mushrooms, seasoned cucumbers, tofu, spicy chicken, and marinated beef. The mixture is then finished with one of Yorganic's unique homemade sauces, each of which contains heart-healthy fatty acids.

The menu's ten sauces include pineapple ginger teriyaki, toasted sesame soy, and lemongrass ginger. The pineapple ginger teriyaki is sweet with notes of fruitiness while the toasted sesame soy is more savory and Asian-inspired. The lemongrass ginger, on the other hand, is very fresh and light, and goes well with cucumbers and bean sprouts.

If you are overwhelmed by the variety of choices, try one of Yorganic's Chef Creations, which are Bliss Bowls designed and prepared daily by Chef Reilly. "The Chef

Creations are combinations that I came up with and that I think have ingredients that go well together. I believe that healthy food can be gourmet too," Reilly said.

One such creation is the Spicy Bowl (\$8.95). With juicy chicken topped with spicy chili sauce, it is a great way to warm up your belly and your taste buds. When you are in need of some vitamins and want something more refreshing, order the Veggie Bowl (\$8.95). It boasts nutritious tofu, shiitake mushrooms, broccoli, zucchini, and bean sprouts. The only downside is that the tofu lacks flavor and the dressing, the sherry shallot vinaigrette, needs a little more sherry and a few more shallots. However, do not be afraid to request a different dressing, which will allow you to enjoy the healthy veggies without compromising flavor. For a more traditional bowl, try the Beef Bowl which has the quintessential marinated beef, egg, vegetables, and gochujang, a traditional Korean pepper sauce, or the Yorgasm (\$9.75), a bowl filled with soft white rice, seasoned veggies, and tender marinated beef that will leave you groaning for more.

Aside from Bliss Bowls, Yorganic also offers sandwiches, soups, and, of course, frozen yogurt. Currently, there are two flavors on the menu: original (\$2.95 for a small) and green tea (\$3.95). There is also soy yogurt (\$3.95) and 9 cal (sugar free) yogurt (\$3.95), for those who have dietary restrictions. The frozen yogurt has the typical tartness and tang of its Pinkberry and Red Mango cousins, but Yorganic offers a wider variety of toppings, such as organic pomegranate seeds, brown rice puffs, and peanut butter puffs. In addition, it has a smooth texture and does not melt easily, making it perfect for hot summer days. Add in organic fruit, homemade granola, and healthy nuts, and you have a perfect combination of sweet, chewy, crunchy, and creamy.

If you are not in the mood for frozen yogurt, opt for a healthy smoothie. Instead of being used as toppings, organic fruits, chocolate chips, nuts, and boosters (organic supplements), are blended with the yogurt to make a filling and nutritious concoction. The Slim and Fit (\$5.45) is filled with organic strawberries, bananas, brown rice puff cereal, almonds, and green tea booster to create a rich, thick mixture best eaten with a spoon. For a more decadent option, try the Nutty Bananas (\$5.45), which is made with organic bananas, peanut butter, peanuts, and chocolate syrup. The natural sweetness of the bananas plus the nuttiness of the peanuts and the rich flavor of chocolate make you feel like you are having an indulgent dessert rather than a healthy beverage.

Whether you buy a Bliss Bowl, smoothie, frozen yogurt, sandwich, or soup, everything from Yorganic is designed to make you feel your best. The owners are very friendly and helpful. A pharmacist as well as a co-founder of Yorganic, Kim also likes to give personal consultations and is known to prescribe juices and supplements to his clients. So the next time you have a cold, the flu, or—worst of all—hunger pangs, a trip to Yorganic might be just what the doctor ordered.

Joann Lee / The Spectator

Arts and Entertainment

Steve's Sub-Lime Pies



Steve's Key Lime Pie is easy to miss, but the pies are worth the search.

Abe Levitan / The Spectator

By KRISTINA MANI

With the commercialization of bakeries in recent years, it has become increasingly difficult to find truly artisanal desserts. Today, average store-bought pies are made with artificial ingredients and can hardly be called flavorful. While the overwhelming majority of bakeries disregard our ever-unsatisfied taste buds, there are still some connoisseurs search continually for high quality pastries. Steve's Authentic Key Lime Pie is a haven for such gourmets, upholding the standards for superb food that many seem to have forgotten.

About 11 years ago, Steve Tarpin, a native of Miami, made one of his special key lime pies for his dinner guests using a "secret recipe." His pie was so scrumptious that one of the

guests, an owner of a New York City based steakhouse, asked if he could sell the pies at his restaurant. Tarpin agreed, causing the popularity of his key lime pie to skyrocket. Steve's Authentic Key Lime Pie employee Erin Norris described it as a "homespun success story."

Tarpin's first steps into the pie industry began in his classic '50s Ford truck. He began by driving out to street fairs, where he sold the pies from his truck. Before long, he decided to expand his business and open a waterfront bakery in Red Hook, Brooklyn. He rebuilt half of the garage where he and his friends still work on their motorcycles, transforming it into a quick dessert stop. Half the garage is still in its original state, with the actual bakery consisting of only a counter to buy pies and a door

leading to the kitchen behind it.

Entering the bakery is like stepping into a pie itself, as the shop's interior décor is a fantastic imitation of a key lime pie. The bottoms of its golden, crust-colored walls are lined with aluminum siding, and the back wall is painted a bright lime green. A collage of pictures covers the walls and various col-

"People from all over the country [...] and planet say it's the best they ever tasted,"
-Erin Norris, employee

lectible toys, including a toy car and a trophy wooden fish, are scattered throughout to give the dark garage a warm, homey feel.

While variety is not a strong point, seeing as the eatery only sells key lime pie, every pie is of the highest quality. All of the

ingredients used are organic, ensuring that each bite is as flavorful as the last. The golden crust is the embodiment of butter and graham cracker baked to perfection, and the fresh squeezed taste of sweet key lime is enough to leave you hooked.

"We aren't cutting any corners here," Tarpin said.

Perhaps Tarpin's greatest achievement the Swingle, which can only be found at Steve's. The Swingle is a key lime pie dipped in a melted mixture of Belgian dark chocolate and coconut oil, frozen, and then served on a stick.

"There are so many days I wake up wishing I had a tart in the fridge. The unforgettable taste stays with you," said Norris, a self-proclaimed chocolate lover. "People from all over the country [...] and planet say it's the best they ever tasted."

Customers can purchase a 10-inch pie for \$25, an 8-inch pie for \$15, and a 4-inch tart for \$4. For those seeking to try their hand at pie-baking, a pound of fresh key lime pies are also available for \$5.

The only setback for Stuyvesant students is the bakery's obscure location. "I was never a fan of key lime pie until I tasted this. The beautiful waterfront view and mouthwatering pie make the trip worth it," junior Katie Bor said. For those who cannot manage the trek to Red Hook, stores such as the Food Coop and Union Market in Park Slope, Zabar's, and Cit-

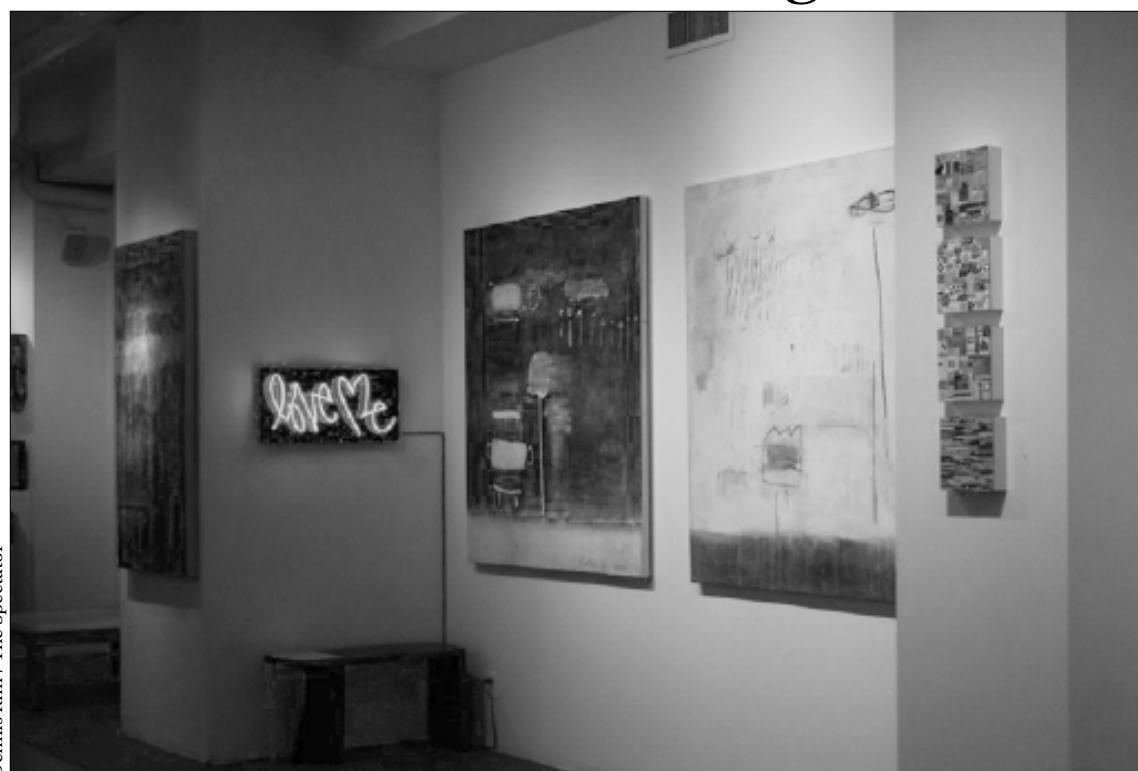
arella always have it in stock.

Today, over a decade since the establishment's opening, Steve's Authentic Key Lime Pie has gone from a small, roadside

Today, over a decade since the establishment's opening, Steve's Authentic Key Lime Pie has gone from a small, roadside joint to a booming business with, unbelievably, only one product.

joint to a booming business with, unbelievably, only one product. While getting there may not be so easy, enjoying a slice of Steve's is as easy as pie.

Painting in ABC's and 123's



The Writings on the Wall exhibit can be found at 35 North Moore Street.

Dennis Rim / The Spectator

By NIKI CHEN

Enter through a large plastic doorframe into a room covered with large oil paintings, watercolor pictures, and collages, covered with boldly printed words and threads of numbers. Some of these pieces are inspired by graffiti, while others, at first glance, seem to be sprinkled with meaningless arithmetic figures and letters. You pass over them quickly, at first, as you are transfixed by a collage directly in front of you, upon whose glaring red background are etched white words that spiral into the shape of a central fingerprint.

This eye-catching, untitled collage is the work of Karim Ghidinelli, a featured artist in

The Cheryl Hazan Gallery's "The Writing's on the Wall" exhibit. Located on 35 North Moore Street, the gallery was founded by Hazan in 1996. Showing from Thursday, February 10, until Saturday, March 5, this writing-themed exhibit featured emerging artists such as Andrew Burgess, Jorge Enrique, and UR New York and included works to promote art exposure in TriBeCa.

The intricately designed and attention grabbing works of Ghidinelli are shaped by the travels he took throughout his life. Though he was born in Brescia, a northern Italian city, Ghidinelli moved from one country to another every couple of years, throughout his childhood. He eventually attended

the International School of Milan, where he encountered the bourgeois Milanese society that eventually became an integral part of his life and art. Greatly influenced by his new environment, Ghidinelli used his word collages to declare his ideas about the society into which he was adopted. Like "Red," most of his collages have his speeches circle into a fingerprint, often composed of mixed media, including prints, pencil sketches, metal pieces, and oil paints. However, as the words of these definitive identity marks spiral inward, you get not a feeling of the end, but of the next phase. He said, "The piece is never concluded. Rather, it symbolizes the continuation of a phase, from myself to the public, from

my interpretation to yours."

For UR New York, an artistic group made up of Mike Baca and Fernando Romero, an urban setting proved to be highly influential on the group's work. Through the use of photography, silk-screening, graphic design, and graffiti, UR New York creates an urban feel with every piece. The two artists capture people, towering skyscrapers, and graffiti on nearly every one of their canvases, adding bright reds, yellows, and blues, to give them more vigor and appeal. However, before creating work on canvases in their studio, both spent their youths illegally spray painting the streets, forc-

Influenced by their youth, environment, and experiences, the artists showcase a little piece of themselves in every artwork.

Greatly influenced by his new environment, Ghidinelli used his word collages to declare his ideas about the society into which he was adopted.

thing positive with their talent and formed UR New York. "Each piece tells the story of our lives, our struggles, and our environments. We want to inspire creativity amongst people, specifically the youth, so they can pick up where we leave off," said UR New York in its mission statement, found on the group's Web site, www.urnewyork.com.

Despite their similarities in mediums and subject, Ghidinelli, UR New York, and other contributing artists featured in the Cheryl Hazan gallery interpret the same letters and numbers—symbols we use everyday—differently. Influenced by their youth, environment, and experiences, the artists showcase a little piece of themselves in every artwork. Hopefully, with every visit, their art will inspire others to share a little bit of themselves, as well.

ing people to view their work. Later, they decided to do some-

Arts and Entertainment

The Forgotten Film Reel: Breakfast on Pluto

Breakfast ON PLUTO



Linda Cai / The Spectator

By NINA WADE

A woman in a smart dress, blond hair perfectly coiffed, pushes a baby carriage past a construction site, flirting coyly with the workers. They leer at her pretty face, but then recoil from her patently male voice as she invites them over for a good time. The woman, revealed to be a transvestite, continues on her way, insulting them under her breath. She says to the infant that the workers must not be able to accept her story, that of "Saint Kitten, who strutted the catwalks, face lit by a halo of flashbulbs." From there, "Breakfast on Pluto," a dramedy set in 1960s England and Ireland, written and directed by Neil Jordan, continues to follow the enthralling tale of Patrick "Kitten" Braden as she sets out to find her long-lost mother. In the end, she comes to accept her strange life, and learns to stand on her own.

Kitten, played by the effervescent Cillian Murphy, was born in a small town on the Irish

border. Left as a baby on priest Father Liam's (Liam Neeson) doorstep, she was raised by her foster mother. One day, upon walking in on a young Kitten's experimenting with a dress and lipstick, her foster mother reveals in a fit of anger that Kitten is not actually her child. When teenage Kitten learns that her birth mother was a maid named Eily Bergin (Eva Birthistle) and discovers Father Liam's check for her own daily expenses, she confronts the priest in a confessional. He immediately flees from her inquisitions.

Armed with her newfound suspicions, Kitten invents and writes a sexually explicit story about Eily's rape by Father Liam and her own resulting conception. She dubs Eily "The Phantom Lady" due to her mysterious disappearance. When Kitten is sent to her high school dean, she tells him, in all of her cheeky seriousness, that she would like to be called "Kitten," after Saint Kitten, an androgynous saint of her own invention. She then

switches to girls' classes and begins to accessorize her male uniform with feminine details.

Soon, during a club visit in full female dress with friends, Kitten meets a drug-fuelled biker gang that tells her to follow the "astral highways" where she can be "eating breakfast on Pluto." Although her best friend, Charlie (Ruth Negga), tries to hold her back, Kitten – inspired by the bikers' surreal words – begins talking back to teachers and harassing male students. After she is expelled from high school for her impudence, she takes the bikers' message to heart and sets out in search of her mother in London, "the city that swallowed her up."

Kitten's off-kilter disposition adds to the film's black comedy as she lives in a dreamlike world of her own creation. To distance herself from her difficult situation, she writes autobiographical fiction, stating that she is "writing a story about a girl who lost her mommy." By insisting that she was lost rather

than abandoned, her plight takes on a sadly delusional feel. When the real world threatens her dreamy bubble, she seems all the more vulnerable.

Kitten is endearing and guileless, and the audience will find it difficult not to get emotionally invested in her story. Murphy perfectly captures her feminine manners and expressions; his movements are lithe, and his expressions, sweet. His striking blue eyes draw the audience's focus, regardless of whether they are holding back tears or shining with joy, and give Kitten an ethereal aura.

The supporting cast holds its own against Murphy's vivacious performance. Neeson plays Father Liam as quietly sympathetic, making his eventual reappearance in Kitten's seedy life all the more touching as he tries to become the father he never really was. Negga's worried and serious tone contrasts with Murphy's dreamlike timbre, showing how far removed Kitten is from reality. However, other actors, such as Gavin Friday as glam rocker Billy Hatchett, Kitten's earlier love interest, fall somewhat flat: during his romantic interactions with Kitten, Friday tries to appear conflicted, but only manages a bored blankness.

The characters Kitten meets in London are as impressive as the city itself. She travels with and falls for glitz magician, Bertie Vaughan (Steven Rea). Rea plays his part brilliantly, coming across as eccentric, yet not caricatural. Brendan Gleeson plays John Joe Kenny, a costumed theme-park mascot who takes Kitten under his wing before joining the Irish Republican Army (IRA), a group protesting British interference in Ireland, and provides much-needed levity with his bitter one-liners. Despite Kenny's wit, the IRA causes trouble for the Irish Kitten, supplying another layer of discrimination that London's inhabitants levy against her. This tension

reaches a climax when, upon the discovery of both her Irish heritage and her male body, she is arrested for the bombing of an English dance club and taken for intense interrogations and beatings, almost leading to a mental breakdown.

The cinematography and soundtrack amplify the film's intensity, adding to its overblown atmosphere. The music is comprised largely of 70s glam rock, a genre full of Kitten's drama and androgyny. Gavin Friday's "Wig Wam Bam," for example, adds to the trippy feel of Kitten's adventures. Patti Page's "(How Much Is) That Doggy in the Window," a childish novelty song, feels out of place in the serious scenes, emphasizing Kitten's innocence. In her small hometown, the shots are subtle and subdued, but, like the music, become bright and vivid in London, where her experiences grow wilder.

One of the most appealing aspects of this film is the lack of emphasis on what might have been its main selling point: Kitten's transgender identity. Other movies, such as "Boys Don't Cry" or "Transamerica," have used this trait either as a gimmick or as a socio-political point, but Jordan leaves it as a simple fact. It is a breath of fresh air to see there is more to Kitten than her gender; it is merely a single detail of her multi-faceted character.

Kitten's constant exploitation is heartbreaking, and the film at times can be difficult to watch – especially during her brutal interrogation by the English police. However, with her stubborn spirit and flair for life, Kitten navigates these setbacks, and successfully emerges on the other side. Though the movie seems as whimsical as its protagonist, it still manages to inspire audiences through Kitten's resiliency and self-confidence. Just like "eating breakfast on Pluto," as Kitten says, "Not many people can take the tale of Patrick Braden." Those who can are in for a mind-blowing ride.

P&S Makes the Cut



PS Fabrics and Crafts, 359 Broadway, New York, NY 10013 40.717139 -74.003817

By CHRISTINE LEE

At the heart of every craft lies a foundation—for music, it's the rhythm, for science, it's the research, but for fashion, it's all about the materials. Most people, save for ultra fashionistas, do not get the opportunity to see how clothing is assembled to become a parade of perfection on the runway; there is a lot of effort put into sewing, weaving, and accessorizing every article of clothing. But before any apparel even enters a workshop, it begins its journey in a fabric boutique.

P&S is divided into various sections, one for each type of material. The front of the store holds trimmings—ornaments applied to clothing and other textiles—of every color, quantity, and size. But what really stand out as the crown jewels of the store's selection of trimmings are the buttons, which range from lady-bug-shaped pins to pricy iridescent studs, proudly displayed on a rack. There are even shimmering mock gold coin belts available for Indian dance costumes. Needless to say, there is a trimming for every customer's wildest ambitions.

The rest of the store is devoted entirely to fabric; there are hundreds of rolls, all stacked upon each other, daring to reach the ceilings. As you move further in, the fabric stock slowly begins to resemble a cloth-lined maze. Walking down one aisle, you may find camel hair and fur,

while in another, you may find yourself stepping past richly-colored, unbelievably soft velvet. Other aisles are dedicated to those who desire only the most lavish materials, including silky charmeuse and intricately woven tapestry fabric. And for those seeking the bare essentials, practical options like cotton and linen are abundant. The store also has more than 40 different prints, with designs utilizing patterns ranging from exotic leopard-print to quaint, delicious looking cupcakes.

Despite the store's extravagance, the prices are more than reasonable. Bargain hunters will rejoice at the sight of a massive sale section that sells pre-cut fabric at a whopping 70 percent off. P&S's friendly customer service agents will also inform you that the store gives discounts just for using cash instead of bank cards.

A fabric shop by Stuyvesant is a great asset to our increasingly diverse tastes and hobbies, not only for those who religiously view Project Runway, but also for people seeking a new and gratifying interest. Whether you want to sew, knit, weave, or have your breath taken away by mountains of lustrous cloth, P&S Fabric Corporation is tailored to your needs.

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Soph-Frosh SING!



Talent Amidst

By TONG NIU

"Why don't we just gather a ragtag bunch of misfits with unrealistically amazing voices and just put them all together and, I don't know...laugh at them?" suggests Henry (sophomore Leopold Spohngellert), a desperate Soph-Frosh SING! writer in need of a good theme, in the opening skit of this year's underclassmen production. Though originally a "Glee" reference, the statement seemed to appropriately summarize the state of this year's Soph-Frosh performance, as undeniable talent got lost in the confusing plot and cheesy, overplayed gimmicks.

While credit should be given for attempts at originality—this year's theme was a lack of a theme—and while the overall message of "it's the journey, not the destination, that's important" is certainly admirable, the show's lack of direction left the audience more confused than enlightened. Dance numbers were tossed in, at times consecutively, for no clear reason other than to meet the competition requirements. Most jokes, rather than adding to the plot, became sidebars of comedic relief. Unfortunately, many of these were more miss than hit. Rather than showcase the clear talent of its singers and actors, the performance instead focused on completing a pointless journey of theme discovery.

The show—executive produced by sophomore Sharon Cho and produced by sophomore Mallory Miller and freshmen Eric Zhang and Juliette Hainline—opens with the spotlight on three brainstorming writers, Henry, Molly (sophomore Eugenie Thompson), and Lindy (sophomore Emmalina Glinskis), who bicker and anguish over the approaching deadline for script submissions. Spohngellert suggests the theme of pandas, emphasizing the need for a "lady's man" panda—a character he molds in his own self-image. When the other two remain unconvinced—of both the theme and his popularity with the opposite sex—Spohngellert breaks into rap, as the curtains open to reveal a well designed set. Much of the rap is incoherent, as the lyrics are mumbled and speed up, and despite Spohngellert's onstage costume change from nerdy street clothes to sleeveless black top and aviator shades, his awkward hand gestures and body position make the "nerd" in him even more apparent.

The set pieces themselves, arranged in a semicircle, depict various locations around Stuy—"Chainberz" Street and the Hole

in the Wall (now the opening to a ghost's mouth) are among the few. Though its creative colors and interpretive design were eye-catching, the set, designed by the art crew (directed by sophomores Irina Titova and Margot Yale), lacked the depth that other SING!s have achieved, making it seem more like a backdrop than an interactive area.

Accompanying Spohngellert's chant of "Nerds, Nerds, Nerds!" was the first girls hip hop routine, a short energetic dance, which, while well performed, was somewhat lacking in good choreography—half of it consisted of un-coordinated shaking, extensive hair flipping, and head swinging. Their later, joint routine with boys hip hop was much better choreographed, and it better represented their dancing abilities.

Several nerd jokes later, the three arrive at a construction site on "Chainberz" Street, where the chorus, dressed in neon, bib-like representations of construction worker uniforms, sang to the tune of House of the Rising Sun by the Animals. Despite its lame lyrics, the song was powerfully performed, even overpowering the amazing band performance.

Glinskis and Thompson soon follow with a duet of "Lean on Me," with one lamenting the hopelessness of their situation and the other clinging onto an optimistic outlook. Both are powerhouse singers whose performances were unfortunately overshadowed by the poor sound system. As the song draws to a close, they are stopped by a construction worker (sophomore Eliza Mitnick), who warns them of the site's radioactivity. One of the better performers, Mitnick has spunk and energy and is a breath of fresh air in an otherwise bland scene. It is regretful that she had so few lines in the play.

As the three prepare to leave, Spohngellert decides to throw out the old SING! scripts. However, he is stopped by four apparitions, the Ghost of SING!s past (sophomore George Kaiser), the Ghost of Seniors Past (sophomore Catalina Piccato), the Ghost of Juniors Past (sophomore Nancy Ko), and the Ghost of Soph-Frosh Past (sophomore Clarissa Sorenson). Ko's interpretation of a pompous Junior SING! and Kaiser's interpretation of the bossy and arrogant Ghost of SING!s past were excellent, but the other two performances were not as noteworthy; Sorenson was overly giddy, and Piccato was too shy to have a significant stage presence. Most noteworthy about this scene were the costumes, which, except for Kaiser's makeshift bed sheet

Soph-Frosh SING!



A Tangled Plot

getup, were simple, but to the point. Unfortunately, from here, the plot begins to break down.

After a quick, yet skillful tap dance to show off the prowess of last year's Junior SING!—which is strangely glorified multiple times throughout the play—the ghosts offer their help by bringing out the rejected themes, represented by boys hip hop. Though impressed by the Rejects, the three writers continue to lament the desperate situation of the themeless Soph-Frosh SING! through a chorus rendition of Pink's "So What," the performance of which was accompanied by an out of sync contemporary dance number. Then enters the step crew (yet another representation of Rejected SING! themes), which was phenomenal, followed by the entrance of even more unmemoable rejected themes: Monsters, Cookies, and Sixties (sophomore Tiffany Chan, freshmen Israt Hossain, and sophomore Betsy Huang). After rejecting them yet again, a never before used theme—Fairytales (freshman Tahia Islam)—enters with her four accompanying princesses (freshmen Libby Ho, Juliette Hainline, and Zara Leventhal, and sophomore Andrew Reilly). Impressed by Hainline's technically impressive, but somewhat emotionally lacking rendition of "Respect," by Aretha Franklin, and a dance routine performed by a tutu wearing-girls' hip hop crew, Fairytales is chosen as the theme.

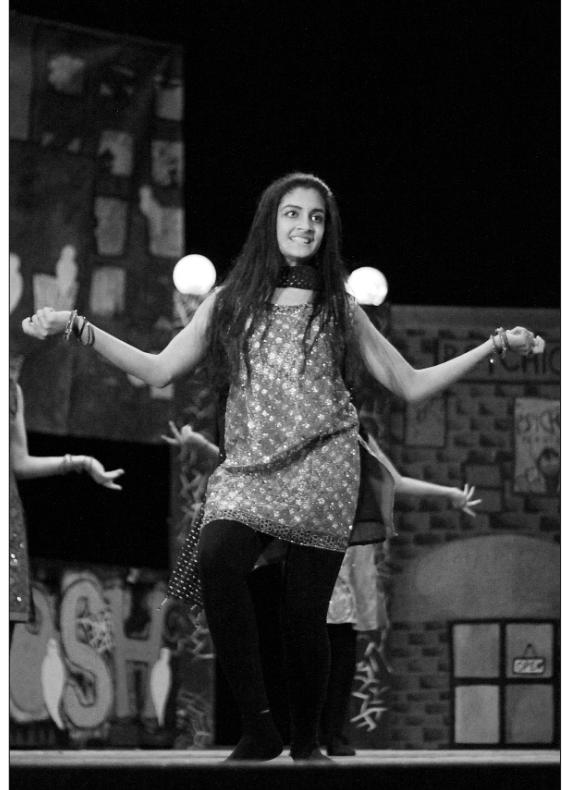
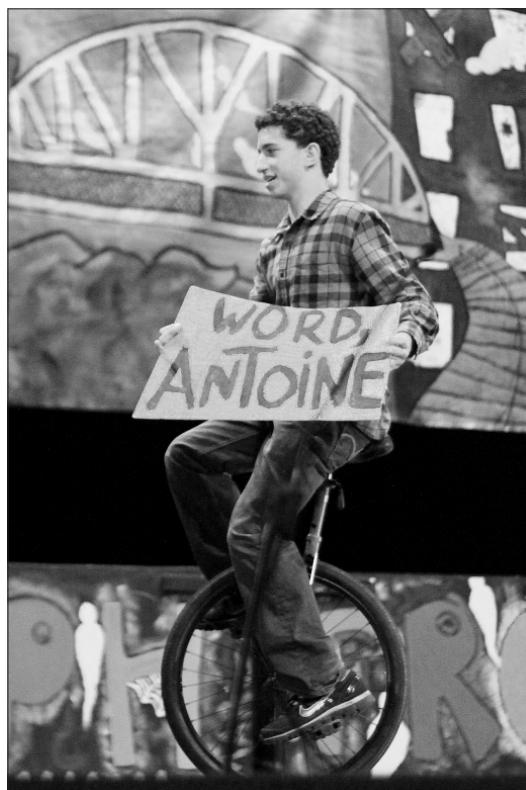
The scene then changes to a plotting Junior "boss" (sophomore Patrick So)—his exact position is never explained—and his two henchmen (sophomores Albert Kwok and Lucy Woychuck-Mlinac). The boss plots to steal Fairytales to use as his own, forcing Soph-Frosh to find another theme, in reference to the juniors' supposed theft of Soph-Frosh SING!'s original idea for a theme. He successfully lures Fairytales away from the writers—"Look! It's Justin Bieber!"—and takes her back to his lair where, after hearing her pleas, the henchman played by Woychuck-Mlinac decides to help out the poor theme. What followed is the most remarkable vocal performance in the entire show, as So catches his henchwoman-turned-good-guy and the two engage in a sing-off to a rendition of "Confrontation," from Les Miserables. Without a microphone, and all the while struggling to escape the hold of Kwok, Woychuck-Mlinac was able to project her voice and hit all the high notes in perfect harmony with So's low notes. The duet emitted all the explosive emotion their vocal fight was supposed to represent.

Returning to the once again downtrodden, theme-less writers, the play shows the four ghosts as they return to impart wisdom on the playwrights and Sorenson's solo of a rendition of "Always Look on the Bright Side of Life." Sorenson astounded with her great singing voice, which was unfortunately inaudible except to the first few rows. After this brief song insert, the three realize that "the story we need isn't one that we have to find, it's the one we've been writing this entire time!" Lindy exclaims. The show concludes with some parting words from the narrator (sophomore Ian Outhwaite) and the Spirit Song, to the tune of "How You Like Me Now" by The Heavy.

Plot aside, there were many impressive dance routines and vocal performances. Boys hip hop's great choreography and excellent use of stage space—coupled with strobe light effects—made a great, surreal viewing experience. Similarly, the step squad wowed with its stunts, multi-layered beats and in sync presentation. The Indian and belly dances, while poorly integrated into the plot, both incorporated formations other than the typical double row of dancers. Belly dance began with a pyramid formation, and their use of levels—some dancers were kneeling while others were standing—was a pleasant change from the uniformity of previous crews. Though coordination was a bit off at times, the overall choreography and energy were excellent.

The one consistently good aspect of the performance was the band, directed by sophomores James Kogan and Adam Cary Lieber, whose antics in the pit were at times more entertaining than the show on stage. The scattered drum and trumpet solos not only showcased great underclassmen talent but also helped alleviate the displeasure of watching the occasionally off beat dancing.

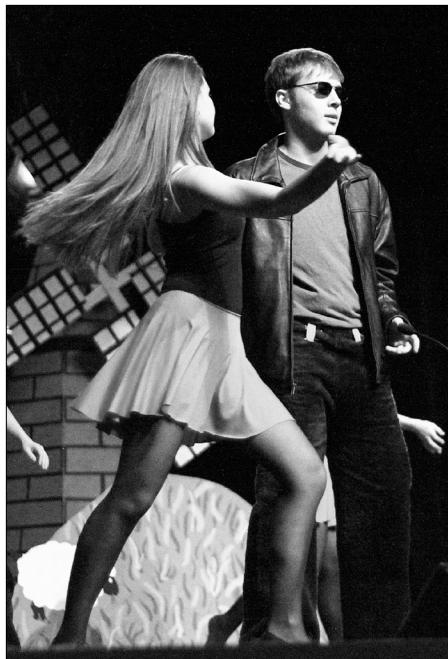
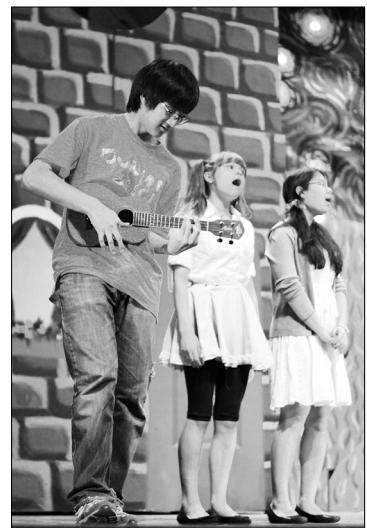
Overall, the show had many highlights, especially sophomore Michael Sheldon's ukulele and kazoo performance and sophomore Daelin Fischman's antics on the unicycle while holding an "Awkward Transition" sign during major set changes. However, the plot holes were simply too big to ignore. In an attempt to focus on so many aspects, the show failed to really perfect any single performance. Rather than appreciate the stunning vocal performance of singers and physical agility of the dance crews, the play left the audience caught in the tangled plot. Maybe it would have been best to go with Pandas.



**Photos by Joann Lee,
Abe Levitan,
Harry Poppick
and Victoria Zhao**

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed are solely those of the reviewers and not of the entire Editorial Board.

Junior SING!



(Almost) Bringing the

By MOLLIE FORMAN

"Thanks to all the juniors who helped make this show as incredible as it is," said producer Neil Maheshwari in his introduction to Junior SING! 2011. The assumption that Junior SING! would be anything close to incredible was a dicey statement to make—especially in comparison to the performance of last year's victorious juniors, now seniors. The theme, as the other SINGSIs constantly jeered, was nursery rhymes, a cutesy idea at best. But despite several gaffes, a disjointed second half, and some weak dance numbers, the Class of 2012 gave the seniors a run for their money with a snappy script, quality performances, and, at the core, a heart that the monsters of Senior SING! could not emulate.

Executive produced by Stacy Chun and produced by Kelly Kwan, Connor Justice, and Maheshwari, Junior SING! tells the story of Mary (Lucinda Ventimiglia), a girl with warring parents who finds comfort in her pet lamb, Lamby (David Kim), and a large, golden egg. Unbeknownst to her, the innocuous egg belongs to, and was lost by, the evil Mother Goose (Madeline Emerick). She and her wimpy sidekick, Muffin Man (Joseph Solomon), enlist the aid of the Itsy Bitsy Spider (Edgar Li), whose family Mary killed during spring cleaning. What follows is an entertaining, albeit confusing, romp through prison, nightclubs, flashbacks, and Mary's eventual return home.

The play opens with the curtain, revealing the whimsically dressed chorus, which launches into an upbeat parody of Queen's "Fat Bottomed Girls," setting a buoyant tone. The beginning of the song was sung a cappella, a smart choice, considering the band overpowered many songs throughout the night. Despite the proficiency of the accompaniment, the ability to understand the lyrics was a nice change that added to the effect of the chorus's enthusiasm. An electrifying guitar solo by Vasia Patov rounded out a solid introduction.

As the chorus members disperse at the end of their song, the Narrator (Jake Simon) ambles onstage wearing a pair of gargantuan, Humpty-Dumpty-esque trousers. Hoisting himself atop a precise replica of the "Alice in Wonderland" wall on Chambers Street, he gives background for the story with an engaging stage voice and snappy rhymes.

After the Narrator's speech, the stage lights go up, revealing in full the beautiful set—put together by general design director Idalia Bamert—which did indeed feel like a nursery rhyme. Colored in lovely pastels, painted sheep leapt across hills in the background, with a quaint, two-story house on the side. With a boom, the front wall of the first story comes crashing down, revealing a room and table where Mary sits with her parents, Jack (Josiah Mercer) and Jill (Lili Gehorsam).

What follows is the most witty and entertaining dialogue of the show: Jack begins discussing news like the "London Bridge disaster," but when Jill asks him how his day was, he launches into a hilarious tirade that references the Jack and Jill nursery rhyme. The best moment comes when he kicks his chair over, bellowing, "Stop screaming in front of the child!" Mercer's performance was unrestrained and authentic. Gehorsam, on the other hand, was almost too sedate, sitting through the abuse with an unchanged expression.

Mary flees upstairs, where Lamby, adorable in his fluffy onesie, sits with the egg. Gehorsam now redeems herself, singing a duet of Sutton Foster's "Flight" with Ventimiglia, expressing their twin desires to leave their oppressive home. The performance is breathtaking: both actresses have beautiful voices, and their harmonies are divine. Combined with brilliantly altered lyrics such as "I want a place where the people are kind, a nursery rhyme that has not gone awry," their vocals briefly raise the show above the triteness that is endemic to SING!.

The great performances kept on coming as Mother Goose, played by Emerick, entered the stage with a catchy version of Kanye West's rap "Monster." Emerick was a force of nature, evoking villains like Cruella de Vil, with a voice to match. Though the beginning of her later rendition of Peggy Lee's "I'm A Woman" was hard to hear, she hit several show-stopping notes in the fantastic ending. Her costume, a slinky, well-fitted dress, accentuated her character perfectly.

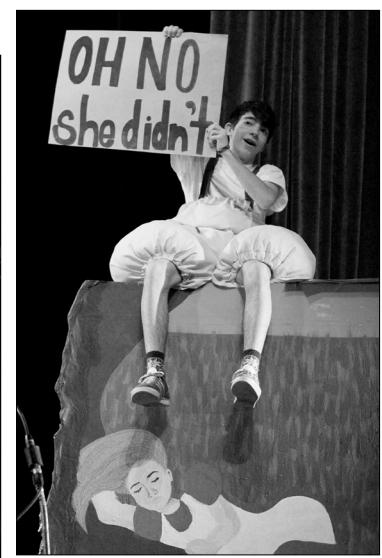
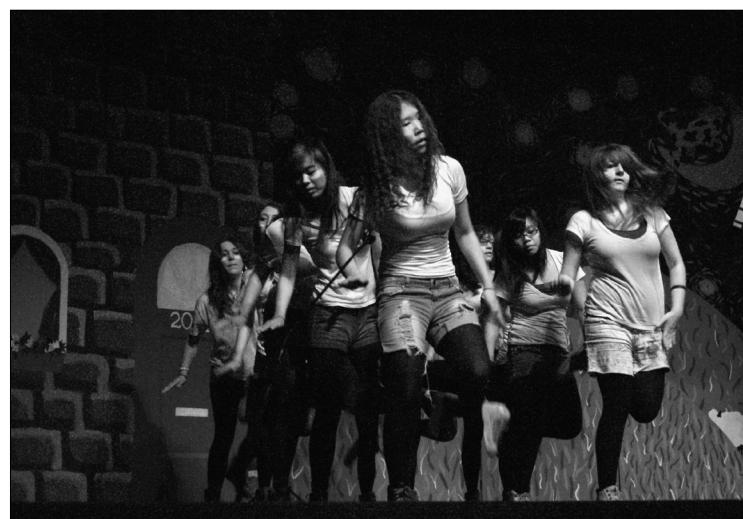
Itsy then tells Mother Goose that he knows where her egg is, and she manipulates him into helping her retrieve it. Li played and spoke his role with a wonderful wimpiness, but, at times, he was unintelligible in his enthusiasm.

A disguised Mother Goose comes to Mary's door, but Mary, who has been left on her own, refuses to admit her. Infuriated, Mother Goose forces her way in with the help of her Angry Birds, this year's krump crew.

The krumpers, the first dancers of the night, were talented and wonderfully costumed, but their dance was somewhat uninspiring, as the choreography was too tame for the genre. Despite the comical hats worn by the dancers, the unrelatedness of Angry Birds to nursery rhymes made the whole sequence confusing. When they finish, Mother Goose grabs the egg, but Lamby spirits it away while she is distracted. In outrage, Mother Goose orders Muffin Man to take Mary to her lair.

The lights come up on Kim, who is pacing and not acting very lamb-like, with Itsy, unnoticed by him, in the background. "I specialize in a very specific type of security: golden egg security," says Lamby, parodying "Inception," while Li, in an inspired move by the writers, hums the movie's

Junior SING!



Whole Stage Down

theme. Even with his own theme music, Kim is not an intimidating figure, and his own brand of ridiculousness meshed well with Li's. After a comic slap-fight over the egg, Lamby calls in his ninjas.

The martial arts crew, especially with the performance of director Gerald Nelson, was one of the best acts of the show. Accented by well-utilized strobe lights, Nelson single-handedly fights off an army of ninjas with prowess and flashy moves, creating a brief and entertaining scene.

Almost too easily, Lamby wins Itsy over to Mary's side and awkwardly transitions to the contemporary dance crew. Though the crew's costumes were some of the best in the show, and though the dancers were more or less in sync, the routine was abrupt and unsensational.

The scene cuts to Mother Goose's prison. Jamie Zhang, playing the warden Peter Piper, killed with a hysterical stage voice and jaunty walk in his short, Renaissance-inspired skirt. The scene also introduced the comedic styling of the Three Blind Mice (Caelin Kaplan, Ian Chan, and Gil Spivack), who earned laughs flexing their muscles for the crowd. The trio's tight chemistry kept their act entertaining, but they figured little into the actual plot, being used primarily in jokes and a contrived transition into the rave number, which was dramatically choreographed, despite several slip-ups on Saturday.

The Old Lady Who Lives in a Shoe (Sarah Soo-Hoo), another detainee, is used solely to introduce the step crew, who represent her children fighting over the house. Soo-Hoo does not have a strong stage voice, and her overly complex monologue was difficult to follow. She stays with Mary for the remainder of the show but remains useless in terms of the actual plot.

Step, especially in the Friday performance, delivered the best act of the show, despite running a little long. Not only were the performers in sync, but they filled the whole stage with their dynamic choreography and used the dance to tell a story. The fight chant, ending with the powerful, "Juniors bring the whole stage down!" was a rousing success.

After the step crew's exit, the plot takes on a disjointed nature, cutting back to Jack and Jill. Again, Jack begins an argument. Jill replies with the cringe-worthy line, "I'm so angry, I just have to dance! Or I can have these people dance for me," cueing the swing crew.

The rapid transition between the familial dispute and an upbeat swing number, complete with silky pink costumes and megawatt smiles, was abrupt and ruined any emotional impact the scene might have had. Director Renata Horowitz was clearly the best dancer, doing several exhilarating tricks on Friday, but the other dancers were mostly mediocre. An awkward scene involving Jill hav-

ing an implied affair with the Big Bad Wolf (Julian Michaels) transitioned into a sleepy Latin number that added little to the production.

Back at the prison, Itsy and Lamby barge in to rescue Mary, launching into a tedious dialogue about how to escape. Spivack ends the monotony by breaking character and bursting into a spot-on impersonation of Principal Stanley Teitel. The entire group rushes off the stage, escaping even though Peter Piper has not been incapacitated, leaving him to follow them awkwardly.

Their final confrontation with Mother Goose cues more unnatural transitions into dance numbers, this time between the warring guards and Lamby's "bah, bah black force," girls and boys hip hop, respectively. The girls outperformed the boys, who had trouble staying in sync, but neither group was outstanding, despite strong choreography.

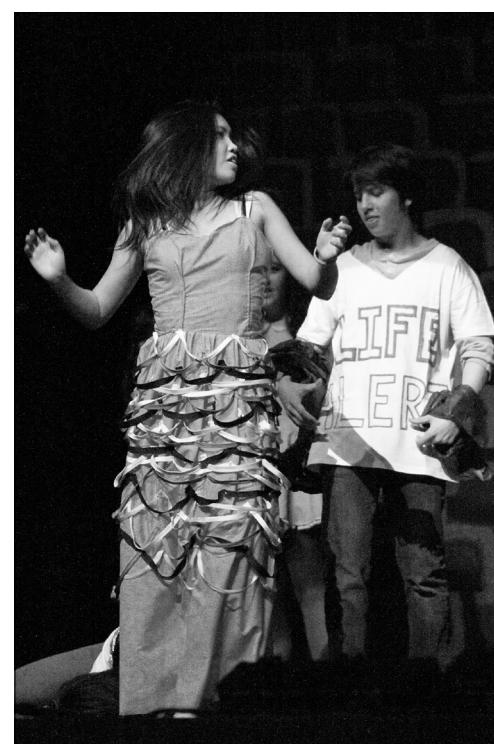
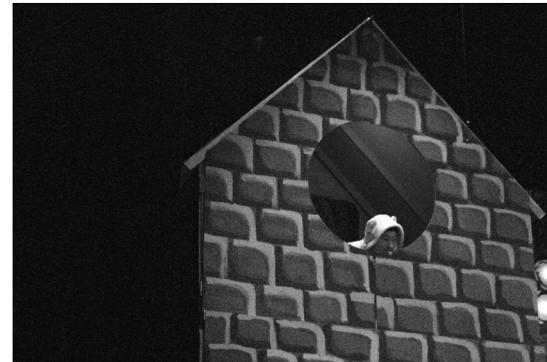
In a predictable move, Itsy convinces Muffin Man to turn against Mother Goose. As Muffin Man grabs Mother Goose, the rest of the cast tries to flee, but inexplicably fall flat, just like the intended joke. The Old Lady begins a scene parodying infomercials, one of the most out of place jokes of the play. Chan is the best part of this shtick, imitating Allstate's Mayhem character. A cameo by Life-Alert (Jules Berman) was also amusing.

Thankfully, this digression is over quickly, and Muffin Man again yells to run. "Come back, you dirty vermin!" Mother Goose screams, and the Mice whip around, offended, to great laughs from the audience. They drag Mother Goose offstage, presumably to beat her with their canes. While slightly humorous, it is a disturbing end to the conflict, and not entirely in good taste.

The sour taste left by Mother Goose's fate is quickly lifted by a spirited adaptation of Florence and The Machine's "Dog Days are Over" by Mary and the chorus. In the first two performances, Venticiglia had trouble with breath control during the refrain, but she was much improved on Saturday, glowing visually and vocally with her character's glee.

One last time, the scene cuts to Jack and Jill bickering at home. In the midst of their fighting, Mary rushes to them, hugging them and uniting them as a family for the first time in the play. Lamby joins them after a few moments, to the obligatory "aww's".

This atmosphere of childhood, nostalgia, and screwball humor permeated the whole play, and, despite the many letdowns of its second half, ultimately made it a success. Yes, there were gaping plot holes—most noticeably why exactly the egg was so important—but the care put into the production left an overall positive impression. Despite its defeat, junior SING! provided a fanciful journey, just "like a dream at the end of a nursery rhyme."



**Photos by Joann Lee,
Abe Levitan,
Harry Poppick
and Victoria Zhao**

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Senior SING!



Horribly

By SHAH ALAM

This year's Senior SING! was an exhibition of frightening wit and aptitude. The sublime plot was complimented by the talents of its many contributors, including cast directors Chester Dubov and Ariel Lerner, and assistant cast director Yana Azova, along with executive producer Daniel Frankel and producers Sam Furnival, Michael Silverblatt, and Hyemin Yi. They utilized their experience and individual talents to create an incredible anthology of entertainment.

Senior SING! starts off with a scream as Mr. Wallace (Benjamin Garner), an anxious father to be, awaits news of his pregnant wife (Rebecca Temkin), who is struggling to give birth. Mr. Wallace pleads with Jezebel (Jaime Meyers), the family's nurse, to witness the childbirth, introducing us to a bizarre child who is cast off into the woods. The child is then claimed by the king and queen of Monstrocity, Dracula (Alex Treitel) and his bride, Medusa (Elizabeth Livitsky). The child, Big Foot (Abie Sidell), wrestles with the obvious conflicts that arise from being a man raised as a monster. On the quest to finding his identity, Big Foot faces the malicious intents of Baron Von Frankenstein (Chester Dubov) and finds romance with the lovely Clock Tower (Willa Beckman). The plot echoes many Shakespearian details, borrowing much from Macbeth and Hamlet.

The opening scene seamlessly set the ghoulish atmosphere. "Monstrocity" was displayed on a road sign, making way for the rest of the set, including a haunted house, eerie clock tower, and King Dracula's extravagant castle, which even had a grand staircase and fully functional drawbridge.

Smoke fills the stage as spectacular jazz dancers and a band of monstrous-looking choristers line up in the background, initiating the opening number: "Kids," by MGMT, skillfully sung by Peter Liu and Emily Martin. The hard-hitting performance of lead dancer Riho Tsuji, who danced in spite of her foot injury caused by a falling power drill the week of the show, left the audience in shock and epitomized the group's obvious professionalism and dedication. Chorus hit just the right tone and volume, avoiding many of the harmony problems that other performances, unfortunately, could not.

As the band of monsters leaves the stage, it is transformed—albeit, rather disruptively, using

the noisy rotating sets—into the lair of the horrific royal family of Monstrocity and their guest, Frankenstein, sitting at a dinner table in the wonderfully designed monster lair, as they gnaw on a variety of human limbs. After a family argument over Big Foot's declared veganism, an awkward transition introduces Jerk Squad. Though the brief performance was filled with plenty of bright lights and energetic steps, the relevance was far from clear.

Following more quarreling, Senior SING!'s heartiest number begins. Dressed in a fantastically accurate costume, Totoro (Sang-A Bae), Big Foot's fellow monster, bolsters his confidence by singing "Summertime," composed by George and Ira Gershwin. Bae's jazzy voice dominated the theater, hitting every note with poise and charm and ending the song with a show-stopping bang.

After Frankenstein expresses discontent with Big Foot's reluctance towards eating humans, the rave crew takes the stage dressed as skeletons. After demonstrating their swift moves, dazzling lights, and fun choreography, two witches, Loch (Hannah O'Grady) and Ness (Sadie Bergen), accompanied by the immaculately-played Cookie Monster (Benjamin Garner), make an appearance. The two quirky sisters, who entertained the audience immensely with their comical Scottish accents, prophesize a new Macbeth-like future for Frankenstein—one that involves usurping the throne from the human Big Foot.

Frankenstein, whom Dubov portrayed convincingly as a scheming German monster, confides in his wife, Bride of Frankenstein (Miriam Coppersmith), telling her of his impending power. Ecstatic, she insists that he expose and overthrow Big Foot, then breaks into a tap dance as two other dancers take the stage. The performance, tapped to Puttin' On The Ritz by Fred Astaire, displayed Coppersmith's talent for dancing and singing simultaneously, but did little to wow the audience. The choreography was simple yet entertaining, though one of the dancers was nervous and constantly looked to the others for reassurance.

The Bride creates an elaborate plan to expose Big Foot by creating a human temptress. Excited by his wife's brilliance, Frankenstein and his bride break into dance, introducing the swing crew. Though the performance was one of elaborate choreography that showed off the

Senior SING!



Talented

amount of practice behind the difficult moves, it was plagued by a lack of synchronization.

After beginning to assemble Big Foot's human bait, Frankenstein's "sexy lab assistants," complete with clipboards, break into an explosive girls hip hop routine. However, the dancers had some costume difficulties and were forced to constantly fix their skirts, weakening the overall performance.

Following the successful experiment, Frankenstein hires a group of belly dancers to teach his creation how to seduce Big Foot. Led by Omika Jikaria on Friday, and Anina Ahmad on Saturday, the belly dancers created a perfect mix of swift, athletic steps with slow, hypnotizing belly rolls and hip thrusts. While belly dance is typically among the weakest of SING! crews, both the choreography and execution seemed to be close to professional quality. The belly dancers also took the award for best use of costume accessories; their flowing, multicolored shawls added to the mystique of the performance.

The scene then shifts to Big Foot and his friends, the visually challenged Cyclops (Peter Liu), the adorable Yeti (Emily Martin), and the brain hungry Zombie (Isaac Lapidus). As they discuss the difficulties of meeting their parents' monstrous expectations, Frankenstein's gorgeous creation enters the scene and is quickly spotted by Big Foot. Big Foot's all too human hormonal urges are exposed as the creature introduces herself, taking on the name of Clock Tower. This romantic first meeting suffers an untimely interruption as Zombie attempts to make a pass at Clock Tower (and her brains), leading into the boys hip hop routine. Though the addition was awkwardly placed and unnecessary, boys hip hop stole the stage with perfectly timed choreography. After a short but robust dance to "Rock With You," performed by Rob Hannan, Clock Tower and Big Foot set off to a werewolf bar mitzvah together.

At the event, The Fame Monster/Lady Gaga (Rebecca Temkin) performs a cleverly hebraized, monster-themed version of "Bad Romance," before Big Foot and Clock Tower enter. The lyrics were very witty, and the entire number was well choreographed. This led in to the Latin dance number, "Smooth" by Carlos Santana, which was one of the better partner dances. Led by Simon Ayzman and Diana Hou, each member exhibited prowess and skill in a well-synchro-

nized routine that maintained a balance of controlled, precise movement and intense energy.

After Big Foot resists his parents' attempt at devouring his human paramour, an outraged Dracula charges towards him and meets his doom at the end of a comically conspicuous wooden stake. Seizing the moment, Frankenstein flags Big Foot as a murderer and takes the throne, claiming Medusa as his queen. In a fit of post-abandonment rage, the scorned Bride of Frankenstein reveals Clock Tower's origin and purpose to Big Foot, who proceeds to confront his new girlfriend in a melodramatic Telemundo parody scene. While the faux-Spanish dialogue and over-the-top violins garnered a few laughs, the overall effect of the scene was one of confusion, as it did little to advance or resolve the plot. Big Foot then resolves to take revenge on Frankenstein and reclaim his throne.

In an unexplained connection, the martial arts crew takes the stage as Big Foot calls upon his dragons to fight against Frankenstein's forces. The fan fighting dragons used their weapons with great expertise to run through the opposing crows, but quickly grew repetitive. After an irrelevant fight that lasts a little too long, Big Foot confronts Frankenstein and demands that he abdicate the throne.

Here, the plot reaches an obstruction as the seniors had difficulty finding a fitting ending. On Wednesday and Friday night, the seniors chose to end with Big Foot's death, doing little to conclude their otherwise well written plot and leaving the audience befuddled. On Saturday night, however, they greatly improved by using an ending in which Frankenstein leaves his throne, allowing Big Foot to become the new ruler and give a King's speech—referring to the Oscar winning film—in which he graciously thanks those involved with the production of Senior SING!.

Senior SING!'s ultimate success lay in its plot, which, in its ingenious mix of classicism and modern humor, established a strong backbone for the performance. Though some of the dance numbers seemed awkwardly forced into the lengthy, yet brilliantly acted scenes, it successfully wove in well-played musical numbers and held the audience's attention throughout. In a repeat of last year's victory, Senior SING! showcased the very best of the Class of 2011's charisma, making for one monstrous show.

**Photos by Joann Lee,
Abe Levitan,
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SING! Scoreboard**Friday**

	Soph-Frosh	Junior	Senior
Overall Impression	53	71	66
Script	45	73	61
Acting	52	69	67
Dance	53	59	63
Band / Orchestra	53	62	68
Vocal / Musical Elements	54	65	59
Sets	46	80	70
Technical Aspects	38	63	68
Costumes	47	70	67
Total	441	612	589
Deductions	0	6	38
Final	441	606	551

*On Friday's production, one judge was absent.

Saturday

	Soph-Frosh	Junior	Senior
Overall Impression	56	65	85
Script	50	65	77
Acting	57	61	77
Dance	67	69	77
Band / Orchestra	64	68	79
Vocal / Musical Elements	57	59	72
Sets	52	78	82
Technical Aspects	43	61	76
Costumes	56	64	85
Total	502	590	710
Deductions	0	52	42
Final	502	538	668

Overall

	Soph-Frosh	Junior	Senior
Overall Impression	109	136	151
Script	95	138	138
Acting	109	130	144
Dance	120	128	140
Band / Orchestra	117	130	147
Vocal / Musical Elements	111	124	131
Sets	98	158	152
Technical Aspects	81	124	144
Costumes	103	134	152
Total	943	1202	1299
Deductions	0	58	80
Final	943	1144	1219

Working on SING!

by the Photo Department



Sports

Boys' Indoor Track

Greyducks Rebound to Win Borough Championships

continued from page 28

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the Greyducks traveled up to 168th street to utilize the track facilities at The Armory.

The captains have contributed sizably to the team's success thus far. "We're the middle ground between coach [Mark Mendes] and everyone else," senior and co-captain Andy Chen said.

They have served as role models for the fairly young team, which is primarily composed of underclassmen. "The younger kids try to emulate the older ones," Mendes said.

The Greyducks' most successful event all season was the Distance Medley Relay, in which the team was anchored by two of the captains. The relay

team, which is composed of sophomore Jack Stevenson, junior Genghis Chau, senior and co-captain Billy Barnes, and Surkont, qualified for the Eastern State Championships held on Tuesday, March 1, in which only the top 33 teams in the entire metropolitan area competed. There, the relay team placed eighth out of nine teams in a close race that separated the second and eighth place finishers by just 16 seconds.

Surkont set the tone for the Greyducks at the Borough Championships, claiming first place in the 1600-meter run with a time of four minutes 49.47 seconds. Stevenson duplicated Surkont's success, placing first in the 3200-meter run, and finishing in the top three in his other two races, the 1000-meter and

1600-meter runs.

"Konrad Surkont is the favorite in the 1600-m [for the City Championships]," Mendes said in an e-mail interview. "Jack Stevenson has an excellent chance in the 3200-m."

The Greyducks dominated despite being a runner short, as Barnes was deemed ineligible to run in the meet by Assistant Principal of Health and Physical Education Larry Barth, who recently instituted a new policy that penalizes athletes for being excessively late to school.

Even though Barnes is expected to be ineligible for the City Championships as well, the Greyducks still have high expectations, anticipating others to step up. "We expect Stevenson to be in the

top three for the 3200-m and Surkont to win the 1600-m. And then hopefully our 4x800-m relay team can place top third," junior Yorkbell Jaramillo said in an e-mail interview. "Scoring in the top 10 [overall] would be an accomplishment."

The Greyducks also expect to compete in yet another Triple Crown in the spring during the Outdoor Track season. "We haven't lost [a Borough Championship] since I've been here," said Mendes, who has been coaching the team for 11 years.

"It's a great feeling to know that we're already two-thirds of the way there," Jaramillo said. "The third leg of the Triple crown next season should be an easy feat."

Girls' Basketball

Phoenix Rises After Slow Start, Misses Playoffs



Michelle Savran / The Spectator

By ELIEZER HANFT

The Phoenix, Stuyvesant's girls' basketball team, finished the season with two more wins than it had last year. Despite the improvement, the team, led by three captains, seniors Audrey Fleischner, Maya Goldman, and Shilpa Agrawal,

finished 8-9, just one win shy of the .500 winning percentage that would qualify them for a playoff berth.

The players had mixed feelings about the season, believing that their record was unrepresentative of their improvement or their perseverance throughout the season.

"I don't think it was an unsuccessful season at all. Even though we lost some important games, we lost close games," Fleischner said.

Nevertheless, there was still some disappointment in missing the playoffs for the second consecutive year. "Our goal every season is to make .500 so we could make the playoffs," coach Michelle Flemming said. "Any season we don't make the playoffs is disappointing."

The Phoenix finished fourth in the Manhattan A South division behind Baruch College Campus High School, Seward Park Campus, and School of the Future. Despite starting the season 1-3, the team was able to keep its morale up throughout the year. The players realized that the best way to overcome losses was to study the mistakes they made, then focus on improving in these areas for the next game. Their new outlook resulted in a 6-5 finish to the season. "After a tough loss we would just play that much harder in the next game," Goldman said.

The team certainly proved how well it could play, even after being mathematically eliminated from the playoffs with two games to go. The Phoenix won those final two games by a total of 38 points, holding the High School of Economics and Finance to just 14 total field goals, and holding four of the five starters to under three points.

"It was pretty emotional for the seniors, but it was also great to see everyone play and to finish on such a positive note," Goldman said.

Voicing the opinion of many team members, Agrawal said, "One of my favorite games of the year was an away game at Lab [Museum United High School] and [junior and point guard] Lisa Qiu hit a three-pointer to end the game."

Qiu was the main playmaker on the Phoenix, finishing with 10.47 points per game and leading the team with close to five assists per game. "She is a great playmaker, and I know she will continue to be one as a senior next season," Goldman said.

Fleming was quick to point out how much the captains helped the team, especially Fleischner, who Flemming believes "did an excellent job of hitting shots for us all season and really getting a lot of points every game," she said. Fleischner led the team with 43 three-pointers and 178 total points.

The team players bonded over the season and became very close through grueling two-hour practices, team lunches, and a team sleepover. The sleepover was established to help them form relationships off the court to increase chemistry on the court. "It's a fun way to make sure we are all comfortable with each other," Agrawal said.

Fleming is saddened that these team bonds will be diminished by the departure of all three senior captains, but is still looking forward to next season. "I'm going to miss my three seniors, but every season is different with new people joining and different personalities joining together, and that's the fun of it," Flemming said.

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Sports

Girls' Gymnastics

Felines Repeat with Fourth Place at Team Championships

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The team's fourth place finish can also be attributed to subpar performances of other schools in the championships. Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School was ranked sixth coming into the Team Championships, but finished last due to the absence of three of its members. The Felines were also helped by low scores obtained by higher-ranked Susan Wagner High School, which was expected to be competing for a top four finish.

However, team members said that achieving a fourth place finish, as they have done in the past three years, was more difficult than in the past. "We had to work harder and learn new skills to keep up with the competition. Coach has been doing a lot more drills to help build up girls," Dogarou said, who had a good performance in Vaulting and Balance Beam in the City Championships.

Junior and next year's captain Shelby Hochberg had a solid performance in all four events, only slightly hindered by an ankle injury a week before competition. "I don't want to blame my performance on my ankle, but I could have done better if it hadn't been a worry," Hochberg said. "[Balance] Beam was sort of a disaster, I made some bad decisions, but the rest of the meet went fine."

"We had a wonderful season and everyone tried her best and gave every minute and every trick their all."
—Shelby Hochberg, junior

Choubaralian noted that the captains did an excellent job relaying in-

formation to and helping the team prepare for competitions. "Being a captain is a huge honor and I was really happy I was able to do it. We worked on having more team spirit and trying to get people more excited about competitions," Dogarou said.

Looking back, Choubaralian believes this season was definitely a success. "It planted some seeds for next year. New girls are going to be very strong," he said.

He mentioned sophomores and twins Elska and Zofia Kaczmarek as good additions to the team, citing their previous gymnastic experience and great discipline. "They were able to compete and did quite well considering it was their first year on the team," he said. The two look to be solid contributors next year, especially with a year of team experience under their belts.

As the Felines look to improve next year and improve their overall standing, the team can still look to this season as a memorable one, using it as motivation to get better, and continue giving it their all. "We had a wonderful season and everyone tried their best and gave every minute and every trick their all," Hochberg said.

Girls' Indoor Track

Greyducks End Indoor Season with Bills Held High

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ahead with thinking about what should be done. Also, when some information has to be passed to me or from me to athletes, they do a great job, as well as with communication with [Assistant Principal Health and Physical Education Larry] Barth."

Though individual race-walkers are aspiring to place in the City Championships on Friday, February 25, and the team is preparing to display their future talents in the Soph-Frosh Championships on Sunday, March 6, Tsenter, Bauer, and Yuan's indoor track careers are over.

Summing up her last season with the team, Tsenter showed optimism that her leadership had made an impact on the team's future. "I didn't win anything individually, but I wanted to set everyone on the track to be greater next year," she said.

Athlete Spotlight: In a League of Her Own

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Championships as senior and captain, and, undisputedly, as the most dominant gymnast on the team. Despite the many obstacles the Felines faced this season, such as losing key players to graduation and injuries, Hirschowitz helped those who would not have played crucial roles to step up.

Co-captain and senior Anca Dogarou and Choubaralian both described Hirschowitz as having grown up since they first met her in her freshman year. She has grown to embrace her role as a leader and has helped run team practices while constantly introducing new drills and activities to keep workouts fun. This new confidence has been a large factor in improving her scores, particularly in Balance Beam.

Hirschowitz's experience with gymnastics has also added to the quality of the team. She often incorporates several warm-ups and exercises that she learned from her own coaches while training outside of school and applies them to the Felines' practices, pushing each player to her full potential.

Hirschowitz has also helped members of the team craft their own routines. "She's been doing gymnastics for so long," Dogarou said. "She's gone through all the steps to get tricks, so she knows how to teach tricks well."

Many underclassmen feel that Hirschowitz's guidance has contributed greatly to their success. Sophomore Florence Gafanovich recalled a Saturday practice when Hirschowitz took her to Chelsea Piers and gave her a private lesson with her own personal coach. "She gave me the opportunity to work with him, even though it was really her time, and I actually came out of that class inspired and motivated to try harder on the school team," Gafanovich said.

Hirschowitz's competitive experience brings an entirely different dynamic to the team. In addition to helping teammates improve their scores,



Senior Chloe Hirschowitz is the captain of the Felines, the Girls' Gymnastics team.

Hirschowitz motivates them to do better and boosts their confidence.

"Just by doing something that's more advanced than what the other girls can do, kind of leaves them in awe: 'Wow, maybe I can do that,'" Choubaralian said.

What sets Hirschowitz apart from the few gymnasts at her level in the PSAL is the way she carries herself. Despite being the best gymnast on the school team, and despite having taken part in the New York State gymnastics team for

the past two years, she displays a great deal of modesty.

"She has this kind of like child-like innocence to her," Choubaralian said. "There's not one ounce of over confidence, cockiness, arrogance, none of that, which is nice to see from someone who's so skilled and so much better than everyone else."

Though gymnastics is very important to her, Hirschowitz is unlikely to pursue it in the future, as none of the colleges she is applying to has gym-

nastics programs. "I want to keep it a part of my life, either by taking classes or transitioning into dance or theater," Hirschowitz said.

Many of the girls currently on the Stuyvesant gymnastics team owe their newfound passion for the sport to Hirschowitz, who has introduced them to it. "Overall, she made the season a very positive experience," Gafanovich said. "I couldn't have asked for a better captain."

THE SPECTATOR SPORTS

Athlete Spotlight: In a League of Her Own

By ODREKA AHMED

Chloe Hirschowitz first came to Stuyvesant's girls' gymnastics team, the Felines, as a quiet, timid freshman. Despite her mellow presence, she quickly made herself known by proving to be the most skilled gymnast on the team. Hirschowitz dominated on all four apparatuses in her first year, scoring well above the team average even on her least favorite event, Vaulting, and her weakest event, the Uneven Parallel Bars.

Hirschowitz began taking gymnastics classes at a small fitness center called Jodie's Gym at the young age of four. Her abundance of energy made her a clear candidate for gymnastics, and she had obvious potential for the sport; by age six, she had already joined the pre-competitive team at the 92nd Street Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association.

There, she joined other aspiring gymnasts and began to work with greater dedication, practicing for four to six hours a week. Some of her peers would go on to compete in highly recognized competitions; several aspired to the Olympics.

"Every little kid who does

gymnastics thinks they're going to make it to the Olympics. Looking back, it wasn't a realistic goal," Hirschowitz said,

"She did start at a very young age. She was a level eight gymnast... Level 10 is elite, so she was very close to it," Choubalalian said. "I'm sure if she had stayed with the club outside of school she would have continued on to be possibly an Olympic or 'elite' gymnast." However, Hirschowitz chose to focus on her school commitments rather than pursue a gymnastics career.

Hirschowitz competed with the 92nd Street Y team until she was 14, when she joined the Stuyvesant gymnastics team. Balancing academics and athletics is a challenge for most Stuyvesant athletes, but for Hirschowitz, her passion for gymnastics helped her deal with school stress throughout her four years.

"It's nice to have time set aside where I can just focus on gymnastics and cannot worry about everything else," Hirschowitz said.

Ranked ninth in the Public School Athletic League (PSAL), Hirschowitz led the Felines to a fourth place finish in the City

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Girls' Gymnastics

Felines Repeat with Fourth Place at Team Championships



Freshman Anna Ruta performs on the balance beam.

By KEVIN MOY

The Felines, Stuyvesant's girls' gymnastics team, defeated ten teams in order to compete in the PSAL Team Championships held on Thursday, February 10, at the Aviator Sports Complex in Brooklyn. The Felines placed fourth in the tournament.

"[We thought that we] would probably come in fifth place

and it would be close between the fourth, fifth, and sixth place team," coach Vasken Choubalalian said.

The Felines were ranked fifth in the Bronx/Manhattan Division going into the competition with a 10-1 record in the regular season. In the finals, they got a huge boost from the performances of seniors and co-captains Chloe Hirschowitz

and Anca Dogariu.

Hirschowitz, who competed in all four events, ranked first in the city in the vaulting event and qualified for the individual City Championships held on Sunday, February 13. "Chloe every year has been the main contributor," Choubalalian said.

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Boys' Indoor Track

Greyducks Rebound to Win Borough Championships



The Stuyvesant Boy's Track team dominated their league this year

By GABRIELLE GILLOW

The Greyducks, Stuyvesant's boys' indoor track team, successfully won the second leg of the Triple Crown by placing first in the Public School Athletic League Manhattan Borough Championships held on Saturday, February 12. If they win the Outdoor Track Borough Championships, they will have swept the Boroughs in all three track seasons for the twelfth consecutive time.

Despite a sluggish start to the season, the Greyducks finally established their dominance at the meet by placing in one of the top four spots in every single event except Pole

Vault. The team also claimed the top spot in eight of the 15 events.

"We started [the season] out a little slow," junior and co-captain Konrad Surkont said. "It took a little time getting all the wheels turning."

To compensate for their subpar start, the Greyducks practiced every day, regardless of weather conditions. Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays the sprinters could be seen running up and down the third floor hallways, while the distance runners could be spotted along the West Side Highway.

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Girls' Indoor Track

Greyducks End Indoor Season with Bills Held High

By JORDAN WALLACH

Though this season was expected to be a tough transition year for the Greyducks, Stuyvesant's girls' indoor track team, new coach Anna Markova has turned it into a major success. After finishing eighth in last year's Public School Athletics League (PSAL) Manhattan Borough Championships, the team was able to bounce back and place fifth this year.

Despite not breaking into the top four spots, which would have qualified the team for the City Championships, five race-walkers and sophomore Kineta Wahl, a 600-meter runner, were able to qualify based on their individual results in previous competitions.

Markova has done much to reform the team, including creating new workout teams, encouraging participating in a variety of field events, and improving the team's chemistry.

"Coach Markova really got the girls interested in field events," senior and co-captain Vanessa Yuan said. "Because she also competed in those events in the past, she knows how to prepare the girls well."

Markova's new strategic approach to meets has had a great impact on the team's results. Seven girls participated in the long jump in this sea-

son's Borough Championships, with sophomore Alicia Vargas-Morawetz finishing seventh, in the top third of the pack.

Markova took advantage of a shortage of athletes from other schools in the field events, even though a first place finish in any one of the field events is worth just as many points as in one in any of the track events.

She adopted the strategy after noting its success for the top-ranked High School of Health Professions and Human Services Vipers. In the Borough Championships, the team scored 77 of their 152 total points in the high jump, long jump, triple jump, shot put, and pole vault events.

Another important adjustment that Markova made was in guiding the team's behavior not only on the track, but off it as well. "[Markova] stresses the importance of attendance, being on time to meets and practices, wearing correct athletic apparel. All of this has made us more serious athletes," Yuan said.

In previous years, runners often showed up to meets after they started and were only on time for their own events. This year, the girls cheered for and motivated their teammates during meets and practices, which improved the team's chemistry and helped push some girls to

do better in their individual events.

Notably, Yuan and senior co-captain Lindsay Bauer were both injured before the Manhattan Championships, but made sure to attend in order to support their teammates.

The attitude has clearly changed, and according to senior and co-captain Anna Tsenter, freshmen are constantly on the PSAL Web site, analyzing stats, and posting on each other's Facebook walls about what they could do to succeed in the next race.

Compared to past indoor track teams, senior and co-captain, Anna Tsenter said, "We're actually more set on winning. Before we were just, 'Oh, hey, let's run and enjoy ourselves.' But now we're actually thinking about what we should do to get better placings."

All four co-captains will be graduating this June, and each of them felt that, because everyone stepped up to the plate this year, the season was a pleasant surprise. Leadership was a key element for the team, not just from Markova, but also from the co-captains.

In an e-mail interview, Markova said, "They are great leaders and are very good working together. They are always

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Victoria Stempel / The Spectator