



The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper

"The Pulse
of the
Student
Body"

Volume C No. 3

October 9, 2009

stuysspectator.com



Because of recent budget cuts, the production of fall musical The Pajama Game has been delayed. See page 13 for the full article.

Parents Protest against Budget Cuts

By BERNICE CHAN

Two hundred parents, community leaders, and members of the United Federation of Teachers and the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) gathered on the steps of City Hall on Wednesday, September 23 to protest the upcoming budget cuts to the New York City public education system. These cuts are expected to take place after the November elections and would be in addition to the budget cuts at the start of the school year.

Larry Wood, co-president of Stuyvesant's Parents' Association and one of the five New York City parents serving on the Alliance for Quality Education (AQE) board, attended the protest. "We know Governor Paterson is going to make cuts, but we don't want him to make big cuts in education. So we're appealing to the governor, mayor, and legislature to not take it out on our kids," he said.

"The message today is loud

continued on page 2

Elect to Educate

By SAM LEVINE
and CASSIE MOY

With Election Day rapidly approaching, education has become a key issue for voters, especially in the race for Mayor. Incumbent Michael R. Bloomberg was nominated by the Republican Party, though he is registered as an independent. William C. Thompson, Jr., the current city comptroller and former president of the Board of Education (BOE), is the Democratic candidate. Both have put education, along with the economy, at the core of their respective campaigns. In tough times like these, it is imperative that the elected mayor step up, take control and continue to better New York City's education system.

Bloomberg boasts of two successful terms in office, while Thompson looks to improve on some of Bloomberg's policies. Bloomberg was able to persuade the City Council to extend term limits to three terms in October 2008, allowing him to run in this election.

For the past two terms, Mayor Bloomberg has focused on several specific aspects of education, such as school violence. As a result of a zero tolerance

policy towards any inappropriate behavior, school crime is reduced since 2001.

Bloomberg has also been very concerned with making the education system more efficient. When he ran for mayor in 2001, a major component of his platform was to abolish the BOE and bring the city's education system under mayoral control. The BOE was composed of several different community boards and a very limited centralized system, leading to inefficiency and a lack of accountability. After he was elected, Bloomberg helped to get the State Legislature to make changes, and the BOE became the Department of Education (DOE). The new education law allows the mayor himself to appoint a chancellor. The change placed all DOE employees directly under the control of the mayor, allowing for more and faster reform.

With this power, Bloomberg has worked to improve test scores citywide. He was also able to raise teachers' salaries by 43 percent, a feat which attracted better teachers. This, among other education reforms by Bloomberg, led to a 20 percent increase in the number of fourth and eighth graders passing their English Language Arts and math

standardized tests. Bloomberg also claims a 15 percent increase in high school graduation rates.

In another effort towards increased accountability, Bloomberg created a "school report card," a rigorous rating system which gives each school an annual grade based on academic improvement from the past year. Bloomberg analyzes the results to determine how to distribute money and help.

"I am actually a strong supporter of [Bloomberg], primarily because of what he's done, what he's improved in public schools. There's a really distinct improvement from eight years ago," Parent Coordinator Harvey Blumm said. "It was hard to change anything. [Bloomberg] brought a new energy."

Blumm pointed to the increases in test scores, increased in spending on education, increased teacher salaries, and the installment of a parent coordinator in every school as evidence of Bloomberg's positive impact on the school system. "[Bloomberg] really has put children first above adult constituents," Blumm said, commenting on Mayor Bloomberg's Children First education agenda.

continued on page 4

College Office Trying Out the Common Application

By ZOE WU
and BEN GARNER

This year, College Counselor Gregg Walkes will be using the online Common Application system to send his students' transcripts, programs, and Secondary School Reports (SSR) to the colleges they are applying to. In previous years, all student information was sent to colleges via mail. If the new system is successful, Principal Stanley Teitel plans to have all seniors use it starting in September 2010, in an effort to make the college application process more efficient.

Teitel informed the senior class of the switch to the Common Application at both the Senior Assembly and the College Meeting earlier this year.

It was decided that Walkes would be the first one to use the Common Application for his students in homerooms 7H to 7Q, because of "his ability to use the computer," said Teitel, adding that Walkes is the most technologically savvy of the school's three college advisors at the school.

"If this works, next year the entire senior class is going to use it," Teitel said. "I am just not ready to take that risk for all 800 [seniors] right now."

One of the potential problems of sending information with the online Common Application is that not all colleges accept the Common Application.

"We need to see if we have a

large number of students applying to those colleges [that don't use the Common Application]," Teitel said. "But if most of the regular colleges that students apply to are part of the Common [Application], then I don't see any reason why we wouldn't want to do it."

According to the Common Application Web site, there are currently 391 colleges across the United States that use their system. Students in Walkes's class, however, will not be restricted to applying to these 391 colleges. Should they choose to apply to schools that do not use the Common Application, their information will still be sent to these schools by other means.

The College Office's decision to use the online Common Application only applies to how college counselors send students' information to colleges. It does not affect how students actually apply to colleges.

"Students can do whatever they like," College Counselor Patricia Cleary said. "They can use the Common application, and they can use the school's online application. Some schools don't even accept paper applications anymore."

Teitel believes that most students at Stuyvesant will not have a problem with the College Office using the Common Application, adding that it might be even advantageous for the students. The system informs students if anything is missing from their

applications and allows students to track them at all times. "As we send transcripts, [the Common Application] will notify the students," Teitel said.

The Common Application will also benefit the school.

"We are going to save a lot of paper," Teitel said. "If the average senior applies to 10 schools, we are looking at 8,000 applications."

Some seniors were unclear about the actual effect the Common Application would have on their college application process.

"I'm not sure what Mr. Walkes is doing with the Common [Application] because communicating with him has been difficult," senior Sarah Morgan-Cohen Smith said. "The college office has been somewhat unhelpful and they always give contradictory information."

Other seniors had positive remarks on the change in policy.

"I don't think the Common Application will have a major effect on the overall application process," senior Esther Schoenfeld said. "In fact, it should help the college office be more efficient."

Teitel said he will discuss with the College Office whether the school is ready to move entirely to the online system in the spring.

"If we are going to move ahead, I will probably give the junior class a heads up before they get out of here in June," Teitel said.

Judges Discuss Hate Crimes and the Legal System with Students



Prada Sokayeva / The Spectator

The organization "Not just Blacks and Jews in Conversation" has been bringing members of the legal system to schools across the country to speak against racism and other controversial topics.

By MAYA AVERBUCH
and SANDY CHAN

The organization "Not Just Blacks and Jews in Conversation" held two assemblies in Lecture Hall A during second and third period on Friday, September 23, and Friday, October 2. The purpose of these assemblies was to encourage students to speak out against hate crimes and inform them of the workings of the legal system.

The organization, which has been bringing members of the legal system to high schools and colleges across the country for the past 16 years, has visited Stuyve-

sant several times before at the request of social studies teacher Warren Donin. According to Donin, the organization invited him 15 years ago to bring a small group of students on a walking tour of New York's civil and criminal courts. "From there, I invited them to come to the school and speak, and for 15 years suddenly we've developed into a program in which every month they come in on a different theme based on race, ethnicity, gender, and bias and the law," Donin said.

Donin discusses possible top-

continued on page 2

Features

Article on page 4.

(101) Things Every Stuyvesant Student Should Do

Have you broken an escalator? Gotten giddy when it's a D day? Here's a list of things everyone should do before they graduate.



Article on page 10.

Opinions

Care 2 Unite?

A contest intended to financially aid a school loved by the community leads to juvenile rivalry between the specialized high schools.

News

Chancellor Encourages Hiring of Staff Members from ATR Pool

By MEGAN HAREWOOD

Chancellor Joel Klein strongly encouraged principals to hire incoming teachers from the Absent Teacher Reserves (ATR) in a weekly email sent to all New York City Public School principals during the week of Saturday, September 5.

School personnel whose jobs have been exsessed due to school closures or cut courses and are unable to find new positions are placed into the ATR pool. Because these teachers are still under contract, they still need to be paid.

Currently, the ATR pool has about 1,500 teachers in it, which will cost the Department of Education (DOE) 127 million dollars per year to sustain. If principals across the city take Klein’s recommendation to hire from the ATR pool for the 1,050 vacancies, the city would save about 75 million dollars. These vacancies have resulted from maternity leaves, teacher retirements or other circumstances necessitating term-long substitute teachers.

In the letter, Klein set the deadline for schools to hire more teachers from the ATR pool as Wednesday, October 30. If the spots are not filled, Klein warned of further budget cuts.

The possible budget cuts could result in a one percent, or

approximately 170,000 dollar, budget cut for Stuyvesant. If the cuts were to happen, Stuyvesant would be forced to take the money from per session funds, which are used to pay faculty advisers for staying after school to oversee extracurricular activities.

Stuyvesant has tried to address these possible cuts. “Everyone we brought into the building who is new is from the ATR pool,” Principal Stanley Teitel said.

The new staff members introduced from the pool include foreign language teacher Robert Weldon, math teachers Robert Maksudian and David Park and social studies teacher Avram Jezer. However, Stuyvesant is unable to hire more teachers since all vacancies have been filled.

Park agrees with Klein’s suggestion to hire from the ATR pool. “There are a lot of exsessed teachers,” Park said. “If someone has been teaching for a while before [being placed in the pool], they should get preference over the newer generations of teachers,” Park said.

English teacher Colette Brown also agreed. “I understand the situation. There are a number of unassigned teachers that need to be assigned,” Brown said.

Some students disagree with the chancellor’s statements because of its exclusion of non-ATR teachers.

“There are a number of unassigned teachers that need to be assigned.” —Colette Brown, English teacher

“While people already in the public education system deserve a second chance, you end up leaving the newer generations of teachers jobless,” sophomore Richard Hsu said.

“While it makes sense to hire back teachers that are getting paid while not working, it also prevents the newer teachers from getting experience that they need to become successful and respected teachers in the field,” freshman Sidney Bynum said.

Parents Protest against Budget Cuts

continued from page 1

and clear. Money makes a difference in our schools,” Executive Director of the AQE Billy Easton said. “But we have a long way to go. Our school children cannot afford a single penny in cuts to our schools. Too many have been in under-resourced classrooms for far too long.”

Principal Stanley Teitel commended the protesters for their actions, but believed that budget cuts would be inevitable. “I certainly don’t feel good about the budget cuts. It’s unfortunate, but given the economy, I don’t know what else I can do,” Teitel said. “It’s almost impossible for the city to sustain poor economic conditions and not cut education.”

“I appreciate what the parents are doing,” junior Jacky Kuang said. “I don’t even have one of my required classes since the classes are full. So they’re forcing me to take that class in addition to my other classes next term. I don’t want to double up, but I have no choice and neither does the

“We all know there will be a cut, but if we don’t lobby and yell and protest, the cut will be much deeper.” —Larry Wood, co-president of Stuyvesant’s Parents’ Association

school.”

“Stuyvesant has always been known for the variety of classes and extracurricular activities it offers,” junior Mohit Kumar said. “So these budget cuts are really hurting the school at its core.”

The parents’ rally was successful in getting press coverage and public attention, but the issue is “a long way to becoming resolved,” said Wood, noting that it was just one step in a longer process. “We’re going to have more press conferences urging people to call and write. We all know there will be a cut, but if we don’t lobby and yell and protest, the cut will be much deeper.”

According to Wood, students should tell their parents about the upcoming budget cuts and get them to take action by telling their elected officials to keep schools properly funded and keeping budget cuts to a minimum. For more information they can visit the AQE’s Web site at <http://www.aqeny.org> or the CFE’s Web site at <http://www.cfequity.org/>

New Guidance Counselor

By ANIKA RASTGIR

Guidance counselor Audra Parris has replaced Greg DeMasi as the counselor for students in homerooms P and Q, as a result of a new Department of Education policy. The policy states that non-permanent faculty members will have either a year, or until the person that they are temporarily replacing returns, before they will be forced to vacate their non-permanent position.

Last year, DeMasi acted as a temporary replacement for Mazra Schlinder, who is on maternity leave. Since DeMasi was a replacement the previous year, he had to be replaced this year.

Parris was previously a guidance counselor for the Science

Skills Center High School in Brooklyn. Due to downsizing, Parris left the school and became a guidance counselor at Stuyvesant. Like DeMasi, she is also a temporary guidance counselor.

Sophomore Vijay Singh does not mind the change in counselors. “She seems really nice and is willing to work with you if you need help,” he said.

Parris said she has been adjusting well to the school change. “Stuyvesant is great and everything is well organized,” she said.

Additionally, Parris will be responsible for writing the Secondary School Reports (SSR) for the juniors in her homerooms. Before DeMasi left, he was able to write, but not finish, the seniors’ SSRs. Because they are still incomplete, the SSRs will be up-

dated by Schlinder.

“Seeing that Mrs. Schlinder is making additions, I am not concerned at all,” senior Morgan Teeratananon said. “She is a professional and we know each other well.”

Senior Jean Rapael Cornel, however, expressed concerns over the change. “I’m a bit worried because she is my homeroom’s third guidance counselor,” he said. “I feel really left in the dark about how this will fit into the college process especially.”

Junior Anca Dogaroiu agreed. “You build a relationship with your counselor,” said Dogaroiu, who has also had a different counselor every year. “It is annoying for us to start a new relationship every year while others don’t have to.”

Calendar of Upcoming Events	
Friday, October 9 <i>Homecoming Football Game</i> Pier 40 6 p.m. <i>Key Club Interest Meeting</i> Cafeteria after 10th	Room 615A after 10th
Monday, October 12 NO SCHOOL	<i>Waves of Hope Interest Meeting</i> Room 403 after 10th
Tuesday, October 13 <i>STRIVE Interest Meeting</i> Lecture Hall A after 10th	Monday, October 19 <i>Show your support as an ally of queer and minority communities at Stuy and stop by the booth on the bridge.</i>
Wednesday, October 14 PSAT	Tuesday, October 20 <i>Student Leadership Team meeting</i> Room 615A after 10th
Thursday, October 15 <i>Open Forum</i>	Thursday, October 22 <i>Open House</i> for prospective students

Judges Discuss Hate Crimes and the Legal System with Students

continued from page 1

ics for the assemblies with judge and executive director of the program Shannon Taylor for weeks before they occur. One month is usually dedicated to discussing the nature of the organization, and generalities about bias and the law. Other topics line up with the school’s curriculum, and delve into more specific issues such as bias against gays and lesbians, Jews, blacks, Asians, women and other groups.

The organization has brought a wide variety of speakers to Stuyvesant in the past, including “candidates for political office, from Anthony Weiner, who was running at one time for mayor, [...] Kathleen Quinn, the head of the City Council, [and] the gentleman who is running for mayor now against Mike Bloomberg, William Thompson Junior,” Donin said.

Both Donin’s Race, Ethnicity and Gender Issues class, and social studies teacher Linda Weissman’s Government class attended the assemblies this year. According to Donin, however, the assemblies are open to everyone.

This year, the speakers included Judge Deborah Dowling, Judge Eileen Natelson, and Taylor.

“We’re judges that step off the bench and go into the community and put communities together,” Taylor said. “We, as an organization, deal with people from all different countries.”

During the assembly, Taylor read a summons in which the defendant cursed Jews and refused to move when asked multiple times by the officer. “These are the type of incidences that are proliferating [...] and that’s why we have our organization,” Taylor said. “We’re going to continue to have these type of dialogues until there [are fewer] incidences that affect all races, and all backgrounds.”

The judges then discussed the cases in which summons were issued, and the importance of coming to court when a person receives a summons.

“You wouldn’t believe how people in this time, in the 21st century, have certain ideas about people of different ethnic groups,” Dowling said. “Jurors

come to me and say they cannot sit on a particular case because of the nationality of a particular defendant.”

The judges said that the responsibility also falls on people to not accept hateful comments. “Nobody says anything [in response to these comments],” Natelson said. “If the world did that, we would have a completely different universe.”

Additionally, Taylor provided examples of hate-related incidents in colleges such as the University of California Los Angeles and the University of Michigan.

The conflict at the University of Michigan involved students engaging in large-scale protests against recipients of scholarships for Muslims.

The organization is often requested to help at such incidences and “cool everybody off,” Donin said. “We’re reaching out early so that what happened at the University of Michigan, or Binghamton, doesn’t happen here.”

The organization also advertised internships in criminal courts that are available to all students who wish to apply. In the past, numerous students from Stuyvesant have taken part in these internships, one of which involves making sure that everything runs smoothly for their TV show, “Conversation,” through tasks such as making flyers, sending invitations and ensuring that the press attends.

Students who went to the assembly said they learned a lot about the racial issues plaguing the United States today.

“It’s great what they’re doing,” senior Josef Kushner said. “Often there is no way to touch base on what is actually out there. You read about something, but it doesn’t really register unless you’ve talked to someone who has presided over it.”

Senior Zi Lin, however, said, “I didn’t quite agree with a few things the judges said. A lot of my friends’ college experiences weren’t as extreme as the cases [the judges provided].”

Donin just hopes that the message students got was to “respect one another regardless of difference,” he said.

“We are always promoting diversity,” Taylor said. “We learn about other people’s culture.”

ADVERTISEMENT

Challenge IVY Plus

Education & Consulting Center



www.WeAreCIP.com



H.S. Seniors (Class of 2010) Consulting Programs

Challenge IVY Plus analyzes your grades and potential abilities to determine your future. We help you find the right major and undergraduate college for you; after graduation, Challenge IVY Plus does the same for future graduate schools and careers.

- Step 01: Visit CIP
- Step 02: Take Aptitude Test
- Step 03: College Selection & Major Consulting
 - Analyze School Grades (GPA, Honors/AP Courses)
 - Analyze SAT I, SAT Subject Tests, AP scores
 - Examine Future Goal Plan and/or Portfolio
- Step 04: Financial Aid Consulting (scholarships, grants)
- Step 05: College Selection Consulting
 - Advice on College Essay, Applications Review
 - Help EA/ED and Regular Admissions
- Step 06: Advice on a Successful College Experience
 - Future career, internship



211-12 Northern Blvd. 2nd FL. Bayside, NY 11361
Phone: (718) 224 – 6570

Challenge IVY Plus

Education & Consulting Center



www.WeAreCIP.com



You never know
what you can do
until
YOU TRY !

2009–10 Fall/Winter Programs

GPA Booster Course (Group or 1:1 Tutoring)	SAT Prep.	Hunter HS / SHSAT Prep.
AP, Honors Course (9 th ~ 11 th) English (Reading/Writing) MATH (AMC 8, 10, 12) Science (Bio, Chemistry, Physics) Social Studies (Global, US History)	Intensive SAT Course Nov, December SAT Prep. (Scores 2000 & higher) Regular SAT Course Jan, March SAT Prep. SAT Subject Tests Prep. (BIO, Chemistry, Physics, MATH 2, US History)	Hunter HS Entrance Essay & Exam (Test date: 01/15/2010) SHSAT Problem Solving Express Courses (for Test 11/07, 11/08/2009)

211-12 Northern Blvd. 2nd FL. Bayside, NY 11361
Phone: (718) 224 – 6570

Features

(101) Things Every Stuyvesant Student Should Do

A list compiled by
LEA BELTRAMINO,
KAITLYN KWAN
and SANGHO PARK

1. Break an escalator.
2. Make an Asian friend.
3. Swipe in with your Met-
rocard instead of your ID
card.
4. Pull an all-nighter for no
reason.
5. Sit on The Wall.
6. Order a pizza bagel from
Terry's.
7. Procrastinate.
8. Play Tetris on your TI-84
Plus Silver Edition.
9. Be disgusted by your ID pic-
ture.
10. Go from the 1st floor to the
10th.
11. Squaredance!
12. Use your phone in the bath-
room.
13. Get senioritis during fresh-
man, sophomore, junior
and senior year.
14. Forget your ID.
15. Write an essay the period
before it's due.
16. Feel a stroke coming on
when report cards are given
out.
17. Play minesweeper during
Computer Science.
18. Have a 10-period schedule
junior year.
19. Cut the lunch line.
20. Wake up at 6 am every
morning.
21. Get your phone taken
away.
22. Cough loudly when some-
one's phone rings during
class.
23. Buy a senior bar locker for
70 dollars.
24. Text in class.
25. Try in vain to get your
schedule changed.
26. Cut class to study.
27. Get kicked off a floor that is
not one, two, or five by Mr.

28. Get in trouble for packing
up at the warning bell.
29. Go to stuy.edu for absolute-
ly no reason.
30. Walk into a classroom, real-
ize it's not your class, then
hurriedly walk out.
31. Fail the final, but pass the
class.
32. Get giddy when it's a D-
day.
33. Slide down an escalator.
34. Watch SING!.
35. Be part of SING!.
36. Buy a SING! t-shirt and wear
it year-round even if you
weren't in SING!.
37. Sit on the half floor.
38. Sneak food into the school.
39. Never hand in your lunch
form.
40. Fall asleep in class.
41. Become a Facebook addict.
42. Copy homework.
43. Join an extracurricular but
never go to a meeting.
44. Sit on the senior bar.
45. Wear a costume on Hallow-
een.
46. Go to a Runnin' Rebels
game.
47. Get marked for cutting
classes you know you didn't
cut.
48. Not get marked for cutting
classes you know you did
cut.
49. Reenact a lesson (by a
teacher with a heavy ac-
cent) to a friend.
50. Get kicked out of the li-
brary.
51. Join too many extracurricu-
lar activities and teams.
52. Get yelled at for eating in
the hallway.
53. Visit the old history room.
54. Write your name on a desk.
55. Post HAPPY BIRTHDAY
posters for friends all over
school.
56. Come to school to find
HAPPY BIRTHDAY post-



- ers and realize your friends
somehow found the picture
of you that you burned five
years ago.
57. Get a random injury or ac-
cident and get to ride the
elevator.
58. Have friends pull favors for
you to ride the elevator with
you.
59. Imitate Mr. Teitel's voice.
60. Print out your homework in
the library.
61. Feel lost the first few days of
school without a planner.
62. Enter Stuyvesant through
the main entrance and get
yelled at by the security
guard.
63. Be late to first period despite
getting to school on time.
64. Change in the Hudson stair-
case.
65. Ask a random stranger
whether the bell that just

- rang was warning, end, or
late.
66. Have your TI-83 or 84 graph-
ing calculator stolen.
67. Hear the Beatles' "Birth-
day" come on the computer
when you swipe in.
68. Envy your friends because
they got an easy teacher.
69. Listen to Mr. Wong sing in
the morning.
70. Watch Mr. Wong dance the
following morning.
71. Sell candy illegally.
72. Break the ice with the words
"I'm so tired..."
73. Stay in the school until 7
PM.
74. Ride the elevator without
a pass and brag about it to
your friends.
75. Ride the elevator without
a pass and get caught by a
teacher.
76. Realize Battery Park is actu-

- ally called Rockefeller Park.
77. Eat lunch in Rockefeller
Park.
78. Ask for the time because the
clock is not working.
79. Stay inside the building dur-
ing a rapid dismissal.
80. Come to school with some
kind of illness.
81. Stalk the College Admis-
sions Statistics site.
82. Spy on someone on the 3rd
floor from the 4th floor hall-
way.
83. Bring in food for minutes.
84. Buy an SU advantage card
freshman year.
85. Ask the lady in the front
what time you have to come
back from lunch.
86. Try to sneak out the front
entrance.
87. Look for and never find the
nurse's office.
88. Share a locker.
89. Attend your grade's assem-
bly.
90. Pull the escalator alarm.
91. Take only five classes senior
year.
92. Finish your homework be-
fore 10 PM.
93. Befriend the security
guards.
94. Stuff your locker with food.
95. Discover that the locker you
stuffed with food smells aw-
ful after spring/winter/mid-
winter break.
96. Buy a drink from the Snap-
ple machine during your
5-minute science break.
97. Come late for 2nd period
when you have 1st free be-
cause you didn't realize it
was a D-day.
98. Go to the Big Sib-Little Sib
Dance.
99. Curse the programming
gods for 4th-period lunch.
100. Go to fake Terry's because
the real Terry's line is too
long.
101. Read The Spectator.

Elect to Educate

continued from page 1

Bloomberg has, however, been criticized over the numbers his campaign proudly touts. A study done at Columbia University's Teachers College asserts that the improvements Bloomberg boasts of—increased graduation rates and improved test scores—come from misleading statistics. Others have pointed to an over-emphasis on standardized testing and a failure to reduce class sizes. Parent groups criticize his absolute authority over education policy and have complained about being shut out of their children's education. However, Bloomberg's overall record of success gives him a significant advantage as Election Day approaches.

Thompson, the Democratic candidate for Mayor, was President of the BOE between 1996 and 2001 and is currently the city's comptroller. As president of the BOE he worked towards centralized management of the

school system, an expanded arts curriculum, more qualified teachers and more afterschool programs. In 2001, he resigned to seek office of city comptroller, the chief financial officer for New York City.

Though Bloomberg has a reputation for education reform, Thompson seeks to further improve the DOE. As city comptroller, Thompson exposed some of the DOE's faulty data collection—student transcripts did not have evidence to support the high graduation rates Bloomberg boasts of. He also revealed some of the DOE's fiscally irresponsible practices, including its failure to monitor many of its programs. To address these issues, he has proposed the use of an independent organization to audit test scores and graduation rates and a biannual review of school performance which would be made available to the public.

Thompson devoted his first major address of his campaign to education policy on September 22. His agenda, named New

Direction for Our Public Schools, was delivered at Pace University and emphasized curriculum reform, greater accountability for student performance, de-privatizing the school system, and decreasing class sizes. Thompson heavily criticized Bloomberg and Chancellor Joel I. Klein, the latter of whom Thompson has said he would fire if elected for using a corporate model in their management of the public school system. Thompson also said that "while the current administration has spent unprecedented sums to promote an idea of historic progress, our education system is going in the wrong direction."

Endorsed by the New York Times in the Democratic primary, Thompson has been praised for being an early critic of no-bid school spending—the hiring of private contractors to perform the jobs of public employees, often at a higher cost. He also played a significant role in the centralization of the school system and the creation of an envi-

ronment for reform.

Despite this, Thompson, who is trailing his opponent by 11 percent in the latest Marist poll, has yet to convince voters that he would be the one to pull the school system in the right direction.

Principal Stanley Teitel feels that Bloomberg has the advantage in the coming election. "Mr. Thompson is in a very difficult position, [because] under the Board of Education, things were not going well," Teitel said.

"Thompson is very capable and very dedicated [and he] did as good as a job as one would hope [as president of the BOE]," Blumm said, "But I don't think he would be as independent as Bloomberg has been." Bloomberg's autonomy is often credited to his financial independence. He runs his campaigns using mostly his own funds, and his mayoral salary is only a dollar a year, meaning that unlike most other politicians, he has no obligations to outside interests.

Teitel also said he did not

witness any specific changes to Stuyvesant after the centralizing of power over the school system, and neither Blumm nor Teitel believes that Stuyvesant will be significantly affected by the results of this year's election. "We are very lucky. We're a great institution," Teitel said. "The outcome of the election won't really affect [Stuyvesant] either way."

Although Teitel does not have a strong opinion, some students do. "If I could vote, I would vote for Bloomberg, because I think that the city has been doing pretty well during his mayoral reign," sophomore Allison Burns said.

"Bloomberg runs education like a bureaucrat and put in someone [Chancellor Klein] who doesn't know that much about education, which stopped progress of the education department," senior Matt Leiwant said. "I think that Thompson would put someone who actually knows about education in charge [...] and start looking at how we can reform education overall. That's what's really most important."

4

Number of Stuyvesant
alums in the Obama
administration

3

Number of Stuyvesant
alums who have won
Olympic medals

9

Number of Stuyvesant
alums who have
performed on Broadway

4

Number of Stuyvesant
alums who have won a
Nobel Prize

9

Number of Stuyvesant
alums currently
working at Stuy

Features

Sham Khera:
Two Worlds Fuse



Joann Lee / The Spectator

Lab specialist Sham Khera was born and raised in New Delhi, India.

By JUDY CHEN

Sham Khera, Lab specialist, can usually be found in room 907, tending to all the chemistry labs, replacing scratched eye goggles and generally making sure that all the equipment is in place for student use. Khera, born and raised in Lahore, in present-day Pakistan, has a saying he lives by: “Life is simple.” Khera’s life, however, has been far from uneventful.

At the age of 15, Khera moved to New Delhi, where his priorities began to shift away from academics, despite being “top at my school and treated as a VIP,” he said. After facing difficulties in his country, he started to think more about cooperation and “how can we treat each other with the maximum decency,” Khera said.

In India, he received a masters degree in physics at a school affiliated with England’s Oxford University in 1954. He worked at two private colleges, and later specialized in wireless technology and became chief engineer at the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation. In 1982, Khera published a book, *Art of Living*. “My book touches on all aspects of life,” Khera said.

“The best thing I could ever [write about] in my book was how to have a good day,” Khera said. “If we cooperate, we will like everything.”

Khera officially retired in India, and then immigrated to the United States in 1990 to complete a project for the United Nations known as Humanity Toward Zenith, and to be with his children, who had already gone abroad.

When he got to America, Khera earned a bachelors degree in education and began teaching at the Worldly Arts School in Harlem in 1992, be-

fore transferring to Stuyvesant.

The retired engineer greatly values his Indian heritage. “India is a country with ancient civilization, music, dancing, literature, philosophy and religion,” Khera said. “It is 5,000

**Khera’s message
to Stuyvesant is to
“rise higher than
us.”**

**—Sham Khera,
Chemistry Lab
Specialist**

years of knowledge that people cannot change. Even modern culture is based on it.”

Khera’s message to Stuyvesant students is to “rise higher than us,” he said. He believes that teachers are there to care, nurture, and shed some insight into the real world. He even brings this insight to the lab room at Stuyvesant, where he handles the lab tools and objects by “treating everything as if it were a baby,” he said.

Beyond the chemistry lab, Khera likens life’s challenges to riding a bike.

“When I was seven, I tried to [ride] the bike in a straight line. I had trouble, but after I learned, [I realized that] it goes. It is easy,” he said. “At first, [things] are difficult. [But] nobody teaches [us] what life is.”

Beyond Academia: Featuring Some
of Stuyvesant’s Unique Clubs

By NANCY MA
and MAX WYCISK

It’s the start of a new school year and students already have many goals to fulfill. One goal may be to take part in an unfamiliar activity. Another may be to help the community. Or they may just want to relax and have fun after a long day at school. There are many clubs and pubs this year that offer students one or more of these opportunities. Here’s a look into a few of the clubs that Stuyvesant has to offer.

The Photo Club

The Photo Club is an ideal place for those who want to become skilled in photography. Students practice traditional black and white photography. The club members use the facilities of the 10-tech photography room, where they develop and print all of their film.

Last year, the members learned how to develop and print their photos, but not much else. This year, the new presidents, sophomores John Mennell and Abe Levitan, plan on doing much more within the club.

“We plan to teach the club more advanced photography skills than last year,” Levitan wrote in an e-mail interview. They will also teach members how to manipulate their photos in the darkroom, how to add effects to their photos and more.

“This year we have new heads, a new student teacher and new freshmen who will hopefully be inspired to learn as much about photography as we can teach them,” Levitan said.

The Photo Club meets every Tuesday in room 336.

For more information, check out the Facebook group at <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=136972675535>

The Rowing Club

The Rowing Club adds a different dynamic to Stuyvesant’s athletic community, using the Hudson River as its practice grounds. “We try to connect people with the water in a way that hasn’t happened since the beginning of the 20th century, if not earlier,” senior and president David Rice said in an e-mail interview.

Meetings are every Wednesday during the season, from mid-April to mid-October, at the Village Community Boathouse, located on the South Side of Pier 40. Members can meet the club as a group on the top of the marble staircase or travel on their own.

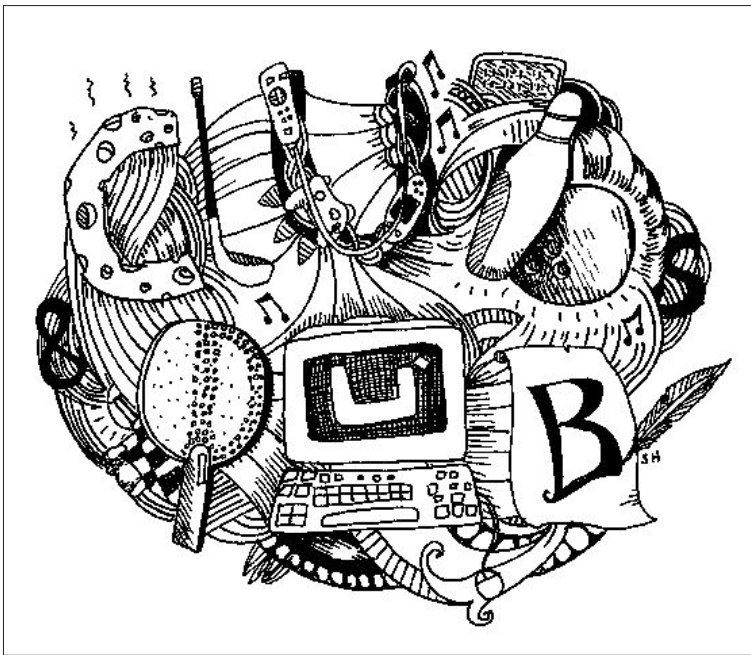
Last year, the Rowing Club won The Icebreaker, an annual competition for New England high school rowers held in Mull, Massachusetts. In addition to furthering their success in this competition and others, the Rowing Club has several goals in store for this coming season. It aims to build another boat, row completely around the Hudson Bay and go on overnight trips.

Rice encourages new members to join the team. “We will introduce them to elementary nautical terms and techniques,” Rice said. “On top of all of this, they can expect a hard row.”

For more information, visit www.villagecommunityboathouse.org. Those interested can join the Yahoo group, called “stuy-rowing” for more information.

Creativity for Children

Formed in 2005, Creativity for Children is a service club where students can get involved in im-



proving their communities. Members of the club work on arts and crafts throughout the year, as well as alongside children at special events.

“Members of Creativity for Children are dedicated to enlightening the lives and minds of children through various projects,” junior and president Ryan Cusack said.

Last year, members of the club attended meetings to create arts and crafts in preparation for weekend events with children. Two major events are during the winter holidays and during Easter. This year, Cusack hopes to increase the popularity of Creativity for Children and get more students involved in the club.

“The atmosphere in the club is really relaxed,” Cusack said. “On top of that, it is always satisfying to see smiles on children’s faces.”

Meetings are held once to twice a month, usually on Fridays.

For more information about Creativity for Children, e-mail creativityforchildren@gmail.com.

BuildOn

Although the BuildOn program (previously Building with Books), was founded in 1992, it made its appearance at Stuyvesant only six years ago.

Since then, BuildOn has worked hard to send aid to impoverished regions around the world. “Our two target areas overseas are Mali and Nicaragua,” senior and president Nisa Beceriklisoy said. “We’re doing a lot of new things this year to raise money for schools in those areas like jewelry sales, coin drives and a fortune cookie sale.” Another upcoming event is the very popular Pie-a-Teacher event.

Although BuildOn does a lot of its work in impoverished regions of the globe like Mali and Nicaragua, it is also very active in the local community, participating in the AIDS walk and cleaning up facilities in Battery Park.

BuildOn meets every Tuesday after tenth period and encourages all interested students to drop by and check it out.

Acapella

Stuyvesant’s Acapella group, called, simply, Acapella, differs from the chorus in that it does not use instrumental accompaniment to back the voices. As a result, the members of the group must be especially strong both tonally and rhythmically.

Acapella started over a decade ago with the sole purpose of learning and performing Christmas songs. It has since transformed into one of the more popular clubs at Stuyvesant, holding perfor-

mances all throughout the school year. “It was pretty recent, about five years ago, that Stuyvesant Acapella actually started doing pieces of music that were not Christmas songs,” senior and president Esteban Pomboza said in an e-mail interview.

With many new voices, and a musical repertoire that Pomboza describes as “amazing,” Acapella hopes to be even more involved in school events than they were last year. “We plan on performing for as many events as we possibly can this year,” Pomboza said.

Acapella already held tryouts for this year but asks all interested students to come and sign up next year.

Roller Hockey

The Roller Hockey club was started by former Stuyvesant students Zak Shtulberg, Chris Zhao and Daniel Goldstern (’09), who initially started the club in order to get some of their friends together and have fun playing hockey together.

Although it keeps that fun-loving nature at its core, the Roller Hockey club has evolved into something more.

Junior and president Sam Rabkin and juniors and vice presidents Ben Garner and Jessica Gordin have opened the club to up all students, even those with no prior skating experience, and relish the opportunity to teach them. In fact, when she first joined the club, “I had never touched a Hockey Stick before,” Gordin said.

Especially this year, with Shtulberg and Zhao and Goldstern away at college, the ultimate goal of the club is to teach enough students so that they can form a team. They then plan to travel with the team to the North American Roller Hockey Championships, a regional tournament held every year in May.

“We haven’t been able to go the past couple of years for budget reasons but this year we are very anxious to go and finally play against real teams,” Gordin said.

Again, while the club is a place to have fun, it is also a way for students to help others. Starting this year, the club will hold events to raise money for a charity organization called Sports Gift Inc. which focuses on getting sporting equipment to kids who can’t afford it on their own.

“The best thing about this club is that there’s no pressure to always be there and be the best like the rest of Stuyvesant puts on you. It’s just a bunch of kids getting together and having fun and learning something new,” Gordin said.

Roller Hockey meets whenever their members schedules allow and invite all students to join in the fun.



Olympiad Academia
450 7th Ave. Suite 804 New York, NY 10123
Office (212) 239-2797 olyacademia@gmail.com

Official Blog

www.olympiadacademia.org

2009 Fall Program

GPA Improvement

September 14, 2009 Start / Mon – Thurs (4 days a week)

- Improve your GPA by 5 points or more.
- Choose one among three options: 2 days, 3 days and 4 days/week
- Students may stay after class until 9 PM to study independently.

▶ 7th Grade	- English (Essay, Grammar) - Math - Science	
▶ 8th Grade	- Social Studies & History - AMC 8 & AMC 10 & AMC 12	4 ~ 6 PM
▶ 9th Grade	Up to Honors, AP, and IB Levels - English (Essay, Grammar) - Math A & B, Pre-Calculus, Calculus AB & BC, Statistics, Linear Algebra, Multivariable Calculus - Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Psychology - World History, US History, Art History - Spanish, French, Japanese - Computer Science Choose One: 4:00 PM ~ 6:00 PM/5:00 PM~7:00 PM/6:00 PM~8:00 PM	
▶ 10th Grade		
▶ 11th Grade		
▶ 12th Grade		

SAT I - 20 sessions / 80 hours
September 12, 2009 ~ End of January 2010

- ① Tuesday / Thursday Class
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (English only)
- ② Saturday Morning Class
9:30 AM - 1:30 PM (5 different levels available)
- ③ Saturday Afternoon Class
2:00 PM - 6:00 PM (2 different levels available)

▶ SAT II Intensive Review for Oct. and Nov. Tests
Saturday classes begin on August 22, 2009.
Sunday classes begin on August 23, 2009.

Biology	Sun 1:00 PM~3:00 PM
Chemistry	Sat 1:00 PM~3:00 PM
Math Level 2	Sun 1:00 PM~3:00 PM

Weekend Courses

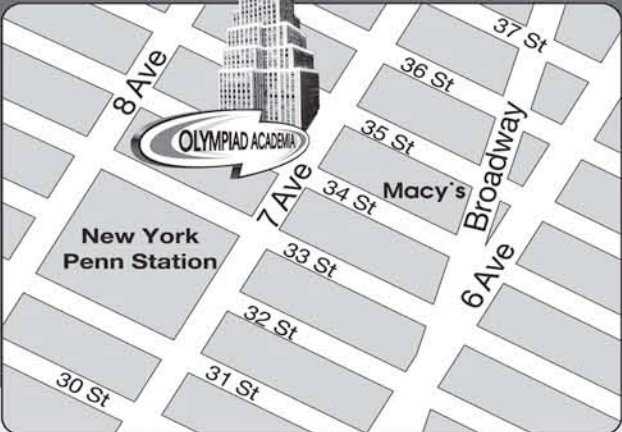
September 12, 2009 ~ January 23, 2010 / Saturdays and Sundays

- SAT I Math perfect scorers and PSAT Math perfect scorers may take AMC 10 & 12 classes instead.

▶ 7th Grade	SSAT, ISEE, SHSAT	9:30 AM ~1:30 PM
▶ 8th Grade		
▶ 9th Grade	PSAT + Essay	9:30 AM~1:30 PM
▶ 10th Grade	PSAT + Essay or SAT I	9:30 AM~1:30 PM
▶ 11th Grade	SAT I	9:30 AM~1:30 PM (5 different levels available)
▶ 12th Grade	SAT I	2:00 PM~6:00 PM (2 different levels available)

Manhattan
Conveniently located steps away from the Penn Station

Open 7 days a week



A C E 1 2 3 Train & LIRR

2010 Olympiad Prep Courses

Students who cannot take the olympiad exams at their schools may do so at through Olympiad Academia.

USA Biology Olympiad (USABO):

Saturday Class (Advanced) September 12th Start / 3:00 PM~6:00 PM – 21 sessions / 63 hours
Sunday Class September 13th Start / 3:00 PM~6:00 PM – 21 sessions / 63 hours

U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO):

Saturday Class (Advanced) September 12th Start / 3:00 PM~6:00 PM – 21 sessions / 63 hours
Sunday Class September 13th Start / 3:00 PM~6:00 PM – 21 sessions / 63 hours

U.S. Physics Team:

Saturday Class Starting October / 3:00 PM~6:00 PM

USA Mathematical Olympiad (USAMO):

AMC & AIME : September 12, 2009 ~ February 7, 2010 / 48 hours

USAMO : Starting February / 48 hours

AMC 10 (2/9 Test)	Tuesday / Thursday Class	5:00 PM~7:00 PM
	Saturday Class	1:00 PM~3:00 PM
AMC 12 (2/9 Test) & AIME (3/16 Test)	Tuesday / Thursday Class	5:00 PM~7:00 PM
	Saturday Class	1:00 PM~3:00 PM
	Sunday Class	1:00 PM~3:00 PM
USAMO (4/27 Test)	Saturday Class	3:00 PM~5:00 PM
	Sunday Class	3:00 PM~5:00 PM

Visit the Official Blog of Olympiad Academia at www.olympiadacademia.org
For tuition and other details, reach us at (212) 239-2797

Cartoons

Conversations

"That's a common misconception"

Robert Vinluan and not not Kiran Sury

Happy Leif Ericsson day!



Leif Ericsson Day? Really?

Why not? Leif Ericsson was, hands down, the best viking of all time.



He left his Scandanavian homeland of Ithaca and sailed for ten years to get back home.



I think you're confusing him with Odysseus, the literary character from Homer's epic poem, The Odyssey.



Yeah, I admit sometimes my history gets mixed up with my literature. That's why I'm not a humanities person.




I do not like slavery, Sam I Am.



Hi. My name is Nosferatu, and I'm here to talk to you about vampires.



I have felt personally hurt at recent slander by anti-Vampire bigots, most notably involving really weird romantic relationships with humans.



Let me make one thing clear: we vampires are soulless beasts that desire only blood and destruction.



Rather than seducing teenagers, you'll probably be eating rats and bugs on a boat.



I just want Stephanie Meyer to know that her message of hate has real consequences, and the rest of us to know the truth behind the lies.



And knowing is half the battle.

the more you know
...about
vampires



garreth o'brien

NOT IMPRESSED

ERICA CHAN

I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY THEY INSTALLED NEW LOCKERS. HOW EXACTLY ARE THESE SUPPOSED TO BE THEFT-PROOF?



WELL, SEEING AS HOW **NOBODY** CAN OPEN THEM...





Editorials

STAFF EDITORIAL

Overcoming Budget Obstacles

It's your free period, and you sit idly in the hallway, half asleep. You can only dream about the criminal law or medical ethics class you could have been taking this period. It is hard to believe that at Stuyvesant High School, students are denied access to extra classes they want to take. However, overcrowding and budget cuts have become recurring and increasingly problematic, forcing us to cope with a more constrained school environment. If a school like ours, with an active Parents' Association and generous Alumni Association, still has conflicts with programming and funding that stem from overcrowding and budget cuts, then the state of affairs of New York City public schools is truly in shambles.

Problems with programming stem partially from the large number of freshmen admitted each year, causing the school to be more overcrowded, and making programming harder to manage. However, our qualms with overcrowding may seem trivial to students at Francis Lewis High School in Queens, where, according to a recent New York Times article, there are "nearly twice as many students as it [the school] was designed for."

As a direct result of lack of space and budget cuts, aside from students' regular programming qualms during the first week of school, some seniors found that they were not scheduled for a 10 tech, a requirement for graduation. The poorly planned programming system would not have occurred if we found out our schedules before the first day of school. Other public schools, like Edward R. Murrow and James Madison in Brooklyn, allow their students to come in a few days before school to receive their programs. This allows students to find out what they are missing from their schedules immediately, and beginning the scheduling

process earlier would alleviate the stress of the programming office.

The parent tools section of the Stuyvesant Web site listed our teachers and classes at the end of the summer. However, if we received this information directly as well, it would be much simpler to modify our schedules. If the school can send our report cards by mail and through the internet, then it is plausible for the programming office to send us our schedules this way as well. These ideas would eliminate the hectic atmosphere during the first week of school, because students could e-mail their problems or requests to the Assistant Principals [AP] or guidance counselors.

Additionally, a more contemporary programming resolution could be a sort of "Programming Craigslist"—a haven for students unsatisfied with their classes. Like the Craigslist internet sensation of online classified ads, the Programming Craigslist would provide students with the opportunity to find potential open spots in classes. Students dissatisfied with a period or a course could make trades with students trying to get into their classes. A program could record the classes a student wants and the classes a student wants to drop and seek students with opposite requests. This system would anticipate the process of having to visit an AP or guidance counselor with another student in order to exchange spots in a class. With authorization by the programming office, the Craigslist system would be legitimate, and the typically stressful week of program changes could be more effectively spent by guidance counselors, APs and students.

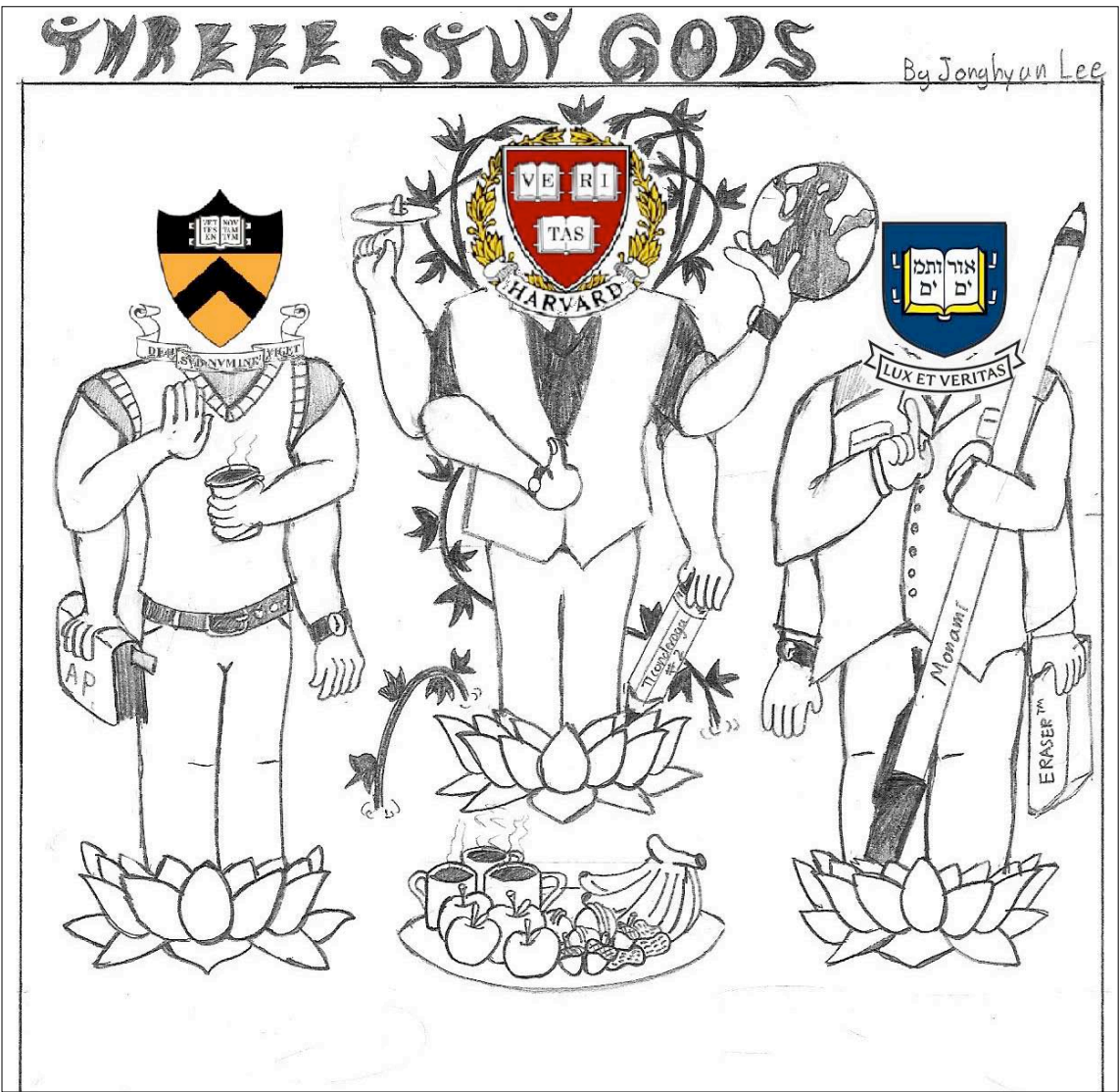
This year, Stuyvesant lost over 450,000 dollars because of budget cuts. Additionally, due to Department of Education (DOE) mandates, more students were admitted this year than in 2008.

The influx of students, coupled with the funding deficit, has diminished the number of electives given to students. A lower budget means fewer teachers can be hired, which cuts down on the amount of extra classes that can be offered in each department.

There is only so much space available, though, because of the increasing number of freshmen admitted every year. On certain days, it is impossible to get through many hallways and stairwells. Students stopping at their lockers and others rushing to class from the opposite direction create a melee of students heaving their way through the crowd. The entrances to the staircases are often backed up as we try to use both doors to get to the stairs. Given these constraints, following a basic sense of common courtesy would be a simple and effective way to deal with crowded spaces.

Obviously, these solutions cannot fix all the problems that have occurred because of overcrowding and budget cuts. Although these financial shortcomings have taken away many things we take for granted, we must acknowledge the plight of public school students across the city. Our situation, though it may seem inconvenient, is not on the same scale as the circumstances of other students, such as those from Francis Lewis High School. As New York City public school students, and more notably as Stuyvesant students, we cannot let overcrowding and budget cuts ruin our high school atmosphere. This is our chance to challenge the DOE's mandates of Stuyvesant student population levels and budget cuts, which have thrust our school into this state of affairs. Through stimulating solutions, and by making the most of our adverse situation, we can progress from our current complacency.

OP-ART



The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



"The Pulse of the Student Body"

EDITORS IN CHIEF

Luc Cohen*
Rebecca Elliott*

NEWS EDITORS

Kaitlyn Kwan
Ani Sefaj
Alexander Shin

FEATURES EDITORS

Sarah Kaplan
Danielle Oberdier

OPINIONS EDITORS

Emma Dries
Gavin Huang
Kiran Sury

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITORS

Leili Saber
Alan Sage*

SPORTS EDITORS

Scott Chiusano
Eddie Cytryn

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITORS

Christina Bogdan
Anna Menkova

ART DIRECTORS

Yun Cho
Singha Hon

LAYOUT EDITORS

Lodoe Sangmo
Vivian Sze
Laura Ye*

COPY EDITORS

Divya Dayal
Sara Li

BUSINESS MANAGERS

Denny Kim
Jamie Yu

WEB EDITORS

Victor Ma*
Marcin Skok

FACULTY ADVISOR

Kerry Garfinkel

Please address all letters to:

345 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10282
(212) 312-4800 ext. 2601
letters@stuyspectator.com

We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and length.

© 2009 The Spectator
All rights reserved by the creators.
* Managing Board Members

The Spectator

We are compiling an archive of past issues.

We are looking for issues published before 1995.

Please send any newspapers to:

The Stuyvesant Spectator
345 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10282

If you have any questions, e-mail us at:
archives@stuyspectator.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@stuyspectator.com or drop it in The Spectator box in the second-floor mail room.

FOR THE RECORD

- In Issue 2, senior Seth Schoenberg's surname was misspelled in the article "Junior Hit by Police Car."
- In the byline for "Junior Hit by Police Car," sophomore Teo Gelles' first name was misspelled.
- In "Stuyvesant Prepares for Return of Swine Flu," senior Valeriy Besse-lyanov's first name was misspelled.
- Sophomore Maya Averbuch co-authored "New Policy for Program Changes."
- Junior Sadie Bergen and senior Danielle Oberdier co-authored "Stuyvesant's New Teachers Join the Mix."
- In "Restaurants and the Recession," Pan Latin chef Sandy Kraehling's surname was misspelled.
- "The Option to Go Test Optional" was printed with edits in it. The correct version can be found online at stuyspectator.com.

Opinions

Band-Aid on a Deep Wound



Rosa Huang / The Spectator

By DANIEL SOLOMON

Pundits pronounced that the election of Barack Obama would herald the beginning of a grand racial catharsis. Instead, this nation continues to be as polarized as ever. Its veneer of racial harmony has been eviscerated by recent developments—the furor surrounding Professor Henry Gates’s arrest and the Sonia Sotomayor confirmation hearings. In the wake of Sotomayor’s nomination to the Supreme Court, a decision she made regarding affirmative action, *Ricci v. DeStefano*, provoked barbs from conservatives that drew equally forceful retorts from liberals. This brought affirmative action roaring into the spotlight.

Affirmative action, on the surface, is unjust because it follows the flawed moral that two

wrongs make a right: that unbearable slavery and persecution suffered by African-Americans can be remedied only by what can be perceived as discrimination against whites. In some cases, preferences for minorities contradict the public interest, as seen in the recent Supreme Court case *Ricci v. DeStefano*. In this case, the City of New Haven decided to throw out a promotional test for the fire department because not enough minorities passed. The city argued that since not many

America must change its obligations to its minority citizens by ensuring equal opportunity, but not necessarily equal outcome.

blacks passed the test, the exam was biased. The Supreme Court sagely ruled that this was unfair because they had already given the exam and many who passed studied very hard. Preferences in school admissions can be viewed in a similar light. Every year,

Stuyvesant’s demographic statistics are published, followed by a parade of politicians who state their desire to make the specialized high schools more representative of New York City’s public school population, usually with little consequence.

In both New Haven and New York, advocates of affirmative action challenge a basic tenet of American values: the meritocratic ideal. Whether you are white or black, rich or poor, Jewish or Christian, the promotional test for the fire department and the Specialized High Schools Admissions Test (SHSAT) are the same. Everyone has the same amount of time to prepare for the exam, and in the case of the SHSAT, everyone has access to free test prep classes—the Department of Education offers a free program through the Specialized High Schools Institute. The other option would be to enroll in a Princeton Review or Kaplan course for around 800 dollars. Instead of blaming the test or claiming it discriminates against minority students, we need to explore the reasons why certain schools turn out batches of failing students.

America must change its obligations to its minority citizens by ensuring equal opportunity, but not necessarily equal outcome. The Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) found in *Secret Apartheid II*, its report on bias in school admissions in New York City, that “a competitive score

on the admissions test for the specialized science high schools requires Sequential I Math or a strong Algebra I course” and that “the districts which send the most

Affirmative action, on the surface, is unjust because it follows the flawed moral that two wrongs make a right.

students to Stuyvesant and Bronx Science differ in their course offerings from the districts which send the fewest students.” These districts also happen to be in majority white and Asian communities, which poor parents may be priced out of. ACORN’s report states that “approximately half of the middle school students in the top five sending districts are eligible for free lunch. Over 86 percent of the students in middle schools in the bottom five sending districts are eligible for free lunch,” and that “four of the five districts which send the fewest children to the two elite schools enroll from 97.6 to more than 99 percent

black and Latino children.” It is not their status that is preventing minority students from reaching Stuyvesant but rather ineffective schooling in their districts.

Another component in boosting minority acceptance to prestigious schools like Stuyvesant is to reform early education. Too often, inner-city schools, rather than being beacons of hope and opportunity amid squalor, become factories of failure. TIME Magazine identified “the biggest problem with U.S. public schools [is] ineffective teaching, according to decades of research.” Several school administrators across the nation have begun to address this, notably Michelle Rhee, chancellor of Washington, D.C. schools. Rhee sees teacher accountability as imperative to school success. According to TIME, “she has shut down 21 schools—15 percent of the city’s total—and fired more than 100 workers from the district’s famously bloated 900-person central bureaucracy. She has dismissed 270 teachers. And last spring she removed 36 principals, including the head of the elementary school her two daughters attend in an affluent northwest-D.C. neighborhood.”

No matter what race or conditions, every child has innate abilities. Teachers and schools must implement programs bearing this in mind. If children have no hope of breaking the cycle of poverty, then they will not succeed. We need educators who inspire and students who are willing to work.

Feeding the Masses



Rosa Huang / The Spectator

By TERESA YAN

“What,” I asked, “does Coca Cola taste like?”

Despite the relative simplicity of the question, the taste of Coca Cola is indescribable. Think about it: is there any combination of “natural flavor,” “high fructose corn syrup” and “caramel color” that can rival Coca Cola in all its saccharine stickiness?

The fact that I have to ask what Coca Cola tastes like is deeply troubling. Pick up any packaged food product and it’s safe to say that it contains at least one ingredient that is foreign to you. I look at my Japanese banana milk cakes and I’m all right with sugar, egg whites and wheat flour. But oligosaccharide, ethanol and sorbitol? My stomach feels unsettled just thinking about them.

We live in a world in which food has become more and more problematic. For one, how we treat food is contradictory to our inherent need for nourishment. Eating has become more focused on speed and ease, as opposed to the actual experience of appreciating food for what it should be: simple, unprocessed and delicious. We abuse food, eating without tasting and sometimes skipping it all together. Even trying to be health-conscious has its problems. Factors like food locality and pesticide usage often affect consumers, who often have to choose between being earth-friendly and having a wide variety of

food choice.

When it comes down to it, the food we eat is determined by a combination of tangled politics and monetary problems. According to a study in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, a dollar can buy 1,200 calories worth of potato chips and 875 calories of soda, which, combined, equals a normal adult’s daily calorie intake. But the same dollar can only purchase 250 calories of vegetables and 170 calories of fresh fruit. The balance between eating healthy and eating just to survive has become skewed; government subsidies have created an unequal playing field for farmers, emphasizing the production of calorie-heavy grains over organic and sustainable agriculture. At the moment, over a million people in the world are starving, but it has become more expensive to feed them nutritious food than a Big Mac. It is no longer a question of being able to feed people, it is a question of being able to feed people healthy food.

Unhealthy eating was not always the status quo. And it should not continue to be the status quo. There has been a huge effort to increase awareness about food, as seen with Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg’s push for fast food chains to post calorie data next to food prices and the recent subway soda ads in New York City. The subway ads in particular have provoked strong reactions with depictions of glasses overflowing with liquid fat and a warning not to “drink yourself fat.” Not limited to New York City, food awareness has also struck global audiences: documentaries like *Super Size Me* and its lesser known contemporary, *Food, Inc.*, have also inspired horror through filming the modern food industries in action.

Although the movement towards healthier eating habits has gained momentum, there is still a great need for change. Changing eating habits must begin with personal questioning of how we eat. In America, obesity burdens our health care and leads to 300,000 deaths a year, according to the American Journal of Public Health. In many urban areas, it is easier to find a hamburger than a bunch of broccoli; the hamburger is more likely to fill you up faster and for less money. I love my Coca Cola as much as the next person, but there is a difference between indulgence and blatant self-destruction. When it comes down to it, what you chose to eat is up to you, but you are what you eat.

The Goodness behind Gaming



Angie Koo / The Spectator

By SAMANTHA LEVINE

Albert Einstein once said, “The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.” Einstein obviously wasn’t a gamer. If he were, he would know that button-mashing for an hour or two only looks insane. One can get more out of gaming than eye strain and a set of calluses. When the headsets and computers are put aside, the benefits of gaming become clear.

Though playing video games can absorb hours, the time ‘wasted’ hides a skill that anyone who has missed dinner in order to finish a level can identify with: focus. While starving oneself in order to get bonus points that amount to nothing in real life isn’t highly recommended, the dedication needed to get those points is apparent.

Developing concentration and focus from a game has the potential to translate into getting through something like a long SAT reading passage. No one should skip out on SAT prep in order to beat a level, but getting used to concentrating may help students through the mentally taxing hours of the SAT and other standardized tests. The endurance necessary for video games isn’t limited to the TV screen.

With many modern video games, concentration is necessary for creative thinking and planning. Despite the popular belief that games are mindless, quite the opposite is true. Newer games, which have multiplayer components (sections where many people can play together), force players to assemble in teams and work out strategies in order to take down enemies. Other games get players to think by means of puzzles. In single player adventure games, players solve challenges and learn new skills as they progress from level to level. The levels end with a ‘boss battle,’ a final challenge that is a culmination of the things the player has learned throughout the levels. A boss battle is therefore a test of knowledge and insight where the player shows that he or she can think and form a strategy.

While these practical benefits are important, it’s worthwhile to remember that video games are fun. Because they are fun,

If shooting at people from halfway around the world in a game relieves tension for someone, then the game has played a beneficial role.

they offer an outlet to relieve tension. Many people have stressful lives, and relaxing is not as easy as it sounds. So if shooting at people from halfway around the world in a game relieves tension for someone, then the game has played a beneficial role.

Few people think of video games as “learning exercises,” but that’s because at first glance, they seem to be mere entertainment. No one would play them if a few of those bright pictures on the boxes were switched with a sticker that said “Education fun!” But that’s what makes video games great. To reap the benefit, all we gamers have to do is sit back and do what we do best—button mash.

Opinions



Michael Silverblatt / The Spectator

By SAMIRA SIDDIQUE

“Yo Brooklyn Tech! I’mma let you finish spamming, but Stuyvesant High school is the best high school of all time. OF ALL TIME.”

Though our well-intentioned exploiting of the loopholes was not obvious, our reactions to the cheating of other schools were petty and juvenile.

Among the several eccentric comments that flooded the “America’s Favorite School” contest Web site in the past two weeks, this one was the most memorable—just replace Kanye West’s words with school names to add to Brooklyn Tech’s inferiority complex. The America’s Favorite School contest is sponsored by

Care2 (an online nonprofit organization for social activists), GreatSchools (a school database site for parents) and Target. The intent of the contest is to help financially a deserving school in the face of budget cuts, and, as stated on its Web site, to “reward the teachers, parents, students and communities that are making an extraordinary difference.” The first prize of 20,000 dollars will be awarded to the school with the most online votes on the contest web site when the voting closes. Though the contest is well-intentioned and is meant to reward a deserving school for its display of school spirit, many people have taken advantage of it and have found easy loopholes to further their school’s rankings. The contest began on September 14, 2009, but gained steam at Stuyvesant on September 20, 2009 after heavy publicity on Facebook. In a mere six hours, Stuyvesant obtained the number one spot in the contest. Though the exponential rise in voting was remarkable to observe, many of the votes were duplicated because of individuals who figured out how to take advantage of the voting system. As a result, the Stuyvesant community’s participation in the contest seemed faked, when compared to other school communities that may have participated fairly. It was easy to toy with the simple voting process. Just a name, a valid e-mail address, a birth date and an optional com-

Care 2 Unite?

ment to “brag about your school” are needed to vote. Though only one vote is allowed per person, once the vote is cast, a student could simply logout and vote again by using a different e-mail address. In this way, the 2,000 votes Stuyvesant gained in such a short amount of time can be attributed, at least partially, and probably, to subtle cheating. Though our well-intentioned exploiting of the loopholes was not obvious, our reactions to the cheating of other schools were petty and juvenile. Eventually, the contest turned into a trivial rivalry between the specialized high schools—mainly Stuyvesant and Brooklyn Tech, though

Our responses to the obvious cheating of others were hypocritical and arrogant.

LaGuardia High School and Bronx High School of Science gained top rankings as well. Out of nowhere, Brooklyn Tech gained the number one spot due to its clumsy spamming on the same day that Stuyvesant had been in the first place. Facebook statuses changed from a well-intended “Vote or Die (Vote for Stuy)” to: “Seriously Tech? At least our cheating wasn’t that obvious.” Comments for Stuyvesant on the contest Web site also became bitter and juvenile: “We’re the best because we’re better than tech!” Brooklyn Tech’s spam votes were eventually discounted, but our responses to the obvious cheating were hypocritical

and arrogant. Though we did not have consecutive automated spamming, many of our votes were fabricated. A significant number of notorious characters supposedly voted for Stuyvesant, including Paris Hilton (“Stuy? Now that’s hot”), Jesus Christ (“Every school is my school, but this school is my favorite”), Swine Flu (“I’m having a great time here in Stuyvesant”), and Barack Obama (“It’s change in y over change in x we can believe in”). These comments may have been witty and creative, but the lack of seriousness displayed in the contest not only represents our school terribly on a national level, but also shows just how naïve and arrogant many students are, and how insensitive they are to other schools’ hardships. The prize money would certainly aid in areas we are lacking in due to budget cuts. As stated in the article “Stuyvesant Enters \$20,000 Contest,” printed in the September 25, 2009 issue of The Spectator, if we were to win, the money would be given “to the Student Union to be given to the students for activities,” Principal Stanley Teitel said. “If students are the ones winning the money, it would seem to me that the money should [be given to] the students.” Though the prize is a clear way out of our school-related economic stump, if we are not acting morally, then we deserve the money less than a school that is fairly participating and legitimately lacks enough funding to afford basic educational necessities. Since the spamming incident, our Stuyvesant comments have improved in overall eloquence and attitude. The virtual displays of affection toward Stuyvesant represent the general sense of unity that can be felt by members of the school community. Instead of comments like “I love Stuy cuz we da best!” there have been more comprehensible comments: “I love Stuyvesant because it has such a unique student body, amazing student activity, some really passionate and intelligent teachers, and great resources to great opportu-

nities. It really taught me to love learning for the sake of learning, and taught me that education is so self-empowering.” We need to have consistency in our comments in order to show respect to the contest procedures and to prove that we deserve the prize. Since its initial first place spot, Stuyvesant has been usurped by Irvington High School in California, presumably without cheating, like Brooklyn Tech initially did. But in order to

The virtual displays of affection toward Stuyvesant represent the general sense of unity that can be felt by members of the school community.

win, which we still have a chance of doing, we need to keep voting until the end of the contest—at 11:59 PM on November 8, 2009. Real world unity, in which we collectively act ethically in difficult situations, is what we can ultimately take from this experience. The choices we make within the contest can either portray us collectively as divergent and arrogant or as cohesive and humble. It is not too late to make up for our impulsive actions and win in a morally united way.

Students interested in voting should visit www.care2.com/schoolcontest.

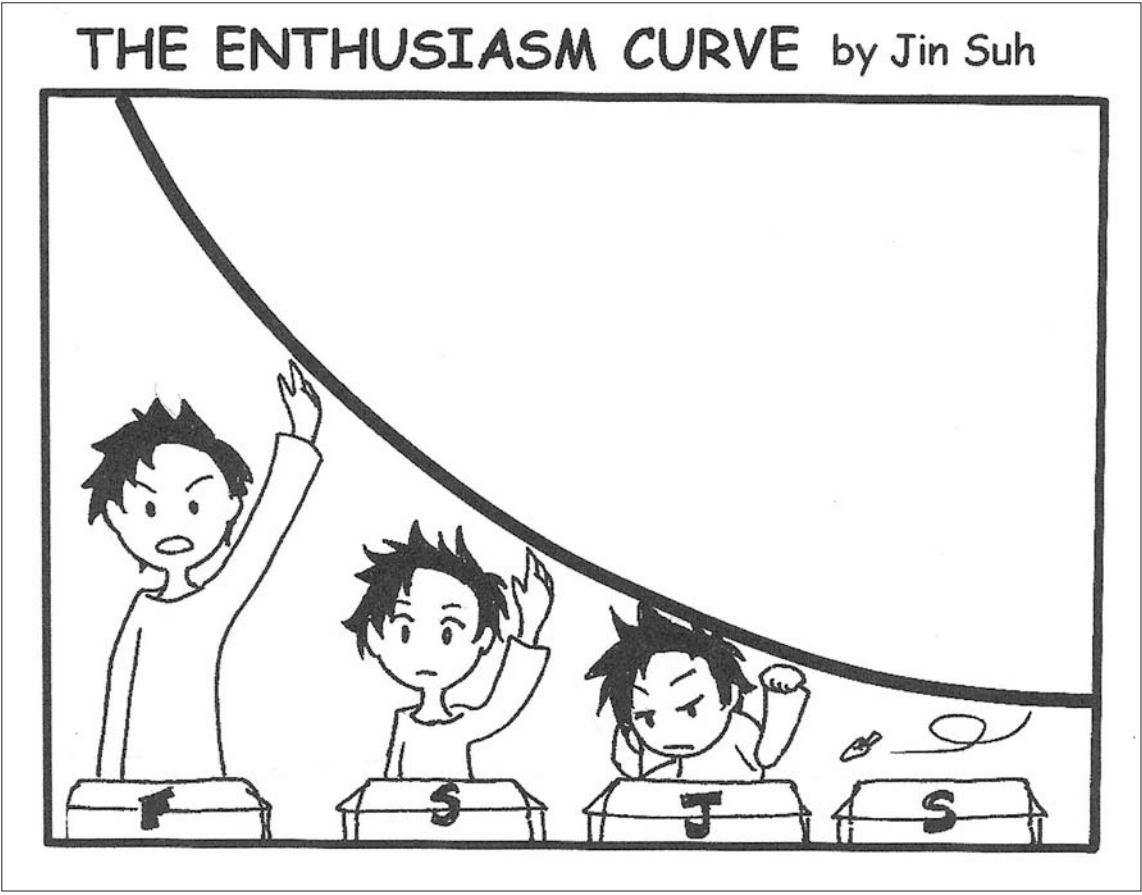
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

RE: “Policy to Ban Failing Students from Extracurricular Activities”

Extracurricular activities are those which lie outside of one’s regular academic schedule. Why then, has a policy been enacted stating that participation in such activities is dependent on academics? I understand that this may be an attempt to sustain the existing policy that prohibits failing students from being on a sports team, but I must question this policy as well. If you have a student who is failing a few classes, say, in the humanities, but he or she is a brilliant mathematician and a fantastic volleyball player, why should this person’s dream of becoming a star athlete and then “retiring” into a position of academia be shattered? If a club feels that having

a failing student as a member would cause a “loss,” then it is up to that club to limit the student’s participation by forbidding his or her participation in a conference. But banning an enthusiastic participant completely is absurd. Furthermore, what would stop someone from pursuing the activities outside of those connected to the school? If this policy was enacted to motivate students to do well in school, I would not be surprised if it had a reverse effect. This is not motivation—this is punishment. And I strongly believe that it is one unsuitable for a learning environment. —Aviva Hakanoglu, ‘10

OP-ART



From the Archives:



VOL. XXIX—No. 1. NEW YORK CITY— FEBRUARY 7, 1929. Price 10 Cents

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT ADOPTS NEW PLAN

The work of the entire course in English is based upon English composition. Promotion depends upon ability to write correctly. In terms 1 and 2 the classes will study only one English classic; in terms 3 and 4 the classes will study three English classics; in terms 5 and 6 the classes will study four classics; in terms 7 and 8 the classes will study five English classics. All terms will devote every Monday to Oral Composition and to Drill in Speech. Terms 1 and 2 will devote every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday to formal composition; terms 3 and 4 will devote every Tuesday and Wednesday to formal composition; terms 5 and 6 will devote every Tuesday to formal composition; terms 7 and 8 will devote no full day to formal composition, but will carry on board work, and write themes and term essays. The following diagram, in which O stands for Oral Composition; C for Formal Composition; and L for English Classics, represents the plan of the entire course in English. The figures show the approximate number of days.

For the work on Mondays every pupil will prepare, in writing, to talk, before the class, on four topics, those topics to be named every week in The Spectator. On Mondays, in the various terms, the pupils accomplish the following:

Mastering four current topics every week.

(Continued on Page 4)

EDITORIAL BOARD HOLDS DINNER AT AMHERST CLUB

The semi-annual dinner of the Spectator and Caliper Business and Editorial Boards was held on Monday, January 28, at the Amherst Club.

The dinner was delayed by Editor Mauro, who, following the traditional custom of the editors, was a half-hour late. The dinner was helped on its way by some anecdotes by Dr. Law.

The meeting was honored by several distinguished guests, Dr. von Nardroff, Will Howe, the editor of Scribners, Isadore Gross, Joseph Low and Adam Rapulski, former editors of the Spectator.

Dr. Law presented Mr. Panse, the faculty advisor of the Spectator, with a gift in recognition of his services to the Spectator.

Mr. owe, Dr. von Nardroff and Isadore Gross obliged with speeches. Dr. Law helped to fill in the time with several funny stories.

After the dinner, Dr. Law presented the medals given by Isadore Gross, known as the Frederick Houk Law Medals, to the five boys who wrote the best story, essay, editorial, poem, and scientific article. The winners were: Anthony Saupios, for editorial, L. R. Kahn for poem, Samuel Goldberg for essay, Sidney Poole for scientific article.

Stuyvesant Club Holds Elections

At the meeting of Jan. 10, 1929, the members of the Stuyvesant Club elected their leaders for the Spring term. The results were:

President—Charles Neuhardt.
Vice-President—Isadore Udowitz.
Secretary—Jack Jawetz.
Treasurer—George Farrel.
Sergeant at Arms—Edward Febbraio.

The elected members have all been members of the club for a year or more and two have already held office. Charles Neuhardt was last year's treasurer and Udowitz was Sergeant at Arms.

All these five men are very prominent in both athletics and scholarship. Neuhardt was captain of the swimming team and secretary of the G.O. Udowitz was tackle on the football team. Jawetz is a member of the track team. Farrel is the new leader of the Arista and Febbraio was captain of the hockey team.

J. A. Hearn Co. Sponsor Contest

- GROUP A
1. \$100 and gold medal
 2. \$ 75 and silver medal
 3. \$ 50 and bronze medal
 - 4, 5, 6, and 7. Each \$25 and bronze medal
- GROUP B
1. \$100 and gold medal
 2. \$ 75 and silver medal
 3. \$ 50 and bronze medal
 - 4, 5, 6, and 7. Each \$25 and bronze medal
- SUBJECTS
- GROUP A
- What did I find that I had to learn when I began my department store experience?
- What could be done by the high schools to make entrance into store work easier for the student?
- (The first question does not refer to store mechanics but to personal qualities such as discipline, appearance, etc. Attention should be given to the student's point-of-view as to the present helpfulness of schools in preparing students for work in retail stores.)
- GROUP B
- The merchant finds it difficult to meet the customer's demands for lower prices, due to the excessive service demands from the customers themselves.
- List service demands which tend to keep retail prices up.
- Suggest methods of reducing the expense incidental to these services. What effect would this have on retail prices?
- (This is a study of service costs, such as delivery of merchandise, return of merchandise, etc., and involves consideration of the responsibility of customers in relation to these costs.)
- (Continued on Page 4)

Oratory Contest Opens February 1

Tour To South America Will Be Given To Seven National Winners

The National Oratorical Contest on the Constitution, which the growing support of secondary schools the country over has made an outstanding event of the American scholastic year, will open on Feb. 1. As for the last three years, the contest will be conducted in New York City and the rest of the metropolitan district by The New York Times, one of forty American newspapers jointly sponsoring this annual educational and patriotic enterprise. Designed to stimulate in future voters an interest in and respect for the Constitution as the fundamental law of the land, the contest is offered as a contribution to better citizenship.

First Prize—Trip to South America, \$1,000 in cash and a gold medal.
Second Prize—\$500 and a gold medal.
Third Prize—\$250 and a gold medal.
Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Prizes—\$50 each and silver medals.
Thirty-six District Prizes—\$50 each.

A medal designed, as were the other prize medals, by the late Emil Fuchs, will be given to the winner in each school.

Orations must be original, not more than ten minutes in speaking length (usually about 1,100 words) and must deal with a selection from the following topics, twenty in number:

The Constitution in the Daily Life of the Individual.
Personalities in the Constitutional Convention.
The Value of Political Parties in the Functioning of the Constitution.
Advantages of a Rigid Over a Flexible Constitution for the American People.
Origins of the Constitution.
The Constitution, a Guarantee of the Liberty of the Individual.
The Citizen, His Privileges and His Duties Under the Constitution.
The Expansion of the Federal Power since the Civil War.
The Influence of the Doctrine of Implied Powers as Enumerated in the

(Continued on Page 2)

Maxmillian Ross, a graduate of Stuyvesant, who was appointed to teach French in Stuyvesant died suddenly January 28.

Thomas Sanna of the P. M. Session met death in an elevator accident Friday February 1. The students and faculty extend their sympathy to the members of the family of the deceased.

The faculty and student body sympathizes with the members of the family of Alfred Figurelli of the A. M. session of class 29 who was run down on Sunday Jan. 27, and died the following Tuesday.

TRACKMEN TAKE THIRD PLACE IN ANNUAL INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIP

Rifle Team Has Successful Term

The Rifle Team did well last term. It contested against and defeated a majority of its rivals. It has wrested victory from such teams as Evander Childs and St. Francis Xavier. It was tied once my Erasmus all. It was defeated but twice out of eight dual matches, once by Morris and once, in a return match, by Evander Childs.

Of last term's eight-man team, only one has graduated. He is Cliff Rowland, the team's captain, and the team's most dependable shot. His graduation is a severe loss.

A strong team remains behind, however, consisting of, Andrew Cipirani, Harry Koslow, J. J. Olton, Harry Solomon, "Bud" Rosensweig, J. Dunn, and J. P. Wolff.

Coach Brenzinger is confident that the team will have a most successful spring season.

Natators Beat Monroe Swimmers

On February 2, the Stuyvesant natators defeated the James Monroe team by a score of 38 to 23, at the George Washington High School swimming pool. Having won seven out of nine dual meets, the scarlet and blue team has been successful in securing third place on the team standing.

In a colorful 50 yd. Freestyle race, Burdion one of Stuyvesant's most successful swimmers defeated Abramowitz of Monroe who in turn out touched Lowey of Stuyvesant.

The 100 yrd Freestyle race was by no means lacking excitement where Newhardt the Scarlet and Blue captain, defeated Schilling of Monroe with Morganweck of Stuyvesant third.

White of Stuyvesant nosed out Jacobson of Monroe for first in the 50 yrd Breaststroke event.

Old Peter's 220 yrd Freestyle star, Frank, again exhibited his superiority by defeating, Didell, the Monroe contestant, while, Kroatshunok, of Stuyvesant captured third.

R. Jennings of Stuyvesant filled up the gap left by Kromers graduation, and succeeded in winning second in the 50 yrd Backstroke while Defozio received third.

The strong, swift, scarlet and blue quartet consisting of: Williams, Young E. Jennings, and Wecklun, defeated the Monroe relay team consisting of: Brecher, Altschbiller, Lambrecht, and Blumbaum, in the 220 yrd Relay swim.

Upholding the scarlet and blue, Gaiti succeeded in winning second place in the Fancy dive by a score of 41 points.

This meet ends Stuyvesant's schedule which was characterized by hard work and clean sportsmanship on the part of all the team members.

Jack Jawetz Stars In High Jump

Rolling up a total of ten points, the Stuyvesant track team finished behind the New Utrecht and De Witt Clinton runners, in the annual P. S. A. L. indoor championships, held last Saturday evening at the Thirteenth Regiment Armory. The Dutchmen garnered their third place by virtue of Jack Jawetz' victory and Clarence Weekes' third in the high jump, and Tommy Campbell's second in the quarter-mile. A. was expected, New Utrecht retained its title, the Bensonhurst team reaping a harvest of four first, two second, one third, and three fourth places. The Red and Black band from De Witt Clinton surprised by capturing second place with two first, one third and three fourth positions.

The feature of the meet, from a Stuyvesant point-of-view, was the excellent high-jumping of Jack Jawetz, who leaped six feet to conquer the P. S. A. L. outdoor champion, George Spitz, of Flushing, and retain for Stuyvesant, for the fourth successive year, the title previously held by Eddie Everard, Leo Berns, Morris Muslin. After Jawetz and Spitz had settled first and second places, Clarence Weekes hooked up with Nat Muller, of Haaren, in a jump-off for third place. Weekes' long legs enabled him to clear five feet, nine inches while his opponent's best mark was an inch less.

(Continued on Page 4)

450 STUDENTS GRADUATED AT STUYVESANT

The graduating exercises of the Class of January 1929, were held in the auditorium on Thursday evening at 8 o'clock.

The exercises were opened with the entrance of the graduates into the auditorium to the tune of Gounod's "March Pontificale", played by the school orchestra with Mr. Danielson conducting.

An oration on the "Value of Chemistry", was delivered by Joseph Mindell. This was followed by another oration on "Science as Service", by Lawrence Kahn. Both orators spoke fluently and were tremendously applauded at the conclusion of their respective speeches. The orchestra then played "Minuet from D-Major Symphony" by Haydn.

Dr. von Nardroff immediately followed with the presentation of diplomas, the final official act of graduation.

The entrancing melody of the Woodford-Finden "Till I Wake" from "Indian Love Lyrics" played by the orchestra, filled the assembly hall as the next number on the program.

The Rev. Albert E. Beebe, D. D. ended the evening's speaking with an address to the departing seniors. The reverend poured advice to the attentive graduates in a most fatherly manner.

Arts & Entertainment

Not Your Average Café Amore

By TONG NIU

Imagine Café Amore, all dolled up and elegant, with dimly-lit tables and a romantic glow. Imagine the pizza men transformed into sophisticated waiters with professional black and white uniforms. Imagine the bleak buffet area of pastas turned into steaming plates of piccolini piattis. Imagine Brick NYC.

Best known for its Brick House Pie thin-crust pizzas, Brick NYC is an undiscovered eatery in the heart of Tribeca. Located at 22 Warren Street, the seemingly small restaurant opens into a large dining room. The high ceilings and brick walls add grandeur to the place. Abstract paintings decorate the halls while modern wall lamps cast a dim red glow onto the customers. Everything, from the mahogany wood tables to the comfortable leather seats, suggests that this isn't your typical pizza place. Combining a modern atmosphere with exquisitely-prepared pizzas, Brick NYC creates a memorable dining

experience.

Despite being aimed more towards corporate businessmen from the neighboring financial district, Brick NYC is the perfect place for students to unwind after a stressful day. It also receives a lot of business from the local families. "We do get a lot of families from the neighborhood," head waitress Liz Gloor said.

The restaurant's menu offers a wide range of foods and prices, from the Pasta e Fagioli at \$5 to Homemade Lobster Raviolis at \$18. "Our most amazing [pizza] is definitely the Crimini Mushroom and Speck pizza," Gloor said. "It's Crimini mushrooms, Speck which is an Italian ham, topped with some asiago cheese baked on our traditional thin crust and drizzled with olive oil. You can smell that pizza from the other side of the restaurant." Pizzas are sold by the pie and vary in price, with the Crimini Mushroom and Speck pizza at \$15.

"We have a brick oven for pizzas and it cooks at a very high temperature very briefly. It makes the crust very crispy and the toppings won't seep into one



Brick NYC, a high-end Italian restaurant found on Warren Street, offers a variety of dishes and pizzas for reasonable prices.

Harry Poppick / The Spectator

another," Gloor said.

The Farfalle Rustica pasta (\$16) made with sautéed chicken, artichoke, zucchini, sun-dried tomatoes, and olives, and the Grilled Prosciutto and Soppressata and Mozzarella sandwich (\$13) made from rustic crusty Italian bread with brushed balsamic vinaigrette are both delicious alternatives to pizza that

are reasonably priced for their large portions.

Though service is slow at times, the waiters and waitresses are always friendly and attentive and the food is well prepared. "It's pretty good. The food comes out warm and delicious," customer Wilson Castrillion said.

To further separate Brick NYC from other pizzerias, all of the

restaurant's food is made fresh. "All food is made on premise, it's made daily to order. Our pizza dough and rolls are handmade in the back every morning," said Drew Smith, an employee at the restaurant.

The only drawback to Brick NYC is the price. Though its prices vary from dish to dish, they lean mostly towards the expensive side. "It's kind of expensive. For a student budget, that's bankruptcy," sophomore Sofia Pidzyrailo said.

Although pricey, students have still found ways to enjoy the delectable food. "Just be sure to bring some money, or some friends to share it with," sophomore Ravtej Kohli said.

Though not the ideal pizza place to hang out on a daily basis, this high-end restaurant is perfect for celebrations and special dinners. Brick NYC's made-to-order foods are worth the few extra bucks. "We have one of the top 10 brick oven pizzas in New York City," Smith said. Brick NYC is a prime example of why New York City is so famous for its pizza.

After Angela: Frank McCourt's Lasting Legacy

Frank McCourt's Pulitzer Prize-winning memoir "Angela's Ashes" has become a staple of the Freshman English curriculum.

Many teachers find it a wonderful way to illustrate the art of storytelling, the craft of memoir and the goal of understanding one's own life through writing. Students may be compelled to use the memoir as a template for their own future memoirs. We read two more of McCourt's memoirs to see how they compared to his first.

You're the Teacher, Man

By TAMMUZ HUBERMAN

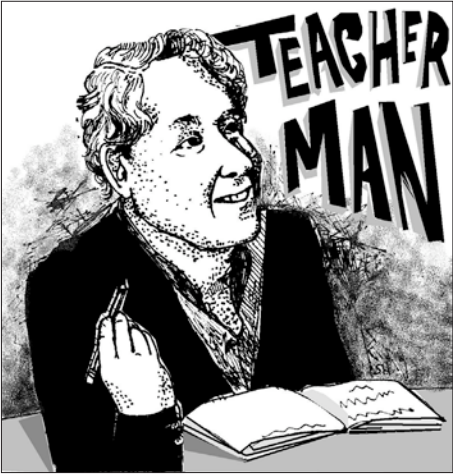
"On the first day of my teaching career, I was almost fired for eating the sandwich of a high school boy. On the second day I was almost fired for mentioning the possibility of friendship with a sheep. Otherwise, there was nothing remarkable about my thirty years in the high school classrooms of New York City," Frank McCourt wrote in his third memoir, "Teacher Man."

After these beginning sentences, the reader is hooked. Throughout the memoir, similarly odd remarks reflect McCourt's quirky personality. With a combination of his passionate stories and modesty, it is not a surprise that he becomes a teacher who inspires his students by teaching outside of the school curriculum.

"Teacher Man" traces McCourt's experience as a high school teacher in the New York City public school system. He begins by teaching at a series of vocational schools, where students are concerned with practical trades and not interested in his English class. As students are unwilling to listen to McCourt's grammar lessons, McCourt decides to have students edit each other's absence notes to teach grammar. The activity of editing a classmate's forged, and usually ridiculous, absence excuse note prompts students previously unwilling to play a part in McCourt's class to participate. McCourt even has students reading from a cookbook while others are playing instruments. Students cannot believe the teaching methods that he is using.

The narration shows McCourt to be unassuming, and yet his originality and innovation in the classroom stand out. As we rejoice in his ability to create dynamic relationships between student, teacher, and subject matter, his students learn to appreciate McCourt as well.

Amidst his difficulties as a first-time teacher, his wife pressures him to return to Ireland to get a PhD at Trinity College in Dublin in order to move up in the school system. However, McCourt soon gives up and returns to New York, landing on a gig at Stuyvesant High School to teach creative writing. He becomes so highly regarded by his students that upon his retirement from teaching, a student calls to him, "Hey Mr. McCourt, you should write a book." And since then, McCourt wrote four: "Angela's Ashes," "Tis," "Teacher Man" and "Angela and the Baby Jesus."



McCourt has a sense of humor that is deeply rooted in ridiculous situations and people. He writes that, "One mother came to the school and pleaded with me to let her daughter into my class [...] She offered to spend a weekend with me in a resort of my choice. I said no." By making note of these strange people he encounters, McCourt offers insight into the minds of not just himself, but the students of Stuyvesant as well. Ultimately, his students sought McCourt for his ingenuity and imagination, not for his distribution of good grades.

Stylistically, McCourt does not use quotation marks. He incorporates the dialogue as sentences. As a result, the chunks of dialogue and tangents highlight the personal relationship McCourt develops with his students as well as a personal relationship with his audience.

Some may be disappointed when McCourt reveals that none of his original ideas for the classroom were well-thought-out. But by the end of his memoir, his sporadic lesson plans only accentuate the beauty of his teaching. He teaches on a whim and does what he thinks will get through to New York City teenagers. Students saw McCourt was an impassioned teacher who deeply cared for them. He is treasured by many of them, as shown when a former student cries upon meeting him some twenty odd years later.

The memoir is not one long narrative. Comprised of small tangents about McCourt's teaching career and much self-deprecation, the memoir offers sincere insights into the life of a teacher man. In the preface to the memoir, McCourt writes that, "You'll never grow old, but the danger is you might have the mind of an adolescent forever."

'Tis A Tale

By ANASTASSIA BOUGAKOVA

Frank McCourt fills his second memoir, 'Tis, with haunting images of the world and glimpses into his own emotional life. He tells us of his early years of adulthood as if we are his friends sitting down at the kitchen table for a cup of tea and listening to his stories.

Beginning where Angela's Ashes left off, McCourt recalls his home in Limerick, Ireland as he heads toward his dream city of New York. He remembers his gossiping neighbors, the quiet Sunday Mass at the church and the men gathering in the local pub to have a few pints of beer. These vivid and blunt recollections are free of fancy ornamentation and full of raw feeling and detail.

Honest insights and observations characteristic of McCourt's narrative pull the reader into the story immediately. He tells us what he sees, no matter how grizzly or grotesque, from his encounter with a drunken priest to the striking poverty in his hometown of Limerick.

A former English teacher, it comes as no surprise that McCourt makes excellent use of "show, don't tell." He never says outright that he is at first disappointed with New York, but shows his opinion through some unfavorable descriptions of the streets and the people he sees. Upon arriving in New York, McCourt realizes that not everyone walking down the streets is a movie star with a happy life, as he had imagined. While he works at a Biltmore Hotel as a houseman in pursuit of the American dream, he is overlooked by the guests and degraded by coworkers. One day, he is cleaning up a table and throws out a paper napkin. A few minutes later, a girl approaches his manger in tears, claiming that a young man's phone number was written on that napkin. At that point, McCourt is forced to dig in a trash can for the napkin. By sharing these personal anecdotes many would be hesitant to recall, McCourt establishes a high level of trust between himself and the reader.

McCourt freely writes of his own mistakes as well. Drafted into the army to fight the Korean War, he lives with soldiers paying refugee women for sexual favors. He is at first appalled by the practice, but is soon pressured into participating. He expresses his confusion and feelings of shame in such a way that we cannot hate him for his actions.

His most moving messages show how he is willing to surrender to his own feelings as he writes and describe moments he shared with others. In a particular scene,

McCourt is engulfed in a powerful wave of emotion while talking to a coworker. McCourt writes, "this beer on the pier with Horace that makes me feel so happy [...] and I feel so foolish I'd like to rest my head on his shoulder and he knows that because he moves closer, puts his arm around me as if I were his own son, the two of us black or white or nothing." McCourt presents an intimate moment between friends while also expressing his views on the issues of racism. To him, his friend's race is of no importance. The reader learns the valuable lesson of looking past a person's exterior along with him.

Beyond moments and anecdotes, his description of the people he encounters adds more depth. McCourt even reveals the nuances in minor characters, such as a priest he meets on the boat to New York, in the few pages they are featured. From the moment McCourt runs from the inebriated priest, McCourt encounters one fascinating character after another. Descriptions of people bring out a spectrum of responses including pity and admiration, love and hate. The people stand out well in the backdrop of such a sincere narration.

Through that heartfelt narration, McCourt shares with the reader his strong desire to accomplish something in life. The big moment of triumph finally comes when he is offered a teaching position at McKee Vocational and Technical High School in Staten Island. However, he encounters problems while trying to establish credibility with his students. The students have no interest in learning and make fun of his Irish heritage.

In attempt to interest the class in literature, McCourt reads a pile of old essays to the students. The students are shocked to learn that those essays belonged to their older family members. They are moved by the opinions expressed in the compositions and work together to rewrite the essays in order to preserve them. Even though they still misbehave at times and complain about other assignments, McCourt succeeds in creating a bond with the students through the tattered compositions. He feels that he has fostered a love of learning in those children, however slight. In these flashes of triumph, we can celebrate alongside McCourt.

'Tis doesn't have the glamour of many modern-day memoirs. There is no happy conclusion. However, every page, every sentence, every word is full of a raw sensation. With his honest words and carefully preserved memories, McCourt gives as a rare glimpse into the raw nature of the world.

Arts & Entertainment

Unearthed From the Slushpile: Creativity Takes Control in Cyberspace

By JAMES HONG

There are only a handful of artists who have earned the title “musical chameleon”—an artist whose diverse styles prevent him or her from being categorized.

A member of this exclusive circle, Beck Hansen, known as Beck, seems to have a bottomless well of creativity. Beck emerged on the music scene in 1994 with the hit song “Loser,” proclaiming himself a slacking “perdedor” (loser in Spanish). His next album, the acclaimed “Odelay,” incorporates elements of hip-hop, funk and even jazz, heard through the winding saxophone lines on “The New Pollution.” Beck shed his detached Generation X image with his 2002 album “Sea Change,” ostensibly a direct result of his breakup with his girlfriend of 10 years. “Sea Change” is a personal favorite of mine because it’s simple and memorable. Some of Beck’s other songs include too many electronic beats and complicated shifts.

of his latest musical project puzzling.

Beck and his group of collaborators, known as the Record Club, have begun recording cover albums of various artists, including The Velvet Underground and Leonard Cohen. The albums, which he posts on his Web site, beck.com, are each recorded in one day. “An album will be chosen to be reinterpreted and used as a framework,” Beck says on the site. “Nothing is rehearsed or arranged ahead of time.” Tracks are uploaded once a week on beck.com. Contributors include Devendra Banhart, Ben Goldwasser and Andrew VanWyngarden of MGMT, and Nigel Godrich, a producer who has worked with Beck and Radiohead.

The first cover recorded was The Velvet Underground’s classic “The Velvet Underground and Nico.” The Velvet Underground, formed in 1965, was an influential, albeit short-lived, alternative rock band with New York City roots. Nico, a vocal collaborator of The Velvet Underground, sings “I’ll be Your Mirror” with a deep, husky voice that contrasts the Beach Boys-style wispy guitars in the background. Beck takes the opposite road. His club mates play warm drums and a solid bass while Beck lets his voice wander.

The unconventional use of tambourines and the xylophone in the Record Club’s rendition of “Sunday Morning” keeps the listener awake. The original is more likely to make eyelids heavy, with Lou Reed’s trailing off. Beck’s “Sunday Morning” is more colorful, dotted with beeps and whistles. This is my favorite cover, since Beck’s performing and Goldrich’s producing complement each other well on this track.

On “Waiting for my Man,” Beck and his pals deliberately un-tune their instruments, creating a curiously chaotic, yet coherent sound. One musician plucks on a sitar, an Indian string instrument, while another takes a violin bow to his bass. This recording might be the most ragtag piece in the whole cover album. Although Beck aims to be as original as possible with the recordings, this one goes a bit too far for my taste.

The Record Club also covered Leonard Cohen’s “Songs of Leonard Cohen.” The aging troubadour’s “whispering” voice contrasts with Beck’s less minimalistic approach. In the classic “Suzanne,” Cohen sings a soothing dirge over a repetitive guitar background. Beck’s reinvention of the song evokes his musical past. The tambourine reappears and Beck sings in the drawl of his early “Loser” period. Beck also removes the song’s

The first cover recorded was The Velvet Underground’s classic “The Velvet Underground and Nico.”

His more recent musical projects have focused on technology. He states his disapproval of a “plugged-in” society on tracks like “Cellphone’s Dead” from “The Information” (2006): Radio’s cold/ soul is infected/ one by one/ hardware defective.” Fans were able to design their own album cover from a myriad of colorful stickers included. The hands-on, sans-digital approach was emphasized, which makes the digital format

Beck seems to understand that Leonard Cohen’s gliding melodies in this number sound best the way they are.

somber and intimate tone—his collaborators sing backup and even shake maracas, a dramatic shift from Cohen’s lonely acoustic guitar.

On “Winter Lady,” however, Beck does not experiment. Acoustic guitar and vocal harmonies are heard front and center. Beck’s version is very similar to the original, which says something about the quality of Cohen’s music. Beck seems to understand that Cohen’s gliding melodies in this number sound best the way they are. When Beck experiments, his voice is sometimes lost to Goldrich and the other musicians’ sounds. But in this cover, Beck is coupled with only his guitar, and his earnest and melancholy singing remains prominent, making this my favorite Cohen cover.

The album thumbnails on the Web site are pencil renderings of the original album covers in line with the spontaneity of the one-day recording sessions. Despite the rawness of the music, it is refreshing in an age of excessive AutoTune.

Budget Cuts Delay STC

By STEPHANIE HOM, LEILI SABER and JASMINE WONG

As clubs and pubs line up outside of the Student Union to request more funding in light of the recent budget cuts, one popular extra-curricular has been dealt a blow and emerged fairly unscathed. The Stuyvesant Theater Community (STC), despite receiving a decrease in their overall budget, has had little trouble adapting to these changes.

The most pressing concern for the STC was whether or not it would be able “to entice a member of the faculty to be the advisor for a show,” wrote previous STC faculty advisor Vito Bonsignore, in an e-mail interview. In June of last year, the STC ran into some administrative issues dealing with continuing the funding for its faculty advisor. That problem was solved early in September when Chemistry teacher Dr. Jeffrey Kivi signed up for the job, but a few problems remain.

Due to the decrease in funding, the STC has had to push back its director interviews for

“We have bounced back even stronger.” —Annalise Lockhart, senior and STC Productions Coordinator

the fall musical, usually held in June, to this September. “Usually, we’d have all summer to prepare, but we weren’t even sure if there was going to be a fall musical. That makes it much harder to rehearse, plan and get things together,” said senior Ava Woychuk-Mlinac, director of this year’s fall musical, The Pajama Game. Since the school cannot afford to pay Kivi as much as the faculty advisor has been paid in the past, the cast of the Pajama

Game only has two all-day rehearsals. They spend as much time as possible rehearsing outside of school at places like

“We are being a little more cautious, but pretty much everything’s the same. We have bounced back even stronger.” —Annalise Lockhart, senior and STC Productions Coordinator

Teardrop Park. Since Kivi does not attend these rehearsals, the STC is able to save money without sacrificing rehearsal time.

There is also, however, the concern of the other three annual STC productions. “We are being a little more cautious, but pretty much everything’s the same,” senior and STC Productions Coordinator Annalise Lockheart said. “We have bounced back even stronger.”

“We’re definitely cutting back on expenses as much as possible, but we haven’t really been directly affected by the budget cuts,” junior and STC Financial Coordinator Jaimie Meyers said.

The STC might be financially stable for now, but the potential of further budget cuts going into effect next term throws a wrench into their carefully laid plans. “We have an ordered system for the budgeting of each show, which we have already done, but it could be an issue if they spring budget cuts on us that we weren’t expecting,” Myers said.

The possible budget cuts still remain a threat to the STC. “So far things seem to be running smoothly because the STC consists of five very dedicated students and because the school administration has been supportive,” Bonsignore wrote.

ADVERTISEMENTS



DUANE PARK
PATISSERIE

179 DUANE ST, NY NY 10013 • 212 274 8447

www.madelines.net



2010
summer in china

info@chinaquest.org
www.chinaquest.org

ADVERTISEMENTS

Raise Your SAT Score by 350 Points!

SAT/PSAT Prep



I went into C2 with a 1790 on my SAT. After 27 classes with C2, I scored 2180. My essay score also improved from a 3 to a 5. I think that all of my tutors were great! They really paid attention to my needs, and accommodated my schedule perfectly.

-Francesca Y.

- Regents Exam Preparation
- SSAT/ISEE/SHSAT/ERB/SCAT
- SAT/ SAT II/ ACT
- Reading Comprehension/ Essay Writing/ College Writing

- Vocabulary/ Composition
- Algebra/ Calculus/ Trigonometry
- Biology/ Chemistry/ Physics/
- Individualized Curriculum
- AP Subjects/ IB Courses

\$50
OFF

C2 Skills Assessment
WITH COUPON
New Students Only



be smarter. 212-564-3737

MANHATTAN

30 West 32nd Street (Between 5th & Bway), 3rd Floor

www.c2educate.com

STUDENT SPECIAL
2 Slices &
a Fountain Drink **\$5.00**



DONA BELLA PIZZA

154 Church Street, New York
Corner of Church & Chambers

IS YOUR CHILD LOST? NO MAJOR? NO DIRECTION?

THE ONLY GUARANTEED INVESTMENT TODAY IS EDUCATION!

START TO PLAN EARLY FOR YOUR CHILDS FUTURE!

WITH SIX EASY TESTS
WE CAN TELL YOU YOUR CHILDS
FUTURE COLLEGE/CAREER!

ALSO FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO ARE UNDECIDED!!

CALL TODAY FOR DETAILS
718-423-5660





MTD CONSULTING GROUP

You practice video games daily, but will you practice daily for the SAT/ACT?



6 questions + **6** minutes a day = **GUARANTEED** point increase

WilsonDailyPrep, an award-winning online SAT/ACT course, provides daily questions, student accountability, and a **GUARANTEED** point increase. All it takes is 6 minutes a day.

Only \$139 FOR 3 MONTHS

Higher scores at half the cost
of other leading online test prep companies.

Daily practice ensures success

For complete program details visit
www.wilsondailyprep.com
or call **800.888.0692**



From the Chem Lab to the Cortlandt Hills: Ms. Pluchino Gets it Done

continued from page 16

a coach and teacher has earned her a place in the heart of students and athletes alike. Pluchino began her coaching career at Stuyvesant last spring when she assumed leadership of the girls' handball team, the Furies. They went on to win a division championship with an undefeated 12-0 record in the regular season.

“Everyone perceives Stuy as a nerdy, academics-only school where kids run home and study. It’s nice to see that students are so dynamic and well-balanced” —Kristyn Pluchino, chemistry teacher

Although she led the team to an undefeated regular season, Pluchino came into the season having very limited knowledge of the sport.

“When a student came up to me asking me to coach the handball team, I thought they were referring to European team handball, which a couple of my friends played in college. Then somebody tossed me a handball, and I looked at it and said, ‘What is this?’ But I did my research, and we had a pretty good season,” Pluchino said. The players believed Ms. Pluchino also helped promote team camaraderie. “The whole team had a bond with her,” junior Sweenly Liu said. “The team was closer than it was the year before.”

The Furies have 11 players returning this year, giving the team the necessary experience and leadership to win another division title. “We have a lot of enthusiasm from the returning players,” Pluchino said.

This fall, Pluchino has replaced William Silver as head coach of the girls' cross country team. Pluchino does, however, have more experience with this sport than with handball. “I ran cross-country and indoor track in high school, and I really enjoyed it,” Pluchino said. She believes she has a “huge team with really solid veterans. It’ll take a couple seasons to dominate, but we’re getting there,” Pluchino said. Seventy runners came out for the team this year, almost double the amount on last season’s roster.

Her runners seem thrilled to be coached by her. After years of dealing with a coach who wasn’t particularly committed to the team, Pluchino seems to be a sweet relief. “It’s wonderful to have an involved, dedicated, and supportive coach like Ms. Pluchino. We are all glad to have her working with us,” senior Vanessa Ventola said.

“It’s wonderful to have an involved, dedicated, and supportive coach like Ms. Pluchino. We are all glad to have her working with us.” —Vanessa Ventola, senior

Pluchino has been most pleased with the relationships that she has formed with her athletes. “It’s been really nice to get to know students outside of the classroom. Stuy kids are really self-sufficient and motivated,” Pluchino said. She has also been pleasantly surprised by the character of Stuyvesant students on a whole. “Everyone perceives Stuy as a nerdy, academics-only school where kids run home and study. It’s nice to see that students are so dynamic and well-balanced,” Pluchino said

One of the most important pillars of athletic success is camaraderie, which Pluchino has established easily with both of the teams that she coaches. Both in the classroom and in the gym, Pluchino has been revered as a phenomenal teacher and coach.

Sports Across the Curriculum

continued from page 16

jor leagues. That student would also be able to reason that the reaction time would need to be very short, allowing him or her to estimate an answer before using a formula. In this case, the student is able to translate their knowledge of sports to the problem.

There is potential for meaningful connections in subjects beyond physics as well. Statistics are prevalent throughout sports. Michael Lewis’s Moneyball describes how Billy Beane, general manager of Major League Baseball’s Oakland Athletics, used statistics to outwit other general managers with larger spending capabilities. Even if the statistics used to analyze baseball were beyond the capabilities of high-schoolers, referencing sports would provide real-world relevancy to the subject.

Anybody who watches the news probably knows that sports players could make an

The technology of the information age has created a generation of young fans with more access to sports than ever before.

excellent case study for a criminal law class. Illegal substance abuse, perjury, assault, animal cruelty, and weapons charges are just some of the crimes being committed by our favorite athletes. Crimes committed by athletes can be loaded with special circumstances worth studying. Taking steroids is illegal, but if the league tells the player his results will be kept confidential, can it be used as evidence? How could you find an impartial jury for a superstar like Michael Vick?

Negro League Baseball and the ultimate integration of Major League Baseball could illustrate the depths of segregation in the United States. The story of Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier is an important moment in sports and American History. Desegregating America’s pastime was a major step in desegregating America.

By using sports as an educational tool, teachers can prevent students from getting intimidated by new material. Instead, students will be excited to learn about their favorite moments in sports from a new perspective.

Especially here in New York, integrating sports into the curriculum would get more students involved in the course material.

Girls’ Swimming

New Pool but hoping for the Same Old Results

continued from page 16

and she knows what needs to be done to make us improve and help us. She’s just a great person to be around,” senior and co-captain Katherine Dease said.

Sabala’s swimming experience allowed her to become an even better coach in her first year. “Just having a knowledge of the sport and knowing what events the girls are good at can really help the team,” Sabala said.

With Sabala in her second year after a championship in her first year, a home pool and a deep and talented roster, the Penguins are once again expecting to make it deep into the playoffs this year. “I do think we have the potential. It will be a lot of work, but they’ve put in the work so far, and I think that we will have that opportunity,” Sabala said.

Now Stuyvesant can watch as the defending city champions swim for another title.

“I do think we have the potential. It will be a lot of work, but they’ve put in the work so far, and I think that we will have that opportunity.” —Kristen Sabala, coach

ADVERTISEMENT

College Admissions Essay Writing Boot Camp
Led by an award winning writer and Professor at a leading University
October 3-4, \$900

Boot Camp Participants get free follow up session
Everyone Finishes Process with a WINNING Admissions Essay
Previous clients have gained admission to top Universities
For more info contact
writeforthefuture@gmail.com or
call 212 533-8308

THE SPECTATOR SPORTS

From the Chem Lab to the Cortlandt Hills: Ms. Pluchino Gets it Done



Chemistry teacher Kristyn Pluchino has made many contributions to Stuyvesant’s athletics, coaching both the girls’ handball team and the girls’ cross country team.

By JACK ZURIER

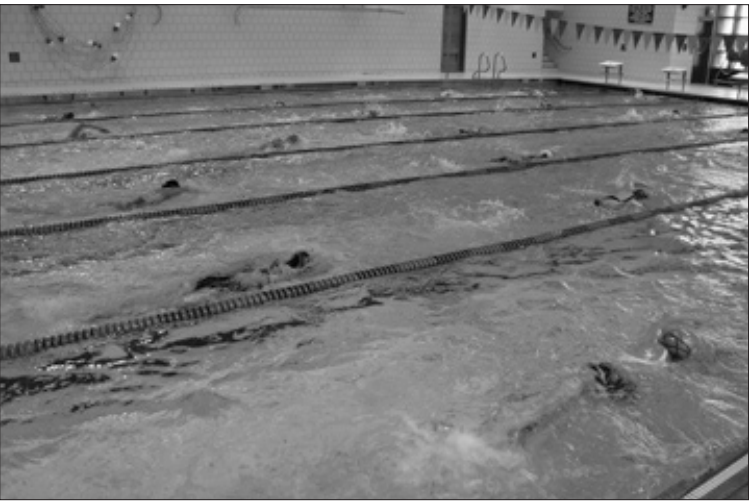
Whether she is mixing chemicals in the lab, helping the handball team with their kills, or directing members of the girls’ cross country team through the hills of Van Cortlandt park, chemistry teacher Kristyn Pluchino is regarded

by many of her students as a great educator. While her teaching abilities have earned her an excellent reputation throughout the school, Pluchino has made many contributions to the school’s athletics as well. Her dedication as both

continued on page 15

Girls’ Swimming

New Pool, but Hoping for the Same Old Results



With the completion of the renovated pool, the Penguins now have access to more practice time and hope to perform even better this season.

By EDDIE CYTRYN and YIFENG ZHAO

The 2008 Public Schools Athletic League girls’ swimming championship meet was in a foreign pool, as all of the Stuyvesant’s girls’ varsity swim team, the Penguins’, meets had been last season. They faced the defending champion Townsend Harris High School Turtles armed only with a first year coach, Kristen Sabala, and the memory of the 64-38 defeat in the 2007-2008 finals. But behind the loud

shouting and painted bodies of Woopegsooie, the official booster club of Stuyvesant Athletics, the Penguins avenged the loss and claimed the city title with a 61.5-40.5 victory, the cherry on top of their perfect 10-0 season. Although the Penguins graduated eight seniors, the team remains confident that there will be no drop-off in performance from last year’s season. “We lost some great girls, really good swimmers and personalities,” Sabala said. “We have some great new girls on the team as well, freshmen and

sophomores. [...] I think the girls who were on the team last year have really improved so far.” This year, with the completion of the renovated pool, the Penguins have had access to much more practice time and are scheduled to host three meets this season. “It’s just a lot more convenient and less stressful. It will definitely help with our season because we can get a lot more things done in the pool,” Sabala said. The team practices almost every day after school doing kicking drills, practicing their breathing and breaking down every part of the stroke. Due to the lack of a functioning pool, the team practiced last year at various pools around the city both before and after school. However, the long days and cramped schedules increased the team’s chemistry. “I think not having the pool really made us stronger as a team because we were more determined to show everyone what we could do, even without a pool,” senior and co-captain Stephanie Jou said. The team’s success last year can also be attributed to Coach Sabala. “[Coach Sabala is] great, she was a swimmer in college,

continued on page 15

Girls’ Golf

Birdies Don’t Need Age to Drive Them



By SCOTT CHIUSANO

They carry only seven girls on their roster. No girl on the team exceeds the age of 16. Though it happens to be the youngest of any Stuyvesant sports team this year, the Birdies, the girls’ varsity golf team, sports an undefeated 3-0 record with five games left in the season. Last year, the Birdies finished the season 6-2 after losing in the second round of the playoffs to Benjamin Cardozo High School. Six if the 11 girls on the roster graduated in 2009, leaving only two upperclassmen to lead the team in the 2010 season. Both of these seniors, Jane Choi and Grace Ko, however, quit the team this year to focus on their college applications. The experience and leadership of the team was left in the hands of three returning sophomores, Sarah Soo Hoo, Melissa

Watt and Jessica Plotnikov. Coach and English teacher Emilio Nieves, however, sees signs of leadership in all the team’s members. “Pretty much everyone shows leadership,” Nieves said. “As young as we are as a team, we’re definitely a team full of leaders.” The two teams they have played against so far, JFK and Lab Museum United, have been made up of mostly juniors and seniors. This, however, has not seemed to pose a problem for the Birdies, as they won both games 5-0. “To me age isn’t that big of a difference because all of us are good,” Soo Hoo said. “Our first three players are actually returning, so we have some experience.” The Birdies have worked harder this year to get the freshmen accustomed to being on a successful team. They practiced twice a week during the summer starting in early July, and now practice three

times a week in between matches. “No matter what I schedule, the girls always seem to get behind me and show up at the practices,” Nieves said. Most of their practices are at a driving range in Alley Pond, Queens—quite a trip for some of the girls. However they have shown a lot of commitment thus far. “They’ve shown leadership by being dedicated to the common goal of winning a championship,” Nieves said. Nieves, who is no stranger to coaching a winning golf team, has also led the boys’ golf team, the Swingers, to three straight undefeated seasons, and brought them to at least the second round of the playoffs every year. The Birdies will face their toughest challenge against Bronx High School of Science on Tuesday, October 6. The Bronx Science Wolverines handed the Birdies both of their losses last year in the two closest matches either team played all season. The Wolverines have a large number of juniors and seniors returning, and will once again be the team to beat in the Bronx/Manhattan division. The two teams will meet again in the last game of the season on Thursday, October 22, a match that will most likely decide which of the two will be the division champion. “That game will pretty much be our main challenge this year,” Soo Hoo said. The Birdies, however, seem prepared to avenge their two losses last year with an underdog team that may very well be underestimated. Although they may lack any upperclassmen to lead them, the team believes a city championship is definitely a possibility in their future. With such a young team, the Birdies have the advantage of time. They have a solid team that will stay together for three years, a team which can work in tandem to perfect their skills. “Next year or in two years I think we’ll be good enough to win the championship because all of our players will have lots of experience,” Soo Hoo said.

Sports Across the Curriculum



By SHALIYA DEHIPAWALA

Forget Boston, Los Angeles and Dallas. New York City is the best sports city in the country. As New Yorkers, Stuyvesant students have grown up with access to more major professional sports teams than other high school students all over the country. The Yankees, Mets, Rangers and Knicks all play in the city. The Jets and Giants play in New Jersey, but officially represent New York in the National Football League. The New Jersey Nets have been trying to move to Brooklyn for several years now, and the New York Islanders are right outside the city in Nassau County. Teachers should use this generation’s knowledge of sports to their advantage. Especially here in New York, integrating sports into the curriculum would get more students comfortable with and involved in the course material. When baseball first became popular, there were only two ways to follow a game: live or

on the radio. Now we can also follow our favorite teams on television, online, or on our cell-phones. The technology of the information age has created a generation of young fans with more access to sports than ever before. The connection between sports and academics is intuitive in a class like physics. Sports are an excellent lens into the world of mechanics. I remember solving many questions that tied baseballs to projectile motion. For example, I was asked to find the reaction time needed for the batter to successfully swing. These questions can be more specific and engaging though, if contemporary sports examples are used. Rather than saying a pitcher throws the ball, the question could name a real pitcher like Justin Verlander. Any baseball fan knows that Justin Verlander is a power pitcher that consistently throws one of the fastest fastballs in the ma-

continued on page 15