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Principal Stanley Teitel Retires



Former Principal Stanley Teitel retired as of Saturday, September 1.

By LEOPOLD SPOHNGELLERT

Stanley Teitel, principal of Stuyvesant High School for 13 years, announced his retirement on Friday, August 3. In a letter that was posted on the school's website, Teitel informed the Stuyvesant community that he would formally retire as of September 1. "It is time to devote my energy to my family and personal endeavors," he wrote. "I have thoroughly enjoyed serving in each capacity as teacher, assistant principal and principal."

Dennis Walcott, Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education (DOE), announced on Monday, August 6 that Jie Zhang would serve as Interim Acting Principal this coming fall.

Teitel's announcement came as a shock to the students, alumni, and parents who had come to equate Stuyvesant High School with his face after over a decade under his leadership. "I was really surprised. At the end of the year there was no sign that he was going to retire," said Isabelle Clark, a senior and a former student of Teitel's.

Indeed many students may find it strange not to see Teitel's familiar face greeting them on the first day of school this year. He departs after 29 years at Stuyvesant and 41 years working as a New York City educator. Teitel began his tenure at Stuyvesant in 1983 as a physics and chemistry teacher. In 1997 he was named Assistant Principal Of Chemistry and Phys-

ics, and by 1999 he became principal of the school.

During his tenure as principal, Teitel worked to advance Stuyvesant's academic programs. He advanced the use of technology in the school as he oversaw its transition into the 21st century. This is evident in his purchase of technological equipment for many departments and his advancement of what is now one of the top high school computer science programs in the city. Teitel also started the Writing Across The Curriculum program, which strives to promote the use of writing in all areas of study.

Teitel was known to say to incoming students that at Stuyvesant, you can pick two of the following three things: friends, schoolwork, and sleep. Despite this quip, Teitel worked regularly with parents on strategies to reduce his pupils' stress. At his monthly Student Leadership Team meetings he developed policies to accomplish this. He instituted a new policy that prohibited teachers from assigning students work during school vacations. He also used these meetings to bridge the gap between the administration and the parents of Stuyvesant students. As early as his first meeting as principal, "he conveyed the desires of the parents he met with and how he hoped to convert that into his goals," social studies teacher Anthony Valentin said.

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Stuyvesant Cheating Ring Exposed

By KAVERI SENGUPTA,
JORDAN WALLACH,
and THOMAS ZADROZNY
with additional reporting by
ARIELLE GERBER

News of the most significant scandal in Stuyvesant history broke in the last weeks of the 2011-12 school year when a group of students was discovered to have cheated on four state exams. The Spectator investigated the sequence of events that has led most recently to the potential suspension of 66 students.

The cheating ring, led by Nayeem Ahsan, a junior at the time, sent answers via smart phone to a list of students he had assembled in advance. Texting records and students' testimonies have revealed that cheating occurred during the Physics, United States History, and English Regents, as well the Spanish Language Other Than English (LOTE) exam, on Wednesday, June 13, Thursday, June 14, Friday, June 15, and Monday, June 18, respectively. The Stuyvesant administration and the DOE have concluded that a total of 71 students were willingly involved in the cheating over finals week.

On the Physics exam, pic-

tures of test answers were sent to the list on Ahsan's phone. On the English and U.S. History exams, students who had finished the test quickly sent answers to Ahsan, who forwarded them to other students in text-message form. It is unclear how many students cheated during each of these exams. The texting chain was compiled from students who asked to be on the list, students whose friends added their names to the list or forwarded the texts themselves, and students who allegedly had not asked for the questions, but were given answers by Ahsan's own volition.

After one of the exams, a student with knowledge of the ongoing cheating approached Principal Stanley Teitel to reveal that a cheating ring, led by Ahsan, had shared answers during the Regents exams. Additionally, the administration found similarities between Ahsan's and another student's Physics exams.

The LOTE exam was administered the next Monday, June 18. Teitel assigned social studies teacher Daniel Tillman to proctor Ahsan's class's Spanish LOTE, instructing him to watch for any suspicious behavior.

A few minutes into the exam,

Tillman stepped out of the class and alerted Teitel of Ahsan's cell use. Tillman then re-entered the room accompanied by Teitel, who confronted Ahsan, asked if he had a cell phone, and then escorted him out of the testing room to the principal's office.

In the following days, it was discovered from Ahsan's phone that 92 juniors were involved in either giving or receiving test answers from Ahsan. The parents of these students received letters stating that their child had received texts containing answers, and that the students were barred from holding leadership positions in certain school organizations, from participating in SING! 2013, and from leaving the school building for lunch.

Over the last few days of school, students who were implicated in the scandal had the opportunity to appeal to the administration to demonstrate that they had not intentionally received the texts, or had not viewed them. In addition to individual interviews with Teitel and Assistant Principal of Organization Randi Damasek, every student accused of cheating

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Opinions

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Mr. President, Money Doesn't Grow On Trees

A conservative view on Obama's student loan plans.



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Arts & Entertainment

Summer Hits You Might Have Missed

Arts & Entertainment writers review this summer's hits.

Introducing Principal Jie Zhang

By LEOPOLD SPOHNGELLERT

Interim-Acting Principal Jie Zhang is no stranger to Stuyvesant High School. A parent to two Stuyvesant students, an involved member of the New York City math community, a former specialized high school principal, and most recently Stuyvesant's network leader, Zhang can say with confidence she is already quite familiar with her new home.

However, nothing could prepare her to become the leader of Stuyvesant overnight. Due to the cloud of controversy that came out of the school's recent cheating scandal, the media and members of the Stuyvesant community will be watching her every move in the coming months. Nevertheless, she is "confident we're going to have a smooth transition," she said.

Zhang recognizes that it is up to her to create this smooth transition, but she also admits that she has plenty of learning to do before she can make any major decisions. Of course, everybody wants to know how she is going to approach the hot-button issue at Stuyvesant: cheating. Zhang has recognized this and has already begun to tackle this problem as one of her priorities as the new prin-



Interim-Acting Principal Jie Zhang started work on Monday, September 3.

pal. "We had a Cabinet Meeting with the 11 Assistant Principals and we spent a lot of time talking about our plans," she said. "All of us agreed that we, as a community, will address the academic honesty."

While this might lead to an increased emphasis on rules and regulations this year, Zhang has never been one to treat her students as second-class citizens. She insists that she will have an open-door policy. "You're welcome to learn from

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Million-Dollar Donation Reopens Alumni Merger Debate

By RISHAM DHILLON

Boaz Weinstein, a Stuyvesant alumnus ('91) who is also the founder of Saba Capital Management, has donated \$1,000,000 to Stuyvesant High School. He intends that the money go toward funding the ongoing library renovation and adding more computers throughout the building.

His donation has reopened a long-held debate that has confronted Stuyvesant alumni organizations throughout the years—disunity within the groups. There are three different organizations within the Stuyvesant community that regularly donate to the school: the Stuyvesant High School Alumni Association (SHSAA), Friends of Stuyvesant, and the Campaign for Stuyvesant Alumni & Friends Endowment Fund (Campaign for Stuyvesant). Weinstein has chosen to donate through the Friends of Stuyvesant organization.

Despite several attempts to merge into a single entity, the three groups have failed to unite their respective organi-

zations. Efforts, however, have been ongoing. One attempt, in 2010, asked each of the three groups to give \$150,000 to help form the group and nominate three board directors to a single Stuyvesant Alumni Foundation. However, due to an inability to resolve disagreements between the groups, the proposal was rejected.

Among the many things that need to be agreed upon by the groups before a successful merger is completed is the question of how the new organization will function: who will serve on its board, how it will direct its efforts in getting Stuyvesant more resources while running alumni activities, and what the name of the organization will be.

All of the organizations, despite working as separate entities, have applauded Weinstein's donation. "The Stuyvesant High School Alumni Association is always appreciative of the generosity of our donors, and we sincerely thank Boaz Weinstein

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News

College Board Changes AP Curriculum and Standardized Testing Procedures

By RISHAM DHILLON
and BRIAN WEI

The College Board has recently introduced new Advanced Placement (AP) curriculums and SAT testing security procedures that will be in effect at the start of the 2012 - 2013 school year.

For each AP exam the College Board offers, it releases a corresponding recommended curriculum designed to give educators and students a better idea of the content to be tested. When a test undergoes change, the College Board adjusts the curriculum to better reflect the new exam. This year, the College Board has introduced new curriculums to match the new AP Biology, AP Latin, and AP Spanish Literature and Culture exams.

According to the College Board, the AP Biology curriculum changes are due to the recent increase in the speed of biological discoveries, which forces teachers to consistently adjust in order to keep their students up-to-date. The College Board's website also states that the old broad curriculum forced teachers to balance "breadth of content coverage with depth of understanding." The new curriculum attempts to eliminate this problem by focusing on learning conceptual ideas and supporting these ideas with established content and content arising from new discoveries.

The new curriculum, therefore, is centered on four concepts that are essential in understanding and describing how living beings function. These four ideas, each of which has its own detailed sub-curriculum, include evolution, expenditure of energy and utilization of matter, response to stimuli, and interaction with the environment. Furthermore, since the new AP Biology test encourages application of information over rote memorization, the new test will feature

half as many multiple-choice questions and double the number of free-response questions. The free-response questions will now also require the application of mathematical formulas. As a result, students will now receive a four-function calculator and a formula list to use during the test.

Some students believe that this new curriculum will not have a major effect on the experiences of Stuyvesant's AP Biology students. "The new changes don't sound sufficiently substantial to warrant a change in their [Dr. Utting's and Ms. Bierig's] teaching methods, since they already incorporate much outside supplementary material into their courses," alumnus Tangent Cheng ('12) said in an e-mail interview.

The major change in the AP Spanish Literature curriculum is a reduction from 56 to 38 works to be included on the required reading list. This decrease intends to give students more time to focus on the curriculum's newly introduced cultural aspects. The course, therefore, will be renamed to AP Spanish Literature and Culture. In this new course, there will be heavy emphasis on learning from a wider variety of media, including art works and audio resources.

The new AP Latin course will combine two older courses into one, while maintaining the workload of a single course. The older courses were completely dedicated to either prose or poetry. The Chair of the AP Latin Development Committee, Jane Crawford, stated in a press release that the new course would ensure that students taking the course have a definite understanding of both Latin prose and poetry. This will be tested by emphasizing sight-reading or reading passages on the AP exam formerly unfamiliar to them.

In addition to the altera-

tions to the three AP curriculums, the College Board will implement security enhancements regarding the registration, administration, and actions taken after administration of the SAT and SAT Subject Tests. With the assistance of Freeh Group International Solutions, LLC, an independent global risk management firm that handles business integrity, safety, security, and investigations, the College Board has crafted measures to prevent test-taker impersonations without hindering honest students from comfortably taking the exams.

In order to register for the SAT and the SAT Subject Tests, test-takers will now be prompted to submit a discernible photo to be placed on a new photo admission ticket. Those registering online must upload a photo while those registering by mail must include a photo with their paper registration form. The submitted photo, mandated to be the size of a passport photo, must be focused, correctly exposed, taken in full-face view without additional people, and match how the student will look on the day of the test.

Standby, or walk-in, testing on the examination day will no longer be accepted. Students must present a photo admission ticket and an adequate form of photo ID, such as official school-produced student identification to be admitted to the test center. The test center supervisor rosters that will be used to admit students will include each student's full name, date of birth, gender, test type, and current high school. Supervisors will also have access to the photos sent in during registration.

Students will undergo additional ID checks upon entry to the test room, reentry to the test room after breaks, and collection of the answer sheets. Students will be obliged to sign a more extensive

certification statement on the answer sheet, which includes affirming to the accuracy of the information on their admission ticket and answer sheet, agreeing to abide by all fairness and security policies, and acknowledging that impersonation could lead to prosecution and law enforcement.

After the test day, high school administrators will receive scores for all test-takers attending that school. A repository for registration will be created to store the information and photos of test-takers; the repository will not include test scores. High schools, colleges, the ETS Office of Testing, and other organizations that receive SAT scores will be granted access to the data stored in the repository to certify student information.

Under these security improvements, cheating on the SAT may become a more difficult enterprise. "The enhanced security measures are great ways to ensure that there will be no cheating or impersonations on the day of the test," junior Alice Li said. "I can't imagine how anyone can get around the photo admission tickets."

Some students acknowledge that the tighter security policies also have their own downfalls. "The obvious advantage of these security enhancements is the prevention of cheating, as it's much more difficult to find a loophole after these policies are implemented. However, the increased number of security checks will be more time-consuming and lead to increased student anxiety," junior YiFan Chen said.

Having long been plagued with vague AP curriculums and security scandals, the College Board hopes that these changes will produce a return to honest and thorough academic pursuit in the near future.

Newsbeat

- Spanish teacher Miguel Garcia and photography teacher Jan Juracek retired. Garcia worked at Stuyvesant for 14 years, in addition to 8 years of service in other schools. Juracek taught for a total of 26 years, eight of which were spent at Stuyvesant.
- Math teacher Dawn Vollaro and Social Studies teacher Josina Dunkel are on maternity leave and will be not be teaching during the fall term of this school year.
- Recently wed foreign language teacher Elena Song will be moving out of New York City and will no longer be teaching at Stuyvesant.
- Executive Director of Stuyvesant High School Alumni Association, Henry Grossberg, has retired from his position after serving 10 years to the association and the Stuyvesant community.
- Social Studies teacher George Kennedy was named 2012's "Teacher of the Year" by Education Update magazine.
- The Stuyvesant air-conditioning system, pool, and library underwent repairs this summer. The library is slated to reopen in November, but the pool will remain closed through the school year.
- Stuyvesant High School alumnus Nzingha Prescod ('10) participated in this year's London Olympics as part of the US Olympic Fencing Team. (See article on page 20.)

More Rigorous Regents Planned

By DAVID MASCIO

Students will be taking overhauled Regents exams in English, Geometry, and Integrated Algebra starting in the 2013-2014 school year. A new Algebra II/Trigonometry Regents will be introduced in the 2014-2015 school year.

The revamped tests will be aligned with the Common Core, a new set of education standards spearheaded by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association. New York State adopted the standards on July 19, 2010, joining 44 other states across the country. Since the standards were adopted, the state has been working with schools and teachers on integrating the Common Core in classrooms. By the time new Common Core exams are released, the state believes that the new standards will be commonplace.

The standards are focused on English and math because the Common Core's creators felt that the two subjects were fundamental to understanding many other subjects. The creators also noted that English and math were the most commonly tested subjects on state exams.

The Common Core emphasizes critical thinking skills over memorization with increased overall rigor. The new standards hope to address the low college graduation rates across the country. In 2010, only 37.8 percent of New York State college students graduated on time. "The rallying cause in designing the Common Core standards was to design a body of standards that were truly

college and career-ready," Common Core contributing writer David Coleman said in a New York State Education Department video.

Preparations for the Common Core in Stuyvesant have been extensive. "Last year, [Principal Stanley] Teitel [brought] in Coleman [...] to talk about Common Core standards to the entire faculty, and individual teachers such as [English teacher Annie] Thoms have attended outside workshops on them," Assistant Principal of English Eric Grossman said.

Additionally, all math teachers received a copy of the Common Core regulations to review. As a change, teachers will make note of the standards when writing their lessons so they cover and are aware of them. Regardless, the curriculum will remain unchanged as a study done by the department revealed that all the standards were already included in the math curriculum. "The math department went through each standard," Assistant Principal of Mathematics Maryann Ferrara said. "We found we were right on par with the standards."

The Common Core standards in English push for less fiction and more informative texts, like instructions. Readings in all state English exams will be more difficult, and research skills will be integrated into the exams.

At a meeting on January 19, 2012, the New York City Department of Education presented sample Common Core test questions to the City Council. In one question, high school students were asked to analyze the pros and cons of the influence of new

forms of media on young people and greater society. Students could use information from several non-fiction and opinion articles that they had read, along with their own research, to complete the essay. The presentation contrasted the sample essay with an actual multiple choice question from a recent English Regents exam that required summarizing a few lines from a passage.

In mathematics, the Common Core standards show an increased emphasis on open response questions as opposed to multiple choice. Word problems and other questions that involve applying concepts to real-world applications will appear on exams more frequently.

Another sample question asked fifth grade students to solve a paragraph-long fraction word problem involving eating pizza. The presentation compared this word problem to a short multiple choice question about fractions from a past state math test. Sample questions for the new math Regents exams have not yet been released.

Ultimately, Grossman believes "Stuy juniors are well-prepared for the ELA Regents," Grossman said. "The English Department has studied the standards carefully and will continue to do our best to make sure our instruction is aligned with them."

Likewise, Ferrara feels students will be prepared for the new math Common Core exams "because of the way classes are taught," Ferrara said. "There's more writing in individual tests, in finals. Kids will be ready for whatever format [the test is in]."

Principal Stanley Teitel Retires

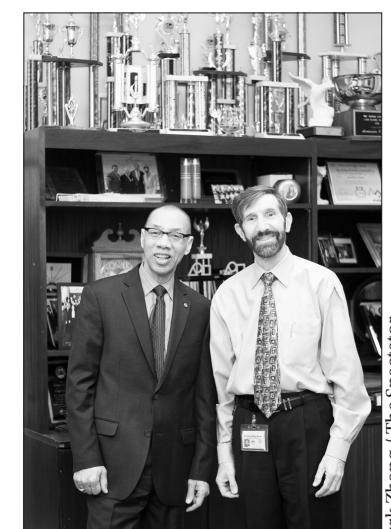
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Though he and parents did not always agree on policy decisions, he maintained an open line of communication with them throughout his time as principal.

September 11, 2001 presented the greatest challenge of Teitel's career. The attack on New York City required him to lead thousands away from the Chamber Street school, just a few blocks from the World Trade Center, and subsequently guide the Stuyvesant community through a time of tragedy for the nation. "That was a rough time for everyone and he bore the lion's share of the pressure since he was principal at that time," Valentin said.

Teitel has made headlines many times in his career, often for the accomplishments of the school, but most notably for its many scandals. Most recently, the school has been in the news for a racist rap video that targeted an African American student, a day of rebellion against the dress code known as "Slutty Wednesday," and the cheating scandal that rocked the school last June.

There has been speculation among many, including most New York media outlets, that Teitel's sudden retirement announcement was directly related by the cheating controversy. According to The New York Times, the city is still investigating whether Teitel followed protocol in the days following his discovery of the cheating ring. In recent years, Teitel has struggled with his health and even



Chancellor Dennis M. Walcott and Former Principal Stanley Teitel.

Mark Zhang / The Spectator

had heart problems during the summer of 2011. It is unknown whether the Department of Education directly requested that he vacate his position. Teitel did not respond to an interview request for this article.

Regardless of what led to his retirement, the Stuyvesant community has expressed its gratitude towards Teitel's commitment to the school for over a decade. As the school enters the new year, students and faculty alike have conveyed that though everybody wants to move forward, Teitel's legacy will not be soon forgotten. "I am fond of the gentleman and will miss his presence. He is the best principal I ever served with," Valentin said.

Million-Dollar Donation Reopens Alumni Merger Debate

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for his wonderful contribution," SHSAA president Lisa Tepperberg said in an e-mail interview.

The SHSAA, which is the oldest existing alumni association, has given Stuyvesant over \$3.2 million in allocations, grants and scholarships over the past 10 years, giving \$450,000 in the past year alone, according to Tepperberg.

The Campaign for Stuyvesant, which was founded in December of 1999 with help of former Principal Jinx Cozi Perullo, has also donated to Stuyvesant over the years. Their goal is of creating "a \$12 million endowment to benefit the student body of Stuyvesant High School," as reported in the campaign's website.

Friends of Stuyvesant is the youngest of the three organizations, having been founded in 2003 with the aid of former Principal Stanley Teitel. Weinstein's donation through Friends of Stuyvesant has become the largest single donation in the school's history.

To many, the benefits of a potential merger seem more important than the issues between the organizations.

"I think it is always best when there is a sole entity advocating for a school. Then all of the efforts of everyone is going in a single direction," former Stuyvesant Assistant Principal Mathematics and current Director of the Campaign for Stuyvesant Daniel Jaye said.

Another benefit, Jaye notes, is that potential donors would not refrain from donating because of the lack of a single alumni entity. "In many ways, competition is a wonderful thing. In terms of fund-raising, however, competition can often cause confusion," he said. "Competition is good for a consumer but not for a donor."

Stuyvesant Cheating Ring Exposed

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answered a prepared questionnaire and a written statement with their account of what happened. Twenty-one students were able to convince the administration that they were not involved in the cheating ring.

On Friday, August 3, a letter from Teitel was posted on the Stuyvesant website stating that he would retire as of September 1. He did not mention the cheating scandal in his statement. On Monday, August 6, Jie Zhang, former principal of Queens High School for the Sciences at York College, was named Interim-Acting Principal by the DOE.

Students implicated in the scandal were called in to Stuyvesant on Thursday, August 9, and were asked to share information as part of the DOE's investigation of how the admin-

Stuyvesant Alumnus John Kwok ('78), who served on SHSAA's StuyCentennial Planning and Events Committees for years, believes that the merger should be of a different nature.

"Ideally SHSAA and Campaign should have an alumni relations structure akin to Bronx Science's with both organizations linked by having several seats held in common by the same persons on the boards of directors of both organizations, with SHSAA devoted exclusively to alumni affairs and the Campaign to raising the endowment," Kwok said in an e-mail interview.

The SHSAA, the Campaign for Stuyvesant, and Friends of Stuyvesant continue talks of merging into a single organization. Alumnus Joan Ai ('94) created a letter of intent earlier this year in the hopes of uniting the three groups, although the attempt ultimately failed. Ai has reportedly adjusted the letter of intent to address some of the issues that prevented some from accepting it earlier.

This past July, the SHSAA held a board meeting to further discuss the merger, and will continue to work on the possibility this year. "The Alumni Association does think that Stuyvesant would benefit from a singular organization and we are currently exploring the possibility of doing just that," Tepperberg said.

Though many are optimistic about the possibility of a merger, it is also important to note the difficulties that exist in doing so. Despite recent advances, there is still no certainty that these groups will merge, especially with the recent retirement of Stanley Teitel. In the meantime, the organizations will have to work on developing a relationship with Acting Interim Principal Jie Zhang and wait to find a solution all three groups can agree to.

istration handled the situation. All of the students involved are required to retake the Regents exams that they had cheated on. Many of them did so over the summer.

On Friday, September 7, the DOE announced superintendent's suspensions for 12 students, with the possibility that 54 more could receive principal's suspensions after individual conferences with Zhang during the week of September 9. Students were contacted by their guidance counselors and were alerted as to whether they were suspended or not, and whether they faced further disciplinary actions.

On Friday, September 14, the students who received superintendent's suspensions have a disciplinary hearing held by the DOE to determine whether they will be suspended for a longer length of time.

Li Presents Research at National Chemistry Conference

By LINDSAY BU
and JULIA MENDELSON

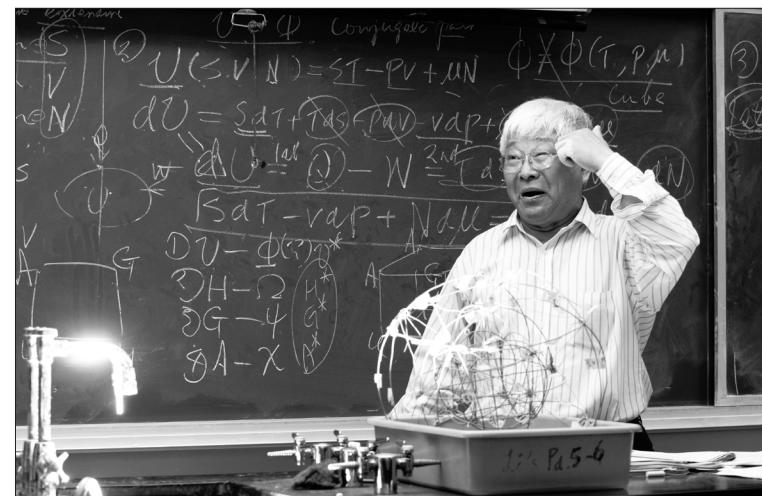
Thermodynamics, a branch of physical chemistry, is generally considered one of the toughest subjects in the field. Its counter-intuitive nature and use of multivariable calculus tend to leave many students in the dust. Yet, it is this course of study that chemistry teacher Dr. Zhen-Chuan Li has intensively researched for over 50 years.

Li recently presented his paper on thermodynamics, titled "Search for Beauty in Science: Thermodynamic Symmetry Diagram and Its Applications," at the American Chemical Society's (ACS) 244th National Meeting and Exposition. This time, the conference was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, from Sunday, August 19 to Thursday, August 23, providing thousands of American scientists the opportunity to share their most recent advances in chemistry and chemistry-related fields.

The American Chemical Society was founded in 1876 and has since held national meetings bi-annually. Each meeting is broken into numerous divisions, such as Food Chemistry, Chemistry and the Law, and Inorganic Chemistry. Each division holds its own meetings and poster sessions. The expositions, along with special events spread over the course of the week, give attendees the chance to meet their colleagues, many of whom are showcasing new technological developments. Many educational workshops are also held to further science education and spur more interest in scientific careers. According to the ACS website, "everyone who attends an ACS National Meeting and Exposition walks away with a greater understanding of the role chemistry plays in the global economy, health, safety, and environment." Today, the ACS has expanded to involve more than 164,000 members, with each national meetings attracting approximately 12,000 professionals and featuring about 7,000 presentations.

Li's paper was presented in the general poster session of the Division of Chemical Education symposia, which consisted of about 300 other presentations. In his paper, Li discusses a three-dimensional approach to analyzing the relationship between different thermodynamic properties, such as temperature, entropy, pressure, volume, chemical potential, and internal energy. According to Li, who quotes renowned American physicist Herbert Callen, "Thermodynamics is a science of symmetry." Properties can be thought of as multivariable functions that occupy a three-dimensional space, and by applying geometry—particularly the concentric multi-polyhedron—Li sought specific thermodynamic symmetries and examined the use of symmetrical diagrams for different thermodynamic purposes.

"Even though I am interested in physics and other applied sciences like chemistry, I am primarily inclined towards mathematics, so when I heard Dr. Li mention his model in my Regents Chemistry class, the fancy partial derivatives and geometric diagrams caught my attention," said senior Andrew Hwang, who also took Li's Physical Chemistry elective, in an e-mail interview. "I eventually became involved in his project as an editor and general assistant, and at the ACS meeting I was able to



Chemistry teacher Zhen-Chuan Li presented his new project at the American Chemical Society 244th Meeting and Exposition.

Mark Zhang / The Spectator

stand alongside Dr. Li to present his Geometric Thermodynamics Model and had the opportunity to meet renowned researchers and journalists from around the country."

On Tuesday, July 24, Li was selected to participate in the ACS Presentations on Demand, a program that captures select content from ACS meetings and publishes oral presentations, posters, and papers online after a meeting. Once available on the ACS online archive on Saturday, September 15, the 113-page "Search for Beauty in Science" will mark Li's first full-length publication in America and will be accessible worldwide, which has "always been my dream, for everyone to be able to read my work," Li said.

Li also applied for the ACS's Committee on Environmental Improvement (ACS-CEI) Award, which is granted to only four to six researchers annually for their exemplary work on the incorporation of sustainability into chemical education. Applicants are required to shorten their papers, with Li ultimately cutting his down to 150 words. Recipients of the ACS-CEI Award are invited to give lectures at the 2013 ACS Spring National Meeting in New Orleans. Results will be announced within the next two months.

In hopes of formal print publication, Li also submitted a 5,000-word version of his paper to the Journal of Chemical Education, from which he awaits a response. In doing so, he has had to fix the original formatting of the paper and include additional diagrams.

While reflecting on his research, Li states that the mathematical concepts were one of the most difficult aspects of his project. He further explains, however, that they were not his only obstacles. "The symmetry of the polyhedron is very much like the Periodic Table or the Eightfold Way in physics. By first using fundamental principles, the model is derived and expanded until it is developed enough to help in making predictions," Li said. "Symmetry is both powerful and beautiful, but the scientific community did not recognize its potential as a model until recently."

Another obstacle was Li's initial unfamiliarity with the new research environment. "In China, I was able to publish numerous papers about my research, but it was far more difficult for me to do so in America, not only due to the language barrier, but also because of my unfamiliarity with Western sources, rather than works from China, Japan, or Russia," he said. "Much of the spare time that I had when I wasn't teaching was dedicated to expanding my knowl-

edge on other thermodynamics research."

Li was first exposed to thermodynamics during his third year at Peking University. Intrigued by the subject, he continued to study the graphic representation of thermodynamic state function relations, publishing his first paper in a national Chinese scientific journal titled "Huaxue Tongbao" in 1982. Chemical Abstracts, an American periodical index that provided summaries of recently published scientific documents, published an English summary of Li's paper the same year. In 1986, funded as a government scholar, Li came to the United States and ultimately decided to remain here, gaining a teaching position at Stuyvesant ten years later.

Aside from teaching Regents and Honors Chemistry, Li also began teaching the Physical Chemistry elective in 2001. A class geared specifically to Li's interests and research he has conducted, Physical Chemistry was comprised of ten to twenty intellectual and motivated students each semester. The class was discontinued in 2005 due to budget cuts but was reinstated in 2011, with Li hoping to spark the same interest that drove his research career in his students.

"There were many interesting, specialized topics in Physical Chemistry," Hwang said. "We were exposed to natural variables, energy distributions, statistical mechanics, thermodynamic potentials, and so on, but I think the most important part of the experience was improving our skills for harder problems with the new techniques we learned, such as knowing how to use calculus for statistical applications."

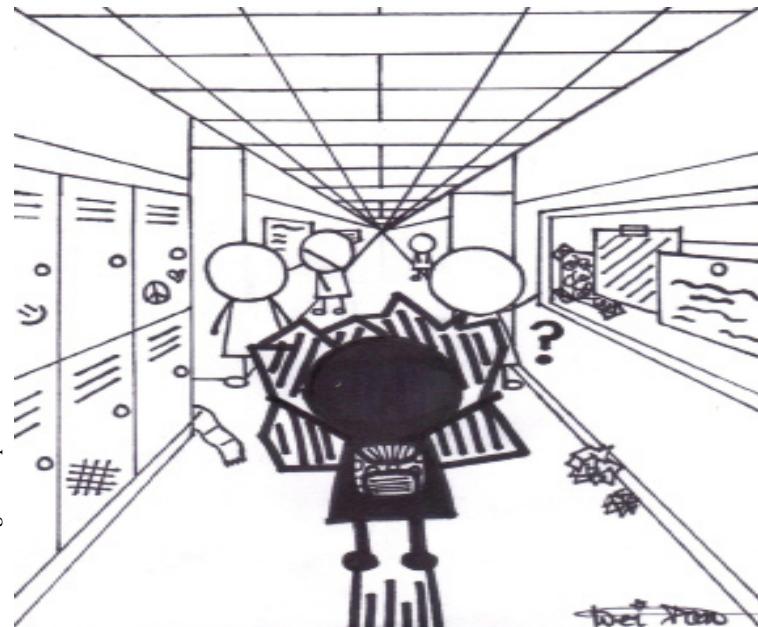
In teaching the course, Li is amazed with his students' ability to make sense of such a complex subject. "Offering such a rigorous course for high school students is extraordinary," Li said. "Usually, such subjects are taught during the second or even third year of college. It is amazing that Stuyvesant is able to foster such intensive learning, and that students are so driven to deepen their understanding of complex topics."

Though he has completed his research paper for publication, "learning never ends," Li said. He asserts that he will continue to learn more about thermodynamics and further his research. Li hopes that his students will continue his work and take it beyond its present scope. "My goal is to inspire others and pique their interests in physical chemistry so that perhaps they will be able to carry on this subject," Li said. "Thermodynamics is so multifaceted; it will be amazing to see how far research in this topic can go."

Features

The Freshman Survival Guide

Wei Dan Yang / The Spectator



By SANAM BHATIA
and MAISHA KAMAL

Welcome to high school, population three thousand.

With the start of the new school year at Stuyvesant High School, the arrival of a new freshman class fills up the absence left by the graduated seniors, as everyone moves up a year. Orientation comes around, and the Big Sibs welcome their homerooms with cheerful faces and bits of advice; they tell the incomers of the fastest routes to classes, locker usage, and how to strike up friendships, but what do they leave out? What rules or guidelines have been deemed unnecessary, but are in fact quite the opposite? There are many, but you have probably already picked up a good amount of them through your visits to Stuyvesant. Still, dozens of tips and tricks can only be established as the year progresses, as a student endures encounters and experiences that will shape their high school career. For that reason, these conventional and somewhat unconventional guidelines have been put together, to make it easier to survive in the chaos that is known as freshman year.

1. No matter how cliché or obvious it sounds, interact with other freshman during your first week. It tends to be the most memorable time for incoming students. The sight of the mob of students crowding the Tribeca Bridge and flooding the sidewalk

below it is surely hard to miss. Instead of scampering into McDonald's and waiting in line for coffee or breakfast, talking to other kids from Stuyvesant in the early hours of the day is a good idea. This is especially important since most students arrive long before their first class.

2. Befriend sophomores and upperclassmen. Because they understand what you are going through, they can provide good advice, so it's important to try to approach them in class or on Facebook. "I talked to a lot of upperclassmen [and] I had a lot of sophomore friends, because I was in sophomore foreign language. They were really nice and gave really good advice," sophomore Iris Zhao said.

3. "Lunch is actually a great time to meet people and talk to them," sophomore Aaron Loo said. If you recognize a friendly face from one of your classes, approach it. This can be a good way to connect with people.

4. Still, high school in general is infamous for social pyramids: a hierarchy made of several different groups with similar attributes—cliques. Contrary to what we've learned from "Mean Girls" and "Heathers," joining such a group is good way to adjust to the new atmosphere; it can be a small circle of familiarity in a sea of everything new. However, getting involved with people who have hobbies different from yours is equally beneficial. It gives you a different point

of view. Though this is often heard advice, it is no less important, "Join a club," sophomore Vanessa Yan said. "Seriously: it's great fun. You'll meet new friends and have fun in general." The Club/Pubs fair in early November is a good way to learn more about extracurricular activities, including those that fit your interests.

5. In addition to being social, social media plays a big part in thriving at Stuyvesant, but not for the reasons one might think. Services like Facebook and Twitter are good tools for keeping up with assignments and class minutes. If used correctly, they can make it easier to stay afloat in your more chaotic classes.

6. You probably already know this, but managing your time is key. Have a good amount of time to get ready, travel to school, use your locker, and get to class, without getting there too early. Also, be aware whether it is an A or B day. On your schedule, next to your physical education (PE) period there is an A or B. If you have an A-day PE schedule, you only have one period of science on an A day and one period of PE. On B days, you have two periods of science, and vice versa if you have a B schedule.

7. Make a mental plan for moving to and from classes, and incorporate locker time, if you use yours at all. Keep in mind that the stairs are better in most situations but escalators are efficient if they drop you off on the right part of the floor. The Hudson staircase is helpful if you need to travel quickly because it is usually empty.

8. "I think the hardest thing about being a Stuyvesant student is time management; especially with the long school days, the after-school activities, and piles of homework the teachers assign each night," Zhao said. If procrastination severely interferes with this, try to fix the problem. Make a list of what you need to do, and offer yourself rewards for completing each task.

9. On the performance end, Open Mic takes place after school on the first Friday of every month. In March, the school hosts SING!, a multi-grade musical competition that is one of the icons of life at Stuyvesant. The various bands and orchestras also perform twice a year in the theater, and the jazz combo sometimes plays by the se-

nior bar during first period.

10. Figure out what you are going to do during your free and lunch periods. If you want to go to the library, get there quickly, as it fills up quickly with students that have work to finish up. The half-floor, the cafeteria, and the area around it are good for hanging out, while the first and second floors can be relatively quiet, so you can get some work done there. They are usually cooler during the hotter months.

11. Most importantly, you need to organize yourself academically. The amount of homework you get will initially seem overwhelming. Break down the work you need to get done for each class and save time for unwinding, especially during weekends. It will take time to get used to it, but "adjusting is a key part of being a Stuyvesant student," Loo said, and the advice applies to every high school student.

12. Though this isn't coming up for months, finals in mid-January before the start of second semester and during the last few weeks of school is a crucial time. It is smart to come to school early those days and form study groups at nearby places like Whole Foods and McDonald's. If taken advantage of, this can bump up your grade.

13. Also, remember to study, but do not be disappointed by one bad test grade. Instead, talk to your teacher about the issue. Communication with your teachers in these situations shows them that you are interested in doing better, which helps you out in the long run. Plus, it ensures that your teachers know your name.

14. However, you need to keep in mind that, even though it is Stuyvesant, not all teachers will suit your needs to teach you efficiently. You can speak to the administration if the situation is really bad. Try talking to your guidance counselor first, but if all else fails, speak to the principal.

15. Apart from all the academic stuff, you probably want to know how you can take a break from the work. There are great places to hang out with friends near the school. The park is open during the warmer months of the year and is a great place for lunch, Frisbee, or hanging out after school.

16. Food is also easy to find around Stuyvesant, either during lunch or after school. The selec-

tions cater to the needs of various budgets and tastes. At Terry's and Fake Terry's (Gourmet Market) you can find different deli products without having to walk too far. However, since these locations are closest to the school, you might have to wait on line; students from the nearby middle school tend to fill the place up. There are quite a few pizzerias, such as Donna Bella, where thin-crust slices are sold for reasonable prices. Subway has its usual deals, and the McDonald's, just a short stroll away, is a good place to hangout and eat. (Or, for a healthier choice, check out Zucker's across the street.) Whole Foods also provides a nice selection of foods, though their prices can get expensive. Fifth-period lunch is perfectly aligned to beat the crowds at Shake Shack, which opens at 11 a.m.

17. Stuyvesant is famous for its atmosphere. Kids from all five boroughs flood the school with a variety of cultures and experiences, and the location of the school makes it feel like it is in the center of its own metropolitan bubble. Not too far from the building are music stores such as J&R (where famous artists such as One Direction and Justin Bieber have recently had signings) and subway lines like the 1, 2 and 3 which can take you to places like Times Square in about twenty minutes. SoHo and the other shopping districts are just a train ride away, and if you're ambitious enough, Chinatown is in walking distance as well.

Eventually, you will figure Stuyvesant out. The fact that the school is not actually perfect will hit you. It is true that the air conditioning does not work all the time, the dress code is controversial, and there is a competition-oriented mindset for many students. You may also have to live up to "the expectations of family and non-Stuyvesant friends," as Yan said, but if you pace yourself and minimize stress, this will not be hard to do.

Regardless, at Stuyvesant you can find yourself. You can discover new passions and enhance your education in interesting ways. Stuyvesant is definitely not a typical high school, but the combination of the positives and negatives make it unique.

Welcome to high school, population three thousand.

Introducing Principal Jie Zhang

continued from page 1

from my old school what kind of leader I am. I am definitely student-centered, very much a listener," she said.

Zhang said that as Principal of Queens High School for the Sciences at York College she was always available to her students. She believes that her pupils should have their voice heard and is open to meeting with the Student Union (SU) on a regular basis. Newly elected SU President Adam Lieber intends to embrace the new principal's approach. "I plan on being respectfully assertive. I think that good communication will be a key

to getting through this transition, so I hope to hold frequent meetings with Ms. Zhang regarding projects that the SU is pursuing," he said in an email interview.

Zhang will not only appeal to students this fall. Parents will find their new principal to be particularly relatable because she has been in their shoes for years. Her son graduated from Stuyvesant in 2008 and her daughter is currently entering her junior year. Zhang says she had many discussions with her daughter before accepting the position this summer. She believes that, with some help, her experience as a Stuyvesant parent will serve as a blessing and in no

way a burden this year. "I hope that students will help with the situation and make her childhood as normal as possible," she said.

Zhang has two things that should guide her as principal this year: experience as a leader and a passion for Stuyvesant and all it stands for. What's more, she has the support of former Principal Stanley Teitel with her as well. "[He] left a message on my cell phone that I am going to save forever, and he congratulated me on my selection as his replacement," she said. Like her predecessor she intends to uphold the traditions of the school, including its math and science reputation.

Zhang is a math-first woman and does not foresee that changing as principal. Though as a Chinese-born immigrant she recognizes the great value of learning to read and write as a high level, don't expect her to pull resources out of the math and sciences and into the humanities anytime soon. However, she will admit that she cannot make any definitive statements on how she will approach managing the finances of the school just yet. She has yet to master the ins and outs of the school budget and is working to adjust to leading a school with far more resources than she's ever worked with before.

Indeed Zhang is quite aware that she is stepping into big shoes this fall. While she believes she is prepared to lead, she is also humbled that she was picked for the job. She intends to validate her selection by directing the school away from its recent traumas, and back on the track that made the school one of the premier public high schools in the city for decades.

"I want to keep all the good traditions of the school, and obviously as a new leader you look into issues to be resolved," Zhang said. "No matter where we are in a year I think we will be in a better place."

41

29

13

63

Number of years former principal Stanley Teitel has been an NYC teacher

Number of years Teitel taught at Stuyvesant

Number of years Teitel was principal at Stuyvesant

Number of years Teitel has had a beard

Thanks to: The Features Editors

Features

Back to School for the Summer

By TASNIM AHMED

For many Stuyvesant students, summer means hot days, trips to the beach, and, yes, you guessed it: more school. Universities and colleges all over the country give high school students the chance to be experience the collegiate world over summer vacation. Students have the freedom to choose a course in which they are interested and, often, will be taking classes with actual college students. Some students will be given college credit upon completion of a course. Summer college courses allow high school students to stay busy during the summer by learning something they otherwise could not in a regular high school.

Applications for most summer college programs are available early in the year and deadlines for applications are usually around April, but if a program is not filled, the college may accept applications in late June. Advertisements for these programs are found on college office bulletins, and many colleges even email prospective students. These programs traditionally require students to pay in order to attend, but senior Mauricio Moreyra had the chance to attend a weeklong program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) for free. However, because the program was free, it was also very selective. Moreyra explained that the admissions officers look for essays that show

devotion to the program, good transcripts, and often teacher recommendations, much like in the real college application process.

Senior Lisa Ng, who has taken college courses at New York University's (NYU) Precollege program for the past two summers, says the opportunity was worthwhile, because though she was back at school, being in a college class "makes you feel so much more aware of everything," Ng said. This summer, Ng decided to take three classes, including a music and creative writing course. Perhaps most uncommon was the class she took on special effects makeup, in which she learned how to imitate burn and gunshot wounds using makeup. Summer college courses give students the freedom to choose a class to take for the sake of learning, rather than as a requisite for a major.

Not only are the lessons taught helpful, but the environment that students get the chance to be in is valuable, as well. Because it was the first time that NYU has allowed foreign students into its program, Ng got the chance to spend time with people from all over the world, including one Argentinean who was also taking the course on makeup to improve her work for a small film company. Ng says that in the classes she took, people genuinely wanted to be there to learn.

"No one would give up their summer if they didn't want to

learn. People are here not because they need to be here, but because they want to be," Ng said. Though being in a classroom with people who are already in college can be intimidating, Ng said, "I realized they don't care about whether or not you're in precollege."

Because the courses Ng took had a credit value, she and her classmates were graded on a letter basis and received college credit after passing the class. Usually, programs that are solely for high school students do not award college credits, and students are graded on a pass-fail system. In such courses, there isn't pressure to pass because failures will not be noted in their records, but suspension from a program will be. Senior Eric Cerny, who spent his summer at the University of Massachusetts, was part of a no-credit program, but still found motivation to do the coursework. It would be a "waste to come for two weeks and spend money, only to not understand anything," he said.

Senior Julia Stemmer spent her summer at Brown University taking a number theories course, and unlike Ng's courses at NYU, Stemmer was part of a special program for high students. Courses in this program also had no credits attached to them, and Stemmer describes the experience as a "high school class with a college workload" Stemmer said. These courses were taught by graduate students or the university's profes-

sors. Because Brown is located in Providence, Rhode Island, Stemmer was required to stay at a dorm along with other students in the program. This was perhaps the most valuable part of the program, as it allowed her to experience every aspect of college life firsthand. Her daily schedule there was unlike the arduous schedule at Stuyvesant. Because her classes started later in the day, she was free to wake up late at noon and eat lunch. Before class, she had the options of studying, visiting other parts of the campus, or going to a museum. After her three hours in a classroom, she was free to spend the rest of the day with her friends. "Besides checking in at night and going to class, you had total freedom," Stemmer said.

Fortunately, most programs offer mentors to manage all events and help students transition smoothly into their first few weeks of college. In many of these pre-college programs, besides attending classes, students are also expected to participate in discussions with classmates about the coursework, college life, and application process.

Mentors may also arrange different events, such as dances or trips to a show.

Just as college comes with an expensive price tag, most of these programs do, as well. At NYU, each credit is worth \$1,000, so a class is worth \$3,000 to \$4,000. However, financial aid is available, and after applying

for it, Ng was able to take courses for free in the summer of her junior year. Because Stemmer had to live in a dorm, she had to pay \$6,000 in total for tuition, boarding, and dining. Some programs even offer scholarships to relieve some of the burden.

Sophomore Sharon Cho attended a Junior Statesmen of America program at Princeton University that gave her a \$2,000 scholarship and encouraged her to create fundraisers to raise the rest of the money for herself. As one of the youngest in the program, Cho expected it to be difficult to adjust, but "adjusted pretty quickly, especially because you're not alone and there's tons of people trying it for the first time, too," she said. She added that there was a heavier workload in her program than she had experienced in high school, "not in the sense that there was more work to do, but it was harder to understand the [college] work."

Taking a summer college course does mean spending some money and going back to school for the summer, but it also opens students up to college at an earlier age, so they can ease into college life. Students have much more freedom to choose their classes and learn what they please in these programs. Even if they're just attending for a few weeks, students benefit from this enriching and refreshing change of pace from high school life.

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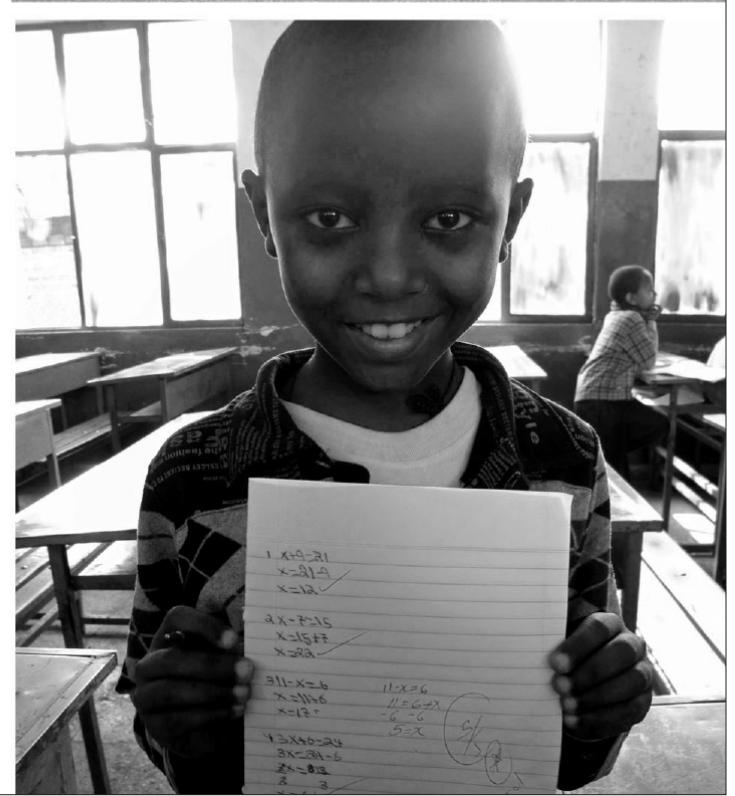
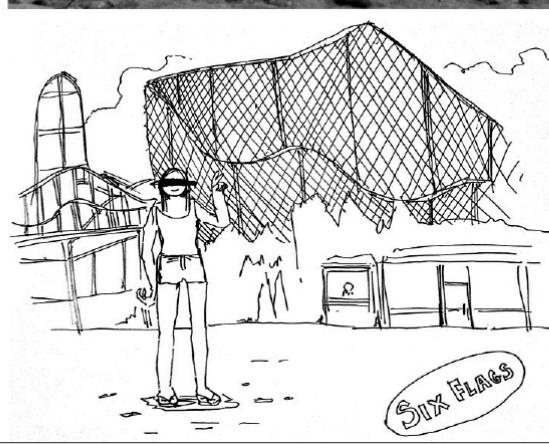
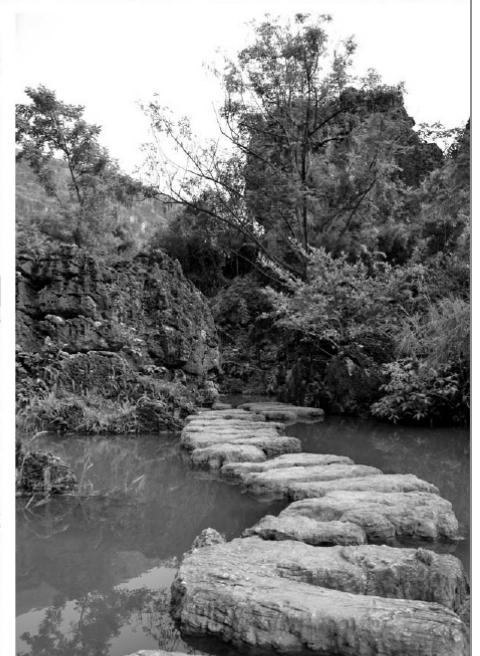
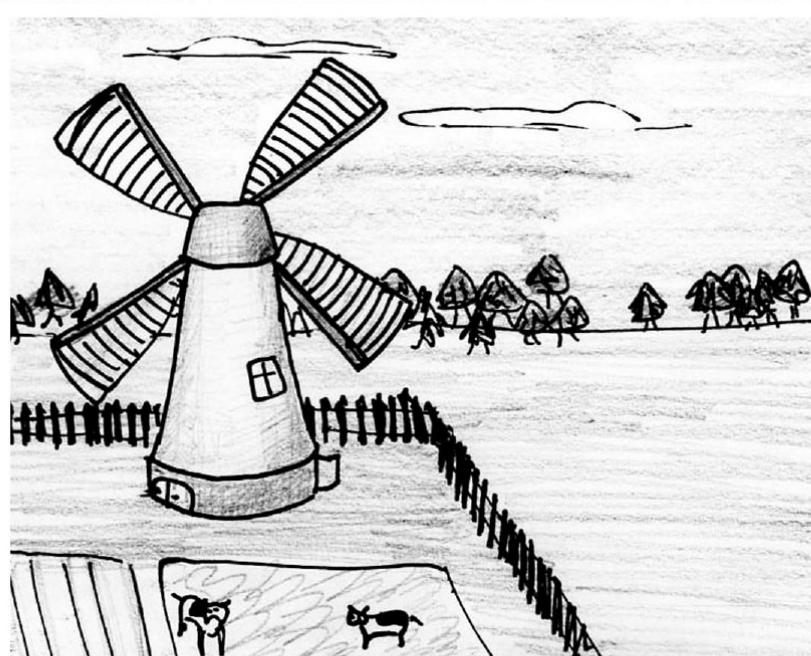
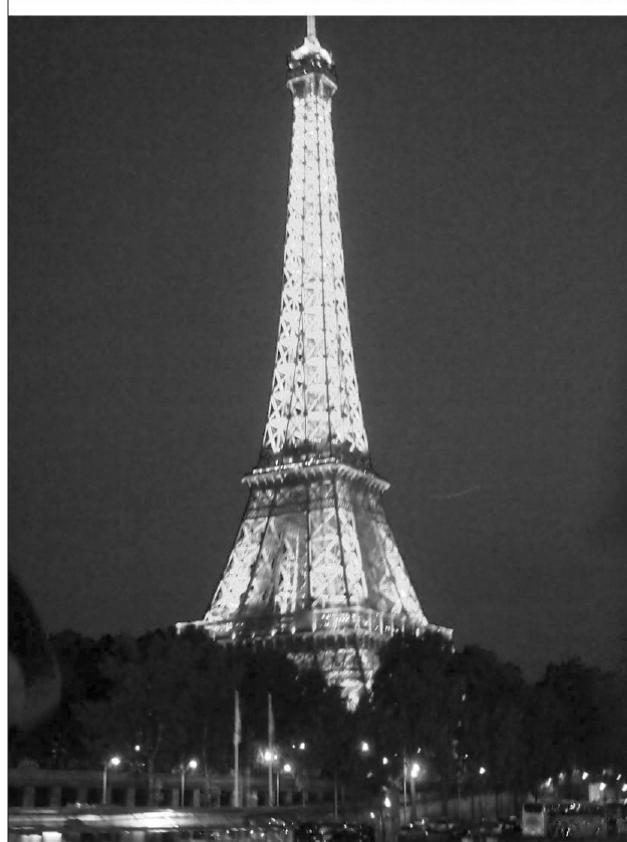
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STAFF EDITORIAL

What Now?

Welcome to another year at Stuyvesant, home of Intel finalists and cheaters. As we enter this new year, we must confront and combat the culture of cheating that has become a central part of Stuyvesant, and its public image.

At the close of last year's Regents week, 71 students were found to have exchanged answers to four state exams via text message. The news came less than five months after The Spectator published a survey that found only 8 percent of students had ever been caught cheating, even though roughly 80 percent of students reported cheating at least once in their Stuyvesant careers. The cheating scheme, which has embarrassed students, administrators and parents alike, was one manifestation of a long-entrenched culture of academic dishonesty within the school.

The media has since taken advantage of the situation to create a scandal that has portrayed the once-elite student body as a massive cheating unit. The media's continued badgering of the school stems partly from a desire to sell papers, partly from incomplete or wrong information, and partly from very real truths that are hard to accept. Though reports of cheating have been grossly exaggerated in many outlets, they all capture an undeniable problem within the school.

The school's new cheating stigma was, unlike many students' grades, earned. For years, cheating has gone unchecked, creating a perverse set of incentives in which the benefits of cheating outweighed both the probability and magnitude of punishment. With the administration turning a blind eye toward cheating, and students continually overlooking the morality of their actions, even the publication of this paper's survey failed to spark any action.

But finally, we have been forced to acknowledge the problem (though far more humiliatingly than any of us would have hoped). It seems that only a public scandal can engender action in such a bureaucratic school. This is our rock bottom—but from here we have the opportunity to come together to develop new policies and dramatically change the way we view academic integrity.

The cheating scandal has implications beyond the walls of our school—it is a culture present in competitive schools everywhere. Former Principal Stanley Teitel, though not successful in combating cheating, was not responsible for it. Still, the Department of Education (DOE) has used him as a convenient scapegoat. After more than a decade of serving as Stuyvesant's principal, there is an all but direct link suggesting he was forced to retire this August. Sources within the school have suggested that the media distorted the reality of events. Teitel may have in fact correctly followed DOE protocol after catching the cheating, though various publications have reported otherwise.

Even if we never find out exactly what happened between Teitel and the DOE, however, we should see our new administration as an opportunity to move forward. Instead of focusing on those who got caught (especially given a lack of conclusive evidence incriminating some of them), we need to fight the culture in which this cheating bred.

We need to develop a student body truly aware of the importance of having "the intellectual, moral and humanistic values" inscribed in our school's mission statement, and not on emphasizing PR-style damage control. If we effectively deal with cheating at Stuyvesant, our image will clear itself over time. But if we work instead on creating the appearance of academic honesty to the public, another scandal is waiting for us.

The first step is directing our attention to the real problem—not beginning an unreasonable war against cheating that will ultimately antagonize innocent students. It should be the students who cheated who face punishments, not the remaining ones. This is no time for administrators to focus on non-issues with the excuse that they're implementing disciplinary policies, hoping those will carry into the classroom. The real problem is that cheating is easy, goes mostly unnoticed, and even when caught, no substantial punishment is given.

In response to the issue, the administration has created an Academic Honesty contract, which students will have to sign in the upcoming weeks. The new Academic Honesty policy requires faculty members to report any and every case of cheating to their department's assistant principal, and bans both the offering and acceptance of test questions. The administration's letter clearly outlines the new policy, which includes stricter punishments for cheating.

But these new measures have noticeably separated the student body and the administration. During the first days of class, teachers have repeatedly mentioned a stricter ban on cell phones and more serious punishments. Students, the majority of whom were not involved in the scandal, feel targeted by the administration.

So ultimately, the question becomes: How do we work together to create a constructive environment that stigmatizes cheating while respecting honest and hard-working students?

Fortunately, both the Student Union (SU) and Interim Acting Principal Jie Zhang have decided to work together to answer this question.

"This upcoming year looks to be very promising because of Ms. Zhang's welcoming and open approach," SU Vice President Tahia Islam said.

Zhang has also been clear in saying that she wishes to maintain an open door policy, and seems very open and responsive to students' ideas. "I am definitely student-centered, very much a listener," she said. "Students should feel very, very

comfortable to talk to me."

We are hopeful that Zhang's administration, with the input of students and the SU, will be able to tackle the problem at hand. Tackling the problem begins by punishing the students who were proven to have cheated, without making life unnecessarily hard for the rest of the student body.

That means no zero-tolerance policies that ensnare innocent students. Many students are willing to help the administration crack down on real cheaters, as long they are protected from irrational policies that are built for good press, but not for a good school environment. That means not taking away cell phones unless they are being used—most cheating does not occur with phones anyway.

Instead, we could combat cheating with a student-based ethics committee, already established in many universities. Studies on peer leadership conclusively show that allowing students to take a substantial role in discipline and mediation can be constructive and effective. More importantly, it can help shift Stuyvesant from an environment in which students largely respect cheating to one in which it is looked down upon, not only by the administration, but by fellow students as well. In the past, students have reinforced the cheating culture by creating a sense of camaraderie around it. But an ethics committee would finally use peer pressure in a more positive way—while it is embarrassing to be condemned by your principal for cheating, it is a lot worse to face condemnation by your peers.

An ethics committee would give students an opportunity to present their case to an impartial board of faculty and fellow students. The committee could be organized as a new department of the National Honor Society (ARISTA) whose students are selected on the basis of academic achievement and contribution to their community. Not only would this allow for far more transparency than in current proceedings, but it would also serve as a much more effective deterrent to cheating.

Teachers should also go out of their way not only to catch cheating, but to make it tougher to cheat. Teachers will need to make an extra effort too—using different test versions, not giving the same tests out every year, not using books or test generators for exams, and not letting students talk once they have the tests in their hands.

An end to Stuyvesant's cheating culture will take time and effort from everyone within the Stuyvesant community. But to move forward, we must view this cheating scandal as an opportunity to improve our school: to understand why students cheat and to develop ways to fight them. Sometimes failure is necessary for success, and we are hopeful that with enough effort and cooperation, we have the ability to turn an awful mistake into a chance for improvement.

The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



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A Letter From Interim-Acting Principal Zhang

Dear Stuyvesant High School Students:

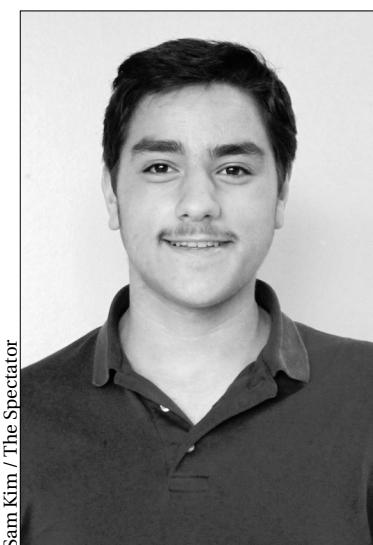
I want to welcome you back to school and let you know how eager I am to start the year as the principal of Stuyvesant High School. I look forward to getting to know you and I want to invite you to introduce yourselves and share your thoughts about what it means to be a Stuyvesant student. I had the opportunity to meet some of you at Camp Stuy. I want to thank those of you who volunteered, along with parents and staff members, to make Camp Stuy a success for our incoming students.

Stuyvesant High School has a strong reputation for academic excellence. As a community, we value scholarly integrity and will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty. Together, we will face the issues that have confronted us as we resolve to uphold the highest standards of behavior and honesty.

Yours,
Jie Zhang, Principal, I.A.

Opinions

Mr. President, Money Doesn't Grow On Trees



By JACK CAHN

College Tuition is too damn high! With the average four-year college charging \$21,189 per year – a figure so high, it's just under half the median household income – middle-class college students are being forced to either pursue a mediocre education at nearby community colleges or saddle themselves with an average of \$24,000 in debt over the course of their four years of college. Stuyvesant students, many of whom live in low-income families, are finding it increasingly harder to afford the high quality education they've worked so painfully hard to earn. Stuck between a rock and a hard place, middle-class families everywhere are faced with the reality that the American dream of social mobility through higher education is fading away.

Lucky for them, President Obama has come to the rescue! To stop college prices from spiraling upward, Obama hopes to force colleges to lower their tuition rates by threatening to cut government financial aid fund-

ing to colleges that don't comply. Obama's plan, according to Molly Corbett Broad, president of the American Council on Education in Washington, "smacks of price controls," which is a sad reality in America, a land built on capitalist free markets.

Though forcing colleges to lower tuition rates may sound good on the surface, we have to dig deeper and ask ourselves where these colleges are going to receive the money to survive if they slash tuition rates. With increased budget cuts, increased enrollment, and a growing number of families in need of financial aid, operational costs are skyrocketing. Colleges are increasingly depending on increased tuition, their main source of revenue, to cover costs.

With decreased tuition rates, many state colleges are going to be left desperately in need of money to balance their budget – forcing them to cut school programs, jobs, and planned renovations.

The consequences are two-fold.

First, cutting academic activities and building renovations and other key school programs are going to hurt the education of American children, only further decreasing the global prestige of the United States. What we're seeing is that Obama's plan to 'promote' education will actually end up diminishing student's academic opportunities.

Second, the college jobs that could be cut in order to meet budget needs will further hurt the American economy.

The colleges that refuse to comply with the President's demand for lower tuition rates face even more severe conse-

quences. Obama is planning to remove government funding from their campus-based aid programs – work-study programs, Perkins loans, and supplemental grants for low-income students – thus preventing underprivileged students from getting the education Obama has so often called "necessary." Spokesman for the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, Haley Chitty said, "Ultimately, who you are punishing with this is the students. They're the ones who get this aid."

The President is putting colleges in a lose-lose situation. If they comply, they cut jobs, school programs, and renovations, thus hurting the economy and diminishing academic opportunities. If they don't comply, the government cuts millions of government-sponsored financial aid programs, crippling the underprivileged lower class's ability to pursue higher education. Either way, Obama's plan, which might sound amazing at first glance, is financially irresponsible and will undoubtedly hurt Americans.

Obama's proposal will set a dangerous precedent for government intervention in business and private affairs. The American Council on Education has already publicly denounced Obama's proposal for that very reason. If the government has the power to determine that education price controls are 'necessary,' what's next?

In addition to forcing colleges to lower tuition rates, President Obama has also outlined a plan to alleviate the burden of college debt on Americans who have taken out student loans that they cannot pay back. Obama is going to pay for

the college debt himself. The money of tax-paying parents who saved every penny to send their kids through college is going to be used to clear the debt of those who were too irresponsible to pay it back themselves. Rather than this, the government should continue to hold students accountable for the debt they acquired from college.

Specifically, the minimum percentage of income that students must pay to the govern-

students shouldn't be getting higher education. They should be able to, but at a college they can reasonably afford.

With trillions of dollars in debt and government spending at an all-time high, the American government should be cutting spending, not using valuable taxpayer money to forgive the loans of one group of people.

President Obama keeps telling Americans that college education is necessary, but tells us nothing about where he is going to get the money to pay for it. No, Mr. President, money does not grow on trees. No matter how badly you want something, if you don't have the money, you can't have it. Sure, it would be great if the government could just absorb all college debt. In fact, it would be great if the government could provide the funds for everyone to get a college education – because education is important to the future growth of this nation. But in working to make higher education affordable, we must remain financially responsible.

As is usual during election season, candidates are making absurd proposals to appeal to voter, which, in this case, are college students. I would love Obama to reduce college tuition, but forcing colleges to do so is not the way to do so. It will only hurt students' educational opportunities and force colleges to fire employees, ultimately hurting the economy. I would love Obama to alleviate the burden of college debts, but absorbing the costs is not the financially responsible decision. Obama's plans are a gimmick to get votes. If ever passed into law, they will cost our nation dearly.

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Was Your Cell Phone Made by a Slave?

By MEG PALMER

Unbeknownst to most Americans, slavery affects our lives every day, from the shirts we wear to the food we eat. Many of our cell phones and computers use metals mined by slaves; the vegetables, fruits, and meats that adorn our dining tables may have been harvested by children or forced laborers; much of the cloth we use, from carpets to tee-shirts, are woven or sewn by slaves, some in the Carpet Belt of India and others in small, studio apartments in Manhattan. Many people believe that slavery only occurs in other countries. Quite frequently, however, it is going on in our own backyards. The State Department has decided that any harboring, transporting, or use of a person can be human trafficking if force or coercion is employed or if the person is a minor. Despite this wide-reaching definition and the numerous laws that have been passed concerning human trafficking, little has been done to stem its flow. It is estimated that 300,000 American children are at risk of being trafficked each year and that human trafficking has an annual profit in the billions.

Today we view antebellum slavery as one of the worst tragedies in American history. It took a massive war to end slavery then, but now there are peaceful

steps that can be taken to end human trafficking.

Raising awareness in communities is the first step in addressing the problem locally. In

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some European nations and now in Texas, it is required that any place that sells alcohol hangs a sign that reminds customers that buying sex is illegal. Something as simple as using ads on taxi cabs to condemn slavery rather than support gentlemen's clubs,

for instance, would spread the word in New York City easily and quickly. These ads send the message that law enforcement is not willing to turn a blind eye.

On the national level, we can extend government sponsored services that are currently afforded only to foreign-born slaves to American-born slaves as well. Following the example of the Thai company NightLight Design, we could set up businesses to hire, provide support for, teach vocational skills to, and protect former slaves regardless of where they are born. Besides addressing the problem of domestically born slaves, companies like these would help raise awareness.

However, not everything can be done within American borders; the international community must band together to fight against this human rights abuse. Opening more schools throughout the world can help to slow the traffic. Many traffickers use employment as a bait to lure their victims into slavery. If more people were capable of finding work, traffickers would have more trouble luring people. Also, if minors spent more time in the protected environment of a school, they would be less vulnerable to trafficking. Beyond expanding educational opportunities, these schools would expand job opportuni-

ties in small nations, and some of the economic incentives for taking work overseas from shady sources could be reduced.

Most importantly, we need to end the perverse incentives that lead to human trafficking. Human trafficking is so lucrative that it will soon surpass the traffic of guns and drugs and become the single most profitable criminal enterprise in the world. Incarceration and even prosecution are rare: few victims speak out, making it hard to make a legal case against perpetrators of these crimes. The risks, when compared to the rewards, are negligible, and to free ourselves from the dark grips of slavery, we need to make the profits less appealing and the risks dangerous, real, and unavoidable. By following the example of Italian priest Don Cesare, we would be able to put a real dent in trafficking.

Cesare set up what was initially a halfway house for refugees entering Italy, but quickly became a safe-house for trafficked women from across Europe. Cesare has become a champion of the cause and pressures the governments of other nations into enforcing their anti-trafficking laws. By forcibly involving different governments and police bodies, he is making it more dangerous to traffic people into and out of Italy. If governments all over the world



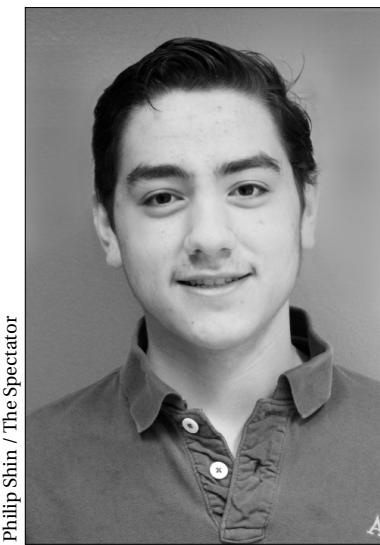
could be moved to similar action, it would be much harder for traffickers to run their businesses internationally.

Slavery has been hidden from the public for so long that many of us are unaware it still exists. We have been taught that the age of slavery is over, and that people stood up against slavery decades ago. We believe that the time to fight has passed. However, the time is now, and the responsibility rests on our shoulders. It is time for us to do more than say "no" to trafficking and to slavery. It is time for us, the next generation of leaders, to look at our lives, at our luck, and work to extend our opportunities to others. It is time for us to stop the traffic.

Victoria Stempel / The Spectator

Opinions

Did the “Sluts” Succeed?



By DAVID CAHN

Get your slutty clothes, bring your friends, and march to the bridge for the long-awaited “Slutty” Wednesday protest!

Emotions were running high on the warm morning of Wednesday, June 6, as hundreds of students prepared to take on the administration. After a year of verbal abuse—with some administrators calling girls sluts, implying that they could be raped because of what they were wearing, and arbitrarily enforcing a new dress code—students decided to protest for more uniform and respectful enforcement of the dress code. The dress code wasn't the only issue or even the most important one facing Stuyvesant students at the time, but it was personal and intimate. Led by Benjamin Koatz ('12), students banded together through a mass rule violation—with many students

breaking the dress code in minor ways on the same day. In the aftermath of the protest the most important question is, did we succeed?

“Slutty” Wednesday was not an isolated event. It was the culmination of what I've labeled “The Year of Disappointment.” During the last school year, almost every edition of The Spectator contained at least one article criticizing the administration for ignoring the student voice. Many students could be heard in the hallway on at least one occasion, grumbling about the ban on hot drinks, the long wait for the library, the lack of air conditioning, or the proposed nine-period day. Rather than listening to the students, and acknowledging the legitimacy of our qualms, the administration made one choice after the next that created a very clear policy of neglecting students' preferences. “We're acting only with the students' best interests in mind”—we've heard it too many times to count.

Yet as June rolled around, the lack of air conditioning coupled with repeated frustration made life at Stuyvesant unbearable. This brought the dress code issue to the front and center of attention once again. If you're going to have a broken air conditioning system, don't blame us for wanting to be a bit more comfortable, students declared.

The movement materialized as the school's seniors, who had led the Year of Disappointment, decided to spearhead the protests. With nothing to lose, and a lot of built-up frustration

with a negligent administration, the seniors decided to take the stand they had been talking about all year, and “Slutty” Wednesday was born.

It started as a Facebook page. Students liked the page. They commented. It was fun. It was small. Discussions took place on how to deal with the administration, how to avoid getting stopped, and students shared horror stories about their experiences with dress-code enforcement. What occurred the next morning as hundreds of students (including myself) marched to the entrance of Stuyvesant in their tank tops and short shorts took most of us by surprise. The New York Times was there. So was The New York Post, and The Wall Street Journal, too. In fact, every major New York City news outlet was in attendance.

People kept asking: Why the dress code, of all things? It just seems so petty, right? But students weren't necessarily protesting the dress code itself—rather the principle behind it. The idea that might is right, that force can overcome logic, that the administration is an unquestionable authority that may exert its power over the students without taking our comfort or happiness into account.

The media loved it. They laughed at the immature Stuyvesant students (who doesn't like to attack the smart guy?) and the administration outwardly ignored the protests. By pretending nothing was happening they allowed the movement to die down. As a result, many

students began to see “Slutty” Wednesday as a failure. “The protest succeeded in bringing attention to the issue, but failed in its objective to bring substantive change,” junior Austin Ostro said.

But it wasn't a failure. The answer to the title of this article is yes. Can we truly measure the results? No. Were they immediately visible? No. The administration could never allow it to seem as if they backed down. Yet I'm going to argue they did. Here's why.

The “Slutty” Wednesday protest was not about getting rid of the dress code, according to Ben Koatz and most of his supporters on the Facebook page. It was about ending disrespectful and unfair enforcement of the dress code. Students were fed up with being called sluts, having the sexiness of their bodies analyzed. They were tired of being objectified and insulted.

If we compare the realistic aims of the protest—uniform and respectful enforcement of the dress code—with the results, we can see that “Slutty” Wednesday accomplished its goals. The weeks following June 6 showed that the administration has become not only more lenient with enforcement, but also more respectful. Complete uniformity has yet to be achieved, granted, but we have come very far from the days of being answerable to the subjective fashion tastes of administrators. Let's hope that the new school year also brings respect and dignity to the students who fought so hard to achieve it last

year.

All this progress comes with one significant caveat. “Success” came at a large cost to the student body as Stuyvesant's reputation was compromised by the media attention the protests received. The New York Post's feature was offensive, and two girls were harassed in a public newspaper distributed to hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers. We ought to realize how much this must have hurt them and their families. So while we might have redressed the code, it wasn't without a cost.

Lessons learned are often forgotten. This one shouldn't be. We've learned that we as students have immense power. We are capable of galvanizing the mainstream media and hundreds of thousands of readers around the globe. From American to India—the world cared about our protests. We are capable of bringing about real and lasting change. Yet, the harms of our protests cause are also very real and very painful. For this reason, protest must be kept as a last resort—and as a last resort, only.

I, and others like me, have taken this movement as an opportunity to grow individually—to reach beyond a youthful tendency toward protest. My hope is that we can usher in a year of compromise, in which we can accomplish magnanimous results without the sometime damaging effects of widespread action. Only if that fails, must we once again turn to protest—a tool that succeeds, but at a cost.

The Endless Wait



By RISHAM DHILLON

“Oh, my God, Risham, you're an illegal immigrant!”

Every time I explain to someone that I am not a U.S. citizen, I almost always get this response. Though I pretty much know this is coming, two things never fail to surprise me. First, the way people look at me in a new light, as if I'm a completely different person, when I tell them I'm not a citizen. And second, how most people assume that I'm illegal and not an Indian-born legal immigrant in the process of attaining a green card.

To be fair, I should note that illegal immigration has been a hot topic in legislation and in the news for quite a while. Because of this, legislators haven't put enough effort into understanding problems and issues that legal immigrants, specifically employment-based legal immigrants, face. The lack of legislation has resulted in a lack

of media coverage and, therefore, a lack of general awareness on these matters. The common perception these days is that if you aren't a citizen, you are most probably an illegal immigrant.

Employment-based (EB) legal immigrants (specifically third preference or EB-3), who are waiting for a green card, face many issues. But perhaps the most prominent ones are the extremely long wait times, as well as the cost of maintaining the legal immigrant status. Furthermore, EB immigrants can't accept promotions at work, as this can jeopardize their green card application.

But it isn't just the EB legal immigrants that get hit hard; the effect trickles down to their children, who must also learn to live in the limits of their legal status. As the child of an EB immigrant, I've had my fair share of saying good-bye to opportunities that I feel I deserved to

have had a shot at, such as summer internships that are open only to citizens and permanent residents. Don't get me wrong; there are plenty of internships and jobs that are open to non-citizens like me. But to be eligible for such programs and scholarships, students must file extensive paperwork and documentation to prove their legal status. Sometimes, such as to qualify for an ID from the NYS Department of Motorized Vehicle or even for federal student aid (FAFSA), students like me have to travel out of the country and re-enter on a specific document known as an advanced parole, just to prove beyond doubt our legal status.

Furthermore, legal immigrant students like me need more than just school-issued employment papers to participate in internships or jobs. We have to apply and wait for an employment authorization card (EAD) before we start to work. It requires a lot of paperwork and around \$380 each year just to get the card. To do the math, that means that a student would have to work 53 hours at a minimum-wage job just to pay off the card that enables him or her to work in the first place.

As a legal immigrant to America, I sometimes feel punished for coming here legally. My mother was offered a job in New York City, and my father, brother, and I were allowed into the country on dependent visas. My mother was assured she would get her green card in two years—it's been more than eight. And the government, due

to the numerous applications from India, still hasn't processed our green-card application. We are homeowners; we pay taxes; we celebrate the Fourth of July and root for America in the Olympics. We came here legally. And yet, eight years later, we still haven't received our green card.

In fact, a report by the National Foundation for American Policy suggests that it may take up to 70 years for an Indian-born immigrant to get one. (Backlogs like this only exist for certain countries like India and China, from which many employees are hired for American companies experiencing shortages. Therefore, since applications are processed based on country of origin, and not on a first-come first serve basis, wait times for these immigrants terribly increase.)

Recently, a new bill, the Fairness for High Skilled (Legal) Immigrants Act (HR 3012), has entered congress. If it's passed, it means that my family and others like mine won't have to sift through useless documents each year, or spend close to \$2,500 for the government to process our paperwork. It means that as a student, I'll be able to apply for more internships with less paperwork involved.

It means I won't have to travel out of the country and re-enter, just to prove to programs like FAFSA that I am a legal immigrant, not someone who has legally entered and illegally overstayed the duration of the visa. It means I'll finally—legally—be able to call America home.

Many organizations have suggested initiatives that the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services can take to make the green card application process for EB immigrants from backlogged countries faster and easier. Among these include eliminating the quota for EB immigration green card applications and processing them on a first-come-first-serve basis (instead of processing them on a country-of-origin basis). Revising the immigration policy to make it more efficient and rational isn't just a benefit for immigrants, but also for the economic well-being of America. The immigration system needs to be fixed before it is too late—before America loses a dedicated legal workforce who feels cheated and unwelcome and before America is seen as a country that deports irrationally.

It's sad that opportunities of hard-working kids who have done nothing wrong in regards to immigration status must be subject to irrational and inefficient immigration policies. The US immigration system is broken. It needs to be fixed for both legal and illegal immigrants.

Some say that we should just wait. Maybe they are right. Maybe we, legal immigrants, should let numerous years of our life go by with fewer opportunities than we believe we deserve. Because, of course, waiting the seemingly endless wait is truly realistic-- perhaps even as realistic as today's immigration policy.

Arts and Entertainment

Movies

Cultzilla: A Beginner's Guide to Japanese Film

By JOSHUA BOGATIN

You think you've seen it all. All those weird, creative films like "Inception" and "Avatar" which are "totally like nothing else." Maybe you've gotten really adventurous, and you've watched "Donnie Darko" or "Fight Club" and gained braggers' rights to tell your friends about how you've seen so many cool movies. Those films are nothing. Just Hollywood's conservative interpretation of "unique" produced to be consumed by the masses. Genuinely weird and exciting films only really grow from one place: Japan. In the land of the rising sun, normal is barely an option. You get weird and you get genital mutilation. Watch these and then maybe we'll have something to talk about.

Love Exposure (2008):

If Tolstoy wrote erotica it might come out something like Sion Sono's "Love Exposure." A four-hour long epic about a boy named Yu who uses martial arts to take up-skirt photographs, "Love Exposure" needs to be seen to be believed. When Yu's clerical father makes Yu confess to his sins and calls him out on his inability to confess to anything bad, Yu takes on this fetishistic hobby so he can have sins to confess. Seriously. Yu begins to use his photography as a means to search for the girl of his dreams and eventually finds her, the only catch being he was



Lisa Lee / The Spectator

dressed as a woman when they fell in love, making her believe she's a lesbian. Then there are three more hours of movie.

If you've ever searched for that movie that truly had everything, this may be it. With graphic castration, katana murder sprees in cultist churches, cross dressers trying to woo lesbians, and biblical quotes about love recited on the beach at sunset, "Love Exposure" is off-the-wall crazy. Yet the movie manages to never lose itself in its insanity and is able to probe deeper themes about love and youth as well, creating a highly stimulating film experience for anyone willing to brave its more perverse elements.

Tetsuo: The Iron Man (1989):

Despite the millions of movies with the blurb "Unlike anything you've ever seen before!"

carelessly thrown onto the back of the DVD box with little merit, "Tetsuo" is the rare film that offers a real never-seen-before experience. The film tells its anti-technology tale—a nameless businessman finds himself transforming into a machine—in a freakish experimental form that will leave your head spinning. The story is told with little to no dialogue, using instead twisted visuals that leaves you at times both utterly confused and utterly consumed in its demented narrative.

A perfect counter-point to the relatively light and campy "Love Exposure," "Tetsuo" is a horror movie that disturbs more than it scares. Nothing ever jumps out at you and you aren't likely to let a shriek, but twisted scenes such as one involving death by drill-saw phallus will leave you fairly unnerved. The film's aesthetics reciprocate its

distressful attitude; the grainy black and white bargain-bin quality video creates not just a sense of unease, but also delirium. Filmmaker Shinya Tsukamoto rattles your senses with frenzied stop-motion effects during chase scenes and audio motifs like a man screaming and scraping metal wires. "Tetsuo" is its own beast because it scares not with its plot, but with its avant-garde filmmaking.

Hausu (1977):

"Hausu," while classified as a horror movie, is nothing but fun. The film follows a group of seven schoolgirls named Gorgeous, Fantasy, Kung-Fu, Mac, Prof, Melody, and Sweetness, as they head to Gorgeous's aunt's house, which, of course, they find to be haunted. The house, furnished with girl-eating pianos, viscous linens, and a fe-

line portrait that literally spews swimming pools of blood, is a lot more than the underwear-clad girls can handle.

With ADD cartoonish special effects and a hilarious surplus of overly stylish camera tricks, "Hausu" is a movie that necessitates yelling wisecracks at the screen with friends in order to fully enjoy it. During what would conventionally be intense fight scenes, director Nobuhiko Obayashi uses colored matte backdrops and comic-book-esque effects like those found in the old "Batman" series to create a brilliantly campy tone. For a culture that already suffers from western perceptions of weirdness and perversion, "Hausu" seems only to add fuel to the fire, but as a celebration of all that is insane and unique about Japan, you'd be hard-pressed to find better than "Hausu."

Music

A Piece of the Promised Land

By ANJELIKA AMOG

Catfish Row is the fabled community in Charleston, South Carolina, the setting of the operatic musical "Porgy and Bess." Bess (Audra McDonald) struts into this community with a lavish, eye-popping, red gown, a luxury in comparison to the ragged clothing worn by the locals. She staggers in, bottle in one hand and "happy dust," or cocaine powder, in the other. In the community, she is known as Crown's lover. Crown (Phillip Boykin), a formidable man with a violent temper, parades her around as a possession. When Crown goes into hiding after committing murder, she turns to the crippled Porgy (Norm Lewis) in search of safety. Porgy's unconditional love for her makes her believe in the possibility of a decent, stable life. But their love is threatened by the return of Crown and the enticements of the gambler and drug dealer Sporting Life (David Alan Grier), who tempts her with a fast-moving life in New York. Ms. McDonald is a powerful presence, offering herself as a tortured woman, desperate to leave her past behind, but constantly chased by her personal demons. Little subtleties communicate her inner conflict with clarity. Her performance reaches incredible heights particularly when Bess reencounters Crown. Bess tries to twist out of Crown's grasp, but her face expresses

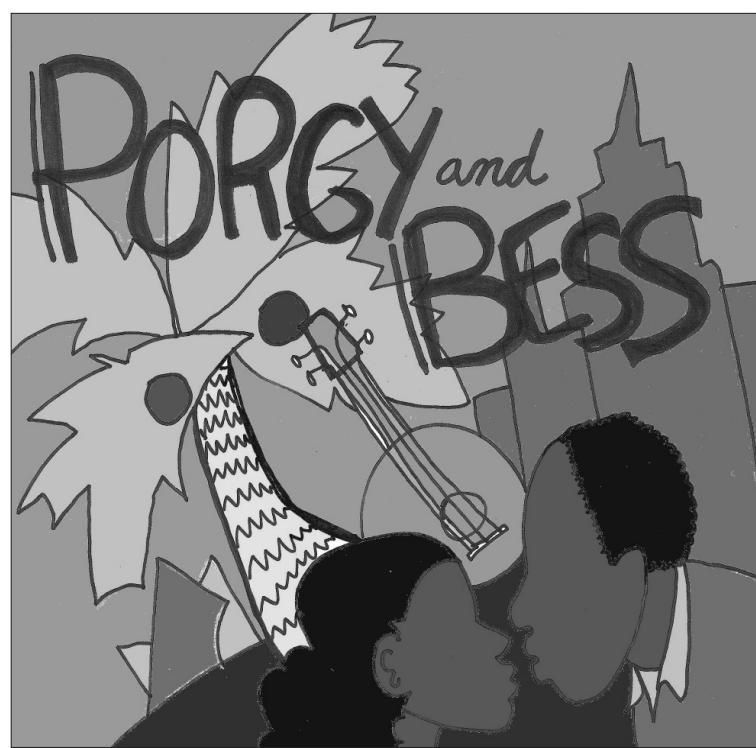
Everywhere onstage, the story is being told. Wherever an audience member looks, he or she can gather a piece of the larger picture.

to Porgy and her lust as Crown holds her against him. The contrast between Crown's robust build in comparison to Porgy's crippled physique accentuates the conflict. The intensity with which Ms. McDonald sings in "What You Want with Bess?" sends tremors throughout the audience, her voice clear despite her twisted positions. The moment is charged with a trem-

ulous passion, evoking the empathy of an audience that begs her not to give in. Mr. Lewis, as Porgy, grows from a man in the sidelines, simply trying to make a living, to a man strengthened and emboldened by love. His physicality – from the way he walks to the deliberate way he lowers himself onto a chair – convincingly conveys Porgy's crippled state. Though it must be uncomfortable to support all his weight on one leg throughout the play, he commits to the movement entirely. Though the stars shine in "Porgy and Bess," the supporting cast make the show complete, beautifully rendering their environment and bringing the minimalistic set to life. Each character is busy performing an everyday action – with a woman knitting in the corner, some others washing basins at the water pump, and some men folding up a fishing net – providing a glimpse of life at Catfish Row. In a talk back with the actors, they discussed some aspects of their direction under director Diane Paulus. Paulus gave them each a position on the stage, and they picked out items from a prop table to define their actions. Each member of the ensemble is remarkably present, having crafted his or her own personality even though the script did not particularly flesh out his or her character. The set is nothing spectacular in terms of scenic elements – plain and simple,

with wooden boards and ragged tarps. Stripped down, the simplicity of the set exposes the humanity and raw emotions of the people onstage, complementing the authenticity of the actors' performance. The lighting design creates the atmosphere – including location, time, and weather – and sets the tone, adding to the sense of character. Everywhere onstage, the story is being told. Wherever an audience member looks, he or she can gather a piece of the larger picture. This particular production at the Richard Rogers The-

ater slims down the Gershwin's original opera to a two-and-a-half hour Broadway musical, but the attack remains – a powerful assault ravishing the human emotions, as evidenced by the audience's reactions: pleading Bess to leave Crown behind; fiercely rooting for Porgy as he faces off with Crown; with rapt attention, eyes following Porgy as he exits into the dark. Though purists may scoff, this "Porgy and Bess" delivers a phenomenal experience packed with raw, uninhibited humanity, power, and passion.



Niki Chen / The Spectator

Arts and Entertainment

Food

A Taste of Fine China



Genting Palace at Resorts World Casino, 110-00 Rockaway Blvd

By MANDY WONG

Tucked away behind the flashy doors of the new Resorts World Casino in Ozone Park, Genting Palace is where Western refine meets Chinese reserve. The restaurant is warm, cozy, and classy; wooden furniture and tangerine trim dot the room while crystal chandeliers hang from the ceiling. Directly across the entrance, at the far end of the room, glass panels lead to the patio overlooking the Aqueduct Racetracks.

From 11 am to 3 pm, the Palace serves dim sum, a bite-sized Southern Chinese cuisine. The food is pricier than the typical Chinatown parlor, especially for only three small, delicate pieces. However, the spectacular flavors and fresh ingredients make it well worth the price tag. Common dishes, such as steamed shrimp dumplings, are transformed into culinary pieces of art; here, fresh shrimp is wrapped in a silky translucent skin in the shape of a ringed planet, steamed, and served in a bamboo steamer. Other well-

crafted dishes include pork dumplings (\$3.50), rice noodle rolls with minced beef and Chinese parsley (\$5.50), fried taro

Genting Palace offers a classier, minimalist take on the oft-complicated Chinese cuisine, proving that 'simple is better' while still maintaining authenticity.

shrimp balls (\$4.50), and radish cakes (\$3.50). The baked durian puffs (\$4.50), a more exotic sweet treat, have a Top Chef-worthy flaky crust and a creamy durian paste center. The dishes

are addictive and flavorful, satisfying taste buds while remaining pleasing to the eye.

After 5 pm, the restaurant transforms into a lounge-like setting. The lights dim, smooth jazz plays in the background, and the plain wooden chopsticks are upgraded with silver tips. Because it is located in a casino, it mainly targets younger patrons on business meetings or dinner dates, rather than large family outings like most Asian restaurants. Thus, there will always be an available table, making it a great place to grab a bite and for last-minute reservations. The dinner menu has a wider variety, but a higher price range, and each plate is about a third smaller than that of a typical Chinatown restaurant. Often, many seafood dishes are unavailable because ingredients are out of stock, especially on the busier Fridays and Saturdays. Even so, the menu is spectacular and sophisticated, off-setting the occasional downsides. Fried lamp chops with salt, pepper, and garlic (\$20) are cooked with enough heat to pack a punch. Sautéed scallops with chive blossom (\$20) are hearty and savory.

While not the cheapest eat out there, Genting Palace offers a classier, minimalist take on the oft-complicated Chinese cuisine, proving that "simple is better" while still maintaining authenticity. Looks are valued just as much as substance and while formal attire isn't a requirement, you'll certainly feel a little guilty (and out of place) if you don't pull on a dressy t-shirt or a nice blouse.

Genting Palace is located at Resorts World Casino, 110-00 Rockaway Boulevard.

A Bite of Spain in Greenwich Village



Café Espana, 172 Bleecker Street

By JOYCE KOLTISKO

Crossed swords on the wall, rounded arches, red tiled roof? Check. Romantic décor? Check. Hearty Spanish food? Check. With a sunroom in the back and ivy on the walls, Café Español transplants the essence of Spain—from flavorful food to idyllic décor and lively culture—across the Atlantic to the center of Greenwich Village.

Here, the food, along with a friendly price tag, is guaranteed to impress. Open every day of the week from noon on, Café Español offers a full-course lunch special (\$11.95 on weekdays, \$13.95 on weekends) that provides a full range of Spanish flavors, including an appetizer, an entrée, two drinks, and a dessert.

Though the menu is quite extensive, a few dishes are more traditionally Spanish than others. The café take on a cool gazpacho, filled with fresh tomatoes and crunchy onions, is perfect

for warm summer months. At Café Español, both the traditional seafood paella (flavored with wild saffron and imported manchego cheese) and the meaty paella valenciana are generously portioned, but the standout dish is the mariscada. The addition of a creamy green dill sauce that covers the clams and scallops and is absorbed by the otherwise plain Spanish rice turns it from just another "rice and beans" dish to a memorable meal. While sipping a complimentary cup of coffee or tea, you can finish your meal with a smooth, caramel-coated flan.

Café Español is an authentic eatery, from its rich flavors to its laid-back atmosphere, and the impression made by its décor is upheld in its menu. While few of us can afford to jet off to Spain for a rich lunch, the food here is a fine replacement.

Café Español is located at 172 Bleecker Street.

Art

A Look Back At A Summer Of Art

By CLAIRE BURGHARD,
BENJAMIN VANDEN HUEVEL,
JAMES KOGAN, and
MADELINE WONG

For the Modernist:

If you're not one for huge and demanding museum exhibitions that fill room after room with weighty art, head over to the Guggenheim and see the ongoing "Kandinsky 1911-1913" show, which features only five finished works by the influential Russian painter. The rest of the exhibition consists of two paintings by his contemporaries Robert Delaunay and Franz Marc, copies of an art treatise he authored, and a preliminary study for one of his displayed paintings. During the time period explored in the exhibition, Kandinsky, Delaunay, Marc, and other artists formed a group called "The Blue Rider." The stylistic trademarks of the group, including expressive use of color and symbolic abstractions, are all evident in the paintings on display. The wide color palettes and almost surreal spontaneity of the paintings make this exhibition not only a fun experience, but also a must-see for any art enthusiast.

For the Photography Fan:

While fans see musicians from one side of the stage, it is often surprising to view them through another perspective entirely: the lens of a camera. The current exhibit at the Steven Kasher Gallery, at 521 W23rd Street, is titled "Jim Marshall: The Rolling Stones and Beyond" and runs through Saturday, September 8 (Tuesday-Saturday, 11am-6pm).

The exhibit features 60 photographs by the famous photographer, best known for his personal and raw photographs of some of the world's greatest musicians; the most notable being the Rolling Stones during their infamous 1972 U.S. Tour. However, these black-and-white photos are anything but glamorous. They are candid and crude, showing the bleakness behind all the fame and fortune. The most striking photo of the British rock band, perhaps, is one of Mick Jagger staring off to the distance while clutching a bottle of Jack Daniels—a glimpse at a moment of loneliness often lost beneath hectic partying.

Also on display are shots of

The Beatles, Bob Dylan, Led Zeppelin, John Coltrane, and many others. Every photo resonates with the copious trust each artist had in Marshall, letting him capture them at their weakest and most personal moments, exposing the vulnerability underneath their glitzed and glammed shells.

For the Humanities Buff:

The recently renovated Morgan Library and Museum, at Madison and 36th Street, has attracted a great deal of attention this summer to a small but precious exhibit. "The Power of Words" is one of The Morgan's new summer displays, focusing on Winston Churchill, one of the 20th century's most iconic leaders. Rather than concentrate on his political exploits, the exhibit examines his love of writing and speaking, emphasizing his powerful gift: the delivery of speeches. The collection includes early drafts of some of his most famous wartime speeches edited in his hand and even one of his dialogues on the art of speech. Churchill's childhood is touched upon as well, with a copy of his elementary-school report card on display,

complaining of his "disruptive classroom attitude," but praising his skills in history and literature. This exhibit is remarkably personal, which is what makes it special. "The Power of Words" runs through Sunday, September 23, and admission is free to Stuyvesant and Hunter students; just show school ID. It only takes a few minutes to check out and is well worth the trip.

For the Architecture Addict:

Taking the Metropolitan Museum of Art's top-floor elevator that lifts visitors to the museum's rooftop gallery is a little like stepping into a time machine. Tomás Saraceno's futuristic "Cloud City," a complex constellation of transparent and reflective materials, sits 20 feet tall on the roof of the Met. Guests are able to walk on a series of stairs that worm throughout the sculpture. With its otherworldly vibe and angular and distorted views of Central Park and the Manhattan skyline, it's understandable why the sculpture shares its name with a floating city from "Star Wars." Looking through the constellation and its many

mirrors, it can sometimes be hard to determine what's real, giving the structure an illusion of grandiosity and depth, and making it a phenomenal place to spend a summer afternoon.

For Those Wishing To Transcend:

Shown in conjunction with her eponymous exposition at the Whitney Museum of Art (running through Sunday, September 30), Yayoi Kusama's "Fireflies On The Water" is a little bit like one of animator Hayao Miyazaki's films (including "My Neighbor Totoro" and "Spirited Away"): wholly capable of enthraling one with the overlooked magic of our existence. In this site-specific installation, Kusama utilizes mirrors, water, and Christmas lights to create the illusion of an infinite depth within a tiny room, leaving patrons with the rare opportunity of experiencing solitude. Unfortunately, as in accordance with the artist's instructions, viewing time is limited to 1 minute, but the impression is deep—visitors often stumble out of the room, still transfixed.

Arts and Entertainment

Arts and Entertainment

Video Games

Hot Fall Releases

By JAMES BESSOIR
and THOMAS DUDA

For most, the end of summer is nothing but a drag. Pulling oneself away from the hot sun and care-free days for another year of school is a painful process. However, for gamers, the changing of seasons can't go quick enough. Fall has the largest concentration of video game releases of any season. While summer is for blockbuster movies, fall usually is for big-name video games. Thankfully, this year is no exception. Below are some of the hotly anticipated games due for a fall release.

That's not to say "The Amazing Spider-Man" is a bland film; its acting gives enough emotional heft to a classic save-the-world-and-get-the-girl tale. But this is an example of actors outshining their characters. Though its 136 minutes are entertaining enough, "The Amazing Spider-Man" won't last in your mind for much longer.

Assassin's Creed III:

October 30 for Xbox 360,
Playstation 3, Windows, and Wii U

The fifth main game in Ubisoft's historical third person sandbox series, "Assassin's Creed III" (ACIII) is the most ambitious installment yet. Each numbered Assassin's Creed title has introduced a new character and time period, and ACIII features the half-native-American Connor, who must battle the agents of the ancient Knights Templar during the American Revolution. Thanks to a brand-new engine, the graphics have never looked better, and the series's distinctive free-running and combat systems have never felt more effortless. The game's massive open world features revolution-era New York City and Boston (painstakingly rendered in 1/3 scale) and the forested frontier between the two cities. The action game for history buffs has never looked or felt better.

Resident Evil 6:

November 20 for Xbox 360, Playstation 3,
and Windows

Survival-horror fans rejoice; the newest game in the Resident Evil series looks like it may be better than all of its predecessors. The reason? It's essentially four games in one. That's right; "Resident Evil 6" will have four separate campaigns, three of which are playable with a cooperative partner, and all of which promise some form of horror-based gameplay. However, only truly skilled players will be able to play all four, because in order to unlock the fourth campaign gamers must finish the other three. Each of the four campaigns is different, featuring gameplay similar to that of a previous game in the series. As such, anybody who has ever enjoyed a Resident Evil game will have good reason to purchase this one.

Borderlands 2:

September 18 for Xbox 360, Playstation 3, and Windows

The sequel to the 2009 hit, "Borderlands 2" features a first-person shooter with a massive open-world environment, RPG elements, cooperative play, and "87 gazillion" guns. It follows four diverse adventurers who attempt to rid the planet Pandora of its tyrannical dictator, Handsome Jack. However, the story doesn't take itself seriously at all, with hilarious writing that often makes jokes at its own expense. The most intriguing aspect, however, is the promised "87 gazillion" guns. The game randomly generates weapons that drop from fallen enemies, so no two weapons are exactly alike. This game promises to be a must-play for any fans of expansive cooperative games.

Halo 4:

November 6 for Xbox 360

Grab your battle rifle and get ready to blast some aliens in "Halo 4," the latest installment in one of the greatest first-person-shooter series of all time. The game picks up right where "Halo 3" left off five years ago and follows the super-soldier Master Chief as he crash lands on the mysterious planet Requiem. Multiplayer is back with some new tricks; players will be able to choose a Call-Of-Duty-esque weapon and perk load-out before a match. With many new weapons and vehicles, along with more detailed and varied graphics and sounds, "Halo 4" may just be the best shooter of 2012.

Dishonored:

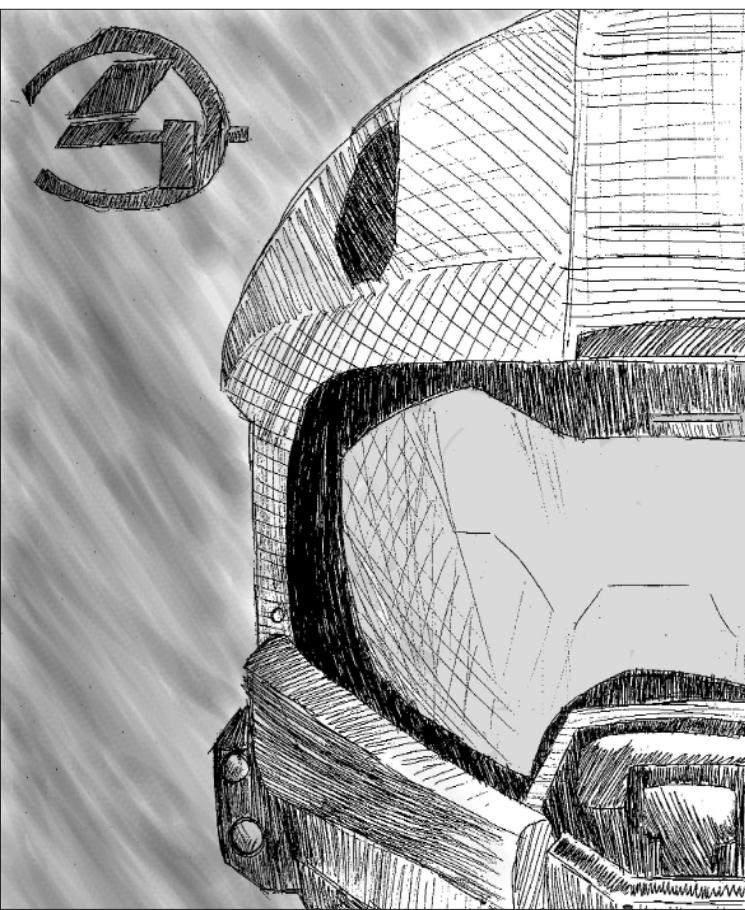
October 9 for Xbox 360, Playstation 3, and Windows

A stealth-action game, "Dishonored" promises gameplay that is sure to keep players captivated for months after their initial purchase. Each level is a miniature sandbox, with an objective given to the player, who subsequently has the freedom to choose exactly how he or she will go about accomplishing the goal. For example, at some point the player must infiltrate a guarded party. One might sneak in through a window, kill all the guards around the party, or even use a fish to swim through the drainage system and reappear in the party's bathroom. In "Dishonored," the possibilities are endless.

Call of Duty: Black Ops 2:

November 13 for Xbox 360,
Playstation 3, Windows, and Wii U

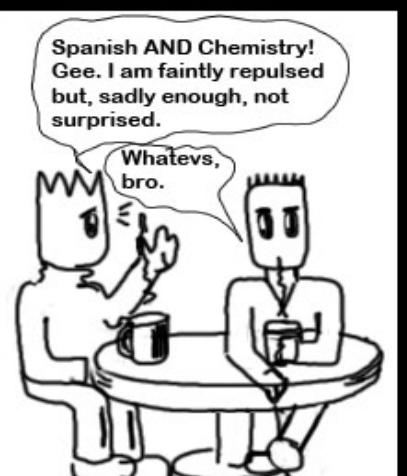
This year's installment in the annual Call Of Duty (COD) franchise, "Black Ops 2" is sure to be a blockbuster. The last game in the series, "Modern Warfare 3," was the highest grossing game in American history. With a single-player set in both 2025 and the 1980s, "Black Ops 2" follows both the cold war of the past and a fictional cold war of the future. By incorporating choices that affect the gameplay and outcome of missions, the game promises to give players a less linear experience than past COD games, in which the story mode progressed one way with few choices to modify the experience. Graphics are improved, albeit slightly, and the series's award-winning multiplayer mode has gotten a visual facelift to fit the near-future setting. "Black Ops 2" also features the popular 'Zombies' mode, in which up to eight players must survive as long as possible while combating an endless onslaught of murderous zombies.



Sam Luangkhot / The Spectator

Comics

Cup o' Joe

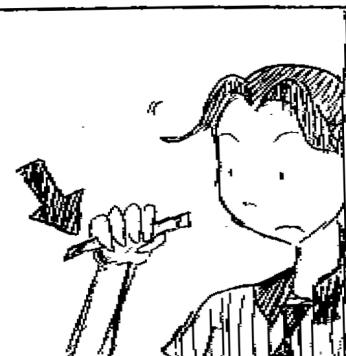


Dia Sotiropoulou

Dia Sotiropoulou / The Spectator

It's Been Awhile.

All right,
time to
draw for
Spectator!

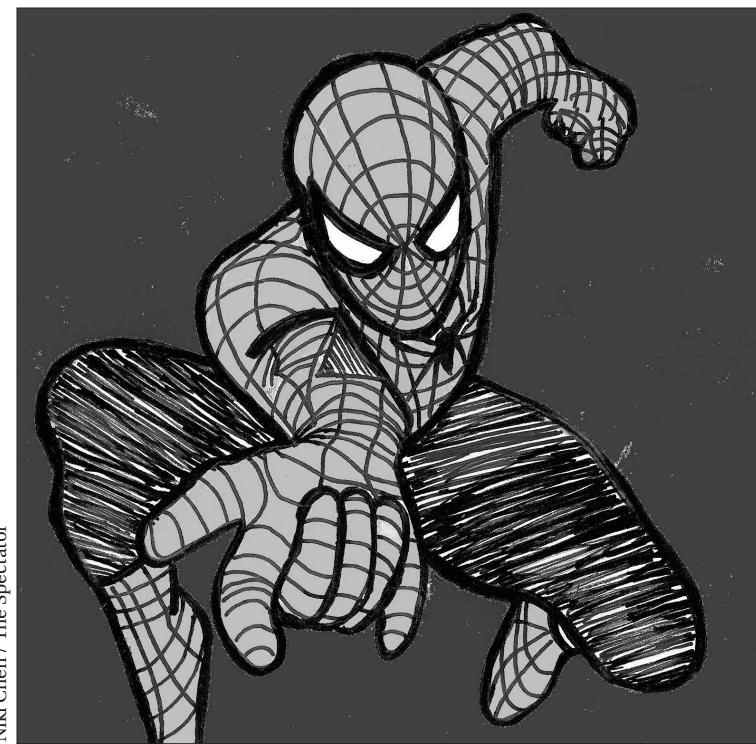


... I HAVE
FORGOTTEN
HOW TO
HOLD A
PENCIL.
Oh, summer.



Samantha Luangkhot / The Spectator

Arts and Entertainment



Niki Chen / The Spectator

The Dark Knight Rises

By THOMAS DUDA

Batman's fist is stopped. In mid-air, approaching Bane's face, Batman's fist has been stopped. No matter how hard he struggles, Batman cannot seem to overcome this obstacle. Such is the theme of "The Dark Knight Rises," the dark and gritty end to director Christopher Nolan's Batman trilogy. Set eight years after the events of "The Dark Knight," the film opens with Bruce Wayne (Christian Bale) holed up in his mansion, having abandoned his cape after taking the blame for the deaths of Harvey Dent, a much adored public-figure-turned-psychotic villain, and several collateral police officers. However, he is soon forced out of hiding by the terrorist Bane (Tom Hardy). His life in shambles, Bruce/Batman realizes that Bane has but one goal: to break the Batman, leaving Gotham City in ruins.

Nolan's swan song to his franchise is a great movie and a grand end to a beloved trilogy. The plot, though somewhat predictable, remains intricate and well-told throughout, a near-perfect fusion of high-octane action and heavy emotion.

Each moment is beautifully executed by the star-studded cast. From trilogy newcomer Joseph Gordon-Levitt, who plays the industrious policeman John Blake, to the great Michael Caine, returning as Bruce's steadfast butler Alfred, each character is nuanced and developed. Nolan grounds his work with characters and situations that almost seem authentic with the use of subtle special effects and well-choreographed fight scenes. If a negative point exists, it would be the film's reliance on its predecessors; newcomers to the series are apt to be confused more than once. Luckily, this is no problem for true fans.

In the end, "The Dark Knight Rises" does rise to expectations. Dark and brutal, majestic and complex, it stands out as one of the strongest films of the summer.



Niki Chen / The Spectator

Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter

By NICOLE SANCHEZ

Look out, undead, because Hollywood's got something to tell you—America's Honest Abe was secretly an axe-wielding, blood-sucking hunter. This "true" story of our enigmatic leader is recorded in a secret journal-turned-novel by Seth Grahame-Smith. It follows Lincoln's rise from a mere farm boy to president; the account also delves into the growth of the slave trade—vampires and their human allies in the South bred them as food—and the rationale behind the Civil War—a plan to crush vampirism and slavery with one blow.

Its historical details—vampires aside, of course—are mostly accurate, showing everything from Lincoln's speeches to his family life. But the plotline itself, a medley of whimsical premise and serious approach, kills some of the spark. Saying the Civil War was fought largely due to a personal vendetta against the undead is dismissive, even offensive, of the high-held ideals of freedom and nationalism. But if taken lightly—as a film about a vampire-killing president is likely to be taken—this shouldn't be a problem.

Grahame-Smith, who also wrote Tim Burton's "Dark Shadows," took his chances when he adapted this tale for the big screen. But "Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter" passes the test as an action flick, packed with hatred, angst, betrayal, vengefulness, and just enough blood spatter. The visuals are intense, with the occasional slow-mo of deftly wielded weapons and hand-to-hand combat; the gore, however, isn't particularly impressive. That being said, the film is certainly weird enough to land a niche audience (among historians who happen to like vampires). The gory take on history gives it flash, but the thematic dissonance might be a killer.

Summer Hits You

The Amazing Spider-Man

By CARMEN YEUNG

In a summer dominated by superhero adaptations with high budgets and even higher expectations, few had more hype than "The Amazing Spider-Man." Though the previous cast's "Spider-Man 3" was revealed only five years earlier, this reboot had high expectations. And this blockbuster falls slightly short.

The web-spinning hero's tale is well known, but this movie created a stronger backstory for Peter Parker's (Andrew Garfield) superpowers; instead of a random lab accident, the fated spider-bite was a direct by-product of his father's work with eventual villain Dr. Curt Connors (Rhys Ifans).

However, like many other superhero flicks, a better-than-adequate plot will only go so far. Rather, the success of "The Amazing Spider-Man" can only be attributed to its cast. Garfield's portrayal of a sarcastic, awkward teenager seems genuine, not forced, and his chemistry with Emma Stone, aided by their off-screen relationship, adds to the blush of their young love.

The inevitable comparisons to Sam Raimi's 2002 "Spider-Man" come up lacking, even with the remake's much-improved cinematography and special effects. In Raimi's, Tobey Maguire's Peter was lovable, lighthearted, and cheeky, while Garfield's Peter is re-imagined as a darker, snarkier, edgier hero. Though Garfield is arguably more true to the Marvel comics, Maguire came across as more heartfelt and had more depth. It was harder to connect with Garfield's character, not because of his acting, but because of the script. Raimi's "Spider-Man" was better written, with a more solid, well-rounded protagonist.

That's not to say "The Amazing Spider-Man" is a bland film; its acting gives enough emotional heft to a classic save-the-world-and-get-the-girl tale. But this is an example of actors outshining their characters. Though its 136 minutes are entertaining enough, "The Amazing Spider-Man" won't last in your mind for much longer.



Christine Lee / The Spectator

Kumaré

BY TEDDY BECKER-JACOB

Over the past decade, exploiting Midwesterners onscreen has become a profitable trade. At first, the Midwesterners share some ignorant, offensive views. The audience shares a hearty laugh at their views and exploits. And then Act II arrives, in which the Midwesterners are revealed to have depth of character, to cope with real-life problems, and to deserve the audience's unexpected-yet-wholehearted sentimentality.

Director Vikram Gandhi's documentary "Kumaré" is a particularly smart follower in this trend. In the tradition of mockumentary pioneer Sacha Baron Cohen, Gandhi addresses the American fascination with meditation and "eastern" spiritual leaders with a Love Guru-esque costume and persona. As his eponymous alter ego, Gandhi travels to Arizona to meet various meditation enthusiasts and participate in their outlandish ceremonies. This first section happily revels in its jest, sharing with viewers its mirth at the "spiritual culture" of Tuscon and Phoenix.

However, there's more to these yogis than meets the eye. Kumaré's (completely fake) system of meditation and counseling proves entirely effective for the 15 or so troubled souls that become his disciples; this is largely a result of Kumaré's emphasis of the power of self-help, which Gandhi claims to be the message of both his experiment and film. However, it remains questionable whether these individuals truly gained the tools necessary to improve their situations, or if Kumaré simply gave them a doctrine to follow. Though the film is formulaic, and the subject matter well-trodden, it is nonetheless entertaining and thought provoking—and its open-endedness highlights Gandhi's skill as a documentarian.

Arts and Entertainment

Might Have Missed

Brave

By ANJELIKA AMOG

"If you would just listen!" Merida exclaims, exasperated, as her trusty steed Angus neighs in response. Little does she know that her mother, Queen Elinor, shares her sentiment. "Brave" focuses on the often-fraught mother-daughter relationship, applying the usual Pixar formula of detailed animation, emotional depth, and just a dash of magic to its rebellious princess tale. When Elinor tries to force Merida into a political marriage, Merida reaches the end of her rope; she wishes to change her mother's view, but ends up turning her into a bear and is given a countdown until the change is permanent.

The relationship between mother and daughter is developed in near-painful detail. One sequence cuts between Elinor and Merida, stringing individual lines into one coherent conversation, a nice, if gimmicky, demonstration of the rift between them and their underlying bond. As Merida struggles to lift the curse, both her and her mother's characters are further developed, as Merida grows more self-aware and less stubborn and Elinor grows more compassionate and respectful of her daughter's independence.

Recognition must be given to Pixar for its skillful animation, especially in detailing facial expressions so brilliantly. Elinor, as a bear, is also rendered with such personality that her character still comes across, as she wipes her mouth with her fore-paw and walks on two legs, rolling her hips as she moves. By contrasting her soft lines and sloping features with the harsh angles of the demon bear Mor'du, the latter is made even more frightening.

"Brave" fits smoothly into the Pixar family, upholding the tradition of taking far-fetched concepts and crafting characters and relationships with rich complexity. Pixar has made yet another kids' movie with soul.

Beasts of the Southern Wild

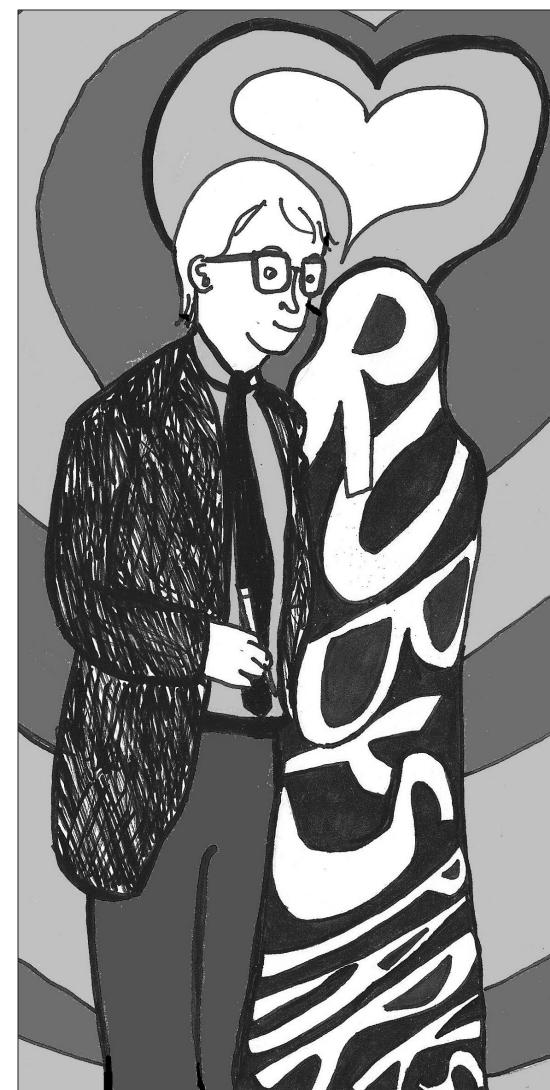
By JANE ARGODALE

From the start, director Benh Zeitlin's fantasy drama "Beasts of the Southern Wild" brings us into a world that refuses to be tamed. We are introduced to small homes cramped with pots and pans, wrinkled clothing, and old tins of cat food, with a couple of pigs and chickens outside. The town looks like backwoods on its ruddy surface, in which there are no holidays because every day is a holiday and crying isn't allowed at funerals because even death can be cause for a celebration of life. Welcome to the Bathtub.

The Bathtub is a Mississippi Delta community at the literal and figurative fringes of America, where six-year-old Hushpuppy (Quvenzhané Wallis) lives with her father. It's never dismissed as undesirable, but its cluttered, cobbled-together appearance and shaky, unpolished camerawork make clear the gritty lives of the community's residents. Disaster breaks out in the Bathtub when Hushpuppy's fathers fall ill and the ice caps of the Antarctic begin to melt, releasing ancient carnivores called Aurochs. Consequently Hushpuppy heads out in search of her long-lost mother.

The film may focus on a child, but it is never cutesy or twee. Keen observations written into Hushpuppy's narration about the interconnectedness of her world don't feel at all clichéd. For Hushpuppy, a child with little control over her circumstances, it is necessary to see how closely her destiny is connected to external factors, from the need for a healthy parent in her life to the need for survival in a world increasingly prone to large-scale natural disasters.

"Beasts of the Southern Wild" brims with life and honesty in every scene. A million little pieces of the natural world support human survival, and a million little connections between friends, family, and neighbors support the human heart.



Niki Chen / The Spectator



Christine Lee / The Spectator

Ruby Sparks

by NINA WADE

Men have often wished to have the "girl of their dreams." But what if that wish came true? Such is the premise of "Ruby Sparks," in which writer Calvin Weir-Fields (Paul Dano), after penning a manuscript about a girl named Ruby Sparks (Zoe Kazan), finds his words brought to life as his girlfriend. What looks primed for a Manic Pixie Dream Girl, a term coined by film critic Nathan Rabin for "that bubbly, shallow cinematic creature that exists solely in the fevered imaginations of sensitive writer-directors to teach broodingly soulful young men to embrace life and its infinite mysteries and adventures," instead reveals itself as a critique of the archetype.

Though Calvin initially wants to give Ruby free will, resisting the temptation to tamper with her is harder than he thinks. Calvin believes he understands her (as he says, "I wrote her"), but when she begins to pull away, dissatisfied, he adds detail after detail to her story in a fit of last-ditch efforts. The film initially plays this for laughs: when she wants independence, he makes her pine for him, which backfires with her clinging to his side, crying if he so much as uses the bathroom. However, the film becomes increasingly dark, and Calvin is forced to question the morality of keeping Ruby in his life when she is, ultimately, little more than his flesh-and-blood puppet.

"Ruby Sparks" has all the trappings of a hipster rom-com—quirky girls, nerd-chic boys, "unconventional" love—save one: a romance selling an unrealistic ideal. While other films in this genre embrace the previously described Manic Pixie image, "Ruby Sparks" attacks it, fleshing out the problems of the ideal muse. Kazan and Dano make this film, showing unexpected sides to Ruby and Calvin; Kazan gives her melancholic despair and a personality, while Dano plays "insecure" and "ethical crisis" with a desperation that makes him equally creepy and sympathetic. By subverting expectations in a well-executed manner, "Ruby Sparks" takes a simple-enough idea and makes it memorable.



Judy Lee / The Spectator

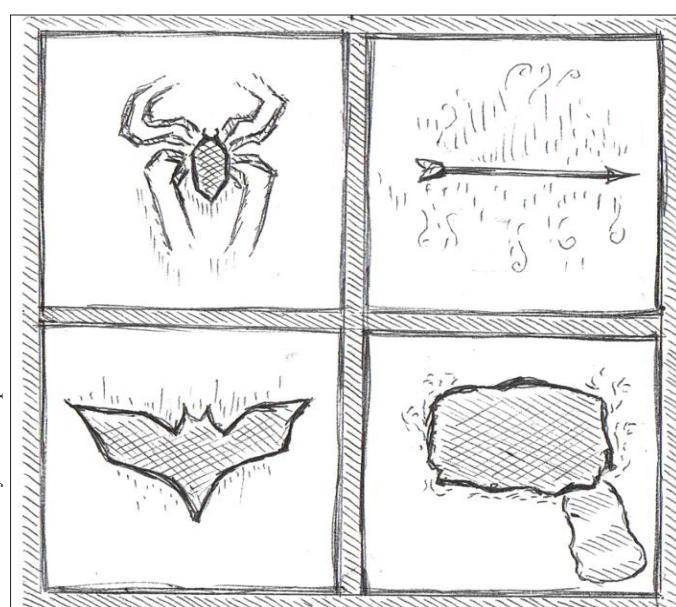
Moonrise Kingdom

By CLAIRE BURGHARD

During the precarious stage between childhood and adulthood, the seriousness of growing up can be overwhelming, and 12-year-olds, Sam and Suzy, in director Wes Anderson's "Moonrise Kingdom" don't want to handle it on their own.

In 1965, on a small island off the coast of New England, Suzy Bishop (Kara Hayward) and Sam Shakusky (Jared Gilman) find comfort in their equally dysfunctional lives and fall in love. The two are passionate and enchanting despite their youth, in stark contrast to the adults, such as Suzy's parents (Bill Murray and Frances McDormand), who are naïve and sad. After a yearlong eclectic, epistolary courtship—shown through an effervescently darling montage—the two use Sam's Boy-Scout skills to run away to the wilderness and claim their territory, a small beach they dub Moonrise Kingdom. Though their escape proves unsuccessful, Sam and Suzy refuse to conform to the staid adults' even more staid wishes.

Like other Anderson films, "Moonrise Kingdom" is atmospheric, precious, and hyper-stylized, capturing the moments of young love in washed-out color and precocious dialogue: Suzy and Sam's love-at-first-sight meeting backstage at a church play; their reunion at a halfway point, a grassy field, after the year spent apart; their desperate attempts to escape the world in which they live, a world where Suzy is called "troubled" and Sam is unwanted by everyone, even his foster parents. But possibly the film's best quality is its exhilarating camerawork, particularly the room-by-room tour of Suzy's house during the opening credits, with Benjamin Britten's "A Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra" playing charmingly in the background. "Moonrise Kingdom" is delightful and just might encourage some pipe-smoking, eyeliner-wearing, sci-fi-reading, 12-year-old misfits to run away themselves.



Mauricio Moreyra / The Spectator

Humor

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

Record-Breaking Urine Concentration In Stuyvesant Pool



The pool is sealed off due to excessively high urine concentrations.

By ROBERT MELAMED

Health officials stormed into Stuyvesant High School on Thursday, September 6, and closed the swimming pool on the grounds that it was another swimming complex affected by the widespread Michael Phelps-Ryan Lochte craze. On Thursday, August 2, both swimming superstars admitted to urinating in pools in order to enhance their swimming performances. Since then, thousands of pools across the country have been closing because fans are trying to follow in the footsteps of their swimming idols.

"My dream was to become an Olympic swimmer, but up until

a few days ago I never thought it could become my reality," junior Alan Baranov said. "Never did it occur to me that peeing in the pool could improve my swimming abilities, but when my two heroes revealed their secret, it changed my life. I want to thank Michael Phelps and Ryan Lochte—they have shown me that a little pee can take you a long way."

"This Phelps-Lochte peeing craze has taken over Stuyvesant High School. Bladder control has become a lost art, and the students are suffering because of it," New York City health official Blake Johnson said. "I bet if I had an eight-pack and won a few gold medals in the Olym-

pics, people would listen to me too."

Many students were sent home due to illnesses they acquired from the contaminated water. However, the boys' and girls' swim team members stayed in the pool. "I have my swimmers urinate in the pool after every lap. It is the key to success," boys swim team coach Peter Bologna said. "To be the city champions every year it takes dedication, hard work, and a gifted bladder."

After numerous investigations, it has been stated that pool renovations will take several months to complete, due to the build up of urine and toxins, which have severely damaged the walls of the pool. The administration has formally announced that the school pool will remain closed for the majority of the upcoming school year.

With renovations ongoing, the swim team has now found itself homeless and unable to perform at their old standards.

"As Coach always told us, 'We are the pee.' And without it, we have lost our winning edge," Penguins co-captain Phylicia Rodriguez said. "It will take years before we can immerse another pool with so much urine. Our city championship and reputation were riding on that pee."

Farewell To A Stuyvesant Legend

By MARIUM SARDER

The summer of 2012 has proven to be quite a tumultuous one. Following the cheating scandal that placed Stuyvesant High School on the front page of numerous newspapers, the high school has also been forced to depart with a great leader and symbol of Stuyvesant pride.

"I don't really know what to think anymore. This year hasn't been easy on us, and now we have to say goodbye to the one person who was able rally the entire school," senior Carlen Zhu said. "Admittedly his tenure wasn't without its hiccups, but he was the best thing for this school, especially at a time like this."

Following the resignation of this towering figure, students expressed their concern over who was set to replace him. "There can't possibly be another one like him. His shining example and inspiring actions kept me going," senior Patrick So said. "The outgoing seniors looked forward to having him at their graduation, but now we have been robbed of the opportunity."

Students and faculty have started a petition with the hopes of saving their idol. "He is the hero New York City de-

serves and is the one it needs right now. So we'll hunt for him, because he can take it, and we'll get him back," Chemistry teacher Brian Dibbs said. "His towering figure, luscious locks, and glorious bass voice will be greatly missed. No one in the school will be able to carry on without the sound of his jovial presence. It's time to get him back—Stuyvesant wants him. New York City needs him."

Despite Stuyvesant's numerous heartfelt attempts to save this icon, the school's efforts proved to be futile. To the dismay of the school, and of this very publication, it has been announced by The New York Post that the "Big Apple star" will be leaving this town for another one far away.

The Humor Department would like to take this moment to extend to you, our one-time fearless leader and guiding light, our warmest congratulations and best wishes. Regardless of what the critics say, we know that you tried your hardest and always had the best intentions. You never let us down; we let you down, and there will never be enough apologies to ever make up for it. So instead, we want to wish you the best of luck. Jeremy Lin, you will be missed.

Escalator Found To Be Haunted

By OLIVER LIPTON

Stuyvesant High School was left in a state of confusion following Machinist Kern Levington's announcement regarding the state of the 2 – 4 escalator on Thursday, September 6. Many have attributed the escalator's long-time malfunction to a mechanical failure. However, Levington has revealed the true nature of the problem.

"The repairmen have reported numerous supernatural occurrences," Levington said. "These reports have led us to believe that the escalator is, in fact, haunted by an ancient spirit."

Interim Acting Principal Jie Zhang confirmed reports after noticing the repairmen exhibiting strange behavior often associated with paranormal possession. "As I walked through the halls I witnessed four accounts of verbal assault, as the repairmen growled and barked at helpless freshmen," Zhang said. Upon realizing this, Zhang hired an exorcist: sophomore and president of the Harry Potter club, Willard Johnson. Unfortunately, after two hours of waving a plastic wand at the escalator, Johnson fell to the ground, hysterically crying and clutching his forehead.

Zhang expressed her intention to explore more professional exorcism options. "Who were we going to call? Ghostbusters," Zhang said. "But the school's electronic ban applies even to proton packs."

In the meantime, Zhang has ruled all the escalators off-lim-

"The repairmen have reported numerous supernatural occurrences," —Kern Levington, machinist

Many are in awe over the extent of the ghost's damage on the school. "It is amazing how well the specter terrorizes students," chemistry teacher Michael Orlando said. "I have been studying his tactics intently, and I intend to include them in my teaching methods."

It is unknown what further steps Zhang has taken towards contacting a professional exorcist, but she has stated that it has become one of her highest priorities.

"I understand the severity of the situation and its detrimental effects on the student body—I promise to attack this issue as soon as I locate my office," she said.

Student Caught Cheating on Swim Test

By JEREMY KARSON

In a shocking twist that some are calling "Stuyvesant's scandal of the week," freshman Alex Huang was caught cheating on the Stuyvesant swimming test on June 7, 2012. A combination of miniature jet-propulsion devices—designed by Huang himself—and Costco-brand floaties allowed him to travel the width of the pool despite the fact that he had no previous swimming experience.

However, proctor and physical education teacher Howard Barbin quickly noticed Huang's tactics and removed him from the pool. "If a student simply copies the stroke of the swimmer to his right or left, we usually let it slide," Barbin said. "But blatant cheating must be properly disciplined."

—Howard Barbin, physical education teacher

All students must pass the swimming test in order to graduate from Stuyvesant. This test, along with the Physics Regents examination, is widely considered the most challenging obstacle Stuyvesant students must overcome. "I've had an immense fear of water ever since I saw 'Jaws' when I was seven [years old]," Huang said. "Since then, I haven't gone near water. Or sharks."

Parents and administrators alike were deeply disappointed in Huang, with some even calling it a disgrace. "I am deeply disappointed in my son," said Dai Huang, the perpetrator's father. "I taught my son: 'Success at all costs.' This is failure. How hard is it to remember chicken-airplane-soldier? He will sleep outside tonight."

Reporters from The New

York Times, The New York Post, The Daily News, The Daily Bu-

"If a student simply copies the stroke of the swimmer to his right or left, we usually let it slide, but blatant cheating must be properly disciplined."

—Howard Barbin, physical education teacher

gle, The Daily Planet, and Dateline India have been seen near Stuyvesant attempting to conduct interviews about the incident. Former principal Stanley Teitel declined to comment, but Stuyvesant students have devoted their lunch periods to trying to make the news. "The whole world needs to hear our opinions," senior Isabelle Clark said. "We are the brightest, cleverest, most insightful high school students in all of Tribeca."

This episode is just the latest in a series of scandals for Stuyvesant High School, which gave rise to the headline that aired on

Fox News on Wednesday, August 28: "Racist, Arsonist Sluts Can't Swim."

"That's actually one of the nicest things the media has said about us in months," math teacher Deena Avigdor said.

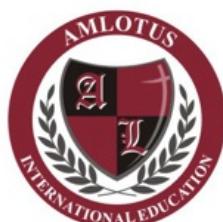
Many students were deeply angered by the news, criticizing the alleged cheater for taking shortcuts. "I went to prep classes for years to prepare for this exam," junior Eddie Zilberbrand said. "Some kids had summers—I didn't have summers."

Students who do not pass the swimming test are required to take Swim Gym, an extremely rigorous course. "I didn't have the luxury of cheating, and, as a result, freshman fall was the worst semester of my life," said sophomore Demos Sfakianakis, who failed Swim Gym. "The swim cap always ruined my hair, and the breast stroke still gives me nightmares."

The administration has pledged to take immediate action to punish Huang for his academic and aquatic dishonesty. "Chinese water torture is probably the most appropriate," Assistant Principal of Pupil Personnel Services Eleanor Archie said.

In the aftermath of this scandal, investigators have discovered many other instances of cheating at Stuyvesant High School. As each new incident arises, it becomes more evident that cheating is an epidemic at Stuyvesant. "It's not just the swim test that people are cheating on," physical education teacher Philip Fisher said. "These ragamuffins have been using performance-enhancing drugs on the Fitness Gram for years."

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Single Subject Class(Weekday)

TIME	SAT
09:00 – 11:00	Mathematics
11:00 – 11:20	Break (Brunch provided)
11:20 – 13:20	Critical Reading
13:20 – 14:00	Lunch Time
14:00 – 15:00	Writing(Grammar)
15:00 – 16:00	Essay
16:00 - 16:30	Vocabulary Review / Test
16:30 – 18:00	Review Study / Test

TIME	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
17:00 – 18:30	Computer Actual Test at Home	Critical Reading	Computer Actual Test + Review Test + Vocabulary at Home	Critical Reading	Review Test + Vocabulary at Home
18:30 – 18:40		Break Time		Break Time	
18:40 – 20:10		Essay+Writing (Grammar, Comprehension)		Essay+Writing (Grammar, Comprehension)	

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2. Critical Reading Class = \$ 1,350 / 3 months
3. (Essay + Writing) Class = \$ 1,350 / 3 months

Sports

Stuyvesant Alum Prescod Fences In Olympics

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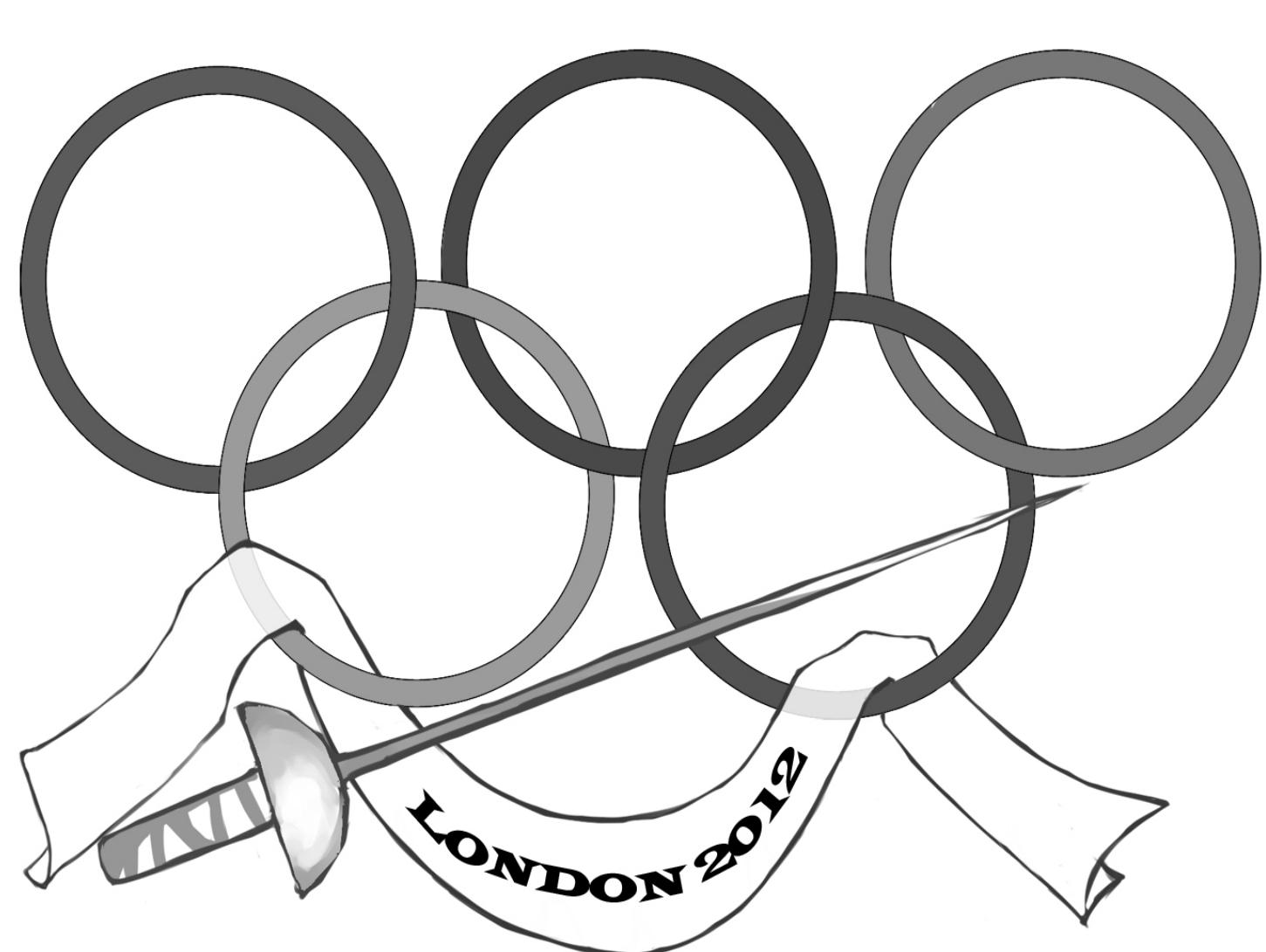
foilist in the country with 6767 points. She is currently ranked second in the country and 21st in the world.

Prescod began fencing at the age of nine because her mom "made sure I was really active so I did a ton of sports," she said in an e-mail interview. "She heard about the Peter Westbrook Foundation when I was nine and enrolled my sister and [me] in the program."

The Peter Westbrook Foundation (PWF) is an organization founded by Olympic bronze medalist Peter Westbrook (1984 Games, in saber) that, according to the foundation's website, uses fencing "as a vehicle for developing life skills in inner-city youth." PWF offers fencing classes, tutoring, and test preparation to its members. Through the program, Prescod was connected with Anthony "Buckie" Leach, her coach of 11 years.

Leach gained widespread acclaim for his coaching achievements at Rochester Fencing Center, before moving to the Fencers Club in New York City, where he still coaches today. "Buckie is an amazing coach, and I couldn't have gotten to this point without him," Prescod said. "I'm so blessed that he moved to [New York] just as I started fencing."

A few months after she started fencing, Prescod fenced her first competition—a 10-and-under event (Y10) in Harlem. She finished 13th out of 16 fencers, but a year later, she came in first at another Y10. As she rapidly improved, she widened her competi-



Michele Lin / The Spectator

onship (for under-20 fencers), and the team event at the Pan American Championships. For a stretch in the 2008-2009 season, she was ranked second in the world.

On top of all of her international competing and traveling, Prescod still managed to participate on the girl's fencing team, the Untouchables, during her first three years at Stuyvesant. Even though her practice time with the team was limited by her busy schedule, "she was a great inspiration," said Joel Winston, who coaches both the boys' and girls' fencing teams. "I was really happy that she made the Olympics. And [that's] the best of the best of the best."

At the last national competition in April before the Olympic team was determined, Prescod had such a lead on the NRPS that she did not even have to fence to secure a spot. In early July, Prescod attended an Olympic training camp in Anaheim, California, along with teammates Doris Willette, Lee Kiefer, and Nicole Ross. Also a member of the Fencers Club, Ross has fenced with Prescod since childhood. At the camp, the squad reviewed drills, bouted, and strategized for its match against South Korea in the team competition in London, which resulted in a draw.

This whole year, however, has been one of intense training and preparation for Prescod. She took the year off from Columbia University so that she could practice at least five days a week. "She does a footwork program [and] a physical training program," Leach said. "She's physically pretty strong so we don't have to spend a huge amount of time with that. Mostly this year, especially during the competitive season, the focus is more

on [fencing] quality work."

Prescod also had private lessons with Leach during the day, in which they practiced technique, strategies, particular situations, and different fencing actions. Later in the afternoon, she would fence practice bouts against other people at the club, often working on individual skills

and Kiefer, and the following day, the individual women's foil competition.

Like most of the 38 fencers, Prescod entered the round of 64 with a bye and automatically advanced to the round of 32. Her first bout was to be with Aida Mohamed of Hungary, "a really strong fencer and her ranking poorly represented it," Prescod said. "I've also lost to her in the past, but I tried to be as positive as possible."

Mohamed took an early lead in the bout, and held on to it while Prescod tried to regain her focus. "During the bout, I made a lot of errors in the [beginning], possibly because I wasn't as confident as I should have been," Prescod said. "But once I felt like I had nothing to lose, I got more in the rhythm of things." Yet by the time Prescod picked up her pace, she was already fighting a five or six point lead, and ended up losing the bout 15-10.

After the bout, "I was also disappointed," Prescod said. "But I was only really sad about it a couple days later when it really hit me." Ross also lost in the round of 32, but Kiefer came in fifth place after winning her first two bouts, and losing to the event's silver medalist, Arianna Errigo of Italy.

The women's team competition took place on Thursday, August 2, five days after the individual event. "In team there so much less pressure," Prescod said. "I have so much faith in my teammates so I know if I'm not able to make a scoring run on my opponent, someone else will be able to."

The American squad first went up against the South Koreans in the round of eight, in a competition that held a total of nine teams. In team fencing matches, each member of one team fences each member of the other to a maximum total

score of 45. The Americans lost to Korea 45-31, but then beat Japan 44-22 to finish in sixth place.

Though female American foil fencers have only medaled once at the Olympics (silver, in the 2008 team event), the genre is on the rise at the international level. Prescod and Kiefer's high rankings through-

For a stretch in the 2008-2009 season, Prescod was ranked second in the world.

"I enjoyed fencing so much it was never a hassle for me to train really hard."
—Nzingha Prescod ('10)

tive radius to regional, super-regional, and national events, with Leach coaching her from strip-side, often making cross-country trips on his motorcycle to be there. She won her first national event at age 10 in Austin, Texas. When she was 13, Prescod fenced at her first international competition in Germany. She finished in the round of 64, outside of the top 32 who gain NRPS points. However, the following year, she won the tournament. And since then, she has won gold in multiple Cadet World Championships (for under-17 fencers), the Junior World Champi-

from the day's lesson. But the strenuous training is not an issue for Prescod. "I was around other Olympians at my fencing club and knew I had all the resources to make it happen—it just depended on me," she said. "I enjoyed fencing so much it was never a hassle for me to train really hard."

After the Anaheim camp, Prescod and the rest of Team USA jetted off to London for a few weeks in the Olympic Village and some more practice at the US training facilities. Then came the Opening Ceremony on Friday, July 27, in which she marched with Ross, Willette,

"Next Olympics, she'll get a medal. That, I'm sure of."
—Joel Winston,
Stuyvesant
fencing coach

out the last four years, in addition to Prescod's multiple World Championship titles, are a testament to this. As for this year's Olympics, Prescod said, "The loss only made me more pumped for 2016 and training to get there."

The next Olympics are certainly in reach for Prescod, who turned 20 on August 14, considering the fact that most fencers reach their peak around the age of 25. "Nzingha's still young. You have to realize that she's still a baby," Winston said. "Next Olympics, she'll get a medal. That, I'm sure of."

Sports

Faster, Higher, Stronger, Together

continued from page 20

the most decorated Olympian in history, with his name appearing on the front page of dozens of newspapers in over 11 different languages internationally. Even Larissa Latynina, the Ukrainian gymnast who held the record for most Olympic medals before Phelps shattered it in his London program, was there to cheer him on at the London Aquatics Center during the record-breaking relay.

It doesn't matter what country you're from when you are watching the Olympics; athletes from all around the world can excite you in different ways. Though I'm always proud to wear the stars and stripes, I found myself cheering for the British men's gymnastics team during the team finals, simply because it was so groundbreaking in that it was the first time that they medaled in the event since 1912. I also think you would be hard-pressed to find someone who wasn't inspired by South African runner Oscar Pistorius, the double amputee who made his way into the semifinals in the 400-meter race.

However, the Olympic Games are truly rare in that they transcend political, religious, and racial differences. Even Saudi Arabia sent its first woman in its Olympic history to London this year. Although 16-year-old Wojdan Shaherkani

did not last long in her first judo match, she left the floor with a roar of applause from the mostly-British crowd.

Though women still lack many basic freedoms in Saudi Arabia, it is a huge step for women's rights to have a woman represent the country in the Olympic Games. Forward progress was encouraged in the spirit of the games, and politics were left behind in the decision that the country made to encourage its best athletes to participate.

Obviously, not everything that occurs in the Olympics is worthy of praise—cheating and doping do occur on some level in every sport. For example, the first time I turned on an Olympic badminton game, I was slightly horrified when the Chinese player served the shuttlecock into the net not once, but eight different times. I first assumed that badminton was just a painfully boring sport to watch, but later learned that both teams had been trying to throw the match; a loss would result in a strategic advantage in each team's upcoming schedule. Both teams were eventually disqualified from the Olympics, and though a professional match, in which each side is trying to lose, is not the most entertaining, the games went on, and an honorable team was eventually awarded the gold medal. However, though it is easy for some to hone in on the scandals or allegations that surround the

Olympic Games, being critical leads you to overlook the big picture.

It is impossible to have an athletic competition on the scale of the Olympic Games without players trying to cheat the system and rumors flying throughout. When Chinese swimmer Ye Shiwen smashed the 400-meter individual medley world record, rumors of doping were rampant throughout the press, all of which were based on little to no factual evidence. The bronze medalist in the event, American Caitlin Leverenz, came to Shiwen's defense. "It's easy for people to point fingers," he said. Amidst all the drama, ultimately athletes in the games stood up for each other despite country loyalties in order to appreciate the hard work of others.

The fact is, incredible things happen at the Olympics, and it's much easier to find something to celebrate rather than something to pooh-pooh. Who knew that someone could jump 7.81 feet without being propelled in the high jump, or that someone could dive off of a 32.8 foot-high platform, complete four full rotations, and create barely a ripple of splash when he entered the water? It takes a lot for a world riddled with so many differences to come together, but 10,000 athletes representing 205 countries surrounding an array of Olympic torches is probably as close as we'll get.

Combating Concussions

continued from page 20

six-day plan laid out to slowly acclimate the student-athlete back to game condition.

"It's a good start. I think as a coach from Stuyvesant, we took it to another level. We actually required all players to get screened for impact testing and NeuroCom testing, which is above and beyond what is required by the PSAL," boys' football coach Mark Strasser said.

New York is the 33rd state (not including the District of Columbia) to pass a bill regarding concussion awareness and

safety, according to the PSAL, and legislators hope that this is the first step in ensuring the protection of student-athletes on the field.

"As for football and soccer coaches, I'm surprised a concussion class wasn't required for them sooner," senior Nathaniel Biggs, co-captain of the boys' football team, said. "It's a huge danger in both sports and kids sometimes avoid going to the doctor when they show signs of a concussion so giving coaches even a little knowledge on the subject can definitely help."

Girls' Volleyball

Vixens Move on with New Pack Leader

By TIMOTHY DIEP
and NOAH HELLERMANN

Stuyvesant's boys' basketball and girls' volleyball games have long been notorious for the shouts and yells of coach Philip Fisher. Unfortunately, his unmistakable swagger will be absent from PSAL games this fall. Stuyvesant's girls' volleyball team, the Vixens, will be without Fisher, who is leaving the team after 11 years as coach. His last season with the Vixens was memorable—the team won every regular season set last year, only losing to Francis Lewis High School in the semifinals of the playoffs. Wingate Award finalist Melissa Chin ('12) led the team to two easy playoff victories against Curtis High School and Midwood High School, before the Vixens dropped the last two sets of the match against Francis Lewis by only four points, 26-24 and 25-23. This year, the team will also be taking court without Chin for the first time in four years.

The team's new coach Joshua Yang has coached boys' volleyball at the Academy of American Studies since 2007. He led their volleyball team to a victory in the City Championships last year. Still, he isn't taking the coaching job at Stuyvesant lightly. "It's going to be tough coming to this school, this volleyball program," said Yang. "You guys haven't lost in 13 years."

Yang is not unfamiliar with perfect seasons, going 14-0 at the Academy of American Studies last year. However, he is not concerned with another perfect record at Stuyvesant in the upcoming season. "Going undefeated in the regular season is not a goal—that's a lot of pressure. I'm not going to think that way," Yang said. Instead, he wants to continue the prestige of Stuyvesant's volleyball career by respecting the seniors and understanding each player individually.

This year, senior and captain Natalie Kozlova is supportive of the new coach. "He is very knowledgeable and patient," Kozlova said, after watching Yang pull over girls individually after practice to discuss their techniques. He pointed to spots on the court and mentioned specific plays, breaking down the girls' form.

"Coach Yang is very understanding and approving," senior Diane Forrest said. "He's really helping us a lot." This personal approach to coaching has inspired the team to work harder, and it is clear that the team is dedicated to winning despite the challenges they face. They have forgone summer mornings at the beach in order to practice diving on hardwood floors in the stuffy third-floor gymnasium, which is of course, lacking air-conditioning.

Even with all the hard work, it is going to be hard to replicate the successes of the past season. "Last year, we really thought we were going to make it to the finals. We had a great season and everything was figured out. Even during preseason we all knew all of our positions," Forrest said. After losing their outside hitter and their setter, the Vixens are going to struggle to replace such talent. "Now we're just trying to live up to last year," said Forrest.

Last season, all of the girls' games promised hard spikes from Chin as well as Kozlova. Chin's shots in particular often sent opponents diving to the floor to try and dig the kill. "This year, we can hit, but to hit, we have to be able to pass," Kozlova said.

Though Chin led the team with 64 kills last season, Kozlova had 44 through the regular season, and 28 in the three playoff matches, only one less than Chin's 29. It will be just as hard to replace setter Lisa Qiu ('12), whose 140 assists set up Kozlova and Chin at the net. "We're having trouble filling in the setting position. That's going to be our main obstacle this year," Kozlova said.

This season, Yang is going to focus on more than just winning games. Practices are relatively calm and positive, with the only yells coming from players calling their shots. The atmosphere during practice is intense, but not overbearing, and Yang recognized this. "My goal is to start a program that is going to reflect character and the community of the school," he said. It seems like the Vixens have the character and work ethic required to be successful. Only time will tell if this new start will result in another winning season.

Boys' Soccer

Stuyvesant FC Optimistic About Upcoming Season



Boys' soccer tryouts for new and returning members at Pier 40.

Savannah Jeffreys / The Spectator

By ALISON FU
and JING LIN

On the second day of soccer tryouts, the Stuyvesant Schoolers were only allowed a third of the field, next to the girls' team and the football team, for conditioning exercises, various drills, and even a scrimmage game. However, everyone involved in the events going on on the left-most part of the rooftop field at Pier 40 seemed engaged in their workouts along with their potential teammates. The members who were already on the team continuously ran around encouraging and giving suggestions to the hopefuls.

This team chemistry and the players' comfort level with each other are exemplified through the members' close relationship with their coach Vincent Miller, who is only starting his second year with the Stuyvesant Schoolers. Every player agrees

that Miller has done a great job coaching the team. Last season, Stuyvesant lost four games total, two to Beacon, a dominant division rival, and two to Martin Luther King, Jr. High School, the eventual city champions. "Mr. Miller really stepped up to the plate. He had a large void to fill, and I think that he has surpassed the previous coach, Felix Fuksman," senior and co-captain Asa Conover said.

Still, the team has faced several challenges on and off the field, challenges that it is working to overcome. It has lost six seniors, including starters and former captains Krit McClean ('12) and Neil Maheshwari ('12). However, senior and goalie Nick Miller refuses to see this as a rebuilding season. "We have a lot of fast young guys who are ready to work," he said.

Coach Miller shares his optimism. "Last year we developed a lot of young players that were

freshmen and sophomores and now they're going to make their way into the starting lineup. We were ranked tenth in the city," Miller said. "We definitely want to improve in that."

Off the field, the team has faced the burden of a club rule that bans players who are on certain club teams from playing high school soccer. This rule originally would have affected sophomore Ethan Lochner and senior Matt Hoffman, who are both starters. Fortunately, Hoffman decided to switch to a different club team which will permit him to play for Stuyvesant. However, the highly regarded Lochner will not be with the team this fall.

Luckily, the club membership rule that almost disrupted the balance of the Schooners indirectly helps Stuyvesant against other teams, especially its rivals, Beacon and MLK, because both teams have players that will lose players to their club teams. "Teams like Martin Luther King and Beacon will be at a lower level," Coach Miller said.

In regards to preparation, The Stuyvesant FC team plans to focus on fitness training to stay in peak form. "We usually focus on a lot of fitness and we try to condition very hard and that makes us able to run with teams like [MLK and Beacon] and outperform them," Coach Miller said. Albeit the loss of seniors and the near loss of two key players, the Stuyvesant is looking to compete against the best and perform at a very high level this fall.

THE SPECTATOR SPORTS

Boys' Football

High Expectations For The Peglegs



Linemen practice blocking and pass-rushing drills.

Anne Duncan / The Spectator

By GAVIN SCHALL

When asked about his team's expectations for the season, senior quarterback and co-captain Alen Makhmudov said, "championship or bust"—a lofty goal for a team that finished last season with a mediocre 5-4 record. Makhmudov even went on to say that he didn't feel the team had any weaknesses (albeit with the qualifier that some could show up in a later scrimmage).

Yet, in defense of his questionable predictions, Makhmudov is no stranger to success. In 2010, he led the junior varsity to an undefeated season and he believes that he can apply those same leadership skills to the varsity team now that he is entrenched as the starter. While Makhmudov was highly inconsistent last season—finishing the year with 6 touchdowns and 12 interceptions—Head Coach Mark Strasser is confident that his quarterback can carry the Peglegs this fall. Strasser singled out Makhmudov as one of the four most impressive players during summer practice. He said, "Alen has done an amazing job he's improved a lot from last year."

Makhmudov's improvements aside, the primary reason for opti-

mism seems to be the team's new spread offense. Strasser sounded ecstatic when discussing the spread, describing it as "a hurry-up offense."

"We are trying to rush to the line and we are calling and adjusting plays on the line, rather than huddling up, to keep people honest and on their heels," he said.

Strasser was also amazed by the speed at which his team picked up the new offense. He said, "[The staff] put in the spread in 7 days, and it's like we've been running it for two years."

The keys to successfully running hurry-up spread offense are superior conditioning and talented skill position players (quarterbacks, running backs, and wide receivers). The Peglegs appear to be set on both counts. Makhmudov stated that the team went above and beyond to get into excellent shape this offseason. Many of the players went to non-mandatory PSAL run workouts known as the Big Apple Games to improve their conditioning over the summer. He also said that out of his three trips to what's known as "Hell Week" at Camp Scatico over his years at Stuyvesant, this year's was by far the toughest. If the team is able to maintain their fitness level, they're

going to be able to win games by simply wearing down the opposition.

Strasser believes that his skill position players are one of his team's greatest strengths, and the statistics seem to back up this claim. Senior wide out and co-captain Nathaniel Biggs (who also plays linebacker) finished last season with over 300 yards receiving and two touchdowns—earning the trust of Makhmudov, who said he would target Biggs any time he had single coverage. Makhmudov also went on record that wide receiver Mike Mazzeo has been the most impressive junior in camp.

A football team's greatest asset is its experience and the Peglegs have an abundance of it. They return 15 starters from last season and according to Strasser, only lost three to four significant contributors. Not only are the players experienced, but they've also adjusted to the new offense and are keeping the same base 4-3 defense.

Despite the excitement over the new offense, Strasser described the defense as the "strongest part of the team." This is due in part to the aforementioned consistency of the scheme, but also because of the play of star linebackers Biggs and senior and co-captain Jack Haggerty. Both players were praised by Strasser for their leadership and by Makhmudov for their tackling abilities.

Strasser believes that the 2012 team is better than the 2011 team, and stated that the current version is "most definitely" a playoff team. The core of this team is primarily the same group of players that made up the undefeated 2010 JV team. The bottom line is that these athletes have played together for four years and they know how to win. While they may not fulfill Makhmudov's "championship or bust" proclamation, there are plenty of reasons for optimism around Pier 40 this year.

Faster, Higher, Stronger, Together



Margot Yale / The Spectator

By GABRIELLE GILLOW

I had always known that I loved the Olympics. However, it wasn't until I sat in weekend rush-hour traffic for 45 minutes outside the Holland Tunnel that I realized that I am a true fanatic, perhaps even borderline obsessed.

It all started with NBC's profit-oriented coverage of the 2012 Olympics. Since all of the events shown in prime time

were actually tape-delayed, because of the time change from London, the media was often rife with spoilers. On that day I refused to let my mom listen to the traffic report because I was terrified of accidentally hearing the outcome of the latest head-to-head matchup between Ryan Lochte and Michael Phelps. I even scrambled to hit the off button on the car radio when a weekend update report on the latest exploits of

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Stuyvesant Alum Prescod Fences In Olympics



Nzingha Prescod ('10) fences against Aida Mohamed of Hungary at the London Olympics.

Courtesy of NBC News

By ADAM SCHORIN

In a 2009 interview with The Spectator, fencer and alumnus Nzingha Prescod ('10) was asked about her post-graduation plans. She replied, "I definitely plan on going to the Olympics in 2012, 2016, and maybe 2020." In fact, the Olympics have been Prescod's dream since she was a little girl, and now, at 20, she has returned from London as a member of the United States Olympic Fencing Team.

Fencers are chosen for the team based on their positions

in the National Rolling Points Standings (NRPS). Fencers accumulate points by finishing well at national and international competitions. After the last points-awarding event of the season, the top three fencers on the NRPS in each of the three weapons—foil, epee, and saber—become the starting members of the Olympic team, and the fourth-ranked fencers become the substitutes. By the end of July 2012, Prescod was the third-ranked

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Combating Concussions

By JORDAN WALLACH

As of this past August, 3,337 former players have sued the National Football League for negligence regarding permanent neurological illnesses stemming from concussions that happened during the course of their careers, according to the Associated Press.

Over the past few years, as more former football players have stepped forward to reveal their injuries and medical research have advanced, information on the dangers of concussions have been released to the public and sports leagues at every level have taken action to increase awareness of the effects of concussions and to reduce the amount of preventable injuries from the outset.

On June 13, 2011, the New York State Senate passed the Concussion Management Awareness Act, a bill sponsored by State Senator Kemp Hannon from Garden City. He told the Senate Majority Press, "By instituting these regulations, school personnel will be able to more easily identify concussions and thereby reduce the risk of long-term complications in our young people."

The bill, which came into effect on July 1, 2012, mandated that all Public School Athletic League (PSAL) coaches be trained and certified in Concussion Management every two years, regardless of the sport coached. Two-hour sessions were held at PSAL headquarters throughout the summer, mostly for coaches of fall sports, and will continue to be held for all coaches throughout the year.

"Concussions are a very tricky injury to deal with for a

coach. If there is no visual injury to a player's head, the coach has to still attend to the injured player to make sure he/she is okay to resume play," boys' soccer coach Vincent Miller said. "There are certain steps and protocols the coach must now follow. Once a player appears to have a head injury, game play will stop and the coach is required to evaluate the injured player."

"It was good because I think that a lot of people don't know about what the symptoms are and what you should do. It's really just to cover coaches, students, and the school and to start learning best practices," girls' volleyball coach Joshua Yang said.

Coaches were trained to administer Standard Assessments of Concussion (SAC), which tests orientation, immediate memory, concentration, and delayed recall in a number of different short exercises. The SAC is supposed to be taken within five minutes of the injury occurring and again after those five minutes, and the student-athlete's score is required to be submitted on an assessment form, which is later filed with the school's Athletic Director.

The PSAL also released a concussion information sheet on its website for students and parents, detailing effects and possible symptoms of the injury. "Return to play protocols" have also been established and they require that student-athletes be symptom-free for 24 hours and cleared by a licensed physician before resuming any athletic activity, after which there is a

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