Arts & Humanities

Fictional Columbia Alumni: TV Edition

37 characters you may not know went to Columbia.

By
Mussaad Al-Razouki '07DM, '08BUS
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Part I: Lawyers



Meghan Markle in "Suits," USA. (Pictorial Press Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo)

Before she became a royal duchess and media fixture, Meghan Markle played **Rachel Zane**, a paralegal who attends Columbia Law School, in the legal drama *Suits* (2011–2019).



Jason Segel in "How I Met Your Mother," CBS.

Environmental lawyer **Marshall Eriksen** (Jason Segel) of the 2005–2014 sitcom *How I Met Your Mother* earned his JD at Columbia.



Jesse Tyler Ferguson in "Modern Family," ABC.

In *Modern Family* (2009–2020), **Mitchell Pritchett** (Jesse Tyler Ferguson) is a double Ivy League graduate, having attended both Cornell University and Columbia Law School.



Charlie Cox as Matt Murdock in "Daredevil," Netflix. (Nicole Rivelli)

Superhero **Matt Murdock** (Charlie Cox); his best friend, **Foggy Nelson** (Elden Henson); and ex-girlfriend, **Elektra Natchios** (Élodie Yung), are Columbia Law School alumni in Netflix’s 2015–2018 *Daredevil* adaptation.



Carey Lowell in "Law & Order," NBC. (IMDb)

Jamie Ross (Carey Lowell) studied for the bar at Columbia before going on to serve as an assistant district attorney on *Law & Order* (1990–2010). In 2005, she appeared as a trial judge on the show’s short-lived spin-off *Law & Order: Trial by Jury* .



Tawny Cypress in "Yellowjackets." (IMDb)

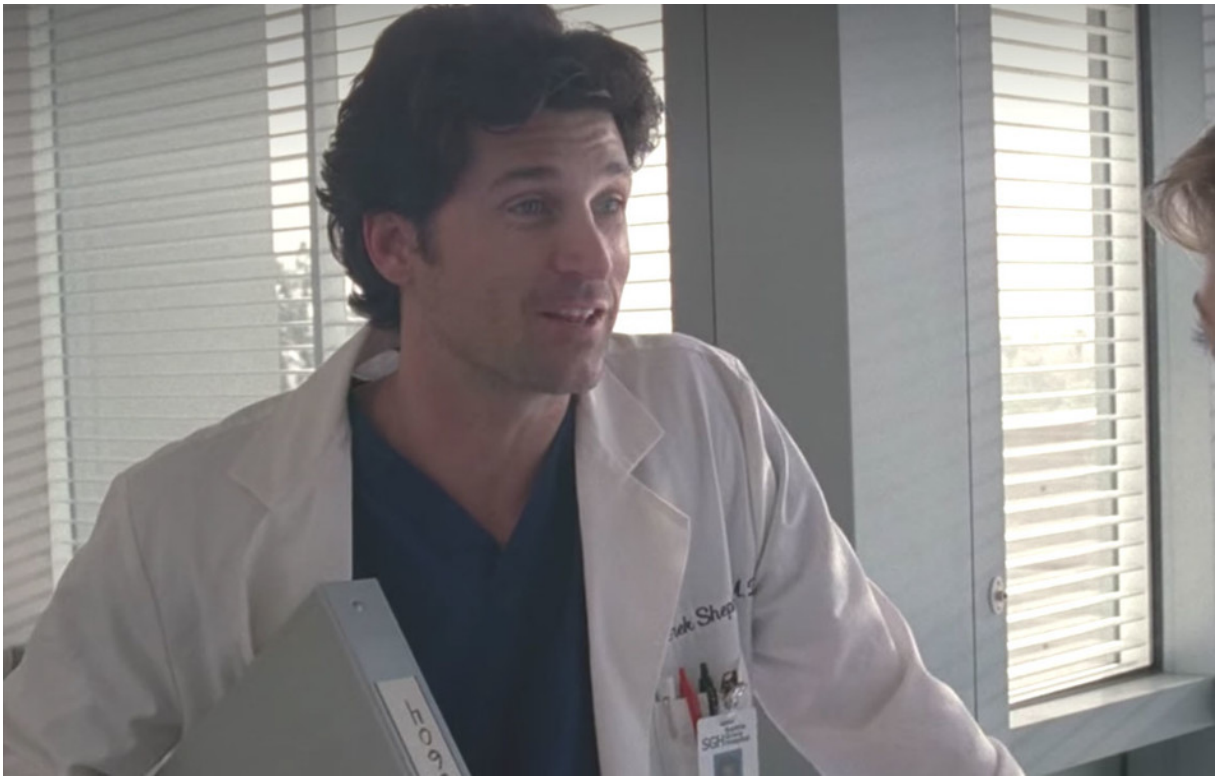
New Jersey state-senate candidate **Taissa Turner** (Tawny Cypress) is revealed to be a Columbia Law School alumna in *Yellowjackets*, the 2021– series about members of a high-school soccer team who survive a plane crash.



Cynthia Nixon in "And Just Like That..." (Craig Blankenhorn / HBO Max)

In *Sex and the City* (1998–2004), **Miranda Hobbes** (Cynthia Nixon) is a Harvard-educated corporate lawyer who makes partner at her law firm. In the series' 2021–22 spinoff, *And Just Like That...*, she goes back to school to pursue a master's in human rights at Columbia.

Part II: Doctors



Patrick Dempsey in "Grey's Anatomy," ABC.

In *Grey's Anatomy* (2005–), **Derek Shephard** (Patrick Dempsey); his best friend, **Mark Sloan** (Eric Dane); and ex-wife, **Addison Montgomery** (Kate Walsh); are all Columbia medical-school graduates who work at the same hospital.



Kate Walsh (left) and Audra McDonald in "Private Practice," ABC. (Photo by Randy Holmes - ©2011 American Broadcasting Companies, Inc. All rights reserved.)

Doctors and on-and-off couple **Sam Bennett** (Taye Diggs) and **Naomi Bennett** (Audra McDonald) are Columbia alumni in *Private Practice* (2007–2013), a *Grey's Anatomy* spin-off centered on Addison Montgomery.



Mindy Kaling and Danny Castellano in "The Mindy Project," Fox / Hulu.

As evidenced by a shirt seen in season two, New York City OB/GYN **Mindy Lahiri** (Mindy Kaling) of *The Mindy Project* (2012–2017) is a Columbia alumna.



Rob Morrow in "Northern Exposure," CBS. (IMDb)

Queens native **Joel Fleischman** (Rob Morrow), another Columbia med-school alum, brings his health expertise and city sensibility to a remote Alaska town in *Northern Exposure* (1990–1995).



Omar Epps (right) with Hugh Laurie in "House," Fox. (IMDb)

While Dr. House himself didn’t attend Columbia, neurologist **Eric Foreman** (Omar Epps) and oncologist **James Wilson** (Robert Sean Leonard) of the 2004–2012 medical drama *House* are both alumni.



Matthew Fox in "Lost," ABC. (IMDb)

In the supernatural series *Lost* (2004–2010), real-life Columbia grad Matthew Fox ’89CC plays physician **Jack Shephard**, a med-school alum who gets stranded on a remote island after a plane crash. (Naturally, his medical knowledge proves extremely valuable.)



Barry Watson in "7th Heaven," WB. (IMDb)

Rising doctors **Matt Camden** (Barry Watson) and **Sarah Glass Camden** (Sarah Danielle Madison) attend Columbia medical school in the 1996–2006 family drama *7th Heaven*.



Vanessa Redgrave in "Nip/Tuck," FX. (IMDb)

Vanessa Redgrave had a recurring role on *Nip/Tuck* (2003–2010) as **Erica Noughton**, a psychologist with a PhD from Columbia.

Part III: Undergrad Alumni



Jamie-Lynn Sigler with James Gandolfini in "The Sopranos," HBO. (IMDb)

In *The Sopranos* (1999–2007), mob princess **Meadow Soprano** (Jamie-Lynn Sigler) attends Columbia College and lives on campus.



Debra Messing and Eric McCormack in "Will & Grace," NBC. (IMDb)

Both **Will Truman** (Eric McCormack) and **Grace Adler** (Debra Messing) of *Will & Grace* (1998–2020) are alumni. In fact, they began their famous friendship during their first year at Columbia.



Leighton Meester and Blake Lively in "Gossip Girl," The CW.

Blair Waldorf (Leighton Meester), **Serena van der Woodsen** (Blake Lively), and **Nate Archibald** (Chace Crawford) all attend Columbia College in the 2007–2012 teen drama *Gossip Girl.*



Cristin Milioti in "How I Met Your Mother," CBS. (IMDb)

Tracy McConnell (Cristin Milioti), the titular mother of *How I Met Your Mother* (2005–2014), is a former Columbia economics major.



Tracey Gold in "Growing Pains," ABC. (IMDb)

After graduating high school with honors, **Carol Seaver** (Tracey Gold) of the 1985–1992 family sitcom *Growing Pains* goes on to attend Columbia.



Bridget Moynahan in "Blue Bloods," CBS. (Craig Blankenhorn ©2014 CBS Broadcasting Inc. All Rights Reserved)

In the NYC cop drama *Blue Bloods* (2010–), Bridget Moynahan plays **Erin Reagan**, an assistant district attorney and single mother who graduated top of her class at Columbia. Reagan's daughter, **Nicky Reagan-Boyle** (Sami Gayle), graduates from the College in season eight.



Ellie Kemper in "Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt," Netflix. (Courtesy of Netflix)

Kimmy Schmidt (Ellie Kemper) of *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* (2015–2019) moves to New York City after being held captive in a bunker for fifteen years. In the show’s third season, she receives a Columbia scholarship but ends up flunking out.



Elizabeth Berkley in "Saved by the Bell," NBC. (IMDb)

In *Saved by the Bell* (1989–1993), high-school student **Jessie Spano** (Elizabeth Berkley) gets rejected from her dream college, Stanford, before settling for Columbia.



Demián Bichir in "Weeds," Showtime. (IMDb)

Esteban Reyes (Demián Bichir) is a drug-cartel leader who attended Columbia in *Weeds*, the 2005–2012 dark comedy created by Jenji Kohan ’91CC.



Molly C. Quinn in "Castle," ABC. (Mitchell Haaseth, ABC ©2015 American Broadcasting Companies, Inc. All rights reserved)

In *Castle* (2009–2016), mystery writer Richard Castle’s daughter, **Alexis Castle** (Molly C. Quinn), attends Columbia for undergrad.



Jennie Garth in "What I Like About You," WB. (IMDb)

Public-relations professional **Val Tyler** (Jennie Garth) is an alum in the sitcom *What I Like About You* (2002–2006). Her less ambitious younger sister, Holly (Amanda Bynes), tries to follow in her footsteps but ends up skipping her Columbia admissions interview to hang out in Coney Island.

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