

FALL 2017

COLUMBIA

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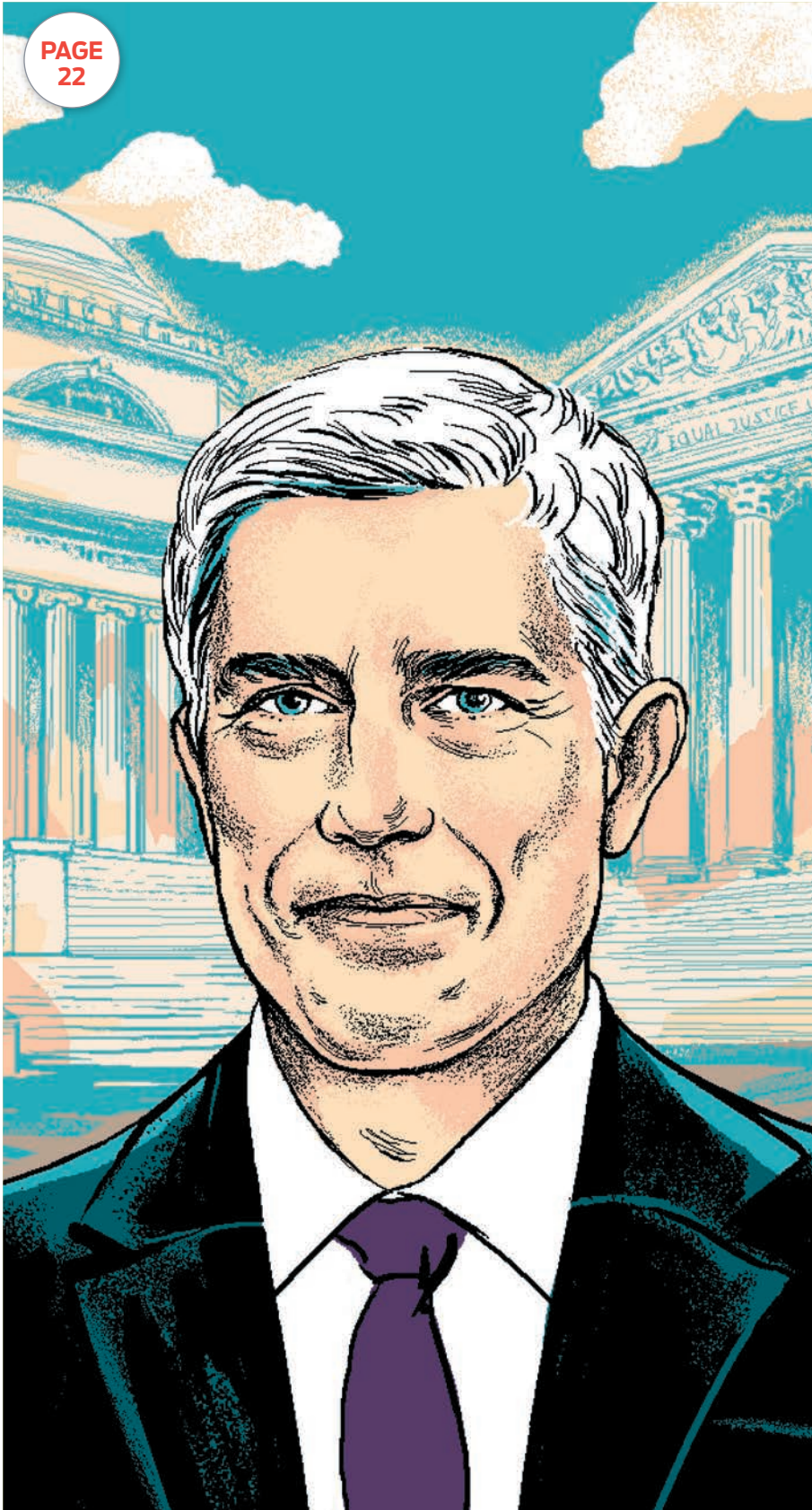
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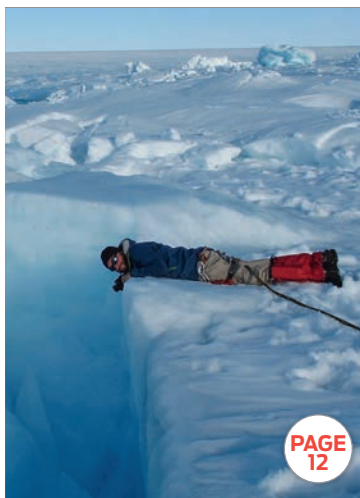
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Deputy Vice President for Strategic Communications
Jerry Kisslinger '79CC, '82GSAS

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Sally Lee

Art Director
Jeffrey Saks

Managing Editor
Rebecca Shapiro

Senior Editors
David J. Craig, Paul Hond

Copy Chief
Joshua J. Friedman '08JRN

Assistant to the Editor
Julia Joy

Editorial Assistant
Catherine Elizabeth Hernandez

Senior Director for Strategic Communications
Tracy Quinn '14SPS

Director of Digital Strategy
Gwynne Gauntlett

Director for Marketing Research
Linda Ury Greenberg

Content Producer
Carolina Castro

Subscriptions:
Address and archive assistance
assistmag@columbia.edu
212-851-4155

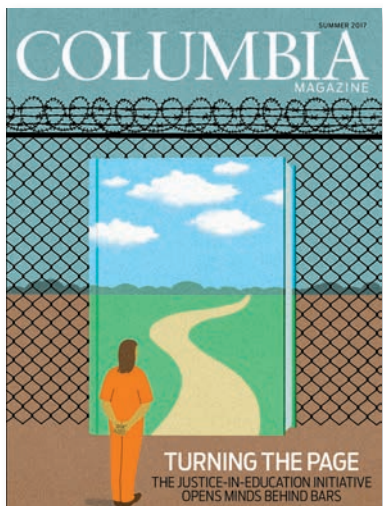
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COLLEGE BEHIND BARS

I am a Columbia alumnus and an inmate at Otisville Federal Correctional Institution in Otisville, New York. I was partial to your article “Opening Minds Behind Bars” (Summer 2017).

The education programs offered at Otisville don’t come close to what Columbia’s Justice-in-Education Initiative has achieved in New York State prisons. I am involved in education at the Otisville camp; my mission is to advance the educational opportunities for inmates.

I believe your programs should be a part of the federal prison system as well. I realize there are roadblocks: to the best of my knowledge the federal system only allows written (non-online) correspondence courses, which makes college degrees nearly impossible. But from the outside, Columbia would be able to gather more data, and possibly be able to advance the capabilities of the federal prison system. Otisville is close by and could be a unique pilot initiative.

Your mission is exemplary, and I want to be involved in any way I can, while incarcerated and after my release in 2020. I used to be very involved with Columbia College and Columbia Engineering admissions, volunteering for fifteen years, and I plan to continue my involvement with Columbia upon my release.

Mair Faibish ’83SEAS
Otisville, NY

I guess my mind is closed. Get over yourselves and your alleged good intentions supported with other people’s money. Start making criminals accountable for their crimes instead of blaming society in general. Your good intentions are promoting anarchy. Divest from private prisons — really? They save the government tax money. But living in New York, why would you care about that?

Steve Rosenblatt ’74SEAS
Houston, TX

As an alum who has taught students at Teachers College and incarcerated students through the Bard Prison

Initiative, I applaud Columbia’s leadership in restoring college-in-prison programs.

While your article mentions several other institutions in New York that operate postsecondary programs in prisons, Columbia’s Justice-in-Education Initiative is part of a broader national movement. The Vera Institute of Justice, where I am the acting director of the substance-use and mental-health program, facilitates partnerships in over a hundred correctional facilities.

As the article discusses, providing postsecondary education in prison confers tremendous benefits, including reducing recidivism, facilitating family reunification, and saving taxpayer dollars. And postsecondary programs equip incarcerated students with skills necessary for gainful employment.

Formerly incarcerated students often face barriers upon leaving prison that undercut the advantages of their postsecondary achievements, such as job

LETTERS

A LIFE IN COMICS

Such a creative way to tell the story of the woman behind Columbia’s comics archives! It’s been years since I’ve done a *Mad* fold-in. Thanks!

Stephanie Pitsirilos
’02PH
New York, NY

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?

E-MAIL US AT:
feedback@columbia.edu

OR WRITE TO US:
Columbia Magazine
Columbia Alumni Center
622 W. 113th Street, MC 4521
New York, NY 10025

Letters may be edited for brevity or clarity.

LETTERS

and housing discrimination and challenges enrolling in colleges in their communities. Comprehensive efforts to support formerly incarcerated students are needed to maximize the value of the crucial programs described in your article.

Leah Gogel Pope '12TC
New York, NY

I read your article with a mixture of interest and puzzlement. The author depicts being in stir as virtually elevating. Where else can one get free rent, free food, free laundry, free lectures, free empathy, and now even free college? Sign me up.

Milton Turoff '55BUS
West Orange, NJ

HUEY, DEWEY, AND LOUIE

I wanted to let you know how much I have enjoyed reading *Columbia Magazine* lately. The variety and depth of the articles make them extremely interesting, and the graphics are fantastic. In the Summer 2017 issue, the imaginative presentation of the story of comics curator Karen Green particularly caught my eye (“A Life in Comics: The Graphic Adventures of Karen Green ’97GSAS”).

The only thing I found sad in Green’s story was that she had to leave Columbia for Rutgers to earn her library degree. Too bad she was not able to obtain it closer to home. Columbia had a wonderful library school created by Melvil Dewey of Dewey Decimal fame. I was lucky enough to receive my master’s in library service

there in 1973. Unfortunately, the school closed in the early 1990s. I was very sorry when it disbanded. The education I received there provided me with a career that was most satisfying for many decades.

Jeannette Siano Newman '73LS
Floral Park, NY

Back in 1965 or so, when Columbia College students worked part-time at Butler Library’s main desk, an enterprising bunch of comedians cataloged and stored in the stacks a small selection of comic books, including *Donald Duck*, perhaps *Bugs Bunny*, and others.

It was a prank born mostly of the desire to challenge the alertness of the often prudish library staff. This was during the era when the library was computerizing all its holdings, so it was believed that the prank would be discovered in short order.

Time passed, and the merry pranksters graduated and went their separate ways. But I can’t help wondering: did the original, first-ever cataloged comics at Butler cross Karen Green’s path? (Search “Donald Duck.”) If still around, these

comics would have put Butler Library ahead of the comic-book curve.

Dimitri Ledkovsky '67CC
Orleans, MA

Columbia librarians gamely searched the electronic database, the old card catalog, and the stacks but sadly found no trace of your Donald comics. Luckily, only eight years after your surreptitious donation, Columbia formally acquired its first comic-book collection, a gift from another College alumnus, Jonathan Zeitlin '72CC. This collection contained about 1,300 comics, chiefly from the 1960s, including issues of Daredevil, X-Men, The Flash, and The Silver Surfer. —Ed.



REMEMBERING VAN DOREN

I greatly enjoyed the article on Mark Van Doren in the Summer 2017 issue (“Counting Van Dorens,” College Walk).

In my senior year at the College, I took Professor Van Doren’s course on the poetry of Hardy and Yeats. It was a small class — mostly seniors, many of them my friends. We slogged through Hardy’s *The Dynasts* and then enjoyed the many pleasures of Yeats.

Years later, while on an auto tour of Ireland, I stopped at Yeats’s grave in Drumcliff, County Sligo, and saw his famous epitaph: “Cast a cold Eye / On Life, on Death. / Horseman, pass by.” Thanks to Professor Van Doren, my interest in poetry has continued even to the age of ninety-four.

Melvin Hershkovitz '42CC
Northampton, MA

In 1958, I graduated from Queens College. As valedictorian and with a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship, I chose to continue my studies at Columbia. There I studied with many great professors: the majestic Jerome Buckley,

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

CODE	SCHOOL	CODE	SCHOOL
BC	Barnard College	NRS	School of Nursing
BUS	Graduate School of Business	OPT	School of Optometry
CC	Columbia College	PH	Mailman School of Public Health
DM	College of Dental Medicine	PHRM	School of Pharmaceutical Sciences
GS	School of General Studies	PS	College of Physicians and Surgeons
GSAPP	Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation	SEAS	Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science
GSAS	Graduate School of Arts and Sciences	SIPA	School of International and Public Affairs
HON	(Honorary degree)	SOA	School of the Arts
JRN	Graduate School of Journalism	SPS	School of Professional Studies
JTS	Jewish Theological Seminary	SW	School of Social Work
KC	King’s College	TC	Teachers College
LAW	School of Law	UTS	Union Theological Seminary
LS	School of Library Service		

who intoned Wordsworth and Tennyson; Marjorie Nicolson, who taught Milton like a grand priestess of literature, always in black, with a single strand of pearls; and William York Tindall, who, in the course *Modern Poetry*, informed us that he wasn't going to waste time on anyone other than Gerard Manley Hopkins and William Butler Yeats.

But best of all was Mark Van Doren, who taught a popular course called *The Art of Poetry*, which, we soon discovered, was so broadly defined as to include Cervantes and Dickens. At his best when lecturing on Shakespeare, Van Doren explained how the master playwright's characters each had a distinct syntax and vocabulary: "Listen to these lines spoken by Falstaff. Short, breathy, just like a fat man. Goes with his great bulk. Almost never speaks in sentences, never more than three or four words."

When I arrived for class on the final day of the semester, the room was crowded with photographers and journalists, who had been told in advance of the great teacher's impending retirement. All at once, we realized we had been privileged to attend his last class at Columbia.

My notes for that day, May 13, 1959, record Van Doren summarizing his thoughts on Don Quixote. The man was a nuisance, he said, not doing anything the world wanted. Maybe he was the only knight who ever expressed his ideals in action. All of us read books and love them; only Don Quixote really believed them. The professor wondered if we did. The don's experiment — living one's ideals — should perhaps not be tried again. It's dangerous, Van Doren said. I wondered if I would be able to live mine.

My subsequent journey took me to a PhD at Cornell University and then up the ladder of professorships, to emerge finally as president of Framingham State University, in Massachusetts. Now retired, I still inform my presentations in a local lifelong-learning program with the ideals and teaching insights I learned from Mark Van Doren almost sixty years ago.

Helen Heineman '59GSAS
Brewster, MA

ADDICTION STIGMA

Thank you for bringing drug abuse to the fore in "Painkiller abuse now a global scourge" (*Explorations*, Summer 2017). Without a person-centered approach, doctors and regulators will focus on judging their patients' motives rather than tending to these human beings in pain. I have yet to hear our leaders talk about ways to educate our professionals, patients, and families about the disease of addiction, underlying factors like trauma and mental illness, and the efforts being put in place specifically to intervene with youth. We must create pathways for people to talk openly, without risk, about their experience with opiates. Removing the stigma is critical.

Evita Morin '05CC, '09SW
San Antonio, TX

DEFENDING ROSSET

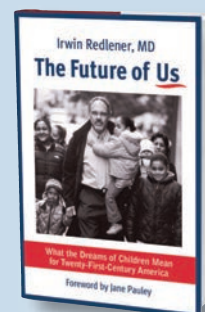
As much credit as Barney Rosset deserves for his courageous battle against censorship ("Barney: Grove Press and Barney Rosset," *Books*, Summer 2017), Columbia can take genuine pride in the fact that the brilliant and tenacious lawyer who successfully represented Rosset was Charles Rembar, who graduated from Columbia Law School in 1938.

After I graduated from the law school in 1969, I had the privilege of working for Rembar, who was known to his friends and colleagues as Cy. The year before, Cy had published *The End of Obscenity*, which chronicled his remarkable seven-year court battle representing Grove Press, which culminated in his winning argument before the US Supreme Court.

Cy was a charming, erudite, and highly skilled lawyer, and an incisive and engaging writer. I learned so much from him, particularly about the importance of robust protection for the First Amendment, which has marked my career ever since.

Stephen Rohde '69LAW
Los Angeles, CA

New from
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The Future of Us

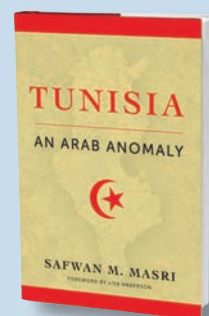
*What the Dreams of Children Mean for
Twenty-First-Century America*

IRWIN REDLENER, MD

Foreword by Jane Pauley

"[The book] will inform you, fascinate you, and most of all, inspire you. . . . Irwin and his partner and wife Karen have improved the health and life prospects of millions upon millions of children, but Redlener never flags in his efforts to do more, and to remind us—with great urgency and eloquence—how much better we can and must do for America's and the world's poor and vulnerable children."

—Jeffrey D. Sachs



Tunisia

An Arab Anomaly

SAFWAN M. MASRI

Foreword by Lisa Anderson

"Richly researched and analyzed, and based on a compelling historical narrative, this is a provocative book that will make a valuable contribution to the understanding of North Africa and to the body of work on the modern Arab world."

—Roula Khalaf, Deputy Editor,
Financial Times

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COLLEGE WALK

NOTES
FROM 116TH
STREET AND
BEYOND



Man in the middle:
Truman (in hat)
in April 1968.

A PROVOST'S REFLECTIONS

David B. Truman and the bust of '68

As Columbia prepares for the fusillade of remembrances that will accompany next year's fiftieth anniversary of the campus uprising of 1968, the University Seminars have gotten a head start on the latest round of '68 soul-searching. Since their inception in 1944, the seminars have presented intellectual offerings in some ninety subjects, including peace, death, the New Testament, comparative philosophy, and the history of Alma Mater itself. The first seminar this past academic year centered on David B. Truman, the former Columbia College dean and University provost whose career was upended by the turmoil of 1968.

The speaker was Truman's son, Ted, a senior fellow at

the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington, DC. Before two dozen guests in Faculty House, Truman *files* discussed *Reflections on the Columbia Disorders of 1968*, a memoir his father had long agonized over after leaving Columbia in 1969 to become president of Mount Holyoke College. The work remained sealed in the Columbia archives until David Truman's death in 2003. It was published in 2009.

An energetic and personable political scientist, David Truman joined the Columbia faculty in 1951. In 1962 he became dean and quickly won undergraduate praise, in part for affirming the College's centrality to the University. Elevated to provost in 1967, he was poised to become president.

But in April 1968, students and administrators clashed over the University's plan to build a gymnasium in Morningside Park and over its ties to the Institute for Defense Analyses, a weapons-research think tank. Students seized five campus buildings and demanded amnesty as a precondition for negotiations. Truman balked, and in the end, the administration called in the NYPD — an action that resulted in the beatings of students and some seven hundred arrests. Rightly or wrongly, "the bust" cast Truman as the authoritarian voice of Low Library.

"He loved Columbia," said Ted Truman, wearing a dark-blue tie adorned with a light-blue Columbia crown motif. "As far as I knew, he was not bitter, just disappointed.

But he suffered from acute depression afterward.” That, combined with his Mount Holyoke duties, delayed Truman *père* from putting down his thoughts at length. Finally, Ted and his wife gave David a computer for his fiftieth wedding anniversary, which facilitated the catharsis.

“My depression came from the nightmarish experience of witnessing, of experiencing, what can properly be described as the disintegration of a great university,” the former provost wrote.

The University Seminars are closed to the public and the press “to encourage candor in discussion of controversial issues,” as the website notes. What can be said is that on this evening, Truman and ’68 were vigorously discussed. The conversation continued at a post-seminar dinner.

“I think David did the best he could, and I don’t think anyone could have done better,” said Michael Garrett ’66CC, ’69LAW, ’70BUS, who as a student leader got to know Truman well. “He was so frustrated with the naiveté and silliness of the faculty, and so shocked that the students could be manipulated so easily by the radicals, and so disappointed by the cops and members of the administration and Trustees. He was in an impossible situation from day one.”

An especially sore point was Truman’s relations with the Ad Hoc Faculty Group, which posited itself as an intermediary between the students and the administration. “He felt the group did not realize

that the goal of the hard-core radicals was to bring down the University and start the revolution,” said Ted Truman.

“When Ted’s father claimed that it was the objective of the radical students to destroy the University,” countered Fayerweather occupier Frank Kehl ’81GSAS, ’81SIPA, “he was not being a political scientist but a participant observer who had a stake in an outcome that was positive for the Trustees and the administration, and was seeking allies.”

Ted Truman dismissed that notion. “My father said, ‘We’ll have to call the cops, and I’ll have to resign.’ So he had no reason to seek allies.” As David Truman wrote, “I still regret that it was necessary to involve police in the Columbia crisis . . . But I do not see, even after more than twenty years of continual and, I guess, inescapable reflection on those events, any reasonable alternative that in the circumstances was available to us.”

This is how Truman concludes his *Reflections*: “Behind this Columbia story another can be told, although I probably shall not write it. That story is implicit in much that I have written in these pages. It has to do with friendships, colleagueships, that I treasure. It has to do with the pride that I felt in joining the Columbia faculty and in being one of a group of scholars of standing and substance with whom it was an inspiration to be associated . . . It is a better story.”

“He labored over each word,” said Ted.

— *Thomas Vinciguerra*
’85CC, ’86JRN, ’90GSAS

THE SHORT LIST

VISIT Meet scientists, tour their labs, and learn about the earth sciences at the **Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory Open House**. October 7 at 10 a.m. in Palisades, New York. openhouse.ldeo.columbia.edu

WRITE **The Columbia Fiction Foundry**, a group for alumni authors who want to polish their skills and navigate the publishing business, holds meetings every month at the Alumni Center. Alumni writers can participate in person or contribute to an online forum. fictionfoundry.alumni.columbia.edu

ROAR It’s **Homecoming 2017**, and the Lions are taking on Dartmouth. The Baker Athletics Complex will hold a day of family activities and, of course, a football game. October 14 at 11 a.m. college.columbia.edu/alumni/events/homecoming-2017

STARGAZE Attend a free lecture and contemplate the cosmos with Columbia astronomers at Pupin Hall’s rooftop observatory. Every other Friday throughout the academic year. outreach.astro.columbia.edu



JOIN Alumni can sign up for **CAA Arts Access** to receive benefits and discounts at over sixty cultural organizations, including Lincoln Center and the Tribeca Film Festival. Membership is free. alumniarts.columbia.edu

LISTEN The string ensemble **JACK Quartet** will perform works by new and twentieth-century composers at Miller Theatre on October 19 and October 21 at 8 p.m. millertheatre.com/event-series/soundscape-america



JEEPERS CREEPERS

Artist Lina Puerta is inspired by the generative power of nature — that is, by plants that creep into abandoned urban spaces and “reclaim” them. Until June 2018, Miller Theatre, in collaboration with the Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery, will feature an installation from Puerta’s Botánico Series, art that explores the relationship between the human and botanical worlds. The artist, who grew up in Colombia and lives in Harlem, uses fabric, foam, pre-made synthetic plants, and other manufactured materials in her works, raising questions about mass production, consumerism, and the impermanence of life.

TAKE A WALK ON THE MORNINGSIDE

There’s nothing too wild about this little hike

The starting point was Low Library, which, as the tour group learned, hasn’t been a library since 1934. But as the campus’s first building and original library, it was the perfect base for Columbia’s free biweekly historical tour, held every Monday and Wednesday year-round. On a recent afternoon, twenty-two people congregated in the Low visitors’ center, ready for a forty-five-minute walkabout.

Guides Alexandria Parkhurst and Daniel Kvoras, both juniors, led their group through the front doors, past the Ionic columns, and halfway down the steps to *Alma Mater*. The bronze statue was designed in 1901 by Daniel Chester French, a sculptor famous for his statue of Lincoln in the Lincoln Memorial and less known for his love of owls. “He even hid an owl within the *Alma Mater* sculpture,” Parkhurst said, and gamely recited the

bird watching, but the tour was moving along briskly.

Next, the guides stopped by Kent Hall, home to the Starr East Asian Library, which was modeled after the Wren Library at Trinity College, Cambridge; then Philosophy Hall, with its 1930 replica of *The Thinker* (a gift of Columbia president Nicholas Murray Butler, who ordered the cast from Rodin’s favorite Paris foundry); then Buell Hall, the oldest building on campus and the last remnant of Bloomingdale Insane Asylum, which stood on Morningside Heights until 1889.

The group walked east to Revson Plaza, a bridge over Amsterdam Avenue known for its modern art and selfie-worthy Manhattan views. “It’s slowly becoming a sculpture garden,” said Parkhurst, who introduced Jacques Lipchitz’s *Bellerophon Taming Pegasus*, a gift to the law school that was *not*, Parkhurst emphasized, installed



Columbia legend that the first member of an undergraduate class to spot it will graduate as valedictorian. Prospective students in the group might have welcomed the opportunity to linger for a few moments of



upside down. (But where *does* the winged horse end and the human begin?) Then came Henry Moore’s *Three-Way Piece No. 1: Points*, nicknamed “the tooth” due to its shape. “If you get four or five adults, you can

spin it,” Parkhurst said. “We call it ‘turning the tooth.’” (The dental school was not available for comment.)

Also on the itinerary: Schermerhorn Hall, where Franz Boas founded the nation’s first anthropology department; Saint Paul’s Chapel, where Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel ‘65CC recorded parts of “The Boxer” in 1969; and the school of engineering, which once possessed a giant steam locomotive that was kept in the mathematics building basement.

Then there was Pupin Hall, where the atom was split, opening the door to nuclear energy and the bomb. “Has anybody heard of the Manhattan Project?” Parkhurst asked the visitors. Everyone had.

The tour ended at Butler Library, which houses the bulk of Columbia’s stacks (two million books) and a collection of antique furnishings that require constant upkeep. As the tour group passed the Wien Reading Room, a guest pointed out a broken chandelier above the help desk, seemingly about to fall. “I’ll bring that up with the Butler personnel,” responded Kvoras



From left: *The Thinker*, “the tooth,” Buell Hall.

at a library-appropriate volume, before leading the group down the marble stairs, past a portrait of former Columbia president Dwight D. Eisenhower, and out the side door.

— Julia Joy

THE ART OF THE DIG

Learning the nuts and bolts of investigative reporting

The journalists came from Italy and Estonia, Spain and Finland. They came from Australia and California. Six came from Greece. They all sat in a classroom in Pulitzer Hall on a recent morning, listening to Charles Ornstein, a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for ProPublica and an adjunct professor at Columbia’s Graduate School of Journalism, give a master class in the use of public records.

The daylong class was part of the Summer Investigative Reporting

Course, a three-week, non-credit program in the J-school’s Professional Education division. The course trains seasoned reporters, most of them from abroad, in the essentials: how to research individuals and companies, harvest information from social media, navigate legal issues, and more.

Citing his ProPublica series *Dollars for Doctors: How Industry Money Reaches Physicians*, which began in 2010 as an investigation with his colleague Tracy Weber (who also teaches in the course), Ornstein shared the methods he’d used to compile the publicly searchable *Dollars for Docs* database, which tracks the money individual doctors receive from pharmaceutical companies.

“The idea is not only to arm reporters from all over the world with the tools that investigative reporters use to do their job, but to teach them how to *think* about investigative reporting,” Ornstein says.

Blake Morrison, an investigative editor at Reuters and a recipient of the J-school’s John B. Oakes Award for Distinguished Environmental Journalism, has, like Ornstein, taught in the course since its inception in 2012. “It’s always eye-opening,” Morrison says. “To

work with international reporters and understand more about the challenges they face gives me greater appreciation for the freedoms that we might take for granted in the US: the ability to get government records, or speak freely with people in positions of power.”

Each year, participants bring story ideas in all categories: politics, the arts, sports, human rights, public health, international affairs, immigration, and war and conflict. (Because the journalists are working on sensitive stories, their in-class discussions are off the record.)

Usually there is misconduct to be uncovered. “We talk about ‘villains and victims,’” Morrison says. “Those who do wrong and those who suffer as a consequence. In unraveling cases of wrongdoing, it’s important to find out why they occurred in the first place. We try to get

to a point where we can figure out who’s behind them, and why that person or entity has been allowed to continue.”

This summer, Morrison’s workshop during the course focused on burden of proof: what evidence must you offer in your stories? “Often, we’re led by our instincts,” he says. “We see things that are suspicious and respond to them. The effort here is to get people to say, ‘Wait. Even though this may appear to me to be true, how do I present a case that is solid and backed by facts?’”

Such questions have metaphysical force in a time of “fake news.”

“The media no longer has a monopoly on news and information,” says Sheila Coronel, director of the Stabile Center for Investigative Journalism, dean of academic affairs, and codirector of the summer course with Ernest Sotomayor, who is dean of student affairs and director of Latin American initiatives. “Millions of people get their news

“How do I present a case that is solid and backed by facts?”

COLLEGE WALK

from Facebook or Twitter, where basically anyone can publish. So it becomes even more important to teach the methods of fact-based, evidence-based journalism.”

Coronel worked for the underground press in the Philippines during the rule of Ferdinand Marcos and covered the revolution that toppled him. Later she became founding director of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, where her work led to the arrest, in 2001, of Philippine president Joseph Estrada on charges of plundering the country’s coffers. This summer she was back in Manila, reporting on the drug war under president Rodrigo Duterte.

Despite attacks on the press and the harassment of journalists, Coronel sees a surge of interest in the field worldwide. “This is a great time to do investigative reporting,” she says.

Back at Pulitzer Hall, Ornstein, who with Tracy Weber was lead writer on the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Los Angeles Times* series *The Troubles at King/Drew*, about conditions in a Los Angeles hospital, saw instruction translate quickly into action.

“I’m amazed when people use the tools we teach to come up with stories right on the spot, about issues that are important in their countries,” he says.

Adds Sotomayor, “The most important element for their stories is information, and they get that. They realize that what makes a story viable and what makes it stand on its own is reporting, reporting, reporting.”

— Paul Hond

PAGING DR. BARD

A 275-year-old physician has a prescription for the ages



One afternoon this past July, in the men’s room on lower level 2 of the Hammer Health Sciences Building, on the Columbia University Medical Center campus, a man in knee-high riding boots, a brass-button-studded blue Colonial coat, white breeches, and a white cravat, stood affixing his wig. In the enlightened and tolerant environs of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, he attracted remarkably little attention.

The man in Colonial attire, who could be heard complaining about his “itchy hairpiece,” was Ron Cohen ’81PS, founder and CEO of Acorda Therapeutics, a biotech company that develops therapies for people

with neurological disorders. Cohen is also a veteran thespian and a former member of P&S’s Bard Hall Players, the preeminent medical-school theater company in the country.

Today, however, Cohen was not on his way to a performance of *The Crucible*, the show that recently capped off the company’s fiftieth-anniversary season, but to the CUMC video studio. Here he would recite an excerpt from Samuel Bard’s “A Discourse upon the Duties of a Physician,” which was delivered at the King’s College Commencement on May 16, 1769 — the day on which the University’s first medical degrees were conferred. The videotaped dramatic monologue was slated to entertain faculty and students at a

reception following Dean Lee Goldman’s 250th-anniversary “state of the medical school” address later in the year.

Bard, personal physician to George Washington, was the founder of the medical school at King’s College — the first in the American colonies to grant a medical degree.

“Be not alarmed, if I set out in telling you, that your Labours must have no End. No less than Life, and its greatest Blessing Health, are to be the Objects of your Attention; and would you acquit yourselves to your own Consciences, you must spend your Days in assiduous Enquiries, after the Means of rendering those of others long and happy,” Bard/Cohen declaimed. “There is nothing by which a Man approaches nearer to the Perfections of the Deity than by restoring the Sick to the Enjoyment of the Blessings of Health.”

Later, as Cohen reflected on the speech, he marveled at how Bard’s sentiments on a doctor’s duty still resonate in the twenty-first century. “To provide patients with the best care, today’s physicians have to keep up with a swelling store of medical knowledge and insurance rigmarole and still stay solvent. The task is no less daunting for those who, like me, work to develop new therapies and seek regulatory approval for them,” he said. “And still the practice of medicine remains an honor and a privilege.”

— Peter Wortsman



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A full-page photograph of an Antarctic landscape. In the foreground, a large, dark blue iceberg floats in the water, its surface showing some white snow. In the middle ground, a long, low ice shelf or glacier extends across the frame, with a smaller iceberg floating to the left. In the background, snow-capped mountains rise against a clear blue sky. The overall scene is bright and cold.

THE ICE DETECTIVES

Columbia researchers go to the ends of the earth to crack the coldest case of all

By Paul Hond



JIM ZUCKERMAN / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Ice is slippery quarry. Always moving, never sleeping, it vanishes and reappears, grows and shrinks, advances and retreats. It builds up over periods of geological time and can crumble in the wink of a polar summer. Today, earth's great ice sheets sprawl over Antarctica and Greenland, the vast, sliding bodies polished by the harshest conditions on the planet, layered with millennia of snowfall packed more than two miles thick in spots: a colossal architecture moving constantly under its own weight, sloping toward the sea.

Robin Bell '89GSAS is watching. Bell, a geophysicist at Columbia's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory and one of the world's leading polar investigators, has been tracking ice for thirty years: inspecting it, measuring it, drilling it, flying over it, spying under it, peering through its layers, sleeping on it, skiing on it. She has coordinated ten expeditions to Antarctica and Greenland, which between them hold more than 99 percent of the world's frozen fresh water.

That ice is transforming before her eyes.

"There are three lines of evidence that the ice sheets are changing," Bell says. "One: in some places they are flowing twice as fast as they were twenty years ago — a mile a year in the last decade, two miles a year now. Two: their elevation has dropped. Three: they are losing mass, which we can tell from satellite measurements."

Melting ice, together with the expansion of oceans due to warming (warm water is less dense), is raising sea levels faster than scientists had expected. And while the earth has a natural climate cycle of warming and cooling that repeats every hundred thousand or so years, the big difference this time is the human factor. Since the Industrial Revolution, we have pumped more than five hundred billion tons of heat-trapping carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Scientific consensus holds this activity to be the main driver of the warming — and melting — that has drowned islands in the Pacific, caused unusual weather events across

the globe, and placed coastal areas, home to hundreds of millions of people and trillions of dollars of property, under increasing threat of devastation.

So Bell has been on scientific stakeout. She and her colleagues in Lamont's Polar Geophysics Group, including Marco Tedesco and Jonathan Kingslake, are working to decipher the nature of the planet's ice — its makeup, its mechanics, its behavior. They are building a character profile of their subject, drilling down for clues, extracting information. The goal is to use this data to improve computer models and projections for sea-level rise, for the benefit of the engineers, city planners, insurers, ecologists, business owners, government agencies, and residents whose destinies are linked, by the ocean, to the least-known topography on earth.

How high will the water go? In 2013, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued a worst-case estimate for sea-level rise of three feet by 2100. In 2015, NASA said it expected a *minimum* of three feet. And in 2017, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration stated that end-of-the-century sea-level rise could reach as high as 8.2 feet, enough to engulf waterfront cities around the world.

But Bell, acknowledging that our understanding of the ice is still limited, demurs on the specifics of future sea-level rise. "My belief is that we don't know yet," she says. "That's because we don't know what's going on underneath the ice. You might think the land underneath is flat, but it's not: it's a very rich environment, with mountains and lakes, and places that can funnel in warm water.

"We need to know what happens when warm water comes into contact with the ice sheet, as well as what happens as warm air creates more surface meltwater." The only way to figure it out, Bell says, is to get "up close and personal" with the subject. This case can't be solved from afar.

"In the last hundred years, sea level has gone up eleven inches. In the next

hundred years, will it go up to your waist or over your head?

"That," Bell says, "is what we're trying to pin down."

THE ROSETTA CODE

Growing up in New Hampshire in the 1960s, Bell liked to watch the small animals in her backyard. She was captivated by their habits. For her, nature overflowed with wonders. Her favorite TV show was *The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau*. As a kid she wanted to be a marine biologist.

Then, between high school and college, she took some classes and learned about physics and plate tectonics. She thought: here is the key to how the planet works.

The creatures faded from the garden of her imagination. She saw rock now. Water.



Jonathan Kingslake drills ice cores.

Motion. Reaction. The white chalk of formulas scratched on green slate.

She gravitated to geophysics, focusing on the oceans, until her curiosity swept her toward the ice, to Antarctica, home to almost 90 percent of the earth's frozen water — "a place on our planet yet to be explored and understood," Bell says.

Bell made her first Antarctic expedition as a geophysics doctoral student in the late 1980s. Much has changed since then. For one thing, the planet has gotten warmer: sixteen of the seventeen hottest years on record (record-keeping began in 1880) have occurred since 2000. That's an especially salient fact when you're chasing ice.

LEFT: REGINE HOCK; RIGHT: TRENOR WILLIAMS

For the last two years, Bell's team has explored the Ross ice shelf, the world's largest piece of floating ice. Ice shelves are platforms of glacial runoff that extend from the land-based ice sheet onto the water, cantilever-like, often accreting to the size of small countries. (The Ross is about the size of France.) They act as doorstops for the glaciers, restraining them from the sea. The collapse of an ice shelf doesn't directly contribute to sea-level rise (just as melting ice cubes don't raise the level of your drink); rather, their disintegration allows the glaciers to flow unchecked. And the Ross is the biggest doorstop of them all. In 2000, it produced, or calved, a 4,200-square-mile iceberg, the largest ever recorded.

Wedged between East and West Antarctica and fed by glaciers from both

is exposed to ocean. Warm water gets underneath the ice. We're figuring out the pathways that the water takes to get in." The Ross, then, is vulnerable from above — in January 2016, unusually warm winds caused extensive surface melting — *and* below.

That worries Bell.

"We think the shelf is under stress," she says.

To investigate, Bell and her team deploy a custom-made device called IcePod — an eight-and-a-half-foot-long instrument-filled fiberglass capsule that attaches to the LC-130 transport planes that take Lamont researchers to the ice sheets. Designed and built with grant money from the National Science Foundation (NSF), IcePod is rigged with conventional and infrared cameras adapted for

hampered by bad weather, and the team could not finish the study. "While we can tell where it's melting in the front of the ice shelf, we still don't know what's going on in the back," Bell says. She hopes that the NSF will support another trip in order to complete this benchmark data set.

"Where we're working now, the last time they collected data was in the 1970s. That data is plugged into every ice-sheet model predicting what's going to happen in the future. To still be using data from almost fifty years ago is just stunning, so we're hoping to improve that." Bell smiles, acknowledging the scope of the enterprise. "We're trying," she says, "to understand the basic topography of the earth."

THE CASE OF THE BLUE DOTS

Seven years ago, Jonathan Kingslake, now a Lamont glaciologist, was working on his PhD at the University of Sheffield, in the UK. In his thesis he used mathematical models to examine how water moves underneath the ice sheets.

In the course of this research, Kingslake got to thinking — "just for fun," he says — about *surface* water. He went on Google Earth, zoomed in on Greenland, and noticed something in the field of white: blue dots, speckling the rim of the ice.

He saw them in Antarctica, too: Windex-blue flecks of liquid water. Scientists know that if meltwater collects around the edge of the ice sheets and on the ice shelves, it can spell trouble, as water can seep into crevasses, forcing the ice apart, weakening the entire edifice.

In 2002, satellite images showed that the Larsen B ice shelf on the Antarctic Peninsula, before its famously rapid and spectacular collapse, was stippled with blue dots. (This summer, the Larsen C ice shelf made news when it calved a Delaware-size iceberg.)

Kingslake wondered about the rest of Antarctica. No one had ever surveyed the 5.4-million-square-mile, ice-covered continent for surface water. Kingslake thought he might look into it someday.

In 2016, Kingslake came to Columbia as an assistant professor in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences. He hadn't forgotten



Lamont-Doherty scientists Robin Bell, Chris Bertinato, Nick Frearson, Winnie Chu, and Tej Dhakal with IcePod.

parts of the continent, the Ross juts up at the sea's edge in sheer white cliffs 160 feet high. It was discovered by James Clark Ross, a British polar explorer, in 1841, and has since served as a base of operations for landmark expeditions to the continental interior. Now it's the focus of a multi-institutional mapping project called Rosetta, after the stone slab that led to the decoding of Egyptian hieroglyphics. The effort, headed by Bell, examines the interactions between the ice, the earth, and the ocean, and how the shape of the bedrock beneath the ice influences ocean currents.

"The Ross ice shelf is particularly sensitive," Bell says, "because its bottom

ice use by Lamont oceanographer Chris Zappa '92SEAS (the infrared cameras can detect unseen cracks, or crevasses, by measuring tiny variances in ground temperature); shallow- and deep-ice radar built by Nick Frearson, IcePod's lead engineer; a scanning laser to create 3D images of the ice surface; and a magnetometer to measure the earth's magnetic field.

The radar images capture jagged cross sections of the Ross ice in shades of MRI gray, revealing what Bell calls "the beautiful layers inside."

Decoding the mysteries of the Ross ice shelf — to see where it's melting — is no fly-by-night affair. Last year's trip was

those blue dots. At Lamont he promptly led the first-ever systematic study of surface hydrology on the Antarctic ice sheet. Using images taken from military aircraft since 1947, and from satellites since 1973, Kingslake, with Lamont colleagues Bell and Indrani Das, as well as Jeremy Ely of the University of Sheffield geography department, revealed a world of unsuspected complexity. Far from a white blanket dappled with *in situ* pools of water, they found surfaces veined and braided with networks of waterways carrying meltwater across the ice sheet: continent-wide seasonal drainage systems of some seven hundred streams, rivers, ponds, and waterfalls.

Kingslake knew they'd found something important. "Amazingly, people weren't really aware that there's surface water being moved across long distances on the ice sheet," he says. "These systems are very impressive, very large" — one pond was fifty miles long — "and much more widespread than we would have thought."

This past April, Kingslake and his colleagues published their findings in *Nature*. They hypothesized that these drainage networks could deliver water to areas of ice shelves vulnerable to collapse — thus accelerating ice-mass loss in Antarctica.

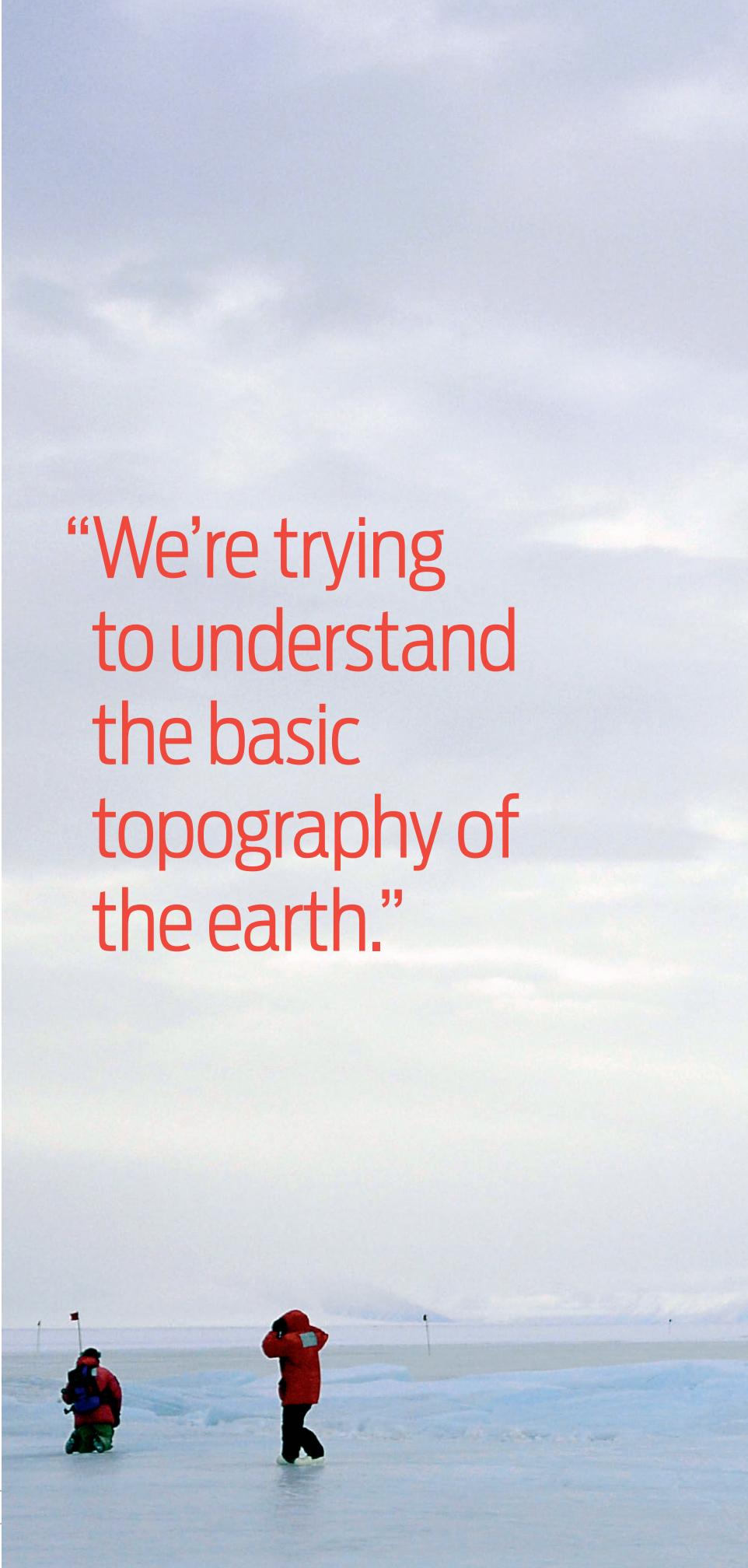
THE ADVENTURE OF THE MELTING ISLAND

Greenland is the biggest island on the map, three times the size of Texas and more than three-quarters covered by ice. This ice sheet — the second largest on earth, flung over the Arctic landmass like a white bear rug — is pulling a monumental disappearing act: little by little, year by year, a little faster now, slowly giving ground.

As the glaciers retreat, Marco Tedesco pursues. Tedesco, a Lamont polar scientist, wants to know how much mass Greenland is losing, and by what processes — how much from ice flow into the ocean, or the calving of icebergs, or — the primary culprit now — surface meltwater.

Though Greenland holds just 10 percent of the world's ice, increasing rates of ice loss make it the fastest-growing contributor to sea-level rise. Last year, it accounted

“We’re trying to understand the basic topography of the earth.”





for a quarter of the average global rise of slightly more than one-tenth of an inch. (Sea level is unevenly distributed; some areas see more rise than others.) Tedesco believes that Greenland has been caught in a feedback loop, which is accelerating the melt: warm temperatures melt sea ice (formed by the freezing of the ocean) and land ice (such as Greenland), exposing more seawater and darker ice layers (from trapped impurities like soot and dust, as well as algae and bacteria). These darker surfaces, in turn, absorb more solar radiation, which generates more warming, which melts more ice.

The Greenland ice sheet holds enough frozen water to raise sea levels by twenty-two feet. But just a tiny fraction of that rise can cause problems. “If you have storms hitting low-lying cities,” says Tedesco — cities like New York — “two or three inches of sea-level rise makes a huge difference.”

The summers of 2012 and 2015 were exceptional melt seasons in Greenland, and Tedesco was there both years. He calls 2012 “the Goliath” melting year, because it broke records for surface melting and total mass loss, just when sea ice was also shrinking to a record summer low. The conditions in 2015 were different, “though still alarming,” Tedesco says. In a paper published last year in *Nature Communications*, he noted the odd kinks that summer in the polar jet stream, the meandering river of atmospheric winds that loops around the northern latitudes, separating warm air from cold. In July 2015, the jet stream reached farther north than scientists had ever seen for that time of year, allowing a billow of warm air to intrude on northwest Greenland.

But why was the jet stream doing this — “going nuts,” as Tedesco says? One theory that Tedesco is investigating suggests that the decreasing temperature differential between the mid-latitudes (the earth’s temperate zones) and the Arctic can slow the jet stream, causing wild arcs, which carry warm, moist, mid-latitudinal air called “atmospheric rivers.” Tedesco wants to know how the melting events are connected to this transport of moisture, which has energy and heat.

“If we can make that link,” he says, “we can better understand the potential increase of surface melting — and link what happens in Greenland to the rest of the warming world.”

To get data, of course, you have to be in the field, up close and personal. “The fieldwork helps us understand the processes,” says Tedesco. “If we don’t understand them, we can’t put them into our model, and so we cannot do projections.”

This spring, Lamont scientists performed more fieldwork when Jonathan Kingslake went to the Great North. Kingslake’s six-week trip began in Schenectady, New York, at the New York Air National Guard base, which provides aerial support for government-funded polar expeditions. There, Kingslake and twenty others — researchers, support staff, and crew — boarded a ski-equipped LC-130 loaded with gear and tents for the six-hour flight to Greenland.

Kingslake spent four weeks in the field (the average temperature was in the

The ice cores, cylinders of condensed ice that show the bands of past seasons, are another way to read the ice sheet. Kingslake was looking for “ice lenses” — layers of ice that are formed by melted spring snow that refreezes.

“Meltwater that refreezes in the snow can create hard layers that are impermeable to water,” Kingslake says. “They impede the water’s flow, causing it to run horizontally. We always assumed it was fine if there’s melting at higher elevations, since there’s this huge sponge — the snow — to soak up the water.

“But if there’s a layer of ice just under the surface, the water simply runs off the ice sheet. Then the whole system changes.”

THE MYSTERY OF THE BURIED MOUNTAINS

Robin Bell was born in 1958 — or, as she likes to say, during the International Geophysical Year (IGY). The IGY, from July 1957 to December 1958, was a global scientific project devoted to the

To get data, you have to be in the field, up close and personal.

single digits, with a low of -36°F), taking radar measurements and drilling for ice-core samples.

“When you use radar to look through the ice, you’re sending out a pulse and listening for the echo back,” Kingslake explains. “You get an echo from the bottom of the ice. This tells you the depth of the ice. If you want to predict what the ice sheet will do in the future, you need to know where the ground is — it’s totally fundamental.

“But we can also use radar to look at complex structures within the ice that help us understand many important processes.”

earth sciences — inquiries into the physical processes of land, ocean, and atmosphere, involving sixty-seven countries and providing a brief thaw in the Cold War.

For Bell, one of the more fascinating IGY discoveries occurred in Antarctica, where a Soviet expedition set foot atop the Antarctic ice sheet, ten thousand feet above sea level. To measure the thickness of the ice, the Soviets set off seismic charges and recorded the echoes, and took gravity readings. Since rock and ice produce different signals, they could detect where the ice had thinned — and where rock had risen. They soon realized that

Marco
Tedesco in
Greenland.



they had found, buried under the ice, an improbable, arresting formation.

The emerging picture shook the geophysical world. Encased in a two-mile-deep cover of ice stood an immense mountain range, more than seven hundred miles wide, with peaks of some nine thousand feet — as tall as the Alps. The explorers named the mountains after Grigory Gamburtsev, a Soviet seismologist.

Fifty years after the IGY, Bell jointly helped revive its long-defunct forebear, the International Polar Year (the first was in 1882–83; this was the fourth). Bell's team from seven nations set out to study an area of Antarctica the size of California — including the Gamburtsev Mountains. Understanding how the mountains formed would give the scientists important data for ice-sheet and climate models, and help them scout the best places to drill for cores. These invisible peaks were the ice sheet's birthplace, the point from which the ice grew and spread. The ice's oldest climate record could be here.

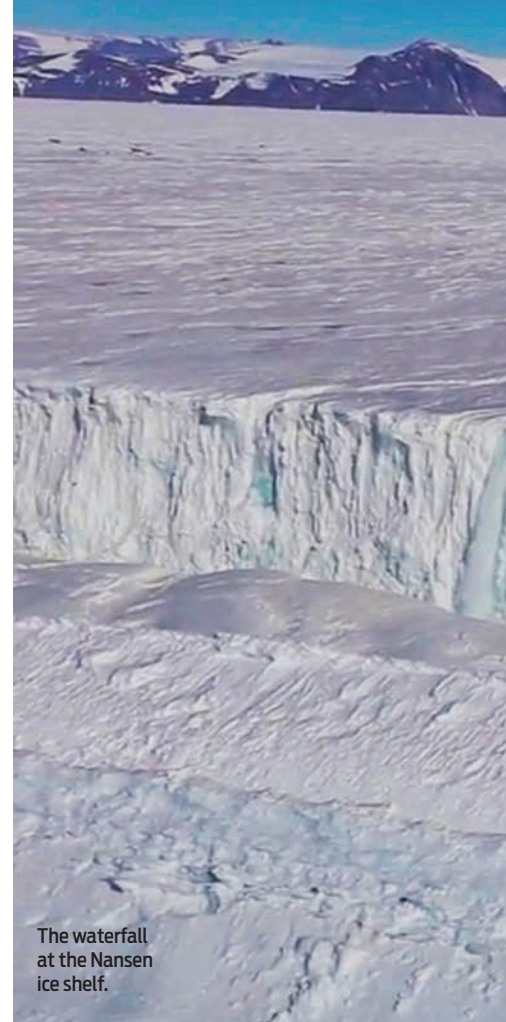
Bell and her partners flew laps over the white fields of East Antarctica in two Twin

“What's beautiful,” Bell says, “is that we saw that water is being driven uphill.”

It was one of nature's freak occurrences: due to the position and pressure of the ice, the water was being squeezed backward and upward. Even more astonishingly, this gravity-defying water, forced up the mountainsides to colder zones, was freezing back onto the bottom of the ice sheet, in accretions hundreds of feet thick. That meant that part of the ice sheet was growing faster from below than from above.

“Jaw-dropping” was how Bell described the discovery. Her colleagues gasped when they saw the data. “It's like learning about a new piece of plumbing in your house,” Bell says. “Learning a new way that water can move around.” And while no one knew at the time that these processes could be important — “the Gamburtsevs are really in the middle of nowhere, far from anywhere that the ice sheet is changing,” Bell says — the same phenomenon has since been detected in Greenland.

Bell is encouraged by these findings — not because ice can form in surprising



The waterfall at the Nansen ice shelf.

“It's like learning about a new piece of plumbing in your house.”

Otter airplanes outfitted with deep-ice radar, magnetometers, and gravity meters to penetrate the secrets of the ice-entombed “ghost mountains.” It was in the course of these investigations that Bell and her team made their own startling discoveries.

Radar indicated that there was liquid water in every valley, running under the ice. The researchers expected that the water, warmed by the earth's heat, would thaw the bottom of the valley ice, which was already close to melting temperature. (The top of the ice is around -50°F .) But the water did something unexpected.

places, but because we've added to our understanding. “We are learning better how our planet is changing and how it will change in the future,” she says. “Our new knowledge provides us hope.”

THE BIG DRAIN

The Nansen ice shelf, a 695-square-mile nugget abutting the Southern, or Antarctic, Ocean, is a floating curiosity: despite evidence of widespread surface water, the Nansen is apparently stable. Why?

In April, Bell, with a team that included Lamont scientists Kingslake, Tedesco,

Das, Kirsty Tinto, Zappa, Winnie Chu, and Alexandra Boghosian '17GSAS, published a companion paper to the Kingslake-led study on the possible dangers of meltwater transport. Both papers appeared in the same issue of *Nature*.

The Bell-led inquiry revealed another facet of the secret life of ice. Using satellite and aerial photography, radar data, and archival journals and photographs from Britain's Northern Party expedition of 1910–1913, the researchers found that the Nansen ice shelf possessed networks of streams, ponds, and rivers that converged, near the shelf's edge, in a spectacular 425-foot-wide waterfall.

The waterfall, they discovered, was capable of draining the shelf's annual surface melt in a week. This meant that surface rivers don't just transport water to other areas of the ice, exacerbating melting; they can wash standing water *off* the ice, potentially *preventing* this destruction.

Found to be active for more than a century, the Nansen drainage system



adds a twist to existing Antarctic ice-sheet models. The variations complicate the question of the overall impact of water on the ice sheet.

“Will these drainage systems move water into places that are more vulnerable, or will they remove water from those areas?” Kingslake says.

He answers his question with perfect scientific equanimity, in words that resound through the great and howling icescapes of the world:

“We don’t know yet.”

ICE DREAMS

Robin Bell has a vision. She wants investigators to fly all the way around Antarctica so that they can figure out the thickness of the ice that extends into the ocean, and find the troughs in the sea-floor bottom that funnel warm water. “If we can understand how and where the warming ocean is reaching the edge of the ice sheet,” she says, “we can better predict how much sea level will go up in the future.”

Though the climate for NSF global-warming research has cooled, Bell, who this year became president-elect of the American Geophysical Union, puts stock in America’s traditional leadership role in polar science, to which her ten expeditions attest. “We’re lucky to have really good support as a nation for Antarctic science,” she says.

But even in the most favorable conditions, there are never any guarantees.

Each expedition is “an incredibly pressure-filled, unique opportunity,” Bell says. “It often involves going to a place where nobody’s been for decades — and if you screw up, nobody might get to go again.” She thinks of the astronauts who went to the moon, and how no one has gone back since 1972. It’s a similar feeling, going to the ends of the earth.

“You’re trying to keep everyone together and everyone safe, and trying to squeeze every last bit you can out of the expedition, because you don’t know if or when you’ll get back,” she says.

And all the while, the ice keeps moving, changing, slipping, and sliding; and the ice detectives, in the field and at their desks, continue their restless surveillance, knowing that the clues they find today will have a life beyond their own: another layer in the frozen record, to be studied by future scientists.

“When you collect data, you might not even know the right questions to ask of it,” Bell says. “It’s going to be a legacy.”

RESOURCE GUIDE

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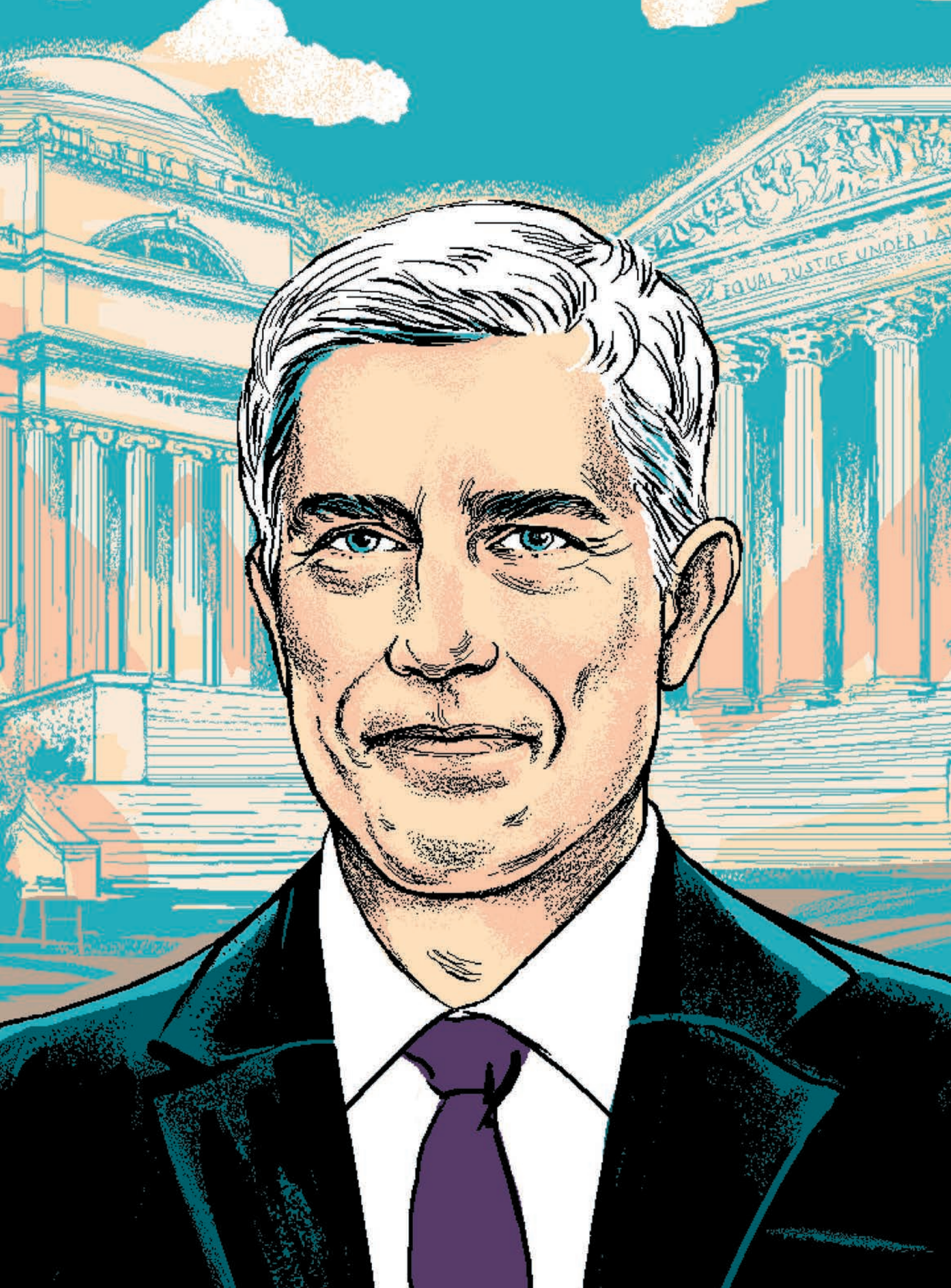
Neil

Gorsuch

AS A COLUMBIA UNDERGRAD,
SUPREME COURT JUSTICE
NEIL GORSUCH '88CC LEARNED
HOW TO ARGUE HIS OPINIONS

BY THOMAS VINCIGUERRA
'85CC, '86JRN, '90GSAS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY AGATA NOWICKA



In January, when President Donald J. Trump nominated Neil McGill Gorsuch '88CC to fill the Supreme Court seat left vacant by the death of Antonin Scalia, politicians immediately scrambled to find out more about this critical appointee and what he stood for. Senators picked through Gorsuch's ten-year record as a judge for the US Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, while the press delved into his formative years, especially the ones he spent as an undergraduate at Columbia.

There was plenty to sift through. In the 1980s, the popularity of President Ronald Reagan triggered what the *New York Times* later called a "youthquake of conservative campus activism," and Gorsuch was one of Columbia College's most prolific conservatives. A contributor to *Spectator* and a cofounder of the alternative tabloid the *Federalist Paper*, Gorsuch published editorials and columns that expressed support for the Contras in Nicaragua, pushed back against the campus's "tyrannical atmosphere" of reflexive liberalism, and criticized left-wing activists for their "muddled thinking" and "vigilante justice." Much was made of his yearbook quote, a sardonic quip from Henry Kissinger: "The illegal we do immediately, the unconstitutional takes a little longer."

Back then, these sentiments earned Gorsuch a reputation as a rabble-rouser. But thirty years later, many who knew him in college are eager to share a more nuanced view of the young man who came to Columbia determined to leave his mark. Some remember his intelligence and charm, others his dry

humor. Even those who disagreed with him give him credit for stirring up vigorous debate on a predominantly liberal campus.

Indeed, during Gorsuch's confirmation hearings in March, more than 150 of his Columbia and Barnard compatriots presented a petition to leading members of the Senate supporting his nomination. "The hallmark of Neil Gorsuch's tenure at Columbia was his unflagging commitment to respectful and open dialogue on campus," the petition stated. The signatories were mixed politically, ethnically, economically, geographically, religiously, and professionally. But their verdict was unanimous: "Despite an often contentious environment, Neil was a steadfast believer that we could disagree without being disagreeable."

Gorsuch wasn't just interested in establishing his own socially and politically conservative voice, says *Federalist Paper* cofounder P. T. Waters '88CC, now managing director of Himmelsbach Holdings, a clean-fuel technology company. "What he really wanted was the John Lockean discussion of ideas. He wanted an open and fair debate."

While Justice Gorsuch is not currently giving interviews, his credentials are a matter of record. He graduated Columbia Phi Beta Kappa and with a prestigious Truman Scholarship. In 1991 he earned Latin honors at Harvard Law School, where one of his classmates was Barack Obama '83CC. He clerked for retired Supreme Court associate justice Byron R. White and sitting associate justice Anthony M. Kennedy. His impressive academic career culminated in a doctorate from Oxford in 2004. From 1995 to 2005 he worked in the Washington, DC, law firm of Kellogg, Huber, Hansen, Todd, Evans & Figel as a litigator (he became a partner in 1998), and he later served as principal deputy to Associate Attorney General Robert McCallum under President George W. Bush.

When Gorsuch was confirmed in April by a Senate vote of 54–45, he



Neil Gorsuch
Political Science
Editor, Founder, *The Federalist Paper*, Phi Gamma Delta.
The illegal we do immediately, the unconstitutional takes a little longer.
— Henry Kissinger
August 29, 1967

The petition also stated: "The hallmark of our Columbia education was the dynamic exchange of ideas in search of greater, universal truths. Not surprisingly, Columbians tend to agree on very little. Even when we do, we still find reason for further debate. Those of us who were fortunate enough to know Neil Gorsuch during our time at Columbia are, however, united in our belief that he would serve our country with honor and distinction on the Supreme Court."

became the eighth Columbia graduate to reach the high court, joining John Jay 1764KC, Samuel Blatchford 1837CC, Benjamin Cardozo 1889CC, 1890GSAS, 1915HON, Charles Evans Hughes 1884LAW, 1907HON, Harlan Fiske Stone 1898LAW, William O. Douglas '25LAW, '79HON and Ruth Bader Ginsburg '59LAW, '94HON. As the court's newest and youngest justice, Gorsuch swiftly asserted himself as the conservative voice that the Republican Senate had held out for when they stalled President Obama's nominee, Merrick Garland, in 2016. And Gorsuch's early opinions as a Supreme Court justice suggest that the conservatism he espoused at Columbia has been a consistent guiding philosophy.



After spending his early childhood in Denver and his high-school years in Maryland, where he attended North Bethesda's Georgetown Prep (Waters was a classmate there), Gorsuch seemed to arrive on 116th Street with his worldview in place. "He was a bit more fully formed than other people, intellectually," says *Fed* cofounder Dean Pride '88CC, now a writer and copyeditor for *Mishpacha* magazine in Israel.

Gorsuch was also extremely driven. Though he entered with the Class of 1989, he piled on the courses and graduated in three years. "He did seem like a man in a hurry," says Waters. "He was always rushing — physically, literally." Sometimes he did so in cowboy boots.

"He was a smart cookie by the time he got to school," recalls attorney Robert Laplaca '89CC, one of his fraternity brothers at Phi Gamma Delta ("Fiji"). "I used to joke with him that he'd become president someday, just because of his demeanor, his likability, his intelligence, and his thinking on big issues."

At the same time, Gorsuch was in many ways a typical college student. He studied, dated, and hung out. In retrospect, some of his acquaintances wonder why he pledged Fiji, which had a reputation for partying. But his Fiji brother and *Fed* colleague Dave Vatti '89CC, today a federal prosecutor in Connecticut, finds nothing unusual about his membership. "Neil liked being one of the guys and having fun, and that was what Fiji was all about."

Gorsuch dissented in *Pavan v. Smith*, in which the court ruled that states may not list same-sex couples differently from other couples on birth certificates. He also dissented from his colleagues' decision not to review *Peruta v. California*, a challenge to a state law that strictly limits carrying firearms in public. He concurred in the majority opinion in *Trinity Lutheran Church of Columbia v. Comer*, which said that states could not categorically deny aid to churches simply because they were religious institutions.

“He was a smart cookie . . . I used to joke with him that he’d become president someday.”

— Robert Laplaca '89CC



Other members of the Columbia chapter of Phi Gamma Delta include Jack Kerouac '44CC, sports-broadcasting executive Roone Arledge '52CC, and actor Matthew Fox '89CC.

If not a loner, Gorsuch was also not quite a joiner; he did not live in the Fiji house at 538 West 114th Street. Classmates claim that he refused to be photographed with a beer in his hand, in case he ran for public office one day. As it was, he was disqualified from his 1986 bid for the University Senate because of inappropriate campaign-flyer placement. *Spectator* reported that the elections commission “found several of Gorsuch’s posters in East Campus elevators, more than two posters on several floors in various dorms, and posters taped to the glass portions of doors in dorms — all violations of election postering rules.” The candidate said he was unaware of the two-poster rule and that his supporters were responsible. (Laplaca recently fessed up: “I was the dummy who violated the sign-posting rules,” he wrote in a letter to *Columbia College Today* this past spring.)

“He was an unfailingly polite, gracious person,” says Pride. “In an argument, he could get sharp. He has a way with words. But in his personal dealings with people, I don’t think anyone would have said that he wasn’t a good guy.”

Elizabeth Pleshette '89CC, a future College admissions officer and a neighbor on the twelfth floor of Carman Hall, agrees. She would frequently tussle with Gorsuch in the floor lounge over abortion and reproductive rights.

“We got into tremendously heated discussions, to the point that people would walk away in disgust — ‘Oh, it’s Neil and Liz again.’ I would get very emotional, and it would be very upsetting.” But Pleshette remembers

another, more homespun aspect of her verbal sparring partner: “He sounded like Jimmy Stewart. We teased him about it. He was the quintessential ‘gee willikers’ kind of guy.”

In addition to his beliefs, ambition, and poise, Gorsuch came to campus with noteworthy family ties: his mother was Anne Gorsuch Burford, the former head of the Environmental Protection Agency. Under President Reagan, she aroused liberal wrath for relaxing pollution rules, and for cutting budgets and employee rolls alike. When she declined to turn over subpoenaed documents related to the federal Superfund program, she became the first cabinet-level official to be cited for contempt of Congress. After twenty-two months, she resigned.

Her son’s friends and detractors are unanimous in saying that Gorsuch downplayed this background — not necessarily because he feared notoriety, but because he wanted to be known in his own right.

As a freshman, Gorsuch wrote for a short-lived journal of ideas called the *Morningside Review* (not to be confused with the current online journal of that name published by the undergraduate writing program). In one piece, titled “A Tory Defense,” he wrote, “Here on Morningside, conservatism is an undeniably fashionable whipping-boy for the world’s ills.” But along with his *Morningside* contributors Pride and Andrew Levy '88CC, Gorsuch found the publication lacking. “It had no campus visibility,” says Levy, a senior producer at the HLN network and a former Fox News commentator. “It was sort of like shouting into the wind.” Pride remembers *Morningside* being wonky, infrequent, and too focused on national and global affairs: “It wasn’t quite a student publication,” he says. “We wanted something a bit more lively.”

So in October 1986, Gorsuch, Pride, Waters, and Levy started the *Federalist Paper* as a feisty and reliable response to campus liberals.

“We were wondering if someone could open a forum for debate — a real debate — that would keep some important issues in the Columbia College student’s mind,” Gorsuch told *Columbia College Today* at the time. “Maybe even provide him with a few different perspectives he hadn’t heard, but which do exist on campus. And we thought we could do it.”

“Neil was the straw that stirred the drink,” says Waters. “He founded that paper, and it was his paper. We had an editorial board, and he was not autocratic. But it would not have happened without Neil.”

Even the publication’s name was Gorsuch’s decision. Levy had wanted to call it the *Columbia Independent*, but Gorsuch insisted otherwise. The moniker was, of course, an homage to the classic defenses of the Constitution written by John Jay, Alexander Hamilton, and James Madison. Gorsuch’s *Spec* column was appropriately titled “Fed Up.”

The *Federalist Paper* (which still publishes as the *Federalist*, but with an emphasis on satire) was far from an ideological monolith. There were pro-and-con forums; one early column objected to then Supreme Court nominee Robert Bork’s “extremist tendencies.” Much of the subject matter was strictly parochial. A piece in the October 26, 1987, issue questioned whether students were getting enough study time before final exams. Another scrutinized wide grading disparities among professors of the four basic Core courses.

The staff, too, was a mixed bag. Pride was a New Deal liberal, Levy a libertarian who embraced the Objectivism of Ayn Rand, and Gorsuch a devotee of Edmund Burke, with his faith in traditional, established institutions. *Fed* editorial meetings, *Columbia College Today* reported, often yielded “red-faced debate.”

“If we tried to reach editorial consensus on every piece we published, we’d never publish,” Gorsuch said in the article. “It’s a tough staff to keep together because there are very deep divisions, very strongly felt

ones.” The future justice told D. Keith Mano ’63CC in *National Review* in 1987, “[The] reason why we can be so diverse is that there is so much room to the right. It’s not a matter of having to be a conservative to be identified with the right, it’s a matter of being a thinking man or woman.”

The *Fed* often aligned itself with mainstream Republican Party policies — anti-Soviet, anti-Sandinista. Much of its more outrageous commentary emanated from the fictitious and semi-satirical “Pierre du Pont Copeland,” a collaboratively constructed character described by Waters as “a very arrogant, wealthy” General Studies student — a sort of comic embodiment of the left’s worst nightmares. “I believe in the trickle-down theory: the servants’ bathrooms are directly below mine” was a typical Pierre pronouncement. “A person in jail for tax evasion (theft evasion) is as much a political prisoner as Nelson Mandela” was another.

At one point, Pierre joshed about how he and his cousins raised geese, tagged them with “the names of our favourite [*sic*] bleeding hearts,” and then hunted them on the Delmarva Peninsula. Among their kills were “Biden” and “Cuomo.” Pierre added, “We always make sure to have at least two or three corpulent ones, which we nickname ‘Teddy’ or ‘Tip.’”

But as Waters remembers it, Gorsuch objected to cheap shots and tried to keep them out of the *Fed* — not always successfully. “We’d gang up on him and he’d say, ‘OK, OK, OK.’ But he did not like it at all.” Indeed, says Levy, “On his deathbed, Neil would not say that publishing Pierre was one of the highlights of his life.”

“In an argument, he could get sharp. He has a way with words.”

— Dean Pride ’88CC



“Tired of making a SPECTacle out of yourself?” asked an early recruitment ad. “You can be a whole lot more on The Fed.”



In April 1988, under the headline “Where have all the protests gone?,” Gorsuch also made sport of the apparent evaporation of the usual springtime political theater: “Throngs of students did not crowd the steps of Low Library, nor did chains seal the doors of Hamilton Hall. Instead, fifteen students wandered about, aimlessly criticizing whatever struck their fancy.” He concluded, “There simply is no burning ‘issue’ of spring, 1988. But don’t worry: there’s always next year.”

For all their acerbity, Gorsuch and his *Fed* cohort eschewed the incendiary tone of the *Dartmouth Review*, the lodestar of the then-budding student conservative press movement and a hothouse for such right-wing firebrands as Dinesh D’Souza and Laura Ingraham. “Other than wanting to be as widely read as the *Dartmouth Review* on their campus,” Levy says, “I don’t remember us wanting to emulate them.”

Many of Gorsuch’s most keenly felt opinions found expression not in the *Fed* but in *Spectator*. Nor were they all politically charged. In February 1988 he pleaded for greater resources for the College, because it was “overcrowded, overburdened, and ever more subservient to the University’s graduate programs and Vice Presidents.” The following month, he urged that Student Council candidates address such pressing matters as the inadequacy of the college library in Butler, the need for a good book co-op, and the College’s “dismal support for its athletes.” With proper attention, Gorsuch argued, Columbia could become “a first-choice school.”

Gorsuch seemed to enjoy being provocative. In an April 1986 column he mocked a South Africa-type shanty that had gone up on Low Plaza as a “pre-fabricated, simple and fashionable” knockoff of Dartmouth’s more authentic “crickety and battered” counterpart. He called the divestment movement “unquestionably an honorable one.” But given that the Trustees had voted to divest the summer before, Gorsuch suggested, the structure had been erected “solely for media coverage.”

“He had very strong views that he expressed well,” says Andrea Miller ’89CC, now president of the National Institute for Reproductive Health in New York. As an editorial-page editor at *Spectator*, Miller says she felt an obligation to publish the full range of student opinions, but she recalls a “tenor of dismissiveness” in Gorsuch’s writing.

“If you read his stuff, you can see that he would very rarely engage the content of the argument someone was making”

says Tom Kamber ’89CC, who is executive director of Older Adults Technology Services, which connects senior citizens to the digital age. “Invariably he was questioning motives.”

Still, Kamber quickly volunteers that he liked Gorsuch personally. In 1985, both of them lost the National Speech and Debate Association’s Lincoln-Douglas Debate at the organization’s national championships. When Kamber sought refuge in drink, Gorsuch consoled him, literally patting him on the back.

Elizabeth King Humphrey ’88CC, a freelance writer and editor in North Carolina, and a signer of the pro-Gorsuch petition, points to the number of signatories as testament to Gorsuch’s personal appeal. “When you spoke with him you could tell he respected you,” she says. “If I didn’t feel that way, I wouldn’t have kept up with him all these years.”

In face-to-face discussion, Kamber, too, found Gorsuch delightful. “We would argue for hours, and it was a lot of fun. He was a fascinating guy to talk to. We had a friendly rivalry. It was a private debating club of two people.”

Their most memorable dustup came when Kamber, a University senator, suggested that Columbia’s fraternities might be compelled to admit women (the College went coed in 1983). The notion became a cause célèbre, spawned a movement on campus called Students for a Reformed Fraternity System, and culminated in a point-counterpoint in the March 7, 1988, issue of the *Fed*.

Defending Kamber’s position, Nancy Murphy ’89CC wrote, “Single-sex fraternities pose an immediate threat to all Columbia students . . . Women who are barred from fraternities by accident of birth face tangible harm.” She equated all-male Greek houses with “slavery and segregation, clear evils [that] were long supported by law simply because they were cultural institutions.”

Gorsuch and his Fiji brother Michael Behringer ’89CC (currently president of the Columbia College Alumni Association) countered the “righteous reformers.” Calling forced coeducation

of fraternities “absurd,” they argued for freedom of choice: “What such heavy-handed moralism misses is the fact that Columbia is a pluralistic University, that its fraternity system is equally pluralistic, with options available for everyone. There is no one at Columbia who cannot join a fraternity or initiate a new one if they wish to do so.” Noting that “three all-women fraternities/sororities” had lately been formed, Gorsuch and Behringer asserted that Kamber’s forces were “incapable of mustering a stable argument against the system as a whole.”

All of this, of course, raises the question: why would Gorsuch attend a college where his views would not only be in the minority, but also draw strong opposition?

Elizabeth Pleshette offers this insight: “We would frequently say to him, ‘Why are you here? Everything upsets you. You think all of these liberal students are so frivolous.’ We were always challenging him. And he said he wanted to be in the belly of the beast to test himself. He said, ‘This is going to hone me. If I surrounded myself with like-minded students, I wouldn’t get stronger.’”

“He was a fascinating guy to talk to. We had a friendly rivalry.”

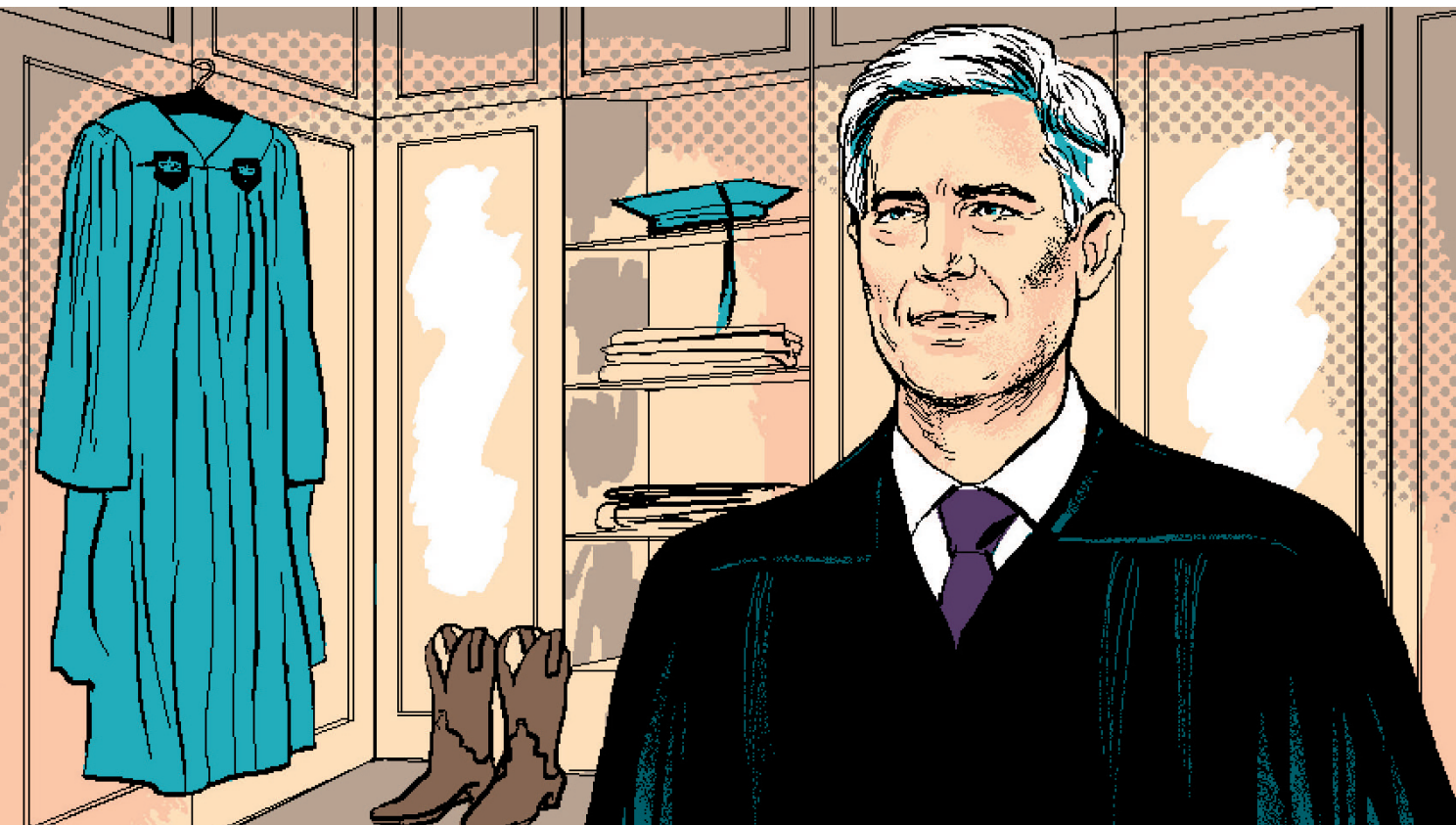
— Tom Kamber '89CC

“Neil often told me that he elected to attend Columbia for two reasons: the Core Curriculum and the rich diversity of Columbia’s student body,” Behringer wrote in a Facebook post the day the Senate confirmed Gorsuch’s nomination.

Perhaps that combination gave Gorsuch the ability to probe his opponents’ beliefs, the better to counter them. Or perhaps it opened his mind, preparing him for when he might have to sit on a high court in dispassionate judgment.

Former *Fed* editor Eric Prager '90CC, now a partner at a New York City law firm, finds truth in both these theories. Either way, Prager pegged his old friend three decades ago.

“It’s a trite expression,” Prager says, “but it captures what I feel: I thought he was destined for greatness.”







Outta Here!

How Mets announcer Gary Cohen '81CC went from the kid in the stands to the man at the mic

By Paul Hond

Gary Cohen '81CC sits at his laptop in the booth behind home plate at Citi Field. The mezzanine-level view takes in the groomed dirt of the diamond, the crosscut outfield grass, the empty dark-green stands, the center-field video board, and the cotton-candy-blue sky over Flushing, Queens. Cohen's broadcast partners of twelve seasons, Ron Darling and Keith Hernandez, who both played on the fabled 1986 Mets championship team, have yet to arrive. A cameraman is futzing with a wire. It's three hours before game time, and Cohen is doing his homework.

"On the air, I have to be ready to address whatever comes up, and you never know what that will be," says Cohen, checking the latest stats and storylines for the opposing



Miami Marlins. “It could be about a player in today’s game or something that happened yesterday or last week or two years ago or fifty years ago.” Cohen types some notes. “I spend most waking hours during baseball season just trying to be ready.”

Cohen has a clear, strong, middle-lower-register voice that can rise as fast and high as a smacked fly ball. On the air with Darling and Hernandez, it’s a voice of unassuming command — deliberate, quick-witted, diagnostic, inflected with the subtle wryness of a consummate straight man. “I’m kind of like the traffic cop” is how Cohen puts it. “So much depends on personality. Ronnie’s professorial, Keith’s a little more quirky” — any incidental echo of the Rolling Stones is not off-base, given the wattage of the ’86 Mets — “so sometimes it’s my job to rein in the silly stuff when it’s time to focus down there” — Cohen nods to the field — “or to *instigate* the silly stuff when the game stinks.”

Cohen, who is widely known as the smartest, best-prepared play-by-play announcer in baseball, does about 150 games a year out of 162 for SportsNet New York (SNY). Each broadcast is its own extended improvisation, its own performance, unfolding with the rhythm of the action.

“Most of what happens up here in the booth,” says Cohen, “depends on what happens out there.” He gestures again to the field. “Something happens in a game that calls to mind something else, which leads to a conversation on another topic, and that leads to a full-blown discussion of an issue we never had any intention of talking about. Ronnie calls it freeform jazz. I think that’s really the best way to describe it.”

Like the best jazz trios, Cohen and company work as an intuitive unit. They don’t step on each other’s lines, and they know when to use the power of silence. “It’s a remarkably low-ego environment,” Cohen says. “None of us needs to be the guy who talks the most. None of us needs to be the alpha dog or the guy who makes the point: we’re just as happy to be the guy who leads the *other* guy into making the point. In a lot of booths, it doesn’t always work that way.”

Cohen was born in 1958 and grew up in Kew Gardens, Queens, a few miles down the Grand Central Parkway from Shea Stadium. The Mets were born in 1962, and for their first two years they played — badly — at the Polo Grounds in Upper



Gary Cohen,
Ron Darling,
and Keith
Hernandez

Manhattan. Even after they moved to Shea they were the sorriest bunch of butterfingers the game had ever seen. Cohen fell in love with them — not for their Keystone Kops blundering but because the kid-oriented, family-picnic feeling of Shea was more appealing than the seriousness and grandiosity of Yankee Stadium.

For his ninth birthday, Cohen received a life-changing gift: a desk-model AM radio, the kind with tubes. Cohen listened to every sports broadcast he could find. Night after night, he drifted through the mists and warbles of the AM dial until he came to a clearing at WJRZ 970, and was carried off by the artful evocations of Bob Murphy, the voice of the Mets.

That was also the year Marv Albert became the voice of the New York Knicks. Cohen was crazy for basketball, and Albert was a revelation. “Marv Albert was the one who inspired all of us New York guys — Michael Kay, Ian Eagle, Howie Rose — to become sports broadcasters,” Cohen says. “His cadence, personality, sense of humor, description: Marv was the whole package. When I was a kid, he did the Knicks and Rangers [hockey], and I’d live for those nights just to hear him describe the games.”

Then, in 1969, after seven years of futility, a young, hungry Mets team — no one in the starting lineup was older than twenty-six — rolled to the National League title and beat the Baltimore Orioles in the World Series. The Miracle Mets! Cohen was in heaven. He had gone to the pennant clincher against the

was terrible: they finished 82–79 and still won it. But September was unbelievable. I was there for a lot of those games.” The Mets lost the World Series to the Oakland A’s, but Cohen was aflame with the orange and blue.

The affair continued through college. It was the late 1970s: Yankees time. The high-paid, high-powered, world-beating Bronx Bombers. But Cohen lived in an alternate baseball universe. From Morningside Heights he would take the subway out to Big Shea. Big, empty Shea. “The Mets were terrible. Four thousand people in the ballpark” — Shea held fifty-seven thousand — “but it was great,” Cohen says. “Give the usher two bucks and sit in the best seat in the house. I felt like I had the team to myself: Bruce Boisclair, Joel Youngblood . . .” Cohen would stretch out in the desolate stands, the swampy Flushing air trembling with flight-path thunder from LaGuardia, while above him, in the mezzanine, Bob Murphy sat in his booth, at the microphone, creating word pictures on the air.

At Columbia, Cohen majored in political science, but the center of his college world was WKCR. There, he landed a gig in the sports department doing radio play-by-play, not just for baseball but also for football, basketball, and soccer. “I got to broadcast many, many Columbia losses,” Cohen says. “But I also got to call some great basketball — the team of ’78–’79 was fabulous. Alton Byrd ’79CC and Ricky Free ’79CC and Shane Cotner ’79CC and Juan Mitchell ’79CC. They won seventeen games that year. They were tremendous. And Columbia had terrific soccer teams — John Rennie was the coach, and you had a great player, Shahin Shayan ’80CC, ’84BUS, ’85SEAS. And baseball: Mike Wilhite ’78CC, ’07GSAPP, Rolando Acosta ’79CC, ’82LAW.” Cohen can go on.

It was in Columbia’s booths that Cohen worked on his vocal technique, learning how to use his diaphragm like a singer. In fact, he looked more like a rock singer than a sportscaster. (A 1980 college photo of Cohen with Woodstock-caliber tresses became an object of lengthy scrutiny on a recent telecast.) Whether at Baker Field or courtside in Dodge gym, Cohen logged hours at the microphone, building the muscles to think and talk at breakneck speeds, to enunciate, to get the names and numbers right while describing rat-a-tat bang-bang action. Then he graduated, got a haircut, and went out to find a job.

“It’s a remarkably low-ego environment . . . None of us needs to be the alpha dog or the guy who makes the point.”

Atlanta Braves back when fans, in celebration, would climb over the rails and mob the field. “I went onto the field and got my little piece of turf,” Cohen says. “Unbelievable that people used to do that. Now you’d get Tasered.”

But the real rapture came in 1973. Cohen was fifteen and could go to games on his own. “That year the Mets were in last place in late August and made this incredible run. The division

You send out tapes and hope somebody likes you. Cohen got some bites. He spent his first few years in professional radio covering local sports in New Hampshire and South Carolina. Then he went to Norfolk, Virginia, where he did the news, a tax show, and fishing and boating reports; he even went up, with unhappy digestive results, in the traffic copter. He also got to do NCAA Division I basketball for the first time, at Old Dominion.

In 1986, while the rowdy, Dionysian Mets lit up New York on and off the field, Cohen was quietly sojourning in Durham, North Carolina, calling games for the Durham Bulls: his first minor-league job. The next year he moved up to the Triple-A Red Sox in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. And then, in the summer of 1988, he got a call: the Mets — his Mets — needed someone to fill in for a game, alongside Bob Murphy.

Cohen jumped at the chance. He went to Shea Stadium, and waiting there in the booth was Murphy. Cohen had to pull himself together. “It was incredibly nerve-racking. Murph did a great job of calming me down.” Cohen was told it wasn’t an audition, but shortly afterward, a job opened up. That fall, Cohen interviewed for three big-league radio jobs: the Montreal Expos, the San Diego Padres, and the New York Mets.

The Padres called and needed an answer immediately. Cohen was torn. He did love hot weather. Certainly there would be nothing wrong with living in San Diego.

But he wanted the Mets job. He wanted it more than anything. So he kept the Padres on hold and waited desperately to hear from the Mets. Finally he could wait no longer. On the Friday before Christmas, Cohen went to Worcester, Massachusetts, to announce a Providence College–Holy Cross basketball game. The moment he got to the arena he went to a pay phone in the lobby and called his Mets contact. “He gave me the answer,” Cohen says. “And that was —” Cohen shakes his head. No words for it.

He had gotten his dream job.

Cohen started in 1989, teaming with Murphy, the voice of his childhood. They were on-air partners for fifteen years.

“I had to pinch myself every day,” Cohen says.

Murphy retired in 2003, and in 2006 Cohen joined SNY. After seventeen years on the radio for the Mets, Cohen was moving to television.

“When Keith and Ronnie and I started on SNY, none of us really had any idea what we were doing,” Cohen says. “For me, I was a radio guy. In radio you’re working with one other person and the engineer, and you’re really your own show. You create your own reality, and you can go in any direction you want. In television, you’re trying to marry words to pictures, and you’re getting ideas from producers, and your partners are experts. It’s completely different.”

As Cohen sees it, the shared lack of TV experience was a blessing. “We all knew we were dependent on each other,” he says, “and that helped make it a real collaborative enterprise.”

The trio became known for its droll banter, discursive digressions, bracing candor, superior preparation, and intricate wisdom of the game; and above it all, atop the tower, blinking in the night, was the beacon of Cohen’s voice, rising, as Cohen might say, *to the apex of its range . . .*

The home-run call never used to have a name. It was just how an announcer expressed the climax of the ascending drama of a swatted ball arcing over the field and clearing the fences. “*Going, going, gone!*” (Mel Allen.) “*Kiss it goodbye!*” (Bob Prince.) Today, home-run calls can feel contrived, test-marketed. Not Cohen’s. And while he would “rather be judged by the totality of what I do for five hundred hours a season” than by a catch phrase, he’s happy to have delivered a hit.

“In the minors I tried every manner of hokey, ridiculous home-run call, and when I got to the majors I realized how hokey and ridiculous they were,” Cohen says. “So I started just describing what was happening, and by luck or happenstance, I started calling home runs in a particular way that people seem to enjoy.”

Cohen’s call typically begins something like, “A drive in the air, deep left field” — his

“That’s what people want to know about: the human beings behind the game. They want to feel a connection.”

voice climbs with the trajectory of the ball — “that ball is headed toward the wall — that ball is” — and now the ripping, primal yell — “*outta here!*”

And time stops. For fans, this cry, so phonetically and rhythmically natural, so genuine (in moments of extreme transport he’ll repeat it: *outta here! outta here!*), has a physical power, like a Stratocaster power chord, electric, hair-raising, complete.

Gary Cohen is not sentimental about baseball. He does not see baseball as a grand metaphor. Baseball is baseball. It’s part of life, not a reflection of it. Life is much more. Life is his wife, Lynn, and their five children. Life is books, movies, music. Life is what happens between games, between seasons.

Life is the road. After twenty-nine years of traveling with the Mets, Cohen spends most of his downtime in his hotel room, or in the gym, or at the ballpark. And when the season ends in October, he will switch gears and return to another passion: basketball. The Mets TV talker also does radio for the NCAA Division I Seton Hall Pirates of South Orange,





New Jersey. Basketball is instinctual for Cohen, a first language, and a way to maintain his chops: the free-jazz guy going back to his bebop, to the joyous precision of rapid-fire play-by-play.

“The games last two hours, the action carries the entire broadcast, and it’s just describe, describe, describe, whereas baseball is the complete opposite,” Cohen says. “I find basketball to be tremendous fun.”

Cohen walks through the wide, curving corridors of Citi Field (the ballpark opened in 2009 right next to Shea, which was demolished) to Mets manager Terry Collins’s pregame press conference. On the way, he sees someone: a Met, in uniform, with reporters around him. Cohen goes over. It’s a rookie pitcher who’s just been called up to the big leagues. He’s in the classic mold: tall and rawboned and fresh-faced and polite. Cohen introduces himself. The pitcher appears excited to meet Cohen, who’s been calling Mets games since before the kid was born. Cohen wishes him well and continues on his way. “That’s the best,” Cohen says, his voice warmed by the glow of every rookie who’s made it to the majors. “Once they get here you never know what’s going to happen. Just being able to get here is incredibly special.”

In the pressroom, Cohen sits in a folding chair in the back row. Terry Collins steps to the lectern, Mets cap pulled over bristly white hair, so that a grim shadow falls over his brow. Cohen listens and takes notes as Collins talks about the bullpen.

Afterward, Cohen says, “I have less contact now with players than I did thirty years ago. The nature of the player-media relationship has changed drastically. There’s a much greater wall now. If you visit the clubhouse when the media’s allowed

in, you might find five players. It didn’t used to be like that. It’s no one’s fault; it’s just the way things have evolved. I spend less time in clubhouses now, but I make sure I’m there every day, because if I say something that offends somebody I want to be there, to be accountable.”

But, he adds, “I’ve been through nine managers since I’ve been here, and Terry Collins is by far, *by far*, the best to deal with.”

Other things have changed. Over the past twenty years, the use of sophisticated (and, for some fans, incomprehensible) statistical analysis to evaluate players has become de rigeur. “It’s foolish to ignore it,” says Cohen,

“because ball clubs are using advanced statistics to determine who to sign, who to trade for, and who to play, so you have to pay it some mind.

“But I don’t think the fans care so much about numbers on a spreadsheet. In all the years I’ve been doing this, no one’s ever come up to me and said, ‘X player has higher WAR [wins above replacement] than Y player.’ No. It’s always, ‘What’s David Wright really like?’

“That’s what people want to know about: the human beings behind the game. They want to feel a connection. They want to feel in touch with the humanity.”

Cohen heads back around the corridors and refreshment zones of Citi Field to the SNY booth. The booth is crowded with producers, directors, camerapeople. Hernandez and Darling are in there too. Hernandez, ever the life of the party, is cracking jokes. Everyone’s laughing. No pregame jitters up here.

So the evening begins. In a moment, Cohen and his partners will take up their microphones, look into the camera, and leap into another night of baseball.

“The season is a marathon,” Cohen says. “You dive into the deep end of the pool in April, and you come up for air in October. That’s it. You just try to stay healthy and make it through the six months. By the end, everyone’s tired.

“But once the first pitch is thrown, the adrenaline kicks in. You find your way through it for the three hours, then you crash.”



A Voice For Women And Girls

Lindsay Stark '10PH, an associate professor of population and family health at Columbia's Mailman School of Public Health, studies gender-based violence in war zones, refugee camps, and other humanitarian settings. We spoke to her recently about the surprising insights uncovered by her new research. **By David J. Craig**



Columbia Magazine: In what parts of the world do you work?

Lindsay Stark: In recent years, my team has worked with refugee populations in Ethiopia and Uganda, where hundreds of thousands of people have fled to escape fighting in nearby countries, and in Indonesia, where tens of thousands have been displaced by floods and other natural disasters. We've also done a lot of work in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sierra Leone, looking at communities that have been devastated by those countries' civil wars.

What kind of issues are you studying?

We want to know: are women and girls in these types of chaotic environments

more likely to experience gender-based violence? If so, what can be done to prevent this? And what can be done to help survivors recover? Very little research has been done on these topics among refugee populations.

Why is that?

In part because it's difficult to get funding to do research of any kind in emergency settings. Donors who fund international relief efforts have historically tended to put their money toward food, medicine, shelter, and other basic necessities rather than studies. Most of the research that *has* been done is focused on improving nutrition and controlling the spread of infectious disease, not addressing women's issues.

Describe a typical day in the field.

In every place we work, we collaborate with local researchers, often from the affected population. With their help, we ask women and girls about their hopes and needs, their overall well-being, and their experiences of violence. In some settings, this can be quite a challenge. In the refugee camps in Ethiopia, for example, people speak dozens of different languages. It's difficult to find literate women who can serve as researchers or translators. It's also challenging to create an environment where women and girls can talk openly about such intimate matters as sexual violence. Many of them come from societies where they are likely to be stigmatized or even punished for being sexually



Residents of a refugee camp in the Benishangul-Gumuz region of Ethiopia.

assaulted. So there are very real reasons why they may not want to talk to us.

You've tried some novel strategies to get them to open up.

Yes, we recently conducted a study in Ethiopia and the Congo, with 1,300 girls aged ten to nineteen, to compare two strategies. We started with an approach that NGOs often use when doing a needs assessment: we spoke to women and girls in small groups and asked them to describe any patterns of abuse that were occurring, without telling us about specific incidents. The information we gathered this way confirmed a lot of traditional thinking. Most notably, we heard that sexual violence was a pervasive problem and

mostly perpetrated by police, soldiers, or strangers in the community.

But then we interviewed the same girls using a new approach: we had them self-administer surveys by listening to audio recordings of multiple-choice questions and entering their answers on electronic tablets. Since a lot of the girls were illiterate, the answers were color-coded, with the audio recording instructing them which colors corresponded to the answers. We hoped that the privacy afforded by the tablet would embolden the girls to open up. And it worked.

What did you discover?

Well, first, we found that the number of girls who had experienced violence was much larger than anyone had previously

realized. More than one in four said they'd been sexually assaulted or raped in the previous year, while one in three said they'd been beaten. The victims were also surprisingly young: many ten-year-olds said they'd been sexually assaulted.

Another surprise was the perpetrators. Whereas most of the girls who participated in our group conversations told us that strangers were the ones who routinely hurt women and girls, more than 85 percent of those who took the self-administered survey said that they were hurt by someone close to them. Typically, this was a boyfriend, husband, father, or other close family member. The shift was so dramatic that at first we thought something was wrong with our data. But the change we saw in the girls' responses was nearly identical in both locations — the refugee camps in Ethiopia and in the Congo. Our finding was no fluke.

Why do you think girls in the group conversations had concealed who was hurting them?

I think it's partly because it's more socially acceptable to talk about violence that is perpetrated by strangers. If you say that a relative attacked you, the risk of stigmatization or retaliation is often higher. Imagine if the person you accuse is the patriarch and main breadwinner. Getting him in trouble could jeopardize the economic well-being of your entire family. It's probably a lot safer to say you were beaten up or raped by some random soldier.

Are you suggesting that soldiers don't pose a threat to women and girls?

Not at all. In fact, the Congo is one country where rape has absolutely been weaponized over the past twenty-five years. It's been used on all sides of the conflict to demoralize and terrorize the opposition. But our findings suggest that, at least in some humanitarian settings, domestic violence is often a much bigger problem.

Is it a bigger problem than in non-emergency settings in the same countries?

That's a good question, and the truth is we don't have enough data yet to answer that

A woman uses an electronic tablet to complete a survey.



for your husband or boyfriend to ever hit you. And it's not OK for him to ever force you to have sex. You need programs that encourage men and boys to treat women and girls as equals. In order to prevent violence within families, you need broad-based community programming that changes the culture of families.

That sounds like a difficult undertaking.

It is difficult, but not impossible. In the past few years, a handful of aid organizations have launched gender-equality programs in humanitarian settings with real results. The International Rescue Committee ran a twelve-month-long pilot program for girls in the same Ethiopian refugee camps where we worked. My research team evaluated the program's impact and found that the young women

conclusively. But there is some evidence to suggest it may be worse. One study we did in Sri Lanka showed that levels of domestic violence against women were higher in communities that were displaced during that country's civil war. At this point, we can only hypothesize that in times of war you have a hyper-masculinized atmosphere and a lot of frustration. This may be one reason violence against women and girls increases.

What are the practical implications of your research?

The implications are substantial. In the past decade or so, international aid agencies have started to put some energy and resources into preventing gender-based violence in places where they provide services. But the steps they've taken are almost always aimed at protecting women from soldiers and other strangers. Refugee camps, for instance, are now often organized in ways that reduce the distance that women must walk to collect water, firewood, or food rations. They also have better lighting than they used to. While these measures are certainly helpful, our research suggests they don't address the primary problem. You also need programs that promote healthier perspectives on gender relations. We want women and girls to embrace the fact that if you make a mistake, it's not OK

“We want to know: are women and girls in these types of chaotic environments more likely to experience gender-based violence? If so, what can be done to prevent this?”



Lindsay Stark

who completed it were more likely to say that girls should stay in school and delay marriage until adulthood — two factors that reduce the risk of being abused.

Is it hard to get men to participate in such programs?

It can be much harder to get men to participate, but we have some great evidence emerging about creative ways to engage men. One recent program engaged men by focusing the curriculum on parenting skills. The men came out being better fathers *and* better husbands.

How realistic is it to think these programs will become widely available?

I think the more important question is: how much benefit would they have? There are sixty-five million displaced people in the world today — an all-time high — and more than half of them are women and children. This is a huge population that NGOs and other aid organizations are helping to care for. The well-being of women and girls ought to be among their top priorities. 📌



Going to extremes

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EXPLORATIONS

FRONTIERS OF
RESEARCH AND
DISCOVERY

Extinction risks wildly underestimated



The Malabar grey hornbill is one of hundreds of tropical bird species whose numbers are dwindling.

A new study by Columbia conservation biologist Don Melnick, graduate student Vijay Ramesh, and several other biologists suggests that the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the global authority on endangered species, vastly underestimates the number that are at risk of extinction.

Melnick and his team came to this conclusion after conducting an assessment of tropical bird habitats in the Western Ghats mountain chain of southwest India. Using data from eBird, a

public website that gathers user-generated information about millions of bird sightings each year, together with high-resolution geographic data collected by satellite, the researchers created detailed habitat maps for eighteen native species. In doing so, they found that the IUCN, which bases its population estimates on the size of animals' habitats, had vastly overestimated seventeen of the species' ranges.

“The main correction we made was to show that there is a significant amount of area within the boundaries of each IUCN range that isn't actually suitable for the species — whether in terms of altitude, temperature range, or the type of vegetation found there,” says Melnick, whose paper appears in the journal *Biological Conservation*.

Based on their own, more precise maps, Melnick and his collaborators determined that at least ten of the eighteen bird species should have their IUCN threat status elevated. For example, the researchers say that the hill-dwelling Nilgiri pipit should be classified as “endangered” rather than “vulnerable,” while the large-beaked Malabar grey hornbill, now listed as a species of “least concern,” should be regarded as “near-threatened.”

Melnick and his collaborators have urged IUCN scientists to adopt their mapping methods, which are described in their paper and are available for anyone to use. Melnick says that his team's approach could generate population estimates for a wide variety of animals.

“Our study suggests that more high-resolution habitat maps could dramatically alter our estimates of the species population numbers,” he says. “And this could give us a much better idea of their risk of vanishing.”

IUCN Conservation Threat Levels

LC	NT	VU	EN	CR
Least concern	Near threatened	Vulnerable	Endangered	Critically endangered

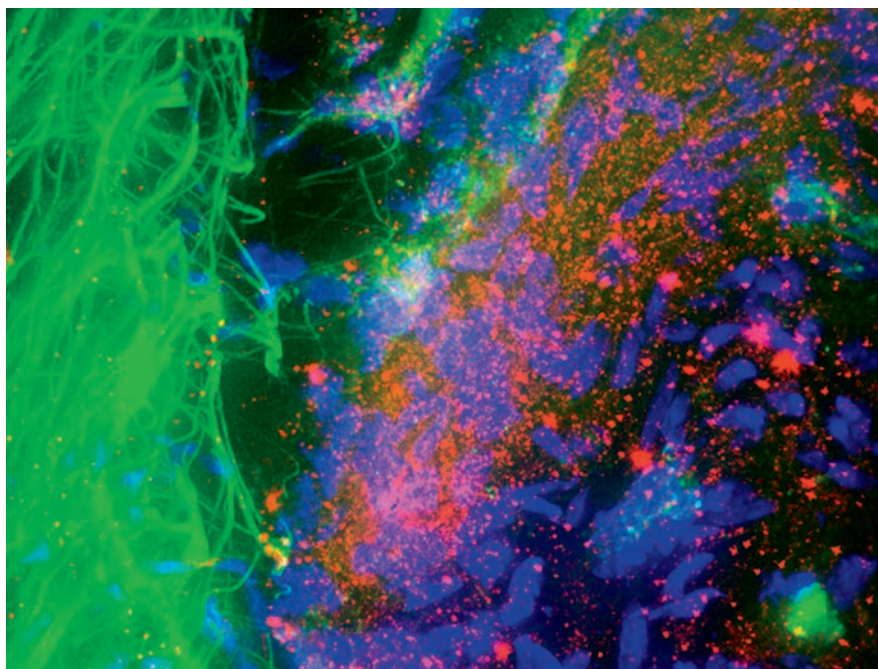
ROBIN CHITTENDEN / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Big breakthrough in understanding Parkinson's disease

Scientists have found the first solid evidence that a malfunctioning immune system contributes to Parkinson's disease, a neurodegenerative movement disorder that affects ten million people worldwide.

observed that in the blood drawn from Parkinson's patients, white blood cells called T cells, which are the immune system's attack dogs, rushed out to annihilate the protein fragments as if they were viruses or bacteria.

Sulzer and Sette say that their findings, which appear in the journal *Nature*, suggest



"This idea dates back almost a hundred years," says study co-leader David Sulzer '88GSAS, a professor of neurobiology in the departments of psychiatry, neurology, and pharmacology at Columbia University Medical Center. "But until now, no one has been able to connect the dots."

Sulzer and several colleagues, including Alessandro Sette of the La Jolla Institute for Allergy and Immunology in La Jolla, California, conducted a series of experiments in which they introduced fragments of a protein called alpha-synuclein, which is present in all brain cells, to blood samples drawn from sixty-seven Parkinson's patients and thirty-six healthy people. The scientists

that Parkinson's disease may arise when an overactive immune system wages war on alpha-synuclein and inadvertently kills large numbers of brain cells in the process. The destruction of brain cells is the ultimate cause of Parkinson's, resulting in tremors, paralysis, and eventually death.

"It remains to be seen whether the immune response to alpha-synuclein is an initial cause of Parkinson's, or if it contributes to neuronal death after the onset of the disease," says Sette. "But our findings raise the possibility that immunotherapy could be used to increase the immune system's tolerance for alpha-synuclein, which could help Parkinson's patients."

Yeast-based tool speeds diagnosis

In many developing countries, people die of treatable infections simply because physicians can't diagnose them fast enough. Part of the problem is that too few medical centers possess modern diagnostic equipment, which means that physicians often have to send blood samples to laboratories hundreds of miles away — a process that can take several days and delay urgently needed treatment.

Now, a team of Columbia scientists has developed a potentially lifesaving solution: a low-cost, portable diagnostic tool that is as easy to use as a home pregnancy test. The device, which is designed to be used onsite by medical workers with minimal training, contains baker's yeast that has been genetically modified so that it changes color in the presence of a variety of pathogens.

Inside the brain, Parkinson's disease may arise when the immune system wages war on the protein alpha-synuclein (in red).



A new diagnostic device powered by yeast.

"Yeast, like all fungi, has sensors for identifying members of its own species, and we manipulated its sensors to detect other microorganisms instead," says lead scientist

EXPLORATIONS

Virginia Cornish '91CC, the Helena Rubinstein Professor of Chemistry.

Cornish and her colleagues have so far demonstrated the tool's effectiveness in detecting ten different fungal pathogens, including *Candida albicans* and *Paracoccidioides brasiliensis*, which are ubiquitous in some parts of the world and can prove deadly especially to people with weakened immune systems. Physicians usually need elaborate molecular analyses of a patient's blood in order to identify them, says Cornish. "But using our device, they'd see the results at the point of care in just two or three hours."

Another advantage of the new diagnostic tool is that it can be manufactured and operated very cheaply, since its only active ingredient is baker's yeast.

"We estimate that it will cost less than one cent per sample to use," says Miguel Jimenez '17GSAS, a former chemistry PhD student in Cornish's lab who worked on the project alongside former graduate student Nili Ostrov '12GSAS and postdoctoral researcher Sonja Billerbeck.

The Columbia scientists believe that their tool could ultimately be adapted to detect many viruses and bacteria, including the *Vibrio cholerae* bacterium, which causes cholera. Cornish says they are currently working with global-health organizations to determine their needs.

"The possibilities, as we see them right now, are limitless," she says. "We've just opened the door to this exciting new technology."



She thinks, therefore I am

He is considered the father of modern philosophy, a daringly original thinker and fierce rationalist who ushered in the Enlightenment by proposing that human reason is the foundation of all knowledge.

But was René Descartes really the innovator he has been made out to be? Christia Mercer, a Columbia philosophy professor, thinks not. She claims that the seventeenth-century Frenchman lifted some of his most influential ideas from a Spanish author and Roman Catholic nun named Teresa of Ávila, who, fifty years before Descartes, wrote popular books

about the role of philosophical reflection in intellectual growth. Mercer lays out her case in the journal *Philosophical Studies*, describing a number of striking similarities between Descartes's seminal work *Meditations on First Philosophy* and Teresa's *Interior Castle*.

"The resemblance isn't subtle," says Mercer. "Key components of crucial arguments in the works are the same."

Of particular relevance, Mercer says, is the fact that Teresa, like Descartes, argues that prolonged periods of introspection are necessary to shed one's personal biases and gain a clearer perspective on the world.

"This idea provides the basis for Descartes's entire metaphysical system," she says.

Mercer notes that it is impossible to know for sure whether Descartes read *Interior Castle*, because he was notoriously stingy in giving credit to writers who had inspired him (he never mentions Teresa in his work or in his letters). But she says that Descartes would almost certainly have been aware of Teresa's ideas, as her books were widely read during his day and discussed by many

of his closest friends. She suggests that historians of philosophy have not drawn a link between the two writers for the simple reason that Teresa was a woman.

"Many women of her time who wrote about philosophical matters were labeled as 'mystics' and disregarded by the academy," she says. "The stigma of that label has endured, so that even contemporary historians hunting for Descartes's influences would be very unlikely to read her."

Mercer hopes that her research will prompt others to read outside the canon of famous male thinkers.

"Philosophy's past is much richer than the standard story would have us believe," she says. "There are lots of brilliant women whose contributions are only just being discovered."

Gluten-free fail!

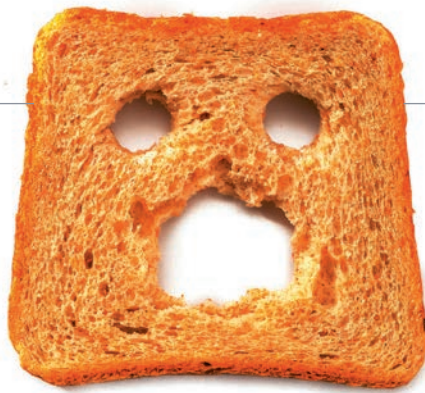
Many popular diet books espouse the idea that limiting gluten intake is good for your health, regardless of whether you have celiac disease.

But a new study has poked a hole in this theory, demonstrating that a gluten-free diet removes an important protection against America's single biggest killer: heart disease.

The study of more than 100,000 men and women was published in the *BMJ* (formerly the *British Medical Journal*).

"Gluten is clearly harmful for people with celiac disease," says lead author Benjamin Lebwohl '03PS, '10GPH, an assistant professor of medicine and epidemiology at Columbia University Medical Center and the director of clinical research at its Celiac Disease Center. "But our findings show that gluten restriction has no benefit, at least in terms of heart health, for people without celiac disease. It may actually be harmful to follow a diet that is particularly low in whole grains, because those grains appear to protect against heart disease."

Celiac disease is an autoimmune disorder in which the ingestion of gluten — a protein found in wheat, rye, and



barley — causes inflammation of the small intestine, preventing the absorption of nutrients. The condition is estimated to affect about one in one hundred Americans, with a similar number of people believed to have a related condition called non-celiac gluten sensitivity, in which gluten triggers mood swings, depression, anxiety, and mental fogginess.

Yet surveys have shown that as many as one-third of Americans are trying to cut back on gluten.

"This certainly benefits companies that sell gluten-free products," says Lebwohl. "But does it benefit the public? That is the question we wanted to answer"

He says that his team looked at heart disease because it's a leading killer, and because it's generally understood that heart health can be affected by diet.

In subsequent studies, the researchers plan to look at the effects of gluten intake on other health conditions, including cancer and non-celiac autoimmune disease.

Select memories can be erased

Neuroscientists from Columbia and McGill have found a way to selectively erase memories in sea slugs — an advance they say could eventually lead to the development of new treatments for anxiety or posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The scientists' breakthrough, which they report in the journal *Current Biology*, relies on a distinction in how brain cells encode different types of memories. They discovered that brain cells use one kind of protein to encode memories that are central to traumatic experiences (say, walking down a dark alley and being mugged) and another to encode memories that are peripheral to such events (hearing a dog bark in the alley). By manipulating levels of these proteins in sea slugs, the scientists were able to erase incidental memories that could trigger past traumas — a procedure that they say could one day provide relief to PTSD patients and others for whom seemingly mundane events, like hearing a dog bark or a door slam, can cause anxiety attacks.

The researchers, led by Columbia neuroscientists Samuel Schacher '71SEAS, '76GSAS and Jiangyuan Hu, hope to begin human trials within a few years.

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Doors open at 6:30pm;

Program begins at 7pm



Photo: Barry Goldstein

Kolbert is the author of *The Sixth Extinction*, winner of the 2015 Pulitzer Prize for General Nonfiction.

This event is free and open to the public.

For more information and to RSVP visit

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EXPLORATIONS

Message in a bottle

It has musty top notes, a hint of almond, and a leathery finish.

A terrible wine? Not exactly. It's the scent of an 1820 edition of Cervantes's *Don Quixote* owned by the Morgan Library and Museum in Murray Hill, Manhattan.

Jorge Otero-Pailos, a Columbia professor of historic preservation, was savoring the book's almost nutty aroma on a recent Monday morning while leading a first-of-its-kind olfactory investigation of the library. He and seven

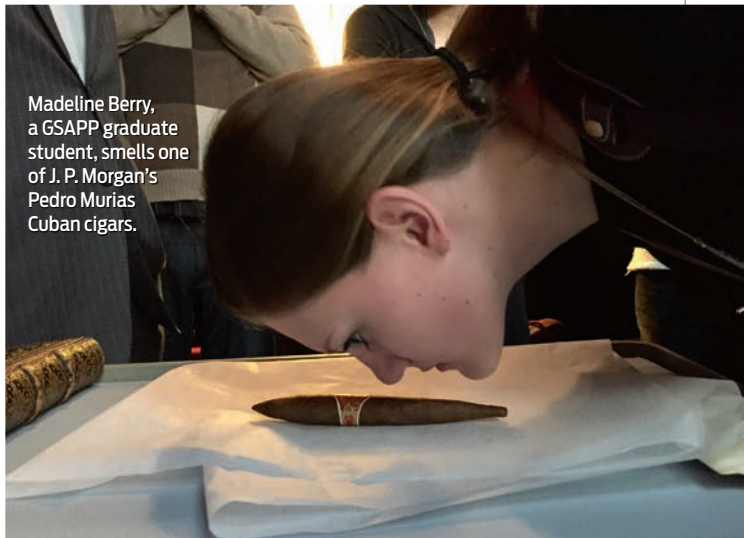
graduate students in his Experimental Preservation course were attempting to describe, and ultimately recreate and preserve, an array of odors that drift about the lavishly decorated neoclassical building that financier J. P. Morgan (1837–1913) built to house his massive collection of rare books and art.

“Smell is such a powerful component of how we experience physical spaces,” says Otero-Pailos, who directs the historic preservation program at Columbia's Graduate

Scent-collecting equipment atop a 1521 copy of *Ihesus: The Floure of the Commaundementes of God* at the Morgan Library and Museum.



Jorge Otero-Pailos takes in the scent of a nineteenth-century book.



Madeline Berry, a GSAPP graduate student, smells one of J. P. Morgan's Pedro Murias Cuban cigars.

School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation. “So why shouldn't we try to document the scents that occupy important buildings?”

Otero-Pailos began the collaboration with the Morgan Library after meeting a curator there, Christine

Nelson '90LS, who shared his interest in chronicling historic odors. Nelson had witnessed the powerful effect that smells can have on people; visitors to the Morgan frequently told her that the scents of its books evoked for them cherished memories of times spent in

TOP AND LEFT: CHRISTINE NELSON
BOTTOM RIGHT: JORGE OTERO-PAILOS

libraries as students. This made Nelson wonder if the Morgan's redolence could be used to deepen people's interest in the building's history.

"Could we go beyond the romance of the 'old-book smell' and investigate the many scents that contributed to the building's presence in J. P. Morgan's day?" she says. "Could a focus on historic smells somehow illuminate the human stories associated with the building?"

To help Nelson answer those questions, Otero-Pailos and his students made several trips to the Morgan, toting a bell-shaped device that sucks molecules off the surface of objects and converts them into a form that can be chemically analyzed in a laboratory. Using this contraption, the students collected the odors wafting off dozens of books, paintings, furniture pieces, tapestries, carpets, and relics — including a box of J. P. Morgan's favorite Cuban cigars. They then sent the samples to the Manhattan lab of International Flavors and Fragrances (IFF), a company that creates smells for perfume makers. A few weeks later, a team of IFF chemists led by master perfumer Carlos Benaim sent the researchers several boxes of blue vials containing liquefied versions of all the scents they had collected.

"One of the things we discovered is that even relatively simple smells, like the sweet floral scent of a cigar, contain many distinct chemical notes," says Justin Miles Clevenger, a student of historic preservation who participated in the project. "Smell is surprisingly complicated."

The Columbia students have proposed a number of ways the Morgan could utilize their bottled-up bouquets to enhance visitors' experiences. In addition to providing people an opportunity to enjoy the aromas of books that are too old to be handled routinely, they suggested that special scent-based exhibitions could recreate the ambiance of important moments in the library's history. A potpourri of cologne, sweat, and cigar smoke could help conjure the infamous night in 1907 when J. P. Morgan locked more than one hundred prominent bankers in his study to persuade them to find a solution to an impending financial crisis. The presentation of Morgan's own casket at the site in 1913 might demand a whiff of five thousand particularly pungent Jacqueminot roses barely masking bottom notes of formaldehyde.

Nelson says the Morgan Library is now considering the students' ideas, possibly to be showcased in a sensory gallery.

According to Otero-Pailos, the experiment was especially valuable to his students, as it helped them to see the creativity that can go into historic preservation.

"What I try to show students is that preservation can be a dynamic, imaginative endeavor," he says. "On the one hand, you are documenting and protecting what exists at a historic site. But you can also take the next step, which is to find ways of bringing the past alive for people, to give them new experiences, and to create new cultural meaning."

STUDY HALL RESEARCH BRIEFS

For heart patients, aspirin is A-OK

A ten-year study of 2,305 heart-attack survivors shows that taking aspirin in combination with prescription blood thinners does not,

as many cardiologists have long feared, pose a health risk. The study was led by Columbia cardiologist Shunichi Homma and biostatistician John L. P. Thompson.

Too hot for takeoff Global warming is likely to cause major problems at airports in the coming decades. According to a new paper by Columbia climate scientist Radley Horton '07GSAS and graduate student Ethan Coffel, warmer temperatures make it difficult for planes to take off and land safely because heat reduces air density and therefore the amount of upward pressure, or lift, that builds up beneath an airplane's wings.

The kids are all right Columbia Law School researchers have conducted a meta-analysis of seventy-nine studies that look at the psychological effects of being raised by gay or lesbian parents. They found that seventy-five of the studies uncovered no significant disadvantages to growing up in such a family. The other four studies were found to have methodological flaws.

Fevers linked to autism risk Pregnant women who suffer multiple fevers during their second and third trimesters increase their chances of having an autistic child threefold, according to new research from Mady Hornig of the Mailman School of Public Health. Hornig's study of more than 95,000 children in Norway provides the most robust evidence yet that maternal infections may disrupt a fetus's brain development.

Gender bias hobbles startup world Venture capitalists ask men seeking financing more questions about potential gains, and women more questions about potential losses, according to new research by E. Tory Higgins of Columbia Business School and graduate student Dana Kanze. The researchers, who analyzed hundreds of hours of videotaped interviews conducted at venture-capital competitions, say the bias could help explain the massive gender gap in venture-capital funding in the United States.

A shot of calm A team of Columbia psychiatrists led by Christine Denny '12GSAS has found that a shot of the anesthetic ketamine, given one week before a traumatic event, may prevent the subsequent onset of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The findings, based on a study conducted in mice, suggest that ketamine could eventually be used as a buffer against PTSD in soldiers, emergency workers, and others with extremely stressful jobs.

—Julia Joy

NETWORK

YOUR ALUMNI
CONNECTION

CEO with a Calling

“Imagine being a fourteen-year-old trans kid in Texas,” says Amit Paley ‘10JRN, ‘11BUS, talking about a call he recently took at the Trevor Project, a nonprofit focused on suicide and crisis prevention for LGBTQ youth. “Soon laws could dictate which bathroom you use at school. So, you’re physically uncomfortable and emotionally degraded. And you really need someone you can talk to about it.”

For several years, Paley has been that person. This sum-

hour shift on the phones. He couldn’t have started at a more critical time.

“The day after the presidential election, our call volume doubled,” Paley says. “And it’s been getting busier as the reality of the new administration sets in. This May, we received more calls than in any other month in the hotline’s nineteen-year history.”

Paley says that the new administration has been harmful to LGBTQ youth — particularly those who identify as transgender and gender

After President Trump announced a ban on transgender troops in the military this past July, for example, the Trevor Project saw another influx of calls. “Even if the policy doesn’t apply directly to a caller, the sentiment behind it matters,” Paley says.

In addition to running the hotlines, the Trevor Project, which serves more than two hundred thousand youth every year, also has an advocacy wing. Paley says that its current priority is fighting what is commonly known as “the bathroom policy” — the reversal of federal protections for transgender students that had allowed them to use the bathroom corresponding with their gender identity. The Trevor Project is also working to ban conversion therapy for LGBTQ youth, and to promote more accurate data collection around LGBTQ suicide and homicide.

For Paley, who came out as gay while an undergraduate at Harvard, the move to a full-time role at the Trevor Project is a significant pivot, and one that feels very personal. He started his career as a journalist with the *Washington Post* — his work covering the Iraq War was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize — and then moved to the paper’s corporate office. He came to Columbia Journalism School on a Knight-Bagehot Fellowship, which allows cross-disciplinary



Amit Paley, center, marches with Trevor Project staff and volunteers at the New York City Pride March.

mer, he became the Trevor Project’s CEO, but before that, as one of the organization’s hundreds of volunteers, he helped to man the twenty-four-hour Trevor Lifeline, offering words of encouragement, suggesting resources, and, mostly, listening. Paley is the first volunteer to lead the organization, and he still takes his weekly four-

nonconforming — through both its rhetoric and its policy. “Most of these kids grew up in a time that felt hopeful. They saw marriage equality come to fruition, and they felt like things were trending in the right direction,” Paley says. “But the policies of this administration are encouraging bullying and intolerance in communities across America.”

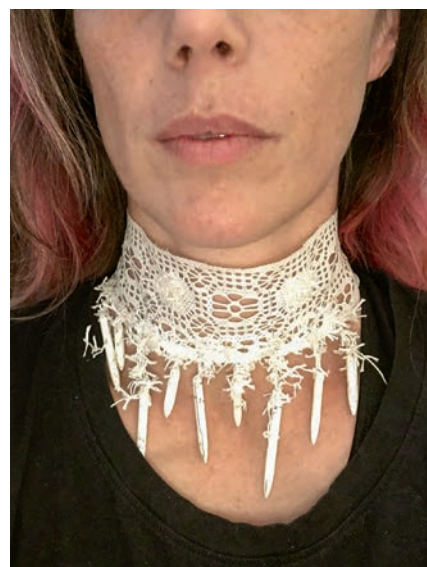
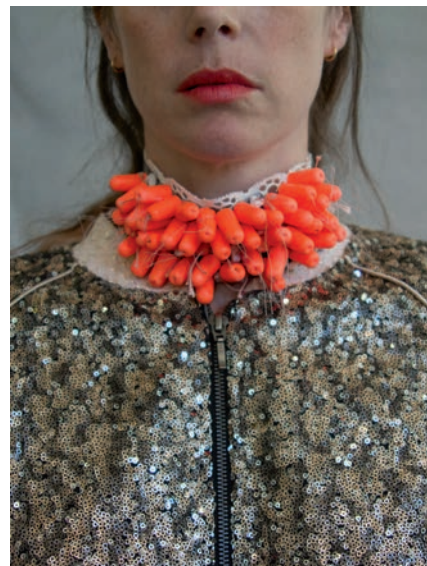
study in journalism, business, and law. While there, Paley won a second fellowship to continue his studies at the business school. He then worked for several years as a consultant at McKinsey and Company, specializing in health care.

At the Trevor Project, Paley hopes to expand the organization's reach. Along with the phone hotline, there's now TrevorText and TrevorChat, where people can connect with volunteers via text and instant messaging, and TrevorSpace, a peer-to-peer social-networking forum. "We want to reach these kids where they're comfortable, on the platforms that they're already using," Paley says.

Though he's started at a challenging time, Paley says he remains hopeful about the future and inspired by the strength of the LGBTQ community, particularly when he thinks about how much progress has already been made. The Trevor Project was founded in 1998 by three filmmakers who had won an Oscar for a short film about a gay, suicidal teen named Trevor. "They wanted to put the phone number of a crisis hotline at the end of the film so that anyone who felt like Trevor could call and get help," Paley says. "But there literally wasn't one to put up. No one was doing this kind of work anywhere. It's heart-breaking. That's what gets me out of bed every day."

The Trevor Lifeline is 866-488-7386. The website, with other resources and information on volunteering, is thetrevorproject.org.

— Rebecca Shapiro



Honorable Accessories

Artist Roxana Alger Geffen '95CC has made a political fashion statement with Dissent Collars, a collection of neckpieces inspired by Ruth Bader Ginsburg '59LAW, '94HON. The Supreme Court justice, who owns an extensive array of expressive jabots, received attention the day after President Trump's election for sporting a studded one that she reserves for moments of dissent. Geffen, who is currently a resident artist at the Arlington Arts Center in Virginia, crafted her own collars of resistance using yarn, safety pins, and other household materials — including earplugs and a Swiffer pad. "It gave me a chance to celebrate the powerful women we do have in office," says the artist, who makes femininity and domestic life recurring themes in her work.

ASK AN ALUM ¿POR QUÉ SE DEBE APRENDER OTRO IDIOMA?

Judy Martialay '68GSAS spent 31 years teaching foreign languages and is the author of *iHola! Let's Learn Spanish* and *Bonjour! Let's Learn French*. Since retiring in 1995, she has become an advocate for language education.



COLUMBIA MAGAZINE: What are the benefits of learning a foreign language?

JUDY MARTIALAY: Children who learn another language are more tolerant of cultural differences and more appreciative of diversity. And there are cognitive benefits to being bilingual: the discipline needed to separate two or more languages gives the brain a workout, which, as you age, can help stave off dementia.

CM: What advice would you give to an adult trying to learn a foreign language?

JM: It takes time, patience, and discipline. You need to stick with it, because after the first ten weeks or so, lessons become more difficult. Online programs like Rosetta Stone and Duolingo can have positive results, but it's important to supplement those lessons with face-to-face conversations. Skype is an effective tool because it allows students to interact directly with people in other countries, in real time.

CM: Does our education system do a sufficient job of promoting foreign-language instruction?

JM: Most students in the US don't start learning a foreign language until middle or high school, if at all. Language programs rarely take priority in school budgets. This is unfortunate, because biliteracy is such a desirable attribute in today's job market. Most students learn Spanish, which is useful, but Mandarin, Arabic, Urdu, and Pashto are growing in importance, because they are prevalent in business and international relations. Americans underestimate the value of speaking another language. People think that everybody on earth knows English, but in reality, only 7 percent of foreign speakers have achieved advanced proficiency, and 75 percent of the world neither speaks nor understands English.

—Julia Joy

Walking and Talking

As a child, whenever Seth Kamil '93GSAS would visit New York, he'd go on long walks with his grandfather, who had a starry-eyed love for the city. "He took me everywhere, even the roughest parts," says Kamil. "I think he was at his happiest when he was showing me the city." Kamil inherited that passion and built it into a thriving company: today, as the cofounder and president of Big Onion Walking Tours, he oversees 1,800 neighborhood tours — serving thirty thousand customers — every year.

Kamil started giving tours in 1991, when he was a twenty-four-year-old Columbia graduate student looking

Outdoor walking tours were uncommon at that time, but Kamil and O'Donnell were inspired by another Columbia professor, the New York City historian Kenneth T. Jackson, who encourages his students to explore the city by foot. They began guiding people around the Lower East Side, Harlem, and Ellis Island seven days a week, writing their dissertations at night.

"I'm Jewish and he's Irish Catholic, so we could work every day but Thanksgiving," Kamil says.

Business was initially slow, but the company caught a break in 1994 when a writer for the *Washington Post* travel section was the only person to book a tour on a snowy day. Kamil — who didn't know his customer was a reporter — went ahead with his two-hour introduction to the Lower East Side and earned the company a glowing write-up.

O'Donnell left the business in 1996 for academia, while Kamil expanded the company. He never finished his dissertation, on the history of homelessness in New York, though his research did inform one important business decision: the choice of the company's name. In the late nineteenth century, Kamil learned, police on the Bowery used to call the homeless "onions," because they were dirty on the outside, with layers of stories underneath. For Kamil, that felt like an apt metaphor for the city. "You have to brush off the dirt to find what's hidden," he says.



Seth Kamil near his home in Brooklyn.

to earn a little extra cash. His adviser, historian James Shenton '49CC, '54GSAS, suggested that Kamil — who was studying American ethnic and urban history — become a guide at the Lower East Side's Tenement Museum. He did, and after working there for a year, he and fellow guide and grad student Edward O'Donnell '95GSAS decided to start their own company.

Big Onion hires only graduate students or recent PhDs as tour guides and pays them a starting salary of fifty dollars an hour. Guides customize each tour, integrating the company's research with their own academic knowledge. Explaining history to tourists from Bulgaria or a group of second-graders turns out to be excellent preparation for teaching, says Sonja Drimmer '11GSAS, a former guide, who is now an assistant professor at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. "Being a guide was essential to learning how to think on my feet," she says.

One of the most popular tours, the Original Multi-Ethnic Eating Tour, winds through the Dominican, Jewish, Italian, and Chinese communities of the Lower East Side. The newest, Art, Sex, and Rock & Roll, takes visitors from artist Andy Warhol's studio to the site of CBGB, the club where punk rock was born.

For Kamil, the rewards of his work are personal as well as professional. He met his wife while leading a tour through the landmarked Eldridge Street Synagogue — she was cleaning stained-glass windows as a volunteer — and wooed her with sour pickles from Guss's on the Lower East Side and obscure facts about nineteenth-century Yiddish-speaking gangsters. Today, they live in Brooklyn, but Kamil still crosses the river most days to lead his original Lower East Side tour. "I feel lucky to spend my days doing my favorite thing," he says. "Walking around New York never gets old."

— Jennifer Altmann

The Dorm Chef's New Menu

Jonah Reider '16CC has always been an accomplished multi-tasker. But even he will admit that his senior year at Columbia got a little, as he puts it, "goofy." While he was finishing his thesis in economics and sociology ("a statistical analysis of worker-

Indeed it did. In October of 2015, *Spectator* ran a review of Pith, touting it as the campus's best new date-night spot. The *New York Post*, the *New Yorker*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, and the *New York Times* all picked up the story. Four months later, Reider

the rest of my life," Reider says. "People thought that it was a gimmick, but entertaining has always been something that I've taken very seriously."

After graduating, Reider moved to Brooklyn, crashing on a friend's loveseat while hosting food events at venues



Jonah Reider serves guests at his Brooklyn supper club, Pith.



owned cooperatives in the United States"), working as a research assistant to Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz, and playing jazz piano in a number of student bands, he was also casually running a restaurant out of his dorm room with a waitlist of over four thousand eager diners.

As for the origins of his legendary supper club, Pith, "Seriously, it wasn't even that deep," Reider says. "I'd just text a few homies and tell them to give me five bucks for groceries. But, you know, word got around . . ."

was a guest on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, feeding the host truffle-honey-infused phyllo dough with pear-nectar sorbet.

Sudden fame does have its drawbacks, though, particularly when running an underground restaurant. Reider was eventually evicted from his University housing because of concerns from the New York City health department. He also sometimes felt conflicted about the attention.

"I didn't want to be known as the dorm-room chef for

around the city. One of his favorites was a collaboration with the Bronx Brewery in which he turned their fermentation tanks into big vibrating speakers and served a menu incorporating their signature brews: celery-root soup with Citra hops, beer-braised short ribs, and panna cotta with espresso milk-stout foam.

Last fall, Reider went on a culinary tour of Australia sponsored by KitchenAid and then headed to the Chicago restaurant Intro for a one-month residency. The

restaurant featured several of Reider's dishes, and on the weekends he took over the space entirely, curating every detail from the menu to the playlists (the *Chicago Tribune* gave him three stars).

Reider is now back in New York, and, thanks to a pair of benevolent Brooklynites with a too-big townhouse, he now operates Pith as a supper club several nights a month. Reider lives and works in the house and runs the dinners cooperatively with his landlords. He's traded his dorm-room toaster for a wood-burning pizza oven, his Ikea plates for hand-crafted pottery, and supermarket groceries for truffles and caviar, fiddleheads and morels.

Instead of asking guests to chip in for groceries, Reider now charges ninety-five dollars for an eight-course tasting menu, with an optional forty-five-dollar wine pairing. Nonetheless, reservations remain as elusive as they did at Columbia. Reider, who hosts ten to fifteen dinners a month, says that tickets sell out almost instantly.

In between the dinners, Reider is taking time to travel, write a cookbook, and eat at some of the restaurants he couldn't afford while in college. But he doesn't want to start a restaurant, at least not in the traditional sense.

"I think people don't want fine dining anymore; it's too stuffy. I like thinking about how to present a meal more creatively," he says. "With really dope food."

—RS

First Responders

When Jason Friesen '12PH enrolled in the executive master's program at Columbia's Mailman School of Public Health in September 2010, he had a vision for a health-care nonprofit that had huge potential but needed a little fine-tuning.



A group of volunteer paramedics in Manzanillo, Dominican Republic.

A year earlier, Friesen, then a paramedic in San Diego, had founded Trek Medics International, an organization that set out to donate emergency medical equipment, including ambulances, to developing countries. But while volunteering in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake, Friesen realized that the needs of poor communities — which have few hospitals, no formal system of emergency care, and mostly unpaved roads — were more complex. "The problem wasn't a lack of equipment," says Friesen, "but of infrastructure."

The emergency medical system that Americans take for granted — including 911 dispatchers and networks of first

responders — doesn't exist in many countries. As a result, car accidents, complicated births, heart attacks, and other sudden illnesses are more likely to be fatal. But to replicate our system, "you'd need lots of money and really good roads everywhere," Friesen says. "The question was, what could we do instead?"

Friesen thought he had the answer. He wanted to recruit local volunteers, train them in first aid, and dispatch them to emergencies via a text-messaging system — in effect, crowdsourcing an emergency-response network. The volunteer first responders — on foot, bicycles, motorcycles — could provide emergency care at the scene and, if more treatment was needed, summon other volunteers to transport the patient to a hospital.

"In these countries, you can't send an ambulance to every scene," Friesen says. "But everybody has a cell phone, and a guy on a motorcycle can get there quickly, stabilize the patient, and treat any immediate life-threatening conditions

— by, for example, stopping a hemorrhage or keeping an airway open." With better communications and a little medical training, he thought, many lives could be saved.

Friesen headed to Mailman, hoping to hone his mission and get valuable management experience. Soon after enrolling, he accepted a post as the director of an international health-care organization in Haiti, which meant commuting from Port-au-Prince to New York (classes in the executive program meet for one long weekend a month).

Columbia proved to be a "great incubator" for Trek Medics and provided a crash course in how organizations work, he says: "We'd study a concept in class, and the next week I'd be in Haiti implementing it."

Friesen also struck up a friendship with classmate Kevin Munjal '12PH, an emergency physician at Mount Sinai Medical Center and a pioneer in community paramedicine, a new model in which EMTs provide more care on scene, rather than transporting every patient to an ER. Munjal agreed to be the medical director of Trek Medics. Its new motto: "911 where there is none."

Today, Trek Medics International has helped to establish networks of volunteer first responders in several communities in the Dominican Republic and Tanzania. Local health organizations generally recruit and train the volunteers, many of whom are compensated with free cell-phone service, while Trek Medics provides the open-source, text-message-based dispatching platform called Beacon.

The communication system, which can be used on any mobile phone, with or without an Internet connection, was designed with funding from Google and the cloud communication company Twilio. Trek Medics also got a boost from the Columbia Startup Lab, which provided office space in SoHo, and from Columbia Business School's Tamer Fund for Social Ventures, which awarded the nonprofit a \$25,000 grant.

To date, volunteers have responded to some one thousand emergencies and provided more than seven hundred potentially life-saving trips to hospitals.

A key to Trek Medics' success, Friesen says, is that he and his small staff find creative ways of adapting their services to suit local circumstances. For instance, in Mwanza, Tanzania, Trek Medics helped recruit the drivers of the city's ubiquitous motorcycle-taxis, called *boda-boda*, to be first responders. In Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic, Trek Medics simply shared their dispatch technology with an existing group of volunteer EMTs and firefighters.

"Trek Medics goes out of its way to make efficient use of local resources," says Meghan FitzGerald '05PH, a partner with the private-equity firm L1 Health and an adjunct professor at the Mailman School who serves on the nonprofit's board. "Jason's approach is not a helicopter drop or Band-Aid fix but rather a solution empowering local health-care providers to work with technology and help their own."

— Melinda Beck



Guinn's Gallery

Muralist David Guinn '94CC brings fine art and unexpected vistas to the streets of Philadelphia. In *Sartain Garden* (2010), his swirling brushstrokes extend the natural boundaries of a community garden by adding lush foliage to an adjacent wall. "I wanted to achieve the spontaneous mark-making of a watercolor painting, but in a mural," says the artist, who has painted over thirty wall installations in his hometown. Before street art became his calling, Guinn studied architecture at Columbia, an education that helped develop his eye for urban design. Today, he teaches fine art at Moore College of Art & Design and is the founder of Freewall, a space where muralists can showcase their creations.

IN MEMORIAM

Wm. Theodore de Bary

1919-2017



Denim Generation

As a film-studies major, Hilary Novelle Hahn '07GS spent most of her time behind the camera. But late last year, she was center stage on the ABC hit TV show *Shark Tank*, seeking a \$500,000 investment in her teen fashion line, the Style Club.

"The Style Club is a fashion-apparel brand for the social-media generation," Hahn told the panel of "sharks," business leaders who would decide whether to invest based on her pitch. "The shopping behavior of the younger consumer has changed. It's all about the experience."

Hahn's interest in fashion started as a hobby: like many other teenage girls, she expressed herself by bedazzling and shredding her jeans. But Hahn had a bigger audience and more raw material than most nascent designers. As a teen, she toured with Destiny's Child and 'N Sync as a singer and dancer, and Levi's was the sponsor. Hahn started wearing her denim creations on stage, and soon others on the tour wanted her designs. Levi's took notice, inviting her to create a capsule collection and perform in its stores.

Hahn thought that her fashion career was just a phase, but after college and a brief stint in Los Angeles, where she produced videos for a digital style network, she realized that she could combine her interests.

The Style Club has thrived on social media, where its thirteen-to-thirty-year-old customers hang out. It uses music videos featuring prominent fashion bloggers and social media "influencers" to showcase the clothes. Hahn has also built the brand by encouraging customers to apply to be "brand ambassadors": in exchange for Style Club swag, the ambassadors promote the line on their own social-media accounts, extending the company's digital reach into the millions.

It's important to Hahn that her clothes have an empowering message. During the 2016 presidential election, she introduced a "Babes Who Vote" line, which is emblazoned with political slogans. "I think that in the current political climate, it is impossible for anyone of any gender, age, or political or sexual preference to be apolitical," she says. And while some might take issue with the term "babe," Hahn feels her generation is reclaiming it. "Before, it was derogatory, but today, it's all about female empowerment," Hahn says. "A babe is smart and strong and a little pushy."

Clearly, being a little pushy has served Hahn well. On *Shark Tank*, she ended up making a \$500,000 deal with fellow Pittsburgh native Mark Cuban. Since then, the company has settled into new Manhattan offices and recruited more staff. There are now exclusive Style Club collections at Urban Outfitters, Nordstrom, and others, with more coming soon to Macy's and Forever 21. "We're tripling our orders from retailers," Hahn says. "It's all pretty exciting and overwhelming." — Leah Ingram



Hilary Hahn on the set of the ABC show *Shark Tank*.

NEWSMAKERS

- Trustee emeritus **H. F. "Gerry" Lenfest '58LAW, '09HON** and his wife Marguerite are among nine winners of the 2017 Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy, given every two years to philanthropists who embody Andrew Carnegie's devotion to giving. Lenfest, a lawyer and media entrepreneur, has donated more than \$1.2 billion to education, social services, and the arts, including more than \$100 million to Columbia.
- **Madeleine Olnek '08SOA** took home the top prize at the Champs-Élysées Film Festival in Paris for her film *Wild Nights with Emily*, which imagines an illicit romance between the poet Emily Dickinson and her sister-in-law Susan Dickinson. School of the Arts film student **Max Rifkind-Barron '11CC** served as a producer.
- Two Columbians have been confirmed by the US Senate to positions in the Trump administration. This past spring, **David Friedman '78CC** became the new US ambassador to Israel. Friedman was previously a lawyer with the firm Kasowitz, Benson, Torres & Friedman, where he represented the Trump Organization in several bankruptcy cases. He has also been involved with several philanthropic organizations, particularly those that support Israeli settlements. **David Pekoske '89SIPA** now leads the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Pekoske is a former vice commandant for the US Coast Guard; he retired from active service in 2010.
- **Parul Sehgal '10SOA** has been named a book critic at the *New York Times*, following chief book critic Michiko Kakutani's retirement. Sehgal, who is also an adjunct professor at the School of the Arts, has been a senior editor and columnist at the *New York Times* since 2012. Her TED talk on literature and envy has been viewed more than two million times.
- Two Columbia Business School alumni were included on *HuffPost's* list of five next-generation tech leaders. **Alicia Syrett '07BUS** is the former chief administrative officer of a major private-equity firm and the founder of Pantegriion Capital, an angel-investment vehicle focused on seed and early-stage investments. **Delphine Braas '14BUS** is cofounder of Sailo, a marketplace connecting boats, captains, and renters, which now manages a fleet of four thousand vessels. (For more on Braas and Sailo, see our Fall 2014 cover story "Start Me Up.") — Carolina Castro



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BULLETIN

UNIVERSITY
NEWS AND
VIEWS

IN MEMORIAM

WM. THEODORE DE BARY, 1919–2017

Wm. Theodore “Ted” de Bary ’41CC, ’53GSAS, ’94HON, a pioneering scholar of East Asian studies who taught at Columbia for nearly seventy years, died on July 14. He was ninety-seven.

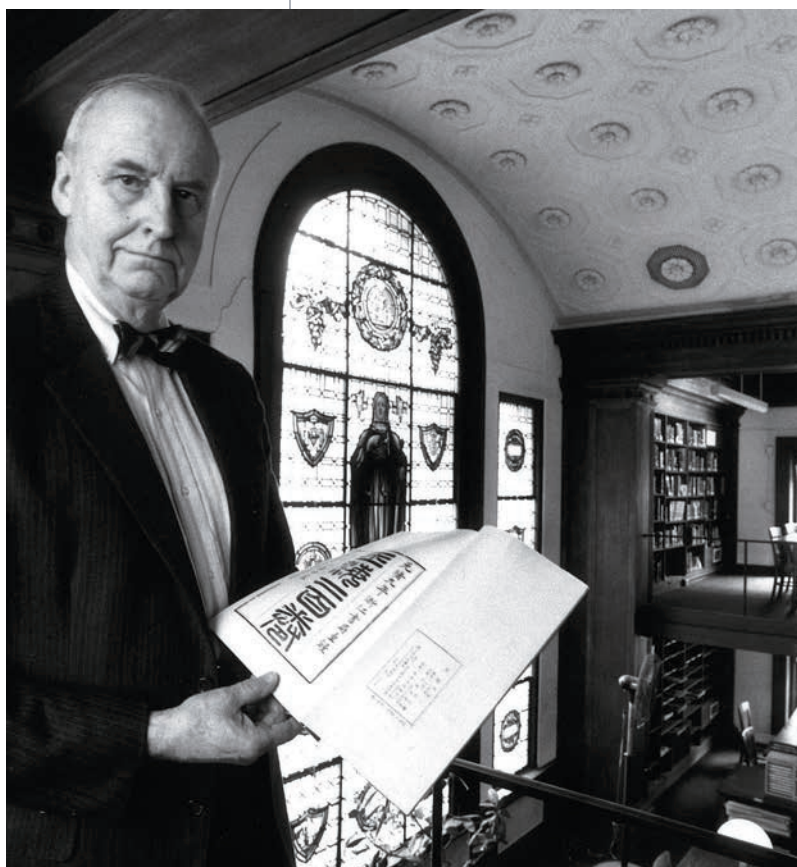
Beloved by generations of Columbia students who took his popular courses on Chinese literature and philosophy, de Bary was among the

made centuries of Chinese, Japanese, and Indian source texts accessible to English-language readers for the first time, he is widely credited with laying the groundwork for the modern field of East Asian studies.

Born in the Bronx and raised by a single mother in Leonia, New Jersey, de Bary entered Columbia College on a full scholarship in 1937. He graduated just months before the bombing of Pearl Harbor and was soon recruited to serve as a naval intelligence officer in World War II. After the war, he returned to Columbia to pursue a doctorate and never left. Hired as a professor immediately upon earning his PhD in 1953, de Bary rose to become chair of the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, a position he held from 1960 to 1966; later he served as University provost from 1971 to 1978. Along the way, he founded the Heyman Center for the Humanities and accumulated numerous teaching honors, including the Society of Columbia Graduates’ Great Teacher Award. He received the National Humanities Medal in 2013.

A Columbia man through and through, de Bary was known for his unwavering support of the Lions football team, for his blue bowties, and, perhaps most of all, for his devotion to undergraduates. After officially retiring in 1989, he kept teaching on a pro bono basis for the rest of his life. He taught his final course, an undergraduate seminar called *Nobility and Civility*, this past spring.

“For Ted, teaching was as vital as reading or writing,” says Paul Anderer, a Columbia professor of Japanese literature who was a colleague of de Bary’s for nearly four decades. “That is why, even as he slowed in old age and found it hard to walk, he kept moving toward the classroom. He needed to open himself to students. He wanted to show them that learning is lifelong, that there is always something more to know, some better way of understanding the tragedies and joys of being human.”



Ted de Bary in
Columbia’s C. V. Starr
East Asian Library.

greatest Sinologists of his era. An authority on Confucius, he wrote several acclaimed books, including *The Liberal Tradition in China* and *Asian Values and Human Rights*, that reveal the Chinese sage’s enduring influence. De Bary’s contributions were hardly limited to Sinology, however. As the driving force behind a Columbia University Press book series that

NURSING SCHOOL GETS NEW HOME

This summer, the Columbia University School of Nursing moved into a new seven-story, 68,000-square-foot building on the University's medical campus in Upper Manhattan. The light-filled, glass-walled facility, at the corner of 168th Street and Audubon Avenue, features large common areas intended to promote social interaction, an event space for two hundred people, a rooftop terrace, and a two-story simulation center where students can practice their clinical skills on medical dummies in mock hospital rooms. Designed jointly by the New York City firm FXFOWLE Architects and the Los Angeles firm CO Architects, the building gives the school 65 percent more space than its former home a few blocks away. "Registered nurses are key to assuring the health of our populations," says nursing dean Bobbie Berkowitz. "This new building gives us the space needed to advance our world-class curriculum."



NEW WEBSITE WILL TRACK PRESS-FREEDOM VIOLATIONS

On August 2, the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University joined more than twenty other organizations in announcing the launch of the US Press Freedom Tracker.

Created by the Committee to Protect Journalists and the Freedom of the Press Foundation, the nonpartisan website aims to comprehensively document press-freedom violations in the United States committed by national, state, and local authorities, as well as by private individuals. These might include: journalist arrests, assaults, border stops, camera and equipment seizures, and surveillance orders.

The Knight First Amendment Institute, a nonprofit established by Columbia and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation to defend freedom of speech and of the press in the digital age, serves on the site's steering committee. The institute is led by Jameel Jaffer, a prominent civil-liberties lawyer.

SIAN LEAH BEILOCK NAMED PRESIDENT OF BARNARD



Sian Leah Beilock

Sian Leah Beilock was recently named president of Barnard College, making her the eighth person to hold the position.

Beilock, who was previously executive vice provost of the University of Chicago, is a cognitive scientist by training. Her research has focused primarily on girls' and women's success in math and science,

and on psychological strategies that can help people overcome performance anxiety and reach their potential.

"Her empathic concern for student success, and her experience bridging liberal-arts disciplines within an urban context, make her uniquely qualified to lead Barnard," said Jolyne Caruso-FitzGerald '81BC, chair of Barnard's Board of Trustees, in announcing Beilock's appointment.

Beilock says that Barnard's position as a small women's college associated with a major research university provides unparalleled opportunities for students. In a letter to the Barnard community, she wrote, "I cannot think of a more important time for Barnard to show the rest of the world that women's intellectual power can drive nations, institutions, and communities."

Beilock replaces Debora L. Spar, who left Barnard after nine years to become president of Lincoln Center.

BULLETIN

COLUMBIA STANDS BEHIND PARIS AGREEMENT



Lerner Hall was lit up green this year in recognition of Columbia's new campus sustainability plan.

The University confirmed its support for the Paris climate accord this summer, just four days after President Donald Trump announced that the United States would withdraw from the landmark agreement.

Columbia joined Barnard College and 181 other universities and colleges, 125 cities, nine states, and nearly a thousand businesses in signing an open letter titled “We Are Still In,” crafted by former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg. Its parties promise to keep taking action to meet America’s previously stated greenhouse-gas emission targets under the Paris Agreement.

“Given Columbia’s singular involvement with issues of climate science, in every dimension and at every level, the University has assumed a special role in the efforts throughout the world to come to terms with the impact of climate change,” President Lee C. Bollinger said in a June 5 statement. “We have long worked with former Mayor Michael Bloomberg on sustainability issues, we have committed ourselves to reducing the University’s own carbon footprint, and we have divested our endowment from thermal coal producers. We are therefore compelled to join in supporting ongoing efforts under the Paris accord to hold warming to under two degrees Celsius and accelerate the transition to a clean-energy economy that will benefit our collective future.”

DANA CANEDY TO OVERSEE PULITZER PRIZES

Dana Canedy, a former senior editor at the *New York Times*, has been named administrator of the Pulitzer Prizes.

The appointment, effective July 17, was announced by the Pulitzer Prize Board and by President Lee C. Bollinger.

A native of Kentucky, Canedy was a lead journalist on *How Race Is Lived in America*, a *Times* series that won the Pulitzer Prize for national reporting in 2001. She is also the author of the best-selling memoir *A Journal for Jordan: A Story of Love and Honor*, which draws heavily from diary entries that her late partner, First Sergeant Charles Monroe King, addressed to their infant child, Jordan. King was killed in combat in Iraq in 2006.



Dana Canedy

As administrator of the Pulitzer Prizes, Canedy succeeds Mike Pride, editor emeritus of *New Hampshire’s Concord Monitor*, who retired this summer after three years in the position. The Pulitzer Prizes, which celebrate achievement in journalism, letters, drama, and music, were established by Graduate School of Journalism founder Joseph Pulitzer in 1917.

PHYSICIST ANDREW MILLIS WINS HAMBURG PRIZE

Columbia professor Andrew Millis has won the Hamburg Prize for Theoretical Physics, a prestigious award given annually by the Joachim Herz Stiftung and the Hamburg Centre for Ultrafast Imaging in Germany.

Millis was honored for his groundbreaking research in



condensed-matter physics, a field that focuses on atomic and molecular interactions in solids and liquids. The prize recognizes Millis’s novel methods of predicting the electrical conductivity and magnetism of materials.

A Columbia professor since 2001, Millis chaired the phys-

ics department from 2006 to 2009. He is also associate director for physical sciences at the Simons Foundation, whose mission is to advance research in mathematics and the basic sciences.

Millis will be honored at a ceremony in Hamburg on November 9.

FROM TOP: BRUCE GILBERT/ELLEN BARROSO; COURTESY OF ANDREW MILLIS

DEANS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE, HUMANITIES APPOINTED

Fredrick Harris, a professor of political science, and Sarah Cole, the chair of the English and comparative literature department, have been appointed divisional deans in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

Harris became dean of social science on July 1; Cole will become dean of humanities on January 1. Working with the executive committee of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and other academic deans, they will oversee departments, research centers, and institutes in their divisions.

Harris, who has taught at Columbia since 2007, is the director of the Center on African American Politics and Society. “The social sciences are needed more than ever to understand the social, political, economic, cultural, and historical forces that shape our times,” he says.

Cole joined the Columbia faculty in 1999 and specializes in nineteenth- and twentieth-century British literature. “I believe very strongly in the importance of the humanities both inside and outside the academy,” she says. “This will be a chance to showcase the wonderful, innovative work going on in the thirteen humanities departments at Columbia, along with our many centers and institutes, and to help connect what they do with the larger community, in New York City and well beyond.”



ARCHERY TEAM WINS 2017 NATIONAL TITLE

For the second time in three years, the Columbia women’s archery team won gold medals in both bow classes — recurve and compound — at the national outdoor collegiate championships. In the final round of the recurve competition, the Lions defeated rival Texas A&M on the strength of the performances of freshman Christine Kim and sophomores Bianca Gotuaco and Aileen Yu. The compound squad, which consisted of freshman Sophia Strachan, senior Judy Zhou, and junior Katherine Alfaro, defeated Michigan State to claim the Lions’ second-ever national championship in the division. Kim and Strachan both qualified to compete in the World University Games, held August 19 in Taipei.

LIVING IN AMERICA AT WALLACH GALLERY

Urban planners in twentieth-century America were torn between two impulses: to revitalize major cities or to abandon them.

A provocative new exhibition at Columbia’s Wallach Gallery in Manhattanville presents materials related to two projects that exemplify these dueling visions of American life. The first, the Harlem River Houses, a nine-acre housing complex built for African Americans in Manhattan in 1936, is now considered one of the most successful urban-renewal projects of its era. The second, Frank Lloyd Wright’s Broadacre City, a design concept he proposed in 1935 for a residential utopia dominated by green lawns and single-family homes, was never built but

inspired countless suburban developments in the coming decades.

The exhibition, *Living in America: Frank Lloyd Wright, Harlem, and Modern Housing*, which runs through December 17, features drawings, architectural models, photographs, and documents dating from the 1920s to the 1950s.

“The difficult questions about American society that are raised by these buildings, projects, and ideas are as relevant today as they were then,” says Reinhold Martin, a Columbia professor of architecture who helped plan the exhibition. “This is a living history, in every possible sense.”

Visit columbia.edu/cu/wallach.

BOOKS

World Without Mind

By Franklin Foer '96CC (Penguin Press)

The 2014 party celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the *New Republic* might well be described as the day that progressive East Coast intellectuals and the new Silicon Valley elite officially broke up.

Before the party, the magazine was living proof that, despite their differences, the two got along on some deeper level. Just two years earlier, Chris Hughes — a Facebook founder, but one with a reassuringly old-school disposition — had used some fraction of his billions to buy the magazine. He was running it the old way, under its traditionalist editor Franklin Foer '96CC and its even more

traditionalist literary editor Leon Wieseltier '74CC. The union of Facebook money and *New Republic* values seemed the deliverance of a kind of utopia: the wild success of the tech industry would keep our cultural boats afloat, leaving us a world with the convenience of Amazon Prime and the edification of our cherished magazines, newspapers, and books.

For a slightly floundering magazine, long unprofitable, the event was surprisingly sumptuous. Held in downtown Washington in a massive marble hall adorned with Corinthian columns and

red-velvet curtains, it was almost like a state dinner. Notables of the press and the political elite came to pay their homage, including Bill Clinton, the keynote speaker.

All was well until it came time for the speeches. Wieseltier's included a lengthy recitation of poetry and the assertion that the *New Republic's* future depended on adherence to its founding values. But when Hughes took the stage, he extolled the importance of change and of transforming the magazine to save it. The room grew tense. It turned out that the twain had not really met; their values were simply too far apart. Just a few days later, Hughes fired Foer, the guardian of the flame. Wieseltier and the rest of the masthead immediately resigned in protest.

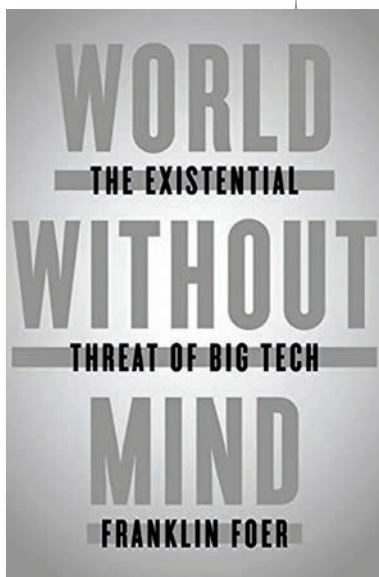
The superficial story was that in the end, Hughes wanted the magazine to be like a tech startup: he wanted "traffic," "engagement," and other metrics of Silicon Valley success. But in fact the cultural differences went even deeper. This is the topic of Foer's fascinating and gripping new book, *World Without Mind*; at its core, it is an intensive examination of the values of the Valley, which he views as a threat not just to old media but to republican values, liberal democracy, and Enlightenment thinking itself.

According to Foer, free will and individuality are themselves under assault, to an extent we barely even realize.

Which is not surprising given the attack is coming not from any totalitarian government or oppressive social code but rather from the very friendly, utterly convenient, and irrepressibly ambitious tech firms whose products take up so much of our days: Google, Facebook, Amazon, Apple — and perhaps Twitter and Microsoft for good measure. All these corporations, Foer believes, have as their deepest ambition "to mold humanity into their desired image of it." Their business depends on controlling or co-opting the premise of choice, not so much that it disappears completely, but enough so that the tech oligopoly becomes the mediator of all that we do.

Heavy stuff — and maybe a touch paranoid for some readers. Most people think of tech companies as businesses, not missionaries: Amazon just wants to sell you stuff, Facebook wants to show you advertising, and Apple wants you to buy the latest iPhone and not complain too much about iTunes. That's what businesses do.

But there is more to Foer's thesis than you might think. We are shaped by the tools we use. And unless you happen to be a lumberjack or a professional chef, I'm going to bet that the main tools you use on a day-to-day basis — your phone, your computer, and various apps and programs — come from just a few Silicon Valley overlords. Their companies want very much to shape what you do. Hence, as Foer argues, in ways large and small, "when it comes to the most central tenet of individualism — free will — the tech



Free will and individuality are under attack from Google and Facebook, says Foer.

companies have a different way. They hope to automate the choices, both large and small, that we make as we float through the day.”

Most of Foer’s book amounts to an intellectual dissection of the ideas that have made their way into Silicon Valley’s products. Technology always embodies ideology, and Foer is right that these are no ordinary corporations but transcendently ambitious ones in a way comparable with Henry Ford at his most spiritual. To take just one example, Google, as Foer points out, is trying to construct an intelligence that exceeds the human brain. As Foer says of Google cofounder Larry Page, “He has built his company so that it can achieve what is called ‘AI complete’: the creation of machines with the ability to equal and eventually exceed human intelligence.”

That is just a sample of the bizarre treats within this book. It would be merely interesting if it were not so important. A fear of concentrated power is an American tradition that goes back to the Revolution. Foer’s book is recommended to anyone concerned about the growing might of the tech industry and its influence over our lives. It is a reminder that unrestrained power, no matter how well-meaning or alluring, is something of which we should always be wary. Perhaps this and other books like it will be a wake-up call for a tech industry that has clearly outgrown its charming adolescence. — *Tim Wu*

Tim Wu is the Isidor and Seville Sulzbacher Professor of Law at Columbia Law School.

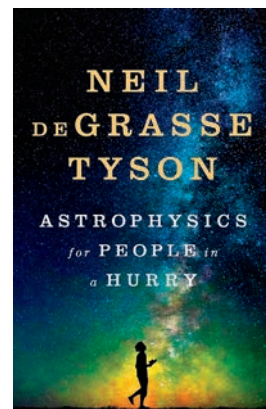
EXCERPT

Astrophysics for People in a Hurry

By Neil deGrasse Tyson '92GSAS In his best-selling new collection of essays, the astrophysicist breaks down complex scientific topics — from the Big Bang to dark energy.

The stars of the Milky Way galaxy trace a big, flat circle. With a diameter-to-thickness ratio of one thousand to one, our galaxy is flatter than the flattest flapjacks ever made. In fact, its proportions are better represented by a crêpe or a tortilla. No, the Milky Way’s disk is not a sphere, but it probably began as one.

We can understand the flatness by assuming the galaxy was once a big, spherical, slowly rotating ball of collapsing gas. During the collapse, the ball spun faster and faster, just as spinning figure skaters do when they draw their arms inward to increase their rotation rate. The galaxy naturally flattened pole-to-pole while the increasing centrifugal forces in the middle prevented collapse at midplane. Yes, if the Pillsbury Doughboy were a figure skater, then fast spins would be a high-risk activity.



Standard Deviation

By Katherine Heiny '92SOA (Alfred A. Knopf)

New Yorkers Graham and Audra have a life that looks pretty perfect from the outside. He’s an attorney. She’s a part-time graphic designer and full-time mom to their gifted ten-year-old son, Matthew. Their apartment is lovely, their schedules are full, and they even seem to (mostly) find each other

charming after twelve years of marriage.

But, of course, in Katherine Heiny’s novel *Standard Deviation*, it doesn’t take long to discover that all is not, in fact, perfect.

Audra is Graham’s much-younger second wife and his former mistress, a fact that still causes some guilt and awkwardness in their marriage. And Matthew, a quirky, friendless,

origami-obsessed child, has recently been diagnosed with a developmental disorder on the milder end of the autism spectrum.

Heiny ’92SOA writes tenderly about the different ways that Graham and Audra navigate parenting a special-needs child. It’s clear that Graham loves Matthew, though he still sometimes wishes that he could trade him for a child who can make friends easily and roll with life’s punches. These parental frustrations are hard for Graham to accept, because he isn’t exactly socially gifted himself — he can be sarcastic and grumpy and a little too fond of routine and order.



BOOKS

Audra, on the other hand, is so cheerful and easygoing that she could, as Graham says, “make friends with a statue.” She’s nurturing and endlessly patient with Matthew. But she also has no boundaries: she makes a habit of taking the lonely and displaced under her wing and, in many cases, into the family’s apartment. Even Graham is surprised when Audra very quickly manages to make friends with his ex-wife, Elspeth (on whom Graham cheated with Audra twelve years earlier). Thanks to Audra’s social prowess, the humorless Elspeth and her foppish boyfriend, Bentrup, become the couple’s regular dinner companions, and all social norms seem to fly out the window.

Heiny, a graduate of the School of the Arts in fiction and poetry, was praised as something of a literary virtuoso in 1992 when she published her comic short story “How to Give the Wrong Impression” in the *New Yorker* at age twenty-five. She left the literary scene for twenty years to raise a family, but her prose here feels as fresh and funny as it did then, especially thanks to her vivid use of metaphor. Walking an unruly dog is like “flying a kite in a hurricane.” Audra’s attempt to climb from the back of a car to the front feels to Graham “like a giraffe [is] being born next to him.”

Standard Deviation is not a plot-driven novel, and it can meander at times. But as a comedy of manners, it works beautifully. Graham, Audra, and Matthew are wonderfully flawed, and in the end that makes them easy to root for.

— *Renée Bacher '91SOA*

What We Lose

By Zinzi Clemmons '13SOA (Viking)

“I’ve often thought that being a light-skinned black woman is like being a well-dressed person who is also homeless,” says Thandi, the narrator of Zinzi Clemmons’s debut novel, *What We Lose*. “You may be able to pass in mainstream society, appearing acceptable to others, even desired. But in reality you have nowhere to rest, nowhere to feel safe.”



For Thandi, the daughter of a biracial South American mother and a Black American father, finding a community where she can rest is a central concern. Raised in suburban Philadelphia, she feels like a social pariah. “Because of my light skin and foreign roots, I was never fully accepted by any race,” Thandi says of her childhood. In Johannesburg, where she spends summers at her family’s vacation home, rampant racial violence means that being identified with either group could be dangerous. Thandi is also middle-class, which doesn’t fit into the conventional narrative of Blackness in either South Africa or America. She is perpetually an outsider — living not within the parameters of any racial identity, but at the very center of their intersecting oppressions.

But race is only one of the aspects of her life that make Thandi feel unmoored; for much of the book, she is nursing her dying mother — an unsettling role reversal — and then, aching, mourning her loss. Clemmons ’13SOA, who calls the book loosely autobiographical, is at her best as she follows Thandi

through the disorienting fog of grief. She perfectly captures the banal symbols of her mother’s absence — the jewelry that needs to be sorted, the clothes that need to be donated to Goodwill, even the extra can of pineapple soda that the family’s favorite Chinese restaurant sends as a gesture of sympathy — as well as the burden of not being able to fully let go of what had once been the central relationship of her life. “I am most troubled when my mother is very present to me, when I dream of her extra vividly and can hear her voice. Even when I wake up I am left with the eerie sensation of how I used to feel — scared, loving, and small, in comparison — in her presence.”

Thandi seeks solace in a romantic connection, an intense physical relationship with a man who lives on the other side of the country. Then, unexpectedly, she is confronted with the possibility of becoming a mother herself. There are myriad ways that this could go wrong. Thandi is young and just starting a career, and her partner (who is white) is ambivalent about having children. But sitting in a park in Brooklyn, watching other multiracial families, she wonders if motherhood might be a path forward. “I feel like I am walking on land again, like my effort is getting me somewhere.”

Clemmons imbues her prose with postmodern flair, telling the story in vignettes peppered with photographs, diagrams, and musings on controversial South African figures like Oscar Pistorius and Winnie Mandela. She does so deftly, and the quirky narrative structure gives the book an appropriately blurry, dream-like quality. But none of this would work without her elegant prose, which is at once stark and direct and deeply, often heart-breakingly, emotional.

— *Rebecca Shapiro*

READING LIST

New and noteworthy releases

BED-STUY IS BURNING

by Brian Platzer '04CC

The Brooklyn neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant doesn't look the same as it did in Spike Lee's 1989 film *Do the Right Thing*, to which the title of this debut novel alludes. But tensions around race and police brutality are still potent. Here, after a Ferguson-like episode, riots break out, with a white family at the center of the chaos.

THE HOT ONE by Carolyn Murnick '01GS

When Carolyn Murnick was twenty-two years old, her childhood best friend, Ashley Ellerin, was found murdered in her Los Angeles home. Tabloids picked up the story when it came to light that Ashley had been casually dating actor Ashton Kutcher. In this riveting memoir, Murnick — now an editor at *New York* magazine — delves deeply into her friend's secret life, trying to get to the truth about her murder.

THE QUARRY FOX

by Leslie T. Sharpe '73GSAS

Not everyone is lucky enough to live on top of a mountain, overlooking a meadow full of wildflowers. But reading naturalist Leslie T. Sharpe's reflection on life in the western Catskills might be the next best thing. Her snapshots of local wilderness — from a luna moth on the screen door to a bear and her cubs settling into hibernation — are vivid and soothing.

EPISTROPHIES

by Brent Hayes Edwards '98GSAS

Jazz and literature have long intersected, with composers and writers each seeking inspiration from the other. See, for example, Thelonious Monk's song "Epistrophy" — whose title refers to a literary device of rhythmic repetition; Amiri Baraka

later wrote a poem in homage to the song. In this erudite text, Columbia literature professor Brent Hayes Edwards uses jazz writings — from record liner notes to letters from Louis Armstrong — to analyze the relationship between the two art forms.

HOW TO BE A MUSLIM

by Haroon Moghul '10GSAS

Haroon Moghul was an undergraduate at NYU when 9/11 made him an unlikely public figure. As the student leader of the university's Islamic center, he was frequently asked to give interviews and speeches and ended up becoming a sort of spokesman for young American Muslims. But Moghul was also struggling with his own beliefs, and with mental-health issues. Now a PhD candidate in Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies at Columbia, he writes movingly about his search for an identity that felt comfortable.



THE ANSWERS

by Catherine Lacey '10SOA

Mary — the heroine of Catherine Lacey's new novel — is drowning in debt and desperate for a second job when she answers a Craigslist ad for "The Girlfriend Experiment," engineered by a rich and famous actor. Soon she finds herself part of a strange harem, where different women are cast in different girlfriend roles — Mary is the Emotional Girlfriend, but there is also the Maternal Girlfriend, the Anger Girlfriend, and several Intimacy Girlfriends — to create one ideal composite. The result, like an episode of *Black Mirror*, is intriguing and deeply unsettling.

THE FUZZY AND THE TECHIE by Scott Hartley '11BUS, '11SIPA

In our tech-focused world, it's easy to imagine that in the future, liberal-arts

degrees will be obsolete and only engineers and robots will have jobs. Not so, says venture capitalist Scott Hartley (also an alum of Google and Facebook), who argues that data is meaningless without creative humans — particularly ones well versed in the arts and humanities — behind it.

OUR SHORT HISTORY

by Lauren Grodstein '97CC, '01SOA

For six years, political consultant Karen has parented her son Jacob alone. Now she's terminally ill, and time is running out for her to introduce Jacob to his father, a former client and fling who never had any interest in children. Lauren Grodstein's new novel is epistolary — it's a long letter from Karen to Jacob — a format that could feel maudlin, were it not for her protagonist's wit and charming self-deprecation.

What's So Funny about Autism?

In *To Siri with Love*, journalist and *New York Times Book Review* columnist Judith Newman '84GSAS shares an uplifting account of how technology — specifically, Apple's voice-controlled personal assistant — has helped her autistic son, Gus.



Columbia Magazine: Tell us a little about the genesis of your book.

Judith Newman: It started as an article I wrote for the *New York Times* about my teenage son and his relationship with Siri. Gus is autistic, and he has an obsessive interest in weather patterns and train timetables. Like most people on the spectrum, he asks the kind of arcane questions that, as a mother, just make my head explode. Then he discovered Siri, a patient, intelligent being who was happy to answer his questions over and over again. That led him to ask follow-up questions on all kinds of subjects. Before Siri, Gus wasn't really interested in having those back-and-forth conversations. Practicing with Siri has helped him learn to communicate better with actual humans.

CM: Why do you think this particular article resonated with so many readers?

JN: I think it hit a nerve because we tend to think of technology as something that isolates us or dumbs us down, but the article showed that technology could be a bridge for people who find it difficult to communicate. It can

also be a source of comfort and companionship. I found out in the course of researching the article that a lot of people like to talk to Siri, especially when they are feeling upset or lonely. And Siri has pretty good answers to most questions. If you ask Siri if your ass looks fat in a pair of jeans, Siri will tell you, "You look fabulous."

CM: You've said that you wanted to write about an "average" autistic kid.

JN: Autism is a spectrum disorder, and so many narratives about autism are about the extremes. They're about kids who are so non-functional that they are banging their heads against the wall, or they're about savants who, along with their limitations, have extraordinary talents. There's not that much written about the vast number of autistic people in between. People like my son Gus.

CM: Let's talk about the language of autism. As a writer you are probably very attuned to its nuances.

JN: It's supposedly politically incorrect to call a person "autistic." We're told to use "person-first" language, but I don't like referring to Gus as "a person with autism." To me it suggests autism is something you carry around and can drop at will. You'd never say "a person with Jewishness" or "a person with homosexuality." As a writer I hate to be fenced in by language, but I'm all for finding language that is descriptive and fun and to the point.

CM: Some of your stories are hilarious. Did you set out to write a funny book?

JN: Well, most books about autism are terribly earnest, and I was determined not to write an earnest book. Do I ever

wonder, "Oh, God, what is going to become of my son?" Of course I do, but lots of people worry about their neurotypical kids, too. I like to say that Gus, who is now fifteen, is an incredibly adorable question mark. I don't know at this point if he is going to be independent or not. That uncertainty feeds into a lot of fears, but also a lot of hopes.

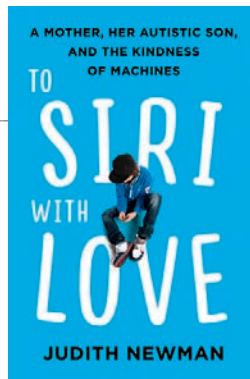
CM: What are your hopes for Gus?

JN: I hope he can get a job. As a country and as a community, we need to design jobs to fit people on the spectrum. My son's ideal job would be working the information booth at Grand Central: he would do that with joy every day of his life. For many people on the spectrum, repetition rocks — data entry, sorting parts, software testing, to name a few examples. That stuff might seem tedious to other people, but for Gus boredom is not an issue. In my book I mention one Columbia grad who has done this type of job-matching: Jonah Zimiles '08BUS, an attorney who opened a bookstore in Maplewood, New Jersey, and hires people on the spectrum who like to sort books and enter inventory into the computer.

CM: Do you spend much time wondering why Gus is autistic?

JN: When it comes to some of the main risk factors for autism, Gus fits the bill. He has an older father and a somewhat older mother, and he is a twin born through IVF. But do I sit there and worry about it anymore? No, I don't. Gus landed on the spectrum, and he is currently a happy person. I adore him just as he is. Autism is so much a part of his Gus-ness.

— Sally Lee



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Benchmarks

As Neil Gorsuch '88CC begins his first full term on the US Supreme Court, there's no better time to test your knowledge of the court's other Columbians. Can you pass the bar? By Joshua J. Friedman '08JRN



1. Ruth Bader Ginsburg '59LAW, '94HON argued six gender-discrimination cases before the Supreme Court while serving on the Columbia Law School faculty. What was the subject of the first one?

- a. equal benefits for military husbands
- b. equal Social Security benefits for widowers
- c. equal drinking age (for low-alcohol beer)
- d. equal obligation to jury duty

2. Which phrase was *not* used by his contemporaries to describe Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes 1884LAW, 1907HON?

- a. "animated feather duster"
- b. "berobed bristle-brush"
- c. "bearded iceberg"
- d. "looked like Jehovah"

3. John Jay 1764KC, who became the nation's first chief justice in 1789, left the bench abruptly after only six years. What unexpected event forced him to step down and return to New York?

- a. He fell ill
- b. He was married
- c. He went bankrupt
- d. He was elected governor

4. What Columbia Law School attendee (but not graduate) was the last justice to serve on the Supreme Court without a law degree?

- a. Noah Haynes Swayne
- b. William Henry Moody
- c. Stanley Forman Reed
- d. James Clark McReynolds

5. Benjamin Cardozo 1889CC, 1890GSAS, 1915HON was the second Jewish Supreme Court justice. What distinction does he hold in Columbia history?

- a. second Jewish dean
- b. second Jewish trustee
- c. second Jewish graduate
- d. second Jewish law professor

6. One of the fundamental principles of judicial review — that laws restricting minority rights deserve heightened scrutiny — was first articulated by Justice Harlan Fiske Stone 1898LAW, 1925HON in a famous footnote. What was the subject of the larger opinion?

- a. workplace discrimination
- b. interracial marriage
- c. school prayer
- d. the regulation of milk

7. William O. Douglas '25LAW, '79HON, who would become the longest-serving Supreme Court justice, traveled by freight train from Yakima, Washington, to enter Columbia Law School. Which did he *not* claim he did along the way?

- a. play dice with hobos
- b. get stranded in a railroad strike
- c. look after 2,000 sheep
- d. wash dishes to pay for his first New York City meal

8. Columbia President Lee C. Bollinger was the named respondent in the landmark 2003 case *Grutter v. Bollinger*. What was the subject of the case?

- a. campaign finance
- b. privacy rights
- c. freedom of expression
- d. race-conscious admissions

9. Constance Baker Motley '46LAW, '03HON and Jack Greenberg '45CC, '48LAW, '84HON both took part in litigating which groundbreaking case?

- a. *Loving v. Virginia*
- b. *Roe v. Wade*
- c. *Brown v. Board of Education*
- d. *Miranda v. Arizona*

10. What Columbia Law School alumni group was established to honor a Supreme Court justice's time at the school?

- a. the Ruthies
- b. the Stone-Agers
- c. the Wild Bills
- d. the Cardozers

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