Confucian Censorship
How the Confucius Institute’s presence impacts Columbia

Fantastic Texts and Where to Find Them
Some of the wild and wonderful things to be found in our libraries

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theblueandwhite.org  COVER: “Butler's Ghosts” by Sadie Kramer
Ah, Fall, the languorous shoulder season between summer and Christmas, where daylight wanes and workload grows, where laziness and lethargy fester, where undulating midterm seasons bulldoze into the tranquil peace of campus life and leave a wake of terror and fear in their path.

Despite it all, I’ve always found Fall to be a good time. The weather may oscillate like a tropical storm but, by and large, it’s the only season that is moderately tolerable in the Big Apple—unless you count that two week gap between freezing ice-paced wind tunnels and sweltering heat-soaked concrete commonly known as NYC Spring.

Fall’s also the time for that most fleeting of campus characters, school spirit! Giving day drives, flocks on Low Steps, and this year more than ever: an actually successful football team, Alma’s not painted (page fourteen), but Pantone-292. Our thoughts are with the team as we charge ahead with a 5-0 lead at press time (page twenty-six).

This issue, we’ve assembled another vibrant mix of pieces for your most cherished entertainment. From advice on Halloween costumes (see page five), to some musing on our school’s quaint shower etiquette (see page sixteen), to an interview with a well-known indie rock star (see page eighteen), you’ll find a piece that will most assuredly distract you from your “required reading” and make sure you’re getting the most out of your Columbia education. And if you’re that rare reader who doesn’t delight in our issue, why not stop by our meetings, Mondays at 8pm in the Choir Room of St. Paul’s Chapel.

As the leaves redden and the pumpkins ripen, we here at The Blue and White wish you a wonderful Fall. Enjoy!

— David Alexander Swanson
The Blue and White has always loved holiday spirit. At Easter we lay eggs, at Christmas we get together and decorate our Bwistmas tree, and at Halloween, we get spooky. However, we realize that Halloween costumes can get out of hand sometimes, and so we’ve, for your benefit, compiled a list of all our favorite, appropriate Halloween costumes. Enjoy!

**Adopted sexy kitten from kill-free shelter**
Try this different spin on slutty Halloween to appear extra cute while also carrying around a feline, feel-good attitude!

**Racially Diverse a capella group**
Want a group costume that will really make you stand out from the crowd? Why not go for an appa-ritious sight: a racially diverse a capella group!

**Homeboy Homer**
Put the ‘Il’ in Iliad, this October 31st with home-boy Homer. It will be Epic, brah.

**Slutty male nurse**
Because fuck gender norms, but also, it’s Halloween! (Other variants include slutty barman, slutty masseur, and slutty fishmonger)

**Socially aware frat boy**
A truly awe-inspiring costume that requires no preparation other than ten minutes of actually thinking about things—as well as Sperry’s, obnoxious banter on the subway, participation in a private groupme, and a memorized list of all the women you’ve disappointed!

**Hegel**
As appropriate as it gets!
PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE CATS !!!!
THIS IS A MANAGED COLONY WITH
A CARETAKER AND REGULAR FEEDING
SCHEDULE.
These cats are cared for.
EXCESS FOOD ATTRACTS PESTS.
THANK YOU
If you venture down to the carpark adjacent to
605 West.113th St. at 6:00 pm, Swirly and Prince
will most likely be waiting. Swirly, a young female
feline, will be sitting by the chain-link fence. And
Prince, Swirly’s father (named because he was found
the day the musician Prince died), will be lingering
underneath the lot’s cars. Both members of said ‘col-
ony’ await one of three current and retired Barnard/
Columbia faculty members who come to care for and
nurture them.
On October 12th, they waited for an ex-Medi-
eval History professor who Swirly “knows by voice.”
Swirly, “doesn’t even like wet food,” but watched as
the professor placed canned cat food under the fence. Swirly sniffed it, and then, in a gesture her scholar-
caretaker interprets as “calling him over,” meowed
to Prince that all was okay. Swirly then proceeded to
eat dry food from a nearby automatic dispenser while
Prince, on the condition that the professor step aside,
ate the wet food. This charade of feral cats and profes-
sors occurs daily, and has for the past few years.
It began when a Physical Education instructor
known for her cat-whispering ability got a call that a
cat on 113th was injured. She happened upon eight
abandoned cats, all once pets of undergrads living in
Nuss, who had migrated from the dorm’s basement
to the streets. She began to trap, neuter, and release
these cats (a process known as TNR), even finding
permanent homes for three of the eight. Today, she
works alongside two other women building shelters,
caring for and rehabilitating cats around Columbia’s
campus. They hope to stop NYC’s feral cat population
from growing, and to stop the spread of feline
HIV.
Next time you walk down West 114th, PLEASE
DO NOT feed them, but do give Swirly and Prince a
nod from afar, because “if you get too close they’ll
run away.”
— Ottilie Lighte
Ever wonder why you’re eating with seeming-
ly plastic cutlery at Ferris Booth Commons?
While students study about environmental issues
behind closed classroom doors, what happens when
they are eating? Do students think twice
before grabbing a new plate, fork, or napkins?
According to a representative of Columbia
Dining, around 6.6 million paper napkins are con-
sumed at Columbia Dining halls annually. That
sounds like an absurd amount of napkins, an
obscene level of wastage for a school that claims to
be so environmentally focused.
But, the good news is that Ferris might be
more green than you think. According to the same
Columbia Dining representative, “plastic cutlery
was used at Ferris Booth Commons only until 2009
when, in an effort to incorporate more sustainable
practices into our operation, we introduced the
current biodegradable cutlery.” It looks like plastic,
but it’s actually not! Furthermore, she clarified that
the material is not only green, but also more durable
than other environmentally friendly materials (for
example, it does not melt or splinter). The repre-
sentative also explained that the paper napkins
are made of “100 percent post-consumer recycled
content”.

When asked why Ferris Booth does not use metal flatware like its John Jay counterpart, the representative from dining said it has nothing to do with cost -- Ferris cannot use metal flatware because the kitchen’s infrastructure is not suitable for a dishwashing system that could support the number of dishes students use at John Jay and still maintain hygienic standards. While it is a relief to know that Ferris uses eco-friendly cutlery and other materials, there is still a pressing issue of wastage. Even if these materials can be recycled or disposed of correctly, there has to be a lot of energy used to produce them in the first place. After all, 6.6 million napkins is no small number.

— Ayesha Kapur

My freshman year of college, I mentioned to an English professor how much I had enjoyed Tennessee Williams’s plays when I encountered them in a high school English class, the sweltering summer heat, dysfunctional families, the eerie sense of impending disaster that gripped every scene. My professor then mentioned that Columbia University owned a collection of Williams’s eyeglasses. I looked into it more and found out that Columbia’s Rare Book and Manuscript Library had a lot more than just glasses: numerous typewritten manuscripts and scripts, three notebooks, several typewriters, some of Williams’s paintings and equipment for painting, photographs, letters, and the contents of his personal library.

So how did a university in New York City come to possess the belongings of a famous New Orleanian playwright? The answer to this question begins not with Williams, but with a student, Brander Matthews, CC 1871, who went on to become a Columbia professor. While Matthews died decades before Williams published the plays that would earn him international renown, the professor’s lifelong fascination with collecting, as well as his deep interest in theater and performance arts, set a precedent at the University for collecting possessions of artists that would continue long after his death. As mentioned on Columbia’s website, by the time Williams died in 1983, Columbia had been purchasing Williams’s items for more than a decade, and in 1994, the University purchased a number of items that were in Williams’s house in Key West at the time of his death.

The University’s interest in Williams persists to this day— in 2013, Columbia acquired even more of his material to add to its collection. For anyone curious about seeing it for themselves, the collection can be found in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, located on the sixth floor of Butler Library.

— Pavi Chance
The Blue and White

Angel Vettikkal

Angel Vettikkal, CC ’17, came to New York from the suburbs of Cincinnati with plans to pick up a major in a STEM field and make a career out of Indian classical dance, which she has studied for years. Now she studies philosophy and Sanskrit.

“I thought, ‘Oh yeah, Sanskrit’s going to be really useful for me to be a dancer,’ but I don’t know if that was the real reason ... I was told by some people I had met in my first year that Sanskrit was super difficult. Like it’s harder than Latin, it’s harder than Greek, so I was like, ‘Oh OK, so now I have to do it,’” Vettikkal explains. Rumors that it was similarly difficult and an interest in classics sparked by the Core led her to philosophy. By her junior year, Vettikkal’s explorations of philosophy and Sanskrit had begun to intersect.

“We [started] reading philosophical texts, it’s hard to say whether or not they’re philosophy because there’s no real word ‘philosophy’ in the Sanskrit tradition. There are instances where we could say that [the texts] are concerned with the same questions, like ‘What are the valid means of knowledge?’, ‘What is real?’ ‘Are there universals?’, so we look at that and we say, ‘Oh that’s philosophy,’ but there’s not technically a single word for it. But we’re not reading [Sanskrit texts] in a philosophic way, we’re just trying to read the [text], what it says.”

This point is where Vettikkal’s training in philosophy comes into play. She continues, “but immediately this has philosophical concerns, because if you can’t follow the argument, you’re not going to be able to read the text or figure out what’s going on in the language, because there’s no way to just read it without knowing what’s going on.”

Bringing out her philosopher’s toolkit to try to understand what’s going on in certain Sanskrit texts led Vettikkal to organize a non-Western reading group with the Minorities and Philosophy (MAP) chapter at Columbia. This semester, Vettikkal, a professor in the Philosophy Department, and a cohort of undergrads and grad students across several departments are working their way through a text by a Buddhist philosopher of language named Jñānaśrīmitra.

Vettikkal isn’t sure whether she’s a Sanskrit scholar or philosopher first—she’s applying to graduate programs in both—perhaps “historian” is a better way to put it. “I just really like history of philosophy a lot, because it makes all these questions that some people take for granted completely contingent.” In the seminar she and I take together, she likes how “we’re getting into the history of how modern epistemological questions came to be the way that they are...
How did we get to this point right now? Whether or not the entire world is real, whether or not I’m still dreaming—there’s a history to these questions.”

Vettikkal doesn’t want to “destroy philosophy as we know it,” but she is interested in evaluating the categories that make up the discipline and illustrating how the trajectory differs in the Sanskrit intellectual history. In Western philosophy, “we take for granted that there’s Metaphysics, there’s Epistemology and there’s Ethics, [that] these are separate fields, [that] the discipline must be separated into these categories—so when you have an entirely, nearly independent philosophical tradition that lasted for at least 1,500 years, you see different categories that were formed, different developments...What if you didn’t start with Aristotle? What would have happened?” — Virginia Ambeliotis

VIKRAMADITYA KAPUR

“The saddest moment during my time at Columbia,” says Vikramaditya Kapur, CC ’18, “was when Cannons closed down. The second saddest was when Bernheim and Schwartz did.” Though he contends that “vibrant is pushing it” when it comes to the infamously stagnant social scene here of which he has been a mainstay, Kapur maintains that he would have his wedding at Mel’s, and traces the origins of many of his closest and most enduring friendships to bars around Columbia. He is emphatic in his assertion that “there is a good time to be had,” though it helps that his friends all enjoy going out as well. “Everyone has a type of person they get on with,” he says, “you just have to find it—my friends are all people who I gelled with really fast.”

An international student from India who has also lived in Peru, Kapur is a familiar face to many in Morningside Heights. Majoring in Economics and Psychology, his plan for the short term is to stay in New York after he graduates, though he expects to eventually succumb to a lifelong passion for travel. He hopes to work in sales and carry his “work hard play hard” mentality into professional life.

On living abroad, he says that “the majority [of Indian students] have a different experience” than his own, because his compatriots “stay more true to themselves,” whereas he has “embraced life in America.” When asked about his fondest memory at Columbia, Kapur says that “the best day of my life was the day I got an ID that said I was 21. So many more opportunities opened up.”

Indeed, Kapur is appreciative above all for the “opportunity to meet so many people” that he has been afforded by his time at Columbia. He urges younger students to explore, both on and off campus: “you don’t have to spend money—there’s just so much to do.” The rooftop at the Metropolitan Museum of Art is one of his favorite places in the city and he is in the midst of planning a trip to Six Flags next weekend with his friends.

Though his forays downtown are frequent, he maintains his affection for nightlife in Morningside Heights, and attributes this to something more than the fact that he does “enjoy a drink from time to time.” Kapur is refreshingly clear in his acknowledgment and enjoyment of a community around Columbia, especially given the carefully practiced cynicism most upperclassmen adopt in their attitudes towards our student community.

Throughout our conversation, his charisma and predilection for a good time shine through, and it begins to feel like perhaps some others could benefit from the application of his trademark nihilistic epicureanism.

What has surprised him the most during his time here? “I thought Americans could drink a lot,” he says, “but they really can’t—the movies overplay it.” — Saif Maqbool
Oh god yes, Desmond, you sugar-tongued devil, you. Build on, my dear, though I fear the bloated corpse of my pitiful point may provide a poor foundation. There was never any need for you to ask. I have prayed for this day, for you to speak, to correct my boyish naïveté. I defer to you. I have no doubt that through the majesty of your dialectic, the truth will come out. Every word you speak ravishes me, pin-pricking my skin syllable by syllable. I have heard it said that the truth can be uncomfortable, but when you speak I feel nothing but pleasure. But allow me to explain myself:

Since the earliest days of my youth, I have been enchanted by truth ... I dreamed only of coming to Columbia University—this bastion of scholarly wonder—in the hope that I might learn among the best and brightest of America’s fifth most highly ranked undergraduate institution. I imagined that enshrined in these ancient halls and storied streets I would find the wisdom I sought. I expected the very concrete to glisten, the bright insights of our predecessors to be embedded like gemstones into the rock. But I was a fool. My aspirations, though noble, were wrongly directed. The mechanisms I had hoped would bring my dreams of wisdom to fruition have been revealed to be nothing but lies.

I am nothing more than an apprentice, an aspiring learner; I am prone to mistakes. Foolishly, I voyaged to this institution as a scholarly pupa, hoping that I would one day be metamorphosed into a voluptuous nymph of knowledge. But it is not the structures, stories, or staff of Columbia that can offer me true knowledge, Desmond; it is only you. Only you can bring about my evolution, complete my being, deliver me unto Nirvana.

Misled and mistreated, I was tricked down the bread-crumbs trail of academia. I had thought that my efforts would be best spent laboring under the great minds of this institution, but I was wrong. But fate brought me to this Art Humanities class, Desmond. Fate brought me to you. Your beauteous words grant knowledge in shivering gasps. Your words are sparks, flying high through the sky, burning brightly over the heads of the ignorant masses, lighting the blackest of nights. And here, here in this Schermerhorn classroom, they have finally found me. They tiptoe into my mind, burning straight through the fallacy and failure in which I once held faith. Your words, they fill the darkest depths of my mind with truth universal.

How fitting it is that today we study Titian. His adoring dedication to the boyish yet corruptible kurios is well honored in your presence. Perhaps your form provides some explanation for your wisdom; a beautiful mind befitting a beautiful man. It astounds me that a head so great can be matched by the finely crafted pedestal on which it stands. Your polyester-blend polo softly cradles your supple torso; its softness a fine contrast to the sharply defined abdominals that I can only imagine hide below. When you raised your hand just moments ago, your proverbial ‘adonis belt’ exposed itself to me, a scintillating and enticing invitation to further explore what is hidden: the man in the clothes, and the mind within the man.

But I have lost myself. Where were we? The answer to your question is yes. Take my point. It is yours. Correct me, and do with it—or me—as you may. Should I faint during your sagacious soliloquy, know that it was not for lack of interest, but rather the total failure of my inferior intellectual constitution. Speak on, you wonderful creature.
Hmm? Let me think about it. You know, as I was walking to this class, and as I cut across Butler lawn, a lone leaf fell my way and landed quite perfectly in the palm of my hand. I recalled that time back in Battersea Park—oh, how long it’s been since those aquatint days—when my mother fished from my hood a stray sycamore leaf that had gotten lost on its lapsed voyage. “Stewart,” she said in her tulip-bud voice, “do you know what this means?” “No,” I said with boyish timidity. “It means,” she began, drawing me into her warm, maternal bosom, “that you are a very lucky boy; for whenever a leaf falls your way it is marking you for a day of great joy...”

...Such then was my thought, strolling to the end of Butler lawn, that this class was going to be honeysweet, that the next hour and fifty minutes were to be cheered by the light giggle of lady luck. You just fucked up that hope. With one meager attempt at augmenting your ten percent participation grade, you have spat on the cherished words of my dear mother, and shattered a whole life of happy fallen-leaf-to-good-memory connections. I hope you feel sanctified; I hope you feel you can now brag to your family friends next time they come over for roasted chicken and olive dip.

I once saw a bird perched atop an oaken branch. It was a beautiful sight: silken sunlight cascading down a saffroned back of radiant plumage. This moment is nothing like that! I start the class with a lovely point about Titian’s aged use of sfumato, about the fog and haziness of his scattered brush hairs, while you sit idle, perched behind a pointlessly expensive, marbled S’well bottle and peruse videos of ferrets munching funnel cake on your MacBook Air. Then, as I crescendo my comment with a deft reference to the upper left corner of Venus and Adonis, your ears perk up, no doubt stirred by the coming of an inconvenient Facebook ad. You adjust yourself, rearrange your glasses, pick up a pen, wave it around slowly; you ruffle some pages in your notebook, begin to look like you’re coming to a conclusion. And then you look at me, you gaze at me up and down, drinking in the candor of my well-rolled light-wash jeans, soaking up the architectural poise of my soliloquy. But no, it’s not to admire me (as I thought it might be); it’s to manipulate, to use my scholarly musings to your end, to dismantle my point, piece by prescient piece, and find a way to taint it with your half-finished shitstorm of a point. You’ll probably talk about how you like it because it has some “texture”—what the fuck does that even mean—you find enticing. Or maybe you’ll find a way to apply some postmodern, irrelevant reading to it which the professor will be obliged to entertain. Burn in hell. No one cares about you or your opinions—not even Franklin...

I miss that leaf, those gilded hours. I miss the prospect of a good day. I miss professionalism and courtesy. I miss mother.... So no, do not “build off my point.” I hate you and I hate that god-awful turn of phrase. Like you and like your proposed comment, it doesn’t make any sense.
The trees had belatedly begun to shed their leaves, and Riverside Park was a mesmerizing bricolage of auburn and gold as Verily finished preparing what is in the vernacular referred to as a baseball bat. As usual, there was a great deal on our hero’s mind, as the slow burn of summer had given way to the tumult of the fall semester.

At a party in September, Verily had been introduced by a mutual friend to one Pera Perfida, with whom he had been smitten from the very first moment. Sharing a providential cigarette on a rusty fire escape, they had been intoxicated momentarily by each other and the vast realms of possibility that seemed to envelop them. Drawn to what he thought was ambition and intelligence, Verily thought Pera was perfect for him, and he glossed over the brevity of their interaction and the shallowness of their acquaintance and descended promptly into the seventh circle of infatuation.

With the normally sharp faculties of our erudite protagonist distorted by the sirenic charms of a young woman he really did not know in the slightest, he quickly came to see her as capricious. He would dwell arduously on her late, noncommittal replies, and linger tentatively in well-lit Butler corridors as he watched her interact with other men and projected self-deprecating narratives onto each encounter.

His failings in love led him to seek solace in that festival of masculinity, American football, the only sport which Verily liked to say instilled in Adonis himself a sense of inferiority. Though he didn’t really understand the sport very well, the sporadic bursts of intense motion fomented in him a strange new kind of excitement, and Verily was soon as tribal and enthusiastic as the most ardent fan of Columbia football, though he was considered by one eloquent observer to be a “bandwagon poser dilettante who never cared about this team before it started winning.”

Pera Perfida was soon forgotten, and “sports” were the new central interest of Verily’s young life, prone as he was to unpredictable and fleeting interests. Looking back now, Verily realized that the deep internal thirst he had sought to fulfill was just the cry of a firmly ensconced internal demon. Perhaps self-improvement until this point had in fact been an endeavor of self-exorcism, and his unprecedented liberation led him to believe that perhaps it was important to free himself from a prison of his own design.

That evening, the streaks of pink in the sky bathed everything in a kind of ephemeral light, and Verily thought to himself that love was powerful, that happiness existed somewhere, and that the opportunities ahead of him were limitless. It was a quiet euphoria, one that cannot be sought, only encountered. Later, he would try to render the feeling in words, but find himself painfully and frustratingly barricaded by the limitations of language. Everything he wrote sounded conceited and unnecessary.
Fantastic Texts & Where to Find Them

Some of the wild and wonderful things to be found in our libraries

By Alice McCrum

This summer, two historians of all things exotic travelled to Columbia from New South Wales to inspect the in-house celebrity of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library archive: the Cuneiform tablet, otherwise known by its stage name, Plimpton 322 (It is artifact #322 of the Plimpton Collection) is a 3,700-year-old Babylonian Tablet.

Plimpton 322 is about the size of two small pieces of toast, and has a similar dark brown color. The tablet, which confusingly sounds like an extra-terrestrial spaceship, is far from the only surprise in the dark recesses of the library system. A Gutenberg Bible; Benjamin Franklin’s composing stick; a fabric “cheat sheet” left behind from the impossible Chinese examination system; the gold double-band wedding ring of Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton, and wedding handkerchiefs of Alexander and Elizabeth Hamilton from 1780 (Hamilton fans go wild); an original Lewis Hine photograph entitled Welder, Empire State Building, New York from 1930; a Frank Lloyd Wright Drawing of a Dining Room, Dana House from 1902; John Jay’s Federalist Number 5 paper of 1788; John Hunter’s The Natural History of Human Teeth—all share a home in Columbia’s RBML.

Columbia has accumulated over 30 million books, manuscripts, photographs and other objects across its twenty-six libraries. This includes Butler Library, the Geology Library, Journalism Library, Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Burke Library, among others. There are specialty collections that range from East Asian Collections, New York City History, Law, Music, Health Sciences, Theology and Religion. But the well-known Rare Book and Manuscript Library’s accumulation of artifacts, located on the east side of the sixth floor of Butler Library, is special— is the one that draws the most attention.

I sat down with Tara Craig, the Public Services Librarian and Jennifer Lee, officially the Curator for Performing Arts, unofficially the source of wisdom and knowledge about Columbia’s weird and wonderful possessions, who oversaw the curation of the book Jewels in her Crown: Treasures from the Special Collections of Columbia’s Libraries.

Accessing the rare book archive is quite laborious, but, as Craig assures me, quite worth the effort. First, you have to make an online account to request the material. Next, you arrange a time to view your material, where you are checked into a special room (the air has more oxygen and less nitroge, so the sound waves travel on higher frequencies). The stacks are not open to the public, as rare books often have special protective boxes. As you examine your treasure work in the special room, there is an on-duty librarian at the front who ensures that you do not make off with the material— or worse, sneeze on it. Though this long process puts the “burden on the researcher,” as Lee puts it, researchers flock from the far corners of the world to work with the rare and exclusive pieces. In fact, roughly two-thirds of visiting researchers are not affiliated with the University, Craig notes.

Craig breathes life into the archive by drawing connections between pieces and the Core Curriculum. Veterans of Literature Humanities will be delighted to hear that this library contains some of the earliest known fragments of Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey, as well as a book of John Milton’s letters. And students of Contemporary Civilization might be interested that Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley has a piece in the collection—a first edition Frankenstein. Indeed, the Rare Book and Manuscript Library’s archive is so enormous that it flows over into an offsite storage facility in Princeton, New Jersey. So check it out—, though, of course, you can never actually check them out.
Caught Red Handed

An in-depth look at a little-known prank

By Sophie Levy

When Marc Rosenblum, CC ’91, first stepped foot onto College Walk, tensions at Columbia were high. Numerous large-scale demonstrations rocked campus over a short period, from calls to complete Columbia’s divestment from South Africa, to protests regarding the school’s eviction of low-income residents from properties around campus. Yet, despite the frequency and fervor of these protests, frustratingly little changed. Feeling personally compelled to act, Rosenblum joined the Democratic Socialists of America where he dramatically ramped up the boldness of his protests to grab Columbia’s attention. Working with a group of 12 other students who shared his desperation for action, Rosenblum hatched a plan.

In the spring semester of 1988, their freshman year, the 12 students marched into the office of Michael Sovern, the President of the university at the time; wearing masks to protect their identities, the group occupied the room. Collectively, they called for Sovern’s immediate resignation, and demanded that Columbia fully divest from any relations with South Africa. When Sovern’s himself refused to come in to speak to the students, the group hatched a new plan. If the school was not going to take their protests seriously within the halls of the administration, they were going to need to take another approach. Rosenblum, along with fellow freshman Carl Meyer (CC ’91), volunteered to execute the plan.

And so, at 12 a.m. on Friday, May 13, 1988, just days before graduation and the end of their freshman year, Rosenblum and Meyer set out to Low Steps with giant glass jars of red paint.

The two young men paused briefly to make sure no one was in close proximity to Alma—her central position on campus of pivotal importance to their plan—and took the glasses of paint and threw them at Alma Mater. The glass shattered. If they had not already attracted attention to themselves, the noise surely did the trick. Alma Mater was covered in paint. Red dripped down her body, symbolic of the blood Columbia had on its hands for its various controversial deals with South Africa.

After completing their mission, the young provocateurs quickly went their separate ways. Rosenblum almost made it to his Carman dorm unnoticed; however, a half dozen Columbia security guards were waiting for him in his room. As it turned out, Rosenblum and his suitemate had experienced a year-long struggle for the affections of a girl in their hall. When she finally started dating the suitemate, there was evidently lingering resentment between the three of them. After Rosenblum let his suitemate in on his plan earlier that day, his suitemate along with the belle, turned him in to the Columbia authorities.

Rosenblum attempted to move past the security guards and go into his room, but they insisted he follow them. They convoy proceeded to the basement of Low Library, where Rosenblum found himself the subject of “a complete interrogation.” They demanded that he tell them the names of everyone involved in the incident. When he wouldn’t give any names, they threatened him with suspension. Unwilling to betray his friend, Rosenblum refused to talk. As he recalls, “They were really very heavy-handed with me about, ‘give us the names or we’re going to suspend you,’ and I sort of called their bluff, and they weren’t bluffing.”

At the end of the disciplinary process, Rosenblum found himself suspended for the fall semester of his sophomore year. In order to return to Columbia for the spring semester, he had to petition by writing the university a letter requesting readmittance back into the University. After he was readmitted, he immediately created a left-wing newspaper called The Modern Times. It was through this newspaper that he continued to express his own political beliefs and details of Columbia’s various involvements both locally and internationally.

Now almost 30 years after the incident, Rosenblum admits he doesn’t harbor any hard feelings towards Columbia for the suspension. “I think it’s not a completely disproportionate response what they did. I don’t advise my college-aged kids to paint statues.”
Let It McRain Over Me

A philosophical exploration into the liminality of shower spaces

BY JACOB SNYDER

Few bathrooms on campus are more private than those found in McBain—one sink, one toilet, one shower, locking doors. And still, showering in one of these bathrooms, especially on weekend mornings or early afternoons, can be a surprisingly intimate experience when I start to hear music. Most of the time, it’s only a pulsating bass from a few bathrooms down; other times, it’s full songs selected by shower-goers next door. While showering on McBain 2, I’ve listened by osmosis to Post Malone, Florida Georgia Line, Eminem, Frank Ocean, Drake, and Kesha. I feel confident estimating that it’s already late enough in the semester for a majority of McBain residents to have involuntarily showered to music curated by their peers, and yet, I’ve never heard any expressions of annoyance with this evidently common practice, from students living in McBain or elsewhere.

Why is this something we’re so OK with? Why should we not be outraged at such an intrusion into one of the most private spaces available to college students? Music appears to hold some special status in this way. To see through the walls of McBain bathrooms would surely be a violation of privacy, but to share music through them is not. It actually seems unreasonable, even downright curmudgeonly, to complain about involuntarily listening to others’ music in such private spaces. What is the source of these intuitions?

The answer may lie in the social function of music listening. We don’t see the act of forcing our peers to listen to Usher while they de-funk as a violation of privacy precisely because playing music out loud can be a kind of social signaling (“this is the kind of music I love!”) or a form of music sharing (“you should listen to this!”). McBain residents don’t play music in the shower despite it being audible to others; they play music in the shower because it’s audible to others!

There are obviously more selfish reasons for listening to music in the shower, too. Music can soothe, entertain, or excite in a way that makes the prosaic act of showering more enjoyable. And it’s possible, depending on how self-conscious the shower-goer in question is, that these selfish motives far outweigh any others.

But if you’re the kind of person to play music in dorm showers, think about the act of choosing the particular music you play. There’s a good chance you select music not purely according to your own interests, but place some (potentially subconscious) value on what others around you would like to hear, even from the private space par excellence of the bathroom. The chances are especially good that you’re playing music as a social gesture during these opening months of the year, when the social conscience of the average Columbian is in overdrive.

The social vocation of music listening would help to explain why I hear so much hip-hop and pop while rinsing off—these are the least offensive and most popular genres of music for the college-aged demographic. Playing niche favorites or guilty pleasures that you might otherwise not listen to while showering (if you were, say, at home by yourself)
by definition lowers your chances of pleasing your peers-in-hygiene. In a word: you’ll probably make more friends playing Drake in the shower than The Fall.

There’s one last practical worry here, though: how can music listening in McBain showers perform a social function if these bathrooms are anonymous? There’s no obvious way for shower-goers to identify who it is that’s playing music in the next bathroom overshort of waiting outside the restroom door for the toweled culprit to reveal themselves, of course. This anonymity is an important difference between blasting music in the shower versus in a dorm room. What’s the point of sharing your impeccable music taste if it’s so likely your shower playlist will remain faceless?

Perhaps our desire to play music in the shower despite the factors stacked against it—such as our conflicting wishes for privacy and rational behavior—reveals something basic about human priorities. Even in the most private spaces, there’s room for assertion of our essentially social nature. We are, most of all, social animals. Really clean social animals.
Nightlife isn't exactly Columbia's forte. The Blue & White was forwarded this email thread from a neighborhood Yahoo group. Smart thinking with the film trucks, but please leave us 1020. Or come to Trivia Night! About the noise levels, may we suggest relocating to a non-university neighborhood or, gee, outside of New York City? Westchester doesn't seem so bad.

Sep 19, 2017, Tuesday, 6:07 PM, [redacted] [AROUND110] <AROUND110@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
As if we didn't have enough noise with Fresh Direct and partying Ivies, we have film truck engines idling and adding to the cacophony.
Are they allowed to do this all night?

Sep 19, 2017, Tuesday, 7:45 PM, [redacted] [AROUND110] <AROUND110@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
Well, you might try one approach that seems to work: go down to the street, take photos of the license plates and identifying info on the cab doors and truck body, and then ask the driver to please shut off the engines. They will probably refuse - generating for lights and cameras etc. - but we might then file with the city’s film department, using the photos of the offending vehicles, and ask that they require organizations using our blocks and polluting our air and keeping us from sleeping to redo their operations. Or perhaps reimburse the residents for extra time and AC use we need to block out their noise.
Perhaps the city council nominees and candidates in the next election could be pressured to address this issue. And of course the issue of inebriated students who think they’re on a 200-acre college campus where nobody expects to sleep.

Sep 20, 2017, Wednesday, 4:20 PM, [redacted] [AROUND110] <AROUND110@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
If you really think it’s college students in the neighborhood bars, a police crackdown on fake IDs should do the trick. Most college students aren’t old enough to drink.
[attachment: YouTube: "Dick Gregory apologizes to the first Black President"]

Sep 20, 2017, Wednesday, 7:31 PM, [redacted] [AROUND110] <AROUND110@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
I was just guessing: from the shrieking and horseplay and voices I hear, it sounded like high school students, but I discounted that possibility. Of course the bar posts a sign requiring two IDs for entrance, but those around here long enough to remember the West End’s end might be excused for a bit of cynicism on that score.

Sep 20, 2017, Wednesday, 7:31 PM, [redacted] [AROUND110] <AROUND110@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
Bucket of water or another noxious liquid out the window sounds like fun! I’ll participate :)•
Since 2004, Hanban, a non-profit affiliated with China’s Ministry of Education has established 400 Confucius Institutes in high schools, colleges, and universities throughout the world. Funded and supervised by the Chinese government, Confucius Institutes aim “to promote Chinese language and culture in foreign countries” by providing educational resources and instructors. In 2011, Hanban pledged to donate $1 million to Columbia over a five-year span in order to establish a Confucius Institute.

Although Columbia’s Confucius Institute is now technically up and running, there is strikingly little information available about the Institute and its operations. There is no Columbia webpage dedicated to the Confucius Institute, nor is there any mention of the Confucius Institute on the website for Columbia’s Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures (EALAC), in which the Institute is held. For Andrew Nathan, Class of 1919 Professor of Political Science and Chair of the steering committee of the Center for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia, this lack of information is troubling. “I think that all Columbia academic units including the Confucius Institute should be transparent,” Professor Nathan stated. As of now, Columbia has made no information available about the Confucius Institutes’ activities and governance structure, a fact that Professor Nathan believes should be corrected.

This lack of information is particularly alarming given the fact that Confucius Institutes are overseen by the Chinese government yet operate directly within the educational establishments of other countries. Indeed, this operational structure is what separates China’s Confucius Institute program from other countries’ government-backed language and cultural programs. While Germany’s Goethe Institutes and France’s Alliance Francaise centers are similar to China’s Confucius Institutes in their goal to promote the language and culture of their respective countries, they do not function within foreign high schools, colleges, and universities. China’s Confucius Institutes are unique in that they not only offer funding for foreign schools, but that they also offer to provide Chinese language instructors and coursework material.

Because China’s Confucius Institutes operate within the schools of other countries, many in academia have voiced their suspicions—if not outright disapproval—of the program. In 2013, the Canadian Association of University Teachers released a statement urging Canadian universities to terminate their partnership with the Institutes, citing a case at McMaster University in Ontario in which a Confucius Institute instructor felt that she was discriminated against for her belief in Falun Gong, a spiritual practice that is banned in China. In 2014, the American Association of University Professors issued a similar statement, arguing that “Confucius Institutes function as an arm of the Chinese state and are allowed to ignore academic freedom.” That same year, more than 100 professors at the University of Chicago signed a petition calling on their University Senate to discontinue their Confucius Institute. The petition claimed that the instructors selected for the Confucius Institute program “are trained to ignore or divert questions on issues that are politically taboo in China, or indeed criminalized, such as the status of Taiwan, Tiananmen, the pro-Democracy movement, etcetera.” Five months after the professors’ petition was released, the University of Chicago terminated their partnership with the Confucius Institute program. A week later, Penn State University followed suit.

So, what is the role of the Confucius Institute at Columbia? Does Hanban select Chinese language instructors to teach at the university? And does Hanban have any authority over the curricula of Columbia’s Chinese classes? Does the university’s partnership with Hanban in any way limit Columbia’s commitment to academic freedom?

“No,” is the short answer according to Professor Lening Liu, the director of Columbia’s Chinese Language Program as well as the university’s Confucius Institute Director of Chinese Language Pedagogy. Professor Liu explained that Columbia was able to negotiate an individual agree-
ment with Hanban that established Columbia’s Confucius Institute as solely research-oriented. The Confucius Institute at Columbia—run by Professor Liu and two other EALAC faculty members who work as volunteers—does not offer Chinese language classes, does not have any influence over the coursework and textbooks used in Columbia classrooms, and has no input in the hiring of instructors. Rather, Columbia’s Confucius Institute serves simply as the means through which faculty within the EALAC Department can submit research-project proposals to request funding from Hanban.

“All the Chinese classes here are offered by our Chinese language program within the EALAC department,” Professor Liu asserted. “We have exchange teachers from China and Taiwan, but that exchange program started long before the Confucius Institute had been established. The role of the Confucius Institute here is to serve the faculty to conduct China-related research. That’s all.”

Professor Liu stressed that the Confucius Institute at Columbia has only been advantageous for the university. According to Professor Liu, Hanban has never interfered with Columbia’s academic operations, yet Hanban has funded every research proposal submitted by Columbia’s faculty through the university’s Confucius Institute. Professor Liu estimates that Hanban provides around $150,000 each year in support of five to six research projects. “I really don’t know how Confucius Institutes operate at other places but we just focus on what is beneficial to our faculty,” Professor Liu stated. “So far, all we can say is it works well for us.”

Based on the information Professor Liu provided, it seems that Columbia’s partnership with Hanban has, indeed, been beneficial for the university. However, it is worth considering the larger implications of Columbia’s involvement in China’s Confucius Institute program. Given the fact that other educational establishments may not have agreements with Hanban that protect academic freedom and nondiscriminatory hiring, is Columbia contravening its intellectual and educational values by participating in—and thereby endorsing—the Confucius Institute program?
The Blue and White

I arrived home on a normal August night to a compact yet 4 lb. package sitting outside my bedroom door. I had no recollection of recently ordering anything. The cardboard seemed professional, folding into itself with a hinge on the back. I was hoping that I had won a contest I didn’t know I entered, a long-time dream of mine. I hefted the box onto the kitchen island and took scissors to its clear packing tape. There, wrapped delicately in a thin sheet of silver tissue paper, was theMystery.doc. Matthew McIntosh’s then yet-to-be released sophomore novel. “Oh yeah,” I thought to myself, “I forgot this was coming.”

Someone once told me that if you write reviews of books, you can email a publisher and request an advanced copy of any upcoming novel. The review, however, can be something as simple as brief review on Goodreads, the book-based social media site. A friend of mine asked if I had heard of theMystery.doc. “Crazy 1,700 page novel”, he said. “My friend is saying it’s awesome. He hit me up cuz he knows I like Pynchon and said it was in the same school.” I sent off an email to Grove Atlantic. “I just caught wind of Matthew McIntosh’s theMystery.doc and have to say I’m very intrigued,” I wrote. The next week, I had a free copy of the book. I had never written a book review before, not even on Goodreads, where McIntosh had three followers. Now, at the time of writing this, he has six (two of them being myself and a friend I told about the book).

McIntosh’s goals were to write a book that “is a modern epic about the quest to find something lasting in a world where everything -- and everyone -- is in danger of slipping away” and his attempt created a most maximalist book.

The book itself is this thick, sprawling jumble so dense it comes with it’s own built-in bookmark like a Bible. Before even opening the book, it is record setting. Coming in at 1,653 pages, this book is already on the list of longest novels (and features praise from Alan Moore on the back, author of other longest novel list occupant Jerusalem). But the majority of this book is taken up by space. While the book is disgustingly large, most of the pages are filled with photos, a few words, or white space. This novel makes sense of how Harold Bloom could allegedly read 1,000 pages in an hour; flipping pages every few seconds is empowering as the reader tries to dominate this leviathan.

The novel is broken down into several seemingly unrelated parts: a writer working on a novel who wakes up with no memory and a blank document on his computer that is supposed to be the his work for the last decade, a website greeter who works for a website greeting company field inquiries, transcriptions of interviews, stories of death and terror. “All you need is there to understand,” the novel tells us. Acknowledging that life is “impossible to document,” McIntosh tries to put every possible existential query into a single place, albeit obscured and unconnected.

No one wants to be the reviewer who shames their family name for generations to come by insulting a future classic calling it remedial or unreadable. But I don’t think it’s unreasonable to yearn for a more narrowed focus when reading a book like this. I love a good flirtation with the difficult or unnecessary within literature, but the end goal should be to illuminate an extremely difficult point, not simply expand the format of the novel.

— Ned Russin
The Blue and White: So you’re on tour. Did you already play Austin City Limits, did that already happen?

Alex G: We played that yesterday and then we have to go back next weekend to do the same thing again. So, yeah, we did yesterday at 1 PM and I guess we’re doing next week probably same time.

B&W: How was it?

AG: It was pretty good. It’s kind of hard—I think we played good but it’s kind of hard to feel like you’re... I don’t know. At 1 PM, when the sun’s beating down on you, it’s kind of hard to feel, like, in the music or something, do you know what I mean?

B&W: Yeah.

AG: But I think we played good and I enjoyed it, but I don’t know if I was as entertaining as I should be or something.

B&W: What makes for an entertaining set do you think?

AG: I don’t know. I guess just believing that the performer actually is, like, feeling what they’re saying or whatever. Or something like that, yeah. Not to say that I wasn’t feeling it, but I just don’t know if I was conveying the fact that I was feeling it, you know? Like I feel like some people do that by jumping around, and sometimes I do that. Or just... I talk to the audience a little, but I just didn’t do any of that I guess. Just because it was kind of early and I felt a little shy or something because it was so early.

B&W: Was it a big crowd, too?

AG: Uh, it was big. Not, like, crazy, but, um, like I think later on in the festival the crowd got huge. And we played early in the day, it was sort of a fraction of the size. But I guess probably like a couple hundred, maybe 200 or something.

B&W: Yeah. You already brought up a couple of things that I wanted to touch on, but you were talking about believing what, you know, what you’re saying...
or what you’re performing. Something that I think is really interesting is that you write about and from the perspective of characters a lot.

AG: Yeah.

B&W: When you say you believe what you’re saying, are you kind of acting in a way then? Do you believe that you are the characters that you are talking about in that moment?

AG: Yeah because I think it’s all… I guess it’s not as much characters as it is like really one-sided monologues of my own perspective, you know what I mean? So instead of… It’s not like I’m fabricating something. It’s more just that I’m giving a piece of my own mind but leaving off a lot of chunks that make it more rounded or something. Does that make sense?

B&W: Yea h.

AG: But it’s not like I’m, when I’m saying stuff it’s not like I’m saying stuff that I don’t think or something. It’s just like… or if it is, like… Actually there are songs where it’s totally from another person’s mouth, and at that point I think about my relationship with the person or something who I’m trying to sing about or whatever. Yeah, you’re right, it is kind of like acting.

B&W: Yeah, because you do sing about people. You have names in your songs of people, and some songs titles are even just their names, and I think it’s, like, an important part of your music that there are these people that are being talked about and that it seems that the performance and the records make them a real thing through your performance of it.

AG: Yeah, I think you’re right, it is like acting. Cause I have to think about the song and… Yeah, yeah. You’re right. I forget cause, like, sometimes I write like that and sometimes I don’t, and I don’t… but, yeah, I agree.

B&W: And also, so you’re out touring in support of your newest record, Rocket, which was, you know, a huge hit, right? Like it went over really well with the press and with fans and with the music world at large, but it’s your second record with Domino, it’s your second piece in this world of being, like, a more established, you know… I don’t want to say real, but “real” artist, band, musician thing. Was there any pressure on you in writing this record that you hadn’t felt before because of all those things involved and the new stakes at hand?

AG: Nah, I think I did feel more pressure but I wasn’t like thinking about the label or fans as much. I would catch myself more easily now when I’m writing, like, if I have a stupid lyric or something, I can see my own mistakes -- or not mistakes, I can see my own, like, shortcomings as a musician and lyricist more clearly now. So that makes things more difficult in a good way but, yeah, I guess that’s more where the pressure comes from. Like I’m still trying to do something as good and feel as good about it as I always did, but it’s harder to feel that way when I’m catching myself all the time now, you know what I mean?

B&W: Yeah, but you have released so many records, you’ve written so many songs at this point that now that, you know, you’re not trying to repeat any of those things. Is there a difficulty in that?

AG: Yeah I think there is, but I don’t… Yeah, it’s hard to tell when it’s because maybe I’ve already… Either I don’t want to repeat myself or just because my taste has changed, so my interest in that kind of stuff has changed. I wonder if I had never -- yeah it’s hard to say but that could be. I just wonder if at this point, if I had never recorded any records in the past if I’d still be making the stuff I make now just because my taste in music is different now that I’m older, you know?

B&W: Yeah, yeah, that makes sense. But also I want to talk about… You’re talking about checking yourself and putting all these things and kind of having this new filter but still everything is completely you, right?

AG: Mmhm.

B&W: You’re writing everything, you’re recording everything. I mean you have a couple guest spots on the record...

AG: Yeah, yeah that’s what I was going to say...

B&W: But, you know, it’s still everything is from your head at the beginning.
AG: Yeah, yeah.

B&W: Is that a difficult thing? Do you find that to be increasingly difficult to only have yourself to rely on, or is it something that you’re just used to?

AG: It’s something that I’m kind of used to. Like I much prefer it that way, but I never... I think because I’ve never successfully done it a different way, so if it is great writing collaboratively I don’t really know. So, it’s the best thing that I know of because I never have to, like... What would take me like an hour to explain to somebody else I can just do because I don’t have to explain it, you know what I mean? That’s I guess the biggest thing -- that I don’t have to communicate, because a lot of times I want something to come off in a certain way that’s hard to communicate to someone, you know what I mean? Like I want it to come off a little bit corny, a certain part, or a little bit over-earnest, you know what I mean? I feel like I always try and do stuff like that a lot, and it’s hard to tell someone to write something corny or something.

B&W: I know what you mean because it comes across in the songs. Like the parts that you’re mentioning I know exactly what you mean by that. But was the recording process any different for this record? Because it was more... I feel like -- correct me if I’m wrong -- but you had a couple more guest spots on this record than you have had in the past.

AG: Yeah, definitely.

B&W: So was the recording process different in that regard?

AG: I mean I went about it the same way but I guess I wanted to capture the feeling of, like... I think the other records feel like they’re coming out of one person so I did wanna make this one feel like it was a big collective thing even though it’s still not that many people, but I think if you add like someone else’s input at key parts it really spreads out the whole aesthetic, you know? I don’t know if aesthetic is the right word, but it makes it sound, like, bigger. But other than that, I went about it the same way as all the other albums, and then the only difference is this one got mixed the same way Beach Music did where it was brought to a professional named Jacob Portrait and he mixed it, and he also mixed Beach Music. After I got the feel and the basic mix down on my own, he fine tunes it and everything.

B&W: So, yeah, you record everything yourself and you use one microphone, right?

AG: Right, yeah.

B&W: So, like... I don’t know. I still find that crazy. But what is the actual recording process like? Do you have every song mapped out before you start? Do you have everything sorted out in your head before you put it to tape? Or is it a thing that you let evolve as the process goes on?

AG: I think it’s more like that. I let it go as I record it. I kind of think it lets me, like... I don’t know, I just noticed that when I’m with other people recording it’s usually they’re trying to to match what’s in -- like they have an image in their head before they even lay down the first track. And then I guess the difference with me is that I have the chord progression and the melodies, but I don’t have the... I have the most basic impression of what it’s going to be and so I can just let it go. If a part comes in and it feels like it’s lacking in a certain way then I can overcompensate by adding another track on top of it that does something else, you know what I mean? So basically what you say, I let it evolve as I go on.

B&W: But it seems like there’s also a difficulty involved in that because of the limitations of using one microphone at a time. Just, like, the sheer difficulty of lining up drums the right way and playing everything and having it sound good, and all this stuff.

AG: I think I’m finding... Like I was able to get that down over a long period of time because I still have the same mic that I was using since I was like 15, which is almost like 10 years ago now. It’s like this little, you know, inexpensive mic that plugs right into your computer. I’ve been using it so long that I think I’ve just kind of figure out how I could make that sound the best that it can be, or almost the best that it can possibly be. So, it just came from like a long time of trial and error with mic placement. And go to EQ, like, things. I’ll know to boost the bass if I’m doing drums, or boost the treble on guitar. Stuff like that. And so it comes really quick to me with
that, everything has a kind of... I didn’t realize but everything has a kind of layer of, you know, shittiness on it or something so that when something is a little bit shittier, when something is recorded a little shittier than the other things you don’t want hear it, really. You could if you were using a nice mic. And that’s something that I’m kind of starting to run into now. Cause my friend has a nicer microphone that I’ve been trying to record with, and, uh, that’s starting to take me a much longer time because, like, I’ll record the guitars and the bass and it’ll sound really good. And I’ll try and record the drums and it’s like, “Oh, relearn how to do this because this.” Because the slightest difference in mic placement actually does make a difference when the mic is so much nicer. So, I think, uh, the shittiness set up kind of frees it in a way.

B&W: Yeah that’s interesting. But it’s also, like... it seems to match everything about the band. I mean like, you know, people like to talk about the fact that you’re a “bedroom artist” or whatever they want to throw around, but it’s the kind of intimacy just makes sense with the music it seems.

AG: Yeah I think so too. Like I don’t like the bedroom thing because it’s like... I don’t know, I feel like when I think about it I think of, uh, something that you hear coming out of the bedroom. Like really quiet, minimal stuff, and I never thought of myself as minimal.

B&W: Yeah, it’s not. But it’s something about it being all recorded by you, all written by you, all, like, all done by you that it’s not this big-budget studio thing and I think there’s a vibe about it that somehow walks the line between the two because, you’re right, there’s these big instrumentations and, like, a big mix and everything, but it’s still just all you somehow.

AG: Right. Yeah, you know what? I think that’s an aspect I don’t plan on and don’t even know how to capture, but I think it just ends up that way. You know what I mean? I think that’s something I wouldn’t even... That I can’t pick up on about my own stuff cause to me it sounds like so normal and I can hear all my own, like, fuck ups and stuff so I can’t, uh,... I don’t know. I can hear myself acting, kind of. You know what I mean? So I’m glad that it comes off that way, but I wouldn’t know how that happens.

B&W: So you’re still in Philly, right?

AG: Yeah.

B&W: So you went from doing the band and being in school and having a more traditional route to taking the band full time and going on the road, still living in Philly and everything, but has that affected how you make or think about music at all?

AG: It definitely has because any lifestyle change would affect it cause I’m trying to be super... I don’t know. I don’t know if honest is the right word but I’m always trying to reflect everything that I can so, like, yeah, everything kind of affects it. But then as far as the way I think about the process, I don’t think that’s really changed. I think it’s just a little harder cause I’m like listening to stuff all the time and thinking about it all the time as opposed to part time. So maybe it gets a little too abstract, or something, you know? To the point where it’s not that enjoyable for anyone but me, or something. I think that maybe will be more of an issue as I go on, because I have so much time. That’s what I’m thinking about all the time now. It’s like I’ll have an idea and then be like, “That’s too obvious, let me warp it a little bit.” And then go, “Oh that’s too obvious, let me warp it some more.” Because I’ll go back to it so much, and I wonder if in the future something where my original idea doesn’t come across because it’s become some, like, morphed, Frankenstein thing or whatever.

B&W: I think a thing we have to talk about and another thing that is, you know, something people can’t stop talking about with you, is the Frank Ocean collaboration.

AG: Oh yeah.

B&W: It’s a crazy thing obviously, but it’s a weird thing that I feel like a lot of people, in talking about you in, whatever, music journalism, bring up as a sort of validating point of your musicianship or something. I wanted to get your take on it. Obviously I want to hear how it started, I think that’s an interesting story, but I also want to know, like, how you feel it’s come to be represented as well.

AG: I think it’s like... well it started right before
we met up with [Title Fight] actually. We were in Europe, like we were touring Europe, and we come home for a day and we left for tour with [Title Fight] and it was like a couple days before we left Europe, we were playing a show in London and, like, he emailed me, like, the night before, or his manager emailed, and was like, “Hey, my client would like work with you,” or something. And I was like, “Sure. I’d like to work with them.” But it was really cool, he was the nicest, most... Just like a normal down-to-earth, really conscientious person and stuff, and he was just telling me what he wanted me to do, which was basically just -- he would show me a song or whatever and ask me to come up with stuff. And he ended up only using a couple little things that I made, but I thought it was an awesome experience, if anything: I got no complaints about it other than that it’s, like, what people write instead of my name now, it’s like “Frank Ocean collaborator” or something, you know? Which is cool, too, but honestly it was all him. He had me play and just used a few snippets of my guitar, which is so flattering for me but they make it seem like I was some creative force behind the record when I had minimal input.

B&W: It’s also interesting because, you know, we were talking about how your creative process is so individual and personal, and going to another person who works the same way but just lets you be you is an interesting thing because it’s a whole other level, you know?

AG: Yeah I think that’s what kind of made me want to go and ask other people to throw their stuff in my record because I saw how effectively he was doing that, you know? Just letting people do their thing and choosing the parts that he wanted, like, post production or whatever. And I thought that was the coolest idea. So that’s one of the forces pushing me in that direction.

B&W: Did you get to meet Brad Pitt at FYF?

AG: (Laughs) No. No kind of stayed away because I was drinking a little bit and I didn’t want to make a fool of myself.

B&W: You mentioned that you were recording some new stuff with a new mic, but are you already working on new material?

AG: Yeah it’s so, like... I made such little progress so far so I can’t be like, “Oh yeah, I’ve got new thing coming out,” or something, but just in the brief period that I’m home I’ve been trying to get stuff down just to keep that part of my brain working. I get paranoid if I don’t... If I take a long break from it or something I won’t be able to do it good anymore or something. I’m just worried that it won’t come as easy to me any more if I take a break.

B&W: Have you ever really taken a break though?

AG: Not really. I guess that’s why I’m obsessed with doing it all the time. Ever since I started doing it I’ve just been a thing that I always do.

B&W: It seemed like the live part and the touring part of the band came later.

AG: Yeah, absolutely. Cause before that i was always, like in my free time, always just recording.

B&W: Has that, knowing that the songs are going to be played live, changed the way you are recording or writing them at all?

AG: Um, maybe a little bit, but I know that I think about that sometimes and then remind myself not to think about it, you know? So hopefully no. Hopefully I just do my thing as I always do and will figure out the live thing out later. Who knows, like, what my subconscious is thinking, but yeah I know I’m always like, “Oh, should I add this weird stuff in here, how am I going to do that live,” and I’m like, “No. That means I have to do it because I’m not supposed to think about that.”

B&W: Do you have any things that you couldn’t pull off live because they were so weird?

AG: I’m working on getting most of it down, but I think the voice of “Sportstar” I’ve got to figure out that out. That’s a song where my voice is high pitched and auto tuned and stuff, and, let me think, I think the trick stuff is just all the instrumentation. Cause I mean we could do it all, it would just be more people than we have, or can afford to pay. But, yeah, it’s all doable, just a matter of finding people to play it. Which I don’t think we’re going to do any time soon.
The newly-hatched SGA Committee for Diversity and Inclusion received 59 applications. It accepted four.

Dean of the School of General Studies, Peter Awn, apparently has not retired yet, following his retirement parties last spring. He was recently seen strolling past Lewisohn Hall in his signature cropped pants and funky socks.

The Yale Daily News has deemed all men at Yale, “overwhelmingly underwhelming in bed.” Spec has made no such claims, so Columbia men are in the clear at press time.

Multiple Barnard RAs have left their posts this year thanks to Res Life’s harsh policies on alcohol use, which discipline RAs who fail to write up underage suitemates, residents, friends and even fellow RAs who consume alcohol.

The New York Post reports former Secretary of State and Democratic Party nominee for the 45th President Hillary Rodham Clinton is in talks with Columbia for a professor position.

Dean James Valentini was spotted taking a photo in front of Alma Mater as protests against Columbia University College Republicans’ speakers list were underway.

Columbia College Student Council named football captain Lord Joshua Hyeamang a “Lord” of Columbia College. How do these people get elected?

The Sig Ep house will be going dry from Spring 2018 in accordance with a vote by their national fraternity.

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The Diana doors are, reportedly, so heavy because they are meant to generate power for the building as they open and close.

During the protests against Tommy Robinson, someone started singing the folk song “This Land is Our Land.” Someone within the crowd called hastily it “manifest destiny shit.”

Superchunk, which is not a scatological pun and who feature Mac McCaughan (CC ’90) on guitar and vocals, will be playing “The Fest” in Gainesville, FL and are also set to release a new 7” on McCaughan’s own Merge Records benefiting the Southern Poverty Law Center featuring a new song “Break the Glass” and a cover of Corrosion of Conformity’s “Mad World”.

Brown Football is the new Columbia Football, losing 53-0 to Princeton, a team that we handily beat. Speaking of Columbia, the Princeton head coach said, “We are not better than them.”

Ezra Koenig, CC ’06, created and co-wrote a new anime for Netflix entitled Neo Yokio. It has a 30% on Rotten Tomatoes. He also confirmed in an interview with Pitchfork that Vampire Weekend is working on a new album.
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