

5-15-2000

Columbia Chronicle (05/15/2000)

Columbia College Chicago

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COLUMBIA CHRONICLE

Volume 33, Number 25

Columbia College Chicago

Monday, May 15, 2000

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COLUMBIA
COLLEGE LIBRARY

College reaffirms open admissions

By Ryan Adair and Amber Holst

Copy Editor Assistant Editor

Columbia's College Council voted unanimously on April 12 to reaffirm the college's commitment to its historic open admissions policy.

The decision will go in June to the North Central Association, which asked the college to re-evaluate its open admissions policy, during their visit last year, as part of the school's reaccreditation process.

Despite unanimous approval of the open admissions statement, council members expressed concern and uneasiness because a revised version of the document was presented to them at the last minute.

The Blue Ribbon Committee on Open Admissions was appointed by the college to thoroughly analyze the meaning and value of "open admissions." The committee prepared a 20-page report, which was withdrawn at the last minute, and replaced with a one-page statement modifying the investigation into the school's admission policy.

"I'm offended that we didn't have the opportunity to review the statement prior to the meeting," said Margaret Sullivan, chairperson of the College Council and chair of

the Marketing Department.

"I feel eerie and somewhat dispirited about the entire process, particularly the manner in which the statement was dispersed," said Doreen Bartoni, of the Film and Video Department.

The council was pushed to vote on the issue, as the NCAA's deadline for a new statement is in early June. Normally, the college's Board of Trustees has the final say on such matters. According to Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Blue Ribbon committee member Samuel Floyd, the board has chosen not to handle the matter.

Council members were also uneasy because debate was held off on the implementation of programs to help academically challenged students brought into Columbia through open admissions.

Sheldon Patinkin, chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, read from a prepared statement saying, "The Academic Affairs Committee expresses concern that, although apparently unavoidable, the lateness of the report—less than a month before response is due to the NCAA team—neither encourages nor allows time for truly thoughtful consideration of the report by the faculty."

The revised statement affirms that Columbia College will retain the open admissions policy, but reserves the right to limit the number of students admitted to the school in order to manage enrollment growth.

The decision to turn away prospective students will be conducted on a basis other than selective admissions—possibly on a first-come, first-serve basis. College officials feel that open admissions remains the best way to meet the challenges of students with increasing effectiveness.

"It was a difficult discussion, it was open, free, and full of disagreements, but in the end we came to an unanimous agreement," said Floyd after the meeting about his experience on the Blue Ribbon Committee. "The NCAA is sure to approve the report for it is a clear statement of the college's policy."

Randall Albers, chair of the Fiction Writing Department, expressed his concern over the exclusiveness of the committee's decisions. "The policy itself was very well-done, in the long haul it will serve the college very well. However, the policy needs to be brought to a wider college community for more of a clarification," Albers said.

During the meeting, Albers moved for a motion emphasizing the need for an open discussion pertaining to the implementation of pro-



Rob Hart/Chronicle

(From left to right) Randall Albers, Lya Dym Rosenblum and Samuel Floyd at the college council meeting.

Graduate students have years worth of celebrating to do

By Elizabeth Fiting

Staff Writer

The late spring sun burns brightly on the long-awaited day. Everywhere there is jubilation, relief, and the sense of freedom. Hallmark has made yet another killing this month.

Why?

It's graduation day.

College graduation is the brass ring Columbia students are all working for. An end in sight after all those years of blood, sweat, tears, day we take that shiny new diploma and...

But wait...double or triple that joy and you might come close to the happy cloud the graduate students are walking on when their day comes. They've been there longer and have worked harder to get their shiny new degrees.

But people often forget about the graduate graduation.

But it should be noted, because many of us will be there some day, and it is as important a landmark in the world of academia as high school or college graduation. (My preschool graduation was also a big day for me.)

It's also a big day for the Graduate School.

Numbers are up from previous years, with about a 130 grads participating in the ceremony. There are also many other grads who will not be joining their fellows in the "Pomp and Circumstance" dance.

This year, they will be reinstating a college tradition to have a faculty member give the commencement speech. Norma Greene, the chair of the journalism department, has been given the honor.

This year Columbia's Graduate School Lifetime Achievement Award recipient is Dr. Fred Flne, founder and chair of Columbia's Arts, Entertainment and Media Management Department in 1977, and the College's Director of Public Affairs since 1987.

The Graduation ceremony is being held on June 3, 2000, at the Skyline Theatre at Navy Pier. It starts at 11:00 a.m., and ends roughly around the time the grads start running through Navy Pier singing "No more teachers, no more books..."

Congratulations, Graduates!

Blackstone Hotel fined for unsafe working conditions

By Ryan Adair

Copy Editor

One of Chicago's most popular and historic hotels is facing a mountain of fines for several violations cited previously last year.

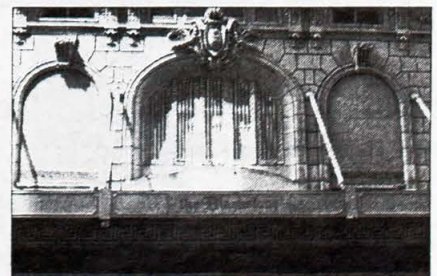
The Blackstone Hotel, on South Michigan Avenue, was closed last November after city inspectors found a number of building code violations that stemmed from a poor electrical system to exposed asbestos and leaking water pipes.

The famous Loop hotel is now being charged with \$157,350 in fines for allegedly exposing its workers to asbestos and other unsafe conditions.

Heaven On Earth Inns Inc. located in Boone, N. C. is the current owner of the Blackstone and has two weeks to contest the citations.

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) stated that the owner failed to properly train its employees on how to appropriately dispose of hazardous materials. The company was also cited for failure to post warnings and neglecting to investigate the exact quantity and location of asbestos. Despite the pending charges, the Blackstone is expected to re-open later this year after extensive renovations.

The landmark hotel opened its doors in 1910 and since then, has been a constant staple in the downtown area. In addition to being a historic tourist trap, it has also served as a popular movie setting including "The Color of Money," starring Paul Newman and "The Untouchables," starring Kevin Costner, both of which used the hotel's interiors and exteriors for filming during the mid-80s.



Bill Manley/Chronicle

The historic Blackstone Hotel, located next to Columbia's Torco building.

Columbia News and Notes

Art and Communication Explosion 2000 rocks Wabash Avenue

Columbia's Block Party "Art and Communication Explosion 2000" provides a great opportunity for students to come see their fellow students work. Entertainment is provided by Columbia student bands, dancers and other performers as well as artwork, photography and writing.

When: Thursday, May 18, 2000

Time: 12:00-4:00 p.m.

Location: South Loop Parking Lot, 610 S. Wabash Ave.

Lectures on African-American life and Americanizing the world at Columbia Museum of Contemporary Art

Kerry James Marshall will be lecturing on African-American life, especially focusing on the historical time of civil rights.

Marshall will address the ongoing struggles faced by African-Americans over race in America.

The lecture is scheduled for Wed., May 17, at 6 p.m. at the Museum of Contemporary Art.

Neile Harris is lecturing on Americanizing the World of "Globalizing American: The Last Half Century."

The lecture will focus on the postwar Americanization of the world and the diversification of American culture.

The lecture is scheduled to take place on Sat., May 20, at 2 p.m. Both lectures are free to the public.

Reel Filmmakers seeks increased student involvement

Reel Filmmakers is an on-campus networking and support organization who holds monthly Thursday meetings.

President Donna Watts invites any film, video, theater, television, sound and acting students to come out and meet with them at the "Arts and Communication Explosion 2000."

Get involved, this is your chance to speak and address your issues and concerns.

For more information send Donna Watts an email at: reel filmmakers@hotmail.com

Public interactive exhibit opens at the Hokin Gallery: everyone can be an artist

The public is invited to participate in an interactive exhibit of drawings that will eventually become a collage covering the walls of Columbia's Hokin Gallery.

The exhibit will include work by Elisabeth Condon, a New York-based painter and Adelheid Mers, a Chicago based sculptor and artist-in-residence at Columbia.

The general public is invited to contribute to the exhibit by adding to the collage of drawings, in the manner and medium of their choice.

The only stipulation is that the work must be on the subject of the exhibit's theme, which is a place, either real or imagined.

For appointments to add to the exhibit, call 312-344-7696 or email at econdon_@yahoo.com or amorpm@earthlink.net.

Any participation in the exhibit is free.

The exhibit opens Monday, May 15. There will be a reception held on Thursday, May 18, from 5 to 7 p.m.

The Hokin is open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The exhibit is scheduled to close on June 15.

2000-2001 Echo magazine launch party; all are invited

Students who have worked diligently on this year's edition of Echo magazine are inviting one and all to a launch soiree celebrating the fruit of their labor.

There will be food, a raffle and entertainment at the party which is scheduled to take place on Mon., May 22, at the Glass Curtain Cafe, located at 1104 S. Wabash Ave.

The party will be held on the first floor from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Around Campus



J. C. Johnson/Chronicle

Nurse Diane Jay administers a shot to student Scott Campagna during immunization days at Columbia, which took place last week in the Torco building.

Columbia students in L.A.

By Alan Trubow
Staff Writer

Columbia is constantly coming up with unique ways of preparing its students for their careers. The latest of these is an unprecedented program called "A Semester in L.A." set up by the Film and Video Department.

Students in the program spend a semester in L.A. taking a full load of classes. The catch... the classes only last five weeks, compared to Columbia's typical 15 week semester. After five weeks, students are on their own to promote themselves.

"L.A. is where all the action is," says Don Smith, curriculum coordinator for the program.

"We wanted our students to be able to make connections, get internships, and see what the industry is really like."

The five week program takes place in the CBS Studio Lot. Robert Enrietto, a Columbia alumnus, runs the program out in L.A. He was the person that helped Columbia gain permission to conduct classes on the studio lot.

Columbia students earn their 12-16 hours of credit right next to where television shows such as "Will and Grace," "Malcolm in the Middle," and "That 70's Show" are in the midst of being filmed.

On April 24, 19 Columbia students headed out to L.A. and began their spring 2000 semester. It was the third group of Columbia students to participate in this program which has already had many success stories.

Philip Hoffman, a student who completed the second session, which began last February, is still living out in L.A.

"I have been offered multiple job opportunities because of the connections I made during this program," says Hoffman, a senior at Columbia. "I might go back and finish getting my degree, but at the moment I am planning on staying here and starting my career."

The five weeks of classes consist of numerous speakers who make their living in the film industry. Each speaker specializes in a different aspect of the profession, giving students a well rounded idea of how things get done. The program also consists of multiple tours to Panavision, American Film Market, and other studios.

"The five weeks of classes shouldn't really be called classes," says Smith. "It's more like a seminar. The speakers in the seminar are executive producers, directors, Academy Award-Winning writers and agents."

Admissions

Continued from Front Page

grams to support open admissions, as well as a historical overview of the school's policy. After debating the motion, council members voted 17-14 in opposition, with six members abstaining.

The council student representative, Reina Alvarez, class of 2000, echoed that the policy never came to students, and that a student forum should be held. "Students have a great deal to say about open admissions, and the council should avoid overlooking students in the decision making process," Alvarez said.

Michael Rabiger, chair of the Film and Video Department and a non-council member, crystallized feelings that Columbia has received a bad reputation in the past for being lax in its standards relating to open admissions. "Columbia is perceived as an easy rider college by students. With open admissions, this is saying, 'yes, we want you.' We just need to define what open admissions is."

Susan Osborne-Mott, from the Theater Department stressed the importance of keeping the open

admissions policy, since it defines Columbia from other schools.

"Open admissions requires more responsibilities on our part," she said. "Columbia is unique in that regard. By keeping open admissions we can specifically approach each student and give them the tools they individually need. We also provide a chance for people to start over and reinvent themselves. Above all, it allows us to guide students in the right direction."

"A Semester in L.A." was designed to be taken by second semester seniors. However all Juniors and seniors who have completed their general education courses and have over a 2.75 GPA are welcome.

"The ideal time to take the course would be your last semester at Columbia," says Rudy Darden, a Junior that finished the program in March. "The program basically hands you off to the film industry. It gives you a head start on everybody else. If you go back to Chicago to graduate, you might not have the same opportunities. L.A. moves quickly, who knows if those connections you make will help you a year down the road."

Though the majority of the program does consist of film students, all juniors and seniors at Columbia who are interested in film are encouraged to apply. One journalism student who finished the semester is now writing for a magazine that covers the latest "happenings" in the film industry.

"I definitely encourage all students to apply for this program," says Smith.

"The key for success is motivation. If you know where you want to go, this program will show you how to get there. But you've got to be willing to work."

Students who have taken the program say that if you utilize the opportunity, the program is invaluable.

"The program might be able to get you in the door," says Darden. "But that's the easy part. It's getting to where you want to be that's difficult. L.A. moves fast, and you'll be pushed out the door quicker than you got in if you're not willing to bust your tail."

According to Smith, his goal was to help Columbia students shorten the amount of time it took to get established in the market. He hopes that students who complete that semester won't have to deal with what can be a very difficult first year in the film profession.

"We don't know of any other school in the world that has a program like this one," says Smith. "Hopefully the amount of Columbia College students in L.A. will continue to grow and help our Film and Video department make a better name for itself than it already has."

"I could see the number of working Columbia College alumni in L.A. growing every year," says Darden. "Who knows, maybe one day Columbia College students will run this industry."

If you are interested in doing "A Semester in L.A." in the future, you should contact Don Smith in the Film and Video department.



Jessica Quist/Chronicle



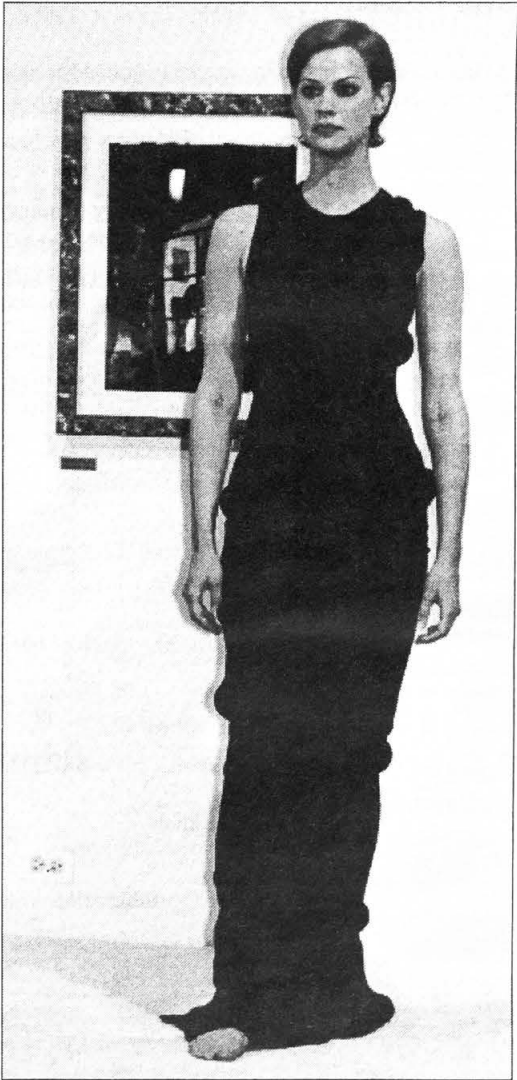
Jessica Quist/Chronicle



Jessica Quist/Chronicle



Tasos Katopodis/Chronicle



Jessica Quist/Chronicle

C O L U M B I A | C O L L E G E | C H I C A G O

RECORDS

April 2000

Dear Graduate:

Columbia's 2000 Commencement Exercise will take place Sunday, June 4, 2000, at the University of Illinois Pavilion (1150 West Harrison Street), from 2:00 p.m. to approximately 5:00 p.m. Please note the following:

- There will be open seating at the ceremony and tickets will not be required. You may pick up your announcements in the Records Office, Room 611, 600 South Michigan, the week of May 15. The office is open from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 5:00 p.m. on Friday. Each student will receive ten announcements. Extra announcements may be available after May 22. Personalized invitations are available through the bookstore at a reasonable cost.
- Caps and gowns are to be picked up in the Hokin Annex, 623 South Wabash, (10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.) Wednesday, May 31. If you cannot pick-up your robe on May 31, you can obtain it immediately before the ceremony on June 4. You will receive your seating ticket with your cap and gown. You must bring your seating ticket with you to Commencement. Graduates should arrive at the Pavilion no later than 1:00 p.m. Signs will be posted to direct you to the processional staging area. Parking is available adjacent to the Pavilion and across the street. Guests will not be permitted to enter before 1:15 p.m.
- If you have a physical handicap and require any type of assistance, please contact Noel Rodriguez, Office of Student Support Services, 312-344-8133.
- Retain the diploma jacket issued to you at the ceremony. Diplomas are to be picked up in Academic Advising, Room 300, 623 South Wabash, on the appropriate date. All diplomas must be picked up in person. Diplomas are not issued until all academic and financial obligations have been satisfied. Contact Ruby Turner, 312-344-7441, for more information.

January Graduates	Week of June 19, 2000
June Graduates	Week of July 31, 2000
August Graduates	Week of September 25, 2000

- Caps and gowns must be returned to the designated area immediately following the ceremony. You may keep the tassels from the caps.
- A party for all graduating seniors is planned for the evening of June 2, 2000 at the Chicago Hilton and Towers. Please contact the Student Life and Development Office for further details, 312-344-7459.

On behalf of the Student Services staff, I congratulate you on your accomplishment and extend our best wishes for a successful future.

Sincerely,



Marvin Cohen
Director of Records and Registration

Education in the Arts and Communications

600 South Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60605 1996 312 663 1600

COLUMBIA CHRONICLE

C o l u m b i a ' s C h o i c e

Want a Job?

Students must be in good academic standing, enrolled in at least 12 credit hours in the fall semester and should be taking and or have taken the core courses in either Journalism or photography. Knowledge of Windows NT, word processing, Photoshop and/or QuarkXpress is a huge plus but not required. All editors must be available on Tuesday for the College Newspaper Workshop class (53-3001-01) and our staff meeting, and every Friday for production of the paper.

If you're a dedicated, hard-working student who doesn't mind working every week with a bunch of crazy students and would like a great job for next year, call (312) 344-7432 and ask for Chris Richert, and I'll answer any questions and set up an interview. Please be prepared to present a resumé, a transcript listing any Journalism/photography classes you have taken and some examples of your work when you come for your interview. Please don't hesitate to call and ask questions. Our office is in the 623 S. Wabash Bldg. Room 205.

Would you like one of these on your resume?

- Second Place - General Excellence
- Second Place - Critical Review Other Than Film: Mike O'Brien
- First Place - Front Page Layout: James Boozer
- Third Place - Editorial: James Boozer
- First Place - Feature Writing: Valerie Danner, Jessica Quist and Chris Richert
- Third Place - Sports News Story: Graham Couch
- Second Place - Sports Feature Story: Graham Couch
- Second Place - In-Depth Reporting: Elizabeth Nendick, Stephanie Berlin, Carmen DeFalco, Todd Hofacker and Jen Magid

Positions Available

Campus Editor

The Campus Editor is in charge of news coverage of events, issues and people on campus. This individual must be available at least 20 hours per week. They will be in charge of assigning and collecting campus [news/feature] stories from staff writers and correspondents and they will also be in charge of layout and design of the Campus section.

Viewpoints Editor

The Viewpoints Editor is responsible in assigning and collecting opinion stories and columns for publication. This individual will also be in charge of layout and design of the viewpoints section. They must also be available for at least 20 hours per week.

Arts & Entertainment Editor

The Arts & Entertainment Editor is in charge of news coverage of events, issues and people within the arts & entertainment field. This includes coverage on campus, and the Chicago area. This person must be responsible, and work well with others. They will be in charge of assigning arts & entertainment stories to staff writers and correspondents, and the layout and design of the section. They must also be available for at least 20 hours per week.

Assistant Editors (various sections)

Assistant Editors help with supervising various parts of the newspaper, and assist Section Editors with story assignments and in some cases, design and layout of the section. They will also produce stories and/or colums for various sections of the newspaper. These students must be available at least 10 hours a week.

Copy Chief & Copy Editors

Copy Editors are in charge of checking, polishing and correcting stories written by staff editors, writers and correspondents.

New Media Editor & New Media Staff

The New Media Editor & Staff are responsible for the content and design of the *Chronicle's* award-winning web site.
WWW.CCCHRONICLE.COM

Staff Writers/Photographers

Any students interested in receiving college credit as a staff writer or photographer **MUST** sign up for the **College Newspaper Workshop (53-3001-01)** which is listed under Journalism in the Fall 2000 course schedule. All students are welcome to write for the *Chronicle*; however, only journalism and photography students may sign up for the workshop.

From the Chronicle Mailbag

editor @ ccc Chronicle . com

Patient rights, or lack of

I just wanted to comment on Valerie's piece ["Adventures in health care," May 8]. She touched on a very important subject that, as she said, many of us have to deal with. I think this is the kind of story I was looking for in her articles because so far she has written on careless topics. This one was important and she did it well.

I do, however, believe she got it wrong when she said she was now like Fox Mulder and trusted no one in a white coat. If there is anyone he trusts it is a doctor with a white coat. Scully! Hello! Aside from that, great job Val.

Susana Torres

Rightful analysis, or useless article?

Katie Celani, it would be so easy to get upset by your article ["Rightful apology, or useless spending?" May 8] but it is clear that you have not done your homework. Before you begin to write articles and call yourself a journalist, you may want to do some research.

I totally respect the fact that you have an opinion. Kudos! However, don't attempt to tell me that my grandmother being born right out of slavery (yeah, some of them are still around) did not affect my mother and her financial standing, which affected me. Sweetie, that money is not for nothing.

We built this country, yet my rights are not equal to whites or other minority groups. We get shot for holding our wallet. Not money that we stole. Money that we worked for the old-fashioned way. And God forbid if I want to visit a friend who lives in Highland Park after dark. Point: Our struggles are great and the rewards are few. No, you didn't own a slave. And no, I don't have shackles on my feet.

Still, considering all that we had to (and continue to) put up with, I face the glass ceiling, will never know white privilege, and have to prove to people like yourself that Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome is very real.

Unfortunately, what is happening in the black community is your problem. I would think that as a journalist, you would understand that. But after reading your article, I see there are many things you don't understand.

Dawn Callahan

Some of what Katie Celani expressed within her article had some validity; however, there were a few things she brought up that didn't sit well with this African-American student.

Her comment, "and claiming that what happened hundreds of years ago still hurts someone 150 years removed from slavery and holds them back is a cop-out to get more free money" was very inaccurate and insensitive. I feel that the poverty within many black communities is a direct result of where African-Americans were left after the "emancipation." If slavery lasted for over 300 years or so, then why would you expect its rehabilitation to take only 150?

Not to say that money is the answer because I don't believe it's that simple—and that's the only area where I agree with Ms. Celani. However, although my parents are both college educated and successful, I'm constantly reminded that I am only one generation out of the projects myself. Some Columbia students currently reside there as we debate the subject. I don't think Ms. Celani could even begin to understand the complexity within the issues of black communities, black families, black progression and black society as a whole. Most people who are quick to throw out such comments are seeing things from the outside of the window looking in. Things seem clear, but unless you're actually inside, the painful truth is obscured.

What I'm trying to say is that it takes time. And as far as comparisons to other minorities who came to this country with nothing and became successful, African-Americans weren't exactly on that same immigrant boat with the same dreams and aspirations for what opportunity may lay ahead in the new country. We were demoralized and told we weren't human, that we couldn't achieve, that we couldn't even learn to read! Again, it takes time to change mind-sets that have been molded in such a way for long. It is a diseased state-of-mind that is unintentionally passed through generations. Today, more than ever before the links are being broken in that chain of depression.

Now, as far as the money issue—I'm not for it. Why? Because we'd do the same thing we usually do with our money and purchasing power. Invest it right back into another white business. Not that I have anything against white businesses, but it cancels out the purpose of reparations. White businesses like Nike, Coca-Cola and Tommy Hilfiger would be the winners in the end. Even FUBU (For Us Buy Us) apparel is backed by white investors. That's where the problem lies. Until more of us venture out and start our own businesses, I don't think reparations would be effective. Besides, when you're asking for something from someone, you're giving them even more power, which in turn will lead us right back to square one!

Marlon E. Millhouse
Senior, Broadcast Journalism

I would just like to thank Katie Celani for once again proving that ignorance is a state of mind that knows no boundaries. In her article, Celani points out

See Letters, following page

Editoon

By Billy O'Keefe



VICE

per

place

Help Wanted

GRADUATION SPEAKER - Local college seeks somewhat motivated (more than us, anyway) speaker to appear at 2000 student graduation ceremony. Must be able to work for free. Health benefits will be provided during the speech, but after that, you're on your own. Call (312) 663-6000.

How much does a decent speaker cost, anyway?

Northbrook CPA firm seeking speakers for client presentations. Please specify duties and include resume.

As the largest arts and communication school in the country, you'd think Columbia would be able to choose from a variety of well-known guest speakers at this year's commencement. Well, you'd think.

I was excited when I heard that Roosevelt had snagged Oprah for their big day. I thought for sure Columbia would get someone just as memorable for its first graduating class of the new millennium. They'd have to. They wouldn't want to be outdone by Roosevelt. I have never been so wrong. Our guest speaker isn't even a guest—he's part of Columbia.

Now what I want to know is, how did Columbia's class of 2000 get so lucky as to have John Duff speak at its commencement?

To the various grads, family and friends who will be sitting through the three-hour ceremony, one of the highlights is the guest speaker, who is meant to inspire and uplift the graduates before they step foot into the post-school world. When my sister graduated from the University of Illinois a few years ago, the only speaker I remember listening to (and it felt like hundreds) was Diane Sawyer because she was Diane Sawyer. Imagine Roosevelt's delight when it was announced that Oprah would be their guest on their big day. Oprah. Everybody knows who she is. Years from now, graduates will be able to tell their great grandchildren that Oprah was their commencement speaker, and they'll still know who she is.

I feel cheated. After paying \$50,000 in tuition these four years, I think this class deserves better. Most of us graduating have spent at least 16 years in school. Couldn't Columbia actually get somebody outside of the school to speak? Duff doesn't even officially retire until this fall, so technically he's still our president. It's not like he wouldn't have been there anyway. The school really went out on a limb with this one—getting the school's own president to deliver the guest speech. They must have spent a lot of time contemplating this.

I've had more positive than negative experiences over the course of my four-year career at Columbia. But my biggest beef is that the administration has been so out of touch with the students. Most of my dealings with them proved to be like a drive-through service—get in, state your reason for being there, and get out as soon as possible. By getting Duff to deliver the commencement speech only reaffirms what I've known all along—the administration doesn't spend much time considering how the students might feel.

How many times have you actually seen Duff out and about with the students on campus anyway? The only times I've seen him are coming in and out of the 600 South building, probably just going to lunch.

Columbia is a school littered with success stories. Columnist Mary Mitchell is a graduate. What about Janusz Kaminski who won the Oscar for cinematography for Steven Spielberg's "Schindler's List"? Our president-to-be even works for Disney. I'm sure he knows more than a few interesting people. These few barely scratch the surface. Even faculty members are more captivating. In the Journalism Department alone, I can think of at least five faculty members who would be more exciting and spark more enthusiasm from the crowd than Duff.

Columbia still has time to correct this error. I just hope they fix it in time before they decide to solicit Bert Gall to hum "Pomp and Circumstance" when the graduates march in.

COLUMBIA CHRONICLE
COLUMBIA COLLEGE

Editorials are the opinions of the Editorial Board of The Columbia Chronicle. Columns are the opinions of the author(s).

Views expressed in this publication are those of the writer and are not the opinions of The Columbia Chronicle, Columbia's Journalism Department or Columbia College Chicago.

Letters to the Editor must include your full name, year, major, and a phone number. All letters are edited for grammar and may be cut due to the limited amount of space available.

Letters can be faxed to us @ 312-344-8032, e-mailed to letters@cccchronicle.com or mailed to The Columbia Chronicle c/o Letters To The Editor, 623 S. Wabash Ave., Suite 208, Chicago, IL 60605.

Progress, not time or money, is the only way to heal slavery's wounds

Mad. Angry. Upset. Furious. Pissed off. Choose your adjective. After reading Katie Celani's article, "Rightful apology, or useless spending?" in last week's *Chronicle*, any of these tags would have applied to my mood. I actually stopped what I was doing, grabbed a friend and marched over to the *Chronicle's* office to voice my opinion while it was still fresh. Luckily for Celani, and myself, the *Chronicle* was closed for the day.

Another view Venita Griffin

I want to make it clear that I am not a supporter of reparations for the descendants of slaves. A cash payment will not begin to make up for the horrors blacks suffered during slavery and the subsequent apartheid in America. On this point, Miss Celani and I agree. Any similarities in our thinking end there.

While I disagree with paying reparations to descendants of slaves, I do support the thinking behind this movement. Many black political leaders feel it's time to cash in on the promise of "Forty acres and a mule." While I find it hard to believe that they actually expect Uncle Sam to start writing checks, I do think black leaders want to pressure the government to start dumping more resources into black communities which, more often than not, get the short end of the stick when it comes to government spending on health care and education.

Slavery and generations of discrimination have taken its toll on Black America. Miss Celani and others who disagree with this fact should do their research. *From Slavery to Freedom*, by John Franklin and Alfred Moss, Jr., is an excellent place to begin. There is a sense of hopelessness that is prevalent in certain areas of the black community. This despondency stems from being told for years that you are inferior because of the color of your skin. When

you add to discrimination the lack of opportunities blacks have had, crime, drug abuse and broken families are the result. I am not making excuses for the problems in Black America, but I understand where and how they originated. Miss Celani, blacks will never be "removed from slavery;" it's part of our history and it will always affect us in some way. Despite the problems in the black community, most African-Americans are trying to help themselves and are not, as Miss Celani said, looking for a way to get "more free money."

Miss Celani, contrary to what you believe, what's going on in the black community is your problem. It is EVERYONE's problem. Just as it's important to find out why white, upper-middle class teenage males have higher rates of suicide, why young women, ages 18-25, are contracting HIV at alarming rates, why so many elderly are dying alone and impoverished, it is important to discover why Black America has not fully overcome. I think of America in terms of a chain: when one link is weak, the entire chain is weak. Black America is part of the chain and Miss Celani doesn't help the problem by distancing herself from it.

As long as Miss Celani and others like her continue to distance themselves from America's problems, black leaders will raise hell on Capital Hill. And they shouldn't have to do it alone. Anyone interested in improving race relations in America, anyone concerned with the problems that plague minority communities, should join them. If enough noise is made, maybe, just maybe, people like Katie Celani will get the point. Finally.

Venita Griffin is a senior majoring in broadcast journalism and television.

Letters

Continued from previous page

that her ancestors came to this country with nothing and worked for their wealth. I would just like to remind Ms. Celani that when Africans were brought to this country, not only did they not have anything, they weren't even considered human.

This country was built on the free labor that my ancestors provided for 400 years, and reparations is not about the government giving away money for nothing, it's about recognizing the wrong doings against African-Americans that characterizes our history.

We all want to take slavery and sweep it under the rug, which is why the great racial rift still exists in our society. If we are ever to achieve the ideals of equality upon which this country was founded, we must find a way to achieve a level of tolerance that was totally lacking from Katie Celani's article.

Shonta Durham Freshman Journalism

I will support the removal of Katie Celani from her job.

Steve Shakes

Keep 'em coming! Send your letters to chron96@interaccess.com, or drop them off at our office (Wabash #205).

The prison system: Time for creative options

By Christopher Martin
Truman College

The last place many people want to find themselves is in jail.

And after a recent visit to the infamous Cook County lock-up, home to some of the Chicago area's most notorious criminals, I can certainly vouch for that.

I went with members of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, a national civil rights organization based in Chicago, to watch an in-house screening of the movie "Hurricane" and to hear the man on whose story the film is based, Rubin Carter, talk about what it was like to spend 20 years behind bars for a crime he didn't commit.

Once on the inside of those clanging steel doors, I couldn't wait to leave. Though the facility wasn't as unpleasant as I had imagined, it still resonated with a dreary and confining atmosphere—as I suppose it should. I found myself in a room with prisoners, men charged with various crimes—some incredibly brutal—and even men who were, perhaps, wrongfully accused.

Most of the inmates sitting near me were my age and younger. Some, even as young as 16, raised their hands as the guest speaker and PUSH's leader, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, asked how many had children of their own. They were just kids themselves—and they were doing hard time in a place known for breaking more spirits than for

rehabilitating.

Of the faces I saw, most were minorities, mainly Latino and African American. As I left them, I couldn't help but think about a recent study released by the Justice Policy Institute, which found that black and Hispanic youth are subjected to stiffer penalties than whites.

The same study also indicated that while our prison population is increasing, the average age of its prisoners is dropping. And with stiffer penalties being approved, many "kids" aren't going to see the light of day until they're old—if ever. Thoughts of truly rehabilitating them to function in society are fleeting. Places like California are a good example of the struggle to do justice while at the same time helping to rehab those who run afoul of the law. State voters approved legislation that pushes more children into adult courts and mandates life imprisonment for gang members convicted of home invasion.

We need more prevention programs methods to reverse this tide. Incarceration should not be the only answer. What if the billions of dollars spent on erecting new jails and prison facilities, went toward creating decent paying after-school jobs and better counseling programs? Perhaps then more time could be spent ironing out social disparities than worrying about stocking our streets with more police officers, to "profile and patrol."

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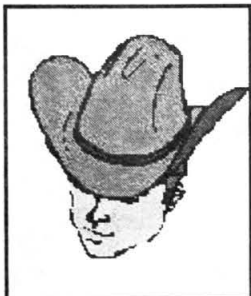
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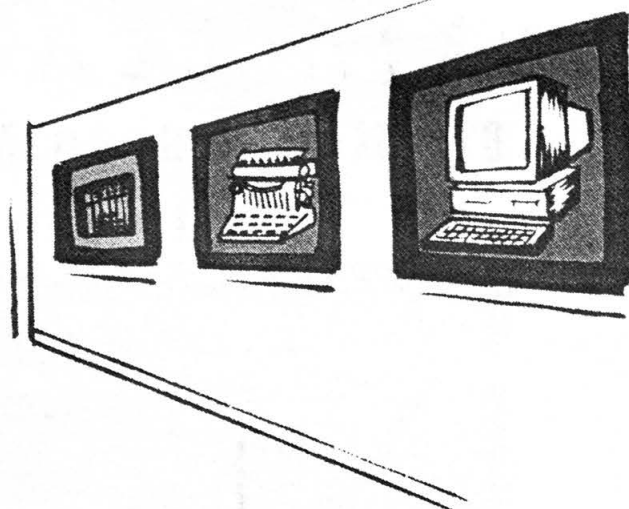
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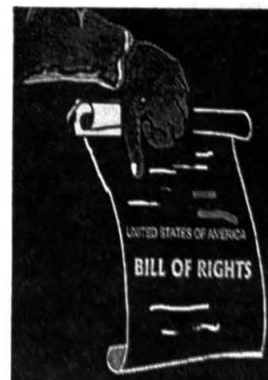
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Columbia Grad Resurfaces with Film on Navy Hero

By Mary Beth Cooper

Correspondent

Bzzzz-5 a.m.-- the alarm awakens this 30-year-old Hollywood giant. After a quick review of his notes, he's off to the Portland, Ore. set of his upcoming action flick "Navy Diver." But he'd better not take too long. He may be late for rehearsal with Cuba Gooding, Jr. and Robert DeNiro. And this family man is sure to check in with his wife Marsha at some point in the day. With a spark of humor in his voice and a confident tone that is anything but overwhelming, it's no surprise that Columbia alumnus George Tillman is making waves in Hollywood.

Mirroring the life of Carl Brashear, the first African-American Navy diver, "Navy Diver" tells the tale of one man's struggle to conquer prejudice and disability. Sure to be a sell-out extravaganza, the big-budget film stars Cuba Gooding, Jr. and Robert DeNiro. Hollywood awaits the success of this new release.

This isn't the first time Tillman has turned Hollywood upside down. Best known for his blockbuster hit "Soul Food," Tillman demonstrated the result of perseverance at its best. Critically acclaimed for its non-violent tone, "Soul Food" changed the course of African-American film and established Tillman as an icon in the film industry.

However, to Tillman, Hollywood is just a place to hang his hat. A Milwaukee native, Tillman has kept his Midwestern roots. As a matter of fact, his production studio, State Street Productions, is named after Chicago's own State Street. And he says he wouldn't be opposed to returning to the Windy City at some point.

So how did George Tillman, Jr. become George Tillman, acclaimed Hollywood director? Tillman dreamed of making films at a young age. After making short films in high school, he hit the college film scene as a Columbia film student. Fully committed to his career, his four years at Columbia propelled his talent to new heights. Winning awards at seven college film festivals with his short film "Paula," Tillman will not soon be forgotten by his alma mater.

This same motivation has carried him into the working world. Upon his graduation, Tillman and his partner, Columbia alumnus Robert Teitel, sought funding for their first full-length film, "Scenes From the Soul." Backed by \$40,000 from Chicago investors, the film was purchased by Savoy Pictures. But the buck stopped there-- it never made it to the big screen. It was then that Tillman decided to go for the gold. He wrote "Soul Food" and took a risk.

The rest is history. In this exclusive *Chronicle* interview, Tillman tells Columbia correspondent Mary Beth Cooper about the trials and tribulations that have made him the success that he is today.

Cooper: Tell us about a typical day on the set of "Navy Diver"

Tillman: We shot the movie in Portland, Oregon. I wake up in the morning and go over my notes from the prior night because I do a lot of my homework at night. Usually, that's the most quiet time, when no one's going to bother me. My day starts at 5 a.m.. I usually go over my notes and get picked by my assistant around 5:30 or 5:45, and I'm usually the first one on the set because I like to get there before the actors get there. I think that it's very important for the director to

be there and talk to the actors to go over the day to day and upcoming scenes. Then I'm there from the beginning of rehearsal-- 30 minutes before the actors get on the set. I try to do 25 minutes of rehearsal. Sometimes I kick the crew out. I think it's very important to have a one on one relationship with your actors.

Cooper: How did you select this movie along with its actors?

Tillman: Well, I knew for a studio to spend \$40 million, and I knew when I read the script that it was Robert DeNiro. It just felt like him, and he's one of my favorite actors of all time. Also, I knew that he had an interest in the script many years ago before I got involved. We met here in LA. He clicked right off the bat with my producer, Robert Teitel, who's also from Columbia. And we just clicked-- all three of us. We knew he liked my last movie and

guys who are big, but they're not movie stars. So for me it's like working with great actors. So that [the acting] is still the same. The creativity is still the same. But things get a lot bigger. The trailers get bigger, the entourage gets bigger. But these guys are the best actors I've ever worked with. They're friends of mine now. I've been creating a relationship.

Cooper: How have you incorporated your personal style into "Navy Diver?"

Tillman: "Navy Diver" was written by Scott Smith, a writer from my hometown of Milwaukee. I read the script and was totally blown away because I'd never heard of Carl Brashear, the first guy who actually got inducted back into the Navy after losing a leg. He had all of the odds against him. His story is about reaching goals and what happens when your goals get cut down before you actually reach them. So I said how can I relate this to myself? All my life I always felt that coming from Milwaukee to Chicago to make films offered tremendous odds, but if you stay determined, you can always accomplish things.

Everyone will definitely have a shot. You cannot give up. So no matter what the odds in this movie, it had tremendous odds for me-- I had to become the character of Carl Brashear to relate to him. I didn't even know how to swim. I'd never swum before, so I learned how to swim for the movie. I got down into a MarkV diving suit that weighed 290 pounds and I became Carl Brashear. I did all of the things that he did. I learned to make this thing very possible in order to make it easier for me to understand the material.

Cooper: Has your increased budget changed your filming style?

Tillman: It's the same thing as an independent film. You've just got more money and responsibility. Jumping from a \$7 million to \$40 million budget, you have a lot more to play with. I was still chasing the light, fighting for time and setups. You're not relaxed. You've just got more pressure on you from the studio to stay on budget, to stay on time. It's just like the song "More Money, More Power," this is definitely true. You just have to look at it like any other film. I look at Navy Diver just like my first film, and I try not to let anything else get in the way for me accomplishing what I want to achieve.

Cooper: How does the cinematography in this film differ from that of "Soul Food?"

Tillman: For me, this is 360 degrees different. "Soul Food" is a contemporary piece and "Navy Diver" is a period film. You definitely have to change filming style to complement the material. The film is set from 1948 to 1969. I had a camera man named Tony Richmon sent in from Europe. He's kind of old school, and I want to get this film [to look] old school, which is something totally different from "Soul Food." We shot in Super 35 with a lot of period looks. We have to go through different periods [in the film], so each time you have to change your cinematic style.

Cooper: Speaking of "Soul Food," what inspired you to write and direct the film? Were any of the characters based on real people?

Tillman: All of the characters in "Soul Food" were based on my family. I always knew I wanted to make a film about my family. After "Scenes from the Soul," my



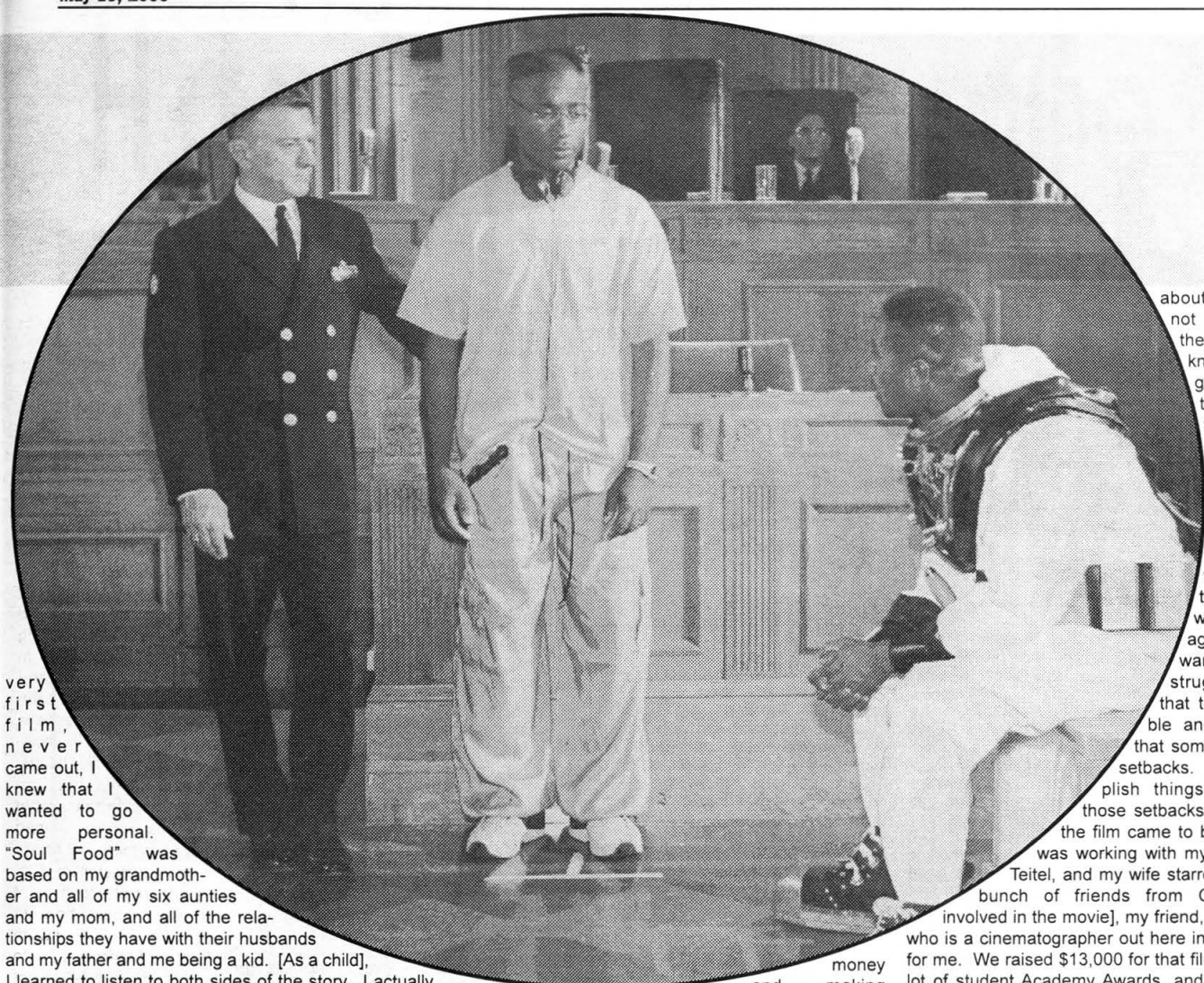
of course, he's

a legend. Right off the bat he agreed to do the film. And we knew we had to find someone to play Carl Brashear, the first African-American Navy diver, and Cuba Gooding, Jr. is a viable African-American actor. It was great because he looked exactly like Carl Brashear. He had exactly the same build. I think Cuba Gooding, Jr. was born to play this role.

Cooper: Do you find working with big name actors to be different?

Tillman: It's a lot different. The entourage gets bigger. Everybody has their own family. They have their own makeup artist, their own wardrobe stylist. But the creativity is still the same. Robert DeNiro isn't a movie star. He's an actor. You know what I mean? He doesn't live in Hollywood. He lives in New York. He still loves the craft of acting. Even before he got involved, I had to do a reading with him in New York-- which is what most theater companies do. And Gooding also loves his work. These are

Above: Columbia grad George Tillman directs Robert DeNiro on the set of his second big film, Navy Diver.



very first film, never came out, I knew that I wanted to go more personal. "Soul Food" was based on my grandmother and all of my six aunts and my mom, and all of the relationships they have with their husbands and my father and me being a kid. [As a child], I learned to listen to both sides of the story. I actually learned that at Columbia. I did a film at Columbia called "Monty and His Friend." My teacher, Paul Hettel, actually influenced me to really write things as personal. And I really went deep and personal with "Soul Food." It was really gratifying to write something so close to you. You can tell. I really believe something is a lot better if you write something personal.

Cooper: Students dream of projects such as yours. Is there any advice that you would like to give to the film students at Columbia?

Tillman: I think my advice is to make your own films. That's the main thing-- make your own films. And if you want to be a director, direct your own projects. I just think that's the most important thing. If I want to direct, I can't be a production assistant and work on a film for a director. I said this is going to take 12 years! So I said let me jump right into what I want to do. That's when I started on my first film and I started writing "Soul Food." Being a director, sometimes you have to write your own material. I wrote "Soul Food" and that gave me so much power to direct "Soul Food." Once you write your own material, you have so much strength over other artists coming in. They really didn't want me to direct my own script, but I stuck by it. I said fine. I was going to walk away, and they let me direct the film. And because of that, now I'm able to direct other projects written by other people. I just think that in Hollywood you have to have a base. And for me it was writing and directing. You have more strength going in Hollywood. I'm seeing a lot of Columbia people coming out here every day and it's cool. It's good, definitely to know there are other people out here.

Cooper: Speaking of Hollywood, do you like it?

Tillman: I was just complaining about Hollywood to my wife because it's just full of money. It's a weird town. There are a lot of people in this city from many different places, and they're all coming here for one thing. It's to make money or to get in this business of making money, which is the Hollywood system. And because of that, this town is so fast paced. Everybody is always in a rush trying to get places and everybody's so materialistic. It kind of gets to me sometimes. I just got that feeling last week after I did a close of shooting Navy Diver. So for me, this town is just a means of making

Above: Tillman with Robert DeNiro and Cuba Gooding, Jr. on the set of Navy Diver, which opens this fall.

money and making films. This is what I've wanted to do since I was a kid, and this is what I'll continue to do. Otherwise, I wouldn't be here. I think I would be in Chicago. You could really make a film in Chicago, or an independent film in Cincinnati or Milwaukee. My wife is an actress, so that's why I'm here-- for her.

Cooper: Is it hard to have a successful marriage in this business?

Tillman: I've known my wife since I was 16 or 17. We went to the same high school, college and we share the same business. We're more friends. She's more into TV, and I'm in film. We knew this is what we wanted to achieve. It's like at Columbia. I was in the film department and she was in the theater department. The departments are two different things.

Cooper: Which part of your education of Columbia has influenced your career the most?

Tillman: Definitely the films. You don't need those very tough classes. For me, it was always those people that gave me the hardest time that influenced me the most. Like Paul Hettel- he taught Tech II. For me, Tech II was a tough class because I was taking so many classes at the time. I think it's really important for us to embrace these tough times because they're only gonna make you better.

Cooper: When you were at Columbia, you had a film win numerous awards. Tell me about "Paula," and the events that inspired you to write this film.

Tillman: Pretty much it just came from my high school in Milwaukee. I mean there were a lot of young women pregnant at the time, having kids. I was on Western and Lawrence. There was this diner, and I saw this young woman working in there and she had a great relationship with a lot of people that came into the diner. I kind of put those two things together. I wanted to make a film because there are a lot of stereotypes

about single moms not achieving what they want. And I knew a lot of single moms-- teenaged moms who were actually doing things. Who were actually going further in their careers-- going further in their lives. I thought there were stereotypes against that so I wanted to show that struggle, to show that things are possible and also to show that sometimes there are setbacks. We can accomplish things and get over those setbacks. So that's how the film came to be. At the time, I was working with my partner, Robert Teitel, and my wife starred in the film. A bunch of friends from Columbia [were involved in the movie], my friend, Rob Benedidas, who is a cinematographer out here in LA shot the film for me. We raised \$13,000 for that film. We earned a lot of student Academy Awards, and it helped me to raise money for my first film. Every step of the way is a building block.

Cooper: I understand that you met your partner, Robert Teitel, at Columbia. Tell me about that relationship.

Tillman: He was another film maker that was attending Columbia at the same time I was. He lived over in Roosevelt University's dormitory. We had Tech I class together. We started working together and have been working together ever since. We got five other filmmakers together. I felt like I wanted to start a company with five other filmmakers, student films. Maybe we'd go ahead and just work on other projects after college, but only two of the people survived. It was me and my partner. Everybody else kind of got kicked out of the company, and we just started working together. He produces, and I write and direct. He is really good at what he does. And I am trying to be the best at what I do. Right now, we have our company over at 20th Century Fox and we are still working together. I think it is a good relationship.

Cooper: Was your company, "State Street Pictures," named after State Street in Chicago?

Tillman: Yes. My first roll of films were on State Street. We shot on State Street, and it's like the biggest street in Chicago. We pulled these two things together, and we try to shoot all our films in Chicago. We always try to be known as Chicago filmmakers.

Cooper: What will your next project be?

Tillman: as far as my next project, I don't know. I think I am going to go back to writing and directing the next project. I think I want to go back and forth. But I think I will write the next one too.

Cooper: How long will it take you? Do you just sit down and write it? What is the process?

Tillman: For me, it takes a long time. It's going to take me about a year to get something on paper. I don't get a lot of offers and a lot of good projects right now. I don't know. I have to see. I'll just wait-- continue being. I may step back and do something mediocre or small. Think about the material that you are bringing out. I think that's important.

Troma Fest

Troma Film Marathon Places It's Wrath Upon the Village Theater May 19-21

Lloyd Kauffman Tells All...

By Mike Costa
Correspondent

Lloyd Kauffman once filmed a scene in which a man named Senior Seda raped a woman with the intention of giving her AIDS ("Seda" is apparently Spanish slang for the disease). He began our interview with a lengthy and disturbing story about "Hog lagoons" in eastern North Carolina where heartless pork-belly barons allow millions of gallons of pig feces to flood poor areas and spread unchecked diseases. He described the "Toxic Avenger" as a certain kind of unique benchmark in that it "is the first film to feature a child's head being crushed by the back wheel of a car, and then to go on to be adapted into a popular cartoon series with toys marketed to kids." He also told me about an online essay he was writing in defense of the MP3 pirate-haven "Napster" against "Slime Warner" and "AO-hell."

What's up with this guy? How can such a demonstratively irresponsible filmmaker be such a socially responsible advocate for human rights and free speech? "Well," he says, "My major at Yale was Chinese Philosophy, and I've always been fascinated by dualities - the yin and the yang. That was the idea behind 'The Toxic Avenger.' You had those kids at the health spa, working out all the time, along with all the chemical waste dumps. The idea of beautiful bodies and a ruined landscape. That, plus I always wanted to make a monster movie where the monster was the hero because, you know, people always root for the monster anyway."

"The Toxic Avenger" was the first real hit film from Kauffman's studio Troma, which produces self-described "movies of the future." Before "Toxie" (as fans affectionately refer to him) Kauffman had directed a string of little-seen teen sex comedies and beach movies. After "Toxie" hit big with the cult film and midnight-movie crowd, Kauffman (along with Troma Co-president Michael Herz) changed direction and his films became absurdist, post-modern riffs on violence, sex and big business.

Kauffman has always been an iconoclast. Back in the mid '80's, when Kauffman belonged to the Director's Guild of America, guild by-laws forbid him from working with non-union crews with the threat of expulsion. Kauffman assumed a pseudonym and continued to work, even perjuring himself in court when charges were brought against him. He considers himself very much a director for the people, and his work speaks for itself.

"I've always said that you have to be smart to watch a Troma film," Kauffman says. "There is a lot of audience participation. We rely on the audience to believe for us. We have characters talk to the audience. We love our audience." It's true,

and his audience loves him back. Troma films are defended fiercely by their fan-base, and their hard-to-find releases are some of the most sought-after bootlegs on the Internet and at trade-shows (all of which Kauffman approves, even as it takes money out of his own pocket). Kauffman is so enamored with his followers that he often allows non-sequitor, cameo walk-ons by fans both unknown and pseudo-celebrity (Ron Jeremy, Lemmy from Motorhead, and Howard Stern's Hank the Angry Dwarf have all taken small roles in recent Troma films).

"I love the idea of letting other guys get the spotlight. We're taking 'Terror Firmer' [Troma's newest release] to Cannes this week, and the E! Entertainment network is going to do a special on Troma, and follow us around the festival. They wanted to focus on me, but I said, 'hey, why don't you follow around these two guys who had small parts in the movie, Yaniv Sharon and Mo Fischer? They're more interesting than me.' And so that's what E! is going to do. And Yaniv Sharon and Mo Fischer are now out official representatives at Cannes, and they'll be on all the panels, and they'll be on TV representing us for everyone to see." As a note: Yaniv Sharon is the character in "Terror Firmer" whose most notable scene involves him running around Times Square in New York completely nude before getting his head crushed by a car. This sequence earned applause at the screening of "Terror Firmer" I attended at the Chicago Film Festival this October.

Why all of the head crushing and violence? "I think it has something to do with my early memories of my dog getting run over by a car," Kauffman answers. "That left a very indelible, uh, indelible impression on me. The dog was whipped around in the wheel well like a towel or rag or something. Also, a lot of the ideas for 'The Toxic Avenger' came from a frog I once saw on a trip with its leg stuck inside a Styrofoam MacDonald's container. Because, hey, unless that frog can survive a million years, or however long it takes for that container to dissolve, it's done."

Other influences on Kauffman's films include the French New Wave, obscure Japanese cinema and Andy Warhol. "I spent a lot of time with Warhol in the '70's," Kauffman says. "He was one of the first directors to really break the 4th wall and have his characters speak to the audience, or break character and step out of frame and ask for lunch or something. His films, like 'Lonesome Cowboys' and 'Blue Movie' were very influential to me." But despite his myriad of influences, Kauffman's films remain instantly recognizable as his own.

The progression of his career through Troma is easily charted through the procession of his films, which start off as sometimes wrongheaded or silly (like certain parts of "The Toxic Avenger" or "Troma's War") and become more and more assured as they become more and more recent (like the arch and layered madness of "Tromeo and Juliet"). Troma's most recent release, "Terror Firmer" is the zeitgeist of Troma filmmaking (and, in my opinion, of post-modern New



Above: "Class of Nuke 'Em High part 2: Subhumanoid Meltown"

Wave filmmaking on it's whole). Concerning a rash of murders perpetrated on the set of a Troma film, "Terror Firmer's" endlessly complex deconstructions of life-imitating art, of the meaning of true independent cinema, and it's deliciously subversive allusions and riffs on everything from "Psycho" to Sam Fuller's "Shark" make it one of the best movies about movie making I have ever seen. No serious film student can pass this film up. Added to the mix are hermaphrodites, a 300-pound nude man, and some of the most offensive acts of violence ever committed onscreen and the picture that results is simply sublime.

But, obviously, simple caption summaries fail to describe even the most mundane of Troma films, so I encourage readers to see these films for themselves which won't prove difficult since the Village Theater on Clark and North is hosting a Troma Film Festival the weekend of the 19th. Most of Kauffman's directorial efforts will be playing, including "The Toxic Avenger I & II," "Sgt. Kabukiman NYPD," "Tromeo and Juliet," and his most recent effort, the jaw-droppingly brilliant "Terror Firmer."

Perspective fans are also encouraged to take a look at Troma DVDs, which are absolutely crammed with extra features. "We try and make the best DVDs possible here at Troma, and to use the technology to its fullest extent," Kauffman explains. "Again, it's all for the fans." And he's right - the Troma DVDs are undoubtedly some of the most impressively compiled discs on the market. While the mastering sometimes leaves much to be desired (many discs suffer from bad artifacts and dot-crawl) the specs on each disc speak for themselves; the "Tromeo and Juliet" DVD features a droll and surprisingly erudite commentary track by Kauffman himself, deleted scenes, cast interviews, trailers, bizzare and sometimes hilarious PSAs from Troma's TV station, a still gallery, an interactive tour of the studio, and even more features beyond that. The pinnacle, Kauffman promises, will be the "Terror Firmer" release in fall of 2000. The DVD will be a colossal 2-disc-set featuring all of the above features, plus an interactive-viewing option where viewers can navigate directly to audition tapes for specific actors as they enter their scenes, as well as a wholly original mockumentary on the making of the film, shot in pompous "Hearts of Darkness" type style.

With such an enthusiastic view of technology, and such a radically democratic bend, the tagline "Movies of the future" seems less an ironic joke than a prophecy being realized. "I'm an old-type person," admonishes Kauffman. "Well not an old-type, but a sixties-type person. Who knows what'll happen? I'm almost done with 'Toxie 4,' and then I'm doing a campus zombie movie. I'm just going to keep making movies."

And I'm just going to keep watching them



Left: "Tromeo and Juliet"

Hawke's 'Hamlet':



TO BE OR NOT TO BE?

By Ryan Adair
Copy Editor

It has often been said that it's nearly impossible for Shakespeare's classic, "Hamlet," to be presented in less than three hours. The newest film adaptation, starring Ethan Hawke in the title role breaks that rule, among many others. This modern day version squeaks by in just under two hours and does everything in its power to entice a younger, hip audience to the often barren realm of Shakespeare.

Although the story is a bit compacted and much of the dialogue has been axed, director Michael Almereyda has kept most of the original plot intact, while stylishly transporting the famous tale to a gritty New York City, circa the year 2000. The president of the Denmark Corporation has been found dead, and his wife (Diane Venora) has remarried his brother (Kyle MacLachlan), who is suspected of the murder. No one is suffering more than her son Hamlet, who is not only determined to avenge his father's murder but is also in love, with the beautiful but conflicted Ophelia (Julia Stiles). These events lead to the downward spiral that will ultimately destroy all those involved.

Hawke does his best with what little character development he is given. Unfortunately, his portrayal makes this Hamlet unlikable. There is never a moment to establish why the audience should really care about what is going on in his life. His Hamlet is

grungy and unkempt, while being monotone, soft-spoken and prone to small fits of rage. This contemporary Hamlet is a budding filmmaker, obsessed with cameras and always carries around a small camcorder vainly filming himself. Hawke's take is different from most other film versions, since this Hamlet is under 30, still a young man, as Shakespeare intended it. However, he fails to make the proper character transitions needed to show Hamlet as a disturbed young man entering into a world of madness.

MacLachlan and Venora do able turns as Hamlet's corrupt parents, and Bill Murray makes the bumbling character of Polonius even more bumbling than past portrayals. Still, there is something unsettling seeing the star of "CaddyShack" and "Ghostbusters" speak in Shakespearean verse. Stiles, as Polonius' daughter, is gripping as her character descends into gradual insanity. Finally Stiles is able to branch out from the typical teen-comedy garbage she has been cast in recently, and tackle a role that shows her true range as an actress.

The conversion of details from the traditional form of "Hamlet" to the present day setting is unique throughout the film. Castles are now Penthouses, swords become guns, limousines replace horses and the country of Denmark is really the island of Manhattan.

Although played strictly as a drama, this "Hamlet" can be amusing at times since it is odd to see these characters in modern times, reciting their

lines as if they really belonged in Shakespeare's day. The multimedia world is woven tightly into the story featuring cellular phones, fax machines and the Internet.

Perhaps most absurd of all is Hamlet's famous soliloquy ("To be or not to be..."). This is delivered in the middle of a Blockbuster Video store.

The main fault with this rushed version of "Hamlet," is that it tries too hard to engulf its audience with pizzazz and pop-culture rather than simply telling the story Shakespeare has laid out. The film at times takes on a campy feel and that in the end, is what prevents it from captivating the audience, making them feel like they've just seen a bad MTV-video, rather than one of Shakespeare's greatest works.



Ethan Hawke on Hamlet

A week after screening "Hamlet," I had the opportunity to chat briefly on the telephone with actor Ethan Hawke. With 14 films under his belt, legitimate theater experience and even one best-selling novel published, I was curious to hear what Hawke had to say about his current version of Shakespeare's classic.

What was your initial attraction to this project?

I've been friends with Michael Almereyda, an experimental filmmaker, for a long time and he approached me about doing a film rich in substance, and that led him to the idea of a modern version of "Hamlet." We wanted to explore how "Hamlet" could be effective in modern-times. Michael had the thought to create a whole production into one cohesive idea and keep it as simple as possible.

There have been 40 filmed versions of "Hamlet." What is the specific appeal of this film?

"Hamlet" was written for a younger man to play. The character, coming from a 40-year-old like in past versions, is hard to get across to a modern audience. Setting the story in a modern context makes the characters more available, especially to a younger audience.

How do you think the general public will react to this updated version?

It's hard to say. We filmed it on location in New York City. We had a low budget and all the actors worked for scale. We really wanted to create an immediate and accessible interest in Shakespeare. Putting Shakespeare on film can be subtle, intimate and as personal as possible.

In recent years there have been many film adaptations of Shakespearean work. Why do you think some film makers choose to tackle Shakespeare?

Shakespeare has such rich meaning and is so complex and challenging. It also tends to be more fun to work on. It's not like reading it in high school; I used to hate that too. Having it on film is creating a living, breathing piece.

Throughout this version of "Hamlet" there are several overt product placements. How does this figure into the story?

We actually received no money from any of the companies that had their products in the movie. We had to pay them to use their name. Throughout the film, Hamlet's inner struggle is explored. What is shown is a fragile inner-life inundated with advertisements. They have a profound effect on us all. Michael Almereyda tried to make the point that we were swimming in the middle of modern times.

Do you have a favorite film version of "Hamlet"?

I would say the Olivier version. That's what first turned me on to Shakespeare when I was younger.

This is your first time with "Hamlet." Have you done Shakespeare in the past?

I played Romeo in "Romeo and Juliet" and Petruchio in... what the hell was that one? Oh yeah, "The Taming of the Shrew." Both were in high school.

Your last film, "Snow Falling on Cedars," failed at the box office. Is that ever a concern of yours?

You know, five or six years ago it was never printed how much money movies made at the box office. Box office success shouldn't determine if a film is a significant piece

of art. I wanted people to like it ["Snow Falling on Cedars"] but it was our fault if people didn't get it. I don't know, maybe we didn't do it right.

Do you have a favorite film that you've worked on during your career?

I would say "Hamlet." I'm really very proud of it because it was such an arduous undertaking. Also, if I can choose another, "Before Sunrise," because it was very personal for me.

You've already written one novel, *The Hottest State*, can we expect more writing from you in the future?

I love writing. It's very exciting for me because it's hard and personal to do. It's something that's very dear to me. Right now I'm working on my second novel, which should be finished soon.

Have you ever considered screenwriting?

You know, I enjoy fiction writing better. I bet someday I'll do a screenplay. I actually considered doing one for my first book. For some reason, though, I'm just not drawn to it. I like to write for readers, not actors.

Is there anything that you'd like to do differently in your life right now?

Life is a work in progress. I've always enjoyed the performing arts and try to approach them as a love. The key is to see what challenges you can learn the most from. Above all, I try to maintain the attitude of an amateur.

Although Hawke has no immediate film currently in the works, he will appear on the New York stage in February of 2001 with the Lincoln Center Theater in Jon Robin Baitz's new play "Ten Unknowns," also starring Julianna Margulies and Jason Robards.



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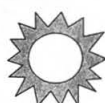
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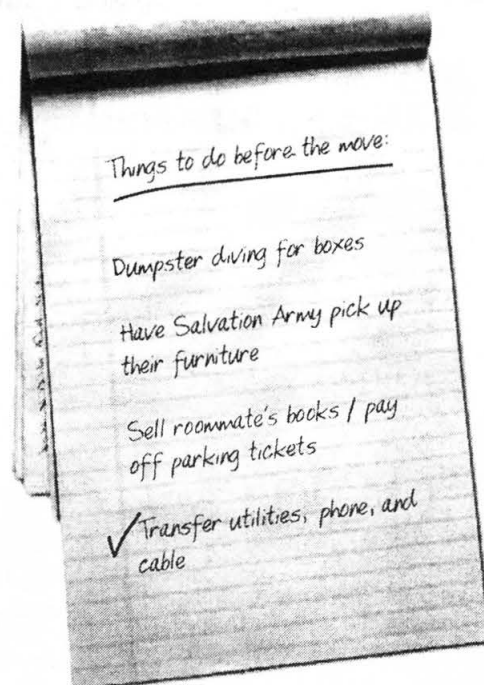
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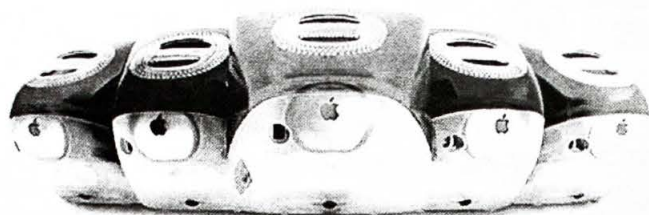
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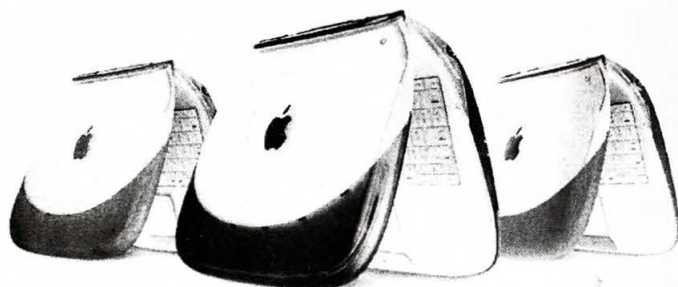
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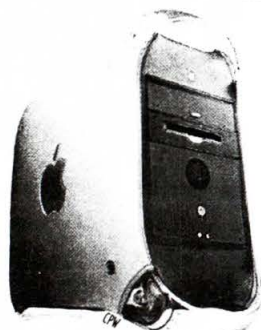
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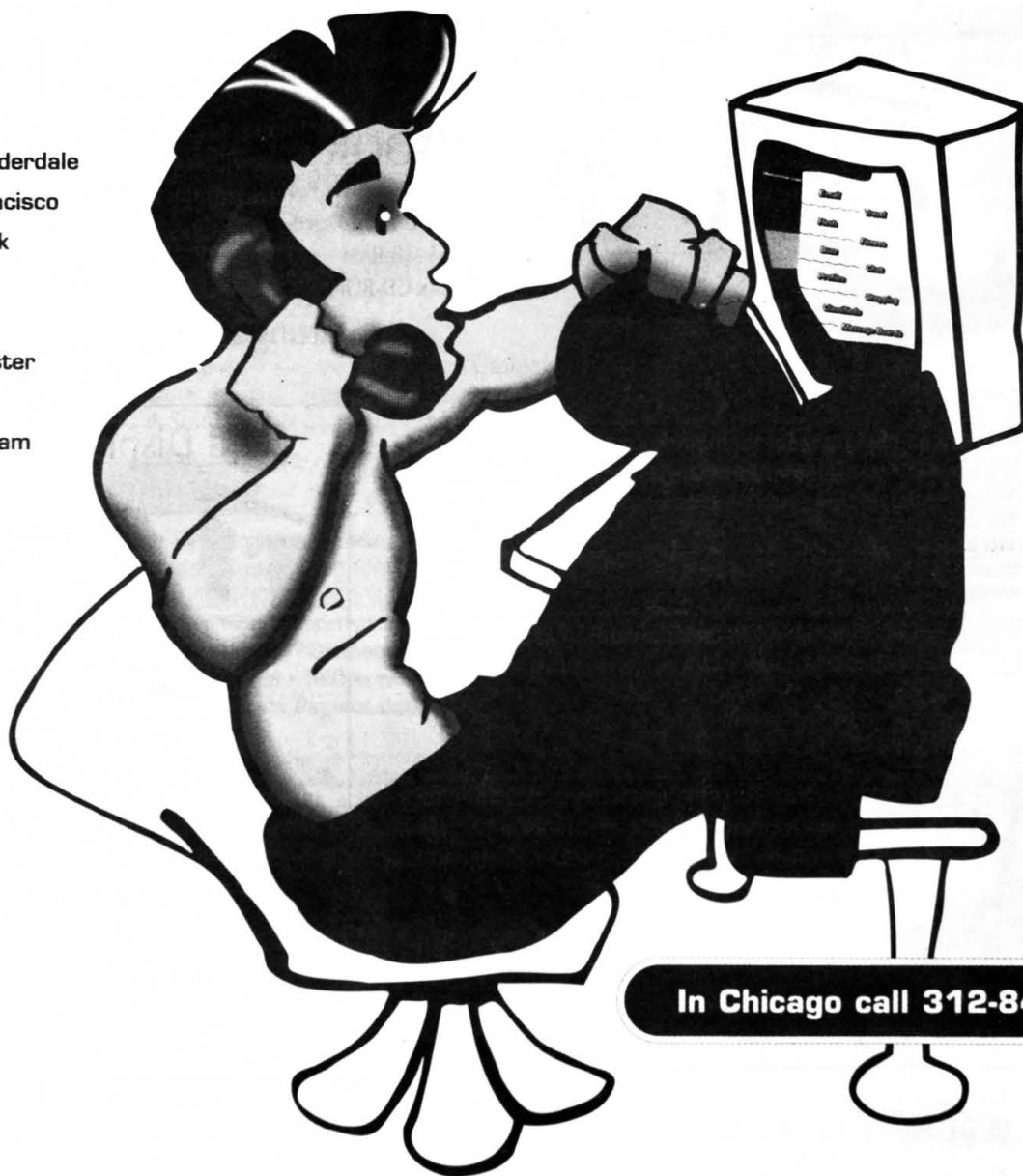
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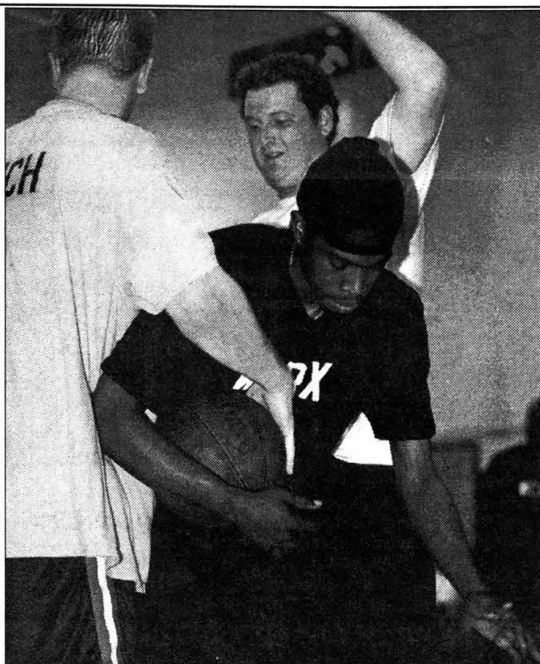
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at the 600 S. Michigan
Building

The *Chronicle's* George Dabaglia (top right) and Graham Couch (left) converge on WCRX's Dion Walker (center) late in the *Chronics* 64-43 win on May 6. Dabaglia led all players with 24 points and 15 rebounds. Walker spent most of the game on the floor or yelling at the referee. He also missed eight of his 11 shots.

Bill Manley/
Chronicle



Domination

CONTINUED FROM BACK PAGE

big relief to us all," said *Chronicle* point guard Donnie Seals, who finished with 10 points and six assists. "It was embarrassing not being able to score on those scrubs early on."

At the end of the first quarter WCRX led 14-12, boosted by two three-pointers by Jolliffe.

As the second quarter began, the *Chronics* switched to a 2-3 zone defense to combat the rapid and questionable substitution pattern of the Undergrounders. At this point the first sign of the *Chronics*' overwhelming athletic ability surfaced as they out scored WCRX 14-8 on their way to a 26-22 halftime advantage.

Dabaglia battled inside to the tune of 14 first half points despite the Undergrounders' so-called aggressive defense.

"I thought they hacked a lot," Dabaglia said. "Every time I got the ball down low

I felt three people swinging."

The game remained tight throughout the third quarter while the Undergrounders' center Dion Walker did his best to keep his team from falling. He had six of his eight points in the period, including some impressive post-moves.

As the final quarter began, WCRX was within striking distance, trailing just 42-34. Then the fourth quarter onslaught began and the Undergrounders' chances quickly ended.

Ben Barrons led the losers with nine points and nine boards and Walker added eight points, five rebounds, four assists and four steals for the Undergrounders.

After the game, Coach Joyce called for a rematch in two weeks, apparently forgetting the meaning of the term "annual."

"We could play them 100 times and the result would be the same," said Snyder. "Talent and hustle always win out."

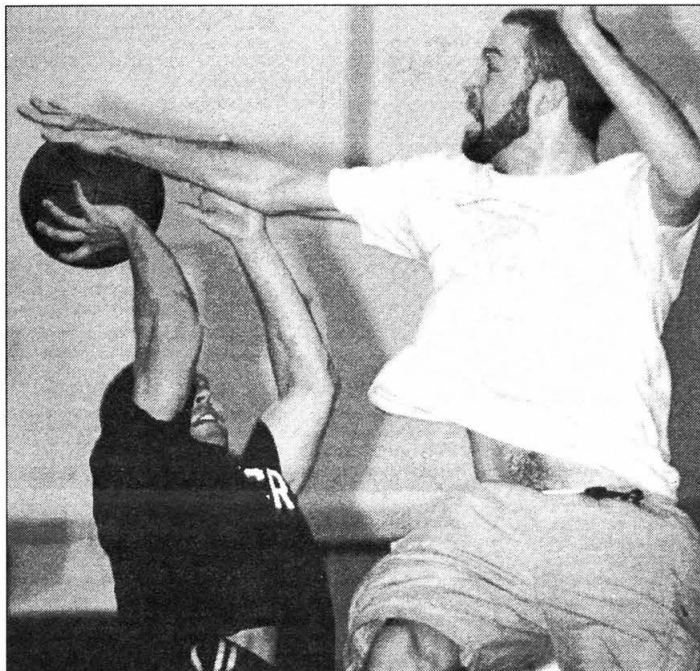
The bad news for WCRX is that the *Chronicle* returns all seven members of this year's team next fall.

Could this be the beginning of the next Chicago basketball dynasty?

Chronicle vs. WCRX Box Score

Chronicle	FG-FGA	3pt-3ptA	FT-FTA	Reb	Ast	Stls	TO's	Blk	FL	Pts
Seals	5-11	0-0	0-3	9	6	3	6	1	0	10
Snyder	1-5	0-1	2-4	4	2	2	1	0	0	4
Dabaglia	11-19	0-2	2-2	15	1	0	3	1	1	24
Gavazzoni	2-12	0-5	1-2	6	4	0	2	1	1	5
Couch	3-9	0-0	1-1	5	1	0	3	0	1	7
Richmond	4-7	0-0	1-2	3	5	1	2	1	0	9
Venci	2-7	0-2	1-2	8	1	0	1	0	1	5
Totals	28-70	0-13	8-16	50	20	6	18	4	4	64
	40%	0%	50%							

WCRX	FG-FGA	3pt-3ptA	FT-FTA	Reb	Ast	Stls	TO's	Blk	FL	Pts
Parent	3-10	2-8	0-2	1	2	2	5	0	1	8
Jolliffe	2-6	2-5	0-0	0	0	1	1	0	0	6
Walker	3-11	0-0	2-2	5	4	4	3	1	4	8
Barrons	4-11	0-1	1-2	9	1	1	1	1	1	9
Collins	2-7	0-0	0-0	2	0	0	0	0	2	4
Bryan	0-2	0-0	0-0	5	1	0	1	0	0	0
Wade	0-3	0-2	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Holtry	2-3	0-1	0-2	3	0	2	0	0	0	4
Misiek	1-4	0-1	0-0	5	1	0	0	0	2	2
Hughes	0-4	0-1	0-0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Albaugh	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Rosenthal	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Rudman	1-4	0-0	0-0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Stintson	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cannon	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Totals	18-65	4-19	3-8	31	9	10	18	2	15	43
	28%	21%	38%							



Bill Manley/Chronicle

The *Chronicle's* Chris Gavazzoni (right) blocks WCRX's Ben Barrons' shot.

Chronicle Sports Information

as of May 12

NBA PLAYOFF MATCH-UPS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

- (1) Indiana vs. (5) Philadelphia
- (2) Miami vs. (3) New York

WESTERN CONFERENCE

- (1) L.A. Lakers vs. (5) Phoenix
- (2) Utah vs. (3) Portland

NHL PLAYOFF MATCH-UPS

EASTERN CONFERENCE FINALS

- (1) Philadelphia vs. (4) New Jersey

WESTERN CONFERENCE FINALS

- (2) Dallas vs. (3) Colorado

MLB STANDINGS American League East

	W-L	GB
New York	22-10	-
Boston	19-12	2.5
Toronto	19-17	5
Baltimore	16-18	7
Tampa Bay	12-21	10.5

Central

Chicago	19-15	-
Cleveland	17-15	1
Kansas City	18-16	1
Minnesota	16-19	3.5
Detroit	9-23	9

West

Seattle	17-15	-
Oakland	18-17	.5
Anaheim	18-18	1
Texas	15-19	3

National League East

Atlanta	20-7	-
Montreal	14-12	5.5
New York	16-14	5.5
Florida	14-15	7
Philadelphia	9-18	11

Central

St. Louis	20-14	-
Cincinnati	18-15	1.5
Pittsburgh	15-18	4.5
Houston	14-19	5.5
Chicago	14-23	7.5
Milwaukee	13-22	7.5

West

Arizona	24-10	-
San Francisco	18-14	5
Los Angeles	17-16	6.5
Colorado	15-18	8.5
San Diego	13-21	11

MLS STANDINGS

Eastern Conference

	W-L-T-PTS
New England	2-2-4-10
Miami	2-3-4-10
Metrostars	3-5-0-9
DC United	2-6-1-7

Central Conference

Tampa Bay	5-4-0-15
Chicago	4-4-1-13
Dallas	4-4-0-12
Columbus	3-5-1-10

Western Conference

Kansas City	6-0-2-20
Los Angeles	5-0-3-18
Colorado	4-5-0-12
San Jose	2-4-2-8

Next Week in Chronicle Sports:

- Rugby in Chicago
- Cubs Update
- Sox Update

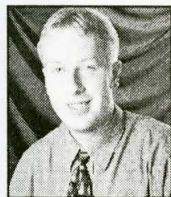
Dig in, speak out.

Sports has expanded to three pages. To get in touch with Graham Couch, Sports Editor of the *Chronicle*, e-mail him at Ghcouch@hotmail.com or call 312-344-7086.

Ultimate frisbee = running + soccer + football + more running

When I think of the game of frisbee, I used to picture kids leisurely playing on the beach, throwing a frisbee back and forth. I thought that it was a game more for socializing than for athletic activity. So when I was asked to play with the Columbia Ultimate Frisbee team last Sunday, I figured that I would work up a light sweat and meet the only so-called athletes Columbia has to offer.

Yeah, see, I was mistaken. Apparently the "Ultimate" part of ultimate frisbee stands for running. I'll admit, as I was working on last week's story on the funding for Columbia Ultimate, I had doubts about the validity of ultimate frisbee as a legitimate sport. It's safe to say those doubts have



Graham Couch
Sports Editor

been wiped away.

As I laced up my cleats and smelled the long grass of Grant Park, it felt like I was back in high school about to take part in soccer practice. I assumed that the cleats and the smell of grass were going to be the only similarities. I found out in a hurry that I would be sprinting as much, if not more than I had back then.

Ultimate frisbee is a combination of soccer, rugby and football but without the violence. However, when you subtract violence and contact from a sport, you can count on more finesse, which translates into more running.

If it seems as if I am emphasizing running, good. Because you will get that wonderful feeling of lactic acid creeping into your stomach as you play, unless you're in tip-top shape.

Ultimate frisbee is supposed to be played with two teams of seven trying to get a frisbee across a goal line by throwing it to teammates in any direction.

This particular Sunday there were only seven players total. This meant three-on-three with a substitute. With the low turnout, the field became wide open, which forced us to hustle even more.

As we scrimmaged, I thought I held my own. However, I was still impressed with the ability and skill that is involved in the sport. It does not get the attention or coverage of the major sports; however, it is just as competitive and maybe even more fun than many of them.

Because of the energy exerted while playing, having your team score a point is more of a rewarding feeling than hitting a shot in basketball or scoring a run in baseball. It is a sport that takes speed, agility, hand-eye coordination, communication, and sheer will in order to succeed.

I encourage all Columbia students to try practicing with this team. One time and you may fall in love with this sport. If nothing else, you will at least respect the competitors as true athletes.

For more information on Columbia Ultimate go to <http://interactive.colum.edu/students/frisbee>.

The Chronicle

WCRX





Bill Manley/Chronicle

The winning team: (clockwise, top left to right) S. Venci, G. Dabagia, G. Couch, M. Richmond, D. Seals, C. Gavazzoni, T. Snyder.

Total domination

Dabagia's 24 leads the Chronicle past WCRX in first annual basketball game

By Graham Couch
Sports Editor

Sometimes less can be more. As was the case May 6, when the *Chronicle*, playing with only seven players, pounded a WCRX squad of 14, 64-43 in front of a sold out Roosevelt gymnasium in the first annual *Chronicle* vs. WCRX basketball game.

George Dabagia dominated inside for the *Chronicle* despite being hacked profusely on his way to a game-high 24 points and 15 rebounds. The 6-3 210 pound center/correspondent said that the *Chronics* were not to be denied.

"It was a Jordanesque performance like in game six at Utah," he said. "We won the game on will. We wanted it more and when the game got tight we decided we were not going to lose."

Leading just 44-40 early in the fourth quarter, Dabagia spearheaded a 18-0 spurt in which he scored on several "Dream shakes" to put a leaderless WCRX team out of their misery.

During the run, the *Chronics* demonstrated their superior athleticism and unselfish team play, dominating WCRX in every facet of the game. Using a balanced scoring attack in which five players

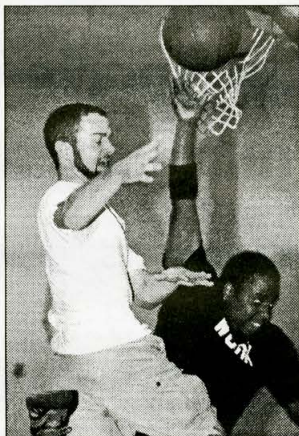
made a field goal, the *Chronicle* took advantage of repeated defensive break downs by the Undergrounders, scoring several times on easy lay-ups.

"Our defense seemed to collapse and we just couldn't keep with their big men," said WCRX Coach Tom Joyce.

Most impressive for the *Chronicle* during the stretch was their defense and rebounding. They forced WCRX to miss 14 consecutive field goals and did not give up an offensive rebound. Meanwhile, the *Chronics* made a living on second chance opportunities.

"They couldn't have stopped us even if their lives depended on it," said *Chronicle* forward Tom Snyder. "They may have

had more players, but we had the talent. It was only a matter of time before we broke them down."



Bill Manley/Chronicle

Gavazzoni and "Madness" battle for the rebound.

A baseline three-pointer by WCRX's Marc "Madness" Parent ended the drought for the Undergrounders, but by that time the game was all but over.

"With all the substitutions, guys didn't always know who to guard so we missed a lot of assignments," said WCRX forward Mark Joliffie.

However, the game wasn't always a blowout. For a while it looked as if the game would be tight all the way.

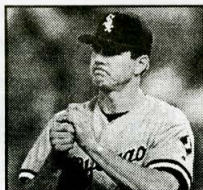
Due to superior defense by both teams, nobody scored for the first four minutes. Then the Undergrounders jumped out to a 6-0 lead.

Dabagia opened up the scoring for the *Chronicle* with a low-post put back and from there the *Chronics* knew they would be okay.

"When we got that first bucket it was a

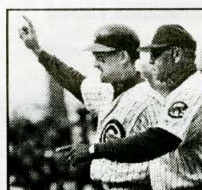
See **Domination**, page 23

This Week in Sports



► White Sox

Tuesday-Wednesday- at New York, 6:05 p.m. (both)
Friday-Sunday- at Toronto, 6:05 p.m., 3:05 p.m., 12:05 p.m.



► Cubs

Tuesday-Thursday- Los Angeles, 7:05 p.m., 1:20 p.m., 1:20 p.m.
Friday-Sunday- Cincinnati, 2:20 p.m., 1:20 p.m., 1:20 p.m.