

# TUFTS OBSERVER

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## Commencement 2006

PLUS:  
The job forecast  
Four-year retrospective  
An interview with Martin Sherwin

Tufts' Student Publication of Record



# Contents

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# Thank You

BY VINDA RAO



ship opportunities and built up a resume that impresses many people to no avail. I expected that I'd graduate with my friends and we'd live happily ever after together, for at least a year, somewhere exciting and young in Boston, bonding over our new careers and feeling empowered by our paychecks and our wisdom. Instead my friends

the highpoint of my senior year. Every week I relished the time I'd spend with the dedicated writers and editors who in turn would produce ten issues, each one a revolution in its own right. I was a bizarre Editor-in-Chief for certain; I'd bark out orders and had little sympathy for procrastination or bland themes. I insisted on each issue stirring

I was a bizarre Editor-in-Chief for certain; I'd bark out orders and had little sympathy for procrastination or bland themes. I insisted on each issue stirring controversy in some manner, be it with a shocking cover image or an article that drew fire from authority.

And now it's over.

I didn't think this time would come so quickly, a cap and gown on my suitcase, pictures of friends and family on my walls that I can't bring myself to take down. I always thought that by the end of senior year I'd have all the answers to the questions I'd posed as a freshman: What am I going to do with my life? Do I really belong here? Is it ever going to get easier? Graduation is two weeks away and I'm still waiting for those answers, armed with a longer list of questions to follow. I feel like four years have gone by and I've gotten even more confused.

In four years activities have come and gone, courses enthused and dismissed, and everything I imagined I'd cry about during Graduation doesn't seem to be so high on my list of priorities, or anyone else's, for that matter.

are leaving, I have nowhere to stay, and my paycheck is anything but certain. I came to Tufts because I thought that Boston was the city where I belonged, and suddenly, I'm not so sure.

In four years activities have come and gone, courses enthused and dismissed, and everything I imagined I'd cry about during Graduation doesn't seem to be so high on my list of priorities, or anyone else's, for that matter. Senior year was the most difficult of the four, and I don't think I can classify it as "good" or "bad" without a decade's worth of distance from it. There is one aspect of this year, however, that never let me down—a place where I always felt at home, working with the most dedicated and talented staff for which I ever could have

controversy in some manner, be it with a shocking cover image or an article that drew fire from authority. I changed around staff positions, abolished some, created others, and took control over areas of publication that had never before been handled by the Editor-in-Chief. Some readers embraced my style, others were dismayed by it. In the end, I know that what I helped produce was art, and art will always incite a reaction from its viewers—whether negative or positive is of no consequence to me.

The idea of moving forward without having the staff of the Observer by my side is a painful concept with which to deal. I have never been surrounded by so many brilliant minds and caring, loyal friends as during my times in Observer production. I don't know where I'm going after this...physically, emotionally, professionally, it's transient. I will take this opportunity to thank the editors and writers of the Observer for their support, patience, and friendship. Their dedication and kindness made an otherwise unsuccessful year worth it for me.

Thank you with all of my heart. I will miss you all terribly. It has been an honor and a privilege to work with you.

Love always,  
Vinda ☺

The college experience was always an amplified one for me; I dove into leader-

hoped: The Observer.

This semester as Editor-in-Chief was

# POLICE BLOTTER

## Best of the Spring 2006 Police Blotter

### Sunday, January 22

At 1:00 a.m., an officer observed a male urinating on the bushes near the Davis House on Sawyer Avenue. The individual was a student, and police have reported him to the Dean of Students. The student claimed that the bushes appeared dry and malnourished.

### Saturday, February 4

At 11:45 p.m., there was a report of an assault and battery on Latin Way. A student was walking down the street while talking on his cell phone when unknown an individual punched him several times from behind and then took off running. Neither the victim nor his friend could provide a description of the suspect. The victim believes the attack might be connected to the time he hoarded free pens from the Buddhist-Sangha Club table during the activities fair earlier that week.

### Thursday, February 23

At 4:00 a.m., there was a report of the use of illegal substance in Miller Hall. An officer responded to a complaint by the RA that students were smoking marijuana in a certain room. A student answered the door enthusiastically, hoping that someone had ordered a pizza. The student voluntarily surrendered a small amount of pot and a pipe. The incident has been reported to the Dean of Students. The student described the incident as a "major buzzkill."

### Monday, March 13

At 6:30 p.m., there was a report of a stolen bicycle from Wilson House. A student reported that the bike had been left unsecured in the lobby of the house for a period of several hours and found that it was missing later in the day. On an unrelated note, the writer of this column is currently selling a bicycle that he recently acquired; please contact him for more info.

### Sunday, April 9

At 2:30 a.m., an unknown individual struck the writer of this column in the face in front of Chi Omega. The attack was completely unprovoked, and as such is described as a random act of violence. I urge anyone to contact me if they have any information about the attacker. Thank you.

—Compiled by Stephanie Leung, written by Spencer Maxwell, with the cooperation of TUPD

## COLLEGE BULLETS

### Controversy Over New Gallaudet President

About 100 people protested on Gallaudet University's campus, America's only liberal arts college for the deaf, against the newly-elected president Jane K. Fernandes because she does not exemplify the true essence of Gallaudet. Fernandes has practiced speech since childhood and only learned American Sign Language at age 23; Gallaudet's main means of communication is ASL. The board of trustees voted to uphold the decision to hire Fernandes, but students have still expressed negative attitudes about her.

### NASA Grant for North Dakota Students to Explore "Mars"

Students being trained in space travel explored the Mars-like terrain of the North Dakota Badlands in space suits they created with a \$100,000 NASA grant. Five different colleges sent a total of about 40 students to participate in the development of the experimental Mars space suits. An astronaut would have to remain in an actual suit for several hours of exploration, but the students' experimental suit would not accommodate natural bodily needs.

—Compiled by Stephanie Leung

## Just the Facts

The hardness of the butter is proportional to the softness of the bread.

—SOME-GUY.COM/FACTS.HTML

# American Prometheus: Martin Sherwin on Oppenheimer, Writing, & Tufts

BY MICHAEL SKOCAY  
AND LYDIA HALL

In 2005, Martin Sherwin, a Tufts Professor of History and English, published *American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer*. The text details the life and times of Oppenheimer, the iconic scientist and the “Father of the Atomic Bomb,” including his personal as well as intensely public life. *American Prometheus* is the 2005 recipient of the National Book Critics Circle Award and the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for biography.

Q: It took you two and a half decades—a quarter century—to write *American Prometheus*: thousands of hours of research, hundreds of interviews, visits to archives throughout the world, and presumably long hours of writing. That in itself is a journey, a marathon production. Did you feel a certain amount of loss when you finally finished the book? What do you miss the most now that the text is completed?

A: The publication of *American Prometheus* was the end of a long journey that I had not expected to be so long. With its publication I feel a sense of accomplishment and relief; I feel no sense of loss.

Q: What was your initial motivation for writing *American Prometheus*? Did that change throughout the course of writing the book?

A: After publishing *A World Destroyed* in 1975, a book about the building and use of the atomic bomb during World War II, I knew I wanted to continue to write about the history of the nuclear weapons and the struggle to abol-

ish them. I had spent a lot of time doing research for that book in the Oppenheimer papers, which were at the Library of Congress. So a biography of Oppenheimer seemed to be the perfect topic. It kept me in touch with the nuclear issue as well as several other issues of great interest to me: the American left during the Great Depression, the origins of the nuclear arms race, the McCarthy period.

Q: How did you choose the title *American Prometheus*? Did you consider other possibilities?

A: For the last year or so before publication our working title was “Oppie.” That’s what his students and friends called him

and Kai Bird, my co-author, and I liked the sense of familiarity that the title conveyed. Some people loved it and others hated it. One of the haters was our friend Ronald Steel, the biographer of Walter Lippmann. At the 11th hour he suggested “*Prometheus*.” Kai’s wife came up with the same title at about the same time. As soon as Ron called me with that suggestion I knew it was right, but I thought it needed the addition of “American.”

Q: How was collaborative work, with Kai Bird, different from working alone?

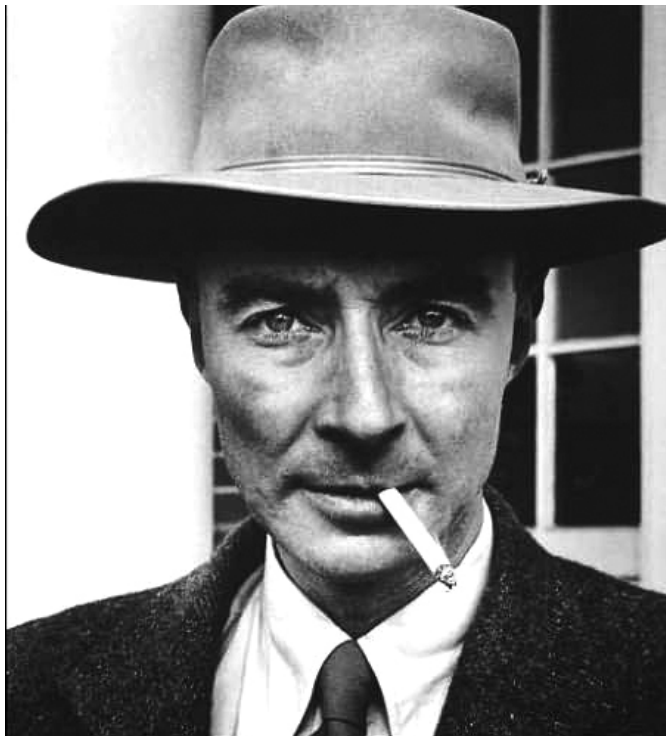
A: Working with Kai was a wonderful experience. I like to think out loud and debate interpretations, the meaning of evidence etc.

I guess that is why I like teaching so much. In any case, our collaboration turned into a seminar on Oppenheimer that lasted five years. If there is anything that I miss, it is that intense intellectual engagement.

Q: What was your reaction when *American Prometheus* received a National Book Critics Circle Award (2005) and the Pulitzer Prize for biography (2006)?

A: Just what you would imagine.

Q: In the Author’s Note for *American Prometheus* you wrote, “The writing of Oppenheimer’s life has given me a new understanding of the complexities of biography. It has been sometimes an arduous journey but always an exhilarating one.” Can you shed some more light on the process of writing a biography and, particularly, the challenges of a biography of J. Robert Oppenheimer?



AMERICAN PROMETHEUS

THE TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY OF  
J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER

by KAI BIRD and MARTIN J. SHERWIN

A: Biographical writing is tough. A good biography has to do several things at once. It has to understand the inner life of the subject, the external world in which he lived and the interaction between the two. A biographer has to be at once a psychiatrist and a historian. It was not easy to get inside Oppenheimer's head. He was a brilliant, complex, admirable and flawed human being. Getting to know him was a long difficult process. I

“Our leaders have led us and the world down a strategically unsound and morally indefensible yellow brick nuclear road. At the end it is not the Wizard of Oz but a nuclear war.”

think I had to get to know myself better before I could understand Oppenheimer. That may be one of the less obvious reasons why the book took so long to complete.

Q: Why was the public (and the government) so anxious to condemn Oppenheimer in 1953, when only years before he had been a championed national hero on the covers of *Time* and *Life*? Was he a scapegoat for an anxious American consciousness terrified by the aftermath of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings and the emerging nuclear culture of the cold-war period?

A: Oppenheimer's security hearing in 1954 was a cold war political trial. The public was not against him. His enemies were those in the Eisenhower administration, the FBI, the congress and the military who advocated the expansion of the US nuclear weapons arsenal. Oppenheimer considered the Massive Retaliation plans of the Air Force's Strategic Air Command a strategy for genocide, and he spoke out against those plans. In response Lewis Strauss, the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, who had been opposed to and suspicious of Oppenheimer's ideas for years, joined in a conspiracy with the head of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover, to destroy Oppenheimer's influence. They employed numerous illegal actions to assure that his security clearance was removed: they tapped Oppenheimer's lawyer's telephone, they coached witnesses, they refused to allow the defense counsel to have a security clearance which he needed to do his job. There is even the possibility

that Strauss attempted to bribe one of the AEC commissioners who sat in review of the hearing board's verdict.

Q: In the same vein, why did the public ignore Oppenheimer's warnings about the emerging nuclear culture, about the production of the hydrogen bomb, and the control of nuclear weaponry outlined in the Acheson-Lilienthal Report?

A: Why did the public support the Vietnam War for so long? Why did the public support the invasion of Iraq? We appear to be a fearful people. We too readily accept.

Q: Do you sense a connection between Oppenheimer and Edward R. Murrow in their respective efforts to stand up to the radical anti-communist sentiment in McCarthy-era America?

A: No. Oppenheimer argued against those who supported the expansive use of nuclear weapons. While he agreed with Murrow, he was not a crusader against McCarthyism either before or after his security hearing.

“During the war, as he led the race to build an atomic bomb, he paid little attention to postwar consequences. But that changed after Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed.”

Q: How did Robert Oppenheimer's early life and pre-Los Alamos life influence his reactions to the use of the bomb and further nuclear proliferation?

A: Everyone's behavior as an adult has childhood roots and sorting out those influences was our most difficult challenge. The values of his parents, his teachers at the Ethical Culture Society's school (now called Fieldstone) and the science community he joined as a young adult all pointed him toward thinking about the global consequences of nuclear weapons after

the war. During the war, as he led the race to build an atomic bomb, he paid little attention to postwar consequences. But that changed after Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed.

Q: Robert Oppenheimer's 1946 comments to the senate in response to questions of national security; “Of course it could be done, and people could destroy New York,” are startlingly prescient to the present national situation. How would Oppenheimer judge post-9/11 America and the resurgence in global terrorism? What lessons have we yet to learn?

A: Oppenheimer was very clear that in the long run absolute security against a terrorist nuclear attack was impossible. His view was that the United States would be far more secure if it promoted the abolition of nuclear weapons. I cannot tell you how he would judge post 9/11 America; too many things happened between his death in 1967 and that awful day. But we can read what he said about these weapons and recognize that we have learned the wrong lessons. Our leaders have led us and the world down a strategically unsound and morally indefensible yellow brick nuclear road. At the end it is not the Wizard of Oz but a nuclear war. Sad to say but the United States more than any other nation bears the responsibility for the consequences of a nuclear armed world.

Q: Is there anything that you feel you failed to accomplish with American Prometheus? Are there any elements of Oppenheimer's life that you felt were inaccessible even through comprehensive research?

A: I wanted to know more than I knew about every important issue we discussed. But that is true of everything I have ever written.

Q: What are your thoughts on a film adaptation of *American Prometheus* or on the story of Oppenheimer's life?

A: Funny you should ask. The book was recently optioned to Sam Mendes (*American Beauty*, *Road to Perdition*, *Jarhead*). If he makes the film I hope he focuses on the Oppenheimer hearings rather than the Los Alamos years.

Q: As a Professor of History and English at Tufts, you created the “Global Classroom” program which linked Tufts students with their counterparts in Moscow, Russia to discuss major world issues. Are you currently working on any interactive projects with Tufts students? Finally, as this is the commencement issue, do you have any guiding words for the Tufts graduates entering the “real world”?

A: The Global Classroom project was an incredible (as well as expensive and time consuming) experience. It delayed my Oppenheimer biography at least five years, but it was worth it. It brought Tufts students in contact with students at Moscow universities from 1988-1992. Our classrooms were linked by television and simultaneous interpretation twice each semester. Our classes covered the nuclear arms race, the environment and other pressing issues. The programs played on PBS stations throughout the USA and the USSR. With the help of Professor Tanya Gassel (Russian Department) every spring vacation I brought up to 60 Tufts students to Moscow to live in Soviet dormitories. In effect, our students had a front row seat watching the incredible political drama that was the transformation of the Soviet Union.

For guiding words, let me go back to *American Prometheus* and Oppenheimer’s life. He too often allowed his ambitions to trump his values. For example, he thought he could remain part of a government whose policies he opposed. He thought he could have it both ways. That never works.

Q: What initially made you want to teach at Tufts?

A: Are you kidding? It’s a great place to teach. I have taught at UC Berkeley, Cornell, Princeton, Dartmouth, Yale, the University of Pennsylvania, and Wellesley so I have a very broad basis for comparison.

Q: What do you think it means for Tufts as a university to have a member of their faculty win the Pulitzer Prize?

A: I’m the last person who should answer that question. Ask President Bacow. ●

# Where Do We Go From Here?

BY LYDIA HALL

For the Tufts Class of 2006, the end of the road is finally here—but what to do next? In earlier generations, graduation from an elite university almost always guaranteed someone a good job and a smooth transition to the working world. Today, however, this is not the case, with more people than ever going to college, and not enough positions for all of the eager graduates. As senior Andrew Chapman put it, “Too many people in our generation, too few jobs.” Indeed, as a 2004 survey showed, 18 percent of recent college grads are “underemployed,” that is to say, they are forced to take jobs for which they are overqualified.

But not everyone chooses a path that leads straight from the classroom into an office. As another recent survey showed, the percentage of graduates who accept jobs immediately after college is only 57.7%, proving that, in today’s world, not everyone knows exactly where he or she is going after being handed that diploma. Members of the Tufts Class of 2006 are no exception to this trend; although there are those who seem to have their careers perfectly mapped out already, there are some others who are less clear on what their professional futures will hold—and for some, this isn’t necessarily a bad thing.

“Graduating has brought me to one of many of life’s proverbial intersections,” said senior engineer James Pray. Pray is unsure of what exactly what he wants to do post-Tufts, but a break after a long four years before heading to school again is definitely in the cards. “My undergraduate career at Tufts has brought me to the conclusion that I really haven’t a clue as to where I envision myself in the years to come,” he said. “It is my eventual desire to attend a culinary program but I have no immediate timeframe. At this juncture it is my overwhelming desire to simply kick back, and do nothing but enjoy the freedom of

the interim.”

Another senior in the School of Engineering had similar sentiments. “I’m still not sure exactly what I want to do,” she said simply, adding that for now, she will stay at Tufts to continue her studies as a grad student, but is still leaving her options open. “I’ve enrolled in Tufts grad school but am still applying to jobs,” she explained. “I just want to see what all my options are and know I have a good couple months before I really need to pick one. In addition to working over the summer, I think I might also take some extra classes in areas related to my major that I never really got to explore during college.”

Some seniors, however, like Economics major Edward Jun Wha Lee, are heading straight from the Hill to demanding “real world” jobs. Explained Lee, “My plan for the next year is to start my job at Citigroup Global Markets as a sales and trading analyst for [the] fixed income and equities division. I will be busy working on the trading floor.” He added that people shouldn’t be too quick to judge the world of investment banking by what Hollywood shows them: “Don’t think of *Wall Street* or *Boiler Room*,” he joked. “These are criminal movies and they are not typical major investment banks in New York.” For Lee, this job seemed to be a natural next step after college. “I majored in quantitative economics and I [have loved] financial markets since I can remember, [since] before Tufts,” he said. “And things worked out naturally. I have been an active investor since my high school years. I am really excited about doing this as my job.” He added that beyond this first job, he has a pretty clear plan mapped out for his future in the world of finance. “I definitely know where I am going into,” he said simply, adding, “I will work on Wall Street for at least 15 years; however, the work I will do will change over time [depending] on the market situation. I think once I make a big plan, details will work out as I proceed.” In the future, he plans to perhaps take his



career global: “I don’t really know how the industry will change 5 years from now in detail,” he said, explaining, “I know that Asia will grow faster than the U.S. So I will keep my eyes on Asia but I don’t know how I am going to take advantage of that. The master plan is set but the details are not.”

Other students plan to take unique jobs abroad before continuing on to graduate school. “Next year, I am teaching English in Japan through the JET Program,” said Chapman. “I would like to take a break before I continue onto graduate school. I also need to make money to afford graduate school.” For Chapman, this position was a perfect fit in other respects as well: “In addition, I’ve always wanted to go to Japan and it will give me an opportunity to practice my language skills,” he said. “Further, it fits in with my intended plan of study in graduate school, East Asian Political Science.”

The challenges of entering the professional world after four years on the Hill are clear to most. Said the senior female engineer, “I feel like the biggest challenge of being a graduating senior in today’s working world is the competition for jobs.

“I don’t think it would be healthy to plan out my entire life yet because there are so many unknowns in the equation. I’m going to try and (cautiously) play it by ear.”

I know I’m probably just as qualified as other people in my major, but I don’t always have the confidence in my skills to back it up.” She added that the variety of choices can also be overwhelming: “In some ways I also feel like we have too many options,” she reflected. “I feel like most of us are well-rounded and can adapt to change well ... but then we put pressure on ourselves to make decisions and be sure of our choices.”

Lee pointed out that often, in order to obtain a good job, a student must start looking earlier than ever. “10 years ago, [top] tier firms hired during spring,” he noted. “These days, the best job offers are given by the end of September. Everything is going on advance. It gets more difficult than ever.”

Pray pointed to yet another difficulty, in finishing a rigorous education and mov-

ing into a demanding world of work. “I see one of the more daunting challenges I face as leave my college days behind me is motivation—motivation to start making a name for myself in the fast-paced world which we as seniors are moving into,” he said, adding, “That’s not to say I don’t have ambitions—I’m a firm believer that life is chock full of opportunity and is inevitably what you make of it. My problem is that where I stand currently, I have no immediate designs to delve straight into the working world.”

It is undeniable that for some, this sense of not knowing exactly where to go next can be a scary thing, particularly when everyone else is so eagerly inquiring about their post-Jumbo plans. Said the senior female, “It’s really unnerving not being sure of what I’m going to be doing and where I’m going to be five months from now, especially with every other person asking.” However, she adds, “But I’m finally starting to accept it. Most of my friends don’t know what they are doing either but they seem OK with it, so why shouldn’t I be?”

Chapman had a different take on things. “I do not think that it is the best idea for me to have my entire career set out,” he said adamantly. “I have a plan that I’m considering pursuing but I’d like to see what the world has to offer before I commit myself to one career track.”

The senior female agreed that in the end, it is essential to be open to any kind of opportunity that might come along. “I don’t think it would be healthy to plan out my entire life yet because there are so many unknowns in the equation,” she reflected. “I’m going to try and (cautiously) play it by ear. If there was one reoccurring piece of advice that came from the Senior Receptions at the Gifford House, it was ‘keep your options open,’ and ‘be open to change.’”

No matter where they go when their days at Tufts finally draw to a close, this year’s seniors seem bound for a world of opportunity and excitement. Lee summed it up: “I am happy to graduate and will look forward to a fabulous life [in my] 20s,” he said. “Working hard and playing hard.” ☎



*Some graduating seniors expressed anxiety about their career paths.*

# In the Blink of An Eye: Life at Tufts, 2002 – 2006

BY MICHAEL SKOCAY  
AND LYDIA HALL

“Remember when...?” It’s a phrase that many seniors are uttering now as they prepare for their Tufts careers to come to an end and reminisce about the eventful four years that they’ve had. Remember the SLAM protests? Remember Hillary Clinton’s and George H.W. Bush’s Fares Lecture? Remember Busta Rhymes not performing at Spring Fling—twice? Here are some memorable events from the past four years that are sure to make people just a little nostalgic for their days on the Hill.

## 2002-2003

### Bushwhacked

Former President George H.W. Bush delivered the Isaac M. Fares Lecture in March to an audience of Tufts students and faculty at the Gantcher Center. His second visit to campus was marked by intense political protests that included a student-community march from Davis Square to the Tufts campus, clashes with the police, and interruptions during his speech. Bush spoke about his presidency—including a defense of Operation Desert Storm, current conflict in the Middle East, and Saddam Hussein’s “insane quest for weapons of mass destruction.”

### Fair Farming

The Second Annual Fair Trade Forum was held in Cabot Auditorium in April. The event brought together students from several Massachusetts colleges united in their desire to promote equitable trade relations. Morning and afternoon panels discussed using fair trade products on campus and the state of global politics and economics while the event as a whole was aimed at promoting awareness of issues surrounding fair trade.

### Changing of the Guard

The 2002-2003 school year brought a vast restructuring of the university’s administration. The deans of Academic Service and Student Affairs, Engineering, Admission, Tufts Medical School, the Nutrition School, and the Sackler School were among the many administrators who retired or resigned from their positions. The vast changes were described as coincidental and a product of the ever-changing climate of higher education, rather than changes pushed by the incoming President Bacow.

After 21 years as provost of the university Sol Gittleman resigned in August and continued at Tufts as a Professor. After a national search for his replacement, President Bacow selected Jamshed Bharucha, a professor of psychological and brain sciences at Dartmouth College.

### Zinn

Howard Zinn, a renowned American historian and political scientist and the author of *A People’s History of the United States*, spoke to students about his opposition to military action in Iraq. Tufts students later formed the Tufts Coalition to Oppose War in Iraq in response to increasing military and political action in Iraq.

### In Other News:

Spring Fling was cancelled due to bad weather while the university was forced to pay the headlining acts, Busta Rhymes and Reel Big Fish, for their intended appearances.

The seven-year fundraising campaign “Tufts Tomorrow” raised \$609 million in donations. A large portion, \$223 million, was added to the university’s endowment while smaller amounts were earmarked for new construction and current spending.

The 180,000 square foot Jaharis Center for Biomedical and Nutritional Sciences opened on the Boston campus in November and increased the university’s research space by half.

## 2003-2004

### SLAM

The Student Labor Action Movement (SLAM) demanded work benefits and higher wages for the university’s custodial staff with campus-wide protests—two of the protests coinciding with the school’s April Open Houses. SLAM advocates cite wages of \$11.45 per hour with minimal health insurance and no sick days as evidence of the necessity for higher wages and improved benefits. Janitors also joined the protest and one commented “[Tufts] recognizes our jobs, because the places are clean ... but they don’t see us.” With the combined effort of SLAM advocates and local unions, the university’s contract was eventually renegotiated with increased salary and benefits for OneSource workers.

### Do the Right Thing

Controversial filmmaker Spike Lee spoke to a packed crowd of students in the Cohen Auditorium on a range of issues from the comic to the serious. The lecture was primarily focused on modern race relations in America but Lee spiced up the serious tone with comments on Martha Stewart and sports rivalries. Lee also spoke about his current film at the time, “She Hate Me,” loosely based on the Martha Stewart ImClone scandal and the decline of ethics in American culture.

### Crime Wave

The spring semester of 2004 was marked by a sharp rise in campus crime that included several eccentric incidents. Students were charged with falsifying parking passes, one intoxicated student was caught breaking and entering into Ballou Hall, and another stole computer supplies from the Eaton Computer Lab. On a more serious note, however, students were the victims of armed robbery, theft, and mugging on campus. One student was robbed at gunpoint in Wilson House and lost almost \$2,000 in

personal property.

### Naked Quad Run

After a stern warning from President Bacow based on the previous year's Naked Quad Run, the TCU Senate and the Programming Board worked to reform the Tufts tradition. The 2003 run threatened to permanently derail the event after several students sustained injuries and one almost died of alcohol poisoning. As a result, the committee recommended adding entertainment and refreshments in an outside venue to avoid overcrowding in West Hall and to transform the run into a broader campus gathering.

### In Other News:

Vanessa and Alexandra Kerry visited the Tufts campus to campaign for their father's presidential run.

The Fletcher School hosted the two-day "Sudan at the Crossroads" conference to discuss a road to peace in the African nation long embroiled in civil war.

The Somerville Historic Preservation Committee rejects the initial plans for Sophia Gordon Hall, citing the destruction of a historic building on campus and significantly slowing the building's construction.

## 2004-2005

### Hill on the Hill

In front of the largest audience ever gathered for the Fares Lecture, New York Senator and former First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton spoke at length about American policy in the Middle East. Clinton encouraged non-partisan discussion of the issues facing the region and the importance of diplomatic action when Middle Eastern and American "fates are inextricably bound together." Unlike the appearance of President George H.W. Bush a few years prior, Senator Clinton was met with almost universal support and approving applause in her critical remarks on the current Bush administration.

### Red Sox Rally

When the Boston Red Sox finally triumphed over the New York Yankees in the 2004 MLB Playoffs, fans celebrated all across New England and the hilltop was far

from immune to the fan fervor. Hundreds of Tufts students converged on the academic quad in a joyous celebration—smoking cigars and hugging each other. The crowd of overenthusiastic celebrants quickly went overboard when they lit a bonfire on the quad and marched to the Gifford House chanting "We Want Bacow."

### Divided Jumbos

The 2004 presidential elections polarized the nation into red and blue states fighting for widely different ideological goals and Tufts was no exception to the heated political debate. Tufts Republicans and Tufts Democrats campaigned for their candidates and their politics while the university as a whole sympathized with the democratic candidate. In October 2004, just days before the election, Tufts held its first live "mock" presidential debate in Cabot Auditorium. Debaters from both sides of the political aisle (and even a Socialist representative) bickered over issues as varied of war, gay marriage, and the economy.

### Spring Fling

Once again, bad weather dampened the excitement of Spring Fling as downpours cancelled the show before its headlining act, Busta Rhymes, could take the stage. This was the second time in three years that Spring Fling was cut short or cancelled and both times the headlining act, Busta Rhymes, was paid an estimated \$50,000 as a result of contractual obligations. In 2005, Rhymes was on campus for the event but a Tufts electrician and concert promoters worried that the soaked electrical equipment was a danger to the talent.

### In Other News:

Comments made by guest speaker Dr. John Diggs during a Tufts Republican-sponsored panel on homosexuality enraged students of all sexual identities. Diggs commented, "Public health should discourage homosexual behavior ... there are only heterosexual people, and homosexual problems." The comments struck a raw nerve for LGBT students, coming just months after a fellow student verbally and physically assaulted a homosexual student.

The Water Watch program, aimed at preserving the Mystic River Watershed,

received support from hundreds of eco-friendly Tufts students working through the University College of Citizenship and Public Service.

## 2005-2006

### Hurricane Katrina

One of the worst natural disasters in recent memory, Hurricane Katrina pounded the coast of New Orleans as a category three storm in August. The tragic event killed upwards of 1,000 residents in Mississippi and Louisiana and left a path of destruction in its wake that destroyed countless homes and uprooted thousands of residents. Tufts students were just arriving for the year when the hurricane devastated the Gulf Coast region and over the course of the year, students and the university would continue to help rebuild lives and homes. In the fall semester Tufts welcomed forty students from Tulane University who attended classes and lived on campus while waiting for Tulane to reopen. During their winter and spring breaks, hundreds of Tufts students and alumni traveled to the Gulf region on volunteer vacations to help in the rebuilding effort.

### The Omidyar Gift

In November of this year, Tufts received the largest single donation in the history of the university by way of Pierre and Pam Omidyar, founders of the internet auction house Ebay and Tufts alumni. The early November gift from the EBay founder and his wife was allocated not only for the school's endowment (which now stands at over \$1 billion), but for the creation of the Omidyar-Tufts Microfinance Fund, which, as President Bacow explained at the time, was formed with the purpose of "extending small loans to entrepreneurs in the developing world, designed to help and empower them to start businesses." After these small sums are repaid, the proceeds will go back to the school. Another important program that has been funded from the Omidyar donation has been the creation, along with the TCU Senate, of the internship stipend program, which is allowing students who might previously not have been able to accept unpaid summer internships to take them and build up their résumés.

As of now, according to President Bacow, several investments have been made through the microfinance fund, although it is the University's policy not to disclose where they were made or how much money was put in.

#### A Better Housing Lottery...Finally

After a majority-vote in support of changes proposed by the TCU Senate, the housing lottery system received an update in November. The previous system called for random lottery numbers to be released each of a student's four undergraduate years. The new system works toward equalizing the process by giving students random numbers in freshman and junior year and reciprocal numbers in sophomore and senior year. In other words, if a student received the lowest lottery number in sophomore year, they would receive the highest number in senior year and vice versa. The new system begins with the class of 2009 and also calls for the release of sophomore, junior and senior lottery numbers at one time, rather than separately each year. The fall 2006 opening of Sophia Gordon Hall has also cleared space for rising juniors to live on campus—a class which is traditionally re-

stricted in their on-campus options due to a housing shortage. Sophia Gordon is also notable as a climate-friendly residence hall that runs partly on solar power.

#### Notable Speakers

An author, a CEO, an evening news anchor, a conservative pundit, and an early pioneer of the internet all stopped by the Tufts campus this year to deliver lectures and receive awards. Salman Rushdie, author of *The Satanic Verses* and *Midnight's Children* and the former target of a fatwa and numerous death threats, delivered a lecture entitled "Step Across This Line" to a packed crowd in Cohen Auditorium. The September lecture decried the evils of censorship, championed the value of literature, and mixed serious comments about Rushdie's life and religion with lighthearted remarks and even jokes about his former enemy, the Ayatollah Khomeini.

April brought the Edward R. Murrow Symposium and a panel that included alumnus Neil Shapiro and the long-time voice of the ABC evening news program *Nightline*, Ted Koppel. The ageless Koppel began the symposium with an adaptation of his famous line, "I'm Ted Koppel and this is Tufts University," and moderated an

intriguing discussion on modern journalism and the legacy of E.R. Murrow with a panel of distinguished guests.

#### In Memoriam

Sadly, two members of the Class of 2006 who would today have been dressed in cap and gown along with their classmates are no longer there to celebrate. Alex Mendell, a TCU Senator and active community member, committed suicide in September of 2003. Today, the TCU Senate gives an annual award, the Alex Mendell Scholarship, to a student who shows a particular "generosity of spirit and character that both contributes to the self esteem of others and to their love of Tufts," and who is committed to drawing diverse groups of students together in campus-wide activities. This year, the community also mourned the loss of Boryana Damyanova, who was hit by two cars and killed just before Thanksgiving vacation. In her honor, friends of "Bory" have created a fund in her name to bring speakers to Tufts to discuss corporate social responsibility, which was one of Damyanova's passions. Also in memory of Mendell and Damyanova, a bench and tree will be placed outside Sophia Gordon Hall. ☪



# It's Sloppier Than You Think

This week, publisher Little, Brown announced that Kaavya Viswanathan's *How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, and Got a Life* would be removed from shelves forever, and—contrary to their initial statements—no revised editions will be published. DreamWorks Pictures cancelled their plans to adapt a movie version of the Harvard sophomore's novel, and the author herself is “taking some time off” from school. The announcements follow several weeks of controversy after the *Harvard Crimson* first discovered similarities between *Opal Mehta* and two books, *Sloppy Firsts* and *Second Helpings*, by Megan McCafferty. Subsequent reviewers alleged that Viswanathan might also have borrowed passages from Salman Rushdie (*Haroun and the Sea of Stories*), Meg Cabot (*The Princess Diaries*) and Sophie Kinsella (*Can You Keep a Secret?*).

Coverage of the story has happily laid all of the blame on Ms. Viswanathan, mocking her initial statement that the plagiarism was “unconscious and unintentional,” the result of her “photographic memory” after reading McCafferty's books in high school. And on some level they are right: any psychology professor will tell you that there's no such thing as a photographic memory, and it's all but impossible that the number of suspicious passages in *Opal Mehta*

could have been produced unconsciously or unintentionally. But that doesn't mean that the unsettling *schadenfreude* surrounding this case is justified. Not nearly enough attention is being paid to the book packaging giants that pitched, crafted, and co-wrote Ms. Viswanathan's books (as well as some of the books from which she is supposed to have plagiarized), then left her high and dry when the scandal broke.

Alloy Entertainment, the *New York Times* reports, is “a behind-the-scenes creator of some of the hottest books in young-adult publishing.” Editors at Alloy decide on sexy, marketable plots for chick-lit books, even sketch the characters themselves, only later farming out the project to the “author” whose name will appear on the book jacket. Ms. Viswanathan was picked up by Alloy through agent William Morris, who thought that her life sounded marketable. (The heroine of *Opal Mehta*, like Ms. Viswanathan, is an Indian-American teenager with high-pressure parents who put her on a rigorous track to get in to Harvard.) Editors at Alloy helped Ms. Viswanathan with the first four chapters of her book, nudging her in the directions they knew would make a successful product. It was on the basis of those four chapters that Little, Brown signed Ms. Viswanathan's book deal.

What happened next, while the book was being finished, is unclear. It could be, as the publishing house's spokespeople would have us believe, that Ms. Viswanathan copied the phrases from McCafferty's book, and her misdeeds slipped underneath the radar of the editors at Alloy. Of course, that would mean that the Alloy staff has a rather short memory, since at least one of the editors involved in creating *Opal Mehta* had also—just a few years earlier—worked on *Sloppy Firsts* and *Second Helpings*, from which the passages were borrowed. A more likely possibility is that Alloy knew all along that *Opal Mehta* sounded exactly like all of their other chick-lit hits—and that's how they wanted it. This is, after all, a market that rewards mindless homogeneity: witness the four Dan Brown thrillers on this week's fiction bestseller list.

Here's an example of the kind of plagiarism at issue, helpfully provided by a graphic comparison in the May 1 *Times*. In Sophie Kinsella's *Can You Keep a Secret?*, the heroine stumbles into “a full-scale argument about animal rights,” and one of her friends says, “The mink like being made into coats.” In *Opal Mehta*, Opal finds “a full-fledged debate over animal rights,” in which someone says, “The foxes want to be made into scarves.” Yes, Viswanathan probably stole the scene from her predecessor—but how are we supposed to react to that theft when even the original wasn't all that creative? When cookie-cutter fiction is the *goal*, how are we supposed to assess plagiarism? Stuart Klawans of *The Nation* said it best: “This is a story about clichés and stereotypes passing from one subliterary commercial product to another.” 🍪

## Information and Policies

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Call (617) 627-3853 or email [observer@tufts.edu](mailto:observer@tufts.edu) to place an advertisement.

# Schedule of Events

## FRIDAY, MAY 19

1:30 p.m. – Muslim Service – Islamic Center, 176 Curtis St.

6:00 p.m. – Shabbat Evening Services (Reform and Conservative) – Granoff Family Hillel Center

## SATURDAY, MAY 20

10:00 a.m. – Shabbat Morning Service (Conservative) – Granoff Family Hillel Center

11:00 a.m. – Renewal of Marriage Vows – Goddard Chapel

12:00 p.m. – Graduation Recital – 48 Professors Row

1:30 p.m. – ROTC Commissioning Ceremony – Goddard Chapel

3:00 p.m. – Baccalaureate Service – Fletcher Field

5:00 p.m. – Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Ph.D. Hooding Ceremony  
Fletcher Field

5:00 p.m. – Roman Catholic Mass – Goddard Chapel

10:45 p.m. – Candlelight Procession – Starting at the Mayer Campus Center  
Patio

11:00 p.m. – Top of the Hill Tribute/Illumination Ceremony – Goddard  
Chapel Terrace

## SUNDAY, MAY 21 – COMMENCEMENT DAY

9:00 a.m. – Phase I – all-university Academic Procession

9:45 a.m. – Commencement Program begins

11:00 a.m. – Recessional

11:30 a.m. – Phase II – Luncheons and Ceremonies for Individual Schools,  
Colleges, and Departments

# An Inappropriate Question

BY ELIZABETH HERMAN

If there is any question one should not be asking one's self in the days leading up to graduation, it is the very one that I have found myself faced with at odd moments—while my last paper is printing, as I look up from packing boxes, and before that, as I'd stare out the window in idle moments during classes. Should I have really gone to college at all? This is not the ideal time and place for such musings, thousands of dollars and four years in sunk costs too late. I am fully well aware of that. It's certainly a useless question, considering I already did go to college. And it's possibly not really a fair question to ask: maybe I had to go to college to even think to ask such a question. Still, the question persists.

I know why, as I senior in high school, I made the decision to go to college. I went to one of the top public schools in my state, I graduated first in my class, I grew up around parents that encouraged me in the true love of learning, I lived in a town that idolized the name-dropping competition that starts with a prestigious college and ends with a prestigious job or an enviable neighborhood. It was a mathematical necessity, if you were who I was when I graduated from high school, you went to college: you wanted to, you were expected to, you never thought twice about there being another option any more than you thought about there being another option besides middle school after elementary school.

Nor do I mean to completely disparage the logic I was so sure of at seventeen. Behind the social expectations, there is a reason why everyone who can naturally chooses to get a college education. Like it or not, these days it could just be a simple necessity. I cannot ignore the argument that you just have to have one, like a driver's license, a checking account, or a telephone—part of the trappings of modern life, your side of the deal you agree to uphold upon deciding to live in up to date America.

And I do believe that being a formal student has irreplaceable advantages. Signing on with an institution grants you access to professors and scholars who are living experts. And I believe there is something equally invaluable in discussing ideas, in liv-

ing them, in working with them in a more immediate manner than simply reading them on your own in a dry secondary source. If college provides one with a group of experts who will train a student in the fundamentals of the best ideas that humanity has come out with, if college forces one to drag ideas out of black and white font and into confusing reality, if one can only achieve this through the academy, then there would be no contest. Go to college.

But I'm not sure to what degree of success college does this, not sure that it is so exclusively successful at doing this that it eliminates all thoughts of other methods. Does the as-advertised-in-the-glossy-brochures college "experience" really have a monopoly on forcing you to come to grips with all the ideas that are out there? How easy is it just to slide by and learn what's necessary for a paper or an exam, while living out unchanged your round of internships-parties-activities-travel plans? Couldn't one just as easily feel the immediacy of these ideas while repairing a watch or building a house?

At some point in my four years here I became very enamored of the idea of learning a practical trade, pulling in enough to live off of, and then coming home and reading all those great works in the evenings and on weekends. Work would be simply an activity to support the mundane necessities of life that everyone has to deal with. But at least you wouldn't just be vaguely processing data—words, numbers, memos, briefs, bytes, whatever the modern world needs millions of people to do. Your work would have an immediate, tangible necessity. Or a concrete end creation. My pipe dreams—I guess that's all they really were, just pipe dreams—led me to research everything from cheese-making in Vermont to learning how to cut and set jewelry. My most passionate urge was the desire to become a lighthouse keeper, which seemed the perfect combination of a practical, and if perhaps skilled, then un-college-educated, occupation that would leave me time to think, to write, to read, to gain the education I valued on my own. (Unfortunately, all the remaining lighthouses in the United States have been converted to computerized systems, except for one, in Boston Harbor, whose keeper is the only one left and is a member of the Coast Guard. My chances

of taking this lone holdout's job didn't seem high enough to warrant my looking into joining the Coast Guard.)

The point remains though. Thanks to public libraries and Amazon.com, one could have access to almost any book one could ever want on any subject. The body of knowledge that exists in the printed word and that is thus accessible to any one who desires it enough and has the discipline to study it long enough to understand it is essentially unlimited. Without the help of the structure of classes and the expertise of professors, it might take one a little longer to be familiar with a subject, but you'd have almost all the time in the world and, whatever knowledge you gained, you'd be assured it really belonged to you, was not just rote memorization or temporary acceptance of spoon-fed knowledge.

I have met a few people here that have been the only way the scale has solidly tipped towards the side of being glad I came to college—a few worth giving up the unknown possibilities of worthwhile people I would have met in another life, where I didn't go to college. But I can count the number of those truly worthwhile people on one hand and even on more generous days I can only stretch that number to cover my other hand as well. It's a small percentage, small enough that it's questionable whether it's any higher than it would be in any walk of life. There are a handful of meaningful, worthwhile people everywhere—no less and no more. College isn't a guarantee that those chances will improve.

I'm graduating today still unable to answer my question. Was it right to go to college? I don't know, and it would have been nice to graduate without that nagging doubt. But at the same time, I have to admit—in what may make this entire article seem somewhat hypocritical—I'm also planning on pursuing a higher degree. A year off to try my lighthouse keeper-like life (sadly, without the lighthouse) and then back to the academy, hoping that graduate school will not leave me asking this same question all over again. The university system, such as it is, is the unquestioned route for education, that is what I regret the most. ❧

*Elizabeth Herman, LA '06, is majoring in history.*

# Freshman Musings

*The class of 2006 has accomplished so much in four years, yet MIKE SNYDER envies the seniors for something else entirely.*



When my editor emailed to ask if I would write an opinion for the commencement issue, I shook my head skeptically. Was she serious? What could a freshman possibly communicate to seniors that would have even the slightest bit of significance or meaning? Being an outspoken, at times critical rabble rouser comes in handy when speaking to peers of my age or other newbies; realistically, though, is there any opinion I could express to seniors that would not make me come across as a condescending, know-it-all jerk?

Let's discuss some potential opinion pieces and find out:

How about something on academics? Well, the seniors are classroom veterans, having completed whopping senior theses or senior projects while conquering upper-level seminar after upper-level seminar for their biopsychology and international relations double major. I'm analytically-inept, never having written an essay more than 5 pages or extended my research beyond the sanctity of *Wikipedia*. Plus, I'm an undecided flip-flopper.

Okay, what about a reflection piece on what it means to be independent? I can certainly relate to that theme. This year I've braved a mysterious city for the first time, thousands of miles away from the comforts of home and my loving parents. Though I suppose the seniors have already done that, not to mention worked various menial jobs, sought and paid for off-campus housing,

and navigated the streets of Santiago, Hong Kong, Tübingen, or Madrid with nothing but a passport and dictionary. Assuming the seniors don't boomerang back to their parents for a few years, they've surely got me beat in that department.

I doubt a whimsical musing on the night life and party scene would prove very interesting at this point. Over the last four years, the seniors have had several hundred weekend nights to do with what they willed. I think it's fair to say that in that time each of them has been to every frat at least once, all of the big-name bars in Boston and Somerville, endless concerts, plays, musicals, culture shows, dances, ballets, operas, orchestra and choir performances, et cetera, and spent at least 250 dollars on movie tickets. As for me... well, let's not even go there.

Maybe, if by some trick of nature I had made close friends with a senior this year, I would write this article about him, as a tribute. I would put down an anecdote or two, talk about all the great memories we

## It's a rare occasion when one has nothing to do, no obligations to fulfill, no places to go or papers to write, phone calls to make or emails to reply to.

shared in the short time we knew each other, and naturally, conclude with a monologue on the pure unexpectedness of college relationships. But things did go as expected. Most of my friends are freshmen, living on my floor in my dorm.

You know, these paragraphs have only served to underline the differences between the class of '06 and the class of '09. If anything, this opinion lends more evidence to the argument that freshmen should *not* write for commencement under any circumstances. After a series of emails with my editor, however, she insists I finish it off. Is there anything I could say to you guys, the battle-hardened soldiers of academia, that might make an impact as you leave Walnut Hill for the last time?

I should mention that the few seniors

I knew this year from classes, extracurriculars, explorations, and orientation were warm and kind, willing to give advice but never wanting to impose it, and always humble—in some cases I could work side-by-side with a senior on a project and never realize it until long afterwards. For these qualities, I envy who you are and what you have accomplished.

On second thought, maybe it's not that I envy what you have accomplished—the senior thesis, the year abroad, the ruggedly independent living. No, for I will have my turn at these things eventually. What I do envy is that feeling of accomplishment you must have right now. That feeling of elated satisfaction, of genuine relief from the endless stream of stress and strain that infiltrates all four years, even the summers after freshmen year, and sophomore year, and junior year. I envy the feeling of closure.

It's a rare occasion when one has nothing to do, no obligations to fulfill, no places to go or papers to write, phone calls to make

or emails to reply to. Maybe less than 1% of life is spent this way. I know I was like that after high school graduation. Knowing this feeling intimately is perhaps the only thing I share with the class of '06—our one commonality is seeking out the pure pleasure that comes from satisfaction, relief, contentment and fulfillment.

To the class of 2006, do me a favor and enjoy that feeling while you still can, and let me envy you from afar. Before med school, or that corporate job, or the Peace Corps comes crashing down on you, make the upcoming weeks and months the most carefree you have ever experienced. There will be time to change the world later. I promise. ☺

*Mike Snyder, LA '08, has not yet declared a major.*



# Words of Wisdom

BY CHRISTOPHER MUNSEY

The older I get, the more I realize I have no idea what I'm doing. After four years of college, that's as close as I can get to words of wisdom. The truly unfortunate thing about is, they aren't even my words. No, I cribbed them from my best friend like answers to a high school physics test. In my defense, he is much funnier than I am, and I still have another paper to write before Tufts will actually condescend to give me a diploma. But to be completely honest, finding something deep or in any way meaningful to say about graduation is a struggle for me. I had no real interest in even attending my own commencement ceremony, until I realized that it might actually kill my mother not to get pictures. But any enthusiasm that proximity to the event might have engendered was more than tempered—it was, in fact, obliterated—by the \$50 price tag of my cap and gown. The only way that shoddy, see-through nonsense is worth that much is if a Vietnamese prostitute comes wrapped inside of it. Of course, they did come with some graduation announcements, so the three people in my life that haven't hear that I'm graduating can find out AND look at the Tufts seal.

I'm not sure I accurately remember my first semester of school, but my point is better made if I was a fiery, idealistic

I had no real interest in even attending my own commencement ceremony, until I realized that it might actually kill my mother not to get pictures.

young man, convinced of my place in the world, so we'll go with that. It seems that the one thing I can definitely say that I've learned in college is that I don't know a damn thing. Sure, a stray piece of knowledge has on occasion managed by the very grace of God to escape the memory dumps that occurred roughly five minutes after every test I've taken in college. But unless I eventually fulfill a lifelong dream and make it on to Jeopardy, I'm pretty sure that these tidbits will continue to serve only to fill

the awkward moments of silence at parties: "Did you know that at the end of his career Idi Amin went nuts and granted himself a bunch of titles he hadn't earned, like King of Scotland?" I think it goes without saying that I'm quite popular with the ladies.

So what exactly have I gained from my

The truly unfortunate thing about is, they aren't even my words. No, I cribbed them from my best friend like answers to a high school physics test.

time in college? I will say that unlike many of my classmates, I procrastinate less than I use to. Or more accurately, I'm a more efficient procrastinator—I get less done in twice the time. One thing is certain, I haven't become more stable. Evidence of how screwed up I am is not difficult to find. This year I have drunk enough Jack Daniels to kill a small to medium sized Asian family, gotten into a fist fight with one of my best friends over who gets to sit in the front seat (I called shotgun, fair is fair), and been stood up for visits by my ex-girlfriend roughly 12 times—and still believed she was coming every time. But despite these momentary lapses in sobriety, judgment, and sanity, for no amount of money in the world would I trade places with the 18-year-old freshman that I was. Whatever virtues that kid may have pos-

sessed—and there is something romantic about a teenager that is convinced that he'll one day be president and change the world—and whatever vices have become so ingrained that they're now as much a part of my personality as my favorite brand of beer, I still feel like I have a better handle on things now. Exactly what constitutes 'things' is something of a mystery, because I'm fairly sure it's not my values, opinions, or life goals. I think that maybe I have a better handle on the way the world works.

Which is to say that I have a fairly decent idea of my own insignificance. This is an important lesson that we all have to learn at some point. Personally, this realization has allowed me to go from an arrogant, self-involved boy to an arrogant, self-involved man. But at least now I'm aware that I'm

not particularly special—there are plenty of other guys that fit that description.

One of the more surreal moments of my college career, maybe of my life, occurred when I returned from visiting law schools to find high school seniors touring the Tufts campus. It made me wonder how much things have really changed in four years. Seeing the looks of mortification on the faces of kids as their parents asked questions reminded me that I spent my day at UVA law terrified that my mother was going to carry through on her threat to reference "Legally Blond" as many times as possible (just for the record, I despise that movie—the amount of work I put into the LSAT only to score nine points less than that idiotic character; she couldn't have just had an uncle that donated a bunch of money to Harvard or something? I hate that movie with the fire of a thousand suns). But, for better or worse, I have changed substantially since I was a high schooler visiting colleges. I'm a little older, I'm a little calmer, and yes, I'm a little wiser. Even if I don't have the words to show for it.

I am approaching graduation not with trepidation, but with anticipation, for everything that coming afterward. For me, it really is a commencement, the beginning of my life as a law student, and an adult. Hopefully, I've found the proper vehicle for my talents (if good looks, charm, and the ability to bullshit constitute talents), and I will to continue to learn about my own ignorance.

*Christopher Munsey, LA '06, is majoring in political science and English.*

# What's Hot This Summer

BY ELIZABETH HAMMOND

One of the selling points of Tufts is its prime location, or at least that's what you told yourself as you ate at Carmichael for the first time. There is so much to see and do in Boston that we all brag about how exciting the city is to our friends back home. Alas, we are lying. Somewhere between papers and problem sets, we rarely make it downtown to actually experience all the things we came to Boston for in the first place. Even when we have the time, more often than not we find ourselves plopped on the couch with a buffalo chicken calzone and *Family Guy* re-runs. With all the excitement that Boston has to offer, it would be a crime to miss out. So get off the couch, pack your picnic basket, and get outside.

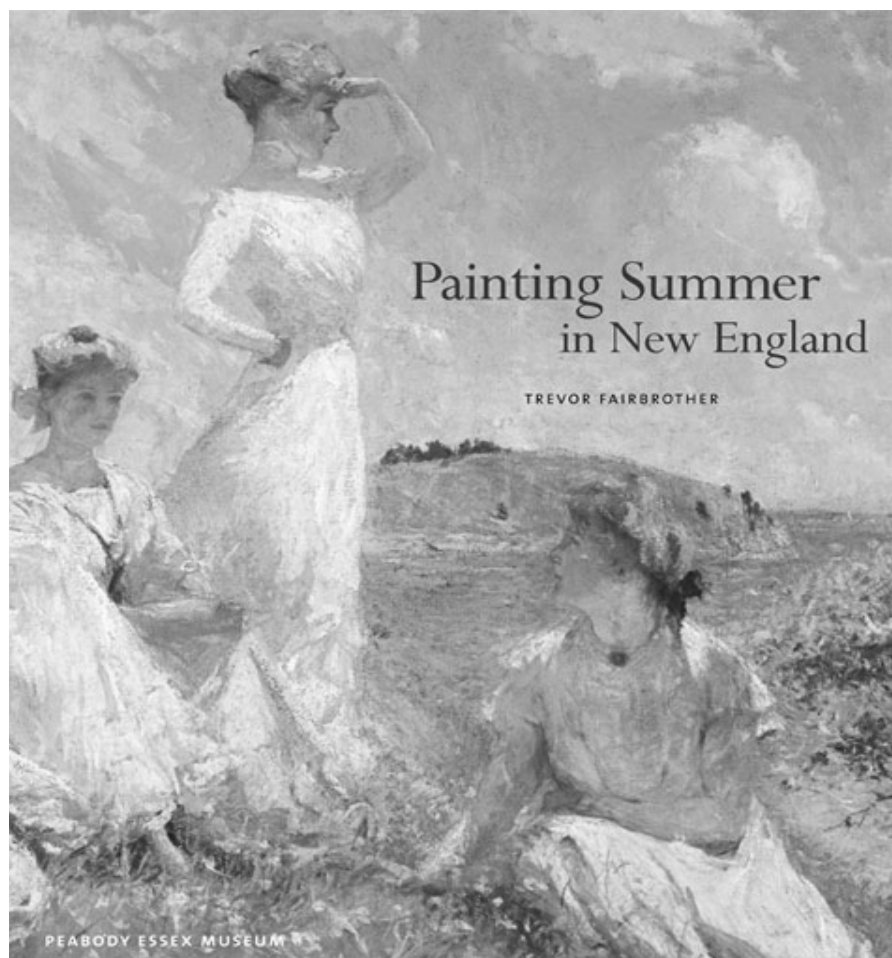
During the summer, the theatre scene dies down a bit. This makes it the perfect time to check out what's happening at the MFA. Don't miss *Degas to Picasso: Modern Masters*, which is open until July 23. The exhibit includes over 280 works from the late impressionist period to the mid-century modernists, including Gauguin, Munch, Rodin and Magritte. Be sure to note the boldly colorful landscapes by Emile Nolde, and the haunting portraits by Egon Schiele. Some of these works are rarely on view due to light sensitivity, so see these while they are available.

If painting doesn't excite you, check out the series of rock and roll posters from 1966-67. The prints on view include the Grateful Dead, Quicksilver Messenger Service, Jefferson Airplane, and other bands from the summer of love. Complete the experience with the downloadable iTunes playlist offered by the MFA, and rock out to the sounds of the sixties.

For those of you over 21, visit the MFA on the last Wednesday of every month for "Winesdays." These tastings include instruction from wine experts and feature a different winery every month. Tickets are \$20 and include hors d'oeuvres

and unlimited wine tastings. For a cheaper alternative, try "MFA First Fridays," included free with admission. Enjoy live music as you sip cocktails, munch on tapas, and mingle with other artsy folk.

Peter Eötvös' staging of *Angels in America*, from the Kushner play of the same name. The show starts June 9 and runs until June 24 at the Wimberly Theatre. Opera Boston and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project



PEM.ORG

The theatre scene wraps up by the end of June so try to squeeze in a few shows while you still can. The SpeakEasy Stage Company will be performing Tony Kushner's "Caroline, or Change" until June 10. The *New York Times* called this "an extraordinary new musical" about a black maid working for a Southern Jewish family at the time of Kennedy's assassination.

Tony Kushner is a running theme this summer as Opera Unlimited produces

collaborate on this work which promises to be a powerful story about the AIDS epidemic.

The Huntington Theatre Company is performing Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* until the June 11. This hilarious drama follows the King of Navarre and his three young lords as they take a vow of chastity for three years in order to focus on their studies. When the Princess of France and her three beautiful ladies-in-waiting come

to visit, a battle of the wits ensues as the men struggle to keep their promise.

Unfortunately, there are no students at Tufts named “Isabella.” Individuals by that name “get in free forever” to the Isabella Stuart Gardner Museum. Nonetheless, a visit to the museum is well worth your time and costs only \$5 for students. This summer, the ISGM is featuring their artist-in-residence, Henrik Håkansson, who uses various mediums to explore environmental issues and bring man closer to nature.

On June 17, the Cambridge Arts Council is hosting the Cambridge River Festival, a celebration of the arts. It’s just a short T-stop away, so there’s no excuse to miss this one. More than 100,000 people visit the Festival each year to enjoy international music, dance, food and visual art. Experience hands-on arts and crafts, creative food vendors AND free admission.

Otherwise, kick up your heels every Wednesday at Faneuil Hall as you dance to live swing bands. Instructors are present to provide free lessons to the public. If swing isn’t your style, try Latin Nights on Thursdays starting the first week in August. Call (617) 523-1300 for more information.

Get excited about great food and head to Chinatown this August for the Chinatown Festival and the August Moon Festival. Both feature authentic cuisine, martial arts displays and arts and crafts. Try a mooncake, a sweet confection of lotus paste, as you celebrate the overthrow of the Yuan dynasty in 1368 AD.

Summer is also a great chance to stop ordering from Andrea’s every night and savor fresh produce. While the Haymarket farmer’s market is an experience that everyone should have, buyers beware. Those prices are low for a reason so make sure you insist on seeing the food before they wrap it up. A little closer to home, Davis Square features a farmer’s market every Wednesday. From noon to 6 p.m., vendors will be hawking their wares in the parking lot at the corner of Day and Herbert streets.

After packing up your fresh produce, head to the Hatch Shell for “Free Friday Flicks.” The titles of the show are only announced a day or two ahead of the

screening, so call (617) 227-0627 to find out what’s playing. Screenings begin June 16. Film junkies should also check out the Boston International Film Festival, going on July 7 through the 15 at the Loews Theatre in Boston Commons. The Festival will screen the latest and best documentaries, shorts, and animated films from all over the world.

Still here in the mid-summer season? The Fourth of July in Boston is like none other. The fun starts during the last weekend in June with the Boston Harborfest, a seven-day Fourth of July festival. Experience a crowd of tens of thousands to enjoy a free concert, and be sure to test the winning recipes from the Chowderfest, the legendary competition of local chefs competing for the best chowder.



ART.NET

On July 4, don’t worry about seeing the Pops concert live. You can stick to any area close to downtown Boston because the concert is broadcast via speakers. I would highly suggest spending the Fourth of July where there’s an unbeatable view. Of course, the Boston Pops is a traditional part of any Boston summer. Their summer program is full of American classics like Gershwin, Berstein and Sinatra. Their season ends with their July 4 concert, so be sure to make it a first on your summer itinerary.

No New England summer is complete without a trip to Tanglewood. Forget the expensive orchestra seating, and bring a blanket to stretch out on the grass. On Friday evenings, lawn tickets are only \$8.50, and never over \$18 during the rest of the week. Pack a picnic dinner and enjoy a nice bottle of wine while you laugh at the ridiculous set-ups of your fellow

lawn denizens. I once had the pleasure of viewing an eight-candle candelabra!

While there are many things to enjoy downtown, it’s important to remember there is plenty of fun for you outside of the city. For starters, Salem is about way more than just witches. The Peabody Essex Museum offers a stunning collection of nonwestern art, including Yin Yu Tang, an authentic Chinese home from southeastern China that was inhabited for over two hundred years. This summer, a special exhibition, *Painting Summer in New England*, will chronicle paintings from the 1850s to the present, including Winslow Homer, John Singer Sargent, Andrew Wyeth, Edward Hopper and many more. The exhibition is now open and runs until September 4.

For those of a literary mind, The House of Seven Gables, the building that Nathaniel Hawthorne based his novel of the same name, is an interesting visit. While the tour is a little dry, the location just by the waterfront is breathtaking and is worth a stroll. Keep in mind the other sights nearby, including the *Friendship*, a reconstruction of a 171-foot three-masted ship built in 1797.

Salem is accessible by commuter rail, and is only a twenty to thirty-minute drive outside the city. Along the way, explore the lighthouse in Marblehead, spread out a picnic along the beach in Lynn, or enjoy the all-time best view of the Boston skyline from Swampscott, preferably at sunset.

Walden Pond is another must. It’s only a fifteen minute drive away, so long as you don’t mind fighting the crowds once you’re there. Take a leisurely stroll around the perimeter, explore Thoreau’s cabin, or wade into the shallow waters along the bank. Visit now, but be sure to return next winter. The absolute stillness and frigid beauty of the pond in winter is astounding. You will understand what Thoreau meant when he said “Heaven is under our feet is well as over our heads.”

Whether this is your first summer in Boston, or your last, do make it memorable. Invest in a good picnic basket and get off that couch. If anything else, you’ll still end up with some great stories to go with that tan. ☺

# School's Out... Movies Are In

BY MELISSA LEE

You've sweated through two semesters of classes; final exams, papers, projects, and presentations are finally done; and the weather is getting warmer and sunnier. You're probably thinking about what you're going to do with your three months of freedom (at last!). Lying on the beach every day is an enticing idea, but you need something to do on the rainy days. Fortunately, the people in the movie industry have this department covered. A promising selection of movies awaits your empty summer hours and precious internship dollars. Here is a sneak preview of what awaits.

*X-MEN: THE LAST STAND*  
(IN THEATERS MAY 26)

The X-Men are back for the final chapter of the mutant superhero trilogy. Even Jean Grey (Famke Janssen) has returned, despite having sacrificed her life in the last film. She returns as the dangerously powerful Dark Phoenix. In addition, newcomers Beast and Angel join the team of Professor Xavier. This time, the X-Men have to deal with a "cure" for mutancy that has been developed. This drug is supposed to treat and ultimately eliminate genetic mutations. The mutants face the choice of either retaining the powers that lead to their persecution or becoming ordinary humans and being accepted in society. Still an ever-present threat to the X-Men, Magneto (Ian McKellan) now leads the Brotherhood, a band of powerful mutants. X-Men leader Charles Xavier and Magneto clash in a mind-blowing, visually-stunning climatic battle.

With original director Bryan Singer taking on *Superman Returns* (also coming this summer), Brett Ratner, the visionary behind *Rush Hour* and *Red Dragon*, takes on the final installment. Fans and critics are skeptical about Ratner's first attempt at the comic-book genre, especially since new directors taking over third installments

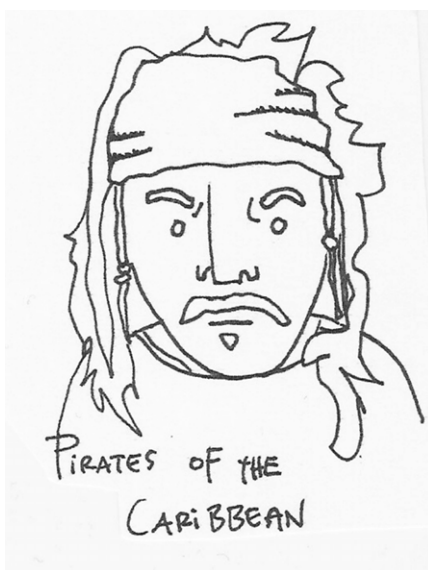
of superhero movies don't have a history of success. (The *Batman* series are a prime example.)

Lines such as "Do you know what happens when a toad is struck by lightning?" certainly won't be missed.

Ratner was originally a candidate to head the *X-Men* franchise. He insists that he maintains the character and flavor of the previous two films and claims that he isn't trying to take the movie to another level. This last film promises more special effects and humor, which will hopefully be improved. Lines such as "Do you know what happens when a toad is struck by lightning?" certainly won't be missed.

Additionally, *X3* boasts a star-studded cast. Halle Berry, Hugh Jackman, James Marsden, and Rebecca Romijn are back in their familiar roles as Storm, Wolverine, Cyclops, and Mystique. Kelsey Grammer takes on the role of Beast. Even if this movie doesn't quite live up to its predecessors, *X-Men: The Last Stand* looks like a good time.

*PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST* (IN THEATERS JULY 7)



ANGELA ROBINS

All the major characters from the first blockbuster return as Captain Jack Sparrow (Johnny Depp) once again gets tangled up

in the supernatural. This time, he learns that he owes a blood debt to the late Davy Jones (yes, the one with the locker), who is ruler of the ocean depths and captain of the ghostly Flying Dutchman. If Jack doesn't repay the debt, he will be damned to a life of eternal servitude in the afterlife. All the while Will Turner (Orlando Bloom) and Elizabeth Swann (Keira Knightley)—that perfect couple from the first film—are going through with their wedding plans. Jack of course interrupts and manages to drag them into his mess. They set out to help him and learn the truth about Will's pirate father, Bootstrap Bill (Stellan Skarsgard). Alas, the stage is set for another high-seas adventure.

With the cast, director Gore Verbinski, and the original writers intact, this film is sure to be a major hit at the summer box office. And though the storyline sounds a bit stretched, who would want to miss another glimpse of Johnny Depp as Jack Sparrow? In fact, Depp had such a good time filming the first *Pirates*, that this is his first ever sequel. I am certain that everyone will be back for the third and final installment next summer as well.

The fact that the film was based on the Disney theme park ride made many critics skeptical of the first film. Who would have known that a film based off a theme park attraction could be so entertaining? The blockbuster hit more than paid off. Fans should expect a similarly pleasant experience with this movie, although they may no longer be surprised at its exciting entertainment value. This sequel promises more intrigue, special effects, and humor—basically more of the good stuff. The bottom line is, if you enjoyed the first movie, you'll probably love this one, too. ☺

# Gelato in Vogue: The Hot New Summer Respite

BY JOSEPHINE CHOW

There is something unspeakably magical about frosty treats. Whether it is ice cream, frozen yogurt, or popsicles, every sweet taste seems to encapsulate and evoke a special childhood memory, so heavily dusted with age in the back of our minds that sometimes it takes us a while to remember again who we once were and how much we have changed.

Frosty treats—an indispensable and fundamental mark of summer—also unite friends, lovers, and above all, family. They are a marker of time, a memory capsule, and always, an occasion for joyous celebration, especially during this season as Seniors bid farewell and venture into the anxiety-ridden or eagerly-anticipated “real world.” But before you seniors throw off those graduation caps and gowns, please take a moment to take the T one last time to the North End. While you may not miss the Italian fare, one savor of the gelato at Caffè Vittoria may just prove to be the cherry on top of all your unforgettable experiences in this place.

So you ask, “What is so special about the gelato at Caffè Vittoria that you can’t get from the ice cream at Davis Square’s J.P. Licks?” I can only comment that judging from the quality and the price of its desserts to its intimate interiors and authentic Italian ambience, Caffè Vittoria has been more than a reputable fragrant, dreamy medley of antiquated nostalgia and modern sophistication since 1929.

While the café does not boast a list of flavors as extensive as that of J.P. Licks, the fewer choices only serve to guarantee higher quality. A small sized ice-cream at J.P. costs \$3.50. But why settle for that when you could buy a large sized gelato at Caffè Vittoria for the exact same price?

Although the number of flavors is not extravagant, the café certainly offers enough of a diverse spectrum of tastes to satisfy your palate. For an unconventional experience that does not veer too far from

the traditional flavors, opt for the “cioccolata mandorla” (chocolate almond) or the “nocciola” (hazelnut) gelato. While both demonstrate a rich and creamy consistency, they do not fall prey to the pitfalls of being either too thick for digestion or too thin to qualify as gelato. At the same time, the nutty flavor never overpowers. It instead gently seals your lips with a subtle lingering taste that arrives almost as an afterthought.

For the more adventurous, select from the contemporary “torrone” (nougat, a frothy concoction of honey blended cream and nuts), “zuccherro filato” (cotton candy), and “mora” (blackberry) flavors. While the first two may be a tad too saccharine for the tastes of adults, the blackberry gelato delivers a refreshing, fruity zest to the mouth that is at once both distinct and delicate.

Of course, there is always the standard “vaniglia” (vanilla) and “cioccolata” (chocolate) gelato as well for all you devoted fans of traditional flavors. If perhaps you are still craving something sweet after the gelato, then worry not because Caffè Vittoria is equally renowned for its award winning pastries and coffees. It has been rated by Boston Magazine and Zagat Survey as the “Best Coffee” and “Best Desserts” for many consecutive years.

Personally, I believe there is nothing more gratifying than chasing a gelato with one of their tiramisus and cappuccinos. The selling point of both signature orders is that they successfully retain a palpable and genuine caffeinated taste without succumbing to their dense, sugary, chocolate “soap bar-like” counterparts at Finale. Nevertheless, their bitterness does not compromise their sweetness at any point and the two entities seamlessly counterbalance one another.

The Caffè Vittoria experience however, as mentioned earlier, is much more than just the desserts. With four levels of sitting areas, three full liquor bars, and a contemporary salon-turned-wing, which opened next door about fifteen years ago,

the café is a historic jungle of clustered corners, intimate booths, and hidden treasures.

Known as the “first Italian café,” Caffè Vittoria has remained more Italian than any other pastry shop in the North End, visible in the fluency of the Italian servers as they communicate between themselves strictly in their native tongue. They also have two menus, one completely in Italian and the other one, only half in English. The typical middle-aged, heavy-set Italian men that reek of a mafioso mysticism are also commonly found loitering around the café, probably related in some way to the big-haired Italian waitresses who efficiently maneuver the floor.

As you savor your gelato and listen to the soft background murmurs of Nat King Cole, admire the intricate tiled flooring that has remained unchanged since the 20s, or the antique brass copper ceiling with its Greco-Roman inspired, decorative sunken panels. Eye the ancient coffee brewing machines from the 40s that are now retired behind the front windows, and appreciate the beautiful oak bar with its fantastic inventory of Grappas. The workings and changes of history throughout the ages are before you.

Lining the walls are moving black and white photographs of intimate neighborhood friends who have all since passed on. But as you sit savoring that bittersweet taste of childhood memories with every bite of gelato, as you are reminded about some part of your past through the haunted eyes of those long gone in the photos before you, and as you struggle with even a tinge of uncertainty about your own future... Remember, in this little booth in this particular café, you might just be able to find home in one place—where the past, the present and the future gather to rest at last. ☺

*Caffè Vittoria is located at 296 Hanover Street, Boston. It is accessible by the Government Center Station on the Greenline. For more information, call (617) 227-7606.*

# Breakfast Crawl 2006

## Eating My Way to Davis Square and Back

BY ELIZABETH HERMAN

Earlier this year, my housemates and I were out to brunch and started naming all the breakfast places around here we wanted to make sure we ate at once more before leaving Somerville. Instead of eating out every day for a week, we decided to improvise on the pub crawl and have one grand, multiple-venue breakfast blow-out. Two Sundays ago, from 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., we put our plan in action: Breakfast Crawl 2006.

The key to a good breakfast crawl is planning and experience. You need to know which restaurants to include; what to order to get the ultimate experience at each restaurant without eating so much that by restaurant three you can't imagine putting another homefry in your mouth; a convenient route so that no leg of the journey is more than, say, ten minutes away from either another restaurant or home. Between me and my housemates we have a combined five years of experience eating breakfast from the home base of this apartment. We'd been working on this for a large percentage of our college career. This was like the defense of a senior thesis—years of research put to the test.

The eternal question of ordering brunch is which realm to focus on: a.) pastry, b.) bread product (waffles, pancakes, French toast), or c.) eggs? Or you could solve the problem by going for d.) all of the above. Graduation has two phases, we had four.

### Phase I: Magnificent Muffins and Bagels

A relatively new discovery for us, although the restaurant has certainly been around for probably forever, Magnificent Muffins and Bagels is an inconspicuous, almost-hole in the wall with little more than a bakery case to display the muffins and a small counter to stand and eat said muffins. It's located in Teele Square and seems lost next to the Bank of America

ATM—yeah, that's how unassuming it is. But if it's that plain looking and yet has managed to stay in business, it must be good. Which it is—good and cheap with a surprising range of food. Not only do they have a full menu of muffins (about a dozen flavors) and bagels, but they also serve a variety of fresh breakfast sandwiches. It's not a place to sit down and enjoy a leisurely breakfast, the store is just too small, but it's perfect for a breakfast on the go or to take back home.

I will eat just about any number of muffins at any time of the day or night, but it was nine in the morning and we were all pre-coffee, a little groggy, and loathe to fill up on muffins when we knew we had three other full-service, sit-down restaurants ahead of us. As pathetically abstemious as it sounds, we decided to just split one muffin three ways (I can honestly state this is the only time I've ever partitioned a muffin). I've enjoyed all the flavors of muffins I've had there, but I think the cinnamon chip is best (as verified by the guy behind me who I heard mutter to his friend, "oh cinnamon chip is the best here," as I ordered), plus it's my housemate's favorite type of muffin. And she knows muffins.

We sat outside on plastic lawn furniture, ate one-third of a fantastic muffin (purchased for \$1.58), stared at the liquor store across the street, and went over once more our plans for the rest of the morning. Normally, when you get up from a meal, you feel a little sad—your consumption of food is over. But for once, we had the novel experience of leaving a restaurant with more food yet to come. Phase one: check.

### Phase II—Renee's Café

A couple blocks down from Teele Square, Renee's is the place for omelets. They have a full menu, and their apple and pecan waffles aren't bad, but you want to go with an omelet because all egg plates come with one of this area's best takes on homefries (perhaps the best, now that Jay's on

Boston Ave is no longer) and their toast options include English muffins. Renee's has a range of tempting daily special omelets, but the highlight is the ham, brie, and apple omelet. The sweetness of the ham and apples with the undertone of brie is just about the perfect combination of flavors, especially with the salty, herby potatoes on the side. We ordered this, each got a cup of coffee, felt slightly guilty for only ordering one omelet for three people, and so added a fruit bowl to our order (we didn't feel that guilty—it had taken the waitress 30 minutes to suggest adding a third chair to a table of two so that we could go ahead and sit down).

Renee's has a sunny, eclectic atmosphere: where artsy Somerville professionals go after their weekend morning jog. The tables are small, the restaurant is a little cramped and noisy at peak hours, but unlike other area favorites (ahem, Soundbites), there's no pressure from the management to hurry you along. It didn't take us too long to finish our food though (when sharing one plate, it's every man for himself—eat slowly and you lose out) and we were a little too cramped at our table to sit around, chat, and take in the scenery (a.k.a., the local art and Renee's apparel for sale, though if you're interested, I did notice that bibs are \$7.00). Phase two was complete.

### Phase III—Johnny D's

Right in Davis Square, Johnny D's was our turning point, the far end of our course. Live music, a convenient location for all of Boston next to the T, and great food (a previous trip to Johnny D's elicited so much food it wouldn't all fit on our table) make its weekend Jazz Brunch very popular and our less than fifteen minute wait quite a pleasant surprise. Ideally, getting there before or around ten is the best idea—the music isn't drowned out by the conversations of a full dining hall, you can sit in the roomy booths along the side of the restaurant instead of the somewhat



GOOGLE MAPS

awkward tables in the middle of the room, and you aren't stared at by other parties waiting to be seated. Still, even in the busiest circumstances, the restaurant's jazz-club-the-morning-after atmosphere doesn't waver—it's a specifically Johnny D's feel.

We'd done pastry, we'd done eggs, and Johnny D's has great bread options anyway (which we'd planned on), so now was the time to go for some pancake/waffle/French toast dish. I've had all three there and they usually have flavor-of-the-week type options for the pancakes (pumpkin,

cranberry, etc.) that are hard to pass up. But if you have to get one thing, get, as we did, the special French toast: three pieces of inch and a half thick French toast with whipped cream, strawberries, and bananas piled on top. Another round of coffee, one piece of French toast for each of us (each with its own large glob of whipped cream) and phase III was over and done with.

#### Phase IV—Sabur

The walk from Davis Square back to our apartment simply could not be attempted all at once without a break for one

last restaurant. Luckily, Sabur on Holland Street represents pretty much the halfway mark on the journey back home. We were starting to feel full and somewhat wired off coffee, but only three restaurants does not a respectable breakfast crawl make—not for us, anyway. I'd never eaten there before, but my housemate had and Sabur had won her eternal approval by offering two breakfast dishes with lamb. It bills itself as offering exotic Mediterranean cuisine which was definitely a realm of breakfast food we hadn't covered yet. Instead of coffee, we went with fresh juices—orange, peach, and strawberry. We split two appetizers—flaky, herbed biscuits with figs, honey, and apricot butter, and potato pancakes with sour cream—and laughed at what the other customers must be thinking of our belabored attempts to finish off these two reasonably sized dishes between the three of us. Little did they know, while this may have been their first meal of the day, this was our fourth breakfast. We were full, but I for one, was certainly not going let such good food go uneaten.

We sat outside on the patio. It was a perfect, cool, slightly breezy spring day. Quiet and relaxed, this sunny spot was the perfect end to what by then had been three fantastic hours of eating breakfast. The whole operation could definitely be termed a resounding success—better than expected, in fact. We decided that if we had one day left to live on earth we'd ask for a similar breakfast marathon on a similar perfect day, only this time, crawling towards Fenway for a Red Sox-Yankees game. Unfortunately, the latter part of that ideal day is a little harder to arrange than the breakfast crawl, and I hope none of us are faced with our last hours any time soon. But even though we're soon going to be spread between two different cities, we did declare this the first annual breakfast crawl.

A good breakfast crawl needs good friends—and no one is a good friend of mine without also having a good appetite, especially when it comes to breakfast. Thank you to my two housemates for many, many great brunches which only culminated in this breakfast crawl, and for being daring enough to help me make it happen. ☺

# An Egyptian Adventure in the Heart of Boston

BY ANNA FELDMAN

I know we all have that inner child in us, repressed after years of thinking ourselves too cool for school. You know, the one that shamelessly (and embarrassingly?) comes out when a pick up game of capture the flag is initiated or an impromptu water balloon or food fight (ahem ahem) breaks out. Well, never one to suppress that little person, I recently discovered a place where children of all ages (yes that means you) can have a blast while testing their five wits. Allow me to explain.

TOMB is an “interactive entertainment experience” at 5-Wits. You are supposed to be archaeologists sent deep into the 3000-year old tomb of an ancient Pharaoh, whose spirit, through different physical and mind-bending challenges, decides if he wants to let you get out alive or not (not all adventures have the same ending). The goal is to get to the final burial chamber where the Pharaoh’s sarcophagus lies and return his mummy to his proper resting place. Then he’s happy again because he’s no longer floating around in limbo, you’re happy again because you didn’t die, and the tour guide’s happy because another group of bratty little children and their supervising parents got through the TOMB without difficulties. Oh wait, did I mention I was in that group? No, I wasn’t one of the bratty children. My fellow archaeologists were Lara, my friend from Tufts, and Jeff, a friend from BU. The big thing with TOMB is, that as a person above the age of ten, you absolutely cannot allow your maturity to take any part. Find your inner child and embrace him/her!

Located directly across from the Landmark Center at the Fenway T stop (Green line, D train), the 5-Wits establishment consists of a lobby/themed gift shop/café which gives way to the three connected rooms of the Pharaoh’s tomb, all displaying amazing special effects and authenticity in their architecture and surroundings. Leaving every twenty minutes, the ‘expeditions’ start out in the lobby campsite tent, where we are addressed through a speaker phone by the pre-recorded voice of a spastic mumbling English archaeologist who is supposed to give us our task. But, surprise surprise, his absent-mindedness results in no explanation being given of what we need to do, and thus we are equipped with a mere

flashlight, and of course our intellect, to enter the first room and begin our adventure. Our group was comprised of myself and my two friends, and then about eight little boys (yeah, that’s right), two dads and one mom. I was very excited and I will admit, even a bit nervous, but overall ready to take on this Pharaoh dude. Lara, Jeff and I agreed, no way were we going to die today.

Upon leaving the lobby tent, we were led to a large door, the entrance to the newly discovered tomb. Our first challenge: to figure out how to open it. “Open Sesame” proved fruitless, and finally one of the boys pushed a button conspicuously hidden in a cleft in the wall to the left of us. The rumbling door slid open, and darkness beckoned. Jeff, holding the flashlight while Lara and I held onto each other, bravely led the way in. The darkness didn’t fade for a while, and the skeleton propped up against one of the columns didn’t calm my nerves. We were allowed to venture through the L-shaped room, illuminating the stone floor, the hieroglyph-covered walls and the basalt seated statue of the Pharaoh, who soon enough, after all our flashlights somehow coincidentally lost power at the same time, decided to address us. His bald, dark-eyed, furrowed-brow face appeared before us, floating in a streaming wall of highly chlorinated water, as his deep cliché-scary man voice, simultaneously harassing and threatening us while outlining our challenge, echoed off the walls. In this first room, we were to use our sight, our hearing, our strength, and our courage. I’m not going to give away all of the tasks, but one in particular was actually rather challenging. The Pharaoh played overhead a short melody made up of four different notes, which we were responsible for recreating. Congregating around four different speaker stones, we had to work together to touch our speaker stones, which elicited one of the four notes, one at a time in the correct order. And let me tell you, from what I experienced, the trapped spirit of a Pharaoh is not a patient thing. He was yelling at us and flashing the lights whenever we messed up, not very conducive to efficient problem solving.

Needless to say, we successfully completed all four challenges in the first chamber and moved on to the second smaller room, where our logic and speed were tested. Cer-

tain conditions applied for both challenges, explained by the omnipresent Pharaoh’s spirit, which made it a bit more difficult and mind-bending than the initial task appeared. And on top of that, after our first blunder, the ceiling actually started lowering down on us. It was quite frightening.

The last room, the Pharaoh’s actual burial chamber complete with an actual sarcophagus, presented us with my favorite challenge. At each corner of the room was a column, etched from top to bottom with hieroglyphs. Two sections of the column could be spun around and it was our task to line up the hieroglyphs with a specific template found on the walls of the chamber. Once all four columns were verified correct and lit up by a dim blue light, we were told to find a way to illuminate the Pharaoh’s face on the lid resting against the sarcophagus. Suddenly, a bright thin stream of light came pouring down a chute in the wall. Flashbacks of Brendan Fraser in *The Mummy* roared through my mind. How did the Pharaoh’s workers see what they were doing deep underground with no natural light around? A few minutes earlier, I had taken notice of several square tiles placed on the corners of the platform of the tomb. Aha! The copper mirrors! I felt like a true grave-disturbing archaeologist. Holding one of the copper tiles up to the chute, I maneuvered the light to bounce off of Jeff’s mirror across from me, which finally illuminated the Pharaoh’s sculpted face and triggered the final showdown. The ceiling opened up and down came levitating the Pharaoh’s mummy, until he was securely in his sarcophagus, which meant we had successfully completed our expedition.

Talk about feeling like you’re in a movie or a video game. From flashing lights, lasers and fog, to a creepy floating head and booming voice, TOMB, with its physical and mental challenges that test your teamwork and logic, is an unconventional mode of entertainment, sure to also be unforgettable. In an effort to fully encapsulate the TOMB experience, I think the website says it best: “Each 5WITS show combines the best elements of theme parks, museum exhibits, haunted houses, and video games to create an incredible real-life experience where you get to be the hero!” And please, lose the adult facade. You’ll have much more fun. ☺



# Let the Bidding Begin!

BY SARINA MATHAI

Clearly Major League Baseball's equivalent to a fine wine is Roger Clemens since he seems to get better with age. Well, at least the teams vying for his arm hope so.

To retire, or not to retire? That still remains the question even though we are well into the 2006 Major League Baseball season.

It was precisely that question that led the Houston Astros to make the difficult decision of not offering Clemens arbitration on December 7, 2005 in spite of his career-low 1.85 ERA season. If they were to offer him arbitration, Clemens could ask for over \$20 million if he decided to pitch. Understandably, Houston decided to use that money elsewhere and improve their roster through other sources. It was a difficult decision for them to make but baseball is a business and they had to make the correct baseball decision.

## The latest report has Clemens leaning towards retirement, but it is safe to say that he is fully aware of the financial benefits of waiting out longer.

This did not sit well with Clemens who was miffed by the Astros's actions and decided to not even negotiate a new contract with them. At that time, he hinted that he was going to retire for good.

Then the World Baseball Classic rolled along with Clemens representing the United States. Many determined that this would be the litmus test and that Clemens would decide how he feels after pitching again.

Since the World Baseball Classic, however, the right-handed pitcher has yet to make a final decision and his future in baseball remains uncertain.

Clemens's agent, Randy Hendricks, has commented that there is really nothing to talk about until Clemens decides if he still wants to play.

That has not stopped teams calling and asking for his services. As of now, there are four teams in the "Roger Clemens

Sweepstakes": the Houston Astros, the Texas Rangers, the Boston Red Sox, and (of course) the New York Yankees.

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waiting out longer.

Selfish? Yes. Surprising? No.

Now one would think, "Why would Roger Clemens, who has amassed more than probably any pitcher in the modern era, want even more money?" It's a valid question. He definitely does not need the extra cash.

But is it really the money that is keeping Clemens from throwing in the towel? Or is it all the attention he will receive once he

steps on to the mound.

I'm going with the latter. Sure, money has to do with it as it does with every athlete in today, but Roger was never the type to willingly relinquish the limelight. It's understandable. A player of his caliber deserves all the ink he can get. He is, after all, possibly the greatest living pitcher of all time.

Will this mini-soap opera tarnish his image? Probably not, except to the fans of

## Clemens has always made questionable decisions and remarks in the past and has proved to be quite the unpredictable fellow.

the teams he will scorn if he decides to return to baseball. Yankees fans were not exactly thrilled when he decided to pitch with Houston after retiring from them in 2003.

Imagine if Clemens rejects them twice in a less than three-year span (and especially if he returns to their arch-nemesis, the Boston Red Sox).

Whatever the case, Clemens's prolific past is giving him a free pass. Fans in Hous-

ton will welcome their hometown hero back with open arms and be willing to forgive his less-than-peaceful exit.

Not all Red Sox fans will "forgive and forget" but if it means another World Series title, they can look past their differences.

Clemens should start making his decision soon for the fans are getting restless. He has certainly been putting himself out there. His appearance at the Texas Rangers-Boston Red Sox opener in Arlington, Texas raised some eyebrows.

If he chooses the Nolan Ryan route and goes from the Astros to the Rangers, the Rangers would provide him a chance to stay in Texas and be closer to home. Texas will also be able to provide the run support which he sorely needed in Houston last season. As of early May, the Rangers are fifth in the American League and sixth overall in run production while Houston is ranked ninth in the National League and 17th overall. That being said, Houston has won slightly more games than Texas thus far.

If Clemens is worried about run production, than the team he should consider would be the New York Yankees who, as

of early May, are hammering away to scoring the second most runs in Major League Baseball only behind the Cleveland Indians. The Yankees will be in the playoffs in some

shape or form so Clemens will be able to pitch in October, which might be an issue if he joins the Rangers.

When it comes down to it, the Yankees are the Yankees and they will do what they do best: throw the most money at the player they want. Steinbrenner will have no problem opening that checkbook up and re-signing the Rocket to whatever his price may be.

Another team willing to open their checkbook will be the Boston Red Sox. If Clemens returns to Boston, it will provide a storybook ending to his career. Not only will he cash in, he will be seen as the "Prodigal Son" and return in glory.

Finishing his career with the team that drafted him and placed his name firmly in Major League Baseball history? Sounds pretty much like poetic justice to me.

Furthermore, with one more win in a Red Sox uniform, he will move past Cy Young as the winningest pitcher in Boston Red Sox history. If the spotlight is what Clemens is looking for, the best place to get it will be Boston where he will be immortalized should he help bring another championship to Boston.

His career will have come full circle, with a script that even Disney couldn't have come up with. His good friend, Al Nipper, is the interim pitching coach of the Red Sox and has been talking to Clemens about returning. Nipper is convinced that Boston is the best place for him.

Being a Bostonian, I know that if Clemens returned to Boston to ride off into the sunset, it would create an even bigger buzz around Fenway. Yet I do not believe it is the best choice for him.

The most logical destination for Clemens would be where he is right now: the Houston Astros.

Last season, they basically gave him the dream situation of any athlete today. He got to pitch in his hometown without having had to travel with the team while making a ridiculous amount of money. Pretty good, huh?

Family has always been the biggest factor in Clemens's life. If he stays in Houston, he'll get to see his kids' little league games while playing in his own big league games. His oldest son, Koby, was drafted by Houston in 2004. In fact, Koby Clemens hit a

home run off his father during batting practice in spring training. Staying in Houston will give him the opportunity to watch over his son's growth and development.

Additionally, pitching in the National League is considerably easier than pitching in the American League. If he were to stay in the NL, he could make his already sterling stats even better. The pressure of being the ace would be lifted from his shoulders as he would be joining a rotation featuring Roy Oswalt and Andy Pettite.

The Astros are off to a good start and Lance Berkman is tearing up the National League thus far with a scorching .350 batting average and 1.095 OPS. Brad Ausmus has also been on fire of late and he and Berkman will give Clemens the run support he did not have last season.

All the arrows are pointing to Houston. So why is Roger Clemens taking such a long time? Who knows. Clemens has always made questionable decisions and remarks in the past and has proved to be quite the unpredictable fellow.

All I know is that the fans are sick of waiting and the longer he holds out, the faster the general interest in him will wane.

Until then, let's just continue to play ball. ☺



RONALD MARTINEZ, GETTY

*Roger Clemens has many suitors lining up and willing to throw millions of dollars his way in order to have his services in October.*

## Way to go Jumbos!

### Congratulations to all the athletes in the Class of 2006!

### Thanks for all of the memories these past four years.





# Good luck, class of 2006!

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