

# DISORIENTATION GUIDE

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COLUMBIA STUDENT  
SOLIDARITY NETWORK  
ALMA MATER

2002-2003

This guide is brought to you by the Columbia Student Solidarity Network (CSSN). Our goal is to create a stronger activist community at Columbia by increasing communication between different groups as well as hosting educational events (and kick-ass parties). We also plan direct actions to make our demands heard. To this end, we operate a monitored listserv for announcements and an open one for discussion. We also provide advice on how to start new groups, make existing ones more effective, and how to plan campaigns. Email [cssn-steer@columbia.edu](mailto:cssn-steer@columbia.edu) for direct questions or email [majordomo@columbia.edu](mailto:majordomo@columbia.edu) with "subscribe cssn" in the body of the message to join our announce listserv. Also, check out our website, which features many links and a campus calendar. We are proud to present a few of the viewpoints that comprise our diverse community.

[www.columbia.edu/cu/cssn](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/cssn)

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*Look for these upcoming events!*

Activist Career  
Night

Tech Skills Workshop  
Direct Action Training

Potlucks

Anti-Racism Training

Beer drinking in secluded basements

Surveillance Camera Tours

Radical Cheerleading Training

And anything you want to see happen!

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\* Starred articles have been condensed and are available in their original, longer form on our website, <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/cssn/disguide/>

# Up Against the wall, Motherfucker!

## The Columbia Student Strike of 1968

In 1968, just like today, Columbia was heavily involved in weapons research for the Department of Defense. In 1968, just like today, Columbia practiced racist development policies in the Harlem community. In 1968, two student groups led an uprising that changed the history of America. Today, it doesn't take a weatherman to know which way the wind blows...

For years, social disillusionment and institutional disenchantment had simmered on campus and off; the war in Vietnam began to bring popular hostility towards all forms of authority to a boil. Civil rights activists were beginning to move towards Black Power. Relations between the University and the Harlem community were strained to the point of breaking over the construction of a private University gymnasium on public land in Morningside Park; this tension was exacerbated by the assassination of King and the ensuing riots in Harlem.

On April 23, 1968, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Student Afro-American Society (SAS) united for the first time to occupy the gym construction site. The University called in the 26th Precinct of the NYPD to forcibly remove them, so students marched back to Hamilton and occupied it, taking Dean Coleman as a hostage. The SAS members were far more serious and better trained than the SDS members, so the next morning they evicted all of the white students from Hamilton; SDS marched over to Low Library and took over President Kirk's offices. Over the next week, students and supporters also occupied Avery, Fayerweather and Mathematics. The strikers were supported by hundreds of students who rallied in front of the occupied buildings, running supplies and press releases back and forth; they were opposed by a handful of athletes and alumni who called themselves the "Majority Coalition." Finally, in the early morning hours of April 30, President Kirk instructed the NYPD to invade the occupied buildings and remove the students by force. The police rioted: 712 were arrested and 148 were injured in the police violence; 372 complaints of police brutality were filed. Most of those arrested and injured were not in the occupied buildings, but were just students on South Lawn who had come to watch. Some students evacuated from the buildings were made to walk by a line of police officers while being beaten by each one; others were dragged head-first down marble stairs.



*The Rev. Bill Starr marries a couple in Fayerweather during the strike.*

On May 6, Kirk unsuccessfully attempted to reopen the University as most students and many faculty members boycotted their classes. An alternative "Liberation School" was established on South Lawn, with classes about the Cuban Revolution and the history of Native Americans taught in a truly collaborative method. Students put on guerilla theater pieces; the Grateful Dead played a free concert. The strike lasted until Friday, May 17, when community activists, with the help of student strike leaders, seized a Columbia-owned low-income apartment building slated for demolition. Within hours, police cleared the building and arrested 117 people, including 56 students. On May 21, nearly 300 students protesting disciplinary action against strike leaders again occupied Hamilton Hall; the administration again called in the NYPD and they rioted again. Forty-seven student bystanders were arrested, and 68 people were reported injured, including 17 police.

The last action that spring came on June 4, graduation day. Several hundred graduating seniors walked out of the ceremonies and held a counter-commencement on Low Plaza. With this peaceful symbolic gesture, the tumultuous spring semester of 1968 came to a close. Over the course of the never-to-be-forgotten six weeks, 1,100 were arrested at Columbia. Hundreds of arrested students went home for the summer facing suspension or expulsion, not knowing if they would be allowed to return. Others took their experiences to Chicago, for the Democratic Convention of 1968. Some formed the Weathermen, a guerilla organization committed to ending American imperialism by force. The legacy of 1968 on campus is the formation of the University Senate, a more democratic governing body – and of a campus security department that is committed to using espionage to stifle student protest movements before they erupt and that maintains still closer ties to the 26th Precinct of the NYPD. They said it could never happen at Columbia, but it happened at Columbia. They say it could never happen again at Columbia...

**Come watch actual footage of the 1968 strike, eat free food, and learn about contemporary campus activism. See back cover for details.**

# The New McCarthyism

## Civil Liberties in a Post-9/11 America

American citizens are living in fear. Since the attacks of September 11th 2001, many Americans have put the safety of themselves and their loved ones as priority number one. They may fear future acts of violence perpetrated on American soil, nuclear or biological warfare, or terrorist enemies overseas. But what most Americans aren't afraid of-but perhaps should be-is the oppression of their own government.

The acts of violence committed against the United States on September 11th have been used to promote a conservative agenda that infringes upon Americans' civil liberties by eliminating the checks and balances that Americans have relied on to protect constitutional freedoms. According to Laura W. Murphy, Director of the ACLU's Washington National Office, "The USA Patriot Act gives law enforcement agencies nationwide extraordinary new powers unchecked by meaningful judicial review." Our country's leaders use fear to garner the support of the American public for unconstitutional legislation. Free speech is being stifled, and those who would speak out against the actions of our government and warn fellow Americans are the ones targeted by intelligence to keep silent.



Preying on the current emotional state of the nation, our country's leaders are using the events of September 11th to insist that protecting America right now must come at the expense of our personal liberties (USA PATRIOT is actually an acronym for Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism). Legislation like the USA PATRIOT Act (Bill HR.2975) and the related USA Act of 2001 (Bill S.1510) not only threaten the activities of today's progressive citizens, activists and organizations, they contain provisions that give intelligence authorities the power to engage in retroactive search and seizure by abolishing the statute of limitations on these "crimes." Were you involved in any "un-American" activities in the

past? The FBI may be contacting you in the near future. This warning is not meant to incite fear in the hearts of activists; rather, we need to arm ourselves and others with the knowledge we need to combat this kind of neo-McCarthyism.

The ACLU has issued a legislative analysis of the USA PATRIOT Act and the ways in which it encroaches on civil liberties. The following list is an excerpt from their analysis, citing the most alarming provisions of the Act, measures that would:

- Allow for indefinite detention of non-citizens who are not terrorists on minor visa violations if they cannot be deported because they are stateless, their country of origin refuses to accept them, or because they would face torture in their country of origin.
- Minimize judicial supervision of federal telephone and internet surveillance by law enforcement authorities.
- Expand the ability of the government to conduct secret searches.
- Give the Attorney General and the Secretary of State the power to designate domestic groups as terrorist organizations and deport any non-citizen who belongs to them.
- Grant the FBI broad access to sensitive business records about individuals without having to show evidence of a crime.
- Lead to large-scale investigations of American citizens for "intelligence" purposes.

Additionally, Arab-Americans have been profiled and discriminated against in recent months. Already, many Muslim and Arab-American groups have been subjected to the intense scrutiny of FBI agencies. In Don Thompson's article entitled "Muslim Student Groups Probed for Terrorist Links" (Associated Press, 12/22/01), the author makes unsubstantiated claims linking Muslim student groups to terrorist groups. Based on quotations taken out of context and manipulated to incite suspicion, these claims are dangerous in that they have the potential to invoke widespread prejudice and fear of Arab-Americans reminiscent of World War II profiling of Japanese-Americans. From the statement released by the Muslim Students Association in response to the article: "The unfortunate timing of this deplorable article has only worsened the already high anti-Muslim sentiment in North America after the 9/11 attacks." There is imminent danger to all Americans if these dangerously prejudiced ideas are allowed to infiltrate the subconscious of the American public.

So what can we do? The answer is the same as always. Get involved. If you already are, stay involved. Stay up-to-date on the latest Congressional actions, and talk to others to make sure they are as well. Organize people to demand that their Congressional representation dissent from future legislation that in any way curtails our civil liberties and constitutional freedoms. And most importantly, whatever you do, don't stop talking about it.

That would be when they will truly have won.

# Lies and Smiles: Your Administration

Poor freshpeople, I feel sorry for you. When I entered Columbia four years ago, George Rupp, an idiot-savant able to raise millions in a single benefit yet capable of alienating the entire student body with a single word, was president. Whenever we fought the administration, George made a perfect target, saying such things as child labor was fine because he had a paper-route as a child. Now, the aloof leader has been replaced by a friendly one, Lee Bollinger. Not only will Bollinger teach a class for you, but he will also invite you into his home for a fireside chat. And, even better, he is a defender of affirmative action.

It's going to suck.

Columbia is an institution that for all of its contributions to the canon of human knowledge is one that still tosses tenants out onto the street, refuses to recognize the Teaching and Research Assistants' union, and has a tendency to not tenure female faculty. This is not to say that the administrators who make these policy decisions are evil bastards; they are bureaucrats with their eye on the bottom line who favor maintaining the status quo. And when you want to change a policy you will find that Bollinger will talk with you and even say favorable things about you to the press. He did this at the University of Michigan even as students occupied administration offices. But what he won't do is respond to issues that the University has a vital interest in without a little pressure being applied. Case in point: Bollinger praised the Teaching Assistants Union in UMich, but sent out an anti-union letter to all Columbia students last spring.

So don't be swayed by Lee's friendly style or even his personal beliefs. He was hired by the Board of Trustees and it is to them that he answers—after all, they write the checks for his half-million dollar salary. Lee won't make things easier for you; he will say things that students will confuse for action. All this will do is make activists look more unreasonable, even as their demands aren't met. And so you must learn . . .

The Art of War (with your administration):

1. Always find out who has the final say, and deal only with him/her. Sometimes decisions are made by the President, sometimes by lower-level administrators, but it is important to research who has the real power and not let administrators pass the buck to the president, or let the president send you to useless meetings with powerless people. They will try.

2. Never meet with an administrator without first building a group of students who support your goals. Find some way to display this: a petition, lots of students at a meeting with administrators, or students wearing a symbol of support. And never attend a meeting with less than three students.

3. Know your administrator. A closet liberal? Pull his heart strings. An evil bastard? Keep detailed notes of all things he says. Play administrators off of each other. Make them seem like the brilliant ones for coming up with your idea. Find out who has the president's ear.

4. Beware of "death by committee." After ignoring you, they may decide to

"study" the issue with administrators, faculty, and a token student rep—maybe even you. Sometimes there is no way around a committee, but always give it firm deadlines and keep up the pressure, or all it will do is issue an inconclusive report. Demand that all committee meetings be open to the public.

5. Have clear, short demands.

6. Remember, Columbia is one of the few universities with a Senate in which there are student Senators. They are your reps and often take their jobs seriously, and they actually have some power. As the Senate's decisions are often listened to, this is a process you may want to get involved with. However, beware rule 4.

Now go out there and win!



*A Dean held hostage for 26 hours in 1968.*

**June 1917** - Three Columbia students are arrested at an anti-war demonstration.

**October 1917** - Trustees fire CU Professors Cattell and Dana for their anti-war activities; students led by the Peithologian Society protest.

**1932** - Columbia Spectator editor Reed Harris expelled from Columbia College for his critical coverage of Columbia's dining room employment policies. The National Student League organizes a protest of 2000 NYC students as well as a one-day strike, which results in a 75% drop in class attendance.

# “Dangerous” Neighborhoods

## Urban Legends Your RA Told You

The first time I saw a friend of mine step foot into Morningside Park, I screamed. After being told for two years to NEVER set foot in the park by my RA's, professors, and fellow students, I took these admonitions literally to mean that if any part of one's body went inside the park, a pack of crackheads would murder him or her. After my friend stood inside the park (maybe 5 feet from the sidewalk) for a whole minute without getting mugged, I realized that shrieking like Jamie Lee-Curtis was not only irrational, but racist. Like many white New Yorkers, I believed that if I entered a poor, non-white neighborhood I was likely to be the victim of criminals who were waiting for me to trespass on to their turf.

The Columbia Administration, who has probably told you to never go above 125th or east of Amsterdam, perpetuates this idea. It has spent the past 50 years or so kicking poor non-whites out of “Morningside Heights”, filling it instead with yuppies, over-priced bistros and you, all protected by a private security force (this process is called “gentrification” and is happening throughout NYC as poor neighborhoods are colonized by well-off people in search of cheaper rents). Sure, our schools celebrates diversity and raves about Harlem, but from a distance. Rather than pushing its students to interact with the city, it presents a sanitized version through on campus events.

Luckily for me, I took a class that required that I do research—by myself—in the very neighborhoods I feared. As I explored the city, I realized that “dangerous” is based on one's perception: it can be safer to walk on a crowded Harlem Street than on a deserted one on the Upper East Side where no one can hear you scream. And besides, all of these neighborhoods are where countless families make their homes, and go about their business in relative peace. The more I walked, the more I took the subway at night, the more I learned not to search out for fellow white faces to make me feel safe, but to look to other clues to read people. And the more I explored, the more I realized that the “dangerous” neighborhoods also could be the most interesting; if you want to see a good community garden, go to the South Bronx, not to SoHo.

This article is not an exhortation to let down your guard; people get mugged, raped and scammed in New York, just like in other places. But rather it is a request that you critically examine what makes you feel unsafe. Remember, you are far more likely to get physically hurt by someone close to you than someone you have never met. Keep an eye on your surroundings and pretend you know where you're going, but a close look at crime statistics will show you not to be afraid to explore the parts of the city where investment bankers fear to tread.

If this phenomenon of gentrification and “dangerous” neighborhoods interests you, check out the following books:

*The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, by Jane Jacobs. This classic work from the 1960's argues that cities (especially “slums”) are safer than suburbs. Discusses how people watch out for each other in the concrete jungle.

*Bomb the Suburbs*, by William Upski Wimsatt. In 1992 this white graffiti artist from Chicago's South Side made a “bet with America” that he could hitch-hike through America's most “dangerous” neighborhoods unscathed. Not only did he win, but he met a bunch of great people. Containing essays about do-it-yourself urban renewal, hip-hop and race relations, this book is an altogether enlightening and entertaining read written by one of America's leading young activists.



*Jazz Musicians in Harlem, 1958*

**1934-6** - Columbia students participate in a series of National Student Strikes Against War. To commemorate the third strike in 1936, 2000 Columbia and Barnard students assemble at Broadway and 120th Street, with the Barnard women dressed as widows of future wars.

**1945** - Maintenance workers, led by TWU leader Mike Quill, hold a one-day strike to demand the right to unionize. University concedes this right.

**1952** - John Jay dining hall employees, led by Mike Quill, strike for right to unionize. University refuses to recognize union.

**1961** - 600 CU students and faculty gather on Low Plaza to protest the mandating of air raid drills on campus.

# Unions: The Folks Who Brought You The Weekend



## What is a union?

A union is a democratic organization of workers that uses its power to win better conditions, pay, and benefits for its members. Unions also fight for political solutions benefiting their members and the working class at large.

## Why do workers join unions?

Aside from pay, benefits, and safety, unions can prevent arbitrary firing and discrimination, and they provide workers with a voice on the job.

## How are unions structured?

Workers in a company form a bargaining unit to negotiate with one employer, which is part of a “local” in one area. An international is a collection of locals in one industry to coordinate struggles. Examples of international unions include Service Employees International Union, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, and the United Farm Workers. International unions in one country also form federations, such as the AFL-CIO or the I.W.W.

## What is collective bargaining?

Negotiation between a union and an employer, hopefully resulting in a contract guaranteeing certain standards for the workplace, such as non-discrimination policies, wage scales, safety provisions, and health insurance.

## What is a strike?

A way of making an employer listen, in which workers just don't show up, or don't work (a sit-down). The employer loses money and is forced to bargain on better terms. Strikes demonstrate where the employer gets its money from, and they help win workers a piece of the pie.

## What is a picket line?

When workers strike, they often demonstrate outside of a workplace to raise awareness and pressure the employer. Picket lines are not to be crossed: workers risk a lot by striking, and they depend on outside support.

## What is union-busting?

Employer attacks on unions, such as firing pro-union workers, giving raises to reward complacency, making threats or spreading disinformation, or abusing the NLRB to claim that workers aren't really workers and thus can't form unions (ask Pres. Bollinger about this one). Often such actions are illegal, but companies have expensive law firms like Proskauer-Rose.

## What is the NLRB?

The National Labor Relations Board is a government agency theoretically charged with mediating between unions and employers, and with conducting elections where workers decide whether or not they want a union. It remains slow, as well as biased towards large companies and Ivy-League universities.

## What about corruption and racism?

Many unions have done stupid, short-sighted things in the past; a handful still do. But a lot of unions backed the civil rights struggle, and many nowadays will strike against racist or sexist employers. SEIU actively fights for humane immigration policy; ILWU has refused to move toxic waste, and has struck against racist application of the death penalty. The union movement remains a vibrant, diverse, and tolerant place, where workers from all backgrounds find their common needs. For many minority, female, immigrant, or queer workers, the union is the first place they go when the boss discriminates, because they know their co-workers will support them. And since unions are democracies, workers can eject unwanted leaders.

## Don't unions just hurt progress by forcing businesses around?

If “progress” means “rich get richer,” yes, they do, by forcing the rich to share the wealth with those who make it. Don't like it? Move to Myanmar.

## Why should I care about all of this?

Because the labor movement created the two-day weekend. Because everyone deserves decent health care, safety, and the knowledge that hard work will be rewarded with decent pay and a secure job. Because people should control where they spend their lives 9 to 5. Because the rich are too rich, and the poor are too poor. Because it's morally good to stand up for your neighbors. And because you, or someone you love, might be on that picket line one day.

**1965** - Students disrupt NROTC awards ceremony. First time ever NYPD called on campus.

**1966** - 18 SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) members hold first campus sit-in at Dodge Hall to protest CIA recruiters on campus.

**1967** - Series of demonstrations (with 100s of students) to protest military recruiting on campus and University's involvement with the Institute for Defense Analysis.

**1968** - see article, page 4.

# X-Ray Astronomy On Strike!

## Academic Labor and the Struggle to Unionize

The famous Core Curriculum: perhaps you came to Columbia for it, perhaps in spite of it. One thing is certain, though: the 700 students taking L&R each semester require a lot of instructors, and tenured professors aren't really interested. Even in more advanced classes, those that are not deemed to be “beneath” a professor's abilities, someone has to grade your exams, lead discussion sections, and make all those photocopies.

Professors are expensive, though, so Columbia (like other universities around the country) is hiring fewer and fewer of them. Instead, education is turning to other sources of labor: adjunct faculty (part-time, underpaid teachers who can be hired and fired at the department's whim), graduate students, and even undergraduates in some departments.

But, while the University has been primarily concerned with cutting costs, even graduate students have to eat. So, concerned with “bread-and-butter” issues such as stipends and health care as well as the larger issue of respect for the work they do, a group of teaching and research assistants at Columbia made the same decision as made by many other groups of workers: to form a union.

Many more than the required 30% of student-workers signed “authorization cards” indicating their wish to join Local 2110 of the United Auto Workers (UAW).

The University, unwilling to cede any power to the teachers and researchers upon whom it depends, has been fighting the union all the way. Its legal case relies on the absurd argument that one cannot simultaneously be both a student and an employee, an argument which the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the government body that rules on such issues, has already rejected in the case of New York University. Beyond this legal argument, Columbia has been making vague threats and indications: suggesting (incorrectly) that foreign students may be deported if the union passes or trying to artificially divide slightly-higher-paid natural science and engineering students from humanities students.

A union election, permitting both undergraduate and graduate teaching and research assistants to vote on whether they wish to join the UAW or not, was finally held in mid-March, 2001. However, the results of this election are not known; the ballots have been “impounded” and will not be counted until the University's appeal is settled.

Dissatisfied with waiting for the seemingly endless legal process to end, union-supporting student-employees held a one-day walkout on April 29th. Clerical and support staff, also members of UAW Local 2110, joined in this action. While this walkout did not cause the University to drop its legal appeal (nor was it expected to), it offered a preview of the possible future power of the union, should the University continue to refuse to bargain.

Columbia's refusal to bargain with the UAW is perhaps particularly ironic as it welcomes new University President Lee Bollinger. Prior to his arrival at Columbia, Bollinger was president of the University of Michigan, home to a graduate student union which, at more than 25 years, is the second-oldest in the nation!

Hopefully, the legal process will end soon, and the University will sit down to bargain with the employees upon whose labor it depends. If not, the union is certainly not willing to wait forever.



**1969** - Black students occupy office in Hamilton to protest delays in establishing African-American Studies program.

**1985** - 5 day strike by UAW clerical workers.

**1985** - After years of student pressure (beginning in 1978), trustees finally agree to divest from companies doing business in apartheid South Africa - the first major university to do so.

**April 1986** - Students erect shanties on Low Plaza to protest the slow pace of divestment.

**October 1987** - CU announces that divestment is complete.

# What is a Sweatshop?

A sweatshop is a factory that requires long hours in unsafe conditions, paying low, often illegal, wages and often using coercion and child labor.

## How common are sweatshops?

In the United States, the Labor Department estimates that there are 2,500 sweatshops violating labor laws in NYC, especially in Chinatown and the Garment District. Only 37% of the garment workers here work in law-abiding shops. Abroad, sweatshops are even more common, especially in countries that have no effective labor laws. The problem is nearly universal in the garment industry, and most companies refuse to disclose factory locations, blocking investigation.

## How much do they pay workers? How long are the hours?

Virtually no garment shop pays a “living wage.” Typically work runs upwards of 60 hours per week; during “rush orders,” shifts of over 24 hours straight are not unheard of.

## How are health conditions in sweatshops?

Due to a complete lack of law enforcement, factories very often have poor ventilation, and dust inhalation causes respiratory diseases so severe that workers routinely “retire” in their 20's. Extreme fatigue and machine injuries are common, as is physical abuse (in Colombia, murder) of union activists. Many factories force pregnancy tests, and Honduran women were involuntarily given birth control, all to prevent costly maternity leaves.

## Can't they just get other jobs?

Not typically. Undocumented immigrants in the U.S. have few job opportunities and risk deportation if they report labor abuses. Abroad, population growth and corporate buyouts have reduced available farmland as World Bank crop rents and International Monetary Fund crop price reductions make agriculture less lucrative. Landless workers, especially young women, are forced to go to cities, where sweatshops are some of the few options available.

## Aren't low-paying, unsafe jobs with long hours better than no jobs at all?

No one wants to starve, but that doesn't make sweatshops okay. In 2000, Nike made \$601 million in profits and spent

\$978 million on advertising. In the same year, their Indonesian workers made 15 cents an hour. Almost every multinational could afford to put its workers above the poverty line and in safe shops without putting a big dent in their profits.

## So what can I do?

Check out Columbia Students Against Sweatshops, which uses a monitoring agency (the Worker Rights Consortium) to make sure Columbia apparel is bought from safe shops, and influences companies to pay decent wages. By using Columbia's purchasing power we have helped thousands of workers fight for more secure futures.

Individual purchasing power can also be influential. Look for the union label, and, if possible, seek out clothes made in cooperatives like Sweat-X. Ask managers at stores whether their products were made in safe shops by well paid workers, or write letters to the companies. And, of course, support calls for boycotts made by unions.

Workers' struggles are also tied into global trade policy. The “Free Trade Area of the Americas” threatens to speed up the “race to the bottom” by attacking labor laws; call “your” politicians and voice your opposition. And remember the International Monetary Fund policies that drive workers to sweatshops in the first place. September 27-28 we'll be “quarantining” their meetings in DC; see below for more info, or watch the CSSN website for ways to participate in an international struggle for the rights of workers.

Columbia Students Against Sweatshops: See page 22.

National Labor Committee: [www.nlcnet.org](http://www.nlcnet.org)

Educating for Justice: [www.nikewages.org](http://www.nikewages.org)

Stop FTAA: [www.stopftaa.com](http://www.stopftaa.com)

Sweat X: [www.sweatx.coop](http://www.sweatx.coop)

Info on the World Bank/IMF: [www.50years.org](http://www.50years.org)

and how to shut them down: [www.abolishthebank.org](http://www.abolishthebank.org) or email [cu-breakthebank@riseup.net](mailto:cu-breakthebank@riseup.net)

**Spring 1992** - Administration threatens to take away need-blind, full aid admissions. A group of students takes over Low Library and occupies an office there. No students are disciplined for this action and need blind is saved.

10

**1992/1993** - CU plans to destroy the Audobon Ballroom, where Malcolm X was assassinated, in order to build a biomedical research center. After protest, Columbia builds the lab, but preserves part of the building as a memorial.

**April 1996** - Ethnic studies struggle. 4 students engage in a 15-day hunger strike; others occupy Low Library and Hamilton Hall, resulting in 23 arrests. In response, Pres. Rupp declares that “students do not design our curriculum.”

# Our Education: Up in Smoke!

Few American endeavors of the past two decades have been as rife with cronyism, corruption, and moral hypocrisy as our failed and futile War on Drugs.

Take the Higher Education Act's 1998 drug provision, which potentially denies federal financial aid to students convicted of drug offenses. Depending on their prior drug convictions and whether they've completed a lengthy drug rehab program by the aid application due date (for many, this is a logistical impossibility), students can lose their aid for up to two years after their last offense. The legislation stripped federal aid from more than 40,000 students last year - aid that's often the make-or-break for economically disadvantaged students seeking a college education. And indications are that it'll get worse. Previously, applicants for aid could leave questions about drug use blank. Now, under the Bush-Cheney regime, all blank answers are the equivalent of answering "Yes," and all applications with them aren't even processed.

Who wins? Certainly not students of color or of disadvantaged backgrounds (or both). As with most War on Drug legislation, the overwhelming number of the incarcerated are of non-white backgrounds (in New York, 95%) and are economically disadvantaged, even though the majority of drug users are white. (Thuggish narco cops tend not to break down the doors of middle-class suburban homes or coke-stained corporate boardrooms) Those convicted but privileged enough to afford slick attorneys -- and whose parents can finance expensive college educations anyway -- rarely need worry about the loss of federal student aid.

Meanwhile, the New York state prison budget continues to balloon to nearly \$2 billion a year while billionaire New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg this year slashed budgets for public libraries, public parks, and recycling programs. Treatment programs, which even the conservative RAND think-tank has said reduce serious crimes 15 times more than mandatory minimums, make up only 15% of the federal drug control budget. Besides representing a more compassionate and effective solution, drug treatment programs are also cost-effective. The annual cost of outpatient drug treatment per patient is a few thousand dollars. New York prisons, by contrast, require \$32,000 per prisoner, 44% of whom are there for nonviolent drug offenses.

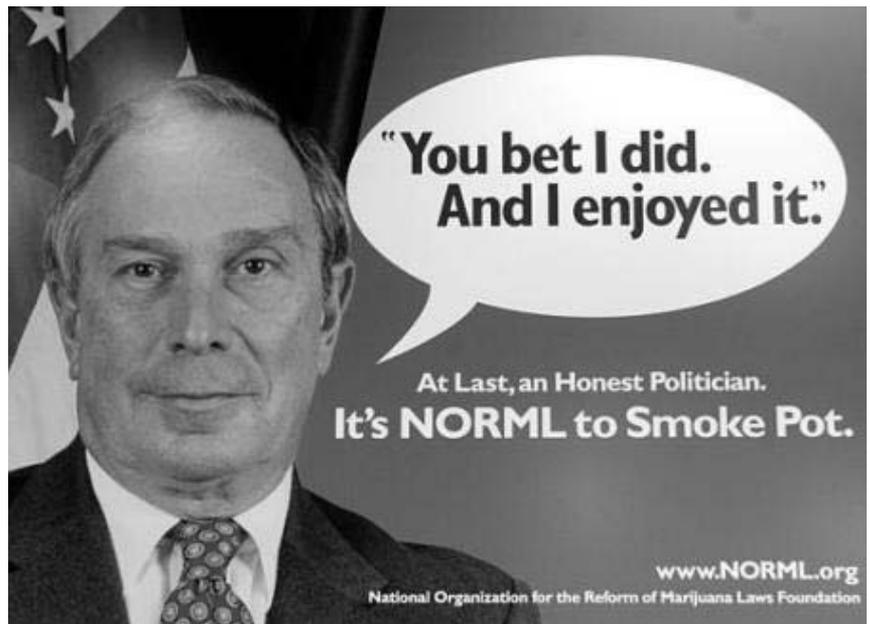
Fortunately, more and more people are realizing that the War on Drugs is our domestic Vietnam. In the past few years, groups like DRCNet and Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP) have initiated and mobilized campaigns to take down such destructive measures as the 1998 HEA drug provision. Last year, Massachusetts congressman Barney Frank introduced a bill to undo that provision, and hundreds of student governments and national organizations support reform (the otherwise pathetic puppet organization known as the Columbia College Student Council passed such a resolution before it presumably returned to offering free potato chips during finals; next comes Bollinger). Figures across ideological lines, from Ralph Nader to William F. Buckley, have called for a serious re-examination of a national anti-drug effort that has drained so many funds from more worthwhile pursuits and ruined so many lives. Even Hollywood movies like *Traffic*, however oversimplified and whitewashed, have introduced reform discourse into the mainstream and encouraged consideration of more compassionate, less punitive approaches to addiction. States like California have relaxed punishments for first-time offenders, replacing jail time with treatment and rehab.

For more information on Columbia SSDP and our current and upcoming campaigns, visit [www.columbia.edu/cu/ssdp](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ssdp).

**1997** - Two week strike by 800 clerical workers in UAW Local 2110.

**February 1999** - Four NYPD officers shoot Amadou Diallo, an unarmed Haitian Immigrant, 41 times when he reaches for his wallet. Many CU students are arrested with countless other New Yorkers in a successful bid to get the Mayor to indict the cops. They also join in the months of protests afterwards.

**2000** - Columbia begins its Committee on Socially Responsible Investing, charged with deciding whether or not to use the voting power it gains by owning stocks of companies to vote on issues concerning environmental, labor and political rights. To date, it has not enacted the vast majority of student suggestions.



# A Hands-On Lesson in Colonialism

## The State of Pan-African Studies At Barnard

Critical observation of the Pan-African Studies program at Barnard provides a powerful lesson about present-day manifestations of colonialism at this academic institution. The behavior of the Barnard administration towards the Pan-African Studies program at Barnard College parallels the model of colonialism traditionally applied to the African continent in terms of its placement of priority, lack of accountability to and for its constituency, and denial of autonomy. The premise of African colonialism was that a continent full of black people and resources was only valuable in terms of its ability to serve the political and economic interests of European powers. Similarly, the college seems to view the existence of the Pan-African Studies Program as a priority only insofar as it furthers the public relations interests of the college. Despite the college's voiced support, in reality the lack of hiring power and curriculum development for the ethnic studies programs at this university has crippled the programs. And in another similarity, it is only when students resist these patterns of oppression that they have been included in planning the future of their education.

If the Barnard administration actually wanted to foster an inclusive curriculum and advance the study of the African Diaspora in the American academy, the logical actions would include the maintenance of at least the basic framework of a program in terms of faculty. The Pan-African Studies program has never had a tenured director. (Note the related but distinct fact that, according to the Provost's office, only two faculty members of color have ever been tenured at Barnard.)

The structural difference between a department and a program is that a department has the ability to hire its own faculty, while a program has to depend on the discretion of the Provost and the departments. The interdisciplinary nature of such majors is designed in a way that makes them dependent on departments and suggests that the topics they cover do not exist as disciplines of their own but as combinations of other subject matter. For instance, Women's Studies, once an interdisciplinary program at Barnard, finally gained department status when it was acknowledged that it is an important field of study not covered by any existing department. The interdisciplinary nature of the study of ethnicity at this school makes sense and allows students to design logical and fulfilling courses of study in most cases. However, the perception of the study of ethnicity at an Ivy League institution as something dependent on other entities and not a unit of its own, perpetuates the marginalization that makes ethnic studies necessary in the first place.

Last year, no student input was built into the strategy of the director search and the departmental talks held did not include discussion for proposed student interactions. A Barnard sophomore, worried that she could be choosing a major that did not exist on any dependable terms, took the initiative to organize a meeting with the provost. The meeting ended up being a conference room filled with students worried about the status of the program. Students did their own research on the performance of the candidates in their previous appointments and arranged yet another meeting with the provost and other administrators before they were granted a place on the official agenda of the candidate search. The Pan-African Studies Advisory Board also expressed that they felt they were not given enough opportunity for input.

When an administrative body operates in a manner that excludes the input of its constituency and then makes decisions that threaten the interests of that constituency, it has failed to fulfill its function.

If this institution is committed to the indoctrination of the student body and the limitation (damnation) of this generation to destructive traditions of the past, then its existing structures are sufficient. If however, as I hope against reason, this institution is committed to the enlightenment of the student body and the empowerment of this generation in the creation of a new context for existence, it is in need of a transformation in policy, perspective and action. In this case, it is necessary that the administration makes the success of every subject of study a priority. It is imperative that the student body and the faculty let the administration know that we value Pan-African Studies not merely because it "proves" by its mere existence that Barnard is not a racist institution, but for of its educational contribution to our academic community.

**Spring 2000** - Due to pressure from Columbia Students Against Sweatshops, the University agrees to join the Workers' Rights Consortium and to enact a code of conduct to define workplace standards for Columbia apparel production.

**November 12, 2000** - Over 400 students march on a University Senate Meeting to successfully urge the senators to enact meaningful reforms to the Sexual Misconduct Policy.

**2001** - Columbia begins a permanent experiment with Socially Responsible consumption by offering fair trade coffee.

**September 12, 2001** - Over 300 students attend the first People for Peace meeting and later join in large NYC protests against the bombing of Afghanistan.

# When and Where We Enter

## The Struggle for Ethnic Studies at Columbia

Students have been agitating for ethnic studies at Columbia since 1968, but it was not until 1993 that the administration first established the Institute for Research in African American Studies (IRAAS), which is currently directed by Manning Marable. In 1996, after a 15-day hunger strike and several building takeovers, the administration agreed to the establishment of a Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race (CSER), which houses two programs, Asian American Studies and Latina/o Studies. Unfortunately, this agreement, reached under coercive conditions, fell far short of the students' goal: an Ethnic Studies Department with hiring power and with Native Studies included. The sole major victory in the agreement was that it allowed for undergraduate student representatives to sit on all faculty search committees in CSER (a first for the university).

Gary Okihiro currently serves as chair of the Asian American Studies program and as director of CSER. Under his leadership, CSER has developed a comparative emphasis which stresses not only comparative work across various racialized groups, but which also attempts to locate the intersections of race and ethnicity with other social formations such as gender, sexuality, class and nation. Hopefully, beginning this year, students will be able to major in Comparative Ethnic Studies, in addition to current options in African American Studies, Asian American Studies, and Latina/o Studies.

The matter of when and where 'people of color' enter into Columbia's curriculum, the matter of when and where the experiences of communities racially constructed as 'non-whites' and socially constructed as 'minorities' will be allowed the academic space and resources that are necessary for their development on this campus will determine the extent to which Columbia University, itself, will serve as an enabling site for its students and remain both expansive and reflective in its production of knowledge.

In 1998, students involved in the protests for Ethnic Studies founded Students Promoting Empowerment and Knowledge (SPEaK). SPEaK's mission is to make students active in shaping their own education. In the last four years, we have fought for student input in decision-making processes and greater autonomy for Ethnic Studies and Women's and Gender Studies programs, created extracurricular spaces for dialogue about race, class, gender, and sexuality, including an underground student-run Native American Studies program, and curated public art to express our visions of the world and our



*Victor Cervantes in his mock jail cell on College Walk. The "cell", designed to call attention to the lack of space for students of color on campus, was vandalized.*

interpretations of the historical and existing injustices around us. We also hosted the first-ever student conference on Ethnic Studies. For more detailed information on the history of Ethnic Studies at Columbia and around the nation and on Columbia's Core Curriculum, visit [www.columbia.edu/cu/speak](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/speak)

**2002** - Barnard agrees to an advisory committee for socially responsible investing. It also begins to offer fair trade coffee on its own.

**February 2002** - Students hold a counter summit, with over 1000 attendees, to the World Economic Forum's meeting in New York and participate in actions against the WEF.

**April 29, 2002** - Teaching and research assistants hold a one-day walkout to protest Columbia's failure to recognize their union or count the ballots from their election.

**2003** - ?

# Ethical Consumption

Every day each of us makes many decisions on how to consume. Consumption can range from what we eat to our mode of transportation to our clothing purchases. Any purchase of goods or services is a form of consumption. As consumers we have power to affect the products we buy. If a product becomes unpopular it is no longer produced, for example. The terrible environmental consequences from laundry detergents made ordinary housewives environmentally conscious, leading to fundamental changes in what is used to make detergents. Conversely, if a product is in demand it may enter production. Organic food and hybrid gasoline-electric cars did not exist until consumers demanded them. The consumer's control of their spending dollars gives them the power to affect the products they are using. Ethics can inform this purchasing power. Immoral or un reputable business practices can be rejected by not buying a particular company's products. Boycotting a specific company's products will often pressure it to change. Demand that the goods and services you pay for are provided ethically. A mass movement of ethically conscious

individuals, each acting on personal morality, can change the world in fundamental ways.

As a college student, you may find Barnard or Columbia providing objectionable products for your use. Columbia Students Against Sweatshops is one group fighting for ethical purchasing at the University level; it supports labor struggles by changing university purchasing policy to pressure clothing manufacturers. It takes recommendations from a monitoring agency, the Worker Rights Consortium, and asks or demands that Columbia implement them. In this way thousands of garment workers have won decent pay and safe shops, supported by the actions of students half a world away. Students for Economic and Environmental Justice has organized to have fair trade coffee introduced throughout Columbia's campus, a program that was recently expanded to Barnard. These products guarantee fair wages and healthy working conditions throughout production and environmentally sustainable growth. Look for a variety of socially conscious products to begin being

offered throughout Columbia's campus.

Alternately, ethical consumption can be enacted on a much larger scale throughout your life. Lots of people see vegetarianism and veganism (meaning, not eating or buying dead animals or animal products like milk) as a futile gesture, but really they amount to a boycott of an earth-destroying, dangerous industry that clearcuts forests for unsustainable grazing, dumps toxics into our water, and kills 11 billion animals a year (in the US). Check out [www.vegan.org](http://www.vegan.org) for more info. Organic food can also help prevent cancer-causing pesticides from winding up on your plate or in our reservoirs. Bicycles, subways, buses, and trains do more against global warming than political proposals ever will, and now that you're in Manhattan, you're stuck with mass transit anyways. Looking for clothes made by union shops helps pull workers out of poverty, and not buying from union-busting companies gets the message across that you support living wages. Perhaps none of these suggestions fits your particular morality. Be creative, find a solution to correct the moral wrongs you see in the world and begin your own unique version of ethical consumption!



If you polluted the air in the 80's,  
here's your chance to redeem yourself.

Riders wanted.



# Ethical Investment

In a time when a tragic majority of corporations are choosing to put profits before people, and where multinationals are becoming an ever more formidable force, those hoping for a more ethical social and economic world are often left feeling helpless. Companies argue that ethical practices would not cost more, but that their ultimate responsibility is to their shareholders, not to their community. Business ethics dictate that executives must always think of their investors' desires first and foremost; only later can environmental, labor, political, and other considerations be considered. However, investors have the ability to dictate business priorities, including morally conscious ones. Through a variety of investor-executive channels new considerations of the investors' choosing can be stressed. The ethics of investors can override the strictly profit motive.



The growing influence of the socially responsible investment (SRI) movement has given individual as well as institutional investors (Columbia and Barnard, for example) the ability to compel corporations to adopt more ethical policies. As shareholders in major corporations, schools like Barnard and Columbia have the right to vote on shareholder resolutions,

voicing their concerns as investors over the moral choices these companies make. As students we can pressure our schools to use this power to affect positive social change.

A few years ago, the Columbia Socially Responsible Investment Committee was created with the mandate of advising the university's trustees as to how they might improve the social and environmental impact of their investments. Each year, the SRI committee invites members of the university community to a public hearing where they can voice their opinions on any issue relating to SRI at Columbia. The trustees have also made public a snapshot of the university's investment portfolio (six months out of date) to give the community an idea of where the school's money is. In addition, after hearing the advice of the SRI committee, the trustees release a summary of how they voted on those shareholder resolutions that the committee supported.

This summer, the Trustees of Barnard College voted to create a similar committee. Unfortunately, the Barnard SRI committee is much less equipped to seriously address issues concerning Barnard's investments. Firstly, the trustees have refused to release Barnard's investment portfolio to the university community, or even to the members of the Barnard SRI committee itself. The extent of Barnard's investment

disclosure policy is that the SRI committee can (although individual concerned students cannot) ask whether the college owns specific stocks-and even then, they are given a 'yes' or 'no' answer with no indication as to how much money the school has invested in it. Perhaps the most problematic aspects of the committee, however, is the trustees are never required to reveal whether or not they chose to act on any of the committees recommendations.

There is no excuse for Barnard to have created an SRI committee so doomed to be inefficient and ineffective. Barnard's progressive values and special commitment to address women's issues make this move especially hypocritical. Surely a concern for women's issues must include, among other things, a concern for the disproportionately female textile workers suffering horrific working and living conditions around the world. It's not enough to ensure a positive and supportive environment for the few women with the privilege of attending the college while remaining silent as the very companies in which they are invested discriminate against and abuse their own female workers. Of course, the obligation to take responsibility for its investment decisions extends beyond women's issues. By failing to create an effective SRI committee, Barnard has foregone the opportunity to influence a broad range of social and environmental issues.

To demand that Trustees of Barnard College release the college's portfolio and their voting record, contact Vice President of Finance Andrew Manshel at [amanshel@barnard.edu](mailto:amanshel@barnard.edu) and ask him to forward your concerns to the college's trustees. To join the struggle to encourage both Barnard and Columbia to behave as socially responsible investors, contact Students for Environmental and Economic Justice at [seej@columbia.edu](mailto:seej@columbia.edu).

## Columbia's *Other* Bank: The Bethex Federal Credit Union

If you're anything like me, you're probably not too thrilled about the idea of putting your money into a Citibank account. Practitioner of redlining and predatory lending, funder of socially and environmentally devastating projects all over the world - the Three Gorges Dam in China is just one example - Citigroup is the nightmare of anyone with a social conscience. Not to mention, the customer service sucks - one day when you have a couple of hours to kill, try calling the 800 number, and you'll see what I mean. But you don't really have a choice, do you? After all, it is the only bank on campus, right?

Wrong! There is an alternative - Bethex Federal Credit Union, located on the fifth floor of Lerner Hall, in the club space. Bethex is not exactly an ideal banking option either - there is a \$5 monthly fee for all checking accounts and the only two free ATMs in Manhattan are the ones in Lerner. But at least you'll know your money is being used to give low-interest loans to people in the Bronx and not to destroy the planet.

For more information go to <http://www.bethexfcu.org>, or visit the office hiding on the 5th floor of Lerner.

# All Activists Aren't Crazy

## Destroying Some Common Stereotypes

One day a few years back I was standing out on college walk, trying to get people to sign an anti-death penalty petition. One man I approached seemed wary and apprehensive, clearly reluctant to talk to me, but then when I explained my petition, he visibly relaxed. "Oh," he said, smiling in relief, "I'll sign that. It's so nice to see people out here who are normal," he added, "usually it's these crazy socialists with wild hair, selling Russian newspapers." He was half-joking, I think, but nevertheless that one man summed up perfectly what many people seem to think about activists: they're crazy, not normal. And if, like most people, you've never had much contact with leftist politics, chances are that's probably what you think too. Hey, I don't blame you. I watch TV, I read the newspaper, I see how activists are portrayed. But now I'm here to clear up some common misconceptions about political activism.

1. Activists are all extremists: Whenever people find out that I'm involved in progressive politics, they tend to assume that I'm some kind of extremist: a communist, an anarchist, a Radical with a capital 'R'. But the truth is, becoming an activist doesn't necessarily mean embracing an entire ideology, adopting an '-ism' of some sort. Are you appalled by the exploitation of workers? Or are you opposed to the death penalty? Do you want to do something about it? Well, then, congratulations, my friend, you have all the makings of an activist.
2. Activism is a full-time commitment: A lot of people I talk to seem to think that an activist's idea of fun is sitting at the Hungarian Pastry Shop late on a Saturday night and plotting the revolution. Hey, we're not fanatics. Sure, there are some people who see activism as a 24-hour a day way of life - and more power to them - but most of us have an outside life as well. Just because you're trying to change the world, it doesn't mean you can't have fun in the meantime.
3. Activists are all tree-hugging vegetarian hippies: Hey, I like tree-hugging vegetarian hippies. Hell, I am a tree-hugging vegetarian hippie. But there are plenty of activists who aren't. Even if you can't stand the taste of soy and have never worn a pair of Birkenstocks in your life, but you think that people should have the right to abortions, for example, there is a place for you in progressive politics.
4. Activists are just a bunch of spoiled, middle class, white kids: This stereotype seems to contradict some of the earlier ones, yet it is one I have heard time and time again, usually in regards to the anti-globalization movement. You know, the old "people in the third world want globalization, they want the WTO, you stupid college kids think you know what's good for them better than they do." Well, I'm sorry, but that is just a load of crap. Anti-WTO/GATT/IMF/World Bank movements have been going on in other countries for years. Just one quick example: October 1993, half a million Indian farmers converged on Bangalore in opposition to GATT. That was a good six years before the big anti-WTO demonstrations in Seattle, but it didn't happen in America, so it didn't really make it into the news here.

5. Activists are violent: Whenever there is a big demonstration, the media always seem to focus in on the "violent protesters:" smashing store windows, throwing rocks, fighting with the police, etc. But this is just another example of "selective reporting." At most protests, the large majority of the participants are peaceful. Not surprisingly, most people don't want to get arrested (and you will get arrested if you hit a cop). And, honestly, much more violence is usually perpetuated by the police than by the protesters.

6. All activists do is protest: Any good activist spends the bulk of his or her time educating people. Some of us work on drafting legislation, setting up women's centers, campaigning for a candidate and creating alternative media outlets.

So remember kids, all activists aren't scary! Your next-door neighbor, your classmate, or even your girlfriend could be one. And you can be one too!

### THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

**THE COLUMBIA ADMINISTRATION GUIDE TO UNION BUSTING**  
HOW TO KEEP YOUR TEACHING ASSISTANTS SAFE FROM INCREASED WAGES, CHILD CARE BENEFITS, AND OTHER PERILS OF UNIONIZATION!

1. DELAY, DELAY DELAY!  
IF WE WAIT LONG ENOUGH, THEY'LL ALL GRADUATE ANYWAY!  
I'LL CALL THE LAWYERS!

2. DENY, DENY, DENY!  
JUST BECAUSE THEY TEACH, IT DOESN'T MEAN THEY WORK!  
IT'S NOT A JOB-- IT'S A GROWTH EXPERIENCE!

3. SUPPORT THE OPPOSITION!  
THESE FINE YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE DEFAKED UNION POSTERS, INFORMED ON UNION SUPPORTERS, AND SPREAD ALL MANNER OF MISINFORMATION!  
THEY'RE JUST THE SORT OF STUDENTS COLUMBIA NEEDS!

4. SPREAD FEAR AND CONFUSION!  
IF THE UNION WINS, THE UNIVERSITY COULD BE FORCED TO SHUT DOWN AND MOVE TO MEXICO!  
AND THEN WHAT WILL YOU DO?!

5. WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS--PRETEND THAT THINGS ARE FINE JUST THE WAY THEY ARE!  
YOU KIDS DON'T NEED A CONTRACT! THE GROWNUPS ARE ALREADY LOOKING OUT FOR YOUR BEST INTERESTS!  
RUN ALONG AND PLAY NOW.

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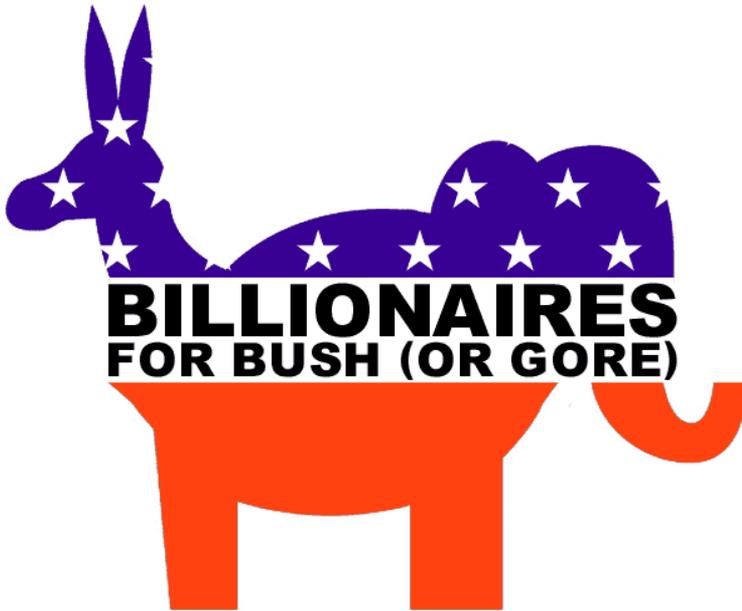
# Electoral Politics

## How To Be a Radical and work within the System

Soooo...you want to fight the good fight with fellow students and activists here at Columbia, but you feel disillusioned with direct action, let down with leafleting, irritated with issue campaigns? What's a young progressive to do? The solution may just be getting involved with electoral politics.

If you were anywhere near a television set during the 2000 presidential elections, then you witnessed firsthand just how screwed up America's two-party system is. During the presidential debates, in fact, Dubya and Al uttered the words "I agree" in response to their opponent's answer a whopping thirty-two times! But the good news is this: our country has mechanisms built into the political system that lets average (but dedicated) folks like you and I get involved and run ourselves for political office. In fact, the Green Party, America's most rapidly growing third party, has been the source of many victories for students who have run for local offices.

However, if you aren't the type to run for political office, and prefer strategizing and organizing, than maybe campaign management is more your bag. If so, you're in luck, because New York City just happens to be one of the best places to gain real-world experience working on city council, congressional, and other local campaigns. There are plenty of great candidates running in elections this fall, and it's not too late to get involved with many of these campaigns. Check out [www.gpnys.org/newyork.html](http://www.gpnys.org/newyork.html) to find out more about some of these New York state candidates, many of whom are running as Greens. You can also visit [www.feinstein.org/greenparty/electeds.html](http://www.feinstein.org/greenparty/electeds.html) to find a list of all elected Greens currently holding office in the U.S.--at least 152 in 20 states! Working on one of these campaigns, you'll gain electoral know-how



and meet some hard-working political hacks like yourself, who may help you work your way up through the ranks to get connected with people and jobs that excite and empower you.

## Finding Your Niche On The Left

As you begin to explore the world of political activism-by volunteering, interning, protesting, political education, lobbying, or some combination-you may feel overwhelmed by the wide array of choices for you at Columbia and in New York City. But don't worry, you can find the place where you fit in, a group that will allow you to grow as an individual, teach you about how the world really works, and actually accomplish change. The trick is to not get derailed by groups who live in their own world or whose style of activism turns you off-just keep on moving. Many students who don't think of themselves as that radical get turned off by some of the more extreme activists without realizing that the majority of activists are smart, level-headed people who don't follow a party line, but are always debating and questioning.

So, as you try on different groups and causes, here are some good questions to ask yourself or others:

- Do the people in the group all have the same arguments? If they do, yours will probably begin to sound a lot like theirs. Healthy groups expect members to agree on basic frameworks but allow room for individual opinions and beliefs.
- How are decisions made in a group? Process is very important. Do you like top-down structure or do you prefer decisions to be made by consensus (where everyone, or the vast majority, has to agree in order to pass a resolution)?
- Does the group have a clear focus and winnable goals?
- What time commitment are you comfortable with (this may change as you get more involved)?
- Do people with different backgrounds or identities feel comfortable?

Not all criticisms lead to one solution. For example, just because you agree with someone that the government does not represent the best interests of the people does not mean that you are obligated to agree with one group's solution. And remember, if you don't find a group that you love, start your own! It's easier than you think.

# Red Tape Won't Cover Up Rape

## Lessons From the Struggle for a Sexual Misconduct Policy

Due to the long struggle of student activists, Columbia University and Barnard College have the most progressive sexual misconduct policy in the nation. This fight educated the university community about the rapes that were being ignored by the administration and organized a large group of students by using creative tactics that focused on building unity. After 14 years of student requests, the Columbia University Senate passed its first Sexual Misconduct Policy in 1995. However, this policy proved to be ineffective in preventing or punishing rapes and difficult for victims to use. Only two students attempted to use the policy, and both cases were dismissed. No provisions were made to educate the student body or the deans responsible for trying cases. But what angered the campus most was the number of cases reported by Columbia: 3, in a 5 year period. Every year hundreds of students gather at the Take Back the Night Rally and listen to dozens of student stories about rape and sexual assault on campus – crimes, unreported and unpunished.

In 1999, students collected 1,800 signatures recommending a series of changes to the old policy, but this concern fell on the deaf ears on the Senate Task Force assigned to this issue. After this, students founded a group called Students Active For Ending Rape (SAFER) that decided to build student power in order to have their demands listened to. SAFER began a campaign using red tape on posters and clothing as a sign of the bureaucracy's reluctance to address sexual violence. This allowed students who did not have a lot of time to do something visible to show their support and feel that they were a part of the struggle. After

a few months, the campus was covered not only with posters, but with red tape on walls, wrapped around railings, and on the students themselves. While SAFER held weekly meetings and used the consensus model, it relied more on events, such as forums with administrators, giving lots of students the opportunity to confront the decision-makers. The coalition of five groups that worked on this issue also relied on these encounters instead of protests, which can fail to communicate messages to observers, until support for reform was campus-wide. These tactics enabled SAFER to turn out 400+ students to a rally on November 12, 1999, which garnered major press attention. This changed the nature of the debate, and the administration became more responsive to their proposed reforms and eventually adopted major elements of the proposal in February 2000. The new policy calls for education and a disciplinary process that is accountable and administered by trained personnel. While no one, including the activists, believe that the new policy is perfect, it did come under fire from certain on campus and off campus groups that believed it did not offer the accused enough due process.

However, these critics, rather than directing their concerns at the new policy, often slandered activists and used the issue to attack feminism. It is up to you, the next generation of students, to guard the progress made while working for improvements in an environment that sticks to the issues.

For more information, go to the Office of Sexual Misconduct's website at [www.columbia.edu/cu/sexualmisconduct](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/sexualmisconduct)

## Resources

### **Barnard/Columbia Rape Crisis/Anti-Violence Support Center** 854-HELP

Trained advocates 24 hours a day to take you to an emergency room or to help you deal with the police, University policies, or similar issues.

**St. Luke's Hospital Victim's Services Hotline** 577-7777

**St. Luke's Emergency Room** 523-3335

**The Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project** 714-1141

**Sex Crimes Report Line** 267-7273

Specially-trained officers. Female officers available.

**Office of Sexual Misconduct Education and Prevention**

To initiate a complaint within the University. 854-1717

**Nightline** 854-7777

Anonymous peer counseling.

**Barnard Counseling Services** 854-2091

Ten free sessions available to all students.

**Columbia Counseling Services** 854-2284

Ten free sessions available to all students.

**Escort Services** 854-SAFE

From 8pm-3am, in the Columbia area, two specially trained students will walk you to your door.

**Planned Parenthood** 965-7000

Emergency contraception, abortion services, and gynecological care.

**Safe Horizon's** 577-7777

Crime victim's hotline. Available 24 hours.

**Mount Sinai Rape Crisis Intervention Program** 241-5461

**In case of emergency, dial x99 (Columbia) or x88 (Barnard) for immediate assistance.**

# Resources for Activists



Bluestocking Books. Amazing feminist bookstore. 172 Allen St.

Jobs With Justice. National labor solidarity group. 330 West 42nd. St. (212) 631-0886

Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM). Radical South Asian group. [www.drumnation.org](http://www.drumnation.org)

Student Liberation Action Movement (SLAM). Defends open education at Hunter College and elsewhere. (212) 772-4261

Mayday Books. An anarchist bookstore open afternoons, in Theater for the New City. 155 1st avenue

ABC NO RIO. A squat cum community center, with lots of concerts and organizing resources. Food Not Bombs cooks here. 156 Rivington. [www.abcnorio.org](http://www.abcnorio.org)

[www.anarcho-nyc.net](http://www.anarcho-nyc.net). Connections to various NYC anarchist groups. Spring collective has a hotline: (212) 252-6821

Critical Resistance East. Fighting private prisons and needless incarceration. [www.criticalresistance.org/creast](http://www.criticalresistance.org/creast)

Coalition for the Human Rights of Immigrants. Currently fighting arbitrary immigrant detentions. [www.itapnet.org/chri](http://www.itapnet.org/chri)

National Action Network. Al Sharpton's organization fighting gentrification and police brutality. 1941 Madison Avenue, 2nd Floor. (212) 987-5020

dumba. Queer anarchist performance, art, and activist space. 57 Jay St. Brooklyn. (718) 390-6606

Youth Activists, Youth Allies. Maintains info on events and city groups. 250 West 57th Street #820. (212) 581-6922 <http://www.youthlink.org/yaya>

Nkiru Center. Black community center founded by Talib Kweli and Mos Def. 732 Washington Ave. Brooklyn. (718) 783-6306.

Indymedia Center. 34 East 29th St. 2nd floor. (212) 684-8112 [nyc.indymedia.org](http://nyc.indymedia.org)

WBAI. Pro-peace radio, a Pacifica affiliate. 99.5fm, [www.wbai.org](http://www.wbai.org)

Animal Defense League. Contact [benjamin@vegfl.com](mailto:benjamin@vegfl.com)

People's Law Collective. Legal observers who support activists. Call (917) 807-0658 if you're arrested in action. <http://www.tao.ca/~nycplc/>

National Lawyer's Guild NYC. (212) 679-6018 [nyc@nlg.org](mailto:nyc@nlg.org), or try the Columbia chapter at x4-2395, or the NYU chapter at [www.law.nyu.edu/studentorg/nlg.html](http://www.law.nyu.edu/studentorg/nlg.html)



# The Police and You

Assassinations, fire hoses, and pepper spray: whatever the time, whatever the weapon, the police defend one version of the law, and everyone from antislavery rebels to war resisters to southern blacks have found themselves opposite state repression going above and beyond the usual litany of police crimes. So how do you deal with them?

Contrary to the “rock-thrower” image, most protests aim at raising awareness, which can usually be done legally. Whenever you're planning an action, ask yourself, Can we do this without risk of arrest? Can we pull off some other (legal) stunt? Illegal actions are sometimes necessary and effective - remember how restaurants in the South started serving black folk? - But we want everyone, from immigrants to soccer moms to transgendered folks, to be able to participate without fear. Legal actions typically use permits, and always wind up in barricades (in NYC). If planned and timed well, they can turn heads and hit targets where it hurts (in the media), with barely an unfriendly glance from the NYPD. Keep a legal observer\* around and be nice and friendly. Should people get too rowdy, explain that they may be endangering folks inadvertently, and that they should feel free to take more militant actions elsewhere.

If no effective, legal actions are available and you choose an alternative that coincides with what affected communities want, remember: **THE POLICE ARE NOT YOUR FRIENDS.** They have two jobs: enforcing the law and protecting the state. Your privileged status as a student goes out the window as soon as you trespass, parade without a permit, or torch NikeTown. This means that they only negotiate to control you. Some activists refuse, for this reason, to even negotiate formally. Getting a permit means they know where you'll be and where you'll go, and negotiation doesn't stop them from hauling you to jail. From these

facts, we derive the 3 rules of dealing with cops around non-permitted actions:

1. Don't talk to cops. Unless you are protesting their violence and racism, you are not trying to convince them, and attempting to do so will distract you from your message. They aren't listening and don't care.

2. Don't talk to cops. Legally, they can lie to you; you cannot lie to them. They will make a lot of promises and give lots of orders. Assess their power and strategy yourself, and act on what you know.

3. Don't talk to cops. Anything you say can be used in court, so you shouldn't apologize for or defend your actions, or confirm or deny accusations. Your interaction with them if in jail should be limited to a pretty little song that goes like this: “I wish to remain silent (uh-huh uh-huh), and I would like to see a lawyer (oh yeah oh yeah).”



A few more things to remember: Most charges at demonstrations are bullshit, used purely to keep you off the street for a few hours. Masks are technically illegal in groups in New York (equivalent to a parking ticket), going limp or linking arms counts as “resisting arrest,” and touching cops or batons is “assault” even if done defensively, so be careful unless you know you can get away. Unless you are a very large, angry mob, they will win a fight anyways. You will not typically be arrested for trespassing until given a lawful order to disperse, so push the limit a bit if you think it'll be useful. Always have a legal number (see p. 19) written on your arm if you risk arrest, and try to have media and legal observers nearby to make the cops nervous. But finally, relax. If you panic, you will lose. A few hours in lockup won't kill you, as they know college students can sue them.

And remember an injunction from a famous New Yorker who shut down the New York Stock Exchange and didn't go to jail for it: “The trick is to find the things that aren't illegal yet.”

\*Legal observers are trained people, often lawyers, who monitor police at demonstrations to hold them legally accountable for brutality and civil rights violations. See Community Resources for Activists, p. 19, for contact info.

# Where To Eat

## Vegetarian Dining In “Morningside Heights” and New York City

### Uptown, Harlem, and “Morningside Heights”

Strictly Roots. 2058 Seventh Ave (Adam Clayton Powell Blvd.) @ 123rd St. Great, cheap Rastafarian food in an activist-friendly environment.

Zen Palate. 2170 Broadway @ 77th St., 663 9th Ave. @ 46th St., or 34 Union Sq E. @ 16th St. Mostly vegan (ask) Asian “fusion.” Overrated, but not too expensive.

Quintessence. 566 Amsterdam Ave. @ 87th St. Raw, organic vegan food for the neurotic new-ager in you. Expensive, but creative.

Candle Café. 1307 3rd Ave. @ 75th St. Probably the best vegan restaurant in the city. A variety of stuff, with good Indian dishes and amazing dessert, although expensive.

Ayurveda Café. 706 Amsterdam Ave. @ 94th St. A fixed-price Ayurvedic Indian menu, for \$11 or so. They will hold the dairy if you want, and it’s a great deal. They deliver if you give good directions.

Awash. 947 Amsterdam @ 106th St. Best Ethiopian in the Columbia area. Try combo #3, which is vegan, and a \$13 meal for two. They won’t card when you ask for the blackberry honey wine. Mmm. Also serves carcasses.

Josie’s. 300 Amsterdam @ 74th St. Lots of vegan, some meat, and good organic wine. American.

Ozu. 566 Amsterdam @ 87th St. Japanese Macrobiotic food, no dairy, some fish. The desserts are over-rated, but there are some nice, cheapish noodle dishes and soups.

Cafe Viva. 2578 Broadway @ 97th St. Vegetarian pizza, and they deliver to Columbia (212.663.VIVA). Great non-dairy options (pesto!), and cheese if you want prostate cancer and bad karma.

P&W. 1030 Amsterdam @ 110th St. Vegan cookies and sandwiches for pretty cheap.

The Tamarind Seed. 2935 Broadway @ 115th St. Locally-owned health food store with a salad bar, good sandwiches, and a knowledgeable staff. Don’t buy the pre-made sandwiches.

Lifethyme. 2275 Broadway @ 82nd St. Health food store with a good vegan bakery.

Healthy Pleasures. 2493 Broadway @ 93rd St. More health food, good salad bar.

Farmer’s Market. 116th Street between Broadway and Riverside, right across from the main gates, every Thursday from May through December. Fresh, local produce, way better than what you’ll get in stores. Check [www.cenyc.org](http://www.cenyc.org) for locations other days.

### Midtown

Hangawi. 12 E 32nd St. between Madison & 5th Aves. Amazing, creative, and yummy Korean food in a serene restaurant. Try the \$35 Emperor’s Meal if you have that kind of money.

Vatan. 409 3rd Ave. @ 30th St. Awesome Indian food, overdone decor. For \$23, a fantastic all-you-can eat feast. Date material. Tell them if you don’t eat dairy.

Zenith. 888 Eighth Ave. @ 53rd St. Asian fusion. Quiet and subtly-decorated, a great place for a date if you can’t afford Hangawi. The entrees are alright, but stay for the richest vegan cakes, fancy-restaurant style.

### Downtown

4th Street Food Coop. 58 4th St. between Bowery & 2nd Ave. “Coop” means “doesn’t screw over workers.” Good prices and variety.

Kate’s Corner 60 Ave. B @ 4th St. Really yummy American food, offering such favorites as Buffalo un-chicken wings and vegan pies your Grandma wished she’d made herself.

Angelica Kitchen. 300 E 12th St. between 1st & 2nd Aves. Upscale hippie food, with cute waitstaff. Skip the sandwiches, buy some dessert.

Veg City Diner. 55 W 14th St. between 5th & 6th Aves. A pseudo-diner with okay entrees, fantastic cake, and cute gay waiters. Pretty cheap, and if you flirt, they won’t card.



# Columbia Student Solidarity Network: The Black List

[www.columbia.edu/cu/cssn/](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/cssn/)

**American Civil Liberties Union:** Contact Julia Kraut [jrk35@columbia.edu](mailto:jrk35@columbia.edu)

**Amnesty International** fights against human rights abuses in the United States and abroad. Contact Steffani Jemison [spj7@columbia.edu](mailto:spj7@columbia.edu) and Katrina Seligmann [ks2018@columbia.edu](mailto:ks2018@columbia.edu)

**Barnard/Columbia Students for Choice and Party for Choice:** Jessica Alpert [ja452@columbia.edu](mailto:ja452@columbia.edu)

**Columbia/Barnard Earth Coalition (Earth-Co):** The campus group focusing on environmental issues, Earth-Co got Columbia to recycle after performing an environmental audit. We also work in coalition with groups on other campuses to win national campaigns. Contact Simon Fischer-Baum at [sjf48@columbia.edu](mailto:sjf48@columbia.edu), Angela Barranco [ab651@columbia.edu](mailto:ab651@columbia.edu) and Lauren Sacks [ljs44@columbia.edu](mailto:ljs44@columbia.edu).

**Columbia/Barnard Student Action Labor Coalition:** We support local labor struggles, particularly ones on campus, such as the Teaching Assistant's Union and the Support Staff unions. Contact Liz Capone-Newton [eac126@columbia.edu](mailto:eac126@columbia.edu)

**Columbia Campus Greens:** Contact Lauren Schwartz [ls591@columbia.edu](mailto:ls591@columbia.edu)

**Columbia Men Against Violence:** Contact [cmav@columbia.edu](mailto:cmav@columbia.edu)

**Columbia Students Against Immigrant Detention:** In prisons in New York and New Jersey hundreds of immigrants are detained, sometimes for years, without legal assistance or adequate medical care, and outside support. A new group for 2002, CSAID works to support these detainees and their families through advocacy, direct action and fundraising. On campus, Columbia Students Against Immigrant Detention will work to educate the Columbia community about immigrant detention through speaking events, film nights, letter writing parties and more! Contact: Lesley Wood, [ljw31@columbia.edu](mailto:ljw31@columbia.edu)

**Columbia Students Against Sweatshops:** By changing university purchasing decisions and informing consumers, we have helped thousands of garment and other workers win better pay and safer working conditions. We are a part of a national network of students committed to fighting for global economic justice. [www.c-sas.org/](http://www.c-sas.org/) Contact Nate [nmt2002@columbia.edu](mailto:nmt2002@columbia.edu) or x3-7843

**Feminists United on Campus:** Contact Liz Budnitz [ebudnitz@barnard.edu](mailto:ebudnitz@barnard.edu)

**International Socialist Organization:** We believe that war and poverty are products of capitalism. We are involved in building movements against the war, for justice in Palestine, against the criminal injustice system and link them together to build a socialist alternative. The ISO meets Thursdays at 8pm in Hamilton Hall. Email: [sh414@columbia.edu](mailto:sh414@columbia.edu).

**Jews for Social Justice:** Offers a variety of service projects and works in coalition with other groups on campaigns. Contact Emily Kates [ek532@columbia.edu](mailto:ek532@columbia.edu) and Sonja Rakowski [sr2018@columbia.edu](mailto:sr2018@columbia.edu)

**People for Peace** is the Columbia/Barnard/Morningside Heights coalition against war and racism. We stand against all aspects of War on Terrorism, from the US's military campaigns in Afghanistan, the Philippines and possibly Iraq, to racial profiling, attacks on our civil rights, and the grotesque military budget. We are a member group of a nation-wide network of campus-based antiwar organization, the National Campus Antiwar Network ([www.antiwarnetwork.org](http://www.antiwarnetwork.org)). For info, email [lpd23@columbia.edu](mailto:lpd23@columbia.edu)

**(re) Magazine** Each issue is devoted to a different topic that encourages our readers to critically engage in the world and skool themselves. Contact Steve Theberge [spt31@columbia.edu](mailto:spt31@columbia.edu) and Liz Capone [eac126@columbia.edu](mailto:eac126@columbia.edu)

**Students for Justice In Palestine:** Contact Steve Theberge [spt31@columbia.edu](mailto:spt31@columbia.edu)

**SPEaK, Students Promoting Empowerment and Knowledge:** Founded by folks with roots in the 1996 hunger strike and struggle that brought Latino Studies and Asian American Studies programs to Columbia, SPEaK believes that as students, we should be active in shaping our education. We have fought for student input in the Ethnic and Gender Studies programs, created extracurricular spaces for dialogue about identities, including an underground student-run Native American Studies program, and curated public art exhibitions. Feel free to send questions, ideas, feedback or information to our core committee at [speak@columbia.edu](mailto:speak@columbia.edu)

**Students for Sensible Drug Policy** is one of more than 200 nationwide SSDP chapters working actively to publicize the devastating and far-reaching effects of the nation's failed and futile War on Drugs. Currently, it is fighting, among others, mandatory minimum sentencing, the obscene proliferation of the prison-industrial complex, Plan Colombia, disparate racist drug sentencing, police conduct and brutality, patients' right to medical marijuana, and the 1998 Drug Provision to the National Education Act, which denied federal student aid to more than 40,000 people last year. Now, with a Presidential Administration full of hawkish Drug Warriors, your energy and involvement is needed more than ever. For more info, visit [www.columbia.edu/cu/ssdp](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ssdp)

**Students for Environmental and Economic Justice** is an activist group that pressures the Barnard and Columbia administrations to adopt socially and environmentally responsible policies. Previous successful campaigns have included the creation of Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) Committees at both Barnard and Columbia and the availability of Fair Trade coffee on campus. If you have any questions or would like to get involved, please contact us at [seej@columbia.edu](mailto:seej@columbia.edu).

**Take Back the Night** holds a large annual march promoting an end to domestic and sexual violence, followed by an anonymous speakout allowing community members to share their experiences. TBtN also holds workshops and other events on safe, consensual sexuality, and on how we as a community can end rape. Contact Priscilla Caldwell, [pc391@columbia.edu](mailto:pc391@columbia.edu)

**World Bank/International Monetary Fund Organizing Committee:** We are organizing against the WB/IMF meetings, September 27-28, in Washington, DC. Contact [cu-breakthebank@riseup.net](mailto:cu-breakthebank@riseup.net)

**United Students of Color Council:** The umbrella organization for People of Color organizations on campus, the USCC is dedicated to promoting unity among groups of color and working on joint events. Contact: Alexis Gumbs [ag976@columbia.edu](mailto:ag976@columbia.edu) and Onyi Nwoso [onn1@columbia.edu](mailto:onn1@columbia.edu)



*Police swarm peaceful anti-Gore demonstration outside Columbia's official "Free Speech Zone," October 2000*

In the spring of 1968,  
Avery Hall wasn't only  
known for its quiet  
library...

Join the Columbia  
Student Solidarity  
Network for its  
annual screening of  
the documentary *Columbia Revolts*, a  
student-made  
chronicle of the  
strike of 1968.



This could  
have been  
you.

**Sunday**

**September 22nd  
7p.m.**

**Dodge Room of  
Earl Hall**

**Free  
Food!**

[www.columbia.edu/cu/cssn](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/cssn)