

9-2000

The L, vol. 2, no. 1, September 2000

New York Law School

the

AWARD
WINNING

Vol. 2, No. 1

September 2000

Balance Due

School Gives Reasons for Tuition Increase

New policy: 1L's pay more

Susan L. Harper
Editor-in-Chief

When third-year day student Robert Lorch opened his tuition bill this past summer and noticed the \$1,374 increase he "was disappointed, but not surprised."

"It has happened every year," Lorch shared with the L.

While it is no secret that NYLS's tuition increased this year, the question on everyone's mind, however, is why?

"The increase has two reasons," says Fred DeJohn, Associate Dean for Finance and Administration. "First, there are increases in costs across the board. The second has to do with NYLS's attrition rate."

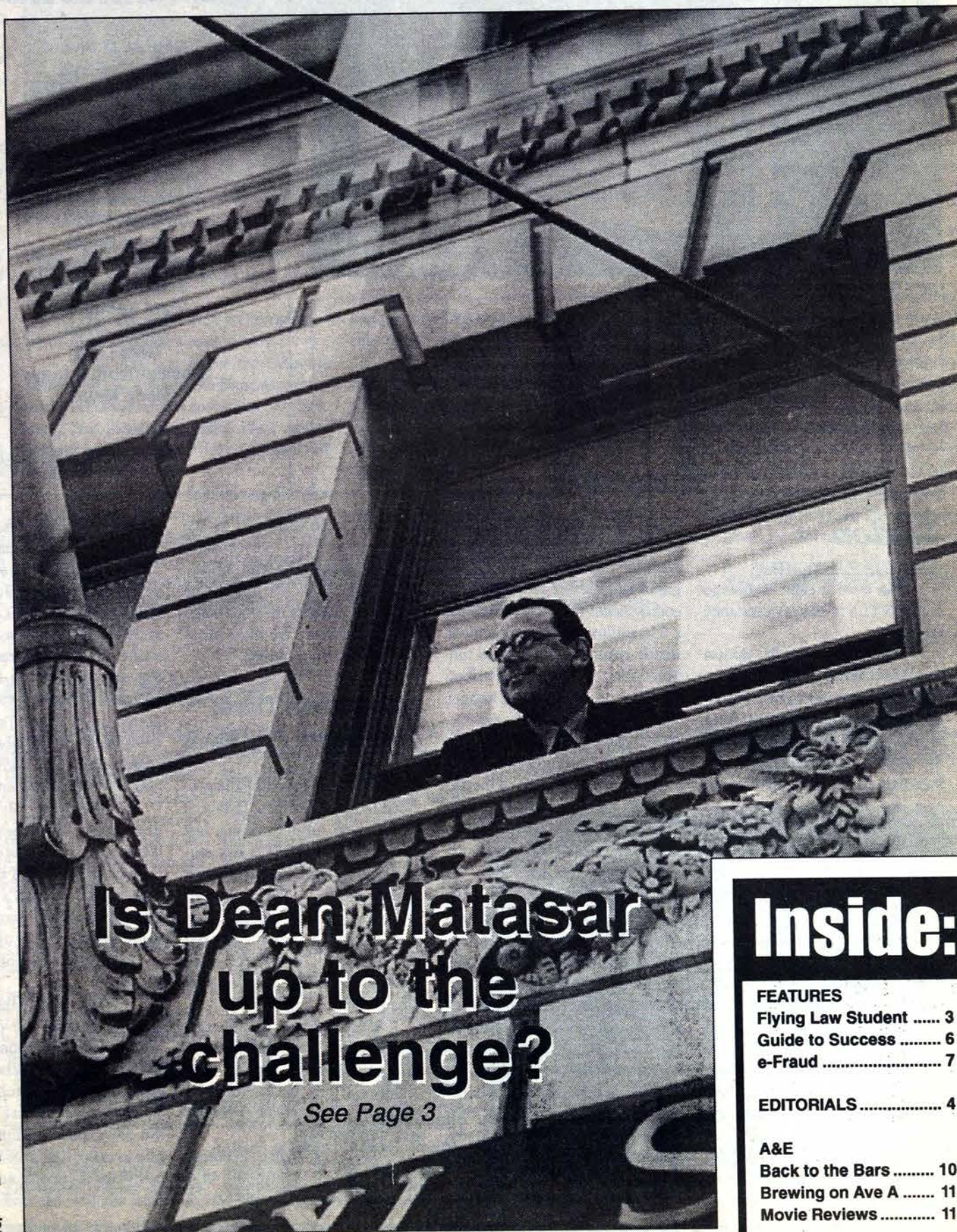
"Increases across the board," says DeJohn, includes increases in "salaries, cost of computerization, up keep of physical plant, postage and supplies," among other things.

As a general rule, DeJohn shares that "NYLS upgrades their computers every three years to keep pace with technology changes." This year, for example, computers in the Student Center and in kiosks were replaced.

"Attrition," or non-retention of students, DeJohn says, "brings down revenue." After the first year, the number of students in a given class usually decreases, thereby decreasing the revenue. The reasons students may no longer attend NYLS vary.

"The reasons range from health, finance, geography, transferring to a new school and realization that one may not want to go into law," shares DeJohn. "Additionally, because the School does not have a lot of students transferring in, the school has to compensate for the loss in revenue when a student leaves NYLS."

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STEPHEN HILL/COURTESY: OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Not to toot our own horns, but...

The L won third prize, for Best Feature Article in a law school newspaper at the American Bar Association Law Student Division Awards. The article, "Your Money and How It's Spent" by Susan Harper and David Resnick, which ran last semester in the March/April 2000 issue,

focused on the SBA's handling of student funds.

The L placed among the *Harvard Law Record* and NYU Law's *The Commentator*, which came in first and second place respectively. The Awards took place on July 7 during the ABA's Annual Convention.



David Resnick, Eddie Westfield and Susan Harper.

the



Tuition

Continued from previous page

An even greater challenge facing NYLS is its heavy reliance on tuition.

"This is a heavily tuition dependent school," says DeJohn. Ninety percent (90%) of NYLS's operating revenue is derived from tuition dollars. Richard Matasar, the newly appointed Dean and President of NYLS is working on new and alternative sources of revenues to keep tuition in place.

In a recent interview with the L, Dean Matasar shared some of the new ideas for alternative revenue. Plans are in the works for developing continuing education courses for business people who want to understand the law. Other ideas include distance learning courses and focusing more on the School's unique strengths such as civil rights law.

"Increasing the class sizes to increase revenue is not an option," says Matasar, "Smaller class sizes are better for the School."

Besides tuition revenue,

NYLS raises money through other traditional methods, including Alumni donations, foundation grants and interest generated from endowments. NYLS currently has a \$36 million dollar endowment, which generates about \$1.6 million dollars in revenue contributed to the school's annual budget.

"Most schools," says DeJohn, "can get about 5% revenue from their investment pool." Dean Matasar, also shared that the School's endowment is within the top 30-40% of law schools nationwide and outperforms the Standard & Poors Index.

Increasing alumni giving, however, seems to be another challenge. DeJohn says, "Alumni contribute in high numbers, but their dollar contribution per capita is not high." DeJohn pointed out, though, that there are schools who have very large endowments and strong alumni support, yet still increase their tuition annually. This seems to imply that even if a school is healthy financially, students may still be paying high tuition.

Some current students do

not seem to be disturbed by the tuition increase. Third year evening student Joseph Miller, says "No, I was not upset. The other law schools do not charge that much more. We need all of the resources we can get."

Two Tuition Tiers: First-Years Pay More

According to numbers provided to the L from the Office of Finance and Administration, last year, a full time NYLS day student paid \$22,900, and a part-time student paid \$17,178. This year, for continuing students (2Ls, 3Ls, 4Ls), the annual tuition increased by 6% to \$24,274 for full time students, and \$18,210 for part time students.

New students (1Ls), this year, however, paid slightly more. 1Ls paid \$24,503 for full time tuition, and \$18,380 for part time tuition or a 7% increase from last year's tuition bill.

The 1% difference in tuition for 1Ls versus continuing students was not noted in the NYLS

The 25th Charles W. Froessel Moot Court Competition

Best Oralist (Winner)
Frank Valverde

Finalists

Peter Buscemi
Mara Levy

Paul Kemnitzer
Frank Valverde

Best Preliminary Round Oralist
David Tomlin

Best Brief and Best Team
Rebecca Ulisse and
Frank Valverde

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Lisa Declemente
Patricia B. DeCola
Lourdes DeRojas
Justin Fossbender
Crystal Frazier
Anna Genet
Michael G. Gervasi
Souren Israelyan
Paul Kemnitzer
Kelly Lerner
Mara Levy
Jessica-Deanna Lupo
Maria Mauro

Matthew J. McGowan
Alina Moffat
Janice Purvis
William Quackenboss
Jodi Quintero
Sherie Rosenberg
Frank Schirripa
Michael Schneider
Amy Schwartzwald
Dan Simonetti
Kimberly Sparagna
Raju Sundaran
David Tomlin
Rebecca Ulisse
Frank A. Valverde
Alifya Vasi
Eric Weissman

For more information, call 212-431-2175.

2000-2001 Academic Catalog or on the School's official web site. The difference was subtly suggested, however, in a June 7, 2000 letter to current NYLS students announcing the increase in tuition written by former Dean Wellington and then Dean-Designate Matasar. It was also subtly suggested on NYLS's Tuition Payment Policy Sheet which current students received with their Fall 2000 invoice statement.

It seems the only way a student would have been aware of this new two tier tuition policy, is if he or she accessed the Student Handbook on NYLS's private internal intranet site. Incoming students, though, do not usually have access to this site until they are enrolled.

When the L asked why incoming students are paying 1% more, DeJohn responded "We are trying to keep costs down and charge returning students less. This is first year we are doing this. We are experimenting with this idea to make it less painful [financially] for the people already here. New students can make the deci-

sion when deciding to come to the school, whereas a continuing student can not. Next year, the 2L's will pay less than the 1Ls."

First year student, Sophia Piliouras, was surprised and a bit angry to hear that she was paying a 1% higher tuition (about \$250) than current students.

"This is the same dollar amount of the work study stipend, the costs of my books or even my utilities bills for the entire year," says Piliouras. "Unless, we are getting additional services, there is no justification. Even if it is for the advance week seminar, I don't see the justification. All schools have some form of orientation and new students are not penalized."

Upon considering the brand new "get it up front" two tier tuition strategy, the important question the L was unable to determine is if tuition increases next year, which tuition (that of the current students or 1L entering students) will the calculation be based upon? For students, this question remains to be answered.

Dean Matasar: On a Mission for NYLS

Eddie Westfield
Founding Editor

Rick Matasar has plans for NYLS. Matasar, who took the helm as our 15th President and Dean in July, is setting a brisk pace for everyone to follow. He aims to help the NYLS community redefine the mission and solidify the long-range purpose of the Law School.

Recently, **the L** sat down with Dean Matasar to find out more on his plans for NYLS and how they will impact the students and other members of the community in the future. Specifically, students wonder what this new Dean will do for them.

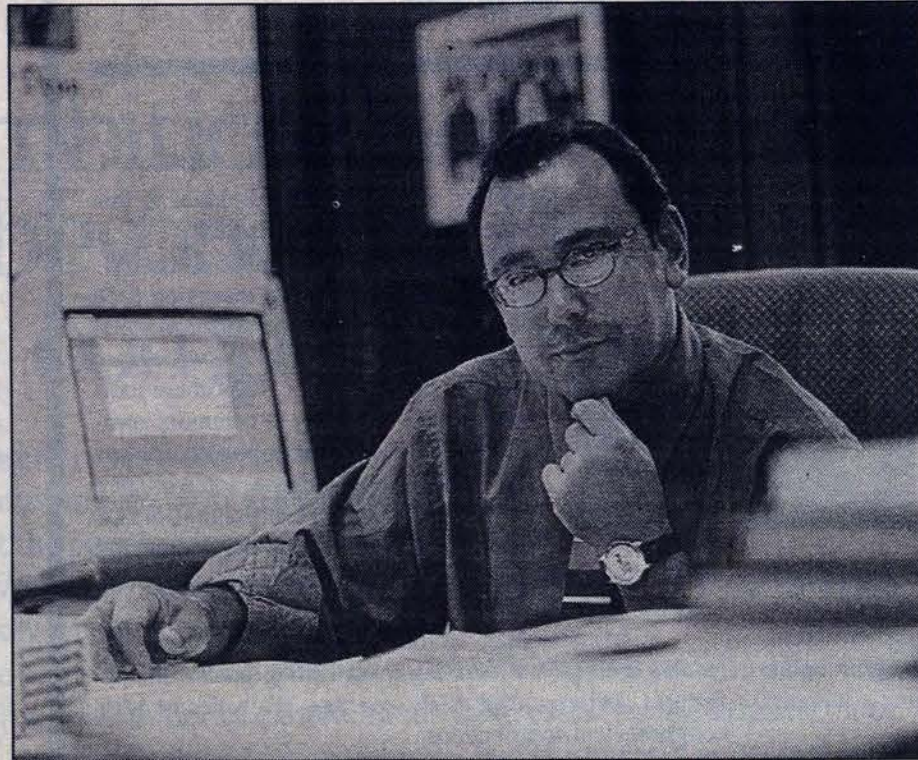
"It's not so much what I can do," says Dean Matasar about his role. "It's what we can do for each other and for the law school."

On top of Dean Matasar's desk sits a molded figurine of Daffy Duck standing eagerly behind a desk topped with stacks of cartoon cash. Below this desk-atop-a-desk is a banner that reads "BIGGER BETTER FASTER CHEAPER." Does this plastic vignette serve as an indication of his plans for implementation of the goals set forth?

"A dean set forth ideas and makes suggestions, but turning ideas into a reality depends on all of us," the Dean explains. "It is my role as a facilitator to come up with good ideas for this school."

Dean Matasar first points out that NYLS must first look at our strengths, before pointing out any weaknesses. Some students still have their doubts.

"Dean Matasar says he wants to bring about change and improve this school's reputation," ponders one skeptical student who wished to remain uniden-



Dean Matasar at his desk

tified. "But isn't that what all deans say when they start out? I wonder if he means what he says."

Other students seem more optimistic of Dean Matasar's tenure here.

"I believe that under the dynamic leadership and guidance of Dean Matasar," states third-year day student Marcus Coleman, "this School will make major strides joining schools already at the pinnacle of legal education."

Matasar, whose fundraising abilities made him an attractive candidate for Dean, feels that good fundraising is directly correlated to the treatment of current students.

"I've always said that we are one rich alum away from a multi-million dollar

donation," he shares. "Fundraising starts with the students. We must take good care of them while they are here. If we treat you well, you will want to become valued contributors."

For now, "we have to tap out the donor that exists in every alum. Remind them of why they came here and what they still can do." He continues, "It is about selling ourselves to them, not about selling them on the school."

Dean Matasar wants to make NYLS a place more future lawyers want to attend. He is looking into reinforcing programs already in place and creating new programs of study as well. He describes a new series of classes and seminars targeted to non-

lawyers—doctors, business people, etc.—as taught by our faculty.

"We are an urban law center and a hub for public service law," Dean Matasar states. "We have to draw upon members of our faculty who are specialists in such areas as civil and human rights, immigration, and governmental relations." He believes that capitalizing on these specialties will help reinforce the School's identity throughout the greater legal community.

The Dean also wants to use the Internet to market NYLS. He states that the revenue stream from new ventures could alleviate the rising costs and allow NYLS to accept fewer students than it has in the past.

"We can't change our reputation overnight!" he admits. "Like every school in the World, we could always be better."

The Dean believes that New York City is a great place to do what he is doing—attempting improve legal education.

"I don't understand people's misconception of New Yorkers," he shares. "The people here are very friendly—much more friendly and helpful than people in Middle America or the South."

Finally, Dean Matasar wants to remind students that he has an open door policy with students. Any student wishing to meet with him to discuss anything may call his office to schedule an appointment. Students may also send any questions or comments to deardean@nyls.edu. The Dean tells us that he will be happy to share with any student his plans for NYLS.

"My mission is for us to have a lot of fun while we improve the reputation of New York Law School," the Dean says in closing.

Students sure hope he can deliver.

Personal Focus

The High-Flying Law Student

Joanne Olson
Features Editor

Some might joke that law students' heads are up in the clouds. Andrew Baffi, on the other hand, is actually up there.

Baffi, a second-year part-time day student, is also a full-time pilot for Trans World Airlines (TWA). Andrew starts his days at 4:30 AM, when he leaves his home in upstate New York and drives to either LaGuardia or Kennedy Airports in Queens. Once there, Andrew boards his MD80 aircraft and takes off to Florida or the Caribbean.

After safely seeing his passengers off, he waits for the plane to be reloaded, and makes the return flight to New York on the

same day, arriving back home in the early evening. That might seem like an easy job for a pilot, but Andrew is also taking 13 credits this semester. The part time day program here at New York Law School allows him to work around his hectic schedule.

Luckily, Andrew only flies about 15 days a month. He does his studying on his days off, and between classes. No reading while in-flight for this student. On school days, he stays with his parents in Flushing so that he doesn't have the long commute to his home. His wife Angela, who is a social worker in Newburgh, is very supportive of her husband's aspirations.

Andrew didn't always plan to be a lawyer. He shared with **the**

L that he originally wanted to be a rock star. When he started Queens College, he majored in music and was in a band until 1991. He quickly realized that music just wasn't paying the bills. In 1991 he became a pilot.

Baffi learned to fly at Republic Airport in Farmingdale, NY, and flew advertising banners over the Long Island beaches. TWA hired him as a pilot in 1996. He is currently the co-chairman for the TWA Pilots Association Retirement & Insurance Committees, representing the interests of approximately 2,500 pilots. Although active in his union, there are no political aspirations for this future attorney. Instead, Andrew would like to concentrate on estate planning when he graduates.

His advice to all the other students juggling jobs, families and school is "Don't take your

eyes off your goals." There seems to be only clear skies ahead for Andrew.



Student and Pilot: Andrew Baffi

Editorial

Guts, Passion and Independence

Welcome to a new year at NYLS.

For first time readers, **the L** is the independent student voice at NYLS. How independent are we?

Most, if not all, of our articles are written and edited by hard working and committed NYLS students. From time to time we also try to sneak in a few special contributions authored by professors, staff or alumni. The outstanding layout and design of this publication, including most of our photos, are also creations of students.

Finally, with the exception of the small basement office space, limited telephone use and nominal supplies, **the L** receives zero funding from NYLS or the Student Bar Association. We cover all of our major expenses, including computer equipment and related printing expenses, via advertising revenue—which again, is initiated, handled and managed by students only.

We are extremely proud to say that because we are not

financially dependent on any group or individual at this school, we can bring objective reports as we see it.

Finally, a quality newspaper could never come to fruition without an outstanding editorial board managing each of its' divisions and committed writers. This year's editorial board and writers are certainly no exception. All of these individuals have one thing in common: commitment to excellence, a passion for our publication and its purpose, and without a doubt, guts. We highly encourage all NYLS students and members of the community

to submit articles and short opinion pieces per our guidelines for publication.

In this next year, we look forward to bringing to our readers more award winning investigative pieces, unique features, and expanded A&E coverage. We welcome your comments and contributions.



Susan Harper

Editor-in-Chief

Are You Involved?

Louis J. Russo III
Managing Editor

Let's give a nice New York Law School welcome to all the new incoming students, and all of the new faculty that have joined our ranks. I personally would like to welcome Dean Matasar to our school because I know he will make every effort to bring NYLS back towards the elite.

In this shortened September issue, I would like to invite all students to contribute to our future publications. The "Letters to **the L**" section, which will begin again next month, is your section. Use it to speak up and give your opinions,

yell, or share a few laughs for all to enjoy.

Currently, we are also actively recruiting proofreaders, news and feature writers. If you are interested in participating with **the L**, contact me directly or the editor in charge of section you are interested in writing for.

Finally, my hope for this publication is that it will continue to grow after my time here has come and gone. Remember this publication will only last as long as the students allow. A small handful of students started it and truly continue to keep it afloat. Without your important participation, after these individuals move on, so will the paper too. Get involved.

Why Am I Still Doing This?!

It's 10 PM on a Monday night. I'm missing the Jets game. I haven't opened a book yet. Summer session and the Moot Court competition destroyed my summer. I've been going non-stop since January. I'm in this office laying out this paper you are reading. The computer crashed again! We are almost at deadline! I want to go home!! What the hell am I still doing here?!!

... And then I remember the reason why: I love it!

Starting-up, heading, and putting together this student newspaper is one of the most grueling, exiting and rewarding feats I've accomplished to date.

Like many third-and-fourth-years, I got my reasons to bitch and moan. Heck, I just want to graduate already. I do not look forward to the bar, nor do I have a job lined up. Money's tight, to boot.

But that's most of us. And just like you, I also have reasons to be grateful. I look forward to what Dean Matasar has to offer. I revel in the fact that, for us, it is almost over. And personally, I am very thankful to be a part of this—the **L** at New York Law School.



Eddie Westfield

Founding Editor

I'm not trying pat myself or anyone else on the back. I put forth this experience as an example of something to be thankful for. Think of one thing that you have already accomplished. Whatever it is, be proud that you have done so. It will make this struggle of ours worthwhile.

In all this, I must not forget to thank Susan. Not only is she keeping this paper going, she has brought it to another level. We are more professional and organized outfit than ever before. When Mr. Cohen and I started this, we never thought it would take off this far. Yet we still have miles to go.

For me, I will continue to put this together for the gang until I graduate. It's nice to see one's handiwork end up in everyone else's hands.

For the rest of you, stay strong. It's alright to be frustrated and angry sometimes. Law school is not an easy challenge. Yet do not forget what you already have accomplished. Nothing can take that away.

That is why I am still here.



We won an award.

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The L is the voice of the New York Law School community. We keep the community informed of relevant school news and events and provide a forum for students, alumni, faculty, staff and other members of the NYLS community to express their views and opinions. **The L** also features content dealing with legal issues and other topics of interest to members of the NYLS community.

The L is independently published by its student members and is released every month while school is in session. Contributions from students, faculty, alumni, staff, and all members of the NYLS community are always welcome.

The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of **the L**, any of its editors or staff members, or the students, faculty, or staff of New York Law School.

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All submissions should be on disk with a hard copy attached and either mailed or placed in our submissions' box in front of our office, room L2 in the lower level of the NYLS student center.

All submissions are due by 5 pm on the Thursday two weeks prior to the release date. Please include your name, telephone number, and email address with your submission.

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The L's 3 Month Plan Towards Finals Success

MONTH 1: September Success

Advice from Upperclass Students to the First-Years

Welcome to law school. If you are a first year, let us stress to you early on that the name of the game for 1L's is **grades, period.** If you desire to work in a large law firm (the type that pays the \$100K plus salary) everything comes down to **grades.** If you work hard and smart and "grade on" to Law Review or the Journals, this will probably open doors for you in the future. High-paying law firms seek primarily to hire individuals with this particular credential. Unlike college, where you can cruise by studying a couple of days before an exam, law school takes daily preparation.

All 1Ls must take required courses. Required course grades are determined by a SINGLE closed book final exam. Read on below for helpful hints to begin preparing for finals.

The L's 3 Month Plan Towards Finals Success is based on information gathered from successful "A" students. It is written by students for students to help you create the best strategy towards gaining law school success.

Get the Syllabus

Each professor provides you with a course syllabus on the first day of class. Make a copy of this and use it to begin building your course outline. Look at the page number assigned on your syllabus and then look at the name of the corresponding chapter heading and sub-headings carefully. Write the name of the chapter heading or sub-heading in your notebook and on your brief. With the exception of additional articles your professor may hand out in class, your final will most likely just cover the materials on your syllabus. When you have completed a chapter's material, make a notation that that subject matter ends. Duplicate this procedure for each new chapter heading.

Read the Assignments

Reading means several things in law school. First, it means reading the assignment before class. Most professors assign on average 3-6 cases, depending on the complexity of the topic. It is hard to tell an individual how much time they should allot for study. It has been said that you should study three hours for every one credit.

Reading also means reading EVERY word carefully in the case or statute, including footnotes. You must also look up words you do not know in *Black's Law Dictionary* or *Webster's Dictionary*. If this sounds time consuming—it is. However, it is the only way you will gain precision as a future attorney.

Brief the Cases

Briefing is like creating a mini-outline of each case you read. A brief contains the following:

- 1) Title of the Case, Year decided, and the Court.
- 2) Procedural History (i.e. what happened in the courts below that led to this court case you are reading.)
- 3) Facts of the Case (This is the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the case.)
- 4) Issue—What is at issue in the case? You can usually find this by looking for the word "whether."
- 5) Holding of the Case—What did the court hold? Do they agree with the person bringing forth the case? Or do they disagree?
- 6) Reasoning—Why did the court hold this? Did the court below interpret the law or facts correctly or incorrectly?
- 7) Rules used—what are the major precedents or statutes the court is relying on to give credence to their holding and reasoning.
- 8) Dissent—The dissent's opinion is not binding. However, you should always read it to make yourself aware of the other side's arguments.

If time permits, type out your brief. Come finals, you will have much of the information already organized so that you need only plug in your course notes. If however, time does not permit typing, write out your brief neatly. You can also speed up this process by bringing a laptop to class. Many of the classrooms are computer accessible.

Listen Attentively

Your professor will review the cases that you read and briefed for homework, in class. Many times your professor will point out a certain passage or mention that this is a very important case for you to know. The bells should be ringing in your head when you hear this! Highlight the passage the professor points out and make a note that this is an important case. This is usually an indication that you should know this case or passage for your final.

Further, if you have any questions that are not answered in class, go to the professor IMMEDIATELY and get clarification. This point is stressed by many Law Review members. Many times the course work builds upon the last class. If you do not understand the material from the last class, you may not understand the future lessons. Thus, clear up areas of confusion early on.

Next, do the problems assigned in class. Many times, these problems show up in a similar format on your final.

Don't Miss Class

Lastly, GO TO CLASS. Law school is too competitive and frankly too costly of an investment not to take full advantage of it. Remember, people will depend on you as their attorney in the future. Frankly, there is no one in the school who can afford to mess up, because they happen to miss a class.

More Tips...

Post Class Review: After each class, review your class notes. This will reinforce what you have just learned. Again, if you did not understand the materials discussed in class, go to the professor and get clarification, immediately.

Study Buddy: Many people form a study group or find a study buddy to work with. Others may prefer to work on their own. You should do whatever you feel comfortable with. In study groups, everyone should come prepared to discuss the

cases, holdings, problems, and so forth. If you find that your time is being wasted on chit chat, pull out of the group and find another group to study with.

Outlines: Each weekend, if possible, begin creating your outline. If you do this now, you will not be overwhelmed come finals. Using your syllabus, along with your brief, class notes, and any problems you completed in class, begin creating an outline.

Additional Study Aids: For hints on how to write briefs or clarifications on the law, you can obtain commercial outlines in the Barnes & Noble Bookstore located in the basement. Use these to reinforce your studies, only. Don't rely on these to get you through law school. The best education you can give to yourself is to understand how to read the cases on your own. When you are out in the "real" world, there will be no study guides. Therefore, try to utilize some, if not all, of the hints above and use commercial study aids for reference only.

Next month: more of *the L's 3 Month Plan Towards Finals Success*.

NYLS/Bar 2001

BAR FAQ's

STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT THE BAR EXAM

by

Prof. Joseph L. Marino

Did you know that getting one extra essay point can be worth more than getting three MBE questions correct? Do you know the best strategy for guessing on the MBE? Should you take two bar exams this summer?

Plan now to attend one of these sessions:

September 25	1 - 2 PM	A900
September 26	5:15 - 6 PM	A900
October 2	7:40 - 8:45PM	A900
October 5	1 - 2 PM	A700

The Sinkhole

Isn't It Nice?

Louis J. Russo III
Managing Editor

Isn't it nice? A brand new year, and for some a brand new start. The school has a brand new Dean/President and two Associate Deans. I think it would only be fair to allow them time to settle in and try to rebuild the damage done from the previous administration before I begin my insightful critiques.

Recently, I had to go for a routine eye examination which gave me an opportunity for a reality check and made me realize the challenges these new NYLS leaders face. During my conversation with the ophthalmologist she asked what Law School I went to. Quickly I responded, "New York Law School." Just as quickly she replied, "Oh, that's not a very good school...is it?" I was floored. After I composed myself, I pushed the eye machine towards her and went on my way. So trust me, I am not the only person who feels cheated that New York Law School is not doing what it should after 100 years of existence.

I hope everyone has taken the time to stroll around the library and see the new monitors used for the schools online catalog. So let me understand something. My tuition goes up about six percent and the library gets FLAT screen monitors? I agree that the library needed new monitors (the

black and white ones weren't cutting it anymore), but is a flat screen monitor really necessary? Currently, a Gateway flat screen monitor sells for about \$930. upwards to \$1,730. for nicer screens. The money should have been allocated, however, to a better scanner. How many times am I going to pull up a reading assignment or a final grade and find that the picture is blurry.

Last year, we discussed the schools pathetic curve, the poor use of teacher reviews, and the prior administrations unfair procedures for enrolling students in the course Principles of Legal Analysis. I think the new administration is poised and ready to take New York Law School back to a respectable level in the Legal Community. But don't think for a minute that we the students will allow or tuition to rise and our reputation to fall without asking "why?"

This year we will look at things like tuition increases, anonymous grading, favoritism and other areas of interest. I hope I will have nothing to complain about and maybe this column will be able to end its run. Until then, let's remember that we are paying customers of our legal education and we should demand only the best when our dollars are being sucked down the NYLS tuition driven sinkhole. BE INFORMED, BE ACTIVE, SPEAK UP.

CHURCH WORTH WEST BROADWAY BEYOND

the world is out there. start here.

CyberScope

E-Signatures: Fraud Made Easy?

It happened to me... It can happen to you.

Chris Ross

On October 1, under the Electronic Signature Act (E-Sign) an electronic signature can be used to create a binding contract. The government asserts its intention and purpose behind E-sign is to encourage the use and continued growth of technology in society. However, critics (including myself) believe that the law may just be the vehicle to foster fraud. The law reads:

(a) GENERAL RULE- With respect to any contract, agreement, or record entered into or provided in, or affecting, interstate or foreign commerce, notwithstanding any statute, regulation, or other rule of law, the legal effect, validity, or enforceability of such contract, agreement, or record shall not be denied—

(1) on the ground that the contract, agreement, or record is not in writing if the contract, agreement, or record is an electronic record; or

(2) on the ground that the contract, agreement, or record is not signed or is not affirmed by a signature if the contract,

agreement, or record is signed or affirmed by an electronic signature.

On the surface, E-Sign appears to alter only a single requirement of a traditional contract; the requirement that a contract be on paper, thus, making life a little easier for consumers and businesses alike. However, if you think through the broader implications of the E-sign Act, didn't the government just make it easier for a common criminal to commit fraud in the short term?

As a consumer, I've always felt that the requirement of a contract in writing gave me some peace of mind because it meant that the act of attempting fraud would take more than just a minimal effort. After all, someone would have to forge my signature in the end.

That was until the Internet became a part of everyday life.

An average individual on the Internet can now have their identity stolen by another individual with only a computer, phone line and a few keystrokes.

Sounds crazy, right? In fact, it is not.

I know this all too well because it happened to me.

After running into the yearly trouble with my student loan application, I was told by my bank, that I had a negative comment on my credit report and that they would not service my student loans because of this. The bank claimed that I had "Abused my Bank of America ATM Card," in the state of California and caused my account to be overdrawn.

No, I did not beat up the ATM machine while in California. In fact, I have never even been to California. Nor do I have an account with Bank of America. I immediately feared the worst. After a few phone calls, I confirmed that an individual had opened a bank account in his name, but with my social security number, and defrauded the bank of funds.

With E-sign, that same person who stole my identity can now open bank accounts, lines of credit and brokerage accounts. In the very near future, they can even take out a mortgage within hours — all from the comforts of their own home.

Although E-sign doesn't legally take effect until October 1st, already several financial companies have begun accepting e-signatures. The online brokerage house, E*Trade and the mutual fund companies; Invesco and Marsico currently allow you to open an e-sign account online.

E-sign does have some positive implications, though. In a single broad stroke, E-sign swept away a number of chaotic state laws and their old school approach to electronic mediums. However, in that very same single broad stroke they may have made it a little easier for the common criminal to defraud a law-abiding citizen in a more serious way. He or she need not even leave the confines of his or her own home. They never have to walk into a bank and speak with a teller or an account manager. Nor do they have to talk on the phone with a broker or the loan officer.

For the time being I'll stick with what has worked for the last couple of hundred years — pen and paper plus keep a watchful eye on those credit reports. I suggest you do the same!



1999-2000 Winners of the Golden "L" Awards

Last April, **the L** held its first Golden "L" Awards. Nominees included sole contributor writers, monthly column writers, proof-readers and editors. Recipients received awards plus nominal gift certificates towards school book purchases. The following is a list of the winners recognized for their outstanding contributions to **the L**.

Column Writing Awards

Best Monthly Column: **Lou Russo II** ("the Sinkhole")

Excellent Monthly Column Award: **Christopher Ross** ("Cyberscope")

Outstanding Creative Column Award: **Ed Maggio** ("Coffee House Diaries and Liquid Bar Review")

Editorial Writing Award

Excellence in Monthly Editorial Writing: **David Resnick**

News Writing Awards

Best News Article: **Eddie Westfield Jr.**, "NYLS Names Its New Dean"

Ace Community News Article: **Mark Demetropoulos**, "Controversy Arises Over the Blood Drive"

Special Writing Category Awards

Best Human Interest Article: **Maria Guerra**, "Stopping the Embargo on Cuba Starts at the Ballot Box"

Best Persuasive Articles: **Gerard Strain**, "Southern Cross: Let it Fly" & "The Confederate Flag: Burn It!" in Case For/Case Against

Best Critique of an Important Legal Subject Matter: **Alison Berger**, "In Contempt of the Status Quo"

NYLS Club Writing Award

Notable Club Contributor: **John Kang** (Asian-American Law Students Assoc.)

Special One-Time Contributors

Special Contributor: **Heather Poole**, "In Search of Civil Rights Law"

Special Contributor: **Robert Lorch**, "The Life of an International Lawyer"

Organization Awards

Outstanding Organizational Member Award: **Julie Goldenberg**

Outstanding Organizational Member Award: **Joanne Olson**

Outstanding Organizational Member Award: **Cecilia Blackburn**

Outstanding Organizational Member Award: **Lori Quinn**

Best Newcomer: **Ed Maggio**

Outstanding Leadership: **David Resnick**

Outstanding Leadership: **Eddie Westfield Jr.**

Phenomenal Layout "Guru" Award: **Eddie Westfield Jr.**

Good Job Everyone!

Welcome to the New York Law School Bookstore, first-year and returning students!!

Congratulations! You've made it this far through your academic career and now have the most exciting challenge ahead of you—earning your degree. Imagine the memories and experiences that are ahead of you!

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We will be a part of so many of your college memories because we are your resource for the essentials of college living. Because of this special role we play on the campus, the staff and I are constantly offering new student-oriented programs and finding better ways to serve our highly unique clientele—*you*.

Take textbooks, for example. Let's be realistic—textbooks are not cheap. But we work with the publishers to get the lowest price possible, and our **used** textbooks knock 25% off the new text price. Another example of how we work for you is our large selection of academically priced software. We also carry a large selection of reference titles and study guides to assist you with your heavy course load. The bookstore also provides a special ordering service to the campus community for titles or merchandise not currently in stock; if you need that Harry Potter book or John Grisham paperback, we can get for you quickly and conveniently.

We look forward to providing you with everything we can during your time at the New York Law School Bookstore. If there is anything my staff or I can do to assist you, please do not hesitate to ask. Remember—this is YOUR bookstore—here to help YOU!

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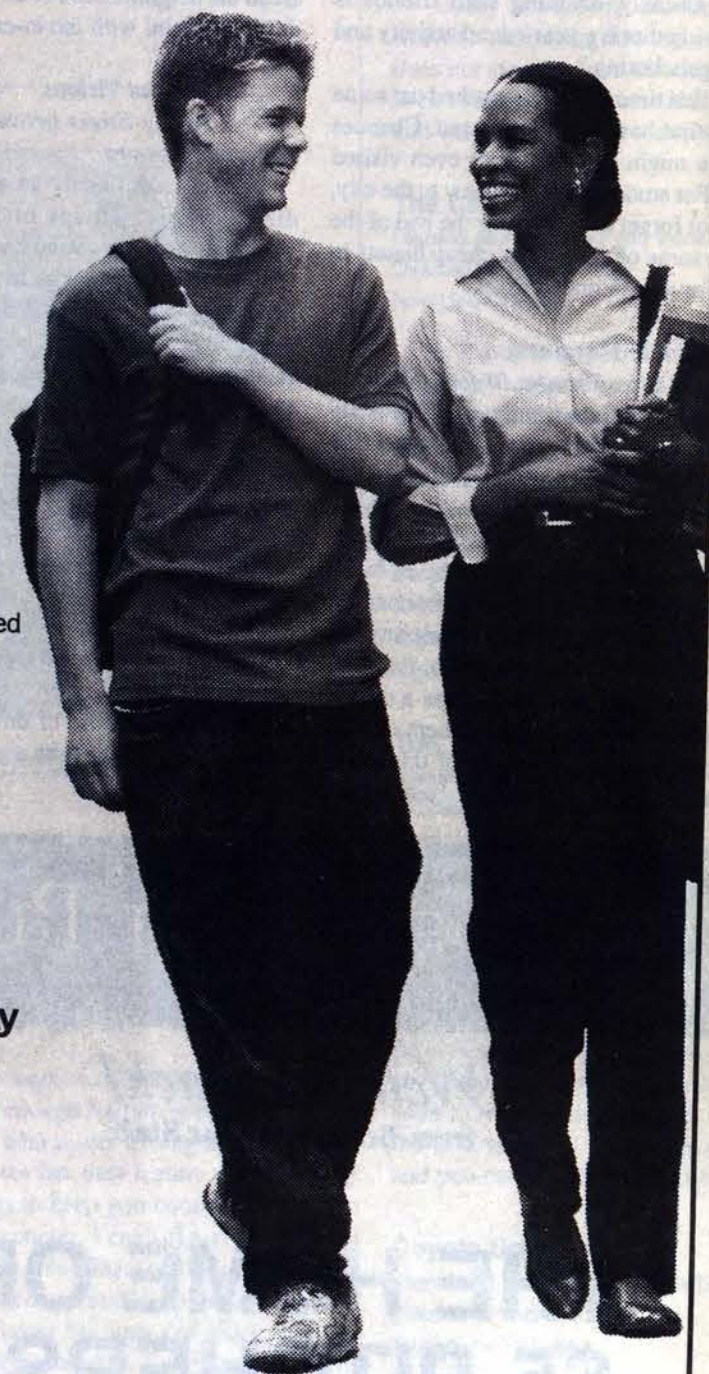
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Liquid Bar Review

New to Town? Back to School? Cheap Drinks?

Ed Maggio
News Editor

It's that time of year again, when the summertime fun is coming to an end and free time to do whatever you want disappears. Luckily, drinking with friends is something that is a year-round activity and never gets boring.

This time around, I checked out some places that have been requested. Chances are you might have heard or even visited them. For students who are new to the city, I did not forget to mention at the end of the article some of the nearby cheap haunts in town for you to grab a drink.

Double Happiness

173 Mott Street at Broome Street

Lately, all the trendy drinking establishments try to keep their locations hidden and this is no exception. What used to be a mob run gay bar in the Chinatown/Soho area has become one of the most popular candlelit yuppie bars to be at in the evening hours. A well stocked bar and the upscale crowd will please almost any law student. Drinks are not cheap, but then again you come here to impress a date or co-workers, not to drink pitchers of bud. Live music is a key feature of this place, featuring different drum and base groups

performing during the week. The only drawback to this place is that it can be a little tight. As one bar patron said, "It can feel like a sardine can, and basketball players may not want to be around low ceilings." Still, it is a place worth a visit if you are in the neighborhood to sit at a table and drink a martini with the in-crowd.

Sweet and Vicious

5 Spring Street between Elizabeth Street and Bowery

This is definitely an after work ladies hangout. Groups of well-dressed women invade this Soho bar on weekend afternoons and evenings to hang out and drink. It is low key with an interesting new wave dark bench motif, in a part of town that is very quiet. Yuppie gentlemen quickly follow suit in hopes of picking up a professional woman. Generally, men seem to pay for women's drinks here. Additionally, since the bar's location is kept quiet it allows a safe haven for people to avoid a huge crowd. Though be warned, the crowd I have heard is slowly growing with each passing week. Drink prices are reasonable, and mixed drinks are pretty good. The garden is open if weather permits, which is another peak feature of this place. If you are seeking to drink with a group this place is for you.

One if By Land, Two if By Sea

Barrow Street between West 4th and 7th Avenue

One of NYC's premiere 5 star restaurants and one of the oldest standing houses in the city (it belonged to Aaron Burr at one point) has one of the most comfortable and relaxing bars you can find. With live piano music in the evenings, a roaring fire place, servants with white gloves, and a well stocked wine cellar makes sheer elegance at it's best. Drinks are steep, but this is one of the places you visit when you are dressed up before going to a fancy event. It is nice just to grab a glass of wine or brandy, and sit down and relax. The atmosphere is beautiful, and has a Christmas decoration feel to it. If you can afford dinner here, I would highly suggest spending the money. If not, just grabbing a quick drink before going to a Broadway show will have your date very impressed.

Off the Wagon

MacDougal Street between West 4th and Bleecker

One of the best selections of beer and drinks and some of the cheapest prices you will find in the city. Decent bar food if you get hungry is available even at late hours. A large open sports bar with TVs, pool ta-

bles, fuzz ball, and darts. A friendly bar staff that does not mind drinking on the job helps add to the fun. In addition to their already cheap happy hour prices, additional daily drink specials also are in effect. If you are here in the early afternoon, you can drink quietly in a wide open spaced bar, but in the evenings expect this place to get packed, especially with the NYU crowd.

Barrow Street Ale House

Barrow Street between West 4th and 7th Avenue

To get a break from all the trendy drinking establishments, this is a nice comfortable dive and respectable enough to visit on a date. Thursdays is a packed house for all you can drink beer on tap night, and daily drinking specials or featured events also provide opportunities for a good time. I can't figure out what's with the mounted animal heads that have clothing thrown on them, but who notices them after you have a few? Say hi to the cat that hangs out in the bar.

Well that's it for me 'til next time. Any comments, suggestions, requests, you can email L@nyls.edu or directly to me at beerforyouandme@hotmail.com. Here's to a brand new school year.

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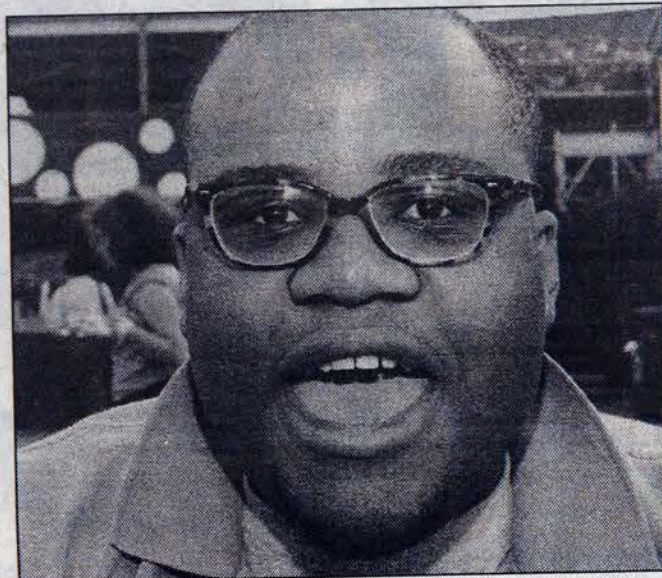


The L's own Cecilia Blackburn standing in front of a sacred cow in Foley Square

Got any funny pictures or quotes? Send them to:

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"Ahh... the atmosphere!"
Third-year Craig Battle enjoying a breath of fresh air at Shea Stadium

EDDIE WESTFIELD

Coffee House Diaries

Sipping Coffee on Avenue A

Ed Maggio
News Editor

If you enjoy coffee like me, finding a nice place to read/study and get away from the world even for a little while is worth every penny. My recent expedition to find new coffee houses has turned up two decent places over on Avenue A for a cup of tea or to have conversation before heading out on the town.

Cafe Pick Me Up
Avenue A b/n 9th-10th Street

This coffee shop, opposite Tompkins Square Park, is the perfect place to stop in during a date or to hang out with friends before hitting the club scene. Walking in, you quickly get sucked into the rustic country furniture, vintage decorations, and artwork. They feature all your hot drink favorites, including Chai Tea, Apple Cider, not to mention their very popular and delicious iced drinks. They feature an assortment of cheesecakes and chocolate desserts in case your sweet tooth acts up. If you are like me, and you become too tired to walk across the street to the Doc Holliday bar for a drink, the cafe features all your fa-

vorite bottles of beer and a decent wine selection to prevent you from leaving. The mostly East Village crowd dictates that the music at the cafe is techno and trance, but nobody seems to mind. Most people come here to read or to get into very heated discussions. If you are non-smoker, I would not get a table in the back because all the cigarette smoke can be overwhelming. My suggestion is to sit at one of the wooden tables facing the park. You'll feel relaxed even before you touch your coffee or the pot of tea you ordered.

Des Moines
Avenue A and E. 3rd Street

I would call this place a community coffee shop, because most people come here to relax before going up to their apartments or to study away from their roommates. Potted plants, green walls, and mounted wall lamps make it a pleasant location to get some of your work done. This place is popular for their assortment of fresh juices, gourmet bagels and cream cheeses, and gourmet salads at prices that are very reasonable. I personally would go for one of their muffins or the oven baked pizza which are great. The cups of coffee

here are huge. A regular size cup of coffee is good enough for two people, or for one student who wants to stay up all night. If you are tea fan, they feature a wide variety of drinks to keep you coming back to the service counter. I can't figure out how an employee doing Tarot card readings on site in the evenings and the alternative music being played fits into this place, but nobody seems to mind. Everyone who visits here is hard at work or reading, even the 60 year old lady with purple spiked hair who just stopped by while I was reading. If you want to see apartment openings, club info, merchandise sales, band info, their community wall is huge. Even during my visit more ads were being put up, and people would come in just to see the wall. A student can feel very comfortable doing work at this place, with few distractions.

Well that's it for me till next time. For comments, suggestions or requests write to L@nyls.edu or directly to me at beerforyouandme@hotmail.com. Till then enjoy life and drink coffee and tea when you can.

The Movie Maven Reviews

What's Hot & What's Not in the Theatres

Jenna Anderson

Hey Everybody, it's me, the Movie Maven. Attending law school full-time does not stop me from checking out a new flick every week. So here it is: what to see and what not to see in today's cinema...

The Cell

Starring Jennifer Lopez and Vince Vaughn
Directed By Tarsem Singh
New Line Cinema

The director of R.E.M.'s "Losing My Religion" video directed this film—and you can tell. Short on acting and plot, but huge on visual effects, this movie is a good Saturday night buddy flick. It's not Jennifer Lopez's strongest performance, but the non-stop barrage of special effects will keep you interested—and sometimes on the edge of your seat. (Guys: check out Jennifer Lopez in some amazing and intriguing costumes).

The Replacements

Starring Keanu Reeves and Gene Hackman
Directed by Howard Deutch
Warner Bros.

Though it lacks the intensity of "Any Given Sunday," and the goofiness of "Necessary Roughness," this football flick has some great laughs and a heartwarming (albeit predictable) story. Keanu Reeves relaxes in his role as an insecure quarterback, and Gene Hackman as his coach makes you want to suit up and play ball. Everyone in the film seems to be having a great time, and you can't help but cheer for them.

Coyote Ugly

Starring Piper Perabo and Maria Bello
Directed by David McNally
Touchstone Pictures

A major guy-pleaser of a movie: Sexy female bartenders dance and trash-talk in a Manhattan bar. It's "Flashdance" crossed with "Cocktail." The only redeeming thing about this movie is a great cameo by John Goodman as the doting Jersey father. Otherwise, I'd suggest taking the \$9.50 and heading to the real Coyote Ugly (153 First Avenue between 9th and 10th Streets) instead.

Till next time film fans... happy movie going!

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