“You can have all the good intentions in the world, you can even liberate a people, and they’re still going to feel violated if they’re not in control of their own destiny.”

—HARVARD PROFESSOR SAMANTHA POWER DURING A LECTURE FOR THE SCPS CENTER FOR GLOBAL AFFAIRS

"These [paparazzi clips] are just indie films made by run-and-gun shooters, and the stars are giving away their performances for free. The best have a total plot arc: Britney shaving her head. John Cassavetes couldn’t have come up with a better climactic scene than that.”


“The window that opened at the end of the Cold War has been allowed to hang flapping in the wind, and it’s time it be fully opened and lead to a peace based on multinational order.”

—FORMER UN WEAPONS INSPECTOR HANS BLIX DELIVERING THE LECTURE “TIME FOR A REVIVAL OF DISARMAMENT?” SPONSORED BY THE CENTER ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

“Sir, you realize with your first hair-raising e-mail you gave me more material for my speeches. And if giving those speeches makes me a prostitute, then doesn’t giving me material for them make you my pimp?”

—AUTHOR IRSHAD MANJI, IN AN NYU WOMEN’S INITIATIVE ADDRESS, LAMBASTING A CRITIC WHO CALLED HER A “WHORE” FOR GIVING SPEECHES IN WHAT HE CONSIDERED INAPPROPRIATE DRESS FOR A MUSLIM WOMAN. MANJI IS DIRECTOR OF THE MORAL COURAGE PROJECT AT WAGNER’S RESEARCH CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP IN ACTION.
KING OF THE WATERCOOLER
THE OFFICE’S RAENN WILSON (TSAO ’89) DISCUSSES BEING AN ACTOR IN L.A. AND HOW HE’S REDEFINED THE SITCOM NERD
/ BY RENÉE ALFUSO / CAS ’06

THE LITTLE DIFFICULT
THOUGH THERE’S STILL YEARS OF WORK AHEAD, SOME SEE HOPE IN THE STRUGGLE TO REBUILD NEW ORLEANS
/ BY NICOLE PEZOLD / GSAS ’04

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ALUMNI NEWS,
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COVER PHOTO JOHN PAUL ENDRESS
COMPOSITION BY RICK’S IMAGWORKS

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IN KEEPING WITH NYU’S COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY, THIS PUBLICATION IS PRINTED ON FSC-CERTIFIED PAPER THAT INCLUDES A MINIMUM OF 10 PERCENT POST-CONSUMER FIBER. (THE FSC TRADEMARK IDENTIFIES PRODUCTS THAT CONTAIN FIBER FROM WELL-MANAGED FORESTS CERTIFIED BY SMARTWOOD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULES OF THE FORESTS STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL.) FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT NYU’S GREEN ACTION PLAN, GO TO WWW.NYU.EDU/SUSTAINABILITY.
old moves are not new to the New York University family. This institution has a proud history of raising itself at the most critical moments, and the past two decades have been no exception as NYU has transformed itself from a distinguished regional university into one of international prominence. Much of the fuel for this evolution has been provided by our Office of Development and Alumni Relations, which has spearheaded a series of historic campaigns, none more bold than the recently completed Campaign for NYU.

This effort has provided some seismic shifts in the makeup of our students, faculty, and facilities. The Partners Initiative will fund the hiring of 250 of the best scholars in the world, an increase in the number of the brightest young minds to our classrooms, and facilities. A massive undertaking of another kind, the complicated rebuilding of New Orleans, is spotlighted in “The Little Difficult,” (page 52), an article that explores the myriad challenges but also new opportunities presented to residents now three years removed from Katrina’s devastation. On the far lighter side, newly anointed comedic icon Rann Wilson talks about how his Taich training helped him create the nuanced character of Dwight Schrute on NBC’s The Office (“King of the Water Cooler,” page 46). The themes of opportunity and ingenuity prevail throughout this issue, and we hope you’ll connect with them both intellectually and emotionally, and find in them inspiration for your own important ventures.

JOHN SEXTON

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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JANET ALNÓN is a freelance writer living in Manhattan. She has written about the arts, and international affairs for The New York Times, New York magazine, and AVENUE.

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COURTNEY E. MARTIN (GSAS ’04) is a writer who lives in Brooklyn. You can read more about her work at www.courtneyemartin.com.

CHANDRA McCORMICK and KEITH CALHOUN are photographers from New Orleans’ Lower Ninth Ward. The couple’s studio was destroyed in Hurricane Katrina.

ANNA WIEBPECK is a freelance writer who lives on Long Island. She is currently pursuing a PhD in classical psychology at SUNY Stony Brook.

WESLEY YANG is a contributor to Nextbook.org who also writes about culture for n+1. He has worked for the Los Angeles Times and The New York Observer.

This issue’s cover story, “The Village Voice: A New Era,” (page 36) and detail the important steps presented to residents now three years removed from Katrina’s devastation. On the far lighter side, newly anointed comedic icon Rann Wilson talks about how his Taich training helped him create the nuanced character of Dwight Schrute on NBC’s The Office (“King of the Water Cooler,” page 46). The themes of opportunity and ingenuity prevail throughout this issue, and we hope you’ll connect with them both intellectually and emotionally, and find in them inspiration for your own important ventures.

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JOHN SEXTON
Thank you to everyone who responded to the Spring 2008 issue. We are delighted that NYU Alumni Magazine’s article “Critical Eye On Aid” hit the mark. I have worked in many developing countries with Hope United (www.HopeUnited.org), using volunteers to improve education, health care, and economic development. As your writer illustrated, we find that children learn better when they are provided good nutrition along with quality education. You cannot exchange one for the other.

Guy Forester
Cortland, New York

As governments fail to address the needs of the world’s poor, more drastic measures will be taken by the poor to survive. The price tag on poverty reduction is still affordable; the cost of not meeting the poverty challenge is priceless!

Ronald B. Biren
STEINHARDT ‘76
Great Neck, New York

NO COVER
I was angered and embarrassed by your inclusion of Dan Barry’s uncritical celebration of blatant animal cruelty in “Under the Cover of Night.” I suggest that you educate yourselves about the plight of elephants and the torment they endure for the sake of human entertainment. What a shame Barry didn’t stop to talk to one of the “ugly animal-rights activists” he dismissively mentions but once.

Art Selvaggio
750A ‘99
Los Angeles, California

Chloé J. Brown
750A ‘99
New York, New York

As one who is working to end the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus’s daily routine of abuse and torture, I can state that there is nothing inspirational nor delightful about the elephants’ yearly walk through the tunnel into Manhattan. Animals do not naturally ride bicycles, stand on their heads, balance on balls, and jump through rings of fire. To force them to perform these confusing and physically uncomfortable tricks, trainers use whips, tight collars, muzzles, electric prods, bull hooks, and other painful tools.

Leda M. Nelson
GAL ‘96
New York, New York

Editors’ note: We thank the many alumni and colleagues who have enlightened us on the misery that elephants and other captive animals suffer. We chose to reprint alumni Dan Barry’s story because of his skillful writing and the new opinion of the elephants’ march on New York City that arose from his article.

I was pleased to read the article on Femininity in Flight [“Sky Girls”]. Thank you for bringing a New York scene to life. We have lightened us on the misery that elephants have suffered. The story was featured on the March 12, 2008, edition of the New York Times. We would like to thank the management and staff of Sky Girls who provided the elephants and their story.

Chloé Jo Berman
TSOA ‘98
New York, New York

I read with great interest your article “Happy Birthday!” but I object to the characterization of Israel as a “divisive nation.” As pointed out in the story, the countries in the Middle East made war on Israel as soon as it was made a state by the United Nations in 1948.

Leila Feldman, PhD
GSA ‘83
Hempstead, New York

I understand that the topic was Israel, but I had hoped that the Palestinian viewpoint would at least not be covered by someone [Palestinian Jeffrey Goldberg] who served in the Israeli forces.

Karen Zamani
vía e-mail

I thought your article on Israel’s 60th anniversary was a disservice to the states of honest, complex, and critical discourse at NYU. Perhaps you could run a counter-story to fill in the picture a bit more from the so-called other side!

J. Anthony
vía e-mail

Please send your comments and opinions to: Readers’ Letters, NYU Alumni Magazine, 25 West Fourth Street, Fourth Floor, New York, NY, 10012; or e-mail us at alumni.magazine@nyu.edu. Please include your mailing address, phone number, and school and year. Letters become edited for length and clarity.
FLIGHT ATTENDANT’S FANCY

As a flight attendant and NYU alumnus, I was pleased to read the article “Feminity in Flight” [“Sky Girls”]. Thanks to the unique scheduling of my job, I was able to relocate from California and fly while attending NYU. It was a joy to see the safety duties we perform highlighted in the article; it is an aspect sometimes forgotten by the flying public.

Amita Dhir, Bronx, New Jersey

COMPLICATED BIRTHDAY

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750A ’99
Los Angeles, California
and
Chloé J. Brown
750A ’99
New York, New York

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Please include your mailing address, phone number, and school and year. Letters become the property of NYU and may be edited for length and clarity.