

Words of wisdom from some of our favorite Grand-Seniors

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EXAMINING THE US EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Music to our Ears:
A visiting orchestra causes a big stir!
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Grandsenior Perspectives on College and NCSSM Columbia University



JULIAN HIMES

How has your college experience been for you thus far?

Well, the "college experience" for most people is something I already lived through at Science and Math. How do I like being at an insti-

tution with students who actually want to be here? How do I like having professors who make themselves available outside of class, who give me the impression that they have lives besides their course? Please. Been there, done that.

For juniors or seniors considering Columbia as one of their undergraduate options, give us a few words on how you feel about the school.

I love New York. That was a huge part of the decision for me, and should be a factor for anyone considering Columbia. If you're not comfortable dealing with incom-

prehensible taxi drivers, impatient waiters, a nicotine addiction, and general sensory overload, I wouldn't even make the trip to visit. But it's not all about the city. What really drew me here is the Core Curriculum. It still invigorates me to walk down College Walk and see, inscribed above our library, the names of great (albeit dead, white, and male) writers - one of whom the author of the book I and almost all of my friends would be currently reading. I took the science course just recently added to the Core and had the opportunity to hear famous biologists and Nobel laureates

speak - perfect for someone who'd gotten all the science they need at NCSSM. Next semester I'm taking a class called Verdi and Shakespeare. Just don't come for the football or the fraternities.

What are a few perks of college life to which our anxious seniors can look forward?

Um... well, take a look at NCSSM's disciplinary policy. Make a list of every offense that's punished with a Level III. That's my answer. Oh, and the internet works after midnight.

Do you have any advice

for the seniors as they wrap up their final months of NCSSM life?

Once you figure out where you're going to college, I have two suggestions: 1) Stop thinking and talking about that school, and 2) Stop worrying about your grades. You're in, you're going, and there's nothing more you can do that won't alienate your friends, who are the most important part of the end of your senior year. Just sit back, relax - and for the love of God, break in-room

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Point-Counterpoint: Israel and Palestine

ANEESH KULKARNI (PRO-ISRAEL) & JONATHAN SMITH (PRO-PALESTINE)

General Info/History of Conflict

Smith:
The issue here begins before the common era, when the Jews were persecuted by many thousands of groups. In Roman times, Jews were tolerated for a time, then destroyed to what seemed an unrecoverable state: their temple destroyed, never to again be rebuilt, their people scattered, and their possessions torn from them. Then, in 1948, the UN created the sovereign State of Israel, granting it all the rights of other nations. To create this nation, the UN took land from what was deemed the historical providence of Judaism. This, displacing Arabs, angered many. These Moslems, forced to live under a new (Jewish) rule of law, reacted with displeasure. Then the real trouble began. The newly formed Israeli government began to enact policies that were designed to make the nation of Israel into a haven for Jews around the world. This is an admirable cause, but one pursued in the

wrong manner. Thus, these Moslems who did not wish for this new government were forced to give up many of their possessions and rights to the Jewish immigrants. Then, in 1967, the Israeli military engaged Syrian, Iraqi, Iranian, and Egyptian forces for control of the West Bank and Gaza. This attack caused an unrepairable rip in the status of Israeli-Arab relations, which has only been exacerbated by internal conflicts over the status of Palestine.

Security Fence Kulkarni:

The security of the people of Israel is the first priority of the peace-loving State of Israel. Despite numerous attempts to end the violence by Israel, the stubborn Palestinians still prefer a suicide bomber over a diplomat. There has been no real effort on the part of the PLO to end this terrorism. However, Israel cannot let its people suffer because of the apathy of the Palestinian Authority. In order to prevent further lamentable loss of life, the State of Israel has unfortunately had to impose a physical barrier to

prevent fanatic Palestinians from entering Israel and causing wonton destruction and loss of innocent Israeli lives. It is unfortunate that Palestinian defiance necessitated the security fence to protect Israeli civilians.

Smith:

There is little evidence that the "security" fence will provide any security at all. Fences are penetrable, and many within Sharon's own governmental believe that the fence will not provide any effective protection from terrorists. If this is the case, then why would the Israeli government want to put up something that would only anger the Palestinians more. This fence would stop those Palestinians that need to be able to move about the country for legiti-

mate (business, personal, governmental, as well as other) reasons. In America, we pride ourselves in allowing those



<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/palestine/images/palestine-map-s.gif>

who are peaceful to do what they please. Most of the Palestinian people are just wanting the same basic rights that Americans get every day. The wall would only serve to deny them those rights.

Temple Mount/Dome of the Rock

Kulkarni:

The problems regarding the Temple Mount are another area where Palestinians contribute to hatred in the region. The region, now a site controlled by Palestinians, was the site of Jewish temples long ago. While Christians and Jews are forbidden from praying on the hill the Bible designates as a site holy to the God of Israel, Muslims are free to worship and preach incitement against Israel from the four mosques straddling the Mount. While Christian and Jewish prayer on the Temple Mount is not tolerated by the Islamic Authorities, Muslim clerics are free to spread hatred of the Jewish people and the State of Israel in weekly sermons in the mosques on the hill. And a Muslim scholar, Ahmad Muhammad 'Arafa, explains that the mosques on the Temple Mount are not holy to Muslims. He states that the mosques were only built because of a political rivalry and were not the center of worship for the followers of Muhammad. Thus, Israeli Jews are being kept off a Jewish holy site by Palestinian authorities because of a mis-

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