PEER REVIEW

New Head of CUNY's Baruch College Has New York Roots; Judge Orders Reinstatement of Kansas State's Newspaper Adviser; Official Spurns 2 Universities

By JOSHUA KARLIN-RESNICK, ERIC HOOVER, and SCOTT SMALLWOOD

HOME AGAIN: Kathleen M. Waldron grew up in New York City, traveled around the world as president of Citibank International, and is landing right back where she started. This August she'll take over as president of the City University of New York's Bernard M. Baruch College after 15 years at Citibank and then six years a little closer to home as an administrator at Long Island University.

A former Fulbright scholar with a doctorate in Latin American history, Ms. Waldron, 55, hopes to mesh her backgrounds in business and academe by making sure there are plenty of chances for the two worlds to meet. The best way to do that, she says, is to bring them together literally, with programs that allow young faculty to experience the corporate environment. Introducing the "dynamic" corporate world to CUNY students is another major goal, she says.

CUNY has also named Selma Botman, 53, the system's new executive vice chancellor for academic affairs, after Louise Mirrer departed for the top post at the New-York Historical Society. Ms. Botman, who comes from the University of Massachusetts system, says she was attracted by the university's complexity and the reforms Matthew Goldstein, the chancellor, has started recently.

Part of what Ms. Botman will help develop is a new graduate school of journalism, which is set to open in the fall of 2005. University officials will select a dean for the school by October at the latest, according to a CUNY spokesman. They're keeping quiet about the leading candidates, though several names have been tossed around. Edward A. Kosner, former editor of the New York Daily News, says he's been in contact with the search committee, and the New York Post reported last month that Stephen B. Shepard, editor in chief of Business Week, is also a candidate.
Sadie Feddoes’ New York

Sadie Feddoes

In last week’s column, I mentioned the City University of New York’s Jonas E. Salk Award ceremony where Gerald W. Dass, M.D., M.P.H., M.A., of SUNY Downstate Medical Center was the keynote speaker. At the ceremony, which was held at Bernard M. Baruch College, the 2004 winners were Mohammed Alaiadi of Brooklyn, who is a student of Brooklyn College and will be attending Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine; Magalie Brunen of South Ozone Park, Queens, and originally of Haiti, who is a student at City College and will be attending Boston University School of Medicine; and Imran G. Chowdhury of Astoria, Queens, a student at Hunter College who will be attending SUNY Downstate College of Medicine.

Also, Miriam Engelander of Manhattan, a student at Baruch College, who came to the U.S. after completing military service in Israel and who will be going to Stanford University School of Medicine; Elena Klimova of Forest Hills, Queens, who attends Queens College and will be going to New York Medical College, and who was inspired by her father, a pediatrician in the former Soviet Union; Nardia McFarlane of Forest Hills, Queens, a student at City College who will be attending University of Connecticut School of Medicine, and who as a child growing up in Jamaica was inspired to study medicine by her pediatrician.

Also, Mark A. Nuqui of Flushing, Queens, a student at City College who plans to attend New York College of Osteopathic Medicine; and Leonardo Santana of the Bronx, who attends Lehman College and plans to attend Drexel Medical School. A native of the Dominican Republic, he came to the United States after high school. Unable to speak English, he worked as a street fruit vendor. Six months after attending an English-language institute he entered Bronx Community College, where he eventually made the Dean’s list.

Honorary Salk Scholars are Alan Barhold of Queens, who attends Hunter College and plans to attend SUNY Downstate College of Medicine; Ana C. Costa of Manhattan, student at Hunter College who plans to attend New York University School of Medicine; Mehvel Gordon of Brooklyn, a student at York College who plans to attend Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine; and Adenike O. Ikotun, also of Brooklyn, who attends City College and plans to enter the University of Connecticut School of Medicine.

“The scholarships are the legacy of Dr. Jonas E. Salk, who developed the polio vaccine nearly half a century ago. Dr. Salk, a 1944 graduate of SUNY’s City College, turned down a ticker-tape parade in honor of his discovery, and asked instead that the money be used for scholarships. The city provided initial funding for the Salk Scholarships in 1955. The endowment now provides a stipend of $5,000 per scholar to help defray the cost of medical school.”
Priceless possibilities
Making most of $1 buy of Governors Island

I T TURNS out that getting the federal government to part with Governors Island for $1 was the easy part. The hard part is figuring out what to do with the biggest real estate bargain hereabouts since Peter Minuit picked up Manhattan Island for $24 worth of trinkets.

More than 150 urban planners, architects, park officials and preservationists gathered recently for a day-long workshop on the future of the island.

The workshop was sponsored by the Governors Island Alliance in conjunction with the National Park Service and the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation.

The main thrust of their conclusions was that the 172-acre island south of Manhattan and west of Brooklyn should become a multi-purpose harbor parkland, a "unique public space" — off limits to automobiles — that makes the most of nature's forces.

An eight-page report released by the alliance remarks radical physical changes, including a man-made hill, new wetlands, beaches and bays and piers for all forms of watercraft, "from rowboats to scowling ships."

"Exposure and contact with the water should be integral to the visitor experience," the report said. "The island's exposure to the elements and ongoing physical evolution can be revealed through exciting new landforms and art installations."

Governors Island was purchased by New York's unglaud Dutch settlers from local Indians in 1637 and served under three flags as a military installation, virtually closed to outsiders for 242 years, until the city acquired it from the federal government in December for $1.

Two early 19th-century forts and other historic buildings on the island and are managed by the National Park Service. Whatever developments there will be mainly in the larger southern region, where a new park is run by the city-state Governors Island Preservation and Education Corp.

One proposal is for a City College educational center, but other ideas include public housing, luxury high-rises, a television tower, even a casino found no takers.

"Governors Island is a special place — filled with history and serenity qualified that derive from its location," said the report. "The island's redevelopment poses a truly singular opportunity to create a unique public space for New York and its visitors."

Because the historic area is protected by law, the development would focus on the southern half, created a century ago as landfill from excavations for the city's first subway. The island served several decades as regional headquarters for the U.S. Coast Guard until closed by budget cutbacks in 1967.

The workshop then envisioned using this area for most public and private purposes but primarily a park, based on a "glass" or sailing ship that would be built. It also suggested "kicking off" the 2.2-mile walkway that surrounds the island to create protected inner areas for swimming and boating.

"The island's open spaces and programming should celebrate wind, water, trees and elevation," it said, adding that these forces might even be harnessed as supplementary energy sources to "help power the island."

Noting that Governors Island is accessible only by ferry from Manhattan, the report said frequent "easy and affordable" transportation from several points would be essential to the park's success, as would a host of cars.

"Getting around the island can be by jellies, pedicabs, bicycles, horse and buggy — just not automobiles," it said. "Creating a car-free environment is critical for the reinforcing of the island's separateness.
With a li’l help from his friends

A S THE REV. N.J. (Chip) L’Heureux Jr. spoke this week of programs, priorities and future plans, a volunteer in the front office was putting stamps on letters asking about 2,400 people to help pay the bills.

"About one-third of the letters are going to clergy and the rest to individuals who support what we do," L’Heureux said. "Without them, we could not stay in business.

Business, in this case, is the Queens Federation of Churches, which has a membership of 144 Christian congregations, another 235 or so affiliated churches that make financial contributions — and one employee, its executive director.

"I've been it for 26 years, and I can't see leaving," said L’Heureux, 58, a Methodist minister who grew up in Connecticut, where his own ecclesiastical background included Sunday school at a Southern Baptist church and baptism in an Episcopal church. He became a Methodist in junior high school, and decided to become a minister while in high school.

"I'm a great believer in ecumenicism," he said. "It's my most common theme when I preach. Even though we may not all agree all the time, we are all family." The Queens coalition, which began in 1931 as an affil- iate of the city's Council of Churches, is one of those low-profile religious nonprofits with a surprising num- ber of well-known activities.

For one thing, it coordinates an emergency food net- work of 115 soup kitchens and pantries, and it provides chaplains at Kennedy Airport, prisons and hospitals. It also directs the campus ministry at York College, in Jamaica, Queens. Other programs range from Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to an Internet directory listing information on more than 900 churches, mosques and synagogues in the borough.

"It costs us about $150,000 a year," L’Heureux said. "It isn't all that much in some organizations, but we're asking a lot of poor churches to dig down a little bit deeper." Member churches pledge, but are not bound, to donate $2.50 for each name on their own membership roll. Nonmembers give what they can, when they can. "About one-third of our income is from churches," L’Heureux said. "That's why we rely so heavily on individual sup- porters."

HIS OFFICE TAKES UP the first floor of a residential building in Richmond Hill, Queens. The rest of the space is the home he shares with his wife and a teenage son.

"The federation set this up in the 1940s," he said. "Combining the living and working spaces probably saved money in the long run." Because it is a Christian organization, there are no Jewish or Muslim members — at least, not officially. L’Heureux does work on some non-Christian projects, especially those involving the homeless, undocumented immigrants and the disabled. And although the Catholic diocese of Brooklyn, which includes Queens, is not a member, several parish churches are financial support- ers.

Otherwise, the federation represents a wide variety of denominations of all sizes — there is even one storefront — and almost every ethnic group in Queens. More than 20 members are Korean Presbyterian churches. There is a Unification Church on the rolls, too, and a Roman Orthodox church.

"This job has been a real education for me, but," said L’Heureux. "Before taking it, I'd never been in a Presbyterian church, or a United Church, or churches of a couple other denomina- tions."

At least he knew New York. Immediately af- ter seminary work at Boston University and his ordination in 1970, he was appointed associate pastor of a Methodist church in Norfolk, Va., and, three years later, pastor of a Methodist church in Massapequa, Queens.

There, he was recruited by the federation in 1976 and after three weeks of wangling with the posts said, he accepted. L’Heureux misses theurgical part of the ministerial life, but not necessarily the preaching — "I used to wonder how anybody could write a new sermon week after week after week."

Still, L’Heureux preaches about 25 sermons a year, mostly as a substitute for pastors who are out of town. Otherwise, he sits in the pew of his own church, Trinity Methodist, a few blocks from home, and listens to someone else’s sermons.

The biggest challenge in his job?

"After the financial ones," he said, "it's language. I only speak one.

And the biggest reward?

"The list of problems that pastors bring me guaran- tees that I'll never get bored."
Where politics shouldn’t go

BY SUSAN JACOBY

One of the most untouchable issues in American politics — the campaign 2004 has been no exception — is the damaging proposition, deliberately fostered by government leaders, that religious devotion and patriotism are inseparable.

This largely unexamined subject, which lay at the heart of the case challenging the recitation of "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance, scares Democrats to death.

Indeed, the question of whether God has really blessed America scared the Supreme Court so much that the justices chose to duck the issue entirely by declaring that the plaintiff, Michael Newdow, lacked standing because he did not have full custody of his daughter.

Democratic Party officials were privately delighted with the decision, because it relieved John Kerry — who, even though he is a Roman Catholic, has already been tarred with the scarlet "S" for secularist — of any obligation to take a stand on the case. But the pledge is only one symbol — though symbols are important in themselves — of a deeper and more damaging assumption, promulgated aggressively by the Bush administration, that the only true patriot is a religious patriot.

The triumphalist modeling of religion and patriotism in Iraq permeates much of American society not only undermines the American social contract at home but runs counter to U.S. interests throughout the world.

What could be more unseemly in the eyes of the world than trumpeting our oh-so-superior religious values at a time when the U.S. military is implicated in a general abuse of Iraqi prisoners that also incorporated specific acts that insult the Muslim faith.

In Muslim culture, which does not even tolerate casuallocker room nudity among men, forcing prisoners to strip naked and simulate homosexual acts is an even graver insult than it would be in other societies.

At home, the equation of religion and patriotism is exclusionary — whether they are from top government leaders or teachers in elementary school classrooms. Not only atheists and agnostics, but religious believers who also cherish the separation of church and state, are being told that their views count for nothing in public life.

Unlike FDR and Lincoln, Bush cites God to assuage shock.

‘What could be more unseemly in the eyes of the world than trumpeting our oh-so-superior religious values?’

Unlike most Americans, I responded to the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, with an immediate wave of anger and grief so powerful that it left no room for alienation.

Walking around my wounded New York, as the smoke from the fairways of the World Trade Center wafted the smell of death throughout the city, I drew consolation from the knowledge that others were feeling what I was feeling — sorrow, pain and rage, coupled with the futile but irresistible longing to turn back the clock to the hour before bodies rained from a crystalline sky.

That soothing sense of unity was severed for the just three days later, when the president presided over an ecumenical prayer service in Washington’s National Cathedral. Delivering an address indistinguishable from a sermon, replacing the language of civic virtue with the language of faith, the nation’s chief executive might as well have been the Heavenly Bush. Quoting a man who supposedly said at St. Patrick’s Cathedral, “I pray to God to give us a sign that he’s still here,” the president went on to assure the public not only that God was still here but that he was personally looking out for America.

“God’s signs,” Bush declared, “are not always the ones we look for. We learn in tragedy that his purposes are not always our own... Neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, can separate us from God’s love. May he bless the souls of the departed, may he comfort our own, and may he always guide our country.”

This adaptation of the famous passage in Romanesque art guide to the Romans left out the evangelist’s identification of Jesus Christ as God, a omission prosumably made in deference to the Jewish and Muslim representatives sharing the pulpit with the president.

Bush would surely have been criticized, and rightly so, had he failed to urge representatives of non-Christian faiths to the ecumenical ceremony in memory of the victims of the World Trade Center. But he felt perfectly free to ignore Americans who adhere to no religious faith at all, or are profoundly secular and who interpret history and tragedy as the work of man rather than God. There was no speaker who represented my views, no one to reject the notion of divine purpose as a work in the slaying of thousands and to proclaim the truth that grief, patriotism and outrage at injustice run just as deep in the secular as in the religious portion of the body politic.

According to a religious identification survey by the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, more than 14 percent of Americans — a much larger minority than any non-Christian group — describe their outlook as "entirely or predominantly secular." There are more secular humanists than there are observant Jews or Muslims — but one would never know it from the makeup of supposedly ecumenical civic rituals that are ecumenical only for those who believe, to paraphrase Bush, that God is at the helm of our country.

Bush’s very presence in the pulpit represented a significant departure from the behavior of other presidents in times of crisis. Franklin D. Roosevelt did not try to assuage the shock of Pearl Harbor by using an altar as the backdrop for his declaration of war and Abraham Lincoln, who steadfastly refused to join any church even though his political advisors urged him to do so, delivered the Gettysburg Address buttressed by a sanctum but on the battlefield where so many soldiers had given the "last full measure of devotion.

The merger of religion and patriotism is especially dangerous in wartime, because it leads naturally to the conclusion that God is on our side. And if God is on our side, it is hard to see out who, with two little horns protruding from his head, is on the other side.

That year, Army Lt. General William G. Boykin, deputy undersecretary of defense for intelligence, explicitly told an audience of evangelical Christians that the war against terrorism was a battle against Satan. He also declared, as widely reported in the media, that he was able to defeat a Muslim warlord in Somalia because, "I knew my God was bigger than his. I knew that my God was a real God and he was an idol.”

Boykin deserved a public reprimand from his superiors for statements that should never be uttered by a military officer who represents the U.S. government. Instead, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld laughed dismissively when asked about the comments at a press conference and accused reporters of "blood-thirsty" bunch.

It is not hard to imagine the impact of such comments not only on the Muslim world but in European nations, where both the public and government leaders are baffle and put off by the religious rhetoric from Washington.

Bush has spoken proudly, on many occasions, of America’s religious liberties as one of the factors distinguishing the U.S. from radical Muslim states — but he does not respect those liberties, which flow from the separation of church and state. Indeed, the sentiment that the Senate Judiciary Committee once took as the nomination of one James Leon Holmes for a federal district judgeship. This is a man who, in a 2002 address to the Society of Catholic Social Scientists, proclaimed that “the final reunion of church and state will take place at the end of time, when Christ will claim definitive political power of all creation, inaugurating an entirely new society based on the supernatural.”

What a great and welcome contribution it would be for John Kerry to lead from the front and proclaim a love of country based not on dreams of a supernatural past but, as the Constitution’s preamble asserts, on the authority of the "people of the United States of America."
Degrees of danger

Students gone wild

Campus crime reports for 2000-2002:
- Fordham University, Bronx: 125 burglaries and 2,621 violations for underage drinking
- Pratt Institute, Brooklyn: 41 robberies, mostly off campus, 590 violations for booze, and 253 violations for having drugs on campus
- NYU: 5,707 pot and drug busts near campus
- Columbia University (right): 13 sex offenses, 49 robberies and 116 burglaries
- St. John's University, Queens: 85 vehicles reported stolen, or near Hillcrest campus
- Seton Hall University, South Orange, N.J.: 212 burglaries and 83 car thefts
- Princeton University: 26 sex offenses
- Brooklyn College: Two homicides near campus
- Lehman College, Bronx: 51 car thefts outside campus and 29 robberies
- York College, Queens: 40 robberies in vicinity of Jamaica campus
- Fashion Institute of Technology, Manhattan: Seven rapes on campus
- NYC College of Technology, Brooklyn: 20 robberies, 10 assaults and 27 car thefts, mostly outside campus

Source: U.S. Department of Education

City’s most crime-ridden campuses

By CARL CAMPAANILE
Education Reporter

Local college students are learning a lot more these days — about violence, illegal drugs and booze on campus, according to explosive crime data obtained by The Post.

Under federal law, college officials are required to publish criminal incidents that occur on public streets adjacent to their campus, as well as inside their grounds — even if students and staff are not victims. Under that criteria, the vicinity of Pratt Institute in Brooklyn would be considered one of the city’s most dangerous for robberies, according to a review of 2000-2002 data, the most recent available.

New York University is far and away the top drug-offense campus. The NYPD averages about 3,000 pot and drug busts a year, mostly in busy Washington Square Park, which is bordered on all sides by campus buildings.

And here’s a shocker. Students at Fordham University are the biggest boozers. Officials from the student government report 2,601 liquor law violations and 285 violations of drug laws at its Bronx campus of 6,240 students, nearly half of whom reside in dorms.

St. John’s University in Queens is the king of car thefts — 85 vehicles were stolen in and around the Hillcrest campus over three years.

Pratt, the arts and design school that enrolls about 3,000 students at its main campus at 200 Willoughby Ave. in Brooklyn, reported a total of 41 robberies from 2000 through 2002 to the U.S. Department of Education. All but two of the violent crimes occurred off campus.

Given the number of students, that’s a higher robbery rate than at two of the city’s largest campuses — NYU and Columbia.

Pratt officials stressed it does all it can to protect its students, including telling them how to get to and from campus safely.

“All campus gates close at 6 p.m.,” the college says in a statement on its Web site regarding security.

The crime stats also point to good news for local campuses, the NYPD and the city. Sex attacks are more prevalent at large Princeton University in neighboring New Jersey than at either NYU or Columbia, figures show.

Princeton reported 26 sex offenses over three years. That compares to 21 at NYU — which has more than double the student enrollment. And it’s twice the 13 sex offenses reported at Columbia, which has roughly the same number of students as Princeton, but is surrounded by a denser, higher-crime neighborhood.

An analysis by the Boston-based Student- Alumni Committee on Institutional Security Policy found that Columbia had the lowest crime rate per capita when compared to other elite institutions, including Harvard, Yale and the University of Chicago.

Meanwhile, the City University reported that crimes plummeted 38 percent at its 20 campuses — from 430 incidents in 2000 to 271 in 2002.
NYU’s no Ivy – but it’s covered in grass

By CARL CAMPANELA
Education Reporter

It appears NYU “pot princess” Julia Diaco is accused of dealing dope at a college in a community that masters in marijuana.


In its campus public-safety newsletter, NYU officials pointed out that none of its students or staff was arrested off campus possessing or selling drugs. But Diaco’s arrest will certainly be recorded when crime stats get updated.

NYU spokesman John Beckman said NYU has a low rate for violent crimes and stressed that NYPD’s aggressive enforcement has made the campus safer.

“The arrests are a good thing. They’re getting the bad guys out of the park,” he said.

The change has been remarkable,” he said.

While most college campuses are at least somewhat gated from their neighborhoods, the heart of NYU is check-to-jowl with the park.

The NYPD has a mobile command post stationed at Washington Square South and Sullivan Street.

But NYU arguably remains the hippest, most popular campus in the country — a magnet in part because it is a city campus “without walls,” says Beckman.

But from a publicity standpoint, NYU has had a tough year. Aside from the notoriety about the pot princess, four students committed suicide over the past year. NYU students say they feel safe in and around the campus, but admitted the presence of drugs was a problem.

“There are definitely students in the dorm engaging in illicit activity,” said one sophomore who resides in the Britanny dorm.
New Yorker's Diary

Jim Callaghan

A Boot Camp For the Media

Administrators at the City University of New York announced recently that they would open a graduate program of journalism some time next year. That’s good news for aspiring journalists who can’t afford pricey degrees from places like Columbia University, where they offer instruction in not giving offense.

Officials described the program as a one-year “boot camp” open to CUNY students. Boot camp? What a wonderfully charming phrase to describe what is needed now more than ever in our city: a boot camp for the new working class, the financially challenged, debt-strapped recent immigrants who don’t have what my generation had—a free college education at CUNY with teachers who challenged us every day to think.

The first move that CUNY officials announced, however, was a major disaster, and hopefully will not portray plans for the curriculum. They said they were looking for campus space in midtown Manhattan, which is already crawling with journalists who aspire to become toadies for the people who run the city and country.

CUNY has campuses throughout the five boroughs in the most diverse of neighborhoods, and that’s where our journalism students should study—at one CUNY campus a month.

Beyond the traditional journalism classes taught from textbooks, the assigned readings should be every major book about New York City over the last fifty years, including but not limited to The Power Broker and Gotham. Students, in return for free tuition (paid for by the media conglomerates that make billions in profits every year), will be required to sign a pledge promising they will never write one word about Donald Trump, Michael Jackson, Barry Bonds, Woody Allen, models, actors and actresses, Al Sharpton and all the other annoying media hounds who hog far too much space in our newspapers.

They will be given a free house on Governors Island, within walking distance to a golf course, swimming pool, gymnasium and spectacular views of the Manhattan skyline—but only if they promise to stay in town for the next five years and irritate those in power. In the process, they will overcome the stereotype that A.J. Liebling once wrote about the media: “You can buy most reporters in New York with a beer and a cheap steak.”

They must start their day by annoying the Mayor, the Governor, the City Council Speaker, every elected official and every executive assistant to the deputy mayor—just on general principle. The courses will be taught for free by reporters who are not yet burned out and cynical and who still believe that one person can make a difference (please, no mail from the professors’ unions—you will still have plenty of work). It will be their way of giving something back, as a partial payment in honor of their immigrant parents and the mentors who helped them along the way.

In return for free space on the idyllic island (they can also write about why the Mayor still hasn’t figured out how to use it, years after the federal government gave it to us for a buck), they will give up the perks that destroy the creativity of writers. No free eats and booze at the nightly openings, and definitely no appearances on those insipid New York cable shows.

Our CUNY recruits will never write about Candice Bergen and Lorraine Bracco being “police commanders” for a day; instead, they will grill Police Commissioner Ray Kelly, asking him why he insists on hobnobbing with these people at crime scenes as the debate about whether we are prepared for another terrorist attack swirls around him.

They must have a heavy dose of economic theory, so they don’t wind up like the “reporters” who were outclassed on that topic in May during a debate with Stuyvesant High School students. This will help them in explaining the various flipflops of Wall Street and city leaders.

One of the courses offered, according to the CUNY administrators, will be “how to spot a story.” That is the easiest part. It’s called taking the subway every day to the end of the line and walking around; reading the Law Journal, to see who is suing whom, and the City Record, to see how the Mayor is selling or leasing your land; attending community-board meetings, where the rubber hits the road on civic issues. Turn off the TV and read the weeklies; they have more information about our neighborhoods and their changing ethnicity in one issue than all the dailies combined.

Of course, there is one major dilemma with all this theory about how to cover the real news of our city, the news that affects all eight million of us.

Where would any of it get published?
News Corp. Donors Show Bipartisan Spirit In Presidential Politics

What do Bill O'Reilly, Sean Hannity and Brit Hume have in common? They all work under a Democratic fund-raiser. Peter Chernin, president and chief operating officer of the News Corporation, parent of the Fox Network, has made contributions to John Kerry, the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee.

"I don't think it's any secret that I am a Democratic supporter," Mr. Chernin said.

He has some company. Gary L. Ginsberg, an executive vice president of News Corporation, has also contributed to Mr. Kerry.

News Corporation is "a company with diverse interests," Mr. Chernin said.

Perhaps more diverse than many Democrats imagined. As of June 1, employees of the News Corporation and their families had given almost $350,000 in campaign contributions, 60 percent of which went to Democrats, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. At least four Fox executives have given money to Mr. Kerry's campaign.

The executives, of course, answer to Rupert Murdoch, the chairman and chief executive of the News Corporation. The Fox cable channel has developed a reputation — which it denies — as one of the more right-leaning news organizations on television. News Corporation is also the owner of The New York Post and publishes The Weekly Standard, two publications with a conservative bent.

But Mr. Chernin said work and politics hardly mixed at the company. "I think it's simplistic to say that the company has some sort of political litmus test," he said.

Mr. Chernin gave $2,000 to Mr. Kerry, the maximum allowed during the primary campaign. He has held fund-raising lunches on Mr. Kerry's behalf. And he defended Mr. Kerry's business policies in a conference call with other executives last week. Mr. Ginsberg gave $1,500 to Mr. Kerry. (Mr. Murdoch has given $25,000 to the Republican National Committee.)

Eric Alterman, a journalism professor at Brooklyn College and the author of "What Liberal Media?" said there was little reason to make assumptions about the politics of Mr. Murdoch or his colleagues based solely on the content of his media conglomerate, adding that Mr. Murdoch's primary interest is to produce a popular product. "It's not that bizarre," he said.

Mr. Alterman, a media columnist for The Nation, even suggested that if Mr. Kerry were to win the presidency, viewers may begin to see a different sort of Fox News, but he stopped short of saying the network would move far to the left. "I don't think that Fox is going to start sounding like 'The Nation,'" he said. MARK GLASSMAN
A Perfect Job Means Leaving a Perfect Apartment

By JOYCE COHEN

Robin Root had a wonderful apartment. But as it became more expensive, it became less wonderful. So when she got a new job — exactly what she wanted, but without a salary to support such a place — she knew she would have to move.

Problem was, the management company required her to find someone to take over the lease, which she had just renewed.

"All I could think about was getting rid of the apartment," she said.

Ms. Root, 27, lived at 25 West 87th Street for two years — the longest she had been in one place since childhood.

As a medical anthropologist, she recently studied the health of female factory workers in developing countries — she traveled (and moved) often.

In April 2003, when she moved to the city for a high-paying research job, she subletted a $1,400, two-bedroom apartment in Somerville, Mass. Through a broker, she found the one-bedroom for $1,065.

"I fell in love with the space," she said. "There was a near geometry to it."

After a year, the rent rose to $1,695. After another year, it rose to $1,971.

Ms. Root wished to return to academia, and was offered an assistant professorship by the City University of New York. "I was thrilled," she said. "This is exactly what I wanted — but it meant that I had to move."

In late May, she signed up for room-direct.com, a Web site that, for $195, provides listings of no-fee rentals. Her goal was to find a one-bedroom for $1,300 to $1,600.

She looked at everything she saw. "It was criminal what they were allowed to call a one-bedroom," she said. "One place was a kitchen with a wall in it. There was enough room for a mattress."

But while she was hunting, she passed a building with a "for rent" sign outside. It was at 136 West 87th Street, just a block away. She didn't have a pen, so she programmed the number into her cell phone and forgot about it.

A week later, she remembered.

"By that time, I had screwed the city in my price range, and was extremely distrustful," she said. "Then, I thought, 'Ah! Remember the number I programmed into the phone!'

The one-bedroom apartment, for $1,495, was still available. I knew it was a fifth-floor walk-up. As soon as she stepped inside, she declared, 'It's mine.'"

"It felt it was a 'dignified space,'" unlike other places she saw. "It didn't have to be a penthouse," she said. "It just had to be assemble to being molded into my personal space. I knew that would be the last place I could find. The price is lower and I get to stay in the neighborhood."

Robin Root at 25 West 87th Street

Robin Root at 136 West 87th Street

Not Too Expensive.
Now her chore was finding someone for the old place. Ideally, she would find someone to sign a lease at $2,075, which the management company told her would be the new rent. She enlisted the help of a broker it suggested. Not wanting to rely entirely on somebody else, she also listed the apartment on rent-direct.com, where she had liked the experience despite disliking the apartments.

The few replies she received were murky. "People were imprecise about when they wanted to see it," she said. "They kept wondering: Am I a landlord and do I have other properties?"

The broker, who also wasn't getting much traffic, told Ms. Root the rent was too high. So she lowered it to $1,875, planning to pay the $100 difference in-rent.

The calls started coming in. One was from Kate Ashford, 27, who dropped by the next morning with her boyfriend, Michael Carpenter, 28.

Ms. Ashford had been nomadic, too, taking assorted internships and freelance jobs after earning a journalism degree from Northwestern University. "I am on my 10th address in 16 months," she said. "I slept on an air mattress from August until May."

Last winter, she landed a permanent job at Good Housekeeping magazine. The plan was for Mr. Carpenter, who was working in the commercial real-estate field in Washington, to get a job in New York and join her.

But as long as his job situation was unsettled, so was their housing situation. Ms. Ashford took a series of short-term sublets she found through the online bulletin board Craiglist, most recently a $550 place in Sunnyside, Queens.

When Mr. Carpenter got a job last month, the two began hunting for a one-bedroom for $2,000 or less. They, too, signed up for rent-direct.com.

Ms. Root's listing looked nice, Ms. Ashford said, and so did the apartment. But it was the very first place they saw, so they kept looking, heading next to Gramercy Park, a neighborhood they had targeted because a friend lived there.

"With nothing to compare it to, you hate to make a year-long commitment," Mr. Carpenter said. Still, "we felt when we walked out we were making a mistake."

Everything else they saw was "teeny and cramped," Ms. Ashford said. Some had no closet space. One had no floor space. "The living room was the strangest thing I have ever seen," she said. "It was a series of platforms, like seps. There was no place for furniture."

In the afternoon, they called Ms. Root, worried the apartment would be taken. It was, sort of. The broker said she had received a deposit from an Australian couple. Ms. Root was torn. She liked Ms. Ashford and Mr. Carpenter, but felt obligated to honor the Australians' prior claim.

Ms. Ashford offered to pay the full $2,075 rent if it would help. It would. In the meantime, the deal with the Australian mysteriously fell through.

Ms. Ashford and Mr. Carpenter happily signed a one-year lease of their own.

For Mr. Carpenter: "I thought finding an apartment was going to be awful. This didn't seem near as bad as people made it out to be. That's because Kate was doing all the work."

For Ms. Ashford: "This has been a long time coming. I've been living like a student with Yaffa blocks and a mattress on the floor. I feel totally nonanchored. I am so excited we have a lease."

For Ms. Root: "This is a perfect solution. I feel I have good housing karma."
Fast chat Hazelle Goodman

I t's the morning after the first preview for Hazelle Goodman's "On Edge," a one-woman play she's performing at the HBO Arts Center in SoHo, and the place is slowly emptying itself. In the next room, two guys are discussing supplies, and one woman reads a play. Back toward the theater in Goodman, being tended to by a stylist readying her for a photo shoot.

One-woman shows are nothing new for Goodman. Her first production, "Hazelle," became an HBO special. "On Edge" is a series of vignettes in which she portrays people searching for meaning in their lives. She has Anna, Devane Smith's ability to depict minute character detail and Richard Pryor's timing for humor. She appears in several movies, including "Destructing Harry," "Hannah," and "Beat," and has made several memorable TV guest appearances.

After the photo shoot, the plays down on a couch and tells Newsday contributor Martin Johnson, "What would you like to know?"

Tell me about "On Edge." I think these characters are the way I make sense of the world. My sensibility comes to me in these people and their little vignettes. It's like a California Cooper, the short-story writer. I think my characters are little short stories that I'd like to read. When I walk by a building I wonder what's going in this window. Or if I hear a cell phone conversation on the bus, that's how they come to me. What I love about the piece is the humor in the midst of the seriousness. The characters have the ability to make us laugh, though what they're saying is very real.

Do each of the 12 characters have a particular genesis like that? Yes. When I look at the character of Fung Shay, I see her in the streets looking out the window, watching for something, reaching for her dreams. And she wonders, "How am I going to get to it?" And she has about this secret Chinese art of feng shui, but in the hood it's Fung Shay, and that fascinated me to look at the need. We all want something more out of life. To take this ancient Chinese art and put it in the streets, the excited me. Everybody is — even if they're not telling you straight up — telling you something. They're burning a candle somewhere or moving something. So on the spiritual side there's that search.

One of the characters is based on Amadou Diallo's mother, Medellin. When that happened, I was mad, I have a son that was a nothard day's lynching. And it really hit home, I put on a benefit concert to raise money for a legal aid group that I needed to raise it for something. The thing that I experienced the most that forced me to write and speak about it was that in going to artists and politicians to get them to support the cause, they said, "Well, who else is going to be there?" Nobody except me can accept two black women's story in America. They could say something to honor this life. We did the benefit, and Bruce Springsteen came to our rescue. He was very supportive, made a big donation. That part of the piece was all about the young black man who is killed. While that part was inspired by Amadou, it was about all mothers who have lost sons violently.

Was the Amadou experience part of what inspired the cop? Yes, but I also wanted to look at our responsibility in our own demise. It was kind of risky to put those sentiments in a white cop's mouth. We can all say there have been a lot of unjust killings by the police. You have to look at how we're killing each other. The numbers of dead are greater than any police killings, and that stuck with me.

What other projects are you working on? I also go up to Bedford Hills, a maximum-security prison for women, and I do a creative writing workshop with them. The workshop is really about facing their past and owning the present and creating a future. Eve Ensler from the "Vagina Monologues" invited me up there. I remember looking out from that stage, and there was this sea of myself. I could not leave. I've been going there for about two years now.

What did you do in "Vagina Monologues"? I think I did all the monologues. It was a rich experience. It was part of a movement: women changing and redefining themselves.

What was it like being Georgia Rae Mahoney on "Homicida Life on the Streets"? Aaawwww, people still ask me all the time. I loved being Georgia Rae, she was so strong — all the things I am. I like the strong women. In "Hannah," I was Bradele Drummy, another strong woman running her life, running her business. I have to let that part of myself shine.
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A BELEAGUERED Queens councilman facing sexual harassment charges has come clean — boldly laying everything on the table in a bid to clear his name.

Allen Jennings has given the Daily News an inch-thick file of confidential City Council documents related to his case.

"I went to The News because I believe that I'm being unfairly persecuted in the City Council and I wanted The News to have the whole truth," he said.

It's an unprecedented look at a complicated case involving five women — four Council employees and one councilwoman — and their accusations against Jennings, 37.

If the five-count charges are substantiated by the Council's Standards and Ethics Committee, Jennings could be censured or even face expulsion.

Jennings has asked the committee to open a scheduled Aug. 10 closed-door hearing to the public, explaining, "I want the truth to be known, the whole truth... I'm tired of leaks."

The documents reviewed by The News make clear his version of events.

But they also offer a humiliating, unflattering portrait of Jennings, a two-term Democrat who has quickly earned a reputation for being flamboyant and unpredictable.

"I did realize I was taking a risk," said Jennings. He added that he anticipates some people may think he's a "creep" or a "sexual pervert" after hearing the "horrible" details of the cases, which have remained secret until today.

But Jennings says he is determined to clear his name, and is demanding a public forum in which to do so.

"The only chance I have for a fair hearing is in public," he said. "I think I will not be able to get a fair hearing in a closed-door trial."

Five women have come forward accusing the councilman of sexually inappropriate or hostile behavior, including two former Jennings staffers whom he had fired.

"These women never made these allegations before," he told The News, suggesting his former staffers were disgruntled and just looking for a lucrative lawsuit. "They just recently made these allegations."

The allegations include a claim by a staffer that Jennings made her do his dishes, then grabbed her from behind while he was wearing only a T-shirt and boxer shorts to show how he was aroused.

The unnamed woman was later fired, she alleges, because she was sick with cancer.

Jennings has also been charged with firing a woman for sending an E-mail last June to Council Speaker Gifford Miller (D-Manhattan) in which she complained of Jennings' harassment.

That woman told Council investigators that on some occasions when she was a passenger in his car, Jennings would stop short and reach across her chest -- as if to stop her from falling forward -- and "touch her breast."

In addition, he is faced with allegations of threatening a fellow Council member, Sara Gonzales (D-Brooklyn).

And in another complicated case, Jennings is accused of making crude sexual remarks, as well as anti-Semitic statements, to a lawyer who had worked on Jennings' committee.

"They're just looking for a payday," Jennings said of the accusers.

He flatly denied one of the allegations by a staffer who said he came on to her at a party and later tried to fire her.

"That's ludicrous," he said, adding that 100 guests were at the party, including the woman's husband.

But even when Jennings lays out a careful defense to each of the women's charges, he still runs the risk of sounding insulting.

When discussing one of his accusers, a City Council committee lawyer, Jennings dismissed her charges as preposterous in part because she is "unattractive" and "old."
EXCLUSIVE

By AL GUARD

The NYPD is about to get more black eyes from its decision to give TV crews unchecked access to sensitive operations, as upcoming episodes unmask murder witnesses, reveal key evidence and show cops misleading a suspect.

With the fourth episode of ABC-TV’s controversial “NYC 24/7” to air Tuesday, cops are bracing for the backlash and have stepped up their questioning of Commissioner Ray Kelly’s decision — despite strong opposition from some of his top brass — to open the department to TV cameras.

Assistant Chief Thomas Fahey, whose Manhattan detective division figures largely in the show, and other top Kelly deputies warned Kelly not open the department’s doors to the TV crews, sources told The Post.

“Fahey tried to talk them out of it,” said one high-ranking police official who did not wish to be named.

Kelly’s predecessor, Commissioner Bernard Kerik, also questioned the wisdom of it.

“I wouldn’t have authorized it,” Kerik told The Post. “I don’t think I would have approved it without the oversight, supervision and coordination of the public information office.”

Last Tuesday’s episode attracted a nationwide audience of 6.5 million viewers.

In the next episode airing this week on the ABC network, the name of a witness to the 2003 murder of Hunter College student Ramona Moore is broadcast.

As the cameras roll, the witness tells how the killers showed him Moore’s battered body while she was still clinging to life in a Flatbush basement.

Her two alleged killers are yet to stand trial and are facing the death penalty.

Cops and prosecutors are usually loath to reveal witnesses before a trial to protect them.

Key evidence is also usually kept under tight wraps, but the TV cameras captured the blood-splattered crime scene and a chain and padlock found in a trash can and allegedly used on Moore during her two days of captivity.

The series has already fueled infighting between the NYPD and the FDNY after a cop was filmed calling firefighters “amateurs.”

COPS’ DOCU-TRAUMA

Upcoming shocks on TV’s ‘24/7’ have NYPD sweating

In this week’s episode, a detective takes another swipe at the FDNY as he responds to community protests over the NYPD’s handling of the Moore murder case.

“There’s an old saying in the [Police] Academy,” Detective Ken Silvia says. “If you want to be a hero, go join the Fire Department.”

Protesters are shown decrying the allegedly dismissive attitude of cops when Moore’s family first reported the 21-year-old missing and police suggested she was of age and probably with a male companion.

In the July 20 episode, cops are filmed trying to build a case against Forrest Bloede for the January 2003 murder of his buddy, Burke O’Brien.

Bloede was initially charged with murder, but prosecutors quickly dropped the charges.

ABC plans to show cops telling Bloede, who was a suspect at the time, that he’s only a witness while they scour his apartment for a murder weapon.

In a bid to elicit a confession, cops later tell him that Burke survived the shooting.

There’s also footage of the innocent Bloede being questioned, led in handcuffs, photographed for a mug shot and fingerprinted.

Bloede’s innocence was later proven when a female lawyer turned up with an account of how three men confronted Bloede and Burke before one shot Burke — buttressing the account Bloede initially gave police.

The case remains unsolved.

Bloede was so incensed by his treatment that he at first refused to look at mug shots until cops devised a plot to “embarass” him into doing so by having Burke’s father make a public plea for help.

Bloede’s lawyer, Paul Fishman, said that while filming suspects is an invasion of privacy, his client has agreed to let the footage roll.

“He was unaware he was being filmed at the time, but he
is hopeful the publicity will result in the arrest of the people who killed his friend,” Fishman said.

The sixth episode shows two female witnesses to a suspected murder of a man who ended up boiled to death at the bottom of a sewer hole.


A crime-scene photo of McGarity dead in the hole is also shown. Masters was hit with a murder rap that was later dropped.

The final show focuses on Kelly and his anti-terror efforts.

Early episodes have already left some of New York’s finest fearing the show has turned into a public-relations disaster.

“I don’t think it’s the image they [the NYPD] want to portray,” retired Detective Sal Blando said.

A Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association official was less diplomatic.

“It’s the dopesist thing I’ve seen on TV, and it’s harmful to the Police Department,” she said.

But retired Lt. Pat Barry said he enjoyed the show, although he felt there was too much cursing.

“There was good detective work,” Barry said. “The profanity they could do without as well as on television.”

Last week’s episode showcased police work described by critics as questionable.

Lt. Vincent Hollisfield, the cop who insured the FDNY with his “amateurish” jibe, ordered a drunken motorist to continue driving to another intersection before setting off a commotion by locking the driver’s keys — including his house keys — in the car.

Hollisfield had to call for backup, and the driver was taken to a hospital and never charged.

Meanwhile, Alison Esposto, a young, attractive cop daughter of an NYPD police chief, was punching a drunken suspect on the street.

Veteran defense lawyer and NYPD critic Ron Ruby questioned the police practices.

“A police officer is permitted to arrest someone for drunk driving,” Ruby said. “But they are not permitted to engage in creative justice.

“If this is how they act when the camera is on, one can only imagine when the camera is off,” Ruby said.

ABC’s deal with the NYPD — initially brokered by Commissioner Kelly’s former spokesman, Michael O’Looney — allowed producers to choose from 5,000 cops and handpick the units they wanted to film in action.

Often riding inside police vehicles, they logged 2,000 hours of footage of cops at work between April 2002 and last December.

The present NYPD spokesman, Paul Browne, confirmed the camera crews were given unrestricted access.

“They were given general permission,” he said. “They had a free hand.”

Producer Terrence Wrong defended the series in an interview with The Post.

“We met with the commissioners [Kelly], and he thought it was a good idea,” Wrong said.

“This is a new experience for the Police Department to see itself exposed in this kind of format.

“Even if you see a few warts or blemishes, the overall outcome will be positive.”

Wrong said nothing could be done about showing police swearing and insisted no major police infractions would appear.

He also said there was nothing unusual about the numerous times charges were dropped or not filed on cases he depicted.

“These are factual, based on real cases,” Wrong said. “Frequently when cops make arrests in homicide cases, DAs don’t think there’s enough evidence to prosecute.”

O’Looney, now a publicist for Merrill Lynch, did not return calls seeking comment.
Taxi Drivers: Taking a Front Seat

Newsweek

July 19, 2004 issue - This week, Elena Tenchikova, 19, will be steering a new set of wheels. Unlike some of her classmates at Brooklyn College, however, she won't be cruising to a party. She's heading to a taxi stand near you. Tenchikova is taking advantage of new scholarships for women and Spanish speakers provided by New York's Metropolitan Taxicab Board of Trade. The scholarships cover a three-day course that prepares potential drivers for the city licensing exam. For low-income immigrants hoping to secure a seat behind the wheel, the course's $175 price tag has long been an obstacle. "They said I could take the course for free, and that was that," Tenchikova says. "I signed up immediately."

The scholarships are meant to boost New York City's driver diversity. Women comprise 13 percent of cabbies nationwide, but account for less than 1 percent of New York's 40,000 licensed cabdrivers. Fernando Mateo, president of the New York State Federation of Taxi Drivers and the man who devised the program, hopes more women will sign up as they learn about the job's perks. "Driving a yellow cab gives women the flexibility to drop their kids off at school and to pick them up in the evening," Mateo says.

According to Doris Nelson, a taxi driver for 12 years, female drivers are well rewarded. "I get better tips [than men do]," she says. "I'm cautious. And [passengers] like my perfume." While some men have made inappropriate comments and some have skipped out on paying, "I try not to take it personally. It happens to everybody."

The scholarship program also offers prep courses in Spanish. Although 64 percent of new drivers in the past 10 years have been minorities, only 7 percent were Hispanic. The test must be taken in English, but, says Mexican immigrant Aurelio Pineda, 55, "if I didn't take the class in Spanish, I never would have passed." He got his license last week.

—William Lee Adams