

# My Very Last Column. Ever. :-(

By: Noelle Hancock

I've published numerous columns over the years. There were the "50 Most Annoying Things" columns (Number 51. When a celebrity marries a "normal" person and it's not you.) There were the columns in which I told people what to do and pretended that they listen to me (A cappella singers: No matter what Shakespeare says, the world is not your stage. Unless there is a spotlight on you at that exact moment, you are not allowed to randomly burst into song.) There were columns in which I discussed the things I don't understand. (How is Au Bon Pain SOOOO slow? By the time I finally make it to the front of the line, I'm no longer hungry because my stomach has begun to eat itself. "Can I help you?" they ask. "I don't know. Did you want to HAND me the stick I plan to beat you with?")

And now the day has finally arrived: My last column. This is probably my last chance to write about what I want, instead of what others tell me to write about. Therefore, I'm going to pull a Julia and keep on going long after the orchestra starts playing the "Please shut up now" music. Prepare yourselves.

Well, it's the end of the year, and there's a lot going on. Dust has become such a large presence in my room, I'm considering charging it rent. I'm debating surprising my unsuspecting teachers with "brownies" on the last day of class. I only have only one more month to see my boyfriend, who's a junior. Soon our relationship will become long-distance and sponsored by AT&T. (Note to girls of Yale: Touch him and I'll end you.) I'm also about to turn in my senior essay. Afterward, I plan to drink my face off until May 27, at which time I will walk across the stage to receive my diploma while carrying two 40s. Levin will have to place the degree between my teeth. Everyone watch for me!

That's right: The finest and, dare I say it, best-looking class Yale has ever seen is finally graduating. Mother Yale is sending us on our way with cries of "Go West, young man! -- or anywhere for that matter, as long as you get the hell out."

I admit, there are a few things I'm glad to leave behind. Like the people who believe it's acceptable to drop a deuce in the bathroom when I'm showering. And after living on the corner of York and Elm streets for a year, I fear I will be hearing "A flower for someTHING to EAAAATTTT!!!!" in my sleep for years to come.

But mostly, graduating is the scariest, saddest and most confusing thing I've ever had to do. I highly unrecommend it. First of all, there's no prom in college like there was at the end of high school. I feel cheated. I was hoping I'd finally get laid. Then you receive your diploma but have to vacate your dorm room by noon the following day. So harsh. Even Toad's Place turns on the lights and lets you chill for a while before closing.

So my first post-graduation adventure will be going in on room draw with Greater Manhattan. I swear, they should really spring the important stuff on you when you're still

young and spry. I no longer have the energy to do things like apartment-hunting, job-searching, showering. I've heard I can make the apartment search easier by getting a "broker." But this is a word I don't understand as a noun -- only in the adjective form, as in "today I am broker than yesterday."

Adding to the complication are landlords, who insist your lease be co-signed by a "guarantor." For those who don't know, a guarantor is a "way richer person" invented so landlords don't get shafted if you bag on your rent. A guarantor is also a word that I have no idea how to pronounce, so I'm too embarrassed to ask someone to be mine.

Another element of confusion is post-college roommates. My parents think I should get an apartment with some girlfriends. They do not realize that I have no girl friends because all girls hate other girls. All of my friends are guys because I am actually a guy that God accidentally put breasts on. After I explained this, mom suggested I take out a personals ad for a roommate. She, apparently, has not seen "Single White Female" and doesn't mind forcing me to sleep facing my bedroom door.

No doubt about it, the unknown is scary. I've been having nightmares. In them, I'm 50 and editor-in-chief of Cat Fancy magazine. Sometimes it's Tiger Beat. Josh Hartnett is still on the cover. Post-college life was just one of those things I always ignored -- like other people's opinions. As far as the real world was concerned, I figured I'd cross that bridge when I came to it. Only now that I've arrived, I see that it's one of those rickety-ass rope-and-wood bridges, and I'd rather chill right where I am, thanks.

But in my heart, I know that it's time to go. The orchestra has packed up and gone, they're about to hit the lights. It's time to stop chickening out and get to the after-party, even if I don't know where it's going to be or who's going to be there.

And now some last words of advice before the credits roll.

If you don't have anything nice to say, get a column in the Yale Daily News.

Professional drinker: Not so impressive on the resume. Who knew?

Don't worry if you don't know what you want to be when you grow up. If, like most Yalies, you are unable to not worry, have a drink. Everyone, when drunk, believes he has a future career in singing.

Believe in yourself. During my senior year of high school, when it was time to vote for "Most Likely to Succeed," I voted for myself. My best friend at the time was appalled at my arrogance. But, hell, if you don't believe in yourself, how can you expect others to?

That said, my goals are small. By the time I'm 25 I want to be so famous that, when my name is typed into Microsoft Word, a red line does not appear underneath it.

All right, time to send this old horse to the glue factory. Man, I'm gonna miss this.

Thanks so much to anyone who read my columns. Like, on purpose. I had so much fun writing them. I had so much fun at this school. Goodbye, everyone! And, in case I don't see y'all, good afternoon, good evening, and good night.