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SAT Options, Not SAT Optional

Colby applicants now have a third choice as they consider which standardized test scores to submit.

Applicants to the Class of 2014 are no longer required to submit scores from the College Board Reasoning Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT) if they choose to submit three different SAT Subject Tests (formerly SAT II).

The change follows three years of study of the role of standardized tests in Colby's admissions process. Last fall a faculty-led group recommended the change as a way for the College to move toward its goals of building a more diverse applicant pool and providing a more accurate way to predict student performance at Colby. The new policy was approved by the Board of Trustees in October.

The study group found that the three-choice policy:

- Allows students with a particular

strength to showcase their achievement.

- Adds an opportunity for students from underrepresented groups to submit a language SAT Subject Test to help fulfill Colby's test requirement.

- Recognizes that the results on the SAT Reasoning Test have been found to be affected by family income more than SAT Subject Tests. Students from more affluent families tend to do better on reasoning tests. The change offers economically challenged students an opportunity to show their academic ability.

- Is consistent with Colby's finding that the third SAT Subject Test is a better predictor of first-year success than the SAT Reasoning Test.

"Each of these alone is kind of a small thing, but when you add them all up it's a considerable advantage," said Steve Saunders, Charles A. Dana Professor of Music and a member of the study group.

The change will be implemented for a five-year trial period, beginning with the 2009-10 admission cycle. During this trial the College will evaluate the three-choice policy to see how or if it affects admissions process and the student body.

Admissions policies regarding standardized tests vary among Colby's peer schools. Standardized tests are optional at Bowdoin and Bates. Williams requires the SAT Reasoning Test plus two SAT Subject Tests. Middlebury's requirements are the same as Colby's.

Saunders said the three-choice model was an incremental change made after a broad range of views was explored, with some study-group members advocating making SATs optional and others calling for requiring both the SAT Reasoning Tests and additional Subject Tests. "I think this is a good move for Colby," Saunders said. —*Gerry Boyle '78*

MASS EXTINCTION? NOT SO FAST

An article written by Robert Gastaldo, chair of the Geology Department, with two Colby undergraduates among the coauthors, undermines a popular and widely publicized theory about the Permian Mass Extinction, the greatest catastrophic die-off of animals in Earth's history.

"Instead of a sudden crisis, the largest mass extinction in Earth's history might have been a prolonged event that stretched over hundreds of thousands of years," is how the American Association for the Advancement of Science's (AAAS) magazine reported the story online. "If

confirmed, the findings could send researchers scrambling to find a new explanation for the greatest of mass die-offs on land." Big news in the world of science.

The article in the March 2009 *GEOLOGY* magazine, the leading journal in the discipline, challenges the theory that a "dead zone" layer of sedimentary rock in central South Africa represents the clear and synchronized end of most animals from the Permian period—a theory championed by other scientists on the Discovery Channel, in National



Geology majors Marcy Rolerson '06 and Daniel Pace '06 working with Professor Robert Gastaldo on the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa.

Geographic specials, and on Animal Planet.

The Colby researchers, working with two other scientists and funding from the National Science Foundation, found wide variations in the stratigraphic record at sites very near where the original layer dubbed "the dead zone" was discovered. The variations undermined the notion that it was a consistent marker of a relatively quick die-off across an area spanning continents.

C. Kittinger "Kit" Clark '08 and Sophie Newbury '08 are coauthors, and about a dozen Colby students have worked on site in the Karoo Basin of South Africa since

2003, when Gastaldo was invited by the Smithsonian to study rocks in the area. The first two science writers to report the story online both made the same mistake: calling Newbury and Clark "graduate students," when, in fact, they published the paper as undergraduates. —*Stephen B. Collins '74*

Go to www.colby.edu/mag for a link to the *GEOLOGY* article.



Musical Islam

The musical sounds of Islam, rarely heard in Maine or even the United States, have made it to Colby. Music Artist in Residence Dhruv Sangari, a well-known vocalist in the genre, is teaching a course and presenting Sufi music—mystical Islamic music—using poetry and improvisation. “It’s the only real singing in an Islamic tradition,” said Colby Music Department Chair Steven Nuss, who helped bring Sangari to Colby from New Delhi, India, to teach and perform. “It’s a facet of Islam that we don’t hear a lot about.”



Dhruv Sangari

Sufi music may be sung in Hindi, Panjabi, Urdu, Persian, or other languages, and much of it surrounds love poems. “It’s a very florid, melodic style, something between operatic and birdlike,” said Nuss.

Sangari’s form of Sufi music, which comes from ancient temples of northern India and Pakistan, is primarily represented by Qawwali, a form of Arabic vocal music from the seventh and eighth centuries that eventually blended with preexisting local Indian forms and evolved into a its own musical genre. Sangari, 27, has also recorded pop and rock fusion, blending sacred, secular and World music traditions.

—Ruth Jacobs

Comic Tragedy

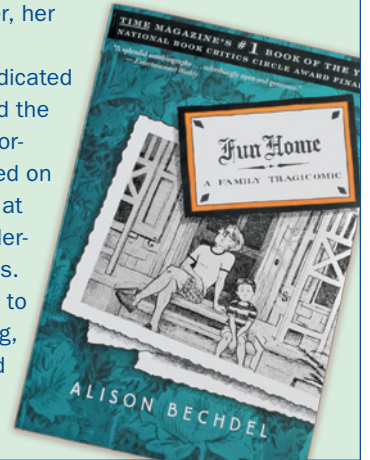
Fun Home, an award-winning graphic novel by Alison Bechdel, is anything but funny.

When Bechdel spoke at Colby in February as part of the Visiting Writers Series, she walked the audience through the steps of sketching, detailing, coloring, and digitizing each panel of her memoir in comic-strip format. She spoke of researching and writing the book: reading books her father read, searching her childhood diary for clues, and weaving images from family photographs into her pictures.

Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic tells the story of Bechdel’s uneasy relationship with her father. An English teacher and funeral home (*Fun Home*) director, her father was a closeted homosexual unbeknownst to Bechdel until shortly after she came out in college as a lesbian. A few weeks later, her father was dead.

Bechdel, well-known for her syndicated series *Dykes to Watch Out For*, read the book’s first chapter aloud—while corresponding cartoon panels appeared on a screen. We see a young Bechdel at home, beginning the journey of understanding a father laden with secrets.

Judging by the length of the line to purchase the book after the reading, a lot of people couldn’t wait to read chapter two. —Laura Meader



Downtown Development

Amid the economic slowdown, two mainstays of Waterville’s downtown are on the move.

After more than three years of planning and extensive historic renovation, the Hathaway Creative Center opened in November. The riverfront mill that once housed the Hathaway Shirt Co. welcomed its first major office tenants, MaineGeneral Health and the HealthReach Network. Work continued as apartment and studio space was readied, with the first residential tenants expected to move in this spring.

The project, undertaken by Rhode Island-based developer Paul Boghossian ’76 and business partner Thomas Niemann, is expected to be a mainstay of downtown redevelopment in Waterville. The mill is on the banks of the Kennebec River, affording expansive riverfront views.

Boghossian intends to follow the Hathaway renovation with redevelopment of two adjacent mills. Boghossian—and state, lo-



Scott Hayes of Niemann Capital gives Colby students a tour of the newly renovated Hathaway Creative Center in Waterville earlier this spring.

BETH COLE '09

cal, and Colby officials—predict the renovation of the mills will bring in a new wave of residents, office workers, professionals, and artisans to the city center.

Plans and fundraising also are underway for a \$4-million renovation of the Waterville Opera House. Opened in 1902 with Waterville City Hall, the Opera House still is in use. But Lisa Hallee ’81, chair of Opera House’s development committee and senior major gifts officer at Colby, recently told city officials that the 900-seat facility needs

extensive modernization. “It’s incumbent upon us to make sure this special place can benefit generations to come,” she said.

Plans call for upgrading the balcony seating, installing new flooring, reconfiguring walls to improve acoustics, and improving safety of exits. “The backstage is both crowded and unsafe,” Hallee told the *Morning Sentinel*. “It is crowded with three stories of dressing rooms dating back to 1902.” —G.B.

WIT AND WISDOM

“See what I mean?
These students—they are good.”

Environmental leader Søren Hermansen to ABC News anchor Bob Woodruff following a meeting with Colby students. Woodruff was at Colby working on a Discovery Channel documentary about Hermansen, a guest speaker (see story, P. 11).

“It does seem strange that it’s
‘metric tonnes per square foot.’”

Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies Philip Nyhus, reviewing data that shows Colby reduced carbon emissions 32 percent since 1990 (based on CO₂ per square foot of building space).

“Champagne Steps was disgusting.”

The Echo, in an editorial advocating a new end-of-classes celebration that includes faculty and staff and that passes “the propriety test.”

“I received two complaints about the heat. Both came from buildings where we did not turn down the heat.”

Vice President for Administration and Treasurer Doug Terp ’84, on faculty/staff reaction to building temperatures being turned down a few degrees between Christmas and New Year’s to save energy.

“I couldn’t see that well, but just being there with two million other people just cheering—this kind of hopefulness, the energy ... the excitement mixed with almost relief when Obama took the oath was just an absolutely incredible moment, one I’m going to carry with me for a very long time.”

Isaac Opper ’10, from Helena, Mont., on attending the presidential inauguration. Listen to the interview at www.insidecolby.com/podcast.

NSF Supports Colby Faculty

Four recent National Science Foundation grants are supporting research and programs at Colby, and all four have environmental themes.

An international conference, Climate and Cultural Anxiety, the first major gathering of historians of climate change, is scheduled on campus April 1-4. Thirty-two international scholars will discuss historical perspectives on climate change.

Professor of Science, Technology, and Society James Fleming received a \$25,000 NSF grant to support the conference, whose formal title is Climate Change Science, Environmental Challenges, and Cultural Anxiety: Historical and Social Perspectives. Fleming billed the conference as “unique and unprecedented ... international, intergenerational, and interdisciplinary.”

A leading expert on the history of meteorology, Fleming said the field of historical studies of climate change is beginning to achieve critical mass. “Ten years ago it would have been me and one other person—and we did meet once in a while for coffee.”

Meanwhile, three other professors received NSF grants in the fall semester for projects focused on the environment. Whitney King (chemistry) is developing instruments that can measure iron and copper in seawater, Phil Brown (economics) is analyzing the pros and cons of dams in China, and Paul Josephson (history) is studying the role of science and technology in the Soviet conquest of the Russian Arctic.

Details on these NSF grants are online at www.colby.edu/mag.



KENDYL SULLIVAN '11

REESA KASHUK '12

S.H.O.U.T! It Out

A student-organized weekend about multiculturalism, centered on the theme of freedom, brought together students and members of the community March 5-7 for demonstrations, workshops, and a keynote address by *Vagina Monologues* author **Eve Ensler** (above, right).

This is the second year of S.H.O.U.T!—a reincarnation of the Diversity Conference first organized by Colby students in 2001. “The point of S.H.O.U.T! was really to spark discussion about underrepresented viewpoints and issues,” said Pamela Colon ’09, who helped found the event last year.

S.H.O.U.T! (Speaking, Hearing, Opening Up Together!) kicked off with demonstrations in Cotter Union—from Aaron Kaye ’11 breaking wooden boards to the **Dynasty Step Team**’s rhythmic performance (above, left).

On Friday Ensler spoke about her work

in the Democratic Republic of Congo and urged the audience to take action on violence against women and girls.

Activities on Saturday included workshops on freedom of speech, religion, and more—giving students an opportunity to talk to their peers about issues relating to this year’s theme and what it meant to them on an individual level.

In the afternoon students participated in activities to learn about cultures through cooking, martial arts, salsa dancing, step dancing, and more. “It was so much fun because it’s such a group effort,” said Amelia Fogg ’11 about the Taiko drumming workshop.

The Pugh Community Board is planning to continue the conversation spurred by S.H.O.U.T! with many other activities including discussion forums, film screenings, and guest speakers.

—*Jenny Chen* ’12

Gerald Holtz '52, Pillar of Fiscal Strength

Gerald J. Holtz '52, who served on the Board of Trustees for 16 years from 1984 to 2001, died Jan. 3, 2009, at 77 in West Falmouth, Mass. He is remembered as a great supporter and friend of Colby. President William D. Adams, recalling Holtz's diligence as chair of the trustees' Budget and Finance Committee, said, "He had a gentle but firm way of keeping us on track. Much of Colby's admirable financial strength and stability is owing to Jerry's influence and leadership."

A chemistry major at Colby, Holtz attended Bentley College and had the highest score in Massachusetts on the Certified Public Accountant exam in 1953. He served in the U.S. Navy and earned an M.B.A. at Harvard. He worked for Arthur Andersen for 35 years, eventually heading the firm's tax quality control program. After retiring in 1992, he taught accounting at the Boston College management and law schools until 2001.

Lawrence Pugh '56, former chair of Colby's board, said Holtz was a devoted alumnus and trustee. "I think one of the reasons the school is in such good financial shape today is because of people like Jerry and because of the sound, conservative fiscal advice he gave."

At Colby Holtz served as vice chair of the board and received a Colby Brick Award in 1992 and the Marriner Distinguished Service Award in 1995.

"He was so wise and experienced, and so gentle in his suggestions," President Emeritus William R. Cotter said in a note to Holtz's widow, Jane, adding that Holtz was "universally liked, respected, and admired at Colby."

Holtz also served on boards at Temple Israel in Boston (where he was president), Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Salt Pond Area Bird Sanctuaries, and Penikese Island School.



Inside Colby Profiles "The Man"

In January first-year student Eva Ludwig scheduled a meeting with President Bro Adams, took along a digital recorder, and asked him questions that she and her friends had to answer during college interviews. "The Man, the Myth, the Bro" roams from *The Godfather* to France and from BMR to Tom Waits. Listen at insidecolby.com/podcast (episode 44).

Clogging the Brain Drain

Despite the discouraging economic climate into which the Class of 2009 will be venturing, there is some good news for college graduates planning to stay in Maine.

The Opportunity Maine program is a citizens' initiative that passed unanimously in the Maine House of Representatives and by a large majority in the Senate. The program is a self-described, "ambitious, first-in-the-nation college affordability and economic development program."

College students who received student loans as part of their financial aid packages since January 2008, and who continue to work in Maine after graduation, are eligible. Students must sign up in their college's financial services office. For a maximum of 10 years, graduates who continue to live and work in Maine may claim up to \$5,500 in income tax credit for each year in which they are repaying loans.

If a student leaves Maine, there is no penalty. They may also claim the tax credit if they leave and return to Maine a few years later. —L.P.

RESETTLING REFUGEES

A full-day conference Feb. 7 that focused on the status of the more than 4.2 million Iraqis who have been displaced since the 2003 U.S. invasion brought together more than 75 students, Maine residents, and community organizers. The Iraq Refugee Awareness Movement (IRAM), a student organization advised by Assistant Professor of History Jason Opal, spearheaded the event. The Goldfarb Center for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement sponsored the conference.



BETH COLE '09

Nour al-Khal, former *New York Times* interpreter and assistant to deceased U.S. reporter Steven Vincent, opened events with an emotional account of her painful journey to attain refugee status in the United States after being shot by Iraqi police impersonators.

Alaa Rasheed, an Iraqi translator and refugee now living in Worcester, Mass., discussed the logistical difficulties of transitioning to life in the United States.

Other speakers included Kael Alford, a photojournalist who created the book *Unembedded*, and journalist Anna Badkhen; two Iraqi refugees who have been resettled in the United States; two representatives from international nonprofits that aid refugees; and Laila Al-Arian, a journalist for Al Jazeera English.

Cheryl Hamilton from the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence and Arian Giantris from Catholic Charities Maine led a workshop that focused on acting locally to offer immediate aid to Iraqi refugees in Maine.

Sophie Sarkar '11, an IRAM student leader, thought the conference forged a relationship between American conference attendees and Iraqis. "It made the issue a reality by connecting the Colby community to actual Iraqi refugees," she said. —Lauren Pongan '09

Loosening the Wind Belt

If all goes as planned, the United States will witness 20-fold growth in wind power consumption by 2030, and that's not just because Obama won the presidency and Democrats have a majority in the House. According to Robert Gramlich '91, policy director at the American Wind Energy Association in Washington, D.C., technological, social, economic, and policy factors are converging to create a welcoming climate for wind.

Supply? Check. "We've got a lot more wind capacity than we have electricity consumption in the country—more than we could ever use," Gramlich told a room packed with economics and environmental studies majors, among others, on Feb. 6.

Demand? But of course. The challenge is getting the power to the demanders. The area of the country best suited for wind power—from the Texas panhandle up to the Dakotas, which energy tycoon T. Boone Pickens calls the wind belt—is sparsely populated. The power needs to go to the coasts. One subject of debate is who will pay for transmission lines, Gramlich said.

Despite the many issues to be worked through, Gramlich believes that the United States is on its way to 20 percent wind power (from one percent currently) by 2030. A primary factor is that, since it has the potential to create jobs, politicians who may have dismissed wind at another time could give it a chance. "There's a lot of windy red states," said Gramlich, "and that could really change a lot of the political dynamics."

And, unlike in Cape Cod and Maine's mountain regions, issues about disrupting views are less pervasive in the wind belt. "The only NIMBY problems we have in the middle of the country are the neighboring landowners who don't get that lease payment," Gramlich said. "They want it on *their* land." —R.J.

Environmental Hero

Here's a recipe for a successful campus lecture: serve refreshments, have a Discovery Channel video crew taping the talk, and invite a charismatic "Time Magazine Hero of the Environment" whose profile on Time's Web site begins, "It's amazing what a little free beer can accomplish."

Søren Hermansen was the environmental hero on campus March 11, meeting with students and other members of the Environmental Advisory Group, getting taped for a TV special, and delivering a public talk. Hermansen gained acclaim when he led the island of Samsø in Denmark, population 4,300, to convert to 100-percent renewable and sustainable energy. In fewer than 10 years the islanders completely eliminated their carbon emissions and, by selling wind and solar power to the mainland, they now claim a 140-percent reduction in their collective carbon footprint.

Hermansen, who spoke less about technology than about changing social values and building consensus, addressed a question from a student about the role of beer in Samsø's initiative. "Don't believe everything you read in the newspaper," he said—then went on to praise the role of coffee, cookies, and yes, sometimes beer, in the countless meetings required for islanders to unite in a common purpose. He also explained that identifying respected community members and making sure in advance that they would volunteer at those meetings helped ensure the project's success. Hermansen is now a sustainability evangelist, talking around the world about Samsø's success and running the island's the Energy Academy when he's at home.

"I always knew Scandinavians were some of the most civilized people on the planet," Blair Braverman '11 wrote in her blog after listening to Hermansen. "And now I have proof." —S.B.C.

To Lend a Hand with Hands-On Skill

Though they received no academic credit for meeting two evenings each week, 22 students completed a Jan Plan enrichment series on how to research and write grant proposals for nonprofit and community-based organizations.

Students said the presentations by employees of local and state nonprofits offered them new options for civic engagement. "There is so much happening in Waterville. It would be great to help there," said Jena Hershkowitz '12. She said that working for a nonprofit in New York last summer showed her how difficult it

can be to find someone with experience writing grants. "Now if they need a grant writer, I know I can help."

Presenters came from the Maine Philanthropy Association, Grantwinners.net, the Maine Governor's Children's Cabinet, and other organizations. They spoke about researching and writing grants and about initiatives they have been able to support through successful proposals.

As he looks to graduation and a career, Brian Wadugu '09 sees grant writing as an important skill. "It came at just

the right time," he said. His interest in learning a valuable skill convinced him to enroll even though the course carried no academic credit.

The Jan Plan workshop series was a collaboration between Community Outreach Coordinator Marnie Terhune and Associate Dean of Students Barbara Moore. Moore considers grant writing an essential skill from a career perspective, while Terhune sees the potential for students to give something back to their communities.

—Alexandra Desaulniers '11