

# Colby



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The Colby Student Investment Association's performance group at its weekly meeting. Students monitor the performance of each stock in the association's portfolio, funded through a \$100,000 gift from Todger Anderson '67. At right, Alexandra Clegg '09, the head of the performance group.

## AHEAD OF THE CURVE

With real money, Colby's student investors beat the Dow and NASDAQ

GERRY BOYLE '78 STORY

FRED FIELD PHOTOS

Traver Elder '10 didn't have good news when she reported to the other members of the Colby Student Investment Association's performance group in November.

"Things aren't looking too good for ICICI," Elder said at a weekly Wednesday-night meeting, referring to the India-based bank in which the club has invested. "The quarterly profits are down twenty-seven percent right now, but there is hope of U.K. investment, an infusion of money. So things went up after their talk of that, but right now it's leveling out."

The 18 students seated around the conference table in the Diamond Building studied the sobering numbers on their spreadsheets (ICICI shares down 58 percent overall). "Can you give me the two strongest reasons to not get rid of this stock?" asked Josh Jamner '09. "Right now I'm hard-pressed to find one strong reason to not get rid of this stock, except for the huge loss we took on it," Elder replied.

Of course the Colby students aren't the only investors caught in the market downturn,



but they had some consolation. That week, the students' portfolio, established last spring through a \$100,000 gift from Todger Anderson '67, was down just 17 percent. That's far better than the performance of the leading indexes for the same period: minus 42 percent for the S&P 500, minus 37 percent for the Dow, and minus 42 percent for NASDAQ.

"It's always fun investing when the market is making twenty- or thirty-percent returns," said government major Alexandra Clegg '09, who heads the club's performance group. "You really don't have to put much thought into it.

But having to come in at a time like this ... ."

Years in the planning stages, the club began investing last April and enjoyed a few heady months before the bear market took hold. But the tight ship that the organization runs has served it well in stormy times as well as in good ones.

"You definitely have to have a much bigger focus on the downside potential for companies," said John Roberts '09, an economics and mathematics double major and the association's chief executive officer.

And focus they do.

With about 50 active members, the club's three working groups—performance, trading, and research—meet weekly and report to the whole group twice a month. Performance follows stocks held by the club, while research considers new acquisitions. The club is open to any interested student, with education sessions held regularly to introduce new members to the ways of financial markets. "We assume you don't know anything," said Roberts.

But that doesn't last long. Reports at the No-

**Investment Advice:** Alexandra Clegg '09 appeared on NPR's *All Things Considered* Dec. 10 to discuss how the Colby Student Investment Association outperformed the Dow, NASDAQ, and S&P 500. [www.colby.edu/mag](http://www.colby.edu/mag), keyword: csia



vember performance meeting included analysts' predictions, economic implications of political events, assessment of companies' earnings, liquidity, and debt loads.

"It's been really cool to see where the club was at this time last year versus where it is today and how much progress we've made as a group," said Clegg, who was mulling job offers from consulting firms. "Just raising the level of our analysis. I think that's what motivated the alum who donated the money in the first place. Actually creating an educational group where you could come in and learn."

With Randy Nelson, the Douglas Professor of Economics and Finance, as their advisor, students manage the fund themselves, buying and selling on three allotted trading days each semester. That restriction keeps administrative time and costs at a minimum but can be irksome in a fast-changing market. "We missed out on a huge opportunity with Apple," Roberts said. "We pitched it [to the club] at a hundred and fourteen dollars a share. We bought it at one-eighth."

Bear or bull market, the lessons are invaluable preparation for a career in finance, members say. In fact, by mid-November all of the seniors in the group had job offers. And other students were gearing up for prime internships.

"That's one of our goals: getting people placed into good internships," said Lokesh Todi '09, who will go to work in Boston for Analysis Group, a national consulting firm, after graduation. "It does show that people from Colby are really smart and do well at their internships and their jobs."

Roberts, who accepted a job offer from Barclays Capital in New York, where he interned last summer, said helping to manage the club portfolio has taught him skills he'll soon put to use.

"The fundamentals are very similar," he said. "Looking at the financials of a company and what makes the company strong and sound. Those types of characteristics are very applicable to a really wide range of financial services jobs."

All three students said interviewers were very interested in the workings of the investment club. "People were very surprised that we were able to raise a hundred thousand dollars, and it's all student run," Roberts said.

The fact that investment decisions have real consequences has driven student interest and involvement, the students said.

And do students get to keep the profits, should there be any?

"Unfortunately not," Todi said, laughing. Any profit, he said, goes directly into the College's endowment fund. "But it's real money, and it's our responsibility. Now people are looking into earnings calls and actually listening to them. It's a real skill."

## Gearing Up For Down Times

Pursuing finance jobs requires focus, flexibility

Alexandra Clegg '09 had successfully made it through two rounds of phone interviews this fall with financial consulting companies and was eagerly awaiting the face-to-face finals.

From two of the companies, she received a call she didn't want.

"They said, 'Actually, we're not going to be hiring, so we're just going to cancel,'" said Clegg, who has four internships on her résumé, part of a college career spent zeroing in on a career in finance.

She was disappointed but by no means defeated.

"I was in New York [for an interview] on Friday," Clegg said in November. "I'll be in Boston Wednesday."

It's that sort of resilience and confidence (Clegg did ultimately land a job with a financial consulting firm) that is required in a down job market, says Colby Career Center Director Roger Woolsey. Rather than panic, students considering careers in financial services should take a hard look at their futures. "Stay focused on what your goals and objectives are, and really take more of an aggressive approach," Woolsey advised.

Contrary to what some might think, the job market for students looking at finance isn't bad, he said. "Regardless of the recession, the early indication is that this is still going to be a decent year for grads."

He reported that investment banks that recruit at Colby are honoring job offers already extended to seniors. And students who had been thinking of going into investment banking are considering consulting, sales, and other financial-sector fields.

Woolsey, who speaks regularly with alumni and Colby parents in the financial services industry, said the word from those in the business is for students to look beyond the obvious. "Look at more of the medium-sized banks in the Midwest and the West Coast instead of always going after the big-brand firms," Woolsey said.

As they consider career options beyond the East Coast corridor, students will need to be flexible—"in geographic location, in job-function within finance," Woolsey said.

"Don't be as concerned with pigeonholing yourself in the industry."

A recent alumnus who was laid off from a financial services company recently called Woolsey for help finding another job in Boston. "I said, 'We'd have a greater opportunity for finding you work if we could open that up to New York, Philadelphia, D.C., because we could use a bigger database of people,'" Woolsey recounted. "Sure enough, he agreed to that."

Colby students are versatile and balanced and have a lot to offer potential employers. But in an economic downturn they also need to know when to be conservative. "I had a few discussions with students with their parents in this office," Woolsey said. "In a good year, a student received two or three offers. We would try to advise the student in negotiating and try to come up with a better offer, leveraging one against the other. But there was a parent specifically this year who advised his son not to do that. It was the best advice. Feel lucky you have one offer on the table. Don't play games, and accept it."

Still, it's a daunting time for seniors interested in finance, many of whom have been working toward this goal since they arrived at Colby almost four years ago.

"Nowadays to get a junior-year internship you need a sophomore-year internship," said Lokesh Todi '09. "And sometimes to get a sophomore-year [internship] you need freshman year. It's become a very competitive field."

Some students are just postponing their job hunt until next semester, while others are signing up for the Graduate Record Exam, said Todi, who is from Nepal.

It is a particularly difficult time for international students hunting finance jobs in the United States because companies must take on those students' visa obligations, said Soule Sow '09, of Senegal.

If jobs don't materialize, grad school beckons. "Last year, I didn't know anyone applying for a Ph.D. [program]," Sow said. "This year I know four people who are applying."—Gerry Boyle '78

# Q&A

## COMPUTER SCIENCE CHAIR BRUCE MAXWELL ON COMPUTER SCIENCE, THE LIBERAL ARTS, PROGRAMMING PARTIES, AND LATE-NIGHT iCHAT.

ROB CLOCKEDILE INTERVIEW

FRED FIELD PHOTO

*Bruce Maxwell is a computer programmer, roboticist, violinist, and swimmer. He talked with Colby's Managing Editor for the Web Rob Clockedile about opportunities that come with teaching computer science at a liberal arts college.*

### **So, you're relatively new to Colby?**

I came a year ago fall. This is my thirteenth year teaching and ten of those have been at small, liberal arts colleges. I knew what to expect, and I've been very pleased with the students.

### **Do you ever feel marginalized by your big university peers?**

I don't. I went to Cambridge University for a master's and Carnegie Mellon for a graduate degree [Ph.D.]. I maintain lots of contacts with people there. When you come to a place like Colby, you understand your research isn't going to move as fast. You're not going to have graduate students working full-time on multiyear projects. That doesn't mean you can't be cutting edge and do very good work.

You end up building a large family of former students who have gone on to be graduate students. I have former students who are becoming peers. We're reading each other's papers and I'm starting to work with them.

### **We hear about the unique nature of the relationships at Colby, relationships that go beyond the classroom and beyond students' stay here.**

It's one of the nice things about being at a small place in a small department. At a big university your only contact with students might be standing in front of a course for fifty people. Here I've got fourteen in one intro course and that's big. It's fantastic.

I also play violin in the Colby orchestra and train with the swim team. I have a lot of informal contact, even with students outside of the major, and that's really nice. On Monday nights we get out of orchestra at ten. I'll come up to the lab, and the students know I'm going to be here, so we have a big programming party here on Mondays between ten and one.

### **There's a lot of value in that impromptu, out-of-classroom contact.**

Last spring in my intro course I started using iChat, because I live twenty minutes off campus and, when I go home for the day, I tend not to come back. I'd get on iChat at nine p.m. and students would get on and ask me questions. They had been very hesitant to make use of that for professor-student relationships. I think they feel that's *their* communication mode—it's not to use with a professor. But the really nice thing is that I can usually help solve their problems in five or ten

minutes. They don't have to spend two hours getting frustrated, they feel better about the course, and neither of us has to move.

### **You mentioned the intro to programming class. That course has more than just CS majors in it?**

We call it Computational Thinking. We focus on multimedia processing. It's a little more interesting, a little more fun, a little more immediately gratifying. We integrate a lot of graphics and image and sound processing, which appeals to a wider variety of students. We're getting art students interested in digital art. We're getting students who are interested in video games.

When I first taught it, the students implemented a system that models the way plants grow, making trees and fractal patterns. They ended up with very nice, very sophisticated programs, and it gave them confidence in their ability to work with a computer.

### **What else is going on in the CS program?**

We're trying to focus the CS program more on interdisciplinary applications of CS. That's where my interests really lie. I enjoy knowing how computers work and can certainly teach that stuff, but at the end of the day the purpose of computer science is to enable other people to be more productive.

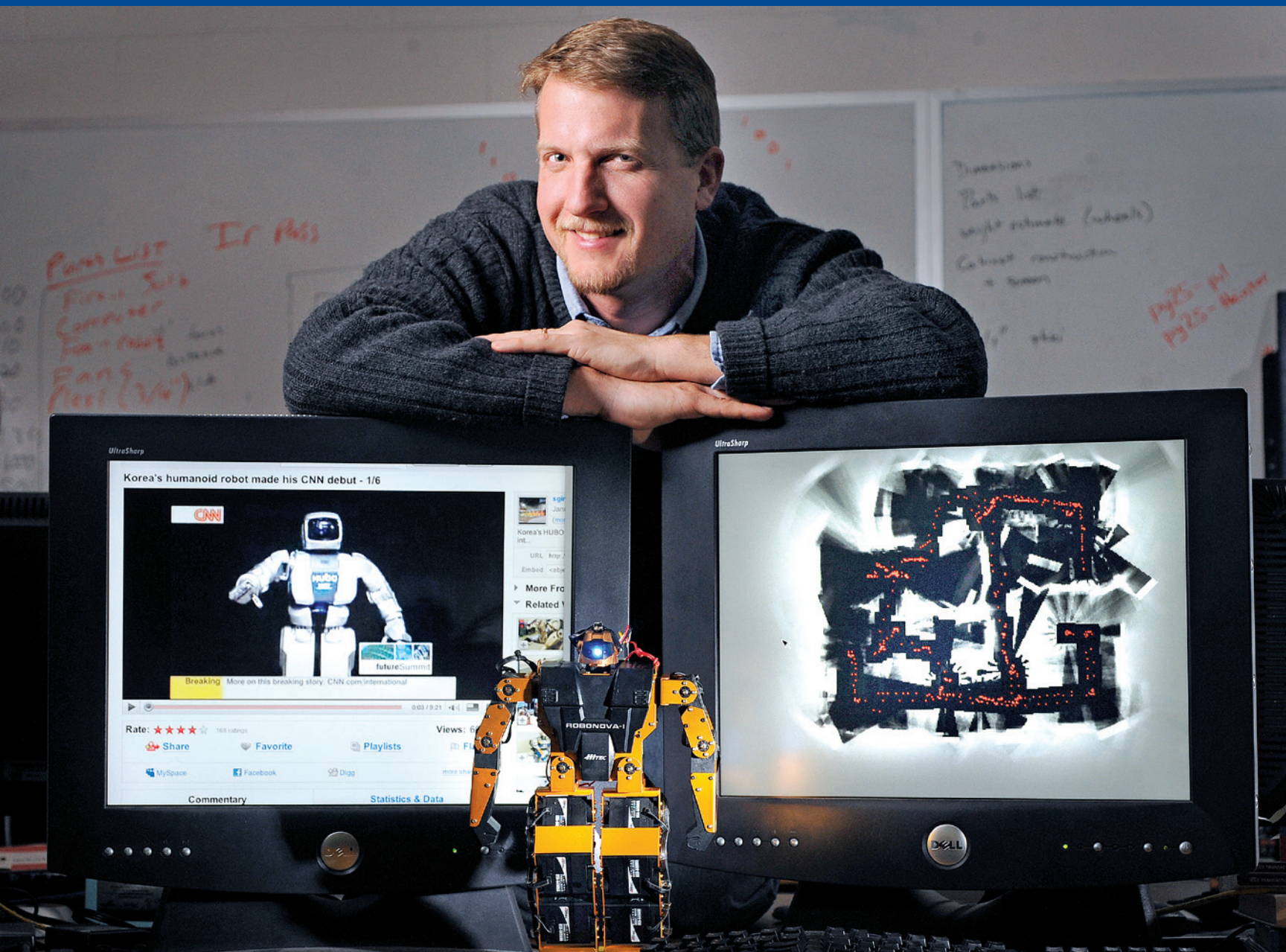
Stephanie Taylor [assistant professor in computer science]—her Ph.D. is in modeling biological systems at the cellular level—was looking at how collections of cells can, with regular exposure to light, be fairly accurate clocks. So she's tying CS in with the biology part of the curriculum.

I've also been working with Frank Fekete in biology on a system for using computer vision to analyze bacteria colonies. We watch the colonies with time-lapse photography, then analyze the properties as they grow.

Philip Nyhus, in environmental studies, has colleagues who want to know what types of habitat elk like. They have GIS [geographical information systems] data about the geographic characteristics of where the elk are and want to use it to find other places where elk would like to be. So a student integrated a machine-learning package with the GIS package to create something more powerful than either one by itself.

Those are the sorts of things that I find interesting because we can leverage things that we do well to enable people to be more productive and discover new things.





Associate Professor Bruce Maxwell (computer science) with a few of the tools of his robotics work. Maxwell has helped link computer science with other academic disciplines on campus, including biology and environmental studies.

### That's the beauty of the liberal arts approach?

That's one of the reasons I love to be at a small liberal arts college. Computer science at a place like this has so many possibilities. It's a lot of fun.

### Where do you see your students heading when they leave Colby?

A lot of them eventually do some graduate work, but most of them get out there and get jobs in a variety of places—they might work at a small company doing database stuff, or a financial firm doing market predictions. Some do go directly to grad school, but they're also interested in getting away from school for a little while.

I've seen students turn down multiple offers from big firms to take a less lucrative offer where they get more responsibility doing something more interesting to them. That's a very good thing. Many of the students who go to work for the big firm doing some sort of pigeonhole job get out of it pretty quickly.

There's a Colby student, Katelyn Mann '03, on the team in charge of Google's home page. She's actually part of the team that manages the code that makes the page that pops up when you type, "Google.com." That's just fun. You're there, front and center.

To read about the robotics work being done by Maxwell and his students, go to [www.colby.edu/mag](http://www.colby.edu/mag), keyword: robots







Chris Copeland '09 returned to the starting lineup for the Colby football team after a head-on car crash in 2007. Determined to overcome the near-fatal accident, he has worked diligently as a government and history double major and as a standout athlete in two sports.

# BEYOND FOOTBALL

NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE GIVES CHRIS COPELAND '09 NEW PERSPECTIVE

TRAVIS LAZARCZYK STORY

THOMAS MICHAEL CORCORAN/MORNING SENTINEL PHOTO

Stephanie Copeland stared at the wreckage. What had been a Toyota Tacoma pickup a few days ago was now a twisted mass of metal and glass. The collision had bounced the truck off its chassis, and the engine sat where the dashboard should be.

The guy who brought the wreck to the junkyard offered condolences. "We were like, 'No, he's alive.'" Copeland said. "The guy was shocked someone walked away from what he had on his lot."

Copeland's youngest child, her son Chris

Copeland '09, had been behind the wheel.

On Aug. 2, 2007, Chris was eager to step into a starting role with the Colby football team. On Aug. 3 he was being airlifted to the intensive care unit at Albany Medical Center. "He was poised to have a great year last year," head football coach Ed Mestieri said. "Then he was lucky to be alive."

That week Copeland had been working for his family's business, Copeland Coating Company. Done surfacing tennis courts in Vermont, Copeland ignored the advice of his

foreman to get some sleep and drove three hours home to Rexford, N.Y., just west of Albany. The next day, he drove to Westchester County, just north of New York City. After speaking to an athletic director about a job, he headed for home. "I remember being tired. I remember leaving and that's it," he said. "I woke up in the hospital."

Ninety minutes from the company office in Nassau, N.Y., Copeland fell asleep at the wheel and drifted into the oncoming lane. A police officer driving to his 3-11 p.m. shift in his GMC

Sierra saw Copeland's Tacoma heading right at him. The officer hammered his brakes, leaving 40 feet of rubber.

The trucks hit head-on. The impact drove both engines into the dashboards. Everything Copeland knows about the accident, he knows secondhand. He doesn't know how he got out or why he was screaming and running around the scene when emergency workers arrived.

Both Copeland and the other driver, who suffered a broken collarbone and a broken toe, were airlifted to the hospital. Copeland had a broken sternum, cracked ribs, and lacerated his liver and spleen. "His body looked like it had been mangled," Stephanie Copeland said.

After eight days in the hospital, including four in intensive care, Copeland returned home and then to Colby—and football. The government and history double major threw himself into his studies and spent the 2007 season being as much a part of the team as he could. Defensive coordinator and secondary coach Tom Dexter gave Copeland a copy of the defensive playbook and asked for his help teaching younger players. Assistant coach Danny Noyes '02 would play catch with Copeland at practice. "It felt so great," Copeland said, "to feel like I was still part of the team."

Healing and getting antsy, Copeland, who ran track one year in high school, joined Colby's track team for the indoor season. "I love to compete and wanted to do something that would keep me in shape," Copeland said. "The first day I showed up, I threw up after warm-ups."

*"Anyone who's had something taken away from them always looks at it as more precious when they get it back."*

### *Ed Mestieri, Colby head football coach*

Copeland stayed with it, competing in the 55- and 200-meter dashes and the long jump. Track and field coach Jared Beers '01, himself a former Colby football player, allowed Copeland to progress at his own pace.

Copeland's track and field season culminated with a NESCAC title in the long jump, with a jump of 6.7 meters (almost 22 feet). Copeland also finished fifth in the 100. "I was barking and screaming," he said, "like a football player."

Copeland, who is 6-foot-1, dropped to 160 pounds while recovering from his accident. He ended his track season at 178 pounds and, after training with a handful of football teammates last summer, he returned to the gridiron this fall, more than a year after the crash, at his playing weight—195.

But when practice started Copeland was nervous. At his mother's request he had ultrasound tests on his liver and spleen. The

test results came back perfect but didn't fully restore his confidence. "I was worried I was going to show up and not know what I was doing," he said.

Those fears were gone with the first hit. Copeland quickly claimed a starting spot at cornerback. "Early on, at Williams, I knew I belonged on this field," Copeland said. "At corner, sometimes there's not much contact and I was itching for it."

Mestieri saw a change in his senior defensive back. "Anyone who's had something taken away from them always looks at it as more precious when they get it back," the coach said. "He's more appreciative of what he has. He's so focused, and it's reflected in his performance."

In the classroom, Copeland focused as well, studying post-genocide transition in Rwanda in a seminar on transitional justice and issues in political memory, among other subjects. The accident, he said as finals approached, caused him to study with "increased vigor." And his performance on the field was vigorous as well.

Copeland had a team-high 11 tackles—10 solo—in a 24-19 win Sept. 27 against Middlebury. At season's end, he was second on the team in tackles with 54, including 38 unassisted. For Copeland, the numbers meant a lot. "For me," he said, "this is more than just football."

*A version of this story first appeared in the Waterville Morning Sentinel. It appears here with permission.*

## SPORTS SHORTS

**WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY** finished 17th at the NCAA Division III Championships at Hanover College in Indiana, continuing a string of strong national performances. The Mules finished fourth at the NCAA New England Regional Qualifier and third at the NESCAC meet, and they continue to rank among the top teams in the country. Under head coach **DEB AITKEN** Colby was fifth in the country in 2004 and 2005 and 11th in 2007. **CASSI KNIGHT '10** just missed All-America honors, placing 36th (top 35 are All-Americans). **KATRINA GRAVEL '10** was 49th and **EMMA LINHARD '11** 77th. At the qualifying meet in Williamstown, Mass., Knight placed 12th out of 330 finishers. ... The brand new Seaverns Field at Harold Alfond Stadium opened in time

for the **FOOTBALL** season, and the Mules posted a 3-1 record on their new FieldTurf surface. Colby football played Middlebury in the home opener and held on for a victory over the defending league champs. The Mules were 3-2 before settling for a 3-5 record. **SAM HANDLER '09** earned first-team NESCAC honors for his play at defensive end, **TOM DALEY '09** and **KEVIN BIRD '09** made the NESCAC second team. ... Despite the loss of top scorer **MARY CLARE SNEDIKER '09** for much of the season, **FIELD HOCKEY** made the NESCAC playoffs before falling to Tufts in the quarterfinals. **MERYL POULIN '11** earned NESCAC second-team honors after leading Colby in scoring with eight goals and 10 assists. **HEATHER QUADIR '11** added

nine goals and seven assists for 25 points. Snediker, a three-time All-NESCAC selection, hurt her knee during lacrosse season and missed most of the field hockey season. Snediker still finished her career with 29 goals. ... **MEN'S SOCCER** finished 7-6-1 overall but missed the NESCAC playoffs with a 3-5-1 record in the league, including a win over rival Bowdoin. **LOGAN KING '09** and **TOM MILASCHEWSKI '09** earned second-team All-NESCAC honors. The squad was honored with the NSCAA Team Academic Award for the eighth straight season, the longest streak of any NESCAC school.

For more fall sports coverage go to [www.colby.edu/athletics](http://www.colby.edu/athletics).







# An Effervescent Biography

ENGLISH PROFESSOR TILAR MAZZEO ILLUMINATES THE RISE OF A CHAMPAGNE STAR

RUTH JACOBS STORY

FRED FIELD PHOTO

Make no mistake. Barbe-Nicole Clicquot Ponsardin propelled a family wine business from near death into the international Veuve Clicquot champagne empire through hard work, determination, risk-taking, and marketing savvy. But the universe helped, too.

In her new book, *The Widow Clicquot: The Story of a Champagne Empire and the Woman Who Ruled It*, Assistant Professor of English Tilar Mazzeo looks at both the internal practices and the external forces that led to the making of, in her words, “the first modern woman CEO.”

When Clicquot Ponsardin’s husband died in 1805, she was 27, the daughter of an affluent businessman who, like her father-in-law, made his fortune in textiles. The widow had worked with her husband on a small family wine business and, despite the financial risk, set out to transform it. Far beyond succeeding, Clicquot Ponsardin internationalized champagne and, according to Mazzeo, reaped the rewards of marketing and branding before those terms existed. “She creates this brand identification,” said Mazzeo, “this ... really iconic status, not only for her champagne but for French champagne more broadly.”

That iconic status is part of what inspired Mazzeo to write the book—and is part of what intrigued reviewers and readers as the book launched to strong national reviews and sales. For Mazzeo, there’s a lot to learn from the icons of an era. Her academic interest is in material culture and commodities—“how clothing, how furniture, how wine, how food, how, you know, the really material substance of the world we all live in, how that shapes literary expression and aesthetic values,” she said. Plus, she really likes champagne.

Mazzeo explores both the life of the widow Clicquot (“veuve” means widow in French) and the history of champagne, framing the widow’s life in historical context; in the process, Mazzeo shows how it was possible for a businesswoman to excel in 19th-century France.

It began before Clicquot Ponsardin entered the game. Her husband was an only son. “If she had had male family members who were able to take over that business, she probably would not have been given that opportunity,” said Mazzeo.

In retrospect, history was also on her side. At the time she took over, it was acceptable for women to work in family businesses. As France’s industrial revolution took hold, the model shifted from family-run businesses to the use of professional managers. That made it more difficult for women to have a role, Mazzeo said. “I think she was born just at that moment where there was a transition between those two models, and she was lucky that her father was an industrialist, so she knew what the wave of the future was going to be.” Clicquot Ponsardin hired (male) professionals and, by the time she was 40, worked largely behind the scenes.

Another bit of luck: she wasn’t pretty. “If she had been really beautiful, she would not have been given the leeway to not have remarried after François’s death,” said Mazzeo. “She just wasn’t a beautiful woman, and

so the idea that she was going to do something besides be a wife, I think, was a possibility for her.”

But in 1814 Clicquot Ponsardin’s business was struggling. She had laid off all her employees and was desperate. Enter the Russian troops in the Napoleonic Wars. After Napoleon’s abdication, they took over. They wanted to celebrate, and they just happened to be in Reims, the Champagne region’s major city. Soldiers from around the world popped corks and developed a taste for this local sparkling wine. That, in turn, sparked an idea—and a major gamble for Clicquot Ponsardin.

Champagne had not been legal in Russia for years. “She recognizes that if she can get this wine back to Russia,” said Mazzeo, “there is this international market that already is positively predisposed to her champagne.” Defying export laws, she sent the champagne on a journey with her salesman, Louis Bohne. “She makes that last desperate gamble to run the blockades and get ten-thousand bottles of her very best champagne into Russia.”

After much anxiety, the bottles were the first to arrive in Russia after the ban. “Within weeks she’s famous throughout Europe and has made her fortune and really doesn’t look back after that,” said Mazzeo. “I think if the Napoleonic Wars hadn’t ended in the Champagne, champagne might not have become the product that it now is.”

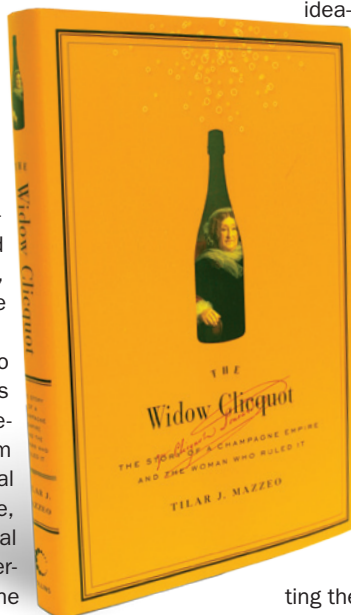
Of course there’s far more to it than that, and Clicquot Ponsardin’s business sense is ultimately the reason for the company’s ascent. She took champagne, once a celebratory drink for only the aristocracy, to the middle classes by expediting the process of eliminating yeast, thereby cutting the price.

Hers was one of the first wines to bear a label—a way of assuring her customers that this champagne came from her cellars. In a letter to Bohne, she wrote, “I understand that name recognition is everything,” according to Mazzeo.

She brought in experts from the outside. “She was also one of the people who really led the way in that managerial revolution,” said Mazzeo, “moving companies away from family holdings to having CEOs and CFOs and also to developing marketing departments.”

Her hard work and perfectionist nature are evident in the Veuve Clicquot archive in France, where Mazzeo spent day after day poring over papers for insight. “She kept meticulous records—every piece of land she ever bought, all the contracts, every bottle of wine she sold, who she sold it to, all of that is there,” she said. Lacking, though, are glimpses into her private life. “It was a very interesting thing, about what she thought was important in her own life to hang onto.”

Mazzeo also spent time learning about how champagne is made and what it’s like to be a woman winemaker today. And, of course, tasting. “Onerous research, I assure you,” she said.



To listen to a student interview with Mazzeo and Mazzeo reading an excerpt, go to [www.colby.edu/mag](http://www.colby.edu/mag), keyword: widow



## RECENT RELEASES



***Vanished Gardens: Finding Nature in Philadelphia*  
Sharon White '74**

**University of Georgia Press (2008)**

From her brick row house atop the site of the Labyrinthine Garden, a 19th-century pleasure garden north of Philadelphia's center, Sharon White '74 sets out to find nature in the city. Digging into the strata of the Piedmont, she discovers universal truths about why we garden and what it means to call a place home.

At every turn, lush details in her precisely crafted prose lead us deeper into a labyrinth of human and natural history of the area. Hungry for nature, White longs to "rip the fabric of the city at the edge and peel it away to rocks that were there all the time. Wilderness just under the surface. Breathing its clear breath right into my face." With crisp, colorful writing White tears away the top layer to expose the richness beneath.

Beyond her search for nature, White—poet, Temple University writing professor, and transplant in search of a connection to the land—wonders "about vanished lives. The sifting and interring of the past, all that accumulation gone, turned over, invisible in the concrete wall of an almost present place."

White's artful combination of science and history makes those vanished lives visible. Vignettes of notable Philadelphia naturalists such as John Haviland, Deborah Norris, and

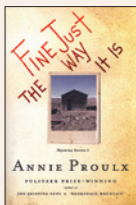
John, Anne, and William Bartram are interspersed with keen observations of nature. Moving fluidly from past to present, from soil to brick, White illuminates the past and shows the land as a composite of ghosts and bones that enrich our present lives.

As White muses and researches, she records her daily life—garden, family, the seasons—like William Bartram, who, "like a prayer ... recorded the small life of the garden in a book no bigger than his palm. A shorthand for the miracle of bloom and feather." Their cumulative observations show the process of building a life and learning the land.

Using deeply personal and rhythmic prose, White finds focus and roots herself in the Philadelphia soil with her husband and son. Amidst growth and decay, our lives progress. "We're all a bit of home, homeless, homebound in this homeland," White writes. "Attached in our own ways to a pot of bamboo or a brick house or a slip of a house that was once a shell on the edge of a sewer that was once a stream in the meadows along the river that once meandered to the sea."

But despite the gardens of the past, she is most importantly in the present. "I like the idea that I'm cultivating a garden here in the middle of our lives, curled and wandering eventually to the heart of the labyrinth. All gardens lead here for me."

—Laura Meader



***Fine Just the Way It Is: Wyoming Stories 3***

**Annie Proulx '57**

**Simon & Schuster (2008)**

Annie Proulx '57 revisits Wyoming in *Fine Just the Way It Is: Wyoming Stories 3*, introducing readers to an assortment of quintessentially Proulx characters who grapple with the difficulties of growing up and old, while yearning for the comfort and security of lasting love and family. In an archetypal struggle, women long to be mothers, men long to be providers, older folks are wistful about lost youth, and the young try to grow up too quickly.

In "Them Old Cowboy Songs," Archie, a struggling young ranch hand, is determined to tame his recently purchased land by singing along its borders. "Archie, thrilled to be a landowner, told Rose he had to sing the metes and bounds. He started on the southwest corner and headed east. It was something he reckoned had to be done. Rose walked along with him at the beginning and even tried to sing with him but got out of breath from walking so fast and

singing at the same time. Nor did she know the words to many of his songs. Archie kept going. It took him hours."

In "I've Always Loved This Place" and "Swamp Mischief," Proulx is a bit adventurous when she abandons her Wyoming setting in favor of Hell. In the former, the devil is a character with a Martha Stewart-like compulsion to give Hell a makeover. "Nothing has been done with this damn place for aeons. It's old fashioned, it's passé, people yawn when they think of Hell."

While play and humor may have a place in Hell, in Proulx's Wyoming there is mostly hardship and loss. Her characters struggle in their chase of the Old West's version of the American dream, with sprawling parcels of land, families in need, and livestock to feed. The weather, an extremely volatile and malevolent force in Proulx's stories, is harsh and unrelenting. In Proulx's Wyoming, nothing comes easily, and, ironically, nothing is ever really Fine Just the Way It Is.

—Lauren Pongan '09



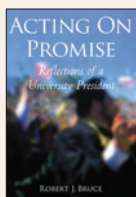
***Not Far From the Tree: A Brief History of the Apples and the Orchards of Palermo Maine 1804-2004***

**John P. Bunker Jr. '72, P'10**

**(2008)**

*Not Far From the Tree* is, as it claims, a history of the apples of Palermo, a small town where the author resides, about 15 miles east of Waterville. Contradicting its title, it is, fortunately, anything

but brief. Bunker lovingly unwraps the intertwined pasts of Palermo residents and their apples. Quotes from reminiscing Palermo residents and historical, even poetic, apple references are interwoven. Botanical sketches of apple varieties borrowed from more comprehensive apple books and journals are interspersed with lovingly hand-drawn apple diagrams, comics, and maps of local orchards. Copies are available online at [fedcoseeds.com](http://fedcoseeds.com) and [mofgastore.org](http://mofgastore.org).



***Acting on Promise: Reflections of a University President***

**Robert J. Bruce '59**

**Polyglot Press (2008)**

*Acting on Promise: Reflections of a University President* offers an insider's perspective on college politics from the president emeritus of Widener University. Bruce offers illuminating

insights into the world of colleges and universities and the faculty, staff, and students that comprise them. Included are details of the transformation of Widener's academic reputation and its expansion into a three-campus university.



# APARTHEID'S LEGACY

ANTHROPOLOGIST CATHERINE BESTEMAN'S NEW BOOK EXAMINES THE HOPES AND FRUSTRATIONS OF "THE NEW SOUTH AFRICA"

FIONA ROSS REVIEW

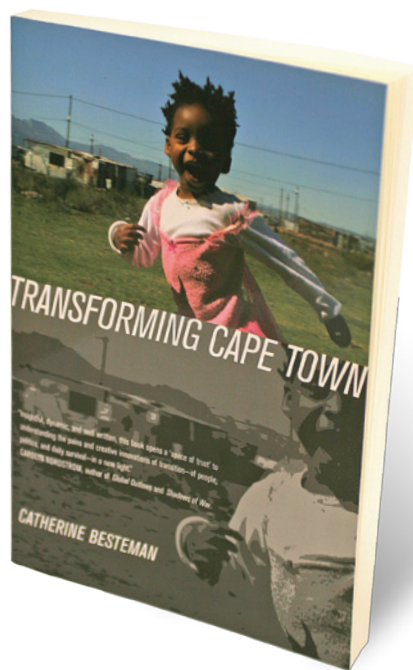
In 1994 South Africa's elections generated great excitement both nationally and internationally. The apartheid regime and its formal racial politics had been replaced. A constitution informed constitutional democracy and people's hopes and ambitions.

Since then there has been much rhetoric about the "miracle" of democratic transition, the "vibrancy" of the "rainbow nation," and "the new South Africa." There has also been great despair over the lack of services like water and electricity, the continued presence of extreme poverty, and spiraling rates of interpersonal violence and crime. In these contexts, what does democracy mean in action? How do societies overcome the injustices of racism and poverty? Do democratic principles and human rights discourse extend beyond rhetoric into the everyday realities of ordinary citizens and, if so, how? What are the residues of historical inequalities and how do they endure and get reproduced in the present? What do former elites understand by transition and how do they see their roles in it?

These are some of the questions that Professor of Anthropology Catherine Besteman poses in *Transforming Cape Town*, her fascinating account of how people in this divided South African city engage with post-apartheid democracy, transformation, and the legacies and ongoing realities of radical inequalities.

Cape Town is a complex city, a city of enormous contradictions. It is simultaneously cosmopolitan and deeply divided. While the city center and elite suburbs are stunningly beautiful, they are surrounded by and founded on terrible poverty and squalor. The city's class structure is firmly entrenched. Politicking is divisive. Racially defined divisions continue to structure the possibilities of everyday life for many. While some people struggle with the legacies of colonialism and apartheid, others live comfortable and often complacent lives.

Through a nuanced account of the experiences of some of the city's residents, both rich and poor, Besteman explores the



ways in which apartheid's legacies continue to shape interactions both intimate and public. From her conversations with ordinary people going about their lives in the city, Besteman describes hurts and humiliations, hopes and fears, and the promises and difficulties of transformation. As a coloured (the South African designation for people of mixed race) man identified as Trevor says, questioning whites' claims of ignorance of the cruelties of apartheid: "How could you not know? When you got into the train to go to school, you sat in the front of the train; why are all the other people sitting in the back? ... When you went to the loo, you knew which loo to go to. When you went to the Post Office, you knew which door to go to. ... And you're telling me you didn't know?"

Working in the city's wealthy southern suburbs and impoverished Cape Flats, Besteman is able to consider the effects of political change on a wide sub-section of the population.

Despite the rhetoric of "the new South Africa," the encounters she describes remain fraught, skirting around deeply emotional issues relating to the presence of the past. Besteman poses provocative questions about how ordinary people might overcome the historical legacies that have left Cape Town one of South Africa's most divided cities. She traces out questions of inheritance—what future generations inherit from past injustices—and asks about forms of remedy: redistribution; memory work; reformulations of identity, family, and senses of belonging. In doing so, she restores a sense of faith in anthropology as a tool for understanding and critically analyzing social worlds.

The book does not shy away from the hard questions that South Africans must face about the persistence of racism, the ongoing effects of violence, and the complacencies of "getting on with life" and "leaving the past behind us," as elites often say. Besteman puzzles over the popularity of crime talk at suburban dinner parties and the contradictions of wealth and poverty in close proximity.

A distinctive feature of the book is her insistence that individuals can make change. Besteman describes people who have committed themselves to transformative efforts—as volunteers, in service clubs, as educationalists and concerned citizens. She makes the important claim that democracy must be learned, and that it is learned through interpersonal encounters that challenge widely held stereotypes and may give rise to "networks of care and human interaction."

Anthropology works through close attention to the realities of everyday lives, contradictions and complexities, and the encounters and friendships that form "in the field." *Transforming Cape Town* is an excellent example of how close attention to everyday lives can reveal important facets of global processes.

Fiona Ross is a faculty member in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Cape Town.

# Awn Be Se: “We Can”

Real Change, West-Africa Style

STEPHEN COLLINS '74 STORY

Emily Goodnow '09J wasn't exactly a seasoned world traveler when she signed up for junior year abroad in a French-speaking country in 2006-07.

"I had been to Canada once," said the Durham, N.H., resident. "When I was twelve."

She was preparing for a semester in France when her roommate and friend, Nancy McDermott '08, encouraged Goodnow to get more adventurous, to indulge her interest in Africa whet by her father's Peace Corps tales from the Congo. So, two days before the deadline, Goodnow shifted her sights south and applied to School for International Training (SIT) programs in Mali, Madagascar, and Morocco.

Whether the result of linear decision-making, serendipity, or West African juju, it would prove a life-altering detour. Fall 2006 study with SIT in Mali ran into a spring semester in 2007 working for Save the Children. A year later she would return with McDermott in the summer of 2008 as partners in a \$10,000 Projects for Peace grant.

In her first semester Goodnow fell in love with the place and the people. By November she felt it would be crazy to leave just when she was beginning to understand the country and its challenges.

Her parents agreed she could stay—but only if she did something structured. "Mali has enough problems," she recalls her father, Donald Goodnow, saying. "Don't just hang around and be a freeloader." Two days later she had a job as the director's assistant at Save the Children, organizing the supply closet, translating documents, even writing a (successful) \$400,000 grant for girls' education. "I didn't come home at all [that year], she said. "My poor mother!"

Marcia Goodnow, Emily's mother, said, "The Thanksgiving and Christmas landmarks were difficult without her, but I think everybody was happy to see her having such an incredible experience. ... We were thrilled to have her stay and be so focused," she said, admitting that news of multiple bouts with malaria and typhoid was rough.

But that first year abroad was just prelude. Back at Colby Goodnow and McDermott (who spent fall 2006 in Cameroon) won a very competitive \$10,000 Projects for Peace grant that allowed them to return to Bamako, Mali's capital,



Nancy McDermott '08 (second from left), Emily Goodnow '09J, and Adda Diallo pose with young women in Bamako, Mali, at the completion of an education program that the Colby students ran with a 100 Projects for Peace grant.

last summer to start a empowerment program for a group of girls.

Projects for Peace is an initiative of Kathryn Wasserman Davis open to all students at more than 90 schools in the Davis United World Scholars Program. To celebrate her 100th birthday, in 2007, Davis offered 100 \$10,000 grants for grassroots projects that students would implement that summer. McDermott and Goodnow won one of 100 grants awarded in the second year, and the selection process for a third round of grants is underway this winter.

McDermott's and Goodnow's program was titled Awn Be Se, which means "We Can" in Bambara, the local language in Bamako. The pair proposed convening girls in three neighborhoods and—through activities, discussions, and training—building the girls' aspirations, business and leadership skills, self images, and sense of community and cooperation.

The work was particularly important in light of the conditions for girls there. Childhood education costs money and, for the most part, only boys go to school while girls do chores at home, Goodnow said. As young women mature, sexual relations often involve exchange for consumer goods, and sex education and HIV awareness and testing are often neglected.

Goodnow says she and McDermott realized that two white college students couldn't just roll into town and say, "Okay girls. Now we're going

to discuss negotiations with guys," she said. So they built a network of successful women mentors and local experts, and they partnered with Adda Diallo, a sociology major at the University of Mali.

Projects don't always go as planned. After advertising a program for teenagers they had 80 girls and women from 3 to 55 years old show up for the first meeting. So, in addition to the core group that served 15 to 20 teenagers, McDermott and Goodnow started a group with age-appropriate activities and discussions for younger girls, and a third group offered vocational training in sewing and tailoring—the first formal education for some of the older girls. The most driven and successful of the seamstresses were hired as apprentices at the end of the three-week training, significantly altering their potential for future prosperity.

In their summary report, McDermott and Goodnow wrote, "... this summer, we saw these young girls—the mothers, leaders, and faces of Mali's future—find new purpose, new dreams, and new inspiration in their lives."

As gratifying as that was, it wasn't all about giving. Asked how the experience affected her, Goodnow said, "I mean, it changed everything. ... It just changed my world."

## COLBY STUDENTS' PROJECTS FOR PEACE

### 2007

**Accessible Information: Working Towards Peace by Designing and Advancing Peer Based Sex-Education**  
Melyn Heckelman '08 and Victoria Yuan '07

**Alpacas and Llamas as a Conservation Strategy in the Highlands of Ecuador: Creating Peace through Animals**  
Christine Avena '08

### 2008

**The Afghan Scholar Initiative**  
Qiamuddin Amiry '09 and John Campbell '09J

**Awn Be Se ["We Can"]:  
A Project for Empowerment in Bamako**  
Nancy McDermott '08 and Emily Goodnow '09J

For more information on Projects For Peace and an essay by Emily Goodnow, go to:  
[www.colby.edu/mag](http://www.colby.edu/mag), keyword: peace

