

Colby



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COMMENCEMENT 2008:

Competition, Risk Fuel Success, says Diamond

Rising fuel and food costs, a declining housing market, and a looming recession dominated headlines as members of the Class of 2008 celebrated the conclusion of their studies at Colby. Not the best time to be entering the job market, some might say.

But Robert E. Diamond '73, president of the London-based Barclays PLC, wasn't concerned about these graduates as he addressed them May 25 on the lawn of Miller Library. And he even added another factor: the talent pool, once dominated by Americans, is now global and full of young people from emerging countries who have "jaw-dropping academic qualifications" and the hunger to succeed, he said.

Not to worry. He told the new graduates that they are extremely well prepared. Based on Barclays' experience hiring Colby graduates, he said, "I know you can compete. I know you can keep up with this more difficult global talent pool."

Diamond, who led the transformation of Barclays from an underperforming commercial bank to a global leader producing record



Trustee Robert E. Diamond '73, P'12, delivers the 2008 commencement speech.

profits, told the graduates that he owed much of his success to risk. When he started at Barclays, 12 years ago, he could have joined any number of U.S. investment banks. But he chose the "slow-moving" British one.

"I took a bet that the single currency in Europe was going to create a big, liquid, capital

market that could compete with the dollar as a currency and as a capital market. I took a bet that the economic developments that we were seeing in Africa, in the Middle East, in the former Soviet states, and in Asia would mean that London was a better time zone for doing business," he said. "But the biggest bet, and the biggest risk I took, was that I would be allowed to change the culture of a venerable, three-hundred-year-old British financial institution from one of hierarchy and bureaucracy, from one where rewards were based on tenure and position, to a culture that was based on meritocracy and performance, where rewards were more about innovation and talent."

Diamond urged the Class of 2008 to embrace risks and be willing to make mistakes. "We don't succeed, we don't learn, unless we're willing to make mistakes," he said. "And what matters is not that you make a mistake. What matters is that you have the courage to face up to them, the courage to correct them, and the courage to learn from them."

—Ruth Jacobs

A Gift to the Environment

After imparting his father's and his own wisdom to Colby's Class of 2008 in this year's commencement speech, Robert E. Diamond '73 left graduates with this: "Don't forget, don't ever, ever forget, you're from Colby College," he said.

Diamond continues to show Colby that he hasn't forgotten.

Two weeks after Commencement 2008, at his 35th reunion, the man whose foundation had already given \$6 million in the College's Reaching the World campaign announced a \$4-million gift for the study of the environment, energy policy, climate change, and sustainability.

The intent of the gift, from the Diamond Family Foundation, is to build on Colby's already strong interdisciplinary environmental curriculum. "There is no better solution for environmental challenges than giving the best young minds the best possible preparation within the context of a broad liberal arts education," he said.

The College, in consultation with the faculty and the Diamond family, will determine the specific uses of the gift in the months ahead.

The Diamond Family Foundation's previous gift helped fund construction of the Diamond Building, a social science and interdisciplinary studies center that was certified green by the LEED program of the U.S. Green Building Council.

Alfond Gift Brings New Turf Football Field and Track

Opening with the football season this fall will be a new artificial turf field surrounded by many other improvements including a reconstructed track, new lighting, and landscaping that will help give the field a stadium feel. The result will be named in honor of Harold Alfond.

Elements of the old track and field were proving a hindrance to athletes, according to Director of Athletics Marcella Zalot. Uneven ground, poor drainage, hard, clay surfaces on the practice field, and a worn, cracked track were among the issues being addressed. "They were two pretty good facilities whose useful life had definitely come to an end," she said.

The new space will be safer and more accommodating for athletes. The turf field won't turn into a muddy mess as the old one did after rainfall. "All it takes is one bad weather day to ruin the field," football coach Ed Mestieri told the *Morning Sentinel* in April. "That's something we're not going to have to worry about." Additionally, the new field will provide even footing, so students will be less likely to turn an ankle.

In the spring the lacrosse teams will be able to practice as soon as the snow melts. The soccer teams will also use the field and, based on availability, so too will club sports, intramurals, and local schools, said Zalot.



PHOTO BY STEPHEN COLLINS '74



The gift for the field and related improvements, from the Harold Alfond Foundation, was the last personal commitment that Harold Alfond made to

Construction, in June, of the new track and field, as seen from above. The project, which will be named for Harold Alfond, is scheduled to be completed before the first home game. At left, an artist's rendering of the completed facility.

Colby before his death in November 2007.

Trustees approved the \$6-million project in April 2008. Construction began April 28, with accommodations so that spring track and field contestants training for postseason competition could continue to work out in their respective events. —R. J.

Colby on NBC Nightly News

Colby was featured prominently in an NBC *Nightly News* segment about the Davis United World College Scholars program and benefactor Shelby Davis. The story, broadcast Friday, May 9, featured Davis and Qiamuddin Amiry '09, one of more than 165 Davis UWC scholars who attend or have graduated from Colby. The segment and extended interviews are available online; go to www.colby.edu/mag, keyword: NBC.



Fulbrights and Teaching Grants

The prestigious Fulbright Program was established in 1946 to promote mutual understanding between U.S. citizens and people from other countries, and this year four current students or recent Colby grads received Fulbright grants to spend next year abroad: Hannah Coleman '08 will teach in Colombia, William Fong '08 will teach in Taiwan, Gretchen Markiewicz '08 will teach in Bavaria, and Danielle Preiss '07 has a research grant in Nepal. In addition Chris Hoffman '07, Chris Shelley '08, and Melanie Ungar '08 will all teach in Austria in a separate program administered by the organization that runs the Fulbrights.

Roads Scholarship

With the Diamond Building and Schair-Swenson-Watson Alumni Center in use across the street from the academic quad, pedestrian crossings on campus are way up and drivers are not slowing down. Though the College has been eager to install traffic calming features to slow traffic through campus, neither the state nor the city has been able to come up with money for such a project, much less to rebuild the roadway, which is badly deteriorated.

As a result, a three-way agreement was hammered out this spring giving Colby ownership of one mile of the former state-aided municipal road. While that means Colby can now call the shots on the speed limit and features like raised intersections and landscaping to slow down vehicles, it also means Colby foots the bill for reconstruction, estimated at \$5 million, as well as future maintenance and repairs.

The first priority for Colby is safety. A recent survey showed an average vehicle speed of 37 m.p.h. and counted 2,300 pedestrian

crossings per day between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. at just one crosswalk. With a science building planned on Colby Green, pedestrian traffic across Mayflower Hill Drive will only increase in coming years.

During City Council hearings on the transfer of ownership and responsibility to Colby, some residents and elected officials opposed the deal citing fears that Colby would close the road to through traffic. President William Adams replied: "We have no plan, no intention, no vision, no reason to interrupt traffic on that road," according to *Morning Sentinel* coverage of one meeting.

While potholes, broken pavement, and a sinking roadbed have created a bumpy ride



Increased pedestrian traffic and deteriorating road conditions led Colby to take over a mile of Mayflower Hill Drive. Plans call for reconstruction of the road, including the portion shown here, across from the Diamond Building.

through one of the nation's most attractive and best maintained campuses, the deal struck among the College, Waterville, and the Maine Department of Transportation came late enough in 2008 that only temporary repairs and engineering work will be completed this year. Major road reconstruction is scheduled for 2009. —*Stephen B. Collins '74*

Sentencing a Terrorist, Searching for Truth

As presiding judge at the high-profile trial that sentenced 9/11 conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui to life in prison, Leonie M. Brinkema came to appreciate the Henry Fonda character—the one man in the 11-to-one vote that hung the jury and spared Moussaoui's life.

Brinkema, U.S. District Court judge for the Eastern District of Virginia, received Colby's 2008 Morton A. Brody Distinguished Judicial Service Award April 6. Recounting her experiences in that trial, she said, "One of the saddest realities I've had to confront in the Moussaoui case in particular is that my government did not always tell me the truth."

During the trial the U.S. government refused to acknowledge that it had key witnesses in custody, even though it was

reported in the news and Moussaoui wanted them to testify. The government refused video depositions and claimed no recordings existed.

When the jury was not unanimous and Moussaoui's life was spared, Judge Brinkema told jurors she thought they had done the right thing. Still later, she encountered the one holdout and told him he had done the American legal system "an extraordinary service."

"If he had voted for the death penalty, and Moussaoui were now sentenced to death, and we now know that these key witnesses are sitting in Guantanamo, the pressure on the legal system would have been horrendous. What it would have posed for our legal system I just shudder to think." —S.C.

Audio of Judge Brinkema's complete remarks is online at www.colby.edu/brody.

Colby Gets LinkedIn

Professional relationships have always been essential to professional success, and Colby alumni can now combine the strength of the Colby network with the power of the top online professional networking site, LinkedIn. The Office of Alumni Relations recently launched the Colby College Alumni and Friends group on LinkedIn.com. LinkedIn is a free social network that can open doors by making connections among the 20 million participating professionals around the world.

Hogging the Spotlight

The Class of '08 was graduating, Barclays CEO Bob Diamond '73 was giving the commencement speech, heavy equipment was carving out the new artificial-turf football field, and the big news on campus in late May was a wayward pig. A Vietnamese pot-bellied pig that escaped from its student handlers and found the free life behind the field house made page one and was publicized throughout the country by the Associated Press. The pig was captured in June and was adopted by Mac Simpson '09 of Casco, Maine. For more see www.colby.edu/mag, keyword: pig.

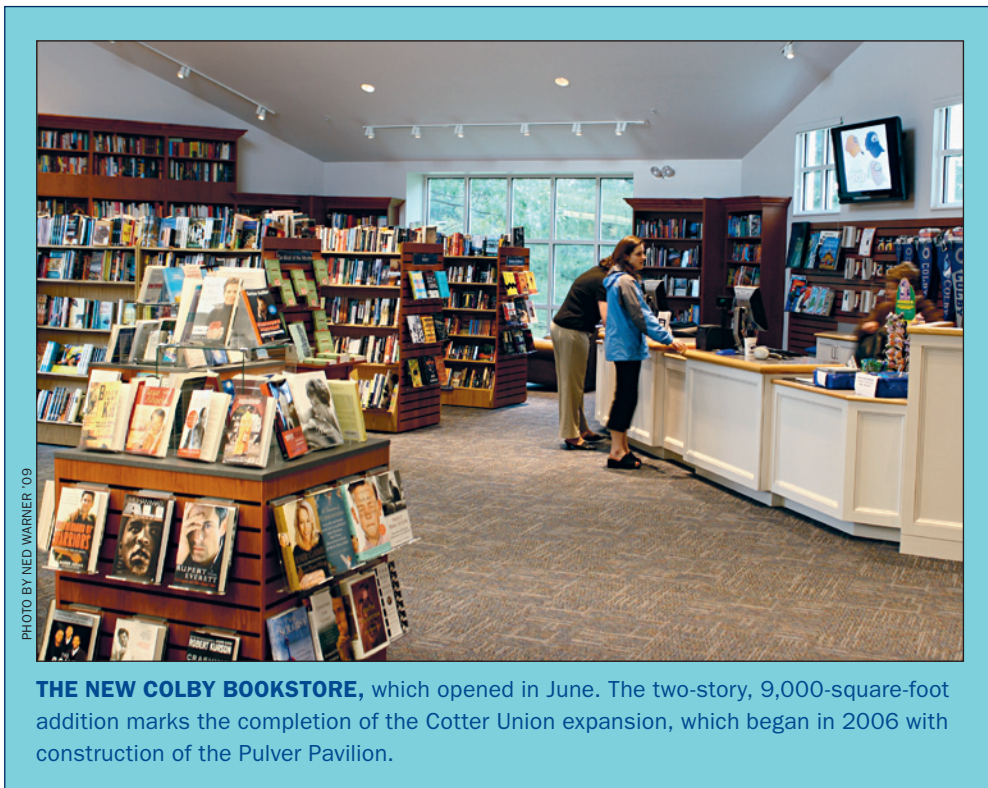


PHOTO BY NED WARNER '09

THE NEW COLBY BOOKSTORE, which opened in June. The two-story, 9,000-square-foot addition marks the completion of the Cotter Union expansion, which began in 2006 with construction of the Pulver Pavilion.

Dispelling the ‘Not a Science Person’ Myth

Most kids love science. But at some point, whether it’s in grade school or college, that interest can get squelched. Particularly at risk are children in fourth and fifth grades and minority and first-generation college students. A \$1-million grant to Colby from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, announced in April, will address these and other concerns in the sciences.

The grant provides funds for a multipronged approach to supporting science education. Two main components address those at-risk groups: faculty will work closely with teachers in Waterville to help develop programs to keep children passionate about science, and at Colby a new program is being developed to sustain interest among first-year students.

The Colby Achievement Program in the Sciences (CAPS) is based on institutional research about the factors that cause students to lose interest. “There are a lot of students at Colby who, because of the schools that they come from, are under-prepared for particularly the math that is involved in introductory chemistry. We were able to identify that as one of the big stumbling blocks,” said J. Warren Merrill Associate Professor of Biology Andrea Tilden. “Students would finally give up... just leave the sciences altogether.”

Part of the CAPS program is to bring enrolled minority and first-generation students with a strong interest in science to Colby the summer before their first year. They will spend six weeks taking a course that will boost the quantitative skills that apply to science. They will also serve as research assistants and be mentored by Colby faculty.

In another major component, faculty and students will join elementary school teachers to study topics such as plant life, ecology, and nutrition, and Colby students will work with kids in an after-school program. The model will be developed for statewide application.

Another minority group in the sciences—female faculty—also will benefit from the grant through funding for leadership training and workshops. Of concern are recruitment, retention, and post-tenure career development. “The number of women faculty in the sciences is relatively low,” said Tilden—nationally and at Colby. “We’re doing much better than we have in the past. There are more women in the sciences now, but we’ve still got a ways to go.” —R.Ĵ.

Wit & Wisdom

“Whoever said this is a cold state just didn’t get it right.”

Judge Leonie Brinkema, this year’s Brody Judicial Service Award winner, on the reception and hospitality she received on Mayflower Hill.

“I don’t have a mechanical system that will take the place of personal responsibility.”

Director of Physical Plant Patricia Murphy, discussing with students how conservation and sustainable environmental initiatives really work, at a lunch that was part of Focus the Nation, when 1,600 institutions worked to create awareness of climate change.

“Here I have found a total new thing. You are not depending solely on the education provided by the professors; you are going out.”

Indian Minister of Parliament Sardar Tarlochan Singh, a Goldfarb Center Visiting Fellow, complimenting Colby on its study-abroad and civic-engagement programs in a talk, “Reconsidering the Relationship Between Two Democracies: India and the USA.”

“I pulled out the ring on the chairlift at Mad River Glen. The first words out of her mouth were, ‘Don’t drop it!’ I asked, ‘Is that a yes?’ It was.”

Rick Huntress ’87 on his proposal to Karen Welling ’87 this winter.

“Just when you feel closest to your students, just when they know each other very well, just when you’ve achieved the sense of community you’ve been striving for in your classroom—the class is over.”

“The Teacher’s Curse,” according to Professor of Education Mark Tappan, the 2008 Senior Class Bassett Teaching Award recipient, in his address at the Senior Class Dinner May 19.

Listen to Tappan’s speech at www.colby.edu/tappan_award

Six Professors, 155 Years of Teaching at Colby

“The faculty presence here, the importance of teaching here, is the glory of the institution,” said President William D. Adams at the annual faculty-trustee dinner two nights before commencement. Adams’s remarks helped mark the end of the teaching careers of retiring Colby professors who, as noted by Joseph Boulos ’68, chair of the Board of Trustees, shaped the lives and careers of thousands of students. All were granted emeritus status upon their retirement. Alphabetically:

Eva Linfield, associate professor of music, came to Colby in 1993, nearly 30 years after completing studies in architecture in Berlin. After later earning a doctorate in musicology from Brandeis, she brought a passion for early music of the Middle Ages. In addition to teaching and scholarship, much of it on the work of composer Dieterich Buxtehude, her professional life included directing the Collegium Musicum ensemble. After Colby she planned to continue research on the place of comic figures in music and culture. “Unfortunately, the connotation of the word ‘retirement’ lacks all the energy I hope to bring to this next stage of my life,” Linfield said.

Patricia Onion, professor of English, came to Colby in 1974 and served as chair, co-chair, and associate chair of the department for 15 uninterrupted years. She taught a broad range of courses, from composition to the Brontës, Shakespeare to modern American drama. Onion also taught American Indian literature and brought a succession of Native American artists, writers, and storytellers to Mayflower Hill. She continued in that vein at the faculty-trustee dinner, regaling the assembled with “The Bungling Host,” a story from the Navajo oral tradition. A lifelong traveler and adventurer who has lived in a dozen countries and major cities, including a stint in the South Pacific, Onion “put the ‘Pat’ in peripatetic,” said former colleague Susan Kenney (English, emeritus).

Ursula “Ulla” Reidel-Schrewe, associate professor of German, joined the faculty in 1989, shortly after receiving her doctorate from Harvard. Reidel-Schrewe taught German language and literature, concentrating on 19th- and 20th-century literature and authors Thomas Mann and Joseph Roth. She lauded the trend toward integrated studies and interdisciplinary courses, saying, “It is obvious that students embrace the opportunity to be taught by professors from different disciplines.” In her remarks at the faculty-trustee dinner, she moved from literature to art, reflecting on her life, growing up in Allied-occupied Germany, moving to Holland, then to America. She said her native Hamburg has a remarkable structure: a blank rectangular box-shaped sculpture by Sol LeWitt—Black Form Dedicated to the Missing Jews. That LeWitt work, for her, is a bookend to his installation at Colby, Seven Walls, which Reidel-Schrewe studies as she passes it. “It has openings,” she said, “like glimmers of hope.”

Thomas Tietenberg, Mitchell Family Professor of Economics, came to Colby in 1977 with a Ph.D. from University of Wisconsin, Madison, on “Pollution Control and the Price System: A General Equilibrium Analysis.” In 1984 he published the first definitive environmental economics textbook, which is in its eighth edition and still at the top of its field, and he built an international reputation in the area of emissions trading programs. His former student and current colleague, Professor Michael Donihue ’79, introduced him at the faculty-trustee dinner as “arguably one of the leading environmental economists of his generation.” Despite his international stature Tietenberg remained intimately engaged with the campus community as, among many other things, a charter member of the Environmental Advisory Group and advisor to many projects and studies related to sustainability.

Jonathan Weiss, NEH/Class of 1940 Distinguished Professor of Humanities, came to Colby in 1972, became modern foreign languages department chair, and later served as associate dean of faculty and director of Colby in Dijon program. Perhaps it was all meant to be. In high school in New Britain, Conn., Weiss was inspired by his French teacher, Monsieur Bouchard. The young student embraced everything French, and, after earning degrees at Columbia and Yale, then teaching in England, he came to Colby. At a concert in Lorimer Chapel that first year, Weiss was shocked to see Monsieur Bouchard, AKA Claude Bouchard, Class of 1928. “Colby had entered my life before I knew Colby existed,” Weiss recalled. In addition to bringing French to Colby, Weiss brought Colby to France. For hundreds of students, he was the first mentor in a Colby career that began in Dijon. “I actually love walking down the Rue de Rivoli in Paris with two dozen Colby students in tow,” he said.

Joylynn Wing, professor of theater and dance, traded West Coast for East when she arrived at Colby in 1988 with a fresh Ph.D. in drama from Stanford. A skilled director, she led a variety of professional and student productions, from Pinter to Stoppard. She was known for the academic rigor of her drama courses, including contemporary and women’s dramatic literature, and she directed the Colby in London program. She also enthusiastically brought students to “theater sports improvisation,” a form of improv that is run like a sporting event, with improv teams in competition.

To see video of these professors’ remarks go to www.colby.edu/mag, keyword: retire



Hats Off

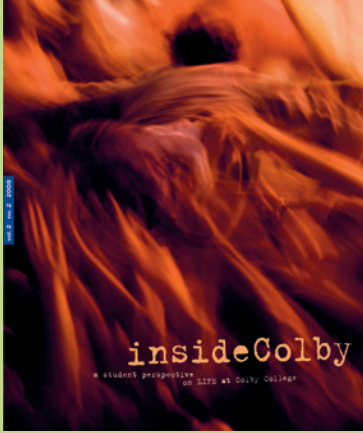
Mortarboards sailed after the conferring of degrees at commencement May 25. Here graduates look to the sky. In a subsequent photo they were ducking as the mortarboards fell to earth.

Photo by Fred Field

insideColby



InsideColby, a magazine and Web site produced by Colby students, won two second-place awards for student journalism from the Society of Professional Journalists this spring. To get a sense of the work they're doing, here are excerpts from a few stories in the latest magazine. To read the stories in their entirety (and see lots more, including videos and photo essays), go to www.insideColby.com.



Different Shades of Green

by Megan Litwin '08

As students scatter across campus headed to their first class of the day, many stop in the new snack bar to grab a coffee when they don't have time for a sit-down, dining-hall breakfast. If they took a moment to pause, these students might notice that all of the coffee is organic and fair-trade certified. What students may not know is that a student made this happen.

Jen Dakin '02 was concerned when she noticed that the coffee at Colby was neither organic nor fair trade. She proposed this change and worked to make a permanent impact on Colby and beyond. Dakin's work is significant, but it's just a small part of a larger movement at Colby: student-based environmental initiatives. ...



INVESTMENT BANKING BLISS

by Stephen Frechette '08

After four weeks on Wall Street, I race through the typical morning. My alarm clock goes off at 7 a.m. "Living the dream, man," my roommate says—his way of saying "good morning"—as we wake up in our midtown Manhattan summer dorm room and start our routine. Bobby Gorman '08, roommate and fellow Barclays intern, and I take turns with our two other roommates at the ironing board to make sure our shirts are pressed for work. Music blasts in the background and we soon forget that we didn't leave the office until 3 a.m. the night before.

Though I was only two hours from my home in northern Connecticut, I quickly learned during my internship at Barclays Capital that I was situated in a vast network of international financial markets. My work in the MetLife building at 200 Park Avenue—through a great chain of investment bankers, salesmen, traders, and investors—was helping to fuel the global markets. ...



Graduating senior Laurel Duggan sat down with new Director of the Career Center Roger Woolsey to talk about the services Colby will add and what Colby grads do when they leave.

What are you looking to do in your new role in the Career Center?

When I looked at the Career Center, I had to identify the student body here. And I refer to ... you students as the MOVERS—it's an acronym. M stands for multicultural. Thirteen-point-four percent of our student body is minority students. I think around two thirds of our students go abroad.



O stands for online. I think on average the students I've spoken to spend anywhere between eighteen and twenty-two hours per week, plus or minus, online. V stands for versatile. You are versatile because you are juggling studying, extracurricular activities, and having a social life. E stands for energetic. In order to be involved in extracurricular activities, clubs, and off-campus engagement, you have to have energy. R stands for responsive. Students here at Colby are responsive to new technologies and certain advertisements. So, I refer to you as the MOVERS. Do you think I got it right? ...



Not “Talkin’ ’bout My Generation”

BY RICHARD C. BACHUS '87

In the wintry months before Reunion 2007, I came to two small realizations: one about me, the other about my class, the Class of 1987.

First, it occurred to me that I am the last baby boomer to graduate from Colby—not the latest, mind you, but the youngest Boomer. Second, I realized that my class is one of the few in Colby history to contain two “generations.”

I was born New Year’s Eve 1964. Most of my classmates were either born earlier in 1964 or, by some definitions, a generation later, in 1965.

I came to reunion with a mission to answer this question—“So what?”

What’s the significance of being at the end of a generation, the beginning of another, or stuck somewhere in between?

So, into the imprecise science of generational classification I dived.

The baby boom was a statistical surge in births after World War II, from 1946 through 1964 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Afterward there was a significant drop in U.S. births. All told, the baby boom produced 75.4 million Americans. The oldest Boomers turned 62 last year, and the youngest (including me) were 43 by the end of 2007.

Beverly Boose in Alumni Relations not only confirmed my title as Colby’s last Boomer, she also found that 6,495 Colby baby boomers made up 27 percent of 24,056 living alumni.

My research touched on hot Boomer topics—the evolution from hippies to yuppies, Woodstock and Watergate, and “Boomsday” predictions of Social Security’s collapse. None of this spoke to my peers and me, though.

Retirement? I’m still trying to get some traction in any one of my three careers. Hendrix, Morrison, Joplin? They were dead before we were old enough to go to their concerts. Empty-nest syndrome? My daughter isn’t even 2.

Instead of looking to those who came before me, I began to look at those behind. These were murkier waters. Wikipedia lists recognized U.S. generations and identifies four labels that could apply to those of us born in 1964-65. Generation X is the most familiar moniker, but most of my classmates thought his term applied to a younger generation.

I found three different timeframes for Gen X: starting as early as 1961; starting the day after the baby boom ends, Jan. 1, 1965; or starting as late as 1968.

Using a 1965-81 definition, Gen Xers make up more than one third of living Colby alumni, including about one third of the 520 members of the Class of '87. But where does that leave us in relation to the other two thirds of our class? I never thought of myself as a Gen Xer before, but now I was curious.

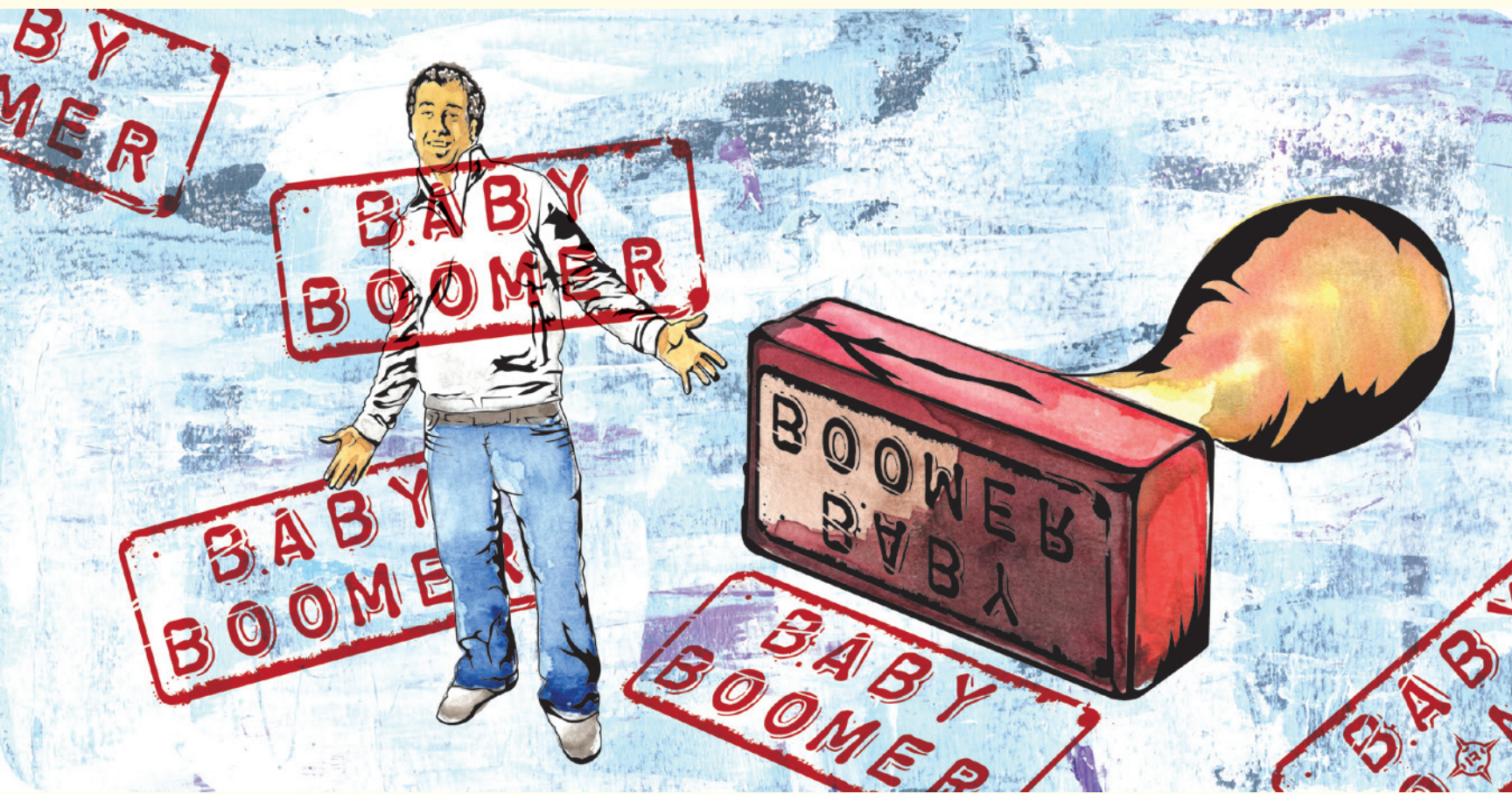
So I put together a little two-page survey to find what Reunion 2007 alumni thought about this generation business. I asked about pop culture, economic power, and common traits of several living American generations. Not surprisingly, alums thought the baby boom generation dominated, both in terms of the economic and political power its members wield as well as in music, movies, and TV.

The Rolling Stones, The Beatles, and Led Zeppelin were as much a part of the soundtrack of our lives in the late '80s as they were for alums a decade older. Even the relatively new stuff that defined our era—The Police, The Fixx, and Bruce Springsteen—was coming from the mouths and instruments of rockers who were born in the '50s or earlier. Only Bono of U2—born in 1960—could reasonably be considered part of my class’s generation.

A handful of alums from the Class of '82 (born about the same time as Bono) felt closer to those of us born in the 1960s than to those born in the 1950s. “We’re not baby boomers, we’re not Generation X. We are undefined,” wrote Scott Sophos '82 on his survey.

My class seemed to share that sentiment. While most of my classmates identified themselves as baby boomers, some chose “none of the above,” and some who said they were baby boomers felt that ours was another lost generation. That term was first used to describe the generation who fought and survived World War I. While our generation was not decimated by war, we have been caught in a generational no man’s land between the dominance of baby boomers and the technological momentum of younger generations.

We have paid a price for coming of age when we did. A 1998 report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics examined economic and job data for three groups (older baby boomers, younger baby boomers, and Gen Xers) as they entered the workforce and began careers. Published in the Feb. 1998 *Monthly Labor Review*, it said: “Members of Generation X have sometimes been accused of complaining too much, and of being cynical and unmotivated. ... With the possible exception of having a larger array of entertainment and other goods to purchase, members of Generation X appear to be worse off by every measure.”



Some Americans in their 30s and 40s have already started Boomer bashing. One poignant rant came from Lisa Bornstein in the May 18, 2007, *Rocky Mountain News*. “Tick, tick, Boomers. Your time is up. Put on your Rolling Stones T-shirts, climb into your SUVs and drive back to the exurbs you created. We’ll even let you crow about how you were gonna save the world. But for God’s sake, get out of the way.”

Standing at the fault line between Boomers and Xers, though, my Class of ’87 isn’t picking sides so much as it is bridging the generational gap. Members of my generation—which I define as those born in the ’60s—may not be true baby boomers, but we probably understand Boomers better than their parents did. We have benefited from their hard work, experimentation, their sacrifices, and even their tantrums. We’ve looked up to them without necessarily wanting to be them.

But my generation also knows what it’s like to come of age under the shadow of the numerous, boisterous, creative, and powerful baby boom generation. That knowledge binds us to those born in the ’70s and ’80s. We are the first generation to grow up entirely with television—just as today’s young adults have grown up without firsthand knowledge of life before cell phones or personal computers.

As each generation ages it begins to feel the pressure of younger masses pushing up from below. The statistics on Colby alumni represent what’s happening in our country. There are plenty of them out there, and the Boomers will probably be around for a lot longer than any previous generation. But they aren’t making any new ones. New generations keep coming, and Boomers (who are only 25 percent of all Americans right now) will find themselves increasingly outnumbered. Older baby boomers will be hearing more from my classmates and me, but I believe the real opportunity for my generation lies in its ability to span the gap between two very different eras.

As for me, I will cling to my self-appointed title as the last Colby baby boomer, but I’ll continue to see things through the eyes of my GenX classmates. Is my title significant? Probably not. But it did get me thinking about Colby, my classmates, and who we are as a generation. Like any good boomer/Xer hybrid, I will keep thinking about my generation’s glory days while worrying about its future.