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From the Hill

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From the Hill

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Faces of Katrina

AP Correspondent Matt Apuzzo chronicles courageous efforts to return to “normal”

MATT APUZZO '00 STORY

AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

The blisters on my feet have healed and the aches from sleeping on floors or in a rented sedan have subsided. Even the smell, that nauseating combination of rotting shrimp, sewage, and death that hung over downtown Biloxi for weeks, has faded from my clothes.

All the things that seemed so permanent after three weeks reporting in coastal Mississippi for the Associated Press are gone, leaving behind more lasting memories of Hurricane Katrina—the people I met only in passing but who faced such incredible obstacles. Them I can't seem to shake.

I met Han Luong, a 52-year-old Vietnamese immigrant, near what was left of the Biloxi docks. A six-foot gash in the pier separated us as he sat on the deck of the Santa Maria, the boat he worked two decades to buy.

His story began like most: His home was destroyed. Destroyed is the adjective reporters use when pulverized, decimated, and obliterated have been used up. None of them really does the situation justice. Luong's house was a slab of concrete.

The Santa Maria, however, endured, keeping thousands of pounds of

shrimp frozen in its hull. This cargo of shrimp was everything to Luong. It was a new house, maybe some clothes, some food other than the MREs the guardsmen were handing out.

But a week after Katrina, every shrimp processing plant from Alabama to Texas was gone.

While other shrimpers dumped their freezers, Luong persisted. He borrowed \$200 in gas each day to keep the generator purring and the shrimp frozen, holding out hope that somewhere a plant would open that would buy his shrimp.

Each day his debts grew and the plants remained closed. If he gave up and dumped his shrimp, he'd have no way to pay for the borrowed gas. He couldn't sell his boat; nobody would offer anything as long as the polluted Gulf of Mexico remained off limits to fishing.

It's amazing the calm that comes over people facing impossible situations. Luong casually shrugged, offering an understated assessment of his needs. “I need to fish. I need shrimp.”

He would wait. That's all he could do. When I left Mississippi, he was still waiting.

Like Luong needed shrimp, Wilbur Brown, a 78-year-old farmer who lives in a nameless crossroads an hour north of the coast, needed power. Days after most Mississippi towns had electricity back, Brown still couldn't start his stove to boil the toxic water sputtering out his faucets. It took days working a chainsaw to clear the trees from the dusty road into town. He survived on warm Dr. Pepper and his morning coffee, which he made from the murky tap water because, he says, we're all gonna die from something.

For all the talk of the mistakes made in the days and weeks following Katrina—and there were plenty—the stories I find myself retelling are about people who, like Luong and Brown, adapted almost immediately to the most difficult conditions.

A week after Katrina hit, the Gautier High School football team was practicing again. The quarterback's house was flooded. The kicker lost his car and everything in his bedroom. One of the linemen said his father escaped his house in a canoe, leaving behind all their possessions. Yet there they were, running laps alongside a National Guard outpost, practicing passing routes like always because that's what Mississippi high school football players do.

Football, they said, meant things were getting back to normal.

It was a common theme in the weeks following the storm. Wal-Mart was open, so things were getting back to normal. The port reopened. The

streetlights were back on. Everything was getting back to normal.

By any measure, of course, things were far from normal. Weeks after the storm, Mississippi was still looking for tens of thousands of trailers to house the homeless.

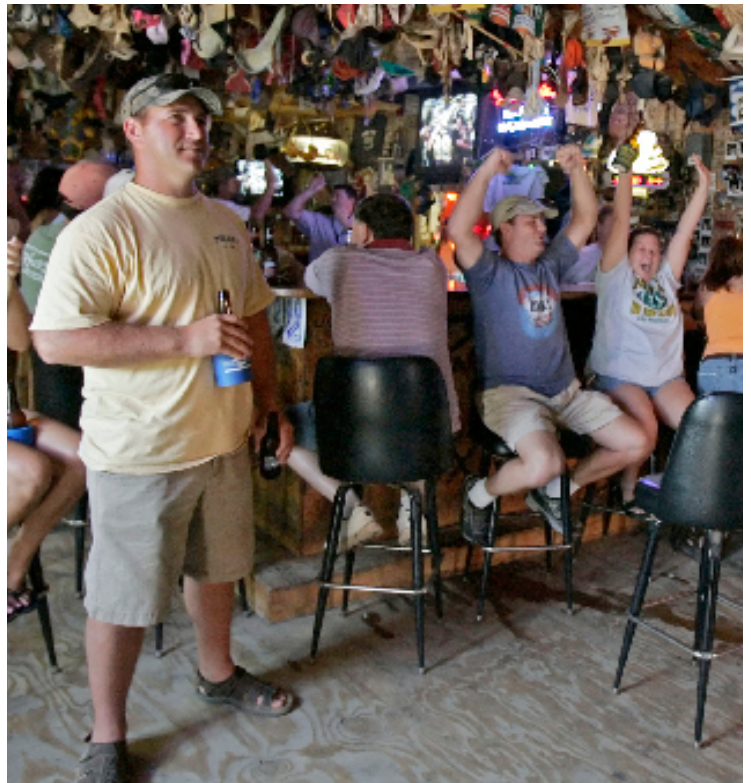
And the yearlong debris-removal process was really just starting, with truck drivers working 14 hours a day hauling away what was left of people's homes. I asked one of them, over a charcoal fire one night, whether it was hard dumping baby furniture, wedding albums, and toys all day.

"Well," the trucker said, "it's kinda like shootin' a dog. It's real hard the first time you gotta do it, but after a few times, it's just shootin'."

That's hurricane wisdom, a sign of just how amazingly good people are at coping with whatever the wind blows in. The first day of the NFL season, for example, people were still trying to calculate the scope of the damage. Bodies were still being found in the rubble.

Yet, in the tiny town of Kiln, the hometown of Packers quarterback Brett Favre, football fans found their "normal." They came in droves and they came on faith, believing that any bar where women's underwear hangs from the ceiling would find a way to serve cold beer and hot food on opening day.

They were not disappointed. Some of the customers were living in tents, others in their cars or with friends. Many wore the clothes they had worn the day before. Some hadn't had a hot meal in more than a week. But they showed up because, hurricane or not, it was opening day for football. And normal is what you make of it.



Facing page, shipping containers are strewn like toys amid the rubble left by Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi. Left, firefighters watch as a loader removes debris left by the storm. Above, football fans at a sports bar in Kiln, La., showed up as usual, refusing to give in to the disaster around them.

Past to Present

Admissions' Denise Walden discovers an illustrious ancestor among Colby alumni

GERRY BOYLE '78 STORY

FRED FIELD PHOTO

When Denise Walden, associate director of admissions and multicultural enrollment, decided to leave her position at the University of Denver to move closer to family back east, she had no idea just how close to family she was about to come.

Walden, who grew up in Virginia, was familiar with Colby and its academic reputation but had no connection to the College. "I was ready for a new adventure," she said. "Let's see what Maine is all about."

She did just that, joining the Colby admissions team in 2003. It was months later that her relatives in Pennsylvania came across a clipping while cleaning out files at home. It was about Walden's great-uncle Hezekiah Walden, and it included a reference to Colby College. The information was passed on to Walden's father, who mentioned it to his daughter at Colby. "I said, 'Okay. How come I've never heard of this person?'"

At her desk in Lunder House, Walden entered the name into the College's alumni database. "He was in there," she said, but the entry was limited to name and class year (1898). Her curiosity piqued, Walden called Pat Burdick, special collections librarian at Miller Library—and hit the jackpot.

Burdick produced a tribute to Walden published in the *Alumnus* on the occasion of his death, in 1931, and a profile researched and written by students of Professor Mark Tappan (education) just two years ago. It seems that Denise Walden's great-uncle not only was a Colby graduate, but a highly accomplished and respected one. "Hezekiah Walden's death ... has called forth many expressions of genuine appreciation of his rare worth," the *Alumnus* reported.

Hezekiah Walden grew up in rural Markham, Va., walking seven miles each way to school each day, the story said. As a boy he worked as a house

servant but yearned for more education. He made his way to Washington, D.C., and entered Wayland Academy, where the president, Dr. George M.P. King, was a Colby graduate, Class of 1857.

King took special interest in Walden and urged him to move to Waterville, where he again worked as a house servant, but also entered Coburn Classical Institute in Waterville, with Gov. Abner Colby Coburn as his benefactor. Walden graduated from Coburn Classical in 1894, entered Colby the same year, and graduated four years later—the third African-American to graduate from the College. "His diligence, unflinching courtesy, kindness of manner and high ideals easily and early won for him the respect and confidence of his associates," wrote classmate Charles Edwin Gurney.

The fresh Colby graduate stayed in the classroom. He taught at a succession of black institutions, including Roger Williams University in Nashville (merged in 1927 with LeMoyne-Owen College), where he was ordained a Baptist minister. Next was another Baptist college, Bishop College in Marshall, Texas. Walden moved from Texas to Kansas City, where he taught high school—and white racists twice dynamited his house.

Bluefield Institute in West Virginia was his next home, followed by West Virginia Normal School, where Walden was president. He ended his career as a high school teacher in Mt. Hope, W. Va.

His children followed in his footsteps, all graduating from college. One, Coburn Walden, earned his medical degree at Howard University.

While all of this was news to Denise Walden, the breadth of her ancestor's accomplishments and his diligence and tenacity were no surprise. Her own upbringing, she said, emphasized education and hard work. "You just keep striving," the modern-day Walden was taught. "You don't let obstacles keep you from trying to realize your goals."





Growing Boys

Tappan, teens reconsider what it really means to be a man

PATRICK MCBRIDE '97 STORY

FRED FIELD PHOTO

As a professor of education and human development and chair of the Education Program, Mark Tappan witnessed the groundbreaking work on girls' development done by his partner and fellow professor, Lyn Mikel Brown, and he realized there was more to be done.

For boys.

Last year, using area middle schools as his real-life classroom, Tappan set out to explore the role that cultural messages and stereotypes about masculinity play in the lives of boys and young men.

"Our goal was to begin a conversation about masculinity," Tappan said, "about what it means to be a 'real boy' or a 'real man,' and to begin to address both the pressures and the privileges that boys and men face in contemporary society."

Working with his students, Tappan linked with junior high schools in Winslow and Fairfield to provide a safe environment for boys to explore pervasive messages and stereotypes. Last spring, students in Tappan's course, Boys to Men, played host to a one-day conference on campus to address these issues in an interactive program. It was the first step in what Tappan knows will be a long and arduous process.

Tappan has collaborated with a Portland-based group, also called Boys to Men (www.boys-tomen.info), whose purpose is to educate young men on the dangers of gender stereotyping. Among its goals is promoting respect and reducing gender-related violence. Boys to Men board members include David Vaughan '77, a teacher at Waynflete School in Portland.

Tappan, his students, and organizations such as Boys to Men are addressing an area of long-standing concern in the United States—and for good reason. An estimated four million women

each year are victims of serious violence perpetrated by an intimate domestic partner. One woman in three experiences at least one physical assault from a domestic partner during adulthood, according to the American Bar Association's Commission on Domestic Violence.

There is also a heightened concern about bullying and violence in U.S. schools. "Most of the bully-prevention curricula don't really address the gendered nature of bullying," Tappan said. "For boys, bullying is related to both the privileges and the pressures they experience as males in this culture. Boys often take those pressures out on others who are less powerful, and the nature of these expectations and pressures bear a relationship to how and why boys bully."

Keegan Albaugh '07J, who works closely with Tappan on the project and also works with boys at the Alford Youth Center and the South End Teen Center in Waterville, says it's critical to provide kids with a venue to talk about important issues that don't really come up in school or at home. "The workshops provide an opportunity to take some of the issues and pressures and talk about them," Albaugh said.

Mike Pendleton, a student at Winslow Junior High School, said the boys in the group are beginning to communicate. "It's nice to talk about things like what's going on at home and know it is confidential," Pendleton said. "And it's also nice to hang out with friends and have the security of knowing that what you say won't be spread throughout the school."

And that is a start. "You have to start moving the wheel, and that's what we are doing right now," Albaugh said.

Boys encounter intense gender-related pressures earlier in their lives than girls, Tappan

said. For that reason he's focusing his efforts on middle-school boys in hopes of engaging an audience that is still open to new ideas. With the support of Winslow Junior High School guidance counselor Penny Linn '73, Tappan and his students initiated a weekly discussion group for eighth-grade boys last fall. Some of the concepts would be lost on younger boys, Tappan said, but waiting until high school to introduce these topics may be too late. Male ideals of control and stoicism are introduced to boys at an early age and reinforced throughout adolescence, he said.

"Boys face these issues from early on and from a variety of cultural and environmental influences, but it is not until middle school that they are able to cognitively reflect upon them," Tappan said. "We want the boys to be aware and see where the pressures come from and help them develop some language and tools that allow them to deal with the culture as it comes their way."

Ultimately the goal is to challenge and resist traditional and conventional definitions of masculinity that are both limiting and constraining for many boys and that promote male privilege and power.

Until that happens, boys will continue to fight back tears in public, but through the efforts of Tappan and his students, more students will be able to overcome gender pressures defined by society.

"Will the boys practice what we are teaching right now? Probably not," said Linn, the guidance counselor. "Down the road, as they mature, they will be aware of the stereotypes and gender issues and hopefully make good choices and define roles according to their own beliefs."

Keegan Albaugh '07J, left, with students at Winslow Junior High School. At right is Mark Tappan, professor of education, who is exploring issues relating to gender stereotypes for adolescent boys.

YOU ARE WHERE YOU EAT

Disparate dining-hall cultures reflected in clientele and menu

BRENDAN SULLIVAN '06 STORY

FRED FIELD PHOTO

One recent stormy evening, students poured down the stairs of Foss dining hall. From his seat a senior Foss regular called across the table to his friend, "I can't believe the rain didn't keep the Dana-heads out tonight, man."

"Do you know them?" his friend replied.

"No."

"Then how do you know they're from Dana?"

"You can just tell."

And vice versa.

For decades the two dining halls have catered to loyal clienteles. At the risk of oversimplification, one group is drawn to Foss's vegetarian and international fare, the other to Dana's fast food, stir-fry, and comfort foods. And with the Roberts dining hall closed for major renovations this fall, the choice has been as clear as it can get.

The Foss loyalists, or "Fosstafarians" as some call them, are a distinct crowd that can tell their fellows from other Colby students without a secret handshake. The Foss menu caters to those with, perhaps, a more speculative palate. A typical dinner entree from one recent night: chickpea and walnut empanadas, chipotle sour cream, and vegan artichoke tapenade.

"The food here is more adventurous," sniffed Eric Ffitch '08. "Eating in Dana is like eating at a high school cafeteria."

Clearly Foss's wide-ranging menu caters to vegetarian and vegan students, but it also attracts an eclectic group of meat eaters. Among those who self-identify as Foss diners are members of the Outing Club, the woodsmen's team, and Habitat for Humanity, as well as Ultimate Frisbee players, some international students, and many students living off campus.

But across the lawn there is another faction with equally strong preferences. "Whereas Foss regulars look for quieter, slower-paced things, Dana attracts groups that want to see and be seen, a more high-profile crowd," said Joe Klaus, operations manager of Colby Dining Services.

With due respect to Ffitch, this is like no high school cafeteria we know. For one thing the food is better. Colby Dining Services has gained national recognition for the quality of the food in all three halls, and Dana is the showplace, with stations where you can watch the chef cook your stir-fry or assemble a sandwich to your specifications.

Who's in Dana?

Many of the groups include first-year students, away from home for the first time and attracted by the familiar menu. Pizza and hamburgers are always available along with choices of meats and comfort food that many Dana-goers consider more reliable than Foss's menu.

Football players flock to the hall—and to tables just inside the Dana entrance in particular—because of its sheer size and also because of theirs.

Dana feeds about twice as many people as Foss, and it can accommodate the entire team. But there's another thing, too.

"Meat, meat, meat," said quarterback Justin Smith '07. "For football players who are trying to gain weight or keep weight on, it is important to eat meat. Because Foss doesn't serve meat on occasion, it leaves us little other choice."

In the main Dana dining area, there is always a table of international students who stay to talk long after dinner. "I think Dana is a more social atmosphere, because, when you come in as a freshman international student, everybody takes you to Dana," said Francis Chapuredima '06 of Zimbabwe. "It's wide open and great for talking and seeing people."

Not that the food at Dana is secondary. "I love Dana food because there is always something to fall back on, as opposed to weird hippie food," said Meg Smith '06, a devout Dana-goer. "At Foss I leave hungry."

While the Foss and Dana faithful create a polemic culinary rivalry, Colby's smallest dining hall, Roberts (a.k.a. Bobs) serves a more low key, neighborly crowd, some of whom are as loyal as the Fosstafarians are to Foss or Dana devotees to Dana. The Bobs regulars are primarily athletes and students who live on Roberts Row and who rely on Bobs because of its convenient location near the field house. Its menu, before the hall closed for extensive renovation last summer, typically offered home-style cooking.

Last semester, though, the Roberts regulars had to hoof across campus and make the Foss/Dana choice. "Last year I never ate lunch at any other dining hall except Bobs. It's a home atmosphere," said Ryan Adams '07, a swimmer who noted that members of the Roberts staff know their patrons by name. After late practices in the athletic center, Adams and his teammates rushed to Roberts just before closing.

While awaiting the reopening of Roberts, at the start of second semester 2006, its faithful were left homeless this fall. In protest, Adams and his roommate made "Save Bobs" T-shirts and wore them the last day Roberts was open. "From what I understand they are trying to make it more like Foss," Adams said. "But I don't fit in at Foss, and at Dana it doesn't matter who you are. I fit in here."

And fitting in at one specific dining hall can become an important part of student identity. Some students even find their dining-hall identity before coming to Colby, said Bayley Lawrence '08J. "I eat at Foss because, on my tour of campus as a high school senior, my tour guide said that's where outdoorsy kids and vegetarians eat, and I'd rather be associated with that group."

Through eight years with dining services, Klaus has noticed that the dining hall subcultures change only slightly over time and the same students frequent the same dining halls night after night.

Whether you are a Dana-head, a Fosstafarian, or a Bobsman—at Colby, you are where you eat.



Students relax over dinner at Dana dining hall, where the menu and clientele may differ from that of other dining halls on campus.

Digging It

Colby volleyball is host for—and wins—New England D-III championship

ERNIE CLARK STORY

JEFF EARICKSON PHOTO

As they played host to—and won—the 2005 NCAA Division III New England regional tournament at Wadsworth Gymnasium in early November, members of the Colby volleyball team appreciated how far they had come.

“During the regular season we had maybe twenty people at our games,” said outside hitter Megan Devlin '06, “and then at the NESCAC finals and the NAAs both sides of the bleachers were filled. People were talking about our team and about our games all around campus. It was pretty amazing.”

Such is life in a championship atmosphere.

The Mules recently completed the best season in the 15-year history of the program, winning their first New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC) title and earning not only their first NCAA bid, but a berth in the national quarterfinals.

“I think I knew we were going to be pretty good,” said Colby coach Candice Parent, the 2005 NESCAC coach of the year. “There were a lot of little factors that became big factors. Chemistry’s a huge part of it. The energy on our team was so good, and our senior leadership was phenomenal.”

The Mules were led by outside hitter Cait Cleaver '06 and middle blocker Kaitlin Adams '06. Cleaver recently was named the program’s first All-American, earning third-team recognition from the American Volleyball Coaches Association after ending her career as Colby’s leader in kills and defensive digs. Adams, an honorable-mention All-American, led the NESCAC in hitting percentage and was the team’s emotional catalyst.

“I think this year, mentally, we’re just so much tougher,” said Cleaver, who helped the Mules to a 37-4 record in 2005 and a 104-33 record during her four years on Mayflower Hill. “Last year when we made individual mistakes we tended to focus on ourselves and become introspective rather than focusing on each other and getting out of it.”

The strength of the Mules’ senior class merely heightened expectations for the 2005 season. Cleaver, Devlin, Adams, and opposite hitter Mariah Daly '06 already had posted a school-record three straight 20-win seasons. However, the Mules’ entire post-season history had consisted of an ECAC tourney bid in 1995 and annual NESCAC playoff appearances.

“A lot of people, including myself, worried about senior-itis,” said Parent,



who has a 228-140 record in 11 seasons as the Mules' coach. "Were they going to put too much pressure on themselves? Were they going to be too analytical? Were they going to worry about all the other things and forget to play?"

Those worries proved unfounded.

The addition of first-year setter Jenny Lawrence '09 addressed the biggest positional issue facing the Mules, and Lawrence and libero (a specialized defensive player) Kendall Kirby '07—the 2005 NESCAC Defensive Player of the Year—joined the seniors as the Mules went undefeated through their NESCAC schedule.

A win against four-time defending conference champion Williams was symbolic of Colby's increased maturity. The Mules rallied from a 30-10 thumping in the fourth game to win the fifth and final game of the match 15-12.

"I think it was Kaitlin who came over to the bench after we lost 30-10 and said, 'the score's 2-2,'" said Daly. "The game score didn't matter, but the match was even and we had to win one more game."

That was in stark contrast to the team's 2004 fortunes in such scenarios. In five-game matches, Colby went 0-5 last year, but in 2005 the Mules were 8-0. "This game is so much momentum," Cleaver said. "This year we proved we can win those fifth games, and that's purely mental."

The top-ranked team in New England Division III for most of the season, Colby not only earned the top seed for the NESCAC tournament, but the opportunity to play host.

That brought out the fans, and it brought out the best in the Mules. They defeated Wesleyan, Williams, and Tufts to win the conference crown. It also earned them the chance to play host to the NCAA New England regional the next weekend. There the top-seeded Mules beat Mount Ida, MIT, and Tufts to earn a trip to the NCAA national championships in Salem, Va.

"All season long I was waiting for us to play as well as we played those two weeks," Parent said. "The crowd was great, we didn't put a lot of pressure on ourselves, and we played some phenomenal matches."

Colby's introduction to national championship-level competition came against Juniata College, a volleyball power from Huntingdon, Pa., that swept the 2004 men's and women's Division III national titles. The teams had met earlier in the season, with Juniata earning a four-game victory. But from that loss—and the game Colby won—came confidence for the impending rematch.

In the quarterfinal, Juniata cruised to a 30-13 first-set victory, but Colby took a 29-27 lead and had two game points in the second game before the Eagles scored four straight points for a 31-29 win. Juniata closed out the match in the next game, then advanced to the championship round before losing to Wisconsin-Whitewater.

"We knew we could compete against them," said Devlin, "but we didn't play our best game that day and lost to a great team."

Graduation will take a considerable toll on Colby's volleyball team, but through their run to the NAAs the Mules gained an intangible that those who remain hope will prove pivotal to continued success.

"Now we know how to win," said Parent. "I really believe you have to go through the experience of learning how to win and how to close out those tough matches to have the confidence you need to be successful. Now we have that confidence."

Mariah Daly '06, left, and Kaitlin Adams '06 go up for a block against Tufts en route to winning the NCAA New England regional championships at Colby.

FOOTBALL finished second in the NESCAC and won the Colby-Bates-Bowdoin title for the third straight year. Colby, 7-1, won its final four games, including a 28-3 road win over Bowdoin to cap the season. Tight end **RODDY AMES '06** earned New England Football Writers Division II/III honors and was first-team all-conference. Co-captain **DAN OLIPHANT '06** was named to the first-team offensive line. Running back **AARON STEPKA '06**, wide receiver **MICHAEL TOMICH '06**, linebacker **ANDREW HEANEY '07**, and defensive back **MIKE BRACCO '06J** all earned NESCAC second-team honors. Stepka finished his career with 3,465 yards and 27 touchdowns. Tomich averaged 20.2 yards per catch and led the Mules in catches and receiving touchdowns, Heaney was second on the team in total tackles, and Bracco led the Mules in total tackles, solo tackles, and interceptions. . . . In men's soccer, **DANIEL KIERNAN '07** earned NESCAC second-team honors as a defender. **BOBBY ABENDROTH '06** and **CHRIS MACFADYEN '07** led in scoring with five goals and two assists apiece. **MONTY HANKIN '06** had four goals and two assists in just nine games following an injury. . . . **WOMEN'S CREW** placed second at the Textile River Regatta and a best-ever 31st in the championship eight meet at the Head of the Charles Regatta. Colby closed the season beating Bates and Bowdoin in the CBB Fall Head Race on Messalonskee Lake. . . . **FIELD HOCKEY**, losing key seniors from a NESCAC semifinal team of 2004, finished 5-8, losing a number of tight games. **MARY CLARE SNEDIKER '09** earned conference second-team honors along with goaltender **JAMIE ENOS '08**. . . . For **MEN'S TENNIS**, **BRYAN BROWN '09** advanced to the second round of the 'A' singles flight against Bates's Will Boe-Wiegaard, one of the top-ranked players in the country. Brown won the first set, lost the second, and fell in a deciding pro set, 10-6, narrowly missing a huge upset. **BEN CRANE '06** won the 'B' flight singles title at Bates's Wallach Invitational. . . . In **WOMEN'S TENNIS** first singles player **TRACY NALE '07** advanced to the second round at the New England Regional Tournament. . . . For the co-ed **GOLF** team, **MATT ASCHAFFENBURG '06**, 2004 CBB champion, had the best score for Colby at the NESCAC meet this fall. For complete and updated fall season highlights, go to Colby Online at www.colby.edu/mag/sports_shorts.

Number 22 Retired for Hoop Great Matt Gaudet

Colby men's basketball great Matt Gaudet '95 had his number 22 retired in November as coaches, players, former teammates, friends, and fans honored the former point guard. Gaudet led Colby to an 85-16 record over four years. A perennial leader in assists, he also is ranked seventh on Colby's all-time scoring list.

Gaudet was paralyzed in a diving accident in 2001.

To read newspaper columns about the ceremony and Gaudet's Colby career, visit:

■ www.colby.edu/mag/gaudet

■ pressherald.maine.com/sports/college/basketball-men/051107sollo2.shtml

Gossip Girl

Writer Cecily Von Ziegesar has served up Manhattan teens; now she's eyeing college

MACKENZIE DAWSON PARKS '99 STORY

MARY SCHWALM '99 PHOTO

When Cecily Von Ziegesar '92 was a teenager at Nightingale-Bamford, a private school on Manhattan's Upper East Side, she wasn't into the party scene.

Instead, she was riding horses competitively, participating in horse shows, and traveling frequently.

"I wasn't around most weekends, and I didn't know any guys," Von Ziegesar admitted with a laugh. "But I was friends with all the cool kids. I was part of the cool clique—but not completely a part of it, because I kept leaving. And then by senior year it seemed like I didn't really know anyone."

As it turns out, this distance served her well. It is, in part, her working knowledge of the nasty-nice world of teens that has made Von Ziegesar, 35, a big success. "I had close friends who were incredibly wealthy and got to be part of their world," she said. "We were well off, but not—well, let's put it this way. One of my friends would fly on the Concorde to Paris to get fitted by Yves Saint Laurent."

Von Ziegesar is the creator and writer of the *Gossip Girl* novels, a hugely popular series of books that has attracted a near-cult following amongst its loyal readers, namely teenage girls. Her books have sold over two million copies, according to her publishers, mainly through word of mouth, with two recent titles making their debut atop the *New York Times* children's bestseller list.

With titles like *All I Want is Everything, You Know You Love Me*, and *Because I'm Worth It*, the series depicts the not-always-glam life of privileged teenagers—think *Sex and the City* for the junior set. "These books are all about living vicariously," said Danica Lo, a *New York Post* reporter who writes about fashion and trends. "They're for the aspiring queen bee in all of us. These are like the teenage years you wish you had—for those of us who barely made it out of our teenage years alive."

"Welcome to New York's Upper East Side," begins the first book's first entry. "Where my friends and I live and go to work and play and sleep, sometimes with each other. We all live in huge apartments with our own bedrooms and bathrooms and phone lines. We have unlimited access to money and booze and whatever else we want, and our parents are rarely home, so we have tons of privacy. We're smart, we've inherited classic good looks, we wear fantastic clothes, and we know how to party."



Cecily Von Ziegesar '92, writer of best-selling novels for young adults, with her children, Agnes, 3, and Oscar, 1.

Even though most of the characters are wealthy and not exactly your average everyday teen, they deal with the same problems teens deal with nationwide. One character is grappling with bulimia, while another just can't seem to kick his pot habit. But part of what sets the series apart from other young-adult novels is the tone; there's no moralizing or preaching. For all the sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll, the characters all turn out okay in the end.

"It's completely unrealistic to have a group of kids who are constantly reforming or who are being punished because they're 'naughty,'" Von Ziegesar said. "And I always resented that quality in books I'd read. I was terrified that the grown-up world would be horrified by my books, but all the parents hug me because their girls are reading. I don't know what it is that redeems the characters, exactly, but deep down, they're still good kids. They're not selling drugs to their little sisters."

Von Ziegesar came up with the idea for the series five years ago, when she was working as an editor at a book production company called Alloy Entertainment. At Alloy, she said, editors were responsible for generating concepts for books, writing out the proposals, and pitching them to

RECENT RELEASES

Name Reactions and Reagents in Organic Synthesis, Second Edition

Bradford P. Mundy (chemistry, emeritus), Michael G. Eller, and Frank G. Favaloro Jr. '96 Wiley-Interscience (2005)

This compendium of organic chemistry name reactions and reagents ushers the 1988 first edition into the contemporary laboratory, says the *Journal of Medicinal Chemistry*. The new edition offers references to current literature and provides an update of the application of reagents for organic synthesis—a meaningful contribution to the field.



Journey

The Casco Bay Tumblers, including Carl Dimow (music) (2005)

This popular Maine-based ensemble, including Dimow and Colby visiting artist Julie Goell, takes klezmer music into the

21st century, picking up Greek, Celtic, and Latino influences along the way. The selections range from new interpretations of traditional tunes to a piece written by Dimow as he listened to the news of U.S. troops marching into Baghdad. The journey lasts a little more than an hour but spans centuries. Available at www.casco-baytumblers.com.

Brokeback Mountain

Annie Proulx '57 Scribner (2005)

This unexpected love story explores the relationship between Ennis Del Mar and Jack Twist, two ranch-hands caught up in a relationship they can neither fully understand nor relinquish. Originally part of the 1999 short story collection *Close Range*, *Brokeback Mountain* was recently released as a film directed by Ang Lee, starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Heath Ledger, with a screenplay by Larry McMurtry.

The Birth of the Khalsa: A Feminist Re-Memory of Sikh Identity

Nikky-Guninder Kaur Singh (religious studies)

State University of New York Press (2005)

A feminist critique of the creation of the Khalsa in 1699, the pivotal event in Sikh history. Singh examines the texts and tenets of Sikh religion and reveals the feminine aspects of rituals and tradition—and their implications for the Sikh community today. She drew inspiration from her father, eminent Sikh scholar Harbans Singh, to whom she dedicated this work.

Fame Without Fortune

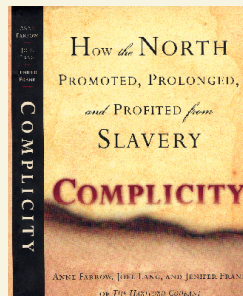
Jordan Messan Benissan (music) (2005)

African drummer Benissan's fourth CD includes the title track, a jazz piece inspired by an exchange with a fan. Benissan, a native West African who now teaches drumming at Colby, has gained a following in world-music circles. More at www.jordanbenissan.com.

Sophocles: Philoctetes

Hanna M. Roisman (classics) Duckworth (2005)

This companion edition gives context and illumination to Sophocles's



timeless play about Philoctetes and Odysseus, who abandoned his comrade on a deserted island. Now Odysseus must convince Philoctetes to join him in the war against Troy. This introduction, for students and lay readers, offers background on the issues that the play explores, making the work accessible to modern readers.

Complicity: How the North

Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited from Slavery

Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jenifer Frank Ballantine Books (2005)

The authors, all staffers at *The Hartford Courant*, turn their investigative spotlight on a remarkably well-kept secret: that the merchants of New England were heavily involved in, and profited handsomely from, the slave trade. Of particular note in this revealing examination is a subchapter on Colby alumnus Elijah Parish Lovejoy, Class of

publishers. She wrote the proposal for what would become the Gossip Girl series, and the people at Little, Brown liked the way the proposal was written—so much that they asked her to write the books herself.

With the October publication of the eighth book in the series, *Nothing Can Keep Us Together*, Von Ziegesar is hanging up the Gossip Girl reins and heading in a new direction in her writing career. From now on, the byline on the continuing series will read, "Created by Cecily Von Ziegesar."

With two children under five, Von Ziegesar gets her writing done when she can, "They're out of the house from ten until three, so I write furiously during that time," she said.

She had considered writing about motherhood for her first non-Gossip Girl book, but she quickly dismissed this idea, deciding she was too new to the maternity scene to write convincingly about it. "I think I'll be funnier about early motherhood five or ten years from now," she said.

Instead she's elected to focus her narrative on college.

Which means her book could feature one strangely familiar New England liberal arts college with a blue light in the library tower. "I might visit Colby to refresh my memory," she said. "I don't think I could write about a college that isn't similar. I mean, that was my experience. I couldn't write about Columbia."

Acting Locally

Jacqueline Dupont can't ignore challenges in Colby's own backyard

NEHA SUD '05 STORY

FRED FIELD PHOTO

One afternoon last summer Jacqueline Dupont '04 paced anxiously in her office at Waterville's South End Teen Center. Dupont, until recently an AmeriCorps teen coordinator at the center, had organized a month-long series of workshops on HIV, AIDS, and safe sex.

The guest speaker was upstairs, ready to start. The boys were in the living room playing video games, but where were the girls? As Dupont glanced at the clock, the door burst open. A young teenage girl sashayed in, wearing low-rise jeans and a bandanna tied around her bust.

"Go put on a T-shirt," Dupont said.

"But Jackie, it's too hot to wear a T-shirt," the girl replied.

At that moment, five more girls walked in. They quickly sided with their friend, and Dupont decided to let it go. "They try to shock me, but I refuse to give in," she said. "I'd rather give them constructive, proactive attention."

And she has been doing that for three years, first as a volunteer during her senior year, then with AmeriCorps, and now as a full-time staffer at Hardy Girls Healthy Women, a Waterville nonprofit that develops opportunities, programs, and services that empower girls and women. And she continues to volunteer at the teen center as well. "I was seriously considering social work but I wasn't sure if I could cut it," she said. "Working at the teen center gave me the chance to figure out if I would sink or swim."

Dupont swam, and continues to navigate the often turbulent world of teenage girls, many of whom are facing dual challenges of adolescence and disadvantaged backgrounds. A human development major with a concentration in psychology, Dupont spent her senior year volunteering at the center as part of her education course requirements, then took the AmeriCorps position. "I knew in my gut that this was the next step for me to take," she said.

During the academic year, the teen center is assisted by 25 or more student volunteers from the Colby South End Coalition. Dupont was one of two full-time employees, responsible for programming, fund raising, public relations, organizing events such as weekend trips, car washes, bake sales, and sleepovers.

She admits that at times her workload was overwhelming. The teen center's open-door policy means there are always 20 or more kids stopping by after school—and Dupont was a mentor to many of them. "There are always situations where kids are getting into fights and doing drugs," she said. She tries to increase the teens' confidence by helping them focus on their positive characteristics. "By bolstering their assets you build their self esteem, and that is the tool we give them to resist a lot of the other pitfalls."

And there are many.

That afternoon at the workshop, the speaker asked the teens if they had a role model who inspired them to act responsibly. "My brother inspires me," said one of the girls. "He got his girlfriend pregnant when he

was fifteen. They had the baby, but his girlfriend went away and took the child. Now he's seventeen and he can't even see his own kid. So he tells me that I shouldn't get pregnant yet."

The story opened a Pandora's box of pregnancy anecdotes. One girl said she has a friend who is 13 and pregnant. Police, she said, were considering prosecuting the friend's older boyfriend. As the teens continued to chatter about their friends' mishaps, the speaker steered the discussion towards safe-sex practices. An hour later, Dupont wrapped up the workshop by giving the teens a pop quiz on responsible sexual behavior.

It was a good day, but Dupont is realistic about the extent of her influence given her limited time with her young charges. "I feel like I've failed personally when someone I've been working with falls off the track," she said. "We had one teen here who really turned around but then her family picked up and moved. Since then she really has crashed and burned, and there's nothing I can do about it."

Dupont paused. "But then, I'm not the catcher in the rye," she said.

As the teens moved downstairs for recreation time, Dupont was asked if she is ever overwhelmed by this generation's problems. "People make mistakes," she said. "When you have a culture of poverty, you deal with a lot of these issues."

Growing up in Baltimore, Dupont was already familiar with the social repercussions of poverty and felt she had something to offer the young people in Waterville. "When people think about working with teenagers, they run the other way. Adolescents are responsive to me for some reason. I felt like it's my responsibility to use that skill."

In addition to dealing with the teens' problems, Dupont had to make her own transition from Colby to Waterville. She maintains that some Colby students' cynical view of Waterville is due to their perception of it as only a place to shop or go out to dinner or bars. "If that's your only relation to a place, then of course you will have a condescending perspective."

Dupont said she prefers Waterville's hospitable, close-knit small-town culture to the anonymity of larger cities. "There's such a strong sense of community here. I love the small stores, the front-lawn economy of summer, the people who are always friendly," she said.

In August Dupont, 24, became an official Waterville homeowner by purchasing a two-story house in the very South End neighborhood she serves. She will be living there for the next five years while she gets a master's degree in social work at the University of Maine. Along with volunteering at the teen center, she expects to remain on the staff of Hardy Girls Healthy Women at least until this fall.

Dupont has no misgivings about dedicating herself to Waterville, she said. "I had the opportunity to make a difference, and I decided to do it," she said. "Now this place is my life."

Jacqueline Dupont '04 hanging out at the South End Teen Center in Waterville.

