

# Colby



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## Colby News

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# Satire and Sensitivity Challenge Free Speech

A Web site posting that authors said was intended as satire of Colby students' involvement in—and indifference to—campus efforts to combat genocide in Darfur provoked an angry firestorm of debate on campus in April.

The disagreement erupted after one group of students, Colby for Humanity, posted a notice on thefacebook.com, a Web site used mostly by students looking to meet other students. There Jamie Manzer '06 and Alexander Tallett '06 urged students to contact their elected representatives about the ongoing killings in Sudan. "With national interest comes government intervention," they wrote. "Please, do your small part to save lives."

That was mocked by a similar posting, this one declaring: "Genocide in Darfur! Who gives a S\*%#?"

In the paragraph that followed, students were told they couldn't make a difference, and should stop trying. "I could be making seven figures by the time I'm 30, thinking about genocide is a real downer. Where the hell is Darfur anyway?"

That posting prompted an angry response that culminated in a "speak-out" on the steps of Miller Library, where authors Brad Kasnet '05, Steven Bogden '05, and Patrick Semmens '05 defended their actions in front of some supporters and a larger throng of critics.

The posting was satire, the three said, and not intended to criticize those who work for humanitarian causes. It should have been considered in the context of thefacebook.com, where group postings often are done in jest, they said. In a subsequent column in *The Colby Echo*, where he



Students, faculty, and staff gathered on Miller Library steps to speak out about the controversy surrounding a Web posting regarding genocide in Darfur.

was news editor, Kasnet said he regretted offending anyone. "To get at what I was really satirizing," he wrote, "I feel that on this campus there is a significant pressure to conform politically."

That explanation didn't mollify many students, including Andrei Roman '08, who wrote a counterpoint column for the *Echo*. "Is it right to satirize human suffering?" Roman wrote.

At the library speak-out, students and others denounced the "satire" and demanded an apology. Huseyin Akturk '07 told the group that he had worked for six months in a UN refugee camp

in Swaziland and he saw no humor in the posting. "I think there is a fine line between satire and being evil," Akturk said.

Manzer, who posted the original notice, said that if the trio intended to prod apathetic students, the writers had chosen the wrong vehicle. "I don't think satire is the best way to attack apathy," she said. "The best way to attack apathy is activism. So let's see more of that."

The debate widened to include faculty and administration, including President William "Bro" Adams, who reminded the Colby community that the free expression of ideas and points of view, especially on difficult topics, is essential to the Colby mission.

"But the commitment to free expression is not without consequences," Adams wrote, noting the obligation to consider the feelings of others. "At some point, we should all expect to have our deepest convictions challenged in unsettling and disturbing ways. We should also insist that these challenges be reasoned, decent, and respectful."

—Gerry Boyle '78



Alex Katz (American, b. 1927), *Picnic at the Beach*, 1960, collage, 4 5/8" x 5 1/4"  
Gift of the Artist, The Paul J. Schupf Wing  
Colby College Museum of Art

## Paper Cuts

As a young artist in the late 1950s, Alex Katz was developing his unique style. A collection of his collages, on view at the Colby College Museum of Art this summer, offers a glimpse into that process. *Alex Katz: Collages* (June 26–September 18) brings together about 60 collages made from cut pieces of colored paper. These "very flat, simple, rather elegant" pieces, as described by Carolyn Muzzy Director of the Museum of Art Daniel Rosenfeld, "had a kind of simplicity that was emerging in his painting at the same time."

While viewers will see some consistency in the characteristics of Katz's collages and paintings, one major difference is immediately apparent—size. Colby's smallest collage is 3 7/8 by 5 5/8 inches, while the largest painting in the Paul J. Schupf Wing for the Works of Alex Katz at the Colby museum, *Pas De Deux* (1994), has five panels that are 11 feet tall and total 30 feet wide. As Katz grew, so did his art.

For this exhibition—the first of its kind—Colby will display its own collection of eight collages and borrow works from such museums as the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum in New York as well as from private collections. —Ruth Jacobs



SUSAN STERLING

The Colby College Chorale performs at St. Nicholas Cathedral in Prague.

## Cross Cultural Chorale

No surprise that the Colby Chorale enjoyed Vienna and Prague when the 68-member troupe visited in March. But the Colby group reveled in more than the museums and restaurants, the cafés and nightlife. The Colby Chorale and its director, Paul Machlin, marveled at the sound.

Knowing that the chorale would be playing in cathedrals and major churches, Machlin had selected—and the students had rehearsed—what he thought appropriate material for venues like St. Nicholas Cathedral in Prague and Karlskirche (Karl's Church) and St. Peter's in Vienna. But even Machlin was deeply moved by the singers' powerful performances of the music.

"In those moments, it was like they were hearing these pieces the way they were meant to be heard," Machlin said.

"It was pretty awesome singing in that church," a chorale member reported in a message posted on the Web. "Our voices bounced off the stone walls around us and our breath rose as we sang."

Machlin said the acoustics were remarkable—created by stone walls enclosing vast spaces. The voices hung in the air, he said, taking on a new life in the cathedrals and churches. Adding to the experience was the knowledge that the chorale was surrounded by so much history. St. Stephen's in Vienna, for example, was the church Mozart attended.

At that church, an impromptu performance—*Haec Dies*, *Ave Maria*, and three Charles Villiers Stanford motets—began with an audience of 10 people. Within a few minutes, 150 had gathered.

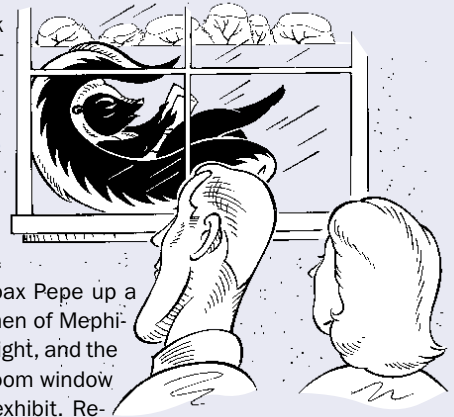
Machlin attributed much of the magic to "the rightness of the place" for the music—something that wasn't lost on him as he was directing. "When it was happening," he said, "I was listening, too." —G.B.

### Honest Alumna

An alumni survey done in 2001 revealed the sentiment of one alumna who was here more than 40 years ago. After expressing low overall satisfaction with her Colby experience, she offered a simple one-line explanation: "Met my spouse."

### Think Your Office is a Zoo?

In early March a skunk stumbled into a window well that looks in on the Eustis mailroom. Mailroom supervisor **LOUIS HUARD** nicknamed the visitor Pepe Le Pew and summoned the animal control officer, who unsuccessfully tried to coax Pepe up a ramp. Alas, this specimen of *Mephitis mephitis* spent the night, and the next morning the mailroom window still looked like a zoo exhibit. Removed with a net, Pepe soon fell into another window well to be netted again before s/he wandered toward the Spa. "It's the most exciting thing that's happened here in two and a half years," said Huard.



## A Different Kind of Dance

The stage was empty, but there was already a buzz in the air. At the annual Mr. Colby talent show in March, the opening act generated as much excitement on campus as the contestants did. As the newly created Colby Dance Team was about to make its debut, the audience wondered what the group was capable of.

With more than 700 people packed into Page Commons, the music started and 12 dancers exploded into a dizzying, energetic array of moves evoking a mixture of jazz, hip-hop, and gymnastics in a style that seemed to mix NFL cheerleading and MTV's hip-hop

dancing. High kicks, splits, and jumps kept the energy at a peak.

The Colby Dance Team was the brainchild of eight members of Colby Dancers who wanted to perform this type of dance regularly for Colby students. The team's captain, Shari Katz '06, says that the team plans to perform at Colby football and basketball games and hopes to compete against dance groups from other schools.

After catching a performance like the one at Mr. Colby, some students may start going to athletic events to see the dancers.

—Caitlin Hickey '06



JEFF EARRICKSON



## Wit & Wisdom

"I'm waiting for the white smoke to come out of my child's room."

*Denise Walden, associate director of admissions and multicultural enrollment, quoting the parent of an admitted student just before the deadline for making a tuition deposit.*

"In Canada, we're not very prone to creating celebrities. He is an amazing man."

*David Coon, policy director of the Conservation Council of New Brunswick, urging participants in the Green Campus Summit on April 2 to "sneak away at dinnertime" to see Lt. General Roméo Dallaire, commander of UN peacekeeping forces in Rwanda, the keynote speaker at a different student-initiated conference—"Shadows of Rwanda."*

"This is not an easy time to be a social critic, but I concede to you that this may be the most important time to be a critic—to find your voice."

*Alex Kotlowitz, author of There Are No Children Here, in his keynote address to the 2005 Colby Diversity Conference, "The Pecking Order: A Conference on Class," organized by students.*

"As you get older, it's a race between wisdom and senility."

*Peter Boblin, who designed Bill Gates's home and Colby's new Diamond Building, speaking in Page Commons on March 15.*

"I've adapted other writers' work, too, from time to time, and I can always see what's wrong with their work. I just have more difficulty seeing what's wrong with mine."

*Former English professor Richard Russo, quoted in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel about adapting his Pulitzer Prize-winning Empire Falls into a screenplay for an HBO movie.*

"We didn't think Superman would last. We thought he was too invulnerable and would run out of stories."

*Jerry Robinson, who was instrumental in creating the Joker and Robin characters for the Batman comics, in a lecture on the impact of Jews on comics and the influence of their work during World War II.*

## Waterville and the World

Colby is officially one of the most international colleges in the country.

That fact was recognized with the presentation to Colby of a 2005 Senator Paul Simon Award for Campus Internationalization at the annual meeting of NAFSA/Association of International Educators on June 1 in Seattle.

The association, dedicated to advancing international education and exchange, began presenting the Simon Award just last year. There are five recipients in 2005, and Colby is one of the first 10 colleges or universities in the nation to receive the honor.

The award recognizes Colby's commitment to internationalism throughout the curriculum as well as its strong study abroad program and its international diversity.

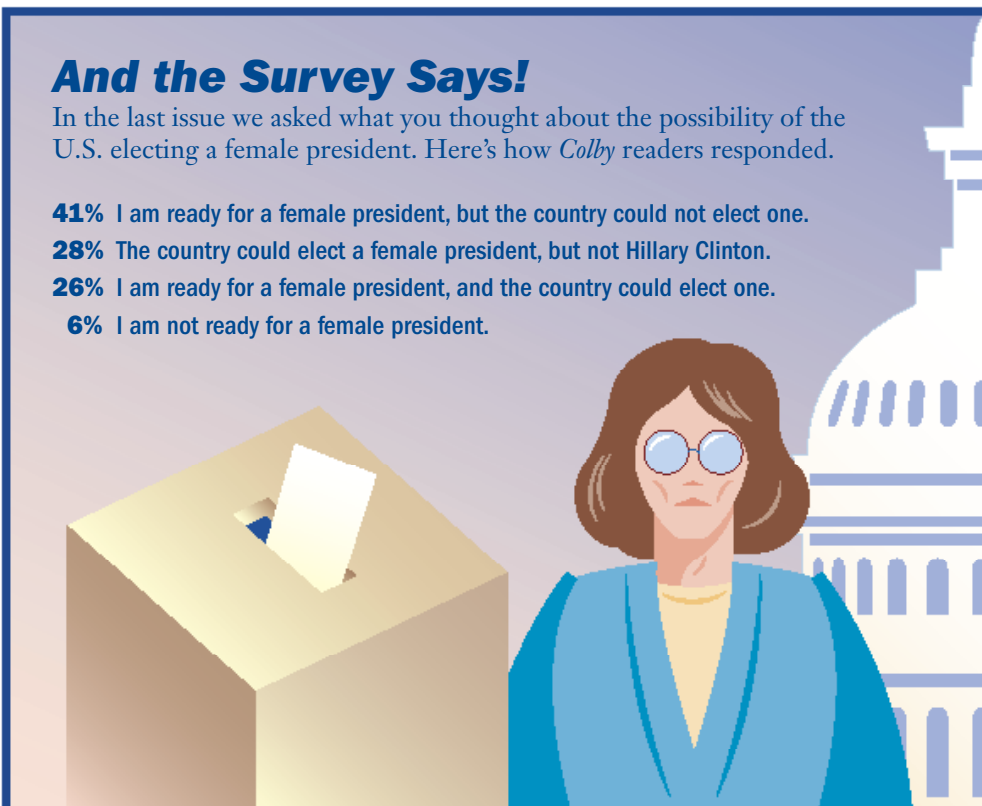
On the academic side, half of Colby's 53 majors have an international component and more than 100 courses satisfy requirements in the international studies major. When it comes to study abroad, more than two thirds of students take advantage of extensive opportunities, a rate that is among the highest in the nation. Colby has led its peer institutions in the percentage of international students for many years, and 66 countries currently are represented by 188 students who are non-resident aliens, dual citizens, or resident aliens. Martha Denney, associate dean of faculty and director of off-campus study, accepted the award on Colby's behalf and said it represented a broad effort at the College. "There clearly are a lot of people involved," she said.

As a recipient of the award, Colby will be featured in a report, *Internationalizing the Campus 2005: Profiles of Success at Colleges and Universities*, to be published this fall by the association. —Stephen Collins '74

### And the Survey Says!

In the last issue we asked what you thought about the possibility of the U.S. electing a female president. Here's how *Colby* readers responded.

- 41%** I am ready for a female president, but the country could not elect one.
- 28%** The country could elect a female president, but not Hillary Clinton.
- 26%** I am ready for a female president, and the country could elect one.
- 6%** I am not ready for a female president.



### Consider This . . .

This spring Colby held a "Green Summit" to address climate change and environmental issues on campuses in Maine and Atlantic Canada. (see page 12). How much of a threat do you think climate change poses? To answer go to [www.colby.edu/mag](http://www.colby.edu/mag).

## Colby Women Brought to Life Through Art



*Memorial to Lizzie (Lizzie Gorham Hoag, 1856-1875), 2004, mixed media/paper, 44" x 30"*

Artist Maggie Libby '81 refers to the process that led to her recent exhibit, "Where Are the Women? Portraits of Colby Women, 1875-1904," as "an excavation."

First Libby sifted through scant archival materials to get a sense of the personalities and characters of these early Colby alumnae. Building on a single image, in some cases, she moved from drawings to mixed media, adding layers until she was satisfied with the work. The result is a collection of portraits—some poignant, some haunting, some revealing a remarkable inner strength—of women who were pioneers blazing the way for the legions of alumnae who would follow.

The portraits include Marion Thompson Osborne, Class of 1900, daughter of Sam Osborne, a beloved College janitor and a freed slave. "I can't imagine the kind of courage that Marion must have had," Libby said.

Osborne is joined in the exhibit by Bertha Louise Soule, the only woman to graduate in the Class of 1885, and by Louise Helen Coburn, one of the first five women to come to Colby and a member of the Class of 1877. Also portrayed is Mary Caffrey Low, whose name graces Mary Low Hall. Not only was Low the first woman to attend Colby, arriving in 1871, she also spearheaded the unsuccessful opposition to a plan to divide Colby into men's and women's divisions. Coordinate education, as it was called, established the two divisions in 1890 and existed (at least on paper) until 1969.

Some faculty and trustees opposed enrolling these women, who, on at least some occasions, were subjected to grueling entrance examinations that male applicants were spared. Even the redoubtable Mary Low, valedictorian of the Class of 1875, was not allowed to give the valedictory address at commencement. She was allowed to recite a set Latin piece before a male classmate gave the address.

Colby was among the first previously all-male colleges to admit women, and yet the College, like its co-educational counterparts, maintained separate deans for men and women until the 1960s.

At the exhibit opening in March, Libby, the slide curator at Colby, noted that on campus she saw very few women in photographs. The Presidents Room in Miller Library, where her exhibit was displayed, usually is lined with portraits of past Colby presidents—all men.

Libby vowed to bring Colby's overlooked alumnae out of the shadows. "There are other women I want to do," she said. "The more time I spend with them, the more fond I'm becoming of certain people." —G.B.

## Terp Replaces Yasinski

Douglas C. Terp '84 was named administrative vice president and treasurer beginning June 1, replacing W. Arnold Yasinski, who was named executive vice president at the Rhode Island School of Design.

Terp, an M.B.A., joined the Colby administration in 1987 and has been director of personnel since 1990 and associate vice president for administration since 2001. As vice president he will manage

the budget, financial planning, personnel services, occupational and environmental safety, risk management, security, campus services, the bookstore, investments, business operations, student financial services, information technology, dining services, institutional research, special programs, and physical plant.

"Doug has built solid and productive working relationships across the College

and with groups and individuals outside of Colby that will stand him in good stead in his new position," said President William Adams, announcing the appointment.

Adams praised Yasinski, who spent 15 years as vice president, for keeping Colby on a strong financial foundation. He also praised Yasinski's leadership on developing a new master plan for the campus and in the area of diversity.

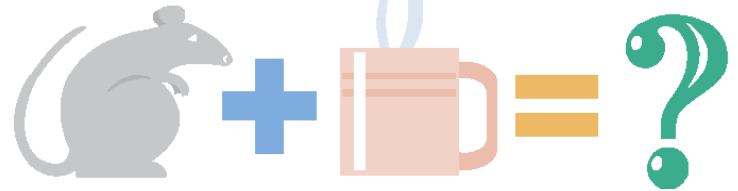


FRED FIELD

### Documentary Dreams

Students in the course American Dreams: The Documentary Film Perspective created five documentaries and on May 7 presented them to a capacity crowd in Given Auditorium.

## Research Began with Curiosity



Ever wonder if mice on caffeine spend more time on their exercise wheels than their abstemious sisters do? Katie Slemp '05 wondered. . . . What about the ability to predict collisions between Alces alces (a.k.a. Maine moose) and SUVicus americanus (a.k.a. passenger vehicles) based on GIS analysis? Alexandra Jospe '06 attempted the prediction. . . . Curious about how well novelist Tim O'Brien captures Vietnam in his fiction? Sarah Eilefson '05 was, so she traveled to Vietnam to find out. All three researchers presented their findings at this year's Colby Undergraduate Research Symposium. To learn more, go to [www.colby.edu/sturesearch/ressymposium](http://www.colby.edu/sturesearch/ressymposium).

### Bursting the Colby Bubble

The week of April 4-8 marked Colby's first-ever, student-organized "Burst the Bubble" week, designed to highlight and enhance the relationship between Colby and Waterville. Events included a walking tour of the South End's "Museum in the Streets" and a panel discussion with students, faculty, and community members about the relationship between Colby and the broader community. The week finished with an a cappella ice cream social in the former Sterns building on Main Street. Bursting the bubble is expected to become an annual event.

## Two Cities, One Watson

Asma Husain '05 knows an opportunity when she sees one. When this studio art major learned of two capital cities—Brasilia, Brazil, and Chandigarh, India—both constructed in the 1950s as symbols of modernity in developing countries, she wanted to learn more. "They were built as really utopian cities that were supposed to solve problems," said Husain, who noted the disparities between rich and poor in both countries. She wants to assess the successes and failures of the two cities.

Thanks to winning a coveted Thomas J. Watson Foundation Fellowship, a \$22,000 stipend for independent research outside of the U.S., Husain will spend six months in each country to study how the cities met the growing needs of their countries. Her goal? "To see how these masses of populations have integrated into this plan and whether it's been successful in its

plan to alleviate poverty," she said. Using that research, she hopes to go one step further—to figure out how to beat the housing crisis.

*"Architecture is very much supposed to be steeped in the society of a place and its economy."*

Asma Husain '05

The connection between architecture and society has been engrained in Husain since childhood. Her father is an architect in her native Pakistan. "I know that just the way architecture is taught there is very different," she said. "Architecture is very much supposed to be steeped in the society of a place and its economy." Her study of architecture at Colby and while attending an architecture program at Columbia University during her junior year made her think that sensibility is lost in this country. "I'm interested in slightly larger issues than just individual buildings," she said.

Husain is Colby's 57th Watson Fellow, and her success keeps unbroken a Colby streak that began in 1970-71. —R. J.



NILANJANA DUTT '05

Asma Husain '05, seen here setting up her senior art exhibit, will spend the next year studying the impact architecture has had on the cities of Brasilia, Brazil, and Chandigarh, India.



## Farewell to Faculty

Richard “Pete” Moss (history) began teaching in 1978 when, he says, Colby was less renowned than today. “It seems to me that Colby went from a small, informal, regional college to being much more of a professional and of course not only national but international college,” he said by phone from North Carolina, just before heading out to play golf. Years ago, when he visited North Carolina and spoke of Colby, he remembers people asking, “Isn’t that a cheese?”

“Now they know the name,” he said.



Richard “Pete” Moss

Moss retired this year, and while he will miss being in the classroom he hopes to stay tied to the Alumni College, which he led from 2001 to 2004 and calls “a great intellectual experience.”

“I just think that the College makes a commitment to lifelong education—this a great statement to that

commitment,” he said.

Moss will miss teaching but will continue to write, play golf, and write about golfing. A life-long enthusiast and the author of a history of country clubs in America, Moss is now working on his first novel about a country club. He also has been writing for the local newspaper and hopes to make a second career of sports writing.

Moss can’t leave Colby without a note about his nickname. As a college freshman, he was assigned to a room with two seniors who had been promised their own room. “They hated me—not for anything I had done but because the college had screwed them,” he said. “They just thought it was hilarious that they would call me Pete Moss. It got to the point where there wasn’t a whole lot I could do about it. Instead of just being renamed Pete, it became like one word—my name became peatmoss.”

In his 28 years at Colby, Nicholas Rohrman (psychology) heard a lot of excuses. One student, who missed an exam, explained that



Nicholas Rohrman

because of his anxiety about the test, when he heard his alarm he leapt out of bed, hit his head, and collapsed back into bed, awaking after the test was over. “I think that’s the champion,” he said.

But times have changed. “I don’t seem to get the kind of cockamamie excuses that I used to,” Rohrman said. “I think the students have gotten a little more

serious. This generation of students is, I think, very uneasy about their futures and worried about doing well and being able to compete.”

Now, as he settles into retirement, Rohrman is able to focus on the many things that give him pleasure. First on the list? Why, reading, of course. He especially enjoys works by James Thurber and Robert B. Parker ’54, whose recent books, he said, are “filled with really funny quips.”

Rohrman enjoys the Maine outdoors—cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and, this time of year, gardening. “I got hooked on day lilies a few years back,” he said. “Day lilies don’t demand anything.” —R.7.

## “There Were No Trees”

*Bob Gillespie, Colby’s college editor since 1986, a member of the English faculty (1971-77 and 1982-2005), and a writer of essays, fiction, and poetry, will retire at the end of June. By his own description he has tried to give Colby publications “as much consistency, coherence, and grace as possible” while allowing “not one typographical, grammatical, factual, or other mistake to get into print”—a high standard, very nearly achieved.*

*Colby solicited Gillespie’s friend and colleague Emeritus Professor of English John Sweney to write about the man whose contributions shaped Colby’s printed words through the turn of the century.*

I’ve known Bob Gillespie for 34 years, and I admire him greatly, even if his faultless memory nearly always gets the best of me. Whether it’s baseball statistics, when someone graduated from Colby, or what I did on my last birthday, he’s nearly always right and I’m wrong, but that memory is a great gift and one his colleagues in the communications office are going to miss dearly. They will also miss his graceful writing, his impeccable editing, and his gentle coaching, just as students missed his dedicated teaching of composition, literature, and creative writing when he left the English Department years ago to take over *Colby* magazine, which he edited and wrote

almost single-handedly for some time.

What a versatile man: poet, teacher, editor, former marathon runner (and still out on the Colby track nearly every day), canoeist (ask him about his Mississippi River trips), master clam-dip maker, and handyman (you should see him plaster). If Colby isn’t his first love, that might be his old farmhouse in Benton, where he enjoys walking in his beautiful woods with his dog.

A lover of all animals, Bob wouldn’t hurt a mouse. In fact he used to feed them in his carrel in the library, much to the horror of librarians, and he still avoids trapping mice in his home, hoping (vainly) that his cat will solve the problem.

We can be certain Bob will stay in Maine. In the late 1970s, he left Colby for a job in Idaho, but after two years he knew he had to get back to Maine. “There were no trees,” he said. We were all grateful for his return.

In one of his Maine poems in his collection *The Man Chain*, he wrote, “For I am still afraid of leaving/no vivid signature in the air but affection.” Bob will leave many vivid signatures behind at Colby as well as the affection of all who have studied with, worked with, and known him. —John Sweney

## CLASS OF 2005 MOST INTERNATIONAL YET



The Class of 2005, Colby's 184th and most international to date, graduated on May 22 with ABC News correspondent Dan Harris '93 as the Commencement speaker. Harris recalled dodging sniper fire in Afghanistan and urged the graduates to heed fear for safety's sake but not to let it paralyze them.



Class speaker Josh Kahn, of St. Louis, Mo., shared lessons he learned in college, including that it's okay that he and his classmates aren't prepared for the real world, because "we've learned how to redefine what the real world ought to mean to us."

Among 484 students who received diplomas, Mark Chapman, of Harare, Zimbabwe, was the class marshal and valedictorian by virtue a 4.07 grade point average. Katie Slem, of New Canaan, Conn., was awarded the Condon Medal, the only award presented at Commencement. Transcripts, video, and more details about Commencement are online at [www.colby.edu/commencement](http://www.colby.edu/commencement).

From upper left, clockwise: For the second year in a row, Commencement was held in Wadsworth Gymnasium because of weather. . . . Dan Harris '93 addresses a crowd of more than 3,000. . . . Melissa Yosua (Cape Elizabeth, Maine), Mallory Young (Hanover, N.H.), and Vasilena Zheleva (Bulgaria), near the end of line. . . . Richard Greenwood II (Gardner, Mass.), who first enrolled at Colby in 1982, celebrated his come-back with an impromptu trumpet solo on the platform. . . . Mark Chapman was first to receive a diploma from President William Adams. . . . Sheena Siu (Hong Kong) gets a hug from College Marshal and Associate Professor of Art Bevin Engman.