

Colby



Colby Magazine

Volume 96
Issue 3 *Winter 2008*

Article 3

January 2008

Letters

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.colby.edu/colbymagazine>

Recommended Citation

(2008) "Letters," *Colby Magazine*: Vol. 96 : Iss. 3 , Article 3.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.colby.edu/colbymagazine/vol96/iss3/3>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by the Colby College Archives at Digital Commons @ Colby. It has been accepted for inclusion in Colby Magazine by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Colby.

His Spirit Never Faltered

Everyone who has had the pleasure of living and learning on Mayflower Hill knows Colby fosters a close-knit community, with a common bond that lives on long after Colbians leave the Hill. However,

it's only natural for people to migrate towards those with whom they feel most comfortable and stay within those groups. Robert Silberman '03 spent his four years on the Hill affably transcending these groups. Everyone knew Bobby and Bobby knew everyone. He was, in this sense, the quintessential Colby student.

Once in a while, a unique individual comes along and graces us with their presence. Bobby was one of those people. Our friendships with him were forged over the long Colby winters that breed both wisdom and their fair share of mischief.

Bobby was born and raised in Stamford, Conn., by his wonderful parents, Mary C. and Alan Silberman, and was a brother to his two lovely sisters, Lauren and Alison. He attended The Kent School and graduated from Stamford High School. Following in the footsteps of his father, Alan Silberman '50, and his sister Alison Silberman '00, Bobby attended Colby. He majored in economics and played lacrosse. He was also an avid snowboarder, played intramural hockey for the Colby Boozehounds, and broomball for the Funky Chills.

The lasting impression that Bobby left on the Hill exists in all of the lives that he touched at Colby. Bobby was full of positive energy and threw himself completely into everything he took interest in, which could not help but rub off on those around him.

A couple of years after college, when most of us were looking ahead to life's possibilities, Bobby was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma, a rare form of cancer. What seemed to many an insurmountable battle, Bobby treated as a hurdle, no

different than his friends' struggles with life and love. While none of us had, nor could even imagine, a struggle as fierce as Bobby's, he silently reminded us that life is about struggles and, more importantly, how you confront them. He used to say, "All I want to do is live, so I will." As his body began to fail him, his spirit never faltered.

Through a remarkable display of sheer will and positive attitude, Bobby showed us how to live life to the fullest despite any adversity. He showed us how friendship can be a source of will power and strength. Bobby's strength was so overwhelming that friends who visited him while he was sick often had the feeling that *he* was supporting them through a difficult time. Such was the strength of his selfless devotion to friendship.

Bobby passed away at home on September 26, 2007, after a courageous 18-month battle with cancer. Although he is gone, Bobby will remain with us in spirit and we will carry on the lessons that he taught us for the rest of our lives. We hope that through his memory we will be able to live a little more like Bobby, extending warmth to all those we encounter and maintaining a positive outlook regardless of the challenges we face. Bobby will be forever missed by his loving family and friends. We know he is watching over all of us with a big smile.

Alexander Browne '03

Christopher Makarewich '03

Edward Piasecki '03

Michael Reilly '03

Robert MacBain '05

The Flip Side of Visa Limits

I truly hope that Ms. Ana Prokic ("Visa Squeeze," fall 2007 *Colby*) is able to work out a good life plan. If she is as bright and resourceful as she sounds in the article, she will.

But I take issue with the contention that the current cap on H1B visas is a "problem." I would be happy to see the limit lowered much further. Over the last decade American IT industries have whined that they need more H1B visas because they can't find "qualified" workers

in this country. With rare exceptions, this is either a problem of their own making or a complete fabrication.

The dirty secret of high tech H1B visas is that American companies use the program to legally import younger, lower-paid workers from other countries while laying off older, better-paid U.S. citizens. I know; I have seen it firsthand.

The claim is that the U.S. workers are not conversant with the latest technology. If there is any truth to that, the major reason is that most American companies won't retrain existing workers. And why should they when they can get cheaper workers who have been trained at government expense elsewhere? These are workers who generally have no family to support, no college loans to pay off, and can't negotiate for higher pay for fear of losing their visas.

Instead of "throwing away" older American citizens, companies should invest in maintaining employees' skills just as they maintain their plants and equipment. Educational institutions like Colby could be playing a major role in the retooling.

No, the real "squeeze" in the H1B visa program is the way it is squeezing older American workers out of their jobs.

George Carvill

Milford, N.H.

Music Dept. Has Other Players

The Music Department very much appreciates the publicity generated by the article "The Soprano" by Julia Hanauer-Milne (fall 2007 *Colby*). Dori Smith ['08] is indeed a very gifted student and one of our most outstanding music majors, and she deserves public recognition.

Members of the music faculty were, however, surprised that the article seems to rely predominantly on quotes from Professor [Paul] Machlin. It makes no reference to other music faculty who have been more directly responsible for shaping Dori's career at Colby. Besides singing for four years in the Chorale under Paul Machlin's direction, she has also sung for four years in the Collegium, directed by Eva Linfield.

Most noticeable and unfortunate, however, is the complete lack of any mention of Elizabeth Patches, Dori's voice teacher at Colby, who has been nurturing her and directly shaping her voice for the past four years. Under Elizabeth's masterful guidance and with the generous assistance of Annabeth French, the indispensable accompanist for the voice studio, Dori has developed her extraordinary gifts in remarkable ways and has been able to put together a fine recording for her Fulbright application. The lack of any mention of these individuals feels especially odd given that Dori has told me that she made special mention of them in her interview.

While the Music Department is grateful for any effort to raise the profile of its many gifted students, the article leaves my colleagues (and probably your readers) with the mistaken and dispiriting impression that the Music Department is a one-person show.

Eva Linfield
Associate Professor of Music
Chair of the Music Department

Spreading the Hume Center Word

Thanks for the insightful article, "All Fired Up," (spring 2007 *Colby*) which has helped me understand a little more of the Hume Center commitments and what is going on there. My daughter Kathleen [10] and I took a ride out to the Hume Center today. We were not sure of all

that went on out there except for crew headquarters. We were so intrigued by the grounds, buildings, and obvious commitment to development of crafts/skills that we vowed to check it out online—and *voilà*.

I now will encourage my daughter to spread the word and consider a Hume Center Jan Plan experience in the shop. Many thanks!

Mark Kramer P'10
Norwell, Mass.

First Dijon Semester a Great Start

I was very excited to read "Passport to Colby" (fall 2007 *Colby*). I was one of the 20 or so freshmen who embarked on the first Colby in Dijon Program in 1985. It is great to see that, 22 years later, the program is still going.

The article really brought back many great memories of our four months there. I still to this day tell folks that I started my college career living in France, going to a French university with students from all over the world, traveling all over Europe on free weekends, and even playing on the local French hockey team. Not the usual fall semester for an incoming freshman.

I think the students in the current article were a lot like our group: we all became very close, very fast. I know we all secretly wondered how we would blend in with the rest of the class when we returned in January. Housing was very tight for Jan Plan and I will never forget that month

where Jeff Koch '89, Dave Longcope '89, and I shared a single room until they found us a triple for the second semester. It took us no time to meet other classmates who had already been at Colby for the semester and to feel welcome.

The Dijon experience seemed to have quite an effect on me since I ended up going away three more times in my career at Colby: I went on the Trans-Siberian Railroad Jan Plan the next year, spent a semester at the University of Reading outside of London junior year, and went on a 25-day Outward Bound trip in southwest Texas for my senior year Jan Plan. All great experiences, just like Dijon.

Rob Erdmann '89
Boston, Mass.

Burns was the Right Choice

Kudos to the trustees for selecting John F. Burns as this year's Lovejoy Award recipient.

Graham Barkham '62
Larchmont, N.Y.

Editor's Note: The Lovejoy Award Selection Committee—five editors from important American newspapers, the president of the College, and the director of the Goldfarb Center—meet annually to select the Lovejoy recipient. The trustees approve the awarding of an honorary doctor of laws degree, which accompanies the Lovejoy Award.

CONTRIBUTORS



ALLEN LESSELS P'08 ("The Making of a President," P. 24) is a New Hampshire-based journalist. He covers University of New Hampshire athletics for the *New Hampshire Union Leader* and writes for various other publications, including *People, Places & Plants*, a gardening magazine published in Maine.



ADRIANA NORDIN MANAN '07 ("Tracking the Forest People," P. 14) spent last summer as a researcher for Cheryl Townsend Gilkes, the John D. McArthur Professor of Sociology, before returning home to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. She is looking for a job combining critical analysis, writing, and interaction with people across various levels of society.



DAVID MCKAY WILSON '76 ("The Diplomat," P. 20) is a New York-based journalist who writes regularly for college magazines including those at Dartmouth, Penn, Columbia, Harvard, Stanford, University of Chicago, Duke, and Colby. He writes for *The New York Times* and is at work on a television project.