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Celebrate Sustainability

The environmentally sensitive design of the new Schair-Swenson-Watson Alumni Center, has, with the large number of other complementing initiatives, helped to catapult Colby into a national leadership position on campus sustainability. I would hope that the entire Colby community would celebrate not only the College's commitment to environmental stewardship, as now manifested in so many aspects of campus life, but also the very effective collaborative process among trustees, administrators, faculty and students, that is producing such profoundly satisfying results.

Tom Tietenberg

Mitchell Family Professor of Economics

Terrorists Cannot be Appeased

It is with mixed emotions and anger that I find myself sitting at my keyboard responding in hunt-and-peck fashion to articles in the latest issue of *Colby*. The fact of the matter is that the issue found itself in the trash after I decided not to respond to the articles and I contemplated having my name removed from your mailing list. I have come to realize that a rather bombastic radio commentator is absolutely correct when he says that "liberalism is a mental disease." Appeasement and liberalism are as much the enemy as are radical Muslims.

I type this with the echoes of the speech of President Adams "On Postings and Other, Sometimes Uncivil, Discourse" ringing in my ears suggesting I try to understand opposing views. I have been listening and reading with much civility over the years while trying to understand those views but those days have reached the end, fortunately, before our entire country has crumbled.

"From the Ashes" by Ruani S. Freeman was the heart-wrenching, gut-twisting personal story of Andrew Rice '96—and the epitome of what is wrong with liberal thinking and appeasement. I find Mr. Rice's attitude and commitment to his cause

beyond noble. However, I regret he cannot or will not face reality beyond the loss of his brother and thousands of other innocent people who worked in buildings symbolic of our society, and freedom and capitalism.

The radical Muslims who murdered Mr. Rice's brother and destroyed the lives of multiple thousands of families, and who are bent on doing the same to you and me, cannot be confronted with appeasement.

Anyone who chooses to blame President Bush, ex-President Clinton, the United States, Israel, the Jews, the Far Right, the war in Iraq, the mayhem in Indonesia, global warming, global cooling, dependence on oil, the need for alternative fuels, the decline or rise of the stock market, or any other contrived reason for the present reality is merely burying his head in the sand. It is the radical Muslims who are to be blamed. It is their ideology, bent on destruction of the Western World—period. Every single day they are murdering their own people in an effort to instill fear within the population and thereby repress any possible insurrection.

Appeasement is impossible with this type of mindset.

Lloyd Coben, '59

Fountain Valley, Calif.

A Broad Appeal

I have just finished reading *Colby* magazine and want to tell you that I think it is an excellent publication. The articles are interesting, engaging, not too long and cover a broad spectrum of college life, Colby alums and faculty and interesting topics. As a parent and parent-in-law (my son and daughter-in-law are Colby '91), I have a vested interest of sorts in Colby, but I would venture to say that most of those articles would appeal to a much broader audience than the Colby community. I look forward to future issues.

Jane E.S. Sokolow P'91

Riverdale, New York

NESCAC's Obsession with Athletics

I find stories about athletics at Colby to be progressively more disturbing. A letter (James Sullivan P'06) and an article ("Playing the Field") in the fall issue of *Colby* imply there's a lot more obsession than enjoyment going on.

Personally I find it sad that a parent values his child's weight training above, say, studying or social activism. Dedication and commitment are laudable character traits. Elevating average athletes (after all, D3 athletes are several divisions below potential pro quality) to hero status is not. It's telling that students who possess worn, dog-eared copies of strength training manuals are held in higher esteem than others who carry worn copies of Hanon's *60 Exercises* or Schey's *Div, Grad, Curl and all That*.

But, parents aside, the mere fact that coaches are traveling countrywide to view and rate athletes gives lie to the claim that these athletes' interest in Colby is academically related. The overriding message is that that their college success comes from concentrating year-round on single-sport training.

Stories such as these make it clear the recruiting and training process force the participants into a paradigm that does not allow for variety. Students feel incredible pressure to play the sport they were recruited for, giving up other sports or activities as a result.

Every few years one college president or another publicly bemoans the preferential treatment accorded athletes not only during the admission process but throughout their college career. Both the letter and the article show these protests constitute no more than lip service.

Colby (and all of NESCAC) could do far better than to perpetuate this hero worship. There's no reason that D3 schools should allow recruiting or scouting in the first place. Let athletes find their place on campus the way everyone else does: show up and discover what they really want to do. It's not as though the students who excel in poetry, music, biology or Commedia dell'Arte are recruited. Students, parents, and alumni alike need to

stop grading schools on the basis of eight Saturday afternoons in the fall.

Carl Wittboft '77
Acton, Mass.

Geib's Lessons

After a very long flight home from my summer vacation, I grabbed the waiting issue of *Colby* magazine to unwind. Instead I became terribly sad at the news that retired sociology professor Fred Geib had died. I haven't been able to think of much else since then.

To me, and I know to many of my classmates, Professor Geib was everything that a teacher in a small liberal arts college should be. He organized and rehearsed every lecture carefully, making sure that his students would not only be clear about the material, but engaged and entertained by the area of sociology. Like many of us who majored in a social science, I was interested in *ideas*, and not all that drawn to the organized principles and laws of those other kinds of sciences. But Geib fascinated us with his overarching equations: "Rapid social change leads to social disorganization (a discrepancy between our long-standing values and our more volatile attitudes), which leads to social unrest, which brings on

Letters Welcome

Colby welcomes your letters. Send them to Gerry Boyle, editor; *Colby* magazine; Office of Communications; 4181 Mayflower Hill; Waterville, ME 04901, or by e-mail to mag@colby.edu. Length should be limited to 300 words. *Colby* reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity.

social problems." Seeing how each piece connected, we learned to formulate our own ideas more systematically. How could it be otherwise, when *his* thinking and presentation were so precise? And once we started writing term papers he insisted upon something I hadn't heard of before, *empirical* evidence. He didn't expect us to be trained researchers, but insisted that we knew how to organize our ideas like one. He told me later that the way he formulated things was built on his early training as an engineer. I'm sure this was so, but I tend to think that he was just too damned conscientious about his teaching to do anything other than approach sociology in a way that its beauty as a science would come across.

Richard Foster '68
Lafayette, Calif.

This letter is excerpted from Richard Foster's essay on Professor Fred Geib that appears in Colby online at www.colby.edu/mag.

A Moral Response

I am pleased with student and the Goldfarb Center action [in response to Hurricane Katrina]. Mankato State University, where I got my M.S. in human services in Minnesota, is providing scholarships for students who have been removed from their universities due to Katrina. Admitting a number of these students to Colby would set a great example for existing Colby students as well as help the students that no longer can continue their education. Also it would actively address a poverty issue. I can just hear Dr. Robert Reuman (a man that changed my life by example) saying yes. He lived the subjects he taught (moral philosophy and ethics).

Carol Ann Sandquist Banister '59
Lake Elmo, Minn.

CONTRIBUTORS



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