

# Colby



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## Letters

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### Not Promoting Obesity

As the founder of the Colby Fat Acceptance Association, I was disheartened to read the responses to the article concerning fat acceptance at Colby (spring 2005 *Colby*) and would like to clarify the purpose of the club.

Under no circumstances do we promote or encourage obesity. I have done a lot of research on this topic and I fully understand the health risks associated with obesity. I do my best to promote healthy lifestyle and physical fitness.

We also do a lot of work to discourage eating disorders. While I understand that many people who suffer from bulimia and/or anorexia do so as a means of gaining control over a part of their life, changing a person's overall view of their body lessens the chance of relapse and aids recovery. We aim to become a link to counseling services and a support group for eating disorder survivors.

I do not believe that accepting your body is a bad thing. In my experience, weight loss is easier when you are not doing it to boost your self-esteem. Once a person loses the ideology that they are ugly and worthless, they find exercising more enjoyable and the pounds melt off.

But this club is not just for fat people. In fact, many of our members are very thin. They joined CFAA to promote acceptance of fat people by non-fat individuals. The amount of discrimination faced by fat people on this campus and across the country is astonishing. It goes beyond mere heckling—which most of us learn to deal with by adulthood—and becomes damaging attacks on a person's character and even a physical threat.

Perhaps we are not ready to see this as outright discrimination, but something needs to be done to change our view of the not-so-perfect body.

*Christina M. Terrell '06*

Gary, Ind.

### Representation Isn't the Issue

In the summer 2005 issue of *Colby*, Richard Streich '52 questions whether [Bridge founders] Nancy Snow Littlefield

'74 and Euan Bear '74 represent enough of the readership to bother writing about them.

The idea that a profile should not be published because the subject does not represent a wide enough swath of the alumni population is silly. Further, disinterest in the experience of others because they are not a complete demographic match to your own is worse. Why limit what you care to know about to your own demographic? At Colby we read Shakespeare, Whitman, Bronte, Ibsen etc. etc. not because they wrote about us, but because through the characters and ideas we learn about human nature, life, and even ourselves. If you don't like certain kinds of people, then you might not be able to see where your experiences overlap or how much you can learn from them, but that's another issue entirely.

*Hannab Howland Judson '87*

Samois-sur-Seine, France

### Alumni Council Notes Holidays

In his letter in the summer 2005 issue of *Colby*, Charles Bowen '96 notes the removal of Western Judeo-Christian holidays from the Colby calendar distributed to alumni while Bowdoin continues to mark the date on their calendar. Mr. Bowen and other alumni may rest easy knowing that the College is cognizant and respectful of these holidays.

The Alumni Council Executive Committee adopted a policy on October 6, 2000, that “no alumni events be scheduled in conflict with (specific) holidays, nor will the Alumni Office support any such conflicting events with mailings, e-mail or other indication of College sponsorship on conflicting dates.”

This policy, with a list of holidays and calendar dates for the next three years, is bound into the Alumni Council Handbook that is updated and distributed every year to all members of the Alumni Council. The holidays include Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Thanksgiving, Chanukah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, Martin Luther King Day, Passover, Good Friday, and Easter. Based on the listing in the Colby Alumni Council Handbook, the Bowdoin calendar

appears to have picked the right dates.

*Hope Palmer Bramball '56*

Alumni Council chair  
Falmouth, Maine

*Byrd Allen '75*

Alumni Council vice chair  
Exeter, N.H.

### Letters Section Was Hijacked

I was disgusted to see the letters section in the summer 2005 issue hijacked as a soapbox for the far right (“Christians’ Task Unchanged,” “An Opposing Voice?” and “Judeo-Christian Heritage Erased”). Why did you feel so compelled to pay lip service to alumni with such an obvious agenda?

*Jason Kirkfield '93*

Superior, Colo.

### Colby's Calendar Cops?

Upon receipt of my Colby calendar, I immediately attempted to find the date for Easter. No luck at all. Then I decided to check other major religious holidays—no luck there either. It appears that the sect of the politically correct has taken over and to even note such dates in a calendar is unacceptable. This choice seems strange in a nation in which 95 percent of its inhabitants profess to belong to some type of religious entity. I might add that Martin Luther King Day and Labor Day were duly listed.

And thus it seems that the Calendar Cops are with us. Are we soon to be blessed with Reading Rangers, Publishing Patrols, and Thought Police?

*Janice Vaughan Crump '52*

Destin, Fla.

### Diversity of Ideas is True Tradition

The letter titled “Judeo-Christian Heritage Erased” (summer 2005 *Colby*) was so vitriolic that I found it difficult to reply. I do not know what “calendar status” confers upon a holiday at Colby, but contrary to the author's glib analogy between Colby and a totalitarian regime, it was my experience that any holiday could be meaningfully celebrated without appearing on Colby's calendar.

It seems clear that the status of Judeo-

Christian holidays is not the writer's primary concern. It is instead the alleged demise of "the culture that built the school," due to the author's litany of so-called cultural Marxist's fads. It is difficult to guess what the terrain looks like on the "ideological map" Colby has purportedly abandoned, but if it includes referring to non-heterosexuals as deviants, I am glad to be off the charts.

Before this letter is written off as another salvo in the so-called "culture-wars," I would like to note my profound respect for the Judeo-Christian tradition. Historically there can be no doubt that many elements of that tradition are tainted, yet I am equally certain that timeless value remains. However, the Judeo-Christian tradition is not the sole source of timeless value, and the need could not be more urgent for many members of that tradition to recognize that view and welcome others.

I am grateful to those who contributed to making my Colby education an immersion in ideas, cultures, and traditions other than my own, for the experience was at once an exposure to the other and a confirmation of myself. Such an experience should be the hallmark of a Colby education.

*Eric Strome '02*  
New York, N.Y.

### **Politics or Hucksterism?**

I never expected to read anything so cynical and manipulative in your otherwise excellent magazine as the Q&A with Erik Potholm '91 (summer 2005 *Colby*). Does his recipe to "outspend" political opponents with TV advertising, using the national news media to report this hype, reflect the current state of American democracy? If so, the deadly silence of the media during President Bush's buildup to the war in Iraq was no fluke. Hucksters have always played an important role in American life but it seems that now blatant hucksterism has risen to the level of political science.

*L.R. Colitt '59*  
Berlin, Germany

### **One Parent's "Blue Team Pride"**

As a four-year Colby football parent, like many team dads I've taken vicarious pleasure watching my son participate in the quality program that is Colby football. He and his team classmates will descend Mayflower Hill next spring enriched from their years spent as Mules and better equipped to navigate life's hilly terrain.

Similar I'm sure to other NESCAC football programs, Colby's is filled with much tradition and many time-honored rituals. There is one tradition particularly unique to Colby, I think, that not only provides the program with a strong environment for success but also provides our kids with something more. It is called "Blue Team Pride" and it is the singular focus of team spirit for the Mules.

The inspiration of coaches Tom Austin and Ed Mestieri, Blue Team Pride was initiated in the early 1990s. It transformed Colby's into one of the most respected small college football programs in New England. When I first got a glimpse of it, it was hardly more than a twinkle in the eyes of my freshman football player. Over his four years at Colby, I watched it grow steadily into a way of life he came to share with his teammates. BTP is not so much about winning as it is about working. It is a year-round allegiance to preparation.

Blue Team Pride is a commitment to conditioning: It's the sweat on the floor next to the squat rack and the wind sprint done with more determination than the last. It's a dog-eared strength and conditioning manual falling apart from overuse in late August. It is the team lining up for the opening kickoff with absolute confidence that no one wearing a red, gold, purple, or black (especially black) helmet has worked as hard, as long, or deserves to win more than the Mules. It is dedication to excellence on each and every hit, every tackle, every block, run, kick, pass, or catch. Regardless of victory or defeat, it is the knowledge that the very last ounce of effort was expended.

Blue Team Pride is all about intangibles like attitude, discipline, and desire. It is mostly about the word "team" multiplied

and magnified by the power of 75 players 365 days a year, not just eight Saturdays in the fall.

*James Sullivan 'P06*  
Rye, N.H.

### **A Hurtful Memory**

It was interesting to read about Shareen Abbasy '05 in the editorial section of the summer 2005 *Colby*, especially her post-graduate plans to learn Arabic. I was reminded of my experience in the final semester of 1943 when I was not granted my rightly earned A.B. degree because of the foreign language requirement. Although I had completed all courses with passing grades, when I needed said degree most it was denied me! The Committee of Standing insisted that I had to pass the foreign language exam in either one of their accepted foreign languages, one of which Arabic.

In 1943, and long before that, I could speak and understand Arabic, as it was my inherited tongue. As stated by Doris Kearns Goodwin '64, that era was "No ordinary time." The Committee of Standing could have and should have made an exception in this case.

I graduated from Boston English High School in September 1935. I worked and earned my college expenses during a severe economic depression. In September 1940 the entering class of '44 was the largest entering class in the history of Colby College. In December of 1943 only four members of the Men's Division presented themselves for the coveted degree. I was one of the four having taken an accelerated course in the summer of 1943. Because of World War II most of our class were in the military service. My draft board delayed my enlistment in the U.S. Navy until I finished college.

The denial of the coveted A.B. degree when I needed it most hurt more than words can express. Now, 62 years later, the hurt still lingers even though the College granted my degree in 1943.

*Louis Deraney A.B., LL.B. '44*  
Honorary J.D.  
Roslindale, Mass.