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Propagandists Among Patriot Act Foes

I feel obligated to respond to the article in your winter issue entitled “Freedom Fighter” (winter ’04 *Colby*) about Carolyn Anthony’s reservations about the Patriot Act.

The opening scenario in that article is totally unlikely and only propaganda promulgated by the liberal elite. Since the Patriot Act was passed in October 2001 (overwhelmingly by both the House and the Senate I might add), it has been distorted beyond recognition by a coalition of anti-Bush leftists and libertarian extremists. It’s a meaningful piece of legislation and must be made permanent if we Americans are really serious about national security. We’re in a war to death with a terrorist enemy whose deepest civilization values come straight out of the 8th century. For these terrorists there’s no mercy or tolerance for those who might choose a different path.

The Patriot Act is not an assault on the Bill of Rights or our rights to privacy, as purported by Ms. Anthony. Essentially, this act has taken down the wall that kept criminal investigators from sharing critical information with intelligence agents and this law has paid handsome dividends ever since. I should know since one of my brothers, Nathaniel, is on the FISA (Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act) Court and the other, Slade, is on the 9/11 Commission.

One Patriot Act reform that has been severely maligned is Section 215, which merely extends to national security investigations, conducted under FISA, the same authority to subpoena business records that criminal investigators have exercised for years; and intelligence agents must obtain approval from the FISA Court before compelling records production. Library records aren’t even mentioned in the statute.

Section 215 expressly contains safeguards protecting First Amendment rights and requires the Attorney General to fully inform Congress twice a year about how the provision has been implemented.

According to my brother Nathaniel (whose FISA Court must approve all wire taps, eavesdropping etc.), this provision to date has not been used a single time, neither for library records nor indeed for records of any kind. The financial arrangements of the terrorists, not reading habits, actually are the target of the Patriot Act.

The bottom line is that the Patriot Act is a small price to pay in privacy rights for our overall security.

Mike Gorton P’87
Needham, Mass.

“Openness” is Welcome

I transferred to Colby from the Connecticut Teachers College in New Britain, Conn., thereby losing some opportunities to take certain courses at Colby. I majored in religion, but realized later that I should have spent more time learning about history and economics to be a more useful citizen. Through various experiences I learn constantly how little I know, and how much more effective I might be if I knew more. All of those experiences for which I received payment were in education, both public and religious. Since then the learning continues, especially since my husband and I are both retired. I cannot always read every word in your magazine, since we seem to be “drowning” in paper most of the time, but I am very happy to learn the stories of students and faculty who are learning also.

In my two-plus years before graduation from Colby, I had a Japanese friend, Peter Igarashi, and of course we were still at war. One day, walking down Main Street in Waterville, we passed a man who looked at Peter and snarled out loud. I don’t have proof, but I gather he had been in the armed services and taught to hate the Japanese. Learning takes place at any unexpected moment. Peter went on to become a respected professor.

To keep this from being too long, let me say how pleased I am that, unlike

when I was there, you now have students of differing races and backgrounds and concern for society and the world. In a recent issue, I was happy to find an openness to gay-lesbian issues and gay marriages. Many of my faxes to my senators and representative, and to the White House, are about these and all other justice issues.

My retired United Methodist pastor husband and I will celebrate 53 years of marriage this June, but we were thrilled to be a part of a wedding ceremony several years ago of a friend’s daughter to her female lover. We have been supporters of the rights of *all* persons for all of our married life. So, keep up the good work of true education for the real world. Our daily prayers are that our country will live up to its dream of a caring and inclusive community.

Grace Keefer Parker ’45
Babylon, N.Y.

Mules in the House

Last weekend, Cross-eyed Rosie (spring ’04 *Colby*) went on our first tour to California—one performance at the Arena Theatre in Pt. Arena, near Mendocino, and another in San Francisco. As we started our first song on the Arena Theatre stage, a loud “Hail, Colby, Hail” resounded from somewhere in the darkness. My curiosity grew through both sets and it wasn’t until we were greeting the crowd after the show that I understood.

Turns out a Colby grad had read about Cross-eyed Rosie in *Colby* magazine and had investigated our Web site as a result. She and her husband drove two hours each way to see our show.

I was so deeply moved that someone would travel so far to support fellow Colby alumni. Thankfully, she seemed pleased with our performance. I wish I could remember her name. I can’t think of many shows we’ve played when there was not a Colby alum present. Amazing!

Zoë Kaplan ’97
Portland, Ore.

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 or fewer. *Colby* reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity.

Education First; Sports Second

A proposal is being advanced in all seriousness to pay so-called student-athletes regular salaries for their services, acknowledging them as the professionals they really are, who bring in billions of dollars annually to the monolith known as “college sports.”

I have a better idea. Why not just junk the whole overblown industry and return the nation’s campuses to their original purpose—education? Let those students who demonstrate they can do college work play sports if they like, but restrict admission and participation to bona fide honest-to-God students.

It’s a travesty that the NCAA can piously boast of graduating just over half of those students who get athletic “scholarships.” That’s bad enough, but minority students playing basketball are exploited significantly more. According to Richard Lapchick, director of the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sports at the University of Central Florida, a whopping 58 colleges in Division 1 (those with the biggest sports programs) failed to graduate a single African American six years after those students had entered those schools.

On top of that, illegal gambling on college basketball milked our troubled economy for an estimated \$3.5 billion this year alone.

Thank God there are still colleges—including Colby—that believe in keeping sports in perspective and in jealously and zealously safeguarding their academic mission. We lose our share of games, but that’s all they are.

Like other alumni, I take pride in reports in national publications listing our alma mater among the best of its kind when it comes to the true purpose of college—education.

Sid McKeen '49
Punta Gorda, Fla.

On Bixler and Schweitzer

Rima Carlson’s account of her experience at the Albert Schweitzer Hospital in Gabon, Africa (“Following Schweitzer’s Path,” winter ’04 *Colby*), has particular meaning for alumni who attended Colby during 1954-55, my freshman year.

As a person who enjoyed the “warm-hearted and loyal” friendship of Dr. Schweitzer, President Julius Seelye Bixler

named Schweitzer’s autobiography, *Out of My Life and Thought*, as our book of the year. The entire Colby community—students, faculty, all departments and classes—was urged to read it, even though doing so would satisfy no course requirement nor be the subject of any quiz or test.

I still have my copy, a paperback full of penciled margin notes in response to big ideas I was encountering for the first time: Bach’s organ music, reverence for life, the quest for the historical Jesus, and making a lifetime career of humanitarian assistance. Dr. Bixler liked the idea that the whole campus would have a common reading experience. Is that an idea whose time has come back?

Helen Payson Seager '58
Nantucket, Mass.

Cornel West Footnote *Cheryl Townsend Gilkes, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Professor of Sociology and African-American Studies, has informed Colby she was misquoted in a story about Cornel West that appeared in the spring 2004 issue of Colby. Gilkes, a professional colleague of West, told Colby that she did not use the word “violent” to describe West in introductory remarks she made prior to his speech in Page Commons in March.*

CONTRIBUTORS



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 (“A Year After Leaving . . .,” p. 24) is a graduate student at Northwestern University’s

Medill School of Journalism. An avid runner, she plans to write for a newspaper in New Zealand this fall and graduate in March. Before attending Medill, Grant covered state government at the Gannett News Service in Albany, N.Y.



Ru Freeman
 (“Whose Fault Is It?” p. 40) is a freelance writer. She writes on international affairs for the

Island newspaper in Sri Lanka, the *Madison Eagle* in New Jersey and for the *Morning Sentinel* in Waterville. Freeman lives in Waterville with her husband, Mark Freeman, Colby’s director of institutional research, and their three children.



Ernie Clark
 (“Crew Captures Rowers’ Hearts,” p. 30), is a sportswriter for the *Bangor Daily News*. A

sports radio talk show host and co-founder of *Maine RoundBALL Magazine*, Clark also serves as color analyst for Maine Public Television’s annual high school basketball tournament coverage.



Abigail Wheeler '04 (“Alumni Network,” p. 25) has written for *Audubon* magazine as well as several Maine

newspapers. Since graduating from Colby in May she has gone on to a position in public relations in New Hampshire.