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Letters

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Letters

'Party action' Sends Wrong Message

The references to "serious party action" and margarita consumption in the Class of 1978 notes (*Colby*, winter 2001) are misplaced and unnecessary.

What is the message? When our children ask why drinking is so important that it is included in a *Colby* publication, I wonder. Hopefully, we have gotten beyond our adolescent over-indulgence to a point where we can drink responsibly or not at all. Every day, I see the effects of parental consumption or of adolescent abuse of this drug. Almost daily, we read about teenage deaths related to alcohol on our roadways. Our actions as adults play a large role in how our children behave. References to alcohol use have no place in a *Colby* journal.

Bradford S. Germain '78
Attleboro, Mass.

Mary Marshall's Challenge

I am writing a brief tribute to Mary Hatch Marshall, whose death was reported in *Colby*, winter 2001. She taught my section of Freshman English in the fall of 1939. In my *Oracle* (1943) she is listed among associate professors. There were four women instructors, two in health and physical education, one in religion, and one in English. The photo roster of faculty in 1943 included 49 males.

Mary Marshall's academic specialty was medieval English, both the language and the literature. In alternate years, she offered courses on Chaucer and Spenser and Contemporary Drama. She also covered for other members of the English Department during their leaves. But if it had not been for Freshman English, she would have been known only to English majors.

Freshman English must have been a challenge. There were no Standards of Learning tests that assured minimal skills in reading and writing, and we came from varied backgrounds: a few from greater New York, a few of us from southern New England, more of us from the greater Boston area, and most of us from the great variety of academies and institutes that made up the secondary education network in Maine.

Mary Marshall led us through Greek drama, taught us basic

research techniques and read term papers that were the first such effort for a lot of us, got us on our feet in front of the class to give oral reports from notes on cards, and managed to convey to some of us that she was our friend.

My special debt to her is that she told me explicitly and clearly to get ready to go to graduate school because, she said, "you can do it." Other professors at *Colby* engaged my mind, read my papers, and graded my exams. But Mary Marshall also challenged my spirit.

Barbara Grant Nuoka '43
Arlington, Va.

COOT Fires Still Kindled

It is spine-tingling wonderful to hear of the tremendous participation in the fall COOT trips (*Colby*, fall 2000).

Our dream 25 years ago was simply to keep the fires kindled and increase the number of trips to four. I was one of the 18 those long (but oh-so-short) 25 years ago who ventured up Mt. Katahdin with Professor [Robert] Reumann. With a great sense of adventure, along with the usual freshman jitters, we set out from the quad behind the library.

At that time the Outing Club room was in the basement of one of the dorms and that was our initial staging area. As many of you now know and understand, there is hardly a better way to gel as a group than the rigors of the outdoors and a focused goal of a diverse group. Back on campus we were able to spread that warmth of friendship to other freshmen, upperclassmen and professors. The dreams of Nancy Noreen '76 have been embraced and expanded beyond all possible hope.

Happy anniversary to a truly inspired program, and to those countless individuals who participate in the planning of the trips and those who have taken part over the years. Three cheers!

Anne Luedemann Hunt '79
McLean, Va.

Cheers for Language, Colin MacKay

I was very interested to read "Print Lives" in the fall 2000 *Colby*. How wonderful to know that so many *Colby* graduates are engaged in the fascinating business of magazine production.

I sit here today writing this letter from my office at *Avenues* magazine, in Cleveland, where I have been editor since 1991. Before this I was editor of another magazine for two years. It is amazing to me that these opportunities came to someone starting so late.

So many times I've thanked my outstanding high school English teacher in my mind. Even my assistant editor and interns know her name. And so often I've felt enormous gratitude for the sacrifices my parents made to send me to *Colby*. Freshman year I was placed in an advanced English class with Professor Colin MacKay. I used to count the hours and then the minutes until I could walk into his class again. What a privilege to be his student! I raise my famous red pen (my primary editing tool) to salute *The Word*. May all of us who work in print love our language, guard its use and celebrate those who taught us to use it well.

Brenda L. Lewison '62
Cleveland Heights, Ohio

In Iowa, Hospitality Rules

Regarding the essay by Sarah Eustis '96 ("A Road Marked with Kindness," *Colby*, winter 2001), since graduating from *Colby* in 1976 I have lived in three countries and 12 cities more or less. Now we live in Iowa City. I am not a native Iowan, but I have come to realize, over the years, that the hospitality that Sarah described after getting stuck in Fort Dodge was the norm, not the exception. Iowa is a strange and wonderful place; protected, because East and West Coast people view it as a backwater where you wouldn't really want to go. When I joined the faculty, here at the University of Iowa, I had extreme reservations about coming to Iowa. I was completely wrong, of course!

Bill Silverman '76
Iowa City, Iowa

The Vietnam War discussion continues with letters from alumni responding to former *Colby* President Robert E.L. Strider's comments on his role as a college president during public outcry about the war. The letters appear in *Colby* online (www.colby.edu/colby.mag/issues/spr01/letters).