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Final Period

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The Issue Was Tissue

“a very thin one-ply at that”

By Earl Smith

In the interest of coming clean with alumni and other close followers of the Colby scene, it must be reported that there was a bit of a to-do about toilet paper on the campus this fall. It was a true resurgence of the “back to basics” movement, flushed with great emotion in a land of 552 toilets.

The issue first arose last year when someone whose sense of fiscal responsibility exceeded a concern for general welfare had the former two-ply tissue replaced with one-ply (and, it seemed to most, a *very thin* one-ply at that). Almost immediately, there was great rumbling up and down the corridors—and not just from students.

As anyone with one-ply experience knows, the problem is at least two-ply, especially when the offending tissue is installed on industrial-sized dispensers. First, finding the end of one-ply tissue is akin to dealing with a long-unused roll of cellophane tape. Second, because the rollers on these giant dispensers are set at a maddeningly high tension, one must tug ever so gently to avoid a break. There are other problems as well. There is no need to go into it. Suffice it to say that the discussion was intense and the humor generally quite earthy.

Dean of Students Janice Kassman knew it was a problem the minute she began to hear the complaints. There was no response to her mid-summer plea for two-ply, and, early in the fall, word circulated that students with revolt on their minds were going to circulate a petition. Kassman, a veteran revolution quasher, quickly assembled the highest powers. Armed with seven rolls of alternate tissue options she demanded a review. By the process of elimination there was soon a breakthrough, and in one clean swipe a solution was agreed upon. The two-ply tissue (made of recycled paper, thank you very much) would be brought back. Not the very best quality, mind you, but twice as good as what was on hand before. Of course this reversal came with a cost, but it seemed a piddling price to pay for keeping students among the happiest in all the nation.

