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FEEDBACK



Spring Issue Tops Them All

During these past 25-plus years, you and your team have published some wonderful issues of *Colby Magazine*. This latest edition, Spring 2018, tops them all. The stories, graphics, and photos capture in so many ways why Colby is such a great institution. Congratulations.

Ed Fraktman '53
Wayland, Mass.

Recipient Chosen for Leadership, Not for Her Race

I was intrigued to learn the magazine was doing a story on Elsie when I was contacted by Laura Meader about my participation in the tradition. Unfortunately, my experience and reflections were misrepresented in the published story.

While at the time I was an ally to the multicultural movement on campus, to my own discredit, I was not an active participant. Although there was certainly a subversive element to the painting's existence and history, sharing it with my dear friend, Adrienne Clay, came from a place of deep admiration and respect for her as an insightful and outspoken voice on campus, not because she was a

woman of color. When I learned to whom she passed the painting, I did appreciate that it was another student of color.

It is generous to attribute my sentiments regarding passing the “painting into the hands of women of color” to me at the time, because it was only in hindsight that I was able to appreciate the racial history of Elsie’s recipients.

Sarah Muzzy '97
Medford, Mass.



The painting *Elsie the Cow*, which was discovered in an office and had a long and rich history.

Elsie the Cow Evokes Difficult Colby Memories

Tucked away in a cardboard box in a closet in my mother’s home is a photograph of an unremarkable painting of a cow leaning against a garish, velvet goldenrod chair. I took that photo in my dorm room during the fall of my junior year, shortly before I spent a semester abroad and, I imagine, shortly before I gave that unremarkable painting to Mayra Diaz. The painting, rather like the delightfully grungy chair, had been passed down through Colby networks for years. From time to time I thought about digging the photo out and sending it in to *Colby Magazine*, asking the editors to publish it to see what response it elicited. I did wonder what became of Elsie, but like so

many other things related to Colby, my initial interest was quickly snuffed out by a wave of exhaustion at the idea of engaging with my alma mater again. So I left the photo in the box to gather dust.

I was pleasantly surprised, then, when Laura Meader contacted me with the update about Elsie and questions for her story. I was interested to learn that my signature was the last to appear on the back of the painting. Though I hadn’t been in touch with Mayra Diaz for many years, I clearly recall giving the painting to her and I am glad she has added her voice to the story (*Colby Magazine*, Spring 2018). Reading her reflections on Colby takes me right back. I cannot convey strongly enough how Mayra’s integrity, warmth, and brilliance helped me (and many others) back in those days. She told the truth, she made me laugh, and she reminded me I wasn’t crazy to see what I saw and feel what I felt. Mayra embodied the values that I strove to live every day. My admiration for her was endless. That is why I gave her the painting.

Colby was a time of painful but important learning for me. I did not anticipate the struggles I’d face there. I came from a very diverse, affluent public high school and believed I was well prepared to excel at Colby—and academically, I did. I was used to being surrounded by peers from backgrounds quite different than my own, so the alienation I experienced at Colby caught me entirely off guard and threw my worldview for several loops. Colby took my blinders off. I am deeply grateful that I learned, alongside people like Mayra, that there is no other choice, and no greater obligation, than to stand up for what you believe and to struggle toward a better self and a better society. That felt like a fringe perspective during my time at Colby (and quite honestly still does) but it remains my most cherished lesson.

Adrienne Clay '97
Ithaca, N.Y.

Colby Conversation via Social Media

 facebook.com/colbycollege

 twitter.com/colbycollege

On Colby's announcement that the College will no longer require standardized testing for applicants:

Ryan Connell '03: Not sure how you compare academic accomplishments from widely differing schools without standardized tests.

Todd Bross: Because very often the brightest stars are dimmed on just paper, or are not hard wired to shine their brightest via test standardization. Well done Colby!

Nancy Reed '80: Well done, Colby! Standardized tests are and have always been biased and not a true rating of other forms of intelligence not captured by these tests.

Paul Gilmore P'20, '22: A pretty cynical move on Colby College's part. Chasing the measure of prestige known as selectivity, as defined by a low admit rate. The easiest way to do this is to increase applications, to allow for a lower admit rate...

Alan Yuods nukis '91: Given that standardized testing is known to be culturally biased against minorities and low income students (not to mention a poor predictor of post secondary academic success) and that numerous studies have demonstrated that admissions practices which forego the consideration of standardized test scores directly result in HIGHER numbers of first generation and low income student admissions, I'd say this (along with waiving the application fee) was a move toward creating more equitable educational opportunity. Cynical? Not by a long shot. Long overdue, however. Well done, Colby!

On the Colby Climate Project:

James Hootsmans '13 As a Colby graduate in the environmental studies group, and having lived in many cities around the world, sometimes it is hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Working here in Los Angeles as an environmental consultant, the increasing traffic, lack of public transportation, depletion of water, and variability in temperature is a cause of concern. There are many conversations to be had.

Luke Siebert '12 The conversations that need to be had are not on the topic of how we can bring extractive industries in line with standards—that is a losing argument on both sides. The real question should be: how can we best incentivize new energy generation through public policy?

On senior class speaker Marnay Avant:

@kellybarnatchez: Excellent speech! You were a fabulous speaker and very inspirational. Your mom must be so proud of you.

@evalinmusic: never been prouder to be an alumni—wow now that is progress.

@lyndellmbade: This was standing ovation fantastic. We are so proud of you, Marnay. Also you've done STL proud!

On the passing of John "Swisher" Mitchell:

Carmel Slattery P'20, '22: I met Mr. Mitchell when visiting Sean for some of his b-ball games at Colby last winter. A charming man who loved his basketball. He seemed so fit and active. It is hard to believe he is gone. Sincere condolences to his family. He will be missed in the Colby basketball community.

Kate O'Halloran: Such a fantastic man. This is such a sad day for both the Colby and Waterville communities.

Christine Rackliff Clayton '97: Rest in peace, Swisher. You sparked many hoop passions throughout Maine and beyond.

Craig Donahue: A great man, and very privileged to have had a chance to get to know him.

John Fortier: He will be missed and very well remembered. A fabulous Waterville legacy.



On the opening of the Bill & Joan Alford Main Street Commons:

John Malcolm Pierce: So excited to see other buildings take better care of their store front. I work on Main St and have seen at least 4 buildings putting on a new coat of paint or clearing up their entry way to appear nicer to their customers.

Michael Wolper: I'm proud to be a part of the construction of this building... putting my stamp on history here in Maine.

Instagram: @jjuntura: @colbycollege what's a hardworking alumnus gotta do to get some Colby-branded giant scissors?

Instagram: @saraaron3: Congrats to Colby, and congrats to Bill and Joan on a strong commitment to education in Maine.