

Colby



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From the Editor

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Colby College

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Wobbling my way through a Q&A session with members of the Class of 1975 during reunion weekend (some sort of bug had me a bit under the weather), one question snapped me to attention. *Colby* magazine is full of articles about remarkable alumni and students, one '75er said, which is all well and good. But (and I paraphrase here) why don't I see more stories about people like me?

This fellow was from Maine, very pleasant, a banker with an M.B.A. By all accounts he's had a rewarding and successful life after Colby. And yet he felt that his accomplishments weren't enough to land him in his own alumni magazine.

Ouch.

I had been thinking about this question already, having just reread the Last Page essay by Chris Schmidt '83 that appears in this issue. Schmidt, communications director for an international management consulting firm (and a very good writer), talks about being a slacker at Colby, how his professors didn't give up on him back then, and that he keeps this in mind now as a manager and a dad.

But Schmidt also points out that he wasn't a star during college or a headliner soon after, and that he probably wouldn't have made the cut for *Colby* magazine.

So how do we decide who and what to cover in *Colby*? Does the magazine accurately represent the Colby community? Or is it what Postmodernists might call a construction? Which should it be? Can you make the magazine if you haven't climbed Mt. Everest or haven't done cancer research. (Actually, both of those can be found in this issue: Tom Claytor '85 online and student researchers on page 11).

But, those examples notwithstanding, of course the answer is "yes." The magazine is about and for Colbians in general. It should not be exclusive, leaving some readers feeling left out or that they don't measure up. That said, it's also true that the magazine is a medium for conveying news about Colby, and, as journalists of a sort, we define news as something out of the ordinary, compelling, eye-catching, edifying, or entertaining. We want to provide readers with stories they will read and will benefit in some way from having read.

It's also true that many more Colby alumni, faculty, students are doing interesting and remarkable things than we can fit in a quarterly print magazine—or that we are able to write for the online version. If we had the staff and resources, *Colby* could be a monthly.

As Chris Schmidt '83 eloquently points out in his essay on The Last Page in this issue, life is about more than résumés and Colby does more than cultivate early high achievers. Some of our most important accomplishments come late. Many don't easily translate to headlines.

It's a balancing act here at *Colby* magazine. And if we lose sight of that, we need someone to stand up in the back of the room and say so. And keep those story ideas coming.


Gerry Boyle '78, P'06
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