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Election Perspectives Invaluable

Thank you for featuring faculty and alumni perspectives on the 2004 presidential election in "Electing a President: What's At Stake?" (fall 2004 *Colby*). In the past election year, I have often wondered what my former Colby professors would say about the current political climate. So it's interesting to me that on the night before the election, I should find myself reading this article.

What would Calvin Mackenzie make of the historical relevance of this election? How would Sandy Maisel explain Republican and Democratic shifts in conservatism or liberalism? What does Tom Tietenberg think of the Bush administration's reluctance to accept global climate change? And finally, how would I defend my views on the war in Iraq and our position in the Middle East in a senior seminar with Ken Rodman? (That last thought goes along with the nightmare I'll have tonight that I didn't really get my diploma and have to go back to get it.) But seriously, that I still appreciate not only their opinions but their emphasis on critical thinking and challenging viewpoints is testament to the value of my Colby education and the lasting impression it has had on me.

My comments may seem quaint in 24 hours or so and certainly by the time the next *Colby* is published. But I think that the thoughts and ideas presented by those in this feature will be lasting and relevant far beyond November 2. Although my choice for president has already been made, there are also about 16 state ballot measures to vote on here in California. I could surely use their input in evaluating these before going to the polls tomorrow.

Laura Thompson '93
Los Angeles, Calif.

Grad School Can Offer Community

I just completed my graduate degree, four and a half years after leaving Colby, and turned with interest to your article "Join the Crowd" (winter 2005 *Colby*). It was a thoughtful piece on the experiences

of students who come from our small, liberal arts alma mater and enter a very different academic setting for their graduate studies. Please know, however, that that is not the experience of all of us.

We chose to spend the last 15 months at Antioch New England Graduate School in Keene, N.H. We earned master of education degrees in a progressive, challenging, and thoughtful setting. And we went to the homes of faculty members for dinner and walked spontaneously into their offices for casual conversations about both academics and our lives beyond the school setting.

Just as we all chose Colby for varied but particular reasons, we can do the same for our graduate degrees. Many of us choose the settings for learning not only for the quality of content but also for the quality of community in which that learning happens. Choosing to pursue an advanced degree does not necessarily eliminate that option.

Nelia Dwyer '00
Ashby, Mass.
Matt Dubel '95
Edgartown, Mass.

Tools Available to Preserve History

This letter addresses some of the issues presented in the winter 2005 issue of *Colby* in the cover article titled "Reinventing Waterville." Like Waterville City Administrator Mike Roy '74, I, too, majored in geology at Colby, graduating in 1962 before going on to the University of Maine for a master's degree. Later, I returned to Colby to join the faculty for two years. Finally, I joined the National Park Service where I spent the next 30 years. I have been with the Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission for nearly seven years.

I was teaching at Colby during one of this country's most devastating periods from the standpoint of cultural resource preservation. Urban renewal, coupled with such earlier overwhelming national initiatives as Eisenhower's interstate highway program, did great harm to the fabric of America by tearing down old structures, replacing them with new. In fact, it was this wholesale destruction of the fabric of America's inner cities that led to enactment

of perhaps the single most important piece of federal legislation regarding our nation's cultural heritage: the Historic Preservation Act of 1966. It is that law and the subsequent amendments to it that Waterville and other similar small towns should be looking to for help in preserving and restoring where possible the historic properties that you cited in your story.

Two provisions of the 1966 Act as amended are particularly relevant here. First, the National Park Service is authorized to work with other federal and state agencies as well as the private sector to further the goals and objectives of the Act, and second, there are tax credits for developers who work on historic structures in accordance with standards and guidelines developed pursuant to the Act. In many cases, it is these tax credits that make the difference between economically feasible and infeasible projects. For information regarding the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program, go to www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/index.htm. At the same time, Mike Roy should contact the Maine State Historic Preservation Commission in Augusta for assistance with this and other aspects of preservation law and assistance.

Elsewhere in the winter 2005 edition of *Colby* I was pleased to learn the whereabouts of the contents of Onie's, that Waterville institution that so many of us spent many a Friday and Saturday night in. I vividly remember when Onie's was demolished as part of the downtown "upgrade." Several fraternities raised money to save pieces of that historic property; many ended up with booths in their rec rooms. It was my introduction to historic preservation without realizing it. I'm wondering if any of those booths remain or if they eventually became a part of Rollie's in Belfast. I'll have to check it out on my next trip home.

Gerry Tays '62
Acting Historic Preservation Officer
Washington State Parks &
Recreation Commission
Olympia, Wash.

Don't Overlook Railroad in Future

Kudos to the Colby grads and others reviving Waterville ("Reinventing Waterville," winter 2005 *Colby*). The article gave rise to two separate thoughts.

First, move Colby back downtown! Gerry Boyle '78's "From the Editor" column notes that Colby moved out of the downtown in mid-century. If the city enjoyed the constant presence of 3,000 or so young people every day, imagine the boost to the heartbeat!

OK, so that's a bit far-fetched. How about something like "City Year," during which juniors or seniors who choose to do so live and study and work downtown, in a Colby-sponsored building, or perhaps one floor of the Hathaway mills Paul Boghosian '76 is developing.

Then some students would get an introduction to living in a city and not be as overwhelmed as Aaron Megquier '01 ("Join the Crowd," same issue).

Second, boutiques and high-tech may represent much of the future of the city, but look closely at the aerial photo accompanying Boyle's article. Rail lines cut through Waterville, meeting at the Guilford Rail System's massive rail yard in the upper right. The line from the yard moving to the left heads to Oakland and then downstate to Portland. The line crossing the Kennebec on the through-truss bridge heads to Bucksport.

The 19th-century railroad (formerly the Maine Central) serves most of what remains of Maine's industrial infrastructure: paper mills to the north, south, and east of Waterville. Without that railroad, the paper mills in Maine disappear, quickly. Hence I hope that City Administrator Mike Roy '74 is attending to the railroad, and to possible customers the railroad could serve in Waterville, as well as to the arts.

Perhaps the College could, also. Some of the students living in Waterville for my dream "City Year" could work for the railroad as apprentices. Nationwide, railroads are hiring.

Chop Hardenbergh '67

Editor, *Atlantic Northeast Rails & Ports*
Yarmouth, Maine

No Iraq and 9/11 Connection

In his letter "He Is Not Fighting in Iraq 'for Oil'" (winter 2005 *Colby*), Mark Lombard '92 argues, in part, "[As happened after] Pearl Harbor, the citizenry of the United States was not going to stand for another 3,000-plus innocents dead on a future late summer morning because a group of radicals were upset that the people of their world were turning toward the progressive Western ideals described above." This is a false premise. There is no connection between 9/11 and Iraq as President Bush has acknowledged. Saddam Hussein was never a threat to the U.S. and never attacked us, unlike the Japanese. Our aggressors came from Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia. Last I heard Bin Laden is still at large, and the same corrupt royal regime is in residence on the Arabian peninsula.

William C. Winslow '57

New York, N.Y.

We Are Part of the Natural World

I very much enjoyed Linda Tatelbaum's "Last Page" essay, "Listen to the Trees" (winter 2005 *Colby*). Tatelbaum presented an eloquent rebuttal to deconstruction and every other alienating literary theory. We are indeed part of the natural world, a world that exists even when there are no words. Nor are words the only way we communicate our experience of the world, although they are the medium we all use as readers and that I use as a writer. Artists and musicians have their own media and interpret the world in their own, non-verbal ways. The creative artists I know are all intensely receptive to the world, retain their images of the world sharply, and are

compelled to release those images back to the world through an act of the imagination. A similar imaginative act is required by the audience for art. I read, I look at art, and I listen to music not only to try to recreate the artist's specific vision but to find out something about how that artist looks at the world. In the process, my own view of the world may change or develop.

Tatelbaum's article also underscored for me the value of Colby's emphasis on teaching. My professors certainly contributed immensely to the exhilarating experience I found on Mayflower Hill a quarter of a century ago. Long may this tradition continue!

Katherine Quimby Johnson '79

Cambridge, Vt.

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