Cover art by Colby-Sawyer College Assistant Professor Bert Yarborough, M.P. Landis and Paul Bowen.
‘A door only opens as much as the hand that grabs it; closed fists won't get you very far.’

-Adrian Pelletier ‘08

This quote came at the end of a student's Sophomore Seminar Pathway Final Reflection, which was proceeded by this statement: “I’ll finish with a quote I came up with not long after college began. With Pathways coming to an end and the start of new things on the way it seems fitting.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life, Learning and Kevin Bacon</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discordant Musical Chair</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Sense of Place</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Come Full Circle</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Credo, “Fragmentation”</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim’s Travels</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganesh</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Diary of Alcandar</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions Without Answers</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bricolage</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good vs. Evil, Jihad vs. Crusade:</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Talking Heads of Today Portray Islam &amp; the Muslim World</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Voyager’s Roadmap:</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Stars, saucers ... and other cosmic travelers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding Jon</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of Birkenstocks, Grinches and Other Life Lessons</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

Learning, Life and Kevin Bacon

Welcome class of 2009! Making connections, the theme of this year’s Student Orientation, is a big part of being human and a useful way to think about learning and life. “It is our nature,” said Aristotle, “to live with others” (Ethics, IX). We are, after all, social animals, making many friendships, some lasting a lifetime. We find partners and form families. We develop relationships with roommates, neighbors, classmates, teammates and colleagues at work. We join clubs and worship together. Clearly we agree with Aristotle that it is better to spend our days with friends and good people than with strangers and, that to be happy and reach our fullest potential, we need to connect with others. And yet here you are with mostly strangers... or, rather, connections you haven’t met yet.

Social psychologist Stanley Milgrim expressed this basic human connectedness in a more modern form as his “six degrees of separation” theory, which predicts that anyone can be connected to any other person through a chain of no more than six acquaintances. Absorbed by popular culture, this idea became the “Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon Game,” purportedly invented by three Pennsylvania college students. (During your Orientation try the “Six Degrees of Colby-Sawyer” game: how many degrees separate you from your new classmates?)

The search for connections drives intellectual inquiry. As learners we look for connections (and disconnections, too) between evidence and hypotheses, between one idea and another, between our ideas and those of others, between concepts and the world around us. Mirroring the globalization that has connected even the most remote parts of our world, we have increasingly found that we must bring together the insights of a variety of fields or disciplines, such as history, science, economics, philosophy, sociology, psychology, etc., to address the complex challenges of modern life. The search for connections has inspired one of the most ambitious scientific efforts of our times, the quest for an Unified Field theory (also known as the “theory of
everything”) which would tie together all the fundamental forces of our universe into a single theory.

Collaborative connections produced “Triage,” the artwork on the cover on this chapbook. Colby-Sawyer Professor Bert Yarborough created this work with two other artists, M.P. Landis and Paul Bowen. One artist began the process by “making his marks” on paper, with pencil, paint and other media, and then sent it to the next artist who was free to add to, alter or even transform the piece in any way. The result is a work filled with connections, some obvious, some elusive, from process to product. “Each mark on its own,” wrote poet Nick Flynn in his introduction to ‘Triage,” “says nothing more than ‘I was here, I was here,’ and yet through some profound alchemy each of these artists, standing on the precipice, caught a glimpse of the fact that they weren’t alone.”

At Colby-Sawyer, we ask you to make connections of all sorts. This chapbook is a good place to start; every piece in it was written by a Colby-Sawyer professor or student. Seek out classmates, faculty and staff who come from backgrounds and cultures different from your own. Make strangers your friends. Look for the relationship between the ideas, texts and experiences you encounter in your classes and your activities outside the class. The more connections you make, the better for you and for Colby-Sawyer. So get connecting!

Randy Hanson
Liberal Education Coordinator
Discordant Musical Chair

By Laurie Shaughnessy ’07

Characters: Sally, 65
Bill, 67, Sally’s husband
Patricia, 66, Sally and Bill’s neighbor

Time: Present, late afternoon

Setting: Living room and kitchen in an old house in Boston. Fairly empty, few pieces of furniture and some boxes. House seems large and cold, with patches on walls that used to have pictures and mirrors. Set of stairs.

[Lights come up on a living room with a coffee table, a couch, an old chair and a TV. There is a connecting kitchen with a table set and sink. Bill is sitting in the chair. Sally enters.]

Sally: What are you watching now?

Bill: “People’s Court.” Look how fat this woman is.

Sally: Bill, you’re not so slim yourself. Maybe if you moved from that chair once in a while.

Bill: And go where, Sally?

Sally: Anywhere. Maybe go look for a new chair.

Bill: My mother bought this chair for this house.

Sally: Are you senile? I bought that ugly thing at a flea market.
Bill: Well, it doesn’t matter. I have no intention of throwing it in the damn dumpster outside, and that’s the end of it.

Sally: This chair just won’t fit in with all the new pieces of furniture I’ve ordered. I mean, look at it.

Bill: It’s worn a little, but so am I. Are you going to get rid of me too?

[Sally walks into kitchen.]

Sally: Would you like something?

Bill: I’m not hungry.

Sally: You have to eat; you haven’t eaten anything since yesterday.

Bill: No.

Sally: Maybe a piece of fru….

Bill: I said no. Stop asking.

Sally: Joey is coming to pick up the rest of the stuff in the house tomorrow. He has to put the kitchen table set, the couch, the coffee table and the TV into the truck.

Bill: And my chair.

Sally: Bill….

[Bill interrupts.]

Bill: This is my house, or it was until you sold it. My parents lived here. Now I have to move after living here my entire life. The only thing I want to take with me is this chair.
**Sally:** We both decided to sell. We can’t grow older in this house. It’s too big, and neither of us can run up and down the stairs like we used to. We both deserve to grow old in a nice home where we can be comfortable.

**Bill:** I will be really comfortable. In my chair. I don’t like new things, they’re too stiff. Can you grab me a beer?

**Sally:** No beer. Especially if you won’t eat anything.

**Bill:** It’s about the friggin’ chair, isn’t it?

**Sally:** I guess I just don’t understand.

**Bill:** I like it. Is that so hard to believe? Now, please. My beer.

**Sally:** No. I’m going upstairs. If you want a beer so bad, get your rear end off that chair for a minute and get it yourself.

**Bill:** I can’t do that. Never know. When I’m not looking, you’ll swipe the chair right out from under me! Plus, after the commercial, Judge Wopner’s going to yell at this woman for abusing her husband.

**Sally:** You and your damn “People’s Court.”

[Sally exits through the staircase. Bill stands up and walks into the kitchen. He retrieves a beer. On second thought, he turns and grabs another. He crosses back into living room and takes a seat on his chair. Doorbell rings. Sally comes downstairs to open it. Patricia enters.]

**Sally:** Patricia! Hello, love! Come in.

**Patricia:** Hiya, Sally, hiya, Bill. You getting excited about tomorrow?

**Sally:** We’re both really thrilled.
[Sally looks at Bill, who is focused on the TV.]

**Sally:** Aren’t we, Bill?
[Bill keeps watching TV.]

**Patricia:** I brought a friend named Jack. You want him to make ya a drinkie? It will be the last one we have in this house.

**Bill:** Who’s Jack? And why is he making us drinkies?

[Patricia takes a bottle of Jack Daniels from her purse.]

**Patricia:** Jesus, Sally, Jack Daniels. Anyways, I brought vodka too, because I know it’s your drink of choice.

[Takes a bottle of vodka from her purse.]

**Sally:** Now you’re talking! Come on into the kitchen…we can have a little chat.

[Bill opens his first beer, as Sally and Patricia enter the kitchen.]

**Patricia:** So, Sal, how’s Bill taking it? He nervous about leaving the house?

**Sally:** I think he’s upset because…

**Patricia:** He has lived here almost his whole life, ya know? [beat] Oh my God. I just thought of that time . . . you remember when we were down in the park with the kids? Oh boy, this must have been 30 years ago now. And Bill didn’t know where we were. He called Arthur and asked him if our kids were gone, too. [laughter] Bill freaked out because he didn’t think we would walk down to the park with six kids in tow.

**Sally:** Oh, yeah! And he drove around looking for us. That was the same year he drove under a fire escape and tore the roof of the car off!
Patricia: He nearly lost his head.

Sally: Well, now he has definitely lost his head. He wants to take that ugly chair with him to the new house.

Patricia: So…that’s his chair, Sally. He has to have his chair.

Sally: No, he doesn’t. It’s disgusting. I’m surprised I left it in the house this long.

Patricia: Well, he never gets off it; you would have to throw him out with it.

Sally: I don’t even want to go near that chair anymore. I haven’t sat on that chair in years.

Patricia: You used to like that chair, too, ya know. You used to sit on it all the time.

Sally: I know. I used to enjoy sitting on it before it got old and disgusting. Now, there is no way I am touching it, never mind bringing it to the new house. It has got to go….it just doesn’t fit in with how I want to be living there.

Patricia: How do you want to be living, Sally? It seems as though you want to leave this place behind all together. Are you sure you aren’t just trying to get rid of Bill instead of the chair?

Sally: I love Billy, Patricia. You know that. Things aren’t the way they used to be, but I would never even think about him not being with me in the new home. I just can’t stand that chair. I just don’t want to have to see that eyesore.

Patricia: You can’t keep things new forever.

Sally: It was so lovely once.

Patricia: It’s time to accept the changes that come, Sal. You’re
moving to a beautiful new house with all new furniture; it won’t hurt anything if that one old chair is in a corner.

Sally: Well, it’s going to remind me of here. I don’t want to remember all the times in this house.

Patricia: Were they really that bad? There were a lot of good times, too.

Sally: Yes. . .there were a lot of good times. [beat]

Patricia: Well, this is something you and Bill need to decide on. I can’t make the decision for you. Unlike the chair, I must be going.

Sally: You sure you don’t want another drink? Last night in this old house and all…I don’t want to say goodbye yet.

Patricia: Jesus, Sally, it’s not like you’re walking down death row tomorrow.

Sally: You never know…with all this moving I might be on my way.

Patricia: For Christ’s sake. Give me one more drink.

[Sally pours them another drink. Then she sits back with Patricia, and they clink glasses.]

Sally: Here’s to the past full of great times.

Patricia: And to the present. And to the future in a great new place.

Sally: I’ll really miss living right next door to ya, Patricia.

Patricia: Don’t go getting sappy on me now, Sal. There’s nothing to worry about. I’ll be down. We’ll still see each other. (standing)
Well, I should probably head back now.

Sally: I’ll walk you out to the door.

[Sally and Patricia pass Bill on the way to the door.]

Patricia: Better go to bed, Bill. Got a big day tomorrow.

Bill: I’m just trying to enjoy the last night…

Patricia: See ya round. [Patricia hugs Sally.] Call me when you get there.

Sally: Goodnight.

[Sally shuts door behind Patricia exiting.]

Sally: I’m going to tidy up the kitchen.

[Bill shakes empty beer can.]

Bill: Empty. [Stands, looks around.] Empty. [Exits up stairs.]

[Sally enters living room. Picks up beer can.]

Sally: Empty. [Looks at chair and, after a moment, sits.] Empty.

[Lights go down on Sally in chair.]

*Communication studies major Laurie Shaughnessy wrote “Discordant Musical Chair” as the final project for her Sophomore Pathway Seminar, Catharsis: A Theatrical Journey. About the piece Laurie writes, “I hope other people enjoy reading (or maybe watching) this play as much as I liked writing it.” This is her first play.*
A Sense of Place

By Chris McClellan ’08

Students in the Community and Environmental Studies (CES 202 Earth) class are assigned a semester-long bioregional investigation project during which they research 24 questions about their hometown. Students are asked to find out where their water comes from, where their garbage goes, which native grasses are present and whether there are any Superfund sites in their town. At the end of the semester, students reflect on what they learned through this project. The following excerpts are from first-year student, and Underhill, Vermont, resident Chris McClellan.

These questions really matter a lot to me. When I first thought about some of the questions, I was thinking that they weren’t really important or significant things to know about my area. But the further I got into the exercise the more developed my sense of place became, and the more the answers to the questions began to matter to me. Knowing three migratory and three permanent bird species didn’t seem very important to me ever before, but soon it struck me: no other place on Earth has all of the same things as my place does. This makes my place so special and so unique. What was once trivial information to me suddenly became the essence of why this place is my place.

It may not make a place much different if everyone who lived there knew all of the information that I learned through this exercise. But, if you think about it, it would make that place so much different and personal for everyone who lives there. I think that sense of place is incredibly important for everyone to feel. I feel so much more attached to and proud of my hometown because of having a stronger sense of place than I did before.

One thing that will stay with me as a lasting effect of this exercise will be a much better awareness of my surroundings. As I
go home and do the things I normally do in summer, I will notice things about my place that I never noticed before, but which were there the whole time.

All in all, the bioregional quiz was a great experience for me. It improved my ability to access information that I’ve never had before. Moreover, it taught me more about my area of Vermont than I ever thought I would have known about at this point in my life. Because of the research I did, I have a stronger sense of place than ever. I know my surroundings better and I have opened up opportunities for myself to do things I wouldn’t have done before. Not only has this exercise made me more environmentally literate, it has made me more environmentally aware. And that is more important than anything else.
I Come Full Circle

By Alicia Rose Harris ’07

The earth moves
The autumn leaves blow up around me as
The Native man presses his tan cheek to mine
Like a brother to a sister
Like a song on the wind to a lost child
His love is warmth that does not leave me
Even in days following our embrace, I feel it still, this
Heat spreading throughout my body like a healing potion

“Be safe,” he whispers as he lets me go and
A lump forms in my throat as I watch him
Pack up his instruments to travel down Reservation Road,
As I remember the stories he told me, the music he played,
Inside I weep, to have been blessed
With his presence
To feel the spirits wrap their arms
Around me, like the mother earth who holds her children

He touches my arm to comfort me, remembering how
I had spilled my heart to him in days before about
The pains of prejudice, of ignorance that
Tore the strength from my warrior heart.
He knows the battle I am fighting, for he
Fights it as well, and he has felt such pain throughout his life.
But he cannot tell me that the turning of the earth
Or the winds of revolution will bring me change

He can only give me hope of freedom
Through the services I give to others, the love that I share
As a human being with the people, the animals, and
The environment I cherish, like the blood
Of my ancestors that runs like a
River of strength through my veins,
A river that flows to my heart and pumps,
Pumps it with meaning, and with life

And the earth, it moves, it spins,
The autumn leaves blow up around me
As I feel my soul fill with this warmth, this comfort,
This truth that there is meaning in what has pained me,
Meaning and love in my heart that I can give back,
Love that this man, this brother of the sky, the sea, the earth
Has shared with his hurting sister; he touches her spirit
And says she is brave, says she is strong,
She will find healing, I will find healing, and I will live.
Sarah Wildermann
My Credo, “Fragmentation”

By Elizabeth Stamm ’06

Almost everything in the universe can be broken down into smaller subunits of some sort. These smaller subunits can be arranged in multiple ways to achieve several different results. The smaller subunits are put together to make larger subunits which are then put together to make even larger subunits, and this process continues until a final product results. At each level of construction new properties and characteristics emerge. These emergent properties can be found nowhere in the subunits alone, but when pieced together the subunits take on a whole new identity. By breaking something down and putting it back together, a complete understanding of that thing can be reached. After reconstruction, that thing may even be of more value than it was in the first place because of the new meaning and ideas associated with it.

A piece of writing can be broken down into several parts. It can be broken down into pages; pages can be broken down into paragraphs, paragraphs into sentences, sentences into words, and words into letters. The paper on which the piece of writing is written can be broken down similarly. The paper can be broken down into wood fibers; the wood fibers can be broken down into bits of cellulose (glucose molecules linked together in such a way that they are useful for structural purposes), cellulose into individual glucose molecules, glucose into atoms of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen, and the atoms into protons, neutrons and electrons.

Protons, neutrons and electrons have little significance or value on their own. They have no chemical properties, and no individual identity. When put together, however, they are able to form atoms. An atom is the smallest form of matter that is still able to maintain chemical properties. An element is a substance whose properties can be expressed by a single atom. The properties expressed by an atom cannot be found anywhere in an
individual proton, neutron or electron, but their unification creates something new.

Letters are very similar to the subatomic particles found in an atom. Alone, letters have close to no meaning, but when arranged in certain ways, they can be manipulated to make thousands of words. Words are the elements of writing. They are the smallest subunits that are still able to maintain significant meaning. The letters P, H, O, E, N, I, and X may have little meaning on their own, but when put together, “PHOENIX,” represents either a city in Arizona or a mythical bird. This meaning is an emergent property that is only made clear when the letters are put together in a specific order.

With the elements in place, more complex things can now be constructed. Elements join with other elements to form molecules; each element brings its own properties to be expressed within the molecule. When the elements join together, the molecule formed possesses the properties of each element involved, and, also, a set of emergent properties found in none of them. Water, for example, is composed of hydrogen and oxygen. The characteristics of both elements can be found in the molecule in some form, but properties such as polarity and molecular stability cannot be found in either element.

Words work in the very same way when forming a sentence. Each word brings its own individual meaning to the sentence, but the sentence holds meaning far too large to be represented by any single word. “Like a phoenix rising from the flames, things that have been taken apart and reconstructed are given new life and meaning.” None of the individual words could adequately convey the meaning of this sentence, but a clear understanding of each word is necessary to comprehend it.

Comprehension of a molecule and its properties can help to explain the properties of a molecular aggregate. In order to understand the nature of molecules, one must understand the nature of atoms, and in order to understand the nature of atoms, one must understand the nature of protons, neutrons and electrons. When all of these components and their interactions with each other are well defined, then an understanding of a molecular aggregate can be reached. A molecular aggregate is a group of
molecules that function as a single unit. They represent something the human world views as “whole” or “complete.” Like all of the other subunits, molecules bring their own properties to molecular aggregates, but new, unexplained properties are also a result of the union.

A paragraph is the literary equivalent of a molecular aggregate. It is complete. It consists of many parts that can function on their own, but not at the same level as when the parts are placed together. When the parts are broken down and analyzed and then put back together, each set of emergent properties brought about by the several layers of construction can be recognized. For example, “Like a phoenix rising from the flames, things that have been taken apart and reconstructed are given new life and meaning. They are stronger than they were in the beginning, and filled to the brim with vitality and meaning. How can ashes be put together in such a way to form a living, breathing bird? How are molecules constructed to create life? How are words put together to create meaning that is so profound as to spark a revolution? They are put together. The rest is magic.”

This piece was written by Elizabeth Stamm, a community and environmental studies major, for the Honors Pathway: The Coming-of-Age Narrative.
Tim’s Travels

By Tim Bradley ’05

The following are excerpts from a series of articles that student Tim Bradley sent to the student newspaper, the Colby-Sawyer Courier, during his participation in the Semester-at-Sea program.

After nearly a fortnight crossing the Pacific, six intense days in Japan, and five days touring China, I was finally able to collect my thoughts and find time to correspond while in Hong Kong.

The independent travel of Semester at Sea has led to the most passionate, informative and enlightening month of my life. I’ve traveled to many places I’ve only dreamed of, and I’m fortunate to share some of my experiences with you.

There are many ways one can travel independently, whether it is by small group, with a tour, with a buddy or solo. I experienced all of them these past few weeks, traveling in groups of five and eight, touring sights with a group of nearly 100, appreciating cultures with my roommate, Bob, and exploring by myself. Each has its advantages and disadvantages, depending on your mode of transportation, your sense of planning, and your balance of time and money.

While considering group or solo travel, it all depends on how compatible you are with a group. If everyone wants to see the same sights at the same time, you’ll have a great shared experience. With my trip climbing Mt. Fuji, Japan, it was so fast paced that it was nice to have friends to share the experience with. When traveling in a group I can attempt to remember it all; everybody remembers things differently than everyone else.

However, if everyone wants to do his own thing and actively expresses his opinions, then all I can say is patience is a virtue. If this is the case, then traveling alone may be the best; one can plan and pace the day in his or her own way.

In traveling abroad, one often has start point A and
destination B, with no real knowledge of the in-between. The first day in Japan, my group of eight and I traveled via Shinkansen (bullet train), subway, monorail, taxi, bus and on foot to reach our destination of Hiroshima. Since then, I have also traveled by train, boat and airplane. Planning is the key.

My technique in planning is to allow a lot of time, at least an hour leeway for each form of transportation. Not all trains, planes and buses have the same schedule as you do. At the end of the day, you don’t want to be regretful that you missed something on your to-do list. Rather, be appreciative; take in what you can and be happy for what you get.

Each mode of transportation has its rewards and drawbacks, and the choice of one over another usually boils down to constraints on time and money. For me, my time is worth more to me than my money, for who knows if I’ll ever return to these beautiful places again. I’m willing to spend the extra dollar if it means receiving a couple extra minutes at the Great Wall of China.

Overall, the best reward of independent travel is finding a sense of peace amid the chaos that is tourism. When visiting the Forbidden City in Beijing, I was one of tens of thousands of people all trying to see the same sights at the same times, but at one point, I made my way down a side corridor and found myself in the most deserted part of the city. Avoiding the typical tourist spots, I could sit in the shade, listen to traditional Chinese music and even hear birds chirping. This was a chance to really appreciate the history of the culture and to capture all the detail. It was such a nice escape.

So, when traveling abroad, remember to make plans with lots of extra time, be conscientious of your actions, and, most of all, be safe. Hope all is well at Colby-Sawyer and you’ll hear from me after Vietnam and Thailand. Sayonara.

**Globalization**

During our course on global studies, I was struck with a sentence that I’m still grappling with: the Semester-at-Sea itinerary is considered to be “wealthy Americans going to see the poverty of the world.”
I’ve learned that the development of the world in the last 50 years could be described as a sumo wrestling tournament, wherein two superpowers concentrate intensely to duel back and forth. It was once a bipolar world, wherein wars were fought between nations and the mentality was that you were either with us or against us.

But we are at the end of a cycle; the industrial age has ended and we are entering a new age. The world has become multi-polar and may be described as the 100-meter dash run repetitively every day. It is run over and over again and no one nation can continuously beat out the competition; you can’t really tell who’s winning. There are different winners at any given moment; no one superpower can reign indefinitely.

The United States is currently the supreme power, but the future could hold something different. The idea of a “country” may be undermined, and natural or logical boundaries may not be as clear in the future. The idea of a nation state is declining, and a new era may introduce a multi-polar world with regional powers, or possibly one world power: a term known as globalization.

Globalization can be seen throughout the world, especially with the franchising of western businesses that have created “non-country-specific” entities. Globalization is needed by businesses, because it enables them to extend to foreign markets. Consider any motor vehicle company; their cross-boundary franchising has allowed the presence of its company to manufacture and sell their vehicles anywhere on the planet.

I’ve witnessed firsthand many instances of global franchising. Visiting the Forbidden Palace in Beijing I was surprised by a Starbucks, and when traveling great lengths to a nearly deserted island in Thailand I found myself making purchases at the local 7-11. I’ve passed numerous McDonald’s, KFC’s and Hard Rock Café’s, and Heineken beer seems to be the preferred choice throughout the world. The West has certainly taken hold of the world market, and we may well witness the total globalization of the world in our generation.

However, there is one very important reality: the richest 20 percent of the world’s population owns 80 percent of the world’s resources, while the poorest 20 percent of the world’s
population owns .5 percent. Globalization is accused of excluding many third world nations that do not have the economic capabilities to keep pace with the rest of the globe. Is it the responsibility of the United States to save “them”? What is its responsibility? What does this mean for the future? I’m not sure, but all I know is that when you have nothing, you have nothing to lose.

Environmental Concerns

The world is beautiful, but why don’t we keep it that way? The places around the globe we perceive as our greatest landmarks and milestones are being destroyed by us. I feel helpless, but I’ll tell an anecdote.

When first arriving in Hong Kong, I saw a tourist information booth with numerous flyers intended to draw visitors to certain attractions. The flyers were produced with dazzling and vibrant colors to catch a tourist’s attention, and included bright, sunny days and friendly faces with smiles to shape the initial emotion of Hong Kong as a welcoming and fun environment. Also, the people in the flyers were well dressed, high class, good looking people, making one’s initial perceptions of Hong Kong to be “the place to be.” Hong Kong is perceived as a “shopper’s paradise,” wherein retail areas are attractive and accessible. Overall, the pamphlets gave an image of a beautiful Hong Kong.

However, the next day I went on a Hong Kong Pink Dolphin boat trip. The Hong Kong I witnessed was not that of the flyers, but rather just like any other major city in regards to weather and the surrounding environment; the skies were hazy, the waters were dirty, and the air was filled with noise. Though the flyers promised bright, sunny days with beautiful waters, the reality was air, water and noise pollution. I was struck with immense cognitive dissonance, wherein my initial perception of a clean Hong Kong become one of environmental destruction.

On the Hong Kong Dolphinwatch, I witnessed the most beautiful dolphins I’ve ever seen, and they really were pink. And they were not just pink, but bright pink; Crayola crayon pink; almost as pink as a flamingo. They were so beautiful. However, I learned that there were less than 100 pink dolphins left in the
world due to pollution and that they were expected to be extinct by 2000. Now that it is 2004, I am most likely one of the last to witness these beautiful creatures.

While viewing the dolphins, one could see the effects of human pollution. Frequent airplanes and boats scared them underwater, indicating that they were not adapting to the presence of humans. Furthermore, the waters in the harbor were murky with floating trash, and we learned of oil spills and contaminated mud that kills the dolphins every year. We also learned that Hong Kong Disney will most likely be the end of the dolphins. Once finished, Disney will attract even more tourists, thus creating more air, water and noise pollution. Disney will be opened next year.

The devastation of the dolphins is not an isolated incident; the earth loses 12 species per day. I have witnessed many instances of environmental pollution in all of the major world cities I’ve been to. You couldn’t even see the sun during midday in Shanghai due to air pollution. The beaches of Vietnam were littered with discarded trash, and nearly every street in India was cluttered with mounds of garbage. And I’m sitting here complaining about Hong Kong, but I could just look at the biggest consumers on the planet: the United States.

Overall, it is just sad to think that many of these places and landmarks I’ve seen will never be the same again due to environmental destruction. Or even worse, one day they may never be there at all.

**The Joys of Traveling**

I’ve seen the sunrise over Mt. Fuji, the most eastern sunrise in the “Land of the Rising Sun.” I’ve played Frisbee on the Great Wall of China. I’ve crawled through the Cu Chi Tunnels in Vietnam. I’ve ridden elephants through the rubber tree groves on an island in Thailand. I’ve lain down, looking up at the Taj Mahal at sunset. I’ve seen baby elephants while on safari in Tanzania. I’ve gone shark diving in South Africa. I’ve slept in a hammock while traveling via riverboat down the Amazon River. And I’ve made the most amazing friends one could ever ask for. I’ve done all this because I decided to take a chance and step into
the world unknown. And now I need to see more. What can you say for the last three months?

I understand that we are at an age of uncertainty, but we are so lucky as Americans to have the opportunities to travel the way I have. We all are capable of just packing up and going and I’m so lucky to have made this realization now before it is too late. The world really is at our fingertips, so get out there. Just pick a direction and run with it.
Ganesh

By Aimee Parkhurst ’06

In the orchid store, Baby’s sullen—two tones of outdone by a nature who could laugh to hand a Girl an ivory pen with which to write her little love for elephants.

At the zoo she’s the ever-open bird’s beak carved into the solace skin of a trunk of books, ink writing.

Snowed into the folds of a pleated skirt she watches the faded lumber smells the gray scent of them the hand deep grooves of African skin.

In her desk she’s butterfly pinned, a fixed object primed for ravishment—the day she learned the word before the thing, the word for the pen:

    implement,
the word for the thing,

    ivory,
and she swallows down the three sad syllables of over. In her teacher’s glare
she’s prostrate to
her timely Remover of Obstacles
and the tattered skin of a tear
in paper.

Tectonic plates crawling with fingerprints,
Telling little stories,
She’ll take what is behind and send it
trembling to the front.
It’s the bitter taste on the tongue of a woman,
the rolling sea of candles overcome with wax.
It’s reading cracks on the ceiling like tea leaves,
the swerving beginnings of a timeline cutting off
like a cliff, like a letter from a person who knows
how to write,

Dear Anything,
    I’m not sorry for the things I’ve said.
Dear Something,
    This house is not my house.

She’s pieces, still,
fragmenting, finding water,
and learning to bathe properly
now that she’s all sodden spines
and bent.

In older eyes she’s stretched
her little love—
the yawning skin,
the length of gesture
feathered cuffs to match
a whole new mind found
for being tall enough to
graze her hands up over
the shelves
in the orchid store—
Turning, she’s back
to bear witness to flowers
able to think only of the

silent, bobbing promiscuity
of botany.
The Diary of Alcandar

By John Bosse ’08

Students in the “Rituals, Excellence, and Challenges: the Ancient and Modern Games” Pathway were asked to explore the ancient Olympics from the perspective of someone living in that time. They were asked to combine creativity with accurate research, as they traced their character’s travels to the Olympic festivals, experiences there, and return home.

After years of training, I finally feel that I am ready to take on Olympia. My paidotribai, Ajax, and I both agree that I would have my best chance of victory in the diaulos. Today, Ajax and I are going to the beach in Argos, my hometown, to begin ten months of formal Olympic training.

To work on my balance and to prepare me for the stadium at Olympia, Ajax felt that running on loose sand was best. I started out with some stretching and then Ajax stood one stade down the beach. I got into my semi-crouched position and when he gave me the signal to begin, I exploded off the starting line and sprinted toward him. When I went to make my turn headed into last stade, he jogged behind me, barking at me to pick up the pace. After hearing some of Ajax’s criticism, I repeated the run four more times. Satisfied with my first day of training, Ajax suggested that we go eat lunch.

We headed into town for a meal of vegetable soup, bread and pork that came from a pig that was fed only cornel, berries and acorns, which improved the quality of the meat. Closer to the Olympics, Ajax would have me incorporate dried figs into my diet, since Charmis of Sparta, a great sprinter, ate only figs. While we ate we avoided in-depth conversations since all worthy paitotribais knew that intelligent conversation while eating is bad for digestion. This did not bother me as I knew that after Ajax left, my buddies and I would go to Anker’s house for his nightly symposium, where we could enjoy all the intellectual
conversation we wanted.

After sleeping in from a nasty symposium hangover, I went to the beach with Ajax again. Today I did another 10 stades, but Ajax also had me run on one of the hiking trails on the way home so I could get some jumping in for explosiveness. For lunch I ate the same foods as yesterday, as Ajax advised a disciplined diet. We would continue this same routine for the next 27 days, while taking Kupiakn off for rest. Ajax warned me that if I wanted a real shot at winning, I would have to give up the symposium and the accompanying hangovers.

Two weeks later

Ajax and I met at the gymnasium where he started me on a Tetrad program for the next 28 days, after which I would take a two-day break to finish out the second month. Today’s routine was an interesting change from the beach. I went to the changing room and my training partner, Zorba, helped me to apply 1/3 of a pint of oil, and then I returned the favor. After this we sprinkled each other with powder and began to warm up in rhythm as flute musicians played nearby.

Once we were good and limber, Ajax had us perform calisthenics for 10 minutes. We then ran a two-stade race against each other. I won the race and relished the mild applause from onlookers. After running we headed inside and lifted weights together for half an hour. We finished the day by tossing a ball to each other as our cool-down exercise. Ajax grabbed us each a stirgil and told us that was it for the day. I washed with soap and shampoo made from olive oil and fine-grained clay. After bathing, Zorba and I helped each other scrape off our bodies with the stirgils and reapplied some perfumed oil.

When we were clean, we went to Zorba’s to eat lunch. My meal was the same as it had been for the past month, except that I ate a small portion of dry figs for dessert. Zorba, who was not going to compete at Olympia, followed a different diet, but listened intently as Ajax explained the benefits of my eating habits. That next morning, we went through the same preparatory duties and were then put through the second day of the Tetrad. We warmed up with 15 minutes of calisthenics. We
did the two-stade race, carrying weights and again without weights. We finished by lifting weights for 45 minutes and playing handball for five minutes. Since the second day, Ajax said, was to test our work at 100 percent intensity, we both maxed out for each of the exercises. Tired and beaten, we washed up and went home.

On the third day, Ajax had us do the same routine as day one. On the fourth day we did the usual calisthenics for 10 minutes and one race, but instead of hitting the weights, Zorba and I wrestled. After this first Tetrad, Zorba and I took a day off. We then continued the next five Tetrads, taking a day off in between each. Following the overload principle that Ajax recommended we added five minutes each of calisthenics and lifting, and two stades of running to each new Tetrad. Ajax made sure we pushed ourselves to lift more weight and do more explosive calisthenics.

When the Tetrads were over, Ajax had me begin a program that focused more on running, which would culminate in a strictly running program. For the next month, we went to the beach every day. The daily routine of the first week consisted of 10 stades each day, followed by running of the hiking trail home with weights in my hands. I then went to the gymnasium, where I lifted weights with Zorba. Each week during this month Ajax made me run two extra stades and carry slightly heavier weights during the trail run. For my diet, he advised that I substitute some of my bread with more dried figs.

During the fourth, fifth and sixth months, my training changed slightly. I ran 16 stades at the beach followed by running the hiking trail and then from the trail outlet to the gymnasium, all the while holding weights. I then lifted weights with Zorba for 20 minutes. Afterward, we ran a two-stade race against each other. My training allowed me to beat Zorba easily, but Ajax advocated it to get me used to competition.

For the seventh and eight months, I followed the same routine as months four through six, but I would now finish each day with six stades against Zorba instead of two. My diet now consisted of only meat and figs.

The eighth and ninth months were composed of strictly
running. During the eighth month I ran 20 stades at the beach and then ten stades against Zorba. I ate primarily figs with a little meat. On the first day of the ninth month, a herald came to Argos to let us know that the games would begin in 60 days. During this month I ran 20 stades at the beach and then 20 stades against Zorba. I took the last two days of the ninth month off to prepare for the trip to Elis. I packed a few articles of clothing, including my tunic and sandals for the procession and a few small items to sacrifice at the altar of Hermes.

On the first full moon of the summer solstice, Ajax, my father, Aetos, and I arrived at Elis. The city had few monuments, but the farmland was vast and beautiful. The first thing we did was go to the Hellanodikaion to register for the two-stade race. My father, who was 100 percent Greek, was there to prove I was the son of free-born Greek parents. I also brought a document from my homeland that showed I had no criminal record and was a citizen in Argos. After registration I was given a tour of the Square Gymnasium, whose track would be the home for most of my last month of training.

One of the primary temptations for all of us athletes was the sexual atmosphere in the changing rooms. I was one of the younger athletes, so I was not expected to tutor the younger boys, but many other athletes took advantage of this opportunity. I was more interested in some of the young women that I saw and pornai were everywhere; however, socializing with them was prohibited. Many of my buddies went to bed with lead plates over their crotches to try to nullify their temptations. I simply relied on my willpower and focused on running to blot out the enticing possibilities.

On the first day of training at Elis, I did mostly running; however, I was shocked when the hellanodikai told me to finish with weights. Ajax, who was standing beside the track, protested, but was quickly flogged for his outburst. Once, in the first week, I slacked on the upper body exercises, which I did not think would help my running. My slacking was met with a lash on my back, which I had to endure or face disqualification. Ajax and I had seen first hand the ruthlessness of the hellanodikai and became more obedient. During these three
weeks, trial races became the core of my workouts. From this practice I realized that I was one of the premier runners, as a couple of my opponents refused to race me. During the last month I had to eat with the rest of the athletes under supervision to ensure that no one was eating any secret recipes. My diet consisted of barley cakes, red meat, feta cheese and wine.

After 27 days of grueling training, the procession to Olympia began. It was a sad day because all of my friends had been eliminated and I now had to make the trip with just Ajax, my father and the other surviving athletes. Wearing my white tunic, I followed the officials in the 40-mile walk to Olympia. When we reached the fountain of Pieria, the half-way mark, we all stopped to sacrifice a pig. After favorable predictions for the games were discerned from the pig’s liver, we settled down for the night by the river in Letrini. On the next day, as we neared Olympia, I was overcome by the sanctuary’s beauty. The Temple of Zeus, the bronze statues and the crowd were all astonishing. Their screams were deafening, and I had goose bumps from all the commotion.

After a restless sleep, I woke and enjoyed a breakfast of bread and wine with Ajax and my father. We were greeted by the roar of spectators and music as we made our way to the Bouleuterion. At the entrance our runners’ group was confronted by the massive figure of Zeus Horkios, the God of Oaths. The oath I was about to make was set in stone, with an inscription that all forms of cheating were punishable by death. The image of bloody pig’s flesh before the statue made me sick and stuck in my mind for several hours afterwards. I swore before the great shrine that I had been training for 10 months and that I would compete honestly during the games.

That afternoon I made my way through the sanctuary toward the altar of Hermes. I knew that I could not win without the favor of the gods and I chose Hermes, the fastest of all gods,-as my patron god. I prayed for his assistance while placing small statues of runners on his altar. I then went with the other runners to the stadium for a brief voluntary practice. Many of the other guys flexed their muscles for extra attention. I was very modest and focused on my running. After dinner I went to
bed early for I knew that I would need my rest.

Before sunrise, I went to the Hippodrome and joined the lively crowd to see the 40 chariots duke it out in a bloody race. The entrance of the charioteers was accompanied by trumpets. The race was brutal and only eight chariots finished, with most of them left mangled in the corners. When all of the equestrian races were done, some runners and I made a mad dash to the stadium where the pentathlon began with the discus, javelin and long jump. A victor could not be determined, so to finalize the event, the two remaining men performed a two-stade race. The crowd was deafening as the finalists exploded off the balbis. The victor was adorned with ribbons and joined the winners of the equestrian events in victory banquets that night. I decided to go to bed early.

The next morning, everyone gathered around at the Sacred Grove of Zeus for the sacrifice of 100 oxen that had been brought from Elis. After entering, the procession stopped at the Great Altar of Zeus, now covered with a pyre of ashes. I watched in awe as the arterial veins of the oxen were cut and drained of their blood. While the thighs of the oxen were burnt, the remains were gathered by laborers for the feast that I hoped to be a part of on day five. I finished my day watching the boys’ wrestling and running events. I left before boxing so I could pray to Hermes. After supper, which included some of the oxen remains, I went to bed to rest up for my race.

When I woke that morning, I had my game face on. I barely even noticed the commotion at the end of the dolichos. I warmed up and then stood near the balbis among the other competitors. I looked at the hellenodkai for the sign to step to the starting line with my right foot. I assumed my slight crouch and felt the rope of the hysplex grazing my body. After a trumpet sounded, I heard the familiar cry of apete! The hysplex slammed to the ground and I dashed into the first stade. I maintained good balance as I went around the post and headed into the final stade. I gave it my all and won the heat.

As I waited for the other heats, I prayed to Hermes. I could feel his presence as I stepped onto the balbis for the final heat. As I headed around this post during this heat, Anatole,
another finalist, called on Athena to make me lose my footing near the turning post. I slipped and plummeted into the loose sand. I felt victory slipping away from me as I saw the other runners turn successfully.

While lying in the dirt I prayed to Hermes to trip Anatole and bring me to victory. I bounced back up immediately and hurried down the last stade. I was soon gaining on the other runners. As I passed everyone except Anatole, I saw him stumble and fall to his knees. He got up quickly, but not before I crossed the balbis and met victory. I was immediately whisked onto dad and Ajax’s shoulders and was adorned with red ribbons. The crowd, which had been quiet during the dolichos, was on its feet as it cheered me on. I was invited to sit under one of the most lavish tents in the crowd to watch the stadion, wrestling, boxing, the pankration and the race in armor.

After a night of celebrating I went to bed. On the fifth day I was crowned with an olive wreath among the other victors. As we processed out of Olympia we had leaves dumped on us. The banquet that night was the most lavish one that I had ever been to. We feasted on the oxen meat from the big sacrifice and throughout the night the hetaeras were all over me. Many aristocratic men pleaded with me to marry their daughters. I was very proud of myself, but I knew the awards would be much greater back in Argos.

When I entered my home city, I was greeted by the entire town jumping up and down and screaming my name. As if the banquet at Olympia weren’t lavish enough, my party had meat, cheese, honeyed cakes, lots of wine, fruit and every kind of good Greek food you could imagine. A local songwriter wrote a song about the swiftness of my feet and my determination. Soon my song, “Alcandar: Swift like Hermes,” was sung all over Argos. A statue of me was erected and people made sacrifices in front of it once a month. Local tax collectors also declared me free from taxes for as long as I lived in Argos.

My journey to victory was not an easy one, but the rewards were great. I live a great life now and I couldn’t be happier. I plan to be a paidotribai someday so I can give back and help teach others like Ajax taught me.
Questions Without Answers

By Anjuli Hiranandani ’08

I read something today that made me sit back and think: “All good writers go to the mountains.” Why is it then that we destroy our nature? But then, while destroying the very resource that inspires us, we expect beautiful creativity from the minds that see nothing but asphalt and smog? All the while we push the future of our world, our youth, to appreciate and respect the beauty of authors and their prophetic words, authors such as Whitman and Thoreau. So we say that we are a species of ingenious thinking, and we believe we are the “alpha males,” of all things. But if we take a look around we must also conclude that we are the species of great contradictions.

Why is it that we say and preach one thing and yet mean another? It’s something that we start from birth, and we continue to cheat and deceive all our lives, usually denying the best things we can find. When it looks into our eyes, stares solemnly into our soul, we turn it away. Why is it that the things that make us the happiest, that make us human and our hearts skip a beat, that inspire us to love and to share and show the beauty inside and out, are the things we always deny ourselves?

Have we destroyed so much beauty, willingly, that we expect ugliness? We have almost come to realize that ugliness dominates this world, our “stretch” of imagination has just stopped at “useful and logical,” while surpassing the wave, the impulse of beauty and natural creation. Have we outdone ourselves? Has the intelligence taken away the natural instincts evolution bestowed upon us?

So, as I sit here in the mountains, wondering what the next journey of my life will have to show me, I wonder about why I am leaving. I am so happy here, things at home really are doing well for the first time and at peace. But, I am still restless. It’s like something inside of me is screaming to be rescued. It’s a feeling like drowning. When you need help in those four seconds above
water, do you suck in oxygen or yell for help? When someone hurts you, do you confront the problem or realize that they make mistakes, accept their imperfections and move on? In true love, is the moment of pain worth a lifetime of goodness, or is that pain, the agony inflicted, something that you can’t overlook? Or does the good not last long enough to count for anything? It’s an optimistic or pessimistic way of thinking that decides either way.

Thinking about that short moment, that heartbeat of goodness, of pure ecstasy, is that worth a lifetime of dissatisfaction? The only problem is, is that the good lasts so shortly that one gets more heartbeats in than anything. But those, those are the heartbeats that mean the most, those are the ones that feel as though your chest might explode, the kind of bliss that takes your breath away, even as you take in the very oxygen that you crave.

As I embark on this next path of my life, I think about those who I am going to leave behind: my family, friends, the familiar streets and sights. There are so many things I have to see, yet I feel I have no choice but to leave. New beginnings bring new life and new endings…no old love bring tears, nothing but a broken heart to leave with.

It’s that pivotal moment in every life where you stand in the terminal, bags packed, heart broken, and think, “What’s harder? Living with the bad, or starting the new and leaving the great, quite possibly the best?” Do you board? Or do you just leave? Which one is living? Which one is running away? Are you being more of a coward boarding that plane or taking a cab home?

Are you even really the coward? Do these people who bring out the best in you, should they be the ones to tell you, or at least give you an encouraging “push” in the right direction? Are they cowards for not letting you leave? Does the idea of your leaving, and them being without you scare them more than anything? Or are they cowards for not telling you how they really feel? Informing you, no, showing you that their love is so deep that they need you in their life. Are you their number one? Are you their best, and by leaving a piece of them will get on that plane with you, never to return? If you sit back and just look
around, you realize that every question I have asked you ultimately has no answers, and even less hope of ever finding one.

*Psychology major Anjuli Hiranandani wrote this piece as a journal entry for the Pathway course, On the Road: Personal and Cultural Journeys in American Culture.*
bricolage

put together with what's available

Meaning is the Muse

Poster Exhibition
Sawyer Center
Graphic Design Program
Oct. 31, 2004 8pm
On Bricolage

By John Kenyon '05

This poster was created as a way of showing the meaning of a word through image and layout. The definition of the word “bricolage” was used to inspire the image used in the poster.

The word bricolage loosely means put together with what’s available (the definition from dictionary.com is as follows: “Something made or put together using whatever materials happen to be available”). To have this definition reach a broad audience I had to think about what people can relate to when it comes to using what’s available to put something together or make something work.

I chose to use a pair of my glasses because people break glasses all the time and try to fix them. I then decided to use duct tape because it is used to hold everything together, especially my first car. By putting my glasses back together with duct tape and using them as my image in the poster, I was able to have people grasp the meaning of the poster in a literal sense.

I used the font Futura Light because it related to the thin frames of the glasses. The names of the other students are included in the poster because it was done as if it were going to be a series of posters on exhibit. The names are done on an angle to relate back to the glasses.

John Kenyon, a graphic design major, graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in May 2005.
Good vs. Evil, Jihad vs. Crusade: How Talking Heads of Today Portray Islam & the Muslim World

By Shahnaz Naeem ‘05

Though media preachers and scholars are on two ends of a spectrum, the recent events of 9/11 have brought their attitudes more in parallel than one may have considered, leading to an overriding image of us (Americans, the West, etc.) as pitted against an evil, angry, resentful they (Muslim world, militant Islam, Arabs, etc., anything doing with Islam). Building on a legacy of the vilification of the Muslim world following 9/11, the media ministers and popular pundits have easily fallen into generalizing and exaggerating the Muslim world as an enemy who hates us, our values, or way of life, which has led to a common assumption being manifested as the truth of our time: the Muslim world is backwards, anti-American, hates us and must be changed.

This has allowed preemptive actions to be taken due to the exaggerated threat, as advocated by those who exaggerate it (Lewis, Huntington, Pipes). This has fueled a supposed clash between Islam and the West and influenced public policy. Public attitudes toward Muslims since 9/11 have darkened. Polls in 2004 show negative attitudes toward Muslims have increased among Americans, indicating a correlation does exist between the talking head attitudes and public opinion. The legacy of vilifying Islam and the post 9/11 fever has allowed a certain mindset regarding the Muslim world to become prevalent, not as myth but as truth. Stemming from generalizations, a sense of superiority has arisen toward that backwards Muslim world, and has all come together to position the Islam vs. the West, Jihad vs. Crusade, Good vs. Evil theory as the reality of our time, as the world’s new struggle.

This study not only shows parallel attitudes between the preachers and pundits, but shows that many of the attitudes
prevalent among the talking heads reflect old stereotypes that existed through the centuries when it comes to Islam and the West. Moreover, in times when an enemy has attacked, stereotypes are quickly drummed up, exaggerated, amplified and promoted as the truth, goading the audience into thinking that a major threat does exist against “us.” In the end, though, these two groups actually fuel a clash between cultures, and take the public policy and much of the public along with them. Furthermore, the attitudes of these talking heads make one wonder if they are intentionally invoking such attitudes of prejudice, superiority and vilification to create a unity among Westerners so as to quickly and preemptively destroy the “threat.” Regardless, such attitudes attest to the ease with which people can fall into sides, pitting one entity against the other, and in so doing create a clash of civilizations that we should so ardently try to avoid. By oversimplifying a group of people who share something in common, it creates monolithic entities in the mind, allowing for a simpler understanding of the world order. But, at the same time, it creates a monolithic “they” who must share one attitude, belief and mentality toward us, in the case of Islam and the Muslim world, it being hatred. Consequently, by dividing the world in such simplistic means, it makes the commission of abuses against the other more easily rationalized.

As the world’s only superpower, superiority easily becomes a filter through which one sees the world from the United States, and, as such, patronization and the imposition of our way as the best way comes easily. Such situations clearly call for the need for more diversity of opinion and perspective within mainstream media. Creating and deepening the divide between a Judeo-Christian vs. Islamic world is detrimental. The need to create bridges of understanding, rather than greater ravines of misunderstanding, is imperative. Seeing just how easily centuries-old stereotypes about a people can persist throughout time and become an inherent part of the lens through which one sees poses a serious problem. It is quite difficult to get rid of stereotypes, especially ones that are more than 1400 years old.

However, it is possible. By promoting efforts of cross-cultural engagement rather than cultural estrangement, stereotypes
can begin to subside. Furthermore, the oversimplification of the world order too often leads to the dualistic type of mentality, pitting one against the other. In reality, the world is much more complex, and so our dealings with our cultures should be as well. By oversimplifying the world order, it makes it look easy, but in the end, it allows us to create enemies of whole groups of people, and to lose sight of the interdependence of our lives, at the cost of the inherent complexity of human society.

Conclusion: It’s what you make it out to be...

This piece is part of a Senior Capstone project.
Student Commencement Address 2005

A Voyager’s Roadmap
(Stars, saucers...and other cosmic travelers)

By Lindsey Archila ’05

Trustees, President Ponder, faculty and staff, family friends, and, most importantly, the class of 2005—It is finally, our turn! We have worked long and hard, spending countless hours on work in classrooms, computer labs, in the library, or on location to get to this time today—Commencement.

Commencement means to go forward, to move on, to begin. But I feel a person cannot move forward in life without looking back on their past and where they came from. This is an essential part of looking toward the future. Looking back at our past is why we share memories, have end-of-the-year celebrations and spend more time with our friends and those who are close to us. Our Commencement represents the beginning of our next phase in life, but sadly, the conclusion of another phase in our lives, which has been so familiar to us for the past four years.

I urge you all now to look back to freshman year. Four years ago, we all were in a similar situation as this; only it was in early September, on a 90-degree day, with almost nothing but strangers around us, and we were under a tent where the Ivey Science Center now sits. On top of that, because it was so hot, we were fainting. Convocation introduced us to Colby-Sawyer College, our faculty, our Board of Trustees and our future friends. It was at Convocation where we heard Edgar Baez-Romero ’03 speak of the two types of students at Colby-Sawyer. He quoted a scene from “Jurassic Park III” stating, “There are those who want to be astronomers, and those who want to be astronauts. The astronomer student sits back in his or her comfort zone and watches everything that goes on without getting too involved, allowing everyone else to get involved. The astronaut student is into the thick of things, is the one who gets involved on campus
and sets out to be involved from their first day on campus.”

Looking back on Convocation, think to yourself; are you the same person who was sitting under that tent in 2001? Or have you changed? I know that I am nowhere near who I was then. I feel like I went through a giant transformation since I have been here, but a transformation for the better! Many of you may feel the same way. Many of you may feel that you haven’t changed that much. But I am sure all of you have found your place, your niche, at this college on the hill. How does one find his/her place in a small community like we have here at Colby-Sawyer? How does one find his/her niche among their friends, classmates and community? I feel that Edgar told us how to find our place on this campus. We find our place by getting involved. By becoming astronauts.

I think all 194 of us became astronauts, even if some of you think, “No I was an astronomer. I wasn’t involved on this campus.” In some way or another, we all became involved in our community, our home. I believe you instantly became involved on this campus when you became friends with other students. Involving yourself on campus, to me, means finding your place within your major, within your core group of friends, and interacting with your faculty, even if it meant just showing up to class. All of us, regardless of our level of involvement, contributed to the culture and the atmosphere of Colby-Sawyer for the four years we were here.

Colby-Sawyer’s motto and philosophy is “Learning Among Friends.” And I truly feel that is exactly what we do here. We all have met so many people in this four-year run that we will keep close to our hearts forever. And, when I say “Learning Among Friends,” I do not just mean that we befriended other members of the student body. We have also befriended faculty and staff, as well as safety officers, administration, faculty, housekeepers, resident directors, the Sodexho food and maintenance crew, and others.

The greatest attribute of this school is its size, since we were able to go to class with our friends and see our friends on a daily basis, all of whom became a part of our family. Friendship is a large part of college life, as well as our everyday life. So, as
we step out of this world we have been in and have loved so
much, I urge you to keep in touch with your friends as we move
forward into the future, and maybe geographically apart. The
relationships we have formed while here at Colby-Sawyer are
probably the deepest friendships we may ever find. These
friendships will remain at our core as we all start the next phase
of our life.

Now that we know where we have come from and where
we have been, we can look ahead to the future and the endless
opportunities laid out for us due to the great experiences we had
at Colby-Sawyer. We now need to find our place again in our new
communities, jobs and relationships. We need to ask ourselves all
over again: do we want to be an astronomer, and observe, or do
we want to become an astronaut and get involved? I think we all
need to remain astronauts as we go forward in the world and stay
involved. I want to take this moment to thank the people who
have helped us all find our place while we enjoyed our time here.
Thank you administration, staff, faculty, friends and family for
making my experience here at Colby-Sawyer better than I could
have ever asked for. Thank you for helping all of us find our own
places and allowing us all to become astronauts.

Congratulations my fellow classmates, and good luck to
all of you in finding your place in the next phase of your lives and
in continuing to be an astronaut.

This speech has been edited for publication.
President Ponder, honored guests, faculty and staff, friends and family, and my fellow classmates, the Colby-Sawyer College class of 2005, it is an honor and a privilege to be here with you today. First, let me thank you for the opportunity to address you to express what Colby-Sawyer College has meant to me over the past four years. Though the path may have seemed long at times, all the roads that I have traveled have led me to this place and I am proud to stand here, (on the beautiful front lawn at CSC), to tell you that I have found my place-my place at this podium in front of you, my place at CSC, and my place among the graduating class, my peers and my best friends.

Like most people, I didn’t always know where my place was. I began my college career long, long ago in a galaxy far away. Perhaps not that long and really not so far away, but it seems like another lifetime. I guess you could say I was lost. Before I found Colby-Sawyer, I was a different person. I found myself pretending to be someone I was not and paying dearly for it. I needed to break out of my comfort zone and find out who I was and where I belonged. I needed a place where people could know me for the free-spirited, fun-loving kind of guy I was.

It was not long after my interview on this beautiful campus that I realized Colby-Sawyer College could help me make that dream happen. It was a bit scary; this would be the first time I would be more then ten minutes from home, the first time I would be separated from my twin brother—my other half—and the first time I was really going to be on my own. But it was also thrilling. This was my chance to become my own person, an individual valued and respected for my contribution to a
community. Of course I’m not one to turn down an adventure, so in the fall of 2001, my road led me to Colby-Sawyer, with little idea of what to expect of the next four years.

It wasn’t long before I realized this was going to be a very exciting time for me. From the day I moved into Colby Hall, I knew I was about to experience some of the best years of my life. I was anxious, excited…ready to begin forming the legacy that will now be forever remembered as the Emmons Years (at least I’d like to think so).

From my first few moments on campus, I was welcomed as a friend, not only by students, but also by the faculty, staff, and, it seemed, everyone who wandered through campus from day to day. From early morning racquetball games to mid-afternoon ski trips or late-night coffee breaks, I found the people who would help me, make me laugh, teach me, inspire me and guide me. These people, and their willingness to accept me for who I am and what I do, have become an extended family, just as Colby-Sawyer has become a home away from home. I know I have developed friendships I will take with me for the rest of my life. The Colby-Sawyer community helped me to appreciate how wonderful it was to be Jon, (or as most of you know me, Emmons) and for that, I thank you all. I have learned to appreciate each and every one of you and to see the unique and individual person in everyone I have met. This being said, I am sure that every graduate here today in a gown and goofy hat can tell you his or her story about how they came to love this school that has formed us and taught us so much.

Speaking of teaching, at least a few of us have attended classes over the past four years. In lectures, discussions, readings and even field trips, I found myself enjoying school for the first time. While I may have struggled at times, I began to truly enjoy learning, thanks to the education I have received here. I, for one, found my place in the Business Administration Department, where long nights lead to early morning study sessions in order to ace an exam. While I may have seen more aces in a deck of cards, I certainly worked hard and appreciated the education I was
receiving. Throughout my time here at CSC, whether in Social Forces, Economics, or White Mountain History, even I was able to find my place in the classrooms; (Mom, Dad…I know this is hard for you to believe, but please stop crying).

I found my place in a field that Colby-Sawyer College helped me to explore and to really grow to love. Even better, we as a class found ourselves in courses reaching beyond the walls of the classrooms and into the world itself. This is all thanks to the wonderful professors. We are truly fortunate here at Colby-Sawyer to attend classes taught by some of the best, most caring and helpful professors in the country. On behalf of my whole class I extend sincere thanks to our professors, all the people who put the time and effort into making sure our experience at Colby-Sawyer was the best it could be. Rest assured that each senior in attendance today will take his or her experience, learned both in and out of the classrooms at CSC, and apply it to whatever lays in their future. We, as a senior class, are ready to stand out, take charge and thrive in all that we endeavor in the future.

What I’ve learned during the past few years is that in finding my place there was never a map. I’ve gone down one or two “dead ends” and one-way streets. X never really marked the spot and my path was not always clearly defined. I certainly knew my destination once I reached it and I have to tell you, I had a great time getting here. CSC was the place for me.

Now, as our time here has come to an end, we all must go out and find our place in the world. While I know it will not be easy, Colby-Sawyer College has given me the skills and the confidence to go out and make the most of my newest adventure. I am again excited by the opportunities that lie ahead of me. I am able to stand in front of you today and say, without a doubt, Colby-Sawyer College helped me find a place within my class, my education and myself. This is a place I know I will always be able to return to. It will always be a home to me. I thank you all once again for giving me the opportunity to stand out—as an individual in front of you today—and for the opportunity to become all that I have learned to expect of myself.
In closing, I challenge all my fellow seniors to go out and find a new place. Find a place that fits you as well as Colby-Sawyer fit us. Find a place that makes you happy; a place where you can succeed and a place that you can love. I wish you all the best of luck and every success in your future.
2005 Commencement Address

Of Birkenstocks, Grinches and Other Life Lessons

By Cheryl L. Coolidge, Associate Professor

Congratulations, students. It is a pleasure to celebrate your past and present achievements with you today as you contemplate your future.

Colby-Sawyer has so many dedicated and wonderful teachers, and I am humbled to have been selected as the recipient of the Jack Jensen Award. It is an honor to be the one to send you off with what I hope will be worthwhile advice, and I promise to be brief.

Before I dispense this guidance, I’d like to share with you the trials of preparing this address. I learned that I was selected for this award in mid-March, but that it would not be announced until mid-April. I floated around in a happy bubble for a couple of days until the reality of being the Commencement speaker struck. I would need to think of something profound and clever to say, a feat which I had not yet accomplished in my life. I did what all good Colby-Sawyer students do when assigned a task that does not require immediate completion—I ignored it.

After the official announcement, the college’s director of communications, Kim Slover, contacted me to make arrangements to have my picture taken for the Commencement program, a jarring reality check. I suggested to her that this program would be more attractive if she used a photo of Anna Kournikova with my biography, but my wish was ignored. The photographer called to set a time, and I was devastated to realize that I could neither schedule Botox nor lose 50 pounds in three days. My picture was taken, and I began to consider the speech.

My first thought was that I might recycle Randy Hanson’s 1999 Commencement address. Today’s graduates would not have
heard him speak, so this seemed like a very practical solution. Unfortunately, I remembered the college’s academic honesty policy, requiring us to do our own work. I then contemplated giving a chemistry lecture. That’s been known to paralyze audiences everywhere, but I was afraid that (Natural Sciences Professor) Bill Thomas might stay awake and ask me a question. Out of alternatives, I needed to get serious, which is a challenge for me.

I have a 24-year-old son, who is a college sophomore, and a 17-year-old daughter, who is a high school junior. What advice do I hope someone will give them on their graduation days two years and five years from now? Although it seems trite, the best counsel I can provide is that you should do something with your life that makes you happy. I know that many of you are seeking a way to change the world with your newly minted degree, or at least to alter the balance in your checkbook, but most of us affect change through a series of small steps.

My recipe for happiness has three components. The first is the briefest to explain. You will not find happiness in uncomfortable shoes. Nothing good has ever been accomplished with sore feet. Purchase Birkenstocks for a pleasurable existence.

The second ingredient is that you will be content with your life if you find a way to serve others. Through service, you will transform the world one person at a time. Having passed the half-century mark, I am quite resigned to the fact that a Nobel Prize and its cool million are not in my future. There is no “Cheryl’s Principle” in chemistry texts to torture future generations of chemistry students. There is, however, an element named just for me that adorns the periodic table in room 205 of the Curtis L. Ivey Science Center. I know that this silly tribute means that many students who previously hated chemistry now have an appreciation for its transformative ideas, and can apply those ideas in their fields. Those I have touched might determine the important future principles that do find their way into textbooks. I just don’t know why my element has to be one with a high atomic weight!
Teaching is a second career for me, one that I stumbled upon after an enjoyable decade as a chemist in industry. In one position, I had the opportunity to train a sales force, and in another, I managed a laboratory as we entered the information age, and I was able to teach a group of coworkers about the intricacies and benefits of Lotus 123. Although I know it’s hard to believe, I discovered that the interpersonal interactions afforded a teacher might be more intriguing than interacting with a test tube, and I decided to pursue an academic path. I have had the privilege of sharing 16 years with students from all walks of life, and the experience has enriched and informed my life immeasurably.

Many of you are preparing for service careers as nurses, educators, counselors or athletic trainers, where you will have direct contact with individuals. Others among you will serve the greater good through careful research, ethical business decisions, and, if you have the means, through generous philanthropy. According to Harry Truman, our 33rd president, “We know that helping others is the best way, probably the only way, to achieve a better future for ourselves.” Eric Clapton, in his Grammy award-winning song, “Change the World,” sings, “If I could change the world, I would be the sunlight in your universe.” I maintain that the inverse of his lyrics—if I could be the sunlight in your universe, I would change the world—is more prophetic. Connecting with others will nourish you and give your life meaning.

The first two ingredients in the recipe for happiness will not produce complete satisfaction unless a third is also added. The third component necessary for a happy life is to strive for excellence. Think about the one project or test or paper that you have completed here that you are most proud of. I am certain that this task was one that required considerable effort on your part. You probably were rewarded with a good grade, as well. But excellence is not merely the attainment of an external recognition like a high GPA or the Jack Jensen Award. Here are some examples of what excellence is not:

“Is this on the test?”
“I’m a history major. Why do I need a science class?”
“I’m a biology major. Why do I need to take history?”
“I’m sorry I missed the test. My dog threw up. When can I make it up?”

You’ve all heard these types of questions in class, and may even be guilty of having uttered one. Fortunately, many of you quickly observed that such queries did not endear you to your faculty. We much prefer to celebrate with you for a job well done. We take tremendous pride in your considerable accomplishments over these past four years, and have enjoyed seeing you surprise yourselves with the quality of work you have produced through your best efforts.

To help you continue on your path of high achievement, I would like to delve a little deeper into what defines excellence. As I stated earlier, excellence is more than just getting good grades or similar rewards. It is a mindset of openness and the welcoming of challenge. While innate talent can make it easier to achieve excellence, high aptitude does not guarantee excellence, nor does average ability preclude it.

Top classroom achievers often excel in athletics, or hold positions of leadership, or find time to volunteer, or pursue and master a hobby. Those who shine juggle jobs, family commitments, and lots of activities with little apparent stress, and have cultivated the art of time management. Achievers often have strong interpersonal skills, work well in a group, and are not afraid to share their ideas. According to Aristotle, “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.”

Those who embrace excellence delight in linking new ideas with knowledge already gained. They see the big picture. They think about how evolution and religion can be reconciled. They consider knowledge in context—how have sociological and historical factors influenced the creators of great works of art, music, literature or scientific theory? Advances in any area of human endeavor do not take place in a vacuum, but rather in a social context at a given point in time. An appreciation of the interplay of knowledge, culture and history refines understanding.
and defines excellence.

Those who strive for excellence are willing to try to learn in ways that are not comfortable. Students in technical disciplines are often happiest when the answer can be found at the end of an “equals” sign, but excellent scientists can also write, debate and work cooperatively, even without a calculator! I know that the same can be said for the best writers and artists—they might even secretly like math.

Here’s a warning: excellence requires lifelong learning. As you complete your undergraduate career, many of you are breathing a sigh of relief—“I’ll never take another class!” A couple of days on the beach, watching a Sox game or reading the latest John Grisham or Dan Brown novel will restore you and set you back on the path to excellence. Before too long, you might even want to return to school to complete a master’s degree.

Regardless of where your life takes you, the stamp of excellence is the desire to do your best and to seek challenge rather than looking for the easiest route. Self-motivation is the hallmark of excellence, and doing a bit more than is required is a given. As you explore your options in life, a mindset of excellence will enable you to appreciate the journey and not just the destination.

I’d like to share with you a story about the lack of excellence in my household. When my son, Todd, was in the sixth grade, I was very pleased when he was selected to join an independent reading group with four other kids who were reading well above grade level, and I silently congratulated myself that he got his brains from me. The next day, he returned home with a dejected air.

“Mom,” he said, “I was kicked out of my reading group.” His first day? What was his transgression? Apparently, the kids were sent to the library to pick out a book that interested and challenged them. Todd returned with How the Grinch Stole Christmas and tried to convince his teacher that it was a classic. She was not amused, and he was convicted immediately of a lack of excellence. I was forced to conclude that he got his brains from
his father.

In closing, I wish you all the happiness that life has to offer. You can promote this happiness by being of service to others and remembering: no uncomfortable shoes, and no grinches!

Cheryl Coolidge is an associate professor in the Department of Natural Sciences at Colby-Sawyer College and the recipient of the 2005 Jack Jensen Award for Excellence in Teaching. She presented this address at Commencement on Saturday, May 14, 2005.
‘A door only opens as much as the hand that grabs it; closed fists won't get you very far.’

-Adrian Pelletier ‘08

This quote came at the end of a student’s Sophomore Seminar Pathway Final Reflection, which was proceeded by this statement: “I’ll finish with a quote I came up with not long after college began. With Pathways coming to an end and the start of new things on the way it seems fitting.”
Cover art by Colby-Sawyer College Assistant Professor Bert Yarborough, M.P. Landis and Paul Bowen.