

COLLEGE

By Lela Moore
Associate Editor

Colby professor denied tenure due to allegations of sexual harassment

Colby College recently denied tenure to a professor due to allegations that he sexually harassed female students by perusing their papers to obtain details about their personal lives, then analyzed the details in private conferences. 16 female students have charged Adam Weisberger, a sociology professor, with creating a sexually threatening classroom environment. Weisberger, for his part, claimed that the college had limited his academic freedom in punishing him for using instruction techniques common in the humanities and social sciences.

Weisberger admitted using a psychotherapy technique to enliven a class on social philosophy. He asked students to write papers about their families in order to discover how social forces had shaped their lives, urging them to delve into their feelings. Yet his accusers claim he manipulated their ideas, making "sexually tinged" comments about their work in front of the class. One called Weisberger "a crude voyeur."

The women who accused Weisberger of sexual harassment said they felt their grades in his class would be threatened if they did not include personal details in their papers. They describe a professor who overstepped the boundaries of his role, often visiting them in their dorm rooms or taking them out to lunch.

Weisberger's supporters said students were confused by the professor's unorthodox teaching methods and claimed that the university was worried that keeping such a controversial professor on tenure would anger parents.

Following the denial of his tenure in the fall of 1996, Weisberger left Colby last August. He filed a claim last month in Maine Superior Court charging Colby with defamation and infliction of emotional distress. He plans to file a sexual discrimination suit in federal court soon, claiming that he was fired because he is male and that the students who accused him would not have done so if he had been female.

Banning alcohol on campus compared to 'preaching chastity in a brothel'

Every college student is familiar with the posters displayed around his or her dorm which decry alcohol abuse. Some warn of the scary consequences of alcohol abuse: drunk driving or date rape. Others teach the warning signs of drunkenness or offer instruction in calculating one's blood alcohol level. All contain the implicit message about not becoming a statistic. And all these tactics have a common purpose—striking fear into the heart of the average college partyer.

A recent study at Harvard University stated that as many as 44 percent of students at 140 schools surveyed qualified as "binge drinkers"—that is, they drank five drinks in one hour for men or four for women. Following the release of this report and after several alcohol-related deaths on college campuses across the United States this year, many colleges are moving to ban alcohol entirely. Yet such drastic action may prove reactionary, caution a growing number of college health educators. Jeff Linkenbach, director of student-health promotion at Montana State University, compares the bombardment of college students with obscure statistics and threats to turn campuses dry to "preaching chastity in a brothel."

Such actions may actually encourage students to drink more in an effort to keep up with what they see as "the norm."

Instead, health educators advocate the "social marketing" approach—teaching students about the "norms" on their own campuses (which typically don't match the frightening numbers reached in national studies) and thus harnessing peer pressure to work for the students instead of against them. "If you start where students are at and tell them the truth, you will reduce heavy drinking," said Michael P. Haines, director of health-enhancement services at Northern Illinois State University.

Source: Chronicle of Higher Education

Fair raises environmental awareness

By Megan Mabey
Staff Writer

True to its title, "Middlebury and Beyond," this year's annual Environmental Fair, which took place on Thursday, November 20 in Proctor, gave students a first-hand look at a broad range of environmental issues confronting both the campus and the nation. Co-sponsored by the Environmental Council and Dining Services, this environmentally-conscious extravaganza provided students with a nutritious dinner and provocative food for thought.

While the Environmental Fair has traditionally urged students to consider their consumption of natural resources, it has been an event that only a fraction of the student body attended—primarily students who were already environmentally-aware. This year's fair, however, captured the attention of a vast majority of students as it was held in conjunction with a Proctor dinner, which appropriately featured local and organic products.

"[The Environmental Fair] went a lot better than last year's one because it was in Proctor and the meal was centered around it," said Environmental Council member Maggie Buck '99. "Even if students only walked through and ate dinner, they still probably learned something."

Increasing student awareness about preservation ventures started by exposing students to the environmental programs that are in effect at Middlebury, and the ways in which students can help conserve natural resources. Electricians, plumbers and other mem-

bers of the facilities staff advised students on how to reduce their waste, and handed out energy-efficient light bulbs.

By highlighting the environmental programs that exist on campus, such as composting and recycling, Environmental Council members hoped to reinforce the significance of them. Not only did students become more educated about the programs, but they also got to see the end results of their

having the fair was to expose everybody to [the programs]."

Director of the Career Services Office Valerie Szymkowicz advised students who are interested in environmental studies and recommended job bulletins and other career-oriented publications to them such as Earth Work's Environmental Opportunities and AEE Jobs Clearinghouse.

It was a really unique opportunity to reach out to students whose interests are, perhaps, not well-represented by some of the high-profile recruiting that we do here at CSO," Szymkowicz conceded.

Coordinator of Off-Campus Study Stacey

Woody also talked to students about environmental studies programs, focusing on countries such as Australia, Ecuador and Tanzania. "There are more and more opportunities to study abroad for environmental studies majors and it's helpful for students to know about them," Woody commented.

In addition to talking with representatives from various organizations, exhibits caught students' (see Fair, page 4)

At this year's annual environmental fair, students enjoyed an organic dinner and used paper towels and napkins made from the college's recycled paper.

conservation efforts. For example, they used paper towels and napkins made from the college's recycled paper and learned that the compost from food waste will be used to fertilize fields in the spring.

"I think a lot of times people on this campus don't really realize the extent of what Middlebury's environmental programs do here," explained Environmental Coordinator Jen Hazen. "My main goal in

Security director addresses campus-wide safety issues

By Mary Tucker
Staff Writer

Director of Campus Security and Public Safety Tedi Jennings addressed the SGA at its last meeting in an effort to address recent campus safety concerns and to help bridge the gap between the student body and security. She began her presentation by discussing the most

pressing security issue this semester: the attempted abduction of a Middlebury jogger. "I'm sure you are all well aware of the attempted abduction..." Jennings began. "There is an ongoing investigation, and there have been numerous motor vehicle checks. [However] This person is still out there, and there is no composite drawing. Luckily, the young lady had her senses about her and concentrated on getting away, and as a result we have little information... [We do know] the car was a maroon color. State police and local police are patrolling jogging routes, but there is still a need to take care, and to jog in groups." Jennings also suggested that any Middlebury woman interested in learning how to better protect herself should look into the self-defense workshop that is being offered this winter term.

Next, Jennings turned to the issue of bike theft. "There has been an increase in bike thefts, both on campus and in the town of Middlebury in general," Jennings stated. "Since the beginning of school 30 bikes have been lost, which is a big increase from last year. Students need to take more care in locking their bikes," Jennings emphasized. She continued, "We offer free bike registration through the town of Middlebury."

Now, for everyone's favorite topic, joked Jennings as she moved into a discussion about parking, during which she suggested that it is getting out of hand. "The student parking lots are packed," said Jennings, "and people are parking in obscure places. We are getting an increase in complaints from faculty and staff. There will be more parking in the future, with Bicentennial Hall creating a new parking lot, etc.," said Jennings "but something needs to be done now."

One of Jennings' ideas to solve the (see Security, page 5)

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She is convinced that once Russians are satisfied with the trend of economic reforms, they will too accept democracy.