

THE TRICORN

NEWSLETTER published jointly by the BOSTON +
LONG ISLAND + PHILADELPHIA GREAT BOOKS COUNCILS

August, 1990

GREAT BOOKS WEEK-LONG INSTITUTES

The week-long institute was started in 1953 by the Great Books Foundation as an occasion for intensive training of discussion group leaders, as well as to test readings for inclusion in two groupings: **Great Issues in Education** and **Great Issues in Faith**. The first institutes were held at Asilomar Park, Monterey, California, and at the University of New Hampshire, Durham, N.H. (where Is Wachs and Charlie Djerf were among the eighteen participants.) Eventually institutes of this sort were accepted as ends in themselves for their unique intellectual and social rewards, and as means to strengthen the Great Books community program by maintaining the interest of those already in groups and by recruiting new participants.

After the 1961 institute, the Foundation ceased to sponsor these gatherings, at which point a small group of people, led by Is Wachs and Charlie Djerf, from Boston and Philadelphia, decided courageously and existentially to run the Colby Institute themselves, rather than give up the transcendental experience they had found it offered. The Colby Institute, now in its thirty-fifth year is still directed by many of the original committee.

Gus Soderberg has researched the following list of institute readings, which should give Great Bookers fascinating food for thought as well as a wonderful set of suggestions for working in their own groups and smaller institutes. *The Tricorn* is publishing the list in this issue, and concluding it in the winter issue. Come and climb aboard our time machine to discover what we were reading in the Neolithic Age of Great Books:

1957 (All Great Issues in Faith)

Colby

Russell, *A Free Man's Worship*
Pascal, *Pensées**
Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion**
Kierkegaard, *Fear & Trembling**
Buber, *I and Thou*
Gospel Accdg. to St. Matthew
(Sermon on the Mount, Crucifixion & Resurrection)

Williams College (MA)

Same as Colby

Aspen

Whitehead, *Science and Religion*
St. Augustine, *Confessions**
Hume, (as at Colby)
Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*
(Grand Inquisitor & Father Zossima)
Weil, *Waiting for God**
St. Matthew (as at Colby)

1958 Colby: Modern Man & His Religion

T.S. Eliot, "Ash Wednesday"
Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*
(Ch. X, The Spiritual Problems of Modern Man; Ch. XI, Psychotherapists or the Clergy)
Sartre, *The Flies*
Buber, *Between Man & Man* (Part I)
Hesse, *Siddhartha*
Tillich, *The Religious Situation*

Lake Forest (IL) Modern Man & His Religion

Two poems: Yeats, "The 2nd Coming";
Hopkins, "God's Grandeur"
Wm. James, *The Will to Believe*
Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*
Shaw, *St. Joan*
Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death**
Otto, *The Idea of the Holy**

Aspen: Great Works of our Century

Two poems: T.S.Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock";

Yeats, "Among School Children"

Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*

Lawrence, *The Man Who Died*

Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (Ch.5, Changed Concepts of the Ideal and the Real;

Ch.7, Reconstruction in Moral Conceptions)

Pirandello, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*

Cassirer, *An Essay on Man* (Part I, Sec.2-5; II, sec. 12)

1959 (All Contemporary Literature & Essays)

Colby

Two Poems: Jeffers, "Night"; Thomas, "Do Not

Go Gentle into That Good Night"

Malinowski, *Magic, Science & Religion*

Schrodinger, *What Is Life?*

Faulkner, *The Bear*

Cassirer, *Language & Myth*

Asilomar & Aspen

Russell, *Mysticism & Logic*

Forster, *A Passage to India*

Bergson, *Intro. to Metaphysics*

Thomas, *Under Milk Wood*

Whitehead, *The Function of Reason*

1960 Colby and Aspen: The State

Plato, *The Republic* (Entire)

1961 Colby: War and Peace

Two Pamphlets: *Community of Fear;*

A World Without War

Homer, *The Iliad*

St. Augustine, *The City of God* (Part 5)

Kant, *Perpetual Peace*

Freud, *Civilization & Its Discontents*

The Colby Great Books Institute Committee is formed to run the program.

1962 Colby: Insights into Man

Cassirer, *Essay on Man* (Parts 1 & 2)

Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales**

Marlowe, *The Tragedy of Dr. Faustus*

Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground*

Aristotle, *Physics**

Asilomar

Plato, *The Republic (The Cave)*

Racine, *Phaedre*

Bronowski, *Science & Human Values*

Ibsen, *The Wild Duck*

1963 Colby: The Cardinal Virtues

Plato, *Protagoras*

Dante, *The Inferno*

Cervantes, *Don Quixote*

Franklin, *The Autobiography*

1964 Colby: Ethics

Stendhal, *The Red & the Black*

Ibsen, *An Enemy of the People*

Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of*

Morals

Nietzsche, *Beyond Good & Evil*

Bible, *Deuteronomy* (?)

Asilomar

Plato, *Symposium*

Sinnott, *Biology of the Spirit*

Albee, *Who's Afraid of Virginia W.?*

1965 Colby: Eastern Religions

Watts, *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*

Lao Tzu, *The Way*

The Upanishads

Alto, *Mysticism East & West* (?)

Sayings of Confucius

Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha

Asilomar

Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*

Ortega y Gasset, *What is Philosophy?*

Wilder, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*

1966 Colby: Crime & Punishment
Coleridge, "Rhyme of the Ancient Mar."
Dostoyevsky, *Crime & Punishment*
Ibsen, *Ghosts*
Kafka, *The Trial*

1967 Colby
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*
(entire)

1968 Colby: The Outsider
Conrad, *Victory*
Hesse, *Steppenwolf*
H. James, *The Beast in the Jungle*
Gide, *Lafcadio's Adventures*
Camus, *The Stranger*

1969 Colby: Perceiving the External World
Moore, *Some Main Problems of Philosophy*
Ayer, *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge*
Austen, *Sense and Sensibility*
Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*
Strawson, *Individuals*

1970 Colby: Revolution
Trotsky, *The Russian Revolution*
Malraux, *Man's Fate*
Camus, *The Rebel*
Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*
Weiss, *Marat-Sade*

1971 Colby: The Counter-Culture
Ginsberg, "Howl"
Hoffman, *Revolution for the Hell of It*
Wolfe, *The Electric Acid Kool-Aid Test*
Laing, *The Politics of Experience*
Roszak, *The Making of a Counter-Culture*
Toynbee, *A Study of History**

1972 Colby: Man's Symbols
Cassirer, *Mythical Thought*
Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks*
Eliade, *Myths, Dreams & Mysteries*
Gide, *Theseus*
Jung, *Memories, Dreams & Reflections*

1973 Colby: The World of Art
Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*
Weiss, *The World of Art*
Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea*
Stevens, "Peter Quince at the Clavier"
Stone, (ed.), *Dear Theo*

Asilomar
Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*
Kierkegaard, *Fear & Trembling*
Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*

Asilomar
Conrad, *Nigger of the Narcissus*
Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*
Buber, *I & Thou*
Shakespeare, *Richard III*

Asilomar: Comments on Society
More, *Utopia*
Plato, *The Republic* (Bks. 4 & 5)
Skinner, *Walden II*

Asilomar
King James Bible, *Job*
Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*
Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*
Jones, *Dutchman*

Asilomar
Plato, *Theaetetus*
Hume, *Concerning Human Understanding*
Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*
Kafka, *Metamorphosis*

Asilomar
Kazantzakis, *Saviours of God*
Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground*;
"The Grand Inquisitor"
Vonnegut, *Cat's Cradle*

Asilomar
Epictetus, *The Manual*
Herrigel, *Zen in the Art of Archery*
Lawrence, *The Man Who Died*
Shakespeare, "The Seven Ages of Man"

Asilomar
Solzhenitssyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch*
Camus, *Caligula*
Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*
Watts, *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*

1974 Colby: The World of Shakespeare

*Henry V, As You Like It,
Measure for Measure, Othello,
King Lear, The Tempest*

Asilomar

Browning, "Pied Piper of Hamelin"
Anderson, "The Emperor's New Clothes"
Pico della Mirandola, "Oration on the Dignity
of Man"
*The Federalist Papers** & the Constitution
Shakespeare, *Othello*

1975: Colby: In Search of Self

Plato, *Phaedo*
Whitman, "Song of Myself"
Freud, *Introduction to Psychoanalysis*
Hesse, *Demian*
Eriksen, *Childhood and Society**

Asilomar

M. Shelley, *Frankenstein*
Hobbes, *Leviathan**
Shakespeare, *Richard II*

1976 Colby: Ways of Life

Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*
Goodmans, *Communitas*
Skinner, *Walden II*
Carey, *The Horse's Mouth*
Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man**

Asilomar

Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*
Toqueville, *Democracy in America**
Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*

1977 Colby: Man's Quest

Buber, *Between Man & Man (What is Man?)*
Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*
Kafka, *The Castle*
Ibsen, *The Doll's House*
The Epic of Gilgamesh
Yeats, "Lapis Lazuli"

Asilomar

Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*
Bellow, *The Dangling Man*
Shaffer, *Equus*

1978 Colby: The Limits of Reason

Hamsun, *Mysteries*
Jaspers, *Reason & Existenz*
Rilke, *The Notebooks of Malte
Laurids Brigge*
Casteneda, *A Separate Reality*
Suzuki, *Manual of Zen Buddhism**

Asilomar

Descartes: *Meditations*
Lessing, *Memoirs of a Survivor*
Shaw, *Heartbreak House*

1979 Colby: Relationship: A Categorical Imperative

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics (8&9)*
Sartre, *No Exit*
Buber, *I & Thou*
Forster, *A Passage to India*
Bettelheim, *The Empty Fortress**
Dickinson, *Poems**

Asilomar

Gardner, *Grendel*
Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*
Balzac, *Pere Goriot*
Yeats, "On Baile's Strand"

1980 Colby: Man & the Sea

Conrad, *Typhoon*
Carson, *The Sea Around Us*
W. James, *Principles of Psychology**
Apollonius of Rhodes, *The Voyage of the Argo*
Synge, *Riders to the Sea*
Arnold, "Dover Beach"

Asilomar

Aristotle, *Ethics**
Wharton, *Ethan Frome*
Duerrenmatt, *The Visit*

1981 Colby: Modern Visions (?)

Halkl, *The Hidden Dimension*
Lessing, *The Marriages Between Zones 3, 4, and 5*
Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*
Albee, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*
Ogden & Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning*
Cummings, *Poems**

Asilomar

Milton, *Areopagitica*
Turgenev, *Fathers & Sons*
Gide, *Two Legends: Oedipus & Theseus*

* Selections

Editor: Norma Oser 7933 Heather Rd., Elkins Park, PA 19117
Long Island Correspondent: June Ferrara, 14 Bay Second St., Islip, NY 11751
Boston Correspondent Gus Soderberg, 30 Braddock Park, Boston, MA 02116

LETTERS

To the Editor:

Your article by Gus Soderberg ("Some Thoughts to Consider in Making Reading Lists for Great Books Institutes") was superb in every aspect (content, style and usefulness.) My comments will be minor points at the margins of what Gus has described.

Although sticking to one author is fraught with danger, our Briarcliff Manor group did conduct a highly successful experiment with James Joyce's *Dubliners*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and *Ulysses* over the course of a year.

Also, I agree that excerpting parts of works is an appropriate method of exploring some great writing. The Great Books Foundation has been slow, however, in heeding requests to label clearly the excerpt in all its details (the title of the full work, the pages which are being excerpted, indications of omitted portions, etc.). Years ago they offered no information; at least now they are trying.

Finally, there is one piece of advice I offer to new leaders which is usually overlooked. One of the components of a sound interpretive question is the interest of the person asking the question. To use a list of questions which someone else has drawn up, even though the questions may be of high quality, is not as good as having the leader delve into questions that he really cares about.

We need more articles like Gus's to keep the intellectual ferment of Great Books alive and vigorous.

Stanley Goldstein



To the Editor:

In the February issue of Tricorn Bill Rossi comments on Aaron Bechtel's article (in the August 1989 issue) about myth. Rossi's remarks seem to be triggered by an error made in the Bechtel article, namely that the "meaning of life" is equated with "ultimate meaning." (Bechtel could have avoided the latter without loss to his article.) The substance of Rossi's response is that it's okay to have myths that contain the meaning of life; just don't call them "ultimate." Calling them ultimate has several consequences, according to Rossi: (1) we thereby violate scientific criteria of immutability and universality, (2) we may be led into the wickedness of impressing our myths on others, and (3) we become gullible fish. Let's look at each of these:

First, violation of science and logic in myth employment may be a problem only to the scientific community. In this imperfect world there are worse things than being unscientific and illogical. There is, in addition, a problem in declaring all ultimate meanings erroneous (i.e., lacking in one or both truth characteristics.) On the basis of observable diverse (non-universal) and shifting (nonmutable) myths, we are not required to declare any one myth **necessarily** non-ultimate.

Second, unquestionably civilization's history is cluttered with oppression in the name of belief. But this is a matter of will, not idea (to be semi-Schopenhauerian.) And is it not equally oppressive to deny anyone the freedom to possess ultimate meaning?

Finally, being a fish seems preferable to being human, for Rossi says, "...all other creatures accept and successfully cope with...(reality.)" It's the "gullible" part that's the bummer.

There is a more serious objection to the scientific demands. If the possibility of knowable, ultimate meaning exists, it is unlikely that scientific logic unassisted is sufficient to turn people from seeking that which can "explain" everything. Indeed, one could make a good case for defining man as an ultimate meaning seeker. To discourage this search may diminish humanness.

Presley Brown

To the Editor:

I hope additional comments can still be made on Bill Rossi's reply to Aaron Bechtel's piece on "The Question of Ultimate Meaning." My interest was piqued by the citing of both Campbell and Jung to illustrate the point. Both Jung and Campbell have been great enthusiasms of mine ever since I first read Jung for a Colby Great Books Institute sometime in the late 60's, so I really am eager to add my two cents. Out of the great body of material of both Jung and Campbell let me try to abstract what I feel is useful to the idea of "ultimate truth."

Jung says buried deep in the unconscious, each human shares with every other human the same personifications of fears and needs. He calls these "archetypes," and these archetypes are what show up in our dreams, our art, our myths, and our symbols. They are effective because they speak to us at a deep unconscious level. Each age reinterprets this material so it is useful and representative of its own era, but the basic stuff is the same for all humans throughout all of human history. Individuals start at an infantile point and move (it's hoped) through growth to some point (integration) where it starts to go together.

Campbell comes to the discussion from the body of oral, written, and artistic material that represents the personification of these archetypes. He calls these stories myths; he refers to them as metaphors. For Campbell they stand for that which we do not know, are afraid to deal with. Only with maturation, growth, much pain and work, and much integration do we learn what is being referred to. Under no circumstances are these myths to be taken literally. He regards Western man's tendency to do so as a major flaw of Occidental culture. Myths are poetic and metaphoric attempts to explain.

In my opinion, the material dealt with in the myths—art, dreams, and so forth—is the ultimate truth. According to Jung, Campbell, and others who have worked with this material, the conclusion of all those who have made the trip into the understanding is the same. The paths of getting there vary, but the journey is the same.

Now at this point it is possible to say, "Okay, all humans are so organized chemically, psychically, or whatever that they keep coming up with the same crazy ideas, but that has nothing to do with the reality of the world." And yet modern scientists, as we read last summer at Colby, are beginning to come very close on a material level to an idea of the world and the universe that the mystics and others came to through exploration of their own inner space.

Now to the issue of "Follow your bliss." It fascinates me that so much commentary has focused on Campbell's use of this phrase and so little discussion has taken place around his statement that "God is a metaphor." The latter statement, to me, is much more important. Anyway, in "The Hero's Adventure," (one of the Pocono readings for November, 1990), he gives a complete definition of what he means by "Follow your bliss." He says, to paraphrase, this journey, although it may have outside forms, is really inward to your center (bliss?) Without the journey one ends up with a life that is stale, meaningless, and spiritually empty. Remember, think metaphorically. Incidentally, the necessity for all humans to travel this road in the "afternoon" of their lives was also the message of the Jung we read some 25 years ago at Colby.

Annabel (Rusty) Lindy



In Memory of Mack

One of our Old Guard is gone. For decades, Mack Blank was always very much a presence in Philadelphia Great Books affairs, so his absence is deeply felt. Mack was one of the first presidents of the local Great Books council, and his continuous service during the succeeding years affected much of our work. Wise and witty, his counsel was always welcome. Particularly since his retirement, Mack gave generously of his time and talents to other worthy organizations, also, notably to Common Cause. A long-term resident in his West Philly neighborhood, he was greatly respected for his civic activities. One of his projects was the establishment of a flourishing Great Books group at the Woodland Fellowship House. Mack was a man who made it his business to make a difference. We're grateful for our long association.

BOSTON ONE-DAY INSTITUTE

Folly and Fulfillment is the theme (and model?) of Boston's October 13th one-day institute, to be held at the Wellesley Hills Unitarian Church, corner of Routes 9 and 16. Readings are Erasmus' *Praise of Folly* and Congreve's play *The Way of the World*, both thought-and-mirth-provoking satires on the human condition. The fee has not yet been set. For details, write or call Ann Mogan, 317 Grove St., Wellesley, MA 02181 (617-237-3855.)

WILMINGTON NEWS

The summer program of the Great Books Council of Delaware offered participants some exotic fare from Islamic literature: *Wedding Song*, by Nobelist Naguib Mah fouz, *The Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam, and a third undisclosed reading.

Philadelphia's 20th Annual Great Books **FALL INSTITUTE WEEKEND**

Presents

THE ANATOMY OF LEADERSHIP

Body by Joseph Campbell: "The Hero's Adventure" from *The Power of Myth*

Brain by Niccolo Machiavelli: *The Discourses (Book III)*

Psyche by Nadine Gordimer: *A Sport of Nature*

November 9-11, 1990

Pocono Manor, Mount Pocono, PA

COST: \$185 per person, double occupancy, \$240 per single occupancy. Price includes meals, lodging, books, entertainment, and tips.

CANCELLATION: Your deposit less a charge for books and mailing will be refunded if notice is postmarked no later than Oct. 6.

TO REGISTER: Please send a deposit of \$85 per person for double occupancy and \$115 for single occupancy with your registration form to:
Sylvia Perelman
8214 Marion Road
Elkins Park, PA 19117

REGISTRATION FORM

Enclosed is a deposit of \$ _____ (\$85 per person double occupancy *or* \$115 per person single occupancy — if available) Made payable to Fall Institute Committee.

Name (please give the first and last name of each person)	Non-smoking group	Smoking group	No preference
(first) _____ (last) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(first) _____ (last) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address (street) _____			
(city) _____ (state) _____ (zip) _____	Phone (_____) _____		

Special requests should accompany this form. They will be honored if possible.

PHILADELPHIA NEWS

Another New Group Hatched

Phenomenal group starter Joe-Blume has done it again; he has conquered new territory, this time the Southwark Library in South Philly. And several other groups, still in early stages, look like future additions to the local list.

Leader Training

Of course new groups require new leaders, so Sibyl Cohen is setting up an autumn training course. The dates are two Sundays in October, the 21st and the 28th, at her center city apartment. To register for this stimulating and most useful training, either call Sibyl at (215) 568-9827, or write to her at 1812 Penn Center House, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

Honor and Memorial Cards

Barbara Isaacman would be glad to send notes informing those you wish to honor, or the families of those you would like to commemorate of contributions to the Philadelphia Great Books Council made in their names. Simply send your contribution, along with the necessary information to Barbara at 1122 Countryside Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17110.



Great Books
14 Bay Second St.
Islip, NY 11751