

THE TRICORN

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

February, 1991

COLBY 1991: MEETING ONE'S SELF

The real self, as opposed to the social construct, can remain undiscovered for an entire lifetime. Some of our finest writers have created people who meet their true selves at crisis points in their lives. These turn-arounds thrill us, as all great literature does, with the possibility of redemption. Proust's autobiographical Marcel dips his madeleine into his tea, releasing a flood of memories with the taste and returning the jaded socialite to his Combray childhood. Shakespeare's proud Lear discovers in his tragic dotage what truly constitutes a man. Marcus Aurelius endears himself to his readers by seeing himself, though a great emperor, as an imperfect being, along with the rest of mankind. Turgenev's traditionalists and nihilists find their real selves along their diverging paths. Virginia Woolf's women meet themselves truly for the first time when they achieve a degree of privacy.

These great books can lead us to a new self-awareness as we meet ourselves through literature.

Lear: Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou ow'st the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume.... Thou art the thing itself; unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal....

King Lear III,iv,115

Marcus Aurelius: If he who knows not what is in the universe is a stranger to the universe, he is no less so who knows not what takes place in it. Such a man is an exile, self-banished from the polity of reason.

Meditations, Bk.IV, #29

Monday, Tuesday: Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past: Swann's Way*
Wednesday: Shakespeare, *King Lear*
Thursday: Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*
Friday: Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons*
Saturday: Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*



Mirror on the Wall

At The

1991 GREAT BOOKS SUMMER INSTITUTE

WHERE AND WHEN:

Colby College, Waterville, Maine — August 4-10

THEME: MEETING ONE'S SELF

READINGS:

Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past: Swann's Way*
 Shakespeare, *King Lear*
 Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*
 Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons*
 Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*

"...waiting for the imminent moment when he would find himself face to face once more, with the phrase, convulsed him in one of those sobs which a fine line of poetry or a piece of alarming news will wring from us, not when we are alone, but when we repeat one or the other to a friend, in whom we see ourselves reflected..."

Proust, *Swann's Way*

COST:

\$360 which includes room, board and readings. Books, travel information and schedule of events will be sent upon receipt of deposit.

ELIGIBILITY:

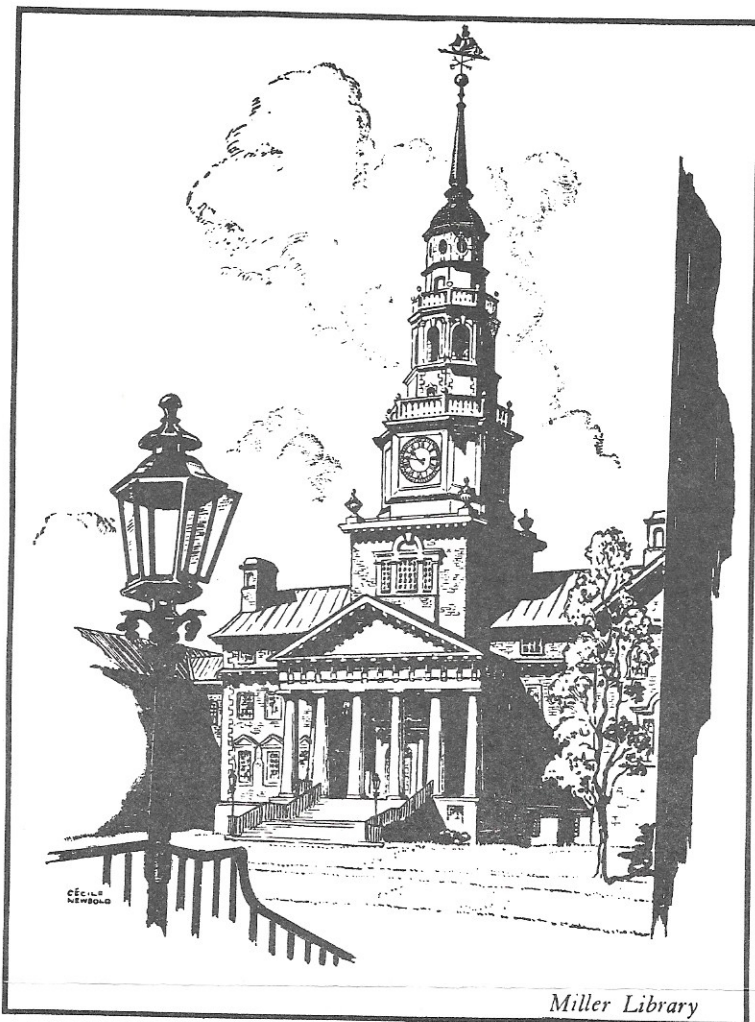
Any adult who desires to spend a relaxing week, which includes the reading and discussion of books.

CANCELLATIONS:

Your deposit will be refunded, less \$65, if you cancel before July 1, 1991.

CHILDREN:

Families with children between 4 and 14 are welcome. A reduced fee for room, board and supervised activities for children will be quoted on request. Contact Ginny Thurston, P.O. Box 299, Harvard, MA. 01451; 508-456-3505.



Miller Library

COLBY COLLEGE CAMPUS

HOW MUCH IS A WEEK WORTH —

If it can give you perspective on the other fifty-one; if it can bring you to being interested in what other people think and feel; if it can rekindle the thrill of reading a book and being exposed to ideas; if it can make you want to discuss what you've read with others so that, together, you can make sense out of what the author says — and, just maybe, come to a better understanding of what your life is all about?

SIDELIGHTS:

Swimming, boating, tennis, golf, summer theaters, warm hospitality of a staff who look forward to our return, and a clambake.

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION

Mail to: Colby Summer Institute Committee
 c/o Mr. I. S. Wachs Tel: 1-215-496-0420
 21 South 12 Street
 Philadelphia, PA 19107

I/We prefer a group with a leader
 without a leader

Enclosed herewith is \$ _____ for registration of the following persons at Colby Institute.

 First Name Please Print Last Name
 Address _____
 City State Zip Code

Deposit of \$100.00 required for each registrant; balance may be paid at any time prior to or at registration at the College.
 Make checks payable to Colby Summer Institute Committee.
 If registering children, please provide names & ages on back.

GREAT BOOKS WEEK-LONG INSTITUTES

(Continued from August Tricorn)

- 1982 Colby:** Communicating Across Cultures
Condon & Seito, *Communicating Across Cultures for What?*
Kang, *The Grass Roof*
Levi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques**
Marquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*
Fugard, *Boesman & Lena*
Lal, *The Farce of the Drunk Monk*
- Asilomar**
Jung, *Answer to Job*
Shakespeare, *King Lear*
Camus, *The Fall*
- 1983 Colby:** Fact & Fancy
Plato, *Dialogues (Excerpts)*
Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*
Spenser, *The Faerie Queen (Bk.I)*
Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
Lagerkvist, *The Sybil*
Tolkien, *Tree & Leaf*
- Asilomar**
Dewey, *Freedom & Culture*
Olsen, *Tell Me a Riddle*
Jeffers, *Dear Judas*
- 1984 Colby:** Mann's Journey
Capra, *The Tao of Physics*
Barrett, *Irrational Man*
Mann, *The Magic Mountain*
- Asilomar**
Ford, *The Good Soldier*
Arendt, *On Violence*
Pirandello, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*
- 1985 Colby:** The Republic
Plato, *The Republic (entire)*
- Asilomar**
Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier*
Tyler, *Celestial Navigation*
Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*
- 1986 Colby:** The Mind's I
Meredith, *An Essay on Comedy*
Bergson, *Laughter**
Moliere, *The Misanthrope*
Hofstadter & Dennett, *The Mind's Eye**
- Asilomar**
Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*
Frankl, *The Search for Meaning*
Macleish, *J.B.*
- 1987 Colby:** The Family
Murdock, *Culture & Society**
Verga, *The House by the Medlar Tree*
Laing, *The Politics of the Family*
Forster, *Howard's End*
Pinter, *The Homecoming*
Wordsworth, *Intimations of Immortality*
- Asilomar**
Sartre, *Existentialism*
Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians*
Euripides, *The Bacchae*
- 1988 Colby:** Then and Now
Plato, *Symposium*
Tillich, *The Dynamics of Faith*
Heisenberg, *Physics & Philosophy*
Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*
- Asilomar**
Twain, *Huckleberry Finn*
Plato, *Meno*
Brecht, *Galileo*
- 1989 Colby:** Looking Ahead
Ecclesiastes
Wilder, *The Skin of Our Teeth*
Ferguson, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*
Bohm, *Wholeness & the Implicate Order*
Spinne, *The Universe is a Green Dragon*
Heraclitus, *Fragments*
- Asilomar**
Emerson, *Self-Reliance*
W. James, ?
O'Neill, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*

1990 Colby: Knowledge

Plato, *Theaetetus*
Goethe, *Faust, Part I*
Freud, *On the Interpretation of Dreams* (Bk. 7)
Whitehead, *The Aims of Education**
Buber, *Between Man & Man**
Eliot, *Four Quartets*

Asilomar

Faulkner, *The Bear*
P. Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry*
Eliot, *Murder in the Cathedral*

* Selections



The Children's Program at Colby

The children's program at Colby Summer Institute began in 1987 as a way to make Colby more accessible for families with young children. The program began with nine children and grew slightly to twelve this past summer. At this point in its evolution, the program includes the following components:

1. Each morning the children have a recreation group with staff provided by the college.
2. Afternoons are family time.
3. Families stay on one floor of the dorm to coordinate quiet time and other childhood necessities.
4. Babysitters are available in the dorm each evening.
5. The children meet twice for book discussions.

Additionally, each year the children have been invited to spontaneous special activities by participants: Barbara Isaacman, "The Pocket Lady," has done storytelling each year; Bob Franz taught line dancing. In case you are wondering how the program is going, these are some of the responses from last summer from the children:

- (Overheard in July) "I can't wait for Colby!!"
- "I love this place, It's like being able to go over to your friend's house any time you want."
- "We went in with two poems and came out with five!" (Some in the shape of paper airplanes)
- "Oh, I forgot my new poems; I really wanted to read them to you." (On the way to the lake)
- "We get to do book discussions exactly like the adults." (Except without water after the discovery that plastic water glasses make a delightful cracking noise when crushed)

Some responses from parents:

- "It's the only vacation everyone in the family agrees completely on."
- "It really is an amazing process and an experience that will last a life time. There are few things I know I've done right as a parent, but bringing my child to Great Books was one."

The children are enthusiastic participants, and their vitality and viewpoint add a new dimension to the institute. For further information, contact Virginia Thurston, P.O. Box 299, Harvard, MA 01451, or phone 508-456-3505.

Chris Thurston

BOSTON NEWS

New Officers & Directors

President: Gus Soderberg
Vice President: Bill Shea
Treasurer: John Mulloy
Secretary: Eleanor Jensen

New Directors:
Connie Lawson
Mary Alice and Vincent Stanton

Mary Vallier, outgoing President, has been made an honorary life member, in gratitude for her long years of service to Great Books. Ann Mogan and Diane Pieters, outgoing Treasurer and Secretary, respectively, have also contributed long and energetic stints.

Delinquent Book Borrowers

Anxiety over overdue books has swept across Massachusetts since a new law went into effect last September toughening the penalties for people who keep library books too long, steal books or deface library materials. The new law has led to a flood of overdue books being returned, many through drop boxes at night bearing notes of apology. But it has also brought numerous protests by irate patrons who complain that Gov. Michael S. Dukakis—who, after all, couldn't keep Willie Horton in jail—is now using police state tactics on harmless library goers. It is widely (and wrongly) believed that delinquent borrowers can be sent up the river; the worst that can happen is the levy of a hefty fine. But we assume that Great Books members, lifelong book lovers all, form no part of the felonious group of borrowers.

Boston Great Books Spring Institute

Theme: Life Sentences

Sheraton Plymouth at Village Landing,
Plymouth, Massachusetts (within walking distance of Plymouth Harbor)

April 19, 20, 21, 1991

Language and Myth, by Ernst Cassirer

A Defence of Poetry, by Percy Bysshe Shelley

Eagle or Sun? by Octavio Paz (winner of the 1990 Nobel Prize for Literature)

The weekend costs \$180 per person, double occupancy, which includes books, discussions, six meals, and all gratuities. Cost for commuters: \$50 for books, discussions, and all social activities.

Scholarships are available: direct inquiries to Virginia Thurston at address below. To register, please fill out the form below and mail it with a \$90 per person deposit to: Virginia Thurston, P.O. Box 299, Harvard MA 01451.

Make checks payable to the Spring Institute Committee. If you cancel by April 3, the deposit (less books and mailing) will be refunded.

Name _____

Address _____
Street City State Zip

Phone (_____) _____ Roommate preference _____

Number of reservations _____ Amount enclosed _____

Please list additional reservations on the back of this form.

PHILADELPHIA NEWS

Theatre Party

Play: *King Lear*

Date: Saturday, March 2, 2:00pm matinee

Place: Temple University's Tomlinson Theatre, 13th and Norris Streets, free parking across the street

Cost: \$12, including discussion and refreshments

Reservations: Please send your check to Fritzie Green, 2401 Pennsylvania Ave., Apt. 10-B2I, Phila., PA 19130

Information: Olga Wallace, 637-3238

Group Therapy

Taking part in Great Books discussions, do you feast on having your smarts tested twice each month? Marvel how your leader comes up with those daunting queries, book after book? Eager to brave the challenge, on and on? Not unless you share some of the leader's burden. Great Books groups lacking depth of leadership usually die out fast. The best-intentioned people fade out for their own reasons, guest leaders won't play, meetings are postponed, the group trickles down the drain. None of this threatens, however, where trained backup leaders step in, or take turns spaced over many weeks or even months.

What treats does Great Books leader training hold for you? First, it spells survival for your group. Next, it helps deepen your insights, to make you a more highly valued discussant. You also learn to listen. Can you spare the time to sit in on a couple of training sessions. Of course you can. Yet despite a half dozen new groups, we've heard from too few registrants to get a sorely needed class off the ground.

Soon after you sign up to bring about a graduating class, Council plans to stage a daylong, areawide Leaders' Advance Training event for both newcomers and veterans. It is meant to let you scan methods, trade tips, gain self-trust. Moreover, a cadre of old hands stands ready for one-on-one prep meetings, when you draft questions for your first couple of discussions. Your move, to make it all happen, is to ask GB leader trainer Sibyl Cohen at 568-9827 about fees and dates right now.

Emil Bix

TO RICH ENDS: Philadelphia's 32nd Annual Spring Seminar

In one of Shakespeare's most magical plays, *The Tempest*, Prospero moves through long-awaited encounters to the rich conclusion of all his relationships. A totally different final chapter is played out by Paul Scott's Tusker and Lucy Smalley in the tragi-comic *Staying On*. In this delightful book, the masterly author of *The Raj Quartet* relates the story of a colonial couple who stay on after India gains its independence, working out new relationships with their Indian servants and friends, as well as with each other.

The institute will take place on Sunday, May 19, 1991, at Holy Family College, Grant & Frankford Aves., Philadelphia. The \$24 fee covers books, lunch, and other feedings. For more information call John Taylor, 379-8622, or Henrietta Rogers, 624-3818.

Please enclose check for \$24 per person, payable to Phila. GB Council. Mail it to John Taylor, 617 Woodland Ave., Cheltenham, PA 19012.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Zip _____

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

To the Editor:

In the 1960's Great Books policy changes led to two new axioms for leaders. The first is to ask questions that seek to determine what the author means. This seems reasonable, since we should not fail to understand the author. The second axiom is never ask a question that has a right answer. This, too, seems reasonable, since we don't want to discuss that on which everyone agrees. But combining these two axioms, we get:

Our job is to find out what the author means, even though one answer is as good as any other.

We get this absurd postulate because we have chosen to drive the Great Books Program on the basis of ambiguity, rather than on the basis of a search for truth. We doggedly insist that the author's meaning is ambiguous, and we are urged not to ask or answer questions that could result in finding right answers to ambiguous issues.

Our purpose in Great Books should not be to wallow in ambiguity, but to remove it. If a book is unclear, it is necessary, *as a matter of housecleaning*, to make it clear. And if questions raised by the book have multiple answers, it is necessary, *as a matter of education*, to search for the right one. In each case our objective should be to remove ambiguity, not to make it our *ne plus ultra*. Failure to discriminate between alternate answers to any question by employing criteria of selection is an anti-educational policy of staggering proportions.

This infatuation with ambiguity may provide sufficient vitality to keep the curious coming back for more, but it is ineffectual in its educational payoff. It may be seen as a game played by those unable to concede that greatness could be just across the discussion table.

What a long way the Program has come. Has it been along the path more traveled?

Presley Brown



WILMINGTON SPRING SEMINAR: SATURDAY, MARCH 23

Theme: Fathers and Sons in a Fatherland

Books: *Cry, the Beloved Country*, Alan Paton
"Master Harold"...and the Boys, Athol Fugard

Place: First Unitarian Church, Wilmington, DE 9AM to 4PM

In Paton's enduringly fine novel, white and black father-son relationships are played out against the backgrounds of a rural village and Johannesburg. Fugard's play touchingly renders a crisis in a boy's life when he must choose between the values of his master-class father, and those of their black servant, his spiritual father.

Your \$21.50 registration fee includes books, lunch, and refreshments. Please make check payable to Great Books Council of Delaware, and send by March 5 to Cyra Gross, 101 Delview Drive, Wilmington, DE 19810. (302 475-3914)

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Zip _____

LONG ISLAND NEWS

Spring Institute Theme: THE ILLUSION OF TRUTH

"...in a walk of art... it is its truth which produces the illusion...*ideal truth*." Schopenhauer

The Readings:

Three Short Essays by Arthur Schopenhauer—*The Vanity of Existence, Interest and Beauty in Works of Art*, and *On the Inner Nature of Art*.

The Remains of the Day by Kazuo Ishiguro—a novel concerned with present truth and illusions of the past.

The Date: Sunday, June 2, 1991

The Place: Mille Fleurs, The Sands Point Preserve, Port Washington, N.Y.

The Cost: \$20.00, which includes readings and travelling directions, coffee at registration, lunch and post-discussion refreshments.

Mail to: Long Island Great Books Council, P.O. Box 821,
Port Washington, NY 11050. (Please send before April 1, 1991)

Please reserve _____ places at the Long Island Institute at \$20.00 each, enclosed.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

NEW GROUP AT THE BRENTWOOD LIBRARY

A first year Great Books Group was organized at the Brentwood Public Library at the conclusion of a discussion demonstration session conducted by Chuck Ferrara. For information call leaders Kennedy McGown (273-3152), or Evelyn Hoey (273-9643).

Great Books
14 Bay Second St.
Islip, NY 11751

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION U.S. POSTAGE PAID PHILA., PA. PERMIT 1509
--

CHARLES & JUNE FERRARA
14 BAY SECOND STREET
ISLIP, NY 11751