

# THE TRICORN

A NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED JOINTLY BY THE NEW ENGLAND ♦  
LONG ISLAND ♦ PHILADELPHIA GREAT BOOKS COUNCILS

FEBRUARY 1998

## B E C O M I N G

The 42nd Annual Wachs Great Books Summer Institute  
at Colby College

August 2 through 8, 1998

A week of reading, discussion, fun and friendship  
on the beautiful campus of Colby College in the hills of Waterville, Maine

"In this mortal frame of mine which is made of a hundred bones and nine orifices there is something, and this something is called a wind-swept spirit..." Matsuo Basho

Who is it that we are always becoming and never are?

How do we remain the same while changing?

When does potentiality become actuality?

Philosophy, biology, psychology, fiction, poetry - - all contributing to an understanding of BECOMING.

### The readings:

**Aristotle**, a definition of potency from *Metaphysics*, and **Plotinus**, *On Potency and Actuality*

**Robert Pollack**, *Signs of Life: The Language and Meaning of DNA* (selections)

**Descartes**, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (selections)

**Katherine Ann Porter**, three short stories and a novella from *The Old Order*

**Erik Erikson**, *Identity and the Life Cycle* (selections)

**Matsuo Basho**, two travel sketches from *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*

(Colby Week is continued on page 2)

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## Colby Week in August 2 - 8, 1998 (Continued)

In a Great Books Discussion a group of readers, sharing their understanding of a stimulating work of literature or philosophy in a well-conducted discussion, can reach a level of insight rarely achieved by those who read alone. Great Books is for people who love to think and talk about the world's great ideas, and whose greatest pleasure is to spend time with others who share that joy.

**Cost:** \$430 per person covers dormitory room (single or double), meals, discussions, and books, as well as swimming, tennis, a film, group social activities, the warm hospitality of the Colby staff, and a real Maine clambake at Johnson Pond. Boating, golf, music and summer theater are nearby.

**Application and refunds:** A \$130 deposit per person is required with application, \$55 of which is refundable for cancellations before July 1. The balance is due at registration on August 2. Books and additional information will be sent upon receipt of deposit.

**There will be three discussions of Junior readings,** in addition to the offerings listed above. The cost for children from 4 to 9 years old is \$290, and from 10 to 14, \$335. A deposit of \$100 is required with application, \$75 of which will be refunded if you cancel before July 1. Please contact Carol Beam, 215-836-1046, if you have any questions about this Junior program.

**Mail application to:** Colby Summer Institute  
680 Elton Street  
Riverhead, NY 11901-2585

**Any questions** may be directed to Dan Kohn, 516-727-8600; FAX 516-727-7592.

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### APPLICATION

(Make checks payable to Colby Summer Institute)

Please Print \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Last name first) \_\_\_\_\_

Address (with zip) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone number (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Notes and comment, additional names on the other side \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer self-directing (leaderless) group [  ]

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Reg. # \_\_\_\_\_

Reg. Grp. # \_\_\_\_\_

Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

LY. \_\_\_\_\_

Deposit \_\_\_\_\_

Bal. at Reg. \_\_\_\_\_

Bks. Shipped \_\_\_\_\_ How \_\_\_\_\_

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New England Correspondent: Richard Ffrench, 19 Melbourne Ave., Newton, MA 02160

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## LONG ISLAND NEWS

### Long Island Spring Institute Theme: SCIENCE AND IMAGINATION

#### The Readings:

***THE FOUR IDOLS*** (selections from *Novum Organum*)  
by SIR FRANCIS BACON

In his pioneering work on scientific method Bacon shows how traditional ways of thinking act as barriers to understanding nature -- the "idols" and false notions that prevent the accurate observation of our world.

***EINSTEIN'S DREAMS*** a novel by ALAN LIGHTMAN

"He has dreamed many dreams about time. His dreams have taken hold of his research... have worn him out, exhausted him so that he sometimes cannot tell whether he is awake or asleep... Out of the many possible natures of time, imagined in as many nights, one seems compelling. Not that the others are impossible. The others might exist in other worlds."

#### DATE AND PLACE

Sunday, June 7, 1998, at The Bailey Arboretum, Locust Valley, New York, a former North Shore Estate-- the grounds now an arboretum. Discussions will be held and lunch served in the main house, built in the mid-1800's. Enrollment will be limited because of the size of the facilities.

#### The Cost:

\$25.00 includes readings, travel directions, coffee at registration, lunch and post-discussion refreshments.

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**Mail to:**

Long Island Great Books Council  
P.O.Box 821  
Port Washington, NY 11050.

(Please send before April 1, 1998)

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places at the Long Island Institute at \$25.00 each, enclosed.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# NEW ENGLAND NEWS

## Special Notice

This notice is to confirm what you may have already heard about the Cruise to Greece. The New England Great Books Council has voted NOT to sponsor the Cruise to Greece that was originally advertised in August of 1997. In addition, the New England Great Books Council is not affiliated with the "Great Books Greece Institute" in any way. If anyone has made out a check to the New England Great Books Council and has sent it to the "Greece Institute Cruise Committee", the uncanceled check should have been returned to you by now. If there are any questions you can call Richard Ffrench at 617-332-1514.

## Fall One Day and Annual Meeting

The NEGBC brought to a close another year of activities with the Fall One Day and its Annual Meeting on October 25<sup>th</sup>. The event had 70 participants and from all reports people had a very enjoyable time. During the Annual Meeting the members elected a new slate of officers as follows:

Richard Ffrench: President

Diana Pieters: Vice-President

Ruth Green: Secretary

Dick White: Treasurer

New council members: Thomas Fitzgerald, Jon Staley, William Shea, and Paula Williams.

## Transitions

Last year the council gave a good deal of thought to how we could acquire and retain new members and also to how we could enhance the resources of the New England Great Books Council. To acquire and retain new members the council came up with three courses of action:

- 1) Conduct Participant Satisfaction Surveys to put in focus what it is that people like about Great Books;
- 2) Find effective ways to publish the results of the survey and to attract new people to our events;
- 3) Begin networking with other reading groups to see what makes groups successful in general, so people from other reading groups can learn about Great Books.

To enhance our resources we talked about four areas of interest:

- 1) Reviewing the financial records and putting together a financial plan;
- 2) Looking at how training of participants and leaders enhances the Great Books experience;
- 3) Preparing reading lists;
- 4) Finding ways to convey appreciation to the volunteers who contribute to Great Books activities.

If you would like to volunteer some of your time to this worthwhile cause please contact one of the council members.

# New England Great Books Council Spring Institute

At the DoubleTree Islander Hotel, Goat Island, Newport, Rhode Island  
March 27 - 29, 1998

## The Mystery of Knowing

*Mrs. Dalloway*, a novel by Virginia Woolf

*The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, by Thomas S. Kuhn, pp. 66-210

*Arcadia*, a play by Tom Stoppard

The DoubleTree Hotel is on Goat Island, just a few minutes' walk from historic downtown Newport. Visit Newport's famous summer mansions; walk the beaches; enjoy fun and fellowship with old friends and new who savor the joy of reading and discussing great books and great ideas.

The cost of the weekend is \$230 per person double occupancy and \$300 per person single occupancy. Prices include books, discussions, two nights' lodging, five meals, gratuities, and all social activities. Commuting is an option at \$70, which covers books, discussions, and all social activities. Commuters may also sign up for meals; a price list and signup sheet will be sent with commuters' books. A fund is available to pay part of the cost for those who would otherwise not be able to attend.

For information, write the Spring Institute Committee at the address at right, or call Mac Snodgrass at 401 683-5260.

To register, mail the form below with a deposit of \$130 per person for double occupancy or \$200

per person for single occupancy, or the \$70 fee for commuters, to:

The Spring Institute Committee

P.O. Box 545

Harvard, MA 01451-0545

Registration deadline is February 20, 1998. Make checks payable to the Spring Institute Committee. If you cancel by March 2, 1998 your deposit or commuter's fee, less the cost of books and mailing, will be refunded.

### REGISTRATION

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

street

p.o. box or apt. #

city

state

zip

TELEPHONE ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ SINGLE OCCUPANCY \_\_\_\_\_ DOUBLE OCCUPANCY \_\_\_\_\_ COMMUTER \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF RESERVATIONS \_\_\_\_\_ ROOMMATE PREFERENCE \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_ PLEASE LIST ADDITIONAL RESERVATIONS ON THE BACK OF THIS FORM.

Notes, Comments, Special Requests \_\_\_\_\_

## Registration for Philadelphia Spring Seminar, *The Tale and the Teller*, May 17

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

### PHILADELPHIA NEWS

#### Philadelphia's 39th Annual Spring Seminar: *The Tale and the Teller*

Daniel Defoe tells the tale of *Robinson Crusoe*, who has become the world's best-known castaway. Defoe's book inspired South African novelist J.M. Coetzee to tell a tale of his own, *Foe*, narrated by one Susan Barton, his addition to Crusoe's castaway community. Once rescued, Susan meets the writer Foe (Defoe), and strives to get her tale told by him. Susan's struggles with Foe, her attempts to communicate with the tongueless savage Friday, and her search for her missing daughter make up some of the strands of Coetzee's tale. As always, this writer transcends the words to reach meanings beyond the literal. Nadine Gordimer's review calls Coetzee "A writer with an imagination that soars like a lark and sees up there like an eagle." *Robinson Crusoe* and *Foe*, a double delight.

#### Sunday, May 17, at Chestnut Hill Academy

500 W. Willow Ave.,

opposite Philadelphia Cricket Club

\$28 fee covers books, lunch, snacks.

Information: Bill Meiers, 215-953-0147

Please send your registration coupon (top of page)

with your check, payable to

"Philadelphia Great Books Council" to:

Henrietta Rogers, 7802 Revere Street,

Philadelphia, PA 19152. Phone: 215-624-3818

#### Happy 50th Anniversary to All from the Philadelphia Council

Thanks to all who made our Philadelphia celebration so successful: the planners, the attendees, and the participants in the program. Special kudos for Dr. Sanford Pinsker, whose most relevant talk on "The Relevance of Great Books in Today's World," and for the Plato interview, staged by Finharr O'Connor and WHYY's Alan Tu.

Some excerpts from the remarks of Gary Schoepfel, Adult Program Director, who came from Chicago to speak at the celebration last October:

"I shall speak slowly for just a moment about what I believe to be the most important moment in the history of Great Books. It is just a moment, but it has happened a great many times and in very unusual places. It is a familiar moment for most, if not all, the people in this room. It is a very private moment prompted by a very public experience. It is a moment that is nearly impossible to describe to those who have not experienced it, and a moment that is not necessary to describe to those who have. I am referring to that moment when ordinary people realize that this thing called Great Books is going to be an important part of their lives, and not by choice, but by necessity. It is the moment when one discovers that reading alone is not adequate, and that talking to others about what we read is a necessary last step, if understanding is the goal. It is the moment when thoughtful people enter "The Great Conversation."

#### A Feast for the Heart, the Soul and the Mind

Twenty-five hundred years ago Sophocles raised in his play *Antigone* a question of priorities. Do we owe our first loyalty to the gods or to the state? Two thousand years ago Christ answered the question with the admonition to render unto Caesar that which was Caesar's and unto God that which was God's. The question posed by Sophocles continues to baffle us.

Fifty years ago Maynard Hutchins and Mortimer Adler created, with the first Great Books group a format in which such questions could be discussed, not coldly and scientifically, but intelligently and, at the same time, passionately. Intelligence and passion not only go together; they belong together. To put it another way - intelligence without passion is an I.Q. test; passion without intelligence is a Harlequin romance.

The Great Books Program gives us specific problems to ponder, problems some of which have existed as long as our species. Why was Socrates condemned to death? We'll read Plato's *Apology* to see Socrates' side of the story. What did

## A Feast for the Heart . . . (Continued)

Thomas Jefferson mean by "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal. . . "? We'll read the Declaration of Independence to see if we can understand. Why does Hamlet consider whether "To be or not to be?" We'll read Hamlet to see why he contemplates suicide.

We've done our reading and when we get to the discussion of Sophocles' *Antigone* the question our leader poses for us is "Why did Antigone ignore the king's order (loyalty to the state) and bury her brother (loyalty to the gods)?"

David Perelman



## Great Literature and its Musical Counterparts

A discussion program of great literature and its musical counterparts is based on the idea that the two art forms can be mutually enriching. The lesson plans listed below contain 30-40 interpretive questions and can sustain 2-4 hours of discussion. Each plan contains recommended videos as well as the paperback book in print. Cost: \$10.00 per lesson.

Titles	Authors	Composers
Pygmalion	Shaw	Lerner and Lowe
Samson and Delilah	Book of Judges	Saint-Saens
Eugene Onegin	Pushkin	Tchaikovsky
Romeo and Juliet	Shakespeare	Prokofiev (ballet)
Turn of the Screw	Henry James	Benjamin Britten
Turandot	Carlo Gozzi	Puccini
Oedipus Rex	Sophocles	Stravinsky
Candide	Voltaire	Leonard Bernstein
Merry Wives of Windsor	Shakespeare	Verdi
Othello	Shakespeare	Verdi
Macbeth	Shakespeare	Verdi
Midsummer Night's Dream	Shakespeare	Benjamin Britten
Tales of Hoffman	E.T.A. Hoffman	Offenbach
Electra	Aeschylus, Euripides, Sophocles	Richard Strauss
Salome	Bible & Oscar Wilde	Richard Strauss
The Beggar's Opera	John Gay	John Gay & Kurt Weill

A superunit on Carmen includes the Prosper Merimee novella, Bizet's opera, Roland Petit's ballet, rehearsal sessions for Bizet's opera, the Bolshoi ballet of Carmen, and the Carlos Saura film of the story. The 8-page plan includes over 100 interpretive questions and costs \$25.00.

To purchase any lesson plans, please mail a check made out to:  
Howard Will 175 E. Delaware #7709, Chicago, IL 60611.

## Spring Theatre Festival: *Hedda Gabler* on February 28

The Arden Theatre Company will be showing Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler* this month. We will attend the Saturday, February 28 two o'clock matinee which will be followed by refreshments and discussions.

The Arden is in the "Old City", 40 North Second Street, Philadelphia. Convenient parking is on Arch Street between Second and Third Streets.

Ordered tickets are held at the theater. Mail your check early. Marney Hague must receive it before February 21<sup>st</sup>.  
Information: Marney Hague, 215-977-7873

## Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler* on February 28 Matinee

Tickets \$15 each. Mail checks payable to Philadelphia GB Council to: Marney Hague, 2018 Green Street - 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Philadelphia 19130-3209

Reserve \_\_\_\_\_ seats @ \$15. Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Mark if you will \_\_\_\_\_ won't \_\_\_\_\_ attend discussion

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Wilmington (DE) Spring Seminar: March 14, 1998**

Send Checks to: Susan Bleiberg, 303 West 37th Street, Wilmington, DE 19802

Please make check payable to: GREAT BOOKS COUNCIL OF DELAWARE

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**WILMINGTON (DE) SPRING SEMINAR: WILL THE REAL GOD PLEASE STAND UP**

ALARMING BOOKS -- BUT THE DISCUSSIONS WILL MAKE THE READING WORTHWHILE

*The Painted Bird* by Jerzy Kosinski and *The Trial of God* by Elie Wiesel

Date: Saturday, March 14, 1998 Time : 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Place: First Unitarian Church, 730 Halstead Rd., Wilmington, Delaware

Cost: \$25 for books, lunch and refreshments

Information: Susan Bleiberg, 302-762-0222 or Ocie Lindh, 302-633-4088.

**Philadelphia Online Committee: Great Books on the Internet**

Since the electronic age is upon us, we are making use of its quick and easy sharing of information. News of several Great Books Councils are now on some of the 50 million pages that make up the World-Wide-Web:

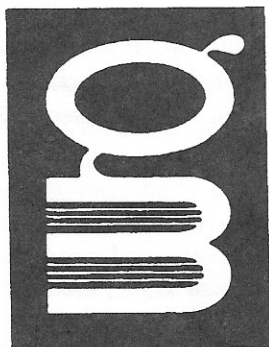
G.B.Foundation information (with links to all Regions): <http://www.greatbooks.org>

New England Council news: <http://members.aol.com/NewEngGbks/index.htm>

Philadelphia, Delaware, and Colby news: <http://www.dol.net/~greatbooks/gbevents.htm>

Nationwide calendar of Great Books events: <http://www.dol.net/~greatbooks/newslett.htm>

Questions? e-mail to [greatbooks@dol.net](mailto:greatbooks@dol.net) (Klaus Traumann's e-mail address) or call 302-478-4058.



**GREAT BOOKS COUNCIL  
OF PHILADELPHIA**

**A. & R.**

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