

THE TRICORN

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BOYS COUNCILS

MARCH, 1979

Colby and Related Matters

The Colby Summer Institute is again off to its explosive start. Is Wachs, the celebrated Guru of Colby, tells us that even at this early date the advance reservations are already over 75% or more of capacity. So if you don't want to receive a disappointing "sold out" reply, move swiftly and decisively with your reservation.

The theme for Colby Week: Relationship — A Categorical Imperative? At this writing the readings are being finalized and will be announced shortly. Total cost per person for the week is \$180, which includes books, meals, lodging, plus a priceless ingredient: provocative discussions, stimulating people, warm socializing. Deposit is \$80 per person, which is refundable, less charge for books, if you cancel and notify before July 15. Also, specify with your reservation whether you want to be in a Leaderless Group, or in a group with Rotating Leaders — and also how you want your name listed.

The Colby Week theme, Relationship — A Categorical Imperative?, probes the age-old process of human interactions, of the spoken and unspoken fusions and understandings involved in all human relationships. The following excerpts, selected by Helene Kohn, symbolize in various forms what some thinkers and writers have to say on this matter:

Poem by Emily Dickinson

"Like Eyes that Looked on Wastes-
Incredulous of Ought
But Blank-and steady Wilderness-
Diversified by Night-

Just Infinites of Nought-
As far as it could see-
So looked the face I looked upon-
So looked itself — on Me-

I offered it no Help-
Because the Cause was Mine-
The Misery a Compact
as hopeless-as divine-

Neither-would be absolved-
Neither would be a Queen
Without the Other-Therefore-
We perish-tho' We reign-"

I And Thou, by Martin Buber

"The basic word I-You can be spoken only with one's whole being. The concentration and fusion into a whole being can never be accomplished by me, can never be accomplished without me. I require a You to become; becoming I, I say You.

All actual life is encounter."

Memoirs of Child and Youth by Albert Schweitzer

"We wander through life together in a semi-darkness in which none of us can distinguish exactly the features of his neighbor; only from time to time, through some experience we have of our companion, or through some remark that he passes, he stands for a moment close to us, as though illumined by a flash of lightning."

What Do You Say After You Say Hello?, by Eric Berne

"How Do You Say Hello?"

This is the secret of Buddhism, of Christianity, of Judaism, of Platonism, of atheism, and above all, of humanism. The famous sound of one hand clapping in Zen is the sound of one person saying Hello to another, and it is also the sound of the Golden Rule in whatever Bible it is stated. To say Hello rightly is to see the other person, to be aware of him as a phenomenon, to happen to him and to be ready for him to happen to you. Perhaps the people who show this ability to the highest degree are the Fiji Islanders, for one of the rare jewels of the world is the genuine Fijian smile. It starts slowly, it illuminates the whole face, it rests there long enough to be clearly recognized and to recognize clearly, and it fades with secret slowness as it passes by. It can be matched elsewhere only by the smiles of an uncorrupted mother and infant greeting each other, and also, in Western countries, by a certain kind of open personality."

Is Wachs suggested that we use the following excerpts from "Books and Men," by Martin Buber, who will be one of the authors on the Colby list of readings:

"If I had been asked in my early youth whether I preferred to have dealings only with men or only with books, my answer would certainly have been in favour of books. In later years this has become less and less the case. Not that I have had so much better experiences with men than with books; on the contrary, purely delightful books even now come my way more often than purely delightful men. But the many bad experiences with men have nourished the meadow of my life as the noblest book could not do, and the good experiences have made the earth into a garden for me. On the other hand no book does more than remove me into a paradise of great spirits, where my innermost heart never forgets I cannot dwell long, nor even wish that I could do so. For (I must say this straight out in order to be understood) my innermost heart loves the world more than it loves the spirit. I have not, indeed, cleaved to life in the world as I might have; in my relations with it I fail it again and again; again and again I remain guilty towards it for falling short of what it expects of me, and this partly, to be sure, because I am so indebted to the spirit. I am indebted to the spirit as I am to myself, but I do not, strictly speaking, love it, even as I do not, strictly speaking, love myself. I do not in reality love him who has seized me with his heavenly clutch and holds me fast; rather I love her, the "world", who comes again and again to meet me and extends to me a pair of fingers.

Both have gifts to share. The former showers on me his manna of books; the latter extends to me the brown bread on whose crust I break my teeth, a bread of which I can never have enough: men. Aye, these tousle-heads and good-for-nothings, how I love them! I revere books — those that I really read — too much to be able to love them. But in the most venerable of living men I always find more to love than to revere: I find in him something of this world, that is simply there as the spirit never can be there. The spirit hovers above me powerfully and pours out his exalted gift of speech, books; how glorious, how weird! But she, the human world, needs only to cast a wordless smile, and I cannot live without her. She is mute; all the prattle of men yields no word such as sounds forth constantly out of books. And I listen to it all in order to receive the silence that penetrates to me through it, the silence of the creature. But just the human creature! That creature means a mixture. Books are pure, men are mixed; books are spirit and word, pure spirit and purified word; men are made up of prattle and silence, and their silence is not that of animals but of men. Out of the human silence behind the prattle the spirit whispers to you, the spirit *as soul*. She, she is the beloved.

Here is an infallible test. Imagine yourself in a situation where you are alone, wholly alone on earth, and you are offered one of the two, books or men. I often hear men prizing their solitude, but that is only because there are still men somewhere on earth, even though in the far distance. I knew nothing of books when I came forth from the womb of my mother, and I shall die without books, with another human hand in my own. I do, indeed, close my door at times and surrender myself to a book, but only because I can open the door again and see a human being looking at me.”

In praise of the Colby experience:

When Jim Kenney, a Great Books participant from Quincy, Mass., recently sent in his reservation to Is Wachs for the upcoming Colby week, he included this unsolicited letter, an exquisite expression of the Colby “experience” and spirit. We thought his insightful comments should be shared by all Great Bookers. Here is his letter:

“ If one were asked to describe the Colby experience he may be somewhat bewildered and overwhelmed by the many lasting impressions of the good things that happened to him. He may say that it is too personal in nature, and to adequately understand it one would have to experience it himself. He is shaken and moved by the spirit of Colby. There is a certain intimacy of personal feelings that transcend the incompleteness of intellectual abstractions. How does one adequately describe a spiritual awakening? Perhaps the explanation should be left to the invisible spirits who even now are stirring their cauldron of magical potion. The brew is potent; we have been away a long time.

In the “real” world of rivalry and one-up-manship we give the spirits a hard time. They have difficulty getting thru to us. We don’t listen. In the world of Colby the spirit prevails. All the spirits belong to the same union, the A.C.S. (Amalgamated Celestial Spirits). The spirit of Colby, however, belongs to a higher echelon because of past successes with Great Books. Its approach is tailored to the individual needs of each participant, sometimes gentle and subtle, other times blunt and direct, depending on how well the participant has learned and remembered from his last encounter. It furnishes the mood to make the transition easy and sets the tone by creating an environment of beauty. The enchantment unfolds itself. With exquisite grace, incredible charm and consummate skill the spirit casts its spell about us. We feel its presence, each in his own way. We yield to an irresistible force and become a part of the magical ceremony. We don’t know one another, yet we do. Each one recognizes the other as a kindred spirit in search of the same thing. The spirit of Colby is what resides within the confines of our own heart.

The revelation of self-discovery can be quite rewarding but has its risks. One may soar like an eagle or fall flat on his face like a gooney bird — a bird that does get aloft but lands inelegantly and ignominiously. We accept the challenge. It's all a part of the experience.

We, of course, don't come to Colby empty-handed. We are endowed with certain personalities, certain acquired characteristics, and conditioned by a host of other factors too obvious and numerous to mention. We try to penetrate a veneer of sophistication and conformity before it hardens into a crusty exterior that can abort the emergence of an inner self that is just bursting for recognition.

There are many delightful facets to the Colby experience, but the one outstanding feature is the group discussion that gives it character and makes it distinct and unique. It is in this medium that we get to know ourselves and one another. It can be so revealing. So long as reason is fallible, there will be different opinions. With moderation and restraint we learn to respect these opinions. Sometimes one's reason and self-love become entangled so that reason and passions have a reciprocal influence one upon the other.

This is an area that covers a lot of territory and is a subject all by itself. I believe the group needs direction and we are fortunate to have leaders so well qualified and professional.

Philadelphia News
20th Annual Spring Seminar:

The Philadelphia Great Books Council Announces its Spring Seminar:

Date: May 20, a Sunday.

Place: Philadelphia College of Textiles & Science, Schoolhouse Lane & Henry Avenue.

Fee: \$12.50 a person, including books, lunch, refreshments.

Seminar Theme: The Unlimited Personality.

Readings: Toward A Recognition of Androgeny, by Carolyn G. Heilbrun, and The Left Hand of Darkness, by Ursula K. Le Guin.

There will be the usual night-before party for all area leaders, out-of-town discussants and their hosts.

To register, send check or money order payable to Philadelphia GB Council to Harold Moll, 7657 Wyndale Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19151.

Name (s) first and last

Address City & State Zip

Phone Name of your GB leader (if any)

Please enclose check or money order @ \$12.50 per person.

Leader Training:

The leaders' training program will begin Sunday afternoon, March 4, and continue for eight sessions. The new Personalized System of Instruction Manual, tested for the first time at last year's training sessions, will be used. An additional unit has been prepared so that the present Manual consists of the following six units:

- Unit 1: What is a discussion? What does a leader do? What sort of questions does a leader ask?
- Unit 2: What is a fact question? What is an interpretive question?
- Unit 3: Organizing questions. What is a basic question? What is a follow-up question? What is a cluster?
- Unit 4: What is an evaluative question?
- Unit 5: What are some types of questions to avoid?
- Unit 6: What are some other areas to examine in a reading?

Each unit includes objectives, information, a reading, and a test. For the most part the readings are chosen either from the first-year Classics Great Books or the Search For Meaning series. Trainees use the readings as a source to learn how to apply the information taught in each unit. The manual helps the trainee to focus on specific issues without limiting the range of questions that come up during practice leading sessions. It has proved a useful adjunct to the traditional training.

The training sessions provide an opportunity for each trainee to lead a discussion at least twice. Additional exercises in listening, group interaction, leadership functions, group dynamics, etc., are included during the sessions. A large proportion of last year's trainees are now leaders. We expect that this year's spring training will help to fill the ever-growing demand in the Philadelphia area for more good Great Book leaders.

Philadelphia's Coordinator Reports:

Fran Jacobs says that all Philadelphia area groups are operating in full gear, including three new ones that were launched last fall. She reminds leaders to advise new participants that single sets of books can be obtained from Mae Shapiro. All series except Series A and Search For Meaning are kept in stock by Mae, who can be reached at ES-9-2203. Series A and Search For Meaning are available from Fran, who can be contacted at IV-2-1367.

One further reminder: Henry Cohen, 7805 Bayard St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19150, asks that recipients of Philadelphia Great Books mailings send him address changes or requests to be dropped from the list. Each wrong address cost 25¢.

Inside Look At the Philadelphia Great Books Council:

Philadelphia has become the largest and most active Great Books area in the country, with more than 60 active groups. Through its Council it is exceptionally well organized, fueled by the selfless efforts of its dedicated members. David Perelman, one of the "dedicatees," gives us some insight into the structure and operations of this Council. As with all successful movements, the Great Books program began many, many years ago in the Philadelphia area with a handful of people enthused about the Great Books concept. Their enthusiasm, along with the program itself, became contagious. More and more groups sprouted, and soon the Council was born to coordinate the groups.

Today the Philadelphia Council is composed of 25 members from the metropolitan area — officers and a board of directors. All past presidents are automatically on the board. One of the major thrust forces is the standing committees maintained by the Council, as follows:

Leader Training: to assure a continuous flow of trained leaders.

Spring Institute: responsible for the annual one-day discussion program.

Advanced Leader Training: a meeting ground where leaders can hone skills.

Theatre: A Great Books evening at a local theatre with refreshments and a discussion following attendance at a play.

Library: this committee sees that Great Books material goes into libraries throughout the metropolitan and Delaware Valley area.

Mini-Institutes: arranges for sites, for the readings, leaders, hosts and hostesses, for the annual kick-off affairs which have been the most productive method of introducing new people to Great Books.

Publicity: sews together all the activities of the various committees and groups and disseminates publicity throughout the area.

Mailings: without this, everything else would stop. It is the communications center.

Books: This committee sees that books are available for all groups who need or want them. It maintains a stock of Great Books readings so that new members have easy access to wanted books.

And no Council is fully functional without its area coordinator, who is the vital contact between the Council and the area groups. Hers is a never-ending job of getting new groups started, keeping track of activities among existing groups, finding leaders when necessary, arranging for leader training sessions, setting up the mini-institutes, handling phone calls, helping to keep the mailing lists updated, etc. She is the bionic woman and then some.

A General Membership Meeting of the Philadelphia Council will be held on Sunday, April 1, at the home of Council President David Perelman, 8214 Marion Road, Elkins Park, Pa. The gavel will sound at 1:30 P.M. The invitation is open to all Philadelphia area Great Bookers. Officers will be elected, business transacted, followed by refreshments and socializing.

For veteran Great Bookers: For groups that have completed the nine years Great Books series, Eva Bix, secretary of the Glenside, Pa., group (which is doing the post-9th year readings), has prepared the following suggested readings for the year:

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| 1) Ecclesiastes (King James) | 8) Oration On the Dignity of Man (Pico Della Mirandola) |
| 2) Meno (Plato) | 9) Nathan the Wise (Lessing) |
| 3) Huckleberry Finn (Twain) | 10) On the Nature of Things (Lucretius) |
| 4) Gargantua and Pantagruel (Rabelais) | 11) Master and Man (Tolstoy) |
| 5) Paradise Lost (Milton) | 12) Utopia (More) |
| 6) School For Scandal (Sheridan) | |
| 7) Meditations (Marcus Aurelius) | |

(Note: additional readings being announced later)

Boston News

Annual Spring Institute:

The Metropolitan Boston Great Books Council will hold its annual Spring Institute on Saturday, June 9, at Regis College, an ideal setting for this popular one-day event. The readings: The Courage To Be (Tillich), and Cyrano de Bergerac (Rostand), both of which make for provocative discussions. All further details are being mailed out in early March. Meanwhile, interested Great Bookers should contact either Sylvia Soderberg (262-1899) or Eleanor Jensen (267-7137).

Boston 1-Day
\$11.50

This tiny segment, by the way, has been used by some Great Books to start a stimulating discussion.

New Publicity Pamphlet: The Boston Council has prepared and printed an excellent 3-1/2 x 8-1/2 six-page pamphlet for newcomers and prospective Great Books participants. It briefly describes the Great Books programs and also lists all the readings in the series A to D covering four years. The pamphlet is distributed through libraries, book fairs and other sources.

Long Island News

New Coordinators: The Long Island Council has appointed two new coordinators to promote the Adult Great Books Program on Long Island. Helen Mascia and Jan Ojalvo will take over the duties which Rose Ermidis performed so faithfully for years. The job will be divided geographically because Long Island is too large for one person to cover. During their short period of service the new coordinators have already started one new group.

The first major assignment for Helen and Jan will be to set up a Leader Training Session for this spring. Anyone in the Long Island area interested in taking this training to qualify as a Great Books leader should call Helen (627-2487) or Jan (271-8899). A time schedule is being arranged to accommodate as many applicants as possible.

One-Day Institute:

The Long Island Annual One-Day Institute will be held on Sunday, June 3, at the Bryant Library in Roslyn. The theme: Past Imperfect, Future Tense. The readings: Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth (Buckminster Fuller), and Future Shock (Alvin Toffler). Registration fee of \$10 will cover cost of books, lunch and refreshments. Send registration application with check in payment to P.O. Box 821, Port Washington, New York 11050, by April 21.

Hegel and Phenomenology

Last summer at the Colby Summer Institute, Chuck Ferrara and Seymour Weinstein (a former President of the Great Books Foundation in Chicago), resolved to make an effort to revive interest in Hegel, whose writings were deleted from the Great Books program a number of years ago. Hegel, who is far from easy to understand, is held in such high esteem among philosophers, that no one either remembers or refers to him by his first or second names (how many know the first names of Plato, Socrates, Aristotle?).

The following fragment from Hegel's Phenomenology is particularly relevant to Great Books since it starts on the idea of "education" and ends with the word "discussion":

"How should education begin, and how the process of working oneself up out of the immediacy of the substance of life? The beginning will always have to be made by acquiring some cognizance of general principles and points of view and by working oneself up, first of all, to the idea of the subject matter. No less, one must learn to support or refute it with reasons, to comprehend a concrete and copious fullness in terms of exact determinations, and to be able to offer accurate information and serious judgments. Then, however, this beginning of education will have to give way to the seriousness of life in its fullness which leads us into the experience of the subject matter itself. And when, in addition to all this, the seriousness of the Concept descends into the depth of the subject matter, then such knowledge and judgment will always retain a proper place in discussion."

This tiny segment, by the way, has been used by some Great Bookers to start a stimulating discussion wherever a few discussion-interested friends are gathered.

Incidentally, are you curious about "phenomenology"? It's an old, an extremely controversial subject among philosophers and many others, including theologians. In fact, the current Pope John Paul II is the author of "Person and Action," a profound treatise on phenomenology published in 1969, and soon to be translated into English on the impetus of its author's newfound celebrity. Phenomenology has also been championed by such intellectual lights as Jean-Paul Sartre, the French existentialist, though American scholars are in split camps about the concept.

For the phenomenologist, the world is only the shell of reality, and the stuff of important philosophical inquiry lies beneath this shallow surface. Phenomenology could be described as a technique for discovering what is hidden in appearances by looking at the world through the eyes of an infant. The basis of phenomenology as a procedure is the belief that when people ask certain metaphysical questions (what is the nature of justice? of a chair? of the color blue?) they are burdened with the baggage of assumptions — unquestioned definitions, categories and opinions that separate a philosopher from the truth about things. The point of phenomenology is to uncover and dismiss all of such biases in an attempt to get straight to the pure and unencumbered vision of what a thing essentially is. Thus it is the search for essences that cannot be revealed by ordinary observation.

The goal of the technique is positive. According to Professor Anna-Teresa Tymienieka, head of the Institute for Phenomenological Research, "Phenomenology is a fundamental philosophy aimed at discovery and clarification of the situation of the human being within his life-world and his condition." The movement was founded at the turn of the century by the Moravian-born philosopher Edmund Husserl, whose new credo was, "To the thing itself." He explained that the quest for phenomenology was "the eventual emergence of the hidden in the overt." This philosophy, until recently, dominated the philosophical life of France and Germany, then splintered into dissident groups.

Using this fundamentalist approach, most phenomenologists focused their analyses on such abstract challenges as fear, death, anxiety, guilt, sexual desire, etc. "What is sadness?" asked Sartre. "It is the meaning of this dull look with which I view the world, of my bowed shoulders, of my lowered head, of the listlessness of my whole body." Like Sartre, anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss, sociologist Michel Foucault and others have used phenomenology to arrive at "truths." The brilliant Martin Heidegger, in his major work, "Being and Time," claimed that the only way to understand being was through a phenomenological analysis of being human. In Pope John Paul's book the subject is the human person and how this person reveals himself in interaction with other persons. It elaborates a new moral conscience based on the concern of every human being for every other person, and the foundation of a new human community.

But many in the Anglo-American schools of philosophy (Bertrand Russell, G.E. Moore, Ludwig Wittgenstein, etc.) believe the movement is marked by excess and lack of intellectual discipline, resembling the meanderings of 19th-century Hegelians. They question the reality of "essences" which are outside the senses but are only intuited.

Today, of the ten best graduate schools in philosophy in the U.S., only two, Northwestern and Yale, provide advanced courses in phenomenology. This, however, may be due to the prejudice of the faculty or the philosophy department heads, and runs contrary to the growing number of students expressing deep interest in the subject. The feeling is that modern philosophy has arrived at a point where it must begin to transcend merely a world of ideas examined from sheer intellectual analyses, and move to a new realm of more intuitive and subjective analyses as represented by phenomenology. As one expressed it, "Man was not destined to remain planted with two feet rooted in the earth, but rather with one foot here and the other reaching to step onto a new and higher plateau."

Holy Books

Every established religion has its major holy book or books, and people of all faiths reread sacred or traditional writings at times of special significance to them. So here's a test for your intellectual prowess. Ten world religions are names in the lefthand column at the right. Match each with the appropriate written work (righthand column) Answers are upside down below — and no peeking first.

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 1) Buddhism | a) Five Classics |
| 2) Christianity | b) Granth |
| 3) Confucianism | c) Kojiki |
| 4) Hinduism | d) Koran |
| 5) Islam | e) New Testament |
| 6) Judaism | f) Rig-Veda |
| 7) Shinto | g) Tao Te Ching |
| 8) Sikhism | h) Torah |
| 9) Taoism | i) Tripitka |
| 10) Zoroastrianism | j) Zend-Avesta |

1-i; 2-e; 3-a; 4-f; 5-d; 6-h; 7-c; 8-b; 9-g; 10-j

Machiavelli From An Italian Perspective

Luigi Barzini, in The Italians, has this to say about Machiavelli who “challenged, for practical purposes, the validity of lofty and disinterested motives in the conduct of public affairs”:

“He was an artist, above all, who wrote perhaps the most beautiful, lean and muscular prose in all Italian literature He lived an irregular, almost bohemian life. He was a brilliant failure, never really managing to achieve his ends. He died penniless never managed to get his immortal works published. He was the permanent victim of political changes: he had made no headway when Florence was democratically ruled by the people; but, when the despotic Medici came back to power, he was arrested and tortured with four turns of the rack as a respected republican; later, when the republic was once more restored, he was wrongly considered with suspicion and excluded from public business as a supporter of the Medici. Such is the fate of very intelligent men who are, however, not intelligent enough to conceal their intelligence and lull other people's fears and suspicions to sleep.”

It was the bitter end of Machiavelli, who once said, “He who has no position in life cannot even get a dog to bark at him.”

Calling Old Great Books Classics Sets

Some of you have old, complete sets of the Great Books classics no longer being used or just tucked away in the corner of a bookshelf. Many of those sets in the classics series could find good use with newer participants who don't have easy access to them. You can do us all, including yourself, a good deed by contributing those sets to your local Council, as follows:

Philadelphia: David Perelman, 8214 Marion Rd., Elkins Park, Pa. 19117

Boston: Sylvia Soderberg, 30 Braddock Park, Boston, Mass. 02116

Long Island: Chuck Ferrara, 14 Bay Second St., Islip, N.Y. 11751

Note: If you receive more than one copy of the **TRICORN**, or if you do not want to receive any, please advise the sender or senders so that the cost of printing and mailing can be saved.

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