

THE TRICORN

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

February, 1992

COLBY '92: A DIFFERENT VOICE

Women haven't been silent over the centuries, but they haven't been heard either. Because they speak from a different experience of life, they have a different voice. Unfortunately for our civilization, it hasn't been an equal voice. This year's authors and readings may help us to compensate, may help both men and women become accustomed to a more balanced tone.

The truth is in the middle, which is why we have two ears. (The other version has it that before She created the sexes She created earrings and they came in pairs. Single earrings came later.)



From the readings:

"I ask you, sir, to stand face to face with me as a friend would: show me the favor of your eyes." *Sappho*

"...when he does not want to change his ways, she will take refuge in God. She will...be resigned to the situation without saying anything more to him about it." *de Pisan*

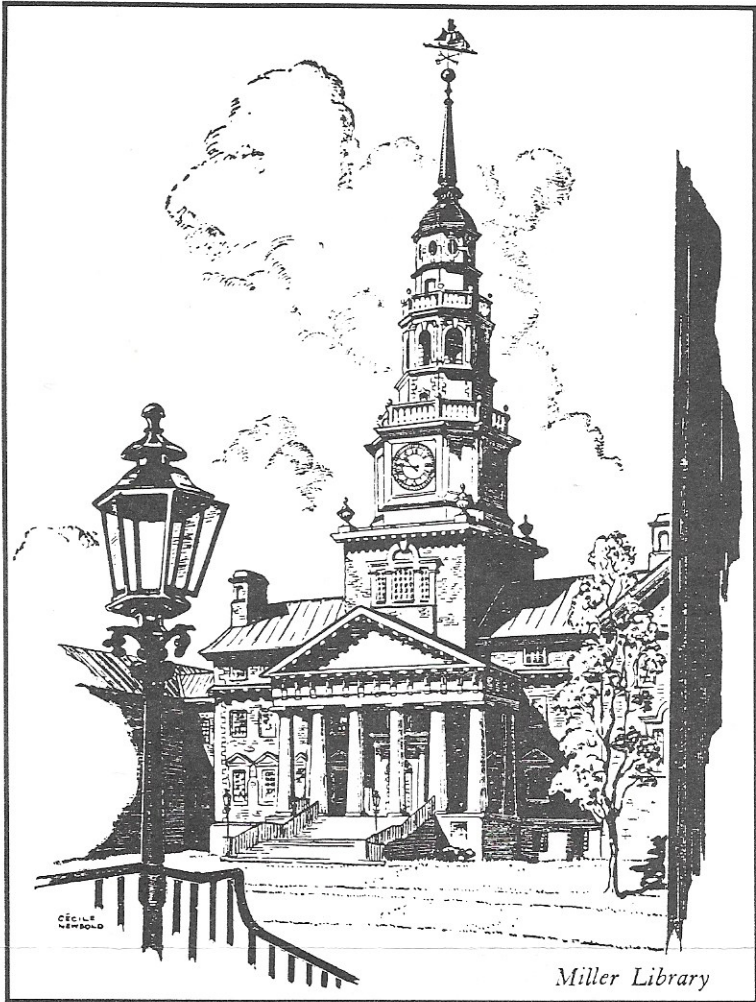
"Let there be no coercion established in society, and the common law of gravity prevailing, the sexes will fall into their proper places." *Wollstonecraft*

"But what have I done with my life? thought Mrs. Ramsey, taking her place at the head of the table and looking at all the plates making white circles on it." *Woolf*

"One is not born a woman: one becomes a woman. No biological, psychological or economic destiny can determine how the human female will appear in society." *De Beauvoir*

"While an ethic of justice proceeds from the premise of equality - that everyone should be treated the same - an ethic of care rests on the premise of nonviolence - that no one should be hurt." *Gilligan*

(marriage) "I wonder what Adam and Eve think of it by this time." *Moore*



Miller Library

COLBY COLLEGE CAMPUS

A DIFFERENT VOICE

At the

1992 GREAT BOOKS SUMMER INSTITUTE

WHERE AND WHEN:

Colby College, Waterville, Maine -- August 9-15

READINGS:

de Pisan, *The Treasure of the City of Ladies*
 Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*
 Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*
 De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*
 Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*
Poetry for a Different Voice

"I ask you, sir, to stand face to face with me as a friends
 would: show me the favor of your eyes"

Sappho

ELIGIBILITY:

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

COST:

\$375 which includes room, board and readings. Books,
 travel information and schedule of events will be sent
 upon receipt of deposit.

TRAVEL:

Your travel needs can be assisted by: Campus Travel
 Service, Colby College, Roberts Union, Waterville, ME
 04901, 1-800-727-8506.

JUNIOR PROGRAM:

Families with children between 4 and 14 are welcome.
 Costs are: \$252 for children 4-9; \$290 for children 10-14.
 Readings are:

C. S. Lewis, *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*
 Browning, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*

Inquires: Contact Ginny Thurston, P.O. Box 299, Harvard,
 MA 01451, 508-456-3505.

CANCELLATIONS:

Your deposit will be refunded, less \$70, if you cancel
 before July 1, 1991. Refund for Juniors will be reduced
 \$15 to cover cost of readings.

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 (508) 456-3505
 P.O. Box V
 Harvard, MA 01451-0560

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

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

Please Print

 First Name Last Name Telephone No.
 Address _____
 Street, Apt/P.O. Box 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 juniors, please provide names & ages on back.

BOSTON NEWS

Winter Event

Metropolitan Boston Great Books members and friends will attend a performance of Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* at the Huntington Theatre, 264 Huntington Avenue in Boston on Sun. March 15 at 2 pm. Following the performance, we'll hear a Huntington Theatre Humanities Series lecture on the play, after which the lecturer will conduct a question-and-answer period. A wine-and-cheese reception will follow this.

Cymbeline, a tragi-comedy, one of Shakespeare's later plays, is the stuff of fairy-tales and adventure, with romance, battles, separation and reunion, questioned fidelity and much more. A mature Shakespeare seems here, perhaps, to be reflection upon the outcome of some familiar plots, where this time around, the characters are not driven by a tragic destiny.

The cost is \$18.50. Please make checks payable to Metropolitan Boston Great Books Council, and mail to Nancy Reifenstein, Box 154, Harvard, MA 01451.

Council Officers

Officers for the Metropolitan Boston Great Books Council as elected at the annual meeting held on October 26, 1991 are as follows: President, Ralph (Gus) Soderberg; Vice-President, Deirdre Skiffington; Secretary, Eleanor Jensen; Treasurer, John Mulloy. Nancy Reifenstein has resigned as coordinator, with the thanks of the Metropolitan Boston Council for her efforts on its behalf. A new title for the position has been established, Group Developer, to more clearly indicate the primary function of the job.

Book Bargains

Paperback readings at a 30% discount (23% with a 7% shipping charge) can be ordered from the Adams Book Company, 537 Sackett St., Brooklyn, NY 11217 (1-800-221-0909), with a minimum order of 10 copies of each title ordered. Advance payment by check or M.O. is required.

Boston's Great Books Spring Institute

LEGACIES

Sheraton Plymouth at Village Landing
Plymouth, Massachusetts
April 10-12, 1992

The Readings:

Human Nature and Conduct, John Dewey

Oscar and Lucinda, Peter Carey

The Price, Arthur Miller

Scholarships are available: please contact Virginia Thurston at the address below. The weekend costs \$185 per person, double occupancy, and includes books discussions, lodging, 6 meals, tips, and social activities. To register, please send a deposit of \$90 per person double occupancy, to Virginia Thurston, P.O. Box 299, Harvard, MA 01451. Make checks payable to the Spring Institute Committee. If you cancel by March 20, your deposit, less charge for 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.

Wilmington Spring Seminar

Save Saturday, March 21 for the annual seminar. Details later. Information: Cyra Gross, 302-475-3914.

The Sounds of Silence

There may be noisier mealtimes than at Great Books Institutes, but I doubt it. As participants file into the dining room, decibels rise to an almost palpable pitch. Food and ideas are ingested simultaneously, with exhilaration.

I found the antithesis of this phenomenon at a monastery. I stayed there for an Elderhostel week, ostensibly to learn about the ecology of the Hudson River Valley. I learned more about silence. We ate two meals a day without speaking; for me, an evocative experience.

All too often, I realized, quietness is a social hole that people feel must be filled with mindless conversation. Silence has become rare, even paradoxical, a presence known mostly by its absence, like the "w" in "answer." Silence is potentially in every midst. Friendship and love may deepen in a rapport that does not depend on the spoken word. There are ways of saying nothing and meaning everything. Personal pursuits are enhanced by quiet: reading, painting, fishing, sitting by a waterside. The natural world has constant soundless beauty, an endless wealth for the perceptive. Underwater motion. Butterflies, falling leaves. Frost, fog, clouds. The stars.

How to explain the mysterious fear of silence, the need for noise? It is an effort to blot out harsh reality or to avoid self-confrontation? For some, silence is no more than a held breath or a restraining hand over a mouth. For others, it is a beckoning world, where truth is to be found.

I still love our periodic hubbub.

Claire Gerber



LONG ISLAND NEWS

Spring Institute Theme: DIFFERENT WORLDS, DIFFERENT WORDS

Readings:

IN COUNTRY by Bobby Ann Mason - Vietnam War veterans adapting to home and peace after the war.

"...You know when you cut down a tree sometimes and it's diseased in the middle?"

"I never cut down a tree."

"Well, imagine it."

"Yeah, but what you're saying is you don't care about anybody."

YOU JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND by Deborah Tannen - Women and men in conversation.

PLACE: An estate on the north shore of Long Island

DATE: To be determined

COST: \$22.00. Includes readings, travel 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 ME FULL INFORMATION ON SPRING INSTITUTE WHEN PLACE AND DATE HAVE BEEN DECIDED.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

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

PHILADELPHIA NEWS

A Good Time Was Had By All Dept.

The Philadelphia Fall Institute was a rousing success. We all had a good time luxuriating in the books, the convivial atmosphere, and one another's company. A number of visitors from such out-of-the-way places as Ruritania, Grosso Stupido and little Lesser Stupido were induced to take on new citizenship.

We're hard at work on next year's institute, and expect that it will be as fulfilling, meaningful, stimulating, and rowdy as last year's.

Theatre Party

CHANGE...CHANGE...CHANGE...CHANGE...CHANGE...CHANGE...CHANGE...CHANGE...CHANGE...CHANGE
Temple University has changed its spring production from the one announced last month in the Philadelphia flyer. The new presentation will be *The Women of Argos* - the history of the ill-fated House of Atreus, based on these works by the three greatest Greek dramatists: Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis*, Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, Sophocles' *Electra*, and Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris*.

Date: Sunday, March 29, Matinee at 2:00 p.m.

Place: Temple University Theatre, 13th & Norris Streets, free parking on Diamond Street, east of 13th, adjacent to theatre door.

Cost: \$12.00, including discussion and refreshments.

Reservations: Please send your check, payable to Phila. GB Council, to Fritzie Green, 2401 Pennsylvania Ave., Apt.10-B21, Phila. 19130.

Information: Olga Wallace 637-3238.

Philadelphia's 33rd Annual Spring Seminar

Hogs, Frogs, Cats, and Wives

Great new location... Fun and surprises...

4-footed critters, 3 feedings, 2 readings, 1 great time...

We, the nominal masters of our animal kingdom, act and react in strange ways with the lower orders: our associations with them are sometimes comic, sometimes tragic, sometimes beneficial, sometimes destructive. Soul Bellow's *Henderson the Rain King* clownishly tangles with an astonishing number of species in his search for meaning. A sheaf of poems presents further sight-literary, (not literal) zoo.

Sunday, May 17, at lovely and convenient Chestnut Hill Academy, 500 W. Willow Grove Avenue, just opposite the Philadelphia Cricket Club. \$24.00 covers readings, feedings, meetings.

Please send check for \$24.00 per person, payable to Phila. GB Council. Mail it to John Taylor, 617 Woodland Avenue, Cheltenham, PA 19012.

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____ Zip _____

LETTERS

To the Editor:

Please note the following analysis of the reading list for Years VI-X proposed in the August 1991 Tricorn by Gus Soderberg:

GENERAL CATEGORY	WORKS %	SESSIONS %
Plato and Aristotle	17.85%	25.00%
Religion, ethics, and related works	32.10%	28.75%
Shakespeare	17.85%	6.25%
Novels	14.30%	27.50%
Poetry	14.30%	5.00%
Political theory & commentary	3.60%	7.50%
20th century literature, science, philosophy, politics, history, etc.	0.00%	0.00%

Clearly, for Years VI-X, this list lacks balance and contemporary relevance. If I were to develop a reading list for these years, I would start with the assumption that the "graduates" of Years I-V would gain much in intellectual breadth, as well as in personal satisfaction and insight, by concentrating on more contemporary - 19th and 20th century - works of literature, philosophy, science, politics, etc. I offer the following suggestions:

1. Drop Plato and Aristotle. Representative works by these authors should have been covered in Years I-V. Although both of these authors were giants in the history of philosophy, much of what they had to say had only marginal contemporary relevance. (Six meetings on Plato's Republic??? Strategic excerpts for one or two sessions would be more appropriate, if any at all. Plato's dialogues often contain a lot of useless Socratic chitchat. Consider using the section on the Allegory of the Cave as a possible reading for a single session. Better yet, forget about Plato and Aristotle for Years VI-X.) Instead, include excerpts from works by Bergson, James, Dewey, Pierce, Russell, Mill, Heidegger, Willgenstein, Kierkegaard, Whitehead, Ayers.
2. Drop Shakespeare. Representative works by Shakespeare are covered in Years I-V. Substitute works by Ibsen, Shaw, Beckett, Brecht, Chekhov, O'Neill, Miller, etc.
3. The inclusion of seminal works on non-Judeo-Christian religions, ethical systems and related works is a refreshing development. But it is overdone. I cannot imagine five successive readings on the *Koran*. By the fifth meeting the only remaining participants would be a few diehard Moslems. Suitably selected excerpts would be more appropriate. Likewise for James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*. Also, delete further Bible readings and reduce Buddha to one compassionate session, and Dante to one divine session.
4. Five meetings on Dostoievsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* may also be too much for groups that meet twice a month, or, in some cases, once a month. Suitable excerpts would be more appropriate - "The Grand Inquisitor" section, for example.
5. Dickens and Thackeray are fine, but more "contemporary" novels with more significant social commentary and philosophical content would be more appropriate for Years VI-X. Some of many possible authors: Melville, Hesse, Mann, Kafka, Camus, Faulkner, Conrad, Hemingway, etc.
6. Politics and social thought - too many sessions on de Tocqueville. Instead, include excerpts from authors like Veblen, Smith, Towney, Levy-Strauss, Weber, Popper, Hayek, Marx, von Mises, Durkheim, Schumpeter, Toynbee, etc.
7. The August '91 Tricorn list is singularly lacking in representative writings on science and the philosophy of science. Many writings by scientists suitable for the educated general public are available by such authors as Einstein, Poincare, Bohr, Eddington, Darwin, Schrodinger, von Neumann, Reichenbach, Feyerabend, and Kuhn.

With regard to the cost and current availability of such books, the problem can be readily solved by modern copying machine services. In places like Kinko's and Sir Speedy copies can be made for less than 5¢ per page. Thus a 100 page excerpt from a book can fit on 50 sheets (2 pages to a sheet) at a cost of about \$2.50.

Johan Dasmeistens-Pingelig van Unaufgeklart
A.K.A. John Chapin

To the Editor,

I took up Colby in retirement in 1984. Then it took me up. Never have I been in such caring - inquiring - stimulating - mutually enhancing atmosphere. I have inherited numerous brothers and sisters. I have been hugged - stroked - smiled at and generally wrapped in warm jolly good will.

At Colby the body and the mind are center stage. We live well, play hard, and think aloud to each other. We study and we relax. We have duties and we have leisure. We are able to be silent and social. The choice is ours and we exercise it daily without pressure. It is autonomy run riot. We become beehives of inactivity.

Charles S. Brown



To the Editor,

As the years pass, I become unalterable convinced that the Great Books Colbyites are a community of carers, concerned with ideas both in the abstract and as they affect our lives. The week-long exchange is quite serendipitous for newcomers and returnees alike. The entire experience is so indelibly etched in one's memory that for the next fifty-one weeks much of what occurred at Colby will be summoned forth and relived many times over.

Who can deny the familial closeness, who would willingly forego the stimulating give-and-take in an atmosphere of trust and respect, who can forget the smiling visages and warm greetings that are an engaging, invigorating force on the Colby campus? Whose intellectual, emotional, and spiritual batteries are not recharged by the discussions taking place formally, over meals, or on shaded grassy plots here and there?

Indeed, we who partake of this seven-day feast of friendship and fellowship owe an incalculable debt of gratitude to the Summer Institute Committee for its unflagging efforts on our behalf.

Curt Boddie

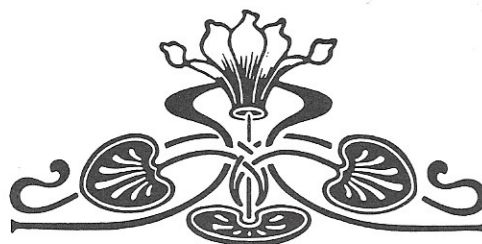


To the Editor:

The changes inflicted on the Great Books Program over the last 25 years, resulting in watering it down into a search for meaning, were driven by a fear of truth. Correctly seeing that some participants were unable to transcend their inherited or acquired truths, the Foundation reconstructed the program to eliminate the possibility of participants asserting their truths or transcending them. Thus the payoff of Great Books was transformed from the productive application of standards of worth to speculation over the author's meaning.

The main reason that notions of truth strike fear into Great Books policy makers is that they see people who cling to truth as a threat to others' freedom from the oppression of having beliefs challenged. Why should that be oppressive? Perhaps the reasoning goes thus: If the challenge to my beliefs is prohibited, my beliefs are unlikely to change - and that makes me feel good.

Presley Brown





The Deepening and Darkening of Doublespeak

Ever since the miraculous post-World War II moment when our Department of War became our Department of Defense, examples of mind-bending doublespeak have become both more numerous and more egregious. Some current examples:

1. Vocational relocation
2. Pre-enjoyed car
3. Servicing the target
4. Hair disadvantaged
5. Food and beverage consultant
6. Clothing optional recreation
7. Foreign guests
8. Mislead
9. Engage in negative attention-getting
10. Senior congregate living community for the chronologically gifted

Translations:

1. Lay off employees
2. Used car
3. Propaganda
4. Bald
5. Waiter
6. Nudism
7. Hostages
8. Lie
9. Misbehave
10. Retirement community for old people

Great Books
14 Bay Second St.
Islip, NY 11751