

66th Annual Great Books at Colby College  
Waterville, Maine  
July 17 – July 23, 2022

**THEME: *Authenticity***

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature & Self-Reliance* (Essays)

Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

Walker Percy, *The Moviegoer*

Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

Magda Szabo, *The Door*

Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha*

We believe **the examined life is worth living**. Come to Great Books at Colby. We are fully prepared to meet and comply with all required safety protocols\* and thus invite you with confidence to join us *in-person* for our annual lively week of discussions on the traditional and picturesque campus of Colby College. Our community enjoys reading and discussing Great Books. You can find insights rarely achieved while reading alone. You can connect with fellow book lovers and make lifelong friends, as you enjoy the beauty and splendor of summertime Maine. Our timely theme is *Authenticity*. Come explore the complexities that confront people as they journey towards individuation and authenticity.

This unforgettable vacation brings together readers who love great literary works and provides an opportunity to associate with those who share that enthusiasm. On campus participants reside in Colby dormitories, eat meals together, and participate in formal discussion groups that meet for two hours each morning, Monday through Saturday. Books are mailed once registration deposits are received, and people are expected to have read them before arriving. Readers develop insights through the Great Books Foundation's *Shared Inquiry Method*. Not quoting outside sources facilitates an egalitarian discussion wherein the emphasis is truly on readers and the text. Discussion leaders are assigned, moving from group to group during the week. A *leaderless* group is available upon request to experienced participants if preferred.

After discussions, participants are invited to use the many recreational, athletic and cultural opportunities available on campus. In addition to an opening night orientation and a Thursday evening Talent Show (strictly voluntary and always a lot of fun), there are a wide variety of activities. Colby's beautiful campus features an impressive, classic library with a fascinating Rare Books Collection, a highly rated Art Museum, tennis courts, first-class athletic facilities with an Olympic- sized swimming pool, an arboretum with hiking trails, and access to waterfront property at a nearby lake. In addition, Great Books at Colby is scheduled in conjunction with the Atlantic Music Festival ([www.atlanticmusicfestival.org](http://www.atlanticmusicfestival.org)), also held on campus, which provides a series of excellent free classical concerts and recitals.

Registration covers books and discussions, as well as lectures, films, group social activities, use of athletic facilities and tennis courts, and a real Maine Lobster Bake. On campus registration includes a single or double dormitory room (six nights: Sunday through Friday night) and all meals. For a nominal additional fee, you may stay over Saturday night either before (July 16th) and/or after the week (July 23rd). Dining is at Dana Dining Hall, newly renovated with air conditioning, which offers a variety of distinctive locally grown and organic foods in an all-you-can-eat buffet and provides many options for vegetarians. Commuters participate in all activities, but live on their own, off-campus, and receive lunch each day and the Lobster Bake at the Dana Dining Hall. Breakfast and dinner for commuters are optional for additional fees.

*\*See details of Covid Protocols on Page 3.*

People attending Colby Great Books vary in age, background, education and interests, but all share a love of reading. Some have come to Colby for decades, but many newcomers arrive each year. Everyone is welcome and embraced as full and equal participants. The goal is shared inquiry, shared ideas, shared laughter, and shared experience. Results are often friendship, fun and sometimes even glimpses of truth. We also regularly have a social gathering place each night. The *Wachs Works* is our version of a friendly pub with an emphasis on socialization and relaxation.

Colby food is delicious and plentiful. Living arrangements are in comfortable dorm rooms. Fans, phones, reading lights and bed boards are available. It is dormitory living, however, with no frills and no air conditioning (Our Maine location means this usually is not a problem.). You might want to bring a mirror. We have private bedrooms with shared bath facilities. All buildings are smoke-free. The school provides towels and bed linen, although some prefer to bring their own towels. Arrangements can usually be made for people with special needs. If you have special medical or other needs, please include that on your application. That information is forwarded to Sylvia Eusebi (Sylvia@softhands.net) who assigns rooms and oversees accommodations.

Participants make their own travel arrangements. Many arrive by car, but there is air service to Portland, Bangor, and Augusta ME; Manchester, NH; and Boston, MA. Rental cars, buses and limousine service are available from these key locations. There is also a Greyhound bus terminal in Waterville right outside the campus. For those without cars, rides with other participants can sometimes be arranged. Coordination of carpooling can be made by emailing participants. There is also a Facebook page for sharing ride info:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Wachs-Great-Books-Summer-Institute-at-Colby-College/156086481080727?ref=ts>

See all details and history at [GreatBooks-atColby.org](http://GreatBooks-atColby.org) and check out the photos of our participants in action.

**Registration and Refunds:** A deposit for each person is required with registration. Cancellations before May 15, 2022 incur the cost for books and mailing (\$90). The balance of registration is due at Colby on **Sunday, July 17, 2022, and must be either Cash or Check.** A previous attendee who registers someone or a family new to Colby, is eligible for a \$25 discount, unless already receiving discount by scholarship. You must register by mail.

In 2020 and 2021, Colby went virtual with a theme of *American Experience*. For 2022, we anticipate attending in person with forty or more attendees. It seems very probable. If we cannot, we will Zoom with these same books. The Zoom meetings will span the weeks of July 17 through July 30<sup>th</sup> on a schedule TBD. Some people rolled over their deposit from 2020 through 2021 and naturally it still applies for 2022. John Dalton will contact you separately as to whether to mail the books.

## REGISTRATION DETAILS:

Make checks payable to: **Great Books at Colby.** Mail deposit checks to: **Great Books at Colby, PO Box 424, Newtown Square, PA 19073.**

Colby Fees	On Campus		Commuters*	
	Fee	Deposit	Fee	Deposit
Adult	\$700	\$350	\$430	\$200

\* Includes Lunch and Lobster Bake: Breakfast per meal, \$10; Dinner per meal, \$15.

**Optional Saturday Nights to Attend the Atlantic Music Festival's Concert:** Extra nights: Saturday, July 16th (\$90, lodging, dinner, breakfast, and Sunday lunch) and/or July 23rd (\$85, lodging, dinner and breakfast). Concerts are free. Please prepay for additional nights with your registration deposit.

For more information or additional flyers visit our website at [www.GreatBooks-atColby.org](http://www.GreatBooks-atColby.org).

You can also direct questions to John Dalton at 610-608-7711, or email him at [agreatbook@aol.com](mailto:agreatbook@aol.com)

Normally, we offer a Children's Program for ages five and above. But, given the pandemic and its uncertainty, we cannot really guarantee anything at this time. If we were to have a Children's Program, are you interested? We might not know for certain till May, 2022. For now, email John Dalton (jd5258875@aol.com) that you would like to bring children. If it is feasible, we will run a program for them.

## REGISTRATION APPLICATION

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY

----- ( Detach Here ) -----

**Mail to: Great Books at Colby, PO Box 424, Newtown Square, PA 19073**

<p><b>APPLICATION</b> (Make checks payable to <b>Great Books at Colby</b>)</p> <p>Name(s) _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____</p> <p>State _____ Zip code _____</p> <p>Phone (    ) _____</p> <p>Cell Phone (    ) _____</p> <p>Email _____</p> <p>Rooming with _____</p> <p>Rooming near (if possible) _____</p> <p>We are commuting (names) _____</p>	<p><b>Please circle your choices.</b></p> <p><b>Lobster Bake: [Circle choice]</b></p> <p><i>Lobster    Steak    Halibut    Vegetarian</i></p> <p><b>Previously attended Colby Great Books:</b></p> <p><b>Yes or No</b></p> <p><b>Prefer Leaderless Group: Yes or No</b></p> <p><b>Prefer Better Hearing Group*: Yes or No</b></p> <p><b>Need Handicapped Access: Yes or No</b></p> <p><b>Need Bed Board: Yes or No</b></p> <p><b>Extra night choice: July 16 for \$90;</b> <b>July 23 for \$85</b></p>
<p><b>Emergency Contact (NOT at Colby) Name _____ Phone _____ Relationship _____</b></p>	

**\*Nota Bene:** We will have an adult group dedicated to maximizing conditions for hearing others while they speak.

### **Covid Protocols – First - EVERYONE MUST BE VACCINATED**

Attendees must adhere to CDC protocols as well as Colby College's own covid safety protocols. Attached page 5 is a statement from Brian Bray, Director of Colby's Summer Programs, which describes the college's current mandatory procedures. It's noteworthy that Colby has been very successful with its Covid protocols. Note that he anticipates that **everyone must be vaccinated**. That may mean a booster, or maybe even a second booster. However, he has indicated that he cannot be certain what exact mandatory protocols will be in place come July.

Because of the pandemic, it is possible that Colby College may require testing upon arrival for a small fee. At this point, the school's safety protocols for this coming summer have not been finalized, so it is possible there might be additional testing. We probably will not have the full picture till May, 2022.

## Readings (delivered by mail)

Below is a brief introduction to required readings that capture our theme of *Authenticity* in exciting, insightful and artful ways:

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*: In this essay Emerson establishes the foundation of transcendentalism, a belief system that espouses a non-traditional appreciation of nature. He argues that the divine, or God, suffuses nature, and suggests that reality can be understood by studying nature. *Self-Reliance*: This essay articulates one of Emerson's recurrent themes, the need for each individual to avoid conformity and false consistency and instead follow his own instincts and ideas. It offers an analysis into the nature of the *aboriginal self on which a universal reliance may be grounded*.

Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*: This seminal novel, published in 1952, addresses many of the social and intellectual issues faced by African Americans in the early twentieth century, including black nationalism, the relationship between black identity and Marxism, and the reformist racial policies of Booker T. Washington. It also closely examines the issues of individuality and personal identity as reflected by authenticity.

Walker Percy, *The Moviegoer*: Winner of the 1962 National Book Award, this debut novel is recognized as an American masterpiece. Its protagonist, Binx Bolling, lives for movies and casual sex. Almost thirty, he undergoes an existentialist awakening and embarks on a quest for authentic experience. Indebted to the philosophy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Danish theologian, Soren Kierkegaard, the approach of phenomenology to examining lived experience, and Dante's poetic vision of the afterlife in his classic masterpiece the Divine Comedy. Insightful and romantic, gently humorous even as it plumbs the depths of despair, it is the story of a young man's search for meaning in a shallow consumerist world.

Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*: This 1862 Victorian English children's novel depicts Alice falling through a rabbit hole into a fantasy world of anthropomorphic creatures. Her dreamlike journey can be viewed from many perspectives. As a literary nonsense genre whose play with logic gives the story lasting popularity with adults as well as children, the novel's narrative, structure, characters and imagery have had a huge influence on popular culture and literature, especially in the fantasy genre.

Magda Szabo, *The Door*: This 1987 Hungarian novel portrays an unsettling exploration of the relationship between two very different women. Magda is a writer, educated, married to an academic, public-spirited with an on-again-off-again relationship to Hungary's Communist authorities. Emerence is a peasant, illiterate, impassive, abrupt, seemingly ageless. She is Magda's housekeeper who has disturbingly taken control over Magda's household thereby becoming indispensable. Whether Emerence is the embodiment of monstrosity, of Old Hungary, or of dignity give way to a view of her as the embodiment of the human. The novel reveals a study of survival tactics, of finding voice out of silence, and of the ways in which authenticity dismisses fakery at every turn in a life truly lived.

Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha*: This 1922 novel deals with the spiritual journey of self-discovery of a man named Siddhartha during the time of the Gautama Buddha. The word *Siddhartha* is made up of two words in Sanskrit language, *siddha* (achieved) + *artha* (what was searched for), which together means "he who has found meaning (of existence)" or "he who has attained his goals." Experience, the totality of conscious events of a human life, is shown as the best way to approach understanding of reality and attain enlightenment. The journey reveals that understanding is attained not through intellectual methods, nor through immersing oneself in the carnal pleasures of the world and the accompanying pain of samsara (the cycle of death and rebirth to which life in the material world is bound); rather, it is the completeness of these experiences that allows Siddhartha to attain understanding.

From Brian Bray, Our Colby Contact, October, 2021:

I hope this email finds you well. All is fine here. We had a great summer and we hosted a handful of groups (including the Atlantic Music Festival and a large youth program). I'm pleased to report that we did not have any COVID cases on our campus this summer.

We do not yet know what our COVID health protocols will look like, but we will most certainly institute policies and protocols to protect our guests and our community. Last year, we established a COVID task force and we continually update our plans based on CDC guidelines and recommendations from the task force. We likely will not finalize our protocols until next spring, but I anticipate they will remain the same. **I also expect that all guests will be required to provide us with proof of vaccination.** To give you a sense of the steps that we have taken to protect our guests and our community, here are the protocols that we instituted this summer and fall:

- All campus spaces were reconfigured to maximize distancing
- Campus buildings have been locked and only are only accessible with a Colby card to prevent the general public from entering these spaces (with the exception of the Museum of Art)
- On July 8, Colby reached out to faculty, staff and students to notify them that they would need to be fully vaccinated prior to returning to campus - everyone was required to upload a copy of their vaccination records onto an online platform to verify these records
- Colby continues to rigorously test faculty, staff and students on a regular basis (twice a week) through the Broad Institute
- In addition to the PCR tests, Colby has used rapid tests for faculty, staff, students upon their return to campus to screen for positive COVID cases following travel
- While masks were not required this past summer, we now require them in all indoor public spaces (except in dorm rooms, of course) as a precaution
- Masks are required in the dining hall serving area, but are not required while seated in the dining hall
- Faculty, staff and students are required to monitor and report symptoms using an app that we developed for COVID
- Staff were hired and trained to provide contact tracing services when necessary
- Specific Dorms and off-campus spaces were designated for isolation and quarantine housing for students who tested positive or had close contact with someone who tests positive
- Faculty and staff members were required to stay home upon a positive test result or close contact with someone who tests positive
- Colby instituted a health code alert system based on the current status of cases - should the college exceed a certain number of positive cases, the campus is prepared to restrict activities/movement and transition to remote learning if necessary
- Summer guests who test positive were asked to isolate in designated housing or to leave campus
- For youth groups, parents agreed to pick up their children within 36 hours of a positive test result

The primary safeguard has been our rigorous testing, contact tracing program and isolation/quarantine housing. We've been able to quickly identify cases and mitigate outbreaks through these programs during the academic year, which has made Colby a model for other schools. Here are a few links below that feature Colby College in national press coverage (including a segment on National Public Television).

<https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/education/2020/09/30/covid-cases-college-testing-colby/3522016001/>

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2020/10/08/colleges-covid-spend-money-resist-pressure-serve-students-column/5910315002/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQMm-8YvJGU>