



# IMPRIMIS

Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, Michigan 49242

May 1989 Volume 18, No. 5

## Chronicling the Culture: The Poet and the Modern Epic Ambition

*By Fred Chappell*

*Editor's Preview:* As poet Fred Chappell notes at the beginning of this essay, "A culture chronicles itself." However, it is the poet's task to sort through "an ocean of documentary material" to discover a grand design and a higher meaning in our world of everyday events.

Professor Chappell also discusses the traditional relationship of the epic hero to his culture: "His customary physical bravery is only a part of the quality of character his role demands; he must also make difficult moral choices."

But today's epic poems seem to sacrifice intelligibility, value, and idealism to the rubbish heap in favor of disintegration, disconnection and skepticism.

This essay was originally presented on the Hillsdale campus in February 1989, as the annual Dike Lecture, and in connection with the College's Arts/Performance Series.

A culture chronicles itself. The archeologist, the anthropologist and the sociologist, the novelist and his brethren in stagecraft and filmcraft, all lead us to appreciate that we live in an ocean of documentary material. The look of our automobiles, the diction of our news reporting, the images of our television advertising, the cut of our clothing, the texture of our mathematics—all these things and a million others provide indices to the collective characters of each of our national cultures and to the character of our global culture, if we can truly be said to have achieved one.

Not only are the professions I have already listed taking on the job of dealing with this infinite clutter of information and implication, but other professions are



equally interested, and are engaged in examining each possible trend and counter-trend, each miniscule revolution and consequent revision, from different perspectives in pursuit of different goals.

We might mention, for example, the historian and the news reporter, the market research analyst and the advertising copy writer, the government census bureaucrat and the public works engineer—each of these professions and a thousand others have a stake in looking at the morass of clues before them and then trying to determine the outlines of our contemporary personalities, individual as well as collective. All sorts of methods have been devised to undertake the smaller separate tasks that the larger task entails; the most pervasive method is quantification, the reducing of historical facts and conscious thought and idiosyncratic impulse to processable numbers.

### **The Poet as a Chronicler**

And there is the pinch, so far as the poet is concerned. For the poet too is highly motivated to analyze and understand and finally to synthesize all the various cultural data that he can come by while still retaining his identity as a poet. Yet the poet is no quantifier—except in the metric quantities of his lines. The methods the poet has at his disposal—intuitive understanding of character, wide knowledge of history, close observation of nature and of psychology, a highly sensitive patterning of his autobiography, and so forth—are not considered trustworthy in any scientific sense. The quality which gives his work its singular and enduring value is its brave subjectivity, a quality which at the present moment is rejected as unscientific, irrelevant, and unimportant.

But "relevance" and "importance" are transitory qualities as well as relative ones. In 1929 it was a matter of some expense as well as of dogged labor to find out just how many tons of pig iron were produced in the United States and how many bushels of sweet potatoes were consumed, how many hospitals were erected and how many tenements were demolished, and it seemed important to know these facts. These are facts which no doubt still have their uses for economic historians, for statistical forecasters, and for a few other professionals. For almost all of us, though, they are now more remote in interest than the minutest subatomic particle or the farthest astronomical object. They sleep the sleep of disused filing cabinets.



## The Poet as a Muse

Now, of course, it is the responsibility of literature to be interesting. No one talks about it much, but it is the first duty of poetry to entertain. After that, it can instruct, enlighten, ennoble, and perform all the high-minded feats of intellectual and moral gymnastic that it ever has a yearning to perform. But first it must flag our attentions and then engage our emotions in a way that 740,000 cubic tons of pig iron and the nearly twelve million bushels of sweet potatoes do not.

I am perfectly aware that Hart Crane's impressionistic American epic poem, *The Bridge*, does not flag the attentions and capture the emotions of everyone who reads it—and that it hasn't acquired milling hordes of faithful readers in the first place. I know that there are many people for whom a phrase like "O Thou Hand of Fire" is less thrilling than "O Thou Pan of Pizza," for whom a line like "The seal's wide spindrift gaze toward paradise" has one thousand times less meaning than a weary cliché from rock and roll lyrics: "Come on, baby, it's all right!"

Nevertheless, there are certain readers for whom *The Bridge* is an entertaining performance and it is to these readers that poets must address themselves, partly because they must find their audiences where they can, and partly because American culture, for all its self-vaunting anti-intellectualism, still does not consist entirely in pizza and rock and roll. Poetry, and especially epic poetry, is supposed to be a more durable stuff than pizza; whether it can ever be as entertaining is a doubtful point.

## The Poet as a Prophet

But an epic poem is an enduring object because its subject matter is enduring, its subject matter being in the long run the very culture that

### About the Author

Fred Chappell is a poet and a professor of literature at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is the author of numerous novels and books of poetry, including: *The World Between the Eyes* (1971), *The Man Twice Married to Fire* (1977), *Wind Mountain* (1979), *Moments of Light* (1980), *The Fred Chappell Reader* (1987), *First and Last Words* (1988) and a forthcoming novel, *Brighten the Corner Where You Are*.

demanded—or caused, or evolved—its production. Once we think that Vergil's purpose in *The Aeneid* was not only to tell the story of the founding of Rome but also to draw the lineaments of Roman ideals as they will always be perceived in history, once we see that Milton's purpose in *Paradise Lost* is not simply to recast the Biblical compilation into Hellenic epic form but to dramatize at the highest ontological and cosmological levels the eternal dialectic between rebellion and authority, between necessary error and merciful justice, then we see the magnitude of the effort that

historic terms is merely the instrument of political policy. In order to achieve what objectivity he can, he must stand back from participation and disengage himself from the activities that inevitably result in partisan bias.

(I am speaking, of course, in generalized ideal terms. The politician can sometimes be a perspicacious historian and even a perspicuous philosopher—as Cicero was. Or the most hotly engaged participant in historical affairs can prove himself an immortal historian—as Julius Caesar has done.)

---

“In the twentieth century English language epic poem, the broadly persuasive, emotionally satisfying plot has disappeared and the heroes who might animate it have decamped.”

---

lies before the poet. He must find the form, the story, and the poetic idiom that will eternalize these conflicts and concerns that underlie and animate his own time, even if these conflicts and concerns are generally unrecognized in his generation. The poet's ambitions in regard to his culture are different from those of the politician on one side and of the historian on the other.

## The Poet as a Judge

The politician wishes to understand his culture; at least, the bright and farseeing politician does. But his goals are immediate. He wants to understand his culture so that he can affect immediate change, sometimes violent change. He wants to lay hands on his society and culture and to leave the impress of his personality upon the daily lives of his fellow citizens. The historian's ambitions may be greater than the politician's in some respects, but they are less immediate. Ideally, the historian of the contemporary world wishes to comprehend his times without affecting immediate change. He may celebrate what he finds good and denigrate what he considers bad; he may acclaim with wholehearted approval or he may view with alarm. If he refuses to judge character, circumstance, and event, then he is no historian but only a glorified statistician. But he is powerless to enforce his judgements. Once he attempts to enforce his judgements, then he reduces himself to a politician—or to a soldier, who in

Somewhere between these two positions, the politician as busy meddler and the historian as ivory tower voyeur, lie the activities of most professions whose business consists in the direct observation of culture. The government bureaucratic information-gatherer does not ordinarily directly affect current events, but he supplies information to those individuals who are in position to do so. The literary critic is not a direct influence; that is, he does not cause this book to be written and that other one to languish unpublished; but his suggestions that one author rewards the time and effort required to read him while another author is an abyss of murkiest idiocy exert a strong indirect influence on the temporary intellectual complexion of his time. Sooner or later it is discovered that the bureaucrat's statistics were faulty or irrelevant and that the literary critic's judgements were dead wrong from top to bottom, but that outcome is what makes these professionals historical personages rather than historians. Most professions which deal with culture—journalism, teaching, sociology, advertising, and so forth—occupy this middle ground between direct action and self-sufficient contemplation.

But the ambitions of the poet seem different and quite apart from those of the other workers in this subject matter. He has no hope (except in his capacities as a private citizen, as a soldier or as a voter, or in other civic responsibilities) of directly affecting current events or of changing the face of his contemporary culture. If he is



wise, he has no desire to do these things, for the poet is ill equipped to be a public leader.

### **The Poet as a Man**

It has long been a demonstrable fact that the poet as personality is a cranky off-putting pain in the butt. Bumptious, bilious, and babbling; irresponsible, unreal, and well irrigated; lewd, loudmouthed, and lunatic, he does not present an edifying spectacle to the society that he must portray for the delectation of succeeding generations. The figure of the poet has been delineated for us in the literature of the millenia and he makes an all-too-human design upon this literature, ranging the gamut from the true picture of bravery and nobility with Sir Philip Sidney to the true picture of funkiness and petty out-lawry with Francois Villion.

Between these contrasting examples we find the usual picture of the poet as a near-sighted scribe and harmless drudge who has been made absent-minded and just a little daft by his books and his dreams, by his flagons and apples, by his inattentive lightminded girlfriends. There he is, as in the opera, *The Tales of Hoffman*, tipsy and humiliated at the beginning, drunk and insensible to the revelations of his own muse at the end.

Even if that rendering of the poet is a caricature, we must recognize that the poet is almost certainly not the pilot we wish to find at the helm of state. When we try to place the poet within the context of Horace's metaphor of the ship of state, the image that inevitably comes to mind is that of the loose cannon on deck. Politics demands passion, but disciplined passion; for the poet, discipline is the business of writing, passion the business of life.

### **The Poet as a Teller of Truths**

No, that formulation is not true. For if the poet should not aspire to the role of politician, neither should he aspire to the role of historian. Those dry, discarded, dull statistics that I have been speaking of with such cavalier superciliousness are daily meat and drink to the conscientious historian. They are not the whole of the raw material that he makes history of, sometimes they are barely ancillary to his purposes. But he must know them and respect them if his work

is to have basis in truth and a claim upon comprehensiveness.

The poet must know *about* the pig iron and sweet potato statistics and he will aid his epic poem by knowing where to find such information, but he is not constrained to know these facts nor to absorb them into his work. He is not even constrained to honor them.

If the dramatic exigencies of his poem require that in 1929 the United States produced only 35 pounds of pig iron rather than 740,000 cubic tons, then he must write down 35 pounds. If his poem demands no sweet potatoes, then it must go yamless, and to hell with those numbers collected so expensively and assiduously. The poet displays an attitude toward raw fact that would give a real historian apoplexy.

But if he is not going to tell us the truth about sweet potatoes and pig iron, then the poet had better substitute some value that we can recognize as being larger and more important than factual accuracy. Aristotle believed that he knew what this value was; he called it "truth," poetic truth in strong distinction to mere accuracy. The truth the poet creates, or discovers, is the general grand design that underlies the

About our modern attempts at epic poems, we have misgivings. In the twentieth century English language epic poem, the broadly persuasive, emotionally satisfying plot has disappeared and the heroes who might animate it have decamped. When we look at the works of Ezra Pound, Basil Bunting, T. S. Eliot, Michael Martin, Louis Zukofsky, Amon Liner, William Carlos Williams, Charles Olson, William Harmon, Ronald Johnson, Hart Crane, Ron Bayes, James Merrill, and others, we find that the epic poem (and also the longish poems which make no claims on epic status) has been redefined so that our usual expectations must be disappointed. And just as the form has been redefined, the methods of composition have been transformed; sometimes, in fact, the compositional methods have been turned upside down.

### **The Traditional Epic Poem**

Some of the larger questions that the epic form broaches have been retained and two of them have been made the main points of these poets' concern. The first question is: *What is the relationship of culture to the individual life in our con-*

---

“The traditional epic form took the historian's narrative and shaped it into the simple grand architecture of a plot; the modern epic takes the historian's narrative and, in a spirit of heated distrust, pulverizes it into a dust of separate and discrete moments, a rubble of footnotes.”

---

infinity of quotidian detail. The historian arranges his data into a narrative; the poet shapes a narrative into a plot. However complex his plot appears to us, it is still quite simple when compared to the complexities of his raw material. His story is to be simple, striking, unforgettable, judicious, convincing; and what it lacks in strict historical accuracy it must make up in excitement. If he can portray strong characters who perform brave actions out of comprehensible motives, then he shall command our warmest allegiances. If he must resort to other means in order to create excitement, we shall probably still look upon his work with interest, but we shall have—reservations.

*temporary world?* The second question is: *What constant qualities of history, if any, are exemplified or illustrated by our isolated modern biographies?*

These are traditional questions. If we examine the latter question first, the problem of the relationship of epic characters to the lessons of history, we can point out that *pious* Aeneas, for example, embodies the primary bond of relationship between the individual Roman citizen and the Roman state; it is duty. We can see that Dante's epic hero is a historical constant, the poet himself stands as Everyman in his search for the correct relationship with God. As for the first question about the relationship of culture to individual life,



all the epic heroes illustrate the same standard proper role: The individual acts in accordance with the highest ideals of his society. In doing so, he gives them living reality, flesh and blood incarnation, and in the act of obeying them raises these same ideals to even higher levels. The hero's physical bravery is only a part of the quality of character his role demands; he must also make difficult moral choices. Achilles must kill Hector, even though his feelings make this final act distasteful; Aeneas must desert Dido even though his

comprehensible, it comes to seem inevitable. It makes a very neat package.

### **The Contemporary Epic Poem**

**W**ith the twentieth century, though, we come to a time when the neat package is suspect. Whether the modern poet is right or wrong in his judgement, he has rejected the traditional form and some of the traditional goals and methods of the epic poem as we

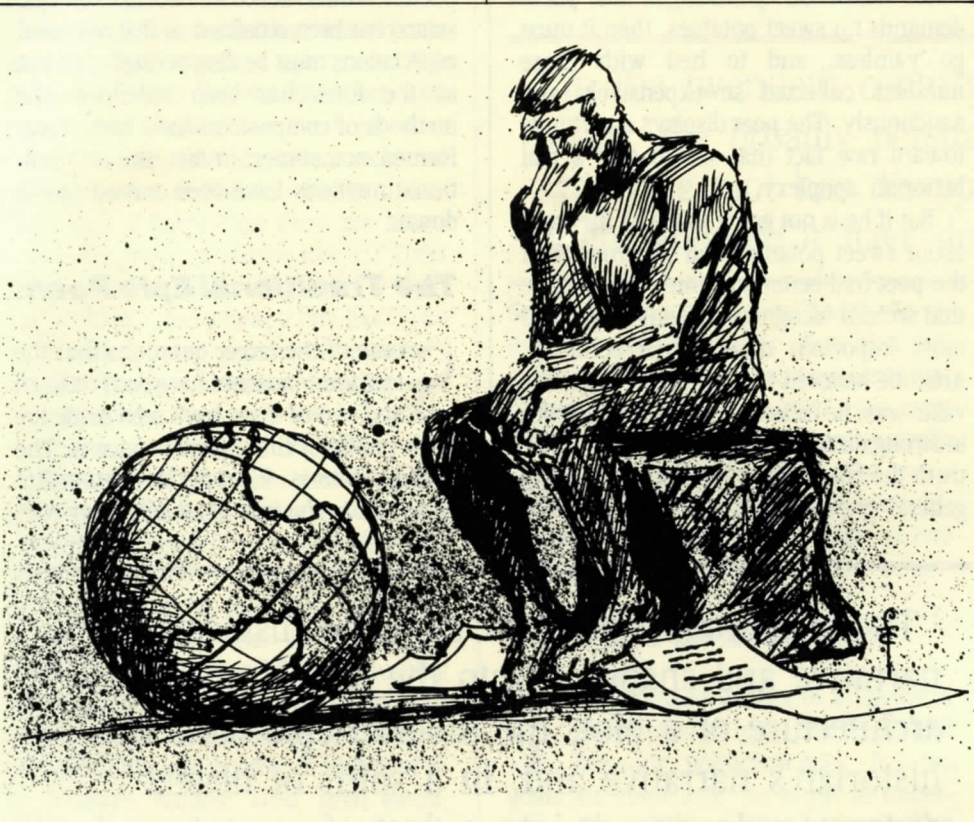
founded, perplexity doubly perplexed. It seems to me that this confusion, this impression of sheer randomness that I find in modern life, ought to be embodied in my epic if my work is to be truthful. If my poem is to possess validity and integrity, if it is to be an accurate speculum of its milieu, then it must present to its audience a fragmented aspect, a jumbled jigsaw-puzzle appearance."

There is a certain logic in this notion, though it may be a specious logic. After all, a confused and confusing poem is not too difficult to achieve. Many of us set down one almost every week while trying to write a poem that is clear, whole, and seamless, and it is vexing to think that another writer may receive wide acclaim for accomplishing what we less fortunate mortals have labored so earnestly to avoid.

Yet our modern epic poet may have a cannier purpose in mind than we have surmised. "I'm not *really* crazy," he shall tell us, "nor is my poem. It has a secret structure that is hidden by its bewildering surface." Then he proceeds to point out to us arcane principles of structure, unnoticed axioms of organization, subterranean networks of relationships, correspondences, and associations. And so it turns out that this object which has appeared to be so haphazard and patchwork can actually be clarified with a diagram. Aren't we all now reassured of the poet's sanity?

Perhaps we are. Perhaps not. For it is a wild connect-the-dots scheme, this construction of the contemporary epic. The countless separate facts and artifacts of our culture glow in the poet's range of vision like the points of light in a star-field photograph, and the poet is to draw lines of significant connection between a comparative few of them until he has discovered a new constellation among these stars, or has imposed one of his own devising upon them. The poet likes to think that he has discovered connections, while we his readers can only believe that he has imposed an order, an arbitrary and ramshackle sort of organization. Still he gets the benefit of the doubt because we recognize the magnitude and difficulty of his undertaking and because even an inchoate or intimated idea of purpose is better than none at all. The surface, however, can be very confusing indeed.

Ezra Pound was at pains to redefine the epic in his famous *Cantos*. He chucked out the notion of plot, insisted upon different qualities of character and purpose for his



betrayal makes him for the moment an arrant villain; Dante must show no pity for the tortures of his friends and acquaintances because the pains they endure are only those that their sins have led them to deserve. Some circumstances demand that the epic hero be hardheaded, other circumstances make him seem to be hard-hearted, but he follows a code that justifies his behavior; it is a comprehensible code that is provided for him by the culture which he inhabits, and in following the dictates of this code he preserves the culture which produced it. The relationship of the epic hero to his culture becomes at climactic moments a one-to-one relationship; the culture creates the man, the man preserves the culture; they are one and the same, policy and instrument, concept and embodiment, absorbed into a single figure. The relationship is not merely

receive the form from Homer and Vergil, from Statius and Milton. The poet feels that this our modern age requires a different sort of object, a variation upon the ancient form.

For the sake of clarity I will oversimplify the modern poet's position. He wakes up one morning and says to himself, or to the world at large: "This is a lovely Tuesday morning and my time is free until noon. Just the day to embark upon an epic. I want my poem to reflect the temper of my own time and to preserve the lineaments of my culture for generations to come, but also to display a historically necessary tie to earlier times, to the centuries that fell before me. Yet when I look out my study window upon the world that I must live in, all I see are disaster, formlessness, motion without purpose, rampant accident, confusion twice con-



multi-personed hero, and made demotic heightened diction of the epic idiom. His reformulation of the epic was simplicity itself: "The epic is a long poem containing history." And he believed that his *Cantos* fulfilled this single requirement.

Probably he was wrong. It is too easy to argue that the narrative of *The Cantos*, insofar as it can be discerned, lacks the dignity and consistency of a plot, that its tatterdemalion design prevents the poem from containing anything, much less

Whether it does so consciously or not, the modern epic poem will deal with disintegration, disconnection, and loneliness.

It will deal with these subjects because these are the terms in which the modern poet sees history. The prevalence of these terms might indicate that our modern age has acquired a healthy skepticism about the past, that it refuses to whitewash, romanticize, or ameliorate the harsh facts that undoubtedly obtained in the past. I'm sure that we would like to believe that we

purposes, we must put aside some small part of our rational skepticism. We are forced to accept the exaggerations of the poet as being more appropriate to his history as well as to his artistry than a more seemingly accurate account would be. The fables that the poet asks us to accept are no more far-fetched than many of the things that contemporary physical science asks us to believe, especially if we are reading in quantum theory or superstring theory.

Did a historical personage named Aeneas actually carry his father on his back out of the wrack of burning Troy? If I can be convinced that it is statistically necessary for an electron to be in two different places at the same time, then I may as well believe the story of Aeneas, and I shall understand Vergil's purposes better if I do believe his story than if I do not.

To this degree I share in the mystical attitude toward the epic. While I am engaged with Homer's plot, I shall subscribe to the details he gives me because in that way his vision is understood to be whole and unqualified. When I close *The Iliad* and turn my attention to other matters, then I can pick and choose what to believe and disbelieve about the poem and within the poem. But if I have not faith in the poem while I read it, I have missed its experience.

Homer's experience was not different in degree of difficulty from yours and mine. The world presented itself to him as a confusing mass of fragments, as a warehouse of disconnected parts, as a whisper-gallery of rumors. But he had faith that in fashioning a plot from all the random matter he would find meaning, and a truth that would have value. I like to think that he believed his work would endure. We know that Milton had that faith.

But lately we have lost it. The factual accuracy about the separate details has come to triumph over the sense of design and we believe that these two requirements are in opposition to one another.

And to a certain extent they are, but not entirely. When the epic poem about George Washington is written at last, it will not contain the story of the cherry tree. But it will tell us, using the materials that we already know almost by heart, a story that we have never heard before, a story large, majestic, and truthful, even though the ledger numbers about pig iron and sweet potatoes shall have been juggled in a manner so graceful as to be almost unnoticeable. **A**

---

"Homer's . . . world presented itself to him as a confusing mass of fragments, as a warehouse of disconnected parts, as a whisper gallery of rumors. But he had faith that in fashioning a plot from all the random matter he would find meaning, and a truth that would have value."

---

history. Pound's *Cantos* point toward history but do not contain it, in the same way that the Goodwill shop and the want ads of the newspaper tell us something about our culture without adding up to coherent commentary.

And what we say of *The Cantos* we can with equal justice say of Williams' *Paterson*, of Olson's Maximus poems, of Zukofsky's *A*, and of *The Bridge*. We can even make the same criticism of *The Waste Land*, though we would have to soften our stricture by pointing out that Eliot's incoherence is a necessary part of his purpose.

### **From Randomness to Meaning**

**T**he traditional epic form took the historian's narrative and shaped it into the simple grand architecture of a plot; the modern epic takes the historian's narrative and, in a spirit of heated distrust, pulverizes it into a dust of separate and discrete moments, a rubble of footnotes. The traditional epic starts in the middle of its story, moves to the beginning, and finishes at the end. The modern epic begins anywhere and finishes when the poet leaves off writing. Whatever the subject matter of the modern epic, and whatever the ostensible and announced themes, three secondary themes will inevitably be articulated because of the poet's choice of structure.

are less deceived than our forefathers. That is a harmless enough vanity, isn't it? Maybe it's not so harmless. Perhaps we ought to name this notion the Monty Python School of Historiography, the one that avers that if people in the Middle Ages smelled bad, then it must have been impossible for them to think clearly or to live nobly. Professor Dan Sundahl of Hillsdale College has pointed toward the lack of a historical sensibility as resulting for modern poets in a lack of "viable poetic stuff." "Fully to appreciate the grandeur of the epic might therefore mean that the persons whose lives are too special fail to read and understand history as meta-history—so to speak." I take Dr. Sundahl's meaning here as the idea that the poet, having become a specialist in isolated historical detail, has lost his sense of community with the people of the past and no longer knows them as people but as examples or as tendencies or symptoms of larger trends of history. Dr. Sundahl continues: "It has always seemed to me that the epic somehow inverts itself so that eternity somehow leaks into the poet's own time."

The good professor's cautious double use of "somehow" reveals that he is aware that his suggestion about the relationship of the epic to time verges upon the mystical. But in order to appreciate the spirit of the epic, in order to enter into a knowledgeable relationship with its



---

# Please Help Us Make a Difference

Dear IMPRIMIS Reader:

Ideas have consequences. And the ideas proposed, discussed and promoted among America's leadership community between now and the year 2000 will determine the shape of the world in which our children will live in the next century.

We need your help now to reach more people—thoughtful and influential people like yourself—who would benefit from receiving **IMPRIMIS**, and who can assist in the vital work of helping to shape the ideas that will shape our children's lives.

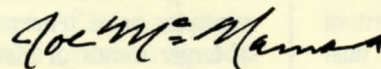
**IMPRIMIS** is one of the major vehicles through which the key thinkers of our time communicate their ideas to leaders at every level of nation, state and community. And we have been working hard to extend the reach and increase the impact of those ideas even more. I'm proud to report that we recently passed the 200,000 reader mark. But that's only the beginning.

Please use the form on page 7 to send us the names and addresses of friends, family members, business associates, educators, religious leaders—anyone whom you think **IMPRIMIS** should be reaching, free of charge, every month.

And before you send the form, please take a moment to note some specific subject areas in which you have a special interest. This will help us in selecting essays for **IMPRIMIS**, and guide us in exploring topics we should be covering.

Concerned individuals working together can turn powerful ideas into effective action. We're grateful for your concern and your help. Together we can make a difference.

Many thanks!



Joseph S. McNamara, Ph.D.  
Executive Editor, **IMPRIMIS**

---

Send **IMPRIMIS** free of charge to:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Address  Business Address

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Address  Business Address

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Address  Business Address

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Address  Business Address

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Address  Business Address

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Address  Business Address

I would like to see **IMPRIMIS** carry more articles about:

Education

Politics/Public Policy

Economics

Religion

Science/Technology

The Arts/Humanities

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution to Hillsdale College.

Yes, I would like to know more about earning a secure income and about gift and estate planning.  
Send me a free copy of *A Guide to Investing in Hillsdale College*.

Enclosed is my check (payable to Hillsdale College) for:

**IMPRIMIS** reprints Vol. \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Quantity \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO ENCLOSE THIS FORM**

Please send me information about:

Center for Constructive Alternatives seminars

Shavano Institute for National Leadership seminars

Family Business Institute and Dow Leadership Development Center's Manager Development Conferences

Admissions Procedures

Hillsdale College Press (catalog and price list)

<b>IMPRIMIS REPRINT PRICES</b> (postpaid):	
_____ 1-10 copies	\$ .75 each
_____ 25 copies	\$10.00
_____ 50 copies	\$15.00
_____ 100 copies	\$30.00

Indicate address changes next to your mailing label on the reverse side of this order form.  
Please enclose inside the envelope which is provided.



Hillsdale College has embodied the volunteer spirit for all its 145-year history. The institution's health and well-being have depended solely on the generosity of alumni and friends who put their trust and support in the College's mission. As a self-reliant and self-determining institution, Hillsdale has merited private support because of the College's leadership role in advancing traditional American values and ideals to students and a national audience alike.

The College's new G.O.A.L. (Great Opportunities for Assistance and Leadership) program, funded in part by a grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, "seeks students who want to make a difference." Hillsdale President George Roche says, "The G.O.A.L. program involves students working locally to help people. It's not more government funds or programs; it's individuals seeing problems in the community and doing something to solve those problems." The G.O.A.L. program at Hillsdale College is philanthropy in action.

Ann Sundareson, Troy, Michigan, coordinates the student tutoring program at Hillsdale High School and Davis Middle School. Ann receives assistance from fellow G.O.A.L. students, Laura Jansen, from Cincinnati, Ohio and Christopher Boergert, a student athlete from Dayton, Ohio. Ann also coordinates the Hillsdale Youth Companion Program, matching youth in the community in need of the special attention that only an older brother or sister can provide. Miss Sundareson will volunteer at Wayne State Medical Center during her summer vacation.

Christopher Boergert, in addition to his mentoring role(s), maintains his interest and involvement in the local Boy Scout troop and has planned a first-ever summer trip for his troop to tour Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio.

Christopher McKenzie, Holland, Michigan, developed a mentor program whereby college

## THE G.O.A.L. PROGRAM

### A Service Award for College Students Who Want to Make a Difference

students work directly with gifted high schoolers in personally chosen fields of study. Chris also worked with representatives from the eight county high schools. Hillsdale recently hosted over 175 high school students for a Student Leadership Workshop on Future Problem Solving.

Todd Sabath, Westlake, Ohio, continues to develop a "speakers series" at Hillsdale High School featuring College athletes and Detroit professional teams. This program is a manifestation of his involvement with the S.A.D.D. (Students Against Drunk Driving) chapter at Hillsdale High School. Todd also works with Athletic Director Jack McAvooy to make the new George Roche Sports Complex available to the high school students for their after-prom party.

Kim Melvin, Perrysburg, Ohio, and Jamie Truesdell from Norton, Ohio, are working together on the Hillsdale County Child Abuse Prevention Council to provide the foundation for a series of prevention skits concerning sexual abuse. Jami and Kim have also completed their coaching responsibilities with Hillsdale's Special Olympics. This summer Kim will volunteer at Saint Luke's Hospital in Toledo, Ohio, to work with terminally ill patients.

Paula Shelton, Birmingham, Michigan, and Michael Fanning, North Olmstead, Ohio, work together on a "1989 Needs Analysis Plan for Hillsdale County" to deal primarily with the status of child abuse services offered in elementary, middle and high schools in the county. Miss Shelton and Mr. Fanning will present the document soon to the Director of the Council.

Paula will volunteer this summer at the Judson Center Orphanage; putting to use her human relations skills by her interaction with orphans.

Jason Andrews, from Bothell, Washington, has just completed a successful season with the Hillsdale basketball team. He serves on the Board of the Hillsdale Chapter of the National Right-to-Life organization. He also spends several hours each

week with his "little brother" Matthew. This relationship is a direct outgrowth of the Companion Program which Ann Sundareson coordinates. During Jason's summer vacation he will be a volunteer coach at his high school's summer basketball camp in Seattle.

In addition to all of their community activities, the G.O.A.L. students have carried a minimum of 12 class hours per student and each student has exceeded the required 3.0 grade-point average. G.O.A.L. students have been elected to the Student Federation, joined campus Greek organizations, served as basketball cheerleaders, members of varsity sports teams and writers for the College newspaper.

The Director of the G.O.A.L. program, Duane C. Beauchamp, is actively involved with each student and their service projects. Mr. Beauchamp also serves on the Board of Directors for the Hillsdale City Youth Improvement Council. He has spoken to youth leadership workshops as well as various area service organizations and was the keynote speaker for Hillsdale's Youth Appreciation Banquet. Mr. Beauchamp has added to the curriculum a one hour not-for-profit management course which he teaches.

The significance of the G.O.A.L. program rests in its long-term consequences for Hillsdale students, the campus community, and local community. G.O.A.L. students are made aware of the voluntary spirit and how they can effect change through personal service and philanthropy, and the resources found in the not-for-profit sector. Likewise, the College reflects the strength and vitality of the private sector as it works toward the preservation of individual liberties and the advancement of personal civic responsibilities.



Editor, Joseph S. McNamara, Managing Editor, Lissa Roche, Assistant, Patricia A. DuBois. The opinions expressed in IMPRIMIS may be, but are not necessarily, the views of Hillsdale College and its External Affairs division. Copyright © 1989. Permission to reprint in whole or in part is hereby granted, provided a version of the following credit line is used: "Reprinted by permission from IMPRIMIS, the monthly journal of Hillsdale College, featuring presentations at Hillsdale's Center for Constructive Alternatives and at its Shavano Institute for National Leadership." ISSN 0277-8432.



IMPRIMIS (im-pri-mes), taking its name from the Latin term for "in the first place," is the publication of Hillsdale College's Center for Constructive Alternatives and the Shavano Institute for National Leadership. Circulation 210,000 worldwide, established 1972. Complimentary subscriptions available.

# IMPRIMIS

VOLUME 18 • NUMBER 5

**FORWARDING AND RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED**

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to IMPRIMIS,  
Hillsdale College  
Hillsdale, Michigan 49242

PRINTED MATTER