



# Great Books Curriculum

Dedicated to the best that has been thought and said.

Wright College  
4300 N Narragansett  
Chicago, Illinois 60634  
773 481-8014  
bmg1030@earthlink.net

Spring 2002 Volume 5 Number 1

## Mayor Richard M. Daley to Head Advisory Board for National Great Books Institute Initiative

Mayor Richard Daley will be serving as Honorary Advisory Board Chairman for the National Great Books Institute now in formation, according to Professor Bruce Gans, Director of the Wright College Great Books Curriculum.

The National Institute, according to Professor Gans, is a response to the needs state legislators, college regents and higher education associations expressed at the Johnson Foundation's Wingspread "national summit." The summit was convened last year to explore how Great Books Curricula could be integrated in higher education institutions nationwide, patterned after the one at Wright College.

The National Great Books Institute aims to make important contributions in improving students' cultural literacy, critical thinking and reading skills through a variety



Mayor Richard M. Daley

of means.

Among them are identifying faculty and institutions across the United States who are interested in teaching the Great Books personally or initiating cross-curricular Great Books Curricula.

The National Institute also aims to serve as *the* national resource, offering consulting services, sample course syllabi and reading lists.

It also aims to coordinate a network of programs and faculty who can meet at best practice conferences sponsored by

the National Great Books Institute as well as through a web site.

According to Karen Burke, Special Assistant to Mayor Daley on Education, Mayor Daley's especial interest in the National Great Books Institute has a variety of sources. Though he does not play it up in public, Mayor Daley, Burke explained that has been a constant reader of serious books all his adult life.

His favorite book is *To Kill a Mockingbird* and the recent city-wide series of discussion groups on the novel which Mayor Daley participated in was a labor of love.

Special Assistant Burke, a long time Chicago teacher at Orr High School, first met Mayor Daley when he "adopted" the school and led regular book discussion groups among the students.

"By becoming Honorary

**Continued on page 5**

# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

© 2001 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

VOL. CCXXXVIII NO. 9 CE/NA \*\*\*\*\*

FRIDAY, JULY 13, 2001

WSJ.com

\*\*\*\*\* \$1.00

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL FRIDAY, JULY 13, 2001 W15

## TASTE

### TONY & TACKY

**THEY CAME, THEY SAW, THEY CONQUERED:** Just because Yale so infamously gave up on Western Civ doesn't mean the field is dead. Just ask the folks at *Symposium*, which advertises itself as "the *first and only* strictly scholarly student writing published by *any* community college" dealing with the Great Books. Published out of Wright College in Chicago, the second issue has just been released, and it includes essays on writers from Cicero to Cervantes and Jonathan Swift to F. Scott Fitzgerald. Might even teach the Ivies a thing or two.

## Great Books Curriculum Scholarly Journal SYMPOSIUM

### Earns National and Local Recognition

Pictured above is the recent laudatory notice that appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* on the occasion of the appearance of the second issue of *Symposium*, the student-written journal devoted to Great Books scholarship that is published by the Wright College Great Books Curriculum. Praising *Symposium* for its scholarly and philosophical focus, the *Wall Street Journal* commended *Symposium* by saying it "might even teach the [Ivy League Colleges] a thing or two."

The *Wall Street Journal* article prompted requests for subscriptions from around the country, ranging from a college town in Mississippi, to upstate New

York, to a penal institution in Minnesota. The third issue, currently in the planning stage, is expected out in the late spring or early fall and is expected to contain essays on authors such as John Dryden, Samuel Johnson



**Prof. Milt Rosenberg, Moderator  
of WGN Radio Extension 720**

and William Shakespeare.

On September 20th, the night President Bush addressed the nation to announce America's war against terrorism, Professor Milt Rosenberg, Host of WGN Radio's Extension 720, invited a panel of Great Books Curriculum faculty and student contributors to *Symposium* to discuss the Great Books and their relevance in understanding the events surrounding the September 11th attack on the World Trade Center.

The panelists included Prof. Bruce Gans, who discussed Conrad's terrorism novel, *The Secret Agent*, Prof. Phillip Virgen, who discussed Faulkner's Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech, student *Symposium* contributor Angeline Tomcik, who discussed Kierkegaard and student Robert Jablonsky who discussed Durkheim

## Chicago Humanities Festival and Great Books Curriculum Establish Partnership



**Dean of Instruction  
Cynthia Cordes**



**Prof. Gans**



**Ms. Eileen Mackevich  
Director  
Chicago Humanities Festival**



**Prof. Virgen**

In an effort to connect the Wright College community and its surrounding Northwest Side neighborhood to some of the most important and interesting Great Books related scholars in the world, the Wright College Great Books Curriculum has established an ongoing formal partnership with the prestigious Chicago Humanities Festival, thus becoming the first and only community college to have a formal association with the institution

equivalent to that of such major universities as the University of Chicago and Northwestern.

“This is a long-cherished dream of mine come true,” Great Books Curriculum Chairman Bruce Gans said. “Under the terms of our partnership, the Great Books Curriculum has been invited to participate in the planning of future Chicago Humanities Festival programs. We will also be hosting at least one event a year on campus—and hopefully more.

There is even talk of hosting a Chicago Humanities Festival class on campus.

“It is deeply gratifying that CHF Director Eileen Mackevich and Vice President Cris Kayser see the immense value in bringing their superb programming to Chicago neighborhoods and dramatically increasing access to them.

“The involvement of Dean Cordes and Prof. Philip Virgen in this work has also been invaluable.

### ***National Great Books Institute continued from page 1.***

Head of the National Great Books Institute Advisory Board Mayor Daley is making a contribution to improving the quality of education for underserved college students across the country that cannot be overstated,” said Wright College Great Books Curriculum Chairman Bruce Gans.

“Mayor Daley’s imprimatur has the potential to encourage the foundations and philanthropic organizations from whom we will be seeking funding to take our grant proposals

with the utmost seriousness and consideration.

This is especially true because Mayor Daley has earned a national reputation for his major efforts in seeking to standards for the Chicago Public School System” In addition to Mayor Daley, the National Great Books Institute Advisory Board includes several other distinguished members: Judge David Delgado of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Ms. Deidra Lewis, Vice Chancellor of the City Colleges of Chicago,

Prof. David Mulroy, Founder and Director of the Great Books Program at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, Prof. Milton Rosenberg University of Chicago Host of WGN Radio Extension 720, Dr. Salvatore Rotella, President of Riverside College, Prof. Herman Siniako, Committee on General Studies in the Humanities at the University of Chicago, Dr. Ilan Stavans Lewis-Sebring Professor in Latin American and Latino Culture Amherst College and Mr. Peter Temes, President of the Great Books Foundation.