

## PEPPERDINE INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

To Distribution\* From Bill Adrian, Dean, GSEP Date February 28, 1984  
Re: Visit of Mortimer Adler c.c. Follow-up 30

We have secured Mortimer Adler for a visit to Pepperdine University for December 3 and 4, of this year. As you know, Dr. Adler has been active in a number of significant educational activities, from directing the Great Books Program of Encyclopedia Britannica to the authorship of the Paideia Proposal which advocates major reform of our educational systems in this country. Dr. Adler will be speaking at the Malibu campus on the evening of December 3, focusing his comments on the Paideia Proposal. On the morning of December 4, he will speak to a group of educational leaders at Pepperdine Plaza. If there are special individuals or groups who should be invited to hear Dr. Adler on Monday evening, please let me know. Also, if you have ideas of activities which might be held in conjunction with Dr. Adler's visit, I would like to hear from you. There is ample lead time to take full advantage of Dr. Adler's visit to Pepperdine, and we are still flexible in planning for the occasion.

\*Howard White  
M. Norvel Young  
Charles Runnels  
David Davenport  
Larry Hornbaker  
Michael Adams  
Mike O'Neal  
Peter Quan  
William B. Phillips  
John Watson  
George Bales  
Oly Tegner  
John Wilson  
Ronald Phillips  
James Wilburn  
Clarence Hibbs  
Nancy Fagan  
Michael Gose  
Joann Taylor

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Baird, David

Dec 1987

**From:** Gose, Michael  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 20, 2011 6:05 PM  
**To:** Fisher, Sarah R  
**Cc:** Ditmore, Michael; Myers, Victoria; Fulmer, Constance; Wilson, John; Tippens, Darryl; Marrs, Rick R.; Benton, Andrew; Mullins, Maire; Baird, David  
**Subject:** Re: Great Books

Probably far too few "great ideas" come to fruition, and when they do, providence seems at work. At the end of World War I Columbia's Professor, John Erskine, started a Great Books program for the officers who had not yet been deployed back from Europe to the United States. He thoroughly enjoyed himself and started a comparable program when he returned to Columbia. Mortimer Adler was one of his students. University of Chicago President, Robert Hutchins, invited Adler to start a Great Books program at Chicago. Together they redid St. John's as a Great Books college, turned around the Encyclopedia Britannica, which then published Adler's *Syntopicon* and **Great Books of the Western World**, and from their work came the Jr. Great Books and the Great Ideas Foundation. I am pretty sure that it was in December of 1984 that then Dean of the School of Education, and future Executive Vice President, Bill Adrian, invited Adler to speak at Pepperdine, and invited me to attend Adler's speech, and then to attend a breakfast at the Brock House with the two of them, and President Howard White. At that same time period, I was also on the Rank, Tenure and Promotion Committee with Professors Victoria Myers and Norman Hughes. After the Adler visit we started talking about starting our own Great Books program. Such programs remain controversial at the university level because they are not tied to a particular academic discipline. In fact the first time we took our proposal to the Academic Council our proposal was defeated unanimously and tabled permanently. When the program was finally approved, we had professors from four divisions teaching within the Colloquium. Dean John Wilson was instrumental to the initial approval and ongoing success of the program, and Dean David Baird championed the program during his tenure as Chair of the Humanities/Teacher Education Division and Dean of Seaver College.

Whatever their majors, "my" alumni write me that the Colloquium was instrumental to the development of serious academic intent, reading and thinking critically, and becoming better students in whichever major they chose. My fervent hope for this celebration, envisioned by Alumnus Curt Portzel, is that it will spur our institutional memory in such a way that the various "divisions" at Pepperdine will renew the widespread support that this program has earned.

On 9/20/11 1:55 PM, "Fisher, Sarah R" <[Sarah.Fisher@pepperdine.edu](mailto:Sarah.Fisher@pepperdine.edu)> wrote:

Dear Michael,

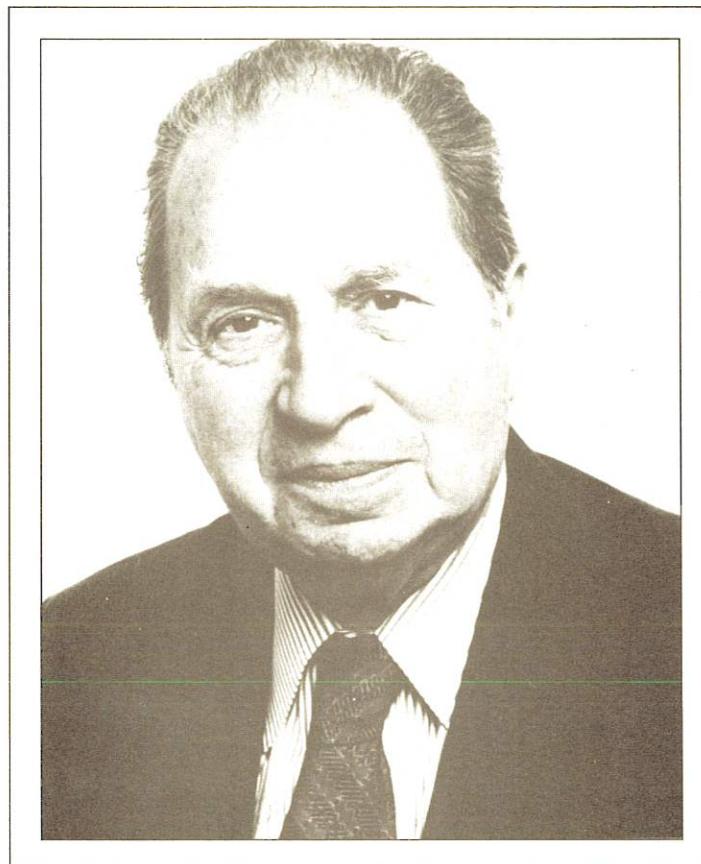
I'm writing a story for Pepperdine's home page about the Great Books program's 25th anniversary and would love to include some comments and thoughts from you as one of the founders and current faculty members involved with the program. Do you have any thoughts you'd like to share about the 25th-year milestone, your hopes for the future of the program, and what you're most looking forward to about the celebrations planned for Waves Weekend (and why)?

Many thanks! I'm excited to share this with our readers. And reading about it makes me wish I was a student, alas...

*Sarah Fisher  
Writer, Integrated Marketing Communications  
310 506 4120  
[www.pepperdine.edu](http://www.pepperdine.edu)  
[magazine.pepperdine.edu](http://magazine.pepperdine.edu)*

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

proudly presents  
A Presentation and Discussion with  
**Dr. Mortimer Adler**



Mortimer Adler is a provocative and intelligent critic of American education. He has taught at Columbia University and the University of Chicago, where he developed the Great Books program. A prolific writer, Dr. Adler has authored numerous publications covering topics ranging from philosophy and religion to the need for significant reform of our public schools. His recent book, entitled *The Paideia Proposal: An Educational Manifesto*, has received national attention. Dr. Adler presently serves as Chairman of the Board of Editors of *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

**Monday, December 3, 1984**  
**8:00 p.m.**  
**Reception to Follow**

**SMOTHERS THEATRE**

**Pepperdine University**  
**24255 Pacific Coast Highway**  
**Malibu, California**

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GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

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Malibu, California

*Quote from Dr. Adrian on Dr. Adler's Visit including the Paideia Proposal*

*Mortimer Adler has been an outspoken critic of public schools in the United States. His most recent publication entitled, The Paideia Proposal, represents the consensus of a distinguished group of educational leaders on the need for significant reform of our public schools. Dr. Adler is a provocative and intelligent critic of American education, and his visit to Pepperdine represents the first in a series of programs designed to stimulate thought and discussion of ways to improve education for all students.*

MORTIMER J. ADLER

Born December 28, 1902, New York, New York

BA from Columbia College, 1923; Ph.D. from  
Columbia University, 1928

Instructor at Columbia University, 1923-1930

Associate Professor of Philosophy of Law at the  
University of Chicago, 1930-1942

Professor of Philosophy of Law at the University  
of Chicago, 1942-1952

Visiting Lecturer at St. John's College, 1936 -

Director of the Institute of Philosophical  
Research, 1952 -

President of San Francisco Productions, Inc.,  
1954 -

Visiting Lecturer at University of Chicago, 1963-1968

Director of Editorial Planning, Encyclopaedia Britannica,  
(15th Edition), 1966 -

Chairman of the Board of Editors, Encyclopaedia  
Britannica, 1974 -

~~Honorary Trustee of the Aspen Institute for Humanistic  
Studies, 1974 -~~

## MORTIMER J. ADLER

Mortimer J. Adler. Director of the Institute for Philosophical Research, Associate Editor of Encyclopaedia Britannica's Great Books of the Western World, and, with Robert M. Hutchins, editor of Great Ideas Today and Gateway to the Great Books. He invented and edited the Syntopicon, to which he contributed 102 essays on the great ideas of Western civilization. First holder of the Encyclopaedia Britannica lectureship in philosophy at the University of Chicago.

He taught at Columbia from 1923 until 1930, when he went to the University of Chicago at the invitation of Robert M. Hutchins. With President Hutchins, he developed the Great Books program, helped to establish the Great Books Foundation, and was instrumental in instigating many educational reforms.

He surrendered his professorship at the University of Chicago in 1952 to found the Institute for Philosophical Research, of which he is now Director. The undertaking on which the Institute embarked has been described as an effort to take stock of Western thought on subjects which have been of continuing philosophical interest from the advent of philosophy in ancient Greece to the present day. This work, a direct outgrowth of Mr. Adler's previous work on the Syntopicon, is basically an analysis of philosophical literature from the perspective of the great ideas. Because of its relevance to the contemporary scene, freedom was chosen as the first idea to be treated. Nineteen Fifty-Eight saw the publication of Volume I of The Idea of Freedom. Volume II was published in 1961. In 1967, under the auspices of the Institute, four additional books were published -- The Idea of Progress, The Idea of Justice, The Idea of Happiness, and The Idea of Love. Other ideas being considered for subsequent treatment are religion and equality.

Since 1953, Mr. Adler has conducted Executive Seminars during the summer months at Aspen, Colorado. From 1956 - 1958 he conducted similar seminars at Inland Steel in Chicago. His Great Books Seminars in Chicago and San Francisco celebrated their 30th and 21st anniversaries respectively in 1973. Mr. Adler continues to give numerous TV and radio talks and public lectures on a variety of subjects.

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Mr. Adler is now Chairman of the Board of Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica (beginning in 1974).

MORTIMER J. ADLER

Biography written by Laurence Grinnell

PUBLIC RELATIONS, EB

Mortimer J. Adler -- philosopher, author, editor, lecturer, and teacher -- is chairman of the Board of Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica.

A member of the Board since its inception in 1947, Dr. Adler devoted a major portion of fifteen years to the planning and development of the 15th Edition of Britannica in his capacity as director of planning and chairman of the editorial executive committee.

As project coordinator, he was responsible for the day-to-day supervision and coordination of the new Britannica 3, published by Encyclopaedia Britannica in 1974. In the same year, he replaced Dr. Robert M. Hutchins, who retired, as Chairman of the Board of Editors.

Dr. Adler is also Director of the Institute for Philosophical Research in Chicago, which was founded in 1952 for the study of ideas. Since 1949, he has been honorary trustee of Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, and since 1953 has annually conducted Executive Seminars during the summer months in Aspen, Colorado. The 1981 seminars on his recent book, Six Great Ideas will be televised by Bill Moyers in the Fall of 1982.

Dr. Adler received his Ph.D. from Columbia University and taught there from 1923 until 1930. While at Columbia he introduced

an honors course based on reading and discussing the great books of Western civilization.

At the invitation of President Robert M. Hutchins, he went to the University of Chicago to teach the philosophy of law. Together they transformed the school curriculum by introducing courses based on the great books. In 1946 this activity was extended to adults through the Great Books Foundation and the expansion of Great Books classes in cities from coast to coast has made it one of the most popular movements in the field of adult education.

Dr. Adler is associate editor of the Great Books of the Western World, including the Syntopicon, coeditor-in-chief of the Gateway to the Great Books and the annual Great Ideas Today, and editor-in-chief of the Annals of America, all published by Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.

A prolific writer, his books include The Conditions of Philosophy, published in 1965; The Difference of Man and the Difference It Makes, 1967; The Time of Our Lives, 1970; The Common Sense of Politics, 1971; a revision of his best selling How to Read a Book, 1972 (with Charles Van Doren); an autobiography, Philosopher At Large, 1977; Aristotle for Everybody, 1978; How To Think About God, 1980; Six Great Ideas, 1981; The Angels and Us, 1982. His latest book, How To Speak and How To Listen will be coming out in the Spring of 1983. Also in 1977, Dr. Adler, coedited with Charles Van Doren, Great Treasury of Western Thought.

He is Chairman of the Paideia Project, which in the summer of 1981 called for a major reform of public school education and provided a blue-print for its structure. The Paideia Proposal will be published in September of 1982, followed in 1983 by Paideia Problems and Possibilities.

BOOKS BY MORTIMER J. ADLER

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1927

Dialectic, London, Kegan Paul, Trench Trubner & Co., Ltd., and New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927.

1931

(with Jerome Michael) The Nature of Judicial Proof. An Inquiry into the Logical, Legal, and Empirical Aspects of the Law of Evidence, New York, Columbia University Law School, 1931.

1933

(with Jerome Michael) Crime, Law and Social Science, London, Kegan Paul, Treacy Trubner & Co., Ltd., and New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1933; reprinted with Introduction by Gilbert Geis, Montclair, N. J., Patterson Smith, 1971.

1935

(with Maude Phelps Hutchins) Diagrammatics, New York, Random House, Inc., 1935.

1937

Art and Prudence: A Study in Practical Philosophy, New York and Toronto, Longmans, Green and Co., 1937; Chapters 1-5; 12, reprinted with Introduction by Samuel Hazo as Poetry and Politics, Pittsburgh, Pa., Duquesne University Press, 1965.

What Man Has Made of Man: A Study of the Consequences of Platonism and Positivism in Psychology, Introduction by Dr. Franz Alexander, New York and Toronto, Longmans, Green and Co., 1937; reprinted New York, Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1957.

1938

Saint Thomas and the Gentiles (The Aquinas Lecture), Milwaukee, Wis., Marquette University Press, 1938.

1940

Problems for Thomists: The Problem of Species, New York, Sheed & Ward, 1940.

The Philosophy and Science of Man: A Collection of Texts as a Foundation for Ethics and Politics, The University of Chicago Bookstore, 1940 (mimeograph).

How To Read A Book: The Art of Getting a Liberal Education, New York, Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1940.

1941

A Dialectic of Morals, Towards the Foundations of Political Philosophy, Notre Dame, Ind., University of Notre Dame Press, 1941, reprinted New York, Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1958.

1944

How To Think About War and Peace, New York, Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1944.

1954

Research on Freedom, 2 vols., San Francisco, Institute for Philosophical Research, 1954.

1958

(with Milton Mayer) The Revolution in Education, Introduction by Clarence Faust, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1958

(with Louis O. Kelso) The Capitalist Manifesto, New York, Random House, Inc., 1958, reprinted Westport, Conn., Greenwood Pres, Publishers, 1973.

The Idea of Freedom: A Dialectical Examination of the Conceptions of Freedom, Volume I, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1958, reprinted Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1973.

1961

(with Louis O. Kelso) The New Capitalists: A Proposal to Free Economic Growth from the Slavery of Savings, New York, Random House, Inc., 1961, reprinted Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1973.

The Idea of Freedom: A Dialectical Examination of the Controversies about Freedom, Volume II, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1961, reprinted Westport, Conn., Greewood Press, Publishers, 1973.

1965

The Conditions of Philosophy: Its Checkered Past, Its Present Disorder, and Its Future Promise (based on the Encyclopaedia Britannica Lectures delivered at the University of Chicago, 1964), New York, Atheneum Publishers, 1965.

1967

The Difference of Man and The Difference It Makes (based on the Encyclopaedia Britannica Lectures delivered at the University of Chicago, 1966), New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967.

1970

The Time of Our Lives: The Ethics of Common Sense, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970.

1971

The Common Sense of Politics, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971.

1972

(with Charles Van Doren) How To Read A Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading, Revised and Updated Edition, New York, Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1972.

1975

(with William Gorman) The American Testament, New York, Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1975.

1976

Some Questions About Language: A Theory of Human Discourse and Its Objects, La Salle, Ill., Open Court Publishing Co., 1976.

1977

Philosopher at Large: An Intellectual Autobiography, New York, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1977.

Reforming Education: The Schooling of a People and Their Education Beyond Schooling, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1977

1978

Aristotle for Everybody:Difficult Thought Made Easy, New York, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1978

1980

How To Think About God: A Guide for the 20th Century Pagan,  
New York, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1980

1981

Six Great Ideas, New York, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. 1981

1982

The Angels and Us, New York, Macmillan Publishing, Co., Inc., 1982

(On Behalf of the Paideia Group) The Paideia Proposal, New York,  
Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1982

1983

How To Speak and How To Listen, New York, Macmillan Publishing Co.,  
Inc., 1983

(On Behalf of the Paideia Group) Paideia Problems and Possibilities,  
New York, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. 1983

1984

A Vision of the Future: Twelve Ideas for a Better Life and a Better  
Society, New York, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1984

(On Behalf of the Paideia Group) The Paideia Program, New York,  
Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1984 (To be published in  
the Fall of 1984)

1985

Ten Philosophical Mistakes, New York, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.  
(to be published March/April 1985)

Associate Editor of Great Books of the Western World, 1945 -

Editor-in-Chief of The Annals of America (20 vols.), 1968

(with Robert M. Hutchins) Gateway to the Great Books, 1963

(with Robert M. Hutchins) The Great Ideas Today, 1961 -

The Great Ideas, a Syntopicon of the Great Books of the Western World, 1952

Editor (with Charles Van Doren) Great Treasury of Western Thought, 1977