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Christening

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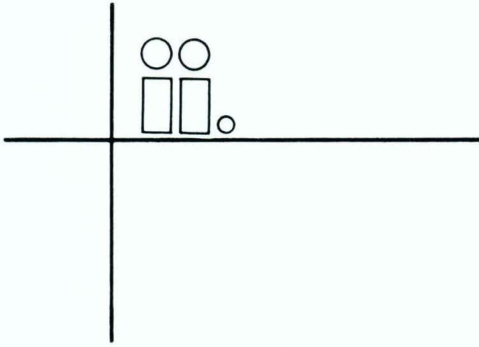


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Christening

No champagne will be spilled over the bow of this new ship. At twelve dollars a bottle the budget won't stand it. Furthermore, this isn't a very big venture. It won't be a battleship, serving as a floating platform for heavy artillery to bombard the fortifications of entrenched academic orthodoxy. Rather, it will be more like a clipper, slipping through precarious channels and frequently tacking against the wind to explore sources of new riches for undergraduate education. Therefore, without more ado, *Perspectives* is launched.

It is often said these days that general education and even liberal education are dead. Semantic difficulties aside, the facts seem to argue otherwise. Even though sweeping curricular changes have not been made in many colleges and universities in the past ten years (see Philip Denenfeld's review of the Dressel-DeLisle monograph in this issue), there is more awareness now than at any time since World War II of the need to reconsider the purposes and practices of higher education. "Relevance" is a big word in students' vocabularies, and it is interesting that it seems to denote consideration of the totality of life and society rather than narrow vocational desires. The formerly dull journals and the lively new *Chronicle* testify to renewed interest in the basic meaning of education.

Western Michigan University, therefore, is honored to assist the Association for General and Liberal Studies in bringing forth this new journal. We hope to make it innovative without being pretentious, solid without being dull, and timely without being time-serving. Contributions and criticisms are welcome.

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Every Fall for the past several years the School of General Studies at Western Michigan University has sponsored a weekend get-together for in-service training of its General Studies staff. The programs have, in general, been oriented toward an introduction to "the idea of general education" for the newer staff members, although the older staff members who attend have found the sessions to be equally fruitful. A keynote speaker sets the tone for the weekend. And then, some very stimulating small group discussions invariably follow. Perhaps, one of the reasons for the discussions being stimulating is the setting, a beautiful resort called Sleepy Hollow located on Lake Michigan near South Haven, Michigan. A better reason, however, would be the stature and competence of the keynote speakers who have attended. In fact, we were so impressed with the nature and pertinence of the thoughts of two of these speakers that we are taking this opportunity—the first issue of the new journal, *Perspectives*—to share their thinking with you.

Knox C. Hill *speaks* on "The Idea of General Education." And you may surmise that the article is almost verbatim what he said at Sleepy Hollow.

Martin Levit's paper, "On Some Aspects of an Integrated General Education," includes as he notes several pages which are composed of paragraphs taken, more or less verbatim, from a few of his other writings.

The Editor

